

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.

“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 Terrence.

“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...?"

“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 Young Master Dun 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 Wafarer, 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 Wafarer. After glancing briefly at Terrance and the others, he then whispered something into the manager's ears.

Looking momentarily stunned, Manager Wafarer then nodded before saying, "...I understand!"

Watching as the young man left, Terrance then looked at Manager Wafarer 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 Wafarer 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 Wafarer—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.

Chapter 1464

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, this 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!"

“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 accessed 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...

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!