

## Chapter 1290

After all, it was important for a person to have self-knowledge. Since Gerald was still shooting his mouth off at a time like this, this only made others look down on him even more.

“Start fighting! Teach him a lesson!” Someone yelled out in dissatisfaction from amongst the audience.

“Young lad, you are indeed courting your death!” Yuno yelled angrily before he rushed directly at Gerald.

Yuno’s skills were indeed very sharp as compared to an ordinary person. Regardless of whether it was a flying kick or a side kick, all of his moves were very simple but powerful. If he were to hit a person directly on his head, that person could easily be knocked into a coma.

The crowd of people quickly hid and avoided them, out of fear that Yuno would injure them too.

However, Gerald simply put his hands into his pockets calmly as he avoided many of Yuno’s flying kicks and side kicks several times in a row.

When Gerald saw that Yuno was going all out to attack him, he could not help but hum slightly before he raised his foot fiercely and ferociously, as if he was raising a giant ax.

Yuno raised his hand in shock as he instinctively put his hands in front of him. However, he flew out directly and fell to the ground on his knees after Gerald had kicked him.

Fortunately, there was soft cushioning on the ground. Otherwise, Yuno would certainly have had to lie down on the hospital bed for half a year at least.

“He won?!”

Everyone on the sidelines was in shock.

Even Aiden was so shocked that his eyes were about to pop out of his sockets.

He had initially thought that Gerald would certainly be utterly defeated by Yuno. This was because even though Gerald possessed great strength and abilities, no matter what it was, Yuno had received and undergone special martial arts training from an early age, unlike any other ordinary person.

Yet, Gerald had actually defeated Yuno with just a single kick?!

“Yuno is too weak, right? He can’t even handle that young lad.”

“It seems as though he was not bragging at all. He truly has some skills of his own.”

There was a lot of ongoing discussion amongst the audience, and some of them were looking at Gerald in a different light now.

Everyone had initially thought that he was only good at bragging and provoking others. However, since he could easily defeat Yuno, this could only prove that he was actually rather powerful and skillful.

This scene also caused the expression on Matilda’s face to change slightly.

She really would not have expected Gerald to win. Moreover, he had won so easily. Matilda knew of Yuno’s strength very well, but he could not even accept a single attack from Gerald?!

Matilda was filled with anger and resentment for Gerald at this time.

Only Fernando frowned as he walked over to take a look at Yuno. Both the meridians in Yuno’s arms were broken, and both of his kneecaps were completely shattered. At this time, Yuno had already fallen unconscious because of the pain. Fernando then turned around and looked at Gerald as he said, “You are pretty skillful, but you should not have dealt such a heavy blow to him. You have ended his martial arts journey completely here! Now, things are not as simple as you offending Matilda anymore!”

“Even if we were to forget about the fact that he was the one who provoked me in the first place, let’s say one of his previous kicks had hit me directly, what would have happened to me, then?” Gerald asked lightly.

Fernando frowned again.

If a normal person’s side kick were to hit a person in the head directly, that person would certainly suffer from a mild injury.

Yuno was about 1.9 meters tall, and he weighed more than a hundred kilograms. If he were to hit a person in the head with all of his might, if his opponent was an ordinary person, that person would certainly end up in a vegetative state.

Strictly speaking, Gerald had already been very merciful toward Yuno.

Fernando stood up and said, “Very well. Since you have such strength, you are indeed worthy enough to die in my hands, then!”

Fernando spoke coldly.

As soon as his words fell, the audience were all staring at them with their eyes wide open in shock. Fernando was already feeling anxious, so they were in for a great show, then!

“You still want to fight with me?” Gerald asked as he narrowed his eyes slightly.

Fernando still dared to step up and challenge him to a fight even after he had seen how Gerald had kicked Yuno earlier. So, it seemed as though Fernando had not shown his true strength yet.

“You should not think that I will not hold back at all if we were to go all out in a fight,” Gerald said lightly.

“Pfft! Do you honestly think that you will be able to defeat Fernando?!”

As soon as Gerald spoke up, there was someone who was extremely dissatisfied amongst the audience. It was Matilda who had spoken up as she snorted coldly.

“That’s right. His kick just now was actually not even that powerful. It was just a little faster and stronger.” Another girl said at this time.

Although Gerald had defeated Yuno easily and swiftly earlier, everyone was still filled with confidence in Fernando’s strength and capability. After all, Fernando had proven his strength and abilities in front of countless people throughout all these years.

Even Matilda was a little more rest assured at this time. If Fernando were to step up and go against this person, that person would certainly be done for, then!

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“You...! Let’s do this then! I’ll go easy on you on your first ten blows!” declared Fernando as he looked at Gerald before shaking his head, a wry smile on his face.

Following that, Fernando rested his arms behind his back and even closed his eyes before turning to face away with Gerald.

The way he was behaving almost suggested that he was in some sort of strange environment. That everything else in the entire world was meaningless to him.

“...Does Fernando not plan to make an attack...? His wordless taunt is so merciless! Fernando being Fernando, I suppose!”

“He’s doing that for a reason! Did you know that the Dawsons have mastered a secret martial art skill called the Art of Counter Injury?”

“The Art of what now? What does it do?”

“From what I’ve heard, practitioners of that martial art will allow you to hit them any way you want. However, the more vigorous the attacker’s blows are, the heavier their hands will start to feel!”

“Good lord! To think that such a mystical skill even exists in the world!”

As everyone in the crowd was busy discussing the current situation in between squeals of shock and awe, Fernando had now enveloped himself within a mystifying-looking veil... If he was already mysterious before, he was even more so now.

Seeing that, everyone could only hold their breaths as they kept their eyes peeled.

Gerald himself had no idea what the Art of Counter Injury was. However, he did know that there was a high chance that he would be unable to leave today unless he resolved this incident.

With that in mind, Gerald closed his eyes as his body quickly began emanating his immense inner strength... The second he opened them again, Gerald immediately began dashing toward Fernando!

“He’s made his move! Fernando’s definitely going to counter that!”

Everyone had their eyes glued to the scene as they watched as Gerald successfully landed a swift kick on Fernando!

Following a loud ‘thud’, the sickening sound of bones cracking became evident a split second later as the crowd watched as a body was flung backward... and began colliding with rows upon rows of tables and chairs!

However, the now messily-arranged chairs and tables were the least of everyone’s concerns. Since several members of the Martial Arts Association had been sitting right in front of Fernando’s path of destruction, many of them ended up flying all over the place as well, either in their attempt to dodge the attack or due to being directly hit by the incoming body!

Eventually, the body finally stopped when it hit against the large hall’s glass revolving door, sending it shattering into a million pieces with a loud ‘crash’...!

And of course, the body itself was Fernando’s.

Everyone was momentarily too stupefied for words, and this was especially so for Matilda.

When she was finally able to break from her utter shock, the stunned woman simply muttered, "...H-how... How is this even possible...?"

Despite being completely shocked, those from within the crowd were already starting to discuss the situation again.

"...Maybe Fernando has some other tactic he hadn't revealed...?"

"...You may be right! After all, he can't have been defeated that easily! I'm sure he has another tactic up his sleeve...! ...Right?"

As everyone continued thinking about how unbelievable the current events were, Fernando himself had been vomiting blood, his shock and fear clearly reflected in his eyes as his body trembled vigorously.

In a way, the sheer force of that kick alone almost seemed to have—somehow—inflicted damage on his entire body. Due to that absurdity, Fernando's mind was now completely blank as he continued lying on the ground.

Gerald, however, simply stood atop the platform before looking at Fernando and shouting, "Hey now, that was only one blow! You still owe me nine more hits!"

"You should have enough energy stored by now, Fernando! Get up!"

"Is Fernando finally going to reveal his unique skill? It's definitely over for the other guy now!"

Listening as everyone continued cheering him on, Fernando slowly began crawling back up. Though he eventually managed to—after great difficulty—he immediately began vomiting blood again, forcing his entire body to kneel.

It was then when everyone realized that he truly had lost all his strength, prompting all of them to think the same thing.

'...What? Could... Could Fernando actually have been defeated...? To think that he even said that he'd go easy on his opponent for the first ten blows... All he managed to take was a single hit!'

As Fernando blacked out from all his internal injuries, Matilda ran over to him while shouting, "Fernando!"

"You're so powerful, Mr. Crawford!" cried out Aiden immensely joyfully.

'Worship' couldn't even begin describing how awe-stricken Aiden currently was.

"Whatever the case is, I'm assuming that nobody's going to stop me from leaving now, don't you think?" replied Gerald as he glared at the bodyguards while gently patting Aiden's shoulder.

Seeing his frigid glare, the guards immediately felt cold sweat running down their foreheads as they stepped aside to let him pass.

"Humph. Let's go!" declared Gerald as he and his party strode off, the rest of the Simes not even daring to raise their opinions anymore.

"Go easy on Mr. Crawford for the first ten blows you said... Hah!" sneered Chester as he spat contemptuously when he walked past the unconscious man.

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Upon stepping out of the large hall, a few women instantly began surrounding Gerald rather excitedly. Finding him to be increasingly stable and attractive, several of them were keen on inquiring him about some things to get to know him better.

"So you were this powerful, Gerald!"

“Indeed! Speaking of which, Gerald, are you really the legendary Mr. Crawford from Mayberry...? Aiden never said a word about this to us!”

“So what if I am? Is that important?” asked Gerald casually.

Hearing that, the women immediately pursed their lips in disappointment. It was obvious that Gerald wasn't interested in them in the slightest.

Regardless, Fernando himself was now half-crippled due to that single kick. In other words, as soon as he woke up, he found that he couldn't use the force around his arms anymore.

Since the Dawsons and the Simes had been sharing a good relationship for generations, the incident definitely caused quite a major uproar among the Simes. After all, not only was Fernando a rising star in the Martial Arts Association, but he was also the one who had received special training from the Gunters, one of the major secret families.

He had been planning to participate in the trial training the following day too, but it was obviously impossible in his current state.

To think that Fernando had ended up being beaten up this badly just because of some misunderstanding the Sime family's young lady—Matilda—had with Gerald! The Simes had simply paid too much attention to that misunderstanding for their own good.

Whatever the case was, both Shandon Sime—the master of the Sime family—and a middle-aged man from the Gunter family—who was there as a guest—were greeted to the sight of Fernando's terrible state as the other Simes were carrying him in. This, of course, prompted Shandon to inquire his daughter about what had happened. The middle-aged man himself was well acquainted with the Dawsons, so he knew that Fernando was a person who had undergone cut and dried training.

Either way, after being questioned by her father, Matilda didn't even dare to miss out on a single detail. She even made sure to show him Gerald's photograph as she fully detailed everything that had led to this point.



Once she was done, the middle-aged Gunter took a look at the photograph before immediately narrowing his eyes as he said, “You... To think that you’ve actually offended him!”

“...Oh? You know who he is, Third master? Is he really the rich heir from Mayberry then?” asked Shandon, stunned.

The third master went by the name of Shandon Gunter, and his role was to mediate communication between the Gunters and the outside world. Due to that, it was no surprise that he was quite close to the Simes.

“I’ve seen photographs of him before, and this is undoubtedly Mr. Crawford from Mayberry. You have no idea how vicious and potent his mysterious martial arts are. I’ll have you know that this person single-handedly ended the lives of all the Moldells from the North, the Longs, and even the Schuylers from the Salford Province!” explained Shaun.

Hearing that, Shandon’s eyes widened so much that they looked like they were going to pop out of his head at any second. Matilda herself was already covering her mouth in fright.

Following that, both father and daughter asked in unison, “Is... Is that really true...?”

“Is there even a reason for me to lie? Regardless, since he’s already here, I assure you that he’s come to meet the Gunters. In fact, Lady Gunter—the master of the Gunter family—had predicted that he would come sooner or later quite some time ago. With that in mind, she had ordered me to receive him upon his arrival. Lady Gunter truly has amazing insight!” replied Shaun with a sigh.

“If that’s the case then... does that mean he’s a prestigious guest of the Gunters?” said Shandon, his fear evident in his voice.

“I’d say so. Regardless, just to remind you how powerful he truly is, I heard that people from both the Squad of Divine Grimness and Judgement Portal have sent exceptional people after him before. However, even their strongest followers were unable to kill him! With that in mind, I have to emphasize your lack of insight for offending such a person!” replied Shaun while shaking his head.

“H-how was I supposed to know that he was that powerful... Hell, if I had known, I wouldn't have even dared to offend him in the first place!” said Matilda fearfully.

“...Still, why would those from the Squad of Divine Grimness and the Judgement portal want to capture him in the first place? Not only that, but the Gunters are also...” asked Shandon as the end of his sentence trailed off.

“Let's just say that he has something special with him. As long as one is able to obtain that special something, a major secret will definitely be revealed to them!” replied Shaun.

“A major secret...?” said Shandon as his eyes momentarily lit up.

After some thought, he then looked up again before whispering, “...Could it be that the Gunters also wish to-”

Shandon's sentence ended midway the second he saw Shaun giving him a warning gaze. Even so, due to that, Shandon knew that his deduction was most likely correct. With that in mind, he quickly breathed a sigh of relief in his mind.

It was a little while later when Gerald finally returned to his hotel. Of course, the private room in the hotel had been ruined by those whom Matilda had sent over.

After seeing the chaotic state of the room, Chester immediately wanted to head off and kill those from the Sime family! Gerald, however, stopped him before he could even leave the room.

“If I may, this isn't your usual style, Mr. Crawford! With the Simes targeting us so many times, surely we can't just let them off that easily!” said Chester.

Gerald simply shook his head before replying, “Let's just say that I've been feeling ill at ease throughout this period of time... With that in mind, I truly don't wish to waste my time and energy on the Simes, at least for the moment!”

Before Chester could reply, the corner of his eye caught a glimpse of something lying on the table in the room. Squinting his eyes slightly, the puzzled Chester then said, "...Mr. Crawford, it appears that someone may have entered the room..."

Looking at the mess before him that Matilda had caused, Gerald then frowned as he replied, "...Yes, I figured as much..."

"...Wait, no, that's not what I'm talking about! Look there! On the table! Someone's left you a note of sorts, inviting you to meet them!"

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Hearing that, Gerald turned to look at the table. Seeing that what Chester had said was true, he then walked over to pick the note up. On it, was a row of words that stated, 'Let us meet at the Sky Bridge in Qerton City at exactly midnight today!'

Aside from that straightforward message, nothing else was on the note. There wasn't even a signature to indicate who had sent it.

"...Could the sender have been Matilda...? After all, she couldn't find us in the beginning... Though she did eventually manage to invite us over, I don't think it would be a stretch to think that she was the one who left that note here," deduced Chester.

Shaking his head, Gerald then replied, "Knowing her, she'd most probably continue madly looking around till she eventually managed to find us. Leaving a note behind is too delicate for a person like her!"

Still, what a strange incident...

'I don't even know anyone from Ancient City... Who could be the one inviting me over for the meet-up...?' Gerald thought to himself. Whatever the case was, Gerald had made his mind up that he would be heading over to have a look anyway.

"I'll be heading over alone, Chester. In the meantime, you should stay here," said Gerald.

“Affirmative!”

Sky Bridge itself was located near the Southern suburbs of Qerton City, and it connected two chunks of land separated by a large river. By the time Gerald got there, it was half an hour before midnight and everything was dark and slightly terrifying.

Since Gerald still didn't know who it was who it was who had called him out, Gerald had been extremely vigilant throughout his journey to the river. While he had passed by a few people earlier on his way here, none of them seemed to be the ones who had called him out.

All of a sudden, Gerald saw a wooden boat—with tiny lanterns at its sides—rowing toward him.

With the aid of the dim moonlight, Gerald was able to see a standing figure wearing a straw hat atop the boat. The person himself was dressed in a way that suggested that he was a villager who had retired to live deep in the forest. Regardless, with how steady and quickly the person was rowing the boat, Gerald couldn't help but feel that the person was a little extraordinary.

As Gerald continued looking at the person, his ears twitched as he suddenly began hearing the—oddly—rhythmic shackling of iron coming toward him from all directions.

Soon after, six figures stepped out from the darkness, and inclusive of the person on the boat, it was a fair guess that Gerald was going to have to deal with seven enemies.

“So you actually came!” sneered one of the men.

Hearing that, Gerald looked at the note in his hand before glaring at the man and replying, “Well you did leave me a note telling me to come over... It would've been unreasonable for me to turn down such an obvious trap. Still, did you really have to go through all that trouble just to tell me something? Or is there something else you have in mind...?”

Despite how cold Gerald's expression was, what seemed to be the group's leader simply shook his iron shackles slightly before replying with a smile, “There's no need for you to ask so much. Regardless, we're giving you a choice now. Are you going to be coming along with us willingly? Or would you prefer us capturing you by force instead?”

Upon hearing that, Gerald then slowly began walking toward the leader as he asked, “Come along, you say? Where to? Also, are you here on behalf of the King of Judgement Portal? Or are you perhaps Queena’s people?”

Seeing how sensibly Gerald seemed to be behaving, the leader couldn’t help but break into a smile. Even though he had caught wind of the fact that Gerald had killed both Tiara and Belzebob, it appeared that he wasn’t really anything out of the ordinary.

“Again, there’s no need to be so inquisitive! After all, you’ll find out sooner or later once you come along with us!” replied the leader with a smirk.

“So be it!” said Gerald.

Following that, Gerald closed his eyes for a second... And when he opened them again, his already cold gaze had turned even more frigid as his inner strength began rapidly pulsing throughout his body!

The next thing everyone knew, Gerald had already disappeared from his spot. Before anyone could even react, a loud ‘thud’ could be heard.

Turning to look at the source of the sound, everyone’s eyes immediately widened as they watched as one of their allies flew a good ten yards away! As it turned out, Gerald had moved so fast that within moments, he had already kicked the chest of that—now-flying—man!

As the victim of the kick spurted blood all over the place—clearly suffering from terrible internal injuries—the rest of his allies found themselves momentarily stupefied.

They truly hadn’t expected Gerald to just attack without warning. Whatever the case was, it was now evident that his martial art skills weren’t as simple as they had initially expected.

“How... How dare you?!” roared one of the men as he immediately threw his iron shackles straight for Gerald’s neck!

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Gerald, however, simply caught the shackles and tugged the person toward him! Due to the sudden tug, the person fell onto the bridge, struggling the entire time as Gerald pulled him closer and closer! Once he was near enough, Gerald simply positioned his foot before kicking him right in the face! Flying backward, not only did the kick cause the person's head to explode like a watermelon, but the headless body's collision also ended up destroying at least ten of the bridge's guardrails!

Following that, cries upon cries of pain could be heard as Gerald swiftly dealt with the men. Though Gerald wasn't at his strongest now, his current training still far surpassed his strength before he underwent the baptism of heaven.

What Gerald found strange, however, was the fact that all these people were similar to Tiara in the way that their inner strength seemed to have undergone some rapid and immense changes. Gerald used the term similar since there definitely were slight differences between these men and the duo—Tiara and Belzebob—whom he had killed, though he couldn't quite put his finger on what the differences were yet.

Still, why were there so many exceptional people who had suddenly undergone such rapid changes in their inner strength? Whatever the case was, Gerald made short work of all the remaining men, save for the one on the boat.

Speaking of him, the now wide-eyed man—who hadn't moved an inch from his boat—barely even registered that his straw hat had just been blown away by the wind.

Despite the fact that he gave off the first impression that he was someone extremely skilled—based on the way he dressed—after witnessing Gerald's true strength, he was now in deep shock. Even so, he knew better than to stick around, so he quickly began rowing his boat away.

'He's far too strong...! If I don't leave while I can, I'll be next to die!'

Of course, there was no way that Gerald was going to just let him escape like that. With a massive leap, Gerald landed right onto the wooden boat with a loud 'crunch'!

As massive ripples formed due to the wildly bobbing boat, the man—who was about to attempt to dive into the water—ended up losing his balance and was momentarily tossed into the air! When his feet touched the boat again, however, he found—to his horror—that he was now right in front of Gerald!

Before he could make another move, Gerald instantly held him by the neck. Now being strangled, he heard as Gerald asked in a frigid tone, “I only have one simple question. Who was it who sent you?”

“Humph! As if I’d ever tell you just like that! After all, I’ll be dead the second I share that information! How about thi-”

Before the man could even finish his sentence, a soft ‘crack’ was heard.

Looking at Gerald with sheer disbelief in his eyes, the man heard as more tiny cracks followed with Gerald’s slowly intensifying grip. Knowing that his neck was going to snap clear in half soon, the man wondered if Gerald truly didn’t wish to know who had sent him.

With his life now flashing before his eyes, he thought about how he had planned—just seconds ago—on manipulating his secret technique in his final attempt to make it out alive. The technique in question involved using Dead Annie flowers!

In fact, all seven of them were proficient in the secret technique. They simply hadn’t felt that it was necessary to use it on someone like Gerald when they first saw what he looked like.

Alas, Gerald’s attacks were swift as they were fierce.

To think that he had assumed that Gerald wouldn’t kill him as long as he refused to tell the truth... At the very most, he had thought that Gerald would only resort to torturing him! Oh, how wrong he was!

That was the last thought the man had before he went completely limp.

With that, Gerald tossed the corpse into the river. Watching as it floated near the head of the bridge, Gerald then said, “If you refuse to tell me, so be it!”

Following that, Gerald went silent for a while as he fell deep into thought.

Up till today, three powerful groups had already assaulted Gerald, each seemingly intent on killing him. Regarding who was orchestrating all this, Gerald knew—at the very least—that Queena and the King of Judgement Portal were heavily involved.

Regardless, all of his assailants were similar in the way that they had undergone immense and rapid changes in their inner strengths. Even so, Tiara, Belzebob, and the seven he had killed tonight all seemed to have acquired their surges of inner strength slightly differently from each other.

Speaking of the seven, they were clearly from a new group separate from the Divine Grimness and the Judgement Portal. In other words, he now had another group of powerful people going after him. The fact that his location and identity had now been exposed only served to make the situation worse.

As Gerald continued pondering on his next move, the corner of his eyes suddenly caught a glimpse of a few strange petals drifting away from one of the floating corpses in the river...

Gerald, for one, was certainly no stranger to them.

'...Dead Annie...? They brought Dead Annie with them?! Could they be from the Gunter family then? Were they the ones who wanted to capture me?'

As Gerald continued speculating the situation, he jumped in fright upon hearing coughing sounds out of the blue! Looking around, the sound seemed to be coming from the cabin on the wooden boat... Judging from how high-pitched the coughs were, Gerald simply assumed it was a female.

Regardless, Gerald carefully lifted the curtains to clear his doubts... And there, lying on the floor, was an unconscious woman.

From how much she was coughing and wrinkling her brows in her knocked-out state, Gerald could guess that her mental state was currently under attack by Dead Annie. Even so, that wasn't what shocked Gerald the most.



No, what made Gerald momentarily stupefied, was the fact that the woman in question was none other than Yume...

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“...Yume?”

‘...It really is her...! So it’s true that she wasn’t actually dead!’

Both of them had gotten acquainted with each other on their way to the king of the ocean’s palace. Gerald himself had already saved her on multiple occasions before her eventual disappearance.

Speaking of her disappearance, Gerald had constantly been troubled and filled with self-reproach from the moment she went missing after he fainted—due to a Dead Annie attack—at the entrance of the king of the ocean’s palace. Upon waking, he remembered how he felt as though she had just vanished off the face of the planet.

He even went so far as to send people out to carefully search for Yume—regardless of whether she was dead or still alive—in the area surrounding the king of the ocean’s palace for over a month, though to no avail.

It was around then when Gerald first started wondering if Yume had actually been saved by someone else. After all, he knew that she was looking for the woman in white as well. For all he knew, she had already found the woman in white’s corpse!

Well, his speculation of her being saved was true at least.

‘Still... Why is she even here...? She’s a Gunter too, no...?’ Gerald thought to himself, filled with questions as he helped her regain consciousness using a secret technique.

Due to Gerald’s help, Yume’s expression turned way better in no time at all. Soon enough, Yume’s eyelids began fluttering open ever so slowly, revealing her beautiful eyes...

When she saw Gerald, however, she immediately jolted awake. Though she was definitely shocked, she quickly snapped out of it and grabbed onto Gerald's arm before shouting, "There are people out to get you, Gerald! You need to run! Quickly!"

Helping her to her feet, Gerald then turned to look at the corpses floating on the river before asking, "You mean them?"

Staring wide-eyed at the dead bodies, Yume replied in sheer disbelief, "You... You killed all seven of them...?"

"Indeed. Also, correct me if I'm wrong, but all of them are from the Gunter family, no?"

Upon hearing Gerald's question, Yume instantly lowered her head, revealing a slight blush on her charming face.

"...They are, indeed. All seven of them are- well, were, exceptional people from my family... Still, I truly hadn't expected them to stalk me! After realizing who they were—before I got completely knocked out by their Dead Annie attack—I immediately knew that they had followed me to deal with you!"

"...I see. Regardless, it seems to me that you didn't tell me the truth about many things back then... For one, I couldn't detect the strange inner strength—that I'm currently sensing from you—back then... Were you simply pretending to be weak at the time?" asked Gerald, now that he had a much clearer understanding of the situation.

"I... I admit that I lied to you before, but after getting to know you better, I've long lost any intentions of hurting you!" replied Yume, looking seemingly afraid that Gerald was going to further misunderstand her.

"So you admit to it. Well, now that you have, why should I continue believing in you? After all, you're the high and mighty young lady of the Gunter family!" said Gerald with a bitter smile.

"Even if you choose not to believe in me, please understand that you can't stay here any longer! I'll eventually give you a clearer explanation, but for now, please just follow me! We really need to hide!" replied Yume.

While Gerald felt that her eyes seemed sincere enough to be trusted, he was no longer the same person he was two years ago. He knew for a fact that the more beautiful a woman was, the more deceptive she could be, and Yume was extremely charming.

Since he now knew that he had already been fooled once by her, he couldn't help but have his guard up.

Though it was true that he now sensed immense inner strength from Yume, that wasn't what worried him most. No, the truth was, while Gerald was sure that she wouldn't be able to beat him with her current strength alone, he knew he would be no match against her if she chose to attack him with Dead Annies!

With that in mind, if she was actually fooling him again, it would definitely be extremely difficult for him to retreat, thus his hesitation to believe her.

Seemingly reading Gerald's thoughts, Yume then said, "Look, I know you're afraid of the Dead Annies. Here, I'm tossing all of mine now! Since you're capable enough to kill those seven exceptional Gunters, you should know that without the flowers, I'm practically harmless to you! So please, please just believe me and let me stay by your side...!"

Following that, Gerald watched as she tossed any petals she had on hand into the river.

"There, I have none on me now! With that said, know that I only asked you out since I wanted to explain all this to you... I never expected Lady Gunter to send these people to stalk me! I... I truly never meant to harm you, Gerald...!" explained Yume, her eyes now starting to slightly tear up.

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After a momentary pause, Gerald took in a deep breath before saying, "...Fine. Since you don't have any Dead Annies on you anymore, I can at least be sure that if you intend to do anything suspicious, you'll go down with me!"

With that said, Gerald then grabbed Yume by the shoulder before making a giant leap together with her! Once they landed safely on the shore, Yume told Gerald where the hiding spot was, and Gerald made sure to hold on tightly to her as the duo swiftly made their way there.

Knowing that he currently lacked the strength to brawl against both Queena and the King of Judgement Portal, Gerald couldn't help but constantly have his guard up now that he knew that he was potentially about to confront the mysterious Gunters.

Soon enough, they got to a cave that was located in the outskirts. Upon entering, Gerald immediately sealed a few major blood vessels in Yume's body!

"...Are you serious? You still don't believe that I'm not planning to harm you?" said Yume as she took in a deep breath to attempt to suppress her disappointment.

"I'll have you know that I give no second chances to anyone who breaks my trust! Now as promised, tell me the truth about the incident!" replied Gerald coldly.

"...I see. Before that, allow me to ask you something. Not only have you saved me on multiple occasions, but you've also constantly looked out for me to the point where after realizing that I had gone missing, you actually sent your men out to tirelessly locate me for well over a month! Hell, you even told the locals to report to you if any of them saw me! With that in mind, I wish to know. Did you do all that just to gain answers from me, or was it because of something else?" asked Yume as she stared at him with reddened and teary eyes.

From her explanation, Gerald now knew that she was aware of everything that he had done up till this point. So she had been keeping an eye on him this entire time...

"The truth is, I had initially promised to bring you to the king of the ocean's palace since I was worried that it would be too dangerous for you to head there alone. I won't lie that I was also hoping to gain more clues from you. Regardless, after you went missing, I was filled with regret, and that prompted me to try all means possible to search for you!" replied Gerald.

Though Gerald had initially only helped her for slightly selfish purposes, his worry about her treading into such unsafe territory quickly outweighed that. It was the reason why he had promised to bring her along. By doing so, he could at least keep her out of harm's way.

Despite that, to think that she would actually go missing right under his nose! With the very real possibility of her being dead, Gerald had brimmed with both grief and self-reproach for the longest time.

If he had known that all this would happen, he would've simply chosen to give up on finding out about Yume's secrets rather than bring her along with him.

After hearing Gerald's reply, Yume couldn't help but break into a gratified smile. After all, she now truly knew that Gerald had simply been treating her as a friend this entire time.

While she did have slight feelings for Gerald, it was due to all those times Gerald had saved her and not because of the d\*mned marriage stone of Master Ghost's.

She remembered a time when she had wanted to secretly kill Gerald, though in the end, she simply couldn't bring herself to do so. If she had, well, Gerald naturally wouldn't have arrived at the king of the ocean's palace in the first place!

Of course, she hadn't fallen for him yet at that point in time. She simply found herself unable to do the deed.

Regardless, after she went 'missing,' Yume began secretly keeping an eye on Gerald. It was then when she realized how much he cared for her. After all, Gerald had left no part of the ocean—surrounding the king of the ocean's palace—unchecked. He simply refused to give up on his search for her until well over a month—after her disappearance—had passed.

She had also witnessed him sitting at the beach for an entire day and night in silence, simply staring out at sea the entire time.

Eventually, she watched as he threw a small ornament—that had been salvaged from the ocean—into the sea. It was then when she realized just how great his guilt for losing her truly was. He really did treat her as his friend.

Seeing that, Yume—at the time—couldn't help but feel an odd emotion welling within her, though it wasn't a bad one. Rather, it felt sweet. After all, nobody had ever treated her the way Gerald did.

It was only when she was thinking about the moments she had shared with Gerald that she finally realized something. Master Ghost's marriage stone was truly an object that was both strange and evil.

After all, she actually began missing him every day after that, constantly worrying about his safety. The more she thought about it, the more anxious she became, and thus came the restless nights...

‘Could my love story truly end this tragically? Have I really fallen in love with a person who will never love me back...?’

Even if that was the case, Yume had sworn to herself that she wouldn’t lie to Gerald for a second time. With that in mind, she took in a deep breath before saying, “...Fine, I’ll give you the truth! I’ll tell you everything I know, but once I’m done, our friendship will be over, you hear? We simply can’t be friends anymore! Humph!”

## Chapter 1297

With that out of the way, Yume then slowly began sharing what she knew about the situation.

As it turned out, there was already a scheme targeting Gerald from the very beginning. Under the orders of her family, Yume had two main objectives. The first was to locate the woman in white in the king of the ocean’s palace. As for the other, it was to capture Gerald in secret before bringing him back to the Gunters.

It was the reason why she had pretended to be frailer than she actually was. By ‘getting injured’ she knew that she would eventually be able to gain Gerald’s pity.

Even after she gained his pity, however, she was unable to make any moves on him. After all, she hadn’t expected to be that moved by Gerald’s actions. She simply couldn’t bring herself to do the deed.

Eventually, both of them embarked for the king of the ocean’s palace together. Of course, the old woman that they had met was none other than Yume’s grandmother—and also the master of the Gunter family—Lady Gunter.

Regardless, she was well aware of Gerald’s weakness to Dead Annies. It was due to that knowledge that she was able to inflict heavy wounds on Gerald in the first place. Even so, she had made sure to seal her own strength back then for fear that she would accidentally kill him.

Whatever the case was, Lady Gunter had wanted to make her move back then since Gerald was already in such a weak state. However, Yume kept signaling—by twirling her hair with a finger—and shooting warning glares at Lady Gunter every time she made an attempt to hurt Gerald.

In a way, it almost seemed like she was saying, 'If you dare hurt Gerald, I'll die before you right this instant!'

After several more gestures warning her grandmother not to make a move, Lady Gunter eventually got so infuriated that she pretended to be injured before making her escape.

Even so, it was evident that she wasn't ever going to allow Gerald to locate the woman in white. After all, the king of the ocean's palace—that Gerald would later enter—was formed according to the Dead Annies, theory, 'Two petals bloom, and each petal represents a world.'

In other words, Lady Gunter had used that secret technique at the entrance of the king of the ocean's palace to lead Gerald into a completely different—yet similar-looking—world.

As for Yume's 'disappearance', it was due to her being taken along with Lady Gunter to the real king of the ocean's palace. They even succeeded in transferring the real woman in white's corpse away!

After hearing all that, Gerald then replied, "...I see. That doesn't explain why my subordinates weren't able to detect your life signals, though."

"Well, it's not very well-known, but not only can Dead Annies be used to disrupt one's mental abilities, it's also capable of disrupting magnetic fields! With that in mind, Lady Gunter has the ability to make herself near-invisible with the aid of the Dead Annies! Using that ability, even a person standing right in front of her wouldn't be able to tell she was there!" explained Yume.

"...None of that explains why your family even wants the woman in white's corpse in the first place. Also, why does it seem like me being captured plays a huge role in this scheme of yours? I can barely see the relation between those two objectives!" replied Gerald.

“Well, from what grandma told me, there’s a massive connection between you and the woman in white... Apparently, there’s a large secret hidden within both of you, and the first person who manages to uncover that secret will be able to gain mastery of the strongest power!”

“...A... secret...?” replied Gerald, clearly puzzled by this sudden turn of events.

No wonder the King of Judgement Portal had been targeting him... Hell, even the Gunters were starting to make their moves now. So this was what they were after.

‘Still... What secret could lie within me...?’

Yume, for one, definitely didn’t look like she knew any more than she had already told him.

“Regardless, you need to escape quickly while you still can, Gerald! You’re no match against those from the Squad of Divine Grimness, Judgement Portal, or even my family! Should you end up falling into either of their hands, then your death won’t be out of the question anymore!” pleaded Yume.

“Also, I’ll have you know that the Judgement Portal has already sent out an extremely strong person out to hunt you down! He goes by the name of Hogan, and... Well, let’s just say with how strong he is, even grandma is terrified of him! He’s barely even human anymore! Putting that aside, again, I implore you not to step anywhere near my family. Otherwise, escape will truly be impossible!” added Yume, intense fear in her eyes.

“You’re saying that Lady Gunter is afraid of this Hogan person as well?” replied Gerald, stunned.

To think that once upon a time ago, he had assumed that Kort was the strongest opponent he would ever have to face. Of course, then came Christopher and now there was this person called Hogan as well...

From the looks of it, Christopher had only been the tip of the iceberg. While normally that would’ve been the peak difficulty for any of Gerald’s opponents, looking at how things were going, Gerald could now safely assume that there were many more dangers that hadn’t even come into contact with Earth.



“Look, if you still refuse to leave, maybe this will scare some sense into you... When I said that Hogan was barely even human anymore, I meant that quite literally. You see, from what grandma told me, he’s actually a corpse that had been revived by the King of Judgement Portal. A zombie with consciousness, you could say. Regardless, while he obeys the King of Judgment Portal, Hogan himself very much deserves the title of the king of poison. After all, upon getting attacked by him, you’ll most certainly get afflicted with an extremely potent poison. With that in mind, even if you manage to escape from instant death, you’ll eventually still succumb to the poison!”

“She’s so well aware of all this because... Well, those from Judgement Portal once came over to our family, and we had a fight against him... Unfortunately, all of my family members involved in the fight were promptly defeated by him, and they suffered from immense poisoning as well. Had the Gunters not sought out a compromise with the King of Judgement Portal, then I’m afraid my entire family would’ve been wiped out there and then! So please, if you ever bump into him, you have to hide!”

## Chapter 1298

With how serious and fearful her voice was, Gerald could tell that Yume’s warning was the real deal.

“...Still, why did the King of Judgement Portal even come over to seek out the Gunters? Could he actually have anticipated that I would come over?” asked Gerald rather doubtfully.

“That could be one of the reasons, though I’m honestly not too sure... I’m aware of their other objective, though. From what I’ve heard, it seems that they’re planning to head to the Ancient Mountain in Ancient City! In case you didn’t know, strange incidents happen on that mountain every few years!” explained Yume.

“What sort of strange incidents...?” asked Gerald curiously.

“That I’m not too sure of,” replied Yume as she shook her head.

Despite that, Gerald was slowly succeeding in piecing together more and more pieces of the puzzle.

From what Gerald now knew, there were three powerful groups hunting him down. Even though he had already received the baptism of heaven, he knew that he still wasn’t completely out of the woods yet.

At his current strength, Gerald was well aware that he still wasn't going to be a match against Queena, and she wasn't the only threat either. After all, he still had the other Gunters, the Judgement Portal, Hogan, and the King of Judgement Portal to deal with.

The more he thought about it, the more he realized how dangerous his current situation was. After all, from the way things had been progressing, he could get caught by any of them at any moment.

"Whatever the case is, just continue hiding in the meantime... Since I've already told you all this, I'm assuming I've repaid all your kindness from back then! With that in mind, we'll be enemies the next time we meet again! Until then, take care!" said Yume as she looked one final time at Gerald before dashing off into the night.

It was a little while later when Yume snuck into the Gunter family's manor. To her utter shock, her entire family was seated in the spacious hall, seemingly waiting for her to return!

As everyone turned to look at her, Yume quickly realized who had planned all this.

"L-lady Gunter!" exclaimed Yume, her face reflecting her brimming anxiety.

"If I recall correctly, I've grounded you from leaving the manor ever since we returned from the king of the ocean's palace... I guess you've suffered a bit too much to want to sneak out that badly!" said Lady Gunter with a faint smile. The way she said it suggested that the old lady knew exactly when Yume had snuck out earlier.

With that in mind, Yume immediately knelt with a 'plop' before replying, "I... I know you already know everything that I've done earlier... While it's true that I ruined your plans by meeting up with Gerald, I... I just wish to repay his kindness... He's honestly a kind person who's not even remotely close to how evil you've described him to be! He truly is kind, so please, Lady Gunter...! Please let him off!"

Though Yume's eyes were now red and teary, the other Gunters simply intensified their glares after hearing what she had to say. Lady Gunter herself looked especially enraged.

"You b\*stard of a granddaughter...! It seems that it wasn't wrong of me to worry about you! You've been bewitched, you hear! None of the Crawfords are good people, especially that pretentious Gerald!

He only used you to help him look for the king of the ocean's palace! Even after that, to think that you would actually go behind my back and inform him about all this in secret! You truly are a textbook example of biting the hand that feeds you! Let me remind you that you're the indirect cause of the deaths of seven exceptional people from our family! If I hadn't intended to beat him at his own game, you wouldn't be able to escape from undergoing family punishment!" scowled the old lady, the corner of her lips twitching in rage.

While Yume now knew that Lady Gunter was aware of the seven deaths, something else her grandmother had said sent shivers down her spine. Trembling, she then asked, "...Beat him at his own game...? Lady Gunter, what do you mean by that?"

"Humph! Since Gerald has come to Querton City, do you honestly think that Lady Gunter will let him off that easily?"

## Chapter 1299

"That's enough! Lock her up in her room, and be sure to guard her closely! From today onward, she's prohibited from leaving her room!" shouted Yreth. Hearing that, a few guards ran over and instantly led Yume to her room, as per Lady Gunter's orders.

Now that her granddaughter had been taken care of, Yreth was confident that she would be able to gain what she wanted from Gerald.

Gerald himself was now swiftly running away from the cave in the dark of night. After learning more about the three groups' plans to capture him, he didn't dare linger around for any more than he needed to.

His current plan was to first find Chester then leave this place together with him.

However, just as he was about to leave the suburbs—and re-enter the city area—Gerald suddenly heard rustling sounds coming from the surrounding forests.

From how loud and swift the rustling was, one would normally assume that it was some kind of extremely fast animal. However, Gerald had a gut feeling that that was no animal. Stopping in his tracks, Gerald then went into high alert to figure out what—or who—he was dealing with.

If he was going to be completely honest, Gerald now felt like the temperature had just plummeted. Whatever was out there, it was sending intense chills down his spine.

‘What—or who—on earth is targeting me this time...?’ Gerald thought to himself as endless beads of sweat rolled down his forehead. The fear he was currently feeling was almost primal in nature, and it was unlike anything he had previously felt.

Eventually, Gerald slowly raised his head... And there, he was.

Standing under the faint moonlight—atop a close-by tree—was a towering and sturdy-looking man who had his arms crossed as he stared down at Gerald. While the man’s face was a purplish-black and his lips a dark shade of purple, his eyes gleamed in scarlet hues. Adding that to the fact that darkness just seemed to exude from that man, Gerald could only describe him as corpse-like!

As he continued staring at Gerald without moving a muscle, Gerald himself now knew the source of all his fear. It was as though his entire being was being suppressed just from the sight of that imposing man alone.

In his terrified state, Gerald found himself taking a few steps back before saying, “...Hogan?”

The second he said that, Gerald watched wide-eyed as Hogan’s massive body leaped into the air... and landed gently atop a fragile-looking branch! While that alone was impressive enough, Gerald barely even had the time to react as Hogan used the slight rebound of the branch to launch himself at Gerald at lightning speed!

Being more accustomed to danger than others, Gerald quickly snapped out of his daze and instantly began attempting to retreat!

Before Gerald could even get far, however, he felt a massive tremor as Hogan landed heavily on the ground! Turning back to look, Gerald watched as Hogan spread out his arms and revealed both of his hands...

The tips of Hogan's fingernails looked as sharp as a hungry wolf's fangs, and in a way, it almost felt like Hogan had iron claws instead of actual hands. What more, a strange darkness seemed to be enveloping both of Hogan's hands.

At that moment, Gerald realized that Yume hadn't been exaggerating at all. Hogan truly was more of a weapon than an actual human at this point. A weapon brought to life by reanimating a corpse.

"Running away? From me? I'll say it now that it won't be easy, boy! Now come with me! My master and Lady Gunter are waiting for you!" said Hogan before screeching in a way that resembled a crow's cry.

Watching as Hogan then immediately—and swiftly—began walking toward him, Gerald quickly activated his inner strength. Fully ready to lose his artifact, as he commanded in his mind, 'Dawnbreaker!'

With that, the black short blade came to life.

Since Hogan's entire body almost seemed to be completely plated with iron, Gerald felt that his only means of fighting against that hulking man was by using the Dawnbreaker.

Regardless, the blade then shot out of Gerald's sleeve at almost breakneck speed, aimed right for Hogan's neck!

To Gerald's utter horror, the usually trusty Dawnbreaker wasn't even close to posing a threat to Hogan. After all, the massive man had simply pinched the blade between two of his claw-like fingers like it was nothing!

Tossing the blade to the ground, Hogan then grunted before coldly saying, "I told you to come with me!"

'This... This person is far too strong...!' Gerald thought to himself, his sheer disbelief evident on his face.

However, Hogan was done waiting. Gerald could only see Hogan's blurry figure as the giant of a man began rushing toward Gerald at immense speed!

The next thing Gerald knew, a huge and powerful-looking hand was inches away from his stomach...

## Chapter 1300

There was no way in hell that Gerald was going to be able to dodge that attack. A split second later, Gerald found himself flying backward as every inch of his body throbbed in immense pain! Soaring on, Gerald could taste something sweet in his mouth before vomiting blood briefly after!

Eventually falling to the ground, Gerald ended up rolling several times before eventually coming to a stop. If he had to describe what he was currently feeling, it almost seemed like all his internal organs had shifted from their initial positions from that one punch.

Even so, this was no time for him to wallow in pain. Attempting to gather his inner strength, Gerald quickly realized that he couldn't do so due to how terribly he had been injured!

'Is this truly my end? Will I be defeated here in Qerton City? Jade pendant, if you're there, please lend me your aid...!'

Though Gerald had hoped that the jade pendant would save his life since he was now in such critical condition—just like the previous time it had activated—he found, to his dismay, that no matter how much he cried out to it, it simply didn't respond!

Soon enough, Hogan was right in front of him again, a frigid expression on his face. Easily lifting the injured Gerald up, Hogan then said in a chilling voice, "So you attempted to kill me, huh? Then it's only fair for me to torture you in return before I bring you back to master and Lady Gunter!"

With that, he tossed Gerald again without warning! Finding himself flying backward once more, Gerald felt as his now-limp body crashed into tree after tree, leaving a trail of tumbled tree trunks before him! By the time Gerald's body finally stopped—after breaking at least eight sturdy-looking trees—he felt as though all his bones had already turned to dust as he slowly lost consciousness from all the pain.

Hogan, however, was far from done.

To him, as long as Gerald could still breathe and he was successfully delivered to the King of Judgement Portal, Hogan's task would still be considered to be a success. As for why he was so keen on torturing

Gerald, it was because Gerald had attempted to kill him earlier. Due to that, Gerald was essentially his enemy now.

With that in mind, Hogan then began smashing his fists into Gerald's stomach, ruining all his internal organs! Following that, he also made sure to smash all four of Gerald's limbs by stepping on them!

Gerald himself kept waking up due to the immense pain before falling unconscious again. It was truly a living hell for him, and Gerald didn't even have the means to fight back anymore.

Eventually, Hogan stepped on Gerald's stomach, forcing the injured youth to vomit what little blood remained in his body. Watching as Hogan lifted his hand, Gerald was conscious enough to realize that he was aiming his iron claws right for his chest!

At the very last moment, Gerald managed to wiggle just enough for the iron claws to avoid his chest. However, they still managed to pierce deep into Gerald's left shoulder!

'You f\*cker...!' Gerald thought to himself as surges of immense pain filled every inch of his body. Now completely dazed, Gerald was in too much pain to remain conscious, but at the same time, the pain also kept him awake.

Smiling coldly as he watched Gerald's lips turn dark, Hogan knew that the poison was taking effect.

At that moment, he suddenly began hearing 'swooshing' sounds. If Hogan had to describe it, it almost seemed as though near-countless arrows had just been shot.

Straightening his body, Hogan then stopped torturing Gerald for a second before looking around while asking in a wrath-filled voice, "...Who goes there?"

In response, however, the sound he had initially heard only seemed to get louder.

It was then when Hogan finally saw it. Eyes widened, Hogan watched a ray of light fell from the sky at extremely high speeds... And it looked like it was heading straight for him! In a way, it almost seemed like a meteor that was intent on landing on him.

From where he stood, Hogan could sense that the ray of light was capable of ripping apart even space, and that fact alone was enough to cause panic to arise within him.

'That... That thing's dangerous!' Hogan thought to himself as he immediately began taking a few steps backward, not even bothering about Gerald anymore.

In fact, he was so terrified that he actually tripped and fell on his buttocks before quickly getting up again and dashing away! When he turned back to check on the light, however, his eyes instantly widened to the point where it almost felt like his eyeballs were going to pop out.

The ray of light was homing in on him! No matter where he ran, the light simply continued following him around! It was almost as though the ray of light had eyes or something!

Hogan knew he couldn't keep running forever, so he dragged his—now-heavy—body to a large tree, hoping that by taking cover, the ray of light would somehow miss him.

Alas, that did little to help him as the ray of light blasted right through the tree and right into his back! Howling in pain, Hogan felt almost disgusted by how badly he wanted to leave this place as he was sent flying dozens of feet away!

His entire body now as limp as a broken kite, he ended up tumbling onto the ground, but that wasn't the end of his pain yet. Hogan now realized that white smoke had been rising from his body from the moment the light had hit him! Screaming in pain as he covered his chest, he noticed as black blood began oozing profusely out of his chest!

Even in so much pain, he knew that he couldn't afford to linger around any longer. With that in mind, he forced himself up before fleeing the area in the dark of night.

As for Gerald, well, he had watched all this happen though from an extremely blurry perspective. Trickle of blood dripping from his open and foaming mouth, Gerald felt as the pain finally soothed enough for him to faint in peace.



Before his eyes shut, however, he watched as a middle-aged man—donning black clothes—quickly walked over to him...

## Chapter 1301

It was a little while later when a young woman—who looked to be around the age of nineteen—called out, “You actually found him, uncle!”

The girl herself was standing by the door of a home that was located within a shantytown west of the city’s suburbs. From the looks of it, she appeared to have been waiting there for quite a while.

As for the person she was speaking to, it was a middle-aged man who had just ridden his tricycle into the home’s compound. Behind the tricycle, lay a bloodied and unconscious youth.

Regardless, she immediately got up to walk over to the man after greeting him.

With the youth looking so battered up, any normal woman would’ve already covered her mouth and screamed by this point. This woman, however, seemed completely unfazed by him. In fact, she instantly began patting his unconscious face a few times before turning to look at the middle-aged man!

“I have to say, this fellow here is quite fortunate! After all, he’s still breathing after suffering from such terrible injuries! As if that wasn’t already enough, he’s also been inflicted with extremely potent poison!” said the woman as she curiously held onto his chin before observing both sides of his face

“Stop fooling around already, can’t you see how badly beaten up he is? Thank god he’s undergone the baptism of heaven and is close to reaching the Spirit Earth Realm! Otherwise, he’d be long dead by now!” replied the man as he shook his head with a sigh.

“How ignorant can one get? To even consider going against the Gunters and the King of Judgement Portal with what little strength he has!” retorted the woman with a pout.

“That’s quite enough cynicism from you! He’s just trying to save people despite not know what the world is like! Now hurry up and prepare the herbs for me! I’m focusing on saving his life first!” ordered the man as he began carrying the youth into the courtyard.

The woman herself looked around to make sure that nobody had seen any of this. Once she was sure, she then quickly pushed the blood-stained tricycle into the house.

Following that, she retrieved a small emerald battle from her sleeve before sprinkling what seemed to be neon green powder around the area. The powder itself quickly dissipated into the air.

With that done, she then entered the house to begin preparing the ingredients.

Meanwhile, the man was already hard at work in one of the rooms, trying his best to save the youth. Naturally, the youth—who was now lying on a bed—was none other than Gerald.

Soon after, the woman entered the room as well before sitting at the side. It was clear how little she cared about the situation since she even had a lollipop in her mouth!

“Still, he’s a bit too young to be possessing such strength, isn’t he? I find it quite unbelievable, honestly! Didn’t you say that the Nebula Realm was the limit for human beings? Hell, let’s not even go there yet! It’s already difficult enough for regular people to gain access to their inner strength, even if they spend their entire lives honing it! Yet this youth here is powerful enough to have almost reached the Spirit Earth Realm!”

The man himself didn’t immediately reply, fully focused on healing Gerald. Eventually, he paused to take in a deep breath before replying in his hoarse voice, “As I’ve said, he’s no ordinary person!”

If one took the time to properly observe the middle-aged man’s features, they would be able to see how hideous and strange his scar-filled face was.

“Then how wonderful is the realm of martial arts, uncle? From what I’ve been able to observe, this youth’s physique is built differently from others. He also doesn’t seem to conform to the general principles at all. It also seems like he’s gone through a special body-refining process through the use of herbs! Based on what my grandpa once told me, this mysterious method of refining the body should, by right, be long lost!” said the woman.

“There’s no limit to the realm. I’ll have you know that someone is always much more powerful than the others! Still, you never have any interest whenever I talk about affairs regarding martial arts!”

## Chapter 1302

After giving a bitter smile, he then quickly began reconnecting Gerald's disjointed bones before swiftly and skilfully bandaging all his open wounds.

"I'll admit that I wasn't really that interested in it in the past, but I'm intrigued now! After all, he truly is quite puzzling!" replied the woman.

"Hah! The martial arts you're interested in learning about isn't something that ordinary warriors can achieve! The requirements to reach the Nebula realm are simply too harsh! Even possessing the right blood won't grant you easy access into that realm! You should know by now that many of the families here have blood types different from typical people, and that's because they're part of secret societies. People from secret societies are reliant on their extraordinary physiques, and they'll always be one step closer than others when it comes to reaching the limits of human beings. Even so, only those assiduous enough—from those families—are able to control their inner strength and potentially arrive at the Nebula Realm!

"However, in the eyes of some of the cryptic families, secret societies are nothing. I wouldn't blame them since those from cryptic families are capable of using secret techniques while manipulating their inner strength! Regardless, those from cryptic families reach the Spirit Earth Realm through a process that involves a second transformation of their inner strength. While secret societies and cryptic families may not seem all that different from each other, I'll have you know that their capabilities are so vastly different that family members of secret societies could never even dream of surpassing those from cryptic families! In case you didn't know, the Gunters are a cryptic family as well! From what I've heard, after members of that family gather enough inner strength, they'll be enlightened to their family's secret technique which will aid them in reaching the Spirit Earth Realm!" explained the middle-aged man.

Following that, he then looked at Gerald before adding, "As for Gerald here, he relied mostly on his physique being changed by someone—through the use of some special secret technique—to get to where he currently is. Adding that to how unique the Crawford family's bloodline is, his training grows rapidly with every passing day. From what I can see, he successfully went through the initial, middle, and final stage in less than a year to arrive at the Nebula Realm!"

"After that, he surpassed the Nebula Realm by undergoing the baptism of heaven. That, of course, landed him at his current stage, the initial stage of the Spirit Earth Realm. In fact, I can see that he's already approaching the middle stage. Even so, his current strength alone seems extremely strange. To put into perspective, even exceptional people who have arrived at his current stage won't be a match for him at all!" said the middle-aged man with a bitter smile.

“...I see! Then for Gerald to not even come close to defeating Hogan... How strong even is Hogan?” asked the woman curiously.

“Him? From what I can tell, he should be at the middle stage of the Spirit Earth Realm, though do note that he’s already arrived at that realm for several years. I’m guessing he should only be a step away from the final stage! With that in mind, there’s no way Gerald could’ve ever hoped of defeating him!”

“I understand... Speaking of which, I recall you saying that Lady Gunter and those from that new group—the Judgement Portal—seemed to have already achieved the final stage of the Spirit Earth Realm. With that in mind, I do pity Gerald! Why hadn’t the person who had helped change his physique told him about any of this?” replied the woman as she scratched the back of her head.

Though she said that, she still found the person who had helped Gerald to be extremely extraordinary. After all, his aid had allowed Gerald to transform to his current state.

“Hmm... I have a feeling that that person hadn’t told him about it since he hadn’t even expected Gerald to grow so rapidly. My guess is that Gerald has had other chance encounters that allowed him to further hone his training. However, he must keep rushing into messes like this due to his lack of knowledge! While he was definitely capable of dealing with any weak people he previously bumped into, the Gunters are on a whole other level! If he gets successfully cornered by them, I’m afraid he’ll be as good as dead!”

“Alas! By the way, are there any other realms beyond the Spirit Earth Realm, uncle?” asked the woman.

After briefly hesitating, the man simply shook his head before saying, “Haha! Even if there is one, it’s pretty much meaningless. After all, there’s already a massive gap between the middle and final stage of the Spirit Earth Realm. I’ll have you know that even if one spends their entire life training, there’s a high chance that they won’t ever make a breakthrough. There’s even less possibility of that happening considering the fact that aside from the Gunters, very few ever make it to the final stage of the Spirit Earth Realm. The Gunters themselves have a naturally higher chance of achieving that realm due to how strong their family’s blood type is. With that in mind, exceptional people from outside that family find it difficult enough to even imagine themselves achieving the final stage of the Spirit Earth Realm, what more a realm beyond that!”

“But... Then why are there so few people who have achieved the Nebula Realm when so many more have already arrived at the Spirit Earth Realm? Isn't that rather illogical?”

“Haha! Didn't your grandpa ever tell you about the mystery that's been troubling the world of martial arts? Essentially, those who've arrived at the Nebula Realm tend to go missing in groups every once in a while. However, since cryptic families have access to secret techniques, they're able to quickly surpass the Nebula Realm and achieve the Spirit Earth Realm, essentially minimizing the threat of going missing along with the others—outside the family—who are still in the Nebula Realm. This is also the reason why secret societies used to be the strongest families. After the disappearances began, however, things slowly went downhill for them, subsequently raising the ranks of those from cryptic families,” explained the man.

“So that's what happened!” replied the woman, finally seeing the bigger picture.

At that moment, she noticed a small pouch that Gerald had on him. Curious, she couldn't help but to open it and look at its contents.

Upon realizing that there were numerous small photographs in there, the woman laughed before saying, “Though he's a high and mighty rich heir, to think that he had such a hobby! Look! He keeps several small photographs of women with him at all times!”

Following that, she held them in hand to have a closer look at them. From what she could immediately assume, Gerald had a habit of keeping photographs of those most precious to him close by. Out of the many photographs, the woman found the pictures of Gerald's parents, Mila, and his cousin—Queta—to be most interesting.

“Say, uncle! There's a charming beauty among these photos who has eyes that resemble yours a lot! Haha!” said the woman as she held out the photograph in question with a smile.

“Stop spouting nonsense! With how ugly I am, how could anyone even come close to resembling me? Also, stop looking at his personal belongings! It's rude to do so!” replied the man with a wry smile before sighing in resignation.

## Chapter 1303

“But it's true, uncle! I'm not pulling your leg at all! Just take a look if you don't believe me! I'm telling you this charming little lady's eyes resemble yours a lot!” persisted the woman.

As he watched her signal for him to take the photograph from her already outstretched hand, the old man simply looked at her for a while before giving in and taking it from her.

The second he got a clearer look at the person in the photograph, he seemed to momentarily freeze in place. He was so shocked that he couldn't even hold onto the photograph properly, resulting in it falling to the floor.

If it wasn't obvious enough, the girl in the photo was Queta.

Seeing him trembling like that was a first for the woman. Adding that to the fact that his expression had changed so much upon looking at the photo, the woman couldn't help but ask in a worried tone, "...Uncle? Is something the matter...?"

Quickly picking the photograph up again, he then replied, "...I'm fine. Everything's fine... Speaking of which, I'm done bandaging Gerald and I need to head out for a bit. Take care of him in the meantime!"

With that said, he then hastily turned around before leaving.

"...He's acting rather strange..." muttered the woman to herself as she scratched the back of her head.

Though she was mischievous in nature, she always obeyed that man's words. With that, she then sat by the bed with her eyes closed, both hands over her cheeks.

Opening an eye to look at the resting youth, she was instantly caught by surprise. Since the middle-aged man had wiped the blood off Gerald's face earlier, she now saw that Gerald was, in fact, quite handsome.

Stretching her hand out, she gently pinched his face before saying, "You look quite handsome, you know? Still, the more I look at you, the more I feel that your eyes resemble uncle's slightly... I wonder why..."

In truth, the woman had always secretly admired that middle-aged man. After all, though he was ugly, that man's demeanor was always graceful and his behavior was nothing short of gentlemanly. What more, he was also extremely mysterious.

Whenever she asked him about how he had gotten all those wounds on his face, he always replied with the same thing, stating that he was simply burned badly. As for photographs of him in the past, there were none to even speak of.

That fact alone saddened the woman greatly. After all, she was extremely interested in knowing how he looked like in the past.

After staring at Gerald for some time, her ears twitched as she turned to look at the door. There, the man sat as he smoked quietly.

'...He really is acting extremely strangely today!' the woman thought to herself.

The man himself was looking at Queta's photo again as he continued smoking. If one were to pay closer attention to him under the light of the moon, they would be able to see his body trembling slightly as tears slowly began welling in his eyes, his gaze at the photograph filled with adoration.

After being in a daze for quite a while, he eventually kept the photograph carefully. Looking up at the night sky, his initial tears were no longer there. Instead, it was replaced with a look of resoluteness and ruthlessness.

"The incident will be settled sooner or later... It isn't far from now!" declared the man coldly as he glared daggers at a large and remote mountain in the distance...

Meanwhile, the Gunters and those from Judgement Portal were currently assembled at the Gunter family manor's brightly lit hall within Ancient City.

At that moment, Yreth—the old lady of the Gunter family—was sitting at the seat of honor as she exclaimed in shock, "...What? Hogan's been defeated? But how is that even possible! Gerald's merely a weak, small fry compared to Hogan! How was he actually able to escape?!"

Hogan was an exceptional man who had already achieved the middle stage of the Spirit Earth Realm. With that kind of strength, he was a frightening man who could do pretty much whatever he pleased.

The Gunters themselves were well aware of how terrifying he was, since before they had formed an alliance with Judgement Portal, they had attempted to fight that beast of a man. Despite how exceptional the Gunter family members were, none of them were any match for Hogan, and they all ended up getting utterly defeated. That alone painted the image of how strong that man truly was.

Since the Judgement Portal had sent Hogan over to capture Gerald this time around, the Gunters had assumed that everything was already in the bag. They were so sure, in fact, that they even had Gerald's jail cell prepared!

Shockingly enough, not only was Gerald able to escape, but Hogan also ended up getting terribly injured!

Hogan himself was currently lying on a chair, his expression extremely ruthless as members of the Judgement Portal continued bandaging his wounds.

## Chapter 1304

"He was saved in the nick of time by someone extremely strong! Had I been a move slower, I wouldn't be alive now!" explained Hogan, feeling utterly humiliated.

"And who exactly is the assailant?" asked Yreth as she frowned deeply.

"Since I was too focused on evading his attack, I wasn't able to see him properly!"

"...Could it be that there are other powerful forces that are secretly helping Gerald...?" muttered Yreth to herself as she fell deep into thought.

For a person to beat Hogan up that badly, they needed to at least possess the strength equivalent to the final stage of the Spirit Earth Realm. Even though she could deduce at least that much, Yreth simply wasn't able to figure out what kind of force would even step forward to help Gerald.



At that moment, she suddenly heard a voice saying, “Could it be that Gerald is the one causing you so much trouble, Lady Gunter?”

Looking up, she watched as an extremely handsome youth entered through the door—leading outside—with both his hands folded behind his back. Upon stepping inside, his first reaction was to imposingly scan through the hall with cold and stern eyes that only served to further amplify his already extraordinary aura.

Now aware of his presence, the thirteen Judgement Portal members—who consisted of both males and females donning strange clothes and portraying queer expressions—took turns nodding at the youth as they greeted, “A pleasure to meet you, Young Master Gunter!”

The Gunters now had, after all, an alliance with the Judgement Portal.

Regardless, the youth went by the name of Felton Gunter, and he was Lady Gunter’s great-great-grandson. To Yume, he was her eldest cousin.

Felton was known to be extremely strong, and he was pretty much the most powerful individual among those from the Gunter family’s younger generation.

With that in mind, Felton was definitely Yreth’s most beloved great-great-grandson. As for her most adored great-great-granddaughter, Yume naturally had that role.

Even so, her love for Yume wasn’t as strong as her adoration for Felton. After all, Yreth had personally trained Yreth to be the heir of the Gunter family.

Due to that, the moment she saw him, a smile instantly formed on Yreth’s face as she said, “Here you are, Felton!”

Smiling coldly, Felton then replied, “Gerald’s honestly so trivial a person that he’s probably only comparable to a stray dog! Despite that, to think that Master Hogan would actually fail to capture him!”

“Well, according to Master Hogan, someone was apparently helping Gerald in secret. That someone also seems to be an exceptionally powerful person!” explained Yreth.

“Fear not, Lady Gunter, for even if exceptional people truly are secretly aiding him, all I need is a few days for me to get to the bottom of all this! Just leave everything to me! As for the forces who are still keen on helping him... I’m going to make you reveal yourselves, one by one!” declared Felton with a confident smile on his face.

Felton had always been this confident, and those who knew him would oftentimes find him to be quite overbearing. It was almost as though there was nothing in the world too difficult for him to deal with.

True enough, however, as long as Felton put his mind to it, he was able to accomplish anything that he wanted to, regardless of who the other party was. It was due to that that Yreth had such great trust in Felton.

“Very well! Truthfully, I was previously thinking about having you investigate it as well! Regardless, try to find out more about the forces aiding Gerald and report your findings to me as soon as you get any hints! As for your methods of acquiring that information, feel free to do as you please!” replied Yreth, a gratified smile on her face.

“Affirmative!” said Yreth as he smiled back at her before turning to leave.

The second he arrived at the door, however, a female servant just so happened to be entering with ginseng tea in hand. Due to her slight surprise, she found herself accidentally bumping into Felton!

“I-I apologize, Young Master Gunter! Please forgive me!” squeaked the female servant—who looked to be around the age of sixteen—as she immediately knelt before him.

“Insensible scum!” shouted Felton with a frown before immediately slapping her on the cheek!

Following that, blood began flowing down the young woman’s fair face, her body now limp on the floor... She was dead!

Seeing that, the thirteen members from Judgement Portal could only look at each other in dismay.

Yreth herself simply revealed a smile as she looked at Felton before saying, “Pay it no heed. I’ve simply spoiled Felton ever since he was young!”

Waving a hand at the rest of the servants, Yreth then ordered, “Get that corpse out of here!”

“Y-yes, Lady Gunter...!” squealed the servants in unison, utterly mortified by what they had just witnessed.

#### Chapter 1305

With that, the Gunters and those from Judgement Portal agreed to cooperate to hunt Gerald down. It was evident that seeking Gerald out was crucial for both Yreth and the King of Judgement Portal.

At the same time, both forces were also well aware that even Queena—who owned the Squat of Divine Grimness—was looking for Gerald. Unlike them, however, Queena’s aim of finding Gerald was to make him marry her.

Despite the clear differences in their interests in finding Gerald, both Lady Gunter and the King of Judgement Portal still made sure to keep a close eye on Queena’s actions.

Regardless, the task of seeking out Gerald was given mainly to Felton and Hogan.

While the Gunters were indeed in full control over Ancient City, their true influence spanned the entirety of Querton City.

With that in mind, the Gunters immediately ordered the Simes—from Querton city— to aid them in their search for Gerald by utilizing large groups of people as well as by providing them with any necessary resources.

Even with so many people dedicated to hunting Gerald down, however, Yreth was unable to find him at all despite having investigated every spot she could think of in Qerton City! Naturally, this greatly infuriated her.

Eventually, every nook and cranny in the city had been searched, though there still weren't any signs of Gerald... All that was left, was the vast shantytown...

By that point, both Felton and Hogan were already feeling extremely anxious due to their failure to locate Gerald, even after a week. With that, both of them then headed to the shantytown with a team—provided by the Simes—that consisted of around two hundred people.

'If we still failed to find him here, then Dordwell Heights is the only place left for us to search...' Felton thought to himself extremely sternly.

He knew for a fact that Gerald hadn't left the city since his grandmother had previously used the Dead Annies to check for Gerald's presence. But where the hell was he...?

Meanwhile, an adorable little girl—who had her hair tied in pigtails and looked to be around six—could be seen standing in a small courtyard of a house within the shantytown as she delightfully said, "I'll be heading off for school now, Brother Crawford and Sister Monica! I'll come play with you again tomorrow! Oh! And these are some eggs that my mom told me to hand over to you!"

Turning to look at the elder brother and elder sister figures, she then smiled before adding, "Since you're sick, be sure to eat more eggs to get healthier sooner, Brother Crawford!"

Upon hearing that, the woman—who had been standing at the side—instantly burst into laughter.

Naturally, the 'Brother Crawford' in question was none other than Gerald. Though he was now doing far better after that man healed him, his body was still extremely weak at the moment. As for 'Sister Monica', she was the woman that had been looking after Gerald—along with that middle-aged man—this entire time, and her full name was Monica Leonard.

"What a good girl! But yes, I'll make sure your Brother Crawford eats lots of eggs till he gets healthy again! Don't worry, I'll keep an eye on him!" replied Monica with a grin.

Knowing that the child meant no harm with her words, Gerald simply laughed along as he looked at the young girl with adoring eyes.

Still, he truly had suffered from massive injuries this time around, and it wasn't a stretch to say that he could've easily died back then after being tortured so much by Hogan. By the time he was rescued, not only had most of his veins and bones already snapped, but he was also suffering from terrible internal injuries as well as from highly potent poison.

Even so, from the middle-aged man's point of view, Gerald already had it good enough since he had managed to escape with his life intact. Still, while the man had estimated that Gerald would only regain consciousness after at least a month had passed, he truly hadn't expected the youth to wake up just three days later!

The fact that his broken bones and internal injuries were healing so rapidly honestly made Monica both frightened and jealous of Gerald's unique—and quite frankly abnormal—physique.

While it was true that he had regained consciousness on the third day he was there, he was only able to get out of bed on the sixth, which was the day before.

Due to how weak Gerald currently was—since his body was still recovering—the middle-aged man had set off for Dordwell Heights first thing in the morning to gather herbs for him again.

Speaking of that man, ever since Gerald had regained consciousness, he had found the middle-aged man to be extremely familiar and friendly, though he wasn't quite sure if that was just a biased viewpoint since the man had, after all, saved his life.

Both Monica and the man were quite mysterious to Gerald.

After all, when asked where she originated from, Monica refused to give him a clear answer. All he knew about her was that she had stayed by that man's side for a good two years by now.

The man himself was even more mystifying. After all, even though Gerald had asked him time and again why he had appeared all of a sudden to save him, the man simply avoided giving a direct answer. Not wanting to continue being rude to his savior, Gerald soon decided not to pry any further.

Instead, he chose to obey the man's orders to simply remain in the shantytown—for the time being—to recuperate with peace of mind.

As for the little girl from earlier, she went by the name of Sierra. Throughout his time awake, Gerald had gotten to know the cute and kind girl fairly well. From what he was told, she was the youngest daughter from Elias Leakin's family, which was one of the families here in the shantytown.

He also found out that when she was younger, she had fallen terribly ill. Ever since she was saved by that man, however, she had treated him like her godfather, which explained why she kept coming over to his house whenever she could.

In fact, she was there so often that she was tasked with wiping Gerald's face for him every day. Additionally, she even brought lots of food for him! The fact that the food mostly consisted of candies and snacks—foods of which Sierra treasured most—certainly warmed Gerald's heart.

Regardless, Gerald waved at the girl—who was now running off while waving back at him—before shouting, "See you, Sierra!"

From what he had been told, the girl was studying in the middle class of kindergarten...

Chapter 1306

"With how cute she already is, I'm sure she'll grow to be an extremely beautiful woman," said Monica with a smile.

"I agree. I'm sure she'll be quite similar to you in terms of beauty!" replied Gerald with a smile.

Seconds later, he immediately cupped his mouth with a white towel—that he had been holding onto—as he began coughing rather terribly.

Watching as the towel slowly got stained with blood, Monica frowned slightly before saying, "It's best that you don't start walking around just yet. After all, your injuries haven't healed yet, you know? Truth be told, I still can't get over how abnormal your body is!"

Following that, Gerald turned to look at her and found that she was staring rather intently at his chest. Feeling weirded out, Gerald then said, "...Why are you staring at my chest like that...?"

“You best not be getting any weird ideas! I’m just looking at your jade pendant! It’s shining again, you know? From the day you were brought here, it’s shone at exactly the same time every morning and night. Thinking back, it must have done so at least a dozen times by now!” replied Monica rather grumpily as she rolled her eyes at Gerald before pointing at the round jade pendant hanging from Gerald’s neck.

“...What? It’s shining again?” said Gerald as he looked down to see for himself.

Even he had been aware that the pendant shone quite regularly ever since he woke up. However, he had no idea what they indicated.

The jade pendant was truly extraordinary. After all, it had previously saved his life on several occasions by giving him aid at the most crucial moments. Despite that, it hadn’t activated this time, even after Hogan had beaten him into a pulp!

‘What on earth is even happening...?’ Gerald thought to himself, feeling quite puzzled.

After giving it some thought, he came to the conclusion that he wasn’t going to be able to figure it out just by dwelling on it. With that in mind, he then followed Monica into the house.

Meanwhile, a group of bodyguards dressed in black—under the lead of a few Gunters—had just made their appearance right outside the shantytown, fully prepared to go door to door to look for Gerald.

From what they knew, the hundred over families living in this shantytown all shared cordial relationships with each other. Due to that, its inhabitants were all pretty united, and that was made evident by how the other families immediately walked out to take a look when they saw the guards barging into one of the houses there.

Despite their initial protests, they soon ended up returning to their own homes after the guards began scowling and threatening to beat them up if they planned to meddle any further.

At that moment, Felton himself was sitting at the back of a luxury car, momentarily resting his eyes. After slowly opening his eyes a little while later, he found himself frowning when he saw a young girl walking across the street.

Noticing that he was staring at her, the girl was temporarily frozen in fright.

A second later, what seemed to be her parents broke through the interception from the bodyguards—who had been standing in front of their house—before rushing over to the girl while ushering, “Sierra! Come back here! Quickly!”

Though the other families—who had been watching all this take place—wanted to help, they were simply too frightened to move, knowing that they couldn’t afford to offend the person launching such a massive operation.

After continuing to stare at Sierra for a little while longer, Felton gave his subordinate a glance before pointing at the girl. Easily understanding what Felton meant by that, the subordinate then walked over and instantly carried Sierra up, even though she was just about to run back home!

“M-mom!” cried out the now utterly terrified Sierra.

Her parents were equally as terrified for her safety, and they immediately began running over to her. However, their advances were halted by a few other guards who quickly kicked both of them to the ground before shouting, “Beat it!”

“W-what are you doing?! We’ve never offended any of you! She’s my daughter and she’s still so young! What are you planning on doing to her?!” cried out the distressed mother.

“You’d best behave yourselves! One more move from either of you and you’ll both be dead!” threatened the guards as they placed knives close to the duo’s necks.

With her parents unable to make another move, the subordinate holding onto Sierra then brought the young girl to Felton.

Once she was before him, he took in a sniff before narrowing his eyes.



“...There’s a peculiar herbal scent on this girl... Herbs that ordinary people wouldn’t ever be able to brew!”

Hearing that, the subordinate then glared at Sierra before growling, “Have you come across any odd patients recently? Spit out the truth, you bad girl!”

“I-I don’t know...!” whimpered Sierra in her fright.

Though she was young, she was bright enough to know that they were looking for Gerald. Even so, she had promised her godfather that she would never reveal his location, and she was going to keep that promise no matter what.

“Don’t test me, young girl. You’d best be obedient and tell me the truth, else I’ll be giving trouble to your parents right after I slaughter you!” growled Felton next as he got out of the car, making sure to flash a cold smile as he said that.

Glaring right into Sierra’s eyes with his stern gaze, he then added, “Now then, are you still unwilling to tell me what you know? Just so you understand, for me, killing you is as easy as killing an ant!”

Chapter 1307

“I... I really don’t know!” cried out Sierra as Felton lifted her into the air.

No matter how much he threatened her, however, Sierra simply continued denying that she knew anything. Quickly understanding that he wasn’t going to be able to get anything out from her, he then fixed his cold eyes at Sierra’s parents before asking, “And what about you two? Know anything about this?”

Seeing that both of them weren’t too keen on answering, he then held onto Sierra’s neck before slowly increasing the force of his grip.

Seeing that, both Elias and his wife—who was already crying in grief by this point—could only gnash their teeth in their panicked states.

While both of them knew for a fact that Felton was looking for Gerald—the young man who had been saved by the middle-aged man—they were extremely loyal to that man, and would never even dream of betraying him.

With that in mind, both of them simply shook their heads.

“...Humph! I see how it is! I guess you won’t fear the consequences until you get a personal taste of it! Allow me to demonstrate!” sneered Felton as slowly raised his arm...

Before lowering it again extremely quickly in a swiping motion! At that moment, everyone froze, unsure of what Felton had even done.

A second later, however, Sierra’s parents’ eyes widened in horror as blood began gushing out of Sierra’s right shoulder! Her right arm had just been dismembered and was now lying on the ground!

With her arm now sliced clean off her body, Sierra instantly began screaming in pain, “M-my arm...!”

Sierra’s mother, on the other hand, was brimming so much with strong emotions that she ended up passing out on the spot!

As for Elias, his eyes had turned bloodshot as he roared, “You... You b\*stard of a man! I’ll kill you!”

However, no matter how much he tried to rush past the guards to attack Felton, there was simply no way that he was going to be able to get past those from the Gunter family. Soon enough, he ended up being flung backward, landing on the ground in his sheer rage.

“That was just the beginning. If you still refuse to tell me where she had gone to get that scent on her, her head will be the next thing that flies off!” taunted Felton with a wicked smile on his face.

Upon closer inspection, the weapon Elias had earlier used to slice the girl’s arm off was a white knife. With it, dismembering her arm was as easy as breaking off the arm of an insect.

Even after hearing that threat, Elias—who currently had his head stepped on by one of the guards—simply remained silent as he desperately tried to struggle free.

“...Nothing? Have it your way then!” said Felton as he shook his head with a bitter smile. Following that, he brought the knife close to Sierra’s neck. From the way he angled it, everyone watching knew that a single slash was all he needed to end her life.

Just as he was about to do the deed, however, the crisp sound of metal clanging could suddenly be heard.

Blinking, Felton realized that the white knife—that had only been less than an inch away from Sierra’s neck just a split second ago—was now no longer in his hand!

It had all happened so fast. All he remembered was seeing a white light intersect the blade, sending it flying!

Speaking of the blade, Felton instantly turned back to see the knife flying in the direction of a tree...

Before sending the tree exploding into a million pieces! From what Felton could tell, the tree’s diameter was wide enough for at least seven people to hug before they were able to hold hands with one another!

‘What a massive aura...!’ Felton thought to himself, feeling his eyelids twitch as debris flew all over the place.

Felton’s immense shock was justifiable since being in the middle stage of the Spirit Earth Realm, nobody should have been able to knock his weapon out of his hand that silently and easily.

Even the Gunter family’s subordinates were now on high alert, occasionally turning to look at each other in worry.

“What are you still waiting here for?! Leave the area!” ordered Felton with a roar before bounding away from the area, not even bothering to get into his car!

Seeing that even Felton was running, the rest of his men immediately scattered as well!

Soon enough, the shantytown was cleared of any remaining Simes and Gunters.

With them out of the picture, Elias immediately cried out, "Sierra!"

Felton has tossed her to the ground before fleeing, and there was now a puddle of blood where the now-unconscious girl's right arm should be.

As he lifted his daughter up with a roar of fatherly pain, a figure could be seen from afar, running toward him at high speeds. On the person's back, was a bamboo basket...

Chapter 1308

If it wasn't already evident enough, it was the man who had just returned from collecting herbs for Gerald.

He had sensed the danger even before he even re-entered the shantytown. Knowing that he wouldn't be able to make it to the scene in time, he had grabbed a divine thought and tossed a knife to disengage Felton's own knife that was about to slice Sierra's neck.

Alas, it was only when he got to the scene that he realized that Felton had already dismembered Sierra's arm!

"Hand her to me and keep her dismembered arm safe! She can still be saved!" ordered the man as he quickly held onto the unconscious young girl before dashing all the way home. Since there was quite a distance between his house and Sierra's, the man knew he had no time to waste.

Regardless, upon arriving at his house, both Gerald and Monica were immensely shocked to see Sierra in such a state. However, they quickly snapped out of it and began helping the ailing girl.

Since Gerald knew the art of setting bones and the middle-aged man had immense medical mastery, both of them seamlessly cooperated to reattach Sierra's arm. All the while they did so, Elias explained the entire story that led to Sierra's current state.

“That b\*stard!” growled Gerald who had to stop moving his hands for a second since they were now trembling so much with resentment.

As it turned out, the Gunters had been searching for him. Sierra had only gotten to her current state since Felton had caught the scent of rare medicinal herbs—that the middle-aged man had used on Gerald—lingering around her. She had suffered so much just because of him...

“You Gunters... To think that you aren’t even willing to let a child go!” added Gerald, his murderous intent clearly reflected in his eyes.

“First of all, be mindful of your wounds. Secondly, don’t stop moving your hands! Focus on saving Sierra!” said the man as he placed a hand over Gerald’s shoulder to ease the anger in him. From how red Gerald’s eyes already were, the middle-aged man was afraid that the sudden stress would result in his internal organ getting harmed again.

While Gerald was aware of what the man was trying to do, he still couldn’t bring himself to just calm down after finding out about all this.

Thankfully, after quite a bit of time, both of them finally managed to reattach her arm to her body. It was truly a good thing that both of them had such exceptional medical skills.

However, though they managed to get her arm functioning again, there was still a large scar left behind. That, however, wasn’t impossible to remove. All they needed was just a few special herbs.

Whatever the case was, it was late at night when they finally bandaged all of Sierra’s wounds and placed her in bed. Elias trusted the middle-aged man enough to leave her here, so he simply headed home to take care of Sierra’s mother next.

As Monica sat by Sierra’s bed to keep her company, Gerald himself sat outside to take a smoke.

Thinking about all that had happened today, Gerald couldn’t help but clench his fist.

Though Sierra was just a naïve child, she was a kind and bright one. Had the man not rushed back in time, then Sierra's life could've very well ended because of him. If that had truly taken place, then Gerald would surely not even have the will to stay alive anymore.

Clenching his fists so hard to the point where minor cracking could be heard, Gerald muttered to himself, "The Judgement Portal and the Gunters... I'm not letting either of you off that easily because of this...!"

"Still filled with self-reproach, Gerald?" asked the middle-aged man out of the blue as he walked over and sat beside Gerald.

"...Indeed. Speaking of which, I have to thank you, sir... Had it not been for your quick actions, Sierra could have..."

Watching as Gerald lowered his head, the middle-aged man then took out a cigarette of his own before prompting Gerald to light it. Once Gerald did, the man slipped it into his mouth before replying, "That's quite enough. There's no point in dwelling in things like this. If you have the time to blame yourself, why not use it to figure out how to arrive at the middle stage of the Spirit Earth Realm sooner instead? By doing so, you'll hopefully be able to deal with the Gunters and the Judgement Portal group since they're still so keen on pursuing you!"

Before this, the man had taken the time to tell Gerald what the world truly was like. He also made sure to share what cryptic families actually were.

With that in mind, the man then continued, "I'll say it right now that unlike the other geniuses who've trained to get to your level, you have exceptional advantages compared to them, both talent and physique-wise. I've been meaning to talk about this for a while, but on the night I saved you, I saw you using rather exquisite techniques as you fought against Hogan. Now then, I'd like to know something. Did someone teach them to you? Or...?"

The old man had truthfully been curious about this throughout the entire week.

"I just learned them by chance," replied Gerald.

"I see. It seems that you truly have good blessings. Regardless, now that you've gained more knowledge on all this, it's high time you began training to further improve yourself. If you don't, well... Your next encounter with the Gunters won't be any different from the last!" advised the man as Gerald nodded in response.

'Well, it's true that I didn't really have a teacher... After all, I had inherited knowledge of all these rare martial arts skills from this pendant... Still, how odd it is that I'm learning all these through memories and experiences that have been implanted into my mind in great detail...'

'Regardless, while I wasn't able to practice more of those skills before since I hadn't gained access to the Spirit Earth Realm in the past, things are different now.'

Now, he finally had enough strength as well as the right to practice all those skills in his mind.

"I understand. I'll need to get much stronger to deal with my current ordeal! While I used to do many useless things in the past, things have changed. With that in mind, I agree that I need to make full use of all my great resources!"

#### Chapter 1309

Following that, Gerald then chatted late into the night with that man. However, even after finally returning to his room, Gerald chose not to sleep.

After having that conversation with that man, Gerald now knew how important it was to properly train himself. After all, though it was true that Felton had been scared off today, Gerald knew that he would eventually return even stronger than before.

With that in mind, Gerald then sat cross-legged in his room as he searched through the many memories—of the deity—that had been implanted into him. He had acquired them back when he was in the ancient tomb within the palace that was located in the desert.

Eventually, he came across the memories of extremely ancient breathing techniques. Gerald recalled a time when he had attempted to practice those techniques, though to no avail. No matter how much he practiced them, he simply wasn't able to get them right.

Though he was only able to master that evil technique—Soul Eater—in the past, the man had told him that after undergoing the baptism of heaven, Gerald had successfully entered the Spirit Earth Realm, which meant that his inner strength had vastly increased. Not only that, but Gerald was apparently only a step away from achieving the middle stage of the Spirit Earth Realm, which meant that he should—by right—be finally able to practice and succeed in mastering the rest of the memories that had been implanted into him.

With that in mind, Gerald then selected an ancient breathing technique called the Thunder Eruption. According to the memories, the technique was used to swiftly improve the refining speed of essential qi. In other words, it was a technique that would allow Gerald to further improve himself, and that was exactly what he needed now.

With that, Gerald then calmed himself before beginning to train his qi according to the steps of the technique.

Soon enough, his chest began rising and falling extremely quickly as he trained on.

It wasn't long after before he was finally able to complete the training for the technique, and it was made evident when a violet-colored aura suddenly emerged from his body. The aura itself kept changing colors according to the rising and falling of Gerald's chest.

Whenever he inhaled, the aura turned scarlet, though when he exhaled, it returned to being violet. Another evident change—as he continued practicing the technique—was the appearance of a milky-white mist that exited Gerald's mouth and nose whenever he exhaled.

Since he was concentrating so hard on his training, Gerald himself wasn't aware of any of these changes. However, he was able to feel traces of qi surrounding his pubic region. The qi itself seemed to be constantly getting stronger.

Meanwhile, a figure could be seen standing right outside the room's window. It was the middle-aged man, and he currently had his hands behind his back as he observed Gerald's progress.

Seeing that things were coming along just fine, he nodded—while looking at Gerald—before breaking into a gratified smile.



'You have a massive burden to carry in the future, Gerald, and life itself will be extremely difficult for you to live out.... Not only will the fate of your family be in your hands, but your own fate will also be dependent on how hard you're willing to work... With that in mind, I hope that you'll continue striving the way you currently are...! Still, how odd... Who was the one who had changed your physique? And who could've been capable enough to teach Gerald these ancient breathing techniques that he's just mastered...?' Thought the man to himself with a frown.

Though he was bewildered by all this, after looking at Gerald again and confirming that the youth was making good progress, the middle-aged man then returned to his room.

It was only when morning came that Gerald finally opened his eyes again. As he did so, a hint of violet momentarily flashed across his eyes. He had trained the entire night, and this was honestly the first time he had ever devoted himself to increasing his training so professionally.

This was due to the fact that in the past, he could easily defeat people like Kort and Christopher with his advantageous physique alone. In other words, he didn't require a lot of training back then since his opponents were always much weaker than him.

Now, however, Gerald was dealing with enemies far stronger than he had ever encountered before. With that in mind, he needed as much training as he could get.

Regardless, upon checking on his injuries, Gerald found that almost half of his injuries had already been healed by this point. What more, his inner strength seemed to have recovered.

Both surprised and delighted to find out that he now had his strength back, Gerald then muttered to himself, "How truly mysterious Thunder Eruption is... I never expected these ancient breathing techniques—that the deity bestowed upon me—to be this useful!"

Finding himself slightly infatuated with the feeling of owning power again, Gerald snapped out of it when he heard a knock on the door followed by Monica shouting, "Gerald! Breakfast is ready! Also, uncle has something to tell you!"

Raising his hand toward the door—with his palm outstretched—Gerald then tilted his palm downward slightly... And the door suddenly flung open on its own with a loud 'bang'!

Clearly caught by surprise, Monica then said, "...What? What are you even doing? You scared the cr\*p out of me!"

She clearly hadn't expected Gerald to know such elusive techniques like the ones the middle-aged man knew.

Chapter 1310

Though she was surprised by that, she was even more shocked when she saw Gerald's condition. Covering her mouth as though she was looking at a monster, Monica then said, "You... Gerald, you've already recovered your strength...?"

"Indeed! Honestly, I hadn't expected those breathing techniques to be so useful! They're truly priceless treasures!" replied Gerald rather excitedly as he looked at both his hands.

"Do... You think you could teach me a technique like that?" asked Monica as her eyes instantly lit up. It was apparent that she was greatly interested in the breathing techniques that both Gerald and that middle-aged man were capable of performing.

"Of course! If a chance presents itself in the future, I'll definitely select a suitable technique or two for you to learn!" replied Gerald with a smile.

By this point, Gerald already treated her as a friend, so he wasn't against teaching her some of the simpler techniques. He had specified on the term 'suitable techniques for her' since learning something like Thunder Eruption was pretty much impossible for Monica at her current state. What more, Thunder Eruption behaved similarly like a talisman of sorts, and one needed a great comprehension of it before training on the technique could even begin.

Even so, Monica still looked excited as she said, "Remember, you're the one who promised me that! Haha!"

With that, both of them then headed to the hall together. Upon arriving, both of them saw that the man had already fully prepared breakfast for them.

The man himself turned to look at Gerald, and despite seeing all the changes that Gerald had undergone, he didn't look too surprised. Instead, he simply said, "Alright, let's eat! Once the meal is over, however, I'd like you to head someplace to exchange a few herbs back, Gerald!"

Nodding in response, Gerald then asked, "Are the herbs in question going to be used to remove Sierra's scars and also strengthen her bones? I had—quite honestly—been wondering whether I could go to Dordwell Heights to look for those herbs!"

"I'll say it now that those herbs are very difficult to look for. Just take this letter here and go to Sunhill Rise on my behalf. There, you should seek out the master of King Valley. He's my friend, you see, and if all goes well, he should give you access to the herbs needed to cure Sierra!" replied the man as he took a letter out and handed it to Gerald.

Gerald himself was fully aware that Sierra was only in such a sorry state at the moment because of him. With that in mind, anything that the middle-aged man ordered him to do—involving Sierra—was really a no-brainer.

"Speaking of which, do you still remember what I told you yesterday?"

"I do. You told me that no matter how much one trained, their power would always be limited to a certain extent. I understand that!"

The man truly had put a lot of thought and care when it came to Gerald. After all, even though Gerald was being sent to King Valley to do what was rightfully his duty—for causing so much pain to Sierra—the man was still willing to hand him a letter which would definitely ease the process of obtaining the herbs that he needed. From all that, Gerald could tell that this man truly was a kind soul.

"While we're at it, I have to admit that I've never contacted anyone from Sunhill Rise... Do those living there belong to a cryptic family as well?" asked Gerald with a slight frown.

"They are, though aside from martial arts, they very much prefer honing their secret techniques of making pills more. It's the reason why they've collected all kinds of herbs in the first place. Regardless, note that Sunhill Rise lies within this mountainous region, and within it, you'll come across seven large valleys, one of which is the King Valley. There, you'll come across a multitude of exceptional people who have already arrived at the final stage of the Spirit Earth Realm. Despite that, I feel that the master of

King Valley may pay us some respect and give us the herbs without much hassle as long as you provide him with this letter!”

“I see... Very well. I’ll head there immediately once I’m done with my meal!”

True to his word, the second he finished his breakfast, Gerald instantly entered the mountain to look for the valley in accordance with the man’s directions.

While memories of the art of pill-making had also been implanted into his memory, Gerald wasn’t really sure if what he knew was even comparable to the pills made by the cryptic family.

Regardless, Gerald quickly made use of his lightness skill to hasten his journey there. The large mountain was called Sunhill Rise, and though Gerald was fast, the journey to King Valley took quite a while since the mountainous region was extremely large and complicated to navigate through. It was only after running through eight neighboring cities when Gerald finally arrived at King Valley around noon.

As its name suggested, King Valley was one of the areas many valleys, and connected to it, was a highway that led to the outside world. Since the place was well-known among tycoons—many of whom were from international levels—for their mastery of the art of pill-making, it was no wonder why so many luxury cars were parked at the entrance of the valley.

From what Gerald had heard, these people had come to beg the master of King Valley to sell them pills. Of course, such incidents were carried out with utmost secrecy. Even if they knew about it, no media companies would ever dare to expose this place to the public.

Whatever the case was, Gerald was stopped by two guards as he approached the valley’s entrance. Seeing that, he gave them the letter and one of the guards headed off for a while.

A short while later, a middle-aged man donning a suit ran out excitedly as the guard from before calmly walked back to his initial post.

Looking at Gerald extremely friendly, the middle-aged man then gleefully said, “Could you be my benefactor’s disciple? Actually, hold on, where are my manners! I go by the name of Myles Yateman,

and I was the master of the valley's driver in the past! The benefactor once saved both me and the master of the valley, you know?"

The benefactor... That should be that man, right? While Gerald saw that Myles was already treating him as that man's disciple, it didn't really bother him too much.

"A pleasure to meet you, Mr. Yateman. Getting straight to the point, we're in urgent need of those three herbs!" replied Gerald without beating around the bush.

"That... Actually, it's rather inconvenient to speak about that here. Please, come with me, mister!" said Myles in an apologetic tone before cheerfully holding onto Gerald's arm and walking by his side into the valley.

As they walked off, the two guards at the entrance of the valley simply gave contemptuous looks at Gerald—with no intention of being subtle about it—as they both thought, 'Where did that bumpkin even come from?'

#### Chapter 1311

The owner of King Valley went by the name of Rupert Yateman.

While that name didn't usually stand out among ordinary people, it was one that was extremely well-known among world-class powerhouse circles. This was made evident to Gerald since—as he continued following Myles—all sorts of signs could be seen on display around the valley. The signs themselves were of celebrities from all over the world.

From what Gerald could guess, those who had their signs here had once come here to ask for medicine.

Regardless, as they walked on, Myles further elaborated on how that man had gotten to know the master of the valley in the first place. As Myles had earlier said, he was once the personal driver of the master of the valley, and back then, both of them had traveled together a lot.

One day, however, both of them came across enemies who were intent on killing them! Things got so bad that Myles even had to carry the master on his back as they fled for their dear lives!

Thankfully, they eventually came across that man while they were still trying to shake off their pursuers. The man himself had been on his way home, and seeing that they were in trouble, he brought both of them back with him.

Thanks to that, the duo were finally able to escape their pursuers after days of running from them.

To express his gratitude, Rupert had told the man that if he had anything he wished for in the future, he would definitely attempt to fulfill it.

Hearing that, Gerald figured that Rupert had only assumed that the man was a simple farmer. In turn, that probably led him to think that whatever the man would eventually request for wouldn't be that hard to fulfill.

Regardless, since the pursuers let the duo off that easily, Gerald had a feeling that the man had dealt with them prior to meeting up with the duo.

Whatever the case was, this seemed to be the full story between the man and Rupert.

From what Gerald could see, Myles didn't seem to be a bad person. After all, he took his debts rather seriously.

As they walked on, Myles turned to look at Gerald with a smile before asking, "Speaking of which, what's your name, mister?"

"Just call me Crawford," replied Gerald, figuring that his real name was now a sensitive word, especially around this area.

Understanding that he didn't wish to give his name, Myles simply smiled back and didn't try to pry any further.

A little while later, both of them arrived at a pavilion in the valley.

As soon as they sat down, Myles began saying in an apologetic tone, “Mr. Crawford, I’m afraid that while you wouldn’t have needed to notify the master of the valley for the three medicinal herbs and I could’ve instantly gathered them for you in the past, things are quite different now. All the disciples in the valley are currently very busy, you see, so all the herbs here are under the supervision of the second elder of the valley. Sadly, I’m currently at extreme odds with the second elder, and I’m not really ranked that high here either. Adding that to the fact that the herbs you requested are quite rare, there’s a possibility that I may not be able to fulfill your request!”

From the way he looked, Gerald could tell that he truly was rather helpless in this situation. Gerald had also been able to tell that Myles wasn’t really someone with a high position from the way the guards at the entrance had looked at him earlier.

Also, the way Myles had explained the situation earlier suggested that while Myles himself still remembered the man’s act of kindness to him, Rupert, on the other hand, could have potentially already forgotten all about it. With that in mind, there was a chance that the man’s ‘friend’ wasn’t actually going to be willing to hand the herbs over.

“Still, since my benefactor has given me a chance to finally repay his favor, I’ll definitely use whatever power I have to fulfill his request! If you don’t mind staying here for a few days, I’m willing to try my very best to get those three herbs for you!” declared Myles.

Though Gerald wanted to tell him that it had better not take more than three days—since obtaining the herbs beyond that time frame would render them useless to him—after seeing how determined Myles looked, Gerald couldn’t bring himself to say it. With that in mind, the only thing he could do now was wait and see what would happen.

“Since I’ll need at least a few days, I can clean up a small room for you to stay in for the time being. I’ll notify you once it’s ready. In the meantime, I’ll be looking for the master of the valley in hopes of obtaining the herbs for you!” said Myles, making sure that the letter was still with him before hurrying off to get the appropriate arrangements done.

In the meantime, Gerald was free to do as he pleased in the King Valley.

As Myles led him to the pavilion earlier, Gerald had noticed several pill-making methods carved onto the low cliffs that surrounded the area. Remembering that there were quite a few secret pill-making methods embedded in his memory, he recalled how he had previously been keen on understanding the pill-making process on a deeper level, though he never actually found the time to look deeper into it.

Since he now had free time anyway, Gerald decided to take a walk and have a look around.

Upon arriving at the low cliffs again, Gerald saw that most of the secret methods of pill-making in the King Valley were mainly focused on refining manual labor. From what he could see, the extraction methods of the medicine seemed even more troublesome.

This was honestly far too different from what had been implanted into his memories.

To show how different his memories and the carvings on the cliffs were, while the cliffs stated that herbs needed to be distilled before being purified with a special potion to properly be extracted, his implanted memories simply told him that he could just stimulate his inner strength for the extraction and purification process.

#### Chapter 1312

As for the refining and heating process, Gerald had memories of a skill called fire control that—while was more profound than the process carved on the cliffs—was also much easier to do.

However, since Gerald hadn't even practiced the art of pill-making before, it was hard for him to pinpoint the more minor differences.

Regardless, just as Gerald was about to head back—now that he was done looking at the carvings—he suddenly heard a sweet voice from behind him saying, “Hello there, handsome! Could you please help me out? My kite’s gotten stuck in a tree and I’d appreciate it greatly if you gave me a hand!”

Turning around to see who the owner of the voice was, Gerald was immediately greeted by the sight of an extremely beautiful and pure-looking girl—who was wearing white sportswear and had her hair tied up in a ponytail—looking at him from under a tree, her expression rather anxious.

Due to how distressed she looked, Gerald found it rather hard to refuse her request, so he simply headed over to her.

True to her word, the kite could be seen lodged atop a tree, and though Gerald could've easily gotten it for her—through the use of his skills—under normal circumstances, the incident that had happened back at the Gunter mansion had taught him not to display his skills so openly.



With that in mind, not wanting to put his life at risk just to make things a little easier, Gerald then headed over to the tree to begin climbing it.

Just as he was about to start climbing, however, he noticed the girl taking a step back... before a large net sprang up from the ground!

The next thing Gerald knew, he was already hanging under the tree!

Since the net was made of gold wire, Gerald knew that he needed to use his inner strength to break free. Not wanting to resort to that just yet, he then glared at the girl before coldly asking, "What do you think you're doing?"

At that moment, several young men and women—donning traditional clothing—began revealing themselves as they walked toward the scene from multiple directions.

"Hahaha! We've caught one~! We've caught one~! Go call Sister Fleur over and tell her we've caught some bait!" cheered the girl from before in glee.

After someone ran off to notify that 'Sister Fleur' person, it wasn't long before they returned together with a woman who looked to be around the age of twenty-three.

The moment the boys in the group saw her, their eyes instantly lit up with excitement as they nodded respectfully toward her before greeting, "Sister Fleur!"

"Sister Fleur, look! I remember you saying something along the lines of being short of bait, right? Well, I've caught one for you!"

"Yenna, do you even know who this is...? And why have you hung him up like that?" asked Fleur as she walked over with her arms crossed, studying Gerald the entire time.

As Fleur looked at her younger sister with a bitter smile, Yenny Yateman then replied, "Beats me! While I was initially planning to capture one of the lower-ranking people here, none of them dared to come

over despite my excellent acting! Just when I thought all hope was lost, I saw this stinking guy wandering casually around our valley! Who could've guessed that I would be successful in capturing him! Haha!"

"Yenny, what if he's the son of one of the wealthy businessmen here who've come to ask for medicine? If that's really the case, then we'll surely be in a lot of trouble!" reasoned one of the youths there as Fleur waited for her younger sister's response as well.

"I doubt it! After all, I've observed this guy for quite a while before actually capturing him! Also, I really don't think that he's a big shot since he's dressed so ordinarily. Since he just came over to help without even questioning my motives, he's clearly an idiot as well! Haha! Though, if you need confirmation, I'll just ask him now!" replied Yenny triumphantly.

With that, she picked a branch off the ground before pointing it at Gerald and demanding, "Hey! Brat! Tell us, are you the son of some rich businessman or something?"

Gerald wasn't even sure how to reply. After all, he didn't really have a clear grasp of the situation yet. From what he could tell, these youths were all from the valley, though he still had no idea what they were planning.

Not knowing what to do, he simply shook his head.

"Hah! See? I told you he wasn't anyone important! Also, since he was acting pretty sneakily in those ordinary clothes of his, I have a hunch that he actually snuck in! With that in mind, it's only right for us to use him as bait!" declared Yenny.

After giving one final glance at Gerald, Fleur finally gave in and instructed, "...Alright then. Hold onto him and take him away!"

Chapter 1313

"Could I at least know where you're taking me?" asked Gerald.

"Humph! You'd better shut your mouth if you know what's good for you, you stinking brat! If everything goes smoothly and you follow all of Sister Fleur's orders, we guarantee that you'll be fine! However, make one mistake too many and you could very well lose your life!" sneered Yenny.

With that, a few guards—belonging to Yenny—quickly held Gerald down the second the net was lowered. After tying Gerald’s wrists and legs tightly with iron chains, they then shoved him into a car.

‘What the hell is even with these kids? If it wasn’t for the fact that I came over to ask for medicine, I would’ve already beaten them up by now just for pulling that trick on me earlier!’ Gerald thought to himself.

Though dissatisfied, he quickly calmed himself and simply went along with what they were doing. Gerald then watched as the line of cars drove out of the valley...

Eventually, they arrived at a large stadium-like building. At the building’s entrance, several luxury cars could be seen gathered there. Quite a number of well-dressed men and women could be seen entering and leaving the building as well.

Looking at the two guards Yenny had brought along, Gerald then asked in a hushed voice, “What is this place?”

“Humph. It’s a colosseum, of course! You’ve never seen one before, have you? It’s no surprise since only young masters from secret societies or young ladies from international rich families are allowed to enter! With that in mind, you should be blessed to even be able to be here!” snorted the guard in response.

“...Alright then. Also, I heard something about me being used as bait... What’s up with that?” asked Gerald as he furrowed his brows.

Rich internal families his a\*s... Gerald was the second generation of the richest family on the planet! He had already witnessed scenes like these on multiple occasions before!

“...Well, the master of Fairleigh Valley caught a savage quite some time ago, and the savage in question is just way too strong, you know? While the savage was successfully escorted to the colosseum by the valley master’s son—Seamus Fairleigh—his brutality hasn’t lessened in the least. He’s already taken down countless masters in the month that he’s been here!” replied the bodyguard who seemed rather excited when it came to the savage, even though he wasn’t really all that keen on paying attention on Gerald earlier.

Following that, he continued, “Due to how strong that savage is, it’s been quite difficult to tame him. With that in mind, Master Fairleigh had to keep using electric shocks to corner him into a room. Unfortunately, once he was inside, the savage had utterly refused to leave that room! Now, since we knew that the savage was a bloodthirsty cannibal, we had been hoping to get someone to be used as bait and lure him out! Once he’s finally out of that room, the masters from our valley will be able to beat him up and, once the savage has been defeated, we’ll gain the right to bring him back to our valley! Of course, once that happens, Miss Fleur will have also won the bet, and Young Master Fairleigh will have to start greeting her with the title ‘sister’ whenever he bumps into her after that! Haha!”

As the bodyguard yapped on in his excitement—at the thought of the upcoming battle—Gerald himself felt like he could finally piece together the gist of the situation.

Essentially, Fleur had made a bet with that Young Master Fairleigh to take down that undefeated savage. In order to do so, they first needed to get him out of that room, which was where Gerald came in. Once Gerald successfully baited the savage out, then Fleur would have her valley’s masters brawl against him.

Regardless, if what the guard had said was true—about the savage being a cannibal—then any regular person would definitely get eaten up by him. How utterly cruel!

Furrowing his brows, Gerald then coldly asked, “The masters you spoke of... Are you sure they’re capable enough of defeating him?”

“...What did you say? Hmph! You d\*mned brat! How dare you question the masters from King Valley! Each of them were carefully selected by our mistress, you know? How dare you underestimate them!” snapped the guard.

Hearing that, Gerald chose not to say anything further and he was pulled out of the car—by the two guards—shortly after.

Naturally, Fleur was the one to lead the group inside.

Not long after, a young man—who had his hair dyed white—walked over to Fleur. One hand in his pocket, he then smiled at her before saying, “Here you are, Fleur! We’ve been waiting quite a while for you, you know?”

Looking at him, Fleur simply calmly replied, "There were just some delays on my end!"

Chapter 1314

"Oh? Is that so! Haha! And here I was thinking you weren't coming over since you were afraid you'd end up losing!" replied the white-haired man.

"My sister? Afraid of you? Seamus Fairleigh, I hope you realize that you aren't invincible just because you've managed to capture some ugly savage! We'll definitely be showing you the power of King Valley today! To hell with your undefeatable God of War bullsh\*t!" growled Yenny without any filter to her words.

"Alright, alright, calm down... We'll just have to wait and see what happens in the end. Speaking of which, I hope you don't end up regretting what you promised me, Fleur!" replied Seamus with a sly smile.

"Oh, you'll be the one regretting it. Get ready to call me 'sister' soon!" said Fleur without even sparing him a glance as she led her group toward the VIP area. Naturally, Gerald was dragged along.

Looking around, the place was a near-perfect replica of a real ancient colosseum, with a massive space in the middle and all. Noticing a darkened area north of the open space,

Gerald had a feeling that the savage was currently hiding in there.

Regardless, Gerald could estimate that the colosseum could easily accommodate up to five hundred people, and of the many decorated seats around the circular area, around three hundred of them were currently occupied.

As the guard had previously mentioned, the audience consisted of rich young masters and ladies who had come over for some excitement. Drinking wine and shouting in their excitement, the hollering from the crowd could give anyone a headache.

Once Gerald and his group sat down, Fleur immediately turned to look at the seven masters of the King Valley—who had been present this entire time—before saying, "I'm saying this now, seven masters, but that savage doesn't seem easy to handle... I heard that though the Fairleigh family had sent out several masters of their own, none of them were able to handle that savage, even when he was severely

outnumbered! With that in mind, I do hope that none of you get too complacent or careless! Though I know all of you are powerful, just for extra measure, I'm sending all seven of you into the arena together!"

"With all due respect, mistress, we're just dealing with a savage from the deep mountains, are we not? The way I see it, Seventh brother alone is sufficient in killing him! Sending all of us out is overkill!" said one of the older masters in the group.

Among the seven, the oldest member was around the age of sixty, whereas the youngest was only around forty.

"I'm glad you're confident, but I can't afford to lose, especially after making that bet with Seamus. I truly think that it's better for all seven of you to head in there together. To ease the process of luring that cannibal out, I even prepared this bait for you. Make sure the savage is out in the open first before any of you make a move, understand?" replied Fleur as the seven masters—slightly reluctantly—agreed.

Following that, Fleur turned to look at her guards before pointing at Gerald and ordering, "Bring him in!"

Meanwhile, a rather small servant headed over to Seamus's side before whispering, "Young Master Seamus, are you truly sure that those from King Valley won't be able to take down the undefeated God of War...? I know those seven masters, you see, and from what I've seen, each of their strengths can be quite unpredictable. Just so you know, even Master would consider them to be significant people if he ever came across them!"

"What are you even afraid of? The savage is so powerful that his strength was well beyond Father's expectations when we first met him! Besides, even you've seen how cruel that savage is in battle! With that in mind, I'm sure he won't get defeated that easily! Regardless, I've been waiting to devour Fleur for the longest time... Every time I see her dangling before me, I can feel my soul dissipating from how dazzling she looks alone! How lucky I am to have been able to force her into taking that bet! Once she loses, only good things will come! Haha!"

"Still, I can't help but be worried!" replied the servant.

“Again, there’s really nothing to be worried about. Everything’s been prepared nicely, and once they enter, they’ll never come out again!” declared Seamus as he glanced both coldly and lustfully at the fair-skinned Fleur.

By then, Gerald and the seven masters were already standing in the coliseum’s open area, prompting several from within the crowd to stand and begin deafeningly chanting, “God of war! God of war!”

Seeing how riled up the crowd was, all seven of the masters took turns looking at Gerald as they shook their heads with pitiful smiles.

“For mistress to use you as bait, you truly are unlucky, boy... Worry not, for we’ll definitely avenge you! Now go ahead and lure that savage out!” said one of the masters.

Gerald himself simply ignored them as he stared tentatively at the darkened area.

Even from where he stood, he could feel massive killing intent exuding from the mouth of the area. Beast-like roars could also be heard exiting the darkness.

‘What kind of savage beast are they even up against? How could a savage have this much power...?’ Gerald thought to himself as he furrowed his brows tightly.

Chapter 1315

“Sixth and Seventh brother! Both of you take him in and bait that savage out!” ordered the eldest among the masters.

“Affirmative!” declared the duo as they instantly grabbed Gerald by his arms and began walking toward the darkened area’s entrance.

Gerald himself was already secretly channeling his inner strength so that if things turned ugly, he would at least have a higher chance of escaping.

From what Gerald could sense, all seven of the masters were simply at the first stage of the Spirit Earth Realm. In other words, they were at the same level as those whom he had beheaded back at the Gunter

Manor. While he was sure he could take them on—if he eventually needed to—he still didn't know what the strength level of the savage was.

Regardless, as all three of them stepped into the darkness, the roaring became louder than ever. The roaring alone was comparable to continuous thunder strikes, and two masters couldn't help but feel slightly startled.

"...Sixth brother, I have to admit that my heart is now beating rather anxiously and nothing I do seems to make it go away... I don't think this is an ordinary savage... I don't think we should proceed any further. After all, if we accidentally bump into it in this darkness, we'll certainly end up in a lot of trouble!" proposed the seventh brother in a slightly meek voice.

After thinking about it for a second, the sixth brother then nodded before replying in a hushed voice, "...I agree. Let's just toss that kid further in first to see what kind of monster is lurking behind there!"

Immediately nodding back in agreement, the seventh brother then looked at Gerald with a cold smile on his face.

"Well, you heard us. Do be tactful and walk yourself in! Worry not, we'll be right behind you!"

Gerald then watched as the two brothers exchanged grins with each other. It was obvious that they weren't expecting him to make it out alive.

Even so, Gerald himself wasn't really sure what to do at the moment. After all, while it was true that he was strong, according to that man, he still wasn't anywhere close to being the strongest. With that in mind, if he were to bump into someone like Hogan again, he was definitely going to suffer terribly.

Understanding that, Gerald wasn't about to do something as stupid as walking straight into the mouth of danger.

After a short while, the sixth brother sneered, "...Hey, why aren't you walking, boy? Do you need us to force you forward or something?"



“You’d best cooperate, boy! Otherwise, we’ll just kill you now and toss your body in!” threatened the seventh brother.

“Actually, why don’t both of you head in first?” replied Gerald with a faint smile.

“...What did you say?” asked both of them, stunned.

Before any of them could even retort, Gerald instantly used his bone crush skill to release himself from his restraints. In one fluid motion, Gerald was able to accurately poke their acupoints, and just like that, the tables had turned! The shocked duo wasn’t even capable of struggling now!

Neither of them had expected Gerald to actually possess this level of strength. From what they could tell, he was already nearing the advanced stages of the Spirit Earth Realm.

‘You...!’ Thought both Sixth and Seventh brother. Though they wanted to yell that out, not a single word came out of their mouths.

As they desperately tried to regain control over their bodies, they both felt something hitting the back of their necks extremely quickly, with each hit producing a distinct snap... The next thing they knew, they had gone fully limp as their consciousness left their bodies forever...

If it wasn’t obvious enough, Gerald had broken their necks! Not wanting to waste any more time, Gerald then kicked the two fresh corpses further into the darkness...

At that moment, heavy thuds began echoing throughout the area. Soon enough, Gerald was able to vaguely see a massive black figure—that stood at around six feet tall and one and a half feet wide—walking out from the depths of the area.

The savage was so massive that before he was even that close, his shadow had already fully enveloped Gerald!

Taking a step back, Gerald couldn’t help but wonder, ‘...Isn’t this a bit too powerful...? Is the one in there truly a savage...?’

Before he could ponder any longer, however, the savage—who didn't want to leave the area, just as the guard from earlier had said—let out a deafening roar before digging his hands into the ground. By the time Gerald realized what was happening, the savage was already rocketing toward him with the additional boost his arms had given him!

From how fast the savage was alone, Gerald could instantly tell that he was as fast as Hogan had been. In other words, this wasn't good!

Just as Gerald was about to book it, his eyes widened in shock as he suddenly saw a massive and powerful-looking hand reaching out to him! By god! That hand was as big as a coffee table!

Chapter 1316

By that point, all of Gerald's hairs had stood on end, and he knew for a fact that he wasn't going to be able to dodge the attack. With that in mind, he gathered what strength he could to brace himself for impact!

A split second later, the colossal hand slammed against Gerald, causing an explosion of energy and white smoke to form as Gerald found himself flying backward! The sheer force of the impact alone had caused Gerald's clothes—especially on his back—to instantly get torn to shreds, and soon enough, Gerald's back collided against the area's stone walls!

Immediately coughing out blood, Gerald no longer had to wonder how the savage had killed the other Spirit Earth Realm masters. From what Gerald could tell, killing them off must have been as easy as pounding garlic with the savage's immense strength! He was way stronger than Hogan!

If it hadn't been for the fact that Gerald had recently sharply increased his strength—by learning and utilizing the art of Thunder Eruption—then there was a good chance that he would've already died from that one hit.

Regardless, now wasn't the time to stop and think about all this. Using all the strength remaining in him, Gerald instantly activated his lightness skill to dodge around the hulking man before silently—and quickly—climbing to the area's rock ceiling. Once he gripped on tightly enough, he immediately held his breath.

Thankfully, the monster of a man below him didn't seem to know where he had gone. Gerald further confirmed this when the savage began running around the area to locate him! What a predicament he was in!

Though he was now sweating, Gerald was thankful that he could at least catch his breath for the moment... Or at least that was what he thought.

Never would he have expected for the jade pendant—that had been hanging around his neck—to slip out of his now-tattered clothes due to the awkward angle he was currently in!

While that alone was already worrying enough, it certainly didn't help that the dangling pendant instantly began shining brightly!

Similar to turning on an extremely bright light in the middle of a pitch-black room out of the blue, everything within the area could now be seen extremely clearly.

'For the love of god, even if you don't wish to help me, there's no reason for you to harm me!' Gerald thought to himself as the giant man slowly raised his head to see where the light was coming from.

Their eyes now affixed with one another's, the brief moment of silence between the two felt like an eternity as Gerald found himself hyper-focusing on the savage's physical characteristics.

'I was wrong before, he isn't six feet tall, but he's actually close to seven! His hair is all over the place and he also has a shaggy beard that covers most of his face! As for his eyes, they're an unusually bright blue, and his muscles... They're like piles upon piles of reinforced steel that plate his body, filled to the brim with explosive power!'

That was the last thing Gerald was able to register before the savage finally let out another roar.

Gulping, Gerald truly wished he could just fly out of there.

While Gerald was confident in his speed, he knew that there was always a chance that the savage would be faster. However, he was currently in a do-or-die situation.

Before he could even execute his plan, however, the savage suddenly leaped off the ground! Unable to even block the attack, Gerald found his neck being clenched before instantly losing his grip on the ceiling... and being pushed right into the ground!

Though that definitely hurt, Gerald immediately began struggling in his pathetic attempt of escaping the savage's grasp.

Was this his end? Was his neck going to be twisted, just like he had done to the sixth and seventh brother earlier?

As fearful thoughts continued running through Gerald's mind, he suddenly realized that the savage wasn't finishing him outright. Surprised, he slowly turned to see what was keeping the savage...

To his astonishment, the savage was now staring at the jade pendant that was lying on his chest! What more, his grip on Gerald's neck was slowly loosening over time!

Following that, Gerald watched as the savage carefully removed the pendant off Gerald's neck. Since the pendant itself was only the size of a newborn's palm, in the massive man's hand, it looked more like a grain of wheat.

After seemingly studying it for some time, the massive man used the light of the pendant to illuminate Gerald's face...

The second he did so, he instantly placed the jade pendant back on Gerald's chest before taking a few steps back in fright. If Gerald had to describe the look on the savage's face, it was as though he had just seen the devil!

As if that wasn't already surprising enough, the savage quickly knelt before him with a loud 'thud' before declaring in a deep and hoarse voice, "Forgive me, Master Deity, for I have sinned!"

Momentarily startled, Gerald quickly regained his wits and—after tucking the pendant back into his still-tattered shirt—replied, "...Master Deity?"

“Yes, Master Deity! This lowly one goes by the name of Leo, and I greet you with the utmost respect!” shouted the savage before lowering his head to the ground.

From the looks of it, the savage seemed to be somewhat similar to Queena. After all, both of them were acknowledging him as some sort of deity. Could Leo and Queena have originated from the same place...? If that was the case, how that meant that Leo had to be at least thousands of years old!

As Gerald was marvelling over that fact, he started wondering why the jade pendant had chosen to light up again now, of all times. The warm sensation that had last appeared a few days ago was now present as well.

Could it be that the jade pendant had sensed that those from this place were nearby and would eventually appear?

Chapter 1317

Whatever the case was, since the man could speak, that meant that he was definitely no savage. Seeing that the killing intent from earlier had been switched with immense respect, Gerald then asked, “...Do you know who I am? Or are you simply familiar with the pendant?”

“I’ve seen a portrait of you before, Master Deity, and I know for a fact that the dragon blood jade is your personal magical weapon! All my life, I never thought that I’d actually be able to be within your honorable presence, Master Deity! With that in mind, I hope that you’ll forgive me for my recklessness earlier!” replied Leo who was still kneeling on the ground.

Gerald’s mind was now brimming with questions that he wanted to ask Leo. After all, it wasn’t easy for him to meet someone who came from the same place as Queena and the woman in white had. Leo was definitely going to be a treasure trove of information.

Just as he was about to start shooting questions at him, however, he suddenly heard footsteps entering the area. From what he could guess, it was most probably the five brothers who were heading closer to investigate why the sixth and seventh brothers were taking so long.

Naturally, Leo had also heard them, and he raised his head, looking at Gerald in confusion. In a way, it seemed like he was asking what Gerald’s relationship with those people was.

Understanding that, Gerald then replied, "They're nobody special, though I do wonder. Since you're far stronger than even I am, how did you manage to get imprisoned by them?"

Sighing, Leo helplessly replied, "While I'm not afraid of them, they possess magical tools that can produce blue light! Those tools are able to mimic lightning in the sky, and being hit by them slightly stuns my body! While I did attempt to escape before, they then created a heavenly lightning formation! In the end, I didn't dare to go against such heavenly powers and ended up being cornered into this place!"

Hearing that, Gerald could only laugh bitterly in his mind.

From what he could tell, Leo had mistaken stun guns as magical tools. As for the 'heavenly lightning formation', it was probably what he considered the power grids outside to be.

Of course, electric charges like those would've meant nothing to Leo. Gerald would know since such weak charges definitely wouldn't be able to even come close to harming him.

Judging from how Leo had used the terms, 'heavenly' and how he 'didn't dare to go against such heavenly powers', however, it seemed evident that he was only refusing to leave out of sheer respect for the divine.

Now getting the gist of the situation, Gerald then looked at Leo before asking, "Do you wish to leave?"

Instantly nodding in response, Leo then replied, "Are you willing to save me, Master Deity? If this lowly one manages to leave this d\*mned place, then I'm willing to follow you by your side and be anything you wish for me to be!"

Just as he was about to lower his head again, Gerald quickly reached out to stop him as he said, "There's no need for that. Regardless, get to your feet, Leo. Now listen carefully and just do as I say. If you follow all my orders, you'll definitely be able to leave!"

After using quite a bit of effort to pull Leo off the ground, Gerald then leaned closer to his ear before whispering his plan...

Shortly after, Leo nodded.

Meanwhile, Fleur—who was still sitting outside—was getting increasingly anxious as she muttered, “What on earth is going on? Sixth and Seventh brother have entered for quite a while... Why aren’t they out yet...?”

Ten minutes had already passed, and even if the duo weren’t able to draw him out, there should at least be signs of movement inside...

“...Could Sixth and Seventh brother be fighting him inside...? Is that why they’re taking such a long time? Do you think that’s why the five other masters went in to help? Because they couldn’t detect any signs of movement from the duo either?” analyzed Yenny.

“...Maybe. Though I feel that something just isn’t right... I mean look at Seamus! He’s been sneering this entire time! I’m sure he’s up to something!” replied Fleur who was now so anxious that she couldn’t even sit still.

Just as even the crowd’s anxiety reached its peak, a deafening roar could suddenly be heard coming from within the darkened area!

The roar itself felt somewhat magical in nature, capable of taking everyone’s breath away as the entire coliseum almost seemed to tremble from how powerful it was.

A second later, a massive gale of wind began violently blowing outward from within the darkened area, sending sand flying everywhere!

Everyone was simultaneously stunned and amazed by what they were currently witnessing.

The five remaining masters, however, instantly began taking a few steps backward when they saw all this. Just from that roar alone, they were more than certain that the savage was no ordinary being.

At that moment, a massive figure could be seen rushing out of the darkened area, sending the audience into an excited uproar as several people among the crowd began shouting, “It’s coming out! It’s coming out!”

With everyone’s eyes now fixed on the darkened area’s entrance, they watched as the seven-foot tall Leo dashed into the open area! Despite how large his build was, his speed was terrifying!

Taking advantage of all the dust and sand in the air, Leo rushed toward one of the masters and, with a seemingly effortless smack to the master’s shoulder, he was sent flying a good few dozen meters away!

With his shoulder now clearly dislodged, the master ended up colliding against the open area’s stone walls, causing the coliseum to almost quiver from the massive impact!

Coughing out a mouthful of blood, the master then lost consciousness and flopped feebly to the ground...

#### Chapter 1318

While he wasn’t dead—since Leo hadn’t hit any of his vital organs—there was no way in hell that he was going to be able to continue fighting.

Releasing another deafening roar, everyone was forced to cover their ears this time due to how close Leo now was to them.

Before anyone could even register what was happening, however, Leo was already on the move again. By the time the audience opened their eyes again, Leo was already standing before the four remaining masters.

With four precise and lightning-fast strikes, Leo proceeded to take each of them down. The way he did it made it look easy, and it almost suggested that he was dealing with nothing but mere insects.

Upon seeing that, those who were still seated instantly found themselves getting up and taking a few steps backward.



Fleur, however, was arguably even more shocked than anyone else from the crowd, and her expression had taken a drastic change by this point. After all, all seven of the masters—who were each highly ranked within King Valley—had been taken out in single blows from Leo. No wonder Seamus had been so confident this entire time!

Even Yenny's expression had changed for the worst, her heart throbbing from the scene she was currently witnessing.

Finding Leo's actions to be unusual, Seamus found himself getting up from his seat as well as his now pale-faced servant said, "It's simply too fierce, Young Master Seamus! I believe that all the electric shocks we've given him have stimulated his potential, making him far stronger than before! By this point, it really isn't a stretch to call him an unstoppable force! Still, we... shouldn't be worried that he'll suddenly rush out, right...?"

"...There's no need to worry about that. After all, he's afraid of electric shocks! Just in case something bad happens, I want you to order the ones in charge to charge the power grid to full power!" ordered Seamus, his face now getting increasingly pale as well.

Now that all five of the masters were lying on the ground, unmoving, the massive Leo began rushing toward the entrance gates just as Seamus gave that order!

With how fast that titan-like man was going, there was no doubt that the gates weren't going to be able to hold against that charged attack!

Understanding that, the panicking Seamus instantly ordered, "Hurry up and turn the power grids on already! Electrocute him while we can!"

By that point, the entire coliseum had descended into chaos, and many of the audience members were already running for their lives.

Even those from King Valley were already tugging onto Fleur's arm, urging her to leave while shouting, "Miss, we must leave immediately! It's too dangerous here!"

"But, the seven masters! They're still in there...!" cried out Fleur, tears already in her eyes.

Moving back to Leo, he was just inches away from the entrance when all of a sudden, the gate seemingly came to life, cackling loudly as blue jolts of electricity danced along its surface!

However, Leo was no longer afraid of the electricity as he had been before. As he landed an immense blow onto the metal gates, electricity surged through his body! Though he suffered physically, he was no longer worried about receiving heavenly retribution. After all, he now knew that this electricity wasn't heavenly lightning at all!

With an explosive sound, he then easily tore open the steel gates with that single punch!

Upon realizing what had just taken place, the chaos in the coliseum got even worse as screams of terror filled the area.

"The hell? He isn't even afraid of electric shocks anymore?!" yelled Seamus in his utter disbelief.

His horrified servant, on the other hand, had already seen countless Fairleigh bodyguards being tossed into the air to know that it was high time to make a run for it.

"Young master! We need to run!" pleaded the terrified man.

"We can't! If we allow this immensely powerful savage to escape, my father will surely have my head!" replied Seamus, seemingly unwilling to just let things end like this.

"Let's not bother about that just yet, Young Master! If you don't run now, it'll truly be too late for us!" shouted the servant as he instantly began dragging Seamus to safety before he could even protest.

The entire coliseum truly was the embodiment of pandemonium at this point.

Regardless, after rushing out of the place, Leo didn't even look back. Following Gerald's instructions, he was currently headed deep into the mountains to look for a cave—that Gerald had told him about—to temporarily hide in.

Gerald himself was now taking in a deep breath as he scanned through the coliseum that now very much resembled a place where no man had traveled before.

Looking at the thick stone walls, the metal gates, and the electric fences that Leo had completely decimated, the shocked Gerald found himself thinking, 'How utterly terrifying...! And here I thought Hogan was already extremely strong! If he were to ever combat Leo, Leo probably wouldn't have any trouble with him at all!'

Leo's true strength was already way stronger than his own, despite Gerald already nearing the advanced stage of the Spirit Earth Realm!

Chapter 1319

Regardless, Gerald hadn't followed Leo since rushing back to King Valley was the priority.

As for the cave he had sent Leo to, it was one that was quite well-concealed. Gerald had previously come across it while heading back to the valley alone, and since he didn't know how far the Fairleighs would go to recapture Leo, Gerald figured that the cave was Leo's best bet of avoiding detection.

Of course, Gerald knew that Leo was no longer afraid of stun guns, and while Gerald didn't really care about the lives of the Fairleighs, if Leo simply began killing them off—and causing a massive bloodbath—then the target on Gerald's back would definitely grow bigger.

To put it simply, Gerald didn't want to attract the attention of both the Gunters and those from Judgement Portal. With that in mind, it was definitely better for Leo to remain hidden for the time being.

Regardless, he needed to hurry back to King Valley to obtain the three herbs to cure Sierra.

Just as he arrived at the familiar yard, Gerald saw a middle-aged man—who looked to be in his forties—and two of his subordinates standing before Myles.

"Humph! Who do you even think you are, Myles? To just allow some random person into the valley... Hell, you even went ahead and prepared a room for him!" scoffed the man.

Despite the man's clear arrogance, Myles respectfully replied, "You may not be aware of this, Steward Sam, but that man is me and the master of the valley's benefactor's disciple! He's come to ask for medicine, which is why I've allowed him to temporarily stay!"

"...What? Not only has he come over to ask for medicine, but he even used the master's name? Why haven't I heard the master talk about this before then? Regardless, the King Valley isn't a place for ordinary people to enter all willy-nilly! Now cease this nonsense and vacate that room for me! It's reserved for Mr. and Mrs. Cate's son! Also, I remind you that you're no longer the steward of this place, Myles. You're just a handyman in the King Valley now! Whatever the case is, you'd better focus on serving their son and carrying out your duties properly, otherwise, you'll have to answer to me!" sneered Sam as he waved his hand.

While Myles had no idea who Mr. and Mrs. Cates's son was, he soon got his answer.

As one of the guards took one step to the side, it revealed an exquisite-looking box—typically made for babies—and in it, was a puppy! So... The 'son' of Mr. and Mrs. Cates was nothing more than a dog...?!

Anger flashed across Myle's face.

He was someone who would live and die for the sake of both the King Valley as well as the master of the valley. Despite that, not only were they now ordering him to live with a dog, but he also had to serve it?! Anyone living on the planet would feel dejected by that!

Even so, Myles could only clench his fist, not daring to say a word.

As he turned to look at Sam again, however, the corner of his eyes caught a glimpse of Gerald who had been standing near the entrance this entire time.

Realizing that, Myles then forced on a smile before saying, "...Ah, Mr. Crawford! Where have you been? I was just about to go look for you!"

Though Gerald had clearly seen everything that had just taken place, he simply pretended that he hadn't and replied, "I was just taking a stroll to have a look around."

Clearing his throat, Myles then shook his head before saying, "...I see! Speaking of which, Mr. Crawford, I... have something serious to attend to that I'm afraid I can't share the details of! With that in mind, I'm sorry to say that I can't help you this time! In the end, I'm just a low-ranked person in King Valley and nobody takes me seriously, though I'm sure you've already seen what happened earlier..."

Hearing that, Gerald knew that there was no point asking about the medicinal herbs now. After all, if even being here was an issue, what more obtaining those rare herbs?

At that moment, Sam—who had momentarily walked off when Gerald came over earlier—returned with a bag in hand. It was Gerald's luggage.

The contents of the luggage bag itself weren't anything special, at least to Gerald. Just a few books that the man had told Gerald to hand over to the master of the valley. As far as Gerald knew, the books held records of important information about folk remedies.

Of course, in addition to getting the herbs, it was clear that that man's goal was to further expand his network with new forces.

Whatever the case was, Sam snorted loudly, "What's this, what's this? Whose broken bag is this?"

"That's mine," replied Gerald as he looked at the mustached steward.

Upon hearing Gerald's reply, Sam then tossed the bag which landed right at Gerald's feet before shouting, "Oh, I'm well aware! Now pick that up and leave already!"

Infuriated, the now red-faced Myles then retorted, "What is the meaning of this, Sam?! I've already told you that Mr. Crawford is here on behalf of me and master's benefactor! Treating Mr. Crawford like this... Do you not care one bit about me at all? Let me remind you that had I not recommended you back then, you wouldn't have been promoted to steward today! You should know what you've done for me to overreact like this! Don't step over the line!"

"I don't get a single word of what you just said, Myles! Not one word!" growled Sam, his expression now dark as he took a few steps forward before stomping on Gerald's bag!

Watching as Sam proceeded to apply extra force on his foot, just to rub it in, Myles's breath instantly began heaving rapidly.

Chapter 1320

"Oh? What's wrong? You planning on hitting me or something? Haha! It's so satisfying to see you enraged like some untamed bear! Come on, hit me! Make my day!" taunted Sam as he began patting Myles's face mockingly.

A second after he said that, Sam's eyes widened as he found himself flying in the air, a burning sensation now on his right cheek. Just as he was about to scream from Gerald's immense slap, all the wind got knocked out of him the second his body collided against the corner of a wall! As Sam began vomiting blood, a few teeth could be seen mixed in with the crimson liquid.

As Sam's two bodyguards stood frozen in place, completely stunned, Sam slowly crawled to his knees, glaring daggers in his utter disbelief at the man who was currently standing beside Myles.

"You... How dare you hit me...?!" growled Sam as he watched Gerald pick his bag up.

Dusting the dirt of the bag, Gerald then replied, "What? You were the one who was asking to be hit, no? Are you satisfied now, you blabbermouth?"

"You... You...! You're courting death! Kill him!" yelled Sam furiously at his two subordinates as his entire body trembled, too hurt to even get off the ground.

"No, wait! Don't do it!" shouted Myles in a panic, knowing full well that every bodyguard within King Valley was extremely well-trained.

What happened next, however, caused Myles eyes to widen in shock.

Before the guards could even make a move, Gerald had swiftly moved up to them! In a single kick, both of them ended up flying quite a distance away!

Realizing that both of them were unable to even get up after receiving that attack, the horrified Sam instantly cursed, “F-f\*ck!”

Not wanting to stay there any longer, Sam immediately began trying to get to his feet to flee the scene. To his utter dismay, he quickly felt Gerald’s foot stomping down on his head!

“Oh? Did you think you were going to be able to leave just like that?” asked Gerald coldly.

“Y-you better not mess around with me...! This is King Valley, you know? Stepping on the head of the most powerful person here... You have a death wish or something...?!”

“Quite frankly, I truly had assumed that those from the King Valley were all exceptional people before I came here. I was even convinced that the master of your valley was some top-notch person. Sadly, everyone from the valley that I’ve come across—except for Myles—has been utterly disappointing. With that in mind, why should I show even the slightest respect to a useless steward like you? Also, who was it who gave you permission to even touch my belongings? A bit daring for such a useless person, don’t you think?” replied Gerald as he slowly began exerting more pressure on Sam’s neck.

Now both terrified and in massive pain, Sam found himself soiling his pants due to how increasingly difficult it was for him not to think about his neck snapping if Gerald continued adding more force to his foot.

“...P-please, have mercy...! Please, let’s just talk this out...!” pleaded Sam.

“I’m glad you finally realize where you stand. Now then, while I’m fine with letting you go, you first have to do something for me. Remember how you stepped on and dirtied my bag? Clean it up!” ordered Gerald as he tossed the bag before Sam.

“R-right away!” replied Sam as he quickly began wiping the dirt off the bag with his hands.

Barely a second later, however, Gerald landed a kick to his face!

“W-what did I do wrong...?! I’m doing what you ordered me to...!” whimpered Sam.

“Oh really? I don’t remember telling you to clean it with your hands... Use your tongue to lick it clean like the mutt you are!” growled Gerald.

Seeing how fierce and ruthless Gerald’s gaze was, Sam could only instinctively tremble in fright.

Taking in a deep breath, Sam then thought, ‘...You may have the last laugh today, but I’ll surely have my revenge one day...! Just you wait!’

Regardless, Sam then stuck out his tongue and began licking the bag clean, knowing full well that this was the only way he was going to avoid getting into more trouble.

Not really expecting Sam to actually obey his orders, the disgusted Gerald then kicked the injured steward out of the yard while shouting, “Now beat it!”

As Sam scurried off, Myles—who had been standing there this entire time—could only continue staring wide-eyed at Gerald, utterly dumbfounded by what he had just witnessed.

#### Chapter 1321

Myles had initially thought that Gerald was just some ordinary young man who just so happened to become the disciple of his benefactor, a clinic doctor.

He would’ve never imagined for Gerald to hold such strength. People could usually tell a real expert from a fake when the ‘expert’ made their move, and from what Myles had seen, Gerald was a hundred percent the real deal. In fact, he was so strong that he was possibly even stronger than some of the masters in King Valley! That fact alone made Myles momentarily stunned speechless.

Eventually, however, he snapped out of it and immediately began sincerely praising, “M-Mr. Crawford! To think you had such immense skill!”

Myles was so overjoyed that it almost seemed like he had forgotten that Gerald had just heavily injured the steward of King Valley!



“You flatter me too much, Mr. Myles. I was simply upset with the way he was treating you!” replied Gerald with a wry smile.

“Speaking of which, Mr. Myles, is the master of the valley aware that I need the three herbs? Regardless of whether he has or hasn’t, I’d like to meet up with him!” added Gerald rather bluntly.

After his absurd encounter with those King Valley siblings who treated other peoples’ lives like they were mere playthings, Gerald’s initial respect for those in the valley had long plummeted.

As if that wasn’t enough, the master of King Valley was obviously being ungrateful since he had clearly forgotten about the man who had rescued him back then. The man in the shantytown hadn’t even thought twice about saving Myles and the master of King Valley at the time, so getting such a cold response in return now certainly irked Gerald.

“I’ll be honest and say that had I attempted to introduce you to him before this, not only would he have declined, but you most certainly wouldn’t have been able to get the three herbs you wanted either. Now that I know that you have such skill, however, that changes things entirely. You should know that the master admires martial artists the most! Also, while the King Valley may appear to be peaceful on the surface level, it’s actually in the middle of a crisis now. With that in mind, the master is currently busy recruiting masters from all over the world! Regardless, let’s go, Mr. Crawford! I’ll take you to the master of the valley right this instant!” explained Myles with a laugh.

Choosing not to say anything in response, Gerald simply followed after Myles. Quite honestly, he was curious as to what sort of deity-like person Rupert Yateman—the master of King Valley—was.

As they made their way there, Myles started talking about some of his bitter experiences here with Gerald. Essentially, after being Rupert’s personal driver for quite some time back then, he ended up getting promoted to the position of steward.

At the time, he had treated Sam like his very own brother, constantly praising him. However, things took a turn for the worst when the previous master’s wife fell seriously ill.

Sam had been placed in charge of taking care of her at the time, but due to his negligence, he ended up mixing the wrong medicines and almost caused the master’s wife to lose her life! To avoid punishment, Sam abused his trust with Myles and framed him for being the one responsible for all that!

Due to that incident, Myles was immediately demoted to a low-ranking handyman, whereas Sam was given the role of steward instead.

By the time Myles got to that part of the story, both he and Gerald had arrived at the conference hall, the place where the master of the valley usually received his guests.

Upon entering, both of them saw that there was already a crowd of people inside. From what Myles could tell, there was a rather important meeting going on, seeing that a number of core members of the King Valley were present.

All of them were seemingly too engrossed in some girl's story that nobody even noticed Gerald and Myles's presence.

"Dad, I'm serious! That savage is way too powerful! He killed over a hundred people there, you know? Thank god sis and I were rather well-trained in martial arts, otherwise, we wouldn't have been able to escape!" explained the girl, hints of fear in her voice.

Finding the voice to be somewhat familiar, Gerald squinted his eyes at the girl, and sure enough, it truly was Yenny Yateman.

"I didn't expect the Fairleighs to have such a master in Fairleigh Valley. Thankfully he appears to be on the run. If he were to obey their bidding, King Valley would definitely be in for a world of trouble!" replied a middle-aged man—from where he sat on a sofa—calmly as he turned to look at Fleur.

Chapter 1322

"As for you. How many times have I told you not to get involved with any of the Fairleighs? Knowing Seamus, who knows what he had in mind when you made that bet with him? It should've been clear as day that he wanted to cheat you! Had it not been for the savage running wild, you would've definitely lost the bet!" reprimanded the middle-aged man.

To those who knew him, he was none other than the master of King Valley, Rupert Yateman. He was a father to two daughters, them being Yenny and Fleur Yateman.

Being the younger daughter, Yenny had quite the bizarre attitude, and her personality was flippant as it was insincere. Fleur, on the other hand, was much more mature and stable-minded.

Regardless, Rupert couldn't help but feel irked this time. After all, the bet his daughter had made had cost the lives of seven of the King Valley's most highly ranked masters.

"All of you should know how covetously the Fairleighs have been eyeing us this entire time! With that in mind, everyone should be extra careful whenever they decide things! None of you should get involved with the Fairleighs, is that clear?" instructed Rupert.

Following that, he then turned to look at his daughters before angrily adding, "As for you two, go back to your rooms! You're grounded until further notice!"

After the slightly pouting duo walked off to enter their rooms, Myles took a step forward and bowed before saying, "Greetings, master! This lowly one has a request!"

Frowning slightly, Rupert then asked, "Go on, what is it?"

"Well, I know you've been recruiting martial arts masters from all over the world, master. With that in mind, allow me to introduce you to Mr. Crawford here! He's the disciple of our benefactor back then!" introduced Myles.

Upon hearing that, Rupert turned to look at Gerald before replying in an indifferent tone, "What benefactor?"

"...You know, the one who... Well, back in the shantytown..." mumbled Myles.

"Ah, so that's what you're talking about. So you're telling me that he accepted some disciple who just so happens to be proficient in martial arts?" replied Rupert while shaking his head.

As someone who had been through a lot, Rupert could tell from a single glance that this young man was simply here to collect the grace from that year. Thinking about it, Rupert remembered wanting to offer the farmer money back then, though that man had declined. At the time, Rupert had wondered what

kind of airs that farmer was putting on. To think that that man had been saving that request all this time till he eventually figured out what he wanted from Rupert.

“Whatever the case is, just go tell the accountant and hand this boy fifty thousand- no, actually, give him a hundred thousand! With that, I hope the matter will be done and over with!” ordered Rupert as he furrowed his brows while waving for them to leave.

‘Hah! Martial artist... It’s obvious that he’s just some naïve kid!’

“To think that we came all the way here just to see a liar! Do you think you can just waltz into King Valley all willy-nilly? What do you think this place is, boy?” said one of the rather extraordinary-looking elderly men in the room as the other old men present took turns shaking their heads with wry smiles on their faces.

Raising a slight brow, Gerald could feel murderous intent building in his heart. If things were really going to proceed this way, then he wasn’t against taking the medicine by force.

Seeing how displeased Gerald was, Myles quickly replied, “B-but master, Mr. Crawford isn’t here for money! Instead, he’s here in hopes of obtaining three rare medicinal herbs!”

Now sighing in irritation, Rupert then responded, “Three rare medicinal herbs you say? What favor did that man even do for us to deserve that! Look, I’m getting really annoyed right now, so if you don’t leave with the money already, you’ll be going home empty-handed!”

At that moment, a young servant fumbled into the room while shouting, “N-not good! Things aren’t looking good!”

Watching as the boy fell to the ground, Rupert’s frown deepened as he asked, “What is it that’s gotten you into such a panic?”

“I-it’s the master of Fairleigh Valley, master! He’s leading lots of people over, saying that it was our peoples’ fault for letting some undefeatable God of War on the loose! I’m not sure what they meant by that, but they’re claiming that those from our valley caused the Fairleighs to suffer massive losses! They

want us to compensate them now, and if we don't, they're planning on barging in!" explained the servant.

"...What?! Those utter b\*stards!" roared Rupert in fury as he slammed both hands onto his table.

"Gather our men immediately! I'm the dignified master of King Valley! Who do those Fairleighs think they are just doing as they please here?!"

Chapter 1323

"The master of the valley is coming!" shouted one of the King Valley's bodyguards excitedly. Hearing that, the other guards—who had been facing off with those from the Fairleigh family—felt like a massive weight had just been lifted off their chests.

Over sixty bodyguards from the King Valley had been groaning and howling in pain as they laid on the ground. Upon realizing that Rupert was coming, however, all of them instantly began supporting each other up—albeit all of them being a little wobbly—before staggering over to hide behind Rupert's back.

Rupert himself was frowning deeply, his fists clenched tightly as he shouted, "Hershel! Bradley!"

Hershel was the master of Fairleigh Valley, and Bradley was Hershel's younger brother.

While the present-day King Valley specialized in the art of pill-making and the Fairleighs were known for their expertise in martial arts, there was once a time when those from the Fairleigh Valley also specialized in pill-making. After all, the founder of Fairleigh Valley was actually a subordinate from the King Valley who managed to escape!

With that in mind, it was already pretty clear that the two families had a long history of grievances.

Regardless, despite the fact that Bradley was the younger brother, he was extremely powerful. If Rupert had to pick between whom he was more worried about, the answer would most definitely always be Bradley. If the rumors were true, Bradley's level of strength was already nearing the advanced stage of the Spirit Earth Realm! That was honestly the reason why Rupert had begun gathering so many masters in the first place.

Even with that precaution, however, it was now evident that none of them were even a match for Bradley. After all, Bradley had simply taken the opportunity to go wild today, as seen by the sixty-over injured guards now cowering behind Rupert. He had truly underestimated how strong Bradley truly was...

Gerald himself—who had followed everyone out—was now observing the man donning black clothes and shoes who was standing in front of the other Fairleighs. Looking to be around the age of forty, a large scar on that man's face only served to make him appear even more ferocious than he already was.

“What’s wrong, Master of King Valley? From the looks of it, you’ve invited quite a number of masters to deal with the Fairleighs! Is my guess correct?” asked Bradley as he took a step forward while looking straight into Rupert’s eyes with a smile.

Being a big boss, Rupert repressed his shock before replying, “How presumptions both of you are today! To think that you’ve brought so many of your men over on such short notice! You’ve even injured so many of our valley’s men!”

“An eye for an eye, Master Rupert! Don’t you remember how you gave my brother that scar on his face? Back when you used the King Valley’s medicine to hire a master to ambush us? If my brother hadn’t risked his life back then, I wouldn’t have even been able to escape in the first place! Mind you, I won’t ever forget how that scar came to be!” replied Hershel with a cold laugh.

The two families had been at odds for far too long, and Bradley had been particularly vengeful about it.

Following that, Bradley then added, “It’s high time we ended this nonsense, Rupert Yateman! Not only do we still have old unsettled scores, but to think that your daughter would actually free the undefeatable God of War that we so painstakingly captured! Have you any idea how many men we lost just to capture him? Our families have already been fighting for a long time, Rupert! We’ve come today to settle our hatred, both old and new! Let’s put an end to all this today!”

Not only were Bradley’s words intimidating, but whenever he opened his mouth, the scar on his face seemed like it was executing some ferocious tribal dance.

Regardless, Rupert remained momentarily silent. It was true that he had previously sent someone to assassinate the brothers. What more, those from the King Valley had had increased conflicts with the

Fairleighs quite recently. Now that the Fairleighs were even blaming his daughter for releasing their savage, Rupert could already tell that they had been waiting for an excuse to do all this. To think that they were finally going to actually do it!

However, even though it was clear that the Fairleighs were looking for a fight, given the current situation, Rupert feared that not even all the masters that he had gathered and trained over the past six years would be able to take on Bradley!

With that in mind, Rupert then lowered his voice before saying, “Don’t think you can just do whatever you please just because you’ve reached the advanced stage of the Spirit Earth Realm... I’ll have you know that we here in the King Valley haven’t just been twiddling our fingers all these years either!”

“Hah! I assure you that everyone knows how strong the King Valley is, and that naturally includes us! Look, the less you struggle, the easier it’ll be for all of us! Know that none of your ‘masters’ have even been able to withstand a single blow from Bradley! With that in mind, stop wasting our time and offer yourselves to us already! Of course, if you still wish to fight back, then it can’t be helped. Seamus! You stay back! There’s not even a need for your second uncle to take action! If they’re reluctant to cooperate, just clean up the rest of those so-called masters!” snorted Hershel as he turned to look at Seamus.

Upon hearing that, the elders from before—who had mocked Gerald—instantly portrayed extremely ugly expressions.

Those from the King Valley had been famous for the longest time. To think that they were being taken so lightly now! As if that wasn’t already humiliating enough, the Fairleighs were just leaving a junior to deal with them!

#### Chapter 1324

Among them, however, Rupert seemed to be the most humiliated. Taking in a deep breath, he then nodded before shouting, “Master Croft, Master Jones, and Master Keay! It’s high time we took action!”

Hearing that, the three masters then nodded in unison before turning to look at a young man who was standing beside them.

“Go deal with the young master of the Fairleigh family, Peter,” said one of the three masters, prompting the young man—who was donning tight-fitting clothing—to nod before walking toward Seamus and facing him.

After Peter made a gesture that suggested that he was saying, ‘after you,’ another of the masters then said, “Peter’s the oldest disciple under me, and he’s been training with me for over ten years. He’s already at the final stage of the Nebula Realm, so dealing with this young master shouldn’t be an issue for him.”

As the three masters took turns nodding confidently, Bradley simply smirked before looking at Peter and saying, “Hah! So they’re sending you out to your death, huh? To think that a mere child like you even dares to go against my nephew! Make sure not to hold anything back, Seamus!”

“You’re the one courting death,” replied Peter.

Being a young man who practiced martial arts day in and day out, Peter wasn’t about to let himself get affected by taunts like these.

With nothing to lose, Peter then dashed toward the sneering Seamus who had his arms crossed.

What happened next took place so quickly that the next thing everyone knew, a figure had already been flung backward! Upon the person’s collision, the impact of it alone was enough to cause the entire ancient-looking building—that they were flung toward—to quiver!

“P-Peter!” shouted all three of the masters in unison, their eyes now fully widened after witnessing what had just happened.

His body sticking against the building’s side, everyone could now see that it truly was Peter who had been punched backward. Anyone paying close attention to Peter’s body could tell that it was a punch since there was a clear fist mark embedded in his chest.

“Humph. It appears that my nephew is still a bit soft-hearted. Rest assured that your disciple isn’t dead yet. Regardless, it’s now your turn...” said Bradley with a grin, bloodlust reflected in his eyes.



Seeing that, all three of the masters felt chills running down their spines. After watching their strongest disciple fall from a single hit, the trio no longer had the confidence they initially had. Just how vast was the difference between their skill levels?

Whatever the case was, in the end, all three of them knew that there was no other way than to bite the bullet.

With that, under everyone's expectant gazes, the three masters then slowly walked over to face Seamus before one of them shouted, "Cease this madness at once, you loquacious child!"

"Humph! Is there even a need for me to fear you three pretentious old things? Just come at me already!" retorted Seamus.

"Don't get too cocky just yet!" replied another of the three masters. Though the trio knew that together, they were near-invincible, they still couldn't help but feel irritated by Seamus's taunting.

With that, all four of them then began gathering their inner strength... And a split second later, both sides had already exchanged up to eight blows!

To the untrained eye, all they could see were black shadows jumping about in the open space, causing destruction wherever they landed. To make matters more intense, each blow was so fast that it caused the air surrounding their fists to whistle!

As the four people fought on, Rupert couldn't help but break out in cold sweat as he thought, '...How... How terrifying...! To think that even the third generation of the Fairleigh family was already this strong...!'

After all this time, Rupert finally realized that he had been a textbook example of being a frog in the well. After occupying Sunhill Rise for over ten years, he had assumed that he was second in the world, bested only by the heavens itself. Why hadn't he ever considered the fact that there were many others in the outside world capable of killing him with just a simple pinch?

'Once this battle is over, no matter what it takes, I'll definitely have to recruit a bodyguard with at least the same amount of strength that Bradley has. Otherwise, nobody would even find out if I were to

suddenly be assassinated!' Rupert thought to himself as he continued praying that the three masters would win. If they did end up losing, then those from the King Valley would truly be unable to weather through this catastrophe!

At that moment, one final explosive sound could be heard as the silhouettes of all four people hopped back to opposing sides of the field. While one of them stood in the spot he had started from, the other three had retreated a good few steps away from where they had begun from.

Everyone's eyes were now fully widened as chills ran up their spines.

The staggering trio who had retreated were the three masters...

Chapter 1325

"How unexpected for a greenhorn like you to have achieved such immense inner strength!" said one of the masters. All three of them had looks of disbelief and bitter smiles on their faces as they stared at Seamus whose entire body seemed to be steaming with excess heat.

Though Seamus was now panting slightly, it was obvious that he had persevered well in his fight. Knowing that, he then cockily said, "I hope you now understand what my father and second uncle had meant! Just surrender already so that lives can be spared! Let this be a warning that if I have to continue fighting, I won't be holding back anymore! Understand that our visit today is solely aimed at Rupert! If you don't wish to die, then step aside!"

Hearing that, all three of the masters could only sigh. Barely any fighting spirit left in them, they were well aware that if they were unable to take down Seamus even after combining all three of their efforts, then they could certainly forget about ever being Bradley's opponent.

Seeing that, Rupert and everyone else from the King Valley felt as though they had hit rock bottom. Understanding that there was no longer anything to lose, Rupert glared daggers at the Fairleighs before shouting angrily, "Do it!"

Upon hearing the command, two gunmen instantly revealed themselves from behind the courtyard's many rocks! Both of them had been hired with massive sums of money, and they had each claimed to be gods of marksmanship. With that in mind, Rupert had placed them as his last line of defense.

Regardless, just as both of them were about to open fire, Bradley suddenly used his inner strength to lift two stones off the ground before launching them directly at the two gunmen! The stones themselves hit each of them right between their eyebrows, causing both of them to scream in unison as they fell to the ground!

Up till this point, the Fairleighs had only made their appearance for about ten minutes. Despite that being the case, many of Rupert's more capable men were already seriously wounded and down for the count. Though he still had about a hundred and fifty bodyguards at his command, Rupert knew better than to increase the casualties for the sake of it. From what he could tell, the only ones left who were capable of momentarily holding their ground were himself and a few other elders. However, that was about it.

As he pondered his next step, Bradley suddenly shouted, "Step back, Seamus. I'll be taking over from here!"

With a frosty glare, Bradley then slowly—and menacingly—began walking toward Rupert.

At that moment, both Fleur and Yenny ran up to the square—utterly panicked and surprised by the huge mess they were currently witnessing—as they shouted, "Father...!"

By this point, Rupert's face had gone completely pale. With trembling legs, he then slowly turned to look at his two beautiful daughters... Though he clenched his fists tightly as he tried his hardest to resist, in the end, he knew he had to do it.

"...Say... Bradley, Hershel... Quite honestly, we never really resented you back then... It was a blessing, really, that your ancestors managed to learn the art of pill-making from our King Valley. After all, it eventually led to the creation of Fairleigh Valley! Regardless, I've always had a hunch that Seamus was interested in our Fleur... What say you to us turning this enmity into friendship...?"

"Hah! You really think my nephew likes your Fleur? Let's cut the bullsh\*t and just let me kill you already! Once that's done, I'll just take your daughter so that my nephew can satisfy his urges!" scoffed Bradley, not even worried about filtering his words anymore as he began walking menacingly toward Rupert. From what everyone could see, his murderous intent was already overflowing by this point.

At that moment, Myles rushed over to stand before Rupert while shouting, "Master!"

However, the second he got there, Bradley simply smacked his hand against Myles's shoulder, causing him to crumble to the ground, completely unable to stand!

Patting Rupert's face with the back of his hand, Bradley—who was now standing right in front of the man—then said, “You know, once you're out of the picture, Rupert, Fairleigh Valley will finally be able to take what we've always wanted. With that in mind, did you honestly think that we would even need to covet to your petty bargain?”

“B-Brother Bradley, I admit to my faults...! I was blind back then, so please forgive me...! Before you do anything rash, please remember that your ancestors were only able to make their fortune because of the King Valley! With that in mind, you can't just wipe out the roots of your forefathers...!” pleaded Rupert. Now that he had nobody else supporting him, the trembling Rupert knew that he was no different than an ordinary man.

A split second later, Rupert's right cheek was immediately greeted by a slap!

“‘Can't just wipe out the roots of our ancestors?’ You talk as though you're even worthy to call yourself that! I'll say it now that to me, killing you is as easy as squashing a bug! Regardless, once Fairleigh Valley takes over the King Valley's industry, I'm sure the other valleys won't have anything to say about it, am I correct?”

“Y-yes! It's as you said! With that in mind, please spare my life, Brother Bradley!” begged Rupert who simply couldn't bear the pressure of death anymore. He was so terrified, in fact, that he immediately knelt before his daughters and everyone else with a loud ‘thud’ before hugging onto Bradley's legs and bumping his forehead onto them.

Regardless of how much of a bigshot he was, he was only human and still feared death. He had only persevered for so long since he had tasted power and wealth before. In other words, he had been more afraid of losing his material belongings than death up till this point.

Watching as his former enemy knelt and begged like a dog, Bradley instantly laughed triumphantly, his dissatisfaction—that he had held in his heart for over ten years—seemingly slowly dissipating.

As for the three masters from before, they could only hold onto their chests, unable to advance nor retreat. Sighing internally, all three of them simultaneously thought, 'Today truly has been a mistake... We've now lost everything...'

Looking at how pitiful the once majestic boss of Sunhill Rise currently was, everyone's hearts felt extremely bitter. After all, no matter how much he knelt or begged for mercy, that man was still their lord.

"M-Master, you mustn't do this...! Kneeling today will only make you the joke of the other valleys as well as our international businessman customers!" said Myles, his eyes reddened.

Chapter 1326

"I...I'll fight it out with all of you!" shouted the furious Fleur out of the blue.

Revealing a hidden dagger, she then rushed toward Bradley, intent on piercing it right into his chest! Since she had always liked martial arts and had been practicing several forms of them ever since she was a child, Fleur was rather confident that she could at least land a hit.

To her utter dismay, all it took was a single kick from Seamus for him to disarm her. She wasn't even able to get anywhere close to Bradley!

As the dagger fell to the ground, Seamus grabbed Fleur by her wrist before pulling her into his arms.

Seeing that, the terrified Yenny then rushed forward, hoping to rescue her sister as she shouted, "I-I'll fight you too!"

Screaming as she ran toward Seamus, another young master from Fairleigh Valley simply stepped in and grabbed her wrist before hugging her tightly in his arms, just like how Seamus was doing with Fleur.

Laughing sinisterly, Seamus then said, "You have no idea how long I've been waiting for this moment, Fleur! I have a proposal for you! If you obey my every order tonight, then I'll tell my father and second uncle to spare your life! Hell, I'll even make you the young mistress of the two great valleys! Due to how generous I am, I'll even allow you to keep half of King Valley! How about it?"

“Unhand me, you b\*stard!” shouted Fleur, despair reflected in her eyes as she turned to face the hundred and fifty King Valley bodyguards who were still standing there.

“What are all of you even doing? Stop standing there in a daze and attack already!”

Upon hearing that order, all of them finally snapped out of it and took a step forward, intent on fighting till the very end! However, the second Bradley turned to look at them, all of them simply froze in place again!

After witnessing how strong the Fairleighs—who had been living in seclusion for so many years—were, everyone knew for a fact that they weren’t going to even come close to being their opponents.

“F-Fleur, just be a good girl and listen to Mr. Fairleigh! Please agree to whatever he wants and save your father...!” pleaded Rupert shamelessly.

“Hah! Save? You’re dying no matter what happens today, Rupert!” scoffed Bradley as he knocked Rupert to the ground.

“Quit dawdling with him, Bradley. It’s high time we got rid of him and all his people from King Valley! The sooner you do it, the quicker we’ll finally be able to take over this place!” said Hershel with a smirk.

“Loud and clear! Well then, Rupert! I’ll be handing you your one-way ticket to hell!” snorted Bradley as he slowly raised his arm, aiming for Rupert’s head.

Rupert himself was so frightened that he ended up closing his eyes.

Before Bradley could land the finishing blow, however, Myles—who had finally managed to struggle to his feet—suddenly shouted, “Stop!”

Now that everyone’s eyes were on him, Myles then knelt with a ‘thud’ before Gerald before begging, “Mr. Crawford! The master of the valley was wrong, so please accept my apology on his behalf! I, Myles Mateman, am willing to offer my life in exchange for another, so please, please save the master of the valley! I’ll repay his debt with my life...!”

As Myles continued kowtowing till his forehead was all bloodied, Hershel shouted, “What are you waiting for, Bradley? Do it!”

Hearing that, Bradley snapped out of it and raised his palm again, this time intent on finishing Rupert...

However, at the very last second, Bradley instinctively took a step back as something lightning-fast rushed past his eyes! Quickly looking in the direction the object had flown toward, Bradley was just in time to see it colliding against one of the courtyard’s many rock structures...

Before sending the rock exploding thunderously into a sea of debris!

Even as the dust finally settled, none of the people there were able to break free from their silent paralysis.

Chapter 1327

“...W-what...?!” shouted Bradly, an utterly horrified and incredulous expression on his face as he stared wide-eyed at Gerald.

Bradley was already someone who possessed immense strength. With that in mind, how could an ordinary person like Gerald—who looked no older than Seamus—actually cause him to flinch from attacking?

Had he not witnessed Gerald’s sudden attack just seconds ago, he wouldn’t have believed how capable the youth truly was! But this was illogical, wasn’t it?

As Bradley—in his shock and horror—continued trying to make sense of the situation, Hershel could simply frown as he turned to look at his younger brother.

Rupert, Fleur, and the others from King Valley, on the other end, were now feeling like they had finally been graced with hope after being pushed into such a desperate situation earlier.

To think that he had such ungodly strength... Thinking back, since none of them had been able to discern how powerful he truly was earlier, it was lucky that they didn’t offend him too badly...

Regardless, when Rupert saw that Gerald—who was arguably even stronger than Bradley—was now defending him, he immediately got to his feet.

Fleur herself had already wiggled free when everyone was still dumbfounded earlier, and she had just successfully freed her sister as well at the moment.

Running back to where most of the King Valley guards were, Yenny panted before saying, “S-sister! It’s him! I hadn’t noticed his presence earlier, but it turns out that he isn’t dead!”

“Hush! Don’t say anything first!” replied Fleur who was equally as surprised as Yenny was.

With the atmosphere now extremely cold and solemn, Bradley eventually frowned before asking, “...Who are you?”

Though he had already noticed Gerald’s presence long before Peter had even begun fighting Seamus, Bradley hadn’t really paid much attention to him, especially since he looked so young. Instead, his attention was fully preoccupied with the three masters, Rupert, and the two gunmen from earlier.

He now knew, however, that this kid possessed truly extraordinary strength. With that in mind, it was obvious that he had something to rely on.

Bradley was a person who had survived countless rains of bullets throughout the years, and aside from using brute force, the reason why he was still alive was because he had always been extremely careful. Even if he was facing a seemingly ordinary man, he knew better than to underestimate his opponent. After all, he was experienced enough to know that everything could go wrong because of a single wrong judgment.

Seeing that Gerald wasn’t replying, Rupert—who was now finally regaining a bit of confidence—cleared his throat as he said, “...Well then! I hadn’t expected our benefactor from back then to raise such an outstanding apprentice! I admit that I was a bit too rash and impetuous just now... If I remember correctly, Myles had said that you wished to collect three Cherish Herbs, correct? If you help us deal with the Fairleighs, forget three, I’ll give you ten of them! Hell, I’ll even throw in another seventy-five thousand dollars! How about it?”



Upon hearing that, Gerald simply turned to look at him before smiling coldly as he replied, "I hope you understand that I only saved you earlier due to how sincerely Myles was begging me to! Are you honestly attempting to use those simple terms, thinking you can just dismiss me after I deal with them? When you're currently at such a critical moment that could easily spell your death?"

What Gerald had said was no exaggeration. Had he not felt Myles's immense loyalty, Gerald wouldn't even have considered saving Rupert's life. After all, he could've just obtained the medicine on his own once Rupert was dead.

Hearing Gerald's reply, Rupert instantly felt his heart clench.

Since Gerald looked like a country bumpkin who hadn't seen much of the world, Rupert had assumed that Gerald would definitely be surprised by his sudden offer. In the end, however, Rupert was the one who was surprised since Gerald didn't seem to care about the offer at all!

"...Do you not think that my offer is good enough, young lad? What do you wish for then? Just say the word and I'll give it to you as long as you're willing to help get rid of my enemies for me!" bargained Rupert.

"Oh, what I want is quite simple. I just wish to own a fifth of the King Valley!" replied Gerald with a laugh.

"...I... I beg your pardon...?" replied Rupert, his eyes widened in shock.

Even Fleur hadn't expected Gerald to be this greedy!

"Oh? Hmm... Well, I said I just wish to own a fourth of the King Valley!" said Gerald with a smirk.

Now breathing frantically, Rupert finally realized how seriously he had underestimated the kid. To think that this young country bumpkin would even dare to ask for a fifth of the King Valley! As if that wasn't already outrageous enough, he was now asking for a fourth!

“...I’m sure I heard you said a fifth earlier... Regardless, I won’t lie that it’s exceedingly difficult for me to just hand over a fifth of my valley to you! How about this? Should you be willing to help me deal with them, I’ll give you a tenth of this place! It’ll certainly be more than sufficient for you to lead an easy and carefree life from the money generated from that area!”

#### Chapter 1328

Rupert found himself frowning as he said that. Naturally, he was going to be reluctant to part with his assents, and since he was still alive, he was definitely going to at least attempt to negotiate further.

Fixing his gaze on Rupert, Gerald simply replied, “A third!”

Hearing that, the elders found themselves exchanging glances with one another. It was already obvious that the knife was at Rupert’s throat, so there really was no reason for him to continue trying to bargain with Gerald. With how things were currently going, the elders knew for a fact that there was a very real possibility of Rupert losing the entire valley to Gerald by the time all this was over.

Taking in a deep breath, Rupert—who was still unwilling to just agree like that—then said, “Please don’t take advantage of us knowing that we’re already at our weakest, young lad! So be it! I’ll hand you a fifth of the valley, just as you’ve asked before! Is that agreeable?”

“Half of King Valley! Nothing less if you still want me to help you!” replied Gerald with a smile.

Rupert instantly knelt on the ground upon hearing that. He truly was caught in a dilemma since it wouldn’t be right for him to simply accept Gerald’s condition like that.

Quite honestly, he was wondering if Gerald would truly end up being useful in the end. After all, not even the three masters and two gunmen he had hired were able to deal with the situation. In the end, however, he knew that Gerald was his final ray of hope, and he couldn’t just let him walk off now that he was already on the verge of death.

He now also knew better than to continue trying to trick Gerald, knowing full well that if he attempted it one more time, Gerald would most certainly end up getting the entire valley.

If only he had known that things were going to end up this way, then he would’ve definitely attempted to build a better relationship with Gerald earlier. To think that Gerald had simply started off asking for

three Cherish herbs... There were at least a million of them stored within King Valley after collecting them for hundreds of years! Why hadn't he just given three of them to him and be done with it?

Now extremely frantic, Rupert could almost feel himself losing his temper. However, he refrained, knowing that whether he got angry or not, there was still not going to be any other way out.

With that in mind, the master of the valley gritted his teeth and stomped his foot hard on the ground before saying, "...Very well! I'll... I'll give you half of King Valley! Now please, please, help me get rid of those enemies!"

"Now wouldn't it have been better for you not to play any of your petty tricks in the first place...?" replied Gerald with a grin before turning to look at Bradley and the others.

From what he was able to tell, Bradley's strength was close to the middle stage of the Spirit Earth Realm, the same stage that Gerald currently was on. While that would technically signify that he and Gerald were equally matched in terms of strength, Gerald was clearly superior when it came to the amount of training both of them had experienced.

"...Don't get cocky too soon! From what I can sense, both of us are equally matched in terms of our inner strength! Furthermore, I have my brother and nephew here with me!" grunted Bradley. While it was true that he was a very cautious person, his anger had overtaken most of his rationality. He was so infuriated, in fact, that blood was already starting to seep from his old facial scar, making him look all the more ferocious!

Looking straight into Bradley's eyes, Gerald then replied, "Oh? You don't believe that I can take you down? Hmm... What to do... I guess I'll just have to prove my point by having all three of you come at me at the same time! How about that?"

"...You...! You're really asking for death, aren't you?!" roared Bradley as his eyes instantly flared up with murderous intent.

In the end, Bradley was someone who placed his worth even higher than his life. With that in mind, despite Gerald clearly having an immense amount of strength, Bradley was more than determined to break him into pieces after being humiliated so much by him!

“Once I’ve torn off your head and limbs, I’ll be tossing all of them into the river for the fish to feed on!” growled the enraged Bradley who now looked so terrifying that everyone present instantly turned pale in fright.

‘You really are just a young kid who doesn’t know what’s good for you! Look at the situation you got yourself in! Couldn’t you sense how terrifying Bradley already was? Why did you have to provoke him even further? While it’s true that you’re talented, you should know that Bradley’s already a veteran!’ thought the three masters as they helplessly watched on.

Myles himself was completely dumbfounded by the turn of events. While he already knew that Gerald was arrogant, he hadn’t expected him to be this arrogant! Was he really going to attempt to fight all three of them at once...?

Before Myles could wonder any further, he saw Gerald straightening his body before casually replying, “Oh? Is that so?”

Following that, Gerald suddenly outstretched his right hand before clenching and turning it ever so slightly... It gave the impression as though he had caught the wind... As everyone wondered what he was trying to do, Gerald then retracted his hand toward his chest before seemingly tossing an invisible knife toward Bradley...

Only rather than just being mere mimicry of tossing a knife, everyone stared wide-eyed as a white light shot out from his palm! As if that wasn’t already shocking enough, the crowd watched in astonishment as the ground split slightly apart as the orb of light continued flying toward Bradley!

In the light’s path, however, was a rather large boulder. Everyone now curious to know what would happen to the light upon collision, their question was quickly answered when it simply shot through the boulder!

...But wait, it didn’t just shoot through... A split second later, the boulder split into two clean halves, with both sides cut so clean that they gleamed like the surface of a mirror! Expensive-looking tiles cracking apart as the light surged on, it finally stopped moving the second it arrived inches away from Bradley’s face.

As Bradley stood paralyzed in his utter shock, the others found themselves too dumbfounded to even make a sound as well.

Everyone now looking at the deep gash on the earth that Gerald had caused, the entirety of King Valley became momentarily enveloped in silence.

Chapter 1329

“...B-by god... Is he... Is he a human or a god...?”

Though Myles’s mouth had been hanging open this entire time, he couldn’t care less about how he looked as he trembled while muttering that question.

Even the three masters were utterly stunned. After all, while Bradley was more powerful, faster, and more skillful compared to regular people, his capabilities were still—at the very least—predictable and understandable. Gerald, on the other hand, was a completely different story.

After all, he had just split the earth and even a large boulder clear in half just by waving his hand in the air! Nobody could’ve predicted that! Several others were having similar thoughts as well.

Regardless, following a long silence, one of the three masters—after staring at the marks left on the ground this entire time—murmured, “...That wasn’t a celestial technique... Instead, it was a strange martial art... It... It was the airbending skill...! Adding that to the fact that that boy has already conquered the Nebula Realm and owns the Power of the Hundred Divine Fists, it wouldn’t be a stretch to say that he would be able to easily kill a person standing ten meters away! I had always thought that all that was simply the stuff of legends... Now that I’ve witnessed it with my very own eyes, I can safely say that I can die without any regrets...”

Before anyone could even respond to that, the steps of feet pattering could be heard, prompting everyone to turn around... Only to realize that Bradley was retreating!

“Retreat! Hurry!” yelled Bradley.

“...What? He’s... he’s attempting to escape...?!”

Of course he was. After seeing how Gerald had launched such a powerful attack just by fiddling with his fingers, Bradley instantly realized that he had just dug his own grave.

To his utter shock, not only did Gerald exhibit signs of superb training, but he also possessed extremely powerful martial art skills! Understanding that, Bradley knew that he was no longer worthy of being Gerald's opponent.

What an extraordinary being! Bradley knew for a fact that even if there were ten of himself, all of his copies wouldn't even come close to defeating Gerald!

"To think that he's already entered such a realm at his age! How utterly unbelievable! Even my genius of a master back then wasn't able to enter that realm till he was around fifty, and he's a top master as well as a hero! How could a martial artist with such an ordinary background even possess such godly skills?!" muttered Bradley under his breath as he continued dashing away, hoping that his head start would allow him to escape.

Just as the other Fairleighs—who were now starting to get increasingly worried—were about to turn around and book it, Gerald simply looked at the escaping man before sneering, "Finally planning on leaving? I'm afraid it's much too late for that!"

Following that, Gerald took in a deep breath before activating his Thunder Eruption skill! His palms now reddened, Gerald then flicked his fingers, sending three, white, silk-like strands shooting out like bullets toward Bradley, Hershel, and Seamus's backs!

Upon—flying over ten meters and—hitting their backs, Seamus was the first to scream as he instantly began spurting blood out of his mouth before falling to the ground shortly after.

Bradley himself found his eyes turning black as he felt the blunt force—that felt similar to being hit with a hammer—on his back. Being flung forward by how hard the force was, Bradley ended up smashing directly into a wall!

Witnessing all that, the three masters could only tremble in fear as one of them said, "...Both his inner and external strength are equally as extraordinary...! He really is capable of killing with just a snap of a finger! He's a living god on earth...!"

While the young man only looked to be around the age of twenty-five, none of the masters had any further doubts that he was a true apex great master as well as someone extremely—and mysteriously—well-learned in the realm of martial arts

Regardless, the masters were glad that they had earlier held their tongues. After all, they would've definitely been slapped by Gerald had they said what was previously on their mind, that being, 'How could there possibly be a great master under the age of thirty? They're already extremely rare in the world, and they're comparable only to living masterpieces! With that in mind, one can't simply brag about being a great master!'

Whatever the case was, with all three of the commanding Fairleighs now completely defeated, it was now their family's subordinates' turn to not dare to make any further moves.

Seeing that the tables had now completely turned, Rupert finally fully recovered from his initial shock and ran over to Bradley before kicking him right in the stomach! Following that, he then laughed before saying, "I bet you never imagined that things would end up this way, did you, young lad? Remember that if I could humiliate and toss you out like the miserable outcast you were back then, then I can just as easily kill you today! Hahaha!"

The second his sentence ended, however, he suddenly heard a faint voice behind him saying, "I assure you that Bradley isn't dead yet... He's simply unconscious for now... You had best be careful that he doesn't wake up from your kick..."

Hearing that, Rupert instantly stopped laughing before turning around to look at Gerald, a pleasant smile on his face.

"...Mr. Crawford- No, Master Crawford... What... did you mean by that...? Didn't you kill this murderer...?"

Rolling his eyes, Gerald simply replied, "No matter what the case is, he's still a learned great master, and his inner strength is almost as good as mine. I only had the upper hand since my martial arts skills are a little better than his. With that in mind, why would I kill him? He's only unconscious now!"

Chapter 1330

The second he was finished speaking, Gerald walked over to Bradley before patting his body a few times.

“...Alright, I’ve severed all of his vital energy points. Even if he has any inner strength left, he won’t be able to use it for the time being. I’ll be leaving him to you then,” said Gerald.

“T-Thank you, Master Crawford! I truly am in awe of your extraordinary strength, greatness, and techniques!” flattered Rupert as he stood beside Gerald.

Watching as the man nearing his fifties tried his best to flatter a much younger person would make anyone watching the scene tempted to laugh out loud. It certainly didn’t help that his attitude before and after he found out how strong Gerald was had taken a complete one-eighty!

Upon hearing that, Gerald himself could only shake his head with a wry smile on his face.

What Gerald didn’t know was that after experiencing a roller coaster of emotions today, Rupert had long given up on maintaining his dignity and image anymore. All he wanted to do now was to get into Gerald’s good books, and what better way to do that than to keep flattering him!

Rupert’s thought process was that if he had such a learned great master backing him up, then he surely wouldn’t have to worry about any other champions, legends, or even masters in the future!

‘No matter how strong my future enemies are, they’d never come close to even being as powerful as Master Crawford, the youth who can kill with just air!’ Rupert thought to himself.

At that moment, the three masters walked over to Gerald—disregarding the injuries on their bodies—before asking, “Master Crawford, will he truly be unable to use his strength after you severed his vital energy points?”

A warrior’s inner strength stemmed from their elixir-of-life field. With that in mind, if Gerald truly had interrupted his main acupuncture points, then Bradley would no longer be able to access his inner strength for real!

“I simply used a unique method of interrupting his body’s meridians at several points. Due to that, his inner strength will constantly be scattered all over the place. If he can’t collect his inner strength, then he’s pretty much rendered powerless,” explained Gerald casually.



The three masters were dumbfounded once again. How utterly amazing! This youth truly was a god on earth!

Even Fleur and Yenny were now blushing. No wonder he hadn't been afraid when they first caught him. Even when he was sent to such a dangerous place, both of them had found it slightly odd that there wasn't a trace of fear on his face! Now that they knew how powerful he was, it made sense why he hadn't been frightened in the least!

"Regardless, now that I've solved your issue, I think it's high time you fulfilled your promise to me, master of the valley," said Gerald as he clapped his hands.

"...Promise?" replied Rupert as he placed his hand over his head as though he had just regained his senses.

Now that his enemies had been taken care of and there was no more danger, Rupert was starting to feel slightly unwilling to part with half of his assets...

"...Hmm? Could you perhaps be planning on going back on your word...?" asked Gerald with a frown as he glared at Rupert.

The moment Gerald's eyes met his, Rupert felt as though he had just been electrocuted. Trembling as he gritted his teeth in panic, Rupert then replied, "N-no! Of course, not! Worry not, Master Crawford, for I'll definitely fulfill my promise!"

Knowing that Gerald was even more ferocious than Bradley, Rupert was afraid that his life would be on the line if he didn't keep his word.

Even so, that didn't stop him from trying to think up countermeasures. As his mind continued racing, he suddenly heard Gerald say, "As long as you don't go back on your word, you'll be fine. Speaking of which, I'll soon be taking my leave first, but before that, I need you to get me the herbs that I asked for as well as a few oxyblood pellets. I'll be using them soon!"

"R-right away, Master Crawford...!" replied Rupert in a clearly depressed voice.

'What on earth should I even do here...? I can't just hand over half of my assets to this young kid! He's not worthy of all that power! I'll have to find a way to get rid of him... But until then, I guess I can only continue delaying the process of handing the valley over... I'll never hand half of King Valley to him...!'

Just as he was deep in thought, Rupert suddenly felt his brows going cold. It felt as if something had... just entered his brain?

Turning around quickly, he was just in time to see Gerald moving his hand away.

Touching his forehead, Rupert then asked, "...Master Crawford...? What were you doing...?"

"Oh, nothing much. I simply inserted poison into your brain! After all, with half of the King Valley being put on the line, I have a feeling that you may try to delay things till you find a way to get rid of me! Of course, if that's not the case, all the better for you!" replied Gerald with a smile.

"...T-that... I... I would never..." stuttered Rupert, now completely dumbfounded.

Chapter 1331

"Mr. Crawford, this is the oxyblood pellet and herb that you asked for!"

Not long after that, one of the servants brought the things over respectfully.

Gerald checked everything carefully.

The fact that Rupert had been poisoned by Gerald was not just to scare him.

Gerald had indeed poisoned Rupert with the secret poison.

Although Rupert was a very greedy person and afraid of dying, besides half of the Cherish Herbs in King Valley, he was still pretty useful to Gerald to a certain extent.

Gerald would not be afraid that Rupert would go back on his words in the future as long as he could threaten him with the secret poison.

After leaving King Valley, Gerald did not return to his uncle's home immediately.

Instead, as per his agreement with Leo, he arrived at the cave that Leo was hiding in.

Gerald could not help but feel a little dumbfounded when he saw the scene in front of him upon arrival at the cave.

Leo had used a pile of weeds to block the entrance of the cave and was simply sitting inside the cave motionless, just like a young schoolboy who had made a mistake and was being grounded at home.

"My lord! You're back!" Leo said as he stood up excitedly as soon as he saw Gerald.

"Were you hiding here in this position the entire time?" Gerald asked as he laughed.

"Well, my lord, you asked me not to move. So, I hid here without moving at all after finding this cave. I was waiting for you to come back and pick me up!" Leo said as he scratched his head.

"You shouldn't keep calling me your lord! Leo, speaking of it, you are my elder. I simply look like your deity, but I am not the same deity that you are thinking of!" Gerald replied frankly.

"That is impossible! You have the dragon blood jade pendant. Based on your aura, I can already sense that you are the deity!"

"After getting locked up by those men in the cave, I have already felt my heart throbbing over the past few days. It turns out that it is because my lord, you are here!" Leo said respectfully.

Gerald hesitated for a moment.

Queena had said that he was the deity.

Also, this jade pendant seemed to have recognized the existence of the deity. That was the reason why it gave Gerald so many memories at the very beginning when he touched it.

Now, Leo could actually sense the deity's aura from Gerald's body?!

Could it be that he was truly the deity? Could it be that the deity was in his body? Could it be that he was indeed the reincarnation of the deity? To be precise, could it be that the deity was Gerald in his past life, and he was the deity's present life?

Gerald had already had these doubts in his mind for a long time.

All of these coincidences that were connected seemed to affirm and confirm this fact too.

"Regarding my identity, we will talk about it in the future. However, you should stop referring to me as your lord. It sounds a little too awkward!" Gerald said as he smiled wryly.

Leo was a little nervous, and he said, "My lord, could it be that you despise me and don't want me to stay by your side to serve you?"

"That is not what I meant... Sigh... if you really want to, you can just call me by my name, then. My name is Gerald."

Leo scratched his head before he said, "In that case, can I simply call you Mr. Crawford just like everyone else? They also called that other person Mr. Fairleigh!"

"Okay!"

Gerald could only nod his head helplessly as he asked, "By the way, where did you come from, Leo? You don't look like a local."

Both of them found a place in the cave to sit down before Gerald questioned him out of curiosity.

Leo was truly in awe of Gerald. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to say that he was in awe of the deity. That was why they had this relationship now.

In addition, Gerald had saved his life. Leo was especially attracted to Gerald's handsome appearance and the way that he spoke, which made him seem kind and approachable. This made Leo feel at ease.

It was also this feeling that made Leo want to recognize Gerald as his master. He felt as though he had finally found someone that he could rely on in this unfamiliar place.

So, he would naturally tell Gerald the truth at this time.

"Mr. Crawford, I escaped from a big flying battleship before coming to this place unknowingly. Moreover, I felt as though this place was somehow very strange and yet very familiar. I felt as though I had lived here before, but then again, at the same time, I felt as though this place was very strange and unfamiliar to me!" Leo said.

Gerald felt his whole body tensing up as soon as he heard Leo's words.

"Big flying battleship?" Gerald asked in surprise.

Chapter 1332

Then, he listened carefully as Leo explained the whole story to him.

It turned out that when Leo was very young, he could vaguely remember that he was on a large flying battleship. He could not remember how old he was at that time, but Gerald assumed that he was about three to four years old then.

Moreover, many people were on that flying battleship, and there were a lot of children who would play together with him.

All of them were taken to a place together where someone took special care of them, and Leo had grown up there.

Leo had received various training, and he had participated in various fights ever since his childhood.

He only knew how to fight.

Moreover, there had always been a very mysterious legend in that place, that was none other than the deity.

The place that they were at had two huge stone statues in place. It was a statue of a deity and a lady in white.

They had grown up under the legend of the deity.

“You mean to say that you were taken away by the flying battleship? And your physique changed and became this way when you were there?” Gerald asked curiously.

He felt as though there was a mysterious door leading to a certain door hidden in the dark which was slowly opening to him.

Leo nodded.

“Yes, but Mr. Crawford, the Leo that you are looking at now is the me after my transformation!” Leo said. It seemed as though Leo felt a little embarrassed with his current rough and boorish appearance.

“After your transformation?”

“Yes. I am currently injured, so I can’t transform and change back to how I was before. I did not look like this previously. In fact, it is really strange. I started planning my escape from the big flying battleship about one month ago. After I escaped, I went into the sea. After that, a big palace at the bottom of the sea exploded. It seems as though someone had used witchcraft and some special technique on the

palace. I was hit hard by this mighty power, and I fainted. When I woke up, I had already been turned into the state that I usually am in, when I am fighting and I cannot transform anymore!” Leo said.

“Into the sea? An explosion of a palace?” Gerald replied as he thought carefully.

“What happened after that? Didn’t they try to capture you?” Gerald asked again.

“I do not know. I was unconscious then. When I woke up, I found myself on a deserted island. After that, I started hiding inside the woods until a few days ago when I ran into the people from the Fairleigh family. They used some electric baton to capture me!”

Gerald was deep in thought. The explosion that Leo described seemed to be exactly the same as the one he had witnessed when he was at the palace of the king of the ocean.

Could it be that the explosion at the palace of the king of the ocean was the same explosion that had caused Leo to faint?

“Then, can you give me a general description of how the big flying battleship looks like?” Gerald asked.

Leo began to use his bare hands to draw on the ground. A few minutes later, Leo had already drawn the outline of the flying battleship.

“Sun League!”

Gerald stood up excitedly as soon as he saw the drawing.

Although Leo had only drawn a rough outline of the flying battleship, its appearance was almost exactly the same as that of the Sun League flying battleship which was depicted on the murals on the stone wall.

Gerald’s eyelids began twitching wildly.

Leo was one of the people who had escaped after getting captured by the Sun League?!

Moreover, that mysterious flying battleship had actually not been too far from him when he had dived into the bottom of the sea that day?!

Gerald began sweating all over.

In that case, Leo was one of the people who had been captured, but he had successfully escaped!

Gerald made a bold conjecture. He felt as though this was extremely possible.

“By the way, do you know this sign?”

Gerald hurriedly took out the token of the holy water which had the logo of the Sun League on it.

Leo’s eyes widened immediately.

“That is the mark that was engraved on those people’s chests!” Leo’s expression became a little flustered when he saw the logo.

That’s right! True enough, Leo had indeed escaped from the Sun League. This meant that Leo was his biggest clue in solving the mystery of the Sun League!

Chapter 1333

“What is the place that you were at, Leo? It seems as though you came from the same place as the deity and the lady in white. You likely were one of the people that the Sun League had captured from earth!” Gerald said.

After some exchanges, all of Leo’s descriptions seemed to correspond to the many clues that Gerald had obtained from the murals together with the evidence that Gerald had gathered from the palace of the king of the ocean, as well as the underground palace in the desert.



Gerald was almost certain that the Sun League had captured many people from earth, and Leo was simply one of them.

Moreover, the Sun League definitely had an inseparable connection with the lady in white and the deity.

This way, Gerald could determine that he was certainly on the right path. Queena had also come from the same place. If she could survive in the form of a soul, it would not make sense that the lady in white would not be able to do the same.

The life experiences that Chester had had as a child were proof that the lady in white had indeed been active before.

At this time, Leo said, "That place is called Jaellatra. It is very different compared to this place, but there is also a seventy to eighty percent similarity."

"Jaellatra? So, do you mean to say that everyone who was captured along with you was all brought to this place called Jaellatra?" Gerald asked excitedly.

Leo nodded as he said, "That's right. All of us were there, but we did not know how we could escape. Fortunately, when we were sent on another mission, we boarded the flying battleship again, and I managed to rush out and make my escape!"

"Moreover, it seems as though it would not be long before ordinary people like you would suddenly appear to receive training there!" Leo continued speaking after thinking for a while.

"Then, what were all of you training for?" Gerald asked curiously.

"I don't know. Everyone was given their own jobs and responsibilities. The few of us were responsible for building weapons. I do not know anything else!" Leo said as he shook his head.

In this case, Gerald had a major clue now, and that was the place that was referred to as Jaellatra.

Mila and the others had been captured and taken away by the flying battleship.

It was no wonder why Gerald had used all of the financial resources and manpower that he had to find all of the clues that he had in the past year but to no avail. It turned out that they had been taken to some other place by the Sun League.

Although Leo did not know where Jaellatra was exactly, at the very least, Gerald was no longer as confused and lost as he was before.

“Mr. Crawford, you told me that you were looking for someone just now. Could it be that someone close to you had also been caught and brought to Jaellatra?” Leo asked curiously.

“Yes! They were taken away by the Sun League!” Gerald replied as he nodded.

Leo scratched his head and said, “But you are a legend from where I came from. So, you should know the way to Jaellatra. There is also a long-standing legend in Jaellatra. Shortly after you gained fame and became famous, you suddenly disappeared. Unexpectedly, you actually came here!” Leo said excitedly.

“I cannot explain everything to you in one or two sentences. However, I am not the deity that you are talking about. As for him, his body is currently stored in an underground palace. Moreover, the lady in white also came here with him. I am currently looking for the lady in white because I want to help the two of them to be reunited once again. This is because I think that there are more secrets hidden where the lady in white is at, but I can’t seem to find her at all. Furthermore...”

Gerald had been feeling very depressed over the past few days. He had so many pent-up feelings inside, but he did not know who he could talk to at all.

When he saw that Leo seemed to be an honest and trustworthy person, he was willing to open up and talk to Leo about all of these things. Moreover, Leo was also very happy to be his confidant.

“I have also heard of some of their legends before. The possessed Queena that you spoke about seems to be her elder sister. She is extremely strong and powerful, but she is also very wicked. She disappeared at the same time as you too, deity! All of them came here! Moreover, it seems as though she had

condensed her consciousness and thoughts to form a soul. Now that she has found a suitable body, it is equivalent to her getting reborn!” Leo said.

Since his thinking ability seemed to be slightly weaker compared to an average person, he was silent for a moment before he said, “If his sister has already been resurrected as you’ve said, and if she has also shown signs of being active a few years ago, this can only prove that she has already condensed her consciousness and thought to form a soul. Unfortunately, she could not find an adaptable body. Therefore, there was no way for her to get reborn!”

“An adaptable body?” Gerald asked, a little puzzled.

“That’s right. A resurrected soul will need to find a suitable adaptable body. If there is no suitable adaptable body, the soul will simply move along with the coffin. However, as soon as there is a suitable adaptable body for her, you can use it to lead her out, and she will be able to get reborn, then! Mr. Crawford, when that happens, you will not need to work so hard to find her corpse!”

#### Chapter 1334

“So, that is the case! In the very beginning, when he was at the underground palace in the desert, a mysterious person reminded him to look for the coffin of the lady in white so that he could bury them together. So, it turns out that it was not transporting her corpse, but it was transporting their consciousness and thoughts!” Leo said.

Gerald finally understood.

“Leo, do you know how to find a suitable adaptable body for her, then? Do you know how to draw her out?” Gerald hurriedly asked.

“According to the legends, it is rumored that she is the same as the deity, and she cultivates and practices the Thunder Eruption technique. So, there is thunder essential qi in her body, and her soul has also been transitioned. So, you have to find someone proficient in Thunder Eruption to use the Thunder Godly Pupil to find a suitable adaptable body for her. After finding a suitable adaptable body, the person should also release thunder essential qi. When she senses it, she will come out immediately!”

“However, Mr. Crawford, there are not many people who can use or practice the Thunder Eruption technique. I naturally do not know how to use it!” Leo said as he was filled with self-reproach.

“Thunder Eruption?”

As soon as Gerald heard this, he could not help but feel overjoyed.

Wasn't he practicing and cultivating the Thunder Eruption technique now?

Indeed, there were many techniques such as eye training, physical training, and qi training recorded within it.

It turned out that he would be able to find the lady in white by using the Thunder Eruption technique!

“That's right. However, this kind of secret technique has very high requirements on a person's physique and blood vessels. If they are not talented or skillful enough, they would explode and die while practicing or using this technique!” Leo said, and there was a strong longing look in his eyes.

Was there such a saying about the Thunder Eruption technique? But why was he okay even after practicing it?

Could it be that he was indeed the reincarnation of the deity?

However, Gerald did not have time to think about this for the time being.

Leo told Gerald how to use the thunder essential qi to find a way to look for a suitable adaptable body.

“Leo, thank you for telling and giving me so many clues!”

Gerald patted Leo's shoulder excitedly before he took out the oxyblood pellet that he had obtained from King Valley over to Leo.

“I do not know if this oxyblood pellet will have any effect on the recovery of your essential qi. However, I brought it here for you anyway. If you consume it, I believe that it will be more or less useful to you!” Gerald said as he handed the oxyblood pellet over.

“Oxyblood pellet? That is good stuff! Although the quality is not very good, it is still very useful. It is indeed very useful to me! Thank you so much, Mr. Deity! No, I mean, Mr. Crawford!” Leo exclaimed as he held the oxyblood pellet happily with both hands.

Then, he waved his hands and directly swallowed about a dozen of the oxyblood pellets.

Not long after that, Gerald saw that Leo’s originally pale complexion had already recovered, and he was gaining some color on his ruddy complexion.

Leo closed his eyes as he examined his body calmly. “I have already recovered some of the essential qi in my body. I will try and transform my body into its original state now!”

As he spoke, Leo clenched his fists tightly, and there was a loud cracking sound in all of the bones in his body.

Immediately afterward, Gerald saw that his physique was shrinking at an extremely incredible speed that was visible to the naked eye.

It felt as though he was using a shrinking technique.

Leo eventually turned into an ordinary-looking uncle with an average height and chubby body without much trouble at all.

“Hehe! Thank you, Mr. Crawford. I can finally be like you now!” Leo said as he smiled.

“Yes!” Gerald replied as he nodded lightly.

"I just do not have a weapon on hand now. Mr. Crawford, is there a blacksmith shop here? I will go and get a weapon for myself so that we can go and look for them!" Leo suddenly said viciously.

"Look for them? Who are you going to look for?"

"Since the Gunter family actually tried to harm you, I will tear them apart to avenge you!"

#### Chapter 1335

Gerald truly would not have expected Leo to be so angry and enraged because he wanted to avenge him.

Gerald felt faintly moved.

"Before that, I will use the herbs to save someone! So, we should go back first!" Gerald said as he smiled.

"Okay, Mr. Crawford!" Leo said as he scratched his head.

After they had left the cave, both of them headed directly toward the shanty town.

Sierra's arm problem cannot be delayed any longer. Otherwise, there would certainly be a sequela.

Moreover, Gerald would have to focus on finding a suitable adaptable body for the lady in white after this. There were so many people in this world. So, where would Gerald necessarily be able to find the perfect and right adaptable body for the lady in white?!

Gerald did not know whether it was a coincidence or not, but as the both of them were walking out of the mountain, Gerald suddenly felt his spiritual sense surging.

“Hm?”

Gerald knew that whenever he felt this way, it simply meant that there was someone with the same aura as him who had appeared not too far away from him.

However, what was really strange was that Gerald would certainly have a very strong feeling if it was a master that was appearing near him, such as how it had been when he had met Hogan before this.

But now, Gerald simply felt a very subtle feeling.

This could only mean that this person was not a master.

That was strange!

As for Leo, he obviously had this kind of intuition too, and he was on guard at this time.

According to what he had heard from Leo, Gerald closed his eyes slightly as he used his magic technique. When he opened his eyes again, there was a strange purple light flashing in his eyes.

The purple rays of light were like two rays that were shooting in four different directions.

“The Thunder Godly Pupil?!”

Leo, who was standing aside, was also shocked.

However, when he saw that Gerald was fully focused, he did not say anything else.

At this time, he only felt as though it was truly strange. ‘Mr. Crawford is clearly the deity. So, why is he simply refusing to admit it, then?’

'He even knows how to use the Thunder Godly Pupil! That is already even more self-explanatory in itself!'

'It must be because the deity has his own plans and intentions. I should not be talking and asking too much about it. Otherwise, it will not be good if I were to offend and make the deity angry.'

Leo secretly thought to himself, and he felt even more respect for Gerald as he waited at the side.

"Leo, you told me a lot about essential qi just now. One of the points was that I would certainly be very aware of it when there is another strange aura around me. I feel as though I have already found the suitable adaptable body that you wanted me to find. It is very near us!" Gerald could not help but feel a little surprised.

According to Leo, the powerhouse aura would give him a very strong feeling. Besides that, his essential qi would also automatically give him a very cold sort of feeling.

If the energy was soft and gentle, the aura would feel even more feminine.

What the lady in white needed was a woman with a soft and feminine aura in her so that she could become her adaptable body.

Gerald found a suitable adaptable body using the Thunder Godly Pupil.

"That might be possible. Actually, although adaptable bodies are rare, they are also not scarce. It is mostly that kind of woman who is born with a spiritual nature. They could more or less be used as an adaptable body!" Leo said.

"It is just about ten miles away! Let's head over there!"

As soon as his voice fell, Gerald's figure quickly moved toward the direction.



This location was already very close to the entrance of the mountain.

There was a small village outside the mountain.

At the entrance at this moment, several young men were surrounding a woman. Moreover, it seemed as though a boy who looked about the age of sixteen or seventeen years old was injured and lying on the ground at this time.

He was struggling to get up so that he could fight with these young men. However, he was quickly kicked down to the ground.

“Let go of my elder sister!”

The young boy grabbed a few pebbles from the ground and threw them directly at the heads of the several men.

As a result, the few men kicked him again, and he flew more than ten meters away.

“Brother!”

The girl looked to be about twenty-three or twenty-four years old, and she was shouting in a very distressed voice at this time.

“Hahaha. So, what now? If you don’t want to see your younger brother getting beaten up, you should just get into the car and accompany us for a little while. It is indeed the first time I’ve ever seen such a beautiful girl!” One of the young men said as he grasped the woman’s chin.

“Get lost!” The girl struggled desperately.

“We are from the Sime family, little beauty. Do you think you can continue living if you were to offend us?” The young man threatened her again.

“You... you... don’t you guys have any regard for the law at all?!”

The several young men were still holding firmly onto the girl’s wrist.

“The law? The Sime family is the law!” One of the young men said as he grinned.

After that, he rushed forward as he tried to force himself on the girl.

At this moment, someone suddenly grabbed his collar from the back.

Then, the young man was subsequently lifted up by a gentle force.

Chapter 1336

“Who is it?!”

The other four men also reacted at this moment.

This was because this person had come forward at such a fast speed, and this group of people could not even see what was going on.

So, they hurriedly took out their daggers, one after the other.

“Mr. Crawford said that you guys deserve to die!”

That’s right. This person was none other than Leo.

Gerald and Leo had been following the aura, and they had followed it all the way here, only to witness the scene that was unfolding before them.

This was when Leo had decided to take action.

“Who the heck is Mr. Crawford?! We are from the Sime family! Are you tired of living?! You’d better let go right now!” The few men said at the same time.

“Mr. Crawford said that the people from the Sime family deserve to die even more!”

After he was done speaking, Leo exerted some slight force. After that, the person in his hand was thrown about twenty meters high up into the sky.

It felt as though Leo was simply throwing a chicken into the sky.

After he had fallen to the ground, he struggled a few times, and then, there were no longer any more movements from him.

“What?!”

When the few men saw this, they were all in shock.

They immediately threw their daggers to the ground, one after the other, before they knelt in front of Leo.

“Master! Please spare our lives, master!”

However, Leo did not care so much.

All he could remember was that Mr. Crawford had said that these men deserved to die.

So, Leo simply snapped and broke the necks of the two remaining men in an instant.

After the pair of siblings were saved, they hugged each other in fear.

The scene just now had absolutely frightened the girl to death.

Right then, she looked at Gerald and the murderous uncle who was slowly walking toward them.

“You don’t have to be afraid. We will not hurt you!” Gerald said as he walked over with a smile on his face.

“Thank you! Thank you for saving us!” The girl said as she nodded slightly.

Gerald looked at the girl as he used the Thunder Godly Pupil to observe her.

The aura came from this girl indeed, but the aura on her body seemed to come and go.

It seemed as though she had an adaptable body, but on the other hand, it seemed as though she did not have one.

Based on the situation, it was very likely that she had come into contact with another person with a suitable adaptable body. Moreover, her encounter with this person had happened not too long ago.

“You don’t need to thank us. Since your brother is holding a bamboo basket, could it be that the both of you were heading up the mountain to gather some medicinal herbs?” Gerald asked.

The girl protected her brother who was already wounded and bruised all over after getting beaten up as she nodded.

She was obviously still afraid of Gerald and Leo.

“The both of you live in this village?” Gerald asked again.

The girl nodded again.

“If there is nothing particularly important or urgent, it would be better for you not to head up into the mountain. It is too dangerous for the both of you. What are you going to do if you run into a wild beast there?”

When Gerald saw that the both of them seemed to be quite fearful of him too, Gerald did not want to continue asking them too much.

“We have to go up the mountain to gather some medicinal herbs so that we can brew some medicine for my grandfather!” The young boy spoke up at this time. “Furthermore, I am not afraid of any wild animals or beasts. I can sense them and know even before they come near us!”

“Hm?”

Gerald glanced faintly at the young boy who had been badly beaten up.

Gerald only smiled wryly and did not say anything else. He simply nodded before he left.

“Mr. Crawford, it seems as though that woman does not have an adaptable body!” Leo, who was beside Gerald, suddenly spoke up.

“That’s right. Although she does not have an adaptable body, she must have been in contact with someone who has an adaptable body. We will go back and give uncle the medicine to treat Sierra first. After that, we will come back and look for them again!”

After Gerald was done speaking, the both of them quickly left and disappeared very soon.

“Sister, the both of them have already gone far away!”

At this time, the sixteen or seventeen-year-old boy suddenly said at the entrance of the village. He had been lying down on the ground, as though he was listening to something.

“How many times have I told you not to let any strangers know about your abilities? We do not even know who they are and what kind of people they are. Brother, are you still hurting?” The girl said.

“No, I am not in any more pain. Let’s go! We can go into the mountain to gather some herbs. I want to gather some Cherish Herbs to treat Rosie’s mother. Rosie has always been very kind to our family! Besides that, that brother and uncle who saved us just now have also been very kind to us and have done us a very huge favor!” The young boy said.

#### Chapter 1337

At this time, Gerald and Leo had already returned to Gerald’s uncle’s house in the shanty town.

“Gerald, why are you only back now? Did you encounter any trouble along the way?” Monica asked as she hurriedly came forward to greet him when she heard Gerald’s voice.

“Fortunately, it was just some small obstacles!” Gerald said as he nodded slightly.

“Gerald, who is he, then?” Monica could not help but wonder when she saw Leo, who was dressed in rags.

“He is my friend. Monica, help me clean up the guest room later. I will talk to my uncle so that Leo can stay here for the time being! By the way, Monica, where is uncle?” Gerald asked as he looked inside the house.

“Uncle went out to run some errands!” Monica said.

“I have already gotten the medicinal herbs that are needed. I will go and help Sierra change the dressing for her wounds first. After that, I will accompany Leo to buy a shirt! We still have something else that we have to do tomorrow!” Gerald said.

“Ahh?! Why are you so busy? I wanted you to teach me some of your skills!”

Monica looked at Gerald with a pouty expression on her face. However, she listened to Gerald’s instructions and went to clean up the guest room.

Gerald spent two hours helping Sierra change the dressing on her wounds.

This way, after Sierra’s arm recovered, there would be no scar, and it would be perfectly reattached.

After they were done eating, Gerald brought Leo to his room. They were preparing to return to that village tomorrow. This time, Gerald would certainly be able to find a suitable adaptable body for the lady in white.

To be honest, it was a little wicked to be seeking an adaptable body.

After all, according to Leo, if a soul lingered on in an adaptable body for more than ten days, it would cause severe damage to the original soul in the body.

For instance, Gerald did not even know whether the original and genuine Queena was dead or alive at this time.

Gerald could not help but feel a little self-reproach when he thought of that extremely kind young girl.

Although he was not the one who had brought this upon her directly, he was indirectly related to this incident no matter what it was.

If he had not made the mistake of entering another realm, he would not have made the mistake of releasing her and letting her out.

So, this time, Gerald was already prepared to search for many adaptable bodies.

Gerald was also willing to compensate them regardless of how much money they would ask for it.

If everything went well, he would be able to successfully save the lady in white.

Gerald would also constantly help her change her adaptable body so that they could avoid harming or taking any innocent lives.

As for that pair of siblings, they were an extremely important and invaluable clue.

Early the next morning, Gerald and Leo went to the village.

What Gerald would not have expected was that the young boy whom he had rescued yesterday would actually be squatting in front of the entrance of the village as soon as he arrived at the entrance of the village.

He was holding a knife in his hand, and he was slashing at the place where the bodies had flown around yesterday!

After killing those men yesterday, Leo had casually thrown their bodies on the grass by the roadside.

When Gerald walked over, he saw that the scene had already been cleaned up.

“Big brother! Uncle! The both of you are already here?”

As soon as the young boy saw the both of them, he hurriedly stood up as he asked in surprise.

When Gerald and this uncle had saved him and his sister, he had realized that this uncle was extremely well-versed in martial arts.



As for this elder brother, the young boy could feel that he was even more mysterious.

So, they had left a very deep impression on the young boy.

“Hm? It looks like you’re waiting for someone. Could it be that you were waiting for us?” Gerald could not help but ask as he smiled wryly.

“Yes, I was waiting for the both of you! I could hear you coming toward the village. So, I knew that you must be here to look for me and my sister. Moreover, you seem to have said that you needed my sister’s help yesterday!” The young boy said.

Gerald and Leo exchanged glances with one another at this time.

It seemed as though this kid was not as simple as he looked.

It was only then that Gerald suddenly thought of what the young boy had said before they had parted ways yesterday.

Chapter 1338

He had said that he could hear and sense danger, and he could escape as soon as he predicted that there was any form of danger.

That was the reason why he was not afraid of any wild animals or beasts in the mountain at all.

“How can you hear it?” Gerald asked.

If it was true, this young kid was indeed a little special, then. Gerald could not even sense anyone or anything all the way to the shanty town which was so far away, but this young kid could actually sense him coming in advance. It was rather mysterious!

“Hehe! My sister said that this is my biggest secret! By the way, big brother, uncle, why are you looking for my elder sister?” The young boy said.

“Why don’t you take us to see your sister first? To tell you the truth, I have something that I need your sister’s help with!” Gerald said frankly.

“Okay!”

After that, Seth led the two men toward his house.

“Brother Gerald, Uncle, can the both of you teach me some fighting moves? I want to be as strong and powerful as both of you so that no one will dare to bully me in the future! I can only run away when I sense and predict danger. However, there is no way for me to fight back at all, just like what happened yesterday when those b\*stards caught hold of my sister!”

Seth begged on the way back home.

Seth did not know why, but he felt as though Leo, and especially Gerald, were particularly easy to approach and get close to.

That was the reason why Seth dared to speak his mind in front of them.

“You want to learn some fighting moves from us, but you have not told us how you have such supernatural powers. How did you know that we were going to come and find you today?” Gerald asked as he smiled wryly.

Of course, Gerald would not make Seth reveal his secret to him in vain. If Seth were to tell him his secret, Gerald would certainly help him to get what he wanted, then.

“That is a secret, and it is my biggest secret. But Brother Gerald, you have to keep your promise. If I tell you my secret, you and uncle will have to teach me how to fight, then!” Seth said.

He was truly very interested in martial arts.

Leo smiled before he said, "Even if you did not tell us about your supernatural powers, we could also guess what it is. Young kid, you must be clairaudient, right?"

"Clairaudient?"

Gerald was surprised.

This vocabulary sounded very strange and mysterious to him.

Even Gerald would not have known this.

However, it was obvious that Leo seemed to know even more than Gerald did in certain aspects!

True enough, Seth was extremely surprised, and his eyes widened in shock as he said, "Uncle, how could you tell at a single glance?!"

"Hahaha! Some people have the same skills as you or even stronger skills than you have where I came from!" Leo said in a domineering tone.

"However, it seems as though you have not received any special training at all. So, how is it possible for you to possess this kind of ability, then?" Leo asked as he scratched his head.

"My guess was right indeed. The both of you are truly people with great abilities! Hehe. I am indeed clairaudient. Based on my calculations, I think that I can hear sounds up to about five hundred miles away. That is how I can sense if any dangers are approaching." Seth said.

"Sigh! I originally thought that I would be able to make a fortune because of this magical ability that I have. However, I realized that being clairaudient does not mean anything at all. I cannot make any money, and I cannot even afford to treat my grandfather's illness. That is why I have to go into the mountain to gather some medicinal herbs!" Seth said as he sighed.

“Leo, how do people gain clairaudience? I’m guessing that they must have gained this ability through a certain method, right? I don’t think an ordinary person would be able to become clairaudient simply through any cultivation or training!” Gerald asked out of curiosity.

“Well, we will have to ask this young kid, Seth, about it. We should ask him how he became clairaudient. When I transformed in the beginning, the abilities that I gained were infinite strength!” Leo said.

“Moreover, some sort of elixir is needed to achieve that kind of mutation!” Leo said.

Gerald nodded.

‘Leo came from Jaellatra, which is a very strange and mysterious place.’

‘Many abnormal changes and transformations can occur there. Therefore, it would be understandable if a person went through a transformation there. However, Seth has been living here all this while. So, how did Seth come to possess a certain special ability just like Leo, then?’

Gerald could not help but wonder.

So, he hurriedly asked Seth about it.

Of course, Seth was not a foolish person, and he was actually very witty and intelligent.

Therefore, Seth only told Gerald the truth after he had made Gerald swear repeatedly that he would teach him martial arts after he had told him everything.

“Brother Gerald, I gained this special ability inside a snake cave in the mountain when I was twelve years old. I ate one of the fruits there, and then I ended up like this. Besides that, there were many weird paintings and murals inside the cave...”

Chapter 1339

“Where is that snake cave?” Gerald asked as stared intently at Seth.

This world was indeed very amazing. Since Seth could encounter such good luck and fortune with his hearing, there had to be other hidden secrets inside that snake cave.

Gerald speculated that if that were indeed the case, he would have to go and take a look at that particular snake cave.

“It is up on the mountain. I still remember the exact location of the snake cave. Brother Gerald, I can take you there later if you want!” Seth said.

“Okay! I will have to trouble you, then!” Gerald said as he nodded.

Seth’s name was Seth Laird, and his sister’s name was Suri Laird.

Their parents would often be away all year round, and the both of them usually lived with their grandfather.

However, Seth’s grandfather was weak and frail, and he needed medicinal herbs to preserve his life.

Seth also mentioned another sister named Rosie Slow as he spoke. Suri was Rosie’s personal secretary, and Rosie was the one who was giving them the money that they needed to treat their grandfather’s illness.

Therefore, Seth had always regarded Rosie as their savior and benefactor.

If Gerald’s guess was right, Rosie had to be the person that he was looking for. This would be the only way that he could explain the source of the adaptable body aura on Suri.

“Sister, look who’s here!”

At this time, Seth shouted out loud as he stood in the yard.

Not long after that, Suri walked out of the yard, and the whole yard was instantly filled with a strong medicinal fragrance.

“Where did you run off to again? Dr. Hadskis is checking grandpa’s pulse now. Quiet down a little!” Suri said.

After she was done speaking, she looked at Gerald and Leo who were standing behind Seth.

She was startled for a moment before she said, “It’s you guys...”

It was obvious that Suri still had a strong sense of fear in her eyes.

Although Gerald had saved her life, the way that they had killed those men yesterday would make any ordinary woman feel scared and afraid.

Also, just as Gerald had expected, there was no longer any aura lingering around Suri’s body at this time.

“Miss Laird, we do not have any malicious intentions. However, there is something that I need your help with. I will do you a favor if you can do me a favor. How about that?” Gerald asked as he smiled.

“I... how can I help you?” Suri asked as she pulled her younger brother to her side.

“I heard Seth saying that the only woman that you have been in contact with yesterday is none other than Chairman Rosie Slow. So, I would like to ask for your help to arrange for me to meet up with her!” Gerald said.

“You want to look for Chairman Slow?” Suri asked, a little worried.

Gerald simply nodded before he walked toward the medicine jar where the medicine was being decocted.

“This prescription of yours will only treat your grandfather’s symptoms, but it will not be able to treat the root cause of your grandfather’s illness. If your grandfather takes this medicine for a long time, he will not only grow more and more dependent on the medicine, but his body condition will only deteriorate even more!” Gerald said.

“You... who are you guys?!”

It was obvious that Gerald was right, and the expression on the latter’s face changed in an instant.

“Sister, Brother Gerald and this uncle are good people, and they are also people with great abilities. They are looking for Sister Suri because they want to ask her for her help so that they can find someone. Also, Brother Gerald has already said that he will help us heal grandpa!” Seth hurriedly said.

“Really?”

“Of course, it’s real!”

“Seth, this is an oxyblood pellet. Split it into twelve portions before brewing it for your grandfather. You can feed it to him once every month for the next twelve months. Your grandfather’s illness will be fully cured after a year!”

As Gerald spoke, he handed an oxyblood pellet over to Seth.

“You don’t even need to check my grandfather’s pulse first?” Suri asked in surprise.

“No. I can already guess what kind of illness your grandfather has simply by looking at the prescription. We have no other ill intentions. We simply want to ask Chairman Slow for her help with something important!” Gerald said sincerely.

Suri struggled for a while, but based on Gerald’s pristine appearance, she could tell that he was not lying to her.

So, she nodded as she said, "Okay. I will help to arrange a meeting with her for you. However, Chairman Slow is not available right now as she is currently in a meeting. She will only have some spare time later in the afternoon!"

At this time, Gerald suddenly received a text message on his cell phone.

[Hurry up and come back! Something has happened!]

It was a text message from Monica.

"Hm?!"

Chapter 1340

Gerald felt a little apprehensive as soon as he saw the text message.

What could have happened in the shanty town?

It seemed as though his uncle had not returned yet.

No. He would have to rush back to take a look.

At this time, Gerald raised his head to look at Seth.

"Seth, could you help me listen and see whether something is happening in the shanty town that I came from?" Gerald asked.



Seth hurriedly agreed.

Then, he knelt on the ground as he listened attentively.

“Yes. It seems as though many people have suddenly appeared there. Many people are all gathered together currently. However, I do not know what is going on!” Seth said.

Gerald frowned as he thought about the situation.

This was bad!

It had to be the people from the Gunter family!

Felton was the one who had injured Sierra, and his uncle was the one who had fought back and driven him away.

So, the Gunter family would not let them off just like that. Moreover, they would certainly know of their whereabouts.

A hint of anger flashed through Gerald’s eyes at this time.

“Leo, let’s go back!”

At the shanty town.

Seth’s hearing was indeed accurate.

All of the people in the village had indeed been gathered out on the main street of the shanty town.

Moreover, it was a group of masters from the Gunter family who were watching over them at this time.

Monica could not escape, and they had captured her as they brought her before Felton.

Felton was standing with his hands behind his back at this moment as he squinted slightly.

“Where is Gerald? You’d better tell me right now. Otherwise, my subordinates are going to start killing these people now! This time, that master will not be here to save all of you!” Felton said coldly.

“I do not know who Gerald is! You are that b\*stard who cut Sierra’s arm off! You are simply a beast who will not even let a child off!” Monica was extremely furious, and she simply glared at Felton as she cursed angrily at him.

When Felton heard this, he simply shook his head as he smiled bitterly.

“I know that there is a master hiding here in this shanty town. Perhaps you are not afraid at all. However, I think that you should not try and take any more chances. I already have a way to deal with that person. This time, I am not only looking for Gerald, but I also want to look for that man to take revenge on him! So, beauty, if you don’t want to end up like that stinky brat and have your arm cut off, you should just tell me the truth right now!” Felton warned her once again.

As he spoke, he suddenly stretched out his hand as he grabbed hold of Monica’s neck.

“I do not know who Gerald is!”

Monica stretched out her hands to hit Felton as she struggled to get out of his grasp.

“Well, alright then. I can tell that you people will not give in unless you see blood! Since that is the case, I will kill a few of you right now to set an example for the others!”

Felton put some strength into his arm, and he was already prepared to break Monica’s neck.

At this time, the other masters from the Gunter family were also prepared to kill a few people.

“Young lad, you will pay with your life!”

A loud voice suddenly sounded in his ears.

This voice was very deafening and loud, and it came before anyone appeared with a sudden burst of dust.

After that, a small pebble broke through the rising dust as it flew directly toward Felton’s temple.

Felton subconsciously let go of Monica as he dodged the pebble.

Boom!

The pebble pierced through a thick tree directly.

Felton took two steps backward as he knitted his brows tightly together.

“A master! This shanty town is indeed not that simple!” Felton said, smirking in anger as he looked at the two figures that were walking toward him at this time...

Chapter 1341

“So you truly are here, Gerald! As I thought, nothing on this planet is too hidden for me! My judgment will always be accurate!” shouted Felton as he flashed a faint smile.

“Gerald! Hurry and beat this villain to death! Not only was he the one who sliced Sierra’s arm off, but if you had arrived a second too late, he would’ve already killed me too!” yelled Monica as she glared at Felton, her initial fear slowly dissolving.

Gently patting Monica’s head, Gerald then looked at Felton with a faint smile before saying, “I really hadn’t expected you to be this confident, Mr. Gunter. Regardless, aside from your ‘judgment’ that I’d be in this village, what else have you managed to predict?”

“Oh? Curious, aren’t we? Well, I predict that all your training and skills will be erased by me today! Following that, I’ll bring you back to the Gunter Manor for my grandmother to deal with you! Or would you rather I destroyed you myself?!”

“You’re overwhelmingly confident, I’ll give you that. A little too confident, I’d say, since you’ve yet to do anything!”

“What can I say? I’ve always been this way!”

Hearing that, Gerald then nodded before saying, “I see, I see... Alas, I’ll have to disappoint you today, Mr. Gunter. Leo, take action! And be careful of the Dead Annie!”

“Affirmative!” roared Leo as he raised his head before taking a step forward...

A split second later, an explosive sound erupted around Leo as dust flew all over the place!

Though he could sense that the ground—and even the mountains—were quivering from the immense power that Leo was releasing, Felton simply displayed a playful smile before scoffing, “So it seems you’ve found yourself a helper! Big deal!”

The second he realized what was truly happening, however, Felton found himself freezing in place as his smile slowly disappeared.

Amidst the dust, Felton could see Leo's body continuing to grow bigger and bigger. By the time he was done growing, Leo stood at least three meters tall, a complete giant of a man! As if that wasn't already intimidating enough, the muscles on his body now seemed to resemble a steel-like texture!

"...H-huh...?" muttered Felton as his eyelids began twitching rapidly.

Before Felton could even recover from his shock, Leo had already begun dashing toward him! As if that wasn't already enough, even though he wasn't all that close to Felton yet, Leo had already used his overwhelming aura to lock Felton firmly in place!

"This... This isn't good...!" muttered Felton under his breath as he immediately tried to use the Gunter family's magic artifact that he had brought along... The Dead Annie!

However, Leo had already been ready for Felton to resort to that tactic. Realizing what Leo was trying to do, the hulking man then let out another ear-piercing roar!

The force of the roar itself caused Felton's eardrums to ring wildly, sending his mind completely blank!

With his body temporarily paralyzed, Leo was easily able to toss Felton up into the air... Before leaping up himself and punching Felton toward the earth, directly in the chest!

Hearing his bones crack, Felton instantly spurt out a mouthful of blood, his entire world now spinning as his body rapidly descended to the ground.

While Leo was preoccupied with Felton, Gerald himself had been busy fighting the Gunter family's masters, though 'fighting' was pretty much an overstatement. After all, he had swiftly dealt with all that family's masters as easily as he was cutting vegetables for dinner, and they were all lying dead in a pile now.

Moving back to Felton, his body collided so hard against the ground that it caused a massive hole to form around him! By the time the dust settled, Leo was already walking toward the paralyzed man, his iron fists clenched as he got ready to punch Felton again. There was no doubt that if this second punch landed, Felton would truly end up being nothing more than minced meat!

Seeing that, Gerald—who was already done with the Gunter family’s masters—immediately yelled out, “Leo, wait!”

“With all due respect, Mr. Crawford, not only has this arrogant and domineering kid committed far too many evil crimes, but he’s also lied to us straight to our faces! I truly thought that he would turn out to be an incredible master, but as it turns out, he’s nothing but a useless person!” replied Leo who clearly looked like he hadn’t had enough fun yet and wished to continue attacking.

An observation that Gerald had made—after Leo’s transformation—was the fact that Leo ended up being a bit too keen on smashing things.

Regardless, Gerald quickly replied, “Just don’t kill him yet! After all, he’s the eldest young master of the Gunter family! What more, I’ve heard that Lord Gunter really dotes on him a lot!”

“...That’s right! I’m glad you’re still a bit realistic, Gerald! It’s true that my grandma dotes on me most, so if you truly do end up killing me today, then she’ll surely tear you to pieces! With that in mind, hurry and tell this monster to back off so that you can go back with me to see my grandmother! If you do, I’ll consider giving you another chance!”

By the time Gerald had ordered Leo to stop, Felton was already scared half to death. After all, ever since he was a child, he had been extremely powerful and had never truly taken anyone seriously.

The fact that he was completely helpless before this mutated monster was a dumbfounding experience for Felton, and before Gerald had shouted, Felton had truly thought that he wasn’t even going to be able to leave any last words.

Whatever the case was, since Gerald had told that monster to wait, that surely signified that he was now having second thoughts knowing how strong the Gunters were!

Chapter 1342

“Chance? Whatever could you be talking about?” asked Gerald as he looked at Felton—who was still lying on the ground—before clapping his hands.

“Well, if you let me off today, I’ll tell my grandmother not to come over and make things difficult for those living in this shantytown! If you don’t, well... My grandmother will surely cause a bloodbath to happen here!” replied Felton.

“I’m not sure what delusions you’re having, but I only told Leo not to kill you immediately since letting you die like this would surely minimize your grandmother’s suffering! Now that would be a true pity!” sneered Gerald with a smile.

The second he saw Gerald’s menacing smile, Felton felt as his entire body—and possibly even his spirit—froze.

Seconds later, he stammered, “...W-what exactly do you mean by that...?”

“Believe me when I say that I’ve been wondering how to deal with you throughout my journey here. In the end, I’ve concluded that you’re still slightly useful to me. With that in mind, I can’t just allow you to die so easily! Whatever the case is, go clean up the scene first, Leo! You can leave this kid to me!” ordered Gerald as Leo immediately began properly disposing of the many fresh corpses.

Gerald, on the other hand, went ahead and retrieved the Dead Annie from Felton’s hand. Unlike the previous instances of the flower, however, this one looked like it was made out of pure gold.

“What exactly is this, Mr. Gunter?” asked Gerald.

“It’s the Dead Annie Mother!” replied Felton while glaring at Gerald. Though he was angry, he no longer exuded the arrogant and domineering attitude that he earlier had.

“Humph! You wanted to kill me earlier, didn’t you, you b\*stard? I’ll be killing you instead now!” shouted Monica out of the blue as she walked up to Felton before slapping him hard on his cheek!

Eyes widened in shock, Felton glared daggers at Monica, immense murderous intent in his eyes as he roared, “You... You b\*tch! You must truly be tired of living! Don’t you know that I hate being slapped in the face the most?!”

Though his rage was clear as day, since Leo had severed several of Felton's meridians earlier, Felton couldn't even gather the strength to get to his feet!

As he continued struggling to get up, Gerald squatted by his side before slapping him on his other cheek!

Turning to glare daggers at Gerald next, he was immediately greeted by many more severe slaps!

By the time Gerald eventually gave him room to breathe, Felton found himself gritting his teeth in seething rage as he said, "...Could you guys truly be unafraid of death? I'll be sure to have my grandmother kill all of you if it's the last thing I do!"

Even when he was young, nobody had ever dared to treat him this way! To think that these people were actually slapping him so much despite knowing which family he belonged to!

"I implore you to wake up, Mr. Gunter. If you haven't already noticed, you're already in my hands now. Do you really think you'll be able to stay alive long enough for you to ever talk to your grandmother again? Speaking of that old woman, I'm not letting her off either!" replied Gerald as he lifted Felton off the ground before tugging him toward the middle-aged man's yard.

Once they were there, he dropped Felton to the ground before kicking Felton a few feet away!

Following that, Gerald began filling three bowls with water before slowly swirling the fresh liquid in each of them.

Confused, Monica—who had been following him closely this entire time—asked, "...What are you doing, Gerald...?"

"Ah, I'm brewing a sort of poison! It's known as inexorable witchcraft!"

"...And it involves water?"

"Not entirely, but its effects will be doubled with water!"



Hearing that, Felton—who still had a cold gaze in his eyes though traces of fear could also be seen reflected in them now—then asked, “...Inexorable witchcraft? ...What exactly does it do?”

“I’m glad you asked! You see, among all the secret techniques, this is one of the most vicious kinds of witchcraft! Once it starts, your entire body will begin itching. Eventually, the itch will get so bad that you’ll begin scratching yourself, but don’t think it’ll end after that. Oh no, you’ll continue scratching and scratching till all your skin peels off, and eventually, you’ll scratch yourself to death!” explained Gerald.

Widening his eyes even more, Felton then warned, “Y-you b\*stard! I dare you...! You won’t do it! ...I-I can tell that you’re bluffing...!”

Ignoring him, Gerald simply continued finishing up the poison. Once he was done, he squatted right next to Felton’s limp body before tilting the brew of inexorable witchcraft dangerously close to him...

Realizing that Gerald was dead serious, Felton quickly began begging, “...P-please, I was wrong, Mr. Crawford...! I’m the one at fault here, so please, please don’t do it, Mr. Crawford...! Understand that I only came here to capture you under grandma’s orders...! Hell, she’s not even the puppet master of all this! With that in mind, you shouldn’t be bearing your grudges against her! Regardless, again, I emphasize the fact that I was forced to do this! Y-you said I was going to be of great use to you earlier, right? Let me prove my worth to that statement! I won’t fail you, I swear!”

“Oh? Is that so? Well, why don’t you tell me a bit more about this Dead Annie Mother, then?”

“G-grandma told me that since regular Dead Annies can already be used to suppress and restrain your functional yin energy, the Dead Annie Mother would have allowed me to subdue you with nearly no effort at all! It’s also the Gunter family’s most prized possession, but anyway, why don’t we negotiate this out? If you promise not to use that poison on me, then I’ll teach you how to utilize the Dead Annie secret technique, and that includes how to use the Dead Annie Mother! With that in mind, please, please spare my life...! What do you say to that...?” asked Felton as he gulped.

Chapter 1343

“That honestly doesn’t sound too bad an idea! Additionally, I’d like to ask you a few other questions... If you answer them honestly, I’ll consider not planting the poison inside you!” sneered Gerald.

“Y-you can ask me anything! I swear to answer honestly as long as I know the answer to them! Just please, spare my life...!” pleaded Felton, incapable of thinking about anything else aside from surviving right now.

After all, while he had initially planned to use his grandmother’s superiority to scare Gerald off, Gerald appeared completely unfazed by his threats! What more, Felton was truthfully extremely terrified of the witchcraft that Gerald had just brewed up! That b\*stard’s methods were simply too sinister and vicious!

While Felton truly wished that he could just eat Gerald alive at that moment, he was well aware of who was in power now. As a result, he honestly began teaching Gerald how to use both the Dead Annie and the Dead Annie Mother secret techniques. He also made sure to answer all of Gerald’s questions as truthfully as possible.

Once Gerald was done with his questions, Felton looked straight into Gerald’s eyes before saying, “...There, I’ve already answered every question you asked, and I’m sure I’ve even added some information that you didn’t ask for... I’ve told you everything I know...! With that in mind, you can spare my life now, right...?”

“Spare your life? While it’s true that the score between both of us has now been settled, at the end of the day, you’re still the person who sliced off Sierra’s arm! With that in mind, I still haven’t settled that score with you yet, but I have the perfect solution to that issue! I’ll just implant the poison into you and with that, I’ll consider any bad blood we had before this to be done and over with!” replied Gerald with a smile.

“...You... You...! You b\*stard! How dare you make a fool out of me?!” roared the enraged Felton as blue veins instantly began revealing themselves on his forehead.

“So what if I did! Were you truly thinking that I would just let you off, you silly boy?” sneered Gerald before tilting the contents of the bowl onto Felton!

In no time flat, Gerald had successfully implanted the inexorable witchcraft into Felton’s body!

“You utter b\*stard! I’ll kill you! I’ll... I’ll slice you up into a thousand pieces if you don’t remove the poison right this instant!” cried out Felton almost hysterically as he instantly began desperately struggling on the ground.

Watching as strong emotions of anger and fear appeared on Felton's face, Gerald simply replied, "Remove...? You have no idea why it's called inexorable witchcraft, do you?"

"...Is there meaning behind that name?"

"While it's only considered to be one of the more vicious witchcrafts among the secret techniques, it's without a doubt, the most powerful, and for good reason too. After all, there truly is no way of removing it! Just so you know, only records of creating this particular witchcraft have been found in the secret techniques book. With that in mind, nobody truly knows how to remove it! Regardless, you don't have to worry too quickly since I haven't activated the poison. However, the effects of the inexorable witchcraft will instantly begin taking effect the second you use your inner strength! Consider this a warning and don't blame me should a time come when you activate your inner strength on your own accord and trigger the poison! Another thing to note is that even if you manage to find a master to attempt to help remove the witchcraft from your body sometime in the future, make sure you don't accidentally use any essential qi to force it out!" explained Gerald with a laugh.

"...There... There's no way to remove it?! You...!" growled Felton, feeling immensely frustrated. Despite being infuriated, however, he didn't dare say a word to Gerald. The only thing he could do to calm himself down was to grab onto the dirt on the ground.

While he wanted to attempt begging for mercy, he refrained since Gerald had already implanted the witchcraft in his body anyway. With that in mind, as long as Gerald felt dissatisfied, he could easily trigger the poison, causing things to very quickly turn extremely ugly.

At that moment, Leo—who had already transformed back to his original state—walked over and kicked Leo a few times before saying, "Everything's done, Mr. Crawford! Heh! Why's this young lad not dead yet? Is there even a reason to keep him alive?"

"He's still slightly useful to me, though you can destroy his inner strength later before tossing him into the cellar and locking him up there. Also, I'll be entasking you with staying here in the shantytown to protect Monica and the other villagers. While I've already told Felton to send a text message to tell the Gunter family's subordinates to change their target, I'd feel better if you stayed back here, just in case!" replied Gerald.

"Very well, Mr. Crawford. What will you be doing in the meantime?"

“Oh, I’ll be locating Rosie Slow! Don’t worry, I can go on my own!” said Gerald before immediately turning around to leave, intent on looking for Seth and Suri again.

Chapter 1344

“Come along now, young lad! I’m tossing you into the cellar!” said Leo with a chuckle before lifting Felton with a single hand.

In his current state, Felton felt like he was nothing but a tiny chick who didn’t even dare to fight or talk back.

As for Gerald’s side of things, Suri had made sure to contact Rosie once noon came, telling her that someone wished to meet up with her.

Due to how much Rosie trusted Suri, she agreed to meet Gerald despite her busy schedule.

With that, Gerald, Suri, and Seth then headed straight for the company—in Qerton City—where Rosie was currently at.

Upon meeting her, Gerald could immediately sense that Rosie had a very strong aura, just as he had expected her to have. In other words, she had a perfect body for the lady in white to adapt to.

Regardless, with the trio now standing before her, the fair-skinned and beautiful woman—who looked like quite a domineering chairman at around the age of twenty-seven—asked, “You’re Mr. Crawford, correct? Suri told me that you were looking for me. How can I help you?”

“A pleasure to meet you, Chairman Slow. I’ll cut straight to the chase and say that I require you to come someplace with me. More specifically, I’d like to borrow you for less than three days. Of course, I’m not asking you to do so for free. From what I’ve heard from Suri, your company appears to currently be experiencing a massive financial crisis, am I correct? I’ll say it now that should you agree to my request, I’m willing to compensate you with over ten times the amount of what you currently owe!” replied Gerald without beating around the bush.

Upon hearing that, Rosie found herself frowning slightly. With a bitter smile, she then said, “I apologize, Mr. Crawford, but what exactly do you mean by ‘borrow’? I’m afraid what you’re asking for is simply too inconvenient for me to oblige to!”

Though she had immediately turned down his request, Rosie couldn’t help but wonder who this handsome and refined person was. What did he even mean by ‘borrowing’ her? What more, the amount she needed to tide over her company’s financial crisis was at least a hundred million dollars! Going with what he had suggested, wouldn’t ten times of that amount to a billion dollars?

Due to it clearly sounding unbelievable, Rosie quickly found herself concluding that Gerald wasn’t a reliable person. With that in mind, she simply stood up to leave so that she could be done with this queer conversation.

At that moment, a shout could suddenly be heard coming from outside, stating, “Mr. Caffin! You can’t just go in like that! Our chairman’s meeting up with a guest right now!”

“Bah! All she’s meeting is a pimp, isn’t she! Now get out of my way! I’m meeting Rosie!” declared Mr. Caffin as he slammed the office door open.

Following that, everyone watched as a robed old man—who looked to be around the age of sixty—sporting a goatee and a felt hat on his head, entered the room alongside his bodyguard. If the four people inside the office didn’t know any better, they’d surely have assumed that old man was from some band!

Hands in his pocket, Mr. Caffin then said in a carefree manner, “Your subordinate truly is too ignorant, Rosie! Can you imagine her actually trying to stop me from entering your office? How could she not know that you’re already engaged to me!”

“I beg your pardon, Titus! Have you gone mad? Who on earth got engaged to you? Also, do you really think that my office is someplace you can just barge into whenever you feel like it?” retorted Rosie.

From what Gerald could see, Rosie’s disgusted expression was more than enough to tell him that she wasn’t the least interested in Titus at all.

“Regardless, aren’t you interested in finding out why I so anxiously came over to look for you today? Worry not, I’ve got you covered. See, with your mother currently so ill and in a vegetative state, I went ahead and took the initiative to find a top-notch doctor for you! The doctor in question is Dr. Yivian Zouch, and he’s well-known for curing several other patients who were also in vegetative states!” explained Titus as he quickly introduced Yivian to Rosie.

Upon hearing that, Rosie—who had initially been planning to scowl and chase Titus out of her office in anger—found herself holding her tongue as she gulped and turned to look at Dr. Zouch before saying, “...Is he the one?”

“Indeed I am, Miss Slow. Just so you know, Mr. Caffin pleaded to me for the longest time before I finally agreed to come over! He’s really been willing to spend a lot of effort on you!” said the doctor as he rested his left arm against his back while stroking his goatee with his right hand, a pose that suggested that he truly was a world-renowned expert.

“Hear that, Rosie? Do you see how much I care about you now? Speaking of which, who is that pimp anyway?” snorted Titus as he looked at Gerald with hostile eyes.

Chapter 1345

“I’m not acquainted with him either. Either way, I have other things to attend to, Mr. Crawford. Also, I’m afraid I won’t be able to help with your request. Now if you’ll excuse me, I need to take care of my mother for now!” said Rosalie.

Quite honestly, if it wasn’t for the fact that Suri had been the one who had brought Gerald over today, Rosie would’ve already issued for someone to chase him off so that she wouldn’t have had to waste so much time on him in the first place!

“I truly implore you to reconsider my proposal, Chairman Slow. After all, I’ve already offered you very generous terms, and you’ll be able to receive a mountain of money without even doing much. To sweeten the deal, I’ll treat your mother’s illness as well as long as you agree to my proposal!” replied Gerald.

“That’s right, Chairman Slow! He’s capable of that!” added Suri.

Truthfully, Suri had been trying her best to recommend Gerald to Rosie since she wanted him to help treat Rosie's mother. After all, Suri knew for a fact how much of a toll Chairman Slow's mother's illness had always been on Rosie.

What more, Suri was certain that Gerald could help since she had already had the honor of witnessing Gerald's magical medical skills when he treated her grandfather. After all, it had only taken about half an hour—after ingesting Gerald's oxyblood pellet—for her grandfather's expression to grow much ruddier than before. In fact, he was even capable of standing again by that point!

With that in mind, Suri knew for a fact that calling Gerald a genius doctor was no exaggeration.

"...You... Can treat illnesses as well?" asked Rosie in utter disbelief.

She had already had the impression that Gerald was a slightly unreliable person. After all, despite having just met her, he had claimed that he was going to help her tide over her company's financial crisis. As if that wasn't already enough, he was now saying that he was capable of curing her ailing mother! There was no way she was going to fall for that!

"Humph! I appreciate the gesture, Mr. Crawford, but I find myself more willing to trust in Dr. Zouch!" replied Rosie as she spoke her mind without the slightest hesitation.

As she ordered her subordinate to chase him away, Gerald simply smiled subtly before saying, "Suit yourself, Chairman Slow! Hopefully you don't come to regret your decision!"

While Rosie didn't reply to that, Titus—who had been standing impatiently at the side this entire time—snapped, "D\*mn it, brat! Don't you get what Rosie's trying to say? You're just some young lad who's not even seen much of this world yet! How dare you even claim that you're capable of curing illnesses! Honestly, I think you just have ulterior motives for trying to get close to my fiancée! Throw this man out immediately, Hiro!"

"With all due respect, Mr. Caffin, I've vowed never to attack anyone without a weapon. Had this man attempted to attack you first, I would've definitely taught him a lesson by now. However, not only has he not done that, but he's not holding a weapon at all! He simply looks like a regular Joe and I can't hurt someone like that!" replied Hiro—who had been standing behind Mr. Caffin this entire time with his arms crossed—as he squinted his eyes slightly before shaking his head.

Though Hiro exuded a rather arrogant and domineering aura, Titus simply retorted, “This is no time to be thinking about your oath! Just teach him a lesson already!”

“And just what exactly are you ordering him to do? Whatever the case is, Mr. Crawford came over to meet me today, so don’t you start doing anything to him now! You can’t just act recklessly as you please just because you have a master by your side!” replied Rosie.

Though she didn’t really like Gerald, in the end, Suri was the one who had brought him here. Since she treated Suri like her sister and best friend, Rosie had stepped in to stop Titus, just to give her some face. Had Suri not been the one who invited Gerald, however, Rosie secretly hoped that Titus would just teach this lad—who didn’t know any better—a good lesson.

“You hear that, brat? Rosie’s already pleading on your behalf, so you better get lost right this instant! Otherwise, I’ll show you how powerful I truly am!” warned Titus.

Hearing that, Gerald simply chuckled with a wry smile as he shook his head.

“...You... You brat! What are you laughing about?!” growled Titus.

“From the looks of it, he seems to be looking at you with disdain, Mr. Caffin!” said Yivian who had been silent this entire time.

“I’m laughing at how overly confident you are! To think that someone like you is still worthy of the title ‘Mr. Caffin,’... Aren’t you even aware of your own capabilities?” retorted Gerald as he moved for the door to leave.

However, Hiro suddenly blocked Gerald’s path—his arms still crossed as he squinted his eyes—before saying, “Now that you’ve insulted Mr. Caffin, I can’t allow you to just leave like that! I’m teaching you a lesson right here and now!”

The way he was speaking suggested that everything in the world was nothing but pitiful ants to him. It was the arrogance of a warrior.



“You know, after hearing you keep yapping on and on about teaching me a lesson, I’ve grown curious as to where you get your confidence from! Regardless, I do hope you understand that healing your mother and dealing with your company’s financial crisis is only out of goodwill. Refusing my request is another matter altogether!” warned Gerald after turning to look at Rosie with a wry smile.

“For f\*ck’s sake! Are you actually threatening my fiancée right in front of me?! Beat him to death already, Hiro!” ordered Titus.

“It seems that I’ll have to make an exception to deal with this ant today!” replied Hiro as he shook his head, seemingly still reluctant to break his oath as he took a step forward.

#### Chapter 1346

The second Hiro got close enough to Gerald, however, Gerald simply raised his arm and slapped Hiro’s face with the back of his hand. While Gerald hadn’t really used that much force—simply making use of the inertia from raising his arm to hit Hiro—Hiro ended up spinning twice in the air before finally landing atop a coffee table that, in turn, smashed into pieces!

With his cheek now extremely swollen as he spat out several broken teeth, by the time he realized what had just happened, Hiro was beyond shocked and dumbfounded.

This person had been this strong this entire time?! Hiro couldn’t even resist that sudden and strenuous blow in the least! How was that even possible?!

By this point, Titus was so shocked that he could only gulp in horror as he took a step back.

Even Rosie found her eyelids twitching slightly. Gerald’s skill was now apparent, and it well-exceeded her expectations.

“...D-do you have any idea who I am? I’m the boss of the Caffin Group!” yelled Titus as soon as he regained his wits.

“Caffin group this, Caffin group that... I’ve grown numb of hearing you say that! Are you honestly still trying to use that Caffin Group of yours to threaten me?!” snarled Gerald as he glared at Titus with a frigid expression.

The glare alone made Titus feel as though an electric current had just run through his body. Shuddering in fear, he had no idea where this panic stemmed from, but whatever the case was, he was so frightened that it felt like his life didn't even belong to him anymore!

With that, he immediately nodded in his terror-stricken state as he said, "P-please don't hit me! You're right! Everything you say from now on is true!"

"I don't have a need to hit you just yet!" growled Gerald as he stared disdainfully at Titus.

Following that, he then turned to look at Rosie before saying, "Miss Slow, I'm giving you a minute to reconsider it. Again, note that as long as you agree to my request, I'll treat your mother as well as give you compensation of over ten times of what you need to tide over your financial crisis!"

After slapping Hiro, Gerald's true aura had flared to life, and in Rosie's eyes, he no longer looked like he was just some swindler. Rather, he now felt like someone extremely powerful and terrifying!

In other words, she was finally starting to believe in Gerald's words.

While Rosie truly wished to agree to his request now, she simply couldn't get used to Gerald's insufferably arrogant attitude!

"...Humph. You said you'd help me, but I wonder how true that statement really is... After all, my company's facing a massive financial crisis, and I need at least a hundred million dollars to fully clear the issue! You said you were willing to compensate me ten times that amount, right? Does your statement still stand?" replied Rosie, feeling extremely unconvinced.

"...Oh? It's only a hundred million dollars?" asked Gerald, feeling genuinely surprised.

Seeing that, Rosie took in a deep breath. Who even was this person...?

"...That's right! While I only require a hundred million dollars, ten times of that would turn the compensation sum into a billion dollars! Are you willing to just hand that over?" asked Rosie.

“Why not?” replied Gerald with a nod.

“...What? You... Since you’re so willing to fork over a billion dollars, then why don’t you just give me ten billion dollars instead?!” said Rosie, her eyes now completely widened in shock.

Even Titus was shocked speechless at that moment!

However, upon seeing Gerald shaking his head, a hint of contempt was reflected in Rosie’s eyes as she thought, ‘Hah! And here I thought you truly were some wealthy man!’

She instantly ate her words, however, the second she saw Gerald fish out a cheque from his pocket.

“This here is a special cheque that I got from the bank before I came here. There’s no limit to this cheque, you see, and as long as you agree to my request, you can fill up whatever amount you wish to obtain on this cheque! There’s no need to hold back at all! Just write down whatever figure you can imagine!” said Gerald as he handed Rosie the cheque.

“You...!”

By then, everyone in the room was staring at him in utter shock.

Chapter 1347

Nobody would’ve believed Gerald’s statement had they not heard him say it with their very own ears.

Even so, while Rosie had undoubtedly heard his proposal very clearly this time—and was also aware that the special cheque was the real deal—she still had a nagging feeling that Gerald was simply bragging.

While she had no idea how he had even managed to obtain that cheque, Rosie truly wondered if he would really be willing to just hand the money over if she wrote down five billion dollars on the cheque, an amount that Rosie couldn’t possibly even dare to raise any further!

Titus himself was too dumbfounded to even close his mouth now!

"It's been two minutes. Have you already thought everything out? If you have, then go ahead and fill in whatever figures you like on the cheque," added Gerald with a subtle smile.

"...You're the one who's suggesting this, alright? I can truly write whatever amount I wish for on this cheque, correct? No take-backs?" grumbled Rosie in her annoyance.

"As I've said, any amount you wish for!"

"...Fine! You're filthy rich, aren't you? Then I'm writing down five billion dollars on the cheque!" declared Rosie, still thinking that Gerald was simply bragging.

In her mind, she was wondering if he had watched one too many television dramas in his life. To think that he would actually dare to just hand her a cheque so casually before telling her to fill in any amount that she wished for! If she didn't know any better, she'd say he was simply mimicking the protagonist of some drama series he watched! Hell, even in dramas, the ones receiving the cheques would still write down manageable amounts of money for the protagonists to pay! Nothing exceeding tens of millions of dollars, that's for sure!

However, since Gerald was still bragging this excessively, Rosie wasn't about to give face to him. Did he truly think that he was some protagonist?!

"I'm warning you, once I write that amount down, the cheque will be effective under the law and you'll have to call the bank immediately to hand me the money! It's still not too late to retract your statement, you know!" said Rosie, giving Gerald her final warning.

"Chairman Slow, please don't take him too seriously!" pleaded Suri—who had been too shocked to even say a word this entire time—out of the blue.

"I've already said it multiple times, any amount you wish for! I've also already notified the bank in advance, so as soon as you write however much you want down, you can instantly go to the bank to have the money transferred directly to you!" replied Gerald with a wry smile on his face as he shook his head in resignation. It was just five billion dollars, right? Was there even a need to make such a huge commotion about it?

“You...! Very well! I’m writing it down right this instant!” said Rosie as she bit her lower lip before writing down that exact amount on the cheque.

Following that, she immediately called up the bank using the number written on the special cheque.

After a short while, the call was picked up and a sweet female voice immediately said, “Good day! You must be Miss Rosie Slow, correct? Please tell me the amount you wrote down on the cheque as well as your bank account number! We’ll be transferring the money over to your bank account immediately after!”

Gulping, Rosie then stated the information that the sales personnel had asked for.

Following that, the sweet-sounding lady then immediately began the transferring process while saying, “Thank you! Please wait a moment!”

It was obvious by this point that customers like Gerald didn’t even need to be there in person for such transactions. After all, his words alone were the greatest certification, and soon enough, Rosie received the ‘transfer successful’ notification on her cell phone.

Staring at her phone, Rosie found herself gulping before turning to look at Gerald in her complete disbelief. He truly had just given her five billion dollars!

“...You... How... How could you possibly be this rich...? What if I wrote fifty billion dollars instead of five billion on the cheque just now...?” asked the flabbergasted Rosie.

“So what if you wrote down fifty billion dollars? It’s just an extra zero, right? Big deal,” replied Gerald.

He truly couldn’t imagine why people placed so much importance on money. After all, Gerald himself was constantly wondering how he could just return to living his life as a pauper! Oh, how he missed his relaxing and enjoyable days as a poor person!

“It... It’s just an extra zero...?!” exclaimed Rosie, shocked once again by Gerald’s words.

Could someone just come over and beat this man up already?! He was simply too much...!

“Regardless, since the payment part is already settled, let’s head off!” said Gerald.

“...Head off? Where to...?” asked Rosie curiously.

“Isn’t your mother seriously ill? I’ll be curing her first and following that, I hope you’ll stick to your end of the deal and allow me to borrow you for three days. Once the three days are up, your task will have successfully been completed. If you still feel like the compensation money isn’t enough by then, you’re free to ask me for more. Hell, if you prefer another cheque like the one from earlier, I’m fine with that too,” replied Gerald as he slid a hand into his pocket before walking to the door.

The second he walked past Titus, Titus instantly bowed respectfully toward Gerald while shouting, “Brother!”

He was now regretting judging Gerald solely by his appearance. After all, Gerald was a truly capable and resolute person.

Chapter 1348

What more, for a person to so casually hand a blank cheque to someone and tell them to just write however much they wanted... How wealthy was he even to be able to just say something like that?!

Understanding that he had almost offended this powerful figure earlier, Titus now truly felt like dying.

Regardless, though Gerald simply chose to ignore Titus as his hand grasped the doorknob, he suddenly heard another person—from behind him—calling out, “Brother!”

It was Hiro, and the injured man—who had finally managed to struggle to his feet—flopped onto the sofa before adding, “I... I was using my full strength against you earlier, thinking that you’d never be able to withstand my blow... But you were simply too powerful just now...! Tell me, brother, how much strength did you actually use on me earlier...?”

Turning back to casually look at Hiro, Gerald simply replied, "Strength...? I barely used any at all! Truth be told, it was just a simple wave of my hand!"

"...What?!" exclaimed the stunned Hiro as Gerald simply walked out the door without turning back.

It was at that moment when Rosie was finally willing to believe that this honest-looking man truly was an authentic, outstanding, and mysterious top master. He was so powerful that quite honestly, Rosie felt like she had no other choice but to trust in him.

Still, she couldn't help but wonder why he wanted to borrow her for three days... Was he... planning to do something with her...?

Then again, he had already spent so much money to compensate her, and he was even willing to treat her mother... Why would he do all that just to spend some time with her...? Perhaps...

As several messy thoughts ran through Rosie's mind, she found herself quickly snapping out of it. What the hell was she even thinking about!

Her pretty face now blushing extremely hard, Rosie simply began running after Gerald.

Meanwhile, back in the Gunter Manor, Yreth was facing one of her subordinates as she asked, "Well? Have you managed to contact Felton yet? Didn't he head out to capture Gerald? Why isn't he back yet?"

"While it's true that he had gone out to capture Gerald, Mr. Felton sent a message to us earlier stating that Gerald had escaped into the mountains, Lady Gunter! While we immediately attempted to get in touch with him after that, we quickly realized that we couldn't get to him! From what we can assume, he chased Gerald so far up the mountain that he reached an area that didn't have any signal!" explained one of the subordinates respectfully.

"From what I know, the current Gerald is simply a Spirit Earth Realm master at best. With that in mind, it shouldn't be a problem for Felton to defeat him at all! What more, he's even brought along the Dead Annie Mother—our family's most treasured possession—just in case! With it, even if he were to run into a top master similar to the one he had previously bumped into, that master wouldn't be able to combat

our magical artifact at all! Which begs the question, what's taking him so long...? ...I want all of you to immediately head up the mountain as well to assist Felton!" said Yreth with a frown.

"Affirmative, Lady Gunter!" replied the subordinate before running off.

Yreth herself simply turned to look at the screen before her.

"...You can stop hiding now. I already knew you were listening in to our conversation from the very beginning!" said Yreth coldly.

Following that, a young woman slowly walked out from behind the screen... It was Yume.

She didn't know why and when it started, but Yume simply couldn't forget about Gerald, and she found herself constantly thinking about him. She truly hoped that she could see him again, though she didn't even know if that could ever happen. Still, in the end, what she truly wished for was for Gerald not to ever end up getting caught by her grandmother.

"You must be overjoyed that I haven't been able to catch that young lad yet, aren't you?" asked Yreth as she glared at Yume, her voice frigid.

"Why do we even need to capture him, grandma...? He bears no grudges or grievances against us, and he was even planning to pay you a visit before this! With that in mind, why did you have to collude with the Judgment Portal to harm him...? Can't all this be settled just by having a good chat with him...? Once that's done, you can just let him off, right...?" pleaded Yume, her eyes reddened.

"Hah! You truly have fallen head over heels for him! I really can't imagine what sort of magic that kid has... Ever since you were young, you've always despised and rejected any guys who've tried to make advances on you. Despite that, to think that you would actually end up getting enchanted by him after getting to know him for just a few days!" retorted Yreth, clearly feeling exasperated since she felt that Yume wasn't living up to her expectations.

"...L-love...? I'm not...!" replied Yume, blushing hard as she nervously tugged on her own clothes to calm herself.



“Who do you even think you’re kidding? Regardless, I hope you know that aside from achieving the Gunter family’s goal, grandma’s anxious to find him for your own good as well! I’m saying it now that you falling for him is only going to end up in tragedy! It’s simply destined that you won’t ever be able to be together with him! He just isn’t someone within your grasp! Can’t you understand what I’m trying to say here...?” said Yreth, feeling extremely tempted to lose her temper. However, she was an old and experienced person, which was why she switched her initially vicious expression into a resigned one as she looked at her granddaughter.

“...Why... Why do all of you keep saying that I’ll never have a happy ending with him...? How can all of you just say that so confidently?!” replied Yume in a panic, her heart now filled with immense anger and resentment as she recalled Master Ghost’s words back then.

“...Mind you, I shouldn’t be telling you about this yet, but if I don’t, I truly am afraid that you’ll be silly enough to do something stupid in future! So be it! I’ll tell you everything today!” declared Yreth as she took in a deep breath.

Her expression now solemn, Yreth then turned to look at Yume before asking, “Tell me... Do you truly know who Gerald is...?”

Chapter 1349

“...Who is he...?” asked Yume, her eyes turning serious.

From the moment she had first met him, Yume could already tell that Gerald was no ordinary person. While it was true that Gerald was the heir of the wealthiest and most influential family on the planet, her grandmother still wouldn’t have needed to devise so many tactics and traps just to capture him if he was merely a regular person. Hell, her grandmother even ended up colluding with the Judgment Portal just to deal with Gerald!

All this begged a question. Though it was true that Gerald’s current training far exceeded that of his peers, Yreth could most probably deal with him easily. In other words, there really wasn’t a need for those from the Judgment Portal—who were even stronger compared to Yume’s family—to collude with the Gunters just to deal with Gerald. After all, what need was there to join forces if both parties were clearly capable enough to capture him on their own?

With that in mind, it was no wonder why Yreth’s words aroused Yume’s curiosity.

Nodding, Yreth then sighed before saying, "...Very well! Come along with me!"

Following that, Yreth led Yume to her exclusive secret room which Yume knew was a forbidden area that only the current head of the Gunter family was allowed to enter. Upon arriving there, Yreth gently touched a mechanism which resulted in the door to the room being slowly opened.

Upon taking a single step into the room, Yreth triggered bright lights to suddenly flare to life, illuminating the initial darkness of what laid beyond the door. As Yume followed closely behind her grandmother, she now realized that the door led to a massive hall that was at least four hundred square meters. Aside from that, it was also noteworthy that the stone walls surrounding the hall were made out of bluestone.

Regardless, after walking for a while, both of them eventually stood before a large coffin that was placed atop a high platform that lay in the middle of what seemed to be a lobby.

The coffin itself looked slightly strange, to say the least. It resembled a crystal eternal coffin, and the bottom of it was somehow levitating in the air. While the inside of the coffin wasn't all that clear, Yume could still clearly discern that inside it was the corpse of a woman.

After staring curiously at the woman for some time, Yume eventually realized that there was much more to awe in the room.

For one, bookshelves were sticking against every wall in the room, and each of them was filled to the brim with the Gunter family's most precious secret books. Aside from that, there was also an incense stand—which currently held several burning incense sticks—at the northernmost wall, and placed upright near it, was a piece of jade. Taking a step forward, Yume also noticed the presence of a big alchemy cauldron, its current contents exuding all sorts of colorful lights that honestly looked a bit strange and creepy.

Now at peak curiosity, Yume found herself saying, "Grandma...!"

"Since this is the first time you're stepping into this place, it can't be helped that you'd be a little curious. Regardless, this here is the secret room where our family keeps our most mysterious and prized possessions. While by right, only the Gunter head is allowed to even step into this room, I'm making an exception for you today!" stated Yreth rather casually.

Hearing that, Yume gulped before asking, "This... coffin.... Could it be holding the ancient corpse of that woman that we were previously searching for at the bottom of the ocean...?"

"That's her, alright!"

Chapter 1350

"...Is she really that important...? Even Gerald is still looking for her... Honestly, had you not misled him with the Dead Annes back then, he would've already succeeded in finding her by this point!" said Yume rather curiously.

"Well of course he's still looking for her! After all, this woman in white is one of Gerald's women!" replied Yreth as she squinted her eyes.

"...She's... Gerald's what? But... She's already been in that coffin for at least tens of thousands of years, hasn't she?" asked Yume, shaking her head in disbelief.

"Well, to be more specific, her name is Zyla Lockland, and she was Gerald's woman in his past life! Regardless, stop interrupting me and let me elaborate before you ask any more questions! You'll understand everything once I'm done explaining!" replied Yreth as she rested her arms behind her back before starting to pace back and forth as she slowly told Yume the entire story...

With her ears perked, Yume listened as Yreth said, "While I'm sure you already know that our family is an ancient one, I don't think I've ever told you about a sacred civilization that existed hundreds of thousands of years ago... It was known as the great civilization of antiquity!"

"Back then, ancient training sects were aplenty, so there were many who were able to train themselves to achieve spiritual enlightenment. With that in mind, plenty of great and powerful warriors were born, and they were capable of near-inhuman feats such as breaking mountains apart, working miracles, and even controlling the five elements! They truly were omnipotent beings!"

"However, among all of them, there was one person who trained himself to the point where not only did he achieve spiritual enlightenment, but he was also able to become immortal! From the day he managed to achieve immortality, he gained the ability to live both in heaven and on earth without needing to reincarnate!"

Yume found her eyes widening even more now, finding everything that her grandmother said to be both weird and mysterious...

“Even so, the brilliance of the great civilization of antiquity was just like a meteor. In other words, though it was both bright and dazzling, it was short-lived, and it didn’t go out slowly either. The entire civilization simply disappeared completely without a trace one night!”

Hearing that, Yume couldn’t help but ask, “But... If the great civilization of antiquity truly did exist—and the people back then were as powerful as you described—how could they have just disappeared or died out overnight, grandma?”

“It was due to the holy spirits!”

“...Holy spirits...?”

“Indeed! Mind you, there were plenty of holy spirits on the earth back during the great civilization of antiquity. However, for some unknown reason, the holy spirits suddenly began ceasing to exist! They just started disappearing out of the blue! Without being able to rely on the holy spirits, those who were still training to achieve spiritual enlightenment couldn’t avoid catastrophe, and their souls ended up getting dispelled. With that in mind, without holy spirits for support, the person with the Immortal Body wasn’t able to continue maintaining his ancient power!”

“...If that’s the case, then doesn’t that mean that all his efforts to become the most powerful person back then were wasted? After all, even he wasn’t able to resist the catastrophe!” replied Yume.

“That’s where you’re wrong!” said Yreth with a bitter smile on her face as she shook her head.

“...I’m wrong...? Then, does that mean that he managed to avoid the catastrophe, even though he was unable to maintain his Immortal Body?”

“That’s right. After all, he was the eternal top master during the great civilization of antiquity. Back when the catastrophe happened, all of the great masters were incapable of even fighting back, so they either ended up dying or fleeing if they could! That man, however, opted to undergo a supernatural

transformation to deal with the situation. Since he was proficient in several supernatural transformation techniques, he chose to condense his primordial spirit and use an artificial reincarnation method to avoid the catastrophe. To complete that cycle, he needed to reincarnate nine times, and this is currently his ninth. He'll finally be awakening again in this lifetime!"

Following that, Yreth had to momentarily pause to calm herself for a moment. Once she shook the feeling off, she then added, "The primordial spirit itself is known as the Herculean Primordial Spirit, and the Herculean Supernatural Technique was something that he came up with himself! With that in mind, do you understand now, Yume? Anyone who manages to get their hands on the primordial spirit will be able to train and achieve an Immortal Body! I'm saying it right now that what I'm now telling you is a very big secret! Very few people in the world even know about this!"

As Yume's breath hastened, she then asked in disbelief, "Grandma... You couldn't be saying that Gerald is the primordial spirit of that top master back then, right...?!"

Watching as Yume almost fell in her shock, Yreth replied, "It is indeed. I'm also well aware that aside from our family and the Judgment Portal, many others are trying to locate and get close to him as well!"

"Note that Gerald still has a lot of unlocked potential, and there's plenty of room for him to further his development. With that in mind, both our family and the Judgment Portal are truthfully fearful of Gerald. Not only do we not dare to face him directly, but we're also worried about hurting him too much. After all, who knows what would happen if we accidentally frustrated him so much that his full potential and abilities ended up being forced out? With that in mind, the only thing we dare to do right now is to capture him first! Once that's done, we'll slowly figure out how to deal with him!"

"In a way, this is all a gamble, and the only option is to win. With that, I hope you finally see the bigger picture now. Do you still think that Gerald is someone that you should be falling in love with?" asked Yreth coldly.

Hearing that, Yume could only take a few steps backward as powerlessness swept through her entire body. If what Yreth had said was all true... Then there truly was no way for her to even come close to being qualified to love him!

Chapter 1351

With that in mind, Yume suddenly found herself growing extremely envious of the woman that Gerald had fallen for. Shaking the thought off, she then asked. "...So... You retrieved the woman in white just so Gerald would take the initiative to come look for us...?"

“Indeed. After all, that is by far the safest way to lure Gerald to us! With any luck, we’ll eventually be able to capture him! Regardless, I truly hadn’t expected that he would actually manage to flee from us so many times! I was already prepared to receive good news from Felton ages ago, but to think that he was successful in escaping again!”

“...Say, grandma... The Herculean Primordial Spirit... Is it hidden within his body...? Does that mean that once you capture him, you’ll have to harm or kill Gerald...?” asked Yume.

Shaking her head slightly, Yreth then replied, “As you’ve said, we only require the Herculean Primordial Spirit. Whether we kill him or not depends entirely on him!”

The second she heard that, Yume instantly knelt with a ‘thud’ before saying, “Please, grandma, I beg of you... Please don’t kill Gerald! Not only is he a good person, but since there’s no real reason to kill him, there’s no need for you to take his life then, right...?”

Pondering on Yume’s statement for quite a while, Yreth eventually said, “...I’ll be making the final decision on that. However, I can promise you that I’ll only kill him if he shows any resistance or tries to fight back! If he doesn’t, then I’ll keep him alive!”

Upon hearing that, Yume couldn’t help but feel like a heavy load had just been lifted off her heart. Looking at her overjoyed granddaughter, Yreth could only smile bitterly as she shook her head before saying, “Now hurry up and get to your feet already, silly granddaughter of mine!”

“Of course, grandma! Still, if not many people across the globe know about this secret, how did you find out about it? As a top master, I’m sure he had no shortage of enemies. With that in mind, it wouldn’t make sense for him to allow so many people to find him upon being reincarnated for the ninth time, right...?” asked Yume curiously.

“It seems that I’ve not doted on you in vain. Now wouldn’t it have been wonderful if Felton was half as smart as you were. Regardless, your doubts are indeed, warranted. While it’s true that he’s akin to an ancient and flawless god, nothing in this world is perfect. With that in mind, even though he managed to keep the secret hidden for tens of thousands of years, those determined enough to crack the code eventually managed to get that information, and Gerald himself had only been able to find out about so much due to this. As for our own family, we found out about the secret due to some vile villain sharing

the information with us some forty years ago! Of course, he wasn't doing it for free, and the condition to obtain that information was for our family to hand the Dead Annie Mother over to him!"

"Eventually, we found out that after obtaining the magic artifact, he had planned to annihilate the Gunters! To think that he nearly wiped our entire family through deception alone!"

"...So... Is this the same enemy who was seeking revenge on us forty years ago...? The one whom you sent all the societies to hunt down? So is the reason behind all that!"

"I'm glad that you're finally understanding everything! Also, if it isn't already evident enough, several forces have already found out about Gerald's true identity and have already begun taking action. While we're on the topic, you should know that Gerald's rapid training growth isn't due to him having some sort of special physique. Oh no, it's simply because someone out there is helping him unlock his many potentials. Oddly enough, that person isn't releasing all of it in one go, only in small bits at a time. To make it easier to grasp, you can imagine the person scooping water out from the ocean, one ladle at a time."

"However, knowledge of that only makes Gerald all the more terrifying. After all, Gerald is already this strong despite not even having unlocked his full potential! Should there come a time where he successfully regains all his power, then we'll all be mere ants to him! Just being stepped on by him would kill us! By that point, not only will the Gunters be unable to ever rise again, but we'll also constantly be facing disaster and tragedy! With that in mind, do you now understand why both our family and the Judgment Portal are so fearful of Gerald...?"

"Speaking of which, I'll have you know that I've secretly observed him in the past. Though he used to have a very weak temperament in the past and he was both wimpy and fragile at best, I can't pinpoint when it started, but he eventually grew more and more cold-hearted, careful, and meticulous. To make matters worse, he's growing even more quickly now than he ever has before! It wouldn't be a stretch to say that you'll notice obvious differences in Gerald even after just a few days of not meeting him! Such changes could be so drastic that there's a possibility that you won't even be able to tell who he is at all!"

#### Chapter 1352

"With that in mind, I hope you now understand what I've constantly been worrying about! His rapid progression in strength is a clear warning that action must be taken!" added Yreth, a solemn expression on her face.

Hearing that, Yume—whose mouth had been gaping wide for a while in her dumbfounded state—could only nod her head in agreement.

After being granted all this knowledge, Yume truly felt like the door to a whole new world had just been opened to her. After a brief silence, she then asked, "Then... What are the origins of our family, grandma...? Aside from that, I'm also curious about the great masters that managed to escape the great civilization of antiquity... Where did they end up running off to...?"

"Oh, they escaped all over the place! While some of those great masters remained here on earth, most of them chose to escape to someplace known as Jaellatra instead. After all, there are enough holy spirits there to relatively sufficiently sustain them!"

"...Jaellatra? Where is it? Could it be someplace not on earth...?" asked Yume curiously.

Shaking her head, Yreth then replied, "While it's a place on earth, it's located within a narrow gap on this planet! Very few people are able to make it into that gap, and once inside, it's even more difficult to leave!"

"As for the start of our family's great history, it began when one of our ancestors accidentally discovered some miracles that were left behind some tens of thousands of years ago. It was also around then when they inherited something great, and after passing it down throughout the generations, the Gunters eventually ended up becoming one of the most influential families in the world!"

"...I see! I seem to understand everything a little better now!" replied Yume with a nod, feeling that she had now gained a comprehensive understanding of the situation.

"I'm glad to hear that. Now then, since you already see the bigger picture, I believe you won't continue hindering me from doing anything in the future, right? After all, since things have already gotten to this point, there really isn't any turning back anymore. Even if we hypothetically choose not to deal with Gerald in the future, he still isn't going to be letting our family off. In case you haven't noticed, the Gunters have already been living through a crisis ever since we boarded ship. With that said, now that you know that the lives of hundreds of innocent Gunter family members are on the line, I hope you're sensible enough not to continue being enchanted by such fruitless and futile love..." said Yreth, slight frustration in her voice.

"...To be completely honest, grandma, from what I've seen, Gerald isn't a cruel or ruthless person at all. Since we haven't fallen out with one another yet, perhaps there is still a way to make peace with him once we share everything that we know!"



“Hah! You’re dead wrong there! You barely understand him at all, especially since he’s changed so much from the last time you’ve met! Regardless, there isn’t anything else to say about this anymore. After leaving this room, I hope you’ll obediently remain inside our manor. Please don’t make me have to worry about you any more than I need to!” replied Yreth as she waved her hand, signaling for her granddaughter to leave the room.

Though Yume clearly looked like she still had more to say, seeing how reluctant her grandmother seemed to continue talking, she chose to leave for the meantime instead.

The second the door to the secret chamber closed, an almost ethereal voice suddenly said, “It was wrong of you to tell her about our affairs... This could easily be the eventual cause of your precious granddaughter’s death! You know how foolish women can be after falling in love! There’s a high possibility that she’ll end up messing up our plans due to how much she loves him!”

“I know my granddaughter well, and I’m only trying to help her. She’s never fallen in love before this, which is why I told her everything so that she can finally understand how powerful Gerald truly is! If I had chosen not to tell her, then that ignorant and foolish girl would surely do something stupid for him, ultimately ruining all our plans! Telling her all that was my way of showing how large a gap there was between Gerald and herself. Hopefully that’ll lead to her finally giving up on him!”

“As for you. You’re the one who got us entangled in this situation in the first place. If you don’t fulfill your promise to our family at the end of the day, then I’ll never let you off, not even after I die and turn into a ghost!”

#### Chapter 1353

“Worry not, as long as you help me capture Gerald, I’ll definitely gain the ability to shuttle back and forth between earth and Jaellatra. With that, I’ll surely be able to turn your family into the most powerful force there without any issues! Besides, you already know about my background, don’t you? Hahaha! To think that Gerald would accidentally release me back then... This is surely god’s reward to me for remaining locked up for thousands of years!”

Turning around, Yreth looked at the piece of jade—that had previously been placed upright near the incense stand—as a black glow emanated from it. Not long after, the black glow began momentarily swirling in the air before finally forming the silhouette of a phantom-like humanoid!

Upon closer inspection, the phantom appeared to be a young man who had a hooked nose, and a pair of upward-slanting brows that laid above eyes that occasionally glistened evilly. Who would've imagined that this phantom-like humanoid—who had supposedly already existed for tens of thousands of years—would still retain the appearance of a young man!

"I'm going to be frank and tell you that I'm already regretting agreeing to collaborate with you in the first place, King of Judgment Portal... Then again, it was never a willing decision for me to work together with your group and get entangled within all this. Truth be told, I have a feeling that that decision is going to end up becoming the eventual cause of our family's destruction! After all, just as I've told Yume, Gerald's getting way too terrifying too quickly based on his rapid progress alone!" said Yreth, a series of complicated emotions currently reflected in her eyes.

"Despite me risking so much, you—of all people—should know that the situation is much different for you, King of Judgment Portal! After all, you currently just exist as the thought of the soul, and that means that you're easily able to use the thought of the soul to control several people at the same time, not unlike your personal puppets! I, myself, am one of your puppets... Regardless, even if everything fails, you can simply continue to exist and eventually find another way to return to Jaellatra to continue being the young lord that you are. However, the Gunters aren't nearly as capable as you are when it comes to retreating! In fact, I have a feeling that even dying with our entire bodies intact will be difficult when the time comes! Do you even grasp how much the Gunters are risking here?" added Yreth.

"Hahaha! You're simply overthinking things! I have a feeling you're only this terrified since I told you a bit too much about Gerald's true identity... Truth be told, Gerald's far from frightening at the moment. After all, in my eyes, he's currently nothing more than an ant! Regardless, I trust you know that there's no turning back for you anymore. Gerald already knows who you are, after all. With that in mind, all we can do now is continue going according to plan!"

"Besides, you were the one who lusted for longevity! Upon finding out about that, I simply promised to bring you and your family over to Jaellatra—where you'd even have your very own place there—in exchange for making a few sacrifices... Think about it, once you're there, you'll be able to continue staying alive for at least another thousand years... Isn't that alone worth any amount of sacrifices...?" added the King of Judgment Portal with a laugh.

"It's honestly the only reason why I haven't backed down yet at this point! Worry not, for I've already made up my mind that I'll personally step up and capture him when it is necessary for me to do so!" retorted Yreth, her voice now both cold and gloomy.

“I’m glad to hear it! You know, it was the Herculean Primordial Spirit’s eighth reincarnation back when Jaellatra was still in turmoil. In order to obtain the Herculean Primordial Spirit, I attempted to break through the gap and come all the way to earth. Little did I know that I had severely underestimated the power of the gap. Upon crossing over, I was immediately struck by lightning, and my entire being was reduced to ashes. Not only that, but the thought of my soul was also trapped by others! Ever since that day, I’ve been far away from my family... With that in mind, if anyone should be anxious, it’s me!”

“I’ll have you know that I’ve been waiting thousands of years for an opportunity like this! That said, your assistance is key for me to get anything done! But whatever the case is, you don’t have to worry too much since everything is still under control!” replied the King of Judgment Portal.

“...Very well. I hope that the day we’ll eventually succeed together will arrive as soon as possible!” said Yreth with a nod.

“...Do you really think that you’ll be able to deal with him...? I’ve already told you many times to cherish your life since you have yet to completely disappear, even after all that you’ve done... Please don’t continue provoking him... You simply aren’t his match... Besides, your conspiracy is destined to fail!” said an extremely pleasant-sounding voice—that simultaneously sounded like an oriole—out of the blue.

Not only was it refreshing to listen to, but it also gave anyone who heard it a comforting feeling, as though one was being caressed by a soothing spring breeze.

Following that, Yreth turned to look at the woman in white that had just arisen from the eternal coffin...

As beautiful as a fairy, even the King of Judgment Portal found himself momentarily dazed before eventually shouting, “So you’re finally willing to show yourself!”

“Don’t get too excited. I only came out to warn both of you. From what I can see, the reason why both of you lack any grudges and grievances is because you’re only motivated by greed! This is your conflict and the only way it’ll possibly end is in tragedy!” said the woman in white—with her gorgeous red lips—as she sighed.

“Screw you and your disaster! What makes you so sure that both of us won’t be able to deal with Gerald? He’s only one person! Honestly, don’t you think you’re underestimating me a bit too much? I’m the King of Judgment Portal! I assure you that it won’t be long before this person—who’s gained your

eternal admiration—ends up kneeling before me, begging me to spare his life and to let him return to simply being the young master that he is! Hahaha!” growled the King of Judgment Portal, hints of anger and jealousy reflected in his eyes.

Just as the woman in white had always been filled with admiration for the deity, the King of Judgment Portal himself had loved the woman in white just as much this entire time. Despite that, he was well aware that she only had the deity in her heart. The deity was her one and only, and the same went vice versa. It was as though to the woman in white, there was no other man on the planet comparable to him. Knowing that, the King of Judgment Portal could only continue burning with jealousy.

Gritting his teeth, he then added, “Regardless, once I obtain the Herculean Primordial Spirit, I’ll be the master then! When that time comes, I’ll surely make you feel heartfelt admiration for me, and by that point, you’ll finally be convinced to be my woman! Worry not, for I’ll make you the top woman in the world!”

Chapter 1354

Upon hearing that, the woman in white could only shake her head in resignation.

Watching as her figure slowly faded as she returned into the eternal coffin, the King of Judgment—who was now seething in rage—roared, “...What the hell did you mean by that? Didn’t you hear what I just said?!”

“I think she’s made herself extremely clear, quite honestly,” said Yreth who had been watching the entire scene play out with her arms behind her back.

“...What do you mean by that?”

“You know what I mean. How could a woman who’s already been with an eagle ever fall in love with a mere locust?” replied Yreth without thinking her words through.

“... What did you just say to me...?! You b\*stard!” growled the King of Judgment Portal, his face reddened in rage.

It was only at that moment when Yreth realized that she shouldn't have spoken her mind out to him! Knowing how much she had messed up, the old woman immediately apologized, "I should've watched my tongue, King of Judgment Portal! Please forgive me...!"

"...Humph! Just hurry up and get your things done already! Regardless, I've already sealed her in with the formation method! I'll have her witness with her very own eyes that I'll succeed in achieving everything that I earlier said!" declared the King of Judgment Portal before turning back into a black glow and returning into the jade.

Meanwhile, Gerald currently had Rosie with him, as well as Seth and Suri. After successfully healing Rosie's mother, Gerald had brought all of them to Seth and Suri's home. While Suri herself was currently indoors, Gerald, Rosie, and Seth were chatting in the yard.

From what Leo had told Gerald, he needed to wait till at least midnight for him to perform the evocation technique. With how smoothly things were going, Gerald honestly wasn't all that anxious, which was why he still found the time to chat with the two.

Suddenly recalling the snake cave where Seth had gained his supernatural powers, Gerald asked, "Speaking of which, Seth... You told me that the snake cave was somewhere atop a nearby mountain... Do you remember its exact location?"

There seemed to be quite a bit of information that had been recorded within the snake cave, and it just so happened that all that information was relevant to Gerald.

His interactions with the Gunters had made him realize that if he simply continued aimlessly looking around for Mila and his second uncle, it was tantamount to him digging his own grave.

With that, he came to the conclusion that he needed to start finding out more about the world in order to better understand how the world worked. After all, he would eventually have to be a part of this path in the future anyway.

"But of course I remember! I've been there a couple of times before, and it honestly hasn't been too long ago since I last went there! I could lead you there right now if you wanted me to, brother!" replied Seth with a nod.

“...Hold up, a snake cave? What snake cave? Bring me along with you! I want to have a look at it too!” said Rosie—who had been standing by the side this entire time—with a puzzled but curious look on her face.

As they continued talking about it for a while—still in the yard—the sounds of a table being flipped and bowls shattering could suddenly be heard coming from within the house!

Upon hearing Suri’s scream almost immediately after, Seth was instantly taken aback as he said, “...Huh? What’s going on?!”

Chapter 1355

Rushing to the door, the second Seth opened it, he was instantly greeted by the tip of a pistol being pointed at his forehead!

Upon recovering from his shock, he slowly backed off as several guards—dressed in suits—quickly began exiting the house together with Suri as well as Seth’s grandfather, both of them held at gunpoint.

“Nobody moves or I’ll shoot!” yelled a middle-aged man—who seemed to be the leader of the group—as over a dozen more armed bodyguards rushed out from the woodshed behind the house.

Currently, everyone—who wasn’t a guard—had at least a few guns aimed at them, though Gerald was by far the one being targeted the most.

Following that, the middle-aged man excitedly said, “For you to predict that Gerald would be here, you truly have incredible foresight, eldest young lady! We’ve truly made a great achievement this time!”

At that moment, a young woman and man—who looked rather handsome—walked out and stood side by side, smiling coldly as they looked at the scene before them.

“The honor of this success actually goes to Fernando here! After all, he was immediately able to guess who was responsible for the deaths of all those Sime family bodyguards! Following that, we came all the way here to set up an ambush for Gerald! To think that everything went according to plan! Hahaha! I’ll be reporting this to the Gunters right this instant! We’ll definitely be given a lot of credit for our accomplishment this time!” scoffed the woman.

If it wasn't obvious enough by this point, the woman in question was Matilda from the Sime family. As stated by Matilda, the young man, on the other hand, was none other than Fernando, the captain of the Martial Arts Association—who had attended a banquet together with Aiden and many others—and was publicly defeated by Gerald at said banquet the other night.

From the looks of it, it seemed as though they hadn't given up on looking for Gerald ever since that night.

Thankfully for the duo, it wasn't long before they heard about the tragic deaths of several of the Sime family's subordinates. Being part of the Sime family, it was only natural for Matilda to investigate the matter. As for Fernando—who had been recuperating in the Sime Manor—he simply went alongside Matilda to look into the case.

After realizing that only a top master could have killed this many of their guards so devastatingly, Fernando immediately figured that aside from the Gunters, nobody else but Gerald could possibly possess such power in Qerton City.

While he was initially slightly doubtful about his conclusion, he still continued digging for clues and eventually wound up at Seth's house. All that led to the current situation.

To his delight, his assumption had been correct! Gerald truly was here! From that, Fernando was able to confirm that he truly was the one responsible for killing all those Sime family bodyguards.

"You flatter me, Matilda! If anyone's to be praised, it should be you! After all, upon hearing my proposal, it was your quick thinking that prompted us to set up this ambush in the first place! Without you, we wouldn't have been able to capture Gerald this easily!" replied Fernando, a wry smile on his face.

Following that, he glared at Gerald—who had caused his image to plummet the other night—before saying, "I bet you never expected this, did you? To think that despite your immense power, you'd still end up falling right into our hands! Keep in mind that dozens of armed men are pointing their guns at you now, so you'd best be on your best behavior and obey anything we say! If you don't, you better not blame us for killing you on the spot!"

"Speaking of which, I suggest that you don't report anything to the Gunters for the time being, Matilda. After all, just from how anxious they are to locate Gerald alone, you can tell how important he is to

them! With that in mind, should he get picked up by the Gunter family's subordinates, there's a high possibility that we won't end up getting anything despite all our efforts! Honestly, I believe that it would be wiser for us to directly meet the head of the Gunter family in order to bargain Gerald with them! Should things go smoothly, we could even have the Gunters teach us some of their secret techniques! If that truly happens, then my strength will definitely advance by leaps and bounds by the end of the day! Nobody in the Martial Arts Association will ever come close to rivaling me anymore!" added Fernando, his eyes filled with hope for that possible future.

"You're absolutely right, Fernando! If we're lucky, the Simes could get their hands on some of the Gunter family's assets! Who knows, the Simes could end up becoming the strongest and most influential family because of that! We truly are killing two birds with one stone! What an amazing idea, Fernando! My admiration for you now is boundless!" replied Matilda as she laughed joyously.

"Are both of you done chatting? Though you've said all that, it's not like you've actually captured me or anything, nor have you notified the Gunters about my presence. Also, are you really trying to threaten me with all those toys?" said Gerald as he glanced coldly at all the men aiming at him.

From Gerald's point of view, the guards were simply akin to children pointing toy guns at him.

Chapter 1356

With that in mind, Gerald truly felt like laughing at their attempt at capturing him.

"Humph! Boasting even when you're about to die? How shameless! I hope you realize that I only lost that day since I was careless! Regardless, from the moment I lost, I knew that I'd never be able to forget how humiliating that moment was for the rest of my life! Knowing that, I swore that I'd kill you sooner or later to reclaim my glory, and now, you're finally in my grasp!" declared Fernando before coughing slightly. From that, it was a clear sign that his injuries—that Gerald had inflicted upon him back then—hadn't even properly healed yet.

"He's right! We need to settle this resentment between us, once and for all! I definitely won't be letting you off that easily this time!" scoffed Matilda before laughing maliciously.

In response, however, Gerald simply shook his head before saying, "What a pity..."

Narrowing his eyes, Fernando then asked, "...What did you mean by that? And why are you shaking your head? While I'm well aware that to you, I'm just some nobody—who you defeated—whose currently



using dirty tactics that further plummets what little respect you had for me in the first place, I can assure you that not only am I talented in martial arts, but I was already a genius by the age of six! Can you imagine that? Even at that age, my intelligence had already surpassed a majority of ordinary people! With that in mind, you'd eventually get defeated by me anyway, even if I hadn't resorted to this tactic! I'll have you know that I have hundreds of ways to kill you!"

"...Oh? You were a genius from the age of six? Color me surprised! And here I was thinking that you were as dumb as a rock!" replied Gerald with a laugh.

Upon hearing that, Fernando instantly began seething with rage, and he was extremely tempted to walk up to Gerald and give him a few tight slaps, just to teach him a lesson!

Before he could do so, however, Gerald then added, "Look, I'll forget about all this and let you live if you release my friends and their family members. After all, I don't really think there's deep resentment between us in the first place. Just so you know, I've sworn to only kill those who hurt my friends. With that in mind, since you haven't done a thing to them, I'm still willing to spare you!"

"Also, just as you've said, I can't deny that you're talented, and I can assure you that if you train yourself properly in the future, you'll surely have good prospects in the martial arts field. As for Miss Sime, you're undoubtedly unruly and immensely annoying. It'd do you good to learn to be a little nicer and more prudent in order to get yourself good in-laws in the future. Regardless, what I'm saying is that not only do you not have to die here, but you also won't have to die for the Gunters!" added Gerald with a sigh.

The second his sentence ended, several of the bodyguards instantly began cackling wildly.

"Haha! Has this guy gone mad already?"

"I know right? Despite there being so many guns aimed at him now—that could easily blow his brains out—to think that he's still daring enough to 'consider letting us go'!"

As the guards continued roaring in laughter while looking at Gerald as though he was some mad person, Fernando himself began laughing before saying, "And here I thought you were a smart man, Gerald! To think that despite your exceptional martial arts skills, you're merely an idiot! Take a good, long look around you already! You're already under my control with so many of my subordinates aiming their

guns at you! Have you truly gone mad?! Also... You said that you'd only kill those who dared to harm your friends, right...?"

Following that, Fernando retrieved a dagger from his belt, and with a swift slash, he left a cut mark on Suri's face!

Laughing as he watched Suri—who now had blood slowly dripping down her cheek—scream, Fernando then shook his head before turning to look at Gerald again before saying with a smile on his face, "Hah! Is this considered an injury? Are you dying to kill me now? Or perhaps I should go a little further? Come on, kill me already!"

"How idiotic... I've already given you two chances, you know? Even so, you still wanted to walk down this path so badly... Speaking of which, I was honestly slightly doubtful at the beginning on whether or not both of you actually thought that these guns were enough to deal with me. As it turns out, you've really been thinking that that's the case! Your stupidity truly is endless!" replied Gerald before raising a hand and waving it.

Following that, a clamor was heard as over twenty guns flew into the sky in unison! Too stunned to even register how all this was happening, everyone simply continued staring wide-eyed as the guns began falling to the ground again! As if that wasn't already shocking enough, everyone eventually realized that upon hitting the ground, the guns had rearranged themselves to form the number four!

"...What?"

After witnessing that scene—that had happened in the blink of an eye—everyone was now paralyzed in shock. Even the smile on Fernando's face had faded...

Chapter 1357

"...How... is any of this even possible...?" muttered the flabbergasted Fernando under his breath.

"I've already told you that those guns were nothing but toys to me. As for your guards, they only have as much presence as rag dolls! You truly shouldn't have acted that rashly you know? Hurting my friend... You truly are courting death, aren't you?" replied Gerald with a subtle smile.

“...I... I don't believe that you're that almighty! Men! Let's kill him together!” ordered Fernando while gritting his teeth in resentment.

'We're of the same age... How could he be so much more powerful than me...?!'

By that point, all of the guards were already greatly aware of how dangerous their current situation was. What they were currently feeling was akin to them falling into a frigid cave with no way out. With nerve-racking chills running down their spines, the guards knew that death could greet them at any second. However, they weren't willing to just go out like this!

Wanting to live to see another day, their immense desire to survive allowed the guards to switch their fear into great murderous intent!

As they swiftly unsheathed their daggers before rushing toward Gerald—intent on stabbing him—Gerald simply waved his hand while shouting, “Utter rubbish!”

Following that, over ten people found themselves vomiting blood as they flew backward! Gerald had hit them with essential qi, and while it swiftly dealt with the guards—who were still flying backward—it also caused the courtyard's floor to be completely ravaged!

Though about ten other guards remained standing, all of them were now completely paralyzed in terror!

Seconds later, a 'clang' was heard as the middle-aged man from before—who acted as the bodyguards' leader—dropped his dagger before shouting, “B-boss!”

Immediately after, the rest of his men quickly dropped their daggers to the ground as well.

Gerald, however, gave them no response, simply opting to rest his arms behind his back.

Understanding what Gerald meant, the leader of the group instantly gulped before ordering, “Retreat! Everyone, retreat!”

He had already sensed Gerald's murderous intent, and though he had been in several life-or-death situations before, never had he felt the omen of death so vividly before. Though it was obvious that Gerald had yet to show his true capabilities, the leader wasn't about to stick around to find out the extent of his power. After all, their guns were already worthless against him, what more their daggers! True to his words, they really were nothing more than ragdolls to him!"

Hearing their leader's command, the men instantly ran to the side.

Seeing that, Gerald smiled subtly before saying, "It appears you're more intelligent than these two idiots here. Since you're wise enough to retreat, you may leave with your lives intact!"

"T-thank you, boss! Men! Fall back!" announced the middle-aged man as he bowed deeply before leading his subordinates away from the scene.

Watching as their men left, Fernando and Matilda were now completely stupefied.

Trembling in fear, Matilda turned to look at Fernando before asking, "...W-what should we do now, Fernando...?"

Quickly recovering his wits, Fernando immediately placed his dagger near Suri's neck before shouting, "You... You'd better not take another step forward, Gerald...! If you do, I'll just kill her! You know how capable I am in terms of martial arts! She's only a slash away from death, you hear!"

"Confident again? And here I was considering one final time whether I'd allow you to escape. Sadly, that chance is no longer available since you're still stupid enough to threaten me! You'll be dying an exceptionally horrible death!" replied Gerald as he took a step forward.

"You...!" retorted Fernando, at a loss of words. Had he truly just thrown away his only chance of escaping...?

"...Don't give advice in hindsight...! Regardless, I know you're a loyal person... With that in mind, why don't we settle things this way? I let this woman go, and you'll let me off! What do you say to that?" suggested Fernando nervously.

“So now you’re begging for me to let you go? I’m afraid you’re all out of chances!” replied Gerald as he shook his head.

In the flash of an eye, he then flicked his finger in Fernando’s direction! A light immediately shot out and—upon hitting Fernando’s palm—instantly mutilated it!

Completely shocked as he watched his hand fall to the ground, the pained Fernando found himself shouting, “Y-you...! How... How are you so strong...?! You... You demon...!”

Now filled with immense regret, Fernando found himself thinking, ‘What if what Gerald had said was right...? That if I hadn’t come over today to cause trouble, I could’ve eventually made good progress in my martial arts and maybe even end up becoming the president of the Martial Arts Association! After all, even he acknowledged my talent...! However... It’s... It’s now far too late for regrets...! I truly have offended someone whom I couldn’t afford to...!’

Though he recognized his utter defeat, Fernando wasn’t going to just give his life up without a struggle. With that, he held on to his still-bleeding hand as he rushed over to the wall, hoping to jump over it and escape!

Chapter 1358

Just as Gerald had said, Fernando was now pretty much as good as dead.

The second Gerald pointed his finger at him, Fernando instantly vomited blood before flopping lifelessly to the ground. Matilda herself was already screaming in terror as she tugged at her hair.

Falling to her knees before Gerald, she instantly began begging, “P-please spare my life...! I swear none of what I did was on purpose...! Please, please don’t kill me...!”

“You’ve been given enough chances. Now cease!” replied Gerald as he pointed his finger at her as well, sending a hollow knife slashing across the devastated woman’s neck! Falling to the ground, it was only a second later when Matilda breathed her last breath.

After witnessing all that had happened, Rosie found herself shivering as she said, “...How... How frightening... To think that you were able to kill so many people in such a short amount of time...!”

"I only kill those who deserve to die," replied Gerald casually.

At that moment, he suddenly raised his head and took a glance behind him. His eyelids twitching slightly, he then said, "...Seth, Suri, bring the old master and Miss Slow into the house first. I have something to attend to at the moment. Remember, do not come out no matter what sounds you hear!"

Before anyone could even question his intentions, Gerald had already turned around and jumped out the courtyard... Running all the way to the bank of a river in the village, Gerald eventually came across over ten corpses lying all over the ground. They were the bodies of those whom he had earlier allowed to leave.

Taking in a deep breath, Gerald then shouted, "...I've been expecting you... Reveal yourself!"

"While we've only been apart for a short period of time, you've already made such rapid progress in your strength... That alone only serves to further prove that you really are that man...! You know, from how much you were lying to me in the past, I often found myself wondering if you truly weren't the person I once loved... However, not only have you mastered Thunder Eruption now, but your behaviors and actions are resembling your past self more, and more! With that in mind, tell me. Are you finally willing to admit who you really are?"

As a breeze blew across his face, Gerald turned to look at the woman who had finally chosen to show herself. Oozing with an aura of mysteriousness, the woman staring at Gerald—as she smiled seductively—was, of course, none other than Queena.

"And here I thought you had gone missing! After all, even after so much had taken place, you never showed up!" replied Gerald while looking at her.

"You still haven't answered my question. Are you finally ready to admit that you're him now?" said Queena, an expectant expression on her face as she walked toward him.

Slightly narrowing his eyes, Gerald then replied, "Truth be told, I don't know yet either. However, what I do know is that the deity will never fall in love with you, be it in the previous or this present life! From what I can tell, he only loves the woman in white!"

“...You... What did you just say....?” asked Queena, her expression filled with rage.

“You should very well know what I’m talking about!”

“You...! Don’t get all cocky just because you’ve learned Thunder Eruption! You’re far from being able to defeat me! Just so you know, I came all the way here just to capture and bring you back with me! After all, you’d definitely be in much better hands with me compared to a situation where you got captured by other forces such as the King of Judgment Portal!” scowled Queena who was now so angry that she didn’t even feel like talking to him anymore.

Knowing that talking wasn’t going to get her anywhere, Queena simply stretched her hand out to attack him! In response, Gerald manipulated his Thunder essential qi to make a counterattack!

The second the two forces collided, an explosive sound was heard! Not only did the sheer volume of the sound cause several of the sturdy-looking trees nearby to snap clear in half, but even the ground began cracking, sending dust flying everywhere!

As Gerald found himself taking ten steps back, Queena retreated three steps herself.

“...That was a powerful Thunder Eruption... To think that your essential qi has already reached such a stage...! Had I been a few days later in my attempt to recapture you, I’d surely have lost!” said Queena—with a shocked expression on her face—as she looked at Gerald, wondering how he had made such massive progress in such a short amount of time.

Chapter 1359

‘Back then, Gerald could hardly withstand a single blow from me... It isn’t even a stretch to say that he was nothing more than a puppet to me just a few days ago! Even so, to think that he’s become such an exceptional person in his short absence... I hate to admit it, but at his current strength, he isn’t too far off from what I’m capable of... No wonder he’s been so confident...!’ Queena thought to herself.

‘While it shouldn’t be too difficult for me to defeat him at his current strength, capturing and controlling him will be near-impossible now! After all, from what I can tell, he can easily evade me now, and extremely easily too!’

Watching as Queena continued pondering the situation, Gerald simply glared at her before saying, “While I’m incapable of killing you at the moment, I’ll have you know that capturing me won’t be an easy feat!”

“...You... What did you say...? You wish to kill me...?” replied Queena in disbelief.

‘I’ve loved you for tens of thousands of years...! Tell me, are there any other women as loyal and passionate as I am?! To think that you’d actually think about killing me...!’ Queena thought to herself while gritting her teeth in resentment.

After a short while, she turned to look at Gerald before giving a firm nod and saying, “...Indeed. I’m well aware that I won’t be able to control you as easily as I had in the past. Still, I hope you haven’t forgotten that your friend, Jasmine, is still in my hands! With that in mind, it isn’t impossible for me to continue controlling you as long as I’m still able to manipulate her!”

“I figured you’d say that. Since you’ve finally decided to bring it up, go ahead and state your conditions! She has nothing to do with all this, so tell me, what should I do for you to let her free?”

Gerald hadn’t forgotten that Jasmine was still in her hands. It was the reason why he had chosen to meet up with Queena in the first place—instead of avoiding her—upon sensing her presence.

“Oh, my condition is all but simple! Just get married to me and I’ll let her go! Besides, it’s for your own good too. After all, even though your strength has increased rapidly, the King of Judgment Portal is still much stronger than you could ever imagine! Quite frankly, if he wishes to deal with you directly, you’ll surely end up dying!” replied Queena, her voice filled with worry.

‘...From the looks of it, it seems that her worry is genuine.... She doesn’t seem to be trying to scare me at all... I have reason to believe her too since I haven’t been able to experience the strength of the King of Judgment Portal for myself... Since he’s a person that even Queena fears, I can only imagine how frightening he truly is...!’ Gerald thought to himself.

“...So what I’m hearing is that though you first formed an alliance with the Judgment Portal and the Gunters to capture me, you parted ways with them after finding out that the other two forces wanted me dead. Is my deduction correct?” asked Gerald, wanting to find out what the full story was.



Nodding, Queena then replied, "It is. At the very beginning, they had told me that you'd be coming over to Ancient City. Upon hearing that, I thought that I'd be able to capture you with ease! It truly hadn't occurred to me that the King of Judgment Portal would be that strong! With that said, I was unable to defeat him!"

"...Who exactly is the King of Judgment Portal...? And why haven't I heard about him before? Also, why's he so intent on killing me...?" asked Gerald. These questions had honestly been bothering him for a while.

"Well, all of this is related to you, of course. Tell me, do you still remember that there was another coffin in the king of the ocean's palace back when you first released me?" replied Queena.

"Of course, I do. That coffin was bound by chains, and there seemed to be figures carved all over it. I also remember that when the king of the ocean's palace collapsed, the coffin ended up being opened as well. Following that, a black light shot out of it!"

As he recalled the scene in his mind, he suddenly paused for a moment. Seconds later, a bewildered expression formed on his face as he said, "...You... Couldn't be suggesting that the black light that escaped was actually the King of Judgment Portal, right...?"

"Unfortunately, you're correct. In life, there are both causes and consequences. I'm sure it never occurred to you back then that not only would you fail to retrieve the woman in white, but you'd also end up releasing both of us!"

Shaking her head with a wry smile, Queena then added, "As for why he planned to capture and kill you, I feel that it's related to him wanting to obtain a chance to return to Jaellatra. After all, he's well aware that you're the reincarnation of Xudon, the god of war. With that in mind, he's probably thinking that once he's killed and refined you, he'll make such rapid growth in his strength that he'll finally be able to return to Jaellatra!"

"...I see. Speaking of which, I know that both of you came from Jaellatra... With that in mind, I'm assuming that marriage isn't the only thing on your mind. Tell me, what other use do I have to you...?" asked Gerald casually.

Upon hearing that, Queena's eyes glinted seductively as she smiled before saying, "...You resemble him more and more now... After all, his calmness, resourcefulness, and wisdom are all visible in you... Regardless, you're right. I do have another reason for wanting to marry you..."

Chapter 1360

"Go on..."

"Well, I'm seeking union between the both of us. You see, by relying on the pure yang energy in your body, I'll be able to be just like her and get the chance to practice Thunder Eruption as well. Once I've gotten the hang of it, I'll be able to travel back and forth between earth and Jaellatra! In other words, I'll be one step closer to achieving my dream of going through true rebirth!"

Upon hearing that, Gerald deepened his voice as he replied, "...I see. From what I now understand, both of you wish to breach into Jaellatra again... If that's the case, negotiation isn't completely out of the question!"

"A negotiation? What are your terms?"

"Well, for now, I suggest we form an alliance in order to take down the King of Judgment Portal. I have two reasons to back that up. Firstly, I could die by his hands if I don't get sufficient help. Secondly, from what I can understand, he's probably not too keen on allowing you to have your way either, isn't he?" proposed Gerald.

"As long as we're together, you're my husband, and I'd never allow anyone to hurt you! With that in mind, I naturally agree to the alliance!" replied Queena with a subtle smile as she slowly began walking toward Gerald.

At that moment, both of them suddenly heard a male shouting, "You b\*tch! Don't you dare hurt my brother!"

Following that, both of them turned to look at who had shouted. As it turned out, it was Seth, and he was currently rushing toward them with a cleaver in each hand!

"What did you call me...?!" growled Queena wrathfully as she lifted her hand, fully prepared to teach Seth a lesson.

Being a beautiful woman, Queena was used to being flattered. Now that someone was actually daring enough to call her a b\*tch, she felt that it was no different from being called hideous!

However, Queena quickly found her wrist getting grabbed by Gerald as he said, "Don't hurt him! He's with me!"

Upon stepping before Gerald, Seth immediately asked, "Are you alright, sir?"

Since Gerald had already saved him and his elder sister on multiple occasions, Seth had long treated him as his elder brother.

"I'm fine! Speaking of which, didn't I tell you not to leave the manor? Why'd you run out here all by yourself?"

"I was simply worried that you'd be in danger!" replied Seth.

Feeling touched, Gerald then said, "Even if I truly was in danger, it's not as if you could return in one piece yourself, you know...?"

"...That's true... But still. Regardless, who is she? Is she coming along with us to the snake cave?" asked Seth as he turned to look at Queena.

"...A snake cave? What kind of snake cave are we talking about here?" asked Queena in return.

"Well, from what I can assume, the contents we'll find within that cave will possibly illuminate us on some ancient civilization on earth. Speaking of which, I'm also interested in learning more—from you—regarding past incidents that had happened on earth as well as that Jaellatra you keep mentioning. With that in mind, why don't you come along with us to have a look around?" suggested Gerald.

'While the Gunters and the King of Judgment Portal are both tough enemies I still have to face, at the very least, Queena's now temporarily on my side... After all, both of us share the same enemy... The King of Judgment Portal...!'

As the saying went, the enemy of his enemy truly did end up becoming his friend. Not that Gerald was complaining. The fewer forces he had to deal with, the better.

Now that Queena was a temporary ally, Gerald found himself wondering about the secrets she possessed.... She had, after all, been alive for tens of thousands of years.... Perhaps she would even know a thing or two about the Sun League...

Chapter 1361

“But of course I’ll come along! After all, this is the first time you’ve even suggested for me to stay by your side!” replied Queena with a seductive smile.

Hearing that, Gerald simply nodded at her with a faint smile.

Naturally, he wasn’t about to tell her that he was going to save the woman in white at midnight. However, he was also well aware that if he wasn’t willing to make at least a slight compromise, then he’d surely end up suffering much greater losses should Queena ruin his efforts while he was summoning the woman in white’s soul...

It was about an hour later when Gerald asked, “Seth, do you truly remember where the snake cave is...?”

The trio who were currently following Seth—after all four of them entered the mountain—consisted of Rosie—who had been curious about the snake cave—Queena—who had agreed to come along since Gerald invited her to—and Gerald himself.

“Of course I do! However, since this place is rather secluded, I still need to gather my bearings a bit better!” replied Seth as he scratched the back of his head before stepping atop a nearby boulder.

A few seconds later, he then exclaimed, “I found it! It’s over there!”

Following that, he then agilely hopped off before taking a few steps forward and pushing some dense bushes aside... With that, a round cave entrance—that was almost as tall as a person—revealed itself to everyone.

A much younger Seth had first bumped into it while he was having fun with his friends. He remembered how his friends had dared him to enter the cave, and of course, he had taken the bet. Seth recalled that upon entering the cave, he had found an extremely large piece of discarded snakeskin. He had also come across a fruit in the cave, and eating it allowed him to gain the superpowers he had today.

Regardless, the snakeskin was the obvious reason why Seth had named this place the snake cave.

Moving back to the present day, all four of them found the need to lower their backs slightly as they proceeded further into the cave. After walking for some time, however, the cave soon opened up. As it turned out, that was a gigantic stone chamber in the cave that was honestly quite spacious.

Located right in the middle of the cave, was that large discarded snakeskin that Seth had told them about. From what Gerald could tell, the snake that had shed such a massive pile of skin could easily be as strong as the monster that Gerald had fought in the underground area back when he was still in the desert.

Whatever the case was, Seth—who now appeared to be so familiar with the place that it almost seemed like he had just returned home—then declared, “Well, this is the place!”

Following that, he then smiled before switching on the searchlight—that he had brought along—and taking a turn in the dark cave.

With the aid of the searchlight, Gerald was finally able to see his surroundings clearly. As was expected, strange paintings adorned every corner of the cave. Upon scanning through the area, he even noticed the presence of an enchanting-looking plant growing from inside one of the cave’s crevices. However, no fruits could be found growing on the plant.

“That’s the plant that I obtained the fruit from back then... However, it seems that it hasn’t borne any fruit again ever since I picked the only one growing back when I was still a child!” deduced Seth.

“How truly odd... This ancient plant is called a Lukra, and it has miraculous properties... Since the plant only bears a single fruit once in its entire lifetime, you truly are lucky to have been the one to eat it. Regardless, I’m pretty sure that their fruits’ aren’t that effective on earth due to its lack of holy spirits,” explained Queena with a smile, making it quite obvious that she knew quite a bit about the plant.

“I agree with the fruit being miraculous... After all, Seth did obtain superpowers upon eating it,” replied Gerald though his focus had been on the paintings on the cave walls this entire time.

From what he could see, the paintings on the walls were extremely old. Ancient, even. After briefly scanning through them, Gerald soon found himself raising a slight brow.

The things he saw on the walls were... weird, to say the least. For one, one of the paintings depicted a winged humanoid figure. As if that wasn't already odd enough, the person even had three eyes!

Chapter 1362

Aside from that, there were also several depictions of massive birds and beasts, and nobody could tell whether they were drawn that way deliberately.

Continuing to scan through, Gerald soon saw a rather familiar image of a massive bat-like creature. Looking at it for a while, Gerald found himself thinking, ‘...I met something similar to that back in the mine where I saved Yume and obtained the water repellent stone, right...? A large bat with the head of a human... While I had first assumed that it was some bat demon that had undergone immense training, since it's on this mural, it wouldn't be out of the question for it to actually be some kind of ancient creature that survived till today... But... How could that even be possible...? There are simply too many peculiar things at play...’

Turning to look at Queena—who had been utterly fascinated by all the things in the cave for a while now—Gerald asked, “...Say, what kind of world is being depicted on the walls...? Could it actually be earth?”

Hearing Gerald's question, she then replied, “Indeed. More specifically, it seems to be the legendary earth that existed millions of years ago! I learned about its existence from the data I got back when I was still in Jaellatra. Regardless, the paintings seem to depict a prehistoric civilization that once roamed the earth. If I had to name the exact civilization, I have a feeling that the murals are showing us what happened during the short-lived, but extremely glorious Shunzuog Civilization!”

After hearing what Queena had to say, Rosie's jaw instantly dropped. Nobody could blame her. After all, what Queena had just said was naturally preposterous to a normal person. Gerald himself would've had the same reaction as Rosie had he not already experienced so much by this point.

Regardless, Gerald already knew that Earth had already seen plenty of civilizations come and go by this point. From what he had found out, there was once a civilization of peculiar and unique humans that predated the appearance of even the dinosaurs! While dragons existed during that age as well, that civilization was rather short-lived.

“...Could it be that this mural had been here ever since the age of the Shunzuog Civilization...?” muttered Gerald curiously.

“No ordinary mural could have remained intact for that long, that’s for sure. With that in mind, why not try using your Thunder essential qi. I wonder if anything will change...” suggested Queena, her eyes still locked on the paintings.

Knowing that Queena probably knew the most about all this, Gerald simply obeyed. Activating his Thunder essential qi, he slowly skimmed it across the painted walls...

Instantly gasping in surprise, Queena found herself exclaiming, “It... It’s changed! It really has changed! Look, Gerald! There are many more people and a lot more information on the mural now!”

Gerald had seen the changes too, and he assumed that his actions had forced the entire mural to completely reveal itself.

“Since you had to use essential qi to reveal the rest of the mural, it’s safe to say that the artisans who drew this weren’t ordinary people. After all, from the looks of it, they had used the power of thought to hide the rest of the mural from those incapable of manipulating their essential qi, a feat that couldn’t possibly have been achieved by those without great strength. As for how I figured this would work in the first place, certain sects in Jaellatra used this method to store other forms of information as well, prompting me to ask you to try it!”

“Whatever the case is, from what I’ve been able to tell, the large snake was no ordinary creature. After all, I have a feeling that it relied on essential qi to nourish parts of it,” explained Queena.

“...I see. As it turned out, the rumors about the peculiar civilization really were true...” replied Gerald with a nod.

Moving closer to the wall to have a better look at all the new information that had just been revealed, it wasn't long before Gerald added, "...After looking at it for a bit, everyone—including the beasts—in the mural appears to be performing some sort of... sacrificial activity? From what I can tell, both humans and beasts didn't seem to live in harmony before. However, it's seen here that all of them later rushed over—regardless of where they came from—and began worshipping some large stone statue..."

"...I think I get it now. From what I could gather, the murals are apparently depicting the lives of those living within some small area during that era of civilization. For both the beasts and humans to unite, I have a feeling that only someone legendary could've possibly gotten them to do so in such a devout manner..." replied Queena solemnly.

"Do you have any idea who it could've been?" asked Gerald, glad that he had decided to bring her along. After all, she knew quite a lot of things.

"Well, I've read about that legendary person before in an ancient book I found back when I was still in Jaellatra... Since Jaellatra is a place that highly resembles the prehistoric Shunzuog Civilization, it's no surprise to me that the legend lives on there. However, while Jaellatra is similar to that civilization, it is by far a lot weaker compared to it. Hell, it wouldn't be a stretch to claim that anyone from the Shunzuog Civilization could dominate Jaellatra with ease! With that said, they'd barely need to lift a finger to take over earth!"

"Regardless, I went off-topic for a bit... Moving back to the legend, the legendary person was apparently the first person from the Shunzuog Civilization who was able to enter the realm of the Immortal Body. Due to that, he was pretty much invincible! With that in mind, it was no wonder why everyone—regardless of status or age—back then worshiped him to the highest degree!"

"...The realm of the Immortal Body?"

Chapter 1363

Nodding, Queena then replied, "Indeed. See, the Immortal Body is a realm that used to only exist in legends. It was said that if a person ever entered that realm, then they'd be able to exist alongside heaven and earth. In other words, nothing would be able to truly destroy them. Though it was said that there was one person who was able to attain that legendary realm during that civilization, it's pretty much just a legend!"

"...Assuming the legend is true, that should suggest that that exceptional person should still be alive, correct? But that couldn't be, right? He should've still died along with his civilization!" said Gerald rather curiously.



“Well, I, at least, believe that he died. My guess is that he never truly entered the realm of the Immortal Body. Even so, he was still an immensely exceptional person who had strength that clearly defied the natural order. Why else did so many people respect and admire him...” explained Queena.

“I see... Speaking of Jaellatra, how much do you know about the Sun League? That organization should belong to Jaellatra, right?” inquired Gerald, finally deciding to ask what he wanted to know about the most.

“...The Sun League? While they do seem to have a special base in Jaellatra, they’re not related to that place at all, nor are they affiliated with any other forces. An extremely mysterious and strong organization, I only know that the power they hold is sufficient to dominate nearly anything they wish to. Quite frankly, it wouldn’t be out of the question to assume that their group stemmed from one of the civilizations that disappeared millions of years ago!”

“...I see. However, I wonder if you know anything about this... While I was previously deciphering some murals, I found some paintings depicting corpses on a sacred tree... The sacred tree itself apparently fell from the sky, and its descent was accompanied by many other corpses, including the deity’s!” said Gerald.

“Oh? You know a surprising lot! That’s right. We died during a disaster that took place between heaven and earth in Jaellatra. I can see where you’re coming from. While it’s true that we too had doubts whether that disaster back then was triggered by the Sun League, none of us dared to investigate it. After all, even the past you didn’t dare to look into it, even when you were at your peak strength! Regardless, you should note that you died while trying to escape from Jaellatra to Earth. I know this since I had been secretly stalking you the entire time!” replied Queena with a subtle smile.

“...Understandable. Regardless, how’s the condition in Jaellatra now, then? And do we not even know what the Sun League truly is...? Is it really that impossible to get to the bottom of it...?” asked Gerald, his disappointment evident in his tone.

“All that’s to be known is that it’s an organization that cannot be offended under any circumstances. With that in mind, you’d best give up if you’re planning on investigating them. Again, you wouldn’t be able to take on them, even at your peak strength!” reminded Queena.

Though she had no idea why he was even inquiring about the Sun League, she was still going to at least warn him against doing it.

Understanding that she meant well, Gerald didn't take offense to her statement. However, as he thought about the previous clues he had come across—that still remained unanswered—he recalled something that prompted him to ask, "...I have one final question for the time being. Back when you were first buried in the king of the ocean's palace, do you still remember the old man who was leading the people responsible for escorting your corpse? If I recall correctly, you were able to break free while they were stopping by an island, resulting in you killing those that were standing guard over you at the time! From what I could tell, it was that old man who brought you down again at the time."

"I truly hadn't expected you to have learned so much! Of course I remember Master Warwick! After all, he's the reason I got sealed for ten thousand years!" replied Queena, a hint of gloominess in her eyes.

"...Master Warwick? From what I can tell, it seems that he's lived an extremely long life... Either that, or his descendants were the ones who had been responsible for the later incidents. Regardless of which it is, he certainly possesses rather remarkable abilities. After all, from what I know, he was able to accurately predict the future! More specifically, he predicted what would happen in current times around eight hundred years ago!" said Gerald.

Nodding, Queena then replied, "You're correct there. Master Warwick truly is the most powerful person that I've come across up till this point. Speaking of him, he seems to be related to the Sun League... Well, I say related, but quite honestly, I have a feeling that he's an actual member of that group! After all, he has way too many miraculous powers! Also, it's impossible for him to have any descendants. With that in mind, I'm guessing he's still alive today! The problem is, I have no idea where he is!"

"...I'm assuming that both you and the King of Judgment Portal have yet to act too ostentatiously due to the fact that you can't tell whether he's truly dead or still alive. Is my guess correct?" asked Gerald.

"You could say that!"

Though Queena had truly shed quite a bit of light on Gerald, the Sun League still seemed as mysterious as ever... No matter how much he tried, he simply couldn't expose their secrets! Even so, there was one thing that was clear to him now...

'There's some sort of secret in me and many people are yearning for it... With that in mind, be it the King of Judgment Portal, the Gunters, or Queena, all of them have their reasons for approaching me... Regardless, while Queena knows quite a bit about the affairs in Jaellatra, as a whole, she doesn't know as much as Finnley... While I'd love to ask him more about all this, I haven't seen him ever since we parted ways... Where could he have gone off too...? I still haven't found out who the person who told me to look for the eternal coffin in the desert is either...' Gerald thought to himself.

While many more mysteries remained, Gerald felt that his mind was much clearer now. It was because of this clarity that he was able to remind himself that only people who wanted things from him would seek him out in the first place.

Regardless, the group remained in the cave for about an hour before they finally came out again. By then, Rosie had even snapped several photographs in her curiosity.

Now standing at the cave's entrance, Queena looked at Gerald before saying, "So... Do you wish to go back with me?"

Since Gerald had been the one who suggested for them to form an alliance, it meant that in a way, he had agreed to them being together.

Chapter 1364

Watching as she gazed with gentler eyes than before, Gerald replied, "I still have some things I wish to learn about. I'll meet up with you once I'm done settling those issues!"

"Very well! I'll be waiting then!" said Queena with a smile.

Following that, her body momentarily swayed... And the next thing anyone knew, she had disappeared!

Taking a step forward in surprise, Rosie then turned back to look at Gerald before saying, "Is... Is she human or a ghost...?"

"Half of both, I'd say!" replied Gerald as he turned to look at the direction Queena had dashed off to while heaving a long sigh.

With that, he then brought Rosie back to the shantytown to meet up with Leo and the others. Noticing that the other man was not present, Gerald then asked Monica where he was.

After being told that the man had yet to return, Gerald found himself feeling slightly dissatisfied as he thought, 'Where on earth has he gone to? What's taking him so long...?'

It was a little while later when Queena finally returned to the manor that she was currently living in. The manor itself was tightly guarded by those from the Squad of Divine Grimness.

Upon entering the manor, Queena was immediately greeted by her subordinates as they shouted, "Welcome back, master!"

Seeing that she was in good spirits as Queena continued walking on, several of her puzzled subordinates found themselves thinking, 'Did something good happen? Why's the master so happy?'

Before they could ponder any further, they heard Queena casually ask, "Has anyone attempted to cause any trouble here during my two-day absence?"

"Not at all, master!"

"I see. Anything to report about Miss Fenderson?"

"She's been staying in her room this entire time, Master! With that in mind, I've been ordering servants to take good care of her!" replied one of the subordinates.

"Excellent. Now go bring Miss Fenderson here. I have some things to tell her!" ordered Queena as she walked further into the manor.

Throughout her journey back, Queena had been keen on telling Jasmine that Gerald had finally agreed to be with her. After all, Jasmine had once told her that Gerald would only ever love his current lover. With that in mind, Queena wanted to properly ask Jasmine whether her statement still stood.

Perhaps it was due to Queena being so lonely for over thousands of years, but she found herself seeing Jasmine as a good friend whom she could confide in. While she had to admit that such intimate friendship was a rather new and strange experience for her, at least she finally had a person she could have a heart-to-heart talk with.

As she continued thinking about it, one of her servants suddenly began running—from the end of the hall—toward her as he shouted, “M-master! Something terrible has happened!”

“What’s wrong?” asked Queena with a slight frown.

“M-miss Fenderson...! S-she’s...” muttered the servant who was so scared that he didn’t even dare to finish his sentence.

“What’s wrong with her?” barked the subordinate from before.

“W-well! She was still in her room when I went over to bring her her breakfast earlier... Now, however, she’s... She’s gone missing...! And Hattie—her personal maid—has fallen into a coma as well!” reported the servant as she immediately knelt before Queena, utterly terrified.

Chapter 1365

“...What? She’s gone missing...?!” growled Queena in rage.

“P-please spare me, master...! She truly was still in her room earlier! While I did hear her talking to someone earlier, I didn’t pay much attention to it since I simply assumed that she was talking to Hattie! By the time I went in to check on her again, she was nowhere to be seen and Hattie was already in a coma!”

As the servant had said before, Hattie was the personal maid that Queena had assigned for Jasmine, and true to the servant’s words, the second Queena entered the room for herself, she found that Jasmine really was absent and that Hattie was still lying in a coma!

Following that, Queena closed her eyes slightly to concentrate on her surroundings.

A little while later, she opened them again before coldly saying, "...From what I can tell, she was rescued by others earlier. I believe they haven't escaped too far, so launch an immediate search party for them around the area!"

Shuddering with fear, everyone immediately obeyed, running off to fulfill Jasmine's orders.

Meanwhile, a slightly fearful Jasmine found herself by a large river as she continued trying to struggle free from the random middle-aged man who had kidnapped her.

The strange-looking person had appeared in her room about half an hour ago, and without saying a word, he had easily knocked Hattie out before bringing her all the way here at incredibly high speeds! In fact, he had been so fast that throughout their journey to the riverside, Jasmine had felt like she was flying!

Aside from Gerald and Queena, Jasmine hadn't seen anyone this capable, and that was honestly what scared Jasmine the most. The fact that he had brought her to some large river that was surrounded by tall trees only served to increase her terror.

"Please, just let me free... Who even are you...?" asked the frightened Jasmine.

"Is there even a need to ask? I'm clearly the one saving you!" replied the middle-aged man with a faint smile.

"...Do you know Gerald? Was he the one who told you to come save me?" asked Jasmine, not knowing who else could be acquainted with such an exceptional person other than Gerald.

"...In a way. Regardless, even if he hadn't told me to save you, I'd still have done so!" said the slightly hunchbacked man—who had also been carrying an odd, large bag on his back this entire time—as he flashed a slightly bitter smile.

Though his scar-filled face—that also littered with burn marks—would strike fear in just about anyone, the second Jasmine heard what he said, she was instantly filled with joy.

“So you really do know Gerald! Where is he now? Why didn’t he come over to save me himself?” asked Jasmine, hints of anxiousness in her voice.

“He’s been with me for a while, and he’s currently busy dealing with something important. Regardless, since you know Gerald well, I’m sure you’re well aware that he has a soft spot for you. With that in mind, as long as you’re still locked up by that woman, he won’t be able to eat or sleep well!” explained the middle-aged man.

Upon hearing that, Jasmine found herself overflowing with joy. So she was still significant to him! Well, maybe not significant, but at the very least, he was still worried for her!

It was at that moment that Jasmine realized that she didn’t yearn for much. After all, all it took for her to be satisfied was for Gerald to show concern about her, just like he currently was.

“...Hold on, you told me that even if Gerald hadn’t told you to save me, you’d still have done so. Why is that, sir?” asked Jasmine, feeling slightly bewildered.

For some odd reason, Jasmine now felt that the middle-aged man wasn’t as frightening as he had been before. While it probably had something to do with their brief conversation earlier, she felt that it was also because she was finally able to have a proper look at his eyes.

His gaze—whenever he looked at her—seemed particularly gentle, and anyone who saw it would be prompted to behave more friendly toward him.

“You truly do resemble your aunt, Jasmine! Like two peas in a pod! Actually, scratch that. You resemble Queta even more!” replied the man with a slight chuckle.

“...You... You know my name...? Actually, hold on, you even know who my aunt and cousin are? Who... Who exactly are you...?” asked the puzzled Jasmine.

“But of course I know who all of you are! Hell, it wouldn’t be a stretch for me to say that I know more about the Fendersons than you do!” said the man with a bitter smile before revealing a photograph that had been hidden under his sleeve... It was a photograph of Queta.

Being an extremely smart woman, the shocked Jasmine found herself carefully observing the middle-aged man's eyes. Eventually, it hit her.

No wonder he felt so familiar... Not only did his eyes resemble Gerald's, but the shape of their faces were similar as well!

Chapter 1366

Adding that to what he had earlier said, Jasmine instantly began trembling all over as she asked, "...Could... Could it be that you're my aunt's missing husband...? The uncle me and Gerald share...?"

Chuckling as he smiled, the man then replied, "You truly are as smart as your aunt, Jasmine..."

"...So, it's really true...?!" exclaimed Jasmine as she covered her mouth in shock.

"...Sir- No, uncle... Haven't you gone missing for ages...? Why are you only showing yourself now....? Also, how did your appearance turn out this way...?"

Based on what her aunt had once told her, Peter Crawford—her uncle—was quite a handsome and elegant man. With that in mind, his current hideous expression would shock just about anyone!

"Let's just say that I needed to end up this way in order to escape! Still, this appearance isn't all that bad since it allows me to hide my true identity. In fact, it's thanks to how I look that I've been able to easily investigate a few incidents!" replied Peter, his eyes returning to their former tranquility.

"Then... I'm assuming that Gerald still has no idea who you are, right? That you're the uncle he's been searching for this entire time...?" asked Jasmine.

"Of course he doesn't. After all, I haven't concluded on whether a certain someone is good or wicked yet... Anyway, it's just better if I don't reveal who I truly am to Gerald yet. Besides, I can still help him in secret!" said Peter with a smile.

"Who exactly are you trying to find out is good or wicked...?" asked Jasmine.



“Sadly, I can’t elaborate on that. Just know for now that all my efforts will go to waste if that incident is accidentally exposed. Speaking of which, I wasn’t even supposed to reveal my true identity to you today, Jasmine! With that in mind, please promise that you’ll keep my identity a secret in the meantime!” said Peter.

Peter had always been a calm person, and for the sake of his investigation, he had constantly suppressed his desire to meet up with his family this entire time, regardless of how much he missed them.

Unfortunately, the second he found out—from Gerald—that Jasmine had been captured by Queena, he knew that he wasn’t going to be able to continue keeping that desire suppressed.

With that in mind, he had secretly begun his search for Jasmine ever since that day. Upon eventually finding her, he took the chance to go on a rescue mission.

While he had simply planned to rescue her without revealing who he really was at first, Jasmine was simply too similar-looking to her aunt for Peter’s mind to not be bombarded with a series of thoughts. In the end, he gave in and ended up revealing his true identity Jasmine.

“But of course, uncle! Still... Where are we headed to now...?” asked Jasmine.

“What, don’t you wish to meet Gerald? I’m guessing that he’s returned for some time now, so I’ll be bringing you over to reunite with him!” said Peter.

After seeing Jasmine nod, Peter then began leading her back...

However, it was only a few steps later when he stopped dead in his tracks. His once tranquil eyes now slightly widened as he felt a chill run down his back, Peter found himself carefully scanning his surroundings before saying, “...I’m afraid that we’ll have to delay our return for about an hour, Jasmine...!”

“...Huh? Why...?”

“Because I don’t want those stalkers to follow me all the way back. Once they know where I live, they’ll surely ruin that place! With that in mind, I’ll be spending some time getting rid of them first!” replied Peter with a brief smile.

“But... There’s nobody here but us, right uncle...?” said Jasmine as she looked around. No matter how hard she scanned the area, there just didn’t seem to be any traces of humans nearby!

“Don’t bother looking for them. They’re about fifty miles away, and they’re divided into four main groups that are headed in the four cardinal directions. There are currently about a dozen of them heading in our direction now!” replied Peter as his eyes momentarily flashed a dark green.

Hearing that, the simultaneously frightened and surprised Jasmine then asked, “...You... You’re able to clearly see up to fifty miles away, uncle...?”

“Haha! Fifty miles is nothing to me! I can see even further away...” replied Peter with a bitter smile.

Chapter 1367

According to Peter, the group of people were moving at extremely high speeds, and true enough, Jasmine was soon able to hear their swiftly approaching footsteps!

It wasn’t long after before a dozen or so people bounded out from the jungle, and the second the person—who seemed to be the leader of the group—saw the duo, he immediately excitedly shouted, “We’ve found them! Surround them immediately!”

He was right to be excited. After all, if all went well, then his group would definitely get the honor of making a great contribution since they were the first to locate Jasmine. Even the eyes of the eleven other men lit up, thinking that their victory prize was standing right before them.

“W-what should we do, uncle?! All of them are extremely powerful!” said Jasmine rather anxiously. Since she had stayed by Queena's side for so long, she already knew how strong her men were.

“Haha! They can’t hurt us if I keep them where they currently are! Now stand back, Jasmine!” replied Peter with a faint smile as he opened the bag—that he had been carrying around this entire time—and retrieved a bow that seemed to be made out of black gold as well as an arrow.

By the time Peter aimed at the twelve men, there was only about a three hundred meter gap between them.

The second Peter released the arrow, however, Jasmine watched wide-eyed as the arrow turned into pure light before homing in on all their assailants! Staring in disbelief as the ray of light pierced through each of them, by the time the dust cloud—that had formed due to the immense force of the light arrow—finally settled, all twelve of the men were already lying unconscious on the ground!

The light itself returned to Peter's hand before promptly taking the form of an arrow again.

Taking in a deep breath, Jasmine found herself muttering, "...Y-you're so powerful, uncle...! Are they dead...?"

"No, I only knocked them out. After all, none of them actually did anything bad to you. They won't be waking up for at least another three days, though! Regardless, let's go! I'm sure Gerald will be thrilled to meet you again!" replied Peter with a gentle smile.

By the time both of them got to their destination, night had already fallen.

At the time, Gerald himself had been busy preparing for the evocation that night. The second he realized that the man had saved Jasmine, however, Gerald was instantly overjoyed.

"...Sir! ...Jasmine, you...?" muttered the surprised Gerald, unsure where to even begin asking.

The fact that he had been able to escape Queen's grasp while Jasmine remained captured had constantly made him both anxious and worried for her safety. Now that she had finally been rescued, Gerald could finally rest a bit easier.

"Well, seeing that you kept mentioning her, I thought I could help eliminate one of your worries by rescuing her!" replied the man as he looked at Gerald with a smile.

Jasmine herself could no longer hold back as she threw herself into his arms before bursting into tears while shouting, "Gerald...!"

"I'm glad to see that you're fine now... You know, I've recently been making some compromises with Queena in exchange for your freedom... Now that he's saved you, however, he's truly helped me greatly by taking away one of my worries!" said Gerald with a smile.

At that moment, Peter suddenly raised a brow before turning to look at Gerald and asking, "...Why are there odd sounds coming from my cellar?"

Upon hearing the man's question, Gerald then called out, "Leo, bring Felton out of the cellar with you!"

Shortly after, Leo made his appearance while holding onto the seriously ill-looking Felton.

Peter instantly found himself giving Leo a weird look before turning to look at Felton who had been tortured so much that he barely looked human anymore.

The second Felton saw Gerald, he immediately began begging, "Sir... Please... When are you going to let me go...? I'm already this useless, so please just treat me as garbage and release me... Please...?"

"If you didn't already know, this pitiful b\*stard is the young master of the Gunter family, and Yreth adores him greatly. Now that he's in my hands, I'm going to use him to deal with the Gunters!"

"That sounds excellent, Gerald! You now have an additional bargaining chip in hand!"

"Indeed! As for this big guy here, he's called Leo, and he's a friend I got acquainted with while I was at King Valley!"

Hearing that, Peter retracted his odd gaze as he looked at Leo with a smile before saying, "...I see! He appears to be an exceptional man with extraordinary strength! It seems that you truly had a rewarding trip! Speaking of which, what are you planning to do with those?"

Noticing that Peter was asking about the sacrificial altar that had been set up, Gerald then explained that he was planning to summon the woman in white's soul here.

Extremely pleased to hear all of Gerald's progress, Peter then said, "Well, since it's only going to be taking place at midnight, why don't we have dinner together? After all, it's still quite early now and it's pretty difficult for us to get together like this!"

"I agree! It'll be a reunion dinner!" added Jasmine with a smile.

"A... reunion dinner...?" asked Gerald, slightly puzzled.

Chapter 1368

"...Well, since sir and I have managed to return safely and you've even found such a good helper, isn't it only right for us to host a reunion dinner...? What more, I've already been treating this sir like family from the moment he rescued me!" said Jasmine who was well aware that she had almost made a slip of the tongue.

Thankfully, her explanation seemed to work as Gerald laughed before replying, "Well, you're not wrong there! He saved my life too, you know! Ever since I regained consciousness, I've been treating him like family as well! Well said! Let's have a reunion dinner tonight! Now then, I'll be cooking if nobody's against it!"

"I'll help!" shouted both Monica and Rosie—who had been standing quietly at the side—almost simultaneously. Upon realizing what had just happened, both of them instantly felt slightly awkward.

Monica had been so eager to help since she had been admiring Gerald for a while now. She respected both his strength and his strong character. Of course, his good looks played a part in that equation as well.

As for Rosie, though she had just gotten acquainted with Gerald not too long ago, she was exceedingly curious about him. After all, not only was he a top-tier rich heir, but he was also extremely mysterious. What more, Gerald hadn't made much effort to hide certain things from her—such as the snake cave—which only further served to increase her curiosity. There were simply too many things that were too hard to even explain clearly!

Regardless, whenever a woman grew too curious about a man, it certainly wouldn't take long before an ambiguous relationship started between them.

Watching as the two fumbled about, Peter—who had been looking at their reactions this entire time—then turned to look at the clearly jealous Jasmine.

‘Gerald truly is my elder brother’s son... At the very least, he has the demeanor my brother had back then!’ Peter thought to himself as he smiled slightly bitterly.

With that, preparations for the reunion dinner began. Soon enough, the food was served, and though the atmosphere was harmonious throughout the meal, everyone seemed rather engrossed in their own thoughts.

It wasn’t long before midnight finally came, and Gerald found himself looking at Rosie before saying, “I’ll be frank and say that this is my first time using this tactic. In other words, I’m not sure whether it’ll even work or not. Regardless, while it may be relatively difficult for you in the upcoming two days, I assure you that the process won’t hurt one bit, Miss Slow!”

Nodding in response, Rosie then gracefully sat at the side before closing her eyes.

Gerald, on the other hand, sat cross-legged before instantly using Thunder Eruption—with the aid of the dragon blood jade pendant’s power—to attempt summoning the thought of the woman in white’s soul.

As all that was happening, a faint light began shining atop the crystal eternal coffin that was currently in the Gunter family’s secret room.

Following that, the light briefly flashed before the figure of a person slowly began materializing... and eventually, it turned into the woman in white.

Sitting atop the eternal coffin, there was a hint of anticipation in both her eyes.

“So, why did you decide to come out today? Could it be that you’ve grown so lonely that you just need to talk to someone?” asked a voice that was being emitted from a dark orb of light.

Soon after, the King of Judgment Portal materialized as well, and he revealed a cold smile as he stood before the eternal coffin.

“I’m only advising you one final time that you stop doing all these useless things, King of Judgment Portal. Please understand already that there are some people who you’ll never be able to lay a finger on! Fate can only be altered so much!” said the woman in white as she smiled bitterly while looking at him before shaking her head.

“You know, I hate the current expression you’re showing me the most. I’ll have you know that after tonight passes, the thought of my soul will finally be enough to materialize. Once that happens, I won’t have to worry about you running away anymore, even if I don’t have an active formation to seal you!” replied the King of Judgment Portal gloomily.

“While you were born in a prestigious family back in Jaellatra, allow me to remind you that you’ve only managed to train your ghostly body by sapping the masculine aura of others. You’re now nothing more than a demon in my book, and in the end, all you’re truly doing is digging your own grave!” said the woman in white as she stared pitifully at him.

Just as the King of Judgment Portal was about to retort, his eyes widened as he watched her entire body suddenly begin glowing. As if that wasn’t already shocking enough, a door of light—that was linked to the outside world—simultaneously began shining on one of the room’s stone walls!

Watching as the glowing woman in white quickly began merging with the light from the wall, the flabbergasted King of Judgment Portal instantly muttered, “W-what...? How are you just ignoring my formation...?!”

Turning to look at him, the woman simply replied, “I already told you that this was going to be the final time I advised you. With that said, I hope you’ll remember what I said and refrain from doing any more bad deeds. Again, if you continue going down this path, you’ll only be digging your grave even deeper!”

As soon as her sentence ended, she immediately began emitting even more light!

Though the King of Judgment Portal attempted to stop her from escaping, he quickly realized that he wasn’t even able to get close to the light!

“What kind of power even is this...?!” shouted the bewildered man, his expression extremely hideous.

With one final strong flash, the woman in white’s body was fully enveloped in light. Completely ignoring the King of Judgment Portal’s formations, she quickly disappeared together with the light...

Chapter 1369

Meanwhile, Gerald himself was also glowing, and the strange sight honestly made Peter feel slightly terrified.

The jade pendant that was currently in Gerald’s hands truly was extraordinary... Not even Peter had any idea what sort of frightening powers it possessed... Even so, he knew for a fact that the jade pendant was highly compatible with Gerald.

As the others watched on in silence, they soon found themselves staring wide-eyed as the light from the pendant suddenly shot up into the sky under the guidance of Gerald’s Thunder Eruption.

Following the appearance of the towering light—that was also producing quite a bit of force—a terrifying atmosphere slowly began building as wild winds blew, sending dust flying all over the place.

“What immense power...!” said Leo, a hint of fear in his voice as he witnessed the eye-opening scene.

A brief moment later, the light slowly began retracting from the sky until it eventually returned to the courtyard. By this point, Gerald had nearly exhausted all of his strength, and he was currently sweating profusely.

Supporting himself as he got off the ground, he then turned to look at Rosie who was still meditating in silence.

Seeing that, Gerald couldn’t help but shake his head as he turned to look at everyone else before helplessly saying, “It seems that even with the aid of the jade pendant to empower my Thunder Eruption, I still failed to communicate with her, Leo...”

After all, had things gone smoothly, Rosie would’ve given off some kind of reaction by now.



While it took him a second, Gerald quickly realized that everyone was currently looking behind him with bewildered eyes, including that man who had previously always retained a calm façade.

Not expecting the shocked expression from Peter, the flabbergasted Gerald found himself asking, "...Is something the matter?"

"M-Mr. Crawford...! You've succeeded! She's right behind you! You've truly managed to summon Angelica!" stuttered the trembling Leo.

Hearing that, Gerald slowly turned around... only to find his eyelids twitching rapidly the second he saw the woman in white hovering right before him!

Though she appeared cold, the woman's beauty alone was enough to cause endless hearts to palpitate.

While Gerald had already seen Queena in the coffin before—and her form back then was nearly identical to the woman in white's—the true woman in white simply had a much more natural and innocent grace to her appearance.

The second Gerald turned to look at her, the woman in white found herself smiling. Her smile alone almost seemed capable of bringing things to life, and it simply gave people a pleasant sensation.

It was a smile that she would only ever show to Gerald and the deity.

Continuing to smile as she floated toward Gerald, she raised her fair and beautiful arms to gently caress his cheeks before saying, "It's been thousands of years since we've last met... To think that we'd finally be able to reunite like this...!"

As a trickle of sweat dripped down Gerald's chin, he found himself gulping slightly before replying, "I-I'm not your husband, woman in white... My name is Gerald and I'm only twenty-five this year...!"

"I understand... However, once you remember your past in the near future, everything will start making sense!" said the woman in white.

After saying that, she tilted forward slightly before whispering, "From what you just referred to me as, I'm assuming that you don't remember my name! Fret not, you can just call me Zyla. Zyla Lockland!"

Upon hearing that, he immediately nodded.

Behind the duo, Peter himself was staring wide-eyed at Zyla, feeling utterly shocked. However, he was also brimming with respect since he had no idea how Gerald had managed to gain the favor of that fairy-like woman.

After all, both she and Liemis—the God of Battle—were a legendary couple who enjoyed an extremely high status in Jaellatra.

As for Jasmine, she found herself facing an inexplicable grief as she stared at Zyla. After all, it was impossible for her not to be jealous of Zyla from how beautiful she was.

Clearing his mind, Gerald then replied, "...Very well, then. Regardless, since you're only existing through the thought of your soul at the moment, I can tell that you're currently quite weak. Worry not, for I've prepared a suitable body for you that you can momentarily possess!"

"I appreciate it. However, I'll only be using her body for a single night in order to restore my primordial spirit. After that, I'll be temporarily living in the dragon blood jade pendant."

Chapter 1370

Watching as she smiled faintly after saying that, Gerald then took out the pendant before saying, "You... wish to live in the pendant?"

"Indeed. For you to actually be able to find me, I feel that someone must have told you to bring my corpse over to be buried together with Liemis, correct? Well, the aim of that lies within the dragon blood jade pendant. See, there's a pure and natural space for me to adapt to my surroundings within the pendant. In other words, I'll be able to train myself in there!" explained Zyla.

"...I see! Speaking of which, Zyla, have you any idea who the mysterious person is...?"

“I have an idea who it could be, though I’m not too certain about it. For any further specific details, you can wait till I find Liemis. Once both of you completely merge, with the aid of the dragon blood jade pendant’s power, it shouldn’t take long for you to restore one of your peaks of strength,” replied Zyla.

“...Restore one of my peaks...?” asked Gerald, feeling quite puzzled though he had a fair idea of what she was trying to say.

‘Could she be saying that she wants me to return to the era of Liemis, the God of Battle...? Then... Could I truly be the reincarnated form of the deity...?’ Gerald thought to himself, feeling immensely bewildered.

Now that he had already gotten this far, he was honestly finding it slightly difficult to just accept all of this.

‘If I truly am restored to my old self by the end of all this, then... Will I still be able to be who I am now...?’

“But of course! After all, you’ve been separated from each other for far too long! With that in mind, I’m only able to let your primordial spirit return to its original place. While you may have regained a small portion of Liemis’s memories, it’s near-impossible for you to restore all your memories!”

“Then... does that mean that I’ll be able to still be my current self, even after the primordial spirit returns to my body?” asked Gerald with a sigh of relief.

“You could say that. Why? Are you that fond of your current self that you don’t wish to return to being the old Liemis...?” asked Zyla rather curiously.

“As a matter of fact, I do. Though I’ve experienced many things by this point, I still find myself preferring things back when I was merely a poor student. To put it simply, compared to being a god of battle, I’m much more willing to remain being an ordinary Joel!” replied Gerald as he shared his true thoughts, a slightly bitter smile on his face.

"I see... Know, however, that there are simply some things that you just aren't capable of fighting against. Not everything can change... Regardless, since you've now faced so much, you ought to continue forging on!" replied Zyla.

"I understand that. Also, now that I've embarked on this journey with no return, all I can do is continue doing the best I can!"

Watching as Zyla gave him a gratified smile, Gerald realized that she had been swaying her body slightly throughout their brief conversation...

A second later, everyone watched as Zyla's form turned into pure light before flying straight into the crown of Rosie's head!

Though Rosie opened her eyes again shortly after, despite there being no physical changes to her body, her default gaze was completely different from before. Noticing that, Gerald was certain that Zyla had successfully possessed Rosie's body.

Turning to look at Gerald, Zyla asked, "Before you restore your past self, you'd prefer if I called you Gerald, correct...?"

Understanding that it was a rhetorical question, Gerald simply remained silent as Zyla then turned to face the others present.

While Peter and Leo were brimming with respect for her, the women, on the other hand, were all displaying immense surprise.

Smiling slightly, Zyla then added, "I'd like to express my gratitude to all of you... After all, I couldn't have returned without everyone's help... With that, let's be friends from now on!"

"Y-you're absolutely welcome, Angelica! I'm only doing what's right, and it's already been a great honor for me to be able to assist both you and the god of battle!" replied Leo with a bashful smile.

“I’m glad to hear that... Regardless, we can’t continue staying here for too long... The King of Judgment Portal has already learned that Gerald rescued me, and given how intelligent he is, I believe that he’ll soon locate us and rush over! With that in mind, this place is no longer safe!” explained Zyla.

“I’ve already considered that possibility, which is why I’ve told Leo and Monica to relocate everyone in a small new neighborhood. I just had a gut feeling that someone would stalk us here!” replied Gerald.

“Excellent. Let’s leave immediately then!” said Zyla.

Just as they were about to head off, Zyla looked like she suddenly remembered something. Turning to look at Gerald, she then added, “Speaking of which, Gerald, I still have something I wish to share with you!”

Chapter 1371

“What is it?” asked Gerald,

“Well, though I’ve been sealed by the King of Judgment Portal in the Gunter family’s secret room this entire time, I was fully conscious the whole time. With that in mind, I was able to listen in on what the Gunter had been planning throughout this period, and from what I remember, the Gunters seem to be holding two of your friends captive. One of them has the surname of Tindall, whereas the other’s surname is Baker. Both of them should still be locked up in the Gunter manor’s secret underground room!”

“So that’s why I wasn’t able to locate Chester! Gerald told me to find him, you see, and I was finding it strange that I still had no clue where he was, even after investigating for a few days! As it turned out, the Gunters have him!” said Peter as he shook his head.

Upon hearing that, Gerald realized that his biggest fears had unfortunately come true.

Not too long ago, he had nearly fallen into the Gunter family’s trap, a trap which involved Hogan almost successfully killing him. While Chester had remained in the hotel under Gerald’s orders—back when Hogan was still attacking Gerald—Gerald could already sense that Chester was definitely in danger as well. After all, he knew how good the Gunters were at scheming.

Aside from Chester, Gerald was also well aware of the possibility of Aiden—his good friend who had been participating in a trial training hosted by the Gunters—getting dealt with. Understanding how the Gunters operated, after they went missing, Gerald knew that they weren't going to have an easy time escaping from that family.

With that in mind, Gerald then replied, "Zyla, sir, why don't you go on ahead first? Now that Jasmine's been saved, I can't just leave my two friends behind. I'll be staying back to rescue them!"

"Are you planning to run a solo mission, Gerald? You won't stand a chance against the King of Judgment Portal!" replied Peter in a worried tone as Zyla looked at Gerald with a concerned expression.

"I'm well aware of that, which is why I won't be fighting him head-on! Worry not, for I have a plan. I trust that with it, I'll be able to rescue my friends and escape safely!" said Gerald with a smile.

Gerald had honestly thought up the idea—of sneaking into the Gunter Manor—much earlier while thinking about how to obtain more news and information from the Gunters. To think that his initial plan would end up being used as a method to rescue his friends!

Regardless, seeing how persistent Gerald was being, the others knew better than to persuade him against it. Quite frankly, Zyla herself seemed to have great confidence in Gerald's decision.

"Very well, then. Since that's the case, we'll be heading to the desert in the Northwest first. Since the King of Judgment doesn't know where Liemis is, that place will be a temporary safe haven for us! We'll be waiting for you there!" said Zyla.

"Excellent! I was about to suggest the same thing as well! For safety, I think all of you should travel in a group. Now if there isn't anything else, I'll be heading off first. I'll regroup with you as soon as I can!" replied Gerald as he watched as everyone nodded in return.

Everyone was well aware that the King of Judgment could very well be rushing toward them at that very second. Not wanting to delay things any further, both parties immediately departed their separate ways.

Gerald himself made sure to grab onto Felton—who currently looked like a wild dog—before dashing into the depths of the mountains.

And just like that, the entire shantytown fell into dead silence, with only the occasional glimmer of moonlight illuminating the area.

Not too long after, however, several powerful-looking people began leaping into the pitch-black shantytown! Upon finally arriving at Peter's courtyard, the black light—that had been leading the other people to this spot—slowly turned into the vague shape of a human.

Scanning through the empty space with his frigid eyes, the dark figure quickly spotted the sacrificial altar that was still in the middle of the courtyard.

A second later, Hogan began walking toward the dark humanoid before saying, "There's not a single soul in this shantytown, master!"

"They've all run away... And quite recently too...!" declared the dark figure—who was obviously the King of Judgment Portal—as his eyes grew scarlet. In his current form, he almost seemed demonic.

"Understood! Since that's the case, I'll immediately order the subordinates to split up and look for them all over the place!" replied Hogan.

"There's no need to do that. Hogan, I need you to bring these men along and head to the mountains in the south. Based on my knowledge—and the fact that they've only recently left—the only way they could possibly avoid getting caught is by heading into the depths of the mountains there!" ordered the King of Judgment Portal, his eyes glinting in the darkness.

Receiving their order, the team then swiftly headed into the depths of the mountains, intent on catching Gerald and his allies.

The King of Judgment Portal himself took in a deep breath before clenching his fists tightly.

"I've been waiting for this day for thousands of years, Liemis and Zyla... Neither of you will be able to escape from my grasp! I'll gain the Herculean Primordial Spirit and accede to the throne of the three worlds!" declared the King of Judgment Portal, his fists clenched so tightly now that his palm was going white.

By this point, he could no longer hide the immensely evil spirit in his body...

Moving back to the search party, almost everyone from Judgment Portal was currently doing a thorough search in the depths of the mountains. Naturally, there were also several Gunters helping them—since they were cooperating with the King of Judgment Portal—to ensure that nothing would escape their eyes. With so many people actively hunting them down, Gerald and the others wouldn't have been able to fly out of that place, even if they had wings.

It hadn't occurred to any of the Gunters or the Judgment Portal members, however, that the others had already long left Qerton City—at extremely rapid speeds—and were now heading northwest toward the desert.

It wasn't too long after before it was near-dawn...

#### Chapter 1372

While searching around the dense forest, the team had split into smaller groups, and Hogan himself was currently leading a team of five people.

As they continued searching on, one of Hogan's subordinates suddenly shouted, "There's a person just right up ahead, Hogan!"

Hearing that, the rest of the small group instantly dashed forward and soon enough, they were standing by that person's side.

While running over, they had noticed that not only was the person limping as he walked, but he also had shabby clothes on as well as scars all over his body.

Now that they were actually beside him, however, Hogan's eyes widened in shock as he said, "...Young... Young Master Gunter...?"

The last anyone had heard from Felton was a few days ago after he was sent to Dordwell Heights to locate Gerald. Nobody could even contact him up till this point.



Worried sick, Yreth—who had managed to find some clues—made sure to send several people into the mountains to look for him, though to no avail. To think that something truly did happen to Felton!

“...H-Hogan...? Oh, thank god! I’m so relieved to see you...! Please, hurry up and save me...!” said Felton as he burst into tears the second he saw Hogan and his men.

“Rest assured, for with me here, nothing more will happen to you, Young Master Gunter. Regardless, who was it who beat you up this badly?” asked Hogan.

“It... It was Gerald...! While I managed to track him down in the shantytown a few days ago, I hadn’t expected him to have hired an extremely strong person to take me on! I had no way of counterattacking at all! Once I lost, Gerald captured me and inserted a potent poison into my body! As if that wasn’t already enough, he even tortured me in countless ways! Worst of all, he somehow managed to summon the soul of the woman in white last night! Following that, he brought me into this dense forest... I still have no idea what he had hoped to achieve from this, but I simply took the chance to escape when he wasn’t paying attention to me!” explained Felton.

“As expected, the master guessed correctly! So you truly were captured and locked up in the shantytown this entire time! No wonder the Gunters were unable to gain any news about you since that day!”

Hearing that, Felton then turned to look at one of his subordinates before ordering, “You there! Go order the rest to immediately increase the search scope within the forest! Gerald’s still somewhere in here, and we mustn’t allow him to escape again!”

“Affirmative! I’ll also be calling someone over to send you back to the Gunter manor now!”

“I appreciate it!” replied Felton with a nod.

A little while later in the Gunter Manor, a servant swiftly ran up to Yreth before declaring, “Lady Gunter! Master Gunter has finally returned!”

“What? Felton’s home?” replied Yreth instantaneously, feeling both surprised and delighted.

It was no secret that Yreth had constantly been worried about Felton's safety throughout his absence. Now that she knew that he was—at the very least—alive, her eyelids couldn't stop twitching in her joy.

"Indeed! However, he's also seriously injured and is currently unconscious!" said the servant.

"What? Lead me to him! Hurry!" shouted Yreth as she instantly ran out together with the servant.

Sure enough, she was immediately greeted by the sight of Felton—lying on a stretcher—the second she stepped outside. Seeing how terribly he had been tortured, Yreth was immediately filled with deep grief.

Yume herself had heard the commotion earlier, and she was now standing beside her grandmother.

"Felton... How did you end up this way...? Who did this...?!" muttered Yreth, immense pain in her voice.

"We found Young Master Gunter in the dense forest in a barely alive state! As for the perpetrator, it was none other than a subordinate that Gerald had hired! Aside from that, Gerald even inserted an extremely strange and potent poison into his body! Gerald himself is currently on the run in the dense forest!"

"...What? So it was Gerald...!" growled Yreth in such deep resentment that her eyes turned crimson.

Following that, she then turned to look at Felton again as she held onto him protectively.

"Can you hear my voice, Felton...? Worry not, I'll definitely capture Gerald and hack him into pieces!" said Yreth as she gently caressed his cheek.

The second she touched him, however, Felton's eyes immediately opened wide and he instantly kicked her hard in the stomach!

Completely caught off-guard, Yreth found herself flying backward before landing heavily—quite a distance away—with a loud 'thud'!

“G-Grandma!” exclaimed Yume, feeling utterly shocked.

Felton himself was desperately screaming as he shouted, “P-please! Don’t come any closer! Please! Stay back!”

As the corner of Yreth’s mouth bled, she simply replied, “I-I’m fine...! Just go check on Felton! The poor boy must be traumatized after being tortured so terribly...!”

Chapter 1373

Yreth wasn’t blaming her grandson for his actions. After all, she knew for a fact that he simply thought that she was Gerald. After going through so much suffering, it wasn’t a surprise for Felton’s temperament to get this extreme.

‘How on earth did you even get this traumatized...? That d\*mned Gerald...! I’ll hack him into pieces if it’s the last thing I do! I’ll surely get revenge on your behalf...!’ Yreth thought to herself as murderous intent flared in her eyes.

While she was undeniably furious, it was still a joyous occasion for the Gunters since Felton had managed to return in one piece.

Since both the Judgment Portal members and the Gunters were currently going all out on their hunt for Gerald, Yreth knew that this was their best chance of capturing him again. With that in mind, she let Felton recuperate in the Gunter Manor as she, too, set off to hunt Gerald down.

Due to everyone focusing on capturing Gerald, the Gunter Manor was pretty desolate by the time afternoon came.

It was around then when Felton finally decided to get off his sickbed.

Smiling slightly bitterly in his helpless state, Felton’s eyes momentarily lit up as he muttered to himself, “The underground prison that Aiden and Chester are currently being imprisoned in is most probably accessible through a secret room in the Manor... Still, to think that Yreth would constantly have so many servants by Felton’s side... I barely have any time alone! That witty woman is good in terms of security, that’s for sure!

While on the exterior, this person looked and sounded exactly like Felton, his true identity couldn't be any further. In truth, the person who had been brought back to the Gunter Manor was none other than Gerald!

While he had already previously planned on sneaking into the Gunter Manor—by disguising himself as Felton—undetected to disrupt the actions of the Gunters as well as to get to the bottom of certain incidents that had been happening, he now had no need to do all that.

With that in mind, he concluded that he could just use the exact same method of sneaking in though this time, his mission would be to easily save and sneak his two friends out.

Unfortunately for him, even after inquiring—several servants—about where the entrance to the underground dungeon was the entire afternoon, none of them had any idea where it was!

Feeling slightly disappointed, Gerald then returned to Felton's room to figure out his next step. Before he could think for long, however, he suddenly heard knocks coming from the door.

"Come in!" said Gerald.

Seconds later, the door opened and in walked a beautiful woman... Of course, it was none other than Yume.

"To think you'd still be getting out of bed and walking around even after suffering from such serious internal injuries!" said Yume rather indifferently as she looked at Felton.

From that alone, it was quite obvious that both of them didn't really share a particularly good relationship.

Whatever the case was, Gerald found himself feeling delighted as he thought, 'With Yume here, I'll definitely be able to find out where the Gunter family's underground dungeon is!'

Following that, Felton coughed before saying, "Though Gerald is both powerful and ferocious, I'm still alive, aren't I? So what if I walk around a bit?"

“Humph! I never thought that you’d actually admire others since you’ve been arrogant for as long as I’ve known you!” replied Yume, feeling slightly amused though she didn’t show it.

“So... Why exactly did you come over to look for me?” asked Felton rather coldly.

“It’s nothing much. I just wanted to ask whether Gerald’s truly as powerful as you described him to be. Has he really changed that much within such a short period of time?” asked Yume rather curiously.

“But of course he has! He’s currently probably even more terrifying than both of us could ever imagine!” replied Felton, trying to make as big a deal as possible about Gerald.

“...So it really is true... Well, based on his current strength, do you have any idea whether grandma will be able to capture him?” asked Yume.

“I’d say that it’s highly unlikely! After all, he’s no longer as weak as he previously was. Besides, that old woman alone won’t be able to-”

“...Huh?”

“...I- I mean grandma. What I was trying to say was that even if grandma and the King of Judgment Portal were to gang up on him, they’d still have a hard time capturing him!” corrected Felton.

Though he was rather close to Yume, he knew that it would be best if he didn’t expose his true identity for now. After all, it was better to be safe than sorry.

“...Regardless, I have something to do in the underground dungeon. Could you bring me there, Yume?” asked Felton.

Frowning slightly, she couldn’t help but feel that Felton was behaving increasingly strange today...

While she would've definitely been able to pick up on what was really happening on any other day, her mind was currently too occupied with Gerald's massive transformation.

Not knowing what to make of Felton's request, she then replied, "...Why do you wish to go there? Besides, can't you just go yourself?"

"By the time I got back, the only item I had left on me was our family's magic artifact. With that in mind, you have to bring me there!" replied Felton.

Chapter 1374

"Please, I know why you want to go there so much... I know for a fact that grandma's captured two of Gerald's friends and locked them down there. You just want to vent out your anger by hurting them, right?" said Yume without a second thought. After all, she, of all people, understood Felton's personality the most.

"Bullsh\*t! I'm trying to save them and lead them to a safe place!" retorted Felton.

"...What's your motive here...?"

"Look, Gerald implanted an extremely potent poison within my body. If I don't save his friends, then he'll kill me! Is that reason good enough for you?!" replied Felton, hints of fear in his voice.

"...So that's the case! No wonder your temperament has changed so vastly ever since you returned! Very well! Since only grandma and I have the key to the underground dungeon, I'll lead you there!" said Yume in a rather willing tone. After all, Yume herself had been racking her brains the past few days, wondering how she could release Gerald's allies.

The second Yume and Felton walked past the dungeon's main doors, they were immediately greeted by endless shouting. As it turned out, many others were being kept prisoner there. Even so, they weren't who the duo was looking for, so they simply walked on till they eventually arrived at the final dungeon.

Even before they got close to that door, however, both of them could already hear Aiden scowling every curse word in the book.

“You b\*tch! You’re a wicked old hag, that’s what you are! You better let us go before I curse your entire family...!”

After Yume opened the door—while blushing slightly from all the profanities—both she and Gerald were immediately greeted by the sight of Aiden and Chester who had been tied up with chains. Their torsos, in particular, had been tied extra securely, and both of them had a blue, sparkling bead hung over their chests.

“What do you want? If you’re daring enough, come get it over with me already! Honestly though, what was I thinking when I came over to your family’s trial training back then? To think that I once considered the Gunters to be good... How blind I was! Don’t even get me started on your unreliable promises! After all, you guaranteed us that we’d get at least three meals per day when you first captured us! While that was true at the start, it soon got reduced to two meals, and then to one... Just so you know, we haven’t had anything to eat in the past two days! If you want us to die so much, then just kill us outright! We’ve suffered enough! Once we’re dead, however, do expect our boss to avenge us...!”

“Please stop with the profanities already! I admit that I overlooked your meals! It’s just that I’ve been particularly busy with something in the past few days! Due to that, I admit that I forgot to order for food to be sent to you! I’m terribly sorry that you’ve had to go hungry for the past two days, but know that I would’ve definitely continued feeding you well had it not been for how busy I was!” replied Yume. While she didn’t like how angrily Aiden was scowling at her, she had to admit that she felt slightly guilty.

“That’s quite enough shouting! We’re here to release you today, you know? Once you’re free, you can eat however much you want! Now hurry up and leave this place and remember, don’t ever show your faces in Qerton again!” declared Felton.

Following that, Yume turned to look at both Aiden and Chester before nodding firmly at them.

The second he heard that, a bandit—who had been standing at the side this entire time—quickly shook his head before saying, “H-huh...? Young Master Felton?! You’re letting them free? No way!”

Felton simply slapped him immediately in response before shouting, “You mother\*cker! Who’s the rich heir here? Huh? Is it me or you?”

Falling to the ground from the force of the slap, the dizzy bandit then wobbled to his feet before replying, “O-of course you’re the rich heir, Young Master Felton...! However, these two are key figures in our effort to capture Gerald...! Due to that, Lady Gunter has implanted very special magic artifacts within their bodies! The second the artifacts leave their bodies, all their internal organs will simultaneously explode! It’ll be a horrible death like no other!”

“...Oh? Magical artifacts you say?” said Gerald as he paid closer attention to the blue, sparkling beads on both Chester and Aiden’s chests.

‘So they had such mysterious items implanted into them... That old woman truly is wicked...!’

“Tell me more about the magic artifacts. How do we undo their effects?” asked Yume.

“I’m not too sure about that... I do know, however, that a key is needed to undo the magic artifacts, and the key itself is stored in Lady Gunter’s room! However, only she is allowed to enter that place, so I’m afraid I can’t help you with this!” replied the bandit in dismay.

“...Could it perhaps be there...?” mumbled Yume to herself as though she was deep in thought.

“...Do you have an idea of where it could be?”

“Well... I may have an idea where exactly the key is kept inside her room... Even so, nobody is allowed to enter without permission... If we get caught, then we’ll surely be given the family punishment... Are you still willing to do so after hearing that?” asked Yume.

“What’s there to be afraid of? If she wants to kill anyone, then she can just kill me! There’s nothing to worry about!”

Upon hearing that, Yume’s respect for Gerald instantly skyrocketed. After all, all it took was a few days for him to change Felton—a usually insufferably arrogant person—this much!



With that, the duo then continued talking as they slowly made their way out of the dungeon. Before arriving at the dungeon's entrance, however, Felton suddenly turned to face Aiden—for a brief moment—before winking twice.

Aiden found himself widening his eyes as he watched the duo leave for Yreth's room.

'...That gaze...!' Aiden thought to himself as he slowly broke into a smile.

"...Say, Chester! I have a feeling that we're as good as saved now! The boss is here!"

Chapter 1375

"...The boss is here?" asked Chester, unsure how to even react to that statement.

"Hahaha! It won't be long before we're saved! Just you f\*cking wait, you Gunters! Once we're free, I'm definitely setting this place on fire!" growled Aiden in rage.

A little while later, Felton and Yume arrived at Yreth's room.

Upon entering, he found that the layout of the room wasn't particularly complicated. Quite minimalistic, in fact. The only notable things in there were a desk at one side of the room and a shelf behind it.

"...Is this where the secret room is...?" asked Felton.

"It should be... After all, Grandma has two secret rooms, as far as I'm aware of. I'm not sure whether you know about this or not, but grandma had a secret room that was accessible through her special study. It was where she imprisoned the woman in white. As for this room... I once caught grandma exiting from behind the shelf when I was much younger... With that in mind, there should be some contraption here that opens a path behind the shelf. If it's anything similar to the way grandma revealed the secret room in her study, then..."

As Yume's voice trailed off, Gerald watched as she walked to the side of the study before holding onto a pen's cap—that was on the table—and twisting it slightly...

A brief 'click' was heard, and all of a sudden, the shelf began trembling as it slowly slid to the side, revealing a darkened hole leading underground!

Noticing how surprised she looked, Gerald then asked, "...Didn't you say you saw her exit that place before...?"

"Well, I did... But it's vastly different from the secret room entrance that I remember as a child... Besides, can't you feel that...? The strange coldness coming from the hole..." muttered Yume in her bewilderment.

"...Whatever the case is, let's enter first... Follow me!"

Quite honestly, Gerald himself had felt a chill run down his spine as well. There was just some sort of extraordinary aura that the hole emitted... and whatever it was, it scared Gerald greatly.

Within the hole was a long corridor, and secret compartments—filled with all sorts of things—were lined all across it.

Lighting an oil lamp that she found, Yume then began looking around...

Eventually, she shouted, "I... I think I've found it!"

Watching as she joyfully held onto a blue jade charm, Gerald himself began sensing an enigmatic aura that was slowly growing stronger. With that in mind, he then said in a slightly fearful voice, "...Its aura is very similar to the aura of the magic artifacts on both Aiden and Chester's bodies. This should be it. Now let's not waste any more time and leave this place already!"

"Alright!"

However, just as they were about to leave, both of them suddenly heard a loud scraping noise...

By the time they realized what was happening, the opening to the corridor had been sealed off, leaving the duo surrounded only by dead silence!

Just as Yume was about to investigate, she suddenly felt an immense force pulling onto her, prompting her to scream!

Gerald himself had sensed the strong suction force, and though he immediately used his Thunder Eruption skill in his attempt to resist it, the force eventually got so strong that it almost felt like he was being sucked into a black hole!

Unable to continue resisting the force by that point, both Gerald and Yume fell to the ground in unison... Only to fall into yet another chamber that was made of stone!

The second they hit the floor of the new area, all the lights within it instantly lit up.

Looking up, both of them then saw a ghostly black light hovering around in mid-air.

As if that wasn't already shocking enough, the orb of darkness suddenly deafeningly shouted, "Haha! I've been waiting for someone other than Yreth to stumble in here! Tell me, are both of you descendants of the Gunter family?"

Chapter 1376

"...W-who are you...? And why are you here in our manor...?" asked the surprised Yume.

"Hahaha! Your manor? This is my manor! I was the one who founded the Gunter family, girl! Both of you are nothing more than my descendants!" replied the black light in a booming voice before slowly taking the shape of an old man.

Having white hair that tufted around his old head and a beard that dropped all the way to his chest, it was hard to deny that the old man gave off the impression of a skillful martial artist.

Regardless, the shocked Yume then replied, "...W-what did you say...?"

Gerald himself was now looking at the old man in slight surprise.

From what Gerald could tell, the old man's form of existence was quite similar to that of the woman in white's thought of the soul. However, there was a clear difference between the two. It was quite obvious, honestly, that the power and energy that the old man had—and could release from himself—was much stronger compared to what the woman in white could achieve.

While the woman in white was nothing more than an ordinary thought of the soul before the fusion, the figure currently standing before him was immensely different. After all, not only did he have the power and energy to materialize himself, but he was also extremely strong!

Gerald wondered how strong and terrifying that old man's training level would actually be if he actually possessed a physical body...

"I said that both of you are nothing more than my descendants! What, hasn't Yreth told you two about the Gunter family's history before?" sneered the old man.

As Gerald found himself shaking his head, Yume—on the other hand—nodded quickly before saying, "Grandma's told me lots about our ancestors ever since I was young! From what I was told, the Gunter ancestors gained immense supernatural powers and founded the base of our family after discovering some historical relics from the great civilization of antiquity. However, when our family finally became stable enough, one of our ancestors went on a journey to seek out more divine artifacts from the great civilization of antiquity... Unfortunately, that was the last anyone ever saw of him! ...You... couldn't really be suggesting that you're that ancestor... right? But... But how? If you truly are who you claim to be, then why did grandma keep you locked up in here?" asked Yume.

Watching as the old man simply laughed in response, Yume then asked, "...What's so funny...?"

"...I don't think he's locked up in here... Rather, he probably can't show himself for certain reasons, which is why grandma brought him into this secret chamber instead. Of course, though he doesn't leave the chamber, I'm sure he's been remotely controlling the entire family this entire time," said Gerald while looking at the old man.

Hearing that, the old man simply scanned Gerald from head to toe in surprise. Following that, he shook his head before saying, "I hadn't expected our family to still have decent and capable descendants. I

admit that you truly are smart, grandson! As you've said, I've been controlling the heads of the Gunter family for many generations now!"

As Yume's jaw dropped in shock, Gerald himself felt slightly surprised.

While Zyla had already told him that the Gunters were an unusual family, he was now only realizing how true her words were. Though he had previously been wondering how the Gunters had even gotten involved with those from the Judgment Portal in the first place, everything now made sense. As it turned out, the real mastermind behind the scenes was this old man—who had probably lived for thousands of years—this entire time!

Finally starting to believe what the old man was saying, Yume then replied, "...So... You truly are our family's ancestor...? But, if you really are our ancestor, why have you remained in her for so long without ever heading out? Didn't you venture out to look for more divine artifacts...?"

"That's going to be a long story to detail... Essentially, while it's true that I headed off to seek out more divine artifacts at the time, understand that all divine artifacts—in general—tend to be guarded by heavenly spirits. With that in mind, I failed to take down one of the heavenly spirits, resulting in my body getting crushed into pieces! However, not long after, I managed to barely escape with the thought of my soul. Since the Gunters still had many strong enemies at the time, I took it upon myself to direct and control the Gunters from behind the scenes in order to prevent our family's utter destruction. As for why I've managed to preserve the thought of my soul for so long, it's because the Gunter's heads have continuously supplied me with the spirit bodies of many top masters!" explained the old man.

"...Wait... W-what did you say...? Are... are you telling me that our family's annual training meeting is nothing more than a means for you to absorb spiritual energy from the contestants....?" said Yume as she came to a sudden realization.

"Bingo! Alas, even though those people possessed spirit bodies, their physical talents weren't up to my standards at all! You two have no idea how long I've been waiting for the perfect opportunity to possess a spirit body that's able to help me achieve true reincarnation!" replied the old man with a laugh.

"...I... I think I see the bigger picture now... The person you're aiming to possess is Gerald, right? The one grandma and those from the Judgment Portal are still trying to capture? After all, since his body contains the Herculean Primordial Spirit, his body is far different from an ordinary mortal's... Is my guess correct?" asked the flabbergasted Yume.

“Right again! I can see now that you, too, are very intelligent!” said the old man before laughing once more.

Gerald himself was now so stunned that he muttered, “...Herculean Primordial Spirit...? What... is even going on here...?”

Whatever the case was, Gerald was now sure of one thing. These people were currently searching so desperately for him since his body contained a great secret that they urgently needed...

Chapter 1377

“Indeed! Once I possess Gerald’s body, I’ll surely be able to make a great comeback! Following that, our family will be able to head to Jaellatra together, a perfect world for the Gunters to reign supreme as overlords! By then, our family would be in total control of both heaven and earth!” added the old man as he chuckled longingly.

“...Regardless... Did you lead both of us down here just because you wanted to tell us all this...?” asked Yume.

“That’s a good question! See, while Gerald’s body would naturally be the best option for me, Yreth and the others have simply been too stupid. After waiting anxiously here for so long, I’m unwilling to wait any longer! Adding that to the fact that I’m slightly worried that Yreth will end up harming the body I wish to possess, I’m planning on making my comeback in advance! In order to do so, however, I’ll first need a suitable body for me to adapt to, and both of your bodies appear to possess sufficient auras...” replied the old man.

Turning to look at Gerald, he then added, “...Especially my grandson here! Quite frankly, I don’t think there’ll be anyone even close to being as suitable as him!”

“...You... what? But he’s your descendant! You aren’t even willing to let him go...?” asked Yume in surprise.

Quite honestly, even if the old man really were to harm Felton, Yume wasn’t about to feel upset or distressed for Felton’s sake. After all, Felton was a demon-like, cruel, and vicious person. In other words, him dying was actually going to be a good thing.

Even so, it still felt extremely awkward to Yume since she now knew that the person who was planning to harm Felton was her family's ancestor whom everyone respected and admired! Knowing that simply served to amplify her discomfort!

"Well, I don't really have a choice either. Regardless, our family is already doing well at the moment, so your sacrifice—to secure an even better future for the Gunters—will definitely be worth it!" scoffed the old man as he smiled wryly.

Astonishment was reflected in Gerald's eyes as he finally realized where the dangerous aura—that he had sensed upon entering this area—came from. To think that this old man would be so cruel and heartless!

Even wild beasts always looked after their cubs... But this old man... He wasn't even willing to let his own descendant off!

As Gerald took a step back, the old man then laughed before sneering, "Now, now, there's no need to be afraid! I'll be sure to lessen the pain as much as possible!"

Watching as the old man's soul dived straight for Gerald, Gerald instantly exhausted all of the Thunder essential qi in his body to resist the attack!

Upon collision, an explosive sound was heard! Though Gerald had the Thunder Essential qi aura up to defend himself, the more the old man's soul continued pushing forward, the more Gerald could feel his own soul trembling...!

His soul wasn't the only thing trembling either, and as Gerald's body began quivering uncontrollably, he found himself tasting a familiar sweetness in his mouth as blood began overflowing from it!

"I advise you not to continue engaging in such futile resistance! After all, it'll only make things much more painful for you!" snorted the old man with a grin.

It was a few seconds later when the smile on the old man's face slowly faded... Only to be turned into an expression of utter disbelief!

“...I’ve already practiced the technique—that allows me to freely move the thought of my soul—for so long that I’m quite literally an expert at it... By right, I shouldn’t make any mistakes at all while using the technique... However, why is it that a surging power repels me whenever I attempt to touch your soul...?!” said the old man in horror as he quickly backed quite a distance away from Gerald, his expression a mix of awkwardness and embarrassment!

With the strength that the old man currently possessed, it was near-impossible for him not to be able to absorb anyone’s soul, regardless of how powerful or talented that person was. Thinking about it, it was also impossible for a Gunter descendant to possess such powerful soul strength! Forget invading this young man’s soul, Gerald’s soul had the capability of destroying the old man’s own thought of the soul! But how could that be possible...?

“...You... You aren’t a descendant of my family, are you...? Who the hell are you?” muttered the intelligent old man who could now tell that something was amiss.

The strength this young man possessed was simply too incredible... Knowing that fact that it could easily destroy his thought of soul, the old man knew that he was very fortunate to have been able to pull away in time.

“His name is Felton Gunter, great-grandpa! There’s simply no way that he isn’t a Gunter descendant!” explained Yume.

“I’m well aware of who Felton is... Yreth had constantly been training him to become the next generation’s successor of the Gunter family, so I know the strength range of Felton’s power very well... With that said, the person who came with you earlier is definitely not Felton...! After all, the power of this person’s soul is so strong that even I feel terrified by it!” replied the terror-stricken old man.

Chapter 1378

Hearing that, Yume turned to look at Felton in amazement and immediately sensed that something was wrong. For one, she had never seen Felton’s eyes like that before.

Smiling faintly, Gerald then replied, “...You are correct. I’m not Felton.”



Truth be told, even he had no idea what was currently going on. While he had felt immensely dizzy after getting hit by that old man's soul earlier, it wasn't long before a rush of essential qi suddenly began filling his body!

It was as if a water god had collided against a mountain, causing all the essential qi dammed up inside to gush out the moment a crack appeared! To put things simply, Gerald's body was currently overflowing with power, and along with it, came an extremely destructive aura.

As Gerald realized that he no longer needed to be afraid of the old man anymore, the surprised Yume exclaimed, "...H-huh...? Then... If you're not Felton... Who are you...?!"

"I'm the one who killed him!" replied Gerald casually.

"You... You killed Felton...?!" said Yume as she took a few steps back.

Even so, she already had a good guess who the person standing before her truly was... Could... Could it really be him...?

As Yume pondered on her conclusion, the enraged old man roared, "You... You brat...! Not only did you kill my descendant, but you also disguised yourself to be him just so you could enter our family's secret chamber! No wonder your essential qi felt so different compared to the rest of the Gunter family members...!"

Just as the old man was preparing to take action again, he suddenly froze in place as he saw what seemed to be a faint, golden light glowing off Gerald's entire body...

It was the same golden light that had earlier hurt him!

"...What is this...? Why does it seem as though the power of your soul keeps getting stronger and stronger...? It's just been a few moments, yet the aura your body's emitting has risen several levels already...!" muttered the old man as his eyes widened in disbelief.

"I'll be honest and say that I have no idea what's happening either. What I do know, however, is that the strong impact on my soul—when you attacked me earlier—seemed to release something that had been suppressed within my body for the longest time... With that said, it's now filling me with extreme strength!" replied the curious Gerald rather casually.

"You're... being filled with extreme strength?" asked the old man in surprise.

"Indeed. With how strong I am now, I'm going to be frank and say that I now have the means to easily destroy you in seconds! I truly wonder how you managed to trigger all this... Well, since all this happened the second you attacked me, why don't you try attacking me again?" asked Gerald in a curious tone as he smiled wryly.

"...T-that..." stuttered the old man as he began panting rather heavily.

By that point, the golden light had grown so much that it almost seemed to encapsulate Gerald within an orb of light. As the light completed its condensation process, the energy it emitted grew even more terrifying to the old man!

After staring intently at Gerald for a while, the old man's eyes widened as he took a few steps back in horror. Seemingly understanding what was happening now, the old man then said, "This... This is the first stage of the Herculean Golden Primordial Spirit...! It seems to be the first-level potential release of the Herculean Primordial Spirit...! Which could only mean that... You... You're Gerald...!"

Chapter 1379

"...Gerald?" asked Yume, looking at Gerald wide-eyed.

Nodding in response, Gerald then replied, "While Zyla did talk about the Herculean Golden Primordial Spirit—that you just mentioned—she didn't elaborate much on it. With that in mind, I know very little about it. What exactly is it...? From what I can guess, it seems that you're referring to the secret that's hidden within me... Had the King of Judgment Portal come all the way here just to acquire this secret as well...?"

Upon hearing that, the old man's eyes instantly lit up as he shouted, "So you truly are, Gerald!"

While he was overjoyed that Gerald was finally standing before him now, he was simultaneously saddened to know that Gerald's current potential and strength were a bit too daunting for him to handle.

The old man was also well aware that even the slightest carelessness—on his behalf—could end up enraging Gerald, in turn destroying the Gunter Manor and eventually, the rest of his family despite them being so cautious this entire time!

Whatever the case was, it appeared that he was the one who had helped Gerald unlock the first stage of the Herculean Golden Primordial Spirit's release...

To think that he was already this terrifying despite being only at the first stage! Hell, Gerald hadn't even gained the full power of the first stage yet! If he were to one day unlock all nine stages of the Herculean Primordial Spirit, then he'd surely be able to destroy entire worlds with just a flick of his finger! How utterly horrifying...!

"You still haven't answered my question. What exactly is the Herculean Golden Primordial Spirit?" asked Gerald.

"...It's the potential that exists within you... Every time it is released, it'll ramp up the potential of the three realms... Such potential is enough to make anyone whose training in martial arts go crazy!" explained the old man.

"This... potential... Is it in my body?" asked Gerald who hadn't noticed the old man slowly moving his hands, sneakily gathering his essential qi.

"Bingo. Tell me, do you know who you are?" asked the old man in a hushed voice before gulping.

"Who I am?" asked Gerald.

The second Gerald's question ended, the old man suddenly raised his head before launching an attack at Gerald with all his strength!

Since the worst possible outcome—to him—was now a reality, he knew that he couldn't allow Gerald to continue developing any further. If he did, then his thousands of years preparing for all this would've been for nothing!

His only option left was to fight Gerald!

As the old man's palm grew inches away from Gerald's chest, the golden light suddenly reappeared where he had planned to strike, causing an explosive sound to ensue!

Not only did the thought of the soul of the old man tremble as it flew backward, but the darkness surrounding his body immediately dissipated as well! Due to the sudden instability of the thought of his soul, the old man instantly screamed in tremendous pain as he stared at Gerald with utterly horrified eyes.

"By god...! You've just unlocked the first stage of your potential yet you're already capable of piercing through the thought of my soul?! How is any of this even possible?!" shouted the old man, looking extremely desperate now.

Watching as his thought of the soul slowly dissipated, the old man could only wail hysterically in all the pain he was experiencing.

He had already come this far, yet... No. He wasn't going to just reconcile with this... He wasn't going to just get destroyed like this...!

With that, he then turned to glare at the frightened Yume—who was still looking at Gerald—before dashing toward her!

Even if he wasn't able to move Gerald's soul, he could at least still take over Yume's body. In doing so, he would, at the very least, still have a lease of life!

"Be careful!" shouted Gerald as he pointed his fingers at Yume before sealing the position between her eyebrows. Unable to bear Gerald's power, she instantly fainted on the spot.

Gerald had learned a thing or two about adaptable bodies from Leo, and he knew what needed to be done in order to prevent a soul from entering another person's body. True to Leo's teachings, regardless of how powerful the old man was, there was nothing more he could do about the situation.

"I'll say it now that you lost the right to call yourself the ancestor of the Gunters ages ago. In my eyes, you're nothing but an old demon who's lived for thousands of years! With that in mind, I believe it's high time you got destroyed!" said Gerald.

"N-no...! Please don't destroy me...! Wait!"

Naturally, Gerald wasn't going to listen to a word he said. Gerald was well aware that the old man wasn't most afraid of his essential qi, nor his strength. No, the old man was utterly terrified by his thought of the soul. After all, Gerald's thought of the soul was many times stronger compared to the old man's. Hell, Gerald's thought of the soul was capable of ending the old man in a snap of a finger.

With that in mind, Gerald then unleashed a great power from his thought of the soul! Aiming it toward the old man, Gerald then coldly shouted, "To hell with you!"

Chapter 1380

Gerald's golden light then flickered before completely enveloping the already faint, black light. And with that, the black light was no more, completely overwhelmed by the immense power.

'So my potential has finally been released... If this is truly the Herculean Primordial Spirit, then that means I've successfully unlocked the first stage of the Primordial Spirit! Though I do wonder... Once I unlock all nine stages, will I really be capable of causing massive destruction to both heaven and earth...?' Gerald thought to himself in amazement.

Whatever the case was, Gerald then lifted the unconscious Yume off the ground before tearing his mask off, revealing his true face. Just as he was about to leave with her, however, he suddenly noticed a rather strange piece of equipment built in the center of the secret chamber.

It looked like some kind of pool, and above it, was a blue light that dispersed a blue liquid from it, not unlike how automatic water fountains functioned. The pool itself seemed to be emitting its own blue glow.

'...This should be what Felton was telling me about... It should be the cornerstone that this family—with secret techniques—used to train their inner strength...! In other words, this should be the source of their family's power...!' Gerald thought to himself.

"Well, since I'm already here anyway, I may as well make the best of the situation. In order to repay your kindness, I'll be passing on a special training technique to you, Yume! Still, it truly seems that both of us can never be on the same path after all!" muttered Gerald with a wry smile as he shook his head.

Following that, he gathered some strength in his palm before blasting the concentrated energy at the cornerstone!

Upon hitting its mark, the blue crystal sphere rolled to the side and the stone platform ended up shattering to pieces in an explosive sound, causing the liquid in the pool to immediately flow out!

"Let's see how arrogant you can continue being after taking this away from you!" sneered Gerald before picking the blue crystal sphere up and leaving the place for good.

Meanwhile, Yreth—who had been busy commanding the rest of the Gunters in her search for Gerald—suddenly felt her heart palpitate, prompting her to shudder and shout, "...Something's not right...!"

"What is it, Lady Yreth?" asked one of her subordinates.

"Something's happened at home...! It seems that our foundation has shaken!" replied Yreth as she frowned incredulously.

She knew for a fact that the place where their foundation was hidden was extremely deep and well-concealed. What more, 'he' would've been standing guard there as well. With that in mind, how could it have shaken...?

If the Gunters no longer had the foundation, then they'd never be able to continue making any progress in their training. Should that come to be, then all the Gunters could do in future was sit idle till their fortune ran dry! Worst come to worst, all it would take was a few years for there to no longer be any more new Gunters who possessed any knowledge of secret techniques!

As she was thinking about that, one of her subordinates suddenly called out in a panicked voice, “W-we’ve found him...! Lady Yreth, we’ve found him...!”

“What? You’ve found Gerald? Also, why do you look so panicked?” asked Yreth as her eyes instantly lit up. Turning to face the direction of the voice, she saw several Gunters carrying a person as they rushed toward her.

Gulping, the subordinate then miserably replied, “...I-it’s not Gerald, Lady Yreth... We... We found Mr. Felton’s body...!”

“...W-what did you say...? Felton’s body...?!” said Yreth as she felt an acute pain in her heart.

By the time the subordinates stood before her with Felton’s body, Yreth was feeling so faint from the shock that she required someone to support her body.

Upon carefully inspecting the body, she heavy-heartedly had to acknowledge that her grandson was dead... But how could that be...? Hadn’t he already returned home...? Why was his corpse here then...?

...If he was here this entire time... Then... Who was the Felton back at Gunter Manor?

As a sea of questions arose in her heart, she slowly began connecting the dots... Before her eyes widened in astonishment.

“...This is bad. Everyone! Hurry and return to the Gunter Manor with me...!” commanded Yreth.

Chapter 1381

When Yreth rushed back to Gunter Manor with the other members of the Gunter family, all they could see was a burst of flames soaring into the sky.

The entire Gunter Manor was lit up in a big fire, and it had nearly turned into ashes.

Yreth’s face was flushed red with anger. At this moment, her feelings of grief and anger were mixed up, and this made her feel extremely hysterical. “The Gunter family’s foundation of more than ten thousand

years has been completely ruined and destroyed by Gerald. Gerald! If I, Yreth Gunter, do not avenge the Gunter family for everything that you have done today, I am not a member of the Gunter family!”

Yreth naturally understood the situation now. The person who had been posing as Felton was none other than Gerald.

Moreover, Gerald had also been telling the truth. Felton had truly ended up in his hands, but Felton had not managed to escape successfully, but instead, he had been brutally murdered by Gerald in the forest.

After that, Gerald had made his way into Gunter Manor, burning down and destroying the foundation of the Gunter family.

Yreth was filled with anger and resentment. She was so enraged that her whole body was trembling uncontrollably as she ground her teeth until they were crushed.

“Gather all our forces and try your best to find and locate Gerald’s whereabouts. Even if Gerald has already run to the ends of the earth, I want you to capture and bring him back so that I can tear him into pieces!”

Yreth could not help but feel inexplicably nervous.

Could Gerald have already taken the Gunter family’s cornerstone away?! It seemed as though it had already been shifted and displaced.

But that should be impossible! After all, the ancestor of the Gunter family should be in charge of watching over it.

At this moment, Yreth did not have time to think about anything else, and she braved the raging fire as she rushed directly to her secret chamber.

Three days later, at North Desert Town.



'Although I do not fully understand what the Herculean Golden Primordial Spirit is, the first stage of the awakening of its potential has indeed brought about many huge changes to me!'

Gerald quickly walked out from within a dense forest.

North Desert Town was already before him.

Gerald could not help but feel very surprised and happy as he thought about the changes in his body within a very short three days' period.

According to Gerald's original cultivation level, it would not be a problem for him to arrive at North Desert Town within a day through Qerton Mountain from Qerton City.

However, Gerald could feel that his body had undergone earth-shattering changes over the past three days.

When Finnley had bathed him with medicinal herbs and materials back then, Gerald's body had changed drastically because of that. It was as though all of the cells in his body had opened up at once, and it was madly absorbing the holy spirit, and his physique continued growing stronger, and his skills and abilities continued strengthening back then.

But now, after the first stage of potential had been awakened, Gerald felt as though his body did not belong to him anymore. He felt as though some sort of wonderful realm between heaven and earth had been opened up. In the past, he had absorbed all of the holy spirits in others to nourish and strengthen his body, but now, he felt as though the barrier between him and the holy spirit had been completely banished, and he felt as though he had completely integrated himself and become one with the elements of heaven and earth.

Using the Thunder Eruption method, the growth rate of his own cultivation level was showing an extremely incredible growth trend.

Now, it had just been three days, but he had already crossed the middle stage of the Spirit Earth Realm, and he had already reached the later stage directly. No, it seemed to be a stage that surpassed the later stage, but Gerald was still a little unclear about the exact details.

In short, Gerald felt extremely strong and powerful now.

Three days ago, Gerald had simply had a stronger and more powerful soul. So, he did not dare to stay in Qerton City to go head-to-head with the King of the Judgement Portal and the Gunter family.

But now, Gerald would certainly be able to defeat Yreth or Queena if he had to face them directly.

This was the confidence that Gerald had. It was the kind of confidence that arose entirely because of his current strength.

However, at this moment, Gerald had to help Zyla look for Liemes's corpse so that the both of them could finally be reconciled. After that, he would have to deal with the important matter involving the pledge of the holy water.

So, after cultivating and rushing to make his way through the forest for three days, Gerald had finally arrived.

Everyone had already agreed to meet up at a hotel that Gerald had visited when he was here before.

However, it was only after Gerald had arrived and asked about it that he found out that Uncle, Zyla, and the others had indeed stayed at this hotel. However, someone had come to pick them up in the morning yesterday and they had left, never coming back after that.

'How could it be? Could it be that uncle is also acquainted with someone here?' Gerald thought to himself.

"Do you know who picked them up?"

Gerald asked.

“I don’t know. We have many guests coming here recently. However, those people are all dressed in Western-style clothing, and they also have a certain logo on their chest. Based on what I saw, your friends were respectfully picked up by those people!” The boss said.

Gerald nodded.

Uncle had not left anything behind for him at all to trace and find them.

So, it seemed as though they did not intend to stay there for a long time even if they had truly left. However, something must have cropped up, and that must be why Uncle and the others had not returned yet.

“Ah, young lad, can you see that? It is some people with a similar kind of dressing. They look just like the people who picked your friends up.”

At this time, the boss spoke as he looked outside the door and pointed at a group of more than a dozen people.

Gerald looked in that direction.

The leader of the group was a tall woman with naturally curly and long hair. She was dressed in sports attire and based on the outline of her figure, it was obvious that she was born from a martial arts family.

She looked very beautiful, and she had an eminent aura around her, making it obvious that she was not a local at first glance.

She was shopping on the street.

There were about a dozen bodyguards dressed in suits behind her at this time.

As the boss had just said, all of these bodyguards had a circular logo on their chests.

“It’s them?”

Gerald could not help but knit his brows together as he frowned. He stepped forward as he got ready to question them.

“Miss, you should hurry up and go back. We should be doing this personally, but Tilar Lacraft is a very sinister and cunning person. I am truly worried and afraid that you will be in danger if something were to go wrong!”

A middle-aged man behind her spoke up.

This middle-aged man had a pair of brows that were slanting like swords, and he had a piercing look in his eyes. He had an extraordinary aura, and his palms were filled with calluses. He was obviously a master.

He was speaking in a very polite and respectful manner as he followed behind the woman.

“Pfft! What is the matter? I want everyone in my family to see that I, Yileen Dailey, can also get things done, and I will not fall behind anyone else! I can even solve things that my father cannot solve, and I can deal with people that my father cannot deal with! Hmph! Alright, then. I will only meet up with them later. Stop disturbing me while I am trying to shop. Just follow me from far behind!”

Yileen looked like she was about twenty-three or twenty-four years old. Although she was very beautiful, anyone could tell that she was a very deadly person who was not to be trifled with.

So, at this moment, the few of her subordinates did not dare to continue persuading her anymore. Thus, they could only slowly follow behind her.

“Miss, there is something that I would like to ask you!”

After waiting for a while, Gerald suddenly came forward and stood in front of Yileen.

“Who are you?”

Yileen asked as she looked Gerald up and down.

He was wearing very ordinary clothes, but he actually had a very handsome appearance.

However, Yileen would never look up to someone like him, and a trace of disdain flashed through her eyes instantly.

“I would like to ask you about six of my friends. They are two men and four women, and they were staying at this hotel before this. However, I heard the boss saying that someone came to pick them up from the hotel early in the morning yesterday. Were you the ones who picked them up?” Gerald asked with a polite smile on his face.

He had decided to approach them as a normal and ordinary person.

“What the hell? Who are you? You can go and look for the person who took your friends away if you want to. Why are you asking me? I have already seen many people who have tried using the same means as you. You actually dare to try to strike up a conversation with me?! Why don't you take a look at yourself! Do you honestly think you are worthy enough to speak to me?!” Yileen could not help but reply in contempt.

As she was speaking, the few bodyguards behind her had already taken a step forward as they all glared coldly at Gerald. They wanted to use their cold and sharp gaze to try and scare this person in front of her away...

Chapter 1383

When Gerald saw these people, he could not help but shake his head as he smiled bitterly.

It was rather dramatic if he were to think about it. Just one year ago, Gerald would certainly have felt extremely nervous no matter how calm he usually was if he were to meet so many bodyguards who were surrounding him.

But now, it would not be a joke to say that if Gerald were to simply point his finger at these people, they would all be dead in an instant, not even knowing how they died.

It was obvious that when a person possessed great strength and power that far surpassed that of an ordinary person, he would appear to be totally indifferent even when facing this kind of intimidation. He would not take it to heart at all.

At this time, Chester and Aiden had already returned to Mayberry City to recuperate and treat their injuries.

Now that Gerald could not find Zyla, he would have to get some clues from these people.

“Wait a minute!”

At this time, Yileen suddenly stopped them as she yelled out loud.

“Miss Yileen, what is wrong?” The middle-aged man asked.

“Dario, don’t you think that this young man seems to resemble someone?” Yileen suddenly spoke up, and her arms were crossed in front of her chest as she stared at Gerald.

“Resemble someone? Who does he resemble?” Dario asked.

“Don’t you think that he looks a lot like Jamarcus, the slave that I beat to death?”

Yileen was very keen and interested as she circled Gerald and stared intently at him.

The more she looked at him, the more she felt as though Gerald truly resembled her late slave.

“Miss Yileen, now that you have mentioned it, it seems as though he does indeed resemble your slave, Jamarcus!” Dario said as he nodded in agreement.

“Hahaha! I was just wondering why this person looks so familiar to me. Sigh. I still feel a little guilty sometimes because I did not control my strength well and killed Jamarcus back then. Why don't we keep this young lad by my side as my attendant so that he can serve me, then? Looking at the way he is, I think he also cannot afford to feed and support himself anyway! Why don't we give him a job, then?” Yileen said.

After cultivating and training in the forest for three days, Gerald's clothes did look very embarrassing and depressing.

However, Gerald could not help but smile bitterly upon hearing Yileen's words.

No one had ever dared to say this kind of thing to him ever since he had become Mr. Crawford, right?

“Miss, I only want to find my friends whom you had taken away. If you know where they are, please take me to see them!” Gerald replied as he smiled slightly.

“You are indeed courageous! Miss Yileen is allowing you to become her slave because she thinks you are worthy enough. You actually dare to turn her request down?!”

Dario had a very cold look in his eyes.

“Stay back, Dario. You said that you want to find your friends, right? Okay, then. I promise you. However, you will have to follow me first. After I am done with my business, I will bring you to see your friends!”

Yileen rolled her eyes slightly before she smiled at Dario.

How could this kind of petty trick escape Gerald's eyes?

To be honest, Gerald could already guess what Yileen was thinking of. However, there were indeed traces and clues of Zyla, Uncle, and the others in this group of people.

Of course, Gerald had another option.

He could easily defeat them on the spot so that he could force them to tell him the truth.

However, Gerald was afraid that they would really turn out to be Uncle's friends. These people would not be able to withstand Gerald's blow. If he were to accidentally kill them, it would not be good.

After thinking about it, Gerald decided to agree to her request for the time being so that he could see what kind of plans and tricks she had up her sleeves.

"I will agree to your request if you promise me that I will be able to see my friends!" Gerald said.

"Hahaha! Alright, then. By the way, what is your name?" Yileen asked as she sneered.

"Gerald Crawford!"

"Your name is so girly! It would not sound good for me to call you Gerald. Well, I will call you Crawford in the future. You will stay by my side and follow me from now onward. I will treat you the same way that I treated Jamarcus in the past, but I will not beat you! Hahaha!" Yileen said as she laughed.

It seemed as though she had something important to do, and that was the reason why she had made an appearance here today. After a while, Yileen assembled and gathered her men before heading toward a manor that was located to the north of the town.

Gerald also had a general understanding of the situation along the way.



## Chapter 1384

Something strange seemed to have happened in the North Desert Town about a month ago.

Many family forces had begun arriving and gathering here, one after the other.

The Dailey family was just one of them.

Yileen was out here as a representative of the Dailey family for negotiation and discussion with Tilar Lacraft. However, Gerald was unclear about the terms and purpose of their negotiation.

Regardless, Gerald could not be bothered about these things.

Very soon, Yileen's convoy arrived outside of Tilar's manor.

There were many of Tilar's bodyguards, both inside and outside of the manor.

Tilar belonged to one of the powerful local forces, and he was a local tyrant.

Tilar was a middle-aged man who was a little round and chubby, and his eyes were narrowed into a straight line.

"Miss Dailey, I thought that the Dailey family would not step up this time. I truly did not expect that you would actually come here in person. Okay, then. You are indeed very courageous and resolute! Miss Dailey, you are certainly an exceptional heroine!"

Tilar said, and he squinted his eyes as he looked Yileen's body up and down.

"Tilar Lacraft, stop talking so much nonsense and let's just get straight to the point. I want to ask you, why did you suddenly change your mind and lower the Dailey family's percentage, when we have originally agreed and decided that the four big and influential families would work together, make

contributions, and share the discovery of these historical ruins? What do you mean by this?" Yileen spoke up in an extremely arrogant and domineering manner.

"Hahaha! Miss Dailey, you are indeed a very straightforward person! You are right. We originally planned to divide the historical ruins equally. However, the Xanthos family made the biggest contribution in this matter, and they were also the first ones to discover this miracle. As for the Dailey family, your family hardly made any contributions in this matter at all. Therefore, for the sake of achieving real fairness, the rest of the two families have already agreed to the Xanthos family's proposal to allow the Xanthos family to gain a bigger percentage!" Tilar said as he laughed.

"My ass! Tilar Lacraft, don't forget, the Dailey family was the one who opened the door to the historical ruins. If the Dailey family did not exist, the rest of the three families might still be waiting outside under the sun!" Yileen retorted.

Although Gerald, who was standing aside, could not hear everything, he could hear most of the important parts.

Historical ruins.

Gerald felt that it could be possible that this group of people had found a place that was similar to the ancient tomb. The four families were originally collaborating and working together to split the profits evenly. However, it was obvious that someone had tried to go back on their word after that!

"Tilar Lacraft, don't forget who saved your life in the first place! You are indeed heartless and ungrateful!" Yileen scolded angrily.

"Pfft! Yileen Dailey, I am only so polite and respectful to you because of our mutual affection in the past. You stinky brat! You'd better not try to take advantage of my weakness to trample all over me! It seems as though you will not understand the current situation you are in if I do not teach you a lesson today!"

"Alright, then. Since you have already personally come all the way to my doorstep, it seems as though I will not have to make another trip, then!"

At this time, Tilar suddenly waved his hand, and a group of bodyguards rushed over immediately as they brought out their pistols and surrounded the group of people in an instant.

“Tilar Lacraft, I dare you!” Yileen yelled angrily.

Slap!

As for Tilar, he simply walked over directly toward Yileen before giving her a tight slap across her face.

“You stupid woman. Why wouldn’t I dare to?!”

“Dario, kill them for me!”

As for Yileen, she never expected that Tilar would actually dare to hit her.

So, she yelled out angrily at this moment.

“Hahaha! Dario is a very rare master indeed. To be honest, the reason why I have always been fearful of the Dailey family was simply because of Dario! The 108th generation of the descendants of the iron palm. It is indeed very terrifying!” Tilar said as he laughed without a hint of panic at all.

“Dario, what are you waiting for? I asked you to kill him for me!” Yileen shouted at Dario who was still standing in place without moving.

“Sigh. Miss Yileen, I have already advised you several times and told you that it would be best if you were to stay at home. Based on the current situation, it is not time for you to continue acting in such a willful manner!” Dario said with a bitter smile on his face as he shook his head.

After that, Dario brought more than a dozen bodyguards as they walked behind Tilar. “Mr. Lacraft is already being very polite to you, Miss Yileen!”

Dario smiled as he shook his head.

Traitors!

Yileen's eyes widened in disbelief.

Dario was actually leading the bodyguards of the Dailey family to defect and betray the Dailey family!

Although Yileen was also skilled in martial arts, at this moment, she could only take a step back out of fear as she looked at the bodyguards of the Lacraft family who were all staring fiercely at her at this time...

Chapter 1385

She would never be these people's opponent.

At this moment, she was so scared that her palms and the back of her hands were all sweaty.

Dario was supposed to be the Dailey family's support and pillar of strength, but now, he was actually turning his back on them?!

"So, what now, Miss Dailey? Master Dario is one of the top masters, but he is made to look like a slave in the Dailey family. However, it will be a whole different story if Master Dario were to come to us. Master Dario will become the Lacraft family's guest of honor!" Tilar said as he grinned.

"You... what are you guys thinking of doing?" Yileen said as she swallowed hard.

"Hahaha! I know that your father loves you the most because you are his only daughter. If he were to find out that you have fallen into our hands, I believe that your father will certainly agree and sign some

of the terms of the agreement that Mr. Xanthos is going to bring up! It is actually that simple!” Tilar said as he shrugged.

“We have not even entered the innermost part of the historical ruins, and we cannot even be certain that there is even any treasure in it at all. So, don’t you think that you and the Xanthos family are acting a little too rashly by threatening the Dailey family so soon?” Yileen said.

“Hahaha! What a silly and adorable woman. Did you honestly think that we would go through so much trouble if we had not found anything? Anyway, no matter what it is, you have already fallen into my hands now. So, I might as well tell you the truth. The Xanthos family has already found a treasure inside the ruins!” Tilar said.

“I do not believe you! The historical ruins are so mysterious. I do not believe that the Xanthos family would have already discovered any secrets within it in just a few days.” Yileen replied as she shook her head.

However, at this time, Yileen was also starting to doubt her own beliefs. After all, if the Xanthos family had not found any earth-shattering and unbelievable priceless treasures, they would not have asked Tilar to go back on his oath. In that case, Tilar would certainly not have the power to make Dario turn his back on the Dailey family either.

At the end of the day, out of the four great and influential families, the other two families had already shown their favor toward the Xanthos family. So, at this point, the Dailey family was indeed a little out of place as compared to them.

“Alright, then. In that case, I will make sure that you are utterly convinced then, Miss Dailey. Why don’t you take a look at what this is?”

As he spoke, Tilar took out a very simple and unsophisticated wooden box.

The wooden box was pitch-black, and it looked just like the size of a baby’s palm.

He took it out carefully, and this wooden box naturally attracted Gerald’s attention at this time.

Gerald knitted his brows tightly together as he felt extremely curious.

The wooden box did not look like an ordinary relic at first glance. No matter how he looked at it, it seemed to contain a trace of a holy spirit.

Gerald's brows were tightly knitted together as he watched intently.

At this time, Tilar opened the wooden box.

Immediately afterward, a hint of a very rich purple glow came out of the box, and the purple glow instantly enveloped itself around Tilar.

It was a spiritual artifact that was accompanying the purple glow.

Gerald's eyelids twitched fiercely at this time.

'It is indeed not just an ordinary relic! It is a spiritual artifact!'

Gerald was shocked.

He had originally thought that this group of people was simply fighting because of some treasure that they had found in the ancient tomb. Unexpectedly, what they had found was actually a spiritual artifact!

Gerald had heard Queena talking about this in the snake cave back then.

Any place where a spiritual artifact was found would be a miracle belonging to the ancient Shunzuog Civilization.

Anyone would certainly be able to find a great ancient heritage or even some good fortune or adventure in that place.

Could it be that the historical ruins were actually a miracle?

In that case, Gerald could now roughly guess the reason as to why Zyla would choose to mingle with and stick around this group of people.

Not to mention Uncle and the others, but if Gerald were to encounter and discover this kind of miracle, he would not let this opportunity go just like that either.

It seemed as though his trip was not in vain this time.

“This... what is this?!”

As for Yileen, she was extremely shocked.

“Hahaha! This is a kind of magic stone. This magic stone alone is already a priceless and invaluable treasure. So, do you finally understand everything now, Miss Dailey?” Tilar said as he laughed.

As for Dario, he could only shake his head with a bitter smile on his face.

Yileen was so enraged that her chest was rising up and down due to her frantic breathing. This group of people was simply too good at scheming! Even her father had been kept completely in the dark.

“Miss Dailey, you are all alone now. So, it would be best if you chose not to resist. You should just be obedient and submit to the arrest without putting up any resistance. Otherwise, you will certainly have to suffer a little, then!” Tilar reminded her.

Chapter 1386

Only then did Tilar suddenly realize that a young man was standing behind Yileen at this point.

Tilar did not know whether the young man had been frightened because of his majestic aura. At this moment, he seemed to be in a trance, as though he was deep in his own thoughts.

It seemed as though his mind and attention were not placed on Yileen at all.

'Could it be because I have frightened and scared him?'

Tilar shook his head as he thought to himself.

After that, he asked, "Master Dario, who is that man? Is he one of Yileen's slaves too?"

"Yes, Mr. Lcraft. He is a slave that Yileen had just taken in earlier."

Dario nodded before he continued, "He is just a poor guy who was deceived and tricked by Yileen. Hahaha! He did not even know that he had been sold off and taken advantage of!"

Dario smiled bitterly.

"He seems to have already heard all of our conversations. So, Master Dario, you know what you will have to do, then!" Tilar said as he sneered.

The complete success of this plan obviously made him feel extremely comfortable.

"I understand. I will burn him alive later. If he wants to blame anyone, he can only blame himself for his bad luck!" Dario replied confidently.

"Ahh!" Yileen was so afraid that she could only swallow her saliva out of fright.

This was especially so when she happened to see a subordinate bringing a big barrel full of gasoline over to them.

Yileen could not stop her legs from trembling out of fear as she observed this scene.



Dario was obviously doing this to make an example out of Gerald so that he could scare her. He was going to kill Gerald so that he could scare Yileen into submission, all so she would act obediently and fulfill the next step of their plan.

“Why? Miss Dailey, are you scared now?” Tilar asked as he sneered.

“You... you... don’t kill me! I beg you!” Yileen said as she trembled in fear.

“Hahaha! What if I can only keep one of you alive, then? Will it be you or this young lad here?” Tilar asked as he continued ridiculing Yileen.

“Of course you will have to kill him, then! He is just a slave! Even if you burn him to death, I would still be of use to you as long as I am alive!”

Yileen hurriedly backed away.

“Hahaha!”

Yileen’s actions made everyone laugh until they were all rolling with laughter.

“Stop laughing! It is time for you to take action. You can also allow Miss Dailey to experience and witness a bloody scene!” Tilar said as he waved his hand.

“Okay, Boss. This kid is probably already scared silly. He has not even reacted all this time, but he will certainly scream out in pain later!”

The subordinate said with a grin on his face as he walked toward Gerald.

“Young lad, you are going to die tragically soon. You’d better shout it out loud if you have any last words!”

The subordinate said savagely as he cracked his own neck slightly.

“Shh!”

As for Gerald, he was still focusing and concentrating, and he simply made a silent gesture at the subordinate.

“What is going on? What are you doing?” The subordinate was taken aback by Gerald’s reaction.

“Is the miracle that you mentioned found in a cave in the desert about seventy miles away from this place?” Gerald asked lightly.

“Ehh? Young lad, how did you know that?!”

Tilar could not help but feel a little startled.

This matter was a very big secret!

“You don’t have to worry about how I found out about it. By the way, you said that you want to keep this woman back here. I’m afraid that will not be possible. She has to bring me to see my friends!”

Gerald was using his own concentration energy to search for a place that was filled with a holy spirit nearby. Just as expected, he locked onto a spot. Based on Tilar’s reaction, it seemed as though the location of the miracle that he had speculated was indeed correct. It was the historical ruins that they were talking about.

“You brat! Are you really that dumb and brainless?! You are already about to die! I have more than seventy men in my manor, and they can easily drown you with a single mouthful of their saliva each. You actually dare to try and negotiate with me at this time?! It seems as though you are indeed not a smart kid at all. Moreover, you are truly stupid. Did you really think that you would be able to threaten me just because you know the location of the historical ruins?!”

Tilar shook his head speechlessly. All of Tilar's men also sneered as they stared at Gerald.

"I am not trying to negotiate any terms with you. I think I have already expressed my intentions very clearly. Those are my words, and my words are commands before you. If you refuse to obey my commands..."

The corners of Gerald's lips turned into a smile as he continued, "I will just kill all of you, then!"

Chapter 1387

"Hahaha! Boss, I have already confirmed that this person is definitely a lunatic. He can't possibly be even crazier than this!"

The crowd of people was all laughing out loud at this time.

Don't mention the others, but even Yileen was also looking at Gerald as though he was a fool.

There was indeed something wrong with this man's brain.

He could have been a little smarter, and he could have simply knelt and begged Tilar for mercy at this moment. Yet, he was actually uttering conceited nonsense without using his brain at all. No, in fact, he was even speaking like a madman.

He was already on the verge of dying! Yileen had originally felt some pity for him, but now, she no longer felt even a trace of sympathy for him anymore.

'He is a fool, and he truly deserves to die!' Yileen thought to herself.

“Master Dario, I have already laughed enough. Killing him off was originally supposed to be an extremely serious matter. However, I never would have expected this young man to turn it into such an amusing matter. Forget it! Kill him now and let Miss Dailey witness his death with her own eyes!”

Tilar also shook his head with a wry smile on his face.

Dario’s mouth curved into a smile that was full of ridicule. At this time, he walked directly toward Gerald as he clasped his hands on Gerald’s shoulder.

He was prepared to throw Gerald into the gasoline.

But very soon, he was full of shock and surprise.

This was because he found that no matter how hard he tried, the young man in front of him would not move at all.

Dario felt as though what he was pulling was not a person, but a huge mountain.

His own strength seemed to be so mild and insignificant in front of this person!

Could it be an illusion?

Dario was horrified.

He was a top master amongst all masters. His iron palm was already at the point of perfection.

He could easily smash a cow to death with just one palm.

So, why couldn’t he settle this young man, then?

“Hahaha!” Gerald laughed faintly as he looked at him.

Gerald’s laughter, and especially the look in his eyes, actually made Dario feel chills all over his back.

“You... what are you laughing at?!” Dario asked in astonishment.

“I am laughing at all of you. All of you are truly very pitiful. Did you really think that people like you guys would be able to kill me just like that? Moreover, you even told me such a big piece of news!”

Gerald shook his head.

At this moment, he simply shook his body slightly.

Boom!

The part between Dario’s thumb and index finger was torn apart directly, and his whole body was hit by a rush of surging energy as he flew to the back and crashed heavily on the ground.

Dario’s clothes were already torn into pieces because of the explosion, and he looked extremely pitiful and pathetic at this time.

All of the veins in his arms were protruding, and it bulged out, looking three times bigger than it was in an instant.

It was abolished!

His arm was now crippled!

Dario looked at the young man in disbelief as he swallowed wildly. He... he... was he a man or a demon?!

As for Tilar, his eyelids twitched wildly as he hurriedly took a few steps backward.

This scene had obviously scared him.

Yileen was even more shocked, and she used her hand to cover her mouth in shock.

She had originally thought that this man was just a pathetic person—a silly pathetic fool.

However, she never would have expected that he would actually be as powerful as a deity!

Everyone's impression of Gerald immediately changed at this moment.

This was because a strong killing intent had shrouded itself around all of them at this point.

“Don't mess around with us!”

Tilar shouted wildly, “Brothers! Take out your pistols now! I want all of you to take out your pistols! Do not let him move at all!”

Tilar was hysterical.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

As soon as Tilar's subordinates took out their weapons, Gerald simply waved his hand lightly, and all of the weapons fell out of their hands in an instant as it flew to the side.

Right then and there, everyone was dumbfounded.

Tilar had been in the underground world for such a long time, and at this moment, he could finally see the kind of existence that this young man who was standing in front of him actually was.

## Chapter 1388

He seemed like a demon—a demon who could easily kill anyone at any time with just a single flick of his fingers!

“Don’t move! Don’t move any more! I want everyone to stay back!”

Tilar raised his hand to signal his subordinates so that they would not act rashly any longer.

Then, Tilar slowly walked in front of Gerald before he knelt directly in front of him with a thud.

“Boss, I... I was wrong!”

Tilar bowed in front of Gerald with an expression on his face that was filled with respect.

“That’s right. You are very smart indeed. Talking to me in this posture is probably the best and smartest thing you have ever done in your whole life!”

Gerald would never think about justice or righteousness whenever he was dealing with this kind of people.

Only fear—fear from deep within the body and mind would truly and utterly convince a person to surrender himself.

"I... I was wrong too! Please spare my life! I am willing to pledge my loyalty to you and serve you by your side from now onward!"

As for Dario, when he saw that Tilar seemed to have made a narrow escape after kneeling in front of Gerald, Dario hurriedly knelt and bowed in front of him too.

"Who do you think you are? Did you really think that someone like you would be worthy enough to stay by my side to serve me? You... you are not enough qualified or worthy enough to become my dog!"

Gerald shook his head.

"Please spare my life!"

Dario pleaded as he continued bowing and knocking his head on the ground.

"This is a gasoline tank. You said that you were going to light me up just now. It just so happens that I have never seen anyone get killed in this manner before. So, I truly want to open up my eyes and witness it for myself today!" Gerald replied coldly.

As soon as his voice fell, Gerald raised his hand as he inhaled, and Dario flew directly into the gasoline tank in an instant.

As he flicked his fingers, a flame shot out directly.

Boom!

An earth-shattering burst of flames ignited in an instant, and Dario started screaming out loud as though he was a pig that was getting slaughtered.

"Ahhhh!"



Yileen held her head in her hands as she started screaming out of fear.

At this time, Tilar and his group of subordinates also swallowed wildly as all of them broke out in cold sweat.

This person in front of them at this moment was, in fact, a living demon.

Boom! Boom!

Everyone knelt instantly, and no one dared to look directly into Gerald's eyes at all.

There was even someone who peed in his pants.

"This is how it should have been. If you had known that this would happen, why would you bother talking so much nonsense just now?!"

Gerald shook his head as he smiled slightly.

Then, he looked at Yileen and said, "Miss Dailey, I was not joking with you just now either. If you really know of my friends' whereabouts, you'd better bring me to see them right now!"

Yileen swallowed frantically at this time. She had been deceiving Gerald all along. She did not know of Gerald's friends' whereabouts at all.

She was terrified. She was afraid that she would die if she were to tell him the truth now.

However, if she refused to tell him the truth, she would certainly have to die, then.

After thinking about it, Yileen finally confessed honestly, "I... I haven't seen your friends at all. I was simply lying to you. I am sorry! Please spare my life! I will not dare to do it again!"

"Could it be that they had already headed to the historical ruins that you guys were talking about? I heard the boss of the hotel saying that the people who picked them up and took them away were all wearing the same clothes as this dozen or so of your subordinates!" Gerald continued asking coldly.

"Perhaps... perhaps it was the Xanthos family! They could have been picked up by Mr. Xanthos. Both the Xanthos family and the Dailey family have this similar logo on their chests!" Tilar said with his head lowered at this time.

"Are you sure?" Gerald asked as he frowned.

Tilar nodded repeatedly as he said, "I am certain. Boss, can I ask if the friends that you were mentioning consist of three women and two men?"

"Yes!"

Zyla was the thought of the soul. It had already been more than three days now, so she should have already come out of Rosie's body.

Gerald nodded at this time.

"That's right, then. Two days ago, Mr. Xanthos invited several masters to come over, and they seemed to be extremely powerful. They were also the ones who unraveled the mystery of the historical ruins! I have also met those people several times before, and they said that they were waiting for someone here. I thought that the person they were waiting for should be even more strong and powerful, then!"

As he thought about this, Tilar swallowed his saliva and asked, "Could it be that you are the person they were waiting for?"

"That's right. I want you to bring me to see them now!"

Gerald said casually with his hands behind his back.

Tilar trembled slightly as he nodded repeatedly.

## Chapter 1389

In the living room, at the Xanthos Manor.

A middle-aged man and a young man were seated on the sofa as they discussed something seriously with seven people who were all dressed in black uniforms.

“This matter related to the historical ruins will be the biggest event that will shake the whole world. So, we have to be extra careful and meticulous this time. As for the seven of you, you have extraordinary skills and abilities. So, we will have to rely on you masters to help us in the future.”

The middle-aged man said as he laughed with a teacup in his hand.

This middle-aged man was Wesson Xanthos, and he was the head of the Xanthos family, which was a well-known family force. Wesson was a very cruel and merciless man, and he had been worshipping theology all his life. He had been continuously expanding and building his family up with the help and connection of various dark forces over the years.

The young man beside him was Sloan, commonly referred to as Young Master Xanthos. He seemed to have inherited all of Wesson’s characteristics, and he even surpassed his father in certain ways. Even from a young age, he had already gained a vicious title because he had a very ruthless character hidden behind his gentle appearance.

He was Wesson’s only son.

As for these seven people, they were all skillful top masters that the pair of father and son had just invited to come over.

Amongst the seven people, there were six men and one woman, and they had a very strong and hostile aura encompassing them.

The Xanthos family had originally thought that the historical ruin they had discovered was just a large ancient tomb. However, it would not have been easy for them to crack this ancient tomb open if they were to rely solely on the strength of the Xanthos family.

So, they had united with the Dailey family, the Lacraft family, and other big families to jointly develop and open up the historical ruins.

They would share everything equally after gathering the treasures.

Of course, as per the pair of father and son's calculation, it would simply be impossible for all parties to share everything equally at the end of the day. So, they naturally had their own plans in regards to how they would eventually deal with those other big families.

However, Wesson would never have expected that this was not actually just an ancient tomb. Instead, it was a place that was filled with many spiritual artifacts.

Everything inside could not be measured by its value or price at all.

Therefore, the Xanthos family would have to take advantage of everything by themselves.

Their plan was originally going smoothly, but unexpectedly, a few strangers had come to this place a few days ago.

They were even more strange. They had discovered the secret of this ancient tomb almost immediately, and they had even helped everyone to enter the depths of this miracle.

There were men and women amongst this group of people. There were an extraordinarily beautiful young woman and a middle-aged man with a face full of scars, and there was also a very quiet and silent middle-aged man amongst them. They aroused and attracted both Wesson and Sloan's attention.

None of them looked like people that anyone should easily provoke.

Therefore, it would certainly be very unwise of them to have a direct confrontation and conflict with them.

So, Wesson and Sloan had invited them to come over so that they could develop and further discover the historical ruins together before they would cut them off completely in one swoop.

That was what led to the current scene at the moment.

"Chairman Xanthos, you have an awe-inspiring reputation, and you are known for your great strength. This time, you are actually paying such a high price just to invite the Seven Monsters from Snow Mountain to make a trip here personally. So, could it be possible that the skills and abilities of the few people that Chairman Xanthos is trying to deal with have already reached an incredibly terrifying point?"

The head of the Seven Monsters from Snow Mountain spoke up at this time.

"Yes. If that was not the case, I would not dare to trouble the seven of you at all!" Wesson replied.

"Chairman Xanthos, why don't you tell us about your plans, then?!"

The head of the Seven Monsters from Snow Mountain was an old man, and he smiled as he squinted his eyes slightly.

"They are a group of people, and I do not know how they discovered the miracle. Moreover, they have even entered the depth of the miracle. It is actually really simple. I know that the Seven Monsters from Snow Mountain are in possession of a kind of poison known as the Snow Mountain Silkworm Venom which can be transformed into a poisonous fog. It would simply be impossible to stop this kind of poison. Therefore, I am thinking of releasing this poisonous fog in the depths of the miracle. After that,

to stay on the safe side, I would like to trouble the Seven Monsters of Snow Mountain to personally step in and kill all of them one by one before bringing their corpses out to me. At that time, I will be willing to share the fruits of my victory with the seven of you!" Wesson said as he smiled.

The Seven Monsters of Snow Mountain were naturally not afraid of this kind of poison.

As soon as they heard this, the Seven Monsters of Snow Mountain also felt that this would be feasible. So, they naturally nodded, one after the other.

At this time, a servant suddenly walked in respectfully.

"Sir, Mr. Lacraft has brought a young man here with him to see you!"

"Hm? Alright, then. Invite him in!" Wesson said as he smiled.

As for the Seven Monsters of Snow Mountain, they disappeared from the sofa in a blink of an eye, almost as though they had never been there.

Sloan could not stop his eyelids from twitching slightly.

Right after that, Gerald, Tilar, and Yileen walked in.

"Chairman Lacraft, who is this?"

Chapter 1390

"This is Mr. Crawford. Mr. Gerald Crawford!" Tilar said respectfully as he made the introduction.

"Mr. Crawford is here today because he is looking for the few masters whom Chairman Xanthos invited to come over just a few days ago. They are all Mr. Crawford's friends. At the same time, Mr. Crawford would also like to investigate and take a look at the miracle!"

At this time, Tilar was acting just like a filial son in front of Gerald, and he did not even dare to take a deeper breath at all.

As for Wesson, he had also obtained some important information and clues at this time.

This was especially so because he had just heard that the people in the cave who were about to be poisoned by him were actually this young man's friends.

This made him feel a little more fearful and anxious.

"Oh! It will be easy for us to talk about this, then! It turns out that you are a friend of those few masters!" Wesson said as he smiled, and he wanted to shake hands with Gerald.

"Stop talking so much nonsense and take me to see them!"

As for Gerald, his sharp gaze swept across the room swiftly as he glanced coldly at Wesson.

At this moment, he spoke up casually.

"You arrogant man!"

Sloan could not help but feel angry when he saw Gerald's arrogant and domineering attitude.

"Sloan! Don't be rude!"

However, Wesson stopped him before he said, "Alright, then. Since you are determined and have the intention to investigate and check out the miracle, I will send some men to lead the way!"

Wesson seemed to agree with Gerald's request on the surface, but in actual fact, he was already holding a grudge against Gerald.

At this time, he immediately arranged for his subordinate to lead Gerald and bring him to the cave.

Not long after Gerald had left, Sloan slammed his hands on the table angrily as he said, "Dad! Why did you stop me just now instead of letting me deal with that arrogant kid?!"

"You are too rash and reckless! Don't forget that those people are also masters with great abilities. As for that young man, although we cannot see anything extraordinary about him, didn't you notice that Yileen Dailey and Tilar Lacraft were both so frightened and afraid to even speak up in front of him?! Therefore, it is obvious that this man is not as simple as he looks!"

Wesson spoke up at this time as he could easily tell some things at a single glance when it came to certain underground matters.

"What should we do, then? Are we really going to take him to the ancient tomb?!" Sloan asked as he frowned.

"Of course, not! In order to prevent any new and complicated problems from arising, I want to invite the Seven Monsters from Snow Mountain to intercept and kill him as he is making his way there. That way, our mission will be accomplished as soon as we poison those few masters inside the cave to death! Pfft! In my opinion, Tilar Lacraft and the Dailey family are already of no use to me anymore!" Wesson said as he sneered.

At this time, the Seven Monsters from Snow Mountain who had disappeared from the sofa just now suddenly reappeared again.

All seven of them squinted their eyes slightly.

They looked like they were all very calm in meditation and had no worldly passions at all.



This was actually a necessary quality of every top master. They would always close their eyes to rest and calm their minds so that they would always be immersed in a certain wonderful and magical state.

“That young man just now is actually extremely talented. If it weren’t because of Chairman Xanthos’s needs, I would have already thought of taking him in as a disciple so that I could train him a little more. Unfortunately, since this is Chairman Xanthos’s wishes, he will have to die today!”

The old man, who was the head of the group, said with his eyes closed.

“I will have to trouble the seven of you, then!”

Wesson was overjoyed, and he hurriedly picked up the hot ginseng tea as he prepared to replace the wine with tea instead.

The old man raised his hand and refused it as he said, “No need. We will be back soon. You can just leave the tea here because it will not get cold!”

The old man then laughed bitterly.

Whoooosh!

After that, their figures disappeared completely.

At this moment, there was only a young man left seated on the sofa with his legs crossed. He was the youngest amongst the Seven Monsters of Snow Mountain.

“Mr. Yvon, why didn’t you go with them?” Sloan asked curiously.

“Because the six of them are already sufficient to complete the mission. As for me, the reason why I am staying behind is because I am tasked with the responsibility of staying back with Chairman Xanthos so that we can receive the fruits of our victory together!” The young man named Yvon replied with a faint smile on his face.

## Chapter 1391

It was a little while later when Gerald—who had been riding in the car that Wesson had sent over—suddenly felt the car stop. Watching as the driver lit a cigarette and glanced at his rear-view mirror—displaying a cold grin to Gerald in the process—Gerald then asked, “We’re halfway there at best, aren’t we? Why did you stop the car?”

“Oh, I’m well aware. I’m just a bit tired so I need to rest for a bit!” replied the driver, contempt written all over his face.

“Tired? Please, you haven’t been driving for that long. Look, you can do whatever you please once I’ve reached my destination, but until then, you’d best drive properly!” said Gerald as he shook his head.

Quite honestly, Gerald was unwilling to just kill people if he didn’t need to. After all, all lives were valuable. If that hadn’t been his view on life, then he would’ve spent less time speaking nonsense with such people and just killed them the chance he could.

“Hah! Do you really think you’re some kind of big shot?” sneered the driver as he turned to look at the rear-view mirror again.

This time, however, six ghastly figures could be seen slowly approaching the car.

Noticing the presence of the demon-like people, Gerald then smiled wryly as he shook his head before saying, “So that’s why you’re being so cocky... Did Wesson arrange for you to stop halfway and have me killed?”

“Indeed! Mr. Xanthos planned for all this to happen! While you’re pretty unlucky, I can’t disobey my orders so you’d better get out and get killed already!” sneered the driver as he hopped out of the car before standing a distance away, his arms crossed as he got ready to enjoy Gerald’s misfortune.

Seeing that, Tilar—who had been sitting quietly next to Gerald this entire time—anxiously said, “W-what should we do, Mr. Crawford...? Those people look like demons...!”

“What’s there to be afraid of? Even if they truly are demons, I’ll just be a demon slayer then!” replied Gerald as he smiled before stepping out of the car.

Looking at the six people, Gerald’s smile remained as he asked, “Ladies and gentlemen, could it be that Wesson sent you over to kill me? Do you intend to deal with my friend here too once you’re done with me?”

“You’re correct. It seems that I didn’t have a wrong impression of you! Alas, while it’s a pity to just kill off such a smart young man as yourself, we don’t have a say in this!” said an old man—who appeared to be the leader of the six—as he shook his head.

“With how handsome he is, I have to agree! I wonder if I should pleasure myself with him first before we kill him...” said one of the women in the group as she stuck her tongue out rather lustfully.

“Don’t be naughty, sister. Let’s just hurry up and accomplish our task. Once he’s dead, we’ll head to where the miracle is to slaughter the rest of the people there!” replied the old man from before as he turned to look at the woman in resignation.

At that moment, Gerald curiously asked, “Quite honestly, there’s been something bugging me for a while now. I wonder if you’d be kind enough to resolve my doubts...”

“Oh? Well, since you’re about to die anyway, we’ll give you two minutes to ask any final questions!” replied the old man.

“Well, the thing is, I find it odd that I keep bumping into enemies—like you—who are so certain that you’ll actually be able to kill me. You all just seem so proud of your plans and intelligence... Is there a reason for that?” asked Gerald in a way that suggested that he was asking them for advice.

“If that’s the question, even I can answer that for you. All of them are rightfully confident since not only are they the six most powerful people in the world, but they’re also operating under Mr. Xanthos and his son, both infamously known for how great they are at strategizing! With the location and even time of your death set in stone, why wouldn’t they be proud about it?” scoffed the driver while smiling smugly.

"I see... Mr. Xanthos does seem to be the kind of person who enjoys getting rid of people once they're useless to him... With that in mind, I'm sure he already has a backup plan should seven of his people end up failing to kill my friend here..."

"...You... What did you just say?" said the driver, his smugness instantly disappearing.

It was also obvious that the six others didn't take kindly to having their intelligence humiliated. With that, the old man then casually said, "That's quite enough. Your time is up! Enjoy your life in hell!"

Following that, the old man then waved his hand, intent on creating a blade of air that would fly toward Gerald and destroy all his internal organs!

However, though the old man's palm was outstretched, he quickly realized—to his surprise—that no blade of air was formed! In fact, it seemed like his inner strength had just disappeared all of a sudden!

His eyes now wide open in disbelief, the old man then muttered, "...How... How is this even possible...?"

Noticing that their leader seemed to be having trouble, the other five instantly made their own moves, only to end up in a similar situation as the old man. None of them were even capable of inflicting any harm on Gerald...

"...You... Who exactly are you...?"

Chapter 1392

Though they were now sneering at him, all six of them found themselves taking a few steps back in their shock.

Gerald himself simply shook his head before saying, "I told you, didn't I? People just seem to enjoy assuming that they can kill me, and you're all living proof of that. Look, quite frankly, you're all just grains of dust to me... And I can't stand the sight of dust!"

Following that, Gerald flicked his finger at them, creating an explosive sound as a strong wave of air swiftly flew toward the six people!

Dust now flying in all directions—due to how powerful the blast of air was—all six of them instinctively turned around, intent on escaping! After all, they knew for a fact that getting caught in that attack would definitely spell instant death for them. What inhuman strength!

While running was the only thing on their mind now, none of them seemed to be able to even lift their legs! It was almost as though the lower half of their bodies had turned to lead!

Unable to even attempt escape, all six of them suddenly found themselves freezing on the spot as they took turns looking at each other with widened eyes... All of them were sure that they had just felt a breeze pass through their necks...

A second later, their decapitated heads then rolled to the ground!

Upon seeing that, the stupefied driver—who had been standing cross-armed at the side this entire time—found himself thinking, ‘...T-to think that this person would actually be this strong...!’

“D-don’t come any closer...!” shouted the trembling driver the second Gerald turned back to look at him.

When Gerald started walking toward him, the driver instantly fell to his knees as he pleaded, “P-please spare my life, boss...! Forgive me for failing to recognize how strong you were earlier...!”

His forehead now pressed against the ground, the driver felt as Gerald slowly placed his foot atop his head...

Wiping the dirt off his shoe on the driver’s hair, Gerald simply replied, “It’s far too late for that!”

Intensifying the force of his foot without warning, the driver couldn’t even brace himself as his head exploded into pieces! What a terrible way to die!

After witnessing all this, Tilar was barely able to avoid wetting himself again as his eyelids twitched rapidly.

Gerald, himself simply got back into the car before closing his eyes and ordering, “Get in the car and let’s go already!”

By this point, they weren’t all that far from where the miracle was, and Gerald wasn’t going to wait any longer than he needed to.

It was a little while later—inside the gigantic cave—when Peter said, “...This should be the end of the miracle, right, Miss Lockland...? To think that such a magical place even exists on this planet... I wouldn’t have believed it had I not witnessed all this for myself!”

He and the others had been deeply amazed by what they had seen so far in this magical underground world. Not only were there forests and treasures hovering all around them, a massive abyss—that led to who knows where—also laid in the middle of the area. Upon closer inspection, there also seemed to be an enormous platform that hovered high above the dead center of the abyss...

This entire place was simply too mystical...

Though Peter had previously considered himself to be quite knowledgeable and insightful, learning about the existence of such a place was a definite first for him.

Zyla herself appeared slightly surprised, though she was taking all this in much better compared to the others.

“...Indeed! This is the place!” replied Zyla with a nod.

“What...? Could Gerald have something he needs here...?” asked Peter curiously.

Zyla simply responded to his question with a simple nod as Leo said, “Speaking of which, when will Mr. Crawford arrive, Angelica...? Had I known about all this, then I would’ve definitely waited in the hotel to come here together with him!”

“He’s probably rushing over this very moment, so he’ll be here soon!” replied Zyla with a faint smile.

As soon as her sentence ended, terrible cries of pain—from the Xanthos family’s disciples—could be heard outside the cave!

“Speak of the devil...” muttered Zyla.

Chapter 1393

Seconds after she said that, everyone watched as a figure slowly walked toward them from afar... And as soon as he got close enough, Leo’s eyes lit up as he declared, “So it really is you, Mr. Crawford!”

Upon realizing Gerald’s arrival, Peter found himself smiling subtly as well... Until he got a closer look at Gerald. Widening his previously squinted eyes, the shocked Peter found himself muttering, “...Gerald... What on earth happened to your training...?”

It had just been a few days since he had last met Gerald... How had Gerald obtained such immensely frightening strength within that short period of time...?

‘Just as Miss Lockland had said, could it be that Gerald is no longer a regular human being...?’

“Indeed. I inquired about it all the way until I finally managed to catch up to all of you here, sir! Zyla!” replied Gerald as he nodded with a smile before turning to look at the faintly discernible world hovering above him...

After a brief silence to recover from his surprise, Gerald eventually said, “...While I’ve found many divine artifacts on my way here, I never thought that I’d come across a place like this.... A space—consisting of multiple other spaces—that resembles a new world... How did you even find such a great place, sir? Zyla...?”

“Miss Lockland was the one who found it and led us to this place... According to her, this place is related to you!” replied Monica who had also been present this entire time.

Upon hearing that, Gerald turned to face Zyla before realizing that she had finally left Rosie’s body. As it turned out, she had managed to swiftly recover after possessing Rosie’s body. With that in mind, Zyla had been living as an independent existence for a while now.

Regardless, Gerald then curiously asked, "It's... related to me...?"

Truth be told, he was still confused about many things. After all, Zyla—and the rest—hadn't had the luxury to sit and talk for long ever since that night. Due to that, Gerald still wasn't able to completely grasp what the Herculean Primordial Spirit even was.

Nodding in response, Zyla then replied, "Indeed. You should be well aware by now that there are a plethora of secrets hidden within you, Gerald... Also, now that we finally have time to talk, I wonder if you realize that though Liemis is a part of you, you aren't a part of him!"

"...Come again? What do you mean by that...?" asked Gerald in astonishment.

"It's a great secret that both Liemis and I found out about thousands of years ago... I've never told anyone else about this, but know that it's the main reason why I came to Earth with Liemis in the first place!" replied Zyla.

"...And that secret is also related to me...?" questioned Gerald as his eyes widened when he saw Zyla nodding in confirmation.

"Correct. In fact, the secret is pretty much directly linked to you. The truth is, while it was true that both Liemis and I had come looking for you back then, we hadn't properly factored in the time needed for us to locate you. Due to that, we bumped into some issues halfway through our journey, resulting in us dying here! Before dying, however, Liemis sacrificed himself in order to allow me to retain a small portion of the thought of my soul..." explained Zyla, her grief evident in her tone.

"That... doesn't answer why you were looking for me in the first place... Also, how would you even have known about my existence, thousands of years before I was even born?" replied the flabbergasted Gerald.

"I'm not quite sure how to explain it to you in detail... But just know that you've never truly disappeared. All that's changed is the way you appear during different time periods!" said Zyla.

"...That is a lot of information to take in... I already have enough questions after saving two of my friends in the Gunter manor... Long story short, I bumped into some mishaps while saving them, and it's



basically how I awakened to the first stage of my potential. During that mishap, the term, 'Herculean Primordial Spirit' was also mentioned, a term which I still lack a comprehensive knowledge of... Whatever the case is, that's the reason how I got so powerful in the past three days. At my current strength, I'm not even sure what realm I'm at anymore!"

#### Chapter 1394

After hearing Gerald's explanation, Peter then said, "So that's how you grew so rapidly in just three days!"

"So that's the whole story... In the end, I guess that some things will always end up being unearthed no matter how hard we try to hide them... Everything is simply going according to fate... You know, despite being the most powerful person to have ruled over Jaellatra, even Liemis told me that nobody was able to escape such a fate... True to his words, Liemis wasn't able to deny his fate either! Regardless, the Herculean Primordial Spirit is a power so strong that it's capable of ruining the ultimate limit!" explained Zyla.

"...Ruining... the ultimate limit...?" muttered both Leo and Peter at the same time.

"Indeed. You see, the ultimate limit is without a start nor an end... It has the ability to remaining indefinitely strong, and nobody should ever be able to even get in touch with it! Despite that, legend has it that the Herculean Primordial Spirit is able to ruin it!"

Upon hearing Zyla's explanation, everyone found themselves feeling simultaneously amazed and stupefied, including Gerald.

"...So... Since the King of Judgement Portal keeps wanting to capture me... Does that mean that he's been after the Herculean Primordial Spirit within me this entire time...?" summarized Gerald, finally seeing the bigger picture.

"You're correct, though the King of Judgement Portal is only one of the many people who wish to obtain that mystical power!" explained Zyla.

"...If that's the case, how come I never bumped into any bizarre people or incidents when I was younger?" asked Gerald as he thought about his childhood.

“That’s because those people were afraid of accidentally activating your power too early. They feared that you’d begin slaughtering people like crazy once you got a taste of power, and that would surely be a disaster!” replied Zyla.

“...Then... does that confirm that I truly was Liemis in my previous life...?” asked Gerald.

“There certainly exists a possibility of that. Whatever the case is, your appearance marked the inevitable demise of Liemis. For now, just understand that both you and Liemis are two independent individuals. While the two of you are similar in the way that you both owned the Formidable Primordial Spirit, you’re clearly different from him since you own the Herculean Primordial Spirit as well! In a way, you hold more prestige than he does!” replied Zyla.

At that moment, Peter—who had been listening closely to the conversation and pondering about it this entire time—found himself asking, “...If that’s the case, Miss Lockland, doesn’t that suggest that it was the Herculean Primordial Spirit that brought Gerald into existence...?”

“Quite the contrary, in fact. Gerald’s the one who attained the Herculean Primordial Spirit!”

His eyes now widened in shock, Peter then said, “Then... Does that mean that Gerald currently bears an immensely strong power?”

“A power that strikes fear into the hearts of many people, yes!” replied Zyla.

“...But... Why did the Herculean Primordial Spirit appear...? Also, while it’s true that I’ve awakened to the first stage of my potential, it isn’t really as strong as you’ve pictured it to be... All that’s changed is that I now rarely ever bump into anyone who’s capable of fighting against me!” said Gerald—who was completely flabbergasted by this point—as he gave a wry smile.

“Well... There are quite a few theories as to how the Herculean Primordial Spirit came to be... While some claimed that it appeared due to the transformation of an immensely powerful person—who owned the Immortal Body—, Liemis rejected that theory. After all, despite thorough investigation, no records about such an incident happening were ever found! However, we did find a very important clue,” replied Zyla as she shook her head.

“See, the clue hinted that we needed to find something called the Mackusion... From what we managed to deduce, activating it would allow us to make more sense about a lot of things! With that in mind, we rushed to earth the first thing we could. We thought that we could use the time—while waiting for you to appear—to look for the Mackusion and hopefully gain some answers that we were seeking. Unfortunately, that didn’t happen. We weren’t able to accomplish a lot at all!”

“Also, you stated that despite awakening to the first stage of your talent, all you were able to feel was a massive increase in your training, correct? That you didn’t feel like your power was as terrifying as I made it sound? Well, I’m not sure who you met up with before you and I first got acquainted, but during our first meeting, I found that your Dehlere Foundation had already been ruined! Due to someone ruining it, you haven’t been able to awaken your Dehlere Foundation!” added Zyla.

“What? Ruined? But how is that even possible? I never even got in touch with any mysterious or powerful people at the time. Who could have ruined my Dehlere Foundation?” replied Gerald, shocked.

Chapter 1395

Following that, he then listened to Zyla’s explanation on what the Dehlere Foundation actually was.

Essentially, the Dehlere Foundation was a fundamental part of a cultivator. Putting it into simpler terms, it functioned like a source of water, the most basic of necessities.

If one’s Dehlere Foundation was ruined, then even if that person somehow managed to train to a high level by relying on their endeavors, they’d never truly be able to achieve their strongest form.

As for how to awaken one’s Dehlere Foundation, apparently one needed to go through the baptism of heaven—of which—Gerald had undergone following Master Ghost’s instructions. According to Zyla, Gerald should have awakened both his Dehlere Foundation and his functional yin energy—which he was now able to control—right after completing the baptism of heaven. However, since his Dehlere Foundation had been ruined from the start, there wasn’t anything to activate.

That explained why though his strength had greatly increased upon unlocking the first stage of his potential, it was still far from Zyla’s expectations.

“What should I do then...? Could I already be close to the limits of my training? Will it be difficult for me to progress any further than this...?” asked Gerald curiously.

“Well, with the aid of both the dragon blood jade pendant as well as the Mackusion, there’s a chance of restoring your Dehlere Foundation!” replied Zyla with a subtle smile.

“It’s true that the dragon blood jade pendant is very magical... Well, since I already have that, where should I even start looking for the Mackusion...?”

“Honestly, I had thought that we’d need quite a bit of time just to look for it... However, things are different now. Quite frankly, I think we’ve already gained the two most magical items between heaven and earth!” declared Zyla.

“...What? Then... Does that mean you already have the Mackusion with you?” asked Gerald with a smile.

“No, of course not... However, we’re currently where the Mackusion should be!”

“...What?” exclaimed everyone, surprised by Zyla’s sudden claim.

“...So that’s why you earlier said that this was the place... As it turned out, you already knew that the Mackusion was located here!” said Peter

“Exactly! Still, with how smoothly we were able to find this place, I have a feeling that Liemis must have given us his blessings in secret!” replied Zyla, a satisfied expression on her face.

“Then... Does that mean that the mystery that’s been puzzling us for so long will soon finally be resolved...?” asked Gerald.

“That should be the case. Regardless, let’s talk about that after we activate the Mackusion,” replied Zyla as she pointed at the high platform that was hovering in the air.

“Let’s head up there and try to activate it together, Gerald!” added Zyla as her beautiful figure gracefully floated toward the platform.

Gerald himself followed closely behind, and soon enough, both of them set foot atop the platform.

Though it appeared to be a vacant space at first glance, upon closer inspection, Gerald realized that obscure lines could be seen all over the platform... In a way, it resembled a giant hovering compass.

“Those are divine lines, and they’re used to summon the Mackusion. While they’re only able to be activated with an immensely strong force—that neither of us can hope to attain alone—by working together, we’ll surely be able to control the power of the dragon blood jade pendant that’s required to activate it!” explained Zyla.

While Gerald already knew that the dragon blood jade pendant was rather extraordinary from before, he now found it to be even more mysterious. After all, there were lots of powerful functions to the pendant that he had yet to develop and discover.

Whatever the case was, both of them immediately began channeling their energy together in hopes of activating the Mackusion. Soon enough, Gerald watched as the dragon blood jade pendant began giving off a golden glow...

Shortly after, the divine lines—that were quite obscure before this—began emitting a bright, blue light that encroached from the corners of the platform all the way to the center-most point.

It wasn’t long before a gale of wind blew from the center of the platform, and the next thing they knew, a blue crystal—the size of an adult fist—had appeared before them!

Seeing the blue glow that followed after the sudden gust of wind that stemmed from the platform, Peter was barely able to hold his shock as he muttered, “Could... could that be the Mackusion...?”

As for Gerald,—who was standing rather close to it—he found himself feeling rather amazed by the crystal’s aura as well.

Eventually, the Mackusion’s glow slowly dimmed, and Gerald placed his palm under the glowing crystal...

As if on cue, the stone then slowly descended into his hand, emitting a tiny warmth the entire time.

## Chapter 1396

“...From the second it rested on my palm, I could already feel how powerful this extraordinary-looking item was... You know, my family has a picture of the sun that is capable of predicting the future... Does the Mackusion have such a power as well?” asked the awe-struck Gerald.

“It does, though that isn’t its only ability. Regardless, go ahead and try using the dragon blood jade pendant as a medium to communicate with it. Ask a question that you truly desire the answer to, and with any luck, it’ll respond to you! This is also the perfect chance for us to see how accurate the legends are when it comes to the Mackusion’s immense magical powers!” replied Zyla.

“Copy that,” replied Gerald as he closed his eyes and did what Zyla suggested.

Not long after, a beam of light shot out from the pendant and entered the Mackusion!

However, even after Gerald reopened his eyes seconds later, nothing seemed to happen... Waiting in silence together with Zyla, both of them watched wide-eyed as the Mackusion—that had previously been resting on Gerald’s palm—slowly rose and began hovering in the air...

Shortly after, the Mackusion suddenly flashed a blindingly blue light that caused Gerald and Zyla to each take a step back!

When they opened their eyes again, they were both shocked to see that the blue light had caused a gigantic screen of sorts to manifest before them... Well, it was less of an actual manifestation and more of an illusion, to be more exact.

Regardless, the greatly shocked Gerald watched as the screen slowly displayed the image of the ocean... Though there was nothing but still water across the horizon, the image simply caused a feeling of unnerve among those who looked at it.

After who knows how long, a large ship slowly began sailing into view... Standing on the deck, two women could be seen chatting with each other as they enjoyed the night view of the sea...

Though the scene portrayed was nothing to write home about, Gerald found himself breathing heavily as hints of tears formed in the corners of his eyes.

One of the women on deck... Was Mila...! This was the ship she was on before her eventual disappearance!

By this point, Gerald was so shocked that he didn't even dare to blink. After all, while he knew that Mila had been kidnapped by the Sun League, he had no idea how the kidnapping process had gone. Hell, he wasn't even sure how powerful the members of the Sun League were yet.

With that in mind, he kept his eyes peeled to make sure he didn't miss any details...

Shortly after, the ocean's waves grew violent without warning. The waves swirled so intensely that soon enough, a massive whirlpool appeared right before the ship! Like a gigantic gluttonous mouth, the whirlpool drew the ship nearer and nearer.

On the screen, Mila could be seen helplessly holding onto her fearful classmate's hands, trying her best to calm her friend as well as herself.

Before either of them could even calm themselves, a massive spaceship—made of bronze—suddenly emerged from the depths of the ocean, sending millions of waves rolling!

All it took was a single glance for Gerald to recognize the large spaceship. It... It was the spaceship belonging to the Sun League...!

Watching as the spaceship swallowed Mila and the rest of her ship up before descending below the waves again, Gerald found himself barely able to hold himself back. He desperately wanted to rush over and save her, even if he knew that there was little chance of that.

Whatever the case was, it appeared that his sudden emotional outburst directly affected the screen.

Noticing how distorted the images on the screen were becoming, Zyla instantly held onto his hand before saying, "Calm yourself, Gerald! All this happened in the past!"

Hearing that, Gerald calmed down slightly, and the screen returned to its initial clarity.

However, the scene was now completely different from before. At the moment, it was now displaying what seemed to be a deserted island...

Chapter 1397

Several mountains could be seen surrounding the rather large island, and odd flowers could be seen growing all over the place.

Regardless, the second Gerald saw the island, he immediately knew what that place was. It was Warhill Island, the place where the pledge of the holy water was getting held!

‘By this point, I’m sure grandpa and the others have long arrived there...’

Whatever the case was, Gerald now had a rough idea on how to use the Mackusion. Essentially, after communicating with it through one’s soul, everything that the communicator thought, missed, or was confused about would instantly reveal themselves on the screen, one after another.

He got to that conclusion since after witnessing what had happened to Mila, the screen was now displaying the place where his grandpa had gone to in order to participate in the pledge of the holy water.

As for why Gerald barely had any doubts that this was Warhill Island, the legendary place where the pledge of the holy water was held, it was because he had seen the upturned—but still dazzling—statue of Angelica as the screen panned closer to the island.

However, Gerald soon realized that even after some time had passed, the screen hadn’t revealed a single person!

‘...Could it be that grandpa and the others have yet to arrive there...?’ wondered Gerald, bewildered.

Pondering about it for a second, Gerald momentarily shook the thought off before pointing at Angelica’s fallen statue and asking, “Speaking of which, what exactly is the relationship between you and that statue, Zyla? Why does a statue of you even exist on the island where the pledge of the holy water is held?”



“Well, first off, you should know that the island isn’t all that far from the king of the ocean’s palace. With that in mind, both the island and the statue worked together as a seal, preventing me from leaving the king of the ocean’s palace back then!” replied Zyla rather casually as she looked at the statue of her.

“...I see. While we’re at it, what do you know about the pledge of the holy water...? According to the legends that I’ve heard, only those whose inner strengths have long entered the realm of legends are invited to participate in it. However, I’ve always found it odd that they don’t invite those from cryptic families—like the Gunters—over. Even if those from the Sun League have some sort of scheme in mind, those from cryptic families would most definitely be more exceptional than the people they’ve been inviting throughout the years!” asked Gerald.

“Gerald, I hope you understand that cryptic families aren’t considered orthodox. After all, they rely on external forces to increase their training. Great masters, on the other hand, have true inner strength and rely solely on their training to get to where they are. With that said, the degree of utilization of great masters is much higher compared to those from cryptic families!” explained Zyla.

“Also, the reason it’s called the pledge of the holy water is because of the existence of a holy pool on that island. It’s one of the entrances into Jaellatra!” added Zyla.

“An entrance into Jaellatra you say? If that’s the case, then does that mean that the legend revolving around drinking holy water—at the pledge—to attain immortality is actually achieved by gaining entry into Jaellatra? Then... does that mean that there’s a possibility that those who never returned from the pledge of the holy water may not actually be dead and have simply been brought to Jaellatra?” replied Gerald, feeling enlightened.

“Indeed. Jaellatra occasionally recruits suitable new people in order to maintain its existence and development. In fact, Leo’s one of the younger people who were recruited!” explained Zyla as she turned to look at Leo.

“I see... I am curious though... How does Jaellatra even exist...?” inquired Gerald.

“As I’ve said, Jaellatra isn’t a particularly special place. Not only is it a place that can be found on Earth, but those living there are just as human as we are. If you’re particularly nit-picky, then one of the more major differences between our world and Jaellatra is the fact that Jaellatra is located within earth. In a way, that means that to them, we’re living on the outer layer of earth!”

“While we’re on the topic, I’ll give you a bit of a history lesson on the place. See, many destructive incidents took place between heaven and earth thousands of years ago. Due to all the chaos, numerous civilizations slowly met their end, and the Shunzuog Civilization was no exception to that. With the eventual downfall of the Shunzuog Civilization, several of the civilization’s valuable treasures and its best features ended up disappearing for good. The Shunzuog Civilization truly was at the final phase of the great civilization of antiquity... Thankfully, it was around then when those from that generation discovered a new path that led to an underground land that they later named Jaellatra!”

“Following that, they got isolated from the world for a very long time. Regardless, according to legends, no humans appeared on the surface of the Earth for the longest time after that. In fact, the only living things on earth at the time were a few rare animals—from the Shunzuog Civilization—who managed to survive the catastrophes!”

“Of course, humans slowly reappeared on the surface of the earth again after a very long time, and when that happened, they eventually got into contact with those living in Jaellatra. Following that, the inhabitants of Jaellatra sometimes lent a hand to those training themselves to attain spiritual enlightenment. While they didn’t have Dehlere Foundations within their bodies, they were able to make use of external forces, allowing them to attain similarly high levels of training!” explained Zyla.

Nodding slightly, Gerald then replied, “So... I’m guessing that’s the origin story of cryptic families?”

Smiling as she nodded in return, Zyla then said, “Indeed. Quite honestly, the Judgment Portal group is comparable to a dormant pawn that the King of Judgment Portal prepared ages ago. He’s been waiting for you to appear for a good, long time now!”

Chapter 1398

As Gerald pondered on that statement for a while, he suddenly heard the other women—who had been standing silently at the side this entire time—scream!

Peter himself was now looking immensely worried, and he immediately pointed at the screen before shouting, “Gerald, look there!”

Turning to look at the screen—that was still displaying Warhill Island—Gerald quickly realized that humans were now present. Of course, that wasn’t the reason the girls were screaming.

The reason they were so terrified was because the people being displayed were nothing more than corpses who looked like they had died horrible deaths!

From what Gerald could estimate, there were about a hundred dead great masters—who had probably come from all over the place just to participate in the pledge—at the catastrophic scene.

Looking at the sea of dead bodies, Gerald's eyelids instantly began twitching rapidly as he thought, 'Grandpa...!'

He was right to be worried. After all, his grandfather had left for the pledge of the holy water quite recently.

As he scanned through the many corpses—to see if his grandfather was one of them—Gerald soon caught sight of Christopher's dead body! From the looks of it, his chest seemed to have been broken by the force of a palm... The peculiar thing was, Gerald noticed that Christopher's mirror was lying right next to his corpse!

Gerald distinctly remembered that he had placed his grandfather in charge of the divine artifact before they left for the pledge. With that in mind, how could it have returned to Christopher's hands? The most shocking thing, however, was the fact that the artifact had been smashed to pieces!

"A-all of them are dead...!" shouted Peter as he leaped over to where Gerald and Zyla were, an immensely shocked expression on his face.

As Gerald continued scanning through the screen to see if his grandfather's corpse was also present, the scene suddenly switched again...

The screen was now displaying an area underground that Gerald was no stranger to. It was the place where the deity had been buried.

'...What could the Mackusion be trying to tell me...?'

Whatever the case was, there was an unsettling silence in the unchanging scene, prompting Gerald to ponder, 'What on earth are you trying to tell me...? I've already sealed this place, haven't I...?'

As Gerald continued wondering what all this meant, the screen soon switched to another display.

Before Gerald could even say a thing, he suddenly heard Peter shout, "The Crawford Manor?!"

"...Oh? You know where my house is, sir...?" asked Gerald.

Hearing that, Peter simply grunted as he nodded. Following that, he turned to look at the screen again, his eyes squinted and seemingly deep in thought.

Gerald continued looking at the screen as well. In a way, the way the Mackusion was portraying his family's manor resembled the image of the ancient tomb from earlier. In other words, it was filled with an eerie silence and little to no changes could be detected within the Crawford family's spacious manor.

It wasn't long before the image switched yet again, this time displaying a vast and starry sky in the depths of space...

Seemingly wandering aimlessly around, Gerald watched as the massive Sun League spaceship drifted into view... In a way, it almost felt like a ghost wandering around the universe...

Chapter 1399

Shortly after, even that image disappeared, and it was then when the Mackusion's glow slowly retracted before eventually falling back into Gerald's palm.

"...Miss Lockland, have you any idea what the Mackusion was trying to reveal based on what it showed us earlier? Could something terrible have befallen those who participated in the pledge of the holy water...?" asked Gerald rather anxiously.

"I have a feeling that seems to be the case... Regardless, not only did the Mackusion reveal that the journey of the participants of the pledge of the holy water was anything but smooth, it also displayed Liemis's tomb as well as your family's manor. From what I can assume, it's predicting that the two places aren't at peace and something is very likely going to happen soon!" replied Zyla.

“...What? Then there’s no time to waste! Let’s head over to those places to investigate immediately” said the shocked Gerald immediately.

“Indeed! Speaking of which, now that you have the Mackusion on hand, do take proper care of it, Gerald. Remember, it’ll help you heal your Dehlere Foundation! With that in mind, please start relying on it whenever you come face to face with strong enemies, even if you think you’re able to go against them without the Mackusion’s help!” replied Zyla in concern.

“Don’t worry, I already understand that, Zyla. Whatever the case is, the important thing now is for us to head to Liemis’s tomb as well as the Crawford Manor. Aside from that, I also wish to head to where the pledge of the holy water is being held to look for my grandpa. Though I tried as best as I could to locate him on the screen earlier, I wasn’t able to find his corpse at all! That means he could still be alive!” said Gerald with a slight frown.

Nodding in response, Zyla then replied, “Indeed. Let’s head off then!”

Though there was no time to linger there for long, Gerald was well aware that there were still a few divine artifacts in there that he had yet to properly investigate. With that in mind, he was prepared to seal the miracle with a formation—once they got out—so that he could have a better look at those artifacts in the future.

Nearing the tomb’s entrance, Gerald saw that night had fallen outside. Just as they were about to step out, however, Gerald suddenly paused before saying, “Speaking of which... Those from the Xanthos family had placed an extremely strong poison right outside the cave while all of you were inside... While I’ve used a formation to isolate it, you probably won’t be able to resist such potent poison...”

Following that, he gently tapped Rosie’s, Jasmine’s, and Monica’s shoulders, effectively sealing their acupuncture points.

With that done, he then safely led them out of the cave.

As was expected, those from the Xanthos family had been lying in wait for them not too far from the mouth of the cave. There were over a hundred of them, and all of them were armed with guns.

Even so, Wesson clearly wasn't expecting them to leave the cave in one piece, and this was made evident by how shocked he looked.

"...You... How could you still be alive...?" muttered Wesson.

Watching as Wesson then took a step back, a gloomy-looking youth donning black clothes—who had been standing at the side this entire time—found his eyelids twitching slightly in his surprise.

"...So you actually managed to walk out of that place alive, even after being poisoned by the Seven Monsters from Snow Mountain... How interesting...! It seems that Mr. Xanthos wasn't kidding when he said that there's more to you people than meets the eye! With that in mind, I guess you've earned the right to die by my hands!" declared the youth as he squinted his eyes slightly.

Shaking her head in resignation, Zyla simply replied, "Do you really think you can kill us...?"

"There's no need to waste your energy trying to talk with these people, Zyla... I've already gotten used to their cockiness by this point... Regardless, while I've never heard of the Seven Monsters from Snow Mountain before, I do know that your six older siblings were all equally ignorant! Though they've all died by my hand, I do acknowledge that it mustn't have been easy for you to get to your current level of training. With that in mind, I hope that you won't continue doing evil... Elsewise, I'm afraid you'll end up dead soon as well! You're still young, so just head back to Snow Mountain to train yourself properly!" advised Gerald with a bitter smile on his face.

Upon hearing that, Sloan instantly laughed aloud before smiling wickedly as he said, "You've gone mad, haven't you? Open your eyes already! Who do you truly think is going to die miserably in this situation?!"

As everyone took aim at Gerald, the youth in black clothes raised his hand slightly.

Narrowing his eyes so much that they almost formed perfectly straight lines, Yvon—the youth in black—then said, "Does that mean you're admitting to killing my six elder siblings...?"

“I am, and quite frankly, I could end your life in a second if I wanted to. Please just give up already and let us pass. I still have things to do and I really don’t see the need to slaughter all of you! Now leave while you can!” retorted Gerald who really couldn’t be bothered about them.

“Leave...? Hah! I suppose you’ve never heard about the immense reputation of the Seven Monsters! I’ll have you know I’m vastly different from them!” roared Yvon before displaying a malevolent smile that sent chills down the spines of all who saw it.

Monica and the other women even found themselves taking a few steps back in fear...

Chapter 1400

Gerald found himself frowning as well at Yvon’s reaction.

From what he could sense, Yvon’s training wasn’t all that high, and Gerald was pretty sure he could easily finish him off.

Despite knowing that, Yvon’s immense confidence was actually enough to cause slight unnerve within Gerald. It made Gerald wonder if he was actually the strongest among the Seven Monsters.

Shaking the thought off, Gerald then coldly replied, “I guess I have no choice but to deal with you first then. I’d rather not have to worry about any trouble you cause in the future!”

Following that, Gerald then flicked his finger slightly at Yvon without actually using any of his inner strength.

Though he was only doing so to prompt the youth to make a move—so that he could analyze Yvon’s movements—he was surprised to see Yvon flicking his finger back as well.

As Gerald looked curiously at Yvon, the youth then declared, “I told you, I’m different from the others!”

The second Yvon’s sentence ended, his form began to waver... The next thing Gerald knew, Yvon now looked exactly like him!

As he watched as Yvon—who was now a spitting image of him—smiled even more contemptuously than before, Gerald revealed his own smile as he said, “How interesting... I have to say, your disguise is quite concise!”

In response, Yvon simply repeated what Gerald said, word for word. Though even his voice was indiscernible from the real Gerald’s, Yvon’s constant contemptuous gaze reminded everyone that he wasn’t the original.

“So, this is your ability?” asked Gerald as Yvon immediately mimicked what he said.

“You’re getting on my nerves...” replied Gerald, feeling rather annoyed now as Yvon repeated the same phrase, a smug look on his face.

“Mirroring me, aren’t you? I wonder what would happen if I threw a punch at you... Let’s see how capable you are of mimicking my power!” retorted Gerald.

As Yvon—once again—mimicked Gerald’s words, Gerald paid him no attention and instantly punched the air before him!

Though Gerald only used a small portion of his strength, it was enough to cause several shadowy fists to manifest and launch toward Yvon with an explosive sound!

With such outrageous power, dust flew all over the place as the shadowy fists continued flying toward the youth!

Yvon himself still had a contemptuous smile on his face as he watched the fists flying toward him from afar. However, just as he was about to imitate Gerald’s skill, he quickly realized how powerful the force before him actually was as it got dangerously close!

Completely stunned on the spot by the immensely imposing aura of the attack, Yvon found himself staring wide-eyed at the incoming fists, unable to do anything but mutter, “T-too strong...!”



A split second later, the shadowy punches collided against his body, instantly forcing Yvon to revert to his true appearance as he screamed in pain!

By the time his lifeless body hit the ground, Yvon looked less like a human and more of a boiler that had just exploded... Nothing more than a badly mutilated lump of flesh now, it was a death more terrible than anyone could've ever anticipated!

While Yvon did feel deeply regretful split seconds before he died, wondering why he hadn't realized how strong the person standing before him actually was, it was far too late for that...

With Yvon now out of the picture, Gerald simply shook his head before saying, "What's so different about you? As far as I could tell, all the members of the Seven Monsters are more or less the same!"

Watching as Gerald sneered, Wesson and his son—who had witnessed all that had just happened—could only continue staring wide-eyed at Gerald for the moment, completely stupefied.

Chapter 1401

The person standing before them... He wasn't human at all...! How insanely powerful...!

As the father and son from the Xanthos family gulped, they recalled how they had first thought that Yvon possessed unique capabilities that would allow him to slaughter just about anyone... Now, however, all the youth was, was a lump of flesh! And all it had taken for Gerald to end his life was a single punch!

Being an extremely experienced and slick person, Wesson knew that he, his son, and possibly even his entire family was done for if he didn't act fast!

With that in mind, he instantly knelt before begging, "B-boss...! Please spare our lives...! Sloan, hurry and get to your knees! Kneel before the boss and start begging for forgiveness as well!"

Following that, Welson tugged on his son's arm till he knelt beside him. Sloan himself wasn't about to disagree with his father's actions. Both of them were well aware that they weren't in any position to even dare to further offend this group of people...

“...Very good!” said Gerald with a faint smile.

Upon hearing that, Wesson—who already had a face filled with tears and snot—immediately replied, “Thank you for sparing our lives, boss...!”

“Oh? I never said I’d be sparing your lives, though. I hope you realize that while I’ve already given you several chances to repent, neither of you took any of them! Just so you know, I once swore that I’d kill whoever tried to kill me first... Naturally, I’d have to kill their entire families as well... With that in mind, I’m not about to break my oath, especially not for you two!” retorted Gerald.

“...W-what...?!” stuttered Wesson, now sweating profusely as he feebly sat on the ground.

‘...If only I had previously known how powerful this ferocious demon truly was, I’d never have dared to offend him in the first place...!’

Following that, things proceeded rather simply. After all, it was naturally no problem for Gerald to deal with those small fries.

As the group then began heading toward the ancient tomb, Gerald recalled how he had sealed the tomb with a formation after finding out where Liemis had been hidden. He ended up leaving it back then since there was still a lot he had yet to figure out at the time.

Now, however, several of his previous questions were already resolved. What more, he had even found out a lot more about the Sun League, and he felt that he was much closer to finally cracking the group’s secrets.

Still, according to Zyla, the Mackusion should have revealed more information if his Dehlere Foundation hadn’t been ruined...

Even so, it still revealed enough for Gerald and the rest to be able to witness a few incidents at several key locations such as the ancient tomb and the Crawford Manor. Worrying that something would happen at those places soon, the group had wasted no time in heading to the ancient tomb.

When the cave leading to the tomb was in sight, Gerald explained, “You know, it was honestly lucky that Christopher had forced me into the underground palace back when he was still pursuing me... Otherwise, I would’ve never been able to find Liemis! Regardless, I made sure to seal the place up before leaving!”

As they got closer, however, Gerald soon felt his eyelids twitch.

He distinctly remembered sealing off the mouth of the cave with a large stone... However, someone seemed to have smashed that stone into pieces!

With the cave entrance now open to outsiders and chunks of stone scattered messily all over the place, Gerald felt his heart skip a beat as he said, “Something’s wrong...!”

Watching as Gerald dashed into the cave, Peter and Zyla couldn’t help but turn to look at each other.

Zyla, in particular, was displaying a cocktail of emotions on her face as she attempted to process all that was happening.

Quickly shaking the thoughts off, she then leaped forward until eventually standing by Gerald’s side.

Gerald himself was momentarily paralyzed in shock. From what he could see, not only had the entire cave grown much messier than before, but the anaconda—that had been living here for at least thousands of years—was dead as well! With a clean puncture to the snake’s head, it was evident that it was killed with only a single move.

Even so, the biggest shock yet was the fact that the eternal coffin had disappeared!

“...L-Liemis... Someone’s taken Liemis away...!”

Chapter 1402

Despite her high status, Gerald watched as her eyes grew red and teary. Who could blame her? After all, she had been waiting for this moment for thousands of years... To finally be able to reunite with Liemis... To think that even after going through so many twists and turns, Zyla was still unable to see even his corpse! Who was the one responsible for such cruelty...?

'From what Zyla had told me, Liemis's thought of the soul had ceased to exist around twenty years ago... It was simply something inevitable that came with my birth... Regardless, while his corpse once lay here, even that is gone now...'

Clenching his fists tightly, Gerald then said, "Putting aside the fact that this place is highly secluded, I even sealed this place using a formation in the dragon blood jade pendant... Who could've been capable enough to do all this...?"

"...From what I was able to see while we were still outside, your formation wasn't ruined at all... In fact, it was solved, and rather easily too, from the looks of it! The person who broke in seems to have been very familiar with the topography here as well! They aren't lacking strength-wise either since they managed to slaughter this giant anaconda!" muttered Peter as he gloomily walked over to the vexed Gerald's side.

Peter was naturally just as bummed out as the duo were since, in a way, Liemis had indirectly saved his life before this... What more, Zyla had helped him a lot throughout their journey. In the end, not only did he fail to reunite her with Liemis's corpse, but his corpse wasn't even present anymore! This only served to increase Peter's guilt.

As Gerald stood silently at the side in self-reproach, Zyla—who had been standing quite close to the dead anaconda—found herself shedding a tear that rolled down her cheek and onto the giant snake's corpse...

With a rather clear 'plop', Zyla's teardrop instantly caused a green light to be emitted from the giant snake...!

Eventually forming the shape of a green orb of light, the orb began emitting a somewhat 'buzzy' sound, prompting both Zyla and Gerald to curiously walk closer to investigate.

After hearing it make a few more strange noises, they were finally able to discern a few words! The orb of green was trying to communicate with them!

"You're... back...!" said the rather awkward and unclear voice.

“...Are you the giant anaconda?” asked Gerald in surprise.

While he was glad that they were still able to tell what it was trying to say—albeit a bit slowly—Gerald couldn’t help but feel that the orb of green greatly resembled the thought of the soul of the Gunter family’s ancestor that he had taken out the other day.

“Yes, it’s me... Sadly, I’m only capable of meeting you like this since I’ve died, as you can see... Regardless, I’m only showing myself now since while I was bracing myself for death back then, I had retained my thought of the soul by holding onto the thought that I wouldn’t pass on until I received the tiniest amount of holy strength... Due to the tear, I was able to manifest this form with some effort...!” explained the giant anaconda extremely slowly.

“...I see... What exactly happened here...? And don’t worry, I’ll be finding a suitable body for you to attain rebirth immediately after this! After all, since you’ve managed to manifest the thought of your soul, I’ll just need to use Thunder Eruption to transfer your soul over!” said Gerald who honestly found the giant snake to be quite pitiful.

After all, it had been captured when it was just a tiny snake before being placed in here as a beast to guard the tomb. In other words, it had been locked up in here for thousands of years by now.

Now that its mission was finally complete, Gerald had been planning to get a primary forest for it to live there freely for the rest of its life. Though it was just an animal, Gerald personally felt the need to treat it as a senior. After all, it had helped him back then when he first entered the ancient tomb.

“While I appreciate it, know that your efforts will be useless. It’s taken great effort for me to retain my soul while waiting for your arrival in the past twenty over days... With that said, I’ve had to deplete the primary part of my soul in order to keep this tiny thought of my soul intact for this long. Due to that, once I pass on my message, I’ll sadly be disappearing for good!” replied the giant snake’s soul with a sigh.

Just from the snake’s words alone, Gerald could feel how lonely it was, and how much it yearned to go to the outside world.

“...Don’t say that... There must be a way to save you! I’ve plenty of ideas on how to achieve that!” said Gerald quickly.

Ignoring that statement, the snake then replied in an increasingly weakened voice, “I... Was slaughtered by an extremely powerful masked old man... Be careful if you ever bump into him... After all, not only is he cruel and vicious, but he also seems to know you well... Since he’s snatched the God of Battle’s corpse away, it’s evident that he’s trying to gain something from him...!”

“A... masked old man...?” muttered both Gerald and Zyla as they turned to look at each other...

Chapter 1403

“...Before that, why would you claim that he knows Gerald well...?” asked Zyla as she wiped her tears away while looking at the orb of green.

“It’s because he knew this place a little too well. You see, the formation Gerald used to seal the cave is the formation of the jade pendant, a formation that the God of Battle bestowed upon Gerald... While ordinary people would undoubtedly be unable to ever solve it, that old man had done so with great ease... What more, after slaughtering me, he used several methods to investigate the God of Battle’s corpse, mentioning Gerald’s name multiple times in the process... Aside from that, he also kept repeating the word ‘secret’, so I have a sneaking suspicion that he knows Gerald well!” explained the giant anaconda.

“Regardless, he didn’t seem to attain what he wanted, which prompted him to bring the eternal coffin away... Thankfully, it hadn’t dawned upon him at the time that I had rather strong soul power. It comes with living for over thousands of years. Whatever the case was, though my body perished, my soul remained, which is why I managed to see all this!” added the snake.

Hearing that, Gerald could only frown as he fell deep into thought.

Just as the snake had said, the formation had been embedded into his memories through the jade pendant... Seeing that knowledge of that wasn’t solving anything, he then thought about who knew about this place. Aside from Christopher, his grandfather, and the mysterious person who had led him here in the first place, there wasn’t anyone else that Gerald could think of. Speaking of that mysterious person, he had yet to appear before Gerald till this very day...

While he knew that something had happened for Christopher to die such a terrible death, Gerald wasn't sure whether his grandfather—and the others who had headed to the pledge of the holy water with him—were still alive. Quite frankly, he didn't even dare think about it. However, that did mean that his grandfather and Christopher were physically unable to be the culprits of this incident...

With that said, the mysterious person was the most likely person to have done all this...

'...The mysterious person... It couldn't be him, right...? It just wouldn't make any sense! After all, he was the one who had led me to the eternal coffin... It must've been done out of goodwill, no...?' Gerald thought to himself, remembering how the mysterious person had left him a clue when he had met a brick wall while investigating the Sun League back then.

With the help of his clue, Gerald was able to progress almost instantaneously that day...

'He had anonymously sent that map—leading to the eternal coffin—to me back then, telling me to head there alone... After grandpa agreed that I should go, I eventually found the coffin, which allowed me to make such rapid progress in my training back then... Following that, I finally took revenge for my family by taking the Moldells out... Regardless, he was also the reason I got so many hints regarding Zyla's incident. Up till this point, he's been helping me this entire time... Could it be that he's just using me...? Is he planning on eventually harming me...? But that doesn't make any sense! At least not for the moment...' Gerald pondered.

"Are you perhaps acquainted with such a secretive and powerful person, Gerald...?" asked Zyla as she looked at him.

After thinking for a short while, Gerald then nodded before saying, "...As a matter of fact, I do! I've mentioned him to you before... He's my master, Finnley, and he's so strong that even at my current level of training, I'm still not confident of standing against him! Just so you know, while I've sparred with him daily—while I was still training under him—not once had he ever found the need to display his true strength!"

Upon hearing that, Zyla's and Peter's expressions instantly turned stern. After all, someone who was able to create fear in Gerald—even at his current level of strength—was surely no ordinary powerful person...

“However, I’m indebted to Finnley. After all, not only did he save my life, but he’s also the one who first taught me martial arts! He’s always been kind to me, so I truly see no reason for him to do all this...” added Gerald.

He simply couldn’t figure it out at all. After all, Gerald had even previously reassured himself that Finnley was the mysterious person who had been helping him out in secret, and he had always felt at ease with this conclusion. This was due to how relaxed he had always felt whenever he was around that old man.

“...Still, if he truly is that nice to you, don’t you find it odd that he hasn’t met up with you by this point? Call it a gut feeling, but I feel that your Dehlere Foundation being ruined is directly linked to him!” said Zyla after thinking for a while.

Hearing that, Gerald instantly felt an acute pain in his heart as he shook his head before replying, “That’s simply impossible! I refuse to believe that he’d treat me this way! Even if he really was the cause of that, I still wish to investigate before jumping to any conclusions!”

At that moment, Jasmine—who had been standing close by this entire time—stepped forward and pointed at the orb of green while shouting, “Gerald, look there! The thought of the giant anaconda’s soul is starting to vanish...!”

Turning to face the rapidly fading soul, Gerald put all other thoughts aside for now and instantly used his Thunder Eruption skill to wrap his essential qi around the thought of the soul, desperately hoping to preserve it.

“There’s no need to waste your essential qi on me... I’m already fading and there’s nothing you can do to stop that... Please remember what I said and be careful in everything you do in the future... Live well, Gerald...!”

Chapter 1404

Hearing the giant snake say that, Gerald intensified his force, delivering more essential qi as he shouted, “I’m not letting you die like this...!”

“...Heh... To think that I’d actually be able to make a friend after so long... And such a caring one at that... Thank you...” muttered the now tiny orb of green as it slowly began floating higher...



Almost like fireflies taking flight in the night, the thought of the anaconda's soul rose higher, and higher, until eventually, it scattered in a sea of glittering sparkles...

As the final sparkles faded, Gerald found himself clenching his fists tightly. While he had only met the giant anaconda once before this, it had previously helped him. What more, the snake had even sacrificed the thought of its soul just to warn him about that masked old man... By that point, Gerald had already considered the snake to be part of his family, and he had sworn that he would never let those by his side get hurt.

In the end, however, he was completely useless in that situation. The soul had completely disappeared, and there was nothing he could have done to prevent it from happening.

The fact that Gerald had even lost Liemis's corpse only served to make him want to beat himself up badly. Quite honestly, he didn't even feel like showing his face to anyone at the moment due to his immense guilt and shame.

"Worry not, I don't blame you for any of this, Gerald... Maybe it's just my fate, and with that in mind, please don't feel guilty over this incident... Whatever the case is, we need to leave for the Crawford Manor, quickly. After all, since the tomb ended up just like how the Mackusion had predicted, I'm truly worried that your family will end up getting attacked as well!" said Zyla.

Hearing that, both Gerald and Peter's gazes instantly turned anxious.

"Remember, the Mackusion had displayed a black light enshrouding the eerily silent ancient tomb back then... And the same atmosphere was present in the Crawford Manor that it showed us! With that in mind, we need to rush to your home right this instant, Gerald...!" added Zyla.

As Peter's eyelids twitched, the worried Gerald knew that all she had just said was right. From what the snake had told him, the murderer knew him very well. With that in mind, it was safe to assume that the masked man also knew about his family...

Now anxious out of his wits, he knew he couldn't allow something similar to happen to his family too...!

Following that, Zyla quickly arranged for Leo to stay back and bury the giant anaconda's carcass. After that, he was to safely escort Jasmine and the other women all the way back to Northbay.

As for Gerald, Zyla, and Peter, the trio immediately headed for the Crawford Manor first.

Given their capabilities, it would only take about a few hours for Gerald and the two others to reach the Crawford Manor in Northbay.

Throughout his journey there, he couldn't help but wonder how Lyra, Queta, and Giya—who had been recuperating in the Crawford Manor the last time he met them—were currently doing.

He also found himself considering the security of the Crawford Manor. While it was true that those from the Soul Palace were currently guarding the place, that masked man had been able to kill that giant anaconda with barely any trouble. With that in mind, Gerald was worried that if the masked old man had any bad intentions toward his family, nobody at the manor would be able to stop him!

Regardless, after flying for a while, Gerald shouted, "The manor's on the island up ahead!"

Since Gerald had slightly higher training than the other two, he was the first to land on the island. However, he was already worried the second he set foot there. After all, despite the island being so massive, there wasn't a single soul around. The entire place was simply devoid of its usual hustle and bustle...

The dead silence was also quite eerie...

Could the Mackusion truly have predicted his family's misfortune as accurately as it had foreseen the events at the ancient tomb...?

Feeling his qi rising as his agitation and anxiousness peaked, his legs now felt like they were made of lead as he slowly stepped past the large entrance doors of the Crawford Manor...

Chapter 1405

The second he stepped inside, the only thing that greeted Gerald was darkness and silence... Now brimming with fear and worry, he didn't even dare take another step further. He just couldn't bear the thought of witnessing a similar scene as he had back inside the ancient tomb.

Despite his fears, he knew he still had to see the truth of the situation for himself. With that in mind, he slowly proceeded further into the manor...

Used to how lively the Crawford Manor used to be, Gerald couldn't help but get the creeps with how devoid of people the manor now was.

Activating his holy sense,—in order to ease detection of any signs of life—Gerald quickly found that the current area where he was in truly was vacant...

Not wanting to give up that easily, he quickly proceeded to the next area within the manor. With how fast he was, he soon finished searching every nook and cranny in the manor...

By the end of it, his search results made him simultaneously happy and depressed.

While he was devastated that there were zero traces of life within the entire manor, he was glad—at the very least—that the situation here wasn't similar to the conditions on Warhill Island that the Mackusion had displayed. In other words, he was relieved that he hadn't come across any corpses. That meant that there was a chance that his family members were still safe, despite them being missing.

'Still... Where could everyone have gone...?' Gerald thought to himself, disappointed that he hadn't even come across a single person in the manor.

'Is there any hope that they're all still fine...?' Gerald thought to himself as Peter and Zyla rushed in.

Upon seeing how dispirited he looked, they already knew the results of his search without even needing to ask.

Peter himself had earlier looked around the courtyard, and he already had a bad feeling about all this before he even reunited with Gerald.

“I’ve already used my holy sense to locate them, but I haven’t been able to find anyone at all...! They’ve just vanished into thin air...!” muttered Gerald under his breath as he clenched his fists.

“At the very least there haven’t been any corpses! With that in mind, let’s not worry too much! There’s a chance that they’re all still fine!” replied Zyla as she walked over to Gerald and held onto his hand.

‘I do hope so... Still, I wonder if the one responsible for all this is the masked old man as well... If it is, not only has he stolen Liemis’s corpse, but he’s also kidnapped all of my family members!’ Gerald thought to himself with a frown.

The second his thought ended, both Gerald and Peter’s ears perked as they slowly turned to look behind them. There, lay an indoor well that was historically important to the Crawfords.

Exchanging glances with each other, both of them were sure that they had heard a voice coming from within the well...

Giving Gerald a nod, Peter then dashed toward the well, arms outstretched as he fished for whoever was inside!

Upon getting hold of someone, Peter instantly dragged them out of the well... And out came a plump, middle-aged man who was drenched from head to toe!

Now realizing that the man had been staying immersed in the well this entire time, Gerald found himself thinking, ‘So he was submerged this entire time... With how chilly the water in there is, no wonder I couldn’t detect him despite using my holy sense...’

“...Who are you? And why are you hiding in the well in my house?” asked Gerald with a frown.

With how unfamiliar the person looked, Gerald was certain that he wasn’t a Crawford.

"I go by the name of Wes Lakely, Mr. Crawford, and I'm a manager from one of the economic areas in Weston...! It's a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Crawford...!" cried out the man as he immediately knelt before Gerald.

"...That doesn't answer my other question, Wes. Why were you hiding in the well?" asked Gerald.

"A-ah... Well, it's because something's happened to the economic area I'm in... While I've contacted those from your family through the headquarters, I couldn't get to them at all, even after quite some time! In the end, things couldn't be delayed any further so I decided to come here in person two days ago to make a report. While I did hear rumors that something happened to the Crawfords, I paid little notice to it till I actually arrived. However, upon arriving, I found it odd that there weren't even any bodyguards at the entrance... Curious, I then stepped in to have a look and see if everything was going alright..." explained Wes before taking in a deep breath.

"...What did you see?" asked Gerald.

"...I... I saw corpses... Many of whom were your family's bodyguards...! Aside from that, I also clearly remember hearing a terrible cry coming from the back... Panic took over me at the time, and the only thing I could think of was to find someplace to hide! It was then when I accidentally fell into the well..."

Chapter 1406

Watching as Wes took in another deep breath, Peter then asked, "...A terrible cry? Also, how many corpses are we talking about here?"

"There... Weren't that many, to be quite honest... Around eight of them, if I recall... I was too terrified by the terrible cries coming from the backyard back then to pay proper attention...!" replied Wes who was clearly still traumatized by that experience.

"...So... Following that, you fell into the well and simply stayed there till now...? Is that what happened?" asked Gerald as both he and Peter exchanged glances with each other.

Gerald believed in Wes's words since he had earlier used his divine vision to detect any lies. As it turned out, everything that Wes had said was true.

“Indeed, Mr. Crawford! Also, not long after I fell into the well, I started hearing people running toward me! Fearing the worst, I instantly dived deeper into the well! I’m assuming that that’s the only reason I’m still alive!” explained Wes.

“...Who could be orchestrating all this...?” muttered Gerald before taking in a deep breath. His blood and qi were boiling by this point, and anyone would be able to sense the murderous intent emitting from him.

“Regardless, I eventually stuck my head out of the water and took a peek to see whether the coast was clear... However, I was immediately greeted by the sound of heavy things being dragged away... Assuming that the corpses were being disposed of, I was so terrified that I didn’t even dare reveal myself up till the point I heard your familiar voice, Mr. Crawford! Still... Why would something this terrible happen, Mr. Crawford...? With your family being so powerful, I can’t even imagine anyone daring enough to touch you!” cried out Wes, his voice filled with grief.

“...You mentioned something earlier about people learning that something had happened to the Crawfords before you arrived at this manor... Who exactly told you about that rumor?” asked Peter coldly.

“I-I found out about it from a few regional managers in Weston! From what I know, they were the first to know about the incident!”

“...I see. Speaking of, you said you had something to report to the Crawfords... What is it?”

“Y-yes! Well, I found out that a few managers from larger areas were transferring out properties of the Crawford family in secret. While I wanted to immediately report that incident, I couldn’t find anyone relevant! I truly hadn’t expected for something like this to have happened to your family when I first got here, Mr. Crawford...!” wailed Wes, still kneeling on the ground in tears.

“Managers you say... Seems like they know a thing or two about this incident!” replied Peter.

Nodding in response, Gerald then said, “I’ll be capturing and interrogating them about this immediately!”

“...No, let’s not do that first. It’s best not to alert the enemy before you further investigate the details regarding this incident. After all, the fact that the regional managers actually dared to transfer out the properties in secret is already highly suspicious. From what I know, the Crawford family’s regional managers always passed their trades down to the next generation, and each generation—up till this point—has been loyal to the Crawfords. With how loyal they are, betraying the Crawfords when they’re in danger seems highly unlikely. With that in mind, let’s not act impulsively yet till more of the incident comes to light,” replied Peter after thinking for a while.

Upon hearing that, Gerald nodded though he also began eyeing the man rather curiously before eventually asking, “...You seem to know quite a bit about my family, don’t you, sir?”

This wasn’t the first time Gerald had a hunch about that, and he was curious as to why Peter knew so much about him.

“...Did you get to know me from long ago, sir? Or did we meet when I was much younger?” asked Gerald.

Shaking his head with a smile, Peter then replied, “Well... The first half of your guess is true. See, I first got to know you when you were studying at university... Naturally, I kept a close eye on your daily experiences back then.”

Peter didn’t feel the need to hide all this anymore, and his statement was—as to be expected—greatly surprising to Gerald.

“...What? Have you been secretly observing me this entire time, sir?” asked Gerald in bewilderment.

“Well, observing isn’t really the correct term here...” replied Peter, seemingly thinking about something before his expression gradually turned solemn.

“But you know so much about me, sir... With that in mind, how else could you have gotten to know me so well if you hadn’t been observing me?” inquired Gerald, not understanding Peter at all.

“Putting it frankly, I’ve been observing another person who’s been observing you this entire time!”

“...What? There was another person observing me this entire time...?!” replied Gerald fearfully.

As it turned out, his university life hadn't been as peaceful as he remembered it to be. Quite the contrary, in fact! To think that he had been closely monitored by others his entire time! Not only that, but he had just found out that people like Peter had apparently also been keeping a close eye on his observers!

Truth be told, Gerald had found Peter to be quite odd from the moment he woke up after being saved by him. After all, Peter knew him well, and it was definitely no coincidence that Peter had been present to save him that night.

Hell, after getting along better with Peter, Gerald had found that the man even seemed to have a good grasp on his temperament and characteristics.

While Gerald had occasionally wanted to ask Peter about that, every time he led the conversation in that direction, Peter made it very clear that he didn't want to talk about it.

Following that, things got busy and Gerald didn't have a chance to ponder about it again up till this point. Due to Peter's slip of his tongue, it reminded Gerald to try his luck asking him why he knew so much about Gerald again. He truly hadn't expected to finally get such a shocking answer today.

“Regardless, I found out that that person had already been keeping an eye on you—for who knows how long—by the time you left Serene County to start your freshman year. While he laid low for a while, he started appearing more frequently after your identity was exposed.”

“Unsure what he was truly after and worried that he would do bad things to you, I—in turn—began observing him. You know, for convenience, I even disguised myself like this and occasionally snuck into the back kitchen of your university's cafeteria under the guise of a worker there! Haha!” explained Peter as he revealed a wry smile.

“You even snuck into my university's cafeteria? But I've never come across you!” replied Gerald, failing to recall ever meeting Peter before this.



Quite honestly, Gerald was in disbelief that such a remarkable man had been watching over him from his university's cafeteria this entire time!

"Of course you wouldn't have met me! There wasn't any reason for you to pay attention to such a random person! Besides, I mostly remained in the back kitchen, and even if I went out, I made sure to do so sneakily!" said Peter.

"...I see. Speaking of which, you said you found out that he was stalking me when I first started university... Does that mean you had your reasons to be there as well? Also, who exactly are you, sir...?" asked Gerald, feeling that now was his best bet of getting the truth from Peter.

"Where to even begin... Truth be told, I hadn't planned on reuniting with you till I managed to identify your stalker... Regardless, I have a feeling that he's the one responsible for all the current incidents! I also suspect that he's already noticed that I've been stalking him in return! You know, despite keeping a close eye on him for so many years, I never even told Jasmine about my observations on him for fear that that information would somehow get leaked to the stalker. By this point, however, I feel that hiding all this is no longer necessary," replied Peter as he turned to look at the curious Gerald.

Following that, Peter placed his hand near his ears... Before slowly peeling off what seemed to be a mask made of human skin!

Despite the fact that Peter was still a middle-aged man, his appearance could only be described as being extremely handsome.

Even so, his good looks wasn't the reason why Gerald's eyes were now so wide open. No, Gerald was now trembling because he recognized that face anywhere.

"...S-second uncle...?" stuttered the bewildered Gerald. The man's appearance bore a striking resemblance to his uncle in the photograph that he had!

As Gerald continued staring in disbelief at his uncle, Peter replied, "Now you finally know who I am, Gerald..."

“...So it really is you, Second uncle...! But... But didn't you...?” muttered Gerald, his breath getting increasingly heavy.

“I'll take my time explaining all this on a later date, Gerald. For now, let's focus on finding out where my brother and sister-in-law are. We still have to look into the incident regarding the pledge of the holy water as well. To think that I still haven't found his motivations yet, even after he's kidnapped our entire family...! While I'd be lying if I said I wasn't worried for them, I have a gut feeling that everyone from our family will remain safe for now, or at the very least, they won't be in danger of being killed just yet. While his aim is still unknown, I'm certain that it isn't to just kill people off!” replied Peter as he calmly analyzed what they knew.

Hearing that, Gerald looked at his uncle rather excitedly before nodding firmly and asking, “...You're right! Speaking of which, have you ever fought against my stalker throughout his many years observing me, uncle? And do you have any clues about him...?”

#### Chapter 1408

Upon hearing Gerald's question, Peter momentarily averted his gaze. Clearing his throat, he then sheepishly replied, “...Regarding that... I haven't had any reason to go into combat with him... As for clues about him, I don't even know his true identity yet... Well, that was the case before we bumped into Wes, of course. From what Wes told us, it's now safe to assume that the managers from the large areas will be the key to us getting our next clue! Also, I have a feeling that since he's now starting to make his appearance, he'll definitely be reappearing again!”

“Whatever the case is, I'll definitely be capturing that stalker if he truly is the one responsible for all these incidents!”

It was at that moment when Wes—who had been shivering this entire time—flopped feebly to the ground before falling unconscious.

Seeing that, Gerald immediately lifted the fainted man up before saying, “With how long he's been immersed in that freezing water, I'm sure his internal organs are now damaged! I'll be saving him first, Second uncle!”

As Gerald walked off—with Wes in his arms—toward a room in the manor, Peter turned to face Zyla, a worried expression on his face.

Seeing that, Zyla knew that he realized that she had already caught on. With that in mind, she minced no words as she asked, "Judging from all that you've said... Could you be from Jaellatra too? Was it the Sun League who brought you there?"

"It appears that I can't hide anything from you, Miss Lockland! Then again, it'd be hard to hide anything from your deity eyes!" replied Peter as he bowed slightly at Zyla.

"Well, your training is quite similar to Leo's, so I had my suspicions that that was the case. Regardless, why didn't you tell Gerald the entire truth just now?" asked Zyla, curious.

"If you're talking about the stalker, it's not that I didn't want to... I just don't want to place the blame on the stalker till I've absolutely confirmed that he's the one responsible for all this. The other reason is because Gerald's undergone enough hardships and mental suffering for the time being... I fear that if I tell him who I suspect the stalker to be, he won't be able to accept it and end up in complete denial!" replied Peter as he shook his head in worry.

"The truth seems hard for you to accept as well."

"Regardless, I hope that everything will continue proceeding for the best from now on!"

"Indeed. Still, despite all the hardships he's had to go through, all of them are simply part of his destiny. From the moment he was born, he was already destined to be extraordinary. With that in mind, he's never going to be able to live life as an ordinary person!" said Zyla.

"That's true... Well, what do you think Gerald should do in the future?" asked Peter.

"Though his training is already at a terrifying level, his Dehlere Foundation is still ruined. In other words, it's evident that he won't be able to achieve a state that'll enable him to deal against those people yet! With that in mind, I'm quite worried about what'll happen next!"

Peter was honestly most worried about this.

From what Peter could tell, there was a high chance that his brother, Queta, and the others weren't going to be in life-threatening danger any time soon... After all, Peter had a gut feeling that the person doing all this simply kidnapped them so that they could be used to threaten Gerald. Should that scenario come to be, Gerald would certainly have to face a lot of trouble.

This was due to the fact that at his current strength, there was simply no way for Gerald to even come close to defeating those truly powerful people.

At that moment, Gerald returned from the room and asked, "Zyla? Second uncle? What are you discussing?"

"We're talking about your ruined Dehlere Foundation..." replied Zyla as she turned to look at Gerald.

"I know it's ruined... But I really don't have the time nor energy to let it recover! After all, the priority right now is to investigate where my family members are! The second I'm done with that, I'll need to instantly begin investigating the pledge of the holy water next to look for my grandpa!" said the distressed Gerald.

"While I understand your urge to immediately begin investigating, even if you eventually manage to find the truth behind these incidents, I assure you that you'll be facing great danger throughout that process. What happens if you lack the strength to defend yourself against that? With that in mind, you'll be able to investigate without any worry of that issue should you heal your Dehlere Foundation first!" advised Zyla.

Nodding in agreement, Peter then said, "What she said is true, Gerald. Your priority should definitely be to heal your Dehlere Foundation. Do note that Miss Lockland and I both have our hopes on you..."

Chapter 1409

"...I understand, Zyla, Second uncle... Still, while you told me that the Mackusion could be used to heal my Dehlere Foundation, how exactly do I initiate the healing process...? Now that you've said all that, I'm adamant on fully healing my Dehlere Foundation before anything else!"

"Speaking of the Dehlere Foundation, after doing a bit of research, I found that even a slightly unstable Dehlere Foundation can be very difficult to heal... If what I read was true, then it also leaves a very major flaw to one's training journey!" said Gerald, clearly feeling that the chances of him fully recovering his

Dehlere Foundation was slim, even with the help of something as magical as the Mackusion! The recovery process was simply too difficult from what he had managed to investigate!

“While you’ll undeniably have to face many hardships in order to heal your Dehlere Foundation, know that a full recovery isn’t entirely impossible! The Mackusion is key in your recovery, and for you to initiate the healing process, you’ll have to utilize the Mackusion’s ability to pull the strings of time and space!” replied Zyla with a nod.

“...Pull the strings of time and space...?” asked both Peter and Gerald in unison.

“Indeed! From what Liemis told me back then, the true power of the Mackusion lies in its ability to pull the strings of time and space... By utilizing that ability, you’ll be able to return to a time before your Dehlere Foundation was ruined! Once that’s achieved, you should theoretically be able to undergo the awakening of heaven earlier before the culprit manages to ruin your Dehlere Foundation!” explained Zyla.

“Not going to lie, that sounds rather unimaginable... If it truly is capable of that, then the Mackusion is a one-of-a-kind oddity...!” replied Peter as he nodded in bewilderment.

“It truly is... In any case, doesn’t that also mean that while time traveling, I’ll be able to mend any of my past regrets...?” asked Gerald curiously.

Shaking her head in response, Zyla then replied, “I’m afraid you’re wrong there. While it’s true that the Mackusion is capable of pulling the strings of space and time, the second you time travel the first time, the Mackusion will only have a fixed amount of time before all its powers deplete! Once that happens, the Mackusion itself will cease to exist, and you’ll be forcefully pulled back to the present!”

Watching as Gerald nodded, Zyla then added, “Still, to think that the current conditions of the situation would be this vague... With the King of Judgment Portal definitely not giving up on recapturing you that easily and the masked old man restlessly acting behind the scenes, we truly don’t have time to spare, Gerald... The situation where the pledge of the holy water is being held—which is also where the entrance to Jaellatra is—isn’t any less complicated either... With that in mind, before you have the strength to rule, I advise you against heading there without careful consideration. One wrong step and all your previous efforts could easily come undone! By that point, it’ll truly be too late to fix anything!”

Hearing that, Gerald found himself gradually calming down.

He had honestly been worried about his grandfather this entire time since he wasn't even sure if he was still alive at the pledge of the holy water. Had Zyla and Peter not been present to advise him against it, he would've definitely rushed off to look for his grandfather by this point.

Zyla was right, and understanding that calmed Gerald down greatly. It was true that he still didn't have the power to rule, and if he simply tried to brute force his way to the pledge of the holy water, it would surely result in a scene similar to how Hogan had almost slaughtered him a while back. If he truly did end up dying there, then there'd certainly spell doom for his family, grandfather, and Mila...!

"...While I agree with what you've said, I'd like to delay the time travel for another week, Zyla. Until I investigate the incident regarding the regional managers, I fear I won't be able to rest easy at all, subsequently affecting my concentration when I go back in time!" replied Gerald.

Regardless of how strong a person's nature was, nobody would be able to remain calm if they knew that their family members could possibly be in danger or even dead! The fact that he already had a clue to explore now definitely made Gerald keener on dealing with this issue first.

#### Chapter 1410

"You're free to do so, of course, but remember, the process of using the power in the dragon blood jade pendant to refine the Mackusion requires—at minimum—a whole day and night to complete. With that in mind, please return as quickly as possible once you're done. Your Second uncle will stay to help me guard the process!" said Zyla after thinking for a while.

"Not a problem, Miss Lockland. However, I do wonder... Even if Gerald will be able to return to the past, which period of time should he return to? And how long can he remain there?" asked Peter.

"That's a good question. After all, Gerald needs to return to a perfect point in time—before his Dehlere Foundation was ruined—to undergo the baptism of heaven in order to achieve the most optimal effects. Truth be told, Gerald underwent his baptism of heaven rather late into the game... Due to that, he wasn't able to activate his Dehlere Foundation—during the baptism— since it had already been ruined ages ago!"

"Regardless, after previously analyzing Gerald's condition, I'd say he has to go back at least two and a half years ago to get to a time when his Dehlere Foundation was still intact. As for the time-traveling

process itself, it depends on Gerald's tacit understanding of the dragon blood jade pendant. Once there's a clear understanding, the Mackusion will send Gerald back to the time period he wants to go to. Now, regarding how long Gerald can remain there... Regardless of how things go, you'll be staying there for a whole week. In other words, you'll only have seven days to undergo the baptism of heaven before you'll be forced back to the present!" explained Zyla.

As Peter nodded in response, Gerald found himself wondering, 'Two and a half years ago, huh... I was still a pauper back then... Regardless, the Zircobsite is located within Mountain Top... I wonder if I'd end up disrupting the order if I revealed my identity upfront...'

Worried about that, he then asked Zyla about it.

"Hmm... That's another thing to look out for. Once you've returned to the past, you can't alter anything that you already know will happen... For example, let's say something happened to your friend back then and you end up intervening—whether directly or indirectly—to prevent some incident from happening... If it gets to a point where you end up altering the ending of that scenario, you'll most probably get forcefully sent back here."

"Now, regarding you revealing your identity a bit earlier to obtain the Zircobsite... I feel that the Mackusion won't force you back since it'll only be a matter of time before the past you decides to reveal his identity anyway. In other words, the results will end up the same, even if you choose to reveal your identity a little earlier. The Mackusion will essentially just consider that to be the process of you completing your transformation from a poor student to a rich heir," explained Zyla.

"That's reassuring to hear... After all, I bought Mountain Top Villa under the identity of Mr. Crawford. In other words, even if I buy it a little earlier after going back in time, it shouldn't really matter as long as I use the same alias when buying it, correct?"

"That should be the case, yes. Speaking of which, there are two others things you need to know about time travel... Since you returning to the past isn't something natural, there's a high chance that your presence there will cause spatial and temporal anomalies... In other words, there's a very likely chance that incidents in the past won't end up happening in the order you remember them. With that said, there's a high possibility that you'll end up getting caught by surprise if you only expect things to happen in the way they previously did! Due to that, I implore you to be extra careful when tackling any situations you come across!"

"I'll keep that in mind!" replied Gerald with a nod.

“Good. Now for the second thing, know that there’ll be another you—the you from the past—walking around once you successfully time travel... You’ll need to find a way to make the old you disappear, at least temporarily. Following that, you can take his place and things will go much smoother for you. Do note that both of you can’t see each other face-to-face. If he does end up seeing you, then the Mackusion will instantly shatter and all our plans will truly be for naught!” said Zyla.

“I understand, Zyla!”

“Excellent! Now, if there isn’t anything else, hurry along and we’ll begin our separate missions! Remember, you have to return here before midnight tomorrow!”

Nodding in response, Gerald then instantly began dashing toward Mayberry, not wanting to delay things any more than he needed to.

After his cousin had taken over the economic area of Weston, the headquarters were relocated to Mayberry. With that in mind, he needed to return to that place again if he wanted to look for them...

#### Chapter 1411

It was evening by the time Gerald arrived at the headquarters building in Mayberry City.

At the time, there were two deputy general managers in the economic area, Zack being one of them and the other being a person by the name of Winson Zaito, commonly known as Chairman Zaito.

Gerald knew for a fact that both men had always been loyal to the Crawford family, and this was especially the case for Zack.

Even so, since Peter had mentioned that there was a possibility that the duo could be involved in certain matters as well, Gerald knew he had to personally investigate them sooner or later.

“Apologies, sir, but both Chairman Zaito and Chairman Lyle aren’t present tonight! You’ll have to wait till morning if you still wish to meet them! However, please note that even if you do wish to meet them then, they aren’t people you can just ask to meet up with just because you want to!” said the receptionist at the front desk as she looked at Gerald.



Though she appeared polite, she wasn't able to fully conceal her contempt toward him. Who did Gerald even think he was? Was he really thinking that he could just meet up with both of them all willy-nilly?

"Just give them a call and tell them that Gerald Crawford is here!" replied Gerald casually, not wanting to waste any time with her nonsense.

"...What? Did you just claim to be Mr. Gerald Crawford?!" exclaimed all the receptionists seated at the front desk as they instantly stood upright and stared at Gerald in astonishment.

"Look, let's just skip all this and just make the phone call already..." replied Gerald coldly.

"...Very well, Mr. Crawford! We'll call both of them immediately... In your dreams!" scoffed the receptionist from before, her gaze brimming with ridicule now as she glared at Gerald.

Watching as he frowned back at her, the receptionist then snapped, "What? Did you take us all as fools? Just have a good look at how you're dressed! How dare you even pretend to be the real Mr. Crawford! Have you any idea how many 'Mr. Crawfords' there are in Mayberry at this very moment? To think you'd dare behave so atrociously here! Do you even know where you are now? Whatever the case is... Security! Kick this troublemaker out of this place already!"

As she tossed the pen she was holding onto the ground, a few guards—who had been posted nearby—quickly marched over, ready to take action.

Seeing all this, Gerald could only sigh... So be it! Since Zack and Winson weren't currently around anyway, he may as well just come back tomorrow morning!

It wasn't as though Gerald wasn't angry at the moment, quite the contrary, in fact.

While anyone who dared offend him would certainly not have a good ending, these people were his own employees. What more, there was no real point in punishing them for their rudeness.

Though Gerald could've very easily proved that he was the real deal—allowing him to act all pretentiously before them after that—he simply felt that there was no reason for him to do so.

What more, Gerald was currently feeling both extremely anxious and distraught, so he really couldn't be bothered about proving anything to them...

"...Fine, then! I'll be returning in the morning to meet them, then!" replied Gerald as he shook his head, a wry smile on his face.

Watching as he slid a hand into his pocket before leaving, the guards found themselves glances before laughing contemptuously.

"Who even was that kid? To think that he'd speak so imposingly even though he was dressed so poorly! Haha!"

"He must've escaped from some mental hospital... He certainly looked like a fool! Make sure you guys keep an eye out for him if he dares come again tomorrow! We mustn't allow Chairman Lyle and Chairman Zaito to run into him, otherwise we'll all be sacked for sure, especially since the company's general meeting is going to be held tomorrow! With that said, everything has to go perfectly!" reminded the receptionist from before as she looked at the guards.

"Worry not, if he really dares to show up tomorrow, we'll just teach him a lesson he'll never forget!" reassured the guards.

Meanwhile, Gerald was already starting to head to Wayfair Mountain Entertainment when he walked past a group of young men and women...

Watching as he walked past them, one of the gorgeously dressed girls—from within that group—caught a glimpse of him and instantly ended up freezing in place.

"...Hold it. That kid there...! Stop right there! You're that guy, aren't you?" called out that girl as she scratched the back of her head, seemingly trying to remember Gerald's name.

Turning to look at who had called out to him, he saw that it was a rather pretty young girl whom he didn't recognize...

"... 'That guy?'" asked Gerald in a casual tone.

"Yeah! You're a graduate of Mayberry University, right? Do you know Harper?" asked the girl.

"Indeed! He was my roommate, but before that... Have we even met before?" replied Gerald.

Nodding with a smile, the girl then laughed before saying, "So I wasn't mistaken! It really is you! No wonder you looked so familiar!"

"Who is he, Westlyn...?" asked the other girls from the group—who were each carrying their own handbag—as they curiously began scanning Gerald from head to toe, arms crossed.

'While he does look pretty handsome, judging from his clothes alone, he's probably not even anywhere close to being wealthy!' Thought the girls to themselves.

"Oh, him? He's just the roommate of one of my hometown friends! I remember him rather distinctly since he used to be willing to do just about anything to obtain a little money! He'd oftentimes be found cleaning the trash up in our school and even running errands for others! That's just how poor he was!" replied Westlyn as she introduced him to the rest of the girls.

"It's not all that out of the ordinary, really. Every school has such a person, and if you're sharp enough, you'll realize that a person like this definitely exists in every other stage of your life, from elementary school till university! As they say, outstanding people will always be great, and those who live difficult lives will always remain miserable!" said a good-looking boy donning branded sports attire—who had been standing next to Westlyn this entire time—out of the blue.

"Hahaha! You truly are a natural at speaking, you know that, Micah? Just about anything that comes out of your mouth sounds philosophical! It's hilarious, really! No wonder Westlyn was interested in you!" said one of the members of the group, prompting the rest of the young boys and girls to laugh aloud.

“Regardless... What are you doing now? Also, I heard that Harper’s doing pretty well these days. He owns his own public-listed company now, right? Do both of you still keep in touch? From what I can see, it almost seems like Harper hasn’t been looking out for you!” asked Westlyn rather curiously.

To be entirely honest, Westlyn had been asking around for Harper’s contact information for quite a while now. It was the only reason why she had called out to Gerald in the first place.

Since both of them had been from the same hometown, it was no surprise that she was Harper’s high school classmate. Since Harper had been rather famous back in high school, Westlyn had liked him for the longest time back then.

However, upon entering university, she became a textbook example of an ugly duckling turning into a white swan. Due to that, her taste and what she looked for in a man grew extremely different compared to how it used to be back in her high school days.

Those who used to seem outstanding and cool back in high school felt like boring nobodies upon entering university. In fact, many of them even ended up changing even more upon entering society, and not in a good way, at least to Westlyn. To her, they simply ended up becoming exceedingly ordinary people.

As for Westlyn, her own temperament and attitude toward Harper grew increasingly different with every passing stage as well. Essentially, she went from liking Harper, to ignoring Harper, and eventually, despising him. In fact, she didn’t even bother talking to him throughout their later years in university.

Thinking that Harper would only end up becoming an office worker once he stepped into society, she even ended up deleting his contact information!

Little did she know that he would instead end up becoming the chairman of a public listed company!

From the day she found out about that, she had always regretted deleting his phone number, and she had constantly been trying to reobtain it ever since.

Now that Gerald was before her, she couldn’t help but wonder if her bumping into Harper’s ex-roommate today was god’s ridiculous answer to her pleas.

'It truly must be God's gift to me! While it's true that I've undergone divorce once and though I've already found a new boyfriend, sparks could still fly if I were to contact Harper now! Heh! All girls, especially beautiful ones like myself, always need to be on the lookout for spare tires to fall back on, after all!' Westlyn thought to herself.

Gerald himself could immediately tell what Westlyn was trying to go for, so he simply replied, "We haven't contacted each other for a long time now. While I do have his WhatsApp Information on my phone, I think I've already lost it."

"...You... What? You don't even have a cell phone on you? Do you live in some forest or something? Who do you even think you're trying to bluff?" asked Westlyn, her eyes now fully widened.

"I speak the truth. Even if I had my old phone on me now, he'd have probably changed his number by this time, no?" replied Gerald.

From what Gerald remembered, he had told Zack to make some arrangements for Harper, and based on what Westlyn had said, Zack seemed to have given him a company. Knowing Zack, Gerald assumed that Harper would've been given a company with a market value of a few billion dollars. While not exactly too valuable—at least for Gerald—it was the thought that counted!

Whatever the case was, Gerald's words instantly changed the way Westlyn looked at him. After all, he had made it clear that he was of no use to her now!

"...I see! I should've realized that Harper wouldn't even bother with someone as foolish as you! I mean just look at the state you're in! Trash! A complete waste of my time and effort!" cursed Westlyn.

Chapter 1413

Glaring back at her, he then headed off to Wayfair Mountain Entertainment. He really couldn't be bothered with such a woman.

Naturally, he wasn't going there to sleep or attend to accommodation matters. He was simply headed there since he knew the people there knew who he was. Following that, he could tell them to call Zack on his behalf. At the very least, he wanted Zack to know that he was here.

Thankfully, things went smoothly this time, and Zack—upon finding out that Gerald was the one on the other end of the line—instantly exclaimed in a voice brimming with respect, humility, and excitement, “You’re fine, Mr. Crawford?! That’s great news!”

“I am indeed. I’d like to hear your explanation regarding some matters, so I’ll be waiting for your return,” replied Gerald rather casually.

“Affirmative, Mr. Crawford! I’ll be returning right this instant to personally report the matter to you!” said Zack without the slightest hesitation.

From what Zack had said, it seemed that Peter’s deduction had been correct. That this matter wasn’t accidental. Gerald could tell that Zack seemed to know something about all this...

Gerald couldn’t really tell why, but he knew for a fact that Zack seemed to be in a hurry earlier. After all, his tone was rather flustered during the call. Whatever the case was, Gerald didn’t need to question him too much at the moment. He could simply wait for Zack to return tomorrow to hear his explanation...

It wasn’t long before the next day came, and having nothing to do while waiting for Zack, Gerald decided to take a stroll around the villa within Wayfair Mountain Entertainment.

While walking around, he started recalling the first time he had come to the villa. Back then, he had just found out that his true identity was Mr. Crawford not too long ago, and he had to admit that he had made quite a fool of himself at the time. Even so, as he continued reminiscing about the old days, he couldn’t help but feel that those days were still pretty good.

Regardless, it wasn’t long before Gerald began hearing quite a commotion while he was walking on.

“Are you blind or something?! Don’t you know how expensive this dress is?!”

“I-I’m sorry! I didn’t do it on purpose! Please, I’m sorry...!”

“The hell is even wrong with Wayfair Mountain Entertainment? Do they hire just about anyone in this place? Even if you’re just a mere waitress, they could’ve at least hired someone who was capable of

sight! How absolutely frustrating...! Regardless, what are you going to do about this?" growled the infuriated woman as she grabbed onto the waitress's collar with one hand while poking her forehead with the other.

Looking at the spilled champagne on the ground, Gerald—who hadn't been able to get a proper look of the angered woman—guessed that the waitress must have bumped into the woman and spilled some champagne over her dress.

Even so, he didn't take the situation too seriously. After all, such conflicts were all too common in a place made for entertainment. Besides, Gerald trusted that the staff would be able to handle the situation well.

Upon walking past them, however, Gerald turned to look at the infuriated woman's face... And was instantly startled.

As was expected, the aggressive woman was none other than Westlyn, and the group of people backing her up was, of course, her friends from the day before. How truly coincidental!

However, he was even more startled by the fact that he recognized the waitress Westlyn was grabbing onto! It was his classmate, Layla Hack!

His eyelids now twitching slightly, he remembered how both of them had done volunteer work together since the duo were considerably poor students at the time. He also recalled that while her family's condition wasn't all that great, her personality was as tough as nails and she always got good grades. She used to have a pretty good relationship with him too...

To think that he would bump into here under such circumstances!

Continuing to stare at Layla for a while, he then began walking toward the group. From how immensely angry Gerald was, he deduced that this was probably Westlyn's first time wearing such beautiful clothes. With that in mind, it was no wonder why she felt like she had just been deeply humiliated.

Even so, she was starting to get a little too far. After all, while she had initially simply been grabbing onto Layla's collar, the rage-filled woman was now shaking her as well!

Gerald managed to pull Layla away from the maddened woman just in time for her to avoid getting a tight slap from her.

The second Westlyn saw that Gerald was present, she instantly shouted, "You again?!"

Turning to look at Westlyn, Gerald realized that though most of her friends were the same people from yesterday, there was a new bespectacled boy in the group.

With a hand in his pocket, the new face simply looked at the scene before him as he sneered.

"It's almost done! Have fun and don't cause any trouble!"

Chapter 1414

Naturally, Gerald didn't feel the need to give this group of people any face at all. After all, he wasn't even well acquainted with any of them.

Layla herself was now feeling exceedingly surprised. Finding it harder and harder to breathe by the second, she eventually managed to shout, "...G-Gerald...?!"

While she hadn't personally met up with him for the longest time, she had heard that he was now a very powerful person. With him having such a high social position, how could she ever dare to claim that she once had ties with him? It was due to that, that the poor girl was shocked speechless the first few seconds she noticed that Gerald was present.

While Layla didn't even dare to say another word now, Westlyn, on the other hand, was now equally surprised as she was mad.

"Good god! How absolutely frustrating! Is Wayfair Mountain Entertainment truly still the best mountain villa in Weston? After all, not only did they hire a blind waitress, but I guess any tom, dick, or harry can just enter this place as they please now! I've not gone blind, have I?!"

This was supposed to be a place that symbolized a person's power! The fact that even someone like Gerald could enter made Westlyn feel utterly insulted!



“Yeah, how the hell did he get in anyway?” asked the other girls in the group who were all thinking the same thing.

“Jerome, could you notify the leader of this place so that he can drive this bumpkin out of here?” asked Westlyn.

“No problem! A single word with the boss will be sufficient to drive this eyesore out of here, Westlyn!” scoffed the bespectacled guy from before as he fished his cell phone out with a nod.

While Jerome was still on the call, Gerald simply laughed before smiling bitterly as he said, “You’re actually trying to kick me out of this place? Did I hear that wrong?”

“You...! Just you wait, you piece of trash!” roared the vicious Westlyn.

By then, Jerome had already ended the call, and he was now staring helplessly at both Gerald and Westlyn.

“G-Gerald! I only ended up dropping my tray because they bumped into me earlier!” stuttered the terrified Layla as she instantly tried to explain the situation to him, hoping not to lose her job.

“Oh, it’s quite alright. You wouldn’t have been in any trouble in the first place, even if you had smashed the trays into their faces!” replied Gerald with a smile.

“...You... How dare you?! Have you gone insane?! Did you actually just think of hitting me?!” roared the seething mad Westlyn.

It was seconds later when a middle-aged man—in his forties—could be seen running toward the group. By the time he was standing before them, his entire body was all sweaty and he was panting quite a bit. Even so, he quickly caught his breath before respectfully shouting, “M-Mr. Crawford!”

Since Gerald hadn't met this person before, he simply assumed that he was new to the villa. Though he didn't really know what position the middle-aged man held, Gerald simply slid his hands into his pocket before saying, "We don't welcome people like them in here. Kick them out, please!"

Upon hearing that, Westlyn and the others were instantly stunned. Was he actually giving orders to the chief executive officer here? This couldn't be, right? By god!

Glancing for a brief moment at Gerald, the middle-aged man simply ignored his statement before turning to look at Jerome and respectfully shaking his hand while saying, "Didn't you say that you'd only be coming over at noon, Mr. Crawford?"

"My friends were all just a little antsy, that's all. Besides, how could we possibly finish walking around Wayfair Mountain Entertainment if we start at noon? It's simply too massive!" replied Jerome with a subtle smile.

At that moment, all the girls suddenly burst out laughing.

"To think I was actually scared half to death just now!" shouted Westlyn in between laughs as she patted her chest.

"...Scared to death?" asked the middle-aged man, unsure as to what was going on.

"Yeah! I mean, didn't you hear him responding when you shouted Mr. Crawford's name earlier? To think that that idiot actually thought you were talking to him! What more, he even ordered you to drive all of us out! Oh god, I think I'm going to die laughing!" shouted Westlyn as she clutched onto her belly.

"I know right? Just look at him, being all pretentious! To think that we almost fell for it too!" scoffed one of the other girls as those from Westlyn's group continued laughing.

"...Indeed! And here I was wondering who this kid was! Interrupting me while I'm greeting Mr. Crawford... The nerve!" shouted Mr. Zealey coldly.

Chapter 1415

“My friend here doesn’t wish to see this person, Mr. Zealey. Could I trouble you to kick him out of this place? The longer he stays here, the lower the standard and quality this villa has!” said Jerome, his subtle smile still on his face.

“Not a problem, Mr. Crawford! After all, you’re high school classmates with Chairman Lyle’s son! With that in mind, your words are the law here! Now excuse me as I kick this young lad out of this place!” replied Mr. Zealey, a triumphant smile on his face.

Turning to look at Gerald, he then sneered, “Now them... Are you going to leave on your own accord or do I have to get my men to kick you out?”

Watching as Westlyn and the others smugly crossed their arms while watching, Gerald simply retorted, “Me? Get lost? Mr. Zealey, was it? You’ve just arrived in Mayberry City not too long ago, correct?”

“...What’s your point?” asked Mr. Zealey as he narrowed his eyes.

“Let me ask you. Do you know who the owner of Wayfair Mountain Entertainment is?” asked Gerald.

“Who wouldn’t know? It’s Chairman Zack Lyle, of course!” replied Mr. Zealey with a laugh.

“What cr\*p are you trying to pull here? Who wouldn’t know that Chairman Lyle is the owner of the place?” retorted Westlyn, feeling speechless.

“Indeed! Now stop trying to stall time! It’s evident that you’re nothing more than garbage just by looking at the way you’re dressed! How did you even manage to sneak in here?”

Ignoring their statements, Gerald simply continued asking in an indifferent tone, “Correct. Now then, while Chairman Lyle owns Wayfair Mountain Entertainment, pray tell, do you know who owns Chairman Lyle?”

Westlyn went silent upon hearing that. As far as she knew, Chairman Lyle was the most influential person in the entire Weston business district. How could anyone possibly be above him?

Mr. Zealey, however, instantly had a change in expression. Now slightly panicked, he respectfully replied, "Chairman Lyle's owner is none other than Mr. Crawford, of course!"

"...Mr. Crawford? Could you perhaps be talking about the Mr. Crawford from Mayberry City, Mr. Zealey? The one who caused an uproar and was the talk of the town back in our school?" said Westlyn, surprised.

Pretty much everyone from Mayberry University had heard about him being an authentic rich heir, and that included her. However, that was the extent of their knowledge about the elusive Mr. Crawford.

Essentially, only a handful of people knew who Mr. Crawford truly was. With that in mind, it was completely understandable why Westlyn was so surprised when she heard that Mr. Crawford was actually the master of the prestigious and influential Chairman Lyle!

"I've also heard about him before, Westlyn! From what I know, he's supposed to be extremely handsome, to the point where women always end up obsessing over him the second they see him!" added Westlyn's friends as they took turns covering their mouths in surprise.

"Well I'll be d\*mned! To think that Mr. Crawford was actually Chairman Lyle's master this entire time!" exclaimed Westlyn.

"Indeed! He truly is a mysterious person... You know, even someone at my level can't get in touch with him that easily!" replied Mr. Zealey, a strong longing emotion reflected in his eyes.

The second his sentence ended, luxury cars suddenly began parking right before the villa's entrance. Since Westlyn and the others weren't standing too far away from the entrance, they were able to witness everything clearly.

"M-my god...! That's Chairman Lyle's car...! Chairman Lyle and the others are back!" shouted Mr. Zealey, his forehead now drenched in sweat.

"It really is his car! I've only had the opportunity to meet Uncle Lyle once when I was still studying with him! I wonder if he still remembers me... Even if he doesn't, I'm still going to go greet him!" said Jerome as he quickly straightened his suit before striding toward the entrance.

Seeing that, Westlyn and the others quickly followed behind him. After all, this was a rare situation where they'd be able to meet an extremely powerful and influential person up close! While even Westlyn's boyfriend had never had the chance to meet a person as powerful as Mr. Lyle in person, Jerome was different in the sense that he had a lot more experience compared to her boyfriend and the rest of the members in that group.

Since Jerome was someone who knew how the world operated, who knew if he would be able to obtain any good luck if he presented himself before Chairman Lyle?

This was simply the kind of respect that ordinary people had for the wealthy and powerful.

Watching as the group of people rushed to greet Chairman Lyle—completely forgetting about Gerald in the process—Layla nervously asked, "...N-nothing bad is going to happen to us, right, Gerald...?"

"Don't worry, everything will be fine! What's the worst that could happen?" replied Gerald with a wry smile.

Chapter 1416

After saying that, Gerald began walking toward the entrance as well.

By the time he got there, the other Mr. Crawford—who had been taking in deep breaths in preparation of greeting Mr. Lyle—quickly ran over to face Zack before excitedly saying, "Good day, Uncle Lyle! I'm Mateo's classmate, Jerome, and I wonder if you still remember me?"

"M-Mr. Crawford...!" shouted Zack, his voice brimming with admiration as he looked upfront.

"Y-you're being too courteous, Uncle Lyle!" stuttered the nervous Jerome, unsure of what to even say.

Westlyn found herself biting her lower lip as well. For Chairman Lyle to refer to Jerome as Mr. Crawford... Wasn't Mr. Lyle giving him a bit too much respect?

Whatever the case was, Jerome now looked extremely cool to the other girls.

As for Mr. Zealey, even he was rather surprised by Chairman Lyle's behavior. Regardless, he now knew that he truly couldn't afford to offend Mr. Crawford. After all, even Chairman Lyle was referring to him as Mr. Crawford!

As if all that wasn't already shocking enough, dozens of prestigious-looking people—who had followed Zack in—instantly made full bows as they shouted aloud in unison, "Mr. Crawford!"

By that point, Jerome was already pale with excitement. Feeling both satisfied and happy, Jerome replied, "U-Uncle Lyle, all of you... This isn't the time to be making jokes...! No matter what it is, I'm still a junior before all of you!"

"That's right! While it's true that Jerome is an excellent young man, remember that all of you have extremely high status and identities, Chairman Lyle! Treating him this way will only make him grow arrogant!" added Westlyn who had finally managed to summon the courage to interrupt the conversation.

However, even before any of them could fully recover from their shock, what happened next was enough to make several of the girls feel like passing out.

With an emotional expression on his face, Zack slowly knelt before them! Following that, the other wealthy and powerful figures in Weston did the same!

"T-this...!" stuttered the speechless Jerome as he took a step backward, his eyes widened in shock.

As seemingly endless streams of cold sweat beaded off his forehead, he suddenly realized that something was off... Wait. Was... Was Uncle Lyle and the other prestigious figures not looking at him this entire time...? Were they actually not calling out to him? But... They clearly called out for Mr. Crawford! Who else could they have been referring to? It didn't make any sense!

Westlyn herself was as dumbfounded as he was, unsure of what was even happening anymore.

"Well, you're all back early!" said a faint voice from behind Westlyn and the others at that moment.

“Even if I’m on the other end of the world, I, Zack Lyle, will definitely rush back as soon as possible should I receive an order from you, Mr. Crawford!” replied Zack who already had tears in his eyes.

From the looks of it, it seemed that he was aware that something had happened to the Crawfords.

Regardless, Zack’s statement made everyone turn around to look at who Mr. Crawford actually was...

The second she saw the person behind her, Westlyn’s eyes widened in shock as she muttered, “...G-Gerald...?”

Not even bothering to look at Westlyn, Gerald then casually said, “Get up now and follow me into the study room. There’s something I’d like to ask you about!”

“Right away, Mr. Crawford!” replied Zack as he instantly got to his feet.

“...M-Mr. Crawford... He’s Mr. Crawford...?!” stuttered Mr. Zealey as he gulped, nearly wetting himself.

As for Westlyn, she was now finding it difficult to even breathe. By god! To think that Gerald had actually been the legendary Mr. Crawford this entire time...! No wonder Harper was able to own a public listed company! His benefactor was the legendary Mr. Crawford himself!

As Westlyn felt like something bad was going to happen soon, Gerald himself simply continued walking to the study room, his hands still in his pockets.

Wherever he went, businessmen—regardless of power and influence—immediately took a few steps back before bowing respectfully.

By that point, all the utterly shocked girls from Westlyn’s group could only think of how cool Gerald now was...

Nobody could have imagined that someone who used to be a pauper would turn out to be the actual Mr. Crawford, the man with the greatest reputation on the planet! Hell, even Chairman Zack knelt before him!

Watching as Gerald left the area, all of them had horrified expressions on their faces, knowing that there was zero chance that they would ever be able to get into Gerald's good books anymore.

Fast forward to inside the study room, Zack was the first to break the silence.

His eyes now teary and reddened, Zack said, "To think that you were fine, Mr. Crawford... What great news...! We previously thought that you had... Well..."

"You thought something had happened to me too, right? Zack, what exactly happened throughout this period? Are you guys transferring the company's assets?"

"That's right, Mr. Crawford! You should have a look at this first!" replied Zack with a heavy nod before opening his briefcase and carefully retrieving something wrapped in yellow cloth...

Before Zack was even able to open it, Gerald took it for himself, his eyelids now twitching slightly.

It was a token of the holy water! The same one that was issued to those worthy of obtaining it by a mysterious organization who could possibly be the Sun League...!

From what Gerald could tell, this was the token that his grandfather had received...

After what the Mackusion had shown him, Gerald hadn't been sure whether his grandfather was still even among the living anymore. Now that his token of the holy water was here, Gerald could instantly feel his heart clench in anxiety.

"...What exactly happened here, Zack...?" asked Gerald.

"I'll now be explaining everything in detail, Mr. Crawford! You see, it all happened a few days ago..."



As it turned out, Chairman Bea Yalerman—the chairman of the Weston Economic Area—suddenly received an order from the Crawford family to head over to Northbay. Due to that, her job was temporarily handed over to Zack and Winson.

Though business proceeded as usual for a while, after a few days, Zack suddenly received a phone call. The call was from the young mistress, Lyra, and from her tone alone, Zack could already sense that she was slightly anxious and worried. Regardless, after giving him some instructions, she instantly hung up without even bothering to explain anything.

According to her, something big was going to happen to the Crawford family. Following that, she then urgently told Zack to use her name to transfer all of the Crawford's assets to his name. She also told Zack to begin working on all of the other economic areas around the globe as well!

'Remember, you must act fast!' emphasized the young mistress before finally hanging up.

While Zack was undoubtedly confused, he didn't dare to delay the transferring process since Lyra had sounded really anxious when she gave him the order. All he knew was that something serious must have happened. Whatever the case was, he immediately got to work. At the very least, working would help him get his mind off things.

It was also around then when Wes first found out that both of them were secretly planning on transferring the assets.

Regardless, it wasn't long after when Zack received a text message from the young mistress.

'Zack, the Crawford family is done for, and I'm going to be in danger at any second now. While I don't know if Gerald's still doing fine, I'll be sending something over to you and you'll have to keep it safe. Please make sure to secretly find Gerald after that, and once you do, hand the item over to him! All the clues are inside!'

Not knowing how to even respond to that, Zack simply went to bed when he realized that no other messages were coming his way. When he awoke again later that night, however, he found that the token had mysteriously appeared by the head of his bed!

With how quickly and silently the token had been delivered, Zack began feeling extremely nervous. He hadn't the slightest idea where Gerald even was at that moment!

It was when Zack was pondering how to even proceed with things when he suddenly received a phone call from Gerald. Naturally, Zack was both surprised and overjoyed, leading him to immediately begin rushing over to hand the item to Gerald.

"...What? You said that Lyra told you that she could be facing danger at any second? What else did she say?" asked Gerald with a frown.

"That's all she said! That she would face danger at any moment..." replied Zack.

Chapter 1418

According to Wes, he had witnessed the murderer assaulting and capturing those from the Crawford Manor.

However, when looking at the time the text message had been sent over, Gerald realized that Lyra had sent it in the afternoon. In other words, the time when his family should've by right been completely dealt with.

With that in mind, Lyra could've only sent that message by avoiding the initial capture! Maybe she could've momentarily escaped. Or perhaps she was outside and hadn't returned when the catastrophe happened.

Whatever the case was, Lyra must have only given Zack those instructions due to having a premonition that she would soon be in danger.

'What exactly happened...? And what's that person's motive...?' Gerald thought to himself as he held on tightly onto the token of the holy water.

Peter had told him that the one responsible for all this was a person who had been stalking him this entire time... What was that person even after...?

Looking at Gerald's puzzled expression, Zack asked in a worried tone, "Even the Crawford family's main phone is no longer reachable, Mr. Crawford... What on earth is happening...?"

"...For now, just do as Lyra instructed and transfer all the assets as soon as possible. Make sure to follow her orders to a T. I'll be dealing with the rest!" ordered Gerald.

Following that, Gerald instantly began focusing on the token of the holy water instead. Lyra had said that all the clues he needed were inside this thing... What could she possibly have meant by that?

The token had belonged to his grandfather... Was she trying to tell him that his grandfather was in trouble? Was that the reason for the downfall of his family?

Regardless, it seemed that the prophecy of the picture of the sun truly did come true... A force had appeared, and it had destroyed the Crawfords... With that in mind, he could very well be next, couldn't he?

Whatever the case was, even after looking at the token from all angles, he couldn't seem to find any peculiarities with it at all!

Unable to crack the mystery, Gerald eventually remembered that he still had to deal with the Mackusion tonight. With that in mind, he decided that it would be best if he reunited with his second uncle first. Once they met, he'd ask Peter for his opinion on all this.

His mind made up, he then began giving a few more instructions to Zack.

As it turned out, Layla, his former classmate, hadn't made smooth development in society after her graduation. She probably chose to work here as a waitress after realizing that Wayfair Mountain Entertainment's salary was above average, at least for a waitress. With that in mind, Gerald made sure to tell Zack to take special care of her before finally leaving the villa.

It wasn't long after before Gerald reunited with Zyla and Peter.

After hearing Gerald's explanation on the final clue Lyra had left them, Peter thought for a while before saying, "...The token of the holy water... If Lyra emphasized so much that it was of great importance, I'm sure she knows some things that we don't... While there's a chance that she's still in hiding now, we really aren't able to tell if she's still in any danger! In the end, everything should only come to light once we find Lyra! Whatever the case is, you'll have to hurry and focus on restoring your Dehlere Foundation! The earlier you recover it, the sooner we'll be able to act!"

"I understand, Second Uncle!"

"Excellent. Since you're already back, you should go ahead and help Miss Lockland refine the Mackusion! While you undergo the process of restoring your Dehlere Foundation, I'll be searching for clues within the token of the holy water," instructed Peter.

"Will do, Second uncle!"

"Actually, hold on a second!" called out Peter, sounding slightly uncertain as he held the token of the holy water in hand.

"Yes?"

Unsure how he should even proceed with posing his question, Peter simply asked, "Should your grandpa still be alive... What do you plan on doing?"

"...I mean... I'd be overjoyed, of course! As for what I'd do, I'd try to locate him as soon as possible! Should I succeed in finding him, you, grandpa, and I will be able to save the Crawford family together! With any luck, we'll finally reunite the family!" replied Gerald with a wry smile on his face.

"...I don't think you're getting my point, Gerald... I mean, if everyone who participated in the pledge of the holy water is dead, haven't you considered why your grandfather—if he's still among the living—didn't die...?" asked Peter after a brief moment.

"...What exactly do you mean by that, Second uncle...?" asked Gerald, puzzled.

Chapter 1419

While Gerald could already tell that Peter was trying to hint something to him, he just couldn't get what it was.

Of course he'd be overjoyed if his grandfather was still alive! Was there even a need to ask such a thing?

The fact that his grandfather's token of the holy water suddenly made its appearance here only made him feel even more certain that something had happened to him. In relation to that, he hoped even more now that his grandfather was still among the living.

All this made Gerald wonder whether his stalker had relations with the pledge of the holy water this entire time.

From what the Mackusion had shown them, could it be that the mysterious person had attended the pledge of the holy water first before killing off everyone else there? Following that, he must have headed to the underground palace in the desert before killing off the giant anaconda and taking Liemis's body away. With that done, the stalker then dealt with the rest of Gerald's family not too long before he, Zyla, and Peter had arrived...

Since he couldn't spot his grandfather's body, Gerald had a gut feeling that he wasn't dead, but rather captured like the rest of his family.

Needless to say, Gerald also knew for a fact that the stalker's end goal had something to do with him.

From breaking spiritual artifacts apart to killing the massive anaconda, the mysterious master coming after him seemed extremely capable. With that in mind, Gerald had been thinking about the possibilities of dealing with him throughout his way back from Mayberry.

"...It's nothing. Anyway, you shouldn't be thinking about all this at the moment. It's better to have peace of mind while you restore your Dehlere Foundation. Once you've recovered it, we'll be depending entirely on you, so focus on the task at hand first!" replied Peter as he patted Gerald on the shoulder, simultaneously refraining from going any further with what he had wanted to say.

Hearing that, Gerald chose not to think too much into it. After all, after so many things had happened, Gerald was now extremely anxious to restore his Dehlere Foundation as soon as possible. Once he

succeeded, he'd use it to better inherit the powers from the first stage of his awakening. With that done, there'd be no need for him to remain so passive and uncertain anymore.

With that in mind, Gerald headed off to help Zyla.

According to Zyla, the Mackusion was a spiritual artifact that had been condensed from a stream of energy from heaven and earth. After a long time, it eventually turned into a stone with great transformative energy.

Emitting great energy and having distinct formation patterns all over the body, the Mackusion had the ability to predict the future.

However, if Gerald wished to travel through time and space, the Mackusion would have to be broken open. In doing so, all of its energy would be fully released. With the help of the dragon blood jade pendant's immense ability to control, Gerald would surely be able to achieve time and space travel without a hitch.

Even so, Gerald could only do all of this once before the Mackusion would be rendered useless.

Regardless, with Gerald's help, Zyla was naturally able to speed up the refining process of the Mackusion. By the time the Mackusion was completely refined, midnight wasn't too far off.

"Alright, Gerald, I'll be standing guard over you later so that you can enter the Mackusion's teleportation circle with peace of mind. Before that, however, I cannot stress enough that you have to remember all the requirements that I've told you before this. Each and every one of them! Do I have myself clear?" said Zyla.

"Loud and clear! Speaking of which, will I still be able to access all my training and skills once I'm in the past?" asked Gerald.

"You should be able to. Just be careful not to change the end results of things you already know will happen. For example, while it should technically be fine if you teach someone—who's been hostile to you in the past—a lesson, just be careful not to end up killing them!" replied Zyla.

“Got it!” said Gerald with a firm nod.

“Remember, you’ll be remaining in the past for seven days, no more, no less. With that in mind, you’ll have to undergo the baptism of heaven right after that time frame! Also, do not allow anyone to casually approach you. After all, you have no idea who, or when your Dehlere Foundation was destroyed. Because of that, you’ll need to be extra wary with whoever you come across with!” reminded Zyla.

After nodding, Gerald then walked into the teleportation circle, prompting Zyla to begin activating the power of the dragon blood jade pendant.

Shortly after, the circle began glowing a faint blue... before completely enveloping Gerald’s entire body!

His body now engulfed in light, Gerald found himself spinning endlessly as he felt an immense force gushing onto him!

“Remember to hold your breath! And just endure it for a bit longer! Concentrate!” shouted Zyla.

#### Chapter 1420

Doing as he was told, Gerald then began focusing on allowing the Mackusion to guide his body. Essentially, in order for the process to work, Gerald’s body had to first be completely broken down and once that was achieved, the Mackusion would begin putting him back together again. With that in mind, it was only natural for Gerald to have to endure a considerable amount of pain.

With a sudden explosive sound, night seemed to change to day as a sudden bolt of blue light shot upward, seemingly tearing the sky apart! Following that, a thunderous sound could be heard as lightning began striking all around the circle that Gerald was standing inside!

Though the immense force continued destroying more and more furniture in the room, Zyla retained a relatively calm expression. Peter, on the other hand, had grown so nervous that his back was already drenched in cold sweat by this point.

“Is everything truly going to be alright, Angelica? I really don’t know how much longer I can continue watching all this!” asked Peter, worried half to death. After all, all that was currently happening was rather eerie, to say that least.

“Had it been any other master who entered the circle, I’d surely be worried. However, this is Gerald we’re talking about. He’s no ordinary person! With that in mind, you can rest assured that nothing will go wrong!” replied Zyla.

The second her sentence ended, a violent electromagnetic explosion shook the entire room...!

And the next thing both of them knew, the blue light had already faded, and Gerald was nowhere to be seen.

All through this entire time, Gerald found himself feeling like he was within the belly of the embodiment of chaos. While he was slightly aware of what was happening throughout the process, he felt like he had no control over his consciousness at all.

It was as though he was simply floating about in endless darkness, with invisible tentacles occasionally wrapping tightly onto him before dragging him deeper and deeper into the abyss...

Eventually, Gerald sensed a bright light shining upon him, and it was at that moment when he realized that he had finally regained control over his consciousness...

Slowly opening his eyes, he immediately shut them again upon being immediately greeted by glaring sunlight.

After shielding his eyes with a hand for a short while, Gerald finally got up to look around, his eyes now fully adapted to the light.

From what he could tell, he was within a small, desolate forest that wasn’t too far off from Mayberry University...

With his extraordinary sight and hearing, Gerald instantly sensed the presence of a crowd of college students walking beside a road not too far from where he was.

From all that he had gathered, he found himself thinking for a bit.



...Wasn't this the small grove where he used to park his Lamborghini? With how barren it currently was... This must have meant that it was a success! He truly was back in the past!

Thinking about it, this was very likely a point in time when he hadn't even regained his identity as a young master yet... As he continued pondering about it, he made sure to check the condition of his current strength as well.

As was expected, his training had stagnated at the point before he underwent the baptism of heaven. With that in mind, his training wasn't all that high now. However, it still wouldn't be too much of an issue for him to defend himself for what he was trying to achieve in this mission.

As he looked down, he caught a glimpse of seven blue spots of light on his arm. It was clear that this was the Mackusion's reminder for him that he only had seven days before he would be forced back to the present.

Once those seven days were up, he'd be able to undergo the baptism of heaven up till the point when the final blue spot of light disappeared...

With that in mind, Gerald made a mental note to pay attention to his remaining time.

Now that he had all his thoughts sorted out, Gerald's mind automatically reminded him of the person whom he had constantly been dreaming of...

'Mila...!'

Mila was still present at this point in time, and he truly hadn't expected that he would only be able to meet her again under such circumstances.

'Now wouldn't it be great if I were able to remain in the past for good...?' Gerald thought to himself.

Just as he was about to pick up the pace and enter the campus, he suddenly remembered, '...Hold on, there's still something I've yet to do!'

## Chapter 1421

Since Gerald had successfully made it back to the past, it essentially meant that there were two of him in the current time and space, and Zyla had emphasized time and again and both of them should never meet face to face.

With that in mind, Gerald knew that he had to first locate his past self and temporarily hide him in a quiet place. Once that was done, he would act as his substitute for the coming week. Whatever the case was, he now needed to put on a simple disguise first...

Meanwhile, a loud 'thud' could be heard within the university campus as a male student was kicked down by another much taller and burlier student.

Locking arms with the tall student, was a beautifully dressed girl who simply watched as her lover pointed at Gerald before cursing, "You're a real embarrassment, Gerald, you know that? How dare you almost bump into my girlfriend while picking up trash? I guess you're as embarrassing as you are blind!"

After watching him kick Gerald again, his girlfriend then said, "Though he's like this, did you know that he actually has a rather pretty girlfriend, hubby? I do wonder what goes through that head of hers! Choosing him to be her boyfriend is a real embarrassment to us women as well, you know?"

"Hahaha! Pathetic! Come on, I really don't feel like talking about him anymore. I just can't help but feel angry whenever I see his wimpy face! Now let's go and have some fun, darling! There's no need to give him any more attention than he deserves!" scoffed the burly boy as he hugged the girl before leaving together.

Being a rather busy time of the day—within the campus, no less—many students who were walking in and out of the place had witnessed the scene, and several of them were now staring and pointing at Gerald.

Naturally, this wasn't the first time something like this had happened to him.

Whatever the case was, all the old Gerald could do was bite onto his lower lip as he clutched onto his aching belly that had been kicked rather hard. Due to all the sardonic gazes from the people around him, he couldn't help but blush out of shame as he quickly got off the ground.

Picking up his snakeskin bag—that he had been using to pick up discarded bottles—he then quickly ran away in embarrassment.

Eventually, he arrived at a deserted corner outside the campus where he squatted down and finally allowed his tears to fall. It wasn't like he wanted to do all this, but he was poor... He really didn't have any other choice.

While Gerald himself had never found it shameful to be doing what he currently was from the very beginning, why was everyone bullying him for doing so?

Just as Gerald was pondering about it, he suddenly received a text message on his old phone. It was from his girlfriend, Xavia.

'Gerald, I've been thinking about this for some time, but... Why don't we take some time off from each other? Don't get me wrong, I don't mean anything by that, I just wish to be alone for a while so that I can think about my future! With that said, please don't contact me for the time being!'

"...Why...?" wept Gerald in grief, knowing full well that this was Xavia asking him to break up with her.

Gerald was so saddened that he didn't even notice that a person wearing a cap and mask was spying on him not too far away.

That person, of course, was none other than the future Gerald.

'So it turns out that I've returned at the exact moment me and Xavia broke up!' Gerald thought.

He had been observing his past self for a while since he wanted to see when exactly in time he had returned to. Now that that was determined, Gerald slowly began walking toward his past self...

Upon seeing him, the past Gerald instantly picked his snakeskin bag up with a frightened expression on his face as he said, "...You... W-what do you think you're doing...?"

Frowning, the future Gerald then replied, "...Why the hell do I feel like beating you up so badly just from looking at how you behave...?!"

Since Gerald had already used the voice transformation technique on himself, his past self most definitely saw him as nothing more than a stranger.

Regardless, the future Gerald was left absolutely speechless. Though this was his old self, he really felt like slapping the past him right across his face.

After all, despite being a top-notch rich heir, he was behaving like such a wimp!

This fact alone enraged Gerald to no end.

Chapter 1422

What a truly amazing feeling...

"...E-even if you beat me up, please let me go once you're done...!" pleaded the past Gerald.

Since his beloved Xavia had now broken up with him, it truly seemed like he had nothing more to lose... And even if others were going to scold or beat him up, it's not like he was going to have the ability to fight back or defend himself anyway!

"By god!" muttered the future Gerald, unable to believe his past self.

With one fluid movement, Gerald then poked his past self's acupuncture point to shut him up. Sure enough, his past self instantly went unconscious after that!

"You're going to undergo a complete change of fate soon, buddy... I hope you won't continue being a useless wimp like I had been right after my transformation! You're a man, aren't you? Start acting like one!" muttered Gerald to himself as he lifted his past self up, a wry smile on his face.

The plan was for him to hide his past self well, and once he did, he'd erase the past Gerald's memories of the incident so that he could simply resume his life a week later. Once that was done, the future Gerald would at least have one problem he didn't have to worry about anymore.

It was about half an hour later when the future Gerald successfully reappeared, only this time he had traded clothes with his past self and he no longer held onto the snakeskin bag.

Walking along the streets of his former campus, Gerald couldn't help but feel nostalgic.

Now wouldn't it be great if he could just remain here... As long as he could do so, he didn't even want to be a rich heir anymore...

It wasn't long before Gerald arrived at the milk tea shop. He had fond memories of this place. After all, it was how he had first gotten acquainted with Mila back then. He could still remember how cute and adorable she looked at the time...

A visible change in expression on his face, Gerald couldn't help but think about how long both of them had been separated... Now that he was revisiting such a memorable place, it was hard for him not to be sad as he remembered the good old days with her...

Walking over to the counter, he then saw that the boss was the same old boss he used to know.

"...Boss! A cup of milk tea, please!"

"Coming right up!" said the boss as he instantly began preparing Gerald's drink.

Once he was done, he then added, "That'll be eight dollars, please!"

Taking a banknote out of his pocket, Gerald then handed it to the boss before replying, "Thanks! Keep the change!"

Just as he was about to leave with his drink, Gerald heard the boss shout, "...Hold it! What do you mean, keep the change? A cup of milk tea costs eight dollars! You only gave me a banknote worth a single dollar!"

Immediately turning back to look at the boss—who was currently looking at Gerald like he was some kind of fool—Gerald took a peek at the banknote before realizing that the boss hadn't been kidding.

He had forgotten how poor he used to be!

The current Gerald was so used to spending money in the billions that he wasn't accustomed to regular banknotes anymore! With that in mind, he truly didn't know what to do in his current situation!

Since he didn't have anything else inside his wallet, he quickly came to realize that he only had a dollar as his savings! All he had was a dollar?!

As if that wasn't already embarrassing enough, several other students—who were also present to buy milk tea—were already covering their mouths as they laughed at Gerald.

Though none of them said a thing, their expressions alone suggested that they were saying, 'This pathetic pauper is actually drinking milk tea too?!'

"...Now hold on, are you honestly telling me that you don't even have eight dollars on you?" said the boss, completely speechless.

"...I... I don't think I have that much...!" replied the embarrassed Gerald as he checked to see if any money had slipped into his pockets. To his dismay, he quickly realized that that dollar truly was all that he had on him!

"...What? So were you deliberately trying to make fun of me, then?! While a cup of milk tea isn't much, I won't just tolerate being told to keep the change after being given only a single dollar! What exactly did you even mean by that, huh? Being so pretentious when you clearly don't have the money! I'm warning you, don't you even dare think about leaving if you don't hand me the proper amount of money today! If I don't get it by the end of the day, I'm bringing up this matter to the university!" declared the boss.

Now completely at a loss for what to do as he continued getting ridiculed, he suddenly heard a sweet voice—from behind him—calling out, “Don’t make things difficult for him, boss! I’ll pay for the milk tea on his behalf!”

The feminine voice was as clear and pleasant as an oriole, and a certain gentleness and elegance simply exuded from it.

Upon hearing it, Gerald found himself trembling uncontrollably as his cup of milk tea instantly fell to the ground...

Chapter 1423

Upon turning around, Gerald instantly saw a few tall, graceful, and well-dressed girls standing before him.

However, it was the girl standing right in front of the group who caused Gerald’s eyes to instantly well up with tears.

It was Mila!

As he immediately began breathing rapidly, Gerald recalled how he had been extremely worried and depressed just an hour ago. While it was true that he really wanted to meet up with Mila, he wasn’t even sure what kinds of emotions to present when he finally stood before her.

Since he hadn’t really figured how to deal with his emotions yet, now that Mila was suddenly before him, he instantly found his mind going completely blank.

Though he was now staring blankly at her, his mind was still able to register how beautiful, adorable, lovely, and kind-hearted she was!

While he was filled with adoration for her, Mila herself couldn’t help but feel slightly frightened when she saw how Gerald was staring at her. While fear was her initial reaction, she couldn’t help but notice that there was some sort of inexplicable emotion reflected in his eyes.

The girls surrounding her clearly felt the same, and they instantly pulled her back as one of the girls whispered, "Do you think that person is crazy, Mila?"

"I was just thinking the same thing! Just look at how he's staring at her! Could Mila's beauty have driven him insane?" whispered another girl as all of them took turns staring at him in disgust.

Shortly after, another girl said, "...I think we should leave for now, Mila!"

After seeing how creepily Gerald was staring at her, all the girls had already lost interest in getting milk tea. They simply wanted to drag her away from Gerald as soon as possible!

Hearing that, Mila quickly paid for Gerald's drinks before turning to glance at Gerald who was still staring at her in a daze. Unable to stop herself from biting her red, lower lips, Mila's friends were just about to drag her away when Gerald suddenly shouted, "W-wait, Mila! Don't go!"

Gerald didn't even know what he was thinking, but the second he saw Mila about to leave, he instantly grabbed onto her wrist.

He was truly terrified that Mila was going to leave him again. Once that happened, who knows how long it'd take for him to meet her again? Hell, this could very well be the last time they ever met!

Whatever the case was, Mila was instantly taken aback by his action and screamed before shouting, "W-what are you doing?!"

Quite honestly, even though her roommates had all been disgusted by his earlier gaze, a voice in her heart had assured her that he didn't have any malicious intentions at all. If anything, Mila was able to detect strong feelings of affection in his eyes!

Though her heart even began beating rapidly the second he held onto her wrist, she quickly snapped out of it and instinctively retracted her arm back in slight horror.

Why on earth was she feeling this way when she barely even knew who the person before her was...?



“...You... You sc\*mbag! How dare you molest her?! You must be tired of living, aren't you?!” shouted Mila's friends as they instantly rushed forward to attack Gerald.

“I know right?! To think he'd take advantage of her when Mila even helped him pay for his drink! Don't let him off that easily, sisters!” shouted another girl as the group quickly encircled him.

Seeing that, Mila instantly shouted, “T-That's quite enough! Let's just go already...!”

Mila had a feeling that this boy didn't have any malicious intent at all. With that said, instead of feeling creeped out, she instead felt pitiful for him. Due to that, the soft-hearted girl quickly pulled her roommates away from Gerald while persuading them not to call the police.

Another reason she wanted to head off as soon as possible was because more and more people were already gathering and pointing at them while whispering about what was going on!

As Mila and her friends began walking away, Gerald soon regained his senses as well when he saw Mila's slowly disappearing back.

...He... He was in the past now! Mila didn't even know who he was yet at this point! Due to his impulsiveness, he had frightened her off!

He couldn't help but sigh at his rashness. Still, Gerald now had a plan in mind...

#### Chapter 1424

In the past, from the moment he had first met Mila and even after they had gotten together, their love had always been plain and simple. Despite having immense wealth later on, he never felt the need to do anything excessive or extravagant for her. After all, the past Gerald had felt that the only truly important thing was for both of them to deeply love each other.

It wasn't until much later when Gerald finally understood that even if two people were deeply in love, romance was still very much necessary. By the time he realized that and wanted to start trying to be romantic, however, it was already far too late.

With that in mind, now that he had been given a chance to return to the past, Gerald truly wanted to make up for all these regrets of his. He wanted to give Mila the most extravagant romance in the world. He'd make her the happiest woman on the planet!

While this was what he fantasized about, he decided not to return to campus just yet. He also knew that it would be best for him not to continue pursuing Mila—at least not yet—especially after what had just taken place. He was truly afraid that he would just scare her even further.

Besides, he still had other more important things to attend to, and that was to head to Mountain Top Villa.

By this point, the villa should've already been built, though it probably hadn't been auctioned off yet.

With that in mind, all Gerald had to do now was contact Zack and purchase the villa. Following that, he would then instruct Zack to begin investing in manpower to dig out the Zircobsite.

Gerald had figured that a small amount of manpower simply wouldn't do if he wanted to excavate Mountain Top within seven days, so he was ready to go big.

After all, Zyla had said that as long as he didn't change the end result of anything, things occurring a bit earlier shouldn't be an issue.

With all that in mind, Gerald then fished his cell phone out before dialing a familiar number...

The second it connected, Gerald instantly said, "Sister!"

"Gerald? Why are you calling me now? I'm still working inside my factory, you know? Can't you hear all the voices around me?!" replied Jessica.

Though Gerald hadn't found those noises suspicious at all in the past, now that he was hearing them again, he knew that she was undoubtedly in some kind of meeting.

Shaking his head with a bitter smile on his face, Gerald simply said, "I need money!"

"Of course you do, our whole family does! Our parents are working hard abroad, right? With so many debts to settle, we truly don't have much to spare! Still, how much do you need? I'll try and see if I can get a way to get the amount you need!" replied Jessica in a way that suggested that she was in a rather tough spot.

"I need at least a few million dollars to buy Mayberry Commercial Street so that the entire street will be completely at my disposal. Is that too much?" asked Gerald with a laugh.

"...You... What did you say?" asked Jessica, her eyes now fully widened.

"I said I need a few million dollars!" repeated Gerald.

"Gerald, did someone say something to you?!" asked Jessica, her tone now frigid.

"Not at all. I just happened to guess that some things were off... You know, while your brother's an honest person, he's no fool!" replied Gerald.

"...Hahaha! I can't say I expected this at all! Good boy! How smart of you! You know, I was just planning to have a showdown with you so that I could tell you the truth in the next few days! To think you'd have a hunch about the truth before I even told you anything! If you think our family's actually very wealthy, you're absolutely correct! Hell, our family's so rich and influential that we own over half the world's wealth and resources! With that said, you're an extremely influential and top, rich heir!" explained Jessica.

"How impressive!" replied Gerald, trying his best to sound shocked.

"Also, I'm completely fine giving you money if you need it. Truth be told, both Mayberry Commercial Street and Wayfair Mountain Entertainment were developed under both our names. You know, I've been planning on instructing Zack Lyle to pick you up when we eventually head over to make changes to the contract in the coming few days. Now that you already know everything, however, you can just head over to talk directly to Zack. I'll be arranging for him to pick you up. Remember, Mayberry Commercial Street belongs to our family!" added Jessica.

While Jessica truly seemed like she still had a lot to say, since Gerald was in a hurry, he didn't really reply much.

After some prevarications, Gerald hung up. However, instead of waiting for Zack, he instantly headed over to Wayfair Mountain Entertainment instead!

Chapter 1425

"Hold on, now! Where do you think you're going? Do you think this is someplace you can just enter indiscriminately?!" shouted a security guard as several other guards—who all had serious and solemn expressions on their faces—shook their electric batons threateningly before Gerald.

Naturally, Gerald had instantly been stopped upon trying to enter the villa, and all the guards looked like they were ready to beat down Gerald without the slightest hesitation if he continued trying to barge in.

"...Hmm? Hubby, look there! That repulsive person is trying to enter such a prestigious place as Wayfair Mountain Entertainment! He should really take a good look at himself first before attempting such a thing!" ridiculed a woman who had her arms locked with her husband's, both of them sharing equally satirical expressions on their faces as they looked at him.

While he heard that, Gerald really couldn't be bothered with them. Either way, it was probably about time for Zack to set out to come meet him now.

Not in any particular hurry, Gerald simply took a step back before waiting quietly.

Retracting her contemptuous gaze from Gerald, she then looked at her husband before complaining, "Regardless, is your cousin brother truly reliable? You should know that it isn't easy to be able to walk around the entire periphery of Wayfair Mountain Entertainment! I only managed to get us in here due to my dad's many connections and relationships, you know? With that said, to think that he's actually taking advantage of this to pick up girls, even though he hasn't even been here that long!"

"Well, since you told me that father-in-law is able to use his connections to let us have fun in Wayfair Mountain Entertainment anyway, I thought it'd be fine to let him come over since he brought up the matter to me yesterday. I wouldn't look good if I turned down his request, right...?" coaxed the woman's husband.

Knowing that they were simply trying to show off their relationship and connections, Gerald simply continued waiting at the side for Zack to come over, completely uninterested in continuing to listen in to their conversation.

It wasn't long after before the man pointed at an approaching car while shouting, "He's here!"

At that moment, a white BMW could be seen approaching the entrance. As if it wasn't eye-catching enough, the driver was constantly honking the car's horn, almost as though he was afraid that people wouldn't notice the car.

Eventually, the luxury car came to a screeching halt.

"Sorry to have kept you waiting, cousin brother and cousin sister-in-law!" said a young man—who was wearing a pair of sunglasses—as he stepped out of the car.

From the looks of it, he was a student, and after taking a step forward, he removed his sunglasses and slid it into his front pocket rather coolly.

Following that, two other boys and a girl stepped out of the car as well.

While one of the boys had his hair dyed blonde, the girl herself was both slim and tall, her beautiful face slightly reddened due to her shyness.

Regardless, when the four of them began walking toward the entrance, the cousin sister-in-law scoffed in a cold voice, "A bit late, aren't we? Oh, and who's this?"

"Cousin sister-in-law, meet my new girlfriend, Xavia! Xavia, these are my cousin brother and cousin sister-in-law whom I was telling you about! Heh, my cousin sister-in-law is extremely wealthy, you know? After getting together earlier today, my cousin sister-in-law had invited us over to have fun at Wayfair Mountain Entertainment, you know?" introduced the young man who seemed to be the head of the group.

While Gerald hadn't been paying attention at first, after hearing that familiar voice and name, he couldn't help but feel slightly startled. Turning to look at the group of people, Gerald found himself slightly shocked. It truly was his girlfriend- No, his ex-girlfriend, Xavia! What a coincidence for him to actually be able to run into her here!

As for the three boys, they were none other than Yuri, Danny, and Blondie...

Whatever the case was, Gerald instantly knew that something wasn't right. After all, he recalled that Xavia hadn't been to Wayfair Mountain Entertainment before at this point. From what he could remember, the first time she was supposed to enter this place was when Yuri's friend brought them in, and Gerald distinctly recalled completely embarrassing Xavia at that moment.

With that in mind, why was she at Wayfair Mountain Entertainment now? Could what Zyla had said be true? That his arrival here had broken some unspoken rules?

Even if that was the case, Gerald didn't think too much about it. While he had already lost all feelings he had for Xavia a long time ago, he couldn't help but feel slightly weirded out by the fact that Xavia had instantly gotten together with someone else right after they broke up. Even more startling was the fact that he was able to bump into her here of all places.

As Gerald remained momentarily stunned, Yuri and the others—who had just noticed Gerald's presence—turned to look at him, surprised looks on their faces, and this was especially the case for Xavia whose cheeks had turned as red as tomatoes at that moment. She truly wished that she could just bury herself deep underground at that moment!

"...G-Gerald...? You... Please don't misunderstand... We were just... Initially studying together! And once we were done, we just decided to come out and have some fun!" explained Xavia nervously.

While it was true that they had already broken up, Xavia couldn't help but feel slightly embarrassed to meet him again in such a situation.

"...I see! Good for you! Go ahead and have your fun then!" replied Gerald with a wry smile.

“Hah! I already told you that that kid looked a bit too much like Gerald back inside the car, Yuri! To think that it really was him! I truly hadn’t expected things to get so interesting and exciting!”

“I guess this pauper must be having a rough time facing the truth now! Regardless, just so you know, Xavia’s going to be our sister-in-law from now on! With that said, I’ll beat you to death if you dare pester Xavia any further in future!” scoffed Blondie with no filter to his words.

Xavia herself simply straightened her hair as she peeked at Gerald, hoping to see his expression.

While she knew that ending things this way was quite cruel to Gerald, vain girls like Xavia would always be tempted to see how jealous the faces of boys fighting over her were.

Chapter 1426

Gerald, however, simply retained his bitter smile. Thinking back, he felt that he truly had been a little too childish and naïve back then.

Clearly dissatisfied by the indifferent look on his face, Xavia found herself asking, “...What do you mean by that, Gerald?”

“I meant exactly what I said!” replied Gerald.

“...You...! You pathetic fool! I’ll have you know that I’ve already been liking Yuri for some time! You’re just a pauper, you hear?! Only a fool would be interested in you!” scowled Xavia.

“You can’t really blame me for liking him either! If anything, you should be blaming yourself for being such a disappointment and failing to meet my expectations! You know, aside from being able to buy branded handbags and cosmetics, getting together with Yuri has even granted me access to Wayfair Mountain Entertainment! What have you been able to give me? You absolute nothing of a person!” added Xavia who was scowling eagerly now, most probably because of her extreme embarrassment.

“...Who is this guy, Yuri? Is he your classmate?” asked the woman who had been standing silently at the side this entire time.

“Hah! This guy? He’s just a pathetic pauper from our university who used to be Xavia’s ex-boyfriend!” exclaimed Yuri excitedly.

“Hah! And here I was wondering what this guy was up to! He tried to break into Wayfair Mountain Entertainment earlier, you know? As a result, he got kicked out by the security guards!” scoffed the woman in an even more mocking tone than before.

“What?! You actually thought about entering Wayfair Mountain Entertainment?! Do you even know what sort of place this is? Do you think you can just enter all willy-nilly?” exclaimed Xavia, surprised beyond words.

No matter how she looked at it, Xavia could only feel that Gerald was nothing but an idiot now. How had she ever taken interest in him in the first place?

“Alright, that’s quite enough! Let’s not continue wasting our time spouting nonsense with him! It’s getting pretty late, so let’s head in and have some fun, Yuri and Xavia!” said the woman.

“Indeed! Let’s head in now, Xavia!” added Yuri as he placed his arm over her shoulder, almost as though he was trying to brag.

However, before they could enter, they were instantly stopped by the security guards as one of them said, “Apologies, but we’ve just received a notification stating that Wayfair Mountain Entertainment is closed for the day. In other words, nobody is allowed to enter!”

“What? But we’ve bought admission tickets!” replied the puzzled woman.

“Any admission tickets are invalid from this moment onward. If you have any objections, then go file a complaint!” retorted the guard coldly.

Hearing that, the woman instantly began feeling anxious. If the guards were saying that, then it must be true! Even if she was dissatisfied, she wasn’t about to dare to try anything funny!

After a brief moment, the woman then—rather unwillingly—asked, “...May I ask why...?”



“It’s because Mr. Crawford, the boss of Mayberry Commercial Group, is coming over today! We’re closed for business so that we can prepare to receive Mr. Crawford!” replied the guard.

“What?! Mr. Crawford? The boss of Mayberry Commercial group?!” exclaimed the woman.

While she honestly didn’t know who Mr. Crawford was, she was well aware of what the Mayberry Commercial Group was. After all, the entirety of Mayberry Commercial Street—which included Wayfair Mountain Entertainment—was owned by the Mayberry Commercial Group. With that in mind, how wealthy and powerful could the boss of the group be...?

Even Yuri and Xavia knew about the strength and power that the Mayberry Commercial Group possessed, so both of them felt themselves gulping.

“Now get out of the way! Since all the senior executives of our group are showing themselves now, I believe that Mr. Crawford is already on his way here!” instructed the security guard.

Upon seeing so many high-level senior executives rushing out of the villa, he and the other guards couldn’t help but feel extremely nervous, which was why they were now urging the group to leave.

Naturally, Xavia and the others immediately hurried to the side when they heard this.

Gerald, however, remained standing at the entrance without moving an inch.

Seeing that, the guard angrily yelled, “You brat! Didn’t you hear what I said? Get out of the way already!”

“F\*cking hell! Is he insane?!” muttered both Yuri and Danny contemptuously.

“That fool...! I truly am speechless!” added Xavia in a cold tone as she crossed her arms.

When the guard saw that Gerald was still choosing to disregard his command, he instantly lifted his baton and tried to hit Gerald while shouting, “You’re courting death, aren’t you?!”

In response, Gerald simply pointed a finger at the guard... Sending the baton flying out of the guard’s hand! The guard himself found himself falling on his back and rolling backward for a while! By the time he got back up, he had a horrified expression on his face as he looked at Gerald.

Staring back at the guard, Gerald then casually said, “I’m your beloved Mr. Crawford!”

Chapter 1427

“...What? Who did you say you were?” said the astonished security guard.

He truly couldn’t believe that this young man before him—who was an actual pauper—would dare to claim that he was Mr. Crawford!

While he definitely wouldn’t have believed Gerald judging off his appearance alone, the guard had the shock of his life when he saw the look in the youth’s eyes.

He hadn’t really been paying too much attention to Gerald earlier, but after catching a glimpse of Gerald’s gaze—when Gerald was staring at him—the guard instantly felt a strong, pressuring aura from the youth.

Adding the immense oppressive feeling—Gerald was capable of emitting—to his great strength, the stunned guard—who was now feeling chill after chill run down his back—felt more and more compelled to believe Gerald’s claim.

Even Xavia and the others had been startled the second they heard Gerald say that.

Soon after, Xavia snapped out of it before laughing and saying, “Did I hear wrongly? Who did you say you were? Haha!”

While Xavia had initially thought that Gerald was going to get beaten up, she hadn’t expected him to actually be that skillful and strong! Even so, her focus still lay on what Gerald had just said. That he was actually Mr. Crawford.

Mr. Crawford was the wealthiest and most influential figure in all of Mayberry city. If he truly was Mr. Crawford, then wouldn't that make her Mrs. Crawford? ...No, that'd make her the former Mrs. Crawford... She couldn't just accept that!

After hearing his claim, Xavia simply felt an inexplicable sense of panic within the depths of her heart. It was obvious that she had nothing to do with this person anymore... So why was she feeling so afraid...?

It wasn't long after when Zack finally arrived at the scene. Due to how joyful Zack's face was as he ran toward Gerald, Gerald figured that his sister must have already explained everything to Zack. The fact that Zack instantly knew who he was must have also meant that his sister had sent a photograph of him to Zack as well.

Regardless, upon standing before Gerald, Zack instantly made a deep bow before shouting, "Mr. Crawford!"

Following that, the group of senior executives behind Zack shouted in unison, "Mr. Crawford...!"

After being given the appropriate information, Zack now knew that the young man before him was Gerald, the child whom the Crawfords had raised in poverty from the second he was born!

"...W-what...?!"

By that point, Xavia, Yuri, and the others were already completely dumbfounded. Yuri, in particular, could feel his face turning green as he continued staring wide-eyed at Gerald.

The pathetic pauper... He was actually a rich, young master? And one whom even Chairman Lyle had to bow before?!

Now breathing frantically, those from the group who had mocked Gerald desperately wanted to just drill a hole in the ground now so that they could hide their faces.

“Very good. Regardless, there are some important matters that I’d like to discuss with you, Chairman Lyle. Let’s head over to the office to talk about this!” replied Gerald with a slight nod.

“Of course, Mr. Crawford!” replied Zack.

Just as they were about to head in, Xavia couldn’t help but yell, “...W-wait a moment...!”

“Hmm? Is there anything I could help with, miss?” asked Zack as he looked at Xavia.

“A-are you sure you aren’t mistaken, Chairman Lyle...? His name is Gerald Crawford, you know? And he’s a mere student from our university! How could he possibly be Mr. Crawford...?!” stuttered Xavia as she stopped Zack from proceeding any further.

“No mistakes here. Mr. Crawford’s true name is indeed, Gerald Crawford!” replied Zack rather indifferently.

“...I-Impossible... None of this is possible...!” muttered Xavia as she took a few steps back.

Zack’s words had struck through her very being like bolts of lightning that brought about endless destruction, simultaneously dispelling all of Xavia’s hopes and dreams.

Now feeling extremely regretful, Xavia found herself calling out, “G-Gerald...!”

“Forget it, we’ve already broken up. With that in mind, there’s no need for us to further bother with each other anymore. Now go ahead and live a good life! I have things to attend to!” replied Gerald as he ignored her regretful pleas, heading straight into Wayfair Mountain Entertainment as the rest of the people at the entrance remained fully stunned for quite a while.

Regardless, once they were inside the office, Zack immediately said, “It’s true that Mountain Top Villa is getting auctioned soon. Are you planning on buying it, Mr. Crawford?”

While this was Zack's first time dealing with Mr. Crawford, he couldn't help but feel that the Mr. Crawford before him was completely different from the Mr. Crawford Zack had initially imagined.

Chapter 1428

Zack had initially thought that though Gerald had managed to find out about his true identity on his own, it'd still take quite a while for him to complete the transition. After all, Mr. Crawford had been raised in poverty for as long as he lived!

With that in mind, Zack had prepared himself to be greeted by a rather embarrassed, and honest Mr. Crawford. Now that Gerald was before him, however, he could've never expected him to be someone so driven and courageous. What more, Gerald had a rather strong pressuring aura surround him at all times!

While it wasn't aimed at anyone in particular, it was enough to make those surrounding Gerald feel that it was hard to breathe.

"Bingo. Also, I don't just want you to buy it for me, but I also need you to hire an engineering team to begin excavating Mountain Top. Immediately. Let's just say that there's a massive boulder inside that's extremely useful to me... Regardless, you'll have six days to complete your task. Is there anything else you'd like to ask?" instructed Gerald.

"...N-not at all... I'll get it done immediately!" replied Zack.

Though he had initially thought about asking Gerald about his motive, he quickly retracted his words before they were able to leave his mouth. At the end of the day, Zack was an experienced man who knew what he should question and what he shouldn't.

Now that Gerald had made all the appropriate arrangements, Gerald simply needed to wait for the next few days.

With Gerald now obtaining a bit of free time till then, he found himself thinking that he wasn't going to have another shot at traveling to the past once all this was over. With that in mind, he wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to make up for all the regrets that Mila had throughout her time with him.

Though Gerald had constantly told Mila that he would make her the happiest woman in the world once they got married, he never really managed to achieve that. After all, she had gone missing before he could properly give her anything.

Due to that, Gerald didn't even care if both of them weren't a couple yet at this point in time. Couple or not, he was going to make sure that he made her feel extremely happy and blissful throughout their six short days together.

With that in mind, Gerald then returned to the milk tea shop on campus before ordering, "Boss, I'd like a cup of milk tea!"

"...You... You still hadn't had enough? Do you even have the money for it? Are you trying to give me more trouble?" muttered the slightly worried boss.

Hearing that, Gerald simply fished out a hundred-dollar banknote before placing it in front of the boss.

"Keep the change!"

Eyes-widened, the shocked boss then replied, "...Did... Did you steal this...?"

"While it's true that your milk tea is delicious, you truly spout a bit too much nonsense... Just hurry up!" muttered Gerald, feeling speechless.

"...R-right! Coming right up!" announced the boss, deciding not to question things any further.

After being handed his milk tea, Gerald then held onto the cup before walking toward the Department of Broadcasting and Hosting.

At the time, there was a male teacher teaching in Mila's classroom...

When the classroom door was suddenly pushed open, everyone inside couldn't help but turn to look at who it was... Upon realizing that it was Gerald—of all people—with a cup of milk tea in hand, everyone was instantly stunned.

After all, Gerald was famous among those in the University for being a pathetic and penniless pauper. Why had he come all the way to the Department of Broadcasting and Hosting?

“Pst! Mila! Look there, it's him!”

Mila herself had still been taking notes at that moment, but after getting nudged by her friend, she instantly saw what was going on.

As she felt her beautiful face turn slightly reddened, the teacher removed his glasses before coldly asking, “...And what exactly are you doing, boy? Why did you come to our class?”

Choosing to simply ignore him, Gerald then slid a hand into his pocket before slowly walking toward Mila... And placing the cup of milk tea before her.

“I owed you a cup of milk tea, so I'm returning it to you now!”

Hearings that, howls and gasps of surprise began coming from the rest of Mila's classmates! Was the pauper actually trying to get the beauty?

Everyone felt that the dramatic scene unfolding before their very eyes was simply unreal!

“...T-there's no need to return it to me...! Regardless, you should hurry and leave first...!” replied Mila who had been caught completely off guard by all this. Seeing her all dazed, the rest of the male students in her class instantly shot dirty glances at Gerald.

“Oh, but before I do, know that I still owe you two other things! While I don't know when I'll be able to return them to you, I'll eventually fulfill both wishes!” declared Gerald in a serious tone.

“W-what other two things...?” asked Mila meekly.

“First off, I owe you a promise! Secondly, my heart!”

Chapter 1429

By the time Gerald was done speaking, everyone was completely dumbfounded. Regardless of whether it was because of how romantic his remarks were or something else, the scene was enough to cause a major uproar among Mila’s classmates! Some people were even snapping pictures of the scene with their cell phones!

As Mila’s face grew the reddest she had ever been, Gerald—who was done speaking—simply turned around and left the classroom.

Staring at Gerald’s back, Mila felt an inexplicable emotion welling within her... Where were these feelings even coming from...?

Naturally, the incident quickly became extremely popular within the university the second Mila’s class ended. After all, a scene where a pathetic pauper attempted to pursue a goddess was something that one would usually only be able to see in movies!

Regardless, Gerald’s move had amplified the courage of all the shyer boys who had previously not dared to ask Mila out. Due to that, many of them were now standing in line to give love letters to her!

Knowing that she absolutely couldn’t remain in her classroom anymore, Mila had decided to go out with her close friends.

Before they were able to leave, however, they heard a rather beautiful girl from her class—who was currently staring at Mila in dissatisfaction—mutter, “Hah! What’s so great about you, Mila Smith? The boys must truly be blind for them to treat you like some kind of goddess!”

The girl herself went by the name of Mallory Xenakis, and she was rather popular within the Department of Broadcasting and Hosting.



Naturally, the more popular a girl was, the greater her jealousy when attention was drawn away from her. Now that all eyes were on Mila, it wasn't a surprise for her to feel this unhappy and dissatisfied.

"And what's wrong with the boys treating her like a goddess, Mallory? How many boys even like you?" scoffed one of Mila's good friends.

Since Mallory had always been mean toward Mila, several of Mila's closer friends had a rather bad relationship with her.

"Boys? Hah! I'll say it now that there are way too many people currently after me, and they're all sons of very wealthy and powerful men! Do you think I'm someone like Mila? A person whom even a pathetic pauper dares to pursue? I don't give a d\*mn about any of this at all!" declared Mallory.

"You're just jealous because everyone's talking about Mila instead of you now, aren't you, Mallory? Just admit to that already! Is there really a need to act like this?" retorted another one of Mila's friends.

"Mila's the main topic of conversation, you say? Well, allow me to remind you that the university's fiftieth-anniversary celebration is in three days' time! I'm sure all of you are already aware that I'm the main emcee of the group! Oh, and what about Mila? She's just a substitute emcee! With that said, I'm sure everyone will finally be able to differentiate between the main character and the side chick from just a simple glance during the event! Just you guys wait!"

Before the girls could quarrel any further, Mila quickly pulled her sisters out of the classroom to leave. She simply couldn't be bothered wasting her time bickering about something so trivial.

Glaring at Mila's back with fierce eyes, she then shouted, "Just you wait and see, Mila Smith...!"

Following that, she fished her phone out before locating the contact number saved under the name, 'Godfather'...

As Mallory dialed the number, Gerald himself had just exited a branded clothing store with a new shirt on.

He had gone there immediately after leaving the Department of Broadcasting and Hosting, and he was making sure that nobody would continue referring to him as a pathetic pauper anymore from this day onward.

Regardless, Gerald was feeling extremely happy and joyous since he had finally been able to reunite with Mila after so long...

Still, undergoing the baptism of heaven remained his top priority. With that said, aside from secretly looking at Mila when he had nothing else to do, Gerald spent most of his time waiting at Mountain Top Villa.

While his sudden change was undoubtedly a great shock for all his classmates, they were no longer important in his eyes. After all, he had already had a showdown and his identity as a top-notch rich heir was now exposed.

That, in itself, caused a huge sensation among those in the university, and countless beautiful girls instantly flocked around him. Of course, Gerald made sure to tactfully turn all of them down.

While all was going pretty well, Gerald constantly reminded himself to remain alert. He even made sure to retain a semi-vigilant state, even while resting late at night in his dormitory!

In the end, he was thankful that he did. True to Peter's words, Gerald could clearly sense the presence of a person who had been spying on him...

Chapter 1430

In fact, that person didn't even seem to be stalking Gerald from that far away!

While he would only approach Gerald secretly for a few hours during the day before this, after Gerald disclosed his true identity—about three days ago—Gerald found that the person now kept a more frequent eye out on him.

Currently walking around on campus, Gerald activated his holy sense to see if he could sense the person's presence again... And sure enough, he quickly realized that two people had been tailing him closely for some time now, with the first being the mysterious stalker and the second being Peter.

'Could my Dehlere Foundation truly have been ruined by that person...? If we had a close relationship, then I'd truly have a very close relationship with that person...!' Gerald thought to himself.

Still, who was his stalker's identity...? If Gerald truly wanted to find out about that, now would be his perfect opportunity to do so...

Even so, Gerald was slightly worried that he wouldn't be a match for the stalker yet with his current strength.

'I can only hope that you'll still be following me when I'm awakening my Dehlere Foundation... Should that be the case, then I'll surely be able to finally find out who you truly are...!'

Regardless, it was the university's anniversary today, and Gerald recalled that Mila was one of the emcees during the celebration back then.

He also remembered that at that point in time, the past Gerald had only thought of Mila as 'an extremely beautiful girl'. The old him could've never anticipated that Mila would eventually end up becoming his girlfriend!

Shaking the thoughts off, Gerald then began walking toward the university's celebration site which was already crowded with people at the time.

The members of the organizing team themselves were also extremely busy.

At that moment, a middle-aged director called Mila—who had been busy memorizing her script—to the side before saying, "Mila! I've something important to tell you!"

"Yes, Director Yaccarino...?" asked Mila curiously.

"I'm afraid you won't be able to go up on stage today!" replied the director.

"...H-huh...? Why's that?!" asked Mila who couldn't help but feel slightly surprised.

“Well, you should know that there has been quite a bit of discussion going on about you in the past two days... A boy recently confessed his love for you, correct? Due to that, the university feels that if they allow you to go on stage, you’ll most probably leave a negative impact on the university! I hope you’ll be a little understanding in regards to this matter!”

“...B-but... I...” replied Mila, feeling slightly miserable now.

“But what? How dare you still have the audacity to show your face here, even after someone like that confessed his love to you? Do you seriously want to embarrass all of us too?!” scoffed Mallory as she walked over to Mila, glints of arrogance in her eyes.

If it wasn’t already obvious enough, Mallory had set Mila up. After all, her godfather was a rather well-known person within the business world. What more, he was quite an influential and powerful figure within this city!

Since Mallory asked him to lend a hand in this, it was barely a problem for him to pull a few strings for things to work out her way. In fact, he was even going to be personally making a trip here to see Mallory today.

Regardless, since Mallory had such a powerful figure backing her up, it was obvious that she was the main character today.

“I know you’re the mastermind behind all this, Mallory...! You truly are a petty villain!” growled Mila.

“Don’t blame me! It’s not my fault for having a good godfather while you have nothing at all!” retorted Mallory, feeling extremely proud of herself when she saw how disappointed Mila looked.

“Just so you know, my godfather will be cheering for me from within the audience, so I can’t stay and chat any longer! Farewell now! Go be part of the audience or something!” said Mallory before walking off.

While Mila was both angry and frustrated, she knew that in the end, she wouldn’t be able to change a thing. With that in mind, all she could do was toss her things aside before walking out from the back...

However, Mallory and Mila were both slightly surprised when they witnessed the scene before them...

Chapter 1431

The both of them saw all the university senior executives standing in a row under the stage.

They looked like elementary school students who were under training.

Moreover, a bald middle-aged man was kneeling beside a young man as he shed streams of tears and mucus from his mouth and nose at this time.

“Godfather?”

Mallory’s eyes widened in disbelief.

And that young man, who was dressed very gorgeously and extravagantly, was actually that pauper who had been pursuing and confessing his love to Mila?

Was she dreaming?!

Speaking of it, her godfather was actually really unlucky. When he was making a phone call to make all the arrangements for this matter on her behalf, Gerald, who had an extraordinary hearing, had happened to overhear his conversation.

So, there were no other reasons for everything that was happening at this time. Gerald could easily deal with them and teach them a lesson in a matter of minutes.

“Mila, we would like to apologize for the incident just now. You were actually able to get such a strong sponsor for our university. We truly do not know how to thank you at all! Also, Mila, it seems as though the young Mr. Crawford has something that he would like to discuss with you!”

A middle-aged man said as he stood up.

“Mr. Crawford?”

Mila looked at Gerald. It was that strange boy again. She had not seen him for a few days, but he had already changed so much!

However, it was also precisely because of her curiosity about these things and the special feelings that she felt for this boy that Mila subsequently nodded in agreement as she followed Gerald out.

“Is there a reason why you are looking for me? You are the young Mr. Crawford from Mayberry Commercial Group. There are many girls who like you. There is nothing good or special about me at all. So, Mr. Crawford, is it worth it for you to be helping me like this?” Mila asked straightforwardly.

“Actually, there is something that I want to ask of you!” Gerald said as he looked at her.

“Mr. Crawford, what are you referring to?” Mila asked.

“I would like to kiss your forehead!” Gerald said.

Seven days was passing by quickly, and he had no time to do anything at all. All he could do was to make sure that Mila’s family would have a very carefree life without any worries.

He did not even have the opportunity to try to pursue Mila again.

Therefore, during this trip, Gerald simply wanted to kiss Mila’s forehead one last time. On one hand, it was because he truly missed her, and on the other hand, it was to bid farewell to her.

After undergoing the awakening of heaven, he would never be able to return to this place, let alone know how long it would take before he would finally be able to find Mila again.

He honestly did not want to simply let go of this rare opportunity just like that.

“What did you say?!”

As for Mila, she was taken aback, and she instinctively took a step backward.

When Gerald flicked his finger, Mila suddenly realized that she could not move her body at all anymore.

She was a little terrified as she looked at Gerald in fear.

“Mila, there are some things that you will never understand. At this point, you will not be able to understand the depths of my love and affection for you! I have been looking for you for a very long time, but you seem to have just disappeared mysteriously. I could not find you at all no matter how hard I tried!”

Gerald said as he walked toward Mila and held her hand gently.

The flustered and struggling expression in Mila’s eyes gradually faded as she looked into Gerald’s eyes that were filled with infatuation.

“The reason why I came to see you this time is to formally say goodbye to you. After this, I will be staying in the Mountain Top Villa the whole time...” Gerald said lightly.

At this moment, he hugged Mila gently before he kissed her deeply on her forehead.

Mila’s body trembled slightly. She felt as though a certain medium in her heart was suddenly connected to Gerald in an instant.

She suddenly had very mixed emotions.

She felt as though she knew this boy.

She had already had this kind of feeling for him ever since the first time she had met him.

Moreover, she felt as though she had a rather unusual relationship with this boy.

This was because she would always feel inexplicably nervous deep down in her heart whenever she saw him.

This was especially so when he kissed her gently just now. It made Mila feel very strange.

This was because even though she felt a little excited, she also felt very sad at the same time.

Mila had never experienced this kind of inner grief and sadness before, and it was precisely this kind of grief that caused Mila to shed tears at this time. She felt as though her whole body was being torn into pieces.

She seemed to have been missing this person for ages, and it felt as though the both of them had been separated for a very long time.

She missed him. She had been missing him every day, and this made her suffer every day.

'Oh, my god. What is wrong with me?!'

Chapter 1432

Mila thought to herself in shock. At this moment, she felt as though she was not herself.

"Mila, I will definitely repay and give you the two things that I owe you. I will use my whole life to make it up to you!" Gerald said one last sentence.

After that, he unlocked Mila's acupuncture point with a light tap.



Mila did not move at all because she felt that her heart was hurting.

As for Gerald, his figure had already begun to slowly disappear from her sight until he was finally gone.

“I... I miss you, Gerald!”

Mila could hardly believe what she had just said. She had actually said those words!

Why did she feel as though everything was so unreal at this moment?!

At the same time, although it was already late at night, a woman who was sleeping on her side inside a luxurious room seemed to be having a nightmare. Her body began twitching, and she started weeping...

It was getting closer. The seven days were getting closer and closer.

Gerald had been keeping guard and watching over the Zircobsite over the past few days, and he could strongly feel that the Dehlere Foundation in his body was still intact.

Gerald understood that the time for him to undergo the awakening of his Dehlere Foundation was coming.

To be honest, when he had come back this time, there were many things that Gerald wanted to do. However, he had discovered that everything seemed to be destined. There were mandatory rules in every time and space, and there was nothing much that he could do at all.

When he finally understood this matter clearly, the first thing that he had done was to look for Mila so that he could say goodbye to her. This was because he did not want to leave with any regrets.

Suddenly, a loud bang sounded!

The mountain exploded, and the engineering team which was composed and made out of thousands of people slowly retreated one after the other.

This was because the center of the mountain suddenly began flashing with colorful colors and lights.

Everyone was shocked.

The seven spots on Gerald's arm had already disappeared, and there was only one spot left on his arm.

When he opened up his holy sense, he discovered that the mysterious person was watching him from not too far away.

'You'd better not leave! At least I will be content if I can clearly see who you are when I am leaving!'

Gerald secretly thought to himself.

He did not think too much about it, and he simply flew directly inside the mountain so that he could undergo the awakening of heaven.

Somewhere in the forest not too far away, a man who was dressed in black with a mask over his face was witnessing all of this with a lavender light shining from his eyes.

"What's going on? What the hell is he doing? How could he possibly change so much in just a few days?!"

The man dressed in black muttered to himself at this moment.

His voice sounded a little old, but it was still very loud and powerful.

'It doesn't matter anymore! I should go over there and take a look before deciding anything else!'

The man dressed in black focused on the scene, and he was about to move forward at this point.

Whoosh!

There was a sudden squeak in the air, almost as though someone had shot an arrow directly at him.

'Hm?!'

The old man dressed in black realized that danger was approaching him.

Not good!

He moved his body and dodged the laser blow attack that was coming directly at him.

However, immediately afterward, a black shadow passed by directly in front of him.

The other party was not slow, and he took away the old man's mask in an instant.

The two people looked at each other for a brief moment.

The old man was stunned for a moment before he immediately hid his face as he made his escape.

There was a middle-aged man in front of him. However, this middle-aged man had scars all over his face. The middle-aged man did not chase after him, but he was completely stunned after seeing the old man's face.

He was in a state of shock.

“How can that be possible?!”

He was horrified as he muttered to himself in disbelief.

Chapter 1433

The middle-aged man could not believe his own eyes.

However, he had to be certain. So, he hurriedly rushed toward the background where the man in black had disappeared as he chased after him.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Lights were flickering continuously inside the cave at this instant.

This was the golden light that was emitting from Gerald’s body.

‘This is the true awakening of heaven!’

Gerald could feel the vitality and strength in every cell in his body, and it felt like a flood that was breaking a dam, not to mention the fact that Gerald’s body was entirely free from worry at this point.

The surging power kept pouring out.

What Gerald was considering at this point was not how he should be using this powerful force, but instead, he was thinking about how he could suppress this powerful force.

He felt that he was invincible. He could easily break the mountain simply by turning his hands.

He was too strong and powerful.

Was this the real strength that he should feel from the first stage of the awakening?

Gerald took a deep breath.

Fortunately, there was a very powerful airbending skill within the Thunder Eruption method. Otherwise, Gerald truly would not know how to control this great and powerful strength.

Gerald also saw that after he had completed the awakening of heaven, the seven spots on his body had naturally disappeared in an instant.

The blue light spots began to completely envelop his body.

'This is the rhythm for me to return to the present!'

Gerald thought to himself.

Since he had already completed the awakening, he was already in full possession of the talent from the first stage of the awakening.

The increase in his strength and power also gave Gerald the courage to take a look at the appearance of the man dressed in black.

He had to hurry!

He could sense that the man in black was trying to escape, and Gerald did not dare to delay it any longer.

"Oh, my God! A deity!"

The engineering team was all terrified and dumbfounded.

In the blink of an eye, Gerald had already chased and caught up to him.

He could see the man in black fighting against his second uncle not too far away.

The man in black obviously wanted to retreat, but his second uncle was very determined to stop him.

However, his second uncle was not the man in black's opponent at all.

As the both of them were still fighting fiercely, they suddenly discovered the changes in the distant sky at the same time.

The man in black was startled, and he hastily retreated.

Gerald attacked him directly.

Boom!

A strong wave of air swept forward directly, and the man in black could not resist the attack at all.

'I am finally going to see your true colors today!'

Gerald said coldly in his heart.

The man in black stumbled backward as he tried to retreat.

However, Gerald simply raised his hand as he pulled the black man's towel away.

The man in black could not resist or fight against Gerald's current strength at all.

His eyes were filled with horror.

Gerald also saw his eyes.

At this moment, Gerald suddenly felt that this man's eyes seemed a little familiar.

Just as he was about to pull off the towel...

Zap! Zap! Zap!

Blue electric currents suddenly circled his body.

'D\*mn it! I have to leave now!'

Gerald thought anxiously to himself.

At the moment of departure, Gerald could not even take a step forward because of the strong power of the Mackusion.

Boom!

A bolt of lightning suddenly struck.

Gerald's whole body turned into a blue light, which instantly dissipated on the spot.

He returned to the same original feeling where he only had vague consciousness, and he could not control himself at all.

However, Gerald had already seen the eyes of the man in black, and he had even seen half of the man's face clearly.

He looked very familiar indeed.

Moreover, he was someone who had been by his side.

Still, Gerald could not put a finger on who he was!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Not long after that, a loud burst of noise sounded in Gerald's ears.

This loud sound woke Gerald up.

Chapter 1434

He felt as though he had just woken up from a dream.

Gerald slowly opened his eyes.

He realized that he was on an island now, and this island was surrounded by dense forests.

He spread out his holy sense immediately so that he could perceive his surroundings. He could vaguely feel that many passenger ships were passing by.

'I should already be back now, but it seems as though my position has deviated, and I have arrived on an island!' Gerald thought to himself.

It would not be difficult for him to return to Crawford Manor in Northbay. Gerald could simply fly back directly.



This was because Gerald could sense that his Dehlere Foundation was still complete and intact. The Mackusion was indeed very miraculous.

He no longer needed to be afraid of anything now.

However, there were also subsequent problems that appeared immediately.

The awakening of Gerald's Dehlere Foundation made Gerald very powerful and strong. This power made Gerald feel as though he was carrying a mountain on his back when he did not utilize the airbending skill.

Gerald had no choice but to stop so that he could slowly digest this huge force first.

Gerald meditated on the spot as he began unleashing his skills.

At the same time, at Crawford Manor.

Waves of thunder and lightning flashed within Crawford Manor.

However, after it was over, there was nothing else left behind.

Peter was waiting anxiously at the side.

At this moment, he could not help but widen his eyes as he hurriedly asked, "Angelica, what is the situation now? Where is Gerald? Based on the time, he should already be back now, right?"

"Yes, but everything is fine. I believe that his position has just slightly deviated. It must be because Gerald had been moving his body very quickly at the moment when he was leaving. Therefore, this might have caused a deviation in his position. I do not know where or which direction the Mackusion has taken him!" Zyla said.

“According to what you have just said, that will only mean that Gerald’s cultivation base after he has undergone the awakening of heaven should no longer be the same anymore. Even if he has landed in any other positions, it shouldn’t take him too long to rush back here!” Peter said.

“No. Since he has already undergone the awakening of heaven, he would have gained too much strength and power all at once. This huge strength and power will be present at this current time. So, Gerald will have to spend some time to slowly digest and merge this huge amount of strength and power within his own body. This is because this strength and power will bring about huge changes to Gerald! It might even transform or change his body. So, I am afraid that he will not be able to rush back for quite a while!”

“Okay!”

Peter nodded. After that, he wondered, “Angelica, what kind of changes will Gerald experience to his body, then? Could it be similar to the abilities that we gained when we were in Jaellatra?”

“You could also understand it that way. However, since Gerald’s ability is obviously completely different as compared to us, the changes that he undergoes will not simply be an ability, but it might actually be a supernatural power! An extremely powerful supernatural power!” Zyla explained.

“Well, in that case, I am really looking forward to seeing what Gerald’s final transformation would turn out to be like!” Peter could not help but exclaim.

At this moment, Zyla suddenly frowned as she knitted her brows tightly together.

“It’s not good!” She hurriedly said.

“Angelica, what’s wrong?” Peter asked.

“There is a group of people who are closing in on us rapidly. I can sense and feel the King of Judgement Portal’s aura!” Zyla cautiously replied.

“The King of Judgement Portal?”

Peter also widened his eyes.

“They have finally found this place! We will have to leave as soon as possible!” Zyla said.

“It won’t be that easy for you to just leave!”

A terrifying and stern voice suddenly sounded and echoed around them.

After that, it was accompanied by a series of hurricanes.

It was the King of the Judgement Portal.

Moreover, many masters had followed closely behind him as they surrounded the entire Crawford Island.

“Angelica, you will have to leave first! I will draw their attention away from you!” Peter said.

“No! You are Gerald’s second uncle. If you were to meet with danger or any mishaps, Gerald would certainly feel even sadder! He does not have any family members left!” Zyla said as she shook her head.

“Angelica, in comparison to me, you are even more important to Gerald. My life is insignificant and of little to no importance to him at all. So, you should go! The Crawford family has a secret passage! If you continue delaying any longer, neither one of us will be able to leave this place!” Peter said bitterly as he tried to persuade her.

Zyla struggled for a while before she finally ground her teeth.

She knew that she should never allow herself to fall into the King of the Judgement Portal’s hands at this time.

Otherwise, it was very likely that Gerald would encounter a very different kind of danger.

So, she had no other choice!

Furthermore, Zyla was in possession of the dragon blood jade pendant. So, she used it to draw a ray of light as she hid inside the Crawford family's secret passage.

"None of you will be able to escape! Gerald will fall into my hands eventually..."

The King of the Judgement Portal's voice was still roaring and echoing outside...

Chapter 1435

Zyla finally escaped as Peter covered up for her.

However, just as Peter had predicted, he was a step too late. He could not escape even if he wanted to.

The King of the Judgement Portal and Yreth from the Gunter family gathered around and surrounded Peter in an instant.

The Gunter family and the King of the Judgement Portal had not given up on the search for them over the past few days.

After all, Gerald had already officially started a feud with them.

This was not merely something that could be expressed with just interest or relationship anymore!

Peter had no way to counterattack in front of these two masters, especially so because there was the King of the Judgement Portal there to suppress him.

So, he surrendered to the Gunter family without any resistance at all.

“Where is Zyla Lockland?”

The King of the Judgement Portal asked coldly as he turned into the shape of a figure.

“Isn’t it obvious that she has already escaped before you even arrived? Moreover, it will be very difficult for you to catch her!” Peter said as he sneered.

“What about Gerald, then?!”

Yreth’s eyes were filled with anger and hatred as she asked angrily at this moment.

“Hahaha! Gerald is no longer here either. Even though both of you are so powerful, it seems as though you always end up empty-handed. You cannot even find the person that you want to find at all!” Peter said as he looked at them with a satirical expression on his face.

“You b\*stard!”

The King of the Judgement Portal was furious and enraged.

“You seem to believe that all of the people that we are looking for have already managed to make their escape. You seem to be very steadfast in your beliefs when you are in fact wrong. In comparison, you are actually a very important chess piece!”

The King of the Judgement Portal said as he looked at Peter.

“Me?”

“That’s right. As long as you are in our hands, we will not need to worry that Gerald will not come to look for you, then! After all, no matter what it is, you are still his second uncle!” The King of the Judgement Portal roared.

“Still, I am just afraid that you guys will not be Gerald’s opponents at all when he comes eventually!” Peter said as he sneered.

Regardless, the King of the Judgement Portal obviously did not have any desire to continue talking to Peter anymore, and he wanted to chase after Zyla immediately.

“Yreth, I am going to leave everything here to you for the time being. The Gunter family should try to take control of Crawford Manor as soon as possible. When the time comes, Gerald will certainly make an appearance and easily reveal himself!” The King of the Judgement Portal instructed.

“Yes, your highness!” Yreth replied.

When she raised her head again, the King of the Judgement Portal was no longer in her sight.

“It would certainly be very difficult for Gerald to escape again if he were to come this time!” Yreth said as she looked at Peter coldly.

“Moreover, the few people who have escaped from Qerton City have also fallen into my hands! So, Gerald will certainly come here!”

“That’s right. I am also very certain that Gerald will certainly come here!”

Peter never expected that the reason why Jasmine and the others had not come back in time even though it had already been so many days was because they had already fallen into the King of the Judgement Portal and Yreth’s hands.

In fact, Peter had already had a foreboding feeling that something might have happened to them.

However, he truly would not have thought that it would be because of the King of the Judgement Portal and the Gunter family.

Moreover, it was just as Angelica had said.

When it reached a certain point, many things and many people would end up becoming bystanders. The only person who would truly be able to stand up to them was Gerald!

Now... everything depends entirely on you, Gerald!

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Five days later.

On the island.

At this time, the sun was shining brightly, and there were strong waves on the sea.

A seagull that was looking for food flew over the island.

Chapter 1436

It slowly descended on a fresh branch.

Boom!

Not long after that, the entire island seemed to be trembling for a moment.

Immediately afterward, an earth-shattering scene was reflected in the seagull's eyes.

The island was cracking open, and it subsequently opened up a wide gully at a speed that was visible to the naked eye.

The waves around the island began to roar frantically, almost as though there was a tsunami.

The sky was suddenly covered in thunder and bolts of lightning.

There was a look of extreme terror in the seagull's eyes, and its whole body began trembling uncontrollably.

After that, the seagull took off from the branch as it tried to desperately make its escape into the distance.

It must have seen something, and that was the reason why it was fleeing out of horror.

Zap! Zap! Zap!

An insane bolt of lightning struck directly.

Immediately afterward, a ray of light was projected from the very center of the island.

The source of light was a young man who was sitting with his legs crossed in the center of the island.

Although this young man was seated on the deserted island, there was no trace of dust on him at all despite the raging waves and the howling wind!

His skin was extremely fair, and his body was filled with a breathtaking aura.

Of course, anyone who saw him now would definitely feel very frightened and afraid.



This was because this person's forehead seemed to be a little strange.

It was not only shining brightly, but there seemed to be a faintly discernible third eye that had appeared on his forehead. It seemed as though this third eye was emitting this bright light.

The bright light penetrated the sky directly as it swept through everything around it.

After a long time, the third eye on the person's forehead began to slowly converge as the young man slowly opened his eyes.

'Unexpectedly, I would actually obtain this kind of gain from the first stage of the awakening. The Thunder Extraordinary Sight is indeed amazing! It is truly unimaginable and completely beyond comprehension!'

Although it could be seen that this young man was usually very calm and composed, at this moment, he had a horrified and surprised look on his face.

As for the identity of this young man, who else could it be if he was not Gerald?!

Gerald had been digesting all of the gains that he had obtained at this place for the past five days.

Over these five days, in addition to the substantial increase in his cultivation base, three days ago, Gerald had also begun to discover that it seemed as though his body had undergone a very miraculous change.

He had felt a slight pain in his forehead, which gradually became a tingling pain, and he had eventually felt a pain that felt like a tear in his skin.

In the end, Gerald had ended up growing an extra eye.

Moreover, it was an eye with magical and supernatural powers.

This eye had many functions. One of them was information storage, and Gerald had already tested it. Gerald had used his divine pupil to scan through everything, and as long as he wanted to, everything before him would be stored infinitely within his mind. There was also a warning function that came with it.

The second function was that it had a far-sighted effect. Just now, Gerald had used his divine pupil to look directly toward the horizon.

Thirdly, it possessed a special ability. Gerald referred to it as the Mysterious Resurrection Power, and this power far surpassed the common people. It seemed as though this force could actually bring the dead back to life and turn any decays into a miracle!

The fourth one was his powerful attack and energy. He was omnipotent, regardless of whether it was a long-range lock-on attack or even a close-range attack.

Moreover, he could even form a very strange technique under the premise of this kind of attacking power.

Gerald has already developed greatly.

This was especially so for the fourth function. It would be hard to imagine what kind of terrifying existence Gerald's attack would end up being if his cultivation level kept rising.

Now, Gerald had already completely unlocked the first stage of his transformation. So, he would have the fighting power and capability even if he were to go against the King of the Judgement Portal.

What's more, he had the blessing of the mysterious Thunder Extraordinary Sight!

Gerald was excited.

At this time, Gerald's Thunder Extraordinary Sight began to flicker continuously.

'Hmm? This is the Thunder Extraordinary Sight giving me a warning that there is danger!' Gerald thought to himself.

He immediately thought of Crawford Manor. Could it be that his second uncle and the others had already met with a mishap?

Gerald could not help but wonder.

However, when he thought about how he had not returned even after five days had already passed by, he knew that he would have to return as soon as possible. So, he quickly cast a spell to hide his divine pupil, and his figure quickly disappeared...

Chapter 1437

Northbay, at the Hong Kong port.

At this moment, there were many people gathered at this lively place.

It turned out that there was a man who was crawling on the ground, and this aroused the curiosity and attention of many onlookers.

Everyone was pointing at this man, but no one was willing to take a step forward to help him.

"F\*ck! Isn't that Chairman Zack Lyle?!"

Someone finally recognized the man in front of them at this time.

That's right. This person was not anyone else, but the infamous Chairman Lyle from the business world.

Oh, my god. Zack Lyle? How had he ended up in the current state that he was in?

He was horrified.

As soon as he spoke up, many people took out their cell phones to take pictures.

This was because Chairman Lyle, who was in front of them, was very badly battered and bruised up, and someone had already broken the muscles in his hands and his hamstrings.

It was impossible for people not to sigh in pity when they witnessed this scene.

“Chairman Lyle, what happened to you?! I heard that you were currently in Mayberry City. So, why are you suddenly here at the Hong Kong port?”

This middle-aged man obviously had a friendship with Chairman Lyle. So, he quickly walked over with a sad expression.

At the same time, he hurriedly took out a bottle of water as he tried to give it to Zack, who seemed to be dehydrated.

As a result, before he could even put the water to Zack’s lips, the bottle of water was kicked away.

It was a few bodyguards who were dressed in black, and they sneered as they said, “Hey, fatty! You’d better get lost if you do not want to die! Stop being so nosy! Otherwise, you will die here today!”

The bodyguard in black said coldly.

The middle-aged man wanted to refute, but when he saw that this group of people seemed to mean what they had just said, he did not dare to continue getting in their way anymore.

So, he could only leave reluctantly.

Zack wanted to pick up the bottle to take a sip of water from it.

As a result, the bodyguard in black instantly stepped on his hands.

He stepped on his hands until it was already bloody, yet the bodyguard simply continued crushing his hands fiercely.

“Didn’t I already tell you that you cannot drink any water for seven days? It is just the third day and you cannot stand it anymore?! Did you think that you are still a very famous and powerful person in the Crawford family? You dare to ask people to serve you water?! Let me tell you something specifically. The Crawford family has already been renamed to the Sime family! From now on, all of you are nothing but the Sime family’s dog!” The bodyguard said coldly.

As for Zack, he was so thirsty that he was even thinking of trying to drink the water that had been spilled on the ground.

“D\*mn it! Do you really want to drink water that badly?! Hahaha! Brothers, throw him into the river, then! If he can survive and swim up to the surface of the water, we will consider it that he indeed has good fortune!”

The bodyguard said as he grinned.

“Okay!”

The other bodyguards responded in unison.

Meanwhile, Gerald had just left the island on the Southeast Sea.

He happened to be passing by Hong Kong as he prepared to head back to Crawford Island.

It just so happened that he also saw the scene that was unfolding before him.

However, at this moment, he did not want to be nosy and interfere in this matter.

Just as he was about to leave, he suddenly heard Zack crying out loud in pain. He initially thought that he had heard wrongly.

As a result, after turning back to take a look, he realized that it was indeed Zack!

How could this be possible?!

Gerald's eyelids twitched wildly.

He appeared directly in front of these few people at this time.

"Zack!" Gerald shouted out loud in disbelief.

The both of them had just met a few days ago, and he had been perfectly fine. Moreover, at that time, Zack had been dealing with the transfer of the Crawford family's assets. He had been back in Mayberry City at that time. What was going on here?!

As for Zack, his body trembled uncontrollably, and he raised his head as soon as he heard Gerald's voice.

"Mr... Mr. Crawford?!"

Tears started streaming down Zack's face at this time.

It felt as though he had finally seen the light at the end of the dark tunnel.

"What is going on?" Gerald hurriedly asked.

"It is the Gunter family and the Judgement Portal. They occupied the Crawford Manor forcibly, and they handed the entire management of the Crawford family over to the Sime family in Qerton City. They took over all of the Crawford family's industries and properties! I tried to go against them, and as a result, I was captured and brought here!" Zack cried out miserably.

“Hmph? Who is this person? Could he be the Mr. Crawford that the Gunter family is currently looking for?”

Chapter 1438

The bodyguards at the side stared at each other in astonishment, and there were sparkles in their eyes at this time.

In truth, the Gunter family had given orders to the Sime family to torture all the members of the Crawford family in various ways so that they could draw Gerald out and subsequently capture him.

Hahaha! This was simply perfect. It seemed as though this person had come up to their doorstep personally.

When the time came, these few bodyguards would certainly be rich!

“Who else did the Sime family capture? Where is my second uncle, Peter Crawford, and the others?!”

Sure enough, something had indeed happened to the Crawford family.

Moreover, Gerald truly did not expect that the Gunter family and the King of the Judgement Portal would actually track them down all the way here.

At this time, Gerald stared angrily at the three bodyguards who were guarding Zack.

“Hahaha!” The several bodyguards laughed out loud.

“Is this fool actually trying to question us?”

“That’s right. He even dared to look at us with such an angry expression on his face!”

The bodyguards said contemptuously.

As for Gerald, he simply frowned tightly.

After that, he raised his hand directly before slapping one of the bodyguards' forehead.

There was a loud bang!

The scene before Gerald at this moment was similar to that of a mortar hitting a watermelon, and the person's head was instantly shattered into pieces.

"Ahh!"

The people around them were so frightened that they hurriedly ran away.

As for the remaining two bodyguards, both of them were dumbfounded.

"F\*ck! He is actually very strong! It turns out that this person is not our opponent at all!"

The two bodyguards could only exchange glances with one another as they felt extremely panicked at this time.

It was no wonder why the Gunter family had to spend so much time and effort just to arrest him. He was so powerful!

"What happened? I am asking you one last time!" Gerald said coldly.

"Pfft! We will never tell you anything. If we were to tell you, you would certainly kill us immediately! However, if we refuse to tell you, then..."



Poof!

Before they could even finish speaking, Gerald had flicked his finger, and their heads exploded directly!

“Zack, I will heal you first!”

Gerald said as he looked at Zack, who was in agony and pain.

Gerald’s figure flickered as he brought Zack into a forest.

The way that Gerald could treat a person’s injuries was naturally no longer what it used to be.

At this moment, Gerald simply closed his eyes slightly.

After that, the Thunder Extraordinary Sight gradually appeared on Gerald’s forehead.

A golden light instantly enveloped Zack at this time.

Immediately afterward, the wounds on Zack’s body were all healed magically in an instant at a speed that was visible to the naked eye.

When the golden light disappeared, Zack could feel the changes in his body.

At this time, when he looked at Gerald, he was not looking at him with awe or respect. Instead, he was staring at Gerald in disbelief, almost as though he was a demon.

“Mr. Crawford... you?!”

Zack did not dare to continue speaking anymore because he was already completely healed.

“We can talk about all these things in the future. What happened to the Crawford family?” Gerald asked.

At this time, Zack hurriedly explained everything to Gerald...

It turned out that something had already happened to the Crawford family five days ago.

The Judgement Portal and the Gunter family had come to the Crawford Manor, and they had captured Peter. At the same time, they had also captured Jasmine and the others before taking over all of the Crawford family’s assets and industries. Zack was captured after he had tried to fight and go against them.

As for their puppet, it was none other than the Sime family from Qerton City.

The Sime family was very domineering and powerful in Hong Kong now.

They were torturing all of the original Crawford family members in various ways.

“Furthermore, when they found out that Miss Jasmine was your fiancée, the young master of the Sime family even sold Jasmine off to a bar to work as a hostess to insult and humiliate her. I heard that the Gunter family has already set up a lot of traps in the Crawford Manor, and they are simply waiting for you to walk right into their trap now!”

Zack told Gerald everything that he knew...

Chapter 1439

“What?! I should have fought it out with them and destroyed the Gunter family a long time ago!” Gerald said as he clenched his fists tightly.

“By the way, where did they take Jasmine? What about my second uncle, Leo, and the others?” Gerald asked.

Before his teleportation, Gerald had explained these things to Zack. So, Zack naturally knew who they were.

At this time, Zack said, "Miss Jasmine has been sent to Emperor's Tavern in Hong Kong! As for the second master and the others, all of them are trapped inside Crawford Manor. The Gunter family have already made massive preparations there, and they are simply waiting for you to make an appearance so that you will fall right into their trap!"

Gerald clenched his fists tightly.

"I want you to find a place so that you can settle down there. I will go and save Jasmine first. You should contact the other members of the Crawford family, and when I have settled the score with the Gunter family, the rest of you will have the opportunity to plan for the future!" Gerald instructed.

As for Zack, he knew very well that he would not be able to help Mr. Crawford in any way. So, he could only nod his head.

Gerald headed directly to the bar in Hong Kong.

The atmosphere inside the bar was very smoky and messy at this moment.

Many people were drinking inside.

If it was the young master of the Sime family, this person should be Matilda's younger brother, then.

Gerald did not know who he was either.

So, as soon as he entered the bar, he asked the waitress directly, "There is a young man named Mr. Sime. Which room is he in?"

In Room 888.

“Hahaha! She is truly a beauty! I wonder what it would feel like if I could have some fun with her!”

Many people were surrounding a young man at this time.

There was a beautiful young woman who was kneeling as some men held her in place as they held onto their shoulders.

This young woman was none other than Jasmine.

“Mr. Sime, if you like her, why don’t you go ahead and do as you please?”

Some people could not help but ask.

At the same time, they were also hinting to the young man that they would certainly be willing to provide him with any help or assistance if there was a need to.

“Hahaha! Would I need you to remind me if I really wanted to do that? I would have already done it a long time ago if I wanted to. However, that would simply be too boring. I want to see how long she can hold out and endure being tortured before she finally decides to willingly climb into my bed. What kind of experience would that be, then! Hahaha!” Mr. Sime said.

“Let me tell you something! If you had the guts to, you can go ahead and kill me. Otherwise, Gerald will never let you off. You people from the Sime family are indeed very courageous. Aren’t you afraid that your family will be met with a terrible disaster?” Jasmine yelled.

“Pfft! Gerald? Let me tell you something. The Gunter family has already set up many traps to capture Gerald. And to be honest, we have been looking forward to Gerald making an appearance as soon as possible. In fact, the sooner he makes an appearance, the better it would be for the Sime family as we would finally be able to enjoy everything that the Crawford family owns unscrupulously! Hahaha!” Mr. Sime said.

“Gerald killed Matilda. So, that means that he has a blood feud with the Sime family. So, I will have to settle this score with him sooner or later!”

Boom!

At this moment, the room door was suddenly opened.

It was a heavyweight bodyguard who was walking in slowly.

He had always been in charge of all of the arrangements for Mr. Sime. Moreover, the Gunter family had provided his services to Mr. Sime exclusively.

There were nearly a hundred masters outside the private room at this time, and they were all tasked with the responsibility of ensuring Mr. Sime’s safety.

This person was the leader.

“What’s wrong?” Mr. Sime asked.

“Someone is going to die here today. I hope that those who have depended on the Crawford family in the past and have nothing to do with all of this will leave immediately!”

The bodyguard said as he trembled uncontrollably.

“Huh? Raion, what do you mean?”

Mr. Sime could not help but ask in surprise, “The Sime family has the final say here in Hong Kong now!”

“Someone is going to die here today. I hope that those who have depended on the Crawford family in the past and have nothing to do with all this will leave immediately!”

As for the leader, it seemed as though he had not heard what Mr. Sime had said, and he simply repeated his sentence as though he was speaking to himself.

At this moment, when they saw the panicked and anxious expression on this man's face, the others in the room could not help but feel a little uneasy.

An unnamed and dangerous aura suddenly enveloped itself around all of them, and everyone suddenly felt extremely nervous.

Leave! Perhaps, it would be best for them to leave now, and it would certainly be their best option.

Chapter 1440

Therefore, most of the people inside the room stood up as they decided to walk out of the room.

"What do you guys think you are doing?! No matter what it is, all of you are still young masters with a very influential existence. Why are all of you such cowards?!"

Mr. Sime snorted as he mocked them.

As soon as he spoke up, no one dared to leave the room anymore.

"What are you afraid of anyway? I am here!"

"Raion, what exactly is happening?!"

Mr. Sime asked as he looked at the bodyguard.

However, at this time, the bodyguard suddenly started trembling uncontrollably all over his body before he fell to the ground and started foaming at his mouth. He died not too long after that!

“Ahhh!”

The young woman in the room screamed out in horror at this moment.

Mr. Sime’s face also turned a little pale.

“Who? Who did this?! Men, come! Men, come!” He yelled angrily.

“You must be very courageous! You guys are just a small and mediocre family, but you are so discontented, and you actually dared to try and reach for what will never belong to you? That is already bad enough, but you even dared to treat my friend like that?!”

At this moment, a ghost-like voice suddenly sounded out loud.

Everyone was stunned, and they felt as though their hearts had stopped.

Jasmine, on the other hand, suddenly raised her head.

This was because this voice sounded too familiar to her.

“Gerald!” Jasmine said in excitement and surprise.

“What?! It’s Gerald?”

There was a look of shock and panic on Mr. Sime’s face at this moment.

“Mr. Crawford!!”

As for the other young masters, they were also exchanging glances with one another in astonishment at this time.

In an instant, they felt as though the space in front of them was suddenly distorted, and Gerald suddenly appeared in front of everyone like a ghost.

“Mr. Crawford!!”

These young masters naturally knew who Gerald was, and they could not help but feel very frightened and afraid when they saw Gerald at this time.

“Gerald!”

Jasmine hurriedly ran toward Gerald’s side. Everything that had happened over the past few days had truly frightened her to death, and she had even thought of killing herself.

Unexpectedly, Gerald would appear at this moment, and he was actually standing in front of her.

“Don’t be scared! I am back today! An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth!” Gerald said coldly.

Mr. Sime had obviously been sentenced to death.

When many of the other young masters were all kneeling as they were pleading and begging for Gerald’s forgiveness, Mr. Sime, who was obviously on the verge of dying, was laughing out loud at this moment.

“Hahaha!”

Mr. Sime raised his head as he laughed out loud.

“What are you laughing at?” Gerald asked.



“Hahaha! I am laughing at you because you are such a fool!”

Mr. Sime’s eyes were filled with ridicule at this point as he said, “Gerald, when I was in Qerton City, I heard that you are extremely cunning and crafty. So, I thought that you would be a very smart and intelligent person. However, I never expected you to turn out to be such a fool. You are a complete fool! Let me tell you, you have already fallen into my trap!”

“Fallen into your trap?” Gerald asked coldly, “So, how did I fall into your trap? What kind of trap is there?”

“Hahaha! Don’t tell me that you don’t think that everything is too much of a coincidence? From the instance where you ran into that d\*mn Zack Lyle out on the streets, until the moment that you made an appearance here? In other words, I was the one who had planned everything step by step so that I could lure you here! I knew that you would definitely come here as soon as possible so that you could save your friend first. So, I have already been waiting here for you for a long time!” Mr. Sime said.

“That’s right. It’s a pretty good strategy, but don’t you think that you have already missed a step?” Gerald asked as he smiled bitterly.

“I know what you are going to say. You are going to say that I am not your opponent at all and you can just kill me easily, right? Hahaha! So, that is the reason why I have a dedicated guest who is here to receive you!”

Mr. Sime began clapping his palms as he spoke.

In an instant, a black light quickly made its way directly to the room...

Chapter 1441

The darkness quickly spread across the entire private room, deeply scaring all of the other rich heirs to the point of screaming. After all, anyone caught in a similar situation would surely be filled with desperation.

“I-I’m sorry, Gerald...! It’s entirely my fault...!” whimpered Jasmine.

Pulling her to stand behind him, Gerald simply consoled, "It's fine, just stay behind me!"

Soon enough, the darkness dispersed, leaving three orbs of light in its place... Everyone then watched as lights began increasing in size till they eventually formed human silhouettes.

By the time the lights dimmed down, two men and a woman stood face to face with Gerald.

One of the men gave off a particularly imposing aura, and his entire body was plated with black armor. The other man, on the other hand, had a tailcoat draped around his slim figure.

As for the sharp-chinned woman who had an extremely graceful-looking figure, a strange charm seemed to exude from every orifice of her body. Adding that to her long, wavy, and red hair, she looked very much like a serpentine demon.

The trio was part of the Judgement Portal, and together, they made up the Squad of Judgement Portal.

Gerald had already met one of them before this, that being the burly man with black armor on... It was Hogan, the person who had almost ended Gerald's life back then!

Even to the King of Judgment Portal, all three of them were considered to be quite powerful and capable people. With that said, knowing that he was able to rely on the extraordinarily talented trio was the reason why Quigley—Mr. Sime—had been so confident earlier.

What more, he was positive that Gerald would have no escape from this perfect trap that both the Gunters and those from the Judgement Portal had set up to deal with Gerald.

Laughing mockingly, Quigley then sneered, "Well, Gerald? What do you think? I'm sure you've guessed that with my three friends here, things are going to end rather simply, but also extremely violently for you! Heh, even sprouting wings to escape won't save you now!"

Murderous intent reflected in his eyes, Quigley then added, "You know, once you're out of the picture, the Simes will be able to legitimately inherit all your family's wealth and assets! That's over half of the

world's wealth! Hahaha! I really don't know how to thank you enough, Gerald! After all, in a way, everything the Crawfords have done up till this point has been for the Sime family's sake! Heh. I'm guessing you're in a bad mood now, right? Though with how smug I'm being, of course you'd be annoyed!"

As Quigley sneered again before lighting a cigarette—his legs still crossed—, Gerald simply smiled calmly before replying, "On the contrary, I'm rather elated now that all three of them are here!"

"...Oh? Could you already have gone mad with fright? Do share why you're feeling so happy!" asked Quigley as he returned a smile.

"Well, let's just say I have a grudge against one of these three people... I had initially been wondering how I'd be able to get my revenge, but lo and behold! Here he is, standing right before me! You truly saved me a lot of time and effort to find you!" replied Gerald as he pointed at Hogan.

'You broke all my tendons, causing me to suffer terribly... Now that you're standing before me...' Gerald thought to himself, fully ready to have his revenge.

"Heh, he's talking about you, Hogan!" said the sole woman of the trip as she stuck her tongue out before turning to look at the big man.

"He's just a small fry! I've already ruined him once, and I have no problem with doing it again! Since the master instructed us to keep him alive, I'll just make sure he's constantly just a few breaths away from dying!" declared Hogan coldly as he slowly raised his palms...

Within seconds, his iron palms darkened, and by the end of the transformation, they looked similar to steel forks!

Turning to look at Quigley, Hogan then said, "You've truly made a great contribution this time around, Young Master Sime! I'm sure the master will reward you greatly!"

Hearing that, Quigley simply smiled before excitedly replying, "That's for sure! Also, after the Simes inherit all the Crawford family's properties, I promise that each of you will be able to enjoy all the wealth and glory in the world!"

Laughing aloud, the serpent-like demoness of a woman then smiled before saying, "I'd like a lot of men then, Young Master Sime!"

"Not a problem! I'll be sure to satisfy every one of your wishes!" said Quigley as he burst out laughing.

Watching as the group chatted among themselves, Gerald simply shook his head with a bitter smile on his face before saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, I'm still here you know? Not only did you fail to greet me, but to think that you're even discussing how to share my family's properties among yourselves, right in my face!"

"Haha! You don't seem to understand how dire your situation truly is at the moment, Gerald! Just to remind you, you've fallen into my trap, and I'm more than willing to take responsibility for ordering the trio to kill you! I guess it's just fate! While your martial art skills are greater than mine, in the end, I still come up on top due to my intelligence!" retorted Quigley with a smug smile.

Chapter 1442

"There's no need to say anything more to him, Young Master Sime. Allow me to capture and break all his limbs first before we continue our little chat!" said Hogan as his imposing aura seemed to amplify by the second!

Lifting his steel claws, he then dashed toward Gerald incredibly quickly, creating a force so massive that it caused all the surrounding furniture to be smashed into pieces! It wasn't hard to determine that Hogan was now much stronger compared to when he had first encountered Gerald!

As Hogan's palm came inches before Gerald's body, an explosive sound was heard...!

However, Gerald was still standing. In fact, Hogan hadn't even been able to touch him!

Now completely paralyzed in place, the deeply shocked Hogan found himself saying, "...What?"

It was obvious that Hogan was being held down by an immense force, and this caused the woman in black and the man with the tailcoat's eyelids to begin twitching rapidly.

“While I wasn’t a match for you at the time, you’re but an ant to me now!” replied Gerald as a strong beam of light suddenly shot out from one of his fingers!

Both rapid and strong, the light sliced through Hogan as though it were a sword... And a second later, disgusting sounds could be heard as Hogan was split clean in half!

Watching as Hogan’s purplish-black flesh seared open extremely bloodily, desperation began filling everyone’s eyes again. Even the remaining duo—from the Squad of Judgment Portal—found themselves tensing up considerably!

“...H-how powerful...! Ariana, detain him here! I’ll be calling for reinforcements!” instructed the man in the tailcoat.

Drawing in a cold breath, the man—who was particularly good at the lightness skill—felt his body sway slightly...

Anyone looking at him at that moment then stared wide-eyed as the man disappeared out the window!

Now all alone, Ariana’s fear instantly doubled! Though her immediate thought was to escape, she knew that it simply wasn’t going to happen.

Gerald himself simply waved his hand in a slashing moment, and soon enough, pieces of Ariana’s diced-up body flopped to the ground.

Seeing that it had only taken Gerald a few minutes to completely turn the tables, Quigley found himself gulping as he stuttered, “T-this... This...!”

Not even realizing that he had wet himself, Quigley instantly knelt before shouting, “M-Mr. Crawford...!”

“You said you were extremely intelligent, no? Do you have any idea how many people have told me the same thing? I do wonder what goes on in those brains of yours... To be able to so confidently boast about your intellect... Compared to all of you, I barely have any confidence most of the time!” replied Gerald as he looked into Quigley’s eyes.

“P-please spare my life, Mr. Crawford...! I... I was forced to do all this...! L-look, since that man’s headed off to call for reinforcements, I’m sure the King of Judgment Portal and Yreth will be rushing over soon...! With that in mind, please give me a chance to redeem myself! If you spare my life, I’ll show you an excellent escape route...!” pleaded Quigley as he continuously bumped his forehead against the ground.

“...Gerald, about that person...” muttered Jasmine, clearly worried about the man in the tailcoat who had escaped.

Hearing that, Gerald casually walked toward the window before saying, “Close your eyes, Jasmine!”

“...H-huh? I... Alright!” replied Jasmine as she instantly did as she was told.

Once he was sure she had done so, Gerald closed his own eyes... And at that moment, a golden eye appeared on his forehead!

The second his third eye opened, an explosive sound was heard as the entire private room was engulfed in a blinding, golden light!

Upon seeing the light, several people instantly began screaming in pain as they covered their eyes. Some of them were even convulsing on the floor at this point, foaming from their mouths as they continued suffering.

Not long after, a shockwave aimed at the sky was launched out of the golden eye...

#### Chapter 1443

Meanwhile, the man in the tailcoat was still soaring in the sky, his heart beating wildly as he thought, ‘That was way too terrifying...! I need to get as far away as possible from him...! I truly hadn’t expected that guy’s training to be even more vicious than my master’s! Thank god I retreated quickly!’

The second his thought ended, however, he immediately felt himself being tugged! Turning to look at what was holding him back, he was shocked to find out that not only had a lasso of searing light caught onto him—preventing him from going any further—, but a shockwave with immense power was now shooting toward him at high speed!

His eyes now fully widened, the man immediately began screaming as he desperately tried to free himself. Unfortunately, that wasn't about to happen, and with an explosive sound, the shockwave shot through his body, leaving only fine dust behind...!

It was then when Gerald finally reopened his eyes back at the house. Upon closing his golden eye, everything else returned to normal.

While that was the case, Quigley—who was now suffering from a terrible headache and extremely pained eyes—found himself sweating profusely as he thought, 'This... This person's a demon without a doubt...! His frighteningly pressuring aura alone is enough to make people find it hard to breathe...!'

With that in mind, he quickly cried out, "P-please... Please spare my life...!"

"No can do. I've sworn to myself that I'd kill anyone who hurt my friends, you know?" replied Gerald as he slowly pointed at Quigley...

The next thing Quigley knew, he had been set ablaze!

As the burning man made disgusting gurgling sounds while attempting to cry out in his agony, Quigley was eventually put to rest, though only when he was nothing more than a pile of burnt, rotten flesh.

After witnessing all that, everyone—including Jasmine—found themselves gulping in fear.

Eventually, Jasmine found herself turning to look at the man before her. The man whom she had missed and loved this entire time... Somehow... He felt quite unfamiliar now...

Jasmine still remembered the first time she had met him two years ago... Back then, his soul was pure and his heart, kind... He also seemed to just exude an aura of simplicity at the time...

Despite having all the prestige in the world with the title of 'Mr. Crawford', the Gerald back then didn't have an arrogant or domineering attitude at all...

Jasmine knew very well that the past Gerald had still felt rather inferior... Due to that, he was slightly cowardly and easily grew awkward when he had to deal with multiple affairs at a time.

'Haha... Now that I think about it, Gerald was still quite cute at the time... Before I knew it, I found myself growing attracted to his past characteristics...'

Now, however, the Gerald she used to know was nowhere to be seen... He was way too cold and cruel now...

While Quigley and all the others Gerald had killed certainly deserved to die, Gerald could've easily ended them without having them suffer... Despite that, he had killed each of them in the most merciless way possible...

Adding that to the fact that there were still traces of murderous intent reflected in his eyes, Jasmine found herself feeling afraid to even approach him now...

"...Everything's fine now, so let's go," muttered Gerald in a casual tone.

"...Go.... Where are we headed to Gerald...?" asked Jasmine as she snapped out of it.

"We're off to exterminate the rest of the Gunters!" declared Gerald as he slowly walked out.

Meanwhile, all the way on the island owned by the Crawfords—that was currently being used as the base for the Gunters, the Simes, and those from Judgment Portal—the Gunters were busy planning on how to rebuild their family there. After all, the island was pretty spacious and their manor had been razed to the ground anyway.

Amidst everything that was happening, a voice from the Crawford family's square could suddenly be heard shouting, "You dirty b\*stards! And here I thought the Gunters were a cryptic and prestigious family! Looking at you now, you're all just a bunch of robbers!"

Chapter 1444



The voice belonged to Peter, and he was currently being hung up at the square as several Gunters—who had been listening to his scowls—glared at him.

Unable to take any more humiliation, one of the Gunter family's disciples icily sneered, "To think you'd still say such cr\*p when you're in such a state... I've decided! I'm breaking all your teeth right this instant! Let's see you try to be arrogant then!"

Just as the disciple was about to make his move, however, he froze in place when a sudden, distinct voice shouted, "Stop right there!"

"Lady Gunter!" declared the other disciples—who were present at the square—extremely respectfully.

"Step down!" ordered Yreth who was now walking toward Peter with a group of people behind her.

Arms against her back, Yreth looked at Peter with a smile as she said, "You know, I heard that a mysterious and extremely exceptional man made his appearance a few years back... He was said to have exceptional archery skills, and was a top-notch marksman... While I was compelled to think that the person came from a new cryptic family, I truly hadn't expected him to be you, of all people!"

While she had to admit that Peter was extremely strong, even he was unable to withstand a single blow from the King of Judgment Portal back when they bumped into each other.

"You old witch! If you wish to end me, then just do it already and spare me the nonsense!" retorted Peter.

"Oh, don't worry, you'll die a little later! Haha! Still, now that I think about it, you resemble a person I used to know quite a bit... Could you be Daryl's second son?" asked Yreth casually.

Upon hearing that, Peter's eyelids twitched slightly.

Puzzled, he then asked, "...You know my father...?"

“Of course I do. The Gunters and the Crawfords have had certain relationships before, you know? Regardless, it truly hadn’t occurred to me that the descendant of that cunning old man could actually be a powerful hero!” scowled Yreth at the mention of Daryl.

While it was a norm for others to get angered whenever they heard others bad-mouthing their fathers, Peter simply took in a deep breath before asking, “...What exactly was his relationship with your family?”

“Haha! So you truly don’t know! I see, I see... Well, I suppose it’s not unexpected from him. After all, he’s a person who’s able to do just about anything! He probably only sees you, his biological son, as nothing but a pawn! I’m saying it now that you’ve been constantly lied to and tricked by him!” replied Yreth.

“Well, since you’re going to die later anyway, I don’t mind sharing what I know. Maybe you’ll finally be able to see what kind of person Daryl really is! First off, I need you to understand that your family is nothing but a preposterous joke! Once you’re done listening to my part of the story, let’s see if you still think that we’re the real robbers!” sneered Yreth.

Frowning slightly, Peter said nothing though he kept his ears peeled.

“Now then, where to begin... I’m assuming that to you, Daryl’s a responsible father who’s good at business and has several other strong capabilities, correct? Well, he’s none of that. He’s nothing but a true b\*stard, that’s what he is! In case you haven’t noticed, the Crawford family’s history isn’t as simple as merely being a rich and powerful family that’s lasted for almost a thousand years! You were simply lied to!”

“The truth is, you Crawfords began as a cryptic family as well! In fact, you were the strongest cryptic family on the planet for the longest time! After all, your family was capable of using a multitude of extraordinary and remarkable secret techniques. Truth be told, there was such a huge gap between your family’s secret techniques compared to the other cryptic families that it wouldn’t be a stretch to say that the Crawfords—in their early years—were close to reaching the level of those living in Jaellatra!” explained Yreth.

“The Crawfords... Were initially a cryptic family...?” replied Peter, clearly surprised. If that were truly the case, then there was a possibility that some of the mysteries that he had been unable to solve in his heart could finally be solved.

“Indeed. Your family almost died out overnight when Daryl was only sixteen, you know? He was the only survivor who managed to escape with his life intact. Regardless, since the Crawfords were no longer in the picture, the Gunters naturally took their place in becoming the most powerful cryptic family at the time.”

“A crucial thing to note is that the Crawfords have been going against the Gunters for the longest time. With that in mind, that cunning old man made sure to place the entire blame—of the Crawford family’s mass slaughter—on our family! You have no idea how many times he attempted to take revenge on the Gunters. There was seemingly no end to his cunning schemes! Unfortunately for him, however, he was nowhere as strong as the exceptional Crawford family members that existed during your family’s earlier years. With that said, all his schemes simply ended in failure!”

“Eventually, however, he plotted to steal our family’s most precious treasure! I’d like you to know that he didn’t even hesitate to kill the innocent people living in the surrounding villages as a means to force us out! In the end, we surrounded and attacked him, understanding that he had simply gone too far. Following that, he was seriously injured though he did manage to flee!” sneered Yreth.

By that point, the glossiness in Peter’s eyes almost suggested that he was in some sort of trance. However, he quickly snapped out of it, and after thinking for a while, he then replied, “...So what you’re saying is that though he clearly knew that he was unable to go against the Gunters, he still tried to use all sorts of ways to launch surprise attacks against your family? Also, he, of all people, should’ve definitely known that your family would have no real way of exterminating ours... With that in mind, why had he continuously pestered your family like that...?”

“Hahaha! With your great deductive abilities, I have no doubts that you truly are Daryl’s son... Regardless, you’re absolutely correct. Even though he was a fool, it was pretty much impossible for him not to know that the Gunters didn’t have the power to even come close to exterminating your family back then, especially since that was the Crawford family’s most glorious and prosperous period. The truth is, he had been constantly pestering us since he had learned of a dreadful secret...”

Chapter 1445

“...A secret?” asked Peter.

“Indeed. I didn’t know about it either in the beginning... Before moving any further, however, I’ll have you know that for the longest time, I was only aware of the existence of your family’s most valuable treasure, that being the picture of the sun. Not only is it capable of foretelling things, but it’s also rich with training techniques! It truly is a treasure among treasures! Regardless, what I’m assuming is that he must have learned something from it.”

“After all, after we beat him up, we were surprised to find out that he managed to escape right under our noses! Though I contacted several champions and their families to hunt him down, we never found him again. It was about twenty years later when the Crawford family suddenly reappeared, and when it did, it shockingly already owned over half the wealth on the planet! The Crawfords controlled the economic lifeline of the world!”

“Even so, a lot of us doubted that the Crawfords who reappeared were established by Daryl. After all, Daryl was still missing, and after a bit of research, we found out that the leader at the time was Dylan. As was expected, we also found out that nobody knew a thing about Dylan’s father. Speaking of which, there’s something else you need to know! Your father’s original name wasn’t Daryl! His true name is Lucero! Lucero Crawford!” explained Yreth, clear contempt on her face.

“Still, he truly is an intelligent person, you know? Had my family not gotten acquainted with the King of Judgment Portal, we’d surely have continued getting fooled by him! He’s an expert at lying and making up stories, that’s for sure! Either way, I’m also sure he was well aware that Gerald’s body held many secrets! Secrets of which few in the world—including the Gunters—know the exact details about!” added Yreth.

By that point, Peter was already frowning slightly. After all, if Yreth wasn’t lying, then all his worries had just been proven to be true.

There were some things that Peter hadn’t mentioned to Gerald before. While he did tell Gerald about the mysterious man who had been stalking him for who knows how long, Peter hadn’t told Gerald that he had once exposed his whereabouts, and was completely ready to fight the mysterious man.

During that process, Peter had successfully torn off the man’s veil, and though the man managed to instantly cover his face, all Peter needed was a simple glance for him to recognize the man’s eyes and appearance.

“Dad?!” called out Peter at the time, feeling as though he had just been struck by lightning.

‘...The man in black clothes... Had been dad this entire time...?! No, there’s got to be a mistake... I must have made a mistake, right...?’ wondered Peter at the time, trying his best to think of a more plausible answer.

As he thought about it, he recalled how strong his father's martial arts skills were when Peter was still a child.

'After escaping from Jaellatra, my training has definitely increased by leaps and bounds... However, if that person truly is dad, then how could he be even stronger than me now...?'

With so many questions in mind, Peter had decided to continue concealing his identity to investigate more in secret. He wanted to find out whether his father's intentions toward Gerald were good or evil.

Whatever the case was, that discovery had stemmed from an incident that he had come across earlier on. At the time, not only had his father stunned Gerald, but he had even snuck into Gerald's body! Following that, he had checked Gerald's bodily conditions, though he found no changes to Gerald's body.

It was also the reason why Peter had concealed the fact—from Jasmine—that his face wasn't actually ruined. After all, he was still unable to figure out his father's true intentions, and the vagueness continued up till the point he found out that several people had died horribly during the most recent pledge of the holy water...

#### Chapter 1446

After realizing that his father's corpse wasn't among the other dead bodies, Peter was finally able to see the bigger picture.

However, something still puzzled him. Why was his father being this cruel? What had prompted him to do all that?

"Well? I wonder what you're feeling now that you finally know what kind of person your father is actually like! Though from your expression, I'm assuming that you had already felt that something was amiss some time ago, correct? Hahaha!" said Yreth with a laugh.

"...I admit that I was aware that something was amiss. Even so, there's something else I don't quite get. The Gunters themselves have plotted many schemes. What were all those for? Also, let's not forget that several innocents have ended up dying as your grand scheme played out! How could you have just played around with and manipulated the lives of so many people?" retorted Peter with strong indignation. After all, he, too, was one of the grand scheme's victims.

“Besides, about the part where you said that you didn’t know about the secrets within Gerald too well... I wonder how true that statement is... After all, I heard from Miss Lockland that you’re quite aware that Gerald seems to be a reincarnation of some kind of powerful deity!” added Peter.

Shaking her head, Yreth then replied, “While Zyla and the King of Judgment Portal may have said that Gerald is a reincarnation of a powerful deity, both of them only know about that through a rumor from Jaellatra. From what the King of Judgment Portal told me, the rumor definitely attracted no shortage of people. Even so, nobody—the King of Judgment Portal included—has been able to confirm the authenticity of that rumor. Whatever the case is, deity or not, Gerald still possesses a frightening amount of power, and whoever manages to get their hands on it will surely be able to rule the three divisions of the world! Many from Jaellatra call the power the Herculean Primordial Spirit, and you know even they find it powerful since they’ve attached such a wonderful rumor to it!”

“Regardless, since nobody knows what secrets lie within Gerald’s body yet, many forces have already begun targeting the Crawford family in recent years. From the looks of it, Daryl already knew about the secret for quite some time. After all, he had already taken action long before all this! Knowing that he wouldn’t be able to deal with so many forces alone, he had made sure to remain in hiding for all those years, only daring to finally show his face again quite recently!” explained Yreth.

“...I see. You know, my father once told me that our family would be annihilated according to the picture of the sun’s prophecy... Could that have been referring to these incidents?” asked Peter, feeling enlightened.

“Right, you are. You Crawfords need to repay for all the things you’ve done, and it’s a massive price to pay! All of you are to be exterminated without question! Even so, I’m sure that your cunning old Daryl already knows about this. After all, he’s extremely competent when it comes to planning ahead. You know, in order to divert our attention, he actually established two Crawford families! If you’re wondering how, he’s conceived many, many children at the same time by sleeping with countless women! If you’re still feeling doubtful then let me ask you this. If the Crawfords truly are such a grand family that hands down its properties from one generation to the next, tell me, have you ever met your second or third uncle? Have you even heard about your grandpa before? In fact, I’m pretty sure that you’ve never even met your mother before, right? I’ll say it right now that though the Crawford family has a large family tree, most of them are adopted children who were taken in by your father! Only your family is his direct descendant!”

After hearing all that, Peter felt like he had just been struck by lightning!

'...There... There are two Crawford families...? But how could that be...?! Though, she does have a point... I've never met my mother before... Hell, I've never even heard anything about her up till this point...! Even so, that's the least of my worries now... If what she's saying is true, then are there currently two halves of our family currently existing...?'

"Regardless, I do have to say that Daryl is exceedingly capable... After all, we only managed to find out about the other Crawford family a few years ago. His diversion truly was a success... You know, while everyone was busy paying attention on Gerald and your half of the Crawford family, the other Crawfords have long developed. Upon finding out about that, the Gunters were utterly devastated! Had the King of Judgment Portal not decided to step in, my family would have ceased to exist long ago!" said Yreth, a hint of fear on her face.

"With that said, not only are we trying to get hold of Gerald to acquire all the secrets of his body, but we're also trying to ruin Daryl's plans. After all, the Gunters will truly end up losing the ability to protect ourselves should this incident continue to develop... He's such a terrifying man that we have a feeling that Daryl had already established communication with the forces of Jaellatra, long before anyone else had!"

Chapter 1447

"...And where exactly is this other Crawford family...? Also, you mentioned something about other forces earlier... What forces are they?" asked Peter. As was expected, this incident was far from simple...

"Nobody knows where the other Crawfords are. I simply know that my family would've been exterminated ages ago had the King of Judgment Portal not stepped in. I do know, however, that the other Crawfords are exceedingly strong... Even beyond your wildest imagination...! And as for the forces... Tell me, who do you think stands at the peak of the world?" replied Yreth as she turned to look at Peter.

"I have no idea. However, I am certain that such a position isn't reserved for a cryptic family like yours! I was fortunate enough to meet several powerful people in the world, and I'm sure there are many others out there who are equally as powerful! Regardless, the ones I've come across are undoubtedly stronger than those from cryptic families like yours. Hell, they're even more powerful than those from warrior families who have special blood types! I do find it funny, though. After all, while all of you are nothing compared to them, all of you still consider yourselves to be the most powerful families!"

"Hmm... Though what you just said is easily enough reason for me to kill you a hundred times over, only half of what you said was true. For your information, my family truly is at the top in selected areas. However, just as you've said, if we're looking at things on a global scale, the true order is controlled by extremely powerful forces. Even so, we're protected by the thought of the King of Judgment Portal's

soul. With that in mind, nobody is daring enough to shake that till the primary part of his soul is released by Gerald. Following that, his strength will greatly increase, and with the additional help from the ancestor of my family, we'll certainly be able to form another force and compete against those people!"

"While that was the initial plan, the thought of my ancestor's soul was ruined by Gerald before he was even able to recover the primary part of his soul! Due to that, Gerald has to pay!" declared Yreth before taking in a deep breath.

Watching as she glared sternly at him, Peter then asked, "Is the Crawford family one of those forces?"

"But of course. Those people control everything! In fact, most of the innocents you mentioned were mutilated by them, so they're the person you should be hating! Regardless, once the Gunter family acquires Gerald and gains control over the world, who knows, maybe the situation will end up becoming better!" replied Yreth, a hint of delight in her tone.

"Apologies for being straightforward, but you're far from capable of fighting against Gerald at your current strength... Are you not afraid?" asked Peter as he looked at her sympathetically.

"Hahaha! Trying to scare me? Well, it certainly is true that Gerald owns mysterious powers... After all, the strength of his soul alone was sufficient in ruining the thought of my ancestor's soul...! However, you should know that he's way weaker than me. Even if he has gotten slightly stronger, what do you think this is?" asked Yreth as she revealed a bead and showed it to Peter.

"This here, is a formation specially made to deal with Gerald... Once it's activated, it'll be impossible for him to escape! I made sure to have this made since I've already heard rumors that it's no longer effective against Gerald..." sneered Yreth.

"...Rumors? 'It'...?" asked Peter with a frown.

"I'm talking about the Dead Annie, of course. The strange plant that exists between heaven and earth... Back then, I had used it as a sure-fire way to suppress Gerald, and though I planned to continue dealing with him using the same method, to think that in the end, he actually managed to snatch the Dead Annie Mother away! With that in mind, I feel that Dead Annies will no longer be useful against him!"



“...I see. Regardless, suit yourselves. I hope your family doesn’t come to regret your final choice!” replied Peter with a nod.

“With all due respect, Lady Gunter, this person’s been putting our family down far too many times by this point. Do allow me to teach him a lesson!” growled one of the Gunter disciples in dissatisfaction.

“As long as he’s still breathing by the time you’re done, you’re free to do whatever you want!” replied Yreth with a slight nod.

What the disciple had said was true. Even under such circumstances, Peter didn’t seem to be the least afraid of the Gunters, and it made Yreth seethe with anger. It was the reason why she wasn’t completely against teaching him a lesson or two.

Upon getting Yreth’s approval, the disciple then took a step forward, ready to launch an attack! However, the second he made his move, a beam of light suddenly shot toward him!

An explosive sound later, it took everyone a second to realize that the person’s arm had exploded! Not only that, but the disciple had been flung to the side with such force, that he was now nothing but a lump of dead flesh.

Utterly shocked and horrified, all the Gunters slowly turned around to see who the culprit was. Even Yreth—whose eyelids were now twitching extremely rapidly—did the same as she roared, “Who the hell did that...?!”

The immediate response she got, however, was a tight slap to her face! She wasn’t even able to come close to dodging it!

Looking around in panic, Yreth felt another hard slap on her other cheek, sending several of her broken teeth scattering across the ground!

Though she was now extremely dizzy, her anger had also amplified as she growled, “Who the hell are you...?!”

Seeing how helpless Yreth was against the assailant, all the other Gunters found themselves looking around in fear as well. As immense terror peaked among those currently in the square, everyone heard a soft 'thud' behind them, prompting them to look at where Peter was...

To their utter shock, Peter had broken free from his restraints! The thud had come from the fallen ropes that had been cut clean in half... And the one who had cut them, was none other than Gerald! The youth who was currently slowly descending onto the rockery in the middle of the square...!

Chapter 1448

"...Gerald...!" growled Yreth, her eyes bloodshot as she glared at him in shock.

'How... How is this even possible...?! To think I'd actually be unable to take him on!' Yreth thought to herself in her sheer disbelief.

"I heard you've been waiting for me to show myself, Yreth! Well, here I am!" replied Gerald.

"So you've grown stronger, have you, Gerald... That's good...! That's more than enough proof to show how frightening the power in your body is...!" added Yreth as she laughed out loud despite still seething with rage.

"Be careful of the bead in her hand, Gerald! That's a formation!" shouted Peter just as Yreth began activating it!

With immense speed and precision, Yreth quickly tossed the formation toward the space above Gerald while shouting, "Now hurry up and get captured without putting up a fight!"

Now right above Gerald, the formation quickly began expanding, and the sight of it immediately caused the excited Yreth's expression to turn twisted and hideous!

However, her excitement instantly plummeted the second she saw the formation retracting... and a split second later, there was a brief flash before the formation disappeared entirely!

"...W-what...?" muttered Yreth who was now beading trails of sweat off her forehead.

Following that, Gerald's body momentarily disappeared... and the next thing anyone knew, he was now standing before Yreth!

Looking at the stunned woman, he momentarily frowned before asking with a subtle smile, "Now what could that have been... Was it made to kill people...? Or was it perhaps just some toddler's toy...? Whatever the case is, how disappointing!"

"D-disappointing...? The hell are you being disappointed for...?!" replied Yreth as she took a few steps back.

The Gerald before her now... He was utterly terrifying...!

"Well, I was kind of expecting your grand scheme to be a bit more... major, you know? A bit more climactic, at the very least? After all, you did go through so much just to set me up... How couldn't I be disappointed when your trump card is nothing by this toy? I was feeling hopeful too, thinking that you'd at least put up a fight after shouting for me to be captured so confidently! While that could've been a side dish, serving that bead as your main dish? That's just sad..." said Gerald.

Her face now reddened with wrath after hearing Gerald's humiliating words, Yreth instantly retorted, "You... You'd best not get too conceited...!"

Still, it truly hadn't occurred to her that Gerald would get this strong this quickly...! Slipping a smoke bomb out from her sleeve and into her hand, Yreth then added, "While you may be a great force now, know that you aren't too far from the day you'll finally be killed! Regardless, you've got me! Just kill me if you want to!"

Yreth was rather confident that with the aid of the smoke bomb, she would be able to make her escape. The next time the two clashed again, she would definitely take him down...!

Just as her train of thought ended, she suddenly felt an acute pain in her chest! Looking down, she realized that a beam of light had just pierced through her heart...!

Seeing that, the quivering old woman then slowly looked up... and saw that Gerald had doomed her by simply pointing his finger at her!

Vomiting blood as she collapsed to the ground, her eyes were fully widened in her utter bewilderment and disbelief!

'Shouldn't he have asked me when his dying day would be...?! Following that, I should have gotten the chance to detain him! Once that was done, we would've simply needed to wait for the King of Judgment Portal to come over...! By that point, Gerald capture would've been in the bag for sure! To think that... That he'd make a move the second my statement ended...! I... I'm dying...' Thought the aggrieved Yreth to herself.

If only she had known that all this would happen, she wouldn't have beaten around the bush... But it was far too late for regrets now, and soon enough, Yreth drew her final breath.

Upon seeing that, the rest of the Gunters were instantly overwhelmed with fright, and all of them instantly began kneeling as they pleaded, "P-please spare our lives, Mr. Crawford...! We were only following her orders! I-if you let us live, we can tell you something important...!"

Naturally, begging him for mercy was only a front. The important thing was for them to survive! Though none of them liked the idea of begging him for their lives, they needed to ensure that at least one of them remained to take their eventual revenge on Gerald...!

To their utter shock, Gerald simply casually replied, "I'm not interested in any of that. You'll all still be dying today!"

Chapter 1449

Following that, matrix formations began enveloping everyone within the Gunter family, and anyone caught within them instantly felt a sense of looming death. Despite knowing that the Gunters were all feeling a cocktail of shock, fright, remorse, and anger, Gerald didn't care.

If he didn't kill them all today, they'd surely return as villains sooner or later. With that in mind, Gerald wasn't going to be soft-hearted on them anymore.

Within seconds of being ensnared within the matrix formations that Gerald's golden eye emitted, all the Gunters were reduced into nothing but fine dust.

Peter himself was honestly horrified beyond words. Gerald's most recent change... How absolutely horrible...

A little while later—after rescuing Jasmine, Leo, and the others—Peter called Gerald over to the manor's secret room. After Peter relayed what he had earlier learned from Yreth, Gerald found himself utterly shocked.

“So... You mean to say that grandpa isn't dead, Second uncle...? Not only that, but he's also the mysterious man who's been monitoring me this entire time...?”

“Indeed! I didn't tell you about it at the time since I wasn't certain about it yet... However, I now have confirmation that that truly seems to be the case!” replied Peter, a complicated expression on his face.

After hearing all that, Gerald recalled how familiar the mysterious man had felt when he had fought against him while Gerald was still in the past. Now that his uncle had clarified the situation, Gerald tried to remember more about that incident.

‘...That person's gaze... In the end, there's no mistaking that it was exceedingly similar to my grandpa's... But... Doesn't that signify that the mysterious man was grandpa? Was grandpa really the one who ruined my Dehlere Foundation...? While uncle did warn me to be mentally prepared for this revelation, I can't help but feel doubtful about all this... After all, the grandpa I know has always been a loving person, especially to me... No matter how I look at it, I just don't feel that he's the kind of person who hides his identity and controls everything from behind the scenes...’

‘However... If he truly is the culprit, then the Dead Annie that he grew back at the Soul Palace explains quite a bit too... For one, he definitely didn't grow the Dead Annie just to display them as a trophy garden!’

“...Even if that's the case, I'd like to have a talk with grandpa about all this first when we finally meet again... Until then, I refuse to fully believe in all this!” said Gerald.

Nodding, Peter then replied, “But of course. We'll just have to wait till we find him in order to clear things out. As for the other Crawford family... I'm going to begin investigating as soon as possible!”

With that, both Gerald and his uncle talked late into the night...

Deep inside, the duo knew for a fact that neither of them was willing to truly admit that there was a serious problem with Daryl... However, with the way things were going, both of them knew that the truth was pointing in that direction...

After all, his grandfather knew about the ancient tomb's location as well. It was completely plausible for his grandfather to have entered the cave, killed the snake, and carried Liemis's corpse away...

Thinking back, Master Ghost had also warned Gerald before this, stating that Gerald had to be careful of the people around him... While Gerald hadn't paid the warning much heed at the time, he now found himself wondering whether Master Ghost had been telling him to be careful of his grandfather...

'...Actually, hold on. Master Ghost!' Gerald suddenly thought.

Ever since that incident regarding Queena, Master Ghost had gone missing. Where could he be now?

'If I'm able to locate him, he'll surely be able to tell me some secrets!'

From what his uncle had told him, Zyla had gone someplace else to avoid the pursuit of the King of Judgment Portal. With that in mind, she probably wasn't going to be back anytime soon... Due to that, Master Ghost truly was his only option of proceeding from this point on.

'Where could my family be...? And what about the things regarding grandpa? I probably won't be solving these questions without Master Ghost's help...' Gerald thought to himself as he instantly began wondering how to find him...

When morning came, the uncle and nephew immediately began discussing the routes they would take next.

By the end of it, it was decided that Peter would help him inquire about Zyla's location. He would also attempt to look for Lyra.

Leo and the others, on the other hand, were responsible for transferring the headquarters of the Crawford family to Mayberry.

As for Gerald, he decided to return to Langvern Mountain first. After all, while he did manage to hear Master Ghost's advice from Zenny, he hadn't been able to listen to the rest of her description.

Chapter 1450

After Queena headed there, Gerald wasn't even sure whether Zenny still remained...

It was a few days later when Gerald finally arrived at Langvern Mountain.

While he had anticipated for the place to be desolate, to his surprise, there was a long queue leading up to the mountain! With how crowded it was, Gerald was reminded of how the place had been like in the past before Master Ghost left.

'What on earth is happening...? Could Master Ghost have returned...?' asked Gerald as he walked up the mountain in his bewilderment.

The more he saw, the more surprised he became. After all, several people seemed to be standing respectfully all over the place, and there were even more of them kneeling in the direction of Langvern Church. With how devout each of them looked, they looked similar to loyal followers who had undergone a millennia of baptism.

Feeling slightly amused, Gerald simply shook his head slightly with a wry smile on his face.

Before he was able to proceed any further, someone suddenly shouted, "You there! Stop where you are!"

Turning around to see who had called out to him, Gerald was immediately greeted by the sight of an angry-looking woman—in her twenties—who had her hair tied in a ponytail.

Looking at the woman—who had both her hands against her waist—Gerald then smiled subtly before asking, "Do I know you, miss?"

“Let me do the questioning first! Why were you smiling while looking at my kneeling grandpa? Was that mockery I sensed?” asked the woman as she frowned.

Truth be told, she had already noticed Gerald for a while. After all, while the others had been respectfully lining up at the base of the mountain—either standing or kneeling—not only did this guy just walk straight up, he had done so with an indifferent expression on his face! And now he was displaying a bitter smile!

While she had heard about people who preferred doing things their way instead of following societal norms, this was her first time meeting such an unconventional person! What more, he had even placed himself above her grandfather! How couldn't she be angry?

“I wasn't mocking your grandfather. I was simply wondering why you were all kneeling here at Langvern Mountain despite the fact that all of you look prestigious and powerful!” replied Gerald.

“You...! To think you'd still retort so rudely...! You're definitely asking for it!” growled the wrathful woman, thinking that Gerald was mocking them again.

‘Who the hell do you even think you are? Since you're so undaunted, I'll teach you a lesson you'll never forget!’ Thought the woman to herself as she swiftly lifted her arm to land a punch on him!

As she did so, her grandfather—and another middle-aged man who had been kneeling beside him—both looked up.

The old man knew his granddaughter's strength well. Both fast, and powerful, the woman's strength alone was comparable to the strength of ten young men! With that in mind, her grandfather could only smile subtly as he thought, ‘This undaunted young man... He's about to suffer a loss for sure...’

“It was merely a question... Either way, I don't mind if you refuse to answer... Is there really a need to start a fight?” said Gerald with a wry smile as he shook his head after seeing her punch coming right at him. Instead of counter attacking or dodging, he simply turned around slowly before continuing to walk off. Such things were dull to him by this point.



Regardless, the second the extraordinarily strong girl's fist came close enough to land, everyone found themselves instantly stunned when the attack simply brushed past Gerald's body! Gerald's movements were so fluid that it almost seemed as though he was a martial arts director who had rehearsed that action for countless times! In fact, the maneuver was so skillful that it almost seemed like Gerald had only avoided the attack by coincidence!

"...W-what...?" muttered the woman, filled with incredulity that her punch could miss.

By that point, everyone who had witnessed the scene—including her grandfather and the middle-aged man—found their eyes widened in disbelief as their breathing hastened.

"S-sir! Please, stop...!"

Chapter 1451

"What? Do you plan on attacking me as well?" asked Gerald with a subtle smile.

With the help of the middle-aged man, the old man then quickly got up before bowing slightly while saying, "We wouldn't dare, sir! You're a powerful person who's hidden your true power extremely well... How dare we normal people offend you?"

Though elderly, the white-haired old man bore a youthful complexion. Regardless, since he looked like someone who had a considerably high status, the fact that he was speaking and behaving so humbly toward Gerald made everyone—his granddaughter included—stare in disbelief.

"...Grandpa, what are you saying? Why are you being so polite to this b\*stard? Whatever the case is, since my punch missed earlier, I'll make sure the next one lands and ruins his face!" growled the woman whose initial shock quickly turned into wrath.

Just as she was about to launch another attack, the old man instantly scowled, "Stop right there, Perla! Don't be rude!"

Though Perla Sherwin was clearly reluctant to obey that order—a sentiment that the middle-aged man from before seemed to agree with—she deeply respected her grandfather, which was why she simply obeyed and stood at the side.

Following that, the old man then smiled—hoping to please Gerald—before saying, “Now then, you were asking my insensible granddaughter why we were kneeling here, correct?”

After seeing Gerald’s nod, the old man then explained, “Well, you see, a person called Master Ghost used to live here, and he was a wise man who could come up with extremely clever strategies and tactics. His claim to fame, however, was his ability to read one’s future. Thinking back, he truly had a number of skills that defied the heavens... While he did eventually leave without a trace, someone called Master Crawford soon took over his place! Not only is Master Crawford capable of drawing charms to save people, but he’s also able to control swords and fly on them! He truly owns an arsenal of remarkable abilities... I came here myself to beg for a charm, you see! With any luck, I hope that the master will also take my insensible granddaughter as his disciple after some begging!”

Even before his granddaughter had attacked Gerald, the old man had sensed a rather extraordinary aura surrounding Gerald... Being someone who had seen much of how the world worked, the old man found himself feeling slightly nervous of the aura, though he couldn’t quite put his finger on why yet at the time... After seeing how proficient Gerald was in martial arts, however, the old man instantly realized that Gerald was the cream of the crop, a person whose abilities and world views were unfathomable...

Terrified by that realization, it was because of that that the old man was treating Gerald with so much respect now.

Regardless, Gerald took a look around after hearing the old man’s explanation. From what he could see, most of the kneeling people were middle-aged men, though there was a young child among the crowd. If what the old man had said was true, then all of them were either here to plead for medical treatment or beg the master to take their children under his wing.

Gerald had also taken note that there was now a new master on Langvern Mountain who bore the surname of Crawford...

“What’s the master’s full name?” asked Gerald.

“Master Crawford’s full name is Gerald Crawford, if I’m not mistaken!” replied the old man respectfully.

“...Oh? His name is Master Gerald Crawford, you say?” replied Gerald, feeling intrigued as he tried to hold back from laughing.

'To think that this sword-riding master would actually share a name with me... Still, there aren't many in the world who are capable of bragging about riding swords...' Gerald thought to himself, now keen on meeting this remarkable person in order to widen his knowledge.

With that, Gerald then turned around and began walking up Langvern Mountain again, completely disregarding the old man.

Seeing that, Perla was instantly shocked as she thought, 'You... How dare you not pay attention to my grandpa...?!'

Unable to hold back her anger, she then rushed toward Gerald, aiming to land a kick against his back as she yelled, "You truly are asking for death!"

While both the middle-aged man and Perla's grandfather had already arrived at a consensus that Gerald wasn't someone to be trifled with, they quickly realized that the same couldn't be said for Perla as she got closer and closer to attacking him.

They weren't going to be able to stop her in time!

However, everyone watching found themselves momentarily frozen in place when they saw what happened next.

'...W-what...?' The shocked old man thought to himself as he stared wide-eyed at the paralyzed Perla.

Even Perla was in disbelief. She was now less than an inch away from Gerald, yet her feet were frozen in place. She couldn't even move her legs in the slightest!

As terror swept through her, she now felt like she had just attempted to kick a mountain just for the sake of it.

Before she could begin regretting her decision, she felt a force gently pushing her back to where she had initially been standing!

“P-Perla...!” shouted the old man in fear as he immediately tugged on his granddaughter’s hand.

Turning to look at Gerald, it was evident that his immense fear for the youth had now overtaken his feelings of respect.

“Don’t ever try me again...!”

Chapter 1452

After casually saying that, Gerald then continued walking, not even bothering to turn around.

“Are... you planning to head up there, master...?” asked the old man.

“Indeed!”

“While it’s true that you’re quite remarkable, there are many rules to Langvern Mountain... If you still wish to head up there, why not wait here for a while? After all, it’ll soon be my family’s turn—the Sherwins—to head up there! Why not go with us?” suggested the old man.

Hearing that, Gerald then thought, ‘That’s not a bad suggestion. Since they’re planning to go visit Master Gerald Crawford anyway, I may as well follow them. After all, it’ll be easier to do that compared to fighting my way in. Still, I wonder how capable that master truly is...’

Seeing Gerald nod in agreement, the old man then said, “It’s settled, then! Speaking of which, I go by Terrance Sherwin! It’s a pleasure to meet you, master!”

After exchanging pleasantries and casually talking about a few other things, Gerald and the trio entered Langvern Church together.

From what the Terrance had told Gerald, the reason why this place was so lively now was because not too long ago, a supposedly authentic video of an old man controlling and riding a sword—that flew through the forest and even across a river—suddenly began spreading around the inner circles of powerful people in the business field.

What more, the old man apparently cured a rich businessman as well. Due to that, he ended up getting extremely famous.

Following that, he took in a few disciples, and that was around the time the business was established. Things then went smoothly for a while. A few days ago, however, the old man suddenly announced that he was willing to take in a few more disciples, though they would first have to be personally assessed by him.

All that eventually led to the current turn of events.

After hearing Terrance's explanation, it was now evident to Gerald that most of the people here had come in hope of becoming one of the master's new disciples.

Regardless, the four people were only a few steps in when they saw a person being driven out while a voice shouted, "Save me the effort and just leave! With such limited talent and quite worrying levels of intelligence, I simply can't accept you as my disciple!"

Naturally, the person who was driven out looked rather dispirited.

Whatever the case was, Gerald quickly noticed that the church's large hall had now been modified to look like an examination hall of sorts.

He also saw several young people from different families respectfully waiting to be assessed.

It wasn't long after before a few young men and women walked over to them before saying, "Perla! You're here! Hurry on over!"

After greeting Perla, they then turned to look at the old man before greeting, "It's nice to meet you too, Mr. Sherwin!"

Following that, one of the men in the group then nervously said, "Say, Perla, did you know that up till this point, nobody's succeeded in becoming the master's disciple? Master Crawford's conditions truly are strict!"

"I know right? Speaking of which, Perla, who is he? Is he your boyfriend?" asked a woman from the group. If it wasn't evident enough by this point, everyone from the group was pretty well acquainted with Perla.

"...What? Of course not! He's just here to pay Master Crawford a visit!" replied Perla in slight embarrassment.

"I didn't come here to pay him a visit. I'm just here to look for some things!" replied Gerald casually.

Regardless, he had been observing Master Crawford for a while now, and though there were undoubtedly traces of essential qi coming from his body, the essential qi fluctuated rather frequently. In other words, it was sometimes strong and other times weak, a phenomenon that was quite peculiar to Gerald. After all, that was a trait that those from cryptic families tended to have. If that was the case, then Master Crawford definitely wasn't a true trainer who had trained himself to achieve spiritual enlightenment.

"...Is he truly capable of controlling swords and flying on them...?" muttered Gerald to himself, now clearly doubtful about what Terrance had earlier told him.

It was at that moment when Master Crawford's voice could be heard asking, "What's all this noise about, then?"

Those from Perla's group had been speaking quite loudly, which was why Master Crawford was now looking at them with a rather bleak expression on his face.

"Apologies, Master Crawford, but this man here just doubted your strength!" said Perla as she pointed at Gerald while smiling smugly.

Hearing that, Terrance was instantly stunned. However, that feeling quickly turned to anger as he shouted, "Perla! What on earth are you talking about?!"

While it was true that anyone who had witnessed Gerald's performance earlier would feel that he was way stronger than Master Crawford, Perla was simply being too unruly! She didn't even seem to care about the implication of her statement!

'Powerful, aren't you? If you're so powerful then go out there and have a real fight! Let's see how long you'll last against an exceptional man like Master Crawford!' Perla thought to herself.

Chapter 1453

"...Oh? There's actually someone who dares doubt me?" said Master Crawford as he squinted his eyes at the direction where Gerald and the others were.

At the same time, many of the people in the large hall were staring at Gerald with bewildered gazes. After all, saying such a thing was akin to Gerald courting death!

Gerald himself could only display a bitter smile. Since things had already gotten to such a state, there was no point in beating around the bush anymore. With that in mind, he decided that it'd be better for him to just straightforwardly reveal his true thoughts.

"Indeed. Regardless, you'll have to forgive me for being rather blunt, but your remarkable skills... They're honestly nothing but simple tricks that barely have any functions at all, Master Crawford!" replied Gerald.

The second his sentence ended, a huge ruckus instantly erupted! For a person to doubt the master like that... He truly was asking for death!

Master Crawford himself now felt his eyelids twitching slightly. To think that he was being humiliated in public, and during his disciple selecting process, no less!

Watching as Master Crawford slowly stood up, Perla—who had been standing quietly at the side for a while—excitedly said, "Look! Master Crawford's about to demonstrate his power!"

While she had to admit that the strange, young man was much stronger than her, in the end, he looked to only be around the same age as her. With that in mind, she wasn't convinced that Gerald deserved

the respect that her grandfather was giving to him, and she hoped that once Master Crawford was done with him, her grandfather would share her sentiment.

Regardless, Master Crawford's actions had caught the full attention of several people by this point.

"Who even is this mad person? How dare he doubt Master Crawford!"

"I know, right? How undaunted! Someone like him will only come to regret things when he's close to dying!"

The scowls had come from a few old men who couldn't bear seeing Master Crawford get humiliated.

As the old men continued bombarding him with scowls, Master Crawford himself simply narrowed his eyes before shaking his head and saying, "I won't make things too difficult for you, young man. Just kneel before me with your forehead against the ground. Once you admit to your mistake, I'll allow you to leave the hill unscathed!"

"You truly are the bigger man for being so forgiving, but I feel you should still teach this guy a lesson, master!" shouted someone from within the crowd.

"Is there a need to admit to a mistake if what I said was the truth? Look, the only true master of this church is the previous one. With that said, I dislike the notion of you being here since all you're doing is humiliating Langvern!" replied Gerald casually.

"How utterly imprudent! It seems like you'll truly remain undaunted till I teach you a proper lesson! I hope you realize that you've only made things more difficult for yourself! With that said, you're only allowed to leave if you roll down the hill!" growled the furious Master Crawford as he raised his right hand.

Out of nowhere, a compass—with a golden dragon engraved on it—appeared on his hand, and the second it did, Master Crawford instantly began reciting a chant. Once he was done, he muttered an order... and just like that, the entire hall began trembling despite the lack of any strong winds!



'By god!' Thought everyone within the hall as they watched the tables and chairs shake wildly!

Even the old men from before were terrified, and with eyes reddened with shock, one of them quickly shouted, "You ignorant child! You've truly offended the master now! Hurry and kneel already!"

Terrance and the others—who had been standing at the side—were similarly frightened half to death by Master Crawford's skill, and they were all dripping beads of cold sweat for Gerald.

Gerald himself, however, simply shook his head with a bitter smile as he said, "Is that all, Master Crawford?"

By that point, Master Crawford's forehead was drenched with sweat. Though he wanted to create even more mayhem, no matter how much he tried, he couldn't seem to increase the intensity of all the shaking by much.

After staring at him for a bit longer, Gerald then shook his head before asking, "Is this what you're trying to achieve?"

With a gentle wave, the compass—that had been in Master Crawford's grasp—instantly flew into Gerald's hand!

The compass now in his hands, Gerald began murmuring a barely audible chant...

Before anyone could realize what was happening, an explosive sound was heard as the compass emitted a blinding light that painted the entire hall in a golden glow!

As if all that wasn't already shocking enough, an inhuman roar was soon heard, and everyone stared wide-eyed as a faint, but large golden dragon momentarily appeared above the compass!

Screams filled the area as a twister showed up out of nowhere as well! What a dramatic change!

Chapter 1454

Almost everyone in the hall was now screaming in utter terror.

While the old men from before could almost feel their eyeballs popping out in their shock, the flabbergasted Perla herself was barely able to keep her mouth closed.

The scene happening before them now was truly difficult to swallow...!

“...A-amazing...!” stuttered Master Crawford as he fell feebly to the floor, now entirely drenched in sweat.

With a slight flick of Gerald’s wrist, the golden light disappeared and everything became peaceful again.

Turning to look at the compass, Gerald deduced that it was simply a simple magic artifact that, upon activating, was capable of displaying terrifying images.

While that was the case, since Master Crawford hadn’t trained his mind for it to be steady enough, he wasn’t able to use the compass to its full extent. Knowing that only increased Master Crawford’s humiliation.

Smiling subtly, Gerald then tossed the compass aside before looking at the master whose gaze had turned bleak by this point.

“Now then... Who exactly gave you the courage to deceive all these people?” declared Gerald.

As everyone in the hall quivered from Gerald’s authoritative voice, Master Crawford—who was clearly the recipient of Gerald’s question—dropped to his knees before replying, “P-please don’t be angry, master...! I was told to wait for a young man here... As for why I used my magic, it was because that same person who told me to wait ordered me to protect the Feng Shui of this place and continue burning incense here...!”

The second his sentence ended, several hissing sounds could be heard as multiple people in the hall drew in cold breaths.

“A young man? Do you have a name?” asked Gerald who already had a good guess of what was happening.

“G-Gerald Crawford! I was told to wait for that young man!” replied Master Crawford quickly.

“And who was it who told you to wait for him? Also, what’s your real name?”

“I-it was my great aunt! And I go by the name of Gus Linstone...!”

After hearing all that Gus had to say, everyone found themselves immensely shocked. However, their shock quickly turned into rage as they took turns glaring at Gus.

Following that, they then turned to respectfully look at Gerald who now looked more like a deity than anything.

Gerald, however, wasn’t going to waste any more time.

“Order everyone to descend the hill, right this instant!” instructed Gerald.

“R-right away...!” replied Gus as he quickly began driving everyone out.

Soon enough, only Terrance and a few others remained.

Before Gerald could ask Gus for more details, he watched as Terrance knelt before respectfully saying, “Master, I have a request...!”

As the middle-aged man from before knelt as well, Gerald observed the duo for a while. To think that the old man was willing to do this despite already having one foot in the grave...

Truth be told, Gerald hadn’t found that old man annoying from the very beginning, so he simply asked, “What is this about?”

“While my granddaughter has always been rather naughty, she’s always had the heart to train. Unfortunately, she hasn’t been able to find a suitable teacher at all... Now that we’ve witnessed your remarkable skills, however, I feel that you’d be the perfect teacher for her...! With that said, I hope you’re willing to take her under your wing!” replied Terrance, his eyes now teary and reddened.

“...Her?” said Gerald with a frown.

Looking at Gerald’s frown, Perla instantly found herself blushing. After all, she now deeply respected and admired him after witnessing his true capabilities.

“I’ll have to refuse!” added Gerald as he shook his head.

“B-but why, master...!” asked Terrance rather desperately as Perla felt herself come close to crying.

“She has a terrible temper typical of a rich, young lady! That simply won’t do!” replied Gerald as he casually waved his hand.

“I-I can change...! I’ll drop this bad attitude immediately...!” exclaimed Perla.

“Change? Haha! If you say so... Look, since you like making things so difficult for people and you think you can just drop that temper of yours all willy-nilly, why don’t you head to the square and bark like a dog three times? If you do it properly, I’ll consider taking you under my wing! If you don’t, then just get off the hill like the others already!” retorted Gerald.

Preoccupied with so many things, Gerald really wasn’t in the mood to take in any disciples.

In fact, had it not been because the old man had knelt before him, Gerald wouldn’t even have bothered listening to his request.

Regardless, he felt that what he had told Perla to do was the easiest way for him to get her off his back.

To his surprise, however, Perla only hesitated for a brief moment before dashing toward the square...

Chapter 1455

Her eyes reddened, several people who were descending the hill found themselves astonished as they watched Perla imitate a dog and bark thrice!

Gerald truly hadn't expected this to happen. After all, he had initially thought that Perla was nothing more than a rich young lady who was both hedonistic and extremely sensitive to how others viewed her. To think that she would actually be willing to humiliate herself just to be able to be his disciple!

Quite frankly, he had suggested for her to bark like a dog since Gerald knew that the humiliation from the act was a little too much for even him to handle. With that in mind, he was convinced that Perla wouldn't be able to carry out the act. Now that she had, however...

"...I... I've done as you told... Are you willing to take me under your wing now...?" asked Perla as she stood before Gerald.

"...That..." replied Gerald rather hesitantly.

Upon noticing that Terrance was also staring at him with his breath held, Gerald eventually grew too embarrassed to go back on his word.

With a nod, he then said, "...Alright, fine..."

Overjoyed by Gerald's reply, Terrance immediately exclaimed, "Well, what are you waiting for, Perla? Hurry and kneel before your master! Remember to greet him as well!"

After hearing what Gerald had told her to do earlier, Terrance had assumed that his granddaughter's bad temper would flare up, prompting her to offend Gerald and further lower her chances of ever getting to be his disciple... To his surprise, his granddaughter was smart and did as she was told! Due to that, despite his clear reluctance, Gerald wasn't able to go back on his word.

To think that the Sherwin family was able to get acquainted with such a great person just because of that small act... It truly was a great fortune on the part of the Sherwins!

'You've finally grown up, my granddaughter...' Thought the old man to himself.

As for Perla, she quickly headed off to get some sweet-smelling tea. Once she had served it to Gerald, she immediately knelt. With her forehead against the floor, she then declared, "Please accept my respect and worship toward you, master!"

'...Could my encounter with this young woman have been predicted as well, I wonder...?' Gerald thought to himself with a bitter smile.

Turning to look at Gus—who had been standing silently at the side this entire time, not daring to speak—Gerald then asked him about his great aunt.

After listening to what Gus had to say, Gerald couldn't help but smile.

As it turned out, Gus had bumped into the ghost of his 'great aunt' while going up the mountain a few months ago. After their initial encounter, Gus had simply acted out everything that his great aunt had ordered him to do, and that included waiting for Gerald.

By that point, Gerald could already guess that the 'great aunt' of his, was none other than Zenny!

Gerald remembered how Zenny had given him a ton of advice after Master Ghost left. After hearing Gus's story, he was pleased to know that Zenny was still in one piece.

While talking about all this, Gus had led Gerald to a manor, and upon entering, Gerald was instantly greeted by the sight of Zenny.

"I didn't expect that we'd meet each other again so soon, Gerald!" exclaimed the bamboo puppet as she stared at Gerald.

"I didn't either. Regardless, I remember that Langvern Mountain had been engulfed in flames back then! I truly thought that you were a lost cause!" replied Gerald, recalling what Queena had done that night.

“Well, I certainly was burned into a crisp! Haha! However, I’m just a puppet, and my body parts can easily be replaced! What more, I’m able to retain my consciousness, even after going unconscious for a while!” explained Zenny.

“I see. Master Ghost truly has excellent workmanship to be able to have made you... Either way, is it true that the master had foreseen me returning here?” asked Gerald.

“Indeed! He had ordered me to stay here and wait for you! Following that, we’d go look for him together! Though, to be more specific, our next mission will be to save him!” replied Zenny.

“Save?”

“Yes! You see, Master Ghost had already predicted that he’d face a great disaster sooner or later. Queena’s appearance was only the beginning of the disaster, and by this point, the worst parts of his predictions should already be in play! Master Ghost even told me that whether he ends up living or dying ultimately depends on you!” explained Zenny.

“...I see. Then, do you know where he is now? The sooner I save him the better! After all, the reason I came here today is because I have important affairs that I need his help with!” said Gerald.

“All I know is that the master has gone to the Jenna Province! If we’re looking for him, that’s the place to go! He also noted that his hometown is located there, and that it’s the place where his fortune starts and ends, which is why he wanted to endure through his disasters there! He didn’t tell you about this back then since he was afraid that your early appearance would ruin the predestined fate!” replied Zenny.

Chapter 1456

“I see... Well, let’s not waste any more time and set off to the Jenna Province as soon as possible then!” said Gerald with a nod.

Gerald had several things boggling his mind now, one of which was his grandfather’s true identity. Aside from that, his family members and Zyla were still missing. He had to head to Jaellatra to look for Mila too...

Thankfully, he now had his uncle to rely on to solve some of those worries of his. With that in mind, Gerald knew that he had to pick up the pace as well and locate Master Ghost as soon as possible so that more of those mysteries could be solved sooner.

“Speaking of which... you’ll be coming with me, right?” asked Gerald.

“But of course! My mission will only be complete once I find master together with you! Also, there’s a bead within my body that you can retrieve and stuff inside an exquisite rag doll! It’ll be easier for you to carry me around as an ornament!” explained Zenny.

“That’s great to know!” replied Gerald.

“Are you planning on heading to the Jenna Province, Master Crawford...?” asked Terrance in a surprised tone after hearing about Gerald’s plans a little later.

“I am. Is something the matter?”

“Hahaha! Well, my family resides there, you see! If you aren’t against it, the Sherwins would be more than willing to provide a place for you to stay in!” replied Terrance in utter delight.

After all, if Gerald agreed with that, then the old man would surely get a chance to deepen his relationship with him with each passing day. Now that would be a true blessing for the Sherwins!

Upon hearing her grandfather’s suggestion, Perla instantly began begging Gerald to accept the offer as well.

Hearing that suggestion, Gerald began considering it. Master Ghost’s church was located in Langvern Mountain, and though Terrance was from the Jenna Province, he didn’t seem to know where Master Ghost was either. Even so, Gerald still needed someplace to temporarily live in so that he could ask around and hopefully locate Master Ghost.

It was definitely a plus that the Sherwins were apparently quite an influential local family there. With that in mind, he’d surely have a much easier way of dealing with things...



Adding that to the fact that his family and Zyla were still missing and he was quite anxious to meet Master Ghost again, Gerald finalized his thoughts before saying, "...Fine! Just arrange it that way!"

Just as Terrance was about to say something, however, Gerald watched as the old man got too excited and ended up upsetting his blood and qi flow! As a result, Terrance instantly began vomiting mouthfuls of blood before flopping to the ground and convulsing violently.

"G-grandpa?!" shouted the anxious Perla as the middle-aged man quickly fished out some medicine from his pocket.

"W-what's wrong with my grandpa, master...?" asked Perla as she looked at Gerald, hoping that he had a way to help.

"From what I can see, he suffered from internal injuries before, and his organs ended up getting damaged. Due to that, his qi can't be upset. Since both his blood and qi ended up getting upset just now, it appears that his internal organs have ruptured!" replied Gerald casually.

Truth be told, he had already noticed the problem for a while, and he had been planning to ask Terrance about how he had sustained such serious injuries.

Still, Gerald truly hadn't expected Terrance to get so excited to the point where his old internal injuries would open!

"Y-you truly are wise, Master Crawford... Just as you've said, I suffered from a serious internal injury a while back..." replied Terrance as he spurted out even more blood.

Hearing that, Gerald simply lifted a finger and poked a few of Terrance's acupuncture points, resulting in them being instantly sealed.

For Terrance, it truly was an odd feeling. After all, one second he was feeling like his heart was splitting in two, and the next, all the pain was simply gone!

Looking at Gerald with a bewildered gaze, the old man found himself muttering, "...Master Crawford..."

Reverence reflected in his eyes, Terrence was awed beyond words as he continued staring at Gerald. Despite being so young, his training and skills were unparalleled...

"If you weren't already aware, you suffered those injuries due to being jolted by essential qi. Essential qi doesn't resemble inner strength, nor is it similar to secret techniques, you know? Few people on the planet have mastered essential qi, and since you were struck by the real deal, I wonder who you could've bumped into..." replied Gerald with a frown.

Chapter 1457

"You truly have good judgment, Master Crawford... It was about half a year ago when I bumped into that exceptional person... My family has always revered martial arts skills, you see, and I have a lot of disciples who serve as my subordinates... Regardless, the exceptional person was hired by our family's enemy to assassinate me in secret. After all, with me gone, my family would certainly fall into ruin! Still, that person was extremely powerful... Despite owning over twenty exceptional subordinates, none of them could even get close to that immensely skillful man!"

"Eventually, my son and dozens of bodyguards had to risk their lives to allow me to escape with my life intact. However, even though I managed to run far, I still ended up getting attacked and injured by his essential qi! Even though the essential qi had only brushed against me gently, I still ended up almost dying on the spot!" explained the old man, fear reflected in his eyes.

It was evident that the incident had left a psychological scar on Terrence, and Gerald simply nodded in understanding. After all, he, of all people, knew that there was a vast difference between people who owned essential qi and ordinary folk.

Even so, there was an unwritten rule stating that those who owned essential qi weren't allowed to interfere too much in the affairs of ordinary people. Since the rule was mostly abided by, this was honestly the first time Gerald had heard about such an incident.

As he thought about it, Gerald remembered his uncle telling him—a while back—that the most powerful people didn't come from cryptic families, even though cryptic families were known to be extremely powerful within certain areas. Regardless, those from such families were far from being the cream of the crop.

After all, he had come across locals before who had truly trained themselves to achieve spiritual enlightenment. Despite not coming from Jaellatra, they had essential qi, similar to his uncle's.

With that in mind, the world truly was an enormous place... Gerald was no longer as ignorant as he had been in the past anymore... He now knew that his enemies from before were far from being at the top of the world...

"Regardless, following that, my family's properties were snatched away from me, Master Crawford! Unable to do anything on my own, I've placed all my hope on my granddaughter... That's why I was so willing to kneel here... I was hoping that Master Crawford of the Langvern Church would take her in as his disciple. With any luck, she'd be able to become a person who truly managed to train herself to achieve spiritual enlightenment..." added Terrance.

"I see... Still, you have to take things slow when it comes to things like these. Here, I'll help you cure your internal injuries first!" said Gerald as he checked the condition of Terrance's heart.

Realizing that he hadn't been lying, Gerald thought about how miserable the man must currently be. Adding that to the fact that Gerald had taken Perla as his disciple, he knew he had to at least pay some respect to Terrance.

With that in mind, Gerald then activated his golden eye to begin treating Terrance's wounds.

According to what Terrance had said, the Sherwins were once a rich and prestigious family in the Jenna Province. However, some trouble that had happened about half a year ago caused the entire family to go downhill. With only a few companies left in hand, the Sherwins were pretty much only comparable to a regular family now.

Either way, after both Gerald and Zenny closed off Langvern Mountain, the group then headed over to the Sherwin family's manor.

Upon arriving, Terrance made sure to give it his all when it came to taking care of Gerald. The old man also made sure to send his subordinates out to inquire about Master Ghost's whereabouts.

Gerald himself made sure to look for Master Ghost as well.

However, even after looking for some time across almost all the areas within the entire Jenna Province, Gerald was still unable to gain any clues about Master Ghost's whereabouts!

Even so, Gerald made sure to train Perla in the garden whenever he was free, simultaneously diligently training himself during those periods as well.

It was sometime later when Gerald realized something. To his bewilderment, the speed of his inner training had begun slowing down for some unknown reason!

What more, something strange was also happening to his body. Five discs had appeared on his elixir-of-life field, and they were arranged in an orderly manner in five different colors. Constantly revolving around that area, they truly were strange, even to Gerald. While Gerald did attempt to touch them using the power of his thought, they didn't respond at all.

"They've been in my body for five days now... What even are they...? If only Zyla was here... She'd surely know about this!"

At the start of it all, Gerald had noticed a few colorful spots appearing within his elixir-of-life field. However, Gerald hadn't paid much attention to that at the time.

Now, however, he could no longer ignore them. After all, they had clearly turned much more mature now, and they had developed some kind of scope.

While he had no clue what was going on, Gerald wasn't the kind of person who would allow himself to remain idle. Since Zyla wasn't by his side, he constantly found himself looking into his implanted memories, hoping to find some answers there. After all, he had a sneaking suspicion that at least one of those memories must have had a direct connection to the colorful disks.

At that moment, Gerald heard a knock on the door as Perla's voice called out, "Are you still training, master...?"

Chapter 1458

"What is it?"

“Grandpa says he’s found an important clue!”

“...Oh?” said Gerald as he opened his eyes. Knowing that this had to be something related to Master Ghost, Gerald then walked out.

When Terrance saw him walking over, he instantly said, “Please have a look at these photographs that my subordinates were able to capture, Master Crawford!”

Taking the photographs from Terrance’s extended hand, Gerald saw that one of them contained an expensive-looking glass cabinet. Squinting his eyes, he was able to discern a rather familiar-looking horsetail whisk lying inside it...

There was no doubt about it. That horsetail whisk definitely belonged to Master Ghost!

Zenny apparently noticed the glimmer of hope in Gerald’s eyes, prompting her to say, “It’s something that belongs to master!”

“After you showed us Master Ghost’s photographs, a few of my subordinates noticed that the horsetail whisk that they found was a mirror image of the one that Master Ghost usually holds onto in most of the photographs you showed us! It’s the reason why they took that photo in the first place!” explained Terrance.

“As for where my subordinates found it, well... It appeared at the biggest auction in the Jenna Province! It’s a pretty grand event! Regardless, since you said that something bad could have happened to Master Ghost, I find myself wondering if he had to sell his horsetail whisk here due to difficulties in surviving...” added the old man.

In response, Gerald simply shook his head before replying, “If it was money he wanted, then he could’ve just used any one of his arsenal of capabilities to earn what he needed. I truly believe that he wouldn’t have fallen to such a pitiful state that he had to sell his horsetail whisk for money! Regardless, let’s head to the auction to have a look first. The best course of action right now would be to gain information on the person who had provided the item itself. I’m sure that will lead to us finding an important clue!”

“Very well, I’ll arrange for it immediately! Just so you know, the auction takes place tonight, and many powerful people from all over the country will be attending. With that in mind, I truly think that this will be your best bet to look for clues regarding Master Ghost!” replied Terrance.

While waiting for the event to begin, Gerald couldn’t help but feel slightly ill at ease... After all, he remembered that Zenny had said that Master Ghost had foreseen that he would face a great disaster within the Jenna Province. Since his horsetail whisk was being auctioned, could that signify that something had already happened to him...?

Night soon fell and the group instantly headed over to the auction venue.

Just as Gerald was about to enter the venue, he suddenly heard a voice saying, “My, my! What a surprise! If it isn’t Mr. Sherwin! It’s been ages since you’ve last made an appearance for such an occasion within the Jenna Province! Could it be that the Sherwins have finally taken a turn for the better? I’d assume so since you’re partaking in the auction’s liveliness so leisurely!

Turning around, Gerald saw that the voice had come from a white-suited rich heir who had just gotten out of one of the many luxurious-looking cars that had just come to a halt before the venue’s entrance.

While the arrival of so many luxury cars certainly caused quite a stir among those who witnessed them, the heir himself looked more interested in Terrance as he stared at the old man.

Observing the rich heir, Gerald noticed that aside from a pair of bodyguards standing behind him, there was also a black-robed person—covered from head to toe—standing by the heir’s side who gave off a peculiar vibe...

Gerald wasn’t sure whether it had anything to do with the fact that he had heard quite a bit of things about black-robed men recently, but he found his eyelids twitching slightly as he glanced a few more times at the old man.

Surprisingly, Gerald noticed that there was moving essential qi within that person’s body.

‘Could he be someone who had trained himself to achieve spiritual enlightenment...?’ Gerald thought to himself, bewildered.

The more surprising thing to Gerald, however, was the fact that the impressive person—who had managed to attain spiritual enlightenment—was actually willing to be another person’s lackey!

While Gerald was wondering how that person was able to just reconcile with that fact, Terrance, on the other hand, now had reddened eyes as he stared back at the rich, young man.

“F-Federico Dun...!” growled Terrance in great fury. However, the second he saw the old man standing before the youth, Terrance instantly retracted in fear.

“G-Grandpa...!” cried out Perla as she ran over to stand beside him before glaring at Federico.

Before she could do anything, however, Terrance quickly held onto his granddaughter’s wrist, a clear indication for her not to act impulsively.

Chapter 1459

“...I simply came today to widen my knowledge and meet up with old acquaintances, Young Master Dun. I wouldn’t dream of ruining your fun!” replied Terrance, clearly suffering in silence.

“Hahaha! I’m glad to hear that! Still, a little bird told me that after you went bankrupt half a year ago, you’ve been looking far and wide for exceptional masters! I do wonder if you’ve found any... Quite frankly, the Duns have also been helping you locate the true criminal behind the scenes this entire time! Once we find the culprits, we’ll definitely avenge you!” declared Federico coldly.

“I appreciate you going through all that trouble!” replied Terrance who was still trying his best to suppress his anger as the corners of his mouth twitched erratically.

“There’s no need to thank me! It’s what a junior should do for his senior anyway!” said Federico before roaring out in laughter and walking into the venue.

As the black-robed man followed Federico in, he made sure to take a few glances at Gerald...

Regardless, once they had entered, Perla immediately grumbled, “To think that we’d bump into that person here... He even had the audacity to pretend to be a good guy...!”

From that, Gerald could easily guess that it was the Duns who had been targeting the Sherwins throughout this entire time.

“Was that old man the person who had beaten you up?” asked Gerald rather casually.

“That’s right, Mr. Crawford! He’s extremely powerful...!” replied Terrance.

Hearing that, Gerald simply nodded in response without saying another word.

Meanwhile, knowing that they were now quite a distance away from Terrance, Federico quickly dropped his mischievous smile before turning to look at the black-robed man.

With a rather stern face, he then asked, “You kept looking at that youth by that old b\*stard’s side earlier... Why is that, master? Do you have some kind of history with him, master?”

“As a matter of fact, I do!” replied the black-robed man in a husky, old voice.

“Then, I assume you’re well-acquainted with him? Who exactly is he?”

“Just know that he’s an old acquaintance of mine! Either way, he’ll be dead soon! Haha!” replied the old man. Though his voice wasn’t all that loud, his words alone were enough to send chills down anyone’s spine...

Regardless, the auction was about to begin soon, and Gerald—and the others—quickly found seats nearing the rear end of the venue.

From what Terrance had told him, the large-scale auction was organized by the Waddys, the most powerful family in the Jenna Province. They were so powerful that even the Duns had to attend, just to pay the Waddy family some respect.



While Perla was worried that Federico would continue finding faults with them there, Terrance himself wasn't the least afraid.

Not long after, the auctioning then began. As per usual, most of the initial auction items were pretty unimpressive.

The second the horsetail whisk was put up for auction, however, all the spectators instantly found themselves momentarily holding their breaths.

"This fine item here is called the Heavenly Horsetail Whisk, and it's a relic from the Warring State Period that's claimed to also be a magic artifact! With that in mind, the starting price for this item is twelve million dollars!" shouted the host.

Upon hearing that, the crowd instantly broke into an uproar!

While it was true that many of those present could sense that it was a good item, none of them had anticipated the outrageous price of twelve million dollars!

Though several people among the crowd were now discussing the atrocious price, none of them dared to bid for the item.

Amidst all the chaos, Federico simply exchanged glances with the black-robed man. Following that, Federico then nodded before raising his hand.

Upon seeing that, the host instantly declared, "Oh? It appears that Young Master Dun is offering twelve million dollars!"

Hearing that, Terrance then turned to look at Gerald before saying, "Mr. Crawford..."

"There's no rush. Let's just wait for a bit longer!" replied Gerald calmly.

At that moment, a coquettishly-dressed woman—who was sitting behind them—excitedly shouted, “Oh dear, please move aside! You’re blocking me from taking photographs!”

Turning around, Gerald saw that several other men and women were with her, and the females in that group—in particular—were all behaving like fanatic fans as they stared at Federico who was sitting in the front row.

“Oh gosh, our Young Master Dun is so handsome...! To think that his first offer would be twelve million dollars too! We definitely have to take a group photograph with him later!”

“I know, right? Aside from those from the Waddy family, Young Master Dun is undoubtedly the second most powerful person within the Jenna Province! Just look at how liberal he is with his money! Either way, there’s probably nobody else who’d dare to offer a price higher than that!” squealed the women excitedly.

#### Chapter 1460

From how much they were idolizing Federico, it was clear that those from within that group viewed anyone else as nothing but idiots.

Regardless, after hearing them scowl at her master, Perla angrily retorted, “And just who are you to tell others to move aside?”

“Who am I? Who are you? Look, just step aside already! We really can’t take photographs of Young Master Dun from here! Can’t you even do that?!”

“Yeah! What, do you think you’re rich or something? Go ahead and compete with our Young Master Dun if you dare, then!” retorted the fanatic women contemptuously.

“You...!” growled Perla who was now brimming with rage.

“Just let them say what they want. Regardless, help me shout out a price, Mr. Sherwin,” said Gerald as he turned to look at Terrance when he saw that nobody else was attempting to raise the bid.

“Very well, Master Crawford. How much do you intend to raise the bid by?” asked Terrance.

Hearing that, Gerald lifted a single finger.

Frowning slightly, Terrance then said, “With all due respect, sir, simply adding a hundred thousand dollars won’t make much of a difference!”

“Hah! For a second there, I almost thought that you were actually rich! A hundred thousand dollars... Pathetic!” scoffed the fans as they immediately began ridiculing Gerald.

“I didn’t mean a hundred thousand dollars!” replied Gerald casually.

“Then... A million dollars? That’s fine. I’ll be offering the price immediately then!” said Terrance with a nod.

Before he could do so, however, Gerald quickly replied, “That’s not it either!”

“...W-what...? Then... How much are you suggesting...?” asked the flabbergasted Terrance.

“I’m starting off with ten million dollars!” replied Gerald.

Quite honestly, Gerald had been wondering why banknotes began at a dollar. Wasn’t that way too troublesome? Things would be so much easier to calculate if a million dollars was the basic unit of money!

It was the reason why Gerald had simply lifted a single finger to indicate how much he wanted to raise the bid. After all, it was far too meddlesome to slowly increase the price a dollar at a time.

“...A-are you sure about this, Master Crawford...?” replied Terrance, his eyes now fully widened.

Even the fanatics—who were still standing behind them—were staring in disbelief at him now, not daring to say another word.

Seeing that Gerald was making no effort to stop him, Terrance then shouted, "...Fifteen million dollars!"

"...F-Fifteen million dollars? Did I hear someone offer fifteen million dollars?!" announced the host excitedly.

He had initially expected Young Master Dun to be the top bidder. To his surprise, someone was willing to pay a much higher price than that!

Federico himself now had a stiffened expression. How dare someone humiliate him...!

'It's that d\*mned Terrance again...! He truly is courting death...! Fine then! Since you want to play around so much, I'll play this game as well!'

"Thirty million dollars!" shouted Terrance who looked like he had lost his wits.

Hearing that, Terrance instantly became worried. Gerald, however, simply shook his head with a bitter smile on his face. Games involving money were simply too boring for him...

"A hundred and fifty million dollars!" said Gerald as he looked at Terrance.

The second Terrance shouted out that amount, the entire venue broke into an uproar!

"I-I refuse to believe that the Sherwins are able to pay such a large amount of money in one go!" exclaimed Federico who clearly wasn't expecting any of this to happen.

Just as he was about to compete with the Sherwins again—since he held a massive grudge against them—the black-robed man suddenly tugged on his wrist before saying in a low voice, "Don't increase the price any further, Young Master Dun! With him here, you won't ever be able to win, no matter how high you offer!"

“Then am I to just hand over this supreme magic artifact to them without a fight, Master?!” replied Federico, unable to reconcile with the thought of that outcome.

“Hahaha! But of course not! Remember, I told you that I was acquainted with that young man, Young Master Dun! If you’ve forgotten, I also said that he’d be dead soon!”

Chapter 1461

Upon hearing that, Federico paused for a moment before sneering, “...I understand, Master! I know what I have to do after this!”

He already had a plan in mind.

Regardless, since Gerald had placed such a high bid, nobody else was willing to even compete with him. Even Federico’s fans were now staring at Gerald in surprise. After all, none of them had expected that this plain-looking person would actually own this much money!

Now that they had witnessed how rich he was, some of them were already winking at him, desperately trying to gain his affection.

Of course, when had such tactics ever worked on Gerald?

Either way, while money clearly was no issue for him, Gerald wasn’t one to spend on a whim. He was only willing to spend so much on the Heavenly Horsetail Whisk since he wanted to ask the organizer of the auction where and how he had gotten his hands on the whisk.

With that, he requested to see the manager once the event was over. Upon hearing that, the service staff immediately ran off to invite the manager out, and soon after, a fat middle-aged man who went by the name of Waferer walked out.

“I appreciate your support, Mr. Crawford! You’ve officially become the biggest benefactor in our auction! Please, have my business card!” said Manager Wafarer respectfully.

Not wanting to beat around the bush, Gerald skipped the pleasantries and simply replied, "Manager Waferer, there's something I'd like to ask you about... Where exactly did you find the Heavenly Horsetail Whisk? And how did you get your hands on it?"

"Well, first off, you should know very well that we aren't allowed to disclose such information without first getting the original owner's permission! However, since you did pay such a premium price for this item, I suppose I could tell you a thing or two..." replied the manager with a smile.

Just as he was about to speak, however, a young man suddenly walked toward Manager Waferer. After glancing briefly at Terrance and the others, he then whispered something into the manager's ears.

Looking momentarily stunned, Manager Waferer then nodded before saying, "...I understand!"

Watching as the young man left, Terrance then looked at Manager Waferer again before asking, "So, what was it that you were about to tell us?"

"...Ah, yes. About that... You shouldn't be in a hurry, correct? You see, Mr. Crawford and Mr. Sherwin, a friend of mine has taken a fancy to the Heavenly Horsetail Whisk as well. With that said, he's already booked an entire restaurant... I suggest that I act as a middleman so that both of you can meet and discuss this matter. Who knows, both of you could strike up a good deal!" replied Manager Waferer whose tone was now different from before.

Hearing that, Gerald easily understood that the one who was responsible for this was either Federico or that black-robed man. From how things were proceeding, it was probably not going to be that easy for Gerald to just take the Heavenly Horsetail Whisk away with him today...

Whatever the case was, it was now obvious that to Manager Wayfarer, Federico was much more important compared to Gerald.

"What should we do now, Master Crawford...?" whispered Terrance.

"Since we're being invited over, it'd be rude for us to decline without a proper reason, no? With that said, let's go meet up with Manager Waferer's friend. Perhaps we'll even be able to double the price of this item once we resell it!" replied Gerald with a subtle smile.

Though Terrance couldn't understand what Gerald was trying to do, Gerald had already spoken his mind, so there was nothing more that the old man could say.

As Terrance followed Gerald out, he failed to notice the brief, mocking smile on Manager Waferer's face...

It was a little while later when the group arrived at the most luxurious room—that was located on the top floor—in Jenna Parlor. True to the manager's words, the entire restaurant had been completely emptied...

Chapter 1462

After the door to the room was opened, Gerald, Terrance, and the others walked in.

The second they entered, they were immediately greeted by the sight of Federico sitting at the main seat. A broad smile on his face as he stood up, Federico then said, "Why hello there, Uncle Sherwin! I hadn't expected to meet you again so soon!"

"So you're behind all this, Federico!" growled Terrance angrily.

"Now, now, there's no need to get angry, Uncle Sherwin! Aside from wanting to reminisce with you, I also called you over today since I wanted to greet and extend my warmest welcome to Mr. Crawford!" replied Federico.

Following that, he clapped his hands before ordering, "Serve the tea to the guests!"

Shortly after, a waitress walked over with a teapot in hand. However, as soon as the teapot's cap was removed, it was revealed there was only tea powder inside! What more, the powder itself smelled extremely unpleasant!

From that alone, it was obvious that Federico was saying that they weren't worthy of being in his presence, despite the fact that he was the one who had called them over!

"What do you mean by this, Federico?!" growled the enraged Terrance.

“Hahaha! What could you mean? Aren’t I inviting you to have some tea?” sneered Federico.

“Tea can wait, and you can save your ‘warm welcomes’ for later. So, Young Master Dun, let’s just get straight to business. Tell us, why did you invite us here today? Even if you’re trying to buy the whisk off me, I’d prefer if you beat around the bush less!” said Gerald as he looked at Federico.

After saying that, Gerald glanced at the black-robed man—who was sitting motionless beside Federico—before thinking, ‘This man... He’s most probably Federico’s strongest subordinate...’

“So you’re a straightforward person, Mr. Crawford! I see, I see... I guess I’ll get straight to the point then! You see, the Heavenly Horsetail Whisk is a magic artifact that is of great use to me... With that said, I’d like to buy it off you, Mr. Crawford. Speaking of which, ever since I was a child, I’ve always gotten what I want. If you don’t believe me, you can just ask Manager Wafarer over here! There’s nothing on this planet that I, Federico Dun, can’t obtain if I wish for it!” declared Federico with a wry smile.

“Young Master Dun is correct! As far as I know, every single request that he’s made—within the Jenna Province—has been granted, and nobody’s ever dared to turn him down! Regardless, since you’re new here, I suggest you focus on making friends with Young Master Dun. Why not kick start this new friendship by selling the whisk to him?” said Manager Wafarer.

“You can dream on!” retorted Terrance, enraged.

Gerald had already anticipated that Federico would be up to no good, and from the looks of it, the heir had booked the entire restaurant just to ease the process of taking Gerald’s life. Regardless, Gerald had expected all this to happen, so he knew how to deal with him.

“Well, since you’re so adamant about buying it, I guess I have no choice but to begin discussing the price... Why don’t we start with you making me an offer? I’ll consider whether I’ll sell it or not based on your answer!” replied Gerald.

“I agree with that. Regardless, call it a hunch, but from my past experiences, I feel that you’ll surely be dissatisfied with my offer. In fact, I believe you’ll even think I’m trying to insult you! Either way, now that that’s out of the way, let’s get to the offer. Honestly, I quite like how straightforward you are, so I’ll give



you some face and pay you ten times my usual offer amount!” said Federico as he placed a freshly printed ten-dollar banknote on the table before pushing it toward Gerald, a mocking smile on his face.

Upon seeing that, Manager Waferer—who had been sitting at the side—couldn’t help but laugh out loud as he thought, ‘Young Master Dun’s always been like this! I’ve already seen this play out many, many times before... Being a famous and influential young master in the Jenna Province, who would dare provoke him?’

‘Honestly, this situation is quite reminiscent of when another wealthy businessman from outstation had spent seven million dollars at an auction to buy an ancient vase. Unfortunately for him, the young master had also taken a fancy to the vase! After using the same method—that Young Master Dun is currently utilizing on Gerald—in the end, he got the businessman to sell the vase to him for only fifty cents!’

‘Naturally, the businessman was eventually unwilling to just accept this unfair trade. As a result, his entire family was slaughtered without mercy! This is how vicious Young Master Dun can truly be! He really is the demon King of the Jenna Province!’

As Waferer was thinking about all this, he saw that Terrance was already getting increasingly anxious and angry.

Seeing that, the manager couldn’t help but pity them slightly. With that in mind, he started playing his role as a peacemaker by saying, “Quite honestly, I advise both of you to just accept his offer. After all, he truly is offering you ten times his usual amount!”

Federico himself simply lit a cigarette before saying, “Look, just leave the whisk behind, or you’ll all die! Simple as that!”

From how indifferent his cold tone was, it suggested that killing them off was just as big a deal to him as taking a nap or having a meal.

Chapter 1463

Following that, both Federico and Manager Wafarer laughed out loud. Even the waitress—who had been serving the dishes—only seemed to stare coldly at their situation.

After all, being targeted by Federico was akin to being personally selected by the devil to undergo an extremely tragic ending...

“Surely you jest, Young Master Dun. You can’t be serious about buying it for only ten dollars, can you?” replied Gerald, unsure of where Federico was even getting all this confidence. Was it just because he had the black-robed man by his side...?

“I assure you that I’m dead serious about that! Nothing more, and nothing less!” said Federico.

“...Very well, then! I’ll agree under one condition!” replied Gerald with a smile.

“State it!”

“It’s simple, really. If you still wish for this deal to go through, you’ll just have to sacrifice the lives of your family members! Once you agree with that, I’ll sell you the Heavenly Horsetail Whisk for ten dollars, just as you’ve proposed. That should sound like a perfect deal to you, right, Master Dun?” replied Gerald.

“Hahaha! You know, I hadn’t really believed Master when he earlier told me that you weren’t an ordinary person. Now, however, I can clearly see what he meant! Quite honestly, it was exactly because of that that I was willing to give you face. To think that you’d choose to refuse my goodwill instead! Very well, then! I guess I’ll just have to show some blood first!” declared Federico as he placed his teacup down.

The second he did so, the black-robed man suddenly vanished into thin air, leaving only a trail of black mist behind! Before anyone could react, the mist quickly slithered toward Perla, and once it was behind her, the old man rematerialized again without warning! Now standing right beside Perla, the black-robed man instantly grabbed hold of her neck!

While Gerald didn’t move an inch throughout the process, the terrified Perla was now shouting, “G-grandpa! Master...! Please, save me...!”

Laughing aloud, Federico then stood up before clapping his hands while staring at Gerald with mocking eyes as he said, “How’s that, Mr. Crawford? I hope that you now realize that the only reason you’re still

breathing is because I didn't order for you to be killed yet! I'm also sure that you understand how easy it is to end you after witnessing my master's power and abilities just now. With that said, know that your life is now in my hands, whether you like it or not!"

"Realize already that there's a vast difference between us that you'll never be able to overcome! With that said, just get lost once you hand me the whisk! After all, you're nothing more than an ant before my extremely powerful and talented master who's managed to train to achieve spiritual enlightenment!" added Federico as he shook his head speechlessly.

"Indeed! How could all of you be so shameless? Do you really think you're all high and mighty just because you're a little wealthy? I'll say it again, but if you know what's good for yourself, just accept the ten dollars already and scam after handing the Heavenly Horsetail Whisk over to Young Master Dun! If you don't, you'll truly be dying in the Jenna Province!" insulted Manager Wafarer.

It was obvious that in his eyes, Federico was the true king here.

"Oh? I get it now... So you're only acting so unscrupulously because you have a master who's managed to train to achieve spiritual enlightenment...? Sorry to burst your bubble, Young Master Dun, but have you ever considered what you'd do if the master you relied so greatly on turns out to not be as strong you thought?" asked Gerald.

"You... Not as powerful? Do you even know what you're saying?" replied Federico with a laugh.

"Oh, I know what I said. In fact, using the same comparison you made earlier, I'll have you know that to those stronger than him, he's the insignificant ant!" said Gerald with a casual nod.

"You can cease the act already, Gerald! What utter nonsense... Do you think you'll be able to scare Young Master Dun away with such tactics?! While I've noticed that your training has increased much more compared to when we had last met quite some time ago, it appears that you're still as stupid as ever!" sneered the black-robed man who finally decided to speak up.

"Also, while others may not know about your background, I know everything about you! So, cease the act already! All that awaits you after this is death anyway!" added the old man as he continued strangling Perla's neck with his right hand.

For this person to just call out his name like that... Also, his tone suggested that he truly did know about Gerald's past and background pretty well...

"...Have we met before? I don't think I know any masters who've trained to achieve spiritual enlightenment!" said Gerald in slight surprise.

Upon hearing that, both the black-robed man and Federico instantly burst out laughing.

"Again, you truly are as stupid as ever...! Regardless, I didn't expect you to still be able to remain this calm even after I've exposed your clunky acting! Either way... Do you really wish to know who I am? I fear you'll be overwhelmingly shocked once you know my true identity!" replied the black-robed man with a triumphant smile.

After looking at the sneering Federico, Gerald then turned to face the black-robed man who was currently ridiculing him. He truly had no idea what was so funny.

Regardless, while Gerald could've just used his divine vision to figure out who this person truly was—given how crude his black robes were—he hadn't done so simply because he really couldn't be bothered to use his divine vision just for the sake of this person.

With that, Gerald then nodded before saying, "Go on, tell me already!"

"Alright, then! You'd better take a good long look at who I am!" replied the black-robed man with a laugh before slowly removing his hood off his head... revealing a familiar black and white face!

It was the yin yang man that Gerald had encountered back when he was still dealing with the Moldells!

After Federico and the old man burst out laughing again, the old man then said, "I'm sure you hadn't expected both of us to meet again this way, have you, Gerald? Surprised by my sudden reappearance?"

As Gerald's eyelids twitched slightly, he found himself thinking, 'Who could I have expected any of this...? After all, I personally killed you back in Everdare Forest!'

If he remembered correctly, the man's name was Julian Laker, and he had appeared in the Fenderson Manor back when Gerald was still in the Salford Province. Following that, Julian had tailed Gerald all the way into Everdare Forest, though he ended up getting killed since Gerald needed blood to bait out the Holy fox at the time.

To think that he'd actually still be alive... What more, Gerald could see that the old man had trained his essential qi while also managing to train to attain spiritual enlightenment!

However, the most surprising thing was the fact that the training aura radiating from the old man's body wasn't inner strength, nor was it from a secret technique. No, the aura he was exuding was the purest form of essential qi!

"Heh, I know what you're curious about... You're wondering how I'm still alive now, correct? Hell, I'm sure you're also confused as to how I've ended up becoming the most powerful person in the world who's been able to train to attain spiritual enlightenment, right?! As a bonus fact, I even have my own title now!" declared the old man, laughing even louder than before. Nobody on the planet could be smugger than him at this moment in time.

"Well, I'd be lying if I said I wasn't curious to know how you returned from the dead. What more, you were even able to access the training realm. And here I thought no normal person could even come close to touching Jaellatra... Regardless, what's your current title?" asked Gerald with a nod, finding it slightly hilarious that a dead man knew more than he did.

"Regarding how I got resurrected, it was through sheer luck, honestly. After you killed me, a bolt of lightning suddenly struck my body out of nowhere! I have no idea how I didn't immediately dissipate or turn into ashes, but either way, I somehow managed to preserve the thought of my soul! It wasn't long after before I was able to resume full control of my body again, and it was then when I realized that my body had undergone a few abnormal changes!"

"With that said, the only explanation as to why I'm still alive is that I've been able to undergo nirvana reincarnation! I find it funny that after endlessly training my inner strength in the past—thinking that I was already at the top of the world with it—it took a bolt of lightning to make me realize that I could get much stronger! Either way, I was able to condense all my essential qi after being struck, and I felt so strong at the time that it was almost as though I had just undergone deification! Truth be told, I've been excited to tell you about all this for a while now! Hahaha!" explained Julian.

Hearing that, Gerald laughed as well before saying, “So you thought owning essential qi alone was enough to qualify you to become a deity?”

“To be fair, I didn’t know anything about this at the time. It wasn’t until much later when I was finally able to come into contact with others who were also training to attain spiritual enlightenment. Following that, I became aware that I was one of them, and it was also around then when I gained my title. You see, those who are able to train to attain spiritual enlightenment are extremely special and powerful. With that in mind, we’re all worthy of having our own titles, and mine is the Yin Yang Master!”

Chapter 1465

“Well, from what you’ve told me, I can safely say that you truly are one lucky person. Still, why the Yin Yang Master?” asked Gerald rather curiously.

“Titles are usually awarded based on the receiver’s characteristics. Regardless, do you still think you’re all-powerful, Gerald?” scoffed Yin Yang.

“Wouldn’t even dream about it!” replied Gerald as he shook his head.

“You can stop putting that act in front of me! While I admit that you’re extremely powerful and talented—based on our previous encounter—, I’ll have you know that we had only seen a small portion of the world back then! I’ll say it right now that the true masters who control the world are those who train to attain spiritual enlightenment! With their extensive and near-incomparable power and abilities, they’re easily able to dominate the world if they wanted to! As a fun fact, know that there’s at least one person in every country who trains themselves to attain spiritual enlightenment!”

“Regardless, even though I’m already one of them and I’ve been given the title of Yin Yang Master—signifying that I’m already one of the top people on the planet—I still know my limitations very well. After all, despite having this title, I’m still worlds apart from getting as strong as the Nine-rank Master! With that in mind, I’m lightyears away from the incredibly skilled top masters who’ve been able to get the title of Chakra King!” explained Yin Yang as his expression momentarily turned respectful with the mention of the Chakra King title.

“So what I’m hearing is that anyone above the Nine-rank master will be given the title of Chakra King? Who’s giving all these titles out anyway?” asked Gerald, puzzled.

“Hahaha! You don’t have to worry yourself about that... Regardless, I have to say that everything’s simply come and gone too quickly and suddenly... I’ll have you know that all this while, I’ve been unable to share this joy with others, my disciple included. After all, telling him about all this would certainly fill him with shock and amazement! But here I am, sharing all this with you, Gerald! After all, you’re different!”

“Truth be told, you’re a fine young man who not only has good character, but you’re also extremely talented! Hell, you even have an amazing training base! Due to all that, I have to say I quite like you. However, there simply is no way out of this. Just so you know, some people are inherently born with evil natures, and I’m one of them. Besides, not only have we been fighting against each other for such a long time, you’ve even killed me before! With that in mind, you can only ever be my enemy!”

“Still, I have to admit that I found it quite intriguing and enjoyable to tell you all about my amazing growth and experiences. I’ve been waiting for the longest time for a chance to finally be able to tell you all this, you know? After all, I had been completely defeated by you just a year ago! To think that the gap between us would end up becoming this vast the next time we met!” said Yin Yang as he cackled.

“You can save the laughing for later. I still have a few questions I’d like to ask. For one, since you’re already so powerful, why did you choose to stay by an ordinary young man’s side, Yin Yang?”

Quite frankly, everyone had expected Gerald to be terrified after hearing Yin Yang’s speech. After all, they were mortal enemies. With that in mind, even if he wasn’t panicked, Gerald should’ve at least been a little nervous.

On the contrary, Gerald was as cool as a cucumber! Still sitting with his legs crossed, it gave off the impression that Gerald was a leader who was listening to his subordinate reporting for duty! What nerve!

Naturally, infuriated Yin Yang. Greatly displeased with Gerald’s attitude, he then sneered, “You truly have made great progress in your disposition and temperament, Gerald... After all, you’re still able to remain so calm before me even after not meeting for a year...”

Before Yin Yang could go on, Gerald simply raised his hand, interrupting him before saying, “That’s quite enough of chit chat. Now hurry up and answer my question!”

“...You brat...! How dare you keep disrespecting me, time and time again...! I guess you won’t take my warnings seriously till I threaten you, you narrow-minded young man! Very well then, I’ll show you the true power of a grandmaster! Your life ends now!” roared Yin Yang as he released Perla... before instantly aiming at Gerald and using his sword tactic!

Explosive sounds quickly followed as a turbulence sent all the tables and chairs in the room flying all over the place! With wine glasses and the restaurant’s windows shattering from the immense force, the scene was made even more terrifying when a blade that glowed purple and black manifested at the tip of Yin Yang’s finger before shooting out at Gerald!

“H-how utterly powerful and terrifying...!” muttered Terrance as his entire body trembled in fear.

However, just as the sword was about to pierce through Gerald, it suddenly disappeared!

“...Huh? ...W-what...?” muttered Yin Yang in his disbelief as he looked at his sword finger.

The skill he had just utilized was known as the Soul Slasher, and its name was pretty self-explanatory. Regardless, he had perfected the skill, and none of his attacks with it had ever missed before...

“Curious as to how I stopped that?” asked Gerald indifferently.

“...How did you do it?” replied Yin Yang with a frown, now feeling that this young man wasn’t as simple as he portrayed himself to be. Gerald had been calm throughout this entire time... A little too calm... Terrifyingly calm, even...

Chapter 1466

Choosing not to answer him verbally, Gerald simply mimicked what Yin Yang had done earlier—in order to use the sword tactic—before pointing in a random direction...

All of a sudden, the room began trembling wildly, causing the surrounding walls to crack and even begin crumbling! Following that, a massive sword that glowed purple and black began manifesting!



The sheer force of the summoning process alone caused strong winds to blow, and the next thing Terrance and Manager Waferer—who had been standing at the side—knew, the corners of their mouths were already bleeding due to how sharp the blades of wind were!

However, they were far too preoccupied with staring wide-eyed at the powerful-looking sword of light before them to even notice that they were hurt! It looked so powerful that it wouldn't be a stretch to say that it could easily topple the entire restaurant with a single swing!

With a slight gesture, Gerald made the sword momentarily disappear... Once it reappeared, it was tiny. However, as the sword of light shot past Yin Yang's face, it caused a steady stream of blood to trickle down his right cheek...

By this point, Yin Yang was already panting heavily as he stared at Gerald, eyes fully widened in disbelief.

"...W-what...? You... You've also become someone who's trained to attain spiritual enlightenment...?!" muttered Yin Yang in horror.

What Gerald had just accomplished was the highest level for this particular magic art. In other words, the ability to freely retract and release the sword of light.

It was a level that not even Yin Yang had been able to master, yet Gerald appeared to have already perfected it...

Gulping, the horrified Yin Yang then asked, "When... When did you manage to attain spiritual enlightenment...? And when did you master the Soul Slasher...?"

"Just a few days ago, to be quite frank. As for the Soul Slasher, I learned it just now by observing you. While you may think you're all-powerful, your movements are honestly pretty slow and the tactics you muttered aren't as silent as you'd like to imagine! I could hear all of it!" replied Gerald with a faint smile.

"...Y-you...!" stuttered Yin Yang as he took two steps back in fear. Gerald had now shown him what true terror felt like...!

Realizing how much trouble he was now in, Yin Yang instantly kowtowed before Gerald while shouting, “P-please spare my life, Mr. Crawford! No, Senior! I was wrong, senior...!”

While Yin Yang hadn’t been afraid of death in the past, he was extremely terrified of dying now. After all, he had finally gotten a taste of what it felt like to be the cream of the crop, a person training to attain spiritual enlightenment... It was like a precious dream come true, and he wasn’t ready to lose all that right here and now.

After witnessing the extent of Gerald’s skills and understanding why he had been so calm this entire time, Yin Yang knew that the young man had already beaten him in every aspect possible. It was just as he had earlier said... The gap between them was simply too vast...!

Yin Yang’s biggest discomfort, however, came from the fact that he had been treating himself as the protagonist this entire time... He now understood that the actual protagonist had been Gerald all along!

As for Manager Waferer, he finally snapped out of his shock when he realized that Yin Yang was kneeling before Gerald. Realizing how dire things were now, the manager instantly knelt in front of Gerald as well, pleading, “P-please spare my life as well, Mr. Crawford...!”

Federico himself was facing a fair amount of internal struggle in his heart. However, since his master was actually kneeling before Gerald while begging for his life, Federico simply did the same.

Seeing that, Gerald—who was still seated on his chair—raised his hand slightly, summoning a cup of untouched fragrant tea into it.

After taking a few sips, Gerald then said, “We truly haven’t met in ages, Yin Yang... Regardless, I can’t exactly tell when it started, but I’ve begun liking it when people talk to me with this kind of attitude and reverence... I would have certainly been much happier if the three of you had spoken to me with this attitude from the very beginning!”

Chapter 1467

“P-please spare my life, Mr. Crawford...! I beg of you...!” pleaded Yin Yang as he continued begging for mercy.

Though Federico continued begging as well, he was simultaneously wondering why someone who was around the same age as him could be so powerful.

After becoming Yin Yang's disciple and entering the realm of training, Federico had naturally grown quite arrogant, and it was no easy task for him to willingly submit to a person from the bottom of his heart.

With that in mind, he quickly regained his wits and began thinking that all of this was simply nonsense! There was no way he was going to just bow to the whims of a person his age!

'I'm unconvinced of all this...! Even if master is willing to kowtow before you, I can't accept this at all! I'm simply being a real man now by making a strategic submission! Mark my words, I'll surely get back at you for all this one day...!' Federico thought to himself.

By thinking of it as a strategic retreat, Federico became more willing to continue pleading for mercy.

"I don't mind sparing your lives. After all, I never even said that I'd kill both of you in the first place!" said Gerald as he looked at Yin Yang and Manager Wafarer, prompting both of them to heave huge sighs of relief.

Realizing that his name hadn't been called out, Federico could only stare at Gerald in disbelief.

"As for you, I recall that you've agreed to exchange the lives of your family members in return for the Heavenly Horsetail Whisk. While it's true that a real man should know when to make strategic submissions, a true man follows his promises to the very end as well! With that said, you and your entire family will have to die!" declared Gerald.

"...Y-you... What...?!" stuttered Federico, now terrified beyond words. He hadn't anticipated that Gerald could read minds!

Quickly backing away in panic, Federico instantly began muttering, "N-no...! Please, don't...!"

However, Gerald was having none of that. Muttering a few tactics, Gerald then pointed his sword finger at Federico!

Following that, a powerful blood-red sword flew right at the terrified man, completely enveloping Federico in a crimson glow as soon as it came into contact with him!

While he thought he was going to die, Federico eventually opened his eyes... Only to realize that he was still in one piece.

"...I'm... Alive...?" muttered Federico, utterly shocked by the turn of events.

Federico found himself pondering if this was a lucky situation similar to what his master had experienced... With his body radiating such strong rays of light, he also wondered if they were the reason why Gerald's deadly sword attack hadn't harmed him in the slightest. Could it be that... He truly was a disciple chosen by god?

However, his fantasies quickly came to a halt when he heard Gerald explain in an indifferent tone, "Don't get your hopes up. You've just been afflicted with a blood curse! As long as the curse is active, anyone who shares the same bloodline as you will start dying, one by one! Don't worry, you'll be the last to die, so cherish what little time you have left!"

"...H-huh...? A... Blood curse...?!" exclaimed Federico.

The second his sentence ended, an acute pain instantly swept through Federico's body! As painful black cracks began forming all over his face, Federico finally began regretting his actions.

Everything had initially been fine... He was already a rich young master, wasn't he? Just why did he have to go provoke this person...?!

"Just... Why...?!" cried out the aching Federico as his entire body exploded into a bloody mist a split second later!

As the bloody mist remained suspended in the air, both Yin Yang and Manager Wafarer gulped as a clear message was imprinted into their minds and hearts.

Anyone who dared to offend Mr. Crawford would surely die...!

Snapping out of it, Manager Wafarer immediately resumed kowtowing as he pleaded, "P-please, please, please spare my life, Mr. Crawford...!"

Yin Yang himself was petrified in fear, unable to even move an inch.

Ignoring Manager Wafarer for the moment, Gerald then turned to look at Yin Yang before asking, "Now then... Do you remember the question I asked earlier?"

"I-I remember...!"

Chapter 1468

Watching as Yin Yang nodded repeatedly, Gerald then said, "Repeat what I asked then before you answer my question!"

Gulping, Yin Yang then muttered, "Y-you asked me how I had obtained my title and why I had chosen to stay by Young Master Dun's side...!"

Wiping the sweat off his forehead, Yin Yang then added, "Truth be told, I only managed to figure all this out about half a year after training to attain spiritual enlightenment. Mr. Crawford, did you know that the world is more exciting and amazing than anything you could've ever imagined? For starters, there's a realm- no, an entire world that can be assessed by those training to attain spiritual enlightenment! However, you should also know that many of them later choose to live and work alongside regular people! We refer to this as joining society!"

"Speaking of which, while it's true that those who have attained spiritual enlightenment have great power and influence that could easily be used to take control over planet's order, in an effort to keep unruly people under control, a joint organization known as the Ringmasters of Obliteration was created! Speaking of the Ringmasters of Obliteration, they're also the ones who regulate the ranks and titles. With that said, those who train to attain spiritual enlightenment have to use the Appraisal Obsidian to complete an essential qi examination that will then give them their grade!"

“As for me, I’m currently in the joining society stage as a person who is training to attain spiritual enlightenment. Naturally, I have my own selfish reasons for doing this!” explained Yin Yang before pausing for a while as he observed Gerald’s expression.

“Regardless, there will be an underground ceremony in the Jenna Province in the next few days. From the rumors I’ve heard, that it’s due to a non-government organization discovering a miracle. While miracles are oftentimes extremely dangerous, they’re also very enticing. With that in mind, I came here about three months ago to lay down the foundation. After all, it’s said that among the miracles, there are some magic artifacts that are capable of destroying the world!” added Yin Yang, stating all that he knew without hiding anything.

Naturally, Gerald made sure to pay extra close attention to everything that Yin Yang said. He was truly learning a lot today, and he now realized that what Peter and Zyla had shared with him before was only the tip of the iceberg in the world of those who trained to achieve spiritual enlightenment.

Regardless, he was now lifting the veils of mysteries on his own.

As he thought about it, he recalled Peter saying that there was a big problem with his grandfather. Had his grandfather also been training to attain spiritual enlightenment...? If that was the case, then everything that had happened up till this point started to make a lot more sense. For some reason, realizing that seemed to make Gerald’s heartache the more he thought about it.

“...I see. Regardless, if I remember correctly, your name is Julian Laker, correct?” asked Gerald casually.

“It is, Mr. Crawford!” replied Julian fearfully.

“Well, since you seem to have the will to live and I know it wasn’t easy for you to get to where you currently are, I’m giving you a chance to persuade me as to why I shouldn’t kill you right now! Make it snappy!” said Gerald.

“I-if you let me live, then I, Julian Laker, will follow you and be your slave! I’ll be willing to do anything for you in return for your kindness and benevolence! I’ve seen the errors of my ways! I truly have!” replied Julian as he immediately began kowtowing again.

Truly terrified and filled with profound respect and humility toward Gerald, everything that Julian had just said was the truth. After all, stating that Gerald was far scarier now than he had been a year ago was no exaggeration.

There wasn't a good ending to be found by choosing to go against him.

"Very good," said Gerald rather indifferently.

As relief washed through Julian, the terrified Manager Wafarer began kowtowing again as well as he pleaded, "I-I'm willing to become your slave as well, Mr. Crawford...!"

In response, Gerald simply lightly stepped on Manager Waferer's head!

"Oh? Who do you even think you are? Do you truly think that you're worthy enough to stay by my side...?"

"N-no! I was wrong for stepping out of line! Please forgive me!" cried out the terror-stricken manager.

"I'm glad you realize that. Regardless, you still haven't answered my question. How did you get your hands on the Heavenly Horsetail Whisk?" asked Gerald.

Not daring to hide anything from Gerald anymore, Manager Waferer quickly replied, "I-it was given to me by a student...! While I came to realize that the item had great value after having someone evaluate it, the student simply asked for three hundred thousand dollars! Quite frankly, I wouldn't have minded paying him three million dollars had he not been so adamant with that price!"

"A student? Do you know more about him?" asked Gerald with a frown.

Momentarily stunned when he heard that question, Manager Waferer quickly snapped out of it before replying, "W-well, at the time, I was curious to know how that kid had managed to get his hands on the magic artifact as well... With that said, I sent someone to tail him in secret... From what I've managed to gather, the student's name is Yul and he's a fourth-year senior studying at the Jenna Province

University... He's also in the second class of the Department of Economics and Management! While his family isn't that well to do, he seems to be a very honest person...!"

"Yul..." murmured Gerald as a plan began forming in his mind...

Chapter 1469

Master Ghost had always been a calm man who had the remarkable ability to predict the future. With that in mind, it was impossible for him to have simply chosen to dispose of such a valuable magic artifact just like that. But what could his intentions have been...?

As Gerald pondered on, Zenny—who had been quiet this entire time—finally decided to say, "Could Master Ghost be trying to tell us something, Gerald? Could this be his way of asking for help?"

Nodding in response, Gerald then replied, "I assume so. After all, with his near-perfect ability to predict the future, he's probably already predicted that we'd come looking for him. In fact, it wouldn't be a stretch to say that he already knows when we'll be coming to get him! Why else would he have allowed his beloved whisk to end up in that auction in the past few days? Regardless, we should head to Jenna Province University first. Once we find Yul, we'll ask him about what he knows!"

"I used to study at that university too, master! Why don't I accompany you there? I'm sure having someone by your side will be more convenient for you anyway!" suggested Perla.

"You have a good point. Very well, then!"

Upon arriving at the Jenna Province University, Gerald found himself thinking about his past. It was just something that happened anytime he entered any campus. Regardless, it had been three years since Mila had gone missing... That was also the start of all of this...

Despite that, now that he was within another university, it felt like everything had just happened yesterday... Time simply worked that way, secretly slipping away when one was most unprepared for it...

When Perla—who had been following Gerald around campus—saw that he was deep in thought, she decided not to interrupt him. Instead, she simply chose to head to the Department of Economics and Management to look for Yul.



Gerald himself simply continued wandering around campus.

Just as he was thinking that all universities looked more or less the same, he suddenly heard someone shouting, “Look out!”

At that moment, a large kite was swooping down from the sky, and it was headed straight for Gerald! Things like these weren’t uncommon when flying a kite. After all, without wind, kites would simply descend rapidly, and there was no real way of stopping that from happening.

Regardless, the girl who had called out to Gerald appeared to have been flying the kite with a few friends of hers, and they were now frantically trying to warn Gerald about it.

Needless to say, Gerald noticed it almost instantaneously. Since he was still deep in thought, he didn’t consider his actions and ended up pointing at the kite... Before causing it to explode while it was still in the sky!

By the time the kite fell to the ground, it was nothing but ashes!

When the girls finally got to Gerald, they instantly began shouting both anxiously and in rage when they saw the condition of their kite.

“Was there really a need for this? It’s not like we did it on purpose! Why’d you have to burn our kite?!” yelled one of the girls.

Of the four long-haired girls in the group—who all looked equally slim and attractive—three of them were pointing angrily at him. The fourth, from what Gerald could see, seemed to be more on the quiet and demure side. Even so, there were still obvious hints of disappointment on her face.

Whatever the case was, Gerald found himself sighing internally as an apologetic expression formed on his face. This was why he preferred sealing off his essential qi... After all, if he accidentally used it, there was always the potential of him accidentally hurting others...

Snapping out of it, Gerald then quickly replied, “I didn’t mean to! I apologize!”

“What do you mean you didn’t mean to? It’s obvious that you intentionally burnt our kite just because it nearly hit you! How terrible can you be?!” retorted another girl.

From the looks of it, they had been so focused on getting to Gerald earlier that they hadn’t really seen how their kite had been obliterated. With that in mind, Gerald burning it seemed to be the only logical conclusion based on the kite’s current condition. From what Gerald could see, they weren’t about to accept any other explanation either.

With that in mind, Gerald then said, “Look, I’ll compensate you for it!”

As he said that, an elegant-looking girl—who had previously been standing in the center of the group—began winding up the kite’s string...

However, she didn’t notice a pit hole in time and found herself leaning dangerously forward!

Chapter 1470

Seeing that, Gerald instantly grabbed hold of the girl’s waist before helping her up!

“My god! What the hell are you doing?! Are you actually taking advantage of Xyrielle right before our very eyes?!” yelled the enraged girls.

To think that he was being so daring out in public, and in front of them, no less!

“I-it isn’t what you think, Xaverie...!” said Xyrielle, hoping to stop her friends from saying anything unnecessary.

“There’s no need to be afraid, Xyrielle! We’re here to defend you! Whatever the case is, I’m making a call now so that this kid pays for what he’s done!” said Xaverie as her angered friends united against their common enemy.

“You’ve got it all wrong! He was simply preventing me from falling just now! There’s a pit hole there, see?” explained Xyrielle.

“...Huh?” replied her friends, all startled to hear that.

After realizing what had truly happened, their glares softened slightly. Xyrielle, on the other hand, found herself blushing slightly as she looked at Gerald.

A brief moment later, one of the girls then said, “...Even so, he’ll still have to make up for our burnt kite!”

“I already said I was sorry!” replied Gerald with a wry smile.

“And do you think things will be settled with a simple apology?” retorted Xaverie as she crossed her arms.

Tugging onto Xaverie’s sleeve, Xarielle then asked, “What are you still doing, Xaverie?”

“Xarielle, you, of all people, should know how expensive that kite was! After all, it was made with high-quality materials! Regardless, with how plainly you’re dressed, I assume it’d be difficult for you to cough out a hundred and fifty dollars... Still, you did help Xyrielle out earlier... Fine, why don’t we do this? Taking into account that you aided her, you’ll just have to buy each of us a cup of milk tea as compensation. How’s that?” asked Xaverie.

“No problem!” replied Gerald with a smile as the other girls cheered and applauded.

Soon enough, all four of the girls were holding a cup of milk tea in their hands. Just as they were about to leave, however, Xaverie asked, “Speaking of which, what’s your name? And which department are you from?”

Seeing no reason to hide it, Gerald simply replied, “I’m Gerald! Gerald Crawford!”

“Copy that! Also, just so you know, a cup of milk tea each isn’t going to cut it! The next time we bump into you, we’ll be asking for at least one more milk tea treat from you! With that said, I’ll be remembering you!” said Xaverie as she dragged her friends away.

Naturally, that wasn't a problem for Gerald. Xaverie didn't seem to be making things particularly difficult for him either. Truth be told, he found them to be quite interesting.

Now that that issue had been dealt with, Gerald recalled that he still had important business to attend to. With that, he then quickly headed to the Department of Economics and Management.

As he left, however, he didn't notice that Xyrielle had been constantly turning back to look at him from time to time...

Watching as his figure slowly disappeared, Xyrielle was jolted back to reality when Xaverie suddenly shouted, "Xyrielle!"

Startled, she then replied, "...H-huh? What's wrong?"

"You know, I've noticed that you've been acting a bit off for a while now... While you were all cheerful before this, you've been acting pretty shy ever since you bumped into that boy! Hell, you were even blushing as you stole glances at him just seconds ago! You can't have already developed feelings for him just because he hugged you a little just now, right...?" said Xaverie in disbelief.

"N-no! That's not the case! It's just... When I saw him earlier..." muttered Xyrielle, hesitant on completing her sentence.

"Go on!" replied Xaverie as she and the other girls anxiously waited for Xyrielle to finish her sentence.

"It's hard to put into words, alright? Look, do you girls remember when we bumped into that fortune-teller about half a year ago...?"

Chapter 1471

"A fortune-teller...? Wait, I think I remember. He was an old man, right? The one we met when we were on an outing?"

"That's the one!" replied Xyrielle with a nod.

“Hahaha! That guy was funny... I remember him saying something along the lines of, ‘Your heartbeat will immediately hasten the second you meet the love of your life!’” said Xaverie, recalling that event.

It was only a second later when she suddenly froze. Dropping her jaw, she then looked at Xyrielle in disbelief before adding, “You... can’t be serious, right...? That was the guy who ended up touching your heart?”

After nodding shyly at her friends—who were all staring at her with questioning looks—Xyrielle paused for a moment before shaking her head and saying, “...While it’s true that my heart thumped a little, I don’t think that he’s the one... After all, that fortune-teller had said that my lover would have very unique life experiences. My lover would also be extremely skillful and have near-unparalleled abilities! A true hero! With that said, while that guy from before was definitely a gentleman, he’s far too thin and fragile-looking! Due to that, I don’t think that he’s the one!”

“Heh! When you put it that way, I have to agree! With that said, I’m sure you simply misinterpreted your feelings earlier. Regardless, I won’t deny that that guy was pretty handsome and honest-looking... I’ll be frank and say that while I’d love for such a person to be my husband, I definitely wouldn’t want him as a boyfriend! As you saw earlier, I just couldn’t help but want to tease him! Either way, don’t think too much into it, Xyrielle! Just wait for your great hero to appear!” replied Xaverie with a laugh.

“You’re so mean!” joked the girls among themselves as they laughed as well.

Just as they were about to leave, however, a commotion—mostly consisting of awe-filled screams from girls—could suddenly be heard coming from the campus’s main road.

Turning to look in that direction, the girls were greeted by the sight of a crowd quickly gathering around a luxury car that was slowly making its way inside. What on earth was all that about...?

Stopping a student who was running toward the crowd to join in on the excitement, Xaverie then asked what was happening.

“What? Don’t you girls know about Young Master Laidler? He’s the coolest interim student around! Not only is he handsome, but he’s also very powerful and comes from a distinguished background!” said the student in a tone that suggested that she was his biggest fan.

“Oh? Is he that amazing? And how powerful are we talking about here?” asked Xaverie.

“I guess I’ll just give you a rundown on who he is! His real name is Stetson Laidler, and he’s a very prestigious individual both domestically and internationally. Now, regarding his power... There’s a rumor that states that he was able to kill a tiger at the age of twelve, simply by pointing at it! With rumors like that spreading around, it’s no question why he’s considered to be a legendary person!”

Before the girls could ask her anything else, she had already run off to join the crowd!

“Bloody hell! To think that such a person actually exists! I do wonder if he’s one of those extraordinary people whom you mentioned back when we were at your house the other day, Xyrielle...” exclaimed Xaverie in her astonishment.

Due to some circumstances, such things were no longer a secret to them.

“I doubt it. After all, father told me that those people are extremely secretive about their identities. With that said, I feel that Young Master Laidler isn’t one of them since he’s appearing in such a high-profile manner,” replied Xyrielle.

“...Hold on. Xarielle! Do you think that Young Master Laidler could be the love of your life? After all, not only does he have a very special background, but he’s also apparently extremely powerful and skillful! The fortune-teller could’ve very well been referring to him, right?” exclaimed Xaverie.

Hearing that, Xyrielle instantly lowered her head shyly.

Ignoring her reaction, Xaverie simply tugged on Xyrielle’s arm while saying, “Come on, let’s go see what Young Master Laidler looks like!”

When they got there, they were just in time to see the tall man getting out of the car.

With long hair and a thin figure, Stetson seemed to have a perpetual sharp gaze in his eyes. To be quite frank, he looked like he had just stepped out from some anime. He certainly felt like an anime character

as well. After all, from what everyone could tell, looking deeper into his past would definitely be intimidating due to all his legendary experiences.

“You know, they say that Young Master Laidler is from the Xyshore Border, and he’s the eldest young master of the prestigious and influential Laidler family! I’ve also heard that he’s been receiving special training in a valley ever since he was a child... I wonder if you’ve heard about this, but a few years ago, a massive discussion about the training boy took place. However, all of the discussions were quickly deleted, leading everyone to believe that the rumors were fake. With that said, I truly hadn’t expected all that to be true! As it turns out, the training boy truly does exist!”

“I heard of that incident too! After all, the training boy was quite famous on the internet back then. The fact that he’s now a teen checks out with that rumor! Still, I do wonder what he’s doing here in the Jenna Province... He couldn’t have come all the way here just to study, right...?”

Chapter 1472

As those from within the crowd continued discussing the matter, Xyrielle and the others simply listened in to their conversations while glancing at Stetson.

From what they could see, Stetson had a very cold personality. After all, he didn’t even seem to bother about all of the people who were treating him extremely courteously. Instead, he simply walked off with an indifferent expression on his face...

Naturally, the discussions soon died out since Stetson was no longer there.

As the crowd slowly dispersed, Xyrielle found herself thinking, ‘That couldn’t be the love of my life, right...?’

While it was true that Stetson satisfied all the conditions that the fortune-teller had mentioned, her heart wasn’t throbbing for him at all.

Observing Xyrielle’s expression, Xaverie then grinned as she poked her arm while asking, “Well, Miss Xyrielle Waddys? What are you thinking about?”

“I’m not thinking about anything!”

“I can already guess what’s on your mind, so you don’t have to say a thing! Regardless, though Stetson seems to currently be shrouded in darkness, I’m sure he’ll soon find his light again since Xarielle’s in love with him! Who knows, his training path could also greatly progress in future due to our Xarielle’s blessings!” said Xaverie with a laugh.

“Alright, that’s enough! I’m a little tired so let’s stop talking about this and just head back to the dormitory to rest already!”

With that, Xyrielle and her friends returned to the dormitories, feeling slightly dispirited.

Meanwhile, both Gerald and Perla themselves were walking out of the campus with a rather well-behaved and bespectacled boy.

When Gerald caught a glimpse of Stetson—who was currently quite a distance away—he found himself muttering, “...Oh? How interesting...”

“What is it, master?” asked Perla.

“Hmm? Oh, it’s nothing. You know, it’s quite embarrassing to realize that though I’ve met so many people before—be it through sharing a school or a workplace—it had never crossed the past me’s mind that some of them could actually have supernatural backgrounds!” murmured Gerald.

“...Huh? What do you mean by that, Master...?” asked Perla, clearly unable to see things from Gerald’s point of view.

Pointing at Stetson, Gerald then said, “What I’m saying is that though I’d surely have missed it in the past, the current me can tell that he’s also a person who’s training to attain spiritual enlightenment!”

“...What? To think that such a young person would be training to achieve spiritual enlightenment!” exclaimed Perla in shock.

“He’s not the only peculiar person we’ve bumped into in this campus either. Do you remember that bespectacled female student who showed you the way earlier?” asked Gerald.



"I do!" replied Perla, recalling her encounter with the girl. Essentially, Perla had bumped into her as she was walking along the corridor of the Department of Economics and Management. Following that, she had asked the girl which floor the second class was located on...

Nodding, Gerald then said, "That girl is a textbook example of peculiar people in this place! She's actually a Rabbit Soul that's possessing the girl! The rabbit itself is doing so to learn how to live amongst us. After all, possessing her would make it look like an ordinary person!"

Watching as Perla covered her mouth in surprise, Gerald simply laughed before saying, "Worry not, you'll slowly be discovering even more in the future!"

Shortly after, the trio then arrived at a restaurant. After booking a private room, Gerald then ordered a bunch of food for them...

While pouring Yul a glass of fruit juice, Gerald then said, "There's really no need for you to be this nervous, Yul! We didn't call you out looking for trouble, you know?"

Chapter 1473

"I appreciate that!" replied Yul as he sipped on the juice before starting to eat. It was evident that he was still being extremely wary with his actions and words...

Noticing that, Gerald simply smiled before saying, "Still, didn't you just receive three hundred thousand dollars...? Why are you still being so hard on yourself? By that, I'm referring to the fact that you were only eating steamed buns with pickles when Perla and I found you!"

"I... don't dare to use the money... Though, I don't mind handing the money over to you, if that's what you want!" replied Yul.

Shaking his head with a smile, Gerald simply said, "We're not here for your money, Yul. We're here to ask you how you got your hands on the Heavenly Horsetail Whisk. From the looks of it, it doesn't seem like you were the one who had made the plan to auction it off in the first place!"

Pondering for a moment, Yul eventually raised his head before saying, "...I... I'm really sorry, but I can't tell you that... Look, if it's money you're after, you can just take it...! I was simply running an errand!"

Seeing that Yul was too frightened to even eat at this point, Gerald then cautiously asked, “There really isn’t a need to be so nervous, brother... Again, we aren’t looking for trouble. Let me rephrase my question... Did the other party say anything else after handing you the whisk?”

After hesitating for a moment, Yul replied, “...A young friend from the south will be coming over!”

“Hey now, what do you mean by that? Are you trying to change the subject again? Have some respect for my master!” scowled Perla.

“...Oh? A young friend from the south, you say... Could that friend of his have the surname of Crawford...? A Crawford living in Northbay?” asked Gerald with a smile.

Upon hearing that, Yul’s eyes instantly widened as he said, “You... You know about the Crawfords from Northbay, brother? Then... Could you perhaps be...?”

“My name is Gerald Crawford, and yes, I’m from Northbay. Getting straight to the point, I’m here today to look for Master Ghost, the owner of the whisk!” explained Gerald.

Instantly wiping his mouth, Yul then exclaimed, “So you really are him! My benefactor had told me that a person called Gerald Crawford would definitely come looking for me soon to inquire about the Heavenly Horsetail Whisk! Now that I know that you’re the real deal, he’s also told me to hand you a letter!”

From that alone, it was obvious that Yul had been extremely cautious with what he had chosen to disclose, up till the point he realized that Gerald was the person he had been waiting for.

“Benefactor?” asked Gerald.

“While I’m not sure whether my benefactor is the same person as Master Ghost, I do know that he was the one who had saved both me and my family from dying back then... Following that, he had entrusted me with this matter, and from that day on, I’ve been patiently waiting for your arrival!” replied Yul happily as he retrieved a letter from his pocket—that appeared to have been personally sewn onto his clothes—before handing it to Gerald.

“Here it is!” added the pleased boy as Gerald took the letter from the boy. On the letter, were the words, ‘To a young friend of mine, Gerald Crawford!’

Recognizing Master Ghost’s handwriting, Gerald quickly found himself equally as delighted as Yul was.

Opening the letter, he instantly began reading its contents.

As it turned out, Master Ghost truly was in the Jenna Province. What more, Master Ghost had apparently also figured out the next step of his plan even before the first time Gerald had scaled Langvern Mountain alone!

Regardless, upon abandoning the church back then, Master Ghost had hurried over to the Jenna Province. Based on what he had written in the letter, Master Ghost had done so specifically because of Gerald. According to him, he truly believed that Gerald was the person he had been waiting for all these years. With that in mind, he wanted to leave Gerald a lavish gift as soon as he arrived at the Jenna Province!

However, even though he managed to predict quite a bit of his future, there was always a chance that the things he foretold could get altered.

Not knowing what other dangers awaited him, Master Ghost had made sure to lay low in order to increase his success of avoiding the many pursuits from a force.

Either way, Master Ghost also made it a point to repeatedly mention the underground festival that the Waddys were hosting, adding that if Gerald managed to participate in it, he would surely benefit greatly!

After reading through the entire letter, Gerald found himself muttering, “Why do I feel that there are some things I can’t seem to grasp from Master Ghost’s letter...?”

Hearing that, Zenny—who had also been reading the letter this entire time—said, “There really isn’t anything to be puzzled about, Gerald! After reading through it, it appears that you’re going to be my master in the future! Actually, allow me to rephrase that! You’re going to end up becoming my master’s master!”

## Chapter 1474

Upon hearing Zenny's words, Gerald instantly replied, "...What? I'm going to become Master Ghost's master? Could you elaborate on that?"

"Indeed! Master Ghost had already mentioned it to me several times before, but he's been waiting for the longest time for someone to take him under their wing. From the looks of how things have been progressing, it seems that it's already been determined that you're the person he's been waiting for. What more, he's even sent you a greeting and such a lavish gift upon your arrival in the Jenna Province! I have a suspicion that once you're done with what happens during the underground festival, you'll surely be able to take a massive step forward, Gerald! No, master!" said Zenny.

"That's nonsense! There are still many things I have to trouble Master Ghost with once I locate him. With that said, why would he even be talking about greeting me as a master?" replied Gerald.

"What more, while it's true that I've encountered a few miracles, I feel that they have little benefit to me!" added Gerald.

"Well... Either way, you should finish reading the letter first... I don't think you've noticed the five elements diagram on the back of it..." said Zenny.

Hearing that, Gerald then turned the letter around to realize that she was right. Well, partly. After all, Gerald knew for a fact that this wasn't a five elements diagram.

His eyelids now twitching rapidly, Gerald knew for a fact that the patterns arranged on the diagram were exactly the same as the five discs that were currently present in the elixir-of-life field in his body!

While he definitely recognized the image, Master Ghost hadn't left any explanations about it at all.

Regardless, Gerald had initially thought that Master Ghost was so focused on locating miracles since he had assumed that Gerald's strength hadn't advanced by much. In truth, however, Gerald had far exceeded his previous strength since they last met.

While that had been Gerald's own assumption about the situation, looking at the picture now made Gerald realize something.

Master Ghost could have only included this picture with the knowledge that Gerald would have already restored his Dehlere Foundation upon arriving at the Jenna Province. After all, the image perfectly mirrored the discs that had recently appeared on his elixir-of-life field.

‘Could this be a hint that I’ll be able to solve the mysteries regarding my elixir-of-life field at the underground festival...?’ Gerald thought to himself.

By this point, he had already made up his mind that he was going to follow Master Ghost’s instructions and participate in the underground festival no matter what to find out more about its origins.

After properly keeping the letter, he then looked at Yul—who had been busy eating—before saying, “Yul!”

“Yes, brother Gerald?”

“From the looks of it, both of us were truly fated to meet... With that said, take this card. I’ll be telling someone to change it to today’s date later, but essentially, there’s some money in it. Consider it as my token of appreciation to you, and do make good use of it!”

“I-I can’t accept that, brother Gerald!” replied Yul as he shook his head.

“Just take it!” said Gerald as he shoved the card into Yul’s hand.

Following that, Gerald and Perla made their way back to the Sherwin Manor...

As soon as they arrived, Julian and Terrance immediately greeted in unison, “Sir! You’re back!”

Both of them were now calling him ‘sir’ since they now knew how powerful he truly was. With that in mind, they felt that simply referring to him as Mr. Crawford would be a little too presumptuous on their part.

Gerald wasn't really against this change either.

Regardless, before he had set off for the university, he had made sure to forcefully intervene in the grievances between Julian and Terrance. In other words, he had arranged for Julian to help train the Sherwin family's children to allow them to open up their spiritual roots. Should things go well, the effort would surely pave the way for the children to embark on their personal training journeys in the future.

Naturally, this decision resulted in Terrance quickly calming down. Terrance was undoubtedly a person who placed his family first before his own grievances, which meant that as long as he was able to ensure his family's survival in the long run, he would certainly be willing to let his grievances slide!

Shaking the thought off, Gerald then sat down and looked at Julian before asking, "What do you know about the underground festival, Julian? Could you detail everything you know about the event?"

"Of course, sir!" replied Julian as he respectfully stood up before sharing the origins of the underground festival...

Chapter 1475

"The underground festival has been around for a long time, and every time this festival is held, it's usually in conjunction with the emergence of certain powerful resources!" explained Julian.

"Powerful resources? Could you be referring to the training resources necessary for those who wish to train themselves to achieve spiritual enlightenment?" asked Gerald with a nod, seemingly understanding what Julian was getting at.

"Indeed, but the reason the festival is held isn't limited to the emergence of regular training resources either, sir! At times, the festival is also held when magic artifacts capable of destroying the world are found! While such items are certainly tempting for ordinary people to purchase and boast about, they're invaluable treasures to those training to attain spiritual enlightenment!"

"With that said, there's always competition when it comes to such resources. It's the reason why those training to attain spiritual enlightenment choose to ignore their agreements during times like these and abruptly join society in order to compete for the resources!"

“Naturally, there are also ordinary people who wish to obtain such magic artifacts. Speaking of which, I’m not sure if you already know this, but as long as a powerful family owns such a magic artifact, there will definitely be a cultivating family who supports them from the shadows. While the buyer would certainly get protection, the truth is, the cultivating family usually ends up remotely controlling everything that happens within the buyer’s family!” detailed Julian.

Upon hearing that, Gerald found himself nodding. After all, from what he now knew, though the Crawfords owned a few magic artifacts and things appeared to be fine on the surface, the truth was that there had always been another Crawford family who had been secretly supporting them.

On the other hand, if an ordinary family acquired similar magic artifacts, they’d surely face the danger of being reduced to nothing but a puppet.

“So that’s the reason you’ve been concealing your identity after entering society, right? Because you’re aware that several people—who are also training to attain spiritual enlightenment—have rushed over and are very possibly already among us with their identities concealed?” asked Gerald.

“Sharp as always, sir. Regardless, had I not kept a low profile and ended up getting discovered by others who are also training to attain spiritual enlightenment, they’d surely lay endless traps for me or even besiege me the second they’re able to!” said Julian.

“I see... The Waddys are the ones responsible for providing the platform for these contenders, correct? Are they trying to allow for reasonable resource allocation using certain methods in advance?” asked Gerald.

“That is correct, sir. You could say that the underground festival is similar to a martial arts conference. During the actual event, many of the participants—who are actually people training to attain spiritual enlightenment—will be disguising themselves as wealthy or even ordinary people. From what I’ve gathered, many of them will also be relying on the prestige of influential families in order to get a better chance of competing.”

“If the rumors are true, then the winner of the competition—or the winning family—will also be given the dominant right to take the lead in discovering the miracle on Tierson Mountain! That’s a big deal since such an honor would only ever be granted to someone with the rank of a martial arts leader outside the competition!”

“Oh? Has a miracle already been discovered on Tierson Mountain?” asked Gerald.

“Indeed!”

“I see... Tell me, though the Waddys are the organizers of the event, do you think they’ll be sending in a participant of their own for the competition?” asked Gerald.

“I do, though do note that being the organizer doesn’t necessarily mean that they’re the one leading the event. Regardless, in order to secretly observe the situation this year, I’ve chosen not to cling onto anyone training to attain spiritual enlightenment or join any powerful and influential families, which is why I settled with the Duns before this.”

Hearing that, Gerald felt that he now fully understood the ins and outs of the matter.

With that, he began thinking about Master Ghost’s letter again. From what he could now guess, Master Ghost wanted him to join the underground festival because he wanted Gerald to participate in the competition.

‘Could there be hidden things relating to the secrets of my elixir-of-life field within the miracle on Tierson Mountain...?’

The more Gerald thought about it, the more he realized how possible that was.

Gerald also finally understood why Master Ghost had been laying low this entire time. As it turned out, the undercurrents of the Jenna Province were already surging despite how calm it appeared on the surface.

Though there were probably already countless training forces that had secretly snuck into the Jenna Province and were already present, Master Ghost had hinted that the miracle would be of great use to him. Knowing that, Gerald knew that he definitely had to get his hands on it.

Still, though Gerald was confident that he was currently powerful enough to belittle many of the existing forces, after his little lesson with the King of Judgment Portal, he now understood that no matter how



good he thought he was, there would always be someone better than him out there. With that in mind, Gerald knew he couldn't be too high-profile now. Thankfully, Julian's explanation had given him some inspiration.

His current plan was to sneak in by joining certain families so that he could secretly observe the people who were training to attain spiritual enlightenment. With any luck, he'd be able to find out about their situations. Following that, he'd hopefully be able to eventually come up with a plan for himself.

After thinking about it for a while, Gerald then asked, "So, where exactly is the underground festival being held?"

Chapter 1476

"At the Heartstone Manor in Jenna City! By this point in time, there should already be many people training to attain spiritual enlightenment there!" replied Julian.

"I see. If that's the case, I'll be heading over there to check things out first!" said Gerald with a nod.

"Allow me to accompany you, sir!" replied Julian.

"There's no need for that. You're simply too big of a target, and I truly believe that you'll easily be discovered by the others training to attain spiritual enlightenment. Unlike you, I'm capable of using my breath-holding technique and that'll allow me to appear like an ordinary person. With that said, Perla can come with me instead," said Gerald before turning to look at Terrance.

"As for you, Mr. Sherwin, I'm afraid I'll have to trouble you with something..."

"Do state your wish, sir!"

"Well, I'd like you to get me admission tickets to participate in the underground festival!"

"That won't be a problem at all, sir!" replied Terrance.

By this point in time, Terrance and Julian found themselves deeply admiring Gerald. After all, they both felt that their futures would surely be bright as long as they followed this man. It probably wasn't a stretch to say that they'd surely be able to reach impossible heights just by being under him, and Julian, in particular, strongly believed in this.

Regardless, after entrusting and delegating everything that was required, Gerald and Perla were just about to head out to have a look at the situation at Heartstone Manor when Perla suddenly received a message on her phone.

Smiling as she read through it, she quickly said, "Master, Yul just sent me a WhatsApp message stating that he needs my help with something! He's apparently waiting at the entrance right now!"

"Oh? If that's the case, then why don't we go meet him now?" replied Gerald who honestly had a pretty good impression of Yul.

He really couldn't deny that Yul reminded him of his past self. Thinking about it, Gerald couldn't help but laugh self-deprecatingly in his mind.

After all, there was a saying that while two equally great people could potentially end up becoming friends, two equally miserable people would definitely get along together. This was because after being miserable for so long, meeting someone who understood their sadness would surely make both parties happy to know that they had finally found a person willing to walk through the same journey together with them. That was most probably the reason such friends ended up getting so close with each other.

Regardless, upon arriving at the door, they saw Yul pacing back and forth with his cell phone in hand. Though he was now rich—after receiving the money from Gerald—he still chose to maintain a plain and simple appearance.

Whatever the case was, the second he saw Gerald and Perla, he instantly ran toward them before saying, "Brother Gerald! Perla!"

"You said you needed my help, right? What's the problem, Yul?" asked Perla.

"I-It's about my grandfather's grave! It's erected at Xbygi Mountain, you see, but a developer just said that Heartstone Manor is conducting an event there! Due to that, they're planning on taking down his grave! While I pleaded them to leave his grave alone, I simply ended up getting beaten up and being chased out! With that in mind, I was hoping that you could have a word with those people so that they'd at least give me a few days to transfer my grandfather's grave away first, Perla...!" explained Yul, his eyes now reddened and teary.

"...That..." muttered Perla, feeling like she had just been placed in an extremely difficult spot. After all, the Sherwins were no longer how they used to be, and they didn't really have a say when it came to things regarding Heartstone Manor for quite some time now...

Seeing how anxious Yul was and how sensing Perla's troubled feelings, Gerald simply smiled before saying, "There's no need to be so anxious. For now, let's just head to Heartstone Manor first. We'll think of a solution once we're there!"

Chapter 1477

Hearing that, the trio then agreed to head to Heartstone Manor together first.

Yul had come looking for Perla since the Sherwins had initially been quite a prestigious and influential family in Jenna City. However, due to the Dun family's schemes, the fall of the Sherwin family came shortly after. With that in mind, though Perla had initially driven a luxury car worth at least seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars, she now only drove an ordinary BMW 7 Series.

Of course, Gerald didn't mind that at all.

On their way there, Perla began telling Gerald about the Heartstone Manor. As it turned out, the manor had a history of over a thousand years, and the earliest depictions of it stated that the manor had first been established by a prince and nobleman from ancient times.

Later on, the manor was eventually contracted by the Waddys who acted as the manor's developer. Following that, they began conducting many large-scale tourism projects there.

Aside from that, the manor was also used as the venue of the underground festival.

Regardless, since the Heartstone Manor was going to be closed up in just one more day, many people were already flocking the area by the time the trio got there.

Eventually, Perla managed to park the car in the crowded parking lot. Just as the trio was about to head off, all three of them suddenly heard a feminine voice sneering, "Who's car is this? Who allowed you to park here?!"

Turning around, Gerald saw that a high-end Mercedes Benz had stopped right in front of Perla's car, and several men and women had just stepped out of it. The one who had yelled at them appeared to be a woman who also seemed to be the leader of the group.

Before she could further ridicule the trio, however, both Perla and the woman suddenly froze in surprise.

After a brief moment, both of them called out each other's names in near-unison.

"Perla?"

"Jenny?"

The second after she said that, Perla's face instantly reddened in embarrassment as she stared at the woman who looked to only be a few years older than her.

On the contrary, there was a smug look on Jenny's face as she crossed her arms while sneering, "So it's you, Perla! Aren't you a bit too free to be having fun here at Heartstone Manor? Don't you have work to attend to or something?"

"Who is she, Jenny?" asked one of the young men from Jenny's group. All it took was a glance for Gerald to see that all of them were wearing clothes befitting fashionable nobles. It was also evident that they all had contempt in their eyes.

"You could call her my cousin, I guess... Her mother is my grandmother's adopted daughter, you see, and she eventually ended up getting married into the Sherwin family. I trust that all of you have already

heard about what happened to the Sherwins, correct? With that in mind, I really hadn't expected her to still have the heart to come play around at Heartstone Manor! A place where only the wealthy can afford to come to!" replied Jenny.

It was really no secret that cousin sisters sometimes enjoyed comparing themselves with each other. Jenny, for one, had always been jealous of Perla. After all, she could never even come close to comparing with her in the past. Now that tragedy had befallen the Sherwins, however, she finally had the opportunity to mock Perla to her heart's content!

"You...!" growled the enraged Perla. However, she knew that there was nothing else she could really say.

A wry smile on his face, Gerald simply shook his head before saying, "Let's just go, Perla!"

Nodding in response, Perla was just about to leave with the other two when Jenny suddenly shouted, "Stop right there!"

"What is it now, Jenny..." asked Perla.

"What do you mean, what 'what is it now'? Move your d\*mned car out of the way! How dare you have the guts to even park your cheap car in this expensive parking lot?!" retorted Jenny, feeling extremely frustrated.

"I know, right? To think that she even brought along that pathetic pauper!" chimed in another girl who had been standing beside Jenny.

The second they heard the words, 'pathetic pauper', Gerald and Yul instantly turned back to look at the girl.

"...Huh? Pathetic pauper? Who do you mean, Poppy?" asked Jenny.

"That guy, of course! He's from our university and he's as poor as a church mouse!" declared Poppy as she pointed at Yul.

Hearing that, Yul instantly blushed and lowered his head.

“You’re really frustrating me, you know that, Perla? How did you ever manage to end up in such a pathetic state? To think that you’d actually bring two paupers along to have fun at such a high-end place! Couldn’t you have just brought them to an amusement park or something? Hell, you could’ve just spent a little more money to bring them to Disneyland to have a look around! With that said, there was absolutely no reason for you to bring both of them here! I mean, just look at what both of them are wearing!”

Chapter 1478

Following that, Jenny and the others covered their mouths as they laughed.

While she hadn’t confirmed whether Gerald was truly a pathetic pauper, she simply assumed that that was the case since he didn’t actually look like someone who came from a good background. With that in mind, she simply ran her mouth without a care in the world.

“Jenny! You can insult me all you want, but you aren’t allowed to insult my master!” retorted the enraged Perla.

“...What? He’s your master?!” yelled Jenny as she and her group of friends roared out in laughter.

“Speaking of masters... I heard from my mother that your grandfather doesn’t even seem to care about his business anymore. She mentioned something about him bringing you around to look for a famous master to teach you martial arts or something... Could it actually be that... That guy’s the famous master that your grandfather got for you?!” added Jenny who was still covering her mouth from laughing so much.

Seconds after she said that, a strong-looking and muscular man—who was wearing a pair of sunglasses—suddenly walked forward from behind Jenny before saying, “Oh? This brother here’s a master? With how thin he is, I’m sure he must be extremely skillful!”

Obviously into fitness, the man then added, “I apologize for not noticing a peer earlier! Speaking of which, I’m the general manager of the Styraburgh Entertainment Club, and I’ve also been the champion of the Jenna Province Fighting Champion for three consecutive years in a row! Hahaha! Regardless, why don’t we shake hands since we’re peers?”

After saying that, the man instantly straightened his neck, creating intimidating cracking sounds.

Startled by that, Yul immediately tried to advise Gerald to hurry up and leave.

He wasn't exactly a wimp, but since it was pretty obvious that this group of people had bad intentions, Yul felt that it would be best if they didn't mess with Jenny's group of friends. From that thought process alone, it was apparent that Yul had forgotten that he was actually richer than them now.

Regardless, the girls found themselves snickering among themselves as they witnessed the scene play out.

Benson had always been like this. He would ask to shake the other party's hand, and once they did, Benson's opponents would surely end up screaming in pain. If it was one thing Benson enjoyed the most, it was making his opponents feel humiliated. After all, he was a famous winner!

Either way, after seeing that Gerald's only response was a subtle smile, Benson then scoffed, "Come on, brother! It's just a handshake! What are you so afraid of? Hahaha! Speaking of which, I hope you realize that we had been eyeing that parking spot for a while now! Just so you know, all I need to make is a single phone call for your car to be turned into a pile of scrap metal~ Now, if we were friends, however, I'd surely allow you to continue parking your car here! With that said, let's shake hands already so that we can get better acquainted with each other! Once that's over, we'll head off to find another parking spot! How about it?"

Looking at Benson as he continued pestering him—seemingly unwilling to leave him alone without a handshake—Gerald simply retained his smile as he replied, "Well, I guess things will turn troublesome if I refuse to accept anyway!"

"Hahaha! That fool actually doesn't realize that Benson's just playing around with him!" shouted one of the girls standing behind Benson, prompting the other girls to begin laughing again as well.

"Ready when you are!" said Gerald with a nod, ignoring the girls' mockery.

Following that, both of them extended their hands for a handshake.

Upon seeing that, Jenny and her friends instantly took a few steps back before covering their ears. After all, they were all sure that a certain someone was going to start squealing like a pig that was getting slaughtered the second Benson began squeezing his hand.

They knew how cruel the screams could get, and they were all cute, young girls. There was just no way they should ever have to hear such violent screams!

Regardless, they soon realized that no screaming was taking place. Finding that odd, they all turned to look at Benson... Only to witness his increasingly reddening face!

Though it appeared like Benson was already squeezing Gerald's hand as hard as he could, Gerald himself was still smiling!

"The hell?!" growled Benson, his eyes now fully widened. Despite already using his full strength, Benson hadn't been able to squeeze down on Gerald's hand in the least! It was almost as though Gerald's hand was made out of steel!

"I think you should apply a bit more force!" mocked Gerald as he momentarily glanced at Jenny before turning back to face Benson.

"You...!" shouted Benson as he instantly began channeling all the energy in his body into his hand!

It was at that exact moment when an ear-piercing scream filled the air! However, it wasn't a scream that belonged to Gerald...

No, the one screaming was Jenny! Clutching onto her chest, she sounded exactly like a sow that was being slaughtered!

Even so, Benson was too focused on saving his own face to care about her. Seeing how smug Gerald still was, Benson then began using his other hand to squeeze as well!

As Benson's force intensified, so did Jenny's screams. The pain was so much for her to handle that she ended up lying on the ground!



## Chapter 1479

“N-no...! Stop...!” cried out Jenny, her face filled with tears by this point as she rolled on the ground in pain.

Finally realizing how much pain Jenny was in, Benson instantly released Gerald’s hand before running over to Jenny’s side.

“What’s wrong?!” asked Benson as he stared at the pale-faced Jenny who was unable to even try hiding the immense pain she was currently feeling.

“I-it hurts...! The pain alone makes me feel like dying...!” cried out Jenny.

Seeing that they were no longer trying to stop him from leaving, Gerald simply shook his head with a wry smile on his face before leaving together with Perla and Yul.

Meanwhile, Poppy found herself asking, “How could this have happened though? Why would you be in so much pain for no reason?”

“Beats me! Actually, didn’t any of you notice that Jenny’s chest only started hurting when Benson started exerting his strength earlier?”

“That sounds freaky! Speaking of which, hold on. Where even are they?” asked Benson—who was already drenched in cold sweat—as he got up in anger.

“I think they escaped since they were worried that we’d continue making things more difficult for them!” said Poppy.

“What? They’re really asking for it this time...! I guess I’ll just have to get someone over to smash their car now so that they’ll know how great I truly am!” growled Benson as he fished his cell phone out and instantly got ready to make a call.

However, the second he was about to press the call button, he suddenly shrieked in pain!

Everyone could only stare wide-eyed at him as his cell phone fell out of his oddly stiffened hand before falling to the ground...

Benson himself couldn't move an inch of his hand, and after about a second or two, his still-lifted hand suddenly began feeling an acute pain! It felt like it was being torn apart, and Benson was now in so much pain that he instantly began rolling on the ground, clutching onto his hand while shouting, "I-it hurts...! My arm hurts so much...!"

Meanwhile, Gerald and the others had already entered the manor as the underground parking lot fell into chaos.

"Is Jenny going to be alright, Master...? Was her pain because of you...?" asked Perla.

"She'll be fine, and yes, I did that. I used a skill known as the Substitution Method!" explained Gerald.

"What does that do, master?"

"Essentially, it redirects damage inflections! For example, I transferred all the strength that the burly man had used on me earlier onto Jenny!"

Hearing that, Perla couldn't help but laugh when she recalled the scene from earlier.

"Regardless, I only did that to punish them for their crimes. Hopefully, that'll stop them from trying to commit even bigger crimes in the future! It certainly didn't help their case when they made all those insulting remarks!" explained Gerald, shaking his head with a wry smile on his face.

Just as he turned his gaze to look at the crowd inside, he suddenly heard a woman's voice saying, "...Huh? You're Gerald, right...? Xyrielle, look! It's that guy again!"

Hearing that, Gerald immediately found himself thinking, 'To think I'd actually run into these girls again... How frustrating...!'

Xyrielle herself could suddenly feel her heart palpitating again the second she saw Gerald... It couldn't be, right...? But if the first time was just a coincidence, then why would her heart still beat so rapidly this time...?

Why on earth was her heart pumping so fast just because of this ordinary-looking person...? The more Xyrielle thought about it, the more puzzled and embarrassed she got.

Either way, just as she was wondering if she should greet him, screams and shouts could suddenly be heard coming from within the audience. Hearing that, those from within the crowd—Gerald included—found themselves looking at the direction where the sound had come from...

Chapter 1480

The shouts weren't all that far away, and while it had been extremely packed in that area just seconds ago, everyone had already formed a path in the middle.

Of course, the person they were all aweing at was none other than Stetson, the young man whom Gerald had noticed when he was at the university back then! To think that he'd make an appearance here at Heartstone Manor as well...

Then again, it wasn't all that surprising since people who were training to attain spiritual enlightenment were all flocking to the manor with various methods anyway. With that said, Stetson—who was commonly referred to as the 'training boy'—was naturally also a person training to attain spiritual enlightenment. From what Gerald had heard, Stetson had already opened up his spiritual roots at the age of three, and that knowledge only solidified the fact that Stetson was someone with authentic talent.

Even when it came to strength, Gerald could estimate that he was as strong as Julian, a person who had trained to attain spiritual enlightenment! With that in mind, Stetson could very well already be a Rank-one Master.

Regardless, it really wasn't a surprise that his arrival would cause such a massive sensation within Heartstone Manor. It probably wasn't even a stretch to claim that he was the most high-profiled person there. Either way, it was also quite obvious—by this point—that he had a very powerful force backing him up.

As Gerald continued observing the scene, he suddenly heard a respectful voice say, “Master has already instructed you to go meet Young Master Laidler once he arrives...!”

Turning to see who had said that, Gerald saw that it had come from an old man who was standing next to Xyrielle. Appearance-wise, the old man looked to be an extremely kind person who was probably around the age of eighty. Aside from the small mole on his face, his most distinguishable feature was his beard that fell all the way down to his chest.

As the old man took notice of Gerald and glanced at him, Xyrielle simply nodded and—after thinking for a brief moment before finally dismissing the idea of greeting Gerald—replied, “I understand, Mr. Babel!”

Xyrielle had her reasons for not choosing to greet Gerald.

Even as a child, Xyrielle had lived a noble life as the eldest young lady of the Waddys family. Be it financial power or strength, the powerful Waddys had it, which meant that she had always been living a near-unimaginable life, at least to commoners. Aside from the moon and the stars, there truly wasn’t much else that Xyrielle couldn’t get her hands on.

Despite having all the power in the world, Xyrielle wasn’t the happiest girl on the planet by a longshot. After all, due to certain rules in her family, she had lost the opportunity to choose her own lover.

Even so, Xyrielle was very reluctant to heed to that rule. After all, she had never experienced love before. With that in mind, she felt the need to experience what it felt like to be in love, which was why she had asked the fortune-teller—whom she had met by a river—to tell her her love fortune.

In response, the fortune-teller told her that her love would appear soon.

Upon hearing that, Xyrielle had cherished the thought and instantly began dedicating all of her energy to look for the person she would eventually fall for.

While it was true that Gerald had caused her heart to palpitate every time she saw him, it was quite obvious that he wasn’t the one she was looking for. After all, her good friends had been accompanying and persuading her throughout the day to go for Stetson instead.

Eventually, she gave in, and Xyrielle was now convinced that the person she loved was actually Young Master Laidler. With any luck, she hoped that his feelings for her would slowly bloom after getting into contact with each other.

With that said, she also chose not to greet Gerald since she felt that both of them were from two completely different worlds.

Regardless, after nodding at Mr. Babel, Xyrielle then headed toward Young Master Laidler who was still making his way through the crowd.

Seeing that, Xaverie made a mocking face at Gerald before saying, “See that, Gerald? You don’t really have a chance anymore so just give up already!”

Watching as Xaverie chased after Xyrielle, Gerald simply scratched the back of his head, wondering what that girl was even going on about. Whatever the case was, it’s not like it mattered to him. After all, his focus here today was to get a good look at all the people—who were training to attain spiritual enlightenment—gathered here today, and who better to start with than Stetson.

From what he could see, despite being surrounded by a large crowd, Stetson appeared extremely cold and arrogant. Whenever he looked at anyone, he made sure to squint his eyes as well. It was almost as though he was viewing everyone as mere ants. Ants that weren’t worthy of being in the presence of someone as extraordinary as he was.

He simply couldn’t understand how these people—who were so small and insignificant—could actually have the dignity to continue living in this world despite being so worthless?

After all, this world should only belong to strong people like him, right? These were the thoughts that Stetson tended to obsess over when he saw people like these.

His train of thought was cut short when a servant—who had been following Stetson by his side—whispered, “Miss Xyrielle Waddys is here, Young Master Laidler!”

Upon hearing that, Stetson slowly opened his eyes... and when he did, he realized that Xyrielle looked as pretty as a fairy...

As his eyes brightened up slightly, Xyrielle found herself blushing slightly as she said, "I've heard many great things about you, Young Master Laidler! My name is Xyrielle!"

Xyrielle herself had a look of admiration in her eyes as she looked at the incredible and spirited young man standing before her.

As she extended her hand to shake his, Stetson barely hesitated when he reached out as well to shake her hand.

While they did so, Xyrielle felt slightly confused. Even after making skin contact, her heart wasn't throbbing in the slightest... Why was that?

Chapter 1481

Regardless, the person she had waited for more than ten years had finally appeared. So, Xyrielle truly cherished this kind of opportunity.

As they continued chatting, the both of them also began walking toward the interior of the manor.

Originally, the reason why Stetson had come here was just to take a stroll as well as to take a look at the situation.

When he saw that Xyrielle was very beautiful, he was naturally also willing to walk together.

At this time, there were very loud noises and a commotion at a large and empty field that was not too far away outside.

"What's going on?"

Stetson asked the servant who was following not too far behind him.

“Young Master, that is the fighting arena. Not too long ago, someone from North Africa caught some fierce bulls and sent them here to fight. This is also considered a feature of the Heartstone Manor!” The servant replied.

“Pfft! That is so boring. What is so great about watching these beasts fight? I do not know how bored and lifeless these people are!”

Stetson said as he shook his head and laughed bitterly.

However, these words seemed to make Xyrielle feel a little uncomfortable.

Stetson’s words were originally not directed at her. After all, in comparison, Xyrielle’s status was much higher than Young Master Laidler’s. However, Stetson’s arrogant attitude made Xyrielle feel a little uncomfortable.

Perhaps it was because she felt a little annoyed, so Xyrielle said, “Not necessarily. My father once said that these kinds of bulls have experienced certain nature experiences. So, all of them are extraordinary and unique. It would be good to take a look at them too!”

“Oh? Xyrielle, I never would have expected that you would be interested in these kinds of things too? Alright, then. I will accompany you to go and take a look!”

Stetson said as he shook his head with a wry smile on his face.

The both of them walked toward the fighting arena.

“Xyrielle!”

As for Xaverie and the others, they had already long been having some fun at the fighting arena here. So, they hurriedly greeted Xyrielle and called her to go over to them as soon as they saw her.

“Wow! Hello, Young Master Laidler! I have heard of you many times before, but this is the first time I am meeting you in person!” Xaverie said.

“Mm.”

Stetson did not say much, and he simply nodded faintly in return.

Stetson was naturally very arrogant and cold.

This made Xaverie feel a little unhappy because she felt as though she had lost face. After all, she did not expect that he would be so arrogant and cold.

The entire atmosphere at the fighting arena also instantly became different with Stetson’s arrival. Many people automatically moved aside and made way for him.

The original noise and commotion also disappeared.

Stetson and Xyrielle looked down toward the open space in the fighting arena.

Following that, they saw a black bull with a long golden horn on its forehead fighting in the arena.

Stetson simply glanced at the bull before he closed his eyes in disdain.

Alas, the rest of the people who were cultivating to achieve spiritual enlightenment felt as though this was an absolutely wonderful thing.

In truth, even after joining society, all of them had also had their own pain.

For instance, Stetson had had to face too many insignificant ants every day. This was actually very painful for someone like Stetson.



Xyrielle glanced at the arrogant Stetson. At this time, she did not know why she had a strange feeling in her heart.

She began to doubt whether the fortune teller had told her the truth.

Would she truly fall in love with this person and end up taking him as the love of her life?

Xyrielle was beginning to have serious doubts about it.

However, she did not say anything. Instead, she placed her focus on the fighting arena.

At the same time, Gerald had also just arrived.

“The fighting arena! Moreover, these bulls seem to have undergone some sort of mutation... These are bulls with a demonic spirit!”

Perla had also come here.

When he saw that Perla was staring at these strange bulls, Gerald gave her a simple explanation.

They naturally stood at the periphery to watch the fight.

“Bulls with demonic spirit? It’s no wonder why they all look so fierce and vicious! Moreover, they seem to have a very strong attacking power! I guess watching these bulls fight is indeed the main attraction, then!”

Perla could not help but nod.

“Main attraction? Is that what you think?”

Gerald shook his head as he smiled.

“What else then, Master?” Perla was puzzled.

“I think what Brother Gerald is trying to say is that these bulls are not ordinary bulls. Moreover, it seems as though they are not willingly being tamed by humans either! Brother Gerald, will there be any danger here?” Yul asked tentatively from the side.

“Yul, you are indeed a very perceptive person. You’re right. These demonic bulls might seem to be putting on a performance on the surface, but in actual fact, they are not so easily tamed. Moreover, at this time, there is no extremely strong or powerful person sitting around and keeping an eye on them. These demonic bulls were previously captured and are now being forcefully tamed by humans. They have already possessed a very powerful hatred deep in their hearts for a long time. So, danger is bound to exist.” Gerald replied with a worried expression in his eyes.

Chapter 1482

Gerald was not a saint, but when he predicted that danger was coming and realized that so many innocent people would be in danger, he felt as though he could not be at ease if he did nothing at all.

“Brother Gerald, what should we do, then?” Yul asked.

“The only way is for us to drive the crowd away!” Gerald replied indifferently.

Of course, Gerald hoped more than anything that no dangerous situation would occur.

“The both of us will go and talk to the staff, then!” Perla said.

Gerald nodded.

Perla and Yul walked toward the workbench.

Gerald also began to observe the surrounding environment.

A few moments later, some sound began coming from the microphone.

“Everyone, please pay attention! These bulls will bring danger to everyone! Please begin evacuating as soon as possible!”

It was Perla who was shouting after she had grabbed the microphone.

“Hm? What is going on?”

The crowd was very uncertain.

“What are you doing?! Hurry up and go down! Don’t distract us from watching the fight in the arena!” Someone also shouted.

Most people were unmoved.

“Xyrielle, it’s them! It’s Gerald’s friends!”

Xaverie had some impression of both of them.

“Mm.”

Xyrielle simply nodded indifferently.

“Why did they say that? Are they here to cause trouble?” Xaverie was puzzled.

“I don’t know. I believe that the staff will take care of them soon!” Xyrielle simply responded faintly.

Sure enough, Perla and Yul were soon driven away by the staff.

“Master, these people are not even listening to us at all!”

Perla said with a face full of anger as she returned to Gerald’s side.

“Why don’t I try rushing up there again?” Yul said.

“It’s useless. It’s already too late!”

As for Gerald, he simply concentrated and stared at a large cage that was welded out of steel within the fighting arena.

Before Perla and Yul could come back to their senses...

“Roar!”

A loud roar suddenly sounded.

The sound was so loud and deafening that even the surrounding ground began trembling violently at this time.

It felt as though heaven and earth were breaking apart in this instant.

“Ahhh!!!”

Many people at the scene were all shouting in shock at this time.

After all, this sound was indeed a little too shocking and horrifying.

“What’s wrong?”

The expression on Xyrielle’s face also instantly changed, and she could not help but stand up in unison along with her few friends as they looked toward the big black steel cage.

“Mr. Babel, is there still something else inside that big cage?” Xyrielle asked Mr. Babel, who was next to her.

Mr. Babel’s eyelids twitched slightly. “Yes, Miss Xyrielle. There is a huge black bull inside the cage. That is the only bull with a white horn, and it looks a little strange and eerie. That is the reason why it has not been released yet!”

As Mr. Babel spoke, he hurriedly used his body to block Xyrielle’s body.

“Miss Xyrielle, I feel that the situation has changed. We should retreat quickly!”

Mr. Babel spoke with a tense expression on his face, almost as though he had already sensed that it was the birth of some kind of huge crisis.

At this moment, he had a horrified and fearful expression on his face...

Chapter 1483

Before anyone could even react...

Boom!

A violent explosion suddenly sounded. In an instant, the iron cage that was refined out of steel suddenly broke apart, and because of this huge impact, the broken segments of the cage began shooting out in all directions.

The broken pieces ruthlessly embedded themselves into the surrounding open platform. At this time, it felt as though the impact of these broken pieces were even more powerful than a bullet itself.

Following that, a pile of dust began swirling upward.

In an instant, it felt as though heaven and earth were collapsing, and the whole area was about to be destroyed.

“Ahhh!!!”

Loud and terrifying screams suddenly sounded.

The crowd began scattering in all directions.

After the dust had finally settled, an extremely huge bull walked out from within the large cage.

Every step it took seemed to carry an extremely shocking force. It was taking its own time, and it even had a white bull horn.

As it emerged, it began to chase several smaller calves around it.

“Roar!”

A thunderous roar sounded.

Everyone felt so frightened that they were all trembling in their hearts.

All of them were motionless.

Even Xyrielle was surprised to see the scene in front of her.

No one dared to move because no one could guarantee that they would not end up becoming the first target of the bull's attack if they were to make even a single move.

"Mr. Babel..."

Xyrielle was extremely nervous.

At the same time, she looked at Stetson, who was sitting quietly at the side.

His eyes were still closed, and it looked as though he was resting.

Could it be that he had not noticed the scene before him?

No!

He had already realized the scene before him. How could he possibly not notice it?

However, his attitude already said it all. The creature before him was just like an ant. It was simply a bigger ant to him. It was merely a scene where the bigger ant was attacking the smaller ants around it!

Ridiculous! It was simply too ridiculous!

Stetson thought to himself, 'Why do such ridiculous things constantly appear in this world?'

"Young Master Laidler, this demonic beast is attacking people!"

When Xyrielle saw that he was unmoved, she could not help but remind him at this moment.

At the same time, she also had great expectations of him.

As for Stetson's name, many ordinary people had already heard about him before on the internet.

At that moment, they slowly began to move behind Stetson.

This was clearly the most dangerous place.

Stetson could only smile bitterly in a helpless manner.

“Roar!”

At this moment, the white-horned demonic bull suddenly tilted its head as it roared.

Immediately after that, it raised two of its hooves up high.

It seemed as though it was trying to provoke someone.

It was obvious that it had somehow been captured some time earlier, and it looked like it was a king about to make its comeback. It was roaring as it waited for the humans in front of it to appear before it again.

It wanted to exact revenge to regain the face it had lost.

However, the people in front of it did not move at all, and this made it feel very indignant.

“Master, what should we do?”

Perla was also frightened, and she hurriedly looked at Gerald.



As for Gerald, just as he was about to answer Perla...

“You sinful animal! Don’t be so arrogant!”

A loud bellow sounded.

Immediately afterward, a figure was seen leaping directly into the open space.

Everyone at the scene also began to feel very excited and thrilled as soon as they saw him leaping in the air.

“D\*mn! There are indeed people who can fly!”

“That’s right! Could it be that he is that kind of legendary person who is cultivating to achieve spiritual enlightenment?”

Someone shouted in astonishment.

It was an old man in his sixties who was standing in the open field. He was extremely thin like a bag of bones, but he was sage-like and had an outstanding behavior like that of an immortal.

As soon as he appeared, Gerald realized that there was a rich cultivation aura within him

He was obviously a person who was cultivating to achieve spiritual enlightenment.

“Roar!”

When the demonic bull saw that someone had appeared, it was immediately filled with the urge to battle.

At that moment, it began charging directly at the old man.

“Pfft! After I am done with a sinful animal like you, I will cut you into pieces and eat you up!” The old man sneered.

Chapter 1484

At that moment, he instantly cast a spell to return the attack.

It could be seen that this old man wanted to use a powerful sword light to maneuver and penetrate the demonic bull directly.

However, just then, there was a sudden flash of white light from the demonic bull’s white horn, and a spiral-shaped light suddenly flew directly at the old man.

Boom!

The two rays of light collided, and the old man’s sword light dissipated in an instant.

“What?!”

Gerald, who was quite a distance away from the old man, could also sense the panic in the old man’s voice at this time.

This was because the latter had only just realized that their strengths were not on the same level after they had already exchanged blows with one another.

Bang!

The white halo light quickly hit the old man in the chest and sent him flying out, smashing heavily onto the bleachers.

“Ahhh!”

At this time, all of the people present truly felt fear.

Even a powerful old man like that was actually knocked down in just one hit. This was simply a demon! A demonic beast!

The demonic bull did not care about the bystanders at all.

It simply glared at the old man lying on the ground with a mocking look in its eyes.

It lifted its feet as it began to step on the old man’s body in an insulting manner.

“Uncle Mace seems to be in danger!”

At this moment, Xyrielle seemed to be extremely nervous.

“Uncle Mace is a top prestigious guest in our family, and he is also my father’s friend. Young Master Laidler, I wonder if you have a way to defeat this demonic bull and save Uncle Mace?” Xyrielle asked nervously.

“Of course! It is nothing more than an ant in my eyes!”

Stetson replied indifferently as he opened his eyes slightly.

“Then, can you please save Uncle Mace?!” Xyrielle asked anxiously.

Xaverie and the other girls were all looking at Stetson with a hopeful expression on their faces.

Although this person was very arrogant, there was naturally a virtue to his arrogance.

At this moment, everyone was already pinning their hopes entirely on Stetson.

“You want me to attack a beast that is nothing more than an ant to me? Xyrielle, I once vowed that I would never make a move against an ant! This is because both the beast and that old man are simply too small and insignificant to me!” Stetson said as he frowned.

Would he really have to force himself to make a move because of these small ants?

No!

Stetson was struggling deep down in his heart.

“Roar!”

At this moment, the demonic bull was stepping fiercely on the old man, and the old man spat a mouthful of blood.

This stance was clearly a challenge. Did anyone else dare to come up?

“Young Master Laidler, it is better to save one life than to build a seven-storied pagoda. I beg you, please save Uncle Mace! Otherwise, he will truly die in the demonic bull’s hands!”

Xyrielle’s eyes were filled with tears of anxiety.

“Okay then, Xyrielle. I’ll make an exception this time because of you. I’ll get rid of this small ant today!” Stetson said as he smiled lightly.

“Thank you, Young Master Laidler!”

Xyrielle nodded heavily.

“Oh, my God! The cultivating boy, Young Master Laidler, has already stepped up!”

“We will have to record the scene today! It seems as though the rumors before this were all true! This world is really not that simple!”

Everyone started discussing loudly.

Meanwhile, Stetson simply shrugged as he leaped directly into the air.

When he landed, his back was facing the demonic bull, and he had one hand in his pocket.

“Wow!”

Everyone at the scene was already screaming.

As for Xyrielle, Xaverie, and the other girls, although they did not really like Stetson’s attitude, they were all filled with admiration for Stetson at this moment.

All of them were staring at him with a look of admiration in their eyes at this point.

“Roar!”

True enough, the demonic bull was simply trying to provoke. As soon as he saw that Stetson was already here, he casually kicked the old man aside in a very uninterested manner as he turned around to look at Stetson.

After that, it let out a provocative roar.

“Beast! Do you want to kill yourself, or do you want me to make a move? As soon as I make a move, you will certainly end up in a very miserable state!”

Stetson spoke with his eyes closed and one of his hands was still in his pocket.

“Roar!”

As for the demonic bull, it seemed as though it could understand human language, and it suddenly became very angry at this moment.

All of the furs on the bull’s body stood upright like countless sharp thorns.

Then, it rushed directly at Stetson wildly...

Chapter 1485

The demonic bull had already rushed over.

Everyone at the scene breathed in shakily at this time, and all of them were waiting to see Stetson’s reaction.

They wanted to see how the young cultivating boy, Stetson, would deal with the demonic bull.

Yet, to everyone’s surprise, Stetson remained unmoved at this time.

On the contrary, Stetson simply closed his eyes with one hand still in his pocket.

This terrifying demonic bull was nothing in Stetson’s eyes at all!

“Here it comes!”

After a loud crashing sound, only the demonic bull's horn could be seen moving as a flash of white light shot out of it.

The dust that rose seemed to have swept everything away!

Many people were swept away in an instant, and even more people began wailing in pain.

Xyrielle was also on tenterhooks.

Meanwhile, Gerald was simply observing the scene in front of him quietly.

This was because he was very puzzled. He could tell that Stetson was indeed extremely talented.

He was a One-rank Master at such a young age, and he had already reached the same level of cultivation as Julian.

This was especially rare.

However, what made Gerald feel truly puzzled was the fact that the old man just now was also a One-rank Master, so there was not much difference in their strength.

But why did Stetson have so much determination? He must have something that he could rely on!

Otherwise, he would not be so unflustered despite the powerful strength that was in front of him!

Gerald's eyelids twitched slightly as he observed Stetson.

Stetson could feel a strong aura coming from behind him.

At this moment, he opened his eyes fiercely.

This was because this strong aura instantly locked him in place, and it seemed as though it was several times stronger than him.

“How could it be?!”

Stetson was suddenly horrified.

“How could this beast be so strong?”

At this moment, Stetson did not dare to be reckless or careless anymore.

He turned around with all of his strength, and he resisted with some luck.

However, that white light that was filled with aura in front of him kept getting bigger and bigger!

It seemed to have an irresistible momentum.

Boom!

Stetson was instantly hit.

Clatter!

There was a loud burst of sound.

Stetson’s arms, which were used to resist the blow, were just like the explosion of a large boiler. There was white gas evaporating, and bursts of oil were raging from within.



The clothing on his arms instantly turned into powder.

Poof!

Stetson spurted a mouthful of blood, and his whole body flew backward immediately.

The red meridians on both of his arms looked like earthworms lying directly on it.

“So powerful!”

Stetson was gasping for air.

He now looked at this demonic beast as an opponent.

“Master said that there was a kind of demonic beast that exists in this world, and they had coincidentally gained the spirit of heaven and earth through some kind of spirituality, eventually becoming very deceitful. Moreover, their bodies might also develop strangely. Since they are demons, they would become demonic beasts. Therefore, they would certainly be unbeatable when they face people who are cultivating to achieve spiritual enlightenment!”

“But now, this is the other situation that master had spoken about. This kind of demonic beast can also evolve to a certain point where they have already reached a certain level where they are able to cultivate. When the time comes, they would have very strong and incredible combat power, but this kind of situation is extremely rare!”

“As for this beast, it is clearly a demonic beast that has already evolved to a standard where it was able to cultivate. A spirit demon!”

Stetson was horrified.

He had truly underestimated his opponent.

He had only had light protection and defense for his own body, and with just that one strike earlier, it had been directly shattered because of the impact, and he now suffered a deep internal injury.

If he were to take another blow, he would be in the same state as the person who had been cultivating to achieve spiritual enlightenment and had just ended up there.

Stetson only had one thought in mind.

Run!

However, the demonic bull seemed to have sensed that Stetson wanted to escape, and it immediately began to attack again.

“Thunderstrike!”

Stetson’s pupils dilated nervously.

At this moment, he pulled out an orb from his chest, and he threw it directly toward the demonic bull.

As soon as the orb came out, it instantly magnified itself.

Moreover, it carried a purple thunderbolt with it.

Zap! Zap! Zap!

The demonic bull’s body was then covered in lightning bolts.

Stetson took advantage of this opportunity as he placed all of his strength and power in both of his legs so that he could escape into the air!

“Young Master Laidler is escaping!”

“Even Young Master Laidler is not its opponent!”

Chapter 1486

“Ahhh!”

At this time, everyone on the scene was extremely terrified as they started fleeing in all directions.

Countless people were getting trampled on for quite some time.

“This does not look good! Miss Xyrielle, we should also run as fast as we can!”

Mr. Babel shielded Xyrielle.

Xyrielle nodded heavily.

At the same time, she felt very disappointed deep down in her heart.

She never would have expected that the person who was her one true love would abandon her just like that all so he could escape on his own first.

However, at this moment, it was already too late to even try and escape.

This was because everyone was panicking and pushing each other in the chaos.

Very soon, Xyrielle was also pushed and squeezed down to the ground. Right after that, she fell toward the stage.

“Ahh! Xyrielle!”

Xaverie and the other girls shouted anxiously.

However, there were many people in the crowd, and they had no way to go over to pull her up at all!

As for the demonic bull who had been struck by the lightning bolts, at this moment, the formation around it had finally dissipated.

“Roar!”

It roared as it looked up to the sky.

It was venting its dissatisfaction because Stetson had plotted against it and caught it by surprise.

The pain that it was feeling in its body instantly turned its eyes scarlet.

It was filled with killing intent, and its first target was none other than Xyrielle, who was the closest to it.

“You abominable humans! Die!”

The demonic bull actually spoke in human language!

Its voice was as loud as the ringing of a bell.

Subsequently, it began walking toward Xyrielle.

At this moment, Xyrielle was already scared to death. She was completely dumbfounded on the spot, and she did not know how to respond at all.

As for Mr. Babel, Xaverie, and the other girls, they were all so anxious that they had already burst into tears.

“No! Don’t!”

Xyrielle stumbled as she tried to get up from the ground, and she began to retreat toward a certain spot.

The demonic bull did not care at all, and it simply charged directly toward Xyrielle.

Just then, Xyrielle arrived at the edge of a high platform, and there was almost no one else left on this side of the high platform.

Only Gerald, Perla, and Yul were left standing here.

Xyrielle raised her head and looked at Gerald, almost as though she was crying out for his help.

Nevertheless, Gerald did not move at all.

Perla, on the other hand, quickly took action, and she hurriedly rushed down as she pulled Xyrielle up onto the high platform.

At this moment, Mr. Babel, Xaverie, and the other girls had just rushed to this side as they protected Xyrielle and hid her behind them.

“Roar!”

What was really strange was that the crowd had initially thought that the demonic bull was about to launch an attack. Instead, it simply stood still for a moment without moving at all.

This was because it had suddenly seen a person, and this person was very powerful.

The demonic bull felt that if it were to take one more step forward, it would be completely pulverized.

Yes. If it were to take one step forward, it would certainly die.

The demonic bull could feel it very clearly.

It was precisely because of this that the demonic bull was simply staring at this person with a fearful expression in its eyes.

And who else could this person be if it was not Gerald?

After staring at him for a long time...

“Roar!”

The demonic bull suddenly roared out loud as it jumped straight out of the high platform, fleeing elsewhere as it brought a calf together with it.

That’s right. It was fleeing!

Very soon, it had dissipated like a cloud of dust as it disappeared completely.

“What? It left just like that?!” Xaverie said in shock and disbelief.

She thought that she was going to die just now!

As for Xyrielle, she was also very thankful after escaping a huge catastrophe!

She glanced at Gerald, who had not made any movements at all, and she felt a little sorrowful deep down in her heart.

When she was facing trouble just now, this person had actually not done anything at all?!

It was only then that Xyrielle looked at Perla before she nodded slightly and said, "Thank you so much for what you did just now. If it weren't for you, I would have already been killed by that demonic bull!"

"You don't have to thank me. Miss Xyrielle, if you must thank someone, you should thank my..."

"Alright, Perla. It's getting late. We still have to go and help Yul investigate his problem. Let's go!" Gerald said lightly.

He did not want to get into any trouble, let alone expose his true identity.

If he really wanted to, Gerald only needed to exhale slightly, and that demonic bull would have already been scared out of its wits just now!

Yet, Gerald did not want to do that...

Chapter 1487

After that, Gerald left with Perla directly.

Xyrielle once again felt an inexplicable stirring in her heart as she stared at Gerald's back as he was leaving.

If the first or second time was just a coincidence, could the third time simply be a coincidence too?

However, if her true love was not Young Master Laidler but this ordinary person in front of her, many aspects would not make sense again.

Xyrielle could not help but feel very torn inside.

“This person is indeed extraordinary!”

At that moment, Mr. Babel suddenly said in a gruff voice.

“Huh? Mr. Babel, what do you mean?”

Xyrielle knew that Mr. Babel was also an expert. However, he had failed to step into the legendary cultivation realm.

At this time, he exclaimed in surprise.

“Could it be that you did not notice it just now, Miss Xyrielle?”

Mr. Babel looked at Gerald’s back with a solemn expression on his face as he spoke solemnly.

“Notice what?”

“That demonic bull just now was indeed extremely ferocious. Even Young Master Laidler and Mr. Mace were not this beast’s opponents at all. Moreover, it could have easily gone on a killing rampage, and you could have lost your life just now, Miss Xyrielle. However, the demonic beast suddenly stopped at the most critical juncture!” Mr. Babel said.

“Yes! That’s right! Xyrielle, you might not have had the time to see it just now, but that demonic beast not only stopped in its tracks suddenly, but it looked as though it had seen something truly frightening!” Xaverie also chimed in at this time.

Xyrielle felt even more surprised.

“What you guys mean to say is that this demonic bull only fled because it was afraid of this guy called Gerald? That is the reason why our lives were spared?” Xyrielle asked curiously.



How could that be possible?! This Gerald looked extremely ordinary!

To be honest, when Xyrielle had initially thought that Gerald was her one true love that the old fortune-teller was talking about, Xyrielle had actually felt that Gerald was just not good enough for her.

How should this be explained?

Well, a girl would always have certain expectations that they would want to see in their true love.

This was especially so since the fortune teller himself was the one who had made Xyrielle have even higher expectations of her one true love.

So, if there was a huge difference between her expectations and the person appearing before her, it was inevitable for her to feel a little emotionally lost and disappointed.

She would naturally not be interested in him either.

Therefore, Xyrielle was obviously a little against the fact that Gerald could actually be her true love.

“I still find it hard to believe that he was the one who scared the demonic bull away. I believe that there must be some other reasons...”

Xyrielle said, “Nevertheless, no matter what it is, I really have to thank that young lady just now. If it weren't because of her, I would not know what would have happened, then!”

Xyrielle's pretty face was slightly flushed as she spoke.

At the same time, she also began to feel a certain interest in Gerald.

However, she refused to admit it.

As for Mr. Babel, he simply said that he must have seen wrongly then, and he did not continue saying anything else.

Immediately after, the people from the Waddys family also heard about this matter, and many top masters from behind the scenes also came forth to protect Xyrielle. Some of them also went out to search for the whereabouts of the demonic bull.

After all, the underground festival would be held soon, and the Waddys family attached great importance to it.

As for Gerald, after he had left Heartstone Manor, he returned to Sherwin Manor.

As soon as he came back, he saw a group of people leaving the Sherwin Manor in disdain.

Terrance, who had sent them out, also had a very embarrassed look on his face.

It was only after Gerald asked that he found out that those people were, in fact, executives from the Waddys family.

Since Gerald had arranged for Terrance to help him handle the matter related to the admission tickets to the underground festival, Terrance naturally took the matter very seriously. So, he had even specially invited the Waddys family to come over to check their qualifications.

As a result, the Waddys family simply did not look up to the Sherwin family at all. Thus, they would not even consider the matter related to the admission tickets at all.

Chapter 1488

That was why there was that scene just now.

Even if he did not have an admission ticket, Gerald believed that he would be able to break in easily based on his strength and power.

However, there was truly no need for that.

Moreover, Gerald already understood the importance of hiding his true identity based on many of his previous experiences.

He would not be acting so recklessly.

“Mr. Crawford, I am so sorry that I could not even complete such a simple thing that you have entrusted to me!”

Terrance was filled with self-blame.

“Uncle Sherwin, you don’t need to apologize to me. In truth, based on the current situation, it would indeed be a little difficult for us to be able to get into the underground festival using the Sherwin family’s name. Why don’t I take Julian with me to another prestigious and influential family so that it would be easier for us to act with discretion?” Gerald said.

“Sir, do you mean to say that you want us to enter the Waddys family? Since you have already annihilated the entire Dun family, within Jenna City, the only other decent prestigious and influential family that we can depend on is the Waddys family! Not only that, but they are also the organizer of the event!” Julian, who was standing aside, said.

“Yes. That’s exactly what I meant. Julian, do you know the head of the Waddys family?” Gerald asked.

“Well, I can’t say I do. Although the Waddys family looks like an extremely powerful family on the surface, there seem to be many cultivating families supporting and backing them up. Therefore, many people in the cultivation realm also dare not mess with the people from the Waddys family because of these cultivating families. Of course, there are also a high number of top masters who willingly surrendered and joined the Waddys family. There are about four to five One-rank Masters like us in the Waddys family. I heard that there is also a strong existence such as a Three-rank Master in the Waddys family!” Julian explained.

“I understand!”

Gerald nodded.

As he thought about it, some forces behind certain families really should not be underestimated.

As for the Heartstone Manor, as Julian had said, there were indeed many top cultivating experts present, and it seemed as though this underground festival would certainly be extremely lively, then.

At this time, a luxury car stopped in front of the entrance of the Sherwin Manor.

An old man stepped out of the limousine.

“It’s him!”

Perla was stunned.

This person was not just anyone else, but it was the old man that they had just seen just now. He was Mr. Babel, who had been standing beside Xyrielle.

“I have been commissioned by the eldest young lady to invite Miss Sherwin and Mr. Crawford to head to Waddys Manor to attend the eldest young lady’s birthday banquet tonight!”

After Mr. Babel was done speaking, he held out two invitation cards.

“Eh?! She was the eldest young lady of the Waddys family?” Perla asked in surprise.

Mr. Babel nodded. "That's right. The eldest young lady managed to come back from the dead today. It was all thanks to both of you for saving her life! So, I would like to ask both of you to make sure that you attend her birthday banquet tonight!"

Gerald took the invitation card and looked at it.

At this time, Julian also came forward as he whispered to Gerald, "Sir, you really did not have to put in any effort at all. Xyrielle Waddys is Yaakov Waddys's most beloved daughter. So, if you can get invited to attend her birthday banquet, you will most certainly be able to get your hands on an admission ticket to the underground festival!"

Gerald nodded.

Although he did not know why Xyrielle would extend her invitation to him out of the blue, he wanted to go to Waddys Manor to personally take a look at it too.

So, this was simply perfect.

On one hand, he could find out what Xyrielle's purpose was, and on the other hand, he could try and take advantage of this opportunity to get an admission ticket.

"Okay. Thanks for the trouble, Mr. Babel. You can tell Miss Xyrielle that we will certainly be there tonight!"

Gerald smiled as he nodded.

After Mr. Babel had left, Julian was planning to continue training the children in the Sherwin family.

At this time, Gerald suddenly called out to him.

"Julian, don't get busy first. There is still something that I want to ask you," Gerald said.

“What is it, sir?”

Julian was puzzled.

Chapter 1489

Gerald had been thinking about the demonic bull he had seen today.

So, he told Julian about everything that had happened at Heartstone Manor today.

Gerald had basically never been in contact with certain demon beasts.

This was especially so for demonic beasts, who could actually perform demon magic.

Gerald’s knowledge in this area was still limited to the understanding of the possession of the beast soul.

Since it was going to be evening soon, Gerald also had to rush to attend Xyrielle’s birthday banquet.

So, Gerald asked Julian to come along with him so that they could continue chatting on the way there.

It turned out that in this world, in addition to a very small number of people who were cultivating to achieve spiritual enlightenment, there was also the existence of some magical demonic beasts.

However, they mostly existed underground or in certain caves.

It was very difficult for any ordinary person to see them.

Even if any ordinary person were to stumble upon one, they would certainly lose their lives.

Therefore, there was very little information about demonic beasts.

A demonic beast who could condense its essential qi was also known as a master.

However, since it was actually very difficult for a demonic beast to reach this cultivation realm, it was only natural for them to be much more powerful and stronger as compared to any humans who were on the same level.

If a One-rank Master were to meet with a One-rank Master demonic beast, he would certainly be crushed by this demonic beast.

Gerald instantly understood everything after listening to Julian's explanation.

It was no wonder why Stetson and that person called Mr. Mace had seriously underestimated the demonic bull when they observed its aura.

The demonic bull had actually defeated both of them in just one round.

This was the reason.

After that, Gerald chatted with Julian about the Waddys family.

At the same time, at Waddys Manor.

With the advent of the evening, a special garden was decorated with colorful lights.

This was because it was the birthday of the eldest young lady of the Waddys family, Xyrielle.

"Xyrielle, you look so beautiful today!"

“Happy birthday, Xyrielle!”

At the same time, many rich heirs from Jenna City also came to congratulate her with gifts in hand.

Of course, many of these rich heirs also came here with other intentions, that was to show off how handsome and privileged they were in front of Xyrielle.

After all, if they could end up as the son-in-law of the Waddys family, they would have already soared all the way to the top for their future.

Regardless, Xyrielle was obviously only responding out of politeness. Even if these young gentlemen were all extremely handsome, none of them were good enough for her, and none of them could touch her heart at all.

“Xyrielle, why does it seem like there is something on your mind today?”

Xaverie could not help but ask when she saw that Xyrielle was simply greeting the others with a very distracted look on her face.

“No... no, I’m not!”

Xyrielle’s beautiful face was flushed red, but she could not hide the look of disappointment on her face.

“Hmph! Why are you still denying it? I feel that you are rather disappointed. Are you still thinking about why Young Master Laidler abandoned you today? Moreover, you are also thinking about why he is not here even though he knows that it is your birthday, right? You feel that he should at least come over to give you an explanation, don’t you?” Xaverie said.

“You... what nonsense are you talking about?!”

Xyrielle replied anxiously as though Xaverie had guessed it right.



“Hahaha! I must have guessed it right! Besides, I know much more than that!”

“What else do you know?” Xyrielle asked gloomily.

“I also know that if Young Master Laidler is willing to come tonight and give you a certain explanation, you will certainly forgive him even though he abandoned you at that time! I know your character very well. When you have identified and made up your mind that a certain person is your one true love, then no matter how he treats you, you will always be in love with him!”

“But, Xyrielle, I have to remind you that I don't really like Stetson's character. He is way too arrogant. I feel that even if you end up together with him in the future, he will only be together with you because he is greedy for the Waddys family's unique resources! I know that you might not want to hear this, but as your friend, I have no other choice but to say it!” Xaverie said.

Xyrielle frowned slightly, but she also held Xaverie's hand gratefully as she nodded.

Chapter 1490

“Then... what about that Gerald? Since you have already chosen Young Master Laidler to be your true love, why did you choose to invite Gerald here today?” Xaverie asked as she smiled.

Xyrielle pondered for a moment before she replied, “I don't know why either, but I just feel very curious about Gerald. It is not only because of what happened in the afternoon. So, I want to see him again, and I want to get in touch with him so that I can find out what kind of person he is. In fact, at the very beginning, I even thought about setting you up with him. Hahaha! But after thinking about it, I felt that he is not from the same world as us anyway. So, I decided to simply invite the both of them here as a way to thank them for what they had done for me today!” Xyrielle said as she took a deep breath and smiled.

“You are truly very bad! Hmph! Xyrielle, you are thinking of pushing a guy that you think is not up to your standards over to me like you are throwing garbage away?! I don't want it! Pfft!”

Xaverie began jostling with Xyrielle.

As the both of them were speaking, Xaverie pointed to the front.

“Xyrielle, look! Gerald is here!” Xaverie shouted.

At that moment, Xyrielle raised her eyes as she looked toward the door.

When she saw Gerald walking toward her with a gift in his hand, Xyrielle felt her heart palpitating again for no reason at all.

“Miss Xyrielle, happy birthday and thank you for the invitation!” Gerald said as he smiled.

“Well, you’re welcome! I would also like to thank you for saving my life at Heartstone Manor today. Make sure that you stay and have a few more drinks tonight!”

Although Xyrielle felt some disdain for Gerald, she could not help but look at him a few more times because of her throbbing heart.

This was because she was not sure whether her heart was throbbing because of him.

“Okay!”

Gerald nodded.

The both of them exchanged glances with one another.

At this moment, the sky suddenly lit up with colorful fireworks that covered the entire sky and seemed to sweep right through the entire Jenna City.

“Wow!”

Many people began to exclaim.

After the fireworks had ended, a few words began condensing and forming in the air.

“Happy birthday, Xyrielle!”

These few words were extremely dazzling and eye-catching in the air.

Xyrielle could feel her heart throbbing.

What was even more surprising had yet to come.

At that moment, a red cloth was seen floating down from the air, and it slowly floated until it fell before Xyrielle’s eyes.

Boom!

The red cloth exploded in an instant, and many colorful ribbons exploded in front of Xyrielle.

As soon as the ribbons appeared, a round high platform also appeared on the ground.

Stetson, who had long hair and was wearing a tuxedo, was standing on top of the high platform with one hand in his pocket.

The scene in front of Xyrielle was filled with fantasy and romance.

Everyone at the scene was also very excited, and their emotions had been lifted to the highest point.

As for Xyrielle, she was also very surprised and moved.

This was because Xyrielle felt that at this moment, she was witnessing the arrival of a hero.

The hero in her heart.

As for Stetson, his eyes were still closed, as though he was enjoying the crowd's cheering for him.

In his eyes, the only role that these mortals in front of him played in addition to eating and sleeping was just to cheer excitedly for a great god like him! That was all!

After a long time, Stetson slowly opened his eyes slightly.

Yes, just slightly.

This was because he had sworn that he would never open his eyes completely unless he were to meet with a decent expert.

This was simply because he did not want any mortals to tarnish his sight...

Chapter 1491

"Young Master Laidler is way too handsome...! I'd die happy as long as I get to be his girlfriend for a day...!" wailed one of the girls in the crowd.

Stetson himself simply casually said, "I believe that there's been some misunderstandings regarding the incident where I left earlier, Xyrielle... It simply hadn't occurred to me that you'd bump into such danger. My initial plan had been to lead the demonic bull away from the scene in order to save everyone!"

"...I knew that!" replied Xyrielle.

'Yeah... Why did I ever perceive him that way? I hadn't even been pushed off that high platform yet at the time Stetson left... There was no way he could've known about the danger I'd soon face...' Xyrielle thought to herself, feeling much more at ease after hearing Stetson's explanation.

With that, the night birthday party resumed and Gerald—and the others—simply got ignored as usual...

It was a little while later when a middle-aged man slowly began walking into the place... Looking at Xyrielle and Young Master Laidler standing together from afar, he couldn't help but break into a gratified smile.

At that moment, Mr. Babel walked up to the middle-aged man's back—his gaze seemingly filled with awe for the man—as he whispered, “Master...!”

As it turned out, the middle-aged man was none other than Yaakov Waddys, the master of the Waddys family.

Taking in a deep breath, Yaakov then replied, “Very good. How are things going between Xyrielle and Stetson? Is Stetson really the one true lover for Xarielle that the fortune-teller mentioned?”

From his words alone, it was obvious that Yaakov had been greatly convinced with what the fortune-teller had said. With that in mind, he was very much concerned about his daughter's future.

“...About that...” muttered Mr. Babel as he thought about it.

“Go on, speak your mind!” replied Yaakov as he rested his arms against his back.

“Well... After observing him for a while, it appears that Young Master Laidler conforms to quite a lot of the fortune-teller's conditions! For one, he possesses remarkable abilities that ordinary people could never hope to achieve. He also has a good family background and his martial arts skills are immensely powerful!” said Mr. Babel, prompting Yaakov's smile to widen.

“...However, there is one thing that Young Master Laidler wasn't able to conform to... While the fortune-teller had said that the young lady would surely fall in love at first sight with the person she was destined to be with, she doesn't appear to have too many feelings for Stetson. On the contrary, she's having palpitations for a nobody!” reported Mr. Babel honestly.

“...What? A nobody?” said Yaakov as he frowned.

“Indeed! The person himself was present this afternoon at Heartstone Manor, and Xyrielle even made an effort to invite him over to the Waddys family manor again! His name is apparently Gerald Crawford!”

Hearing all this was certainly beyond Yaakov’s expectations. After all, if he had to choose between Stetson and that nobody, it was a no-brainer that Young Master Laidler would be his ideal son-in-law.

“Speaking of which, that’s him!” said Mr. Babel as he pointed at Gerald.

“...Humph! He truly does feel like a nobody! That b\*stard... As he could ever become the son-in-law of my family! How preposterous!” grumbled Yaakov as he felt a headache coming while thinking about all this.

There had been multiple instances in the history of Weston where rich young ladies fell in love with ordinary men, consequently causing them to fall out with their families. With that in mind, Yaakov certainly wasn’t going to allow a similar incident to happen to the Waddys if he could help it.

“Don’t get too angry first, master, I haven’t ended my description of him yet... While he does look like a nobody, from what I’ve observed, Gerald is... Quite extraordinary, to say the least. He simply gives off that feeling, at least to me... Regardless, why don’t you go meet him first, master? After all, he’s the one that the young lady apparently has feelings for... I propose you make your decision after you make your personal observation on him...” replied Mr. Babel, hoping to dissuade Yaakov from acting impulsively.

Hearing that, Yaakov took in a deep breath and calmed himself a little.

“...Very well, then! Tell him to come over later! I’d like to see if he truly is as extraordinary as you described!” grumbled Yaakov despite already having other plans on his mind.

Hearing that—and knowing that the party was at peak excitement—the waiter then bowed before shouting, “The master has arrived!”

The second she heard that, Xyrielle looked up and—upon noticing her father’s arrival—called out, “Dad!”

As for everyone else, they instantly stood up before Yaakov—the master of the Waddys family—and greeted, “It’s a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Waddys!”

Chapter 1492

As Gerald got to his feet to have a look at Yaakov, everyone found themselves looking at Stetson—who had surprisingly stood up as well—as he said, “Ah, Mr. Waddys! I send my father’s regards on his behalf!”

Yaakov himself simply walked up to Stetson with a joyous face, not even bothering about the other people as he patted Stetson firmly on the shoulder while saying, “You’ve grown a lot more outstanding over the years, Stetson! I hope you’ll demonstrate your extraordinary talent again during this year’s underground festival!”

After exchanging pleasantries with Stetson for a while, the other men in the crowd began introducing themselves as well. However, it was quite obvious that Yaakov wasn’t as enthusiastic toward them since none of them were as important as Stetson in his eyes.

As for Xyrielle, after realizing that Gerald wasn’t planning to introduce himself, she found herself feeling pitiful for him. After all, the other men were definitely far more exceptional compared to Gerald. While Xyrielle had no doubts that he could very well share a world with his own circle of friends, he truly didn’t belong in the same world the guests here were in...

With that, she found herself growing slightly compassionate as she thought, ‘I wonder if it really was a good idea to have invited him over to my birthday party... Well, there’s no use crying about it now that he’s already here!’

Finalizing her thoughts, she then took the initiative to introduce Gerald by saying, “Allow me to introduce these two to you, dad! This is Gerald Crawford, and the one next to him is his friend, Perla Sherwin! They saved me this afternoon!”

While Xyrielle had only introduced Gerald to him out of pity, Yaakov couldn’t help but get slightly angered when he heard that. After all, to him, this was her way of trying to get friendly with Gerald.

As a hint of contempt was reflected in his eyes, Yaakov casually said, “So you’re Gerald! Tell me, where do you currently live? And what possessions does your family hold? Actually, what kind of capabilities do you even have?”

Staring wide-eyed as her dad bombarded Gerald with questions, Xyrielle found herself asking, “Dad? What on earth are you doing?!”

‘Dad, why are you doing this...?’ Xyrielle thought to herself as everyone turned to look at Gerald.

By that point, Perla realized that Yaakov had already been planning on targeting her master, even before they met. After all, it was pretty clear that the way Yaakov saw it, Stetson had been the one who had taken action and saved Xyrielle. That wasn’t really a surprise since Xyrielle had been treating Stetson as the outstanding person who had beaten up the demonic bull, seemingly disregarding the fact that he had also run away.

Upon summarizing the situation in her head, the now annoyed Perla coldly said, “I’ll have you know that my master is currently the guest of honor in my family, and he has a multitude of capabilities! Which one do you propose he should show for you to gawk in admiration?”

Upon hearing that rebuke, everyone present instantly became stupefied.

Yaakov himself was so enraged by her statement that he burst into laughter before snapping, “Your family? Which family do you even belong to?!”

“The Sherwin family from Jenna State!” retorted Perla unyieldingly.

Hearing that, a few executives—who had been standing behind Yaakov—moved closer to him before whispering a few things into his ear.

Following that, Yaakov then nodded with a bitter smile before saying, “...I see! So, you’re Terrance’s granddaughter! From what I’ve been told, your family attempted to participate in the underground festival this afternoon, correct? However, you were rejected, no?”

Not expecting Yaakov to actually say such things, Perla found her rage building even more as Yaakov smiled subtly before adding, “Speaking of that incident, I do wonder if you only saved my daughter today to gain access to the party... Were you hoping to get another chance of obtaining an admission ticket or something?”



“...You... What did you just say...?!” growled the deeply infuriated Perla.

‘You’re a famous and mighty master, are you not? How could you go targeting us like this from the very start?!’

Xyrielle herself hadn’t expected her father—who had always maintained a serious façade—to say such a thing in front of so many people.

Just as things arrived at a stalemate, Yaakov’s cold laughter broke the awkward silence.

“There’s no need to be that angry, Miss Sherwin! I was just joking around! Look, you said that Gerald has several capabilities, correct? Well, you should know that I love capable people the most!” said Yaakov before turning around to look at Mr. Babel.

“With that said, invite him to the backyard, Mr. Babel! I’ll be heading on first, but do know that I have some things to consult you about, Gerald!” scoffed Yaakov as he briefly glanced at Gerald before walking off to the backyard, his arms still against his back...

#### Chapter 1493

Though nobody really knew why Master Waddys wanted to meet up with Gerald alone, it was at least evident that he greatly disliked him.

Still, knowing that made several of the people there relieved. After all, things had gone just as they had anticipated.

While Yaakov—being a typical family master—was usually solemn and serious whenever he dealt with things, he did have one well-known shortcoming, and it was related to how he treated his children.

He would only ever request for marriages—on his children’s behalf—from families of equal social ranks. With that said, to him—at least for the moment—only an outstanding person like Stetson was worthy of his daughter.

It was also the reason why he couldn't help himself from attempting to eliminate any unsuitable suitors who were trying to go after his daughter.

Regardless, after being led to a lake—that was located in the backyard—Yaakov instantly said, “So, what are your conditions?”

“Conditions?” asked Gerald as he looked at Yaakov.

“Don't play dumb. I know you have your reasons for approaching my daughter. Be it an admission ticket or great wealth and power, just state what you want!” replied Yaakov—who still had his arms against his back—not even bothering to look at Gerald.

“From what you just said, I'm assuming that you're thinking that I only approached Xyrielle due to having some ulterior motives, correct? It's also pretty obvious that you don't think I'm worthy of her. Is that the reason why you're telling me to state my 'conditions'? Because you want me to leave her?” asked Gerald as he smiled slightly bitterly.

Hearing that, Yaakov couldn't help but think, ‘This young man doesn't beat around the bush...’

Following that, Yaakov then replied, “You're smarter than I thought. That was exactly what I was going for. Regardless, it's best that you start being a bit more realistic. After all, Stetson is here, so you should just drop any fantasies that you're still holding onto. Refusing to let go of them is only going to hold up your life even longer.”

Smiling wryly before letting out a bitter chuckle, Gerald then shook his head before saying, “I truly have no idea where you're getting those ideas from. Just so you know, I never planned to ask anything from you. After all, there's nothing worthy for me to have in the Waddys family. I simply agreed to attend this birthday party, thinking I'd be able to become your family's temporary guest of honor in order to join the underground festival for you. Alas, it appears that I've overestimated my abilities, wouldn't you say?”

It was now clear as day that Yaakov had instantly targeted him earlier since he had been afraid that Gerald would try to gain his daughter's affection.

“...I have to admit that you’re a pretty wise person! After all, you admit to overestimating your abilities after everything that you did!” replied Yaakov as he turned around to look at Gerald.

Yaakov had only decided to meet Gerald out of curiosity since Mr. Babel had said that he had rather extraordinary traits. Alas, all he was feeling now was even more disappointment. As it turned out, not only was Gerald only an ordinary young person, but he was also very conceited!

From what Yaakov could see, Gerald wasn’t going to be able to achieve anything in life, no matter what he did. With that in mind, he didn’t plan on wasting any more of his time talking to Gerald.

“Regardless, since you prefer doing things straightforwardly anyway, just tell my butler whatever you need and leave Jenna City as soon as possible after that. That way I won’t have to waste my time talking to you ever again!” said Yaakov without even turning to look at Gerald as he raised his arm—stopping Gerald from saying another word—, before impatiently leaving his backyard.

“So, it turns out that Yaakov is a pretty interesting person as well... Color me surprised...” muttered Gerald to himself, unsure what else to comment about that arrogant man.

Following that, he found himself wondering, ‘Do I truly have to beat my way into the underground festival...?’

He really wasn’t too keen on using that way to obtain his admission ticket, and he would rather only fight his way in as a last resort.

Smiling in resignation, Gerald simply returned inside and led Perla—and the others—away from the Waddys manor, not wanting them to stay there a second longer. However, he did make sure to tell Xyrielle that they were leaving first before the trio headed off for good.

Just seconds after Gerald left, Xaverie walked over to Xyrielle before whispering, “Why did he leave so soon, Xyrielle? Could Mr. Waddys have said something to him...?”

“Who knows... Though that could very well be the case!” replied Xyrielle.

After thinking about it for a brief moment, she eventually decided to give up on catching up with Gerald to ask him what happened. Thinking about it, she felt that his departure was probably for the best anyway.

Either way, after Gerald told Perla and Julian about Yaakov's arrogance, both of them were extremely furious. Julian even suggested that he meet up with Yaakov to talk about tonight's incidents.

However, his efforts were promptly dissuaded by Gerald.

Whatever the case was, it seemed that there truly was no easy way for them to obtain an admission ticket...

Chapter 1494

Despite things not going as smooth as he had liked, Gerald wasn't feeling too worried yet. Worst case scenario, Gerald would have to fight his way into the festival. Even with that in mind, however, Gerald still had a little confidence that things would work out in the end.

As he thought about his next move, Gerald—who had been sitting at the rear seat with his eyes closed—suddenly opened his eyes before ordering, "...Perla, stop the car!"

"...Huh? What's wrong, master?" asked Perla, stunned.

Momentarily paying full attention to his surroundings, Gerald then replied, "...We're being targeted by someone... And it seems that the person isn't too far away from us!"

"What? Could Yaakov have sent people over to kill us? What a b\*stard!" growled Perla.

"I doubt that. After all, the one tailing us has an extremely strong aura. I had made sure to observe any exceptional people I came across at the Waddys manor earlier, and as far as I could tell, I'm pretty sure that nobody there was exceptional enough to bear such a strong aura," explained Gerald, still focusing on the surroundings.

"Then allow me to stay back and help you, sir!" said Julian.

“There’s no need for that. Just leave together with Perla. I’d like to see who this person is first,” replied Gerald.

Before either of them could even reply, both of them watched as Gerald’s body disappeared from the car!

The night was dark and Gerald dashed all the way to a riverside which doubled as a moat for Jenna City. Surrounded by dense forestry, Gerald listened intently to the gentle rustling of leaves above the many trees... Someone was running atop them to move above ground.

Despite knowing that and being able to see the slight depression of leaves when they were stepped on, Gerald wasn’t able to see the actual person at all. Not even their shadow.

All of a sudden, two distinct snaps were heard, and Gerald found himself tilting just in time to evade a leaf and a branch that came shooting out of nowhere!

Both of them were moving so quickly and with such immense force that they honestly felt like laser beams. The exact power of the attack was made evident when the two projectiles completely smashed a large tree—that was thick enough for three adult men to hug—into pieces upon collision!

By the time the explosive sound had died down, Gerald found himself thinking that the assailant’s training wasn’t really all that extraordinary...

Before he could ponder any further, Gerald was greeted by the hideous sound of devilish laughter.

“Stop laughing already and show yourself... I’m here, aren’t I?” replied Gerald casually.

Since the person had deliberately released his holy sense earlier, Gerald already had a hunch that he had intentionally wanted to lead Gerald there. With that in mind, Gerald wanted to see who the person was and what his motives were.

After waiting patiently for a while, the strange laughter simply resumed. Simultaneously, a series of whirlwinds suddenly formed around Gerald out of nowhere! What a strong aura!

Seeing that the assailant wasn't keen on replying, the now slightly annoyed Gerald added, "Are you done yet?"

Following another roar of laughter—that would send chills running down anyone's spine—from the darkness, a voice finally replied, "You're a young man, no? Have a bit more patience!"

Having had quite enough of the man's games, Gerald furrowed his brows before rushing toward the direction he sensed the man in...

And soon enough, he saw a white-haired old man—donning a black robe—standing at the very tip of a tree.

Seeing that Gerald had noticed him, the man then leaped before slowly descending—like some large bat—onto another tip of a tree that was much closer to the youth.

Once he was there, the old man tilted his head backward before bursting into laughter again, the hideous sound resonating across the entire forest...

Chapter 1495

"If I may, who exactly are you, sir?" asked Gerald as he looked up and narrowed his eyes at the evily grinning man.

From what he could sense, this person's training aura was considerably more powerful than Julian's. With that said, Gerald really couldn't help but have a higher opinion of the old man.

Truth be told, ever since Gerald exited the Waddys family manor, he had felt the presence of a person who had trained to attain spiritual enlightenment. However, since there were too many people there—due to the underground festival—and the person didn't seem to be interested in revealing themselves at the time, Gerald simply ignored them.

However, when the old man released his essential qi earlier, it instantly became obvious to Gerald that the old man wanted him to follow him. With that in mind, Gerald—who wanted to see what that person wanted from him—simply followed him here, eventually leading to the current situation.

Whatever the case was, the old man simply ignored Gerald's question and laughed aloud before saying, "To think I'd bump into such a talented young person today... I have to say, you're much more powerful than Stetson! Heaven truly makes good judgments!"

Not getting his reply, the annoyed Gerald gloomily repeated, "...Again, who exactly are you?"

Tilting his head back as he laughed maniacally yet again, the old man then replied, "I hope you listen closely before you die, boy! My name is Carlos Xenos, and my laugh is capable of stupefying ordinary people, you hear?! Tremble before my terrifying voice! Hahaha!"

As clouds of dust began swirling in all directions the louder his laugh got, Gerald simply shook his head before replying, "I've never even heard of you before."

Upon hearing that, Carlos instantly stopped laughing. As he narrowed his eyes and his expression turned into one of anger, the old man then said, "I have to admit that you're more daring than I initially thought, young man... Still, know that even those who have trained themselves to attain spiritual enlightenment-"

"Look, let's just skip all that. You told me to listen closely before I died, right? Does that mean you intend to kill me or something?" interrupted Gerald.

Carlos had wanted to say that even those who had trained themselves to attain spiritual enlightenment would behave respectfully before him. With that in mind, being interrupted by Gerald only increased the old man's dissatisfaction.

Despite Gerald's arrogance, Carlos kept his cool. After all, he knew for a fact that Gerald was going to pay the price soon.

"While you're definitely smart, you're unfortunately equally as stupid! After all, with how calm you currently are, it appears that you're still a bit too ignorant to realize that I'm as strong as a demon king! Also, you said you've never heard of me before, right? Well, I'll just make sure to drill it into your mind before you die!"

With that, Carlos then let out a booming laugh... which resulted in a shock wave that not only caused the surrounding trees to crack, but also sent the river water surging as though an explosion had just taken place!

“D\*mn it, he’s doing it again!” growled Gerald, feeling like he was going to have a mental breakdown if he heard any more of that laughter.

Had it not been for that old man’s strong aura, Gerald would have zero doubts that Carlos was actually someone who had escaped from an asylum.

Laughing hideously, Carlos then roared, “I’ve already been training myself to attain spiritual enlightenment for a long while now, and my specialty is sapping others’ essential qi and holy blood! In other words, you could regard me as a living nightmare for people like you who train to attain spiritual enlightenment! Hahaha!”

“I see... So, you’ve trained yourself by draining the essential qi and holy blood of others... If that’s the case, I’m assuming you came here knowing full well that lots of people—who are training to attain spiritual enlightenment—would be attending the underground festival, correct? Was your plan to continue lurking in the dark? So that you could sneak up on such people when they were alone before draining them of their essential qi and holy blood?” asked Gerald, finally getting the bigger picture.

“You’re sharp, I’ll give you that! Regardless, know that my initial target had been Stetson. However, once I realized that his talent and the quality of his holy blood could never get close to even comparing with yours, I naturally went after you instead! You truly are a great treasure, you know? Once I’m done draining you, my training will surely advance greatly!” replied Carlos before laughing loudly again, now more smug than ever.

“However, you don’t have to worry about the pain! I’m not that cruel a person, for I’ll make sure to sever your nerves first and turn you into an idiot who can’t feel pain anymore!” added Carlos.

“Hold it-”

Before Gerald could even finish his reply, Carlos suddenly began laughing loudly again. In fact, this was the loudest and strongest he had laughed up till this point!



Explosive sounds followed shortly after as the water in the river erupted like no tomorrow and even more trees began snapping in two! Even massive depressions began forming on the ground as the sickening old man laughed on!

Chapter 1496

The soul-shaking laughter boomed across the area for quite a while, and when Carlos was finally done, he placed both his hands against his waist in satisfaction, fully ready to devour his meal...

However, when he turned to look at Gerald again, he found himself instantly stunned.

He had assumed that Gerald wouldn't have been able to block the magnificent power of his Roaring Laughter since the sound of it overpowered any other noise in the vicinity. Since that was the case, Gerald should have gone mad by this point.

Even so, not only was Gerald completely fine, but he even had both his hands in his pockets as he stared back at Carlos, completely unfazed!

"...H-how could this be...?!" muttered the old man to himself in utter disbelief.

Looking helplessly at the old man, Gerald took the chance to ask, "Look, Master Xenos, please refrain from laughing first... I just want to ask-"

However, Carlos—once again—cut Gerald off by immediately roaring in laughter again, this time even stronger than the last!

"Are you mental or something?!" grumbled the infuriated Gerald as he aimed at Carlos before flicking his finger at him!

It was a split-second later Carlos realized that a beam of light was coming straight for him! Immediately ending his laugh, Carlos attempted to resist the incoming attack, but he soon realized that it was far too late!

Following an explosive sound, Carlos found himself falling off the tree and landing hard on the ground! After a brief moment, he looked up at Gerald in sheer bewilderment.

“T-that... What a strong move...!” stuttered the stunned old man.

Truth be told, Gerald had only attacked him just to make Carlos shut up for a moment. To ensure it wouldn't be too much for the old man, he even made sure to only use a thousandth of his true power.

Regardless, not wanting Carlos to suddenly start laughing again, Gerald quickly said, “Look, calm down for a second and just let me finish my question! The way you're laughing... You're using a variation of the Roaring Lion martial arts skill, correct?”

“Y-yes...!” replied Carlos as he held onto his chest while scanning Gerald from head to toe.

“Thank god... If that wasn't the case, I'd have thought you truly were a maniac with how insanely you kept laughing... Regardless, I'm guessing you were either trying to shock or knock me out with that annoying laughter!” said Gerald as he nodded understandingly.

“Speaking of which, how strong are you exactly...?” asked Gerald as he looked at Carlos.

“I-I'm a Third-rank master... And my title is Laughing Master! What about you?” asked Carlos, a lot more careful with his words now.

After all, Gerald's attack from before was enough for Carlos to realize that the person standing before him now was extremely powerful, possibly much stronger than the old man himself! The fact that Gerald was being so composed only served to make Carlos even more terrified.

“I wonder about that myself, to be quite frank. Regardless, since you said that you're a Third-rank master, you should be one of the people training to attain spiritual enlightenment, correct? Are you considered powerful?” asked Gerald rather curiously.

“...A-am I considered powerful...?” muttered Carlos as his heart instantly began beating wildly.

What utter nonsense! If he wasn't powerful, why would so many people—who were training to attain spiritual enlightenment—label the Laughing Master as a living nightmare?!

'Who exactly is this young man...?' Wondered Carlos, finding Gerald to be extremely strange....

Whoever he was, Carlos found himself unable to reconcile with the fact that he was actually thinking about running away from this immature and inexperienced young man!

As Gerald thought about what Julian had previously told him—that Third-rank masters were considered to be the cream of the crop—Carlos's face suddenly became enshrouded in darkness, leaving only his now scarlet eyes visible!

He wasn't about to miss an opportunity to attack Gerald while he was off guard, and with that in mind, he roared wrathfully before rushing toward Gerald to make an attack!

Chapter 1497

'I've been living my life unhindered all this while...! With that said, there's no way I'd lose against this immature and inexperienced young man! It's simply impossible!' Carlos thought to himself, an extremely hideous expression on his face as he stretched his palm out!

As five long and black fingernails extended from his palm, Carlos roared, "To hell with you!"

"You bore me," replied Gerald as he looked at the incoming attack before shaking his head, a wry smile on his face.

Before Carlos could even inflict any damage, he stared wide-eyed as Gerald gently flicked a finger in his direction... sending a beam of light flying toward him!

Unable to evade in time, the golden light rammed right into his darkness, completely countering Carlos's attack as an explosive sound was heard!

The next thing the old man knew, he was flying backward like a crumpled kite. A huge chunk of his clothes—around his chest area—had been shredded to pieces and blood was already gushing out his mouth like no tomorrow.

Enduring the immense pain he was now suffering all over his body, Carlos looked at Gerald in complete disbelief as he shouted, “H-how... How is any of this even possible...?!”

As far as Carlos could tell, Gerald hadn’t even been serious with his counterattack. After all, the old man had momentarily sensed him releasing an immense aura that was so powerful that it could very well be world-ending!

That was what stunned Carlos the most, and he found himself asking, “...That... What kind of martial arts skill even was that...?”

Hearing that, Gerald simply smiled subtly before saying, “You know, I’ve sworn to myself that if anyone attempted to kill or even threatened me a bit too much, I’d end them without a second thought... And in an extremely terrible manner too!”

Upon hearing that—and realizing that Gerald had completely disregarded his question—Carlos immediately kowtowed respectfully while bursting into tears before pleading, “P-please, master! Please spare my life...!”

When people reached a state like Carlos’s, they would be considered to be extremely rare individuals. The cream of the crop, in fact. With that in mind, his life had definitely been way different compared to what regular people could ever dream of attaining.

However, similar to the others who had gotten to a similar stage as he currently was, when standing before death’s door, he was going to do anything he could to live another day. After all, he had gone through such painstaking and difficult efforts just to get to where he was today. He couldn’t just die here. He absolutely couldn’t allow that to happen...!

As regret washed through him, Carlos found himself thinking, ‘Why had I offended such a powerful individual...?!’

Chuckling with a smile, Gerald then looked at the old man before saying, “While I’m definitely not the most compassionate person around, I’m not overwhelmingly cruel either. Fine, then! I’ll give you a chance to survive... You now have one minute to persuade me as to why I shouldn’t just kill you off. Be as concise as possible!”

“...T-that...” stuttered Carlos as he instantly averted his gaze. He was now so anxious that his mind was completely blank!

“Time’s ticking!” replied Gerald a few seconds later.

“I... I... I’m escaping!” shouted Carlos as he momentarily looked up before waving his large sleeves, sending a wave of dust flying toward Gerald!

Once the dust got inches away from Gerald, however, they seemingly disappeared into thin air! Even so, that was enough time for Carlos to take advantage of the situation and dive into the ground!

While Carlos could no longer be seen, Gerald simply shook his head before saying, “It’s unfortunate, but you now have zero chances to redeem yourself. I’m saying it right now that you’ll be unable to escape my holy sense, even if you’re a few hundred miles away!”

With that said, Gerald shifted his divine thought slightly and instantly managed to pinpoint Carlos’s exact location.

Pinching his fingers together as though he was holding onto a sword, Gerald was just about to finish off Carlos when he suddenly heard movement coming from the far end of the forest.

Following that, a male voice could be heard shouting, “H-help! Help...!”

As it turned out, the screams for help had come from a running youth who was carrying an unconscious, injured woman. With how bloodied the duo were, it was evident that both of them were equally as injured...

Regardless, the pleas for help were Carlos’s saving grace since Gerald now had his attention on the quickly approaching duo who were slowly getting closer to him.

Knowing full well that Carlos could easily die if Gerald really wanted him dead, he simply allowed the old man to run off first. He wasn’t really a big deal anyway.

Following that thought, Gerald heard a soft 'thud'...

Chapter 1498

The sound had come from the exhausted youth who had just toppled to the ground—not too far away from Gerald—after making quite some distance in that short period of time. Despite having fallen, the youth still tried his best to protect the woman in his arms.

Witnessing the scene, Gerald found his eyelids twitching slightly as the youth—who had just noticed Gerald—shouted, "S-sir...! Please, save us...! I'm begging you...! Help us make a call or something...!"

As he fumbled a few steps forward, the youth's shouting grew increasingly nervous when he realized how feebly the woman was now breathing.

"Meghan? Meghan! Please, don't sleep yet!" cried out the youth as the moonlight finally illuminated the duo just enough for Gerald to have a good look at the woman's face... And when he did, his heart instantly began palpitating.

The woman... She looked extremely similar to Mila at first glance!

As he thought about how much the woman resembled her, a distinct and cold voice could suddenly be heard shouting, "They're right up ahead!"

Snapping out of it, Gerald watched as eight burly men dashed out from the forest and quickly surrounded them.

While that alone wouldn't have surprised Gerald, he found himself feeling slightly astonished that these people—the youth included—all had hints of inner strength in their bodies. From what he could tell, these were all rather exceptional champions.

"Give it up, Yule! There's no escape! With that in mind, why don't you just obediently come back with us? Or would you prefer if we dragged you back after breaking all your limbs? Regardless, your treasured younger sister... She's about to die, huh? Hahaha! I'm saying it right now that I'm quite the pervert, and I don't really mind having a go with a corpse as long as it's still warm! Hahaha!" sneered what seemed to be the leader of the group as his seven men began laughing as well.

“You b\*stard...!” growled Yule as he clenched his teeth while glaring viciously at all of them.

“Of course, there’s a way to avoid that... If you don’t want Meghan to be my plaything, then you know what to do, right...?” taunted the leader as he slowly walked closer to Yule.

Seeing that, Yule hugged his young sister tightly before gently placing her onto the ground... Though his body was heavy from all his injuries, he gallantly stood before the unconscious Meghan, ready to fight them if it was the last thing he did.

Gerald himself—who had been witnessing all this from the side—found an inexplicable wrath growing within him after hearing the leader’s words. Maybe it was because that woman’s eyes resembled Mila’s so much...

While he knew that she most probably just a stranger, it still felt like they were saying all that cr\*p to the actual Mila, and that irked him to no end.

“...Huh? Who the hell are you, twerp?” growled the leader as he and his men finally realized that Gerald was present.

Gerald himself was already walking toward them, a frown on his face.

Seeing that he wasn’t replying, one of the leader’s subordinates then pointed at Gerald before yelling, “The hell’s a wiener like you doing out here? Get lost if you want to live!”

Despite the intimidating warning, Gerald completely ignored the threat and simply walked over to the unconscious woman. From what he could see, her arms, chest, and abdomen had been stabbed, and blood was practically overflowing from her.

“...If she doesn’t get treatment within a few more minutes, not even a deity can save her,” said Gerald.

“...W-what...?” replied Yule, his eyes momentarily reddening before bursting into tears!

“There’s no need to be so anxious. You’re lucky you bumped into me!” said Gerald as he gently flicked a few acupuncture points on Meghan’s body... And just like that, all the bleeding instantly stopped!

Once he saw the rosiness of her cheeks return, Gerald turned to look at the remaining eight people before asking, “You’re all champions, aren’t you? Instead of killing others so mercilessly, why don’t you use that time to train yourselves properly instead?”

“Oh? So, it turns out that he knows quite a bit! True enough, we are champions! Regardless, consider it an honor to be able to die in our hands today!” sneered another man from the group as the others chuckled sinisterly.

“You know, a champion is capable of hurting others just with flowers and leaves if they train themselves properly... However, I doubt any of you can do that because you’re all still pretty weak! Still... Do you believe that I’m capable of that feat...?” asked Gerald as a green willow leaf suddenly descended onto Gerald’s fingertip and began quivering in place...

Not knowing whether the leaf was shaking because of Gerald’s voice or some other cause, the leader simply glared back at him before growling, “Boy, who even are you? As if you’d ever be worthy enough of attacking with such harmless things!”

Looking at all eight of the wrathful faces, Gerald simply replied, “Allow me to demonstrate, then!”

Following that, Gerald gave a gentle flick and the willow leaf flew into the air...

Upon seeing that, the eight people instantly began laughing before shouting, “Holy cr\*p! Just look at this idiot! Is he trying to amuse us to death or something?”

Yule himself had no idea what this man was trying to pull off... He hoped that Gerald had a plan since the eight laughing men weren’t people who could be trifled with...

Just as his thought ended, everyone present instantly found themselves widening their eyes...

Chapter 1499



While the men had been ridiculing him just seconds ago—as they watched the willow leaf hover in mid-air—they now found themselves feeling astonished beyond words as the leaf suddenly began emitting a golden light!

Not only that, but it was also slowly increasing in size! Soon enough, an explosive sound was heard and for some ungodly reason, the willow leaf had turned into a gigantic leaf blade!

“...W-what?!” shouted the eight people as they stared at the blade that was somehow emitting a murderous aura.

Though their immediate response was to book it, it was far too late for any of them.

With a single swift swipe, the blade sliced through all eight of their necks... and the next thing the wide-eyed men knew, their heads were already on the ground!

Now utterly frightened, Yule found himself screaming in horror at the eight freshly decapitated heads!

However, he quickly stopped himself before gulping down hard. Despite being the best of the best, the eight men had been decapitated in such a short amount of time... Had he not witnessed the scene for himself, Yule would've never believed such a statement... This truly was a tactic only a master could pull off...

Though he was still brimming with fear, Yule quickly got to his feet before bowing deeply to Gerald, filled with gratitude as he declared, “T-thank you for saving our lives, master!”

Choosing not to say much, Gerald simply casually replied, “I’m curing your sister’s wounds now. Turn around and don’t look back!”

Realizing that Gerald didn’t even seem to care about the eight masters he had just killed, Yule immediately did as Gerald instructed. What a terrifying person!

While he had no idea how the master was going to cure his sister, he knew for a fact that it was better for him not to question the master’s capabilities.

Once he was sure that Yule wasn't looking, Gerald opened his divine eye and immediately began healing Meghan's wounds.

Naturally, it was a success, and after a short interlude, Gerald got up to leave. Now that he had saved the duo, he wasn't too keen on staying here for any longer than he needed to.

Before he got far, however, Yule quickly ran after Gerald. Bowing before him, he then said, "Please wait for a moment, master! May I ask for your name? As a member of the Quantock family, I'd love to repay your kindness in the future!"

'He's simply too powerful...! I need to get to know him better!' Yule thought to himself as he said that. Only a fool would give up the chance to make acquaintances with such a powerful individual, and Yule was certainly no fool. While Yule had initially thought that such powerful people could only exist in legends, with Gerald currently standing before him, he now knew that that couldn't be further from the truth.

"There's no need to know my name and you don't need to reward me. Regardless, since you're a champion too, I'm assuming that the Quantocks are a secret society as well? Are p perhaps here to join the underground festival?" asked Gerald as he shook his head, figuring that that was the only plausible answer.

Returning a firm nod, Yule then said, "That's right, master! My family's actually a cryptic family, and during the earlier years, the Quantocks had been the ones in charge of managing and controlling the underground forces within Jenna City. Unfortunately, things went south a little later and we ended up getting driven out of the city! Despite the fact that my family specializes in organizing events—such as the underground festival in the past—, to think that all it took was a little under twenty years for us to actually require an admission ticket just to join the festival!"

Following that, Yule turned to look at Gerald before asking, "Have you come to join the festival as well, master? If it isn't too rude, may I know whether you're a guest of any of the participating families?"

"I'm not a guest of any family. While I did come over to join the festival, it's unfortunate that I haven't even been able to get my hands on an admission ticket up till this point!" replied Gerald with a subtle smile.

“...Huh? Not even with your remarkable abilities...?” asked Yule in disbelief.

He, for one, trusted that any family who had personally witnessed Gerald’s immense skill and power would instantly yearn for such an exceptional man to be their guest. Hell, it wouldn’t be a stretch to claim that the families would rack their brains just to find a way to become a subservient family to that powerful man!

After all, should they manage to do so, the family Gerald chose would definitely gain all sorts of treasures as he participated in the many activities. By the end of it, the family would surely be able to manage and control several properties, allowing that family to further expand their power and influence.

What more, with Gerald’s capabilities, most of those probabilities were pretty much already in the bag.

However, the biggest plus to having Gerald on their side was the fact that that family would undoubtedly become an absolute family. A family that would be able to remain at the top from one generation to the next, never wavering in status and power...

With that in mind, Yule had thought that there were already a number of subservient families under his master since he was such a powerful man. To think that his master actually had none!

After considering it for a short while, Yule then said, “...Please allow me to make a presumptions request, master!”

Chapter 1500

As Gerald looked curiously at Yule—who had just knelt before him—Yule then explained, “Not only are you both my sister and I’s benefactor, but you also have such remarkable capabilities! With that said, I’m begging you to protect, and be the guest of honor for the Quantock family!”

Though the Quantocks were a cryptic family, they didn’t have a patron back then, which was honestly the reason why they were driven out of Jenna City in the first place.

Regardless, Yule recalled hearing that there existed a small group of people that had surpassed the level of champions, and after witnessing Gerald’s skill, he was sure that his master was one of them.

If his family had such a strong person on their side, the Quantock's strength would definitely progress rapidly. With any luck, Gerald's agreement would surely bring great and positive changes to the future of his family.

Hearing that, Gerald found himself frowning slightly as he asked, "A guest of honor...?"

"Well, essentially, what I'm hoping for is that you'll agree to take the Quantocks under your wing. Once you do, my family will respect you over the generations!" begged Yule.

Though Yule had said that, Gerald knew what he was really after. He recalled how he had initially assumed that Julian was suffering injustice since he was working for the Duns back then. However, Julian later told him that he was the one who had taken the Duns under his wing!

'I've completely ruined the Duns though,' Gerald thought to himself.

Whatever the case was, it was obvious that Yule wanted him to protect the Quantocks from future danger.

While Gerald had no interest in such things, he did require a family that was able to get an admission ticket for him. Thinking about it, not only would taking them under his wing not hinder him by much, but he would also obtain a rather good disguise. In other words, it would be like killing two birds with one stone.

With all that in mind, Gerald nodded in agreement before saying, "...I accept!"

Truth be told, Gerald had only considered doing this in the first place since he was slightly moved when he saw how gallant that young man had been when he protected his younger sister earlier.

Regardless, Yule instantly called his family in excitement after hearing Gerald's reply.

While waiting for his family to arrive, Yule began sharing how all this had come to be.

Essentially, he had brought his younger sister along to negotiate about some things. However, on their way there, those eight killers ambushed them! While Yule wasn't completely sure of who had sent them over, he had a pretty good hunch that they were here under the orders of the Waddys, the current ruling family of Jenna City!

It was about twenty years ago when the Waddys had driven the Quantocks out of Jenna City. That incident made it evident that the Waddys weren't a family that people could afford to infuriate.

Regardless, it wasn't long before over ten cars arrived at the scene, and in them, were people from the Quantock family.

Since Julian had left with Perla—under Gerald's orders—and Gerald didn't really have anything to do if he headed back now anyway, he had agreed to follow Yule back to the Quantock family's temporary manor. He was also incentivized to head there since he had agreed to take the Quantocks under his wing. With that in mind, he knew he had to treat them much more seriously now.

With that, it didn't take long before they arrived at the manor.

As soon as the car stopped, Gerald was immediately greeted by the sight of a middle-aged woman hurriedly running toward them while saying, "Yule? Meghan? Are both of you alright?"

The woman in question turned out to be Yule's mother, Madam Quantock.

Looking at the door, Gerald also saw a middle-aged man standing there, his face brimming with worry and concern. Behind him, stood several other old and middle-aged men as well as disciples, quite evidently members of the Quantock family.

"We're fine, mom! Dad! Had it not been for Master Crawford saving us, I wouldn't have been able to rush back to meet you!" replied Yule excitedly.

"Oh? Where is he?" asked the middle-aged man as he and a few of the older men looked toward the car. When they finally saw what Gerald looked like, all of them found themselves feeling astonished.

## Chapter 1501

Xylon—the middle-aged man standing upfront—instantly grew curious when he saw how young Gerald actually was.

After all, despite the fact that his son kept addressing him by ‘master’ this entire time, Xylon simply couldn’t imagine that young man as anything other than completely ordinary. Could his son have somehow been mistaken...?

While Xylon found himself thinking that, he still shook hands with Gerald rather friendlyly in order to express his gratitude.

However, after having a few more exchanges with Gerald, Xylon—being an elder—couldn’t help but start feeling slightly contemptuous toward him.

Regardless, after inviting him in for a meal—and finishing it—Xylon brought Gerald and the others for a walk around the manor to show their new master around.

During the meal, Xylon had mentioned a large and strong stone called the Zekterite, and it was evident that he was keen on showing it off.

Upon arriving before the stone, Xylon chuckled before declaring, “This is the Zekterite I was talking about, Brother Gerald! As I’ve said, it’s the hardest stone between heaven and earth! With that in mind, I make sure to bring it along no matter where I move to!”

Hearing that, Yule—who had been standing beside them—grew increasingly anxious. After all, his father and even a few of the family elders were already starting to call him ‘brother’ instead of master, and Yule knew how greatly disrespectful they were being!

Though Yule continually gave his father non-verbal hints to treat Gerald with more respect, Xylon simply pretended not to see any of his son’s warnings.

Instead, he simply began elaborating on the stone’s history, even though Gerald hadn’t asked for it.

According to rumors, the large stone was first found lying at the very top of Tierson Mountain. By the time it was found, it appeared that the stone had undergone the essence of life for a very long time, though it still remains unknown whether it got to that point due to the special aura within it.

Regardless, the stone was well-known for attracting lightning bolts. Despite being a natural lightning rod, not a scratch ever appeared on the giant stone, regardless of how hard the lightning hit. Due to that, the stone was aptly named the Zekterite.

With his explanation now complete, Xylon smugly looked at Gerald before saying, “Well, what do you think, Brother Gerald? This giant stone of mine is truly invaluable, wouldn’t you say?”

Upon hearing that, the other old men who had followed exchanged smiles as well, thinking, ‘You’re just an immature and inexperienced young man... As if you’d know anything about this great treasure...’

Gerald himself simply returned a wry smile as he nodded before saying, “It does feel invaluable!”

“I knew you’d agree! Still, why do I have a feeling that you don’t actually believe that...? Either way, I remember my son stating that you had extremely remarkable abilities! Why don’t you show some to us to widen our horizons?” replied Xylon casually.

“Indeed, Brother Gerald! Why don’t you try splitting the legendary and unbreakable Zekterite for a start?” joked another old man with a sarcastic smile.

Naturally, Gerald easily saw through the sarcasm, though he couldn’t really blame them. After all, he had promised to take Yule and his family under his wing—after saving him and his younger sister—in exchange for his family revering him for the many generations to come. With that in mind, it wasn’t hard to imagine why Xylon and the rest of the family’s elders couldn’t reconcile with that fact.

In fact, Gerald was already aware of their displeasure from when they were eating dinner earlier. Though they exchanged simple topics of conversation, not one of them was about him taking them under his wing, and it was quite obvious that it was a deliberate decision.

Shaking the thought off, Gerald then casually replied, “...The Zekterite truly is one of the hardest things between heaven and earth... From what I can see, not only does lightning do nothing to it, but cannons

wouldn't be able to smash it either! After all, the stone's been absorbing the essence of life for such a long time that it now possesses a holy spirit. With that said, the Zekterite is only this strong because it's turned into a holy stone!"

Though Xylon had no idea what Gerald had just said, he simply chuckled before replying slightly sarcastically, "Then is anything that bears a holy spirit a holy item? If that's the case, wouldn't there be many other things that are equally as difficult to destroy?"

"You don't seem to be getting my point. How do I put this...? See, while normal items may be difficult to destroy, you can still inflict damage on them with enough inner strength or with the power of ordinary metals. The same can't be said for the stone since it's a holy item that's been imbued with a holy spirit between heaven and earth!" said Gerald.

"Oh? Is that so? Still, doesn't that mean that you're just ridiculing us old men for not being strong enough, Brother Gerald?" replied another old man with a bitter smile on his face.

As the same old man made fun of Gerald before the others, it was evident that they were giving Gerald a warning that went along the lines of, 'You'd best choose your words carefully, young man! Stop being so impetuous!'

"Oh, that wasn't what I was going for. You clearly misunderstood me!" said Gerald.

Hearing that, Xylon and the others' expressions softened slightly.

Just as they were wondering how Gerald would complete his explanation, Gerald added, "What I meant to say was that you don't even deserve to inflict damage upon the stone! Disregarding your strength, there are simply none of you here who are at the stage where you can even begin dealing damage to it!"

Chapter 1502

Upon hearing Gerald's casual reply, all the eyes of the Quantocks present instantly widened in great wrath.

"You...!" growled Xylon whose expression had turned extremely ugly.



“...Since you’ve said that, does that mean you’re able to split the stone, Brother Gerald? If you are, then please widen our horizons...!” added another old man as he and the others gritted their teeth.

“Of course, I can. What’s so strange about splitting it anyway?” asked Gerald as he looked at them before shaking his head with a bitter smile.

“Fun fact, the Zekterite is immune to lightning since it holds similar properties to it. For further clarification, there exist spiritual items that are produced naturally between heaven and earth. With that said, the item will gain immense resistance against the element it is attuned to. Even so, magic arts can be used to split the Zekterite since they’re much more powerful than regular lightning!” explained Gerald.

“You ignorant youth! How dare you boast so shamelessly about nonsense like magic arts!” retorted one of the elders who simply couldn’t take how arrogant Gerald was anymore.

Xylon himself didn’t bother stopping the old man. After all, what the elder had just said was exactly what he wanted to express as well.

“Nonsense, you say? Well, allow me to demonstrate that ‘nonsense!’” replied Gerald with a subtle smile as he pinched his fingers together as though he was holding a sword’s blade...

After murmuring a barely audible magic chant, light began glowing from where his fingers were pinched... before what seemed to be an electric orb formed between his fingers!

Staring wide-eyed at the cackling cerulean orb that seemed to be bursting with electrical energy, everyone found themselves taking a step back as Gerald flicked the orb of lightning upward!

The second he did that, wild winds and lightning suddenly appeared out of nowhere as thunderous roars echoed throughout the area as well! With how strong the blades of wind were, everyone there felt as though they were in danger of being sliced if they weren’t careful.

“...W-what...?” stuttered those who could still speak in nervous voices as they continued staring at Gerald in utter terror and disbelief.

Before they could even recover from their shock, an explosive sound suddenly burst from the sky, causing everyone's hair to stand on end as a massive bolt of blue lightning struck the Zekterite!

While the scene was nothing short of dazzling, it also embedded a massive fear among all who witnessed it.

Seconds after yet another explosive sound was heard, several jaws instantly dropped when the Quantocks realized that the stone had been smashed to pieces from that single strike!

As the debris settled and the wild winds died down, the nights soon returned to its initial peace and silence... It was almost as though nothing had ever happened...

Naturally, the biggest change was how dumbfounded all the Quantocks were. For what seemed to be an eternity, none of them dared to even speak or breathe... until finally, Xylon knelt before Gerald.

His action prompted the rest of the Quantocks to do the same as Xylon cried out, "You... You truly are an incredibly powerful person, Master Crawford...!"

#### Chapter 1503

While the Quantocks were kneeling before Gerald, a young man—who was participating in the festival—could be seen standing before a middle-aged one within the Laidler manor's study.

"So tell me, Stetson, how's your current relationship with the Waddys family's young lady?" asked the middle-aged man.

"Everything's under control, dad! With how infatuated Xyrielle is with me, I doubt there'll be any problems with me gaining her affection!" replied Stetson with a subtle smile.

"Hahaha! That's great to hear, Stetson! While the Waddys themselves don't own much strength, the force backing them up is nothing short of terrifying. Regardless, I believe that you'll be able to handle everything well. If all goes according to plan, we'll definitely be able to use your relationship with the Waddys to eventually allow the Leidlers to have their day! Also, you had best not slack on your training either. The underground festival will be held in two days, and our family has to be crowned the victor this year no matter what!" instructed Mr. Laidler.

Hearing that, Stetson instantly replied, “Loud and clear! Still...”

“...Hmm? What is it?” asked Mr. Leidler.

“The festival... It’s held once every few years whenever a priceless treasure is located, right? I’m curious to know if they managed to find another one for this festival...” replied Stetson.

“Well, I’ve been investigating it myself, and I’ve found that the treasure is greatly important to exceptional people who are training to attain spiritual enlightenment. In relation to that, many such people have been drawn to this event, though they make sure not to reveal too much about themselves. With that said, it’d do you good to do the same!” advised Mr. Laidler in a concerned tone.

“Understood, though I’m sure many of them have already diverted their attention from me after witnessing my deliberate loss to Yagrorok back in Heartstone Manor!” replied Stetson as he shook his head with a wry smile on his face.

“That’s good to hear. You can rest a bit easier while you make the following preparations then. If things go well, and we obtain the Waddys family’s resources, we’ll definitely be able to expand our own family!” declared Mr. Laidler with a loud laugh.

A short while later—after Stetson left—the corners of Mr. Laidler’s eyes couldn’t help but catch a glimpse of something in the corner of the study...

If one looked a bit closer, they would surely be able to see a humanoid figure flickering in and out of existence there...

Moving on to the brightly lit Waddy’s mansion, Yaakov could be seen knocking on the door to his daughter’s room while asking in a gentle tone, “Xyrielle...? Are you still awake...?”

After a short while, the door to the room opened and Xyrielle—who clearly looked like she had just finished washing her hair—replied, “Dad...? It’s already so late! What can I do for you...?”

“Let’s just say that there are some things I need to talk to you about...” said Yaakov as he rested his arms against his back before walking over to take a seat inside her room.

“What’s this about...?” asked the curious Xyrielle in return.

“Well, it’s regarding how strict I’ve been toward you over the years... Especially when it comes to love-related affairs... I’ve been prohibiting you from chasing after love all this time... Do you hate me for that?” asked Yaakov with a smile.

“Of course, I don’t! After all, I know that you’re only being this strict for my own good!” replied Xyrielle as she shook her head.

“I’m glad that you understand my motive... Regardless, I’m pleased that you’ve developed feelings for Stetson... After all, I think pretty highly of him as well. Since your relationship with him has been going quite smoothly, I wanted to ask if you’d like to take it a step further with him...” said Yaakov.

Instantly blushing, Xyrielle then replied, “I... I’m not too sure about that yet...!”

Seeing this, Yaakov could easily tell that his daughter was being troubled by something, and Mr. Babel had apparently noticed it as well.

Since Xyrielle was still having doubts about her feelings for Stetson, Yaakov couldn’t find it in himself to further persuade her to be with him, at least for now...

Chapter 1504

Whatever the case was, Yaakov believed in his daughter’s insight and perception. With that said, he was certain that she definitely wouldn’t end up falling for a man like Gerald.

“I see... Well, that’s fine for now. Regardless, while I promise to always be by your side no matter what, I hope that you understand that you’ll eventually end up getting married to Stetson... After all, his future looks extremely promising! With that said, I hope you mentally prepare yourself for that...” said Yaakov.

Since Xyrielle didn’t look like she was particularly against the idea, Yaakov left her room with ease in his heart.

As for Xyrielle, after watching her father leave, she felt her heart palpitate as she muttered, "...Gerald..."

So, her father had come over just to tell her all that... As a sense of loss filled her while muttering his name, she could almost see his figure in his mind...

Fast forward to two days later, the underground festival was launched as scheduled.

On the day itself, no shortage of prestigious and influential families from all over the place could be seen gathered at the venue. Of course, there were even more guests who were secretly attending after receiving special invitation cards.

They were all here since according to how the previous underground festivals had gone, the champion of the festival would gain a rank similar to the most powerful person in the world of martial arts. Aside from that, they would also obtain the right to distribute a few mysterious items...

Regardless, it was also noteworthy that many families who had participated in the underground festival found themselves rising up the ranks extremely quickly! In fact, it wasn't a stretch to claim that many of the world's most powerful and major families today had relied on the underground festival to get to where they currently were! With that in mind, any families looking to improve themselves would surely value the festival.

Of course, there were also quite a number of families who were foolishly attracted by the secrets of the attending underground forces. Such families either ended up being cheated or forced to get money through thievery if they didn't have enough on hand.

Either way, while most of the ordinary people only attended the festival to enjoy the hustle and bustle, the insiders all knew that the festival's true purpose was to have deity-like people brawl against each other.

Despite how big the fights were, nobody ever dared to record a thing, which was why no relevant information had yet to be leaked. After all, should information accidentally leak out, the family who had taken the recording would most certainly be exterminated...

Moving on to the actual venue, while the festival was still being held within Heartstone Manor, it was now separated into two main areas, that being aboveground and underground.

Comparing the two, the area aboveground was similar to the size of a kindergarten when placed side by side with the university-sized underground area.

While the former was a place where regular bosses could entertain themselves, the latter was an area where people dueled against each other in authentic battles!

Regardless, Gerald himself had just arrived with the Quantock family's executives, alongside Julian and a few other people from the Sherwin family.

Just as they were about to enter, however, a smiling woman—who had been chatting with her friends while walking toward the main door—suddenly froze before calling out, "...Gerald? What are you doing here?"

Hearing that, Gerald turned around to see who the owner of the feminine voice was... and was instantly shocked when he realized who she was!

"Oh? Fancy meeting you here!" replied Gerald with a slightly helpless smile as he looked at the woman.

"Why wouldn't I be here? Still, it hasn't been that long since we've last met! Why are you treating me as though I'm a stranger? Regardless, weren't you unable to obtain an admission ticket? How did you manage to enter this place then? Either way, now that we've bumped into each other, I'd like to ask you to do me a favor!" said the woman with a chuckle.

The woman in question was none other than Xaverie. As for the other girls in her group, they were naturally also friends of Xyrielle's. Xyrielle herself wasn't present, though it was completely understandable. After all, she was one of the function's main characters, so there was no way she was going to be able to stay by her friends' sides like how she usually did.

Whatever the case was, Xaverie couldn't deny that she was curious about all the people accompanying Gerald here today... Still, she wasn't too afraid since she ended up subconsciously thinking about Gerald's true identity.

With that, she then grabbed onto his arm, making it extremely evident that she wanted to lead him someplace no matter what he said.

Seeing that, Yule looked like he wanted to say something before whispering, "Master..."

While the Quantocks no longer controlled or managed Jenny City, they were still a family that owned extraordinary strength. If someone was disrespecting their master, they'd surely have to teach that person a lesson!

Understanding what Yule was getting at, Gerald simply signaled for him and the rest to stand down for now. After all, while she was slightly capricious, she hadn't really done anything wrong to him.

With that in mind, Gerald revealed a bitter smile of resignation as he said, "All of you head on in... I'll see what she needs help with first before regrouping with you..."

Chapter 1505

With that, Gerald then followed Xaverie as she led him someplace...

He found himself slightly surprised when he realized that she had simply wanted him to help her carry a parrot.

Though the parrot distinctly knew how to mimic human speech, it hadn't said a word upon arriving there for some odd reason.

Recalling that Yagrorok was afraid of Gerald too back then, Xaverie deduced that the bird must have simply been too terrified to speak within Gerald's presence! It was exactly because of that that she was asking his help to carry it.

Not wanting to be further pestered by Xaverie, Gerald simply shook his head at the comment before agreeing to help with a nod.

“Still, to think that you were actually able to get acquainted with the Quantocks! Regardless, you really have to thank me this time, Gerald! For context, carrying this parrot isn’t the only reason I called you over...” said Xaverie in a slow tone after both of them descended into the underground area.

“Oh? What do you mean by that?” asked Gerald with a curious smile.

“You may not be aware of this, but the Quantocks and the Waddys have held grudges against each other for quite a while now... What I’m trying to say is that the Waddys will definitely notice that you’re with the Quantocks... In other words, you’re pretty much sentencing yourself to death!” replied Xaverie in a slightly bitter tone.

“...Oh? So, this is what you wanted to tell me? Hahaha! I guess I really do owe you my thanks for warning me!” said Gerald with a smile.

“Why are you being so concerned for this loser, Xaverie? Could you have fallen for him?” teased one of her friends as the rest of the girls in the group snickered while covering their mouths.

“What utter nonsense! There’s no way in hell that I’d fall for him!” replied Xaverie in a defeated tone.

Though she said that, Xaverie honestly had a pretty good impression on Gerald. After all, he was a nice and extremely kind man.

Regardless, Xaverie and her group of friends were permitted entry into the entire Heartstone Manor since they benefited from being acquainted with the Waddys. With that said, once they were in the underground seating area, they quickly found the perfect place to take their seats. Even Gerald was able to sit relatively close to the main stage since he was now associated with Xaverie.

Quite frankly, he had initially planned to leave after helping her. However, after realizing that Xaverie had called him over for his own good, he had a change of heart.

In addition, he now had access to better seats, meaning that he was going to be able to get a closer look at the formal showdowns between exceptional people—who were training to attain spiritual enlightenment—for the first time!



Either way, now that he was seated, Gerald began looking around the gigantic annular venue.

Right in the middle, was a high platform where the battles would take place. From what he had been told, there were over thirty families participating in the battles, and they could all be seen sitting below the high platform now.

While the families appeared to treat the Waddys with utmost respect, undercurrents naturally existed among them. After all, all the present families definitely understood how important this festival was, which meant that they were all most probably secretly competing against each other.

Regardless, from what Gerald could observe, he deduced that the only families who held true strength among the others were the Waddys and the Laidlers.

As for the remaining families, he had a pretty good hunch that they were simply being controlled by those training to attain spiritual enlightenment. While that was the case, none of the puppet masters appeared to be anywhere as strong as Stetson, and Gerald's assumption turned out to be correct.

One by one, they were mercilessly defeated by Stetson almost immediately upon entering the ring.

As the fights went on, Yaakov felt that something was off. He knew Stetson's capabilities well, and by right, he was only a First-rank Master... Even so, wasn't he defeating too many of the other similarly ranked masters a bit too easily? How had he managed to increase his strength so rapidly within that short amount of time?

Could he have managed to surpass that rank...?

Yaakov could only continue staring in astonishment as yet another old man fell off the high platform, swiftly defeated by Stetson.

The old man himself quickly got to his feet and bowed respectfully before Stetson while saying, "I'm now utterly convinced that you young people have surpassed our generation!"

Watching as the old man quickly left after saying that, Yaakov could hardly calm himself anymore. He was simply too strong!

“Was the power to rule finally going to the Laidlers this year...?”

Chapter 1506

Though Yaakov was muttering worriedly to himself, Xyrielle had admiration reflected in her eyes as she looked at Stetson. After watching all those battles, she felt as though she could finally see through that man.

As the fortune-teller had predicted, Stetson truly had immense martial arts skills and no ordinary person could ever come close to being compared to him...

Xaverie, on the other hand, found herself looking at Gerald slightly contemptuously before saying, “While Stetson is arrogant, he’s undeniably handsome! It’s no wonder why Xyrielle fell for him! Though I do wonder if you’ll get jealous of hearing me say such things! After all, I’m pretty sure you’re in love with her! Sadly enough, Stetson has all the strength and glory in the world! You simply don’t stand a chance!”

In response, Gerald simply grunted with a nod.

He had been preoccupied this entire time, observing each battle closely, wondering if anyone stronger than Stetson would show up.

After all, this was an extremely grand festival. It was impossible that only First, Second, and Third rank masters would attend, right?

‘There has to be someone more powerful than that attending!’ Gerald thought to himself.

That thought was the only thing keeping him from stepping forward yet.

As Yaakov smiled in resignation, Yule, on the other hand, was anxiously scratching the back of his head while looking from side to side as he muttered, “How immensely frustrating! Where could the master have gone? The festival is going to end soon!”

Seeing the crossed-armed Stetson—who had his eyes closed—standing atop the platform only served to further anger Yule, and he wasn't the only one feeling taunted either.

'That mother\*cking guy really knows how to put up a show...!'

'That condescending b\*stard...!'

While these were the shared thoughts of many, nobody actually dared to teach him a lesson. Not that they were capable enough in the first place.

Noticing how nervous Yule was, Yaakov—who had been sitting close to the Quantocks—turned to look at the members of that family before mocking, "Oh? Isn't the Quantock family sending anyone out to battle? Or do you have nobody capable enough? Now you're just making me wonder whether you just came to witness all the fun!"

"You...! You're just a pot calling the kettle black, Yaakov! I don't see anyone from the Waddys family capable of dealing with Stetson either! Regardless, mark my words that we'll soon be settling some of the grudges between us...!" snapped Xylon.

Laughing aloud, Yaakov simply replied, "I see! I'm interested in seeing how you Quantocks are going to settle those grudges of yours! Hahaha!"

Following that, Yaakov turned to look at Stetson—who was standing alone on the platform since nobody was daring enough to challenge him—before shouting, "With the representative of the Waddys family defeated, I do wonder if there's anyone among us still daring enough to challenge Stetson? If there aren't any objections, I'll be handing the power to rule over this festival to this fine young man!"

After a momentary silence, a roar of ear-shattering laughter could suddenly be heard echoing throughout the venue!

As objects within the venue began cracking or shattering from the immense noise, many people were also starting to scream and even faint.! Covering their ears didn't seem to help with the situation either!

Noticing that Xaverie and the other girls were also wailing in pain, Gerald simply sealed their blood vessels in order for their hearing to return to normal.

Still, the longer he listened to the laughter, the more familiar it felt... Was it really Carlos?

“Aren’t you being a bit too generous, Yaakov? Giving someone else the power to rule... Just cut the act! I’m bloody sure that you’re extremely reluctant to make that exchange! Aren’t I right, you b\*stard?” taunted the sarcastic voice before continuing to laugh almost maniacally.

Hearing that, Yaakov’s face instantly reddened in embarrassment as he retorted, “Who the hell are you? Show yourself!”

The second he said that, he was immediately greeted by a tight slap to his cheek! He didn’t even see it coming, and he ended up toppling to the ground, his slapped cheek now extremely swollen...

“Oh? You still have no idea who I am...?”

Moments after that statement ended, everyone in the venue witnessed as an old man began falling from the ceiling...

And landing right atop the high platform.

Chapter 1507

“...W-who is that person...?!” shouted several people in bewilderment as many others simply continued screaming.

Stetson himself couldn’t help but widen his eyes as he scanned the old man from head to toe before declaring, “It... It’s you! You’re alive, Carlos?!”

Upon hearing that, Yaakov instantly cupped his swollen cheek as he got to his feet and stared at the old man before muttering, “...C-Carlos...? The god of death...?!”

Even Finnegan Laidler—the master of the Laidler family—immediately stood up when he realized who the old man was.

Completely aghast, Finnegan nervously turned to look at his son before shouting, “S-Stetson! It’s far too dangerous there! Retreat!”

Xyrielle was also looking at Stetson rather anxiously, worried about his safety.

“There’s no need to worry about me, dad! Since he’s shown himself, I’m taking down this fearful villain today!” replied Stetson as a subtle smile began forming on his face. He couldn’t help but feel slightly excited now that he was facing a truly strong enemy.

“Amazing! Truly amazing! Hahaha! Truth be told, I had already anticipated that you’d be an idiot, but I never thought that you’d be this remarkably brainless! It wouldn’t be a stretch to claim that you’re the stupidest person I’ve met throughout the three hundred years I’ve lived!” announced Carlos as he continued laughing loudly while staring straight into Stetson’s eyes.

Just a few days ago, Carlos had been seriously injured by Gerald, both esteem and strength-wise... With that in mind, he wanted to redeem all that loss by going all out during this grand event!

Regardless, he had been busy trying to locate Gerald all this while, thinking that he belonged to one of the larger attending families. Naturally, he hadn’t been able to even catch a glimpse of Gerald throughout that period, and that honestly made Carlos more relieved than anything.

“For saying that right in my face, I, Stetson Laidler, will skin you alive, old man!” retorted Stetson, the corners of his lips twitching as he bumped both his fists together...

The second he did that, a force blowing upward began forming around Stetson, causing his long hair to seemingly dance about gracefully as he readied his attack!

Despite how dashing he looked, Xyrielle was still worried and she quickly shouted, “Be careful, Stetson!”

Truth be told, Xyrielle disliked Stetson's temperament quite a bit, to the point where she even found herself wondering if it was wise to fall for him. Even so, who was she to deny her fated lover that heaven seemingly decided for her?

Hearing that, Stetson simply nodded before taking a step forward... and launching himself toward Carlos as though he were some kind of human spring!

"Have a taste of my Lightning Fist!" roared Carlos as streams of electricity suddenly began surrounding his fist!

Carlos's immediate response, however, was to form a smug smile on his face before retorting with a laugh, "Come at me, you buffoon!"

The moment the old man's sentence ended, he extended his large hand, promptly summoning a darkness that shot out directly at Stetson!

An explosive sound was heard as both light and darkness collided with each other!

While Stetson wasn't holding back anymore and had fully revealed the fact that he had the strength of a Second-rank master, his expression had now changed drastically. Soon enough, Carlos's attack completely overwhelmed him, momentarily distorting Stetson's face as he faced the full brunt of the attack!

Not even having any chances to dodge, Stetson was immediately flung into the air... Before being thrown right back down onto the platform! Vomiting blood, he instantly began writhing in pain within the newly formed depression on the platform... To think that he wasn't even able to withstand a single blow!

"...B-by god...!" shouted several people at the scene as they released horrified screams.

Yaakov himself could feel his eyelids twitching erratically while Finnegan had his eyes wide open in worry and fear.

As for Xyrielle... She had initially anticipated that things would end the same way as how Stetson had dealt with Yagrrok. After all, the confidence he had earlier expressed was similar to his confidence the other day. With that in mind, the end results should have been the same, right...?

After watching him get taken out with only a single blow, however, Xyrielle found herself covering her mouth in shock, finally realizing how wrong her guess had been...

Chapter 1508

Laughing maniacally as he shook his head, Carlos then said, "What an utter fool! To think that you even dared to go up against me in the first place! Who the hell even gave you such courage?"

Following that, the old man raised his hand... and began lifting Stetson into the air without even touching him!

Watching as Stetson screamed in terror in his suspended state, Xyrielle—who was under the platform—quickly shouted, "D-dad! Hurry and think of a way to deal with that villain!"

Despite hearing his daughter's pleas, even Yaakov was at his wits' end.

As for Carlos, he found himself turning to look at who was shouting for Stetson's sake. The second he laid eyes on Xyrielle, he paused for a moment before declaring, "It appears that you're quite gifted too, young lass! Alright then, since you're so loyal, I'll just drain both of you dry together!"

Laughing as soon as his sentence ended, Xyrielle wasn't even able to react in time before Carlos lifted his hand again and drew the poor girl toward the platform as well!

Upon seeing that, Yaakov's nervousness peaked, prompting him to immediately shout, "I-I'm begging you, laughing master...! Please, spare my daughter...!"

Anxiously watching as Xyrielle struggled to free herself from being pulled any closer toward the old man, Xaverie—who had already stood up by this point—found herself yelling, "X-Xyrielle!"

Unsure what else he could do, Yaakov then added, "I-I'm sure you don't want to make an enemy out of that family, right, Laughing master? What more, my daughter doesn't even have access to any of the training realms! There truly is no reason for you to hurt her...!"

Hearing that, Carlos found himself frowning for a brief moment. However, he quickly recovered and laughed aloud before replying, "Hey, now, don't you think it'd be a bit too shameless on my part if I just released the person you told me to? How about this, I'll let you choose who gets to die! Will it be Stetson? Or Xyrielle? I'll let the two of you decide between yourselves! Consider it my way of paying the Waddys some respect! Hahaha!"

While she was still nervous, Xyrielle turned to look at Stetson with an expectant gaze...

However, what she saw was an extremely pale-faced youth who instantly pleaded, "S-sir! I'm begging you to let me off...! Xyrielle is just an ordinary person, so killing her would be as easy as squashing a bedbug for you...! Also, do note that as another person who's managed to enter the training realm, I can still be of some value to you...!"

"...W-what...?" muttered Xyrielle as she immediately began trembling wildly.

This... This wasn't how she had imagined things would go... He was a man whom she had grown to admire... Yet to think that he would actually compare her to nothing but a bedbug...!

Laughing at Stetson's response, Carlos then turned to look at Xyrielle before saying, "His words do make some sense! And how about you, young lass? What do you think?"

At that moment in time, Xyrielle had been stunned completely speechless. After all, ever since that fortune-teller had told her what her future lover would be like, she had patiently been waiting for him to appear... The fortune-teller had even told her that the man was someone worthy of her love... Someone who would remain by her side till death did them apart...

To think that her destined lover turned out to be such a person... Was all that talk about her destiny mere a cruel joke then?

Thinking about it that way made her want to cry out, 'Just go ahead and kill me!'



Xyrielle was snapped back into reality when she suddenly heard an angry woman shouting, “You claimed to have lived for over three hundred years, right? I feel like that’s a big fat lie since only a thousand-year-old b\*stard would be capable of what you’re doing! To think that you aren’t even letting off an innocent woman! To me, you’re nothing but a monster!”

The woman who had shouted was none other than Perla, and her fury had kicked into overdrive when he saw how Carlos was treating Xyrielle. Due to all that rage, she had yelled her true thoughts out without considering the implications.

When Carlos heard that, he turned to look at Perla before replying, “Oh? I have to say, it truly is an interesting day today! After all, I’ve managed to consecutively bump into three people who don’t appear to appreciate favors! Regardless, know that I have a habit of giving people—regardless of gender—particularly horrible deaths if they choose to disrespect me! With that said, you really are one unfortunate girl!”

After shaking his head with a bitter smile, Carlos—who had been casting a formation this entire time to lock Xyrielle and Stetson up—raised his hand toward Perla, ready to pull her over as well.

However, before he was even able to lift her off the ground, a beam of white light suddenly appeared and bolted down directly above Carlos! The light itself was extremely bright, and it seemed to illuminate every inch of the underground area.

Even so, Carlos managed to notice it just in time to barely dodge the attack.

While leaping to avoid the light, the old man found himself raising an eyebrow as he asked, “Who dares?”

Chapter 1509

The second the light hit the platform, an explosive sound ensued as large cracks began forming on the platform’s surface!

As everyone stared wide-eyed at the platform that had almost been split clean in half, the distinct sound of a blade being sheathed could be heard...

Following that, a middle-aged man wearing ninja-like garments stepped out of the clouds of debris.

Watching as the middle-aged man stared at him, Carlos found himself chuckling before saying, "So it's you, Ghose!"

From that statement, it was made evident that he was acquainted with this person...

Regardless, the second Stetson saw him, he looked like he had finally attained a glimmer of hope as he shouted, "M-Master Ghose! Save me...!"

The ninja's earlier attack had freed both Stetson and Xyrielle from Carlos's grasps, and Stetson quickly used this chance to run over to Ghose, gritting his teeth as he glared back at Carlos once he was standing behind the middle-aged man.

His eyelids now twitching slightly, Carlos placed his hands against his waist, laughing out loud before saying, "Interesting! How very interesting! I would've never imagined that Ghose, the infamous elite ninja of Goldenslinger, would actually seek refuge from such a small family as the Laidlers! Do correct me if my guess was wrong!"

"You are correct, though in return, I have my own question for you. You, too, are a famous person who's been training to attain spiritual enlightenment, no? Why would you make things so difficult for these juniors? If you truly wanted a worthy opponent, you could've just looked for me! Either way, as long as I'm here, know that you won't be able to lay a finger on Young Master Laidler!" retorted Ghose, his pronunciation slightly off every once in a while.

Either way, it was evident that both of them were the best among the best, and their conversation alone was enough to create a strange and pressuring atmosphere that engulfed the entire underground area...

Expecting a large battle to commence between the two at any second, nobody dared to speak or even breathe too loudly...

However, much to everyone's surprise, when Carlos finally opened his mouth again, he simply laughed before saying, "While I, Carlos, am a fearless man, it's honestly way too much trouble for me to have to deal with the ninja of Goldenslinger. I'm sure you're well aware that you don't scare me, Ghose. Even so,

I really don't want to have to deal with any extra trouble from the Goldenslinger, at least not for the time being. With that said, I'll leave Stetson alone today! Consider it as my way of paying respect to you today!"

After saying that, Carlos simply waved his hands slightly, a clear indication that he wasn't going to continue giving Stetson any trouble for now.

As Finnegan—who was still standing below the stage—heaved a long sigh of relief, Carlos asked, "Speaking of which, are you going to help the Laidlers obtain the power to rule this time around?"

"I am, and if you're planning to obtain it for yourself, I'm not against having a brawl with you!" replied Ghose as he delicately held onto the hilt of his katana.

"Just forget it! I've recently suffered a number of serious injuries and I truly don't have the energy to have a large battle with you now! Still, I remind you that at my peak strength, the stronger person could be either of us, Ghose. Putting that aside, while I'm fine with letting Stetson off since he's with you, I'm pretty sure there's no need for you to interfere when it comes to those two young women. Putting it simply, if you aren't fighting me over them, I'm planning to drain their life essence dry in order to heal myself!" said Carlos as he pointed at Xyrielle and Perla.

In response, Ghose simply replied in a cold tone, "I only care about Young Master Laidler's safety!"

Hearing that, Yaakov instantly got up and bowed before Ghose, pleading, "M-Master Ghose! I beg of you to save my daughter as well...!"

Even Xyrielle and Perla found themselves getting increasingly nervous when they realized that Ghose didn't even know who Yaakov was.

Getting no reply, Yaakov then turned to look at Finnegan before saying, "Please, Finnegan! Please tell him to save my daughter as well! I... I'll hand the power to rule for this year to the Laidlers if you do, and I'll make sure that the Waddys fully support you throughout that period!"

Upon hearing that, Finnegan—who had just calmed down just seconds ago—found himself hesitantly saying, "...That..."

As Finnegan thought about it, Xaverie and the rest of her friends—who still hadn't moved from their initial spots— anxiously awaited his answer. Still, who could have anticipated for such a villainous person as Carlos to appear out of the blue?

With how powerful that old man was, it was evident that the Waddys and Laidlers were finding it difficult to deal with him.

Regardless, thinking about all this reminded Xaverie about Stetson.

'I remember him closing his eyes as he stepped up that platform... It gave the illusion that he was some kind of exceptional man... Even so, I'm now convinced that he isn't all that great. After all, every time he bumps into an opponent more powerful than himself, he ends up in such a pathetic state!'

Completely speechless as she thought about it, Xaverie suddenly remembered that Gerald was still beside her.

"...Hey, Perla's your friend, right? Aren't you anxious at all...?" asked Xaverie as she turned to look at him... Only to find that Gerald's eyes were closed!

'My god! Is he actually taking a nap at a time like this?!' Xaverie thought to herself, now boiling mad as she gently began shaking Gerald's shoulder.

The second Gerald opened his eyes, however, she momentarily saw two beams of light shooting out of them! How terrifying!

Chapter 1510

Upon being shaken, Gerald finally snapped out of it as he turned to look at Xaverie.

The truth was, he had entered such a state since the five disks in his body had reappeared a little earlier. With that in mind, Gerald couldn't keep himself calm enough to continue watching the fights at full concentration.

While Gerald was still pretty much aware of the incidents happening around him, his mind was more preoccupied on the disks, which explained his lack of action.

“What are you looking at me for? Look down there! Your friend’s about to die!” said Xaverie, feeling speechless.

“She’s not really my friend... She’s merely my disciple!” replied Gerald with a subtle smile, finding her over anxiousness slightly amusing.

“...Disciple? Are you still half asleep?!” grumbled Xaverie in resignation as her friends turned to look at him with odd gazes.

“Not really, no. Regardless, I don’t think I’ve mentioned it, but I appreciate your kindness earlier, Xaverie! Now then, I’m heading off to aid my disciple!” replied Gerald as he stood up, finally ready to leave the sidelines.

Seeing how much trouble Perla was currently in, Gerald knew he had to step in quickly before something bad happened to her.

Before he could even make a move, however, he felt Xaverie tugging his sleeve while saying, “The hell are you doing, Gerald? You can’t just move around so casually! They’ll kill you!”

Chuckling in response, Gerald simply replied in an indifferent tone, “I’ll be fine, don’t worry!”

With that, he slowly began making his way toward the platformed area...

At that exact moment, Carlos—who was done waiting—was just about to draw both Perla and Xyrielle over to him when he suddenly heard a familiar voice calling out, “I do hope you’re doing well, Laughing Master!”

He recognized that voice anywhere, and Carlos’s legs instantly began trembling frantically as though they had just been struck by lightning.

Slowly turning around to see if the owner of the voice was truly him, Carlos’s eyes widened when he realized that his worst nightmare had come true... Gerald was now slowly walking toward the platform!

“...Hmm? Wait... it’s you again!” exclaimed Yaakov in bewilderment when he saw Gerald slowly walking past him.

‘He’s the one who’s endlessly pestered my daughter before this... Still, the way he called Carlos earlier... Is he acquainted with that old man or something?’ Yaakov thought to himself rather doubtfully.

“...Gerald...?” muttered the shocked Xyrielle who had also noticed Gerald’s presence by this point.

Xaverie and her friends were equally as flabbergasted as they watched the calm Gerald—who had slid his hands into his pockets—finally walk up the platform.

Now that Gerald was a little too close for comfort, Carlos found himself gulping as he took a few steps back, his eyes squinting in Gerald’s direction as he muttered, “...What... What are you doing here...?”

Noticing Carlos’s sudden change in demeanor, Ghose narrowed his eyes slightly as he stared at Gerald before asking in a cold tone, “...Who is this person, Carlos? And why are you so afraid of him? Don’t tell me he’s the one who inflicted all those wounds on you...”

Finding it hard to even speak without stuttering, Carlos quickly replied, “...That’s him alright...!”

“I see. How interesting... I feel that this is my first time meeting such a young exceptional person... Regardless, if he truly is as strong as you’ve said, Carlos, I don’t mind helping you kill him today! Though he may have been able to inflict terrible wounds on you, I believe that with our powers conjoined, we’ll be able to take out at least half of those who’ve entered the training realm!” sneered Ghose.

“No!” replied Carlos almost instantaneously as he shook his head rapidly.

“What? Why not? Don’t tell me you’re too afraid to even make a move!” replied Ghose, feeling slightly surprised.

“Me? Afraid? Ghose, I’m Carlos! The man who’s been able to enter the training realm with barely any hindrance! Do you think I know what fear is? Under normal circumstances, even if I bump into much

stronger opponents, I'd still make a gamble and go all out on them despite understanding that I could very easily be the one left dead in the end! Note, however, that every time I do something reckless—like trying to drain the essential qi of my opponents or fighting exceptional people—it's always because I know that winning will either enhance my strength or fame!" explained Carlos while shivering.

"...What do you mean by that?" asked Ghose with a slight frown.

"What I mean is clear and simple. I know I'll die if I face him, and I don't want to just perish so meaninglessly!" replied the old man as his legs trembled one final time before his knees touched the ground with a soft 'thud'.

"Please spare my life, Great master...!"

Chapter 1511

The second they saw Carlos kneel, everyone's eyes instantly widened.

The hell? Wasn't this the extraordinarily powerful and evil Third-Rank Master, Carlos Xenos? Was he actually kneeling before this young man before even attempting to make a single move? How was this even possible?

Who... Who was this young man...?

As the people in the crowd continued discussing the matter among themselves, Xyrielle herself simply stared at Gerald who was now calmly walking closer to the kneeling old man, his hands still in his pockets.

Xyrielle hadn't expected any of this to happen. Nobody had.

Whatever the case was, he was now no longer hiding his pressuring and powerful aura, and anyone who sensed it would surely feel their hearts palpitate. Xyrielle, of course, was no exception to that.

As for Ghose, he quickly recovered from the shock of Carlos kneeling before Gerald and—with rapidly twitching eyelids—turned to stare at the approaching youth.

Upon stepping before the old man, Gerald took a hand out before holding onto Carlos's head as though he was punishing a naughty child.

"Now then... Why didn't you just wait obediently for me to kill you back then? I'm sure you knew what was coming, right? Despite that, you fled the moment I got slightly distracted by some pleas for help..."

"P-please, Deity! It was wrong for me to have tried to escape! I shouldn't have run away!" cried out Carlos as tears began rolling down his cheeks.

"You really aren't acting like a proper elder should be, you know? Either way, it's impossible for a person to truly escape if I want them dead! Wouldn't you agree?" replied Gerald with a laugh.

"O-of course you are, Deity!" said Carlos, his entire body already trembling uncontrollably.

Hearing that, Gerald then turned to face the audience before announcing in an indifferent tone, "Regardless, I'm here today representing the Quantocks for the right to gain control! If anyone's against that, you're free to come challenge me!"

It took him a second, but he then scratched the back of his head before adding, "Oh, and I almost forgot to mention this. You don't need to challenge me one by one. You can all challenge me at the same time! If you prefer, that is!"

Watching as he then put on an innocent smile, everyone below stage instantly found themselves horrified.

"What did he say?"

"My god! How ruthless!"

Despite their dissatisfaction, nobody dared to say a word.



Ghose, however, wasn't about to just accept such mockery. Understanding that Gerald didn't even consider him to be an opponent, Ghose found himself growling, "Don't you think you're being a bit too arrogant, young lad? Can't you see that I, Ghose from the Goldenslinger, am here?!"

"I mean, yeah. You've been standing there for a while now. What of it?" replied Gerald.

"Bakayarou!" roared the now furious Ghose.

Finnegan himself was angered by Gerald's comment, prompting him to say, "You shameless brat! There's no need to hold back, Master Ghose! Just kill this arrogant man however you please!"

To think that Gerald would actually dare to claim control... He truly was asking for it!

Hearing Finnegan's command, Ghose instantly drew his katana before growling, "I'll show you the true power of the Goldenslinger if it's the last thing I do!"

A gleam almost seemed to run down the sharpened blade as Ghose prepared his attack...

It was an attack so powerful that it was the best the Goldenslinger could offer... And it was called the Thirteen Stances of Waterflow!

A slash could split water, and two could slice through a soul. No soul could survive the third slash, and Ghose knew that for a fact since he had already mastered the three blades realm!

Once the gleam pierced through Gerald's soul, Ghose was more than certain that the arrogant youth's soul would be no more!

While all this was happening, Xyrielle found herself getting increasingly nervous as she saw how much danger Gerald was in.

After all, to think that her palpitating heart had been right this entire time... Now that she knew how strong Gerald truly was, she was sure that this was who the fortune-teller had actually been referring to!

With that in mind, she was feeling a complicated cocktail of emotions as she continued staring at Gerald.

However, before she could even decide on what to do, she stared wide-eyed in horror as she realized that Ghose's blade was already swinging down on Gerald!

Expecting bloodshed, everyone sat at the edge of their seats... only to be left completely dumbfounded by the results.

With one hand still in his pocket, Gerald had lifted his other to gently pinch onto the katana's blade... Despite making it look so easy, it worked. Ghose couldn't bring the blade down any further!

"...W-what?!" cried out Ghose in terror.

Though he wanted to retreat a few steps back, he found that he couldn't even move a muscle!

"Oh? I do wonder what kind of stance this is... And what kind of sect is the GoldenSlinger?" asked Gerald in an indifferent tone.

"Y-you...!" growled Ghose as he used all his strength to attempt to regain his mobility. Unfortunately for him, he remained as frozen as a statue...

"...I admit that you're stronger than I thought!" added the angered Ghose after a while before laughing aloud.

"Oh? Does that mean you have other stances up your sleeve?" asked Gerald, feeling slightly surprised when he saw Ghose's reaction.

Chapter 1512

Ignoring Gerald's question, Ghose simply closed his eyes for a moment... And when he reopened them, a momentary flash of fire could be seen reflected in his eyes as he roared, "Flaming Blades!"

Following that, the hilt of his katana seemed to light ablaze, shooting upward toward the tip which Gerald was still holding onto!

Much to Ghose's dismay, the second the flames were about to burn Gerald, they suddenly extinguished with a sizzling sound!

"...W-what...? How is this even remotely possible?!" stuttered the wide-eyed Ghose in disbelief as he stared at the youth.

Sensing that Ghose probably wasn't going to reveal any relevant information if he continued holding onto his blade, Gerald simply released his grip on it, immediately causing Ghose to take a few steps back.

At that moment, seven distinct ringing sounds could be heard coming from where the Laidlers were seated...

Almost immediately after, seven figures leaped out from the shadows, taking only a split second to surround Gerald as they shouted, "Master!"

From what Gerald could see, all seven of the masked men were dressed in ninja-like garb, and each of them had murderous auras as they held onto their steel knives.

Regaining his composure, Ghose then turned to look at Gerald before saying, "Now then... If you didn't already know, Tierson Mountain is extremely important to the Goldenslinger, your excellency... With that in mind, I'll say it right now that if you still wish to gain control over the area, you'll surely offend the rest of the Goldenslinger... You wouldn't want that, would you...?"

"Oh? I see, I see..." replied Gerald as he nodded.

"Hmm? So, you're finally starting to get scared? Wise of you, really. Now then, why don't we have a seat and get a bit more acquainted with each other?" said Ghose as he took a step toward Gerald.

“Scared? I’m afraid you’re mistaken. Regardless, you really shouldn’t have said that to me,” replied Gerald as he shook his head.

“...I beg your pardon? What do you mean by that, your excellency?” asked Ghose, stunned.

“Well, quite honestly, I had only planned to fend you off at first. Following that, I’d have asked you regarding how you went about with your training routes as well as a little on your sect. Before I even got to that, however, to think that you’d actually dare to threaten and blackmail me!” replied Gerald.

“...What? With that said, are you not interested in allying with us? I’m afraid you don’t know how powerful the Goldenslinger truly is!” said Ghose as unease swept through his entire being.

“Whether they’re powerful or not is beside the point. I hadn’t intended on killing you just now, you know? However, for daring to threaten me, you’ll be paying with your life!”

Glaring at Gerald—who still had one hand in his pocket—Ghose tightened his grip on his katana’s hilt.

Gerald, on the other hand, simply looked back at the furious ninja before flicking his fingers at him rather nonchalantly.

With immense speed and precision, the next thing Ghose knew, his kneecaps had already been pierced by some unknown force!

Watching as Ghose screamed miserably—unable to stop himself from falling to his knees in front of Gerald—the seven other ninjas instantly raised their blades, ready to launch their attack!

In response, however, Gerald simply raised his hand before waving it slightly...

And just like that, a glowing halo—that centered around Gerald—suddenly appeared and immediately began widening itself in all directions!

Unable to dodge the counterattack, all seven of the men were sent flying backward as though they were nothing but newborn lambs!

Seeing that, Ghose immediately began begging, "P-please, have mercy! Please spare my life...!"

He now finally understood why Carlos had reacted that way when he first saw Gerald. This youth had abilities that would make anyone feel powerless!

Ghose was now feeling like the weakest man alive as he stood before Gerald.

Not wanting things to just end like this, Ghose quickly snapped out of it before saying, "The Goldenslinger are a secretive and mysterious sect with a thousand-year history in Japan! We have many experts without our ranks, so there's no need to offend us, Deity!"

"Well, since I still wish to gain control, the Goldenslinger are going to be offended either way, no?" replied Gerald.

"That's right! However, if you hand the controlling rights over to us, I'll definitely beg the Goldenslinger to spare your life!" cried out Ghose in his panicked state.

"So, it appears that you still don't get what I'm trying to say, nor do you understand my style of doing things. Regardless, I've already offended you anyway, so I may as well just finish off what I've started. I'll still be killing you off now, and if the Goldenslinger find fault with me later on, I'll just end them when they come for me!" replied Gerald as he squinted his eyes before extending his right hand...

As his hand began glowing, it began radiating an aura that manifested into a giant pair of hands that swiftly grabbed onto Ghose!

Before Ghose could even react, Gerald clenched his fist... and the next thing anyone knew, Ghose had already been reduced to nothing more than a lump of bloodied meat!

Having witnessed such a cruel scene, everyone in the area instantly began screaming in sheer horror!

Chapter 1513

As everyone either screamed or stared dumbfoundedly at the bloody scene, one of the family heads managed to snap out of it and immediately bowed before Gerald, expressing his amazement and respect by shouting, “Master Crawford...!”

Upon seeing that, the other family heads immediately bowed in unison as the words ‘Master Crawford’ echoed throughout the entire underground area.

Finnegan, on the other hand, turned to look at Stetson—who was still frozen on stage—and signaled him to escape together with him. To his relief, Stetson saw and understood Finnegan’s signal, prompting both of them to slowly begin walking away from the area.

Despite his name being shouted, Gerald appeared indifferent, and he simply turned to look at Carlos before saying, “Carlos Xenos... I remember asking you something before you fled... Since I didn’t get an answer, I’m just going to repeat what I said. Give me one good reason why I shouldn’t kill you.”

Upon hearing that, Carlos instantly gulped before replying, “I... I’ll be your lackey till the day I die, Master Crawford...!”

Despite being rather unwilling to be Gerald’s servant, anything was better compared to facing a death similar to Ghose’s. That ninja’s death was truly pitiful...

“Hmm... I accept. With that, I’m sure you know what you have to do next, correct?” replied Gerald as rested his arms against his back before turning to look at the escaping father and son.

Instantly getting what Gerald was trying to say, Carlos then roared, “How dare both of you offend Master Crawford!”

Since Finnegan had earlier instructed Ghose to kill Gerald, he had pretty much already sealed his fate by that point.

Either way, Carlos easily caught up to the duo and after receiving three strikes each, both of them flopped to the ground, dead.

“Now then... If there aren’t any further objections, does that mean that I’ve now gained full control over this underground world?” asked Gerald.

“But of course, Master Crawford! We’d very much prefer having you be the person in control rather than the Waddys!”

“Indeed! With how strong you are, the Yahtos are more than willing to serve you as our head for the generations to come! Even so, please don’t underestimate my family, Master Crawford, for we own a third of the assets in the entire Jenna Province!” added the head of the Yahtos in a flattering tone.

While the other family heads were already fawning over Gerald, Yaakov didn’t even dare to say a word.

With mixed feelings in his heart, he wondered how he had been so blind... How he had actually failed to recognize how strong and powerful Gerald actually was at the start...

Regardless, he understood very well that he had previously offended Gerald quite a bit. It was the reason why he was staying put in complete silence, fearing that he would share the fate of Finnegan and his son.

Despite Yaakov’s worries, Gerald didn’t even look at him from the start till the very end.

After a brief moment, Gerald then declared, “I only wish to obtain one thing from the miracle on Tierson Mountain. Once I obtain it, the rest of the items will be equally distributed to all of you!”

“...W-what?! T-Thank you, Master Crawford...!” cried out the family heads, unable to contain their excitement.

Watching as Gerald stood in the limelight, Xyrielle felt her heart pounding rapidly.

Just as she had thought... Stetson hadn’t been the one the fortune-teller had predicted to be her optimal lover... No... As it turned out, Gerald was the actual one for her!

Now genuinely feeling happy for him, she hoped that he would at least turn back to look at her...

To her disappointment, after he explained a few things to Perla—about the distribution benefits since he was placing her responsible over that—Gerald swiftly went off without another word.

Seeing that, Xyrielle felt slight feelings of loss and bitterness in her heart...

Fast forward to after the underground festival, several big changes had already taken place within the Jenna Province.

The changes included several ancient martial arts families, secret societies, as well as several forces that possessed special skills. Essentially, all of them now obeyed and took orders from Master Crawford.

In relation to this, there were also quite a number of people—who were training to attain spiritual enlightenment—who stepped forth to meet Gerald. While they had previously entrusted themselves to the powerful families within the Jenna Province, they were now pledging their allegiance to Gerald instead.

These were all people similar to Julian in the way that they were all self-taught and weren't particularly tied to any organizations. With Gerald's agreement, they were all overjoyed to finally have a strong and powerful person to back them up.

Among the twenty-seven people who had attached themselves to Gerald in that short amount of time, Gerald found that most of them were First-rank masters while the others were Second-rank ones.

While that meant that Carlos was most definitely the strongest among them, he opted not to turn down any of them. After all, he was truly in need of people at the time.

Regardless of how powerful they were, Perla was still Gerald's first disciple. With that said, despite being considerably weaker than the rest, her words were still absolute among the other disciples.

Chapter 1514



Since Gerald's new force was still relatively small, those within it instantly began discussing the matter. Eventually, they wondered if it would be best if they set up a sect. In doing so, they'd surely be able to properly establish everyone's respect and ensure that they had a name.

Unfortunately, after they brought their concerns up to Gerald, he simply turned down their request, stating that it still wasn't the right time for them to do so yet.

Either way, after postponing any further discussions about that topic, Gerald used that opportunity—since they were all already there anyway—to tell them that he would be staying atop Tierson Mountain for a few days. He also added that nobody was allowed to enter the mountain throughout that period...

Meanwhile, Perla and her cousin sister could be seen getting ready to leave for one of Jenna City's luxurious clothing malls.

"Are you sure about this, Perla...? Didn't grandpa tell us not to go out so much...? After all, girls have been going missing all over Jenna City throughout this period of time... I fear that bandits are the ones responsible for this! With that said, shouldn't we be a little more careful...?" muttered Perla's cousin.

"I know, I know... But think about it. Do you actually think that anyone in this city would dare lay a finger on us now?" replied Perla in a slightly defeated tone.

Hearing that, her cousin thought about it for a bit. Of course, Perla was right. After all, she was Master Crawford's disciple. While it was mostly just a fancy title, it was nonetheless a great title to have.

What more, after that incident, the Sherwins had risen up the ranks, now seconded only by the Quantocks.

As if that wasn't already enough, the many individuals with hidden talents within Jenna City would now all line up respectfully whenever they came across Perla.

With all that in mind, who in the right mind would still dare to provoke anyone from the Sherwin family?

“Besides, I’m only heading out since I wish to prepare some nice clothes for Master Crawford today. After all, he’ll be setting up his own force in the future, and with that in mind, he has to at least own some decent clothing! Speaking of which, Qiselle, I’ll be needing your help in selecting clothes for him as well. With how elegant he is, I wonder what kind of clothes would suit him best...”

Following that, the two girls then chatted and laughed between themselves, eventually arriving at the most luxurious clothing mall in all of Jenna City.

To their dismay, they instantly bumped into someone annoying upon entering the building.

“So, it’s you again! How terrible is my luck for me to have to keep bumping into you!” scoffed the woman who was currently blocking the two girls’ way, malice reflected in her eyes.

“Indeed, Jenny...” grumbled Perla. Of course, it had to be Jenny...

Perla recalled how her master had punished that woman back at Heartstone Manor’s parking lot just a few days ago. Even so, from what Perla could see, Jenny seemed to have already forgotten all about that incident...

Regardless, Perla soon realized that a few of Jenny’s friends were also present.

“Hah! You really are amazing, you know that? Having fun at Heartstone Manor and even entering a luxury store... Have you Sherwins already given up on living or something?” said Jenny with a snort, sarcastic as ever.

“Say what you want as long as you’re happy...” replied Perla in a defeated tone as she put on a wry smile before tugging on Qiselle’s hand to leave.

“Stop right there! Who gave you permission to leave? We still have an unsettled score, you know?!” growled Jenny as she firmly held onto Perla’s shoulder.

Hearing that, Jenny’s friends immediately began surrounding Perla as well.

“Don’t let her leave, sisters!” shouted one of Jenny’s friends who had her arms crossed.

“Just what is the meaning of this, Jenny...” growled Perla, an icy expression on her face.

“Are you playing dumb? Did you think I’d forget about that little incident we had back at Heartstone Manor? Regardless, now that I have your attention, tell me where you hid that pathetic loser from last time. I’ll say it right now that Benson and the others have been looking everywhere for that kid! Once he’s found, they’ll tear him apart, and you, too, will be done for then! That being said, how dare you play that mean trick on us that day?!” hissed Jenny, getting angrier by the second as she thought about that incident.

In fact, she got so angry that she began yanking on Perla’s hair in her frustration!

Little had she expected that Perla would actually retaliate by slapping her hard on her face!

“You... Have you gone mad?! You dare hit me, Perla?! You really have a death wish, don’t you, you b\*tch?! Fine! I’ll gladly fulfill that wish for you then!” roared Jenny before fishing her phone out and making several calls in a way that suggested that she was the leader of some underground gang.

Soon enough, eight Buick commercial vehicles came to a halt right before the mall’s entrance, and out stepped a group of burly and strong-looking men...

Chapter 1515

As the men quickly rushed over and surrounded Perla, what seemed to be the leader of the group asked, “What happened, Jenny?”

Upon closer inspection, Perla realized that the leader was no stranger. He was Benson, the cocky guy who had tried to outmuscle Gerald but ended up getting tricked the other day!

“She slapped me, Benson! Also, remember that kid we met at Heartstone Manor’s parking lot? It appears that Perla is closely related to him!” replied Jenny in an exaggerated manner.

“D\*mn it! I’ve been looking for that little b\*stard for the longest time! I’m going to rip him to shreds once I finally find him! Regardless, to think that you’d actually dare to hurt Jenny! Are you sick of living or something?!” roared Benson as he raised his palm, fully ready to hit Perla.

“Stop this at once!” shouted a cold voice at that moment.

Turning to look at the source of the voice, Benson saw that the one who had shouted was a middle-aged man who had a tag above his front pocket stating, ‘manager’. Following closely behind him, was a group of security guards...

The manager himself was fuming mad. This was the most famous clothing mall in all of Jenna City! Anyone daring enough to cause trouble here must surely be tired of living!

However, after stomping a bit closer, the manager suddenly stopped in his tracks when he saw who the leader of the group was.

A surprised expression on his face, the manager then said, “...Oh? Is that you, Benson?”

“Hmm? Ah, so it’s you, Manager Xenthe! It’s nothing much, really, I’m just teaching this woman here a lesson! It’s a personal grudge, you see. With that said, I’m sure you don’t have a problem with that, right?” asked Benson with a cold smile on his face.

“Heh! But of course, not! Since you’re involved, I’ll be giving you some face this time around!” replied Manager Xenthe with a snort before laughing aloud.

“Is there really a need to talk this much, Benson? Go beat her up already! I need to show her what happens when someone dares to offend me!” grumbled Jenny.

Perla herself was currently feeling a slight mix of anxiousness and anger. After all, she really hadn’t expected the manager of the shopping mall to not care about his customers at all!

While Perla wanted to take immediate action, after thinking about it for a while, she figured that with her current position, she didn’t need to personally do anything in order to resolve the problem.

With that in mind, Perla then took in a deep breath before saying, “I’ll have you know that I’m only choosing not to retaliate because I don’t want any trouble, Jenny. In other words, I’m not afraid of you in the least. Regardless, take my advice and cease this nonsense before it’s too late!”

“Hahaha! Are you actually trying to threaten me, Perla Sherwin? Come to think of it, you’re the kind of person who’s terrified of being humiliated in public, right? Well guess what? I’m going to be recording you getting beaten up and once I’m done with you, I’ll be uploading it on social media! I’m going to make sure that everyone sees what has become of the great young lady from the Sherwin family!” scoffed Jenny as she prepared to record all the action with her cell phone.

Upon hearing that, Benson instantly began tugging onto Perla’s hair!

However, before he could do anything else, everyone suddenly heard an angry voice shouting, “Stop, right there!”

The next thing Benson realized, a person had come dashing toward him before landing a swift kick onto his wrist!

As a result, Benson—who was now in great pain—lost his balance and ended up toppling onto the ground!

Holding onto his aching hand as he screamed miserably, he turned to look at his assailant—who was now standing right in front of Perla—before roaring, “Who the hell are you?!”

By that point, several other middle-aged men had gathered behind the attacker, though none of them even bothered replying to Benson.

Regardless, the middle-aged man who had first arrived then walked toward Perla and bowed before ashamedly saying, “My sincerest apologies, Miss Sherwin! To think that you had been so close to getting humiliated!”

“...Don’t mention it... And you are...?” asked Perla.

Truth be told, she had already planned on how to avoid Benson's attack earlier. To think that someone would suddenly come to her aid instead! Even so, she hadn't the slightest idea who he was.

"Ah, where are my manners. I go by Hanson Luwie, and though you may not know me, I certainly know who you are. The thing is, I first came across you while I was accompanying Chairman Yahto, the head of our family!" replied Hanson in a respectful tone.

Chapter 1516

"I see... that explains it!" replied Perla with a nod.

"...What? Hanson Luwie? Who the hell is he? Is he powerful? Perla couldn't be acquainted with anyone powerful, right?" muttered the surprised Jenny who was still standing at the side.

"Keep your voice down! That person is Chairman Hanson Luwie, the former driver of Lord Yahto from the Jenna Province's Yahto family! Not only is he a great man with exceptional abilities, but he's currently also the general manager of several shopping malls!" whispered Benson who was equally as shocked as Jenny was.

Still, that at least explained why Chairman Luwie's bodyguards were so strong!

At that moment, Hanson asked in a serious tone, "Could you detail what happened here earlier, Miss Sherwin?"

Anyone who wasn't living under a rock knew that all the forces in Jenna City were now under the control of the incredible and mysterious Master Crawford. Hanson, for one, knew this, and he also knew that Perla was Master Crawford's most beloved disciple.

With that in mind, despite knowing that Perla could very easily handle herself, there was no way he was going to risk her accidentally getting humiliated, especially not in his territory. Besides, this was a prime opportunity for him to prove his allegiance toward Master Crawford, and he could show how serious he was as well.

Hanson also feared that if he didn't step in, news about that would reach the ears of his head of the family who was still trying to curry favor Master Crawford. Should that happen, he'd surely be done for! With all that in mind, he was determined to help Perla vent her anger out today.

"Well... This woman here keeps pestering me! She even called for backup so that they could force Master to come get me after beating me up! After hearing that they wanted to rip master to shreds, I instantly got angry and hit her in response! That's pretty much the gist of it!" replied Perla with a subtle smile.

Momentarily stupefied, Hanson shouted, "What? You... You actually dare show that much disrespect toward Master Crawford?!"

Finding herself gulping, Jenny felt slightly intimidated not only because of Hanson's high rank, but also because of his reddened eyes that were now glaring straight into her soul...

Even Benson was stunned by Hanson's response, and he was so terrified that he quickly replied, "C-Chairman Luwie! There must be some sort of misunderstanding here! My uncle's name is Finnegan Laidler, you know?"

Despite bringing up his connections, Hanson barely even flinched as he ordered, "Men! These people are daring enough to cause trouble in our mall! With that said, break their legs in accordance with the rules! Also, that woman there was disrespectful to our VIPs! With such a potty mouth, the only reasonable punishment is to slap her till she can't speak anymore!"

The second his sentence ended, several of his bodyguards instantly took action without the slightest hesitation.

What followed after were screams of pure pain and terror that echoed across the entire mall...

Looking at Benson's broken legs as well as his subordinates who were now all convulsing erratically on the floor, the terrified Jenny found herself slowly taking a step back... Before turning around to book it!

To her utter dismay, she felt as her hair was yanked right back to where she had initially stood!

Turning around, she realized that one of the bodyguards had found a thick wooden plank somewhere, and he was now slowly walking toward her...!

Once, twice, and thrice. The plank continuously and mercilessly smacked the arrogant woman's face. Soon enough, Jenny's face was completely bloodied, and her cheeks were both so swollen that her face almost looked deformed.

By that point, even Perla couldn't bear to watch anymore. All this was simply too cruel!

As his eyelids twitched, Hanson knew that he didn't really want or need to be this cruel either. After all, breaking someone's legs was already punishment enough.

Even so, he had ordered his men to beat these people half to death, and he was aware of how vicious his order had been.

However, there was simply no other way to deal with them. After all, these people had chosen to offend Master Crawford of all people, even going so far as to threaten to rip him to shreds!

Had they not said that, they wouldn't be suffering as much as they currently were.

Regardless, teaching these people such a ruthless lesson was his own way of showing mercy. If he didn't do so now, he was worried that they wouldn't even know how they ended up dying later on...

Chapter 1517

Naturally, Jenny was swiftly dealt with without much hassle.

Moving back to Gerald, there were simply too many people these days who were looking for an opportunity to approach him.

While it was honestly getting to a point where he found it troublesome, Gerald was thankful that he was going to be staying in the miracle cave on Tierson Mountain for the next few days.



As suggested by its name, the place truly was a miracle, and Gerald found several magic artifacts inside. Even so, it took Gerald three whole days before he was able to find the exact one that Master Ghost had told him to find.

It was a blue elite crystal that was about the size of an adult's nail...

While he was pleased to have finally found it, Gerald hadn't the slightest idea how to even use it. After observing it for a while, however, he realized that it seemed to contain a very strong and special form of energy within it.

'I wonder why Master Ghost insisted on locating this specific gem...' Gerald thought to himself before continuing to research it.

However, even after a few days had passed, he still didn't have any idea how to utilize it. With that, he concluded that he needed Master Ghost's help to figure it out.

Knowing Master Ghost, Gerald had a feeling that that man had already foreseen him locating the crystal. In other words, everything was probably going according to how Master Ghost had planned.

Even if that was the case, however, where was Master Ghost even hiding...?

Just as Gerald was beginning to worry, Julian walked up to him before saying, "Master Crawford, Miss Xyrielle from the Waddys family is here! While I had expected her to leave after denying her entry, she's been waiting for you outside for an entire day and night! She keeps saying that she has to meet you no matter what!"

"...Hmm? Xyrielle? What is she doing here?"

Naturally knowing who she was, Gerald remembered how indifferently she had behaved every time she was around him. Aside from her birthday banquet, they pretty much had no other reason to meet each other. Even so, if she truly had been waiting for him for an entire day and night, he had no reason not to meet her. Besides, he felt slightly guilty for initially thinking of using her to obtain an admission ticket.

“Let her in, then!” added Gerald with a nod.

With a flick of his wrist, the blue crystal disappeared just as Xyrielle was brought into the backyard.

The moment she saw Gerald, her heart instantly began palpitating as she stuttered, “G-Gerald... No- M-master Crawford!”

Thinking back, she wondered why she had found this person to be so mediocre just a few days ago... Honestly, hadn't she been acting rather high and mighty before him at the time? To think that she would now be too nervous to even look him in the eye!

Smiling as he turned to look at her, Gerald then asked, “So... I'm here. Did you want to talk to me about something?”

“Y-yes! Though... I doubt you'd agree to my request...” replied Xyrielle in a slightly saddened tone.

She was fully aware that what she wanted to ask from him was slightly impolite, and though she was sure that Gerald would've agreed with it had she not found out about his true identity, now that all this had happened, she wasn't so sure anymore. To make matters worse, her nervousness and inferiority were making it extra hard for her to bring the request up.

“Well, that depends on the request... Go on...” said Gerald.

“W-well... The thing is, I wanted to ask if you could accompany me on a trip to Sacrasolis Mountain... B-but I can see now that you're very busy so...!” replied Xyrielle.

Though she said that, her hopeful eyes clearly betrayed her.

“Hmm? Sacrasolis Mountain? Is there a reason you'd like me to accompany you there?” asked Gerald, flashing a slightly wry smile.

“...T-that...” muttered Xyrielle.

She didn't really know how to explain it without making the request sound absurd. In the end, however, she simply gave up and decided to be straightforward about it.

Essentially, Xyrielle wanted him to accompany her there since she wanted to look for the fortune-teller that she had previously met at the riverside behind that mountain. In other words, she wanted the fortune-teller to determine whether their marriage truly was predestined by fate, despite knowing how ridiculous her motive sounded.

It didn't help that she was well aware that while marriage was the only thing on her mind, Master Crawford was an actual busy person.

Chapter 1518

Her understanding of that only served to further increase her embarrassment.

Despite that, Xyrielle still valued this predestined marriage too much for her to ignore.

Eventually, she gave in and simply told Gerald more about the fortune-teller that had given her, her reading back then.

"...Hmm? A fortune-teller? What does he look like?" asked Gerald in a simultaneously excited and serious tone.

After all, the description she made... Was the person she had gotten her reading from actually Master Ghost?

Could Master Ghost have been hiding on Sacrasolis Mountain this entire time? If that truly was the case, then Gerald didn't have to waste any more time and effort locating him!

After thinking for a short while, Gerald agreed to escort her over to the mountain. This was a chance for him to reunite with Master Ghost, and he wasn't about to say no to that.

Regardless, the second Xyrielle heard that Gerald was willing to go along with her request, she instantly felt both surprised and happy.

Fast forward to sometime later, both of them were able to see a church in the distance...

Sacrasolis Mountain was located south of the Jenna Province, and it was also where Sacrasolis Church could be found. There were apparently quite a number of pilgrims who came here too.

Regardless, the more he looked at the church, the more Gerald felt that Master Ghost truly was in there.

Upon getting close enough to the church's entrance, two young priests stopped them from proceeding.

"Have both of you come to pray?" asked one of them in a respectful tone as the two priests smiled warmly.

"Not at all, sir. We just came here to have a look at the back of the mountains. Also, why are there so few pilgrims here today?" asked Xyrielle while looking around.

"Oh? Our apologies, but Sacrasolis Mountain has been closed for about a month now! With that said, the back of the mountain is no longer open to the public... I'm afraid that both of you are going to have to go back if you're heading there just to have some fun!" replied the other priest as he lowered his head.

Though it was subtle, Gerald managed to catch that same priest—who had just spoken—sneaking glances in between gulps as he stared at Xyrielle's bosom. From that alone, Gerald could tell that these two weren't good people.

It was also at that moment when Gerald noticed traces of deliberately hidden murderous auras exuding from the two. Things like these weren't going to escape Gerald's eyes that easily.

With that, Gerald activated his divine sense to get a better grasp of his surroundings. A brief moment later, he realized that the two priests truly were the only people atop the mountain.

Giving the duo a brief—but cold—glance, Gerald decided not to say anything for the moment.

Xyrielle, on the other hand, looked visibly disappointed to hear that news. Just as she turned around, ready to leave, Gerald noticed the two priests nudging each other by their elbows while exchanging glances.

As Gerald pretended not to have noticed, the two priests eventually chose to run up to Xyrielle before saying, "Miss! Do stay!"

"...Huh? Is something wrong, masters?" asked Xyrielle.

"Let's just say that both of us have seen how pious you are. Due to that, we're making an exception and granting you access to the back of the mountain!" explained one of the priests.

"What? Seriously?! I greatly appreciate it!" replied Xyrielle, both surprised and overjoyed.

"However, note that while we're permitting you entry, you'll only be allowed to head up the mountain one by one. The other person can wait and rest in the guestroom till the other party returns. It's just how things work here, and it'd be difficult for us to explain ourselves if others somehow noticed that we led both of you in at the same time!" added the priest.

"...I see! I'm fine with that!" replied Xyrielle as she turned to look at Gerald.

Since he didn't look like he was against the idea, Xyrielle simply nodded, now more determined than ever to meet up with that fortune-teller. With any luck, she'd be able to get another reading from him.

The fortune-teller had previously shared the exact location for her to find him too, which was why she wasn't worried about not being able to meet up with him once she was at the back of the mountain.

With that, Gerald and Xyrielle then followed the two priests into the church.

Unbeknownst by the priests, Gerald secretly flicked his finger toward Xyrielle, injecting a stream of essential qi into her body...

## Chapter 1519

Naturally, the first to enter was Xyrielle, and one of the priests promptly began leading her to the back of the mountain.

As for Gerald, he was led toward another mountain path by the other priest.

Walking slowly with his hands in his pocket, Gerald heard as the priest suddenly laughed before saying, "I have to say, you really are fortunate, brother! Your girl's a real beauty you know? Probably among the top hundred beauties in the world!"

Displaying a smile, Gerald then replied, "Really? I don't think she's that beautiful!"

"I see... What a pity! Well, since you don't even realize how lucky you are to have such a beauty by your side, why not give her to us instead?" said the priest with a snicker as he smiled coldly.

Was he finally showing his true colors? Whatever the case was, Gerald pretended to be momentarily surprised before angrily retorting, "What? What kind of talk is that? Aren't you a priest?! Aren't you afraid that I'll look for the head priest and complain about you?!"

"Hahaha! You fool! You're actually thinking of complaining about me? Do you think you'll still be able to even speak once I'm done with you?" scoffed the priest before laughing.

"...What do you mean by that?"

"Hah! Truth be told, both your fates had already been sealed from the moment you approached the mountain! You know, my brother's probably already turned that girl of yours into his plaything by now!" replied the priest as he laughed sinisterly.

The second his sentence ended, Xyrielle's terrified screams could suddenly be heard coming from a distance!

“Heh! I’m sure you heard that too, right? With that, I’m sorry but I’m not going to be wasting another second on you! After all, if I don’t rush over and get my share of the fun now, I’ll probably have to wait in line once the other guys hear her screams!”

Before Gerald could even reply, the priest swiftly slammed his palm right into Gerald’s chest!

Shouting in pain, Gerald ended up flying backward until he eventually collided against a tree! The second the impact hit, blood instantly began spurting out of his mouth before Gerald fell feebly to the ground...

A few twitches later, Gerald finally stopped moving, now fully unconscious.

“What useless trash! It’s such a waste that that woman ended up with you! No matter! Once I’m done with you, I’ll quickly head off to have some fun with her! Still, that d\*mned Calven... You should’ve been more careful about her screaming!” grumbled the priest as he quickly tossed Gerald’s corpse to the side.

As the priest ran in Xyrielle’s direction, Gerald remained utterly still...

It was only a few seconds later when some rustling could be heard... and all of a sudden, several people—who were all well-camouflaged—suddenly dropped down from above!

After testing to see if he still breathed and confirming that he was truly dead, the men exchanged glances with each other before quickly running after the priest.

It was only then when Gerald finally decided to slowly open his eyes again.

Following a loud ‘crack’, Gerald’s body began straightening itself again as though some form of necromancy was being used on his body.

‘This mountain truly is interesting... From what I’ve observed, it appears that not only are there quite a lot of masters here, but there also seems to be two different forces present!’ Gerald thought to himself with a frown.

Realizing that Xyrielle was most probably still in danger, Gerald swiftly made his way in the direction that all the others had headed to...

Dialing back time a bit, Xyrielle had been so anxious to find the fortune-teller earlier that she truly hadn't expected the priest to actually have malicious intentions toward her.

When he attempted to force himself onto her, Xyrielle was instantly scared half to death. After all, while Xyrielle did have a bit of training, she was well aware that the priest was much stronger than her. She wasn't his match at all!

Watching Xyrielle struggle desperately as he continued pushing her onto the ground, the sinister-looking priest then laughed maliciously before saying, "Go on, continue screaming! And make sure to struggle all you want because nobody's coming for you~! Push a little harder, won't you? Hahaha!"

It was at that moment when Xyrielle's flailing caused her to accidentally hit the priest at the side of his neck...

Almost immediately after, a loud sound was heard as massive amounts of essential qi was released where Xyrielle's palm was!

Chapter 1520

And just like that, the priest was momentarily sent flying... Before his body exploded into a million pieces!

Staring wide-eyed at the bloody mess she had caused, Xyrielle's first reaction was to scream in horror.

After calming down slightly, the dumbfounded Xyrielle found herself staring at her palm. Despite being terrified out of her mind, she was simultaneously curious where all that power had suddenly come from.

It was around then when the second priest from earlier arrived and witnessed the aftermath of her unintentional attack.

Utterly flabbergasted by the scene before him, the horrified priest instantly yelled, "F-f\*cking hell! You were this strong this entire time?!"



Realizing that the other priest was now present, the terrified Xyrielle instantly began backing away as she shouted, “Y-you... Don’t come any closer...!”

As Xyrielle extended a hand, hoping that it would deter him from coming any closer, the priest—who thought that she was charging up an attack—became so frightened that he almost felt like wetting himself on the spot!

However, the priest soon realized that no attack was coming for him. Though he was still afraid, the priest then laughed before shouting, “W-well? Don’t tell me that your powers have suddenly disappeared!”

“I-I’m warning you...! Don’t you dare take a step closer to me...!” retorted the terror-stricken Xyrielle.

Even so, the priest felt that she would’ve attacked by now if she could. With that in mind, he disregarded her warning and instantly ran toward her, ready to pounce!

However, before he could even get far, the priest felt a hard kick against his back that sent him flying face-first into the dirt!

Crawling back up as soon as he could, he quickly turned around to see who his assailant was.

Standing not too far behind him, the priest was able to identify three masked males.

Not knowing when they had even snuck up behind him, the priest then roared, “Who are you people? How dare you trespass into Sarcasolis Mountain?!”

“Quit it, you fake priest! You must really want to die!” retorted the one who had attacked.

Just as that masked man was about to launch another attack, the priest pulled out a hidden paper talisman that—upon activation—created a large ‘boom’ before a flame shot out of it!

Unable to dodge it in time, the masked man's arm ended up getting wounded!

Before the masked man could recover, the priest had already drawn out another talisman. This time, however, the flames produced were green, and they shot into the sky before exploding dazzlingly!

"This isn't good! Our location's been exposed!" yelled the leader of the trio in a cold voice.

Following that, he pulled out a dagger, hoping to at least end the priest's life and save Xyrielle while they still could.

Unfortunately, several rustling sounds could suddenly be heard, and the next thing he knew, dozens of people dressed in priest-like clothing were already descending from the treetops!

Now completely surrounded, the trio of masked men could all sense the immense murderous auras exuding from the ruthless-looking men who had encircled them.

Before the masked man could make another move, a middle-aged priest waved his hand before ordering, "Capture them!"

Heavily outnumbered, the masked man could only surrender as the other priests quickly took the three masked men and Xyrielle under their custody.

Ripping off the leader's mask, the middle-aged priest then sneered, "So it really is you, Hubert Younger! To think that you'd actually dare to ascend Sacrasolis Mountain! I guess you never anticipated getting caught, huh? No matter! Take them away!"

After laughing mockingly, the priest then began leading the four of them away...

Eventually, they arrived before a large cave located at the back of Sacrasolis Mountain.

Watching as the four people were led into the heavily guarded area, Gerald—who had been witnessing all this from afar—found himself thinking, ‘There seems to be quite a big problem with Sacrasolis Mountain... Could Master Ghost really be here...?’

He had already guessed that the priests on the mountain were all up to no good. It was the reason why he had earlier injected some essential qi into Xyrielle. After all, he would very much prefer if she didn’t suffer any harm throughout this incident.

Either way, Gerald had already planned from the very beginning that if things went awry, he would definitely make a move.

With that said, he deduced that his current best course of action was to capture one of the priests for interrogation. He’d start making further plans once he knew more about the current situation...

As evening drew close, one of the priests on duty craned his neck as he walked toward a wooded area to relieve himself...

Before he could even do so, however, he was suddenly yanked away by some invisible and silent force!

Chapter 1521

When the priest finally awoke again, was greeted by the sight of a young man’s back.

Recalling that he had been yanked by some strong and invisible force earlier—before he blacked out—the shocked priest then muttered, “W-who are you...?”

“Who I am doesn’t matter. However, what does matter is who you people are, and what you’re all planning to do here on Sacrasolis Mountain,” replied Gerald as he slowly turned around before staring coldly at the man.

The second that man saw Gerald, his entire body began trembling uncontrollably as he stuttered, “Y-young Master?! It’s you?!”

Watching as the terrified man knelt right before him, Gerald couldn’t help but frown slightly as he curiously muttered, “...Young Master?”

“Indeed! Still, when exactly did arrive, Young Master?” asked the priest

“I can come and go as I please, can’t I?” sneered Gerald in response.

While he wasn’t exactly sure why the priest was referring to him as ‘Young Master,’ Gerald still felt that this was the perfect opportunity to bait some information out of the man. He was hoping that some probing around would do the trick.

“Also, you’ve yet to answer my first question!” added Gerald in a commanding tone.

Hearing that, the frightened priest quickly bowed before replying, “H-how could you possibly have forgotten, Young Master...? Regardless, we’re all here since we got secret orders from the family to head to Sacrasolis Mountain to refine the holy stone! There’s an area here called the Sacrasolis Pond, and we’ve been refining the Sacrasolis Holy stone for over a month now!”

“The Sacrasolis Holy Stone, you say? I see. And what happened to all the original priests from Sacrasolis Church then?” asked Gerald as he nodded while slowly piecing together the bigger picture.

“W-well, anyone who wasn’t compliant was killed on the spot... The rest of them are currently imprisoned in the dungeon! Regardless, I wonder if the chief knows that you’re already here, Young Master? I can immediately report to Mr. Hoyt Crawford about your presence if you’d like!” replied the priest.

“That can wait. Speaking of which, have you heard of a person called Master Ghost before?” asked Gerald, now more certain than ever that there were loads of secrets hidden within this mountain.

“Master Ghost? But of course, I know him! After all, you were the one who ordered us to hunt him down! If you’ve forgotten, we already have him in our hands! You even ordered the chief to keep a close eye on him at all times!” said the priest.

“So Master Ghost has been captured by your group this entire time?!” replied Gerald as he slightly raised an eyebrow.

“...Y-young Master...? What are you...?” muttered the priest as he raised a slight brow as well, finally realizing that the person in front of him seemed to have a rather different personality compared to the young master he knew... Besides, wasn’t it bizarre that the young master of all people was asking him all these questions...?

‘Well, this is just perfect! To think that I’d get all this information that easily!’ Gerald thought to himself.

As it turned out, Master Ghost had fled all the way to Sacrasolis Mountain to hide within Sacrasolis Church, and all this had led to the incident where he had met Xyrielle and told her about her fortune at the back of the mountain a while back. Unfortunately, this group of ‘priests’ came over sometime later and completely turned Sacrasolis Mountain upside-down for two distinct reasons. Firstly, to seek out and capture Master Ghost, and secondly, to gain access to the Sacrasolis Pond.

With that said, no wonder he couldn’t find where Master Ghost was this entire time!

“...So, who is this Hoyt Crawford that you mentioned? Also, detail me a bit more on your young master,” replied Gerald with a smile.

“...H-huh? So, you really aren’t the young master...?!” replied the priest as he instantly got to his feet, a vigilant expression on his face.

“I’m honestly surprised it took you this long to notice,” replied Gerald with a chuckle, knowing full well that this man was trying to escape.

Chapter 1522

As the priest attempted to book it, he didn’t make it past the third step before some ungodly force began lifting him off the ground! This time, however, all his internal organs felt like they were simultaneously being torn apart!

Trembling violently from the near-unbearable pain, the priest quickly began shouting, “S-spare my life! P-please, spare my life...!”

“I’ll consider once you answer my question. If you need a refresher, I asked why you recognized me as your young master,” replied Gerald.

“W-well, Young Master’s appearance highly matches yours! It’s almost as though you’re his doppelgänger! With that said, there’s no way I could’ve been able to easily tell you apart! Though, I do wonder if you’re also a member of the Crawford family... After all, there’s no other reason you could look so similar!” explained the man who was still aching terribly.

“...Oh? The Crawford family, you say?” replied Gerald as his eyes momentarily lit up.

Observing the squirming man, Gerald could see that the priest appeared to be a master-in-training, though he was probably still far from achieving his goal.

‘Does that mean that the Crawfords that he’s talking about are the other Crawford family that Second uncle found out about? Are these people connected to grandpa...?’ Gerald wondered in slight bewilderment.

“Tell me the location of your Crawfords,” said Gerald.

“T-they’re currently on Yearning Island! Are... Are you from that family as well?” asked the priest in shock.

However, before Gerald could say anything in response, the priest seemed to realize something. Staring wide-eyed at Gerald, he then said, “I... I get it now! Are you from the Crawford family from Northbay?!”

“You got me red-handed. Regardless, I’m assuming that Daryl is the head of the Crawfords from Yearning Island?” asked Gerald in an indifferent tone.

“T-that’s right!” replied the priest as he nodded.

‘So there really are two separate Crawford families... Then... Doesn’t that mean that everything Second uncle found out about is true...? But... Why would grandpa do any of this...?’ Gerald thought to himself with a slight frown, feeling extremely puzzled.

Whatever the case was, Gerald had a hunch that his family's disappearance had something to do with these other Crawfords. He now knew that he had a lookalike in the other family as well. After all, the priest truly seemed to have believed that he was his young master earlier.

As Gerald frowned slightly while thinking about all the clues he had just gathered, the priest suddenly grabbed a handful of dirt from the ground. Following that, murderous intent seemed to flare out of his body as he tossed the dirt toward Gerald's head!

However, instead of dirt, the contents he threw now appeared to be a volley of golden needles that glowed brightly as they flew toward Gerald's head!

Much to the priest's surprise, Gerald's essential qi simply blocked the needles when they got too close.

Watching as the momentarily petrified priest stared wide-eyed at the falling needles that were slowly reduced to dust, Gerald then asked, "You already know my identity, no? In other words, you should know full well that we're from the same clan by this point. With that in mind, why are you still trying to kill me?"

"T-there's a huge bounty on your head if we manage to kill you!" replied the terrified man.

"And who was it who issued that order? Also, were you the ones who had kidnapped my family?" asked the puzzled Gerald, wondering why all this was necessary in the first place.

"If you wish to learn more, you should ask Mr. Hoyt yourself!" replied the priest as he sneakily lit up a paper talisman...

Shortly after, the talisman began releasing multi-colored smoke that quickly dissipated into the air!

Knowing that it was most probably some sort of secret code, Gerald then turned to look at the laughing priest who smugly said, "Look, I know that you're just one of those lowly Crawfords who's managed to slip away. I bet you hadn't expected me to fire off a warning signal while you were questioning me, right? Regardless, you're done for this time, kid!"

Feeling even more puzzled now, Gerald then replied, "...Why are you even getting so excited for? I was already aware that you were lighting that talisman up from the moment you started doing it, you know? Besides, I'm not going to just leave immediately after getting here. With that said, why are you so happy?"

"Hahaha! Since you look exactly like Young Master, I'm sure you have a pretty important role among the other lowly Crawfords! With that said, I'll surely be promoted to deputy chief once I successfully capture you! Just so you know, several experts are already making their way here! Does that answer your question?" replied the priest as he laughed joyously.

"Ah, I see, I see... So, you're feeling proud of yourself, thinking that you were being resourceful earlier... You must be feeling ecstatic from assuming that you've already captured me by this point! Still, you keep repeating the phrase, 'lowly Crawfords'... Just to clear things up a bit, I hope you realize that to me, you're nothing more than an ant!" said Gerald with a wry smile on his face.

Chapter 1523

"...You...! To think you'd still behave so presumptuously even though you're about to be done for!" growled the priest in anger.

Before he could say anything else, however, the priest momentarily froze. Now staring-wide eyed at Gerald, the priest was able to somehow see flames reflected in Gerald's eyes. He couldn't look away, and shortly after, the priest began feeling a burning sensation on the soles of his feet...

Following that, the priest screamed miserably before turning into nothing but dust in less than a second!

"And to me, the lives of ants are insignificant!" declared Gerald as he shook his head with a smile before placing his arms against his back.

With that out of the way, Gerald's figure slowly wavered as it became one with the wind! Due to that, he was able to swiftly return to the cave where Xyrielle had last been led into.

The cave was naturally still heavily guarded, and the second the guards noticed Gerald's presence, they immediately attempted to stop him from entering.



However, just as Gerald had earlier said, all of them were simply ants to him, and he swiftly took all of them out. Though they were technically Crawford's as well, since these people were clearly not against harming him, all of them had to die!

Watching as the group of experts—who had been standing guard at the mouth of the cave—got annihilated like they were nothing, the prisoners who were located just a little deeper in the dungeon found themselves shocked beyond words.

Before they could even recover, all of them stared wide-eyed as a miniature hurricane blew its way into the cave, eventually dissipating and revealing Gerald!

The second she saw him, Xyrielle instantly shouted excitedly, "G-Gerald!"

Truth be told, Xyrielle had been scared half to death earlier, thinking that she was eventually going to get raped by those people! With that in mind, it was no wonder why she was so overjoyed to see Gerald now.

"Everything's fine now," replied Gerald indifferently as he gently flicked his fingers...

And just like that, all the shackles simultaneously clicked open. The prisoners were now free!

Looking around, Gerald saw that the three masked men who had attempted to save Xyrielle earlier were present. Aside from them, there was also a group of priests. However, what shocked Gerald the most was the fact that there were so many ordinary women who were trembling in fear in the innermost part of the dungeon...

He had heard of the missing women cases before he set off for the mountain a few days ago. As it turned out, this was all the handiwork of the fake priests...

Were these truly Crawford's...? How could they be this disgusting and lustful...? The thought of it alone made Gerald extremely angry.

Regardless, the captives were then led out of the dungeon, and the second the cave's entrance was in sight, an old priest—who seemed to be the leader of the group—bowed respectfully toward Gerald before saying, "Thank you for saving our lives, master! I don't know how to repay your kindness!"

"There's no need to be so polite with me, priest. Regardless, the reason I came here was to look for someone."

"Oh? Who could you be looking for?" asked the old priest.

"I'm looking for a person called Master Ghost. From what I've managed to gather, he once took lodging here atop Sacrasolis Mountain. Despite that, I didn't see any traces of him in the dungeon at all!" replied Gerald.

Hearing that, a middle-aged man—who had been standing beside the old priest—turned to face the elderly man before respectfully asking, "Master, do you think this is the Master Gerald Crawford that Master Ghost told us about?"

"That's right, I'm Gerald Crawford!" replied Gerald as he nodded joyously.

"So that's the case! You know, Master Ghost kept saying that you were a supreme genius... After witnessing your capabilities, I have to admit that he was right, Master Crawford! You truly do have supernatural powers! Regardless, Master Ghost had first come to us to avoid the pursuit of the Crawfords. Unfortunately, he failed to escape in the end, and he ended up being taken away by Hoyt instead of being locked up together with the rest of us!" explained the old priest.

"Do you know why they were so keen on hunting Master Ghost down?" asked Gerald.

"That I'm unsure of... However, do know that Master Ghost placed all his hopes on you before the great calamity. With that said, whether he manages to escape it or not all depends on how soon you find him!" replied the old priest.

"Copy that!" said Gerald with a slight nod.

Chapter 1524

At that moment, the leader of the three masked men—who had been standing behind Xyrielle this entire time—came forth and said, “Thank you for coming to our rescue, sir! I go by Hubert Younger!”

“Oh? You were here as well, Mr. Hubert?” exclaimed the old priest as he immediately greeted the three masked men as well, making it clear as day that they were well acquainted.

“Indeed! After receiving your secret message stating that Sacrasolis Mountain was in trouble, we immediately rushed over to investigate. Still, to think that Hoyt would end up getting this powerful in just a few decades since I last saw him... I honestly found it exceedingly difficult to withstand even a single blow of his. Had I not dispatched my Dragon Zone, I wouldn’t have been able to fight against him and his men at all! All that aside, I made an almost fatal mistake today when I decided to save this girl’s life! Due to that action, all three of us ended up getting captured by his men!” explained Hubert.

Following that, Hubert couldn’t help but take a good long look at Gerald’s extraordinary temperament. From what he had witnessed, Gerald was also a master of using profound and unpredictable methods that left even him surprised. How had he not heard of such an amazing person before?

Whatever the case was, he was now brimming with respect toward Gerald.

Just as he was about to exchange a few words with him, however, one of the younger priests—who had earlier been sent out to scout the area—came running back while nervously shouting, “M-master Crawford! Things aren’t looking too good! Those men have completely surrounded us!”

Upon hearing that, the kidnapped girls instantly began screaming before huddling together in fear. It was clear as day that this reaction was due to the psychological trauma that those men had left on them.

“There’s no need to panic, just follow my lead!” instructed Gerald as he began leading the group out of the cave.

As he stepped out into the open, Gerald could see that a large number of ‘priests’ had encircled the area right outside the cave, completely blocking any possible escape routes.

Upon seeing Gerald's face, a middle-aged man—who appeared to be the head of the opposite team—was instantly stunned. However, it turned into an expression of joy just seconds later.

Laughing aloud, the man then declared, "So it's you! To think that you'd walk straight into my lap! I guess I don't have to waste any more time hunting you down now! But before that, allow me to confirm something... You're Gerald from the Crawfords of Northbay, correct?"

"That is correct. And you are...?" asked Gerald.

"Finally! Do you even have any idea how hard we've been searching for you? Where the hell have you even been hiding this entire time? Even the picture of the sun couldn't locate you! Regardless, keep in mind that the one who captured you today goes by the name of Luther Crawford!" sneered Luther.

"The picture of the sun? I've had access to it myself. Regardless, can it also be used to locate others?" asked Gerald.

"Hah! You? As if a cheap and lowly b\*stard like you would be worthy of possessing the real picture of the sun!" retorted Luther.

"...Whatever the case is, it appears that you truly are the ones responsible for capturing my family members. Still, I just don't understand. From what I've gathered, both of us are essentially from the same family, no? Why participate in all this senseless murder?" asked Gerald rather curiously.

In all honesty, Gerald was still in disbelief of all this. None of their actions seemed to make any sense to him at all!

"Let's just say that due to some incidents, the lord's plans have deviated slightly, and he predicts that things will only continue developing in a bad direction... Due to that deviation, however, it appears that the Crawfords on your side won't be of any use to us anymore! With that said, it'd be better to take care of all of you while we can rather than leave a chance open for you to possibly ruin our entire plan in the future!" replied Luther with a snicker.

"I see... Speaking of which, I'd like to know whether my grandpa, the man I've always respected, is the actual mastermind of all this. Has my family been used this entire time?" asked Gerald.

“Hahaha! I can’t say anything about the former part of your question, but for the latter, of course, you’ve been used! That’s the only use of such lowly people as you! Also, I’d prefer if you stopped saying that you’re from the same clan as us! Know that we’ve always been ashamed of you, so it’s honestly great news for us that you’re finally going to be taken out with our very own hands now!” retorted Luther with a sinister laugh.

“I see. And what about the rest of my family members?” growled Gerald, immense murderous intent reflected in his eyes.

“Hah! If I remember correctly, by the time I began carrying out this mission, Dylan had already been tortured beyond recognition! I honestly don’t even know if he’s still alive now!”

“That’s great to hear!” replied Gerald with a nod.

“Did I hear that right? It’s great to hear? That man’s your father!” declared Luther while looking at Gerald and wondering if he had gone mad.

“You misunderstand me. Of course I wasn’t talking about how terribly you people have treated my father, but nonetheless, your statement has dispelled all my worries. Now then, since I’ve probably gotten all the relevant information out of you, I can kill all of you without any hesitation! Mark my words, not one of you is leaving alive!”

Chapter 1525

“Humph! You truly are an expert at saying conceited things, Gerald! It appears that you won’t be able to understand how wide the gap between us is until I show you my training!” retorted Luther before laughing again.

“You’re a Second-rank master, no?” asked Gerald.

“Oh? Color me surprised! You actually know a thing or two about those who train to attain spiritual enlightenment!” replied Luther as he stared sinisterly at Gerald.

“Just curious, but what is Hoyt’s rank then?” asked Gerald.

“Hah! Our chief is a legendary master that’s at a level close to that of a Fifth-rank master! A realm that no ordinary person would ever be able to comprehend!” said Luther, his eyes momentarily filled with admiration.

“I see. So it appears that there truly are a lot of experts within the Crawford family... To think that there even exists a fifth rank!” replied Gerald as he rested his arms against his back.

“I do wonder why you’re still asking so many questions. No matter! I’ll just capture you first and hand you over to the chief so that he can deal with you!”

Following that, Luther positioned his hand into a sword finger, and immediately after, flames began bursting out of his body! With a layer of fire surrounding him, the man then rushed toward Gerald!

From an outsider’s point of view, Gerald could very well be taken out in a single swipe if those large, burning hands ever caught onto him.

Regardless, everyone else present was shocked speechless by the intense flames.

This was the Fire Armor Demon Technique! Anyone using it would be able to summon flames—that could burn through anything—that would then surround the user’s body! Upon coming into contact with said flames, the virulent fire would instantly burn all the victim’s main internal organs!

‘If even Luther is already this terrifying, what kind of power does Hoyt even have...?’ Hubert thought to himself as he trembled in fear.

By the time Luther was close enough to Gerald, Gerald still had both his hands in his pockets. He, of all people, knew that the flames were nothing to be alarmed about.

Even so, the others didn’t see things the way he did, and Xyrielle instantly shouted, “P-please be careful, Gerald...!”

Hearing that, Gerald simply turned to look at Xyrielle before nodding as he replied, "Don't worry, everything's under control!"

Following that, Gerald extended a hand before snapping his fingers.

The next thing Luther realized, a golden aura had appeared before him! Unable to react in time, he felt as the aura's golden rays began piercing through his body, causing his skin to start smoking!

"What?!" shouted the surprised Luther as he instantly attempted to escape the attack. However, it was far too late for him.

The second the golden aura fully engulfed him, Luther felt as though his entire body had just been pierced through! The next thing he knew, he was already spurting blood as he flew backward!

Upon landing on the ground, he found that he couldn't even move a muscle anymore! The only indication that he was still alive was the fact that his eyes were wide open on his bloodied face...

Upon snapping out of his shocked state, Luther instantly cried out in disbelief, "You...!"

Meanwhile, the other Crawfords each found themselves gulping as they slowly took a few steps back.

Luther had ended up in such a state from just a single blow...? This person was way too terrifying...!

Hubert himself had his jaw hanging wide open after witnessing all that. By god! What kind of person even was Gerald?!

Sliding his hand into his pocket again, Gerald then casually walked over to Luther. Once he was standing before him, he stepped on Luther's face, slowly applying pressure as he said, "I haven't even utilized my true capabilities yet, you know? Is this all you've got to capture me with? How pathetic!"

“You...! L-look, while I admit that I severely underestimated you, know that you can’t just kill me! I’m just following orders, you know? If you really want to settle the score, you should duke it out with chief Hoyt instead of me!” replied the stupefied Luther.

“Of course I’m going to settle the score with him. However, I hope you realize that me killing you won’t affect that outcome at all! I hope you all know that I, Gerald Crawford, always keep my promises! With that said, I promised to kill all of you today, and I’ll make sure it happens!”

Chapter 1526

The second his sentence ended, Gerald increased the pressure of his foot without warning! A split second later, a sickening sound was heard as Luther’s head exploded like a watermelon!

Seeing that Luther had been reduced to such a state before he could even scream, some of the remaining Crawfords instantly yelled, “H-hurry! Run for it and tell the chief about this...!”

With that, the hundred over terrified people began scattering in all four directions, hoping to escape with their lives intact!

“Oh? Are all of you seriously trying to escape now?” said Gerald with a faint smile before closing his eyes...

As soon as he did, a golden eye suddenly appeared on his forehead! Almost instantaneously, a strong light was then ejected from the eye! The light itself easily homed in on everyone Gerald deemed as an enemy, and whenever the light pierced through someone, their bodies would end up exploding in gory sounds!

While all this was taking place, those standing behind Gerald could only scream in terror. After all, all this was simply too cruel for them!

Once everyone was taken out, Gerald closed his divine eye before turning to look at the old priest while asking, “Are you sure that Master Ghost is currently in Hoyt’s hands?”

“Y-yes, Master Crawford!” replied the shocked old priest.



Though he had experienced a great deal throughout his lifetime, this was the first he had witnessed such a bloody scene... It made him fear Gerald since the young man was actually willing to resort to such vicious methods...

“Very well, then. Regardless, I’ll have to trouble you to lead my friends down the mountain and settle down there for a bit. For your own safety, please don’t re-ascend the mountain till I get down!” instructed Gerald.

Before anyone could even say a thing about that, Gerald’s figure had already dissipated into thin air...

Regardless, Gerald’s words seemed to be imbued with some sort of magic. After all, though some of them were initially hesitant, everyone eventually hurried down the mountain in retreat.

A little while later, two rows of people could be seen sitting on both sides of a secret chamber located on Sacrasolis Mountain. Sitting at the highest point in the chamber, was a middle-aged man with a square jaw.

Lying right in the middle of this group, was an oil cauldron, and right beside it was an old man who was being held captive.

“Correct me if I’m wrong, but I remember you promising us that you’d give us the answers we wanted after a month of purification. We trusted in you, but it’s now well over a month. Since you attempted to deceive us, I’m now reminding you that there isn’t a way out for you. Look, either you fulfill your promise and cooperate with us, or my men will dunk you into that boiling hot oil cauldron!” sneered the middle-aged man—who was clearly the leader of the group—as he took a sip of his wine.

“Oh? Did I promise such a thing? I’m sorry, my memory hasn’t been the best! Do tell me what exactly I promised at the start!” replied the old and extremely thin man sitting by the oil cauldron.

As expected, the man was none other than Master Ghost, though he now looked rather haggard after being tortured for so long. Even so, his eyes were still brimming with vigor.

“Firstly, I want you to tell me where Gerald is. You, of all people, should know how much we’ve gone through throughout the years just to locate him. Secondly, I need you to tell me where the Astrigite is.

Even so, aren't you just playing a fool, Master Ghost? Do you think any of us here buy your confused act?" growled Hoyt.

"Hahaha! I've already told you, haven't I? Gerald's coming over to find you sooner or later! However, you got impatient and captured his family members! Regardless, as for the second request... Let's discuss that once you meet up with Gerald. That is, if you're still alive by then!" replied Master Ghost before laughing aloud.

This prompted a fat middle-aged man—who had a katana sheathed under his Japanese garments—to slam his fist onto the table before shouting, "You old b\*stard! Who do you even think Gerald is? Killing him would probably be easier than killing an ant for me!"

"Look, if you know what's good for you, just tell us where Gerald is right now! Otherwise, you'll be facing so much misery that you'll be wishing that we allowed you to die!" grumbled another impatient person.

At that moment, everyone heard slow, but distinct, footsteps approaching the room...

"...Hmm? Who could that be?"

Chapter 1527

Realizing that all of them had heard the same thing, everyone turned to look at the doorway...

Following that, a young priest who was trembling in fear walked into the room...

Staring at him, Hoyt then asked in a cold voice, "What is it—"

Before his question could even end, a figure—who had been hiding behind the priest's back—slowly revealed himself. Naturally, it was Gerald.

It took Hoyt a moment, but when he finally realized who the youth was, he found himself muttering, "...You... You're Gerald from the Crawford family, no?"

“Bingo!” replied Gerald with a subtle smile.

“M-master Crawford...! I’ve already led you here! You... You promised you’d spare my life once I did that, right...?” stuttered the priest fearfully.

The second his sentence ended, however, Gerald simply flicked the back of his palm against the priest’s skull... and just like that, the priest’s head exploded! As if that wasn’t already enough, the priest’s entire body then quickly dissipated into a bloody mist!

What a joke... As if Gerald would’ve ever considered sparing his life!

Regardless, Hoyt and the others were momentarily stunned speechless. As it turned out, Gerald was actually pretty skillful!

“Young brother Gerald!” announced Master Ghost who couldn’t help but sigh with relief.

“Master Ghost! I’m so sorry that you had to suffer this much just because I was a little late!” replied Gerald as he, too, nodded in relief when he saw that Master Ghost was still alive.

Before anyone could say another word, Hoyt slammed both his hands against his table before shouting, “We’ve been searching for you for so long... To think that you’d actually come to our doorstep on your own accord! Very well, then! You’ve truly saved me a lot of trouble and manpower!”

The second his sentence ended, Hoyt’s figure seemed to waver for a moment... and the next thing anyone knew, he was already standing before Gerald!

Even the eight experts—who were standing on both sides of the room—were already armed and seemingly ready to attack at any moment.

From what Gerald could see, some of the experts were Japanese, whereas the others were from other foreign regions.

“Is he the one, Chief Crawford? Is the Herculean Primordial Spirit really inside his body?” asked one of the eight people as they exchanged glances among each other with joyous expressions on their faces.

“That’s right! Speaking of which, I’d like to remind all of you that it was the Crawfords who had spent a great deal of time and effort to nurture the Herculean Primordial Spirit. With that said, you’ll still have to listen to the Crawford family’s commands if you wish to even get a share of the pie, understood?” warned Hoyt.

“That’s only natural!” replied all eight of them gleefully.

“You know, I’ve heard from Luthor that the Crawfords of Northbay are nothing more than a tool to your half of the family. Does that mean that the Crawfords of Northbay were created just so you could nurture the Herculean Primordial Spirit within me?” asked Gerald in slight disbelief.

“Oh? It appears that you’re quite smart! Every word you said was pretty much true! Regardless, we’ll be harvesting the Herculean Primordial Spirit in advance due to some changes!” replied Hoyt.

“I see... While I’m sure that you’ll be getting rid of my family members sooner or later, I can’t imagine why you guys are being so ruthless. So what if we’re vastly different? In the end, we’re still from the same family, no?” asked Gerald, finding all of this to be increasingly outrageous.

“Well, I guess it wouldn’t hurt to tell you this since you’re about to die anyway! Look, are you really stupid enough to believe that your Crawford family is from the same lineage as ours? Hahaha! You see, the ancestor of your Crawford family was initially just a stand-in for our Crawford family’s ancestor! In the end, we allowed him to create the Crawfords of Northbay—which would eventually end up becoming a world-class power that owns over half of the planet’s wealth and assets—just for the sake of this nurturing plan! As an extra titbit, in order to ensure that your Crawford family wouldn’t branch out, we personally made sure to get rid of as many of your family’s members as possible!” sneered Hoyt.

“And here I was wondering why my family’s lineage didn’t seem to be prosperous despite the fact that we’re so economically strong... So they were murdered by all of you...!” growled Gerald, his eyes filled with rage.

Chapter 1528

“But of course! Regardless, everything is perfect now! After waiting for over a dozen generations, the prophecy of the picture of the sun is finally going to be fulfilled! After all, you’re the true bearer of the Herculean Primordial Spirit!” declared Hoyt with a laugh.

“What I’m hearing is that since the mission is now complete, my family and I should no longer exist among the living, correct?” asked Gerald.

“Naturally. While I admit that you’re able to see through issues pretty thoroughly, it’s quite unfortunate that there really is no other way out for you. Your fate had already been determined from the moment you were born! You were always destined to end up in our hands!” retorted Hoyt, his mocking expression filled with ridicule.

After taking note of all of this, Gerald then laughed bitterly before replying, “You almost sound proud of your ability to manipulate others and play god.”

“Of course, I am! As if there’s anything more exciting than that in the world!” sneered Hoyt before laughing aloud.

“From what you’ve said, it appears that aside from my strength, everything else that I’ve experienced up till this point could very well be artificial! Regardless, I had trusted others way too easily, resulting in my family getting kidnapped and possibly even harmed... What a pity that I was so careless...” muttered Gerald, hints of remorse reflected in his eyes.

Why hadn’t he thought of establishing a protective formation for his family upon awakening to his powers? That could’ve possibly prevented his family members from getting kidnapped!

Thinking about all this also made him slightly frightened. After all, had Zyla not helped him unlock the natural gift from the Herculean Primordial Spirit, he could’ve easily died at the hands of either this group or the King of Judgment Portal.

Momentarily staring at his palm, he couldn’t help but clench it slightly.

“Hahaha! Well, truth be told, it’s exactly because you were late that your family members are still alive! Had we found you that day, none of them would be among the living anymore!” replied Hoyt as he fished out his cell phone before playing a pre-recorded video...

From what Gerald could see, the video had been recorded in some kind of dark dungeon...

Upon the video zooming in, Gerald realized that a person was being tortured with an iron whip! The person himself looked badly mutilated, and Gerald’s eyes were filled with rage the second he saw the victim’s face. It was his father!

As Gerald’s heart began beating wildly, he noticed the presence of a masked youth who was sitting at the side of the dungeon. That person simply sat there, laughing and ridiculing Gerald’s father who was still being whipped repeatedly.

“While it’s true that they’re alive, it’s only fair that we make them suffer in exchange! Well, Gerald? Are you feeling powerless now? Hahaha! I understand how you feel! After all, it must be quite unpleasant to know that your entire family was manipulated like mere pawns!” sneered Hoyt with a malicious laugh before putting his cell phone away.

“Chief Crawford, there’s no point talking to him anymore. Why don’t I capture him first? Once that’s done, we’ll use the remaining time to discuss how we’ll share the energy from the Herculean Primordial Spirit!” grumbled a Japanese man who was among the eight experts. From what Gerald could see, he was at the very least a Fourth-rank master.

Not even waiting for Hoyt to reply, the samurai then leaped forward in an attempt to grab hold of Gerald’s neck!

Gerald, however, was having none of that. Now extremely furious, Gerald instantly declared, “You utter b\*stards...! For doing all this, I, Gerald Crawford, swear to turn all of you into nothing but ashes once I’m done!”

Following that, Gerald was instantly covered in a bloodred glow that made the hearts—of anyone who saw it—palpitate wildly. Adding that to the pressuring killing intent that Gerald currently exuded, it almost seemed like he could murder just with the two!

Even the Japanese master who had earlier rushed forward found himself freezing in place when he felt Gerald's monstrous killing intent.

"W-what...?!" muttered the man as he instantly felt a strong urge to take a step back.

However, before he could even do so, he felt a strong force yanking him toward Gerald! His hand now over the Japanese man's throat, Gerald then squeezed it hard...

And with a sickening sound, the man's head exploded into a million pieces... He was now as good as a lump of flesh.

"...H-huh...?!"

It took everyone a moment to register what had just happened, but when it finally hit, their eyelids instantly began twitching rapidly.

This was especially the case for Hoyt, who was already taking a few steps back in sheer horror and amazement after witnessing Gerald's terrifying change.

How... How could any of this be?!

Chapter 1529

"Just because you people have a slightly higher rank, you all think you're so invincible... Is being strong the reason why all of you think it's fine to manipulate the lives of others? Well guess what? Your lives are dirt cheap before me!" roared Gerald.

"Everyone, keep your guard up! Attack him together or we'll never be able to capture Gerald!" ordered Hoyt whose eyelids were still twitching.

Since the remaining seven experts now had a common enemy, all of them instantly began charging up their strongest attacks before assaulting Gerald together! Due to the immense release of essential qi, the entire area began trembling rather violently...

With debris and dust flying everywhere, the seven men were just about to land their attacks on Gerald when suddenly, he seemingly vanished into thin air!

Before anyone could even react, the first wail of despair could be heard... Then another... And another...

By the time the dust finally settled, seven mangled and bloodied corpses lay at Gerald's feet.

Gerald himself appeared to be completely unharmed, and there wasn't even a single trace of dust on him!

"A-amazing... You truly are amazing...!" stuttered Hoyt as he revealed himself from behind a stone pillar.

As Hoyt stared at the seven corpses on the ground, Gerald saw that the man was simultaneously strangling Master Ghost with one of his hands! In Hoyt's other hand, he seemed to be holding some kind of bead...

Regardless, as Hoyt continued muttering something in his horrified state, Gerald simply remained calm as a cucumber. Sliding his hands into his pockets, Gerald then smiled while asking, "What exactly is so amazing?"

"Y-you are, of course! Just so you know, the eight who you just murdered were all great masters, and all of them were incredible individuals! Despite the fact that you were face to face against seven of the strongest attacks from the best of the best, none of them even seemed to be a match against you! With how tragically each of them died, I admit that we've seriously underestimated you! You're simply too strong and capable compared to us...!" replied Hoyt as he continued holding Master Ghost hostage. It was also evident by this point that the bead in his hand was no ordinary object.

Though Hoyt did appear to be extremely surprised, he seemed unusually calm for some reason...

"Whatever the case is, it appears that you're no idiot, at least when compared to all the stupid folk I've had to meet before. After all, you didn't just rush over to me to attack. Now that would've instantly spelled your doom. Instead, you actually used your wits to hold Master Ghost hostage amidst all the chaos!" said Gerald with a sincere smile on his face.



Though Hoyt realized that Gerald's praise was authentic, he still remained stern as he chuckled before coldly replying, "...Well, as they say, when a young man has great power, he'll surely get extremely arrogant and think that strength will get him anything that he wants! Just so you know, when it comes to fights between masters, wisdom is what counts at the end of the day!"

"...I'm sorry, did you... Did you just say wisdom?" replied Gerald who was so caught off guard by Hoyt's words that he almost felt like his jaw was about to drop.

"Are you... honestly saying that you're filled with wisdom just because you've taken Master Ghost hostage...? Or is it because of that toy in your other hand?" added Gerald with a wry smile.

"I'll say it right now that I've been nicknamed 'the Crawford family's wisdom' for the longest time among those in the realm of training. Also, did you just say that this bead is a toy?!"

"Indeed. It appears to be a toy that's currently being by an infant!" replied Gerald with a nod.

"Hahaha! Now you're just being ridiculous... While I could explain what it is, I think it'd be better if Master Ghost elaborated on it. After all, you've been seeking him for such a long time!" scoffed Hoyt.

"I-it's the Thunderstorm Formation...!" exclaimed Master Ghost, a fearful expression on his face.

"Insightful as ever, Master Ghost! That's right! I hope you understand, Gerald, that as long as I move my finger, the formation will instantly activate, and when it does, the chaos it'll cause will disallow even an inch of grass to grow within a hundred-mile radius! Needless to say, all three of us will be ashes by then! While dying now doesn't matter to me, I'm sure it'd be a shame if you lost your life here, no? After all, the rest of your family members are still suffering in the hands of my half of the family! Regardless, it seems that in the end, both of your lives are still under my control! With that said, I don't think I need to spell it out for you, for you to know what's most important, right?" scoffed Hoyt rather smugly.

Shaking his head with a wry smile, Gerald simply replied, "Well, since you're calling the shots, what do you propose I should do then?" asked Gerald as he took a few steps forward, his hands in his pockets.

"You... Don't you dare come any closer! Make one more move and all three of us are dying together!" roared Hoyt nervously as the muscles on his face twitched slightly.

“What’s wrong, Wisdom? Are you that scared already when I’ve barely even moved? Speaking of which, there’s something I’d like to remind you about,” said Gerald.

“...What is it?”

“As I’ve said, that formation in your hand? It’s nothing but a toy to me. Consider the fact that I murdered all eight of your ‘experts’ as easily as slaughtering chickens. Have you ever thought about what would happen to you if the formation fails to hurt me?” asked Gerald.

“...T-that...” muttered Hoyt with a gulp as his face went deathly pale.

While Gerald simply looked like an ordinary person, the aura he exuded was simply too overpowering...

Chapter 1530

After hearing what Gerald had to say, Hoyt’s nervousness and anxiety instantly peaked. Feeling cold sweat drip down his forehead, he was now having trouble just holding the bead steadily in his hand.

“I advise you to think this through. Know that if you get careless, I’ll make sure to fully dismantle you as you watch your body fall to pieces before the formation even activates... I’m not one to joke around, just in case you were wondering,” replied Gerald.

“...T-that...!” muttered Hoyt as he stared at the carnage that Gerald had left behind, too nervous to even speak anymore.

Both Hoyt’s hands now trembling violently, he watched as Gerald extended his own hand to take the bead off him.

“So... This is the Thunderstorm Formation?” asked Gerald as he carefully observed the bead. True enough, Gerald was able to sense a small formation contained within the bead.

“T-that’s right!” replied Hoyt as he nodded like an idiot.

Following that, both Hoyt and Master Ghost's eyes widened as Gerald tossed the bead up into the air... instantly triggering the formation!

The second it activated, a dark cloud came out of nowhere and quickly began spreading out across the ceiling...

Seconds before the bolt of lightning—that would decimate everything—struck, Gerald flicked his finger as he called out, "Recall!"

And just like that, the dark clouds turned into nothing but smoke before completely disappearing.

"...W-what...?" muttered Hoyt who took two steps back before slumping to the ground.

Master Ghost himself was so terrified that his face had gone as pale as a sheet. Simultaneously, he was also feeling shocked to see how far Gerald had come.

Though he already knew that Gerald was no ordinary mortal, he truly hadn't expected the youth to already possess such terrifying abilities...

Once the fear and shock passed, however, Ghost quickly began feeling overjoyed!

Gerald, on the other hand, displayed a wry smile before saying, "Now do you see that I wasn't kidding? This bead is simply a toy to me!"

"M-master Crawford! P-please, please spare my life...!" pleaded Hoyt as he fell to his knees the second he regained his senses.

After watching Hoyt kowtow repeatedly while begging for mercy, Gerald then asked, "I want you to tell me the coordinates of Yearning Island."

"...Y-Yearning Island? That's my Crawford family's island... It's at..."

Without completing his sentence, Hoyt suddenly raised his head before crushing a jade talisman that he had hidden up his sleeve!

Almost immediately after, a bright light appeared and the tiles beneath Hoyt's feet suddenly began cracking open! And just like that, Hoyt vanished into the crack, successfully making his escape!

Seconds later, several huge stone doors began toppling around them with explosive sounds, completely sealing the place up!

"That cunning man! He actually managed to escape!" exclaimed Master Ghost in a regretful tone.

"There's no need to worry too much, Master Ghost. I've already planted a spell on him, and with any luck, he'll eventually head back to Yearning Island. When that time comes, I'll be able to find the island without too much effort and finally rescue my family!" replied Gerald while shaking his head with a wry smile on his face.

"...Oh? Apologies, I got a little flustered due to how panicked I was... That's right, you're no longer a person to be trifled with, Mr. Crawford... After all, despite Hoyt's strength, he was nothing but an ant before you! Regardless, this place is filled with traps... How are we to get out?"

"Oh, that's simple!" replied Gerald rather indifferently as he waved his hand...

Following that, a golden light shot out, causing the ground to shake so much that the ceiling of the area collapsed, revealing a new opening!

From below, the light from the outside world was so bright that Master Ghost had to momentarily look away to adjust his vision...

Truth be told, Master Ghost was still utterly shocked by how much Gerald's skills and techniques had improved... Turning to look at Gerald, near-incomparable awe and admiration could be seen reflected in Master Ghost's eyes...

Chapter 1531

The reason why Hoyt was able to escape was because Gerald had deliberately let him go.

He originally thought that he would be able to make use of Hoyt so that he could find Yearning Island.

Unexpectedly, Hoyt had actually gone into hiding on his own instead.

Since Hoyt was no longer of any value to him, Gerald would obviously not let him off just let that. At that moment, he activated his spell on the spot in order to kill Hoyt, who was a thousand miles away.

Fortunately, he had already found Master Ghost. So, once Master Ghost had recovered his vitality, Gerald believed that at that time, Master Ghost would be able to determine the direction that Gerald's family was in, then.

Over these past few days, Carlos and the others could not hold back, and they kept coming forth to request for Gerald to set up his own cultivation sect to formally establish his superiority in front of his subordinates.

The difference this time was that this proposal had been directly approved by Master Ghost.

At this moment, even Master Ghost had explained and shown the importance of establishing his own cultivation sect to Gerald.

After all, in the future, he would not only need to face the Crawford family, but he would also need to face many other cultivation forces. It could already be seen directly from the fact where his family members had been captured that Gerald would not be able to personally get everything done on his own no matter how strong he was.

This point struck Gerald directly in his heart.

"It seems as though it is time for me to establish a cultivation sect of my own!"

Gerald looked at the group of people who were looking at him with an eager expression in their eyes before he nodded.

“That’s simply perfect!”

“Hahaha! That’s right! Our presence will be considered justified, and we’ll also be people who belong to a certain organization in the future!”

“In the future, Mr. Crawford will be our magnificent lord! Master Ghost has great foresight, and he could be our magnificent lord’s military advisor!”

Many of the masters present were all extremely excited as they spoke and communicated amongst themselves.

“Greetings to our magnificent lord!”

At this moment, Carlos and Julian led the crowd to shout in unison.

Gerald could not help but smile wryly at this scene.

Master Ghost also said helplessly, “What’s the hurry? Even if you want to set up a sect, you should occupy a region in advance before coming up with a name for our sect, right? Besides, we will also have to inform the Ringmasters of Obliteration about the matter regarding our sect first!”

“That’s right! Our military advisor is right! We do not have a name yet, right?”

“Also, where should our territory be? It could not possibly be in the Sherwin Manor, right? This is downtown!” Someone said.

“Hahaha. I actually have a territory in mind, and that is none other than Sacrasolis Mountain. After the incident this time, the priest was also worried that the Crawford family would return and retaliate. So, he already had the intention of giving Sacrasolis Mountain to us. Therefore, this matter is basically settled!” Master Ghost said.

“This mountain is so huge! It’s definitely possible!”

Everyone laughed out loud.

“As for the name, sir, I’ll have to trouble you to personally determine a name to meet and satisfy these people’s wishes!” Master Ghost said as he bowed slightly.

In truth, even back at Langvern Mountain, Master Ghost had already determined that Gerald would be the person that he would follow in the future.

So, Master Ghost had already been making all the preparations ever since then.

“Sacrasolis Mountain, Sacrasolis Church, and even the power that I first awakened, all happened to be the Sacrasolis almighty power. So, I think that I have some sort of fate with this word. If I were to come up with a name for my sect, I think that I’ll just name it Sacrasolis Palace, then!”

Gerald said after thinking about it.

“Sacrasolis Palace? Master Crawford, no, Magnificent Lord Crawford, that is indeed a good name!”

At this moment, a voice sounded from outside the door.

It was a middle-aged man.

This person was none other than Hubert, who had been staying at the Sherwin Manor after getting saved by Gerald.

“Oh! Mr. Younger, how is your injury?” Gerald asked as he smiled faintly.

Hubert was the captain of a small team from the Dragon Squad in Weston. He could be considered to have already set one foot into the cultivation realm.

## Chapter 1532

It had already been very difficult for him to go even further throughout all these years.

It was probably because he was born into an ordinary mortal life in the first place. However, even though he was not very strong, Gerald also had very high regard for him.

As for Hubert, he was naturally filled with reverence for Gerald.

“My injury has been completely healed after receiving treatment from you, Magnificent Lord. I rushed here as soon as I heard that you called for me!” Hubert said as he bowed slightly.

“Well, I heard Master Ghost telling me that the Dragon Squad has a very systematic underground resource network. So, I would like to ask for your help for a certain matter, Mr. Younger!” Gerald spoke up.

“I owe my life to you, Magnificent Lord. So, please give me any commands you may have!”

Hubert said as he bowed.

“Julian, Carlos...” Gerald looked at these two men.

“Yes, Magnificent Lord!”

“Since the establishment of Sacrasolis Palace has already been determined, I’ll assign the both of you to assign the tasks so that we can complete the establishment of our force within three days. Both of you can go ahead and coordinate these matters on my behalf. There are still some other things I need to do!” Gerald instructed.

Everyone in the hall retreated immediately to get things done.

“Master Ghost has already spoken to me about it. Magnificent Lord, you want to ask me about the whereabouts of Yearning Island, right?” Hubert said.



“That’s right!”

“Yearning Island is very hidden, and there has always been a curse on the people from Yearning Island. None of their clan members are allowed to tell or reveal the location of Yearning Island to anyone at all. Otherwise, they will suffer a violent death directly on the spot!”

“It is also precisely because of this wicked reason that the location of Yearning Island has remained hidden for so many years. No one knows its location, and not even a single person in the cultivation realm knows about the location of Yearning Island at all!” Hubert said.

It was no wonder why Hoyt had dared to risk death just to escape. It was because if he were to mention the location of Yearning Island, he would definitely suffer a horrible death in front of Gerald!

Gerald nodded with some understanding.

“In that case, is there truly no way for us to find Yearning Island, then?” Gerald asked anxiously.

“Not necessarily. I have a magic artifact hidden in the Dragon Squad called the Soul Arch Compass. Back then, my father also had several acquaintances with Master Ghost because of the Soul Arch Compass. With the Soul Arch Compass and Master Ghost’s Nine Dragons Calculation Technique, coupled with the systematic mechanism of the Dragon Squad’s ground network for so many years, I believe that it would not be difficult for us to uncover the location of Yearning Island!” Hubert said.

“Sir, that is precisely the reason why I asked Mr. Younger to come here. If we want to find Yearning Island, we will have to make use of the Soul Arch Compass. I believe that Mr. Younger will have a way!” Master Ghost said to Gerald.

“Okay!”

Gerald nodded.

“Magnificent Lord, in addition, I, Hubert Younger, have a small request. However, I do not know whether I should speak about it or not!” Hubert suddenly lowered his head as he pondered for a moment. After that, he spoke up in a soft voice, almost as though he was still feeling extremely uncertain.

“What is it?” Gerald asked.

“Well, after the battle this time, I realized that the people from the Dragon Squad are indeed a little too weak when facing certain real masters. Yesterday, I heard Master Julian saying that you intend to teach certain techniques and formations to the people in Sacrasolis Palace. We, from the Dragon Squad, are naturally not as talented as Master Julian and the others. However, since you’re well-versed in these formations and techniques, I wonder if you could take the time to teach the members of my Dragon Squad a technique or two? It would certainly be of infinite and great use to us!”

Hubert was particularly eager as he spoke about this.

If Gerald were to teach them, the combat power of the Dragon Squad would certainly be greatly strengthened without limits.

“This...”

Gerald thought about it. Speaking of it, Gerald did indeed have certain techniques and formations that would be suitable for the cultivation of the members of the Dragon Squad.

Naturally, since the Dragon Squad kept one side safe, even if Hubert had not helped Gerald, if Hubert had a request, Gerald would still help if he could do so.

“Okay! I agree to your request!”

Chapter 1533

Since the Soul Arch Compass belonging to the Dragon Squad was so important, Gerald did not dare to delay any longer. After assigning certain specific tasks, Gerald rushed to the Dragon Squad’s base with Master Ghost.

The Dragon Squad base was a base that was located in Tierson Mountain.

Of course, this area of Tierson Mountain was also forbidden to the outside world.

However, anyone who could enter the Dragon Squad base were all first-class masters who had to complete a variety of restricted tasks to ensure the safety of their party.

So, the Dragon Squad was naturally known as the hidden dragons of Weston.

It was under the direct control of Weston.

“Hubert Younger, are you insane?! How dare you bring such an immature and inexperienced young brat to the Dragon Squad base? That is already bad enough, but you even dared to recommend him to become an instructor at our base?!”

In the chief captain, Team Leader Lock’s office.

As Hubert was excitedly talking about this matter, the other captains felt incredulous.

Even Yeshua was a little surprised.

Yeshua was about sixty years old. He had a head full of white hair, but there was also a burst of energy and vitality in his gestures.

It was obvious that this person was extremely extraordinary.

As the chief captain, he naturally had his own calm and steady aura. He was simply listening quietly at the side as his sub-captains argued over this matter.

The person who had refuted Hubert directly was the sub-captain of the first division, Burnard Jole, who was over forty years old.

What was worth mentioning was the fact that he was the three hundred and sixty eighth-generation heir of the iron palm. It was rumored that one of his iron palms could easily penetrate a rock!

However, the remaining sub-captains did not have this kind of quality.

Who would not know that the first sub-team, the Jole team, and the second sub-team, the Younger team, were extremely difficult to deal with? So, no one dared to interrupt when the both of them were engaged in an argument.

“Burnard Jole, what’s your hurry? The reason I’m doing this is for the sake of the entire Dragon Squad! Mr. Crawford has extraordinary strength and abilities that are far beyond our imagination! He is only willing to impart some of his techniques to us because I worked hard for it! Team Leader Lock, you know me very well. I would never do anything unreliable!” Hubert said.

Yeshua could not help but nod gently. It was indeed true. Hubert was an extremely stable person, and he trusted him a great deal.

If Hubert said that the man named Gerald Crawford was so powerful, Yeshua could only presume that Gerald Crawford was indeed exceptional, then.

“Alright, then. Since you highly recommend him, I think we can give it a go. In addition to what you have just mentioned, what other conditions does he have, Hubert?” Yeshua could not help but ask.

“Oh! Mr. Crawford simply wants to borrow and use the Soul Arch Compass!” Hubert said.

As soon as he heard this, Burnard raised his brows.

At this moment, he said coldly, “Pfft! Who does he think he is?! He actually wants to use the Soul Arch Compass?! The Soul Arch Compass is a magic artifact belonging to the Dragon Squad! Can anyone simply use it whenever they want to? Are there no longer any rules in this place?!”

“Burnard Jole, don’t go too far. The reason why I invited Mr. Crawford here is because I was thinking about the overall strength and future of the Dragon Squad!”

When he saw that the both of them were about to start arguing again, Yeshua hurriedly stopped them as he said, “Okay, that’s enough. Why don’t we do this, then? We can put the matter related to the Soul Arch Compass aside for the time being. Let’s see what this Mr. Crawford that you’ve brought here can offer to the Dragon Squad first!”

Yeshua was obviously not someone who would allow something to go completely unchecked. To be honest, he felt that Hubert was exaggerating by describing a young man in his twenties to have such extraordinary and supernatural abilities!

Yeshua only believed in Hubert’s words slightly because he was giving Hubert face.

“Alright. It’s decided, then. You guys can withdraw first!” Yeshua said as he waved his hands.

“What?! Team Leader Lock, you’re not going to see Mr. Crawford even though he is already here?” Hubert asked in surprise.

At this moment, Yeshua frowned a little.

As for Burnard, he took advantage of the situation as he said coldly, “Hubert Younger, you must have hit your head and lost your mind during the mission this time, right? You’re actually asking Team Leader Lock to go and meet with a young lad?!”

“But!”

Chapter 1534

Hubert was anxious.

“Alright, that’s enough. I’m tired. You guys can leave first.”

Yeshua turned his back around as he raised his hand to give them the order to leave.

What Burnard had said was right. Hubert was actually asking him to go and meet this young kid? That was indeed a joke!

At the same time, Yeshua also felt slightly dissatisfied with Hubert. It seemed as though Hubert was acting a little too frivolously at this point, and that was the reason why he did not want to continue talking to him anymore.

Hubert could only nod as he glanced coldly at Burnard before retreating directly.

Burnard also left the office quickly.

“Captain Jole, do you think that this guy named Gerald Crawford is actually a helper that Hubert has hired? After all, the election for the vice chief captain of the Dragon Squad will be coming up soon. Perhaps Hubert knows that he’s not your opponent at all, and that is the reason why he called him here?”

Burnard’s deputy asked in a low voice at a secluded place at this time.

“Pfft! Who cares about who Gerald Crawford is? So, what could Hubert possibly do even if he invites him here? Do you think Hubert could even be my opponent?! Let me tell you something. I’ll not pay any attention to him at all! In contrast, what worries me even more is the Soul Arch Compass! Did you hear what Hubert said just now?” Burnard frowned as he spoke softly with his hands behind his back.

“You’ll be gaining the controlling rights of the Soul Arch Compass soon, but Hubert just had to find someone to come asking for the Soul Arch Compass at this time. I feel that there must be some hidden intentions and motives behind this!” The deputy said.

“That’s right. So, we have to get rid of all our obstacles. I, Burnard Jole, will turn anyone who dares to stand in my way into a corpse directly on the spot! Hmph!”

At this moment, Burnard beckoned his deputy to his side as he whispered a few instructions into his ear.

After that, the deputy nodded before he retreated immediately to get things done, leaving behind Burnard, who had a ruthless expression on his face.

As for Gerald, after he had arrived with Master Ghost, they were immediately brought to a reception room.

Gerald had initially thought that he would be able to meet with the leader of the Dragon Squad, Team Leader Yeshua Lock, very soon.

Unexpectedly, as they waited, one hour had already passed by.

At this time, Hubert walked in with an apologetic look on his face.

“Sigh. I’m truly sorry, Mr. Crawford...” Hubert sighed as he shook his head.

“I’m guessing Team Leader Lock did not directly agree to the matter regarding the Soul Arch Compass, right?” Master Ghost said as he smiled and shook his head.

“Cough, cough. Well, there is truly nothing I can hide from you, Master Ghost. That’s right. This was originally supposed to be a very easy matter. The chief captain would never refuse this kind of request from me. Yet, I do not know what happened to the chief captain, and he seemed to be a little unhappy, choosing to listen to that Burnard Jole instead!” Hubert said as he hammered his fist on the table in anger.

“Master Ghost already told me about this end result just now. So, Mr. Younger, you do not need to blame yourself too much. I think that it’s simply because Team Leader Lock does not believe in my strength. So, why don’t you help me gather some of the students for the trial training in the afternoon? I will help you conduct a trial training first!” Gerald said as he laughed.

Master Ghost had given Gerald a lot of advice in many matters.

The other party’s intention was already very obvious. He wanted to see Gerald’s ability and strength for himself.

Since that was the case, Gerald did not mind exposing his abilities.

“Okay. It’d be best as long as you’re not angry, Mr. Crawford. Why don’t we do this, then? Since it is already noon, we can just eat at the base first. I’ll gather all the students immediately after we’re done eating. I’ll send someone to deliver the food here!” Hubert said as he smiled.

“I don’t think that it is necessary for you to go through so much trouble. I’ve only heard of the Dragon Squad before, but I’ve never seen the Dragon Squad’s base for myself. So, since I have the opportunity to look around and see what the Dragon Squad’s base in Weston is like, we could just head to the cafeteria in the base to have our lunch there, right? I wonder if it would be convenient for you, Mr. Younger?”

Master Ghost asked as he smiled mysteriously at this time.

“Ah? Yes, it would be convenient for me. After all, Mr. Crawford will be a chief instructor at our base in the future. So, I can also introduce some of the facilities at the Dragon Squad base to Mr. Crawford and Master Ghost along the way!” Hubert said as he smiled.

Gerald did not know what Master Ghost was up to this time, but since Master Ghost wanted to take a look around the Dragon Squad base, he certainly had his own reasons for doing so.

So, the three of them began walking toward the cafeteria in the Dragon Squad base...

Chapter 1535

At this moment, in the cafeteria.

There was a member who had bruises all over his hands, trembling as he held a tray with both hands. He had just sat down at one of the seats.

“Hey! Who told you that you could sit down? Brother Yareth does not have any fruits yet. Hurry up and get some fruits for Brother Yareth now!”

Several young people who were sitting nearby spoke coldly to this young man.



All of these young people had an arrogant and domineering look on their faces, and they were obviously making fun of this young man.

Amongst these several young people, it was obvious that the person sitting in the center of the crowd was none other than Brother Yareth. At this moment, he simply narrowed his eyes, and he had a playful smile on his face as he witnessed the scene before him.

“Okay! I’ll go and get it now!”

The young man bit his lip slightly. It was clear that this was very humiliating for him, but he stood up anyway as he went to get some fruits before placing them beside Yareth.

As soon as he sat down again, the young man at the side just now shouted again, “What kind of fruits did you bring here?! Change it to a smaller one! Hurry up!”

The young man sneered.

As soon as he was done speaking, the few people around him could not help but cover their mouths to stifle their laughter.

Finally, that young man could not stand it anymore.

“Finnick Mackrill, have you guys had enough?! All of us are trial members of the Dragon Squad. So, why do I have to listen to all of your commands and demands?!”

The young man slammed his hands on the table.

“You’re yelling? You actually dare to talk back?! It seems as though the lessons we have given you are not enough!”

After he was done speaking, Finnick swept all of the apples on the table, and it hit the rice plate in the young man's hand directly.

There was a loud crashing sound, and the rice plate smashed and scattered all over the ground.

"You!"

The blue veins were raging on the young man's forehead.

He clenched his fists tightly, but he swallowed his rage and anger anyway.

"He's such a bully! I heard that when this kid first joined the team, he worked very hard, and he even surpassed Yareth Jole in one of the tests. In the end, he ended up in this state after getting bullied and humiliated by Yareth Jole's people every day. Just look at all of the scars on his body!"

"Sigh! What else can be done? How could he possibly have a good life after getting targeted by Yareth Jole? I believe this kid will not be able to continue staying in the Dragon Squad training team for long."

"Speaking of it, Yareth Jole has a very strong background, right? He is not only very strong and powerful, but he also comes from a very strong background!"

"That is only natural. Why don't you think about it? Yareth Jole's last name is Jole, and the last name of the captain of the Jole team is also Jole. I think that the captain of the Jole team is his biological uncle. Besides, I've also heard people saying that the Dragon Squad chief captain's granddaughter seems to have a very strong interest in Yareth Jole!"

"F\*ck! No wonder no one dares to say anything at all even though this kid is being bullied like this!"

Everyone could only keep quiet out of fear.

At this moment, they could only join in the fun as they watched the young man, who was getting bullied and humiliated at this time.

On the contrary, Yareth simply narrowed his eyes slightly as he continued eating his meal without rushing at all.

Meanwhile, Finnick walked toward the young man relentlessly.

“Hahaha! What’s the matter? You’re not convinced?”

Finnick sneered before he crushed and stepped on the rice under his feet.

After that, he grabbed a handful of the dirty rice before he brought it directly in front of the young man.

“Kid! You do not know your own place and you actually dared to overtake our boss? There will be no good rice for you today, and you can only eat this! I want you to pick it up and eat it now!” Finnick said viciously.

The young man’s face flushed red.

Boom!

Before the young man could even react, he had already received another blow from another one of Yareth’s henchmen, and he fell to the ground directly.

Finnick grabbed hold of the young man’s hair immediately before he began stuffing the rice into this young man’s mouth.

“He’s too ruthless!”

The other people at the scene stood up out of shock at this time, but no one dared to say anything.

“Ai... Aiden?!”

However, at this moment, a somewhat trembling voice sounded from the doorway.

Who else could this person be if it was not Gerald?

Earlier, when Gerald, Master Ghost, and Hubert had walked in, they had happened to witness this scene that was unfolding in front of them.

When Hubert saw that the trial members were fighting, he was about to step in and take action.

However, he could suddenly feel a very cold intent coming from Gerald, and he was so terrified that he could only swallow his words.

Emotional. It seemed as though this person was acquainted with Mr. Crawford?

As for Gerald, his eyes were flashing red at this time.

The young man who was getting beaten up was none other than his good brother, Aiden.

Chapter 1536

If he had not gotten a clear look, Aiden, who was seriously scarred, would be almost unrecognizable.

“Hmph? So, it turns out to be Captain Younger?”

At this moment, when Finnick and the others saw Hubert coming in, they stopped whatever they were doing because they were giving him a little face.

“Mr... Mr. Crawford?”

As for Aiden, who was lying on the ground, his whole body shook violently as soon as he saw Gerald.

In an instant, his tears of grievance began pouring out like a flood that had broken through a damn.

“Mr. Crawford!”

Aiden cried as he yelled out loud.

“Aiden! Hurry up and stand up!”

Gerald hurriedly ran over to help Aiden up.

To be honest, if he was at any other location, he would have already disembodied all of these people. However, since Hubert was here, Gerald believed that Hubert would certainly give justice to his brother.

Of course, this matter would not end just like that regardless of whether justice was served or not.

This was Gerald’s character now. No matter who was right or wrong, and regardless of the other party’s identity, as long as anyone dared to touch his brother, the other party would have to pay a painful price as a consequence of his action, even if his brother was the one at fault.

When Hubert saw that Aiden seemed to have a close relationship with Gerald, he was also very angry.

At this time, he hurriedly reprimanded Finnick and the others.

However, Finnick and the others were not afraid of Hubert at all.

“Hahaha! Captain Younger, you have no right to lecture us. If you have the ability to do so, you should go and look for Captain Jole! We will only listen to Captain Jole! Besides, it is also none of your business even if we decide to teach a kid from our trial team a lesson!” Finnick said as he sneered.

The person backing them up was of course none other than Yareth, and there was no need to mention the identity of the person backing Yareth up.

At this moment, Hubert was so angry that he could not say anything else.

Master Ghost hurriedly supported Aiden, and he wanted to let Aiden sit down and rest.

Unexpectedly, Finnick glanced at his buddies who were behind him.

At this time, a young man quickly took the lead as he ran to the seat where Aiden was about to sit.

“Sorry! This seat is occupied!”

After he said those words, a group of people began snickering.

“You guys...”

Master Ghost’s eyes were filled with rage.

Nevertheless, Master Ghost supported Aiden as he brought him to another spot to sit down.

Just as he was about to sit down...

“Sorry! There’s someone sitting here too!”

Another young man said as he grabbed the seat.

Gerald frowned slightly.

At this moment, he looked at Yareth, who was sitting at the side without doing anything as he continued eating his meal calmly, and he instantly understood what was going on.

“I really never imagined that this is how the people from the Dragon Squad base are!”

After supporting Aiden to a few seats which were quickly occupied and taken by these people first, one after the other, Master Ghost spoke up angrily.

At that moment, he decided to support Aiden and bring him to a seat that was located near the door instead.

As for Finnick, he laughed slightly as he placed both of his hands in his pockets.

At this moment, he hurriedly ran over...

“Sorry, but...”

Slap!

As soon as Finnick opened his mouth after he grabbed the seat from Aiden, he was slapped directly on his face.

Ouch!

Finnick flew out sideways directly, smashing down a dozen tables, one after the other.

A mouthful of his teeth also scattered all over the ground, and half of his face was smashed in.

It was obvious that this slap had already deformed his face completely.

The person who had slapped him was none other than Gerald.

Gerald had one hand in his pocket as he patted the dust off his body with his other hand. After that, he looked at the audience who were all stunned as he said, "Sorry, but my hand was feeling a little itchy just now!"

Chapter 1537

"Who are you?!"

One of the young men rushed over directly as he questioned Gerald because he was instantly angered when he saw Gerald giving Finnick such a hard blow.

As for Yareth, who had been squinting his eyes all this while, he finally opened his eyes at this moment as he looked at Gerald.

"This is my brother. How are we going to settle this score since you guys actually dared to bully my brother? So, who did it just now?!" Gerald asked in a cold voice.

"Pfft! You brat! Who do you think you are? I did! So, what are you going to do about it?" A young man said.

"D\*mn! I did it too!"

At this moment, about a dozen young men stood in front of Gerald.

All of them had their hands crossed in front of their chest, and some of them had even picked up their weapons.

It seemed as though they were trying to deter Gerald with their aura.

"Is that so? It seems as though you guys have no intention of repenting at all, huh?" Gerald said with an indifferent smile on his face.



“Hahaha! Repent? If you have the guts, you can deal with a dozen of us. Otherwise, we will have to take action against you and avenge our brother!” One of the young men stood and spoke up as he laughed.

What a joke! Why didn't this kid take a look around him and see whose territory this was?

Who would not know that the Jole family and the Lock family actually had a very big reputation and background in the Dragon Squad?

This kid actually dared to provoke someone who was obviously more superior compared to him in terms of power or strength?

“Avenge your brother? How are you planning to do that?” Gerald asked as he smiled coldly.

“It's very simple. We will simply remove all four of your limbs and knock out all the teeth in your mouth! Of course, you can fight back too as long as you're sure that you can handle a dozen of us!”

The young men sneered as they closed in on Gerald.

“Alright, then. Since all of you have taken action, I do not mind even if all of you end up in the same state as him!”

As soon as his voice fell, all of the young men rushed forward like a pack of wolves to attack Gerald.

As for Gerald, he did not hold back at all.

At this moment, he transformed into a shadow directly, and he transformed amidst the group of people.

Slap! Slap! Slap! Slap! Slap!

The deafening sound of slaps resounded throughout the cafeteria.

Immediately after, there was a burst of screams that sounded like pigs getting slaughtered.

Very soon, these people were all looking for their teeth all over the ground.

After all, Gerald had only had to take a few short breaths from the moment he had started hitting them until he was done dealing with them.

At this moment, everyone was dumbfounded at the scene before them.

Even Hubert swallowed his saliva with a gulp.

Too ruthless. He was truly too ruthless!

As for Yareth, he finally opened his eyes completely, as the scene before him made him feel utterly incredulous.

Who the hell was this person?

Why was he so powerful?!

Cold sweat began flowing out from his forehead, and his legs also began trembling uncontrollably at this time.

He was too strong and powerful!

What was even more terrifying was that at this time, Gerald actually slowly walked over to Yareth.

“You’re their leader?” Gerald asked indifferently.

“No... no!”

Yareth subconsciously shook his head.

Slap!

Gerald raised his hand as he slapped Yareth across his face.

“Aren’t you the Young Master Jole they were talking about?” Gerald asked coldly.

“Yes, yes, yes!”

Yareth nodded immediately.

“How about my brother, then?” Gerald asked as he looked at Yareth.

“All of us will get along and live peacefully together in the future!”

Chapter 1538

Yareth felt truly disgraced, and he was utterly humiliated today.

This was because the eyes of the crowd were all looking at him, hoping that he would make a move and fight back against this strong man.

Unexpectedly, he had actually conceded all at once.

This was indeed way too painful for Yareth.

However, there was no other way. After all, he did not want his teeth to be scattered all over the ground.

“I’m not talking about that. It seems as though you have bullied my brother a lot. So, how are you going to make it up to my brother now? If you don’t, I’ll abolish you on the spot, regardless of who you are or what your background is!” Gerald said as he stared coldly at him.

This made Yareth break out in cold sweat all over his body.

“Brother, why don’t we just forget it?”

As for Aiden, he knew about Yareth’s background very well. So, he could not help but speak up as he walked toward Gerald’s side.

Gerald simply patted Aiden’s shoulder before he laughed slightly.

“Aiden, have you forgotten? Do you remember that you were the one who told me that you would make sure that people would have to pay back a thousand times more as long as anyone offended you? You told me not to be afraid of those people because you guys would always have my back! Do you still remember saying those words?” Gerald asked.

“Of course I remember that!”

Aiden bit his lip slightly.

“Yoel is my brother, and you’re also my brother. The both of you lost your family and everything that you had because of me back then. I’ll always remember your loyalty and love for me. I also swore that I would never allow the people around me to get hurt again. So, Aiden, you don’t have to worry about anything because I’ve got your back!” Gerald told him.

Aiden nodded heavily when he heard this.

“So, he has to pay the price and consequences for his actions today!”

“I’ll give you two options now. Your first option is that I’ll abolish you and turn you into a cripple today. Your second option is to crawl under my brother’s crotch in front of me. In the future, you’ll also have to refer to my brother as your master when you see him! If you do not do that, I’ll kill you the next time I see you!” Gerald spoke up as he stared directly at Yareth.

“What? You want me to suffer the humiliation of crawling under his crotch?!”

Yareth’s eyes turned red in an instant.

He really, really wished that his uncle was by his side right now.

Yareth was simply extremely ashamed and utterly humiliated when he saw that everyone was staring at him at this time.

“I... I’m the three-hundred-and-fifty-seventh-generation heir of the Promissory Sect. I... I cannot crawl...!” Yareth pleaded.

Boom!

As soon as he was done speaking, Gerald grabbed his head and pressed him directly to the ground.

He was utterly defenseless, and his face hit the ground heavily.

His whole face was covered in blood in an instant.

Gerald continued stepping on his head as he said, “Now, I not only want you to crawl under my brother’s crotch, but I also want you to call him your master as you crawl under his crotch! If you cannot do it, I’ll destroy you right now!”

Gerald increased his strength slightly.

“Ahhh!” Yareth screamed out in terror.

“I... I’ll do it! I’ll do it! Don’t do anything to me!”

Yareth clenched his fists tightly, and his sharp nails sank deep into his palms because of the strong force. He felt a strong burst of pain because of that.

This moment was just too painful for him.

In the past, he had always been the one who was treating others like this. However, he never would have expected that he would actually be the one getting humiliated here today.

Moreover, the person in front of him did not seem to care at all even though he had already mentioned the Promissory Sect.

“I’ll crawl!”

Yareth crawled up from the ground with much difficulty.

As for Aiden, he felt as though justice had finally been restored for him. Yareth had been bullying him so much all this while, and now that things had already come to this state, Aiden could finally trample all over Yareth’s head at this time.

At this moment, Yareth slowly crawled toward Aiden’s crotch.

He was moving very slowly, and he was even crying out loud in his heart.

‘Uncle! Hurry up and come! I’ve already sent a report to you! Hurry up and come here!’

'If you don't come now, your nephew will suffer and get humiliated now! In that case, you'll not be able to face others in the future!'

'Besides, if word about this matter were to reach Fia Lock's ears, I'll not be able to become the grandson-in-law of the Lock family, then.'

'At that time, your plan will be a complete loss!'

'Uncle, hurry up and come!'

Yareth cried out loud in his heart.

And just as he was lowering his head to start crawling under...

"Captain Younger, the helper that you've hired this time seems to be really domineering, right? I'd honestly like to see how incredible and powerful your so-called Mr. Crawford is!"

At this moment, a voice that carried a hint of ridicule sounded from the door.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

There was a rush of footsteps.

After that, a large number of masters poured into the cafeteria as they surrounded Gerald and the others completely.

Their leader, Burnard, walked in coldly with his hands behind his back...

Chapter 1539

“I think this friend of yours here is the Mr. Gerald Crawford that Captain Younger has invited here to become the chief instructor, right?”

Burnard said with his hands behind his back as he sneered while looking at Gerald.

“That’s right!”

Gerald nodded.

“Hahaha! It seems as though we really should not judge a book by its cover! I never would have imagined that you’d actually possess this kind of strength at such a young age. That is indeed admirable!”

“But I’ve often heard people saying that a person would often overestimate themselves when they have greater strength and abilities. I did not take good care of your brother when he was training with us. However, you cannot push all the blame entirely onto my nephew, Yareth. If you want to blame someone, you should also blame your brother for not knowing his own place! Hahaha!”

Burnard continued laughing as he waved his hand.

When Yareth saw that, he immediately got up from the ground and ran behind Burnard.

“Uncle, if you did not come in time, I’d have been...” Yareth hurriedly said fearfully.

“Alright, that’s enough. You don’t need to say anything else. I’m already here!” Burnard said as he patted Yareth on his shoulder.

At the same time, he glanced at Yareth, signaling for him to prepare to watch a good show!

As for Yareth, he obviously knew the nature of his uncle’s heart and character very well.



Since he had already been so badly insulted and humiliated, how could his uncle possibly let it go just like that?

At this time, his uncle was simply using his words to make sure that the other party named Gerald Crawford would be completely speechless and dumbfounded. When the other party was completely at a loss for words, his uncle would then take advantage of the opportunity to launch an attack to eradicate this group of people with the help of the Dragon Squad.

Hahaha! This was not the first time his uncle had used this tactic.

At this moment, Yareth simply nodded gently as he looked at Gerald and his group from the side as he sneered.

Burnard acted as if nothing was wrong before he continued speaking as he looked at Gerald.

“Mr. Crawford, look. In the final analysis, it was a dozen of them who had bullied your brother alone. But look what you’ve done now? You single-handedly abolished a dozen of the Dragon Squad’s talented new blood. They were supposed to be the future pillar of the Dragon Squad, but because of your selfishness, you have abolished the entire hope and future of the Dragon Squad. Don’t you think that you’ve gone overboard this time?”

Burnard was not speaking from his own point of view, but he was using the Dragon Squad as an excuse and defense.

As for Hubert, he had already long-expected Burnard’s set up.

He wanted to refute his words at this time, but he truly could not find any reasons to refute his words at all. Indeed, if he were to think about it that way, Mr. Crawford had been a little too ruthless.

What Hubert was afraid of was that Burnard would continue using the Dragon Squad as an excuse to sow discord and drive a wedge between these people.

Hubert was very anxious at this time.

“Moreover, Mr. Crawford, we naturally have our own requirements and rules at the Dragon Squad base. If your brother was humiliated, there is naturally a special place for us to deal with it. You dealt with these people so ruthlessly at the Dragon Squad base. So, does that mean that you do not have any form of respect for the Dragon Squad base at all?” Burnard continued sniping.

“That’s right! Uncle is right! What did you think of the Dragon Squad base? What did you think this place is? Did you really think that you could do whatever you want to do here? You’re simply lawless!” Yareth said coldly as he sneered.

As soon as he was done speaking, he looked at his uncle and smiled with a smug look on his face.

The both of them were smiling, and there was a hint of ridicule at the corners of their mouth.

It was obvious that they wanted to force Gerald into a desperate situation so that they could use the Dragon Squad to eradicate him.

“You’ve done him harm!”

As Gerald was faced with Burnard, who was intentionally trying to make things difficult for him, Gerald simply raised his hand and spoke to Burnard as he pointed at Yareth.

“What? What do you mean by that?” Burnard asked as he frowned slightly.

“I gave him two options just now, and one of them was a way for him to live. The way for him to live was that he simply needed to crawl under my brother’s crotch! Otherwise, I would have to kill him and let him suffer a miserable death!” Gerald said indifferently.

“But just now, he ignored my words completely. Just when he could have crawled under my brother’s crotch and be safe and sound, he chose to give up on this chance to live!”

Gerald shook his head helplessly.

These words made Yareth swallow a mouthful of saliva wildly.

As for Burnard, his eyelids twitched fiercely at this time.

“Mr. Crawford, you did not seem to have heard my words clearly just now, did you? I did not mean this at all...”

A hint of ruthlessness flashed through Burnard’s eyes in an instant.

“Regardless of whether I heard you clearly or not, it’s already too late now. Did you really think that you would be able to trick me and make me feel morally inclined to give in just because you said a few words? Or did you honestly think that you’re that wise or intelligent?”

“Hahaha! Unfortunately, I’ve already seen countless people just like you! And I, Gerald Crawford, have always had a habit of keeping my words! So, if I said that I’m going to kill someone, that person will have to die!”

Gerald sneered.

At that moment, Gerald pinched his sword finger.

In an instant, a golden glow instantly enveloped him.

Whoosh!

The space in front of him seemed to be surging.

Chapter 1540

As soon as the golden light shot out, it pierced right through Yareth's neck in an instant, like the blade of a knife.

Yareth's eyes were wide open, but not long after that, he fell to the ground instantly.

"Yareth!!!"

Burnard's eyes widened in shock.

His eye sockets instantly turned red.

This was because he had no way to block or stop that powerful blow just now at all.

"You killed my nephew!!!" Burnard roared angrily.

"You killed him when he only committed a slight transgression!"

Burnard never would have imagined that this person standing in front of him would actually be so ruthless.

"I had already said it very clearly. He obviously did not need to die just now. All that he had to do was crawl, but you were the one who asked him to stand up. So, he had to pay the price for his actions and decision!" Gerald said indifferently.

"You b\*stard! Don't you have any respect for the Promissory Sect at all?!"

Burnard was completely heartbroken and distressed.

Everyone else also swallowed their saliva in horror.

“The Promissory Sect? I’ve never heard of it before!” Gerald shook his head as he laughed bitterly.

“You b\*stard! I’m going to fight it out with you!”

At that moment, Burnard was filled with a murderous aura as he rushed directly toward Gerald...

At the same time, at the headquarters office at the base.

“Team Leader Lock! It’s not good! Something terrible has happened!”

An instructor rushed in directly.

“Hm? What is it? Why are you so flustered?”

Team Leader Lock frowned immediately, as he was practicing his writing at this time.

“There is a fight going on in the cafeteria!”

“What’s the big deal? Send someone there to deal with it immediately, then!” Team Leader Lock said helplessly.

“No! No! It’s Yareth Jole who got into a fight with the new chief instructor, Mr. Crawford. As a result, Yareth provoked Mr. Crawford, and he ended up getting beheaded directly by Mr. Crawford!”

“And now, Captain Jole has already started making his move on Mr. Crawford!”

“What?!”

The pen in his hand fell to the ground in an instant.

Team Leader Lock then asked, "By the way, who is this Mr. Crawford you're talking about?"

"It's the young instructor that Captain Younger invited to come over!"

"Hurry up! We'll go over there to take a look!"

As he spoke, Team Leader Lock had already led his men over there.

They only saw many people surrounding the scene outside.

However, what was surprising was the fact that everyone had already stopped talking at this time, and the scene was so quiet and silent that it was absolutely terrifying.

As for the Third Team Leader, he was also standing aside, and they did not know what he had seen, but he was completely dumbfounded at this time.

It felt as though he had turned silly from the shock.

"Third Team Leader, how is the situation here?" Team Leader Lock asked coldly.

"Chakra King!"

Third Team Leader said with a blank expression on his face.

"What did you say?" Team Leader Lock asked again in a low voice.

"The Rune Realm which is above the cultivation realm! Oh, my God! I actually saw a Chakra King for myself today!" Third Team Leader was about to cry out of excitement.

“What did you say? Chakra King?!”

When Team Leader Lock heard his words clearly, his eyes widened for a moment, and his whole body began trembling and shaking violently!!!

Chapter 1541

“...What? Are you saying that Gerald’s already arrived at the Rune Realm?” asked the bewildered Yeshua as he began trembling all over.

“That’s right! His strength knows no boundaries! You know, it barely took Gerald a single hit to smash Burnard into pieces! What a terrible way to die... Regardless, Gerald’s currently so strong that he’s probably no longer afraid of any of the challenges he has to face!” replied the third team leader while quivering in fear.

“...To think that such a powerful person was in Weston... Since it’s come to this, I’m feeling rather motivated now! After all, it’d be an honor if he ends up agreeing to be our chief coach!” declared Yeshua in a now composed tone.

Yeshua was no longer taking Burnard’s death to heart. After all, nothing in the world was more important than the fact that someone had actually managed to enter the Rune Realm!

Just as he was thinking that, the corner of Yeshua’s eyes caught a glimpse of Gerald—who had both hands in his pockets—slowly exiting the crowd.

With that, Yesha quickly walked over to him, bowing slightly before he said, “I’ve treated you way too discourteously earlier, Mr. Crawford! Please, forgive me!”

“No worries, Mr. Lock! I don’t take it personally at all!” replied Gerald with a subtle smile.

Quite honestly, Gerald felt little remorse for killing Burnard and his nephew. After all, both of them had acted pretty insensibly.

“Thank you, Mr. Crawford! Speaking of which, I heard Hubert say that you wished to borrow our Soul Arch Compass! Truth be told, we don’t normally even reveal it to others unless we first receive orders to do so from higher authorities. After all, the compass is the Dragon Squad’s most invaluable treasure. However, since you’re an extraordinary person, we’ll certainly allow you to use it!” said Yeshua extremely courteously.

If Mr. Crawford truly was a person who managed to enter the Rune Realm, then he was undoubtedly a rare specimen on this planet. Should Mr. Lock manage to get acquainted with him, it’d surely end up greatly boosting both the Dragon Squad’s strength as well as its international name! With that in mind, the experienced and astute Yeshua definitely didn’t have a problem with any of this.

“I’m well aware. However, the Soul Arch Compass is equally as important to us, which is why I resorted to coming over in the first place!” replied Gerald.

Following that, Gerald allowed Master Ghost to follow Yeshua’s men into their base to use the Soul Arch Compass.

It didn’t take long before Master Ghost was able to learn about some mysteries as well as the location of Yearning Island.

Around that time, Yeshua suddenly began coughing rather badly, eventually even vomiting some blood!

Even so, Yeshua looked like he was used to this, and simply shook his head with a bitter smile before explaining, “Apologies, Mr. Crawford! It’s rather embarrassing that you had to see that... It’s just the result of an old illness of mine!”

“From what I can see, you’ve been training your martial arts skills in a way that doesn’t conform to how regular martial arts are honed. Aside from that, I can also sense that you’ve been training your inner skills for over fifty years. With that in mind, it’s no wonder why you’re suffering from internal injuries,” replied Gerald with a faint smile.

Upon hearing Gerald’s deduction, the shocked Yeshua couldn’t help but widen his eyes as he said, “I have to say, you truly are an extraordinary person, sir! As you’ve said, I’ve trained this set of inner skills ever since I was twelve, making it well over fifty years since I’ve started my training! Alas, even after training for so long, I find myself unable to even attain entry to the Silver Realm! Regardless, my



ancestors were the ones who had created this set of martial arts skills, and it's been passed down to all subsequent generations of the Lock family. Even so, I do wonder why you said that these martial arts skills don't conform to how regular martial arts are honed..."

Yeshua was honestly surprised by Gerald's claim since he had been quite confident of his family's martial arts skills from the very beginning.

"Well, it really doesn't. With that said, I'd like to momentarily stay within the Dragon Squad in order to teach you a formation, though know that it'll take some time. In return, if it isn't too inconvenient, I'd like you to show me more of your family's inner skills and mental training techniques for observation purposes. If you do so, I'll also help cure your injuries!" proposed Gerald.

"...Oh? I'd appreciate that, Mr. Crawford!"

Following Yeshua's agreement, Gerald easily cured all his past wounds, and this surprised Yeshua yet again.

After all, not only did Mr. Crawford exhibit exceptional medical skills, but his great mastery over internal skills was also incomparable to what ordinary people could ever hope to achieve.

What more, Gerald even pointed out fifteen faults to his family's training techniques. Naturally, after performing them the way Gerald suggested, the results were nothing short of miraculous.

Due to that, Yeshua now revered Gerald greatly...

## Chapter 1542

"Mr. Crawford, the fact that you've even managed to enter the Rune Realm realm at your age is immensely admirable! With that said, I do hope you could tell me what rank you currently are within that realm...?" asked Yeshua.

"Truth be told, I'm not too sure about that either. However, I do remember one of my subordinates telling me that I needed the Sceolium of the Ringmaster of Obliteration to check for my rank," replied Gerald.

“Ah, the Dragon Squad always has Sceolium with us. If you’re wondering how it’s used to determine one’s rank, it essentially detects the contents of a person’s essential qi. With that information, one will be able to ascertain what rank they truly are. With that said, why don’t you give it a try, Mr. Crawford?” asked Yeshua who almost seemed overly keen on pleasing Gerald despite having fulfilled all of Gerald’s previous requests.

Following Gerald’s approval, Yeshua then walked over to a bookshelf—in his office—before flipping on a hidden switch behind it. A second later, a mechanism could be heard ‘clinking’ as the bookshelf slowly swung open... revealing an ancient—and rather simple-looking—Sceolium.

“Please place both your hands on it, Mr. Crawford. Following that, I’d like you to direct your essential qi into the stone. With that done, we’ll be able to find out what specific rank you’re currently at!” explained Yeshua who was honestly eager to find out as well.

“Very well,” replied Gerald who was just as eager to finally know how strong he truly was.

After doing as he was instructed, noticeable changes could be seen on the Sceolium. Before long, the results were revealed...

“...You... You’ve already entered the Third-rank Rune Realm...!” exclaimed Yeshua whose mouth was now agape with shock.

‘By god! He’s only in his twenties, no?! What a miracle!’ Yeshua thought to himself.

Quite honestly, Yeshua had been skeptical when the Third team leader told him that Gerald had managed to ascend into the Rune Realm. Now, however, he had zero doubts about it.

No wonder Gerald barely had any trouble killing those masters!

From what Yeshua knew, many Ninth-rank masters found it hard to ever proceed beyond that rank, even after training their entire lives. In other words, being able to enter the Rune Realm was already leagues beyond what a Ninth-rank master could ever hope to achieve!

“I keep hearing people talk about this ‘Rune Realm’ ... How much do you know about it, Team Leader Lock?” asked Gerald.

“...Well... From what I’ve heard, the only ones who have managed to enter that realm are people who’ve lived for over a thousand years! What more, only very few have managed to enter the Rune Realm, and you’re now among those people, Mr. Crawford!” replied Yeshua, filled with even more admiration than before.

Upon hearing that, Gerald frowned as he fell deep into thought. If what Yeshua was saying was true, then did that mean that Finnley—his master—and his grandfather had already entered the Rune Realm? If that truly was the case, then it would explain a lot.

After all, while Gerald already knew that Finnley had terrifying strength—that Gerald wasn’t even able to measure at the time—, he now realized that he hadn’t doubted his grandfather’s true strength when they were still together. Being able to conceal his true strength so perfectly was proof that his grandfather was probably in the same league as Finnley was.

What more, his grandfather had managed to take down that giant anaconda with great ease. With that in mind, Gerald was now pretty certain that his grandfather had to have entered the Rune Realm to be able to perform that feat.

Gerald had been aware of how great his power truly was for quite some time now, though his only way of measuring that was through the fact that the masters he had come across were all nothing more than ants to him.

While he now knew that he had entered the Third-rank of the Rune Realm, he was careful to remind himself that he was probably nowhere close to being the strongest in the world.

After all, he still didn’t know how strong Finnley, Daryl, and the King of Judgment Portal were.

With that in mind, he was sure that the Rune Realm wasn’t the highest point of training...

Fast forward to seven days later, Master Ghost finally exited the secret room, seemingly having found a major discovery.

## Chapter 1543

In the past few days, Master Ghost had been busy using his Nine Dragons Calculation Technique—together with the Soul Arch Compass—in order to obtain the most accurate information possible.

Throughout his time using the compass, Master Ghost truthfully felt like he was the main character in some martial arts novel. After all, he was able to gain access to information about strange incidents—that had been recorded in detail within the Soul Arch Compass—that had taken place over the years.

For example, Master Ghost was able to find out that the Dragon Squad had existed for well over ten thousand years, though it naturally didn't bear the name it currently did back then. Even so, the important thing was that it still derived from the same bloodline. He found out that the Dragon Squad back then mostly did underground dealings as well.

Either way, with that in mind, he was able to accurately confirm the readings he made—through the Nine Dragons Calculation Technique—by fact-checking the detail's historical accuracy with the recorded information within the compass.

After that long week, not only was Master Ghost able to learn of Yearning Island's location, but he also managed to gain information about the master of that island, the person who started the whole issue regarding the Crawford family's origins.

Upon hearing that, Gerald then said, "...You know, I heard Lady Gunter mention back then that the Crawfords were once a very powerful family when it came to training... However, due to a certain incident, the family ended up getting ruined in a single night! However, grandpa..."

Momentarily hesitant to continue, Gerald shook his head before adding, "...From what Lady Gunter said, grandpa was the only one who managed to make it out alive back then... Following that, he attempted to have his revenge on the Gunters by stealing a magic artifact from them. Unfortunately, his plan ultimately failed. In order to avoid getting hunted down, he then began living in seclusion on Yearning island. He apparently had a major secret with him by then too. Regardless, it was then when he established the other Crawford family. Sometime later, he would then proceed to create the Crawfords I lived with! Is that the whole story...?"

In response, Master Ghost simply shook his head before saying, "Let's just say that what you just told me is a simplified version of the whole story. There's a lot of other important information that you've skimmed past! From what I've learned from the Soul Arch Compass, your grandfather... He seems far

from ordinary, to say the least... After all, he seems to have a great connection with an old legend that's been present on Yearning Island for the longest time!"

"A... legend?" asked Gerald, feeling slightly stunned.

"Indeed. You see, Yearning island is located in a mysterious area within Yanam's ocean. From what I've gathered, a legend emerged there around ten thousand years ago... and it was the legend of a Devil Incarnate!" replied Master Ghost as he alternated his gaze between the now curious Gerald and Yeshua.

Following that, he then continued, "While lots of fishermen supposedly fished around that area before that, strange incidents began taking place around ten thousand years ago. Apparently, large groups of fishermen simply started mysteriously going missing! At the time, some speculated that the missing fishermen had simply lost their ways while out at sea. However, they were men of the sea. There was no way that that was the case!"

"With that in mind, more theories began popping up among the remaining fishermen. Some said that their disappearances were the work of sea monsters. Others hypothesized that the fishermen could have encountered typhoons that ended up directing them to foreign islands. Whatever the case was, many of the fishermen began constantly praying for the missing fishermen's safe return..."

"Not long after, a group of fishermen who were out at sea met with a typhoon! Eventually, they ended up being led to a desert island... The shocking thing was, not only did the fishermen find several dried corpses there, but they also managed to identify them to be the bodies of the previously missing fishermen! Understanding that their friends had to have been sucked dry by something to end up that way—after going missing for just a few days—the fishermen were rightfully terrified!"

"Thankfully, the typhoon didn't take too long to die down, and the uneasy fishermen quickly brought the corpses back with them to their fishing village. Alas, upon their return, the fishermen realized that all the others in their village had been sucked dry as well! None of the corpses they came across even had a drop of blood left in them! Deeply grieved, the fishermen refused to believe that there were truly no survivors. After searching for a long time, they did manage to find a single person who was still alive. Unfortunately, the person was a known fool within that village..."

"Upon asking him what exactly took place, the fool—who was also known to be a rather good artist—began drawing out what he had witnessed... Fully aware of his preference for communicating through pictures, the fishermen simply waited until he was done. Once the fool was done, however, the fishermen found themselves shocked by what they saw."

“Apparently, the one who had sucked all the villagers dry was a peculiar-looking person with three eyes! What more, the person had feet that were as long as half an adult male! With hair that hung down till its waist, the abnormally long-tongued monster was apparently also capable of human speech!”

“Following that, the fool explained that when he had first seen the monster, a villager had asked it what it was doing here. In response, the monster simply questioned, ‘Is this Yearning Village?’”

“The second a child told the monster that it was, the monster instantly began killing everyone in the village extremely cruelly!”

After explaining all that, Master Ghost summarized what had taken place after. Essentially, the fishermen who had escaped death were extremely angry, so angry in fact, that they instantly began looking for people who possessed supernatural powers in order to deal with that Devil Incarnate. Revenge was the only thing on their minds...

Nobody could have guessed that the Devil Incarnate wasn't a mere mindless killing machine. As the fishermen would eventually come to learn, it possessed immense supernatural powers as well!

Chapter 1544

Due to that, many great masters—that the fishermen had hired—ended up getting slaughtered by the Devil Incarnate. Even the fishermen who had survived promptly met their ends at the hands of that monster...

By the end of it all, the only one left standing was the fool...

However, after witnessing all those deaths, the fool was somehow able to regain his wits and think normally again. Now capable of registering all that had happened, he found himself equally as angered as the previous fishermen, and he soon became revenge-driven as well.

With his mental capabilities restored, the man was able to recall an incident that had happened to him when he was much younger. Essentially, he had once met up with an exceptional man who had warned him that a foreign and malicious devil-like person would come to his village one day.

With three eyes, large feet, and rather long hair, the exceptional man had also stated that upon the monster's arrival, a mass slaughtering would take place, and none of the people living on the island would be spared! According to the exceptional man, the monster's goal was to claim the island for himself for training purposes. After all, the way Yearning Island was positioned made it an extremely strategic location between heaven and earth.

Regardless, the important thing to note was that the exceptional man had told the ex-fool to light a special incense when the monster eventually arrived. Following that, the exceptional man would surely arrive to kill the demon.

Since there was pretty much nothing else he could do, the ex-fool immediately did as he had been instructed...

Before long, night arrived, and along with it came torrential rains... Amidst the thunder and lightning, the Devil Incarnate—who had noticed that someone was still alive on the island—returned to the village, ready to eat up the last person there.

However, the monster's plan was thwarted when out of the blue, a holy-looking man suddenly bolted toward it!

While a great battle ensued between the holy man and the Devil Incarnate, in the end, he was unable to fully defeat the monster. As his last resort, he sacrificed his primordial spirit to greatly hurt the Devil Incarnate, simultaneously making it weak enough to be sealed!

Even so, the Devil Incarnate was extremely cunning. Upon nearing death, it released its primordial spirit from its body before forming a demonic light that would inherit its soul. It was using a technique called the demonic incarnation, and with it, the monster was able to retain its consciousness until it found a suitable host to get reborn in.

Once the monster found a suitable host, the demonic incarnation would begin altering said person's heart, gradually causing them to start creating chaos. By that point, it wouldn't be long before a great disaster would take place.

Pausing for a brief moment when he got to this part, Master Ghost then shook his head before adding, "...Following that incident, ten thousand years would pass before anyone returned to Yearning Island. By

then, the ocean surrounding the island was aptly named the Forbidden Sea. Regardless, nobody—if anyone even knew about his existence in the first place—had any idea where the ex-fool had been throughout this entire time, at least until ten years ago. It was around then when people finally realized that a cultivating family had moved there... And it was the Crawford family established by Daryl, the master of the other Crawfords!”

Turning to look at Gerald, Master Ghost watched as the youth began trembling all over, clearly unwilling to believe what he had just heard.

Who could blame him? After all, the Daryl he knew was a kind and gentle person. How could what Master Ghost had said be true? But... if it really was true...

Just thinking about it sent shivers down Gerald’s spine.

“...I’d be lying if I said I didn’t find all this to be unbelievable... Either way, with how strong and secretive he is, what exactly is his purpose...?” asked the bewildered Gerald.

Shaking his head, Master Ghost simply replied, “All I can say is that the incident is rather complicated. While I can’t say for sure what Daryl’s exact motivation is, I did manage to recover some records about him in his earlier years that I’m sure you’ll be interested in finding out about. I also believe that after hearing it, you’ll start getting a much better understanding of your grandfather!”

“Go on...” muttered Gerald as he stared at Master Ghost.

“Well, you already know that the Crawfords that Daryl initially founded was completely ravaged in a single night, correct? Then do you know who it was who did the deed?” asked Master Ghost as he slowly lowered his voice.

Chapter 1545

“Who?” asked Gerald.

“...It was Daryl himself. In a single night, he completely exterminated the Crawfords—who had both birthed and raised him—with some tactic that’s currently unknown... Since then, he’s laid low on Yearning Island while establishing the other Crawford family. It’s worth mentioning that it only took the



other Crawfords a few decades to prosper. In fact, it isn't even a stretch to say that the other Crawford family's strength is several times higher than what the previous Crawfords could ever achieve!"

"Regardless, Daryl began executing another plan sometime later, and the plan was called the Plan of Insights. He's apparently been making preparations for that plan for the longest time, and it appears that you're closely involved with the plan's success. He also seems to be holding onto some secret that I've yet to uncover..." explained Master Ghost.

"...I see. Just to clarify, you said that many of these incidents are closely related to my grandpa, no?" asked Gerald, still slightly in disbelief.

"Indeed. Also, Daryl apparently has rather close connections with Jaellatra as well! I'm assuming that this is part of his Plan of Insights!" replied Master Ghost.

"Jaellatra? The legendary place located in the center of the earth?" asked Yeshua, already feeling enlightened just from listening to the conversation.

As Master Ghost nodded at Yeshua, Gerald—who now had a glint of determination in his eyes—said, "...I don't care what this Plan of Insights is, nor do I care who I'm facing. The only important thing to me now is that I won't allow that person to do any more harm! With that said, since you now know where Yearning Island is, I propose we set off for that island today. Honestly, after recently hearing so much about the other Crawfords, I find myself wanting to see what's so different about them compared to my own family!"

"Sounds like a fine idea, Mr. Crawford. You know, the Dragon Squad owns a special fleet of ships... What I'm suggesting is that if you'd like, I'd be happy to contribute my share of power as thanks for your counseling throughout these few days!" suggested Yeshua quickly.

After witnessing Gerald's strength and training, Yeshua simply had a gut feeling that if he could get on good terms with this powerful person, both the Dragon Squad and the Lock family's future would surely be bright. With that in mind, Yeshua wasn't about to miss an opportunity to help Gerald.

Upon hearing Yeshua's kind gesture, Gerald agreed with the idea. After all, he would now have a way to head to the island together with his exceptional men from the Sacrasolis Palace. With that, more people would be able to look out for each other.

Fast forward to the next morning, the fleet of ten large passenger ships—that Yeshua had arranged for Gerald—began departing for the southwest ocean area in Yanam.

Standing on the deck of one of the ships, Gerald found himself staring into the vast ocean. The longer he stared, the more melancholic Gerald felt until eventually, he found himself muttering, “It’s been four years since we’ve last met, Mila... Four whole years... Though many things remained pretty much the same, the people around me have undergone vast changes... I, too, am no longer who I used to be... Mila... How are you doing...? Are you even still alive anymore...?”

While finding Mila had been a constant worry for him, he currently had greater concerns for his family who had been captured by the other Crawfords. He truly wished that they hadn’t suffered too much while awaiting his rescue mission...

Truth be told, given the choice, Gerald would very much prefer to endure through all this pain on his own...

Then there was the fact that he would very likely have to face his grandfather—whom he greatly respected—in the near future.

All this simply made Gerald’s mood extremely complicated.

As he continued to be vexed out of his mind, a feminine voice as sweet as an oriole’s suddenly said, “Good day, sir. Are you part of this passenger ship’s team?”

Turning around, Gerald was greeted by the sight of two women standing behind him.

The one who had spoken was wearing sports attire, and her hair was in a ponytail. As for her appearance, it was just as sweet and lovely as her voice was. Looking to be around the age of twenty-three, Gerald also sensed the temperament of a rich young lady within her...

Chapter 1546

The second he turned to have a look at the other girl, however, Gerald found his eyelids instantly twitching. After all, while he had come across many, many beauties before throughout his lifetime, he still found himself amazed by how dazzling this woman looked.

Wearing a long, graceful-looking dress, the other woman had exquisite facial features and a buxom body to boot. Though she was definitely eye-catching, she was relatively more aloof when compared to the ponytailed woman.

The stunning woman herself simply straightened her hair—that had been flying all over the place due to the sea breeze—as she scanned Gerald from head to toe. After a brief moment, she averted her gaze, clearly having lost interest in him.

That, however, didn't seem to bother Gerald too much since he still hadn't recovered from his earlier grieving session anyway. Regardless, he then casually asked, "...Yes? Is there something I can help you with?"

"Well, I've been looking at you for a while now, and you seem to have quite a bit weighing your mind. You're honestly quite handsome, so I was wondering why you'd have so many woes. Regardless, did you know that the ship will be passing by one of Yanam's islands soon? Once we get to the island, my friend and I will be making a stop there since our other friends told us that a party was being held there. Putting it straightforwardly, I'm planning on inviting any new friends I've made on board to attend the party with us. That way, everyone will have companions!" replied the ponytailed woman with a smile.

"Actually, hold on, where are my manners? Haha! You can call me Sia, Sia Ticer. As for this beauty, her name is Fia Lock. I'd introduce you to our other friends, but they're all boarding another passenger ship! We'll be meeting up at the island though, so don't worry! Now then, about the party... Not to be rude, but if you're unhappy, you really should focus more on relaxing yourself! If you're constantly ill at ease, you'll never be able to do anything well!" added Tia.

Upon hearing that, Fia nudged Sia with her elbow, as though she was trying to imply something along the lines of, 'Is there really a need to talk with him that much? Let him decide on his own whether he wants to go or not!'

Looking at Fia's actions, Gerald was reminded that she was Yeshua's granddaughter.

Since he was using the power of the Dragon Squad to go about his business this time, Gerald was well aware that it would be inappropriate of him to head to Yearning Island with great fanfare. With that in mind, aside from the exceptional people from the Sacrasolis Palace and the Dragon Squad, Gerald had

boarded the ship together with several regular rich young heirs and wealthy merchants to cover up his true motives.

Regardless, despite how strong he already was, Gerald honestly didn't mind joining the girls after hearing Sia's persuasion. After all, he really did need to relax a bit and he was getting rather bored anyway. While he was at it, he could probably also use the chance to inquire the rich merchants of Yanam about some things.

With that in mind, Gerald then nodded to Sia's delight.

A smile on her face, Sia then said, "I'm glad you agreed! It's always best to have a positive attitude no matter which point we're at in life!"

Not too long after, the ship ported by an island.

Though Gerald followed Sia down the ship, Master Ghost, Carlos, and a few others remained on board to make some preparations. They were right to be worried, since dangerous incidents could happen at any time once they got close enough to Yearning Island.

"Sia! Fia! Over here!" shouted a waving young man—who was part of a larger group of young people who were already waiting at the port—the second he saw the trio walk out from the ship.

From what Gerald could see, there were many other rich young people getting off the other passenger ships. His attention was brought back to the current scene when a bespectacled young man excitedly added, "The party's been scheduled for tonight, you know? In other words, it starts in ten minutes! With that said, hurry up and get in here already!"

The second that youth's sentence ended, a tall and lean young man could be seen walking toward Fia's group. Among the others within the group, both he and Fia were the most immaculately dressed.

Either way, it appeared that he wasn't really all that focused on the party. In truth, he was here because of Fia, and he had been staring at her ever since he saw her get off the ship.

After momentarily—but also rather nervously—scanning Gerald from head to toe, he eventually couldn't hold himself back as he asked, "Fia... Who is this? And why did you get off the ship together with him?"

Chapter 1547

The young man went by the name of Beau Mabart, and he was a rich young heir with a gentlemanly temperament.

The Mabarts themselves were one of the Jenna Province's prestigious families, and they owned assets worth at least a billion and five hundred million dollars. With that in mind, it was no wonder that Beau had his education overseas, specifically in the United Kingdom and France.

Even so, the Mabarts were naturally inferior compared to the Lock family who owned the Dragon Squad. Due to that, Beau had only been able to get aboard a minor passenger ship on his way here. After all, only those with the highest of reputations were allowed to board the main ship of the fleet.

Regardless, pretty much everyone there was aware of Beau's infatuation toward Fia. With that in mind, they began sizing Gerald up as well when they heard Beau's question, hoping to be able to enjoy his misfortune.

"I don't know him... Sia's the one who invited him to join the party on Shrine Island together!" replied Fia with a slight frown.

Being as proud as a peacock, Fia hated the feeling of being controlled by others the most. However, between Gerald and Beau, she found Gerald to be much more unbearable. After all, despite her presence, Gerald had remained quiet throughout their journey here.

His silence had led her into thinking, 'Is he trying to catch my attention by remaining silent? Does he really think that playing cat and mouse will work on me? You clearly don't understand your target!'

The more she thought about it, the more annoyed she got.

Due to Gerald, however, she now found Beau considerably less annoying compared to how she had previously perceived him to be. Upon taking a closer look, he even seemed much more mature and solemn...

Either way, when Beau saw how Fia was treating Gerald, his heart eased up considerably as he said, "...I see! Regardless, I'm assuming he's a descendant of some prestigious family, right?"

While he was pleased to know that Fia wasn't acquainted with Gerald, it didn't change the fact that Beau had only been able to get aboard the regular ship. Gerald, on the other hand, had been able to take the main ship despite him wearing such shabby clothes. Due to that, it was no mystery why Beau was feeling so jealous. With that in mind, he felt the need to gain as much information about Gerald as soon as possible.

Realizing that Beau was trying to target Gerald, Sia quickly changed the topic by saying, "That's quite enough questions for now, Beau! I just dragged him along to have fun with us since he appeared all moody and alone earlier! Let's just try to get to know each other! Who knows, we could end up becoming friends in the future!"

Hearing that, they began talking about other topics though Gerald simply opted to stand at the side.

Observing the island's scenery, Gerald had to admit that he was now in a much better mood after following them here.

His head now much clearer, he thought about how his aloof demeanor could have given off the wrong impression that he was trying to give Sia the cold shoulder despite her being so kind to him. With that in mind, he decided to join in on their conversations with a slightly brighter mood, just to show Sia his appreciation.

Before he was able to do so, however, at least a dozen loud and simultaneous 'bangs' could suddenly be heard! Following that, confetti and streamers began fluttering down atop everyone's heads, making the port look particularly magnificent at that moment.

Shortly after, a youth wearing a suit made his way through the crowd before laughing as he shouted, "Ah, my long-lost friend! We finally get to meet again today!"

"Yosef!"

“Beau! It’s truly been ages since we’ve last met face to face! I’ve been waiting for you for a while now, you know? Now then, let’s get this party started!” declared Yosef Jenks—the extraordinarily dressed man who was evidently Beau’s friend—as he gave Beau a bear hug.

The fact that both of them had been responsible for organizing this event’s amusement had brought them closer than ever.

Following a hearty laugh, Beau then looked at Fia before saying, “Allow me to introduce Young Master Yosef Jenks to you, Fia! Actually, I think I already mentioned him to you earlier... He’s the one I befriended while studying abroad in France! Regardless, his family’s been living in Yanam for a few generations now, and it’s even closely involved with the International Martial Arts Association! As additional information, his family owns assets worth nearly fifteen billion dollars as well!”

Upon hearing that, everyone found themselves looking at Yosef with their mouths wide open.

Everyone already knew about the Jenks family’s influence in Yanam. Even so, to think that Young Master Jenks was actually close friends with Beau!

Chapter 1548

Fia—being someone with an extremely good family background—always had a sense of superiority over regular people. After hearing about Yosef’s family background, however, her eyes instantly lit up as she snuck a peek at Young Master Jenks.

After exchanging some simple pleasantries, Yosef found himself asking, “Speaking of which, Beau, what took you so long? Didn’t you promise to arrive a few days ago?”

“Ah, don’t even get me started on that... You see, throughout my absence, massive and rather drastic changes have taken place within Jenna City as well as Weston’s underground structure. With that in mind, I’ve been helping my father deal with the situation this entire time!” replied Beau.

“I think I heard some news about that as well... Sacrasolis Palace, right? Where did that large force even come from? According to what my father told me, several prestigious families and even a few underground forces in Yanam have already submitted to them! While I’ve been told that the palace master of the Sacrasolis Palace is a particularly vicious individual, rumor has it that by submitting to him, one’s family will definitely be protected and will cease to deteriorate for as long as a million years!” said Yosef.

Due to their overwhelming wealth, it wasn't uncommon for large families to be in contact with extraordinary people. While ordinary people may find it slightly preposterous for rich families to submit to more powerful families that belonged to certain sects, it was honestly just business as usual for the wealthy.

"Speaking of which, your father's still in the Jenna Province, right, Beau? Has he managed to contact anyone from the Sacrasolis Palace?" asked Yosef.

Shaking his head, Beau then replied, "We never got the chance. After all, there were simply too many powerful families heading there to submit themselves to them at the time. Even so, it appears that the Palace Master of Sacrasolis Palace was already pretty rich in the first place. With that in mind, many of the families there apparently didn't suit his tastes. From what I've heard, to get acquainted with them, one must first pass through a number of assessments!"

Hearing that, Fia simply shook her head slightly contemptuously before saying, "But of course mere merchant families like yours aren't worthy of getting acquainted with the Sacrasolis Palace! Do you even know how powerful the palace master truly is? How could anyone just submit themselves to Mr. Crawford like that?"

"...Oh? While we're on the topic, I've heard that your family has a relationship with the Sacrasolis Palace... Does that mean that the palace master's surname is Crawford? Also, have you met him in person?" asked Beau in a surprised tone.

"How in the world could I have met him before? Regardless, I'm extremely sure that he's an immensely powerful and awe-worthy person. After all, even his subordinates are all smart and tough. I should know since some of them are well-acquainted with my grandpa!" replied Fia, slight regret reflected in her eyes.

Thinking back, her grandfather's eyes had been filled with admiration and respect whenever he talked about Mr. Crawford to her...

Speaking of her grandfather, she remembered him advising her, 'Remember to grab the chance when you see it!' before the ships had even departed.



When she asked what ‘chance’ he was referring to, however, her grandfather was oddly unwilling to reveal anything beyond that no matter how much she asked.

‘Was grandpa trying to indicate this party or something...?’ Fia thought to herself as she allowed her gaze to fall on Yosef for a few more seconds.

In between laughs and chattering, they eventually arrived at the party’s venue...

Not long after everyone left the port, an odd-looking and ghostlike ship slowly began materializing out of the blue... Skimming across the sea’s surface, the mysterious passenger ship then swiftly approached the port... It was so quiet that nobody was even aware of its presence...

Once the ship docked, two women—bearing extraordinary temperaments and wearing white clothes—slowly descended the ship... Due to the light veils covering their faces, anyone trying to see what they looked like would only be able to see blurry outlines.

“Was it really a good idea for us to have gone behind Sister Mila and come here, sister...? After all, the main reason we came to earth this time around is to execute that special mission, no...?” muttered one of the women in a worried tone as she curiously looked at all the different kinds of people in the distance.

“What are you even afraid of? Don’t worry, things are going to be fine! Look, lots of people are already there! Now let’s hurry over!”

Chapter 1549

Upon getting closer to the rest of the group, the duo could hear Yosef saying, “As you all probably already know, the Turnbells are an extremely large and strong family that’s existed for at least a few hundred years in Yanam. What you may not know, however, is the fact that the party was first proposed by Young Master Baelfire Turnbull himself! With that in mind, any party that he organizes will surely attract all sorts of celebrities and prestigious people from all over the country!”

Throughout his confident introduction—that stirred quite a commotion among the audience—Yosef made sure to take good, long looks at the beautiful women present, evidently finding satisfaction from the shock in their faces.

Since Fia was the most beautiful among them all, Yosef made sure to take an extra long glance at her, a glance of which was noticed by Beau who was standing at the side.

Upon realizing that, Beau couldn't help but feel slightly jealous. After all, his status was so much lower compared to Yosef, and he honestly knew that Yosef was someone who belonged in the same world as Fia.

With that in mind, Beau quickly tried to change the topic by saying, "Young Master Jenks, Baelfire is the most important and influential person here, no? Despite that, I have to say that he looks much more like one of the auction items the way he's currently standing on stage! Hahaha! I'm sure a rich young heir like him isn't in any desperate need for money, right?"

It was obvious from his unnecessary statement that Beau was struggling to even find something relevant to talk about.

"Well, he certainly is the most important person here, that's without a doubt! Regardless, since you're not too well-informed about some incidents here in Yanam, I advise you against saying random things for the sake of it. As for that auction bit, Young Master Turnbull is simply hosting it as a hobby of his! Hahaha! As if he'd ever be short of money!"

"Speaking of which, do you still remember the valuable treasures that I asked your father to help my family locate a few years back? The truth is, we already knew about Young Master Turnbull's hobby back then, so my dad wanted to use the treasures to fawn on him! Hahaha! Regardless, I'm sure the public relations activity back then went remarkably! It certainly explains why I have so many admission tickets now!" replied Yosef with a chuckle.

"Hahaha! I see! To think that the Mabarts would end up making such a great contribution to the Jenks! Regardless, I wonder what items Young Master Turnbull is going to auction this time around!" said Beau with a subtle smile.

Deep inside, however, Beau was slightly ill at ease as he thought, 'If I had known about this before, I would've surely gotten acquainted with the Turnbolls myself! I could've been the one getting all the respect!'

“Pardon my rudeness, but don’t you feel ashamed at all for handing Weston’s valuable treasures over to those foreigners, Young Master Mabart? In fact, you’re feeling rather regretful for not doing so yourself now, correct?” asked Gerald—who had been standing at the side this entire time—rather casually though he had a slight frown on his face.

Upon hearing that, both Beau and Yosef found themselves frowning as well.

Beau, in particular, felt extremely humiliated since Gerald’s statement hit a sore spot. With that, he then shouted, “You’re just some f\*cking loser! What I do is none of your business!”

It was clear as day that he was directing all his anger—from seeing Yosef try to flirt with Fia—on Gerald.

When Sia heard Beau’s retort, however, she instantly took Gerald’s side by saying, “Well, is what he said even wrong? Also, you’re a gentleman who studied abroad, no? To think you’d be so rude, Beau!”

Just as a quarrel appeared to be imminent, Fir—who had her gaze fixed on Young Master Turnbull this entire time—said, “That’s quite enough. We joined this party to relax ourselves, remember? So, stop quarreling already! Now let’s get a bit closer to the stage already, the auction’s about to start!”

As she continued looking at the young master standing atop the colorfully lit stage, Fir found herself thinking, ‘Grandpa told me to grab the chance when it presented itself... Could he have meant that I should try to woo Young Master Turnbull...?’

In a way, it made sense. After all, compared to Yosef, Young Master Turnbull definitely had a much more imposing aura. As for Beau, he was nowhere even near comparable to the two.

While thinking about it, she recalled her grandfather talking about the Turnbells. With how powerful, rich, and influential he described them to be, Fia grew to have a great admiration toward Baelfire. With that in mind, she wanted to get nearer to the stage as soon as possible to get a closer look for herself.

As for Beau, he made sure to give Gerald a vicious glare before the group of people began making their way to the seats closer to the stage.

While Gerald had initially wanted to ask Yosef about the condition of the Crawfords in Yanam, he refrained since the atmosphere had turned this way. Besides, now that they were nearing the stage, it was far too noisy for a proper conversation to be held anyway.

At that moment, he suddenly heard Sia's pleasant voice whispering into his ear, "Don't worry, Gerald. If anyone even dares to bully you today, I'll be the first to stand up for you! After all, what you said earlier was true! With that in mind, I fully support you!"

Turning to look at the girl, Sia even flashed a brief 'victory pose' at Gerald.

Chapter 1550

Regardless, Gerald couldn't help but nod with a smile. She wasn't a bad woman at all, and though her words were casual, they gave Gerald a warm feeling inside.

'How rare to meet such a kind woman nowadays... I wonder if fate had planned for us to get acquainted...'

With that in mind, Gerald felt that he may as well use this chance to grant her a wish or two. After all, money was no real issue to him and he didn't mind really spending a large sum as long as it got her what she wanted or gave her access to a skill she wanted to learn. In a way, this was his way of repaying her kindness to him this entire time.

His train of thought was cut short when Young Master Turnbull—who was still on the stage—held onto the microphone before saying, "Ladies, and gentlemen! Please, be quiet!"

Hearing that, everyone instantly went quiet. Honestly, it was so silent, that it almost felt like this was some rehearsed scene in a play.

Regardless, now that everyone was paying attention, Baelfire narrowed his eyes before saying, "Now then, I'm sure everyone already knows that I host large-scale parties like this once or twice a year, and every time I do, an auction is sure to be held! In the previous years, the items I mostly auctioned were either antiques or rare items. This time, however, the auction item is a little more special!"

"Oh? Even Young Master Turnbull thinks it's special? How special could it even be?"

“Who knows? You think he’s going to auction some kind of elixir or something?”

As the crowd instantly began discussing what they had just heard, a middle-aged man—who was all smiles—walked over to Baelfire’s side before whispering, “As was expected, your statement made these people impatient again, Young Master Turnbull!”

“Hahaha! It’s more interesting this way, isn’t it? The more excited they are, the more these dogs will gnaw at each other to get what they want! I’m here for that excitement!” replied Baelfire with a tiny sneer.

Though their conversation was barely audible, Gerald was able to catch every word they said. Even so, none of all this really concerned him, so he really couldn’t be bothered to step in.

“Now, now, I’m sure everyone is extremely anxious to know what the item is! Fear not, I’ll be revealing it soon!” shouted Baelfire, prompting everyone below stage to shout and scream in anticipation.

Even Fia—who had seen much of the world—was feeling impatient due to the way Baelfire had teased about the auction item.

What exactly was it? Since Young Master Turnbull was taking his time revealing it, the item must be extremely extraordinary!

Just as everyone was thinking the same thing, Baelfire smiled before declaring, “Listen closely now, the item I’m auctioning today is a woman! With that said, I’m sure you gentlemen offstage are going to have a good time! After all, not only is this woman as pretty as a fairy, but she’s also remained pure and innocent up till this point!”

Upon hearing that, shouts of excitement from the men—which were particularly loud from a select few rich young heirs—instantly filled the air.

Pleased with their reaction, Baelfire then waved his hand slightly before ordering, “Alright, bring her over and show her to them!”

Following that, four people carrying a crate—that had been draped with a white veil—slowly made their way up the stage...

#### Chapter 1551

The wooden carton itself appeared very tightly wrapped. Even so, the others could still see the faint outlines of a long-haired woman inside who was curled up into a ball.

“How perplexing! To think that Young Master Turnbull would actually be audacious enough to auction an actual woman!” growled the slightly angered Sia.

She wasn't the only one either. While some of them may have preferred money and others power, many of the women there still had their limits, and they were simply unwilling to just accept the fact that one of their own was being auctioned off just like that!

Their anger and dissatisfaction were completely reasonable. After all, what else were they supposed to feel seeing a person of their gender being put on display to be sold like that?

Despite the majority of women being rightfully angered, some of them appeared to have different opinions. Namely, Fia, who found herself muttering, “What would you know? For rich young heirs, human rights being snatched away is nothing! Try looking at the situation from the perspective of Young Master Turnbull. After you give it some thought, I'm sure you'll be able to see things from his point of view!”

Upon hearing that, Sia's immediate response was to feel frightened by Fia's outlook on life. Turning to look at her, Sia then said, “What? How could you say that, Fia? Can't you see that he's abusing and discriminating against women? Why are you still speaking up for him?”

While the others were having all sorts of thoughts about the situation, Gerald found himself silently staring at the messy-haired woman within the carton.

Baelfire, on the other hand, simply sneered, “I can see all your passionate gazes, men! Hahaha! Alright then, let's not beat around the bush any longer! Unveil that woman for everyone to have a better look!”

Watching as Baelfire waved his hand, the four subordinates from before then began pulling the white veil off the carton... As the cage's door was slowly opened, everyone found themselves staring at the woman inside it.

Sitting right in the middle of the cage, the woman had a snow-white long dress on, and she was hugging onto her knees with her fair and tender arms. Though she had buried her face between her knees, it was quite evident that she was weeping. Nobody knew if it was because she had lost all her energy, but her weeping was so light that only her beautiful shoulders occasionally quivered.

"Come now, raise your head and let the camera crew see you! Your face needs to be shown on the large screen!" shouted Baelfire.

Seeing that the woman wasn't complying, one of Baelfire's subordinates growled, "Hey, b\*tch! Didn't you hear Young Master Turnbull's orders?!"

The woman could only wail in humiliation as her teary face was revealed to all when the same subordinate yanked her hair, forcing her to face the cameramen.

With how beautiful she was, the pitiful-looking woman instantly bewitched nearly every man who saw her. Even the women found themselves growing jealous of how beautiful she was.

As for the two women from before—who had earlier disembarked from the ghostly ship—both of them had been watching the entire scene play out from afar, and one of them was now glaring at Baelfire.

In a wrathful voice, the fierce-gazed woman growled, "That b\*stard...! How dare he treat a woman like that?! I'm going to personally kill him!"

"I advise you to refrain from causing any trouble. Besides, it doesn't appear that he'll be living past tonight!"

"...Huh? What makes you say that, sister?" asked the angry woman rather curiously.

“Just have a look over there yourself!” replied the other woman as she nudged her chin over to a certain direction.

Seeing that, the angry woman turned to look in that direction... And there, she was immediately greeted by the sight of an extremely furious Gerald.

His entire body trembling almost uncontrollably, Gerald had been beyond enraged ever since he saw the caged woman’s face.

‘Giya...!’

He remembered bringing her to his family’s mansion back then to allow her injuries to heal... Regardless, Gerald had assumed that she had been captured by the other Crawfords as well since he couldn’t find her in the mansion back when he first found out that his family members had been kidnapped. Even so, it hadn’t occurred to Gerald that Giya, of all people,—whom he knew to be a fine, young woman with an astounding temperament—would end up suffering such abuse!

Now seething in rage, Gerald couldn’t help but stride forward before shouting, “Giya!”

‘What had she even done wrong? Nothing she could’ve done could have deserved this outcome! Why the hell had they abused her like this?!’

Whatever the case was, the second Giya heard that voice, her weakened body instantly began trembling wildly...

Chapter 1552

‘...Could... I have heard wrong...? There’s just no way, right...?’ Giya thought to herself as she slowly looked around in disbelief, trying to find the source of that shout.

However, the second she saw him, she was so shocked that she felt that she was possibly still dreaming!

She wanted to say something, anything. But it felt like a lump in her throat was preventing her from saying a word...



As for Sia, she turned to look at Gerald—who was already walking toward the stage—before shouting in surprise, “Huh? You... Know that woman, Gerald?”

“Hah! I guess that loser was so entranced by her that he couldn’t help but walk over! From the looks of it, he doesn’t seem like the kind of person who has the money to buy her over through auctioning either!” scoffed Beau.

“Who exactly is he? How rude! If he ends up offending Young Master Turnbull, he’ll definitely end up dead soon! With that said, let’s keep our distance from him!” muttered Yosef with a frown.

Though Sia wanted to at least try to stop the agitated Gerald, he had already made it to the stage by that point.

While everyone was holding their breaths—unsure of what to even expect to happen—Giya was already in tears as she muttered, “...G-Gerald... Is... Is that really you...?”

“It is me! I’m so sorry that I’m late! I’m so sorry...!” shouted Gerald as he hugged her tight, his grief insurmountable.

“What’s the meaning of this, Young Master Turnbull?”

“Yeah! If you want that woman so much then purchase her first, you shabbily-dressed son of a b\*tch! Actually, do you think he’s trying to snatch that beauty away?!”

Below stage, several of the rich young heirs were feeling extremely dissatisfied by Gerald’s actions.

“I must say, he truly is courting death! Now that I think about it, how did he even manage to board the main ship? Regardless, please remember not to admit to knowing him should Young Master Turnbull decide to interrogate us later!” grumbled Fia as she glared contemptuously at Gerald.

Amidst the chaos, Baelfire turned to look at Gerald before sneering, “Being a bit too impatient, aren’t we, sir? Just so you know, this chick’s starting price is seven million dollars! Please pay that amount first before you place your hands on her! Hahaha!”

Gerald, however, simply ignored him, opting instead to help Giya to her feet as he asked, "Are you the only one here? Where are the others?"

"They... your sisters and aunts... they were captured by those people... Following that, the Turnbills contacted the group of villains and in the end, Baelfire purchased me! However, know that despite being repeatedly humiliated by him, I always tried to fight back the best that I could!" cried out Giya.

"I see... Not to worry, Giya. Everything's fine now... Now let's go!" replied Gerald as he patted her gently on her shoulders.

Getting her onto his back, he was just about to leave when Baelfire—who had already been annoyed by the fact that Gerald had ignored his earlier statement— furiously shouted, "Hey, now! Where the hell did you even come from, you b\*stard? Are you treating me like I don't exist? Are you even aware of whose territory you're currently in?!"

Turning to look at him, Gerald then casually replied, "Look, Young Master Turnbull, I'd like to send my friend home first for her to properly recuperate. Worry not, once I've done that, I'll be looking for you and your family next!"

The second Gerald's sentence ended, a roar of laughter could be heard from almost everyone within the audience.

"Is that person a nutjob? Who does he even think he is?!"

Never imagining that a person would be dumb enough to look for trouble with the Turnbills, everyone was already mocking Gerald with tears in their eyes as they laughed their lungs out.

Beau himself was flabbergasted as he declared, "He's truly lost it! You're absolutely right, Fia! We can't ever claim to know him!"

Moving back to Baelfire, he laughed aloud before shouting, "I admit that you're brave. However, do you really think that I'll just stand here doing nothing while you escape with Giya?!"

As if on cue, seven men dressed in black garments then rushed onto the stage before swiftly surrounding Gerald!

“Since you refused to back down, you’ll just have to be beaten up before your corpse gets hacked into pieces!” growled Baelfire.

“With all due respect, Young Master Turnbull, my friend here is already weak enough as she is! I really need to rush back first to have her treated! Also, I’ve heard that your rich and powerful family has existed for dozens of generations in Yanam. With that said, I’ll give you half an hour to prepare yourself and let you have your final sense of ceremony. Again, worry not, for I’ll be back to deal with you in exactly thirty minutes!” replied Gerald with a frown.

“You...! You b\*stard...! Who the hell do you think you are, spitting such nonsense here?! Also, what are all of you still standing there in a daze for? Beat him into a pulp already!” roared the infuriated Baelfire.

Chapter 1553

With contemptuous glares on their faces, the seven men then began crouching, looking very much like vicious wolves that were planning to pounce onto Gerald!

Their stance was so terrifying that everyone else instantly held their breaths!

“Oh god, it looks like they’re positioning themselves to hack this insensible guy to pieces!”

“Humph! It’s his own fault for courting death! Still, I do wonder if he’s unaware of the power the Turnbulls have in Yanam. After all, he dared to offend Young Master Turnbull of all people! Whatever the case is, once he’s dealt with, his family members will surely be next!”

Though most of the people offstage were sneering at Gerald, Sia herself was feeling deeply anxious.

Turning to look to her side, she then pleaded, “Young Master Jenks! Fia! Hurry and figure out a way to save him! Use your families’ powers or something! He couldn’t help it he just wanted to save that woman...!”

However, both of them simply returned cold expressions to her.

“Sia, that’s quite enough! So what if that loser dies? Big deal! If you need a quick refresher, he’s simply a stranger whom we met by chance! With that said, what are you even being so anxious for?” grumbled Fia in resignation.

“But-”

Before Sia could even finish what she was trying to say, the seven men made their moves!

Looking both frightening and fierce, the men watched as Gerald—who was still tightly hugging Giya—slowly lifted his arm...

And with a simple wave of his hand, an explosive sound could be heard as multiple swords that glowed white suddenly appeared out of thin air!

Swiftly slashing at all seven of the assailants with great precision and ease, it barely took a few seconds for all of them to begin falling to the ground, completely sliced in pieces! But Gerald wasn’t done yet.

No, he made sure to dice them up so finely that in the end, only a bloody mist remained of them!

With how bloody the scene was, several of the present women instantly began screaming!

As everyone instinctively took a few steps back in their bewilderment, Sia—who was equally as shocked—found herself momentarily only capable of covering her mouth. She had witnessed every second of Gerald’s retaliation... The demeanor he had at the time... It was undoubtedly the demeanor of a great master!

Regardless, Fia, Beau, and the others couldn’t help but feel their eyelids twitch rapidly as they continued staring at Gerald. He... was the one who should’ve been hacked to pieces, right? How had everything gone the complete opposite direction?

With how swiftly those seven men had been killed, it was now clear as day that Gerald wasn't only an immensely powerful person, but he also had remarkable abilities!

As Fia gulped in realization of this, the now anxious Baelfire found himself slowly taking several steps back as he muttered, "...T-this..."

The ones Gerald had just killed so easily were all exceptional men from his family!

"In the end, it turns out that you truly are insensible!" said Gerald as he glared frigidly at Baelfire.

Sweating profusely, it was only at that moment when Baelfire realized how frightening Gerald's gaze really was.

Hoping to diffuse the situation, the middle-aged man from before tried his best to put on a calm façade before warning, "Sir, before you do anything, let's talk this out nicely. If you don't already know, this rich young heir is Baelfire Turnbull! The son of the richest man in Yanam! Not only is he the master's only son, but he's well known across the entire country as well! While I admit that you possess exceptional strength, know that Yanam has many forces too! With that in mind, I hope you realize that there will be dire consequences if you dare lay even a single finger on the young master!"

When Gerald made no immediate reply, Baelfire assumed that Gerald was finally feeling a little afraid.

With that in mind, Baelfire then quickly added, "...That's right! I'm the top rich young heir in Yanam, and I have an entire country on my side! With that said, I also have several men as powerful as you are! Regardless, correct me if I'm wrong, but I remember there being a certain saying in Weston that I'm sure you're aware of... It has something to do with the ripple effect, and it goes along the lines of, 'Even the slightest change can affect everything else.' With that said, you won't ever be able to leave Yanam alive if you dare hurt me!"

Laughing mockingly in response, Gerald then sneered, "You know, I don't believe you understood what I said earlier! The thirty-minute timer I gave you earlier... It isn't only for you. It's for your entire family! In other words, I'm making sure I kill every single Turnbull as revenge for treating my friend like this!"

“...W-what did you say...?! You’re exterminating the entire Turnbull family?!” stuttered the middle-aged man, utterly shocked by Gerald’s statement.

As deep fear swept through Baelfire, Gerald then scoffed, “Indeed, I am! Also, keeping what I just said in mind, I’m sure you now realize that everything you’ve earlier said was simply nonsense to me! In fact, because you said all that, I’ve made up my mind to just kill Baelfire now!”

“N-no...! Lenox! Save me from this maniac! Please...!” pleaded Baelfire as he rapidly began shaking his head.

Having no other choice, Lenox then glared at Gerald before roaring, “While you may not respect the Turnbolls, I wonder if you’ll bow to the power of the Crawfords from Yanam! Listen here, I’m part of that family, and my name is Lenox Crawford! With that in mind, I wonder if you’re still daring enough to proceed!”

“Oh? Just so you know, once I’m done eliminating the Turnbolls, I’ll be looking for your family members next!

Chapter 1554

Following a cold smile, Gerald slashed the air with two of his fingers, prompting a blade of light to form!

As it instantly flew in Baelfire’s direction, Lenox attempted to stop it from proceeding any further. However, he ended up freezing in place the second he realized how strong the blade really was. That power... Nobody would’ve been able to stop it!

“Y-young master...!” shouted the horrified Lenox as he watched Baelfire get sliced into eight pieces in no time flat!

With how terribly he had died, the atmosphere quickly grew exceedingly suffocating...

Lenox himself was momentarily stunned in his utter disbelief...

Who could blame him? He had just witnessed the horrifying death of the only son of the richest man in Yanam! That youth had control over half the economy there!

Now that all this had happened, Lenox was now having so much trouble imagining what was to come that his ears started ringing.

Eventually, the pale-faced middle-aged man then turned to look at Gerald before saying, "...You truly are a vicious person, sir... Regardless, I wonder if you're daring enough to give me your name after all that you've done...?"

"Sure. My name is Gerald Crawford, and I'm from the Crawford family in Northbay!" declared Gerald as he stared intently at Lenox.

"...W-what? Gerald Crawford?! You're the most important and final element we need for the success of the Plan of Insights! The Crawfords of Yanam have been looking all over for you for the longest time, you know? To think you'd show yourself here of all places!"

"A nice summary, but tell me something I don't know!" replied Gerald with a faint smile.

Now realizing that Gerald had come here specifically to hunt them down, the bewildered Lenox then exclaimed, "...So that's why Hoyt and the others have gone missing...! You killed them, didn't you?!"

"Bingo! I made sure to leave no one alive!" replied Gerald.

As Lenox stared at Gerald, completely speechless, everyone else below stage—who had heard Gerald's words—found themselves utterly flabbergasted as well. While they didn't really understand most of their conversation, they understood enough to know that Gerald wasn't a person to be trifled with.

"What kind of person even is Gerald? How could he be so cruel!" muttered Yosef who still hadn't recovered from all the shock.

That person... To think that he was barely even worried about the Turnbells and the Crawfords of Yanam...! What kind of level did one even need to have to be able to do that?!

“B-beats me! All I know is that he got off the same ship as Fia! F\*cking hell! I knew that anyone riding the main ship couldn’t be ordinary...!” whimpered Beau fearfully.

Fia herself only knew as much about the situation as the others. In other words, it was evident that she had no idea who Gerald truly was either.

“So you were here, sir!” shouted a booming voice at that moment.

Before anyone could even register who that mysterious voice belonged to, several shadowy figures could suddenly be seen dashing above the heads of the audience!

A split second later, fifty exceptional-looking men could be seen standing atop the stage, much to Lenox’s shock and fear!

Fia herself noticed that her grandfather was standing among those people. A sense of pride now welling within her, Fia couldn’t help but shout, “Grandpa!”

However, Yeshua completely ignored his granddaughter, opting instead to bow before Gerald, something that all fifty of the exceptional men quickly did as well.

Following that, Carlos then said, “We’ve been looking for you for quite a while, Mr. Crawford!”

The second Beau heard that name, his eyes almost popped out of their sockets as he muttered, “...W-what...? M-Mr. Crawford...?!”

Even Fia was already covering her mouth in disbelief by this point...

Chapter 1555

Everyone else had their eyes widened in incredulity as well, now finally realizing that the person on stage was none other than the one and only Mr. Crawford of Sacrasolis Palace!

As everyone remained momentarily shocked, Carlos broke the silence by saying, “So, Mr. Crawford, what should we do with this person?”



From the way he said it, it was clear that Carlos cared little about the consequences, and the same went for Gerald's other men on stage.

The only one who had initially been slightly hesitant was Yeshua, who had planned on advising Gerald not to mess with the Turnbolls. After all, they were a top major family who owned over half of Yanam's wealth! What more, those in the Turnbull family were also relatives of the King of Yanam! In short, that family had a deeply-rooted position there...

With that in mind, the fact that Mr. Crawford had just killed Hooper Turnbull's only son spelled nothing but complete disaster!

Even so, after realizing how much Carlos and the others revered Gerald, Yeshua held his tongue. Since things had already gotten this far anyway, he may as well take Gerald as his only guide.

'I guess we're enemies with that family now... So be it!' Yeshua thought to himself.

Either way, Lenox was already well aware that the murderous people before him were all very capable and powerful. With that said, the second he heard Carlos's question, he instantly got to his knees in fright before pleading, "P-Please...! Please, don't kill me...!"

Upon hearing that, Gerald simply turned to look at him before sneering, "You're just a dog, aren't you? Are you even worthy enough to be killed by me?"

Feeling as Gerald gently began stepping on his head, Lenox then heard the youth say, "Now then, listen closely... I want you to send what remains of Baelfire's corpse back to the Turnbull family... Following that, tell them that if they continue allying themselves with the Crawfords of Yaman, this will only be the beginning for them!"

Gerald's cold words instantly sent shivers down Lenox's spine, prompting the terrified man to quickly nod in response.

"Now get lost!" roared Gerald in such a commanding way that Lenox felt as though his soul had just been pierced.

Quickly crawling over to Baelfire's corpse pieces, the man then carried them up before awkwardly scuttling away.

By that point, Giya had already passed out from all the sudden turn of events.

Realizing that, Gerald then ordered, "Carlos! Take Miss Quarrington for her to get some proper rest!"

The second his order ended, however, the corner of his eyes caught a glimpse of a familiar person's back... Though she was standing near the edges of the crowd, Gerald recognized that back anywhere, and he instantly began trembling all over...

She appeared to be with a friend of hers, and both of them were draped in white clothing. Despite being quite a distance away, Gerald could already sense how pure their fairy-like temperaments were...

Regardless, her temperament wasn't what caught his attention. Looking at the taller and leaner woman between the two, Gerald was now more certain than ever that it was her!

That back... it belonged to Mila!

"...T-this..." muttered Gerald to himself, his eyelids twitching as he watched the two stunning figures slowly turn around to leave.

He was well aware that he had mistaken other people for Mila several times by now, which was why he wasn't acting impulsively this time.

In the end, however, he simply couldn't hold himself back as he leaped from the stage and landed right behind the leaving duo!

Still slightly anxious, Gerald placed his hands against his back—in an effort to regain his composure—before saying, "Please wait a moment, ladies!"

Stopping in their tracks, the slightly shorter woman then coldly replied, "Is something the matter, sir? We haven't offended you in any way, right?"

"Of course you haven't. However, I... help but realize that this lady beside you resembles my lover a lot... She's been missing for many years now, you see, and I've been looking all over for her so..."

As Gerald couldn't help but speak his mind out, the taller woman then replied, "There are many people who resemble others in this world, sir. I'm sorry to hear that you miss her dearly, but we honestly aren't acquainted, sir!"

Despite her casual reply, Gerald now found himself unable to hold his tears back, deep emotions welling within him.

His eyes fully reddened, it took him insurmountable strength and courage to finally be able to find his voice again...

"...M-Mila...! It... It really is you...!"

'That back... That voice...! There's no doubt about it, she really is Mila...!'

To think that he would actually bump into Mila here of all places... How completely unexpected! It was so coincidental that he honestly wondered if he was still dreaming!

Now completely certain that it was her, Gerald then moved even closer to the tall woman before saying, "Mila, it's me! Gerald!"

Chapter 1556

The second she felt him grabbing onto her arm, the initially shocked woman quickly became infuriated as she shouted, "You...! How dare you...?!"

Following that, a layer of draconic scales that glowed scarlet could faintly be seen on her arm!

As the glow grew brighter, Gerald could feel a rapidly increasing heat on his palm, prompting him to release his grip before taking two steps back.

It was at that moment when the woman finally turned to face her wrathful gaze at Gerald, her charming face now reddened in anger as she snapped, “How dare you behave so imprudently toward me!”

Upon getting a good look at her face, Gerald instantly began breathing much rapidly, now appearing even more emotionally moved than before!

‘Not only do you sound like her, but you look exactly like her too! I can now say with full certainty that I’ve finally found you, Mila...!’

“Please take a good, long look at me, Mila! Have you truly forgotten who I am? I’m Gerald! I’ve been tirelessly looking for you throughout these four years ever since you went missing during that excursion!” explained Gerald, tears already forming at the corners of his eyes.

Hearing that, both of the women couldn’t help but look at each other. The taller woman—in particular—now had a wide frown as her eyelids twitched slightly.

Either way, though the bewildered short woman appeared like she wanted to say something, her friend quickly stopped her. Shaking her head, it was a clear indication that the tall woman didn’t want her friend to say anything unnecessary.

“...I think this man’s just mistaking me for the wrong person, sister. Look, we really don’t know who you are and it’s already getting late so we’ll be off first!” said the tall woman.

Following that, everyone’s eyes widened as both of them speedily flew toward the ocean! Gerald himself could only stare in utter disbelief as the two figures slowly disappeared from sight.

‘That... was clearly Mila, right? Why did she avoid me? It’s as if she doesn’t remember a thing about me! That... That’s simply impossible...!’ Gerald thought to himself.

Whatever the case was, Gerald wasn't about to let Mila leave him again. With that in mind, he instantly began giving chase!

However, he soon found out that the two women were experts at the lightness skill. After all, with not a trace in sight, he no longer had any idea which direction they could've possibly headed to.

Dejected, Gerald could only hover above the gentle waves, momentarily unable to reconcile with the fact that he had lost her yet again...

It wasn't long after before the two women arrived at an island quite far from where the party had been held...

Their feet finally touching the ground once they got to shore, they were instantly greeted by the sight of a shimmering giant ship that had been docked there.

Resplendently lit, the queer ship almost seemed to be magical in nature, evident by how it kept disappearing and reappearing on the same spot.

With how ethereal it looked, a person who wasn't paying attention could easily mistake the ship as nothing but a trick of the light.

Regardless, now that they had managed to shake Gerald off their trail, the short woman found herself saying, "That was really dangerous earlier, Xoie! That man... He seemed to know who Mila was! What bad luck that you just so happened to be dressing up her today!"

"You're telling me! Either way, while it's clear that he knows her, I wonder why Mila would even be acquainted with anyone here..." mumbled Xoie Quartermain who found the entire situation quite perplexing.

Both she and her younger sister—Xylina Quatermain—had been planning on having some fun for a while now, so they ended up sneaking off to the most crowded place they could find to momentarily enjoy themselves. Neither of them could have ever expected to bump into someone who actually knew Mila!

“Thinking back, I remember him saying that Mila was his lover! What spicy news! Let’s go tell Mila about it right now!” proposed Xylina.

“Hold on, sister!” replied Xoie.

“Hmm? What’s wrong?”

“...Let’s not tell her about this first. After all, if you do, it’ll be equivalent to you telling her that we left for earth without any good reason! With that said, if dad ever finds out about that, he’ll surely ground us! Besides, if Mila truly did know him, she would’ve definitely attempted to find him ages ago! Regardless, let’s not tell her about this first! Best not to stir up something that can be completely avoided!” explained Xoie.

“Well... Alright, sister... Still, I think you should head out with your own appearance in the future. You really don’t have to try so hard to compete with Mila’s beauty, you know? Don’t even dare to deny that you haven’t been trying to see which between the two of you is prettier ever since you came here. You’ve done it far too many times by this point. Aren’t you tired...?” replied Xylina rather casually.

“I get it!” retorted Xoie, a hint of humiliation on her face.

Raising her fair arm, she stared at the part where Gerald had earlier grabbed her...

From her childhood days, Xoie had remained extremely pure... With that said, this was the first time a man had ever grabbed her by her wrist.

Adding that to the fact that Gerald had the aura of a powerful person, the more Xoie thought about it, the more restless she became as strong emotions welled within her...

Chapter 1557

However, her train of thought was cut short when a pleasant voice called out, “Xoie? Xylina! Where have both of you been this entire time?”

Hearing that, Xylina then replied, “Ah! Mila! Well, we were earlier-”

Much to Xoie's relief, Xylina managed to recall their earlier promise in time which prevented her from blurting out everything.

Either way, after a slight nudge from Xoie, Xylina quickly recovered her wits as she continued, "...We... were earlier just having a look around out here! After all, the sea is rather beautiful at night, wouldn't you say?"

In response, Mila simply smiled subtly as she nodded before replying, "While I know it isn't exactly easy to negotiate with the King in the North, you have to remember that our adoptive father specifically chose us to complete the task. With that in mind, while things are currently a little boring, we should really try to obey adoptive father's orders and refrain from wandering around outside!"

"We get it Mila... Regardless, I've brought back some medicine that I ordered some subordinates of mine to get for you. You always seemed to suffer from serious headaches every night, so I thought I'd get you something to help calm your nerves. I got the idea when I heard that strange and valuable herbs existed on earth, you see. Following that, I got my subordinates to pick a few relevant ones for you!" explained Xoie as she took out the strange and invaluable medicine that her subordinates had prepared.

After handing it to Mila, Xoie then cleared her throat before asking, "...Speaking of which, how familiar are you with this world...?"

Mila had a rather mysterious history. After all, while she hadn't mastered any forms of training, she was an incredibly smart person. Due to that, the old lady always had Mila by her side. After some time, the old lady found herself appreciating Mila's efforts so much that Xoie's father felt that it was only right to adopt her into the family!

With that in mind, despite Mila only being his adoptive daughter, Xoie's father had chosen her to be the main spokesperson for the negotiation instead of her! Due to that, Xoie would be lying if she said she wasn't at least a little jealous.

After all, Xoie clearly more outstanding than Mila in terms of experience, appearance, and strength. Hell, Mila had begun her life here as nothing more but the old lady's maid! Why was she being given so much power and respect now? As if that wasn't already enough, Xoie had just found out that there was an extremely strong person who seemed to like her!

Speaking of that person, it was now clear that the rumors were true. Mila truly had come from earth!

“...Hmm? This world? How do I put this...? I find this place to be... both familiar and strange... Every time I come here, a mysterious feeling sweeps through me... What more, for some inexorable reason, my heart begins palpitating a lot more when I’m in this world! I really have no idea why that is myself!” replied Mila as she stared into the horizon, slight worry reflected in her eyes.

She truly had no idea what was wrong with her. For one, ever since she woke up again, she couldn’t remember a thing about her past...

Even so, the blurry figure of that man would always appear in her mind every single night... He wasn’t a strong-looking person by a long shot, but even so, Mila could still sense how strongly he loved her...

‘Who are you...? And why does my heart beat so much harder every time I’m here...?’

As the three sisters remained silent for a while, a figure suddenly dropped from the sky, landing close to where the trio was standing!

He appeared to be a male servant, and after bowing toward them, he then said, “Miss Smith and Miss Quartermain, my master has organized a national party in Yanam, and he’s invited all three of you to attend!”

“I see. Do thank Lord Yao on my behalf. Once we prepare ourselves, we’ll head over immediately!” replied Mila with a nod.

Meanwhile, a pained scream echoed across the walls of the Turnbull family’s mansion.

Staring at his son’s chopped-up corpse, Hooper—the master of the Turnbull family—felt extremely faint, hoping that this was all just a nightmare.

## Chapter 1558

The Turnbolls were a family that had existed for hundreds of years, and there were many exceptional and powerful people within that family who had influential backgrounds. Due to that, they had always behaved rather recklessly since nobody could really stand up against them.



With all that in mind, Hooper had never imagined that his son would die so horribly. Hugging onto the many pieces of his son's corpse, Hooper felt as a cocktail of grief, hatred, and wrath began brewing in his heart...

Upon seeing his reaction, everyone sensible enough immediately took a few steps back.

Still trembling, Hooper then turned to look at Lenox as he growled, "...Who... Who's responsible for killing my son...?!"

Quivering in fear, Lenox then replied, "T-the person who did it... is the one my family's been looking everywhere for! The deed was done by Gerald!"

"...What?! Gerald?!" roared Hooper, his eyes now a bloody-red as murderous intent exuded from every orifice on his body.

Watching all this play out, a luxuriously dressed middle-aged man—who had been sitting at the side—then declared, "I offer my sincerest condolences to you and your family, Hooper... Regardless, to avenge my nephew, I'll be ordering those from the army to capture that Gerald! Once we have him, I'll be sure to make him suffer terribly!"

Turning to look at the middle-aged man—who was from the royal family—the crazed-looking Hooper then replied, "There's no need for that! Once we have him, the Turnbells will be devouring every inch of his flesh and drinking all his blood!"

As he began weeping tears of blood, a voice suddenly shouted, "Do you honestly think that you two can capture Gerald? You're both just idiots! It's really no wonder why your son ended up dying so terribly! Regardless, knowing that boy's temper, you don't have to waste any effort trying to capture him. He'll probably be taking the initiative to come look for you! Hahaha! That silly, silly boy! I bet he thinks that massacring all of you will eventually force me out! Either way, your Turnbells have zero chance to escape his wrath by this point. Your threats won't work against him either since to him, you're all quite literally as easy to kill as mere ants!"

Upon hearing that, everyone turned to look at the source of the voice... And there, slowly walking toward them from the middle of the national banquet hall, was an old man donning black robes...

The second Lenox saw him, he instantly began sweating profusely as he said, “M-master...!”

Following that, he fearfully zipped his mouth tight before kowtowing in the direction of the old man.

Even Hooper and Greyson Leacock—the person who had come from the royal family in the Gloyv State—grew frightened when they realized that the old man was present.

After both of them greeted him, Hooper then asked, “About what you said earlier... How could you be so sure, master...?”

“How couldn’t I be? I’m the one who knows him best in this entire world!” retorted the old man as he slowly took off his black hood...

If Gerald was here to witness this, he’d surely have been extremely surprised to find out the true identity of that old man!

From how well the old man knew the boy, he assumed that Gerald would probably think something along the lines of, ‘It... It was grandpa Daryl this entire time...?! The person who I respected so much in the past?! I... I don’t think he’s my grandpa anymore... From what I can see, he’s now nothing but a schemer who’s been acting behind the scenes this entire time!’

Regardless, Gerald would probably feel shocked by his appearance as well. After all, Daryl’s eyes had now gone fully scarlet, and his lips were a frightening shade of purple and black. There were even hints of divine lines on his forehead that glowed red... Together, this combination made him look like a human who had made it halfway down the route of becoming a true devil...

Smiling subtly, Daryl then laughed before sneering, “I’ve spent way too much time and effort to get my major plan to this point! After all, I had to pretend to be his grandfather for quite a while in order to manipulate him without getting suspected! Even so, it was all worth it since I was able to make and watch him slowly mature... In a way, what I did isn’t unlike watching a seed I planted slowly grow and eventually blossom... However, a slight change in plans happened right before I was able to pick the fruits of my efforts! Though that’s beside the point. Regardless, I’m sure you now know why I said I know him so well!”

“...Wait. Don’t tell me that... Gerald is the product of the Herculean Golden Base...? I remember peculiar things happening in the sky over twenty years ago... Following that, the Herculean Golden Base had sent several forces to explore its product...” said Hooper, greatly bewildered.

As for Greyson, he took in a deep breath before adding, “...You’ve said before that this Herculean Golden Base is also known as the Herculean Primordial Spirit, right, master...? I also recall you saying that it’s the strongest power between heaven and earth... So strong, in fact, that whoever gains it will be able to achieve immortality! Thinking back, it was around fifty years ago when you saved a fisherman couple... Following that, you even gave them a lot of money in order to obtain the Herculean Golden Base that was about to befall their descendants... Since Gerald is so powerful, could it be that he’s that heir...?”

“Bingo. Either way, the demonic power granted me not only strength, but also the ability to foresee the future! With this much power, I’m only able to enjoy myself if my plan goes flawlessly! Sadly enough, I didn’t consider the fact that people would secretly try to help Gerald along the way! Thanks to them, he’s grown a bit too powerful for my taste and my plans were almost ruined!” grumbled Daryl as he clenched his fists tightly...

Chapter 1559

“Come again, master? You weren’t expecting him to get this powerful?” asked Greyson.

“Indeed, I haven’t. Humph. I’ve truly looked down upon the Herculean Primordial Spirit’s power to bring drastic change to people... After all, Gerald’s been able to enter the Rune Realm in just a few years! It isn’t even a stretch anymore to say that his training level is on par with mine! No matter how you look at it, achieving something like this should be impossible, no matter how talented the person is!”

“Whatever the case is, the most annoying thing about all this is the fact that the person who’s secretly been helping Gerald keeps encouraging him to grow stronger! If it wasn’t for him, Gerald wouldn’t have developed so rapidly to the point where I can’t even control him anymore! It’s exactly because of that that I have to act behind the scenes!” explained Daryl.

Upon hearing that, both Hooper and Greyson drew in cold breaths.

“The seven most powerful people from the Ringmasters of Obliteration rule above all... If Gerald truly is as strong as you say he is, does that mean that he’s on par with the seven Chakra Kings who own ungodly strength...? Is Gerald a Chakra King as well...?”

Left deeply stupefied by that realization, both men now knew that seeking impulsive revenge against Gerald was just going to be a suicide mission.

“Right again! And that’s how great the Herculean Golden Base’s power is! Regardless, it’s naturally a unique charm as well!” replied Daryl with a subtle smile.

“Then... do we really have no way to deal with Gerald, master...? I won’t be able to die in peace if I don’t avenge my son after he’s faced such a horrible death! I’m begging you, master, please! Think of some way to kill him!” pleaded Hooper.

“Not to worry, I wasn’t planning on allowing Gerald to continue developing like this anyway! It’s the reason why I captured his family members in the first place! Once I capture one other person, I’ll be able to control at least two-thirds of his life! He won’t be able to escape my grasp then! Hahaha!”

“Following that, I’ll activate Yanam’s national fortification formation—that’s been passed down since ancient times—, the great dragon extermination spell! With it, it won’t be too difficult to kill the current Gerald! After all, that child’s most fatal flaws are his soft-heartedness and his worry-filled heart! Too bad for him, I’m a nemesis that doesn’t care the least about ethics as long as I’m able to achieve my goals!” declared Daryl, clenching his fists once more.

When the duo heard that, their eyes widened so much that their eyeballs looked like they were ready to pop out...

“...M-master... Are we really going to be using the great dragon extermination spell? To even operate it, we’ll be needing...” muttered Greyson in a clearly troubled voice.

“As I’ve said, ethics bear little to no meaning to me as long as I’m able to achieve my goals. There’s nothing more important to me than snatching the Herculean Golden Base for myself. With that in mind, all the sacrifices and effort I’ve put into this mission are completely worthwhile to me!” sneered Daryl.

The great dragon extermination spell was something that the remarkable people from ancient times left behind. The spell was so formidable that even the powerful Chakra Kings would end up being swiftly taken out if they were hit by it!

Of course, such great power came at a hefty price, and Hooper and Greyson were well aware of that. Even so, neither of them dared to disobey Daryl's orders.

Knowing that they weren't going to be able to change his mind, Greyson then asked, "You earlier mentioned something about a fatal flaw of Gerald's, master... Could you elaborate on that...?"

"Hahaha! Well, remember how I said that the boy's too soft-hearted? Sure, we have his family with us and he cares deeply about them... However, once I manage to capture the woman he's in love with as well, everything will pretty much be in the bag! By that point, we just need to make sure that the great dragon extermination spell is successfully operated!"

"...I see! But where should we even begin looking for that woman...?" asked Hooper.

"Well, first off, her name is Mila Smith, and she's the woman of Gerald's life. Secondly, she's currently rushing toward this place all the way from Jaellatra! To ensure her capture, I had made sure to pull enough strings so that she would end up coming here herself!" replied Daryl with a smile.

"...What? Miss Smith? The one from Jaellatra? But master, we're in a cooperative relationship with that place! We can't just capture her!" said the bewildered Harper.

"Ah, about that... I'm saying it now that all that was just bullsh\*t! If you weren't aware, the forces from Jaellatra have been using all sorts of training resources—in recent years—to captivate the seven major Chakra Kings. In other words, while I'm the King of South Asia by name, to them, I'm simply their puppet, or at least that's what they think. I've had to suffer and endure pretending to be subservient to them all this time, just for the sake of getting the Herculean Golden Base... Once I've obtained it, Jaellatra won't even be worth caring about anymore! Regardless, once they arrive later, just act according to plan!" ordered Daryl in a commanding tone.

Trembling as they watched a great darkness exude from his body, everyone quickly nodded in agreement.

Seeing that, Daryl simply smiled smugly before muttering, "It's finally time for us to meet again, Gerald... Rest assured, it'll also be our last encounter!"

Moving back to Gerald, he was still in a slight daze...

After all, he had just gotten confirmation that Mila was alive! Though seeing her with his very own eyes filled him with endless joy, it appeared quite evident that she had lost her memories...

Even so, the most important thing was that she was still among the living. The fact that he was able to meet her again in this lifetime... It was a blessing, if anything. With that in mind, there was nothing to regret about in that brief encounter of theirs...

Chapter 1560

Though Gerald was pretty much at the level of a Chakra King now—meaning that he was at the top of the world—there were still many things that surprised him. For one, it hadn't occurred to him that Mila would get so strong throughout her absence.

Lifting his hand, he stared at his burnt palm... To think that the searing aura from Mila's body was actually able to breach his thunder essential qi with such ease...

As Gerald released a long sigh, over ten ghostly and strange-looking ships swiftly appeared before him, completely blocking his path in seconds...

Following that, it didn't take long for Master Ghost, Carlos, and the others to notice their presence as well.

Walking over to stand behind Gerald—who was already staring at the ships with his arms against his back—everyone then watched rather curiously as a white-haired old man—alongside ten other middle-aged people—leaped off one of the ships before slowly descending toward the ship that Gerald and the others were all on.

Now that they had a good look at the old man, both Carlos and Julian's eyes widened as they muttered in unison, "That... That's the leading priests from the Ringmasters of Obliteration!"

"The Ringmasters of Obliteration?" asked Gerald who clearly wasn't familiar with that name.

As the leading priest gently stepped onto Gerald's boat, he laughed before saying, "Indeed! As they said, I'm the leading priest! Regardless, it's a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Crawford! If I recall correctly, you tested your power with the aid of the Sceolium a few days back, correct? Well, when the Ringmasters of Obliteration learned that there was yet another Chakra King in the world, they instantly grew excited!"

Watching as the leading priest laughed aloud again, Gerald then placed his palms together before replying, "You flatter me, sir. However, I do believe that your arrival here today isn't just for the sake of congratulating me, correct?"

"Hahaha! You're rather straightforward, Mr. Crawford! However, you are correct! I'm here in person with an important mission from the Ringmasters of Obliteration!" replied the leading priest, choosing not to beat around the bush either.

Looking into the polite elder's clear eyes, Gerald couldn't help but have a good impression of him.

Due to that, he had no problem with inviting the elder into the cabin.

Once inside, the leading priest wasted no time and instantly said, "Since you've probably only heard snippets about the Ringmasters of Obliteration before, I wonder if you'd be willing to allow me to give a more detailed introduction about ourselves? Just to make things as clear as possible between us!"

Watching as the leading priest then took a sip of tea before smiling, Gerald casually replied, "I'm all ears."

"Excellent! See, the Ringmasters of Obliteration is an organization that's existed for thousands of years, and it's responsible for coordinating all the unbalanced forces around the world, just to ensure that an objective balance is always maintained. As the name implies, the organization consists of representatives who are sent out by the most powerful people across the globe. A united nation, if you will! Hahaha!"

"Regardless, there are currently seven extremely powerful people leading the Ringmasters of Obliteration, and they were chosen for good reason. All seven of them have managed to enter the Rune Realm, you see, making them the cream of the crop. With that in mind, their common discussions together oftentimes influences the direction of how things happen within the cultivation realm. Also, while they each have their own regions, it should be noted that none of them ever interfere with what

happens within the world's secular society. It's simply a limitation under the principles of the Ringmasters of Obliteration!"

"Moving on to its members, the seven powerful people include Murray Click, the King of Northern Europe, Petros Ambers, the King of the Northern Desert, Yellowleaf Laelia, the King of Southern Island, Sergius Leuke, the King of East Asia, Odin Duras, the King of Northern America, Feit Foreswift, the King of the Ocean, and as for the last one... I'm sure you know him well, Mr. Crawford! Hahaha! He's Daryl Crawford, the King of South Asia!"

Upon hearing that last name, Gerlad found his eyelids twitching slightly.

As it turned out, Daryl had not only hidden himself well, but he had also been busy to the point where he eventually managed to become the ruler of South Asia... That explained why he could do whatever he pleased.

Noticing a hint of resentment in Gerald's eyes at the mention of Daryl, the Priest Jenkins then added, "Each of the Chakra Kings owns magical powers and are pretty much omnipotent. Due to that, they each possess near-endless honor as well. With all that out of the way, I'm here to tell you that you're now one of the eight most powerful people in the world! In relation to that, the Ringmasters of Obliteration naturally wish for you to send us a representative, just as the others have done. Do you agree to that?"

"Well, since all this is for the sake of keeping the cultivation realm stable, there's no real reason for me to object. With that said, I agree!" replied Gerald.

"Thank you for your cooperation, Mr. Crawford! Speaking of which, we learned that the Sacrasolis Palace—that you're currently leading—is located North in Weston. With that in mind, the Ringmasters of Obliteration have given you the title of King of the North, a title of which they will be using to address you from now on!" said Priest Jenkin as he took out a wooden token and placed it before Gerald...

On it, were the characters, 'King of the North'!

Chapter 1561

"What wonderful news! From this moment forth, he'll be recognized by the cultivating realms all across the globe as the King of the North!" whispered Carlos and the others excitedly among themselves.



Gerald, however, didn't seem to care too much about this. After all, by this point, honor and recognition weren't really important to him anymore.

Regardless, Priest Jenkin then cleared his throat before saying, "Actually, there's one more thing that one of the Ringmasters of Obliteration entrusted me to tell you... Quite frankly, however, I'm not really sure if you'd like to hear it..."

Nodding in response, Gerald then replied, "Please share it with me, leading priest!"

"Well... I heard from the King of South Asia that Daryl's had some beef with you... As I've earlier said, the Ringmasters of Obliteration have a rule of not getting involved with the real world... I'm sure you can guess where I'm going with this, but the love-hate relationship between you and Daryl has gotten to the point where you actually killed the Turnbull family's young master! While the past is in the past, I've been told to advise the two of you to have a nice talk about all this... After all, in the end, this is all for the peace of the cultivating realm..." explained Priest Jenkin.

"First off, there's something wrong with that statement... You see, I'm not the one unwilling to let go of all this. In fact, you can trust me when I say that it's the other person who isn't letting me off! Regardless, now that you've all spoken up, I can agree to meet and have a talk with Daryl once the chance presents itself. However, I'll only be willing to do so if he first releases my family members!" replied Gerald in a straightforward but casual way so that even an idiot would be able to fully understand his message.

Daryl had been playing this game for the longest time, making precise calculations and even manipulating Gerald's ancestors, all for the sake of eventually being able to deal with Gerald.

With that in mind, it was evident that Gerald had been hurt far too much by that old man. Despite the good advice from the Ringmasters of Obliteration, Gerald wasn't about to just let that old man off that easily. Daryl needed to pay something back for all the damage he had done to him.

Putting his grudges against that old man aside, Gerald fully understood that the Ringmasters of Obliteration simply didn't want him to hurt innocent people or intervene with secular matters. Both of those were naturally no issue for Gerald.

“That’s great to hear! Now I can return and give the ringmasters a good explanation! Well, without further ado, I’ll be taking my leave then, Master Gerald!”

After the priest left, everyone instantly began excitedly chatting with each other.

“What a great and honorable title the King of the North is!”

As the others chatted on, Gerald knew for a fact that he wouldn’t be able to find peace yet. After all, there were simply far too many things he still needed to do in the future... All he could do in the meantime, was hope that his family members were all still safe and sound...

The second his thought ended, a loud ‘bang’ could be heard before the ship began shaking all of a sudden! Sensing that the waves beneath them were now churning violently out of the blue, Gerald found himself furrowing his brows, wondering what was going on.

By exerting some force, the waves instantly went calm again, though almost immediately after, a massive force attracted Gerald’s attention.

Activating his divine eye, Gerald scanned the area up ahead... before closing it again after only a brief moment.

“There’s no need to panic, everyone! I’ll be heading off for a while, but don’t worry, I’ll be back soon!” said Gerald rather casually before he slowly faded away...

Within the country of Yanam, tall mountains were everywhere. However, there was one mountain, in particular, that was so tall that it went above the clouds... Almost as though it connected the heavens with the earth, the mountain was aptly named Alview.

At that moment—above the many clouds beneath Alview’s peak—a man donning plain clothes could be seen standing on a tall porch, his arms against his back as he stared at the near-endless horizon of mountains and rivers before him...

With how tall Alview was, it was no wonder why nobody else was there.

All of a sudden, Gerald could suddenly be seen slowly walking over...

Staring at the old man's back with a bitter smile on his face, Gerald then said, "You know, I was devastated when I first realized the possibility of you being dead... After all, you were still my respectable grandpa whom I prided greatly before all this... I won't lie that at the time, I truly felt the warmth and love of family from you!"

"Oh? Is that so? Regardless, I have to say that I'm rather impressed that you've been able to grow so much in both ability and maturity from when we last met... Honestly, I was expecting a bit more surprise from you upon reuniting with me. Well, I guess this reaction of yours is pretty interesting too. Whatever the case is, quite a lot truly has happened throughout these few months!" replied Daryl as he slowly turned around...

Their eyes now meeting, both men seemed unexpectedly calm and composed...

Chapter 1562

"As you've said, I'm no longer the old me! Regardless, I'm sure you know why both of us are meeting today. Cutting straight to the chase, release my family right this instant! They have nothing to do with what's happening between us!" said Gerald in a casual tone.

"Release them you say? Oh, I will! I'll definitely be releasing Dylan and the rest! Of course, that includes Mila!" sneered Daryl.

"...What? You... You've even captured Mila?" replied Gerald, stunned.

"That's right! While she did get captured by those from the Sun League, she didn't die! Quite a bit happened after that, but essentially, I managed to get my hands on her while she was representing Jaellatra on a trip to earth! Either way, I know how much you want your family to be together, Gerald, which is why I'm honestly doing you a favor by reuniting her with Dylan and the rest!" said Daryl with a scoff.

"You... You despicable rat...!" growled the infuriated Gerald as he instantly made a sword finger gesture!

A split second later, a strong bolt of lightning shot toward Daryl's direction!

While it was true that Daryl's initial goal had been to trigger Gerald, now that he saw how strong Gerald's attack was, his eyelids couldn't help but twitch. This power... He truly was a Chakra King!

"Demon protection!" yelled Daryl as darkness rapidly encased the old man within a protective orb!

Had Daryl activated the skill a second later, the golden bolt would've surely struck him! Even so, the near-blindingly bright bolt wasn't done yet. Still pushing against Daryl's dark barrier, the force of it began creating gales that were so strong that it uprooted a lot of the vicinity's greenery, causing them to instantly wilt!

Shortly after, an explosive sound could be heard as even the porch that Daryl was still standing on—that wasn't protected under the dark orb—blasted into pieces! Following that, debris and dust began flying everywhere...

It honestly shouldn't have been that hard for Daryl to block Gerald's lightning attack. After all, he was a Third-rank Chara King as well.

What he hadn't anticipated, however, was the fact that Gerald's sword attack would behave this strangely! It was constantly changing!

From what Daryl could see, it looked like multiple pulses of power were being pushed into the golden bolt of lightning, making it larger and larger as more power flowed into it!

Eventually, a crack could be heard, and before Daryl knew it, the shadowy barrier had shattered not unlike broken glass!

This wasn't good! Immediately retracting his power, Daryl then made a mad dash away from the incoming attack!

Following that, the ground almost seemed to explode as the lightning bolt shot right for the cliff opposite of them, leaving a deep gash that was at least four meters deep!

Upon seeing that, Daryl quickly found himself stumbling backward till the back of his soles touched the cliff's edge...

Even after managing to stabilize himself, Daryl's breath was heavy and his eyes wide open as the utterly flabbergasted old man muttered, "...What... What kind of attack even was that? Where did you learn that from?!"

"Just so you know, aside from Thunder Eruption, there exists another skill called the Ninth-sky Blade. As a trivia, this skill was specifically designed to counter evil powers like yours!" explained Gerald in a frigid tone.

"...How incredible... It truly appears that you've inherited all of Liemis's powers... However, allow me to remind you that both of us are Third-rank Chara Kings, Gerald. I hope you don't assume that I'll lose to you, just because you have an extra skill or two! Regardless, I've been feeling a bit worn out in the past few days. With that said, what do you say to a duel at Yanam's dragon tower at noon tomorrow? Since we're having a decisive battle on who lives or dies, I'll be sure to bring your family members along as well!" growled Daryl in an icy tone as he placed his hands against his back.

While Daryl had a poker face on, a steady stream of blood was already dripping from his torn palms and purlicues. Even the veins on his trembling arms were now extremely visible as they pulsed wildly due to all the stress they had just faced.