

Chapter 856

There was a rather bitter smile on Gerald's face as he said that.

"Hmm? Why's Shane back inside?"

Before anyone could even react to that statement, a scream of shock echoed through the hall.

It wasn't long after before everyone saw Shane and his subordinates retreating back into the living room, and for good reason too.

A powerful-looking woman made her appearance seconds later, and following behind her, was a group of extremely intimidating men who all appeared to be equally strong.

'Who... Who could this possibly be...?' Lady Yalaman thought to herself as the corners of her lips twitched.

Bea, on the other hand, was full of awe and astonishment as she looked at the young and beautiful woman. After all, she had witnessed with her very own eyes how Shane had retreated in fear within that woman's presence.

"What an absolute coincidence, Shane! We meet again!" said the woman as she chewed on her gum while looking at the terrified man.

"I-It has, miss! It's truly been forever!" stuttered Shane, his face dripping with cold sweat.

"President Crawford!" greeted Chairman Jagger and the others as they bowed respectfully toward her.

"P-President Crawford...?"

Seeing that all the big shots were bowing toward the young lady, Lady Yalaman bowed slightly herself. She wasn't against doing so since the new woman truly felt extraordinarily powerful and imposing.

“Grandma!” shouted Bea as she began moving toward her. However, Gerald stuck an arm out, a sign for her to remain standing by his side.

“W-who is she, cousin?” asked Bea nervously as her adorable face blushed.

Smiling, he then patted her on the head before looking toward the woman and saying, “Sister, this here is our cousin! She goes by the name of Bea!”

“...Sister? ...Huh? She’s my other cousin... Jessica?” said Bea as she covered her mouth in excitement. After all, she had never known what either of her cousins looked like for the longest time. Today, she was finally able to see what Jessica looked like as well!

“Well hello there, Bea! What a pretty little dear you are!” said Jessica as she walked toward Bea and held on to her hands.

“Jessica?” said Lady Yalaman, her eyes opened wider than ever.

‘Could... Could she truly be my granddaughter...?’

“While it’s our first time meeting today, I’m afraid that my gift isn’t anything special, Bea... I do hope that my humble present will be to your liking...” said Jessica.

As soon as her sentence ended, one of her subordinates immediately walked toward Bea and held out a box.

The moment Bea opened the box, an extremely valuable object was revealed, and its resplendence sent waves of awe among those who saw it.

“That... That’s the legendary moonstone, isn’t it?! Oh my god!” shouted someone from within the crowd, unable to hold their astonishment.

While many of the guests were astonished, many others—like Mae and the girls—were left extremely jealous.

So it turned out that Gerald and his family were this powerful! To think that they hadn't even asked for his Line contact information! Thinking about it now, Mae and the others were filled with remorse.

“Go on Bea! It's a gift from your cousin! Take it already!” squealed Catherine in sheer delight.

Rose, Yura, Ysabel, and many others were left absolutely stupefied by the turn of events.

Once the moonstone was taken, Jessica looked toward Lady Yalaman before greeting her in a soft voice.

“T-the pleasure is mine!” said Lady Yalaman excitedly as she nodded toward Jessica.

It took her a while to notice, but she realized at that moment how different Jessica and Gerald were.

After all, though she had already seen much at her age, she was surprised at how nervous she could still get when facing somebody like Jessica.

Upon hearing what Lady Yalaman had to say, Jessica turned around and scanned through the crowd. Nobody dared to even look into her eyes, and all of the guests found themselves lowering their gazes.

At long last, her gaze fell on Bea once more.

She then smiled before saying, “Bea, if you haven't heard, Gerald and I prepared three gifts for you! Since both of us have already given one each, we'll now present the third and final gift!”

Chapter 857

“Another gift?” said several of the guests as they awaited eagerly for it. After all, one would surely wonder what else the two powerful Crawford siblings had to offer after seeing the moonstone and all the presidents Gerald had invited.

“Since Gerald and I have each already presented a gift, the third gift will be given to you by our sister-in-law!” said Jessica as she turned to look back.

As the others followed her gaze, they saw that a group of servants—led by an extremely graceful-looking woman—were now walking down the hall toward them.

Even from afar, everyone could tell how gentle the beautiful woman’s disposition was. That made the atmosphere even tenser than it already was.

“What a beautiful woman!” shouted several of the people as they watched her make her way into the living room.

“Sister-in-law?” said Bea, shocked.

The sister-in-law in question, was none other than Lyra.

As she turned to look at Gerald, he simply lowered his head and said nothing. After all, he was well aware that he wouldn’t be able to explain the affair properly in such a short amount of time.

“It’s a pleasure to meet you, Grandma,” said Lyra as she stood beside Gerald while bowing slightly toward Lady Yaleman with a smile on her face.

Lady Yaleman herself was smiling broadly as she nodded back at her.

“What an astounding woman my granddaughter-in-law is! Absolutely wonderful!” said Lady Yaleman between nods.

Though she had lived a long life, this was honestly the first time she had ever felt this much glory and pride from her family members.

“You must be Bea, right? Here! This is a gift from your cousin and I!” said Lyra as she smiled while looking at Bea.

As soon as she said that, one of her subordinates walked up to her and presented Bea with a contract.

Blinking, she then looked at the contract before her as Lyra explained, “From today onward, you’re the president of the Trustdeck Group in Yanaken, Bea. Aside from that, you’ll also be the one in charge of all the properties belonging to the Crawford family up North!”

“...Huh?”

It was the only reply Bea could process in her stupefied state as she looked at the smiling Lyra.

Even Lady Yaleman was stunned speechless.

“The Trustdeck Group belonged to the Crawford family...? And now Bea’s the president of the Trustdeck group?!”

All of the people present had bulging eyes as they realized what that meant.

After all, even if they completely disregarded the fact that all the properties up North—that the Crawfords owned—now belonged to Bea, with her new position as the Trustdeck Group’s president, the other three large families in Yanaken would’ve already suffered a terrible loss!

As a surge of emotions filled Rose, making her feel faint, Mae and the other girls immediately began hopping in excitement as they cheered while holding on to Bea’s hands.

No wonder Chairman Jagger and the other big shots had taken the initiative to celebrate Bea’s birthday! It explained why they had asked her for future guidance regarding their businesses as well!

As it turned out, Mr. Crawford had been looking for the perfect opportunity to hand the group and properties over to Bea for a while now.

Lady Yalaman was now filled with ecstasy. Not only had the Crawford siblings help resolve her issues with the Long family, but they had also given Bea so many priceless gifts!

While Lady Yalaman was feeling both grateful and excited, simultaneously, she was also feeling another emotion.

After the situation calmed down a bit, Jessica turned to look at Shane who hadn't even dared to move from his earlier spot.

"I'm in a rather good mood today, so I won't torture you, Shane! Speaking of which, I trust that you remember how your father looked like that year in Mayberry, correct?" said Jessica coldly.

"I-I haven't forgotten, Miss!" replied Shane as he rapidly nodded.

Back then, Jessica had kicked both Shane and his father out of Mayberry after discovering their direct involvement with a certain incident.

"I'm glad you haven't forgotten! Now listen closely. If you ever come face to face with another Yalaman in the future, avoid them. If you don't, you only have yourself to blame for what I do to you next! Now get out of my sight!" ordered Jessica.

"R-right away, Miss!" said Shane as he bolted from his spot.

"Come back here! Who do you think you are to leave like that! Return and roll all the way out!" growled Jessica.

Shane could feel his lips twitch slightly. After all, he had done the same thing that year when he and his father were kicked out of Mayberry. Though it was a moment of *déjà vu*, he didn't even dare to sigh as he lay down on the floor and began rolling toward the entrance.

'F*cking hell! To think that Bea would have such powerful people on her side!'

Chapter 858

After the party ended, Rose, Second aunt, and many others could barely even recover from everything that they had just witnessed.

Though they had the idea of fawning over Jessica a little earlier, all they received were frigid glares from her. They were so intimidated by Jessica that in the end, none of them could even say a word to her, let alone please her!

Bea had shot to stardom in just a single day.

“So it turns out that Dylan had such great influence and power! What a surprise!” said Lady Yalaman sadly after hearing a summarization of what had happened from Gerald.

It was now night time and including Lady Yalaman herself, a few others were standing inside her bedroom.

“The grudges of old have no reason to continue existing, grandma... It’s time to let go of them and have our families reunite!” said Gerald.

“Are they though? I was so cruel to Yulia that year... I even made Bea’s father suffer so terribly! Since Yulia’s so close to her fifth brother, she definitely still hates me... Who wouldn’t hate a mother like me!” wailed Lady Yalaman as she cried vehemently.

“That simply isn’t the case! In fact, mom has missed you this entire time! While you probably weren’t aware of it, mom’s tried to visit you on numerous occasions! Though she never made it past the front gates, I’m sure that’ll change in the following year!” added Jessica.

Hearing that, Lady Yalaman raised her head, feeling tremendously moved. She was now filled with deep remorse as she recalled how her younger self had held on to those stubborn old-fashioned principles.

If it wasn’t for her, her family would’ve continued living in peace... Now that was a nice thought...

What more, if none of that had happened, then the Long family wouldn't have ever found a reason to bring trouble to her family in the first place!

"That's not all, grandma. My aunt's always been thinking about my dad! She's even found several doctors for him! As if that wasn't enough, she was the one who had sponsored me so that I could complete my studies!" said Bea next.

"She... She sponsored your studies as well...?" replied Lady Yalaman as she began crying even louder.

That's right... Bea was also a young lady of the Yalaman family... Yet she was placed in such a difficult position that she wasn't even capable of completing her studies without the aid of her daughter... To think that she was left unaware of all this...

In the end, even wild beasts looked after their offspring.

Reminiscing her life, Lady Yalaman realized how much time she had spent on pursuing wealth and fame. As a result, she had completely neglected the importance of familial affection.

"I... I'm so sorry... To Yulia and your father... To Bea... And to you and your sister as well..." said Lady Yalaman with a heavy sigh as she looked at both Gerald and Jessica.

As the four chatted late into the night, at the same time, a few others were feeling upset beyond words.

The shattering sound of a wine bottle could be heard as an extremely drunk man shouted, "Wine! Give me more wine!"

"You've already drunk a lot, Mr. Yalaman! Please stop and just go home for now!" advised the bar's manageress.

In response, Yura slapped her right in the cheek!

“You mother*cker! So even you’re looking down on me now, huh?! Well that’s just great! Just absolutely fantastic! Just pour me my god d*mned wine already!” roared the gloomy-looking Yura as the manageress—who was now cupping her swollen cheek—ran off to get more wine.

When she finally returned, a few people stood in her way, preventing her from getting any closer to Yura.

“You’re... Could you be Mr. Long...?” said the manageress in surprise when she realized who was leading all those men.

“Hand that over to me. And if you know what’s good for you, let nobody enter this place without my permission!” said Mr. Long as he took the bottle of wine from her hands.

The moment his sentence ended, one of his subordinates took out a large wad of cash and flung it toward the manageress.

Seeing that, she immediately nodded before saying, “I-I understand!”

“Mr. Yalaman! Here’s your wine!” said Shane as he placed the bottle before the drunk man.

Just as Yura was about to grab the bottle, he narrowed his eyes at the familiar person before finally realizing who was there with him.

“Why are you here?”

“Hah! Under such circumstances, who else would be able to come over to meet you? Just look at you. To think that the once almighty Mr. Yalaman has now been reduced to such a pathetic state!” sneered Shane.

“Humph! As if the position you’re in is any better! Didn’t you have to roll all the way out to the entrance earlier! Haha!” replied Yura before bursting into a fit of laughter.

Hearing that, Shane's eyes immediately turned stern as he said, "It seems like we really need to knock some sense back into you, Mr. Yaleman!"

As soon as he said that, the door was kicked open and over ten men rushed in!

Chapter 859

One of the men immediately yanked Yura by his hair before slapping him several times.

It was only when Yura saw one of Shane's other subordinates brandishing a knife at him when he finally returned to his senses.

"L-let's not act recklessly now, Mr. Long! If anything, let's just talk it out!" stuttered Yura as his fear grew by the second.

"Hah! If you were a bit more aware of how to properly behave, then I wouldn't have needed to treat you like this in the first place! Regardless, why are you speaking as though I've come after you looking for trouble? I'm here for your own good! After all, nobody would've ever been able to guess that Bea had the Crawford siblings on her side. As a result, she's now the most influential big shot in all of Yanken! While the Long family will surely suffer a lot from that, I'm sure the one suffering the greatest loss is you, Mr. Yaleman! Don't you agree? Once the future heir of your family, now reduced to a nobody, am I not right?"

Hearing that, Yura clenched his fists hard before asking, "What exactly do you wish to say, Mr. Long?"

"Me? Oh, I'm not saying anything! Speaking of which, I heard that Lady Yaleman has announced that Bea will be the Yaleman family's heir! Such a pitiful position you're in... Not only did you not gain anything at the end, but Bea could very well already be plotting to have her revenge against you and your family!"

Shane watched as Yura's gloomy expression turned worse with every word he said. Once he was sure Yura couldn't get any gloomier, Shane then added, "Well, since you've pretty much already hit a dead end, why don't you cooperate with the Long family? If we're going down anyway, we may as well fight till our very last breaths. If all goes well, the Long family may end up not suffering that massive a loss and you may still be able to take control over the Yaleman family! In fact, you could even end up becoming the family's master if you join us!"

“You... What...? What’s your plan...?” asked Yura after thinking about Shane’s words for a while.

“Interested, are we? Let’s discuss it then!” replied Shane, a wicked smile on his face as he nodded.

It was a little before dawn some three days later when a team of cars left the Yalaman family house.

“Since your family is both powerful and influential, it doesn’t surprise me that you know about the Moldells in Yanken... While the last I’ve contacted them was a good few years ago, I distinctly remember that their family owes me a single favor. However, as I’ve said, it’s been years since we last met and I’m not sure whether they’ll still be willing to bother with families like us...” said Lady Yalaman as she held onto Gerald’s right hand in the car.

After getting to know Gerald a little more in the past few days, Lady Yalaman found herself adoring her gentle grandson more and more.

As a result, upon learning about the details of Mila’s and Dylan’s younger brother’s disappearances, she readily agreed to confront the Moldell family together with Gerald.

Since they had time to spare before actually arriving at the Moldell family’s house, Lady Yalaman told Gerald the gist of how she got acquainted with the Moldells in the first place.

In short, it was mostly coincidental.

Back then, a junior member of the Moldell family was carrying out a mission. Unfortunately, his mission was thwarted and his enemies immediately began hunting him down. It just so happened that the garden he managed to escape into belonged to the Yalamans.

At the time, Lady Yalaman was still in her forties and, as she said herself, she wasn’t a stubborn bigot like how she eventually came to be.

The seriously injured child she saw in the garden was aged around sixteen, and being as compassionate as she was back then, she took him in and saved his life. Days later, the child left yet she didn’t think much about it.

It was years later—when Lady Yalaman had become the master of the Yalaman family—when the two finally crossed paths again. Back then, she was bringing her son and daughter out to attend an occasion of sorts. Halfway through, however, the Yalaman family’s business rivals blocked their path! It was a planned assault!

During their most perilous moment, a person stepped forward and saved Lady Yalaman and her children. Though it took her a while, she soon came to realize that her savior was the child she had saved years ago. He had returned to repay her kindness!

Before he left, he gave her an address and told her that he would lend her a hand once more if she needed his aid in the future.

It had been almost twenty years since she last had any contact with him. She was honestly unsure whether the child even remembered the promise anymore.

That was about the gist of the situation.

Eventually, the car arrived at a mountainous area.

The entire area seemed to be filled with an unnerving miasma. The fact that the trees grew so spacious only served to increase the feeling of unease.

“What a large mountain... Are you sure this is the place, grandma? We haven’t passed by a single person in a while...” said Gerald as he got out of the parked car to have a look around, feeling puzzled.

As he helped Lady Yalaman out, she firmly replied, “That child wouldn’t lie to me... This is the exact address he gave to me, so I’m definitely sure he’ll be here.”

After scanning through the area once more, Gerald realized that there was a wooden house a little higher up. It seemed to still be inhabited by someone.

“...Wait for me here, grandma. I’m just heading up there for a bit to see if I can find anyone. If there is, I’ll ask them if we’re at the exact location...”

Chapter 860

Gerald was honestly feeling slightly disappointed as he made his way toward the house.

‘Would a large family even be able to live in such a secluded place...?’

Just as he was a few steps away from the wooden house’s door, Gerald watched as an old man—who looked to be over sixty—exited the house.

Though the old man was dressed like a villager, his clothes were rather clean.

The second he noticed Gerald, he was momentarily stunned though he quickly hid his shock with a smile before asking, “Well hello there, mister! Can I help you with anything?”

“It’s a pleasure to meet you, sir! I’d just like to ask whether you know of any large families living up here on this mountain,” replied Gerald.

“Large families? Haha! Take a good look around, mister! There’s nothing but mountains and trees all around! I’m only living here since I guard the forests! Nobody else here but me!” explained the man as he continued to smile.

“I trust my friend who told me to look for him here. Are you absolutely sure that there aren’t any other families living atop this mountain?” said Lady Yalaman as she slowly inched closer to the two under the support of a subordinate.

Hearing that, the old man squinted his eyes slightly as he scanned both Lady Yalaman and Gerald from head to toe.

“...Friend? Pray tell, what kind of friend could you possibly mean? I do wonder if that friend of yours left a token of sorts with you...?” asked the old man rather casually.

When she heard that, Lady Yalaman seemed to realize something.

“...Yes... Yes, he did give a token to me. A wooden one!” said Lady Yalaman as she fished around her purse before finally taking out a small wooden token.

Upon giving the wooden token a good look, the old man found himself raising an eyebrow.

“What exactly is your relationship with the Yalamans in Yanken?”

“I’m the master of the Yalaman family. It’s been a good many years since I’ve last met with the person who handed this token to me...”

“I see. Well, that’s all I need to know. Follow me, though only the two of you are allowed to come. Any others will have to remain here,” said the old man.

It hadn’t occurred to Gerald earlier that the forest was merely a distraction to allow the Moldells to continue living in seclusion. So they really were living here!

After helping his grandmother get atop the old man’s bullock cart, Gerald got on as well as the old man began transporting them down a small path that went deeper into the forest.

Meanwhile, Sheldon was standing beside Bea back inside the Yalaman family house.

“Here are all the foreign loans of the Yalaman family from the past few years. I’ve summarized most of them, Miss Yalaman. Do have a look,” said the butler.

“I appreciate it, Sheldon,” replied Bea with a smile.

She had been given special orders from Lady Yalaman before she left together with Gerald. Until she returned, all affairs of the Yalaman family, both major and minor, would be left under Bea’s care.

As Bea was looking through the loans, Yura burst into the room before shouting, “S-something’s gone terribly wrong, Sheldon!”

“Young master! What happened?” asked Sheldon immediately.

“It’s my parents and that piece of land! Since they couldn’t reconcile with the fact that they had been tricked by Shane, my mom got into an argument with him when they were handing over the land! As a result, Shane has now captured both of my parents!” explained Yura.

“How could such a thing happen...? Shane is getting increasingly daring! And to think that he’s still doing such things even after receiving that warning from Miss Crawford!” said Sheldon resentfully.

“Regardless, matters regarding the Yalaman family all fall under Miss Yalaman now. Why don’t you ask her about it?” added Sheldon.

Hearing that, Yura’s left eye twitched slightly before he turned to look at Bea.

“Bea... Though it’s true that my mom’s acted rashly toward you in the past, she’s still your aunt! Please help your uncle and aunt... We can’t allow the Longs to do this!” pleaded Sheldon in an apologetic tone.

Hearing that, Bea took in a deep breath before remaining silent for a brief moment.

“Cousin... Please... If you don’t do something now, something bad could happen to my parents... Believe me when I say that Shane truly wants to vent all his anger out on my parents!”

“...Fine. Sheldon, make some arrangements and get us some subordinates. I’m heading over to have a look at the situation myself.”

Regardless of how terribly he and his family had treated her in the past, Bea felt that it would simply be too cruel not to lend him a hand.

Once all the preparations were made, she headed out with Yura.

Chapter 861

“Didn’t you say that your aunt was here? The construction zone is completely devoid of life!” said Bea within a parked car.

The site itself was connected to their family. After all, it was initially her uncle’s project. However, due to a very serious issue with her uncle’s loan, any further development of the construction zone was completely terminated.

While that was so, since the handover ceremony was held just the other day, a few people should still be present. The fact that nobody was there was honestly what surprised Bea the most.

“Humph! Your aunt’s waiting for you inside there!” shouted Yura in a cold tone, a stark contrast to his desperate voice just minutes ago.

“...What do you mean by that, Yura?” said Bea, realizing now that something was terribly off with him.

“Oh, nothing really! Since we’re already here anyway, why not just follow me in after a little chat!” replied Yura with a wicked grin before locking the car doors.

Frowning, Bea then casually said, “I’m not sure what you’re up to, but if it truly is nothing, then I’m calling Sheldon now to tell him that everything’s fine.”

The moment her cell phone was in sight, however, Yura snatched it away from her! As soon as he did that, several people rushed out from the building, surrounding the car in seconds!

“Call? Now why would you do that? After all, as I’ve said, you’re getting out of the car together with me later, cousin!” growled Yura intimidatingly.

“So you did deceive me! Did you conspire with my uncle and the others to lead me to your trap? Do you have any idea what you’re doing now?” said Bea.

“Any idea? Haha! Under these circumstances?! Cousin, I really couldn’t be bothered about things like that at this point! The only thing I know is that the family’s properties must never fall into a b*tch’s hands such as yourself! Never, I say!” roared Yura.

“Do you have any idea how long I’ve been planning to become the family heir? Or how much I’ve had to fawn on grandma to please her? After countless hours of dedication—even from when I was young—I was so close to getting my hands on the family’s properties together with my dad! And the day finally came! Yet what the f*ck happened at the most crucial moments? You did! You, Bea! You ruined all my efforts and fantasies, you b*tch!” hollered Yura almost maniacally.

Yura was honestly well aware of how crazy his current actions were. However, he knew that both he and his parents had run out of options. He needed to take such drastic measures for the sake of his future prospects.

He also knew that simply trying to force his way back into becoming the Yaleman family’s head wasn’t going to happen since his family had already personally offended the powerful and influential Crawfords. It wasn’t hard for him to imagine how his family would continue living in the future. Knowing that fuelled him to continue his current plans till the very end.

“Bea, I won’t allow you to even start planning your revenge on me! You’ll never get it!” screeched Yura.

By now, Bea was already in tears. However, she wasn’t crying out of fright. Rather, it was because she now knew that internal familial fights like these were still happening.

While it had been her top priority to solve such issues from the moment Lady Yaleman had left her in charge, to think that the first instance of her finding out that such conflicts still existed would be so extreme.

“When did I ever say that I wanted to take revenge on you?” said Bea between tears.

“There’s no need to play dumb, Bea! You now own everything whereas my family owns nothing! Isn’t the first phase of your revenge already in action?! After I’m done dealing with you, my family and I will return in charge of the Yaleman family! My family will only rest easy once you’re completely out of the picture!” replied Yura before unlocking the car’s doors and dragging her out.

“Time to switch locations! Be sure to guard her properly!” ordered Yura.

“Don’t be too happy too soon, Yura! You won’t be able to just inherit the family after capturing me! After all, grandma and Gerald aren’t even back yet! Once they return, you’ll regret it! Besides, Sheldon is probably rushing over now, so you better think about what you’re doing while you can!” said Bea.

“Hah! I’ve already considered him while planning all of this! He won’t come, trust me! Tell me Bea, did you know that he has a granddaughter whom he absolutely adores? She’s studying in a kindergarten in one of the Yaleman family’s buildings you know? If there aren’t any issues, my mom should be talking to him about this now! Haha! That old fart will be sure to remain silent for good! So just give up already, Bea!” shouted Yura with a monstrous expression befitting his evil nature.

Chapter 862

It was at that moment when a phone belonging to one of Yura’s subordinates began to ring.

“It’s Mr. Long, Mr. Yaleman,” said the subordinate.

“So you’ve actually sided with the Long family now! You’ve truly gone insane, Yura! And not just you, aunt and uncle must have lost their minds as well!” said Bea in disbelief.

“Just take her away already!” ordered Yura as he waved a hand impatiently before answering the call.

“Everything’s going smoothly, Mr. Long. You better not forget the promise you’ve made me.”

“But of course I haven’t! I’d never forget such a promise, Mr. Yaleman!”

It was nearing night at the Yaleman family house and nobody seemed to have noticed anything particularly abnormal.

However, many family members did notice that Bea had been missing for the entire day, particularly Second aunt and her family who had been waiting to treat Bea and Catherine to a meal. Due to her absence for most of the day, they simply assumed that Bea was extremely busy.

When they enquired both Catherine and Sheldon about her whereabouts, neither knew where she was.

Eventually, Second aunt walked out of Bea's office in resignation as she shook her head and sighed.

"If only I knew she was going to end up becoming the family head, I would've treated her much better! With how tense our current relationship is, I wonder if treating her to a meal will even change anything..."

The day soon passed and on the morning of the second day, Second aunt and her family waited in front of Bea's office once more. However, even as noon approached, there wasn't any sign of Bea anywhere.

"Mom, let's just leave... There's probably no point in us waiting here like this... After all, Bea's different now! She's the most powerful big shot there is in the North! Why would she still be willing to even attend to us?" said Ysabel, dissatisfaction in her tone.

After all, Bea had risen the ranks so quickly that it made Ysabel extremely upset. She couldn't even categorize the feeling as simply feeling envious anymore.

As a woman, Ysabel knew that Bea would've already done the family proud if she had gotten married into a rich family. If she had just stuck to that, Ysabel wouldn't be feeling such complex emotions right now!

But of course, she had to go out of her way to become a powerful big shot! She was now truly a strong and independent boss.

After thinking about it for a moment, Ysabel realized that she couldn't be envious anymore since there was literally zero chance she would be able to ever top Bea ever again. In fact, if she pleased Bea, there was a chance that she would still be able to become the second most important female boss in the area. Now that would be a good feeling...

"Be patient, Ysabel... After all, as you said, Bea is now different from before..." said Second aunt.

Just as she said that, Catherine came rushing over.

“Good morning, Catherine! Why isn’t Bea here with you?” asked Second aunt.

“I wanted to ask you the same thing! Hasn’t Bea arrived at work?” replied Catherine in an anxious tone.

“We’ve already been here for at least three hours! We haven’t seen her at all!” explained Ysabel.

“How odd... I’ve failed to contact her on the phone since yesterday and Sheldon hasn’t seen her either... Where could she have gone? Knowing her, it’s unlikely that she ever switches her phone off, even if she’s busy!” said Catherine.

Hearing that, Second aunt and Ysabel looked at each other. After a brief moment, Second aunt then asked, “Could... something have happened to her? Is her phone still off even now?”

Helplessly, Catherine nodded, “Yes... It’s not been on this entire time!”

“What should we do?” asked Second aunt, unsure of how to even process the sudden turn of events.

Though it took her a while, she soon snapped out of it and began consoling Catherine.

“Worry not, Catherine... After all, Bea’s both influential and powerful now! I’m sure she’s fine! Let’s just wait a little longer... If she isn’t back soon after, we’ll come up with something else...”

With motherly concern reflected in Catherine’s eyes, she could only nod slightly at her suggestion.

With that, even the second day soon came to pass... Then the third... and the fourth...

“What did the police say?” asked Yuma—the eldest son—hurriedly.

It had now been seven days since Bea's disappearance and the rest of the Yalemans were now having a family meeting.

"Up till this point, we haven't even found any clues! What on earth could have happened to Bea...?"

Chapter 863

Bea's disappearance had caused a massive uproar among those living in Yanken, and that included several big shots from Jacksonville. Since they were aware that Mr. Crawford wasn't around, they had personally sent their own subordinates out to search for Bea in the meantime.

While they did suspect a few people to be involved, in the end, there simply weren't enough clues to go with. Bea just seemed to have vanished into thin air!

Though Catherine herself wanted to contact the Crawfords from Northbay, only Bea had the means to contact them! Nobody else knew how to even get to them!

They weren't even sure if Bea was still alive. After all, it had already been seven days since anyone had seen her. From the day she realized that her daughter could very well already be dead, Catherine had had an extremely haggard expression etched on her face.

Today, the Yaleman family's members were all gathered to discuss how to progress with Bea's disappearance. Though everyone at the meeting was solemn, Catherine herself was wailing her eyes out.

Nobody spoke a word and everyone simply lowered their heads as they faced the distressed mother.

Among the Yalemans, however, Yura and Rose secretly smiled as they exchanged gazes with each other.

The plan had worked flawlessly. After all, with the help of the Longs, of course they wouldn't be able to find any clues from their investigations! Even if the others were to somehow doubt them, with the Longs on their side, nobody would be able to touch both mother and son.

"Mrs. Yaleman! Both Mr. Crawford and the chairman have returned!" announced a servant excitedly.

“What? Gerald’s finally come back?” said Catherine as she jolted up and rushed outside.

Several of the other Yalemans followed them out as well, everyone but Yura and his mother.

“...M-mom... Gerald’s back!” said Yura as he gulped while trembling.

“Fear not! There’s nothing to be afraid of! So what if they’ve returned?” soothed Rose calmly.

Hearing that, Yura became much more assured that their plan would still work out in the end.

Gerald himself was helping Lady Yalaman out of the car. Despite being at her age, she had accompanied Gerald for the past eight days. It was natural for her to be this exhausted.

When he saw the other Yalemans coming out to welcome their return, he was about to greet them when Catherine staggered toward him before grabbing his arm and pleading, “G-Gerald! Thank god you’re finally back! Please! We have to save Bea!”

“...Save? What do you mean ‘save her’? What happened?” asked Gerald.

“Calm yourself, Catherine. Now explain slowly to us... What’s wrong?” added Lady Yalaman.

“Bea... She’s... She’s gone missing for a week now! We haven’t been able to locate her at all!”

“What?!” replied Gerald, stunned.

To think that something would actually happen to Bea during his eight-day absence!

“Elaborate. What led to her disappearance?” asked Gerald rather anxiously.

Gerald was this anxious since Bea and her family were particularly important to him. It was natural for him to feel concerned if anything were to happen to any of them.

Hearing that, Catherine then told them the gist of what she knew.

“Bea’s such a nice girl... She hardly offends anyone! Who would anyone even want to harm her?” said Catherine.

“Let’s not be so pessimistic first, aunt. I’ll send some of my men to begin investigating the matter right this instant! Worry not, for whoever the culprits are, I’ll make sure each and every one of them come to regret ever being born into this world should they have laid their fingers on her!” declared Gerald as he continued supporting Lady Yalaman all the way back into the house.

“W-what should we do now, mom?” said Yura as he began trembling violently.

While the mother and child had first assumed that Gerald was a soft-hearted person, his bloodshot eyes that stemmed from his anxiety to find the culprits honestly frightened both of them. His reaction was not even close to what they had envisioned!

They had thought that he would be dispirited and nervous after finding out about Bea’s disappearance! Never would they have imagined that he could express such viciousness and cruelty!

Rose herself was now feeling intimidated, wondering what would happen if Gerald ever found out that they were involved. Would he end up ruining their entire family...?

Chapter 864

Though the thought of it alone was terrifying, Rose kept her cool.

“Worry not, we’ll just act accordingly. Though the Longs aren’t as powerful as Gerald, their family still wins in terms of size and history. I’m sure it won’t be that easy for Gerald to sniff us out!”

Soon after, Gerald issued a command for all the members of the Yalaman family to remain inside the Yalaman family house unless he permitted them to leave.

“There’s something I’m not sure whether I should tell you, Mr. Crawford,” said Philip to Gerald in a private room within the Yalaman family house a little later.

“Go on!” replied Gerald as he nodded.

“In all honesty, I find Yura and his family to be rather suspicious. After all, they clearly have a motive to do something like this,” said Philip.

At that, Gerald nodded before replying, “Indeed. I suspect them to be the culprits as well. I’ve already ordered a few people to investigate more about them. After all, his family is being a little too quiet this time around, contrary to how they usually behave. It simply feels off. While that’s the vibe I’m getting from them, I truly hope they aren’t involved this time around.”

At that moment, Sheldon knocked on the door before entering.

“You haven’t had any rest since you returned, sir. You must be exhausted. I’ve ordered a servant to brew you some soup,” said the butler.

“Thank you, Sheldon. How’s my grandmother? Is she doing alright?” asked Gerald.

“Lady Yalaman has been extremely depressed... She’s been crying for the longest time, sir. However, she’s now taking a rest...” explained Sheldon as he placed the bowl of soup before Gerald.

Just as Gerald was about to taste some of the soup, Sheldon opened his mouth though no words came out. In the end, he refrained from saying anything.

“Speaking of which, Sheldon... I remember Bea telling me something before I left about a week ago... If I remember correctly, she said that she wanted to help the Yalamans resolve the issue with the foreign loans... Did she manage to resolve them with the Long family? Or did something happen to her before she even managed to do anything?” asked Gerald as he lowered his bowl of soup at that moment.

“...Huh? Oh... No, Mr. Crawford... She... Wasn’t able to resolve it in time... The incident happened before she... managed to do so,” replied Sheldon.

"I see. Go ahead and take a rest for now," said Gerald as he smiled faintly.

"I will, Mr. Crawford. Do enjoy your soup while it's hot..."

"Definitely!" replied Gerald as he watched Sheldon leave the room.

"I'll investigate that old man immediately," said Philip in a cold voice the moment Sheldon left.

Gerald himself looked at the soup before shaking his head.

"From what I've heard, that man's always been honest and loyal his entire life... He's quite diligent too, though he's a terrible, terrible liar... He must have done something extremely embarrassing for him not to be able to even bring it up," said Gerald as he dumped the bowl of soup into a nearby dustbin.

After experiencing so many things, Gerald was no longer the gullible and naïve person whom he used to be. After all, he had already met so many wicked and vicious people who had put him in the most perilous of situations.

Despite that, he was still slightly reluctant to believe that those from the Yalman family had a part in all this. While he didn't particularly have a good relationship with Rose and her family, in the end, they were still his elders.

It was the reason why he refused to take the first step until concrete evidence was found. In a perfect scenario, he would very much have preferred the culprits to admit to their mistakes and consequently, correct them.

However, he knew that the possibility simply didn't exist. After all, there were now clearly people who had gone so far over the edge that they were willing to harm their own family members! It was almost as if they were forcing Gerald to use vicious tactics on them on purpose for the sake of resolving the issue.

"There's no need to investigate any further... Just force the truth out of them!" ordered Gerald.

Since they were now willing to directly harm him, Gerald was getting more and more worried about Bea's safety.

Gerald had previously assumed that they wouldn't harm Bea since they would still be able to gain the same benefits by getting close to her. What more, they were still family in the end. Surely they wouldn't do anything to actually harm Bea, right?

As it turned out, harming her was a very possible scenario. In fact, there was now even a possibility that she was already dead!

His assumption this time had fallen way too far off mark. The culprits definitely still had the drive to ruin both him and Bea.

"Right away!" shouted Philip as he turned to look at the corner of the room with a stern gaze.

A few intimidating-looking subordinates of his had been standing there the entire time.

"Follow me!" growled Philip as he led them out of the room.

Chapter 865

"Mom... Aren't we being a bit too cruel...? Gerald's not to be trifled with! If the truth ever gets out and Jessica realizes that we were involved..."

Within their own room, Yura was now talking in an extremely worried manner to his mother.

In response, Rose sneered, "In for a penny, in for a pound! It's not like we can help it! We were already running out of options from the moment we decided to snatch the right to inherit the Yalman family from Bea. With Gerald dead, we won't have any more enemies! If we're lucky, the properties up North—that Gerald gave Bea—may even eventually fall into our hands!" assured Rose.

"For now, we can only pray that Sheldon doesn't mess up. After all, I'm aware of how much Gerald trusts that butler!" added the villainous mother.

“But... But what if someone finds out about the poison?”

“Worry not, the poison I picked was both colorless and odorless. Besides, even if someone does manage to detect the poison, Sheldon’s the one who technically killed Mr. Crawford! If the moment ever comes, he’ll definitely be unable to defend himself!” explained Rose in a vicious manner as her eyes narrowed.

“I understand, mom...”

As soon as his sentence ended, however, the door to their room instantly burst open! Immediately after, a group of people dressed fully in black rushed in!

“What are all of you doing?!” shouted Rose as both she and her son started growing nervous.

Instead of replying, the men immediately covered their heads with black hoods which muffled any screams they attempted to make.

When they finally came to a halt, Philip was standing before them.

Though the duo had initially thought that they could hang on long enough for Philip and his men to give up, all it took was half an hour for him and his subordinates to make them spit out everything that had happened.

After all, Philip and his men were proficient in torturing people.

Both now tremendously terrified, neither of them dared to lie before Gerald’s face any longer.

“P-please Gerald! The one who wants to harm you is Shane! He’s the one who gave us the idea! Besides, Bea’s with him now! We’re out of options too! You know, if we hadn’t followed his orders, he would’ve killed us by now! We weren’t involved in the planning process of the kidnapping, Gerald!” said Rose, now so anxious that she was quivering almost uncontrollably.

In her mind, she now admitted that she had looked down upon how ruthless Gerald could actually get. Rose had simply assumed before this that as long as he didn't have enough evidence, he wouldn't act recklessly.

How wrong she was. After all, Gerald had suspected them from the very beginning.

"I do hope you don't assume that you'll be let off the bat just by putting all the blame on Shane. Regardless, grandma will hear about all this tomorrow. She'll know how to punish you. As for the Longs! I won't let them off this time!" growled Gerald coldly.

"Now... Be honest. Where did Shane hide Bea?"

It was a little while later in a dimly lit room within a secluded factory when Shane shouted, "B*tch! Just sign the d*mned thing already!"

At the moment, Shane was tying Bea to a chair as several of his subordinates stood guard over the place.

"Just give up already!" growled Bea angrily.

In response, Shane slapped her directly on the cheek!

"Bea, Bea, Bea... There's a limit to my patience, you know? If it gets to a point where I think you're too much of a hassle to be useful, I'll just kill you right here and right now!" warned Shane viciously.

"Please, I'm no fool, Shane! As if you'd ever let me go after I sign it!" sneered Bea.

Shane's eyes turned bloodshot the moment he heard that.

Once the contract before her was signed, he would be able to retrieve a few of the properties that Bea owned. Just as she said, once that happened, there was absolutely no way he would ever let her out alive.

“Hah! It seems I need to teach you a lesson! Call Second brother and the others over! They can act now! Humph! Still, before they do it, perhaps I should let them enjoy themselves first! After all, you’re quite the beauty, Bea!” said Shane maliciously.

“Right away, Mr. Long!” said his subordinates as they all laughed.

With that, one of the subordinates activated his walkie-talkie before saying, “Come up now.”

However, even after a few seconds had passed, there was no reply. Finding it odd, he called out to the few people who had been stationed to stand guard downstairs.

No reply either.

“What’s happening here? Head downstairs and have a look!” ordered Shane.

Chapter 866

Obedying his orders, a few subordinates then descended the stairs.

However, even after they went down, no noise followed. Everything was quiet. Too quiet.

It was at that moment when Shane realized that something was terribly wrong.

“You there, you stay guard here. The rest of you follow me downstairs!” ordered Shane as a lone subordinate stood at attention in the room while the rest of them descended the stairs together with Shane.

The moment Shane arrived at the last step, however, he stopped. The room was pitch black and not a sound could be heard.

Before he could even proceed any further, he felt a sharp pain against the back of his head! He could only assume that someone had smashed his head with a bat before he eventually passed out.

It was late that night when Gerald and a very exhausted Bea finally made it back to Bea's room. As she fell asleep almost instantaneously, Gerald covered her with a blanket before leaving the room.

Standing right outside her room was a group of bodyguards dressed in black suits.

"Humph! The Longs will surely find it difficult to sleep peacefully tonight, Mr. Crawford! After all, they've just lost one of their most capable people! As to be expected, they're searching all over for Shane as we speak!" said Philip with a smile.

"Indeed! Why don't we let them look for him for seven days as well! Imagine their reactions after a week without their precious grandson!" added another subordinate.

"I really don't have the time to mess with the Longs for a week. Speaking of the Longs, they're celebrating some kind of occasion tomorrow, right? Perfect. Since Shane gave us such a large gift by threatening Bea for seven days straight, we'll head to that occasion tomorrow with a gift of our own!" said Gerald with a cold gaze in his eyes.

"Get him ready!"

"Roger, Mr. Crawford!"

It was the next day in the Long family's manor when Master Long asked, "How's the situation? Did any of you manage to find Shane?"

Master Long himself was wearing a formal suit. After all, they were celebrating a special occasion today. Several of their family members were coming over alongside many more distinguished guests. While the atmosphere was somewhat festive, all those from the Long family were honestly filled with worry and anxiety.

"We haven't, master. However, from what we can tell, the Yalemans should be behind this. After all, Miss Bea was saved last night. However, when we headed over to the Yalaman family to investigate, we couldn't find a single trace of him!" said Master Long's butler.

“Hah! The Yalaman family isn’t that capable. Besides, they would never dream of even trying to stand up against the Long family. The one who did it was most probably Jessica’s brother, Gerald!” replied Master Long as he squinted his eyes.

“Gerald?” said the butler, stunned.

“It’s not the first time I’ve heard his name... From what I can recall, he seemed to have grudges against Mr. Yunus back in Mayberry... What more, Gerald seemed to be there when Mr. Yunus went missing in the Salford Province,” added the butler.

Hearing that, Master Long clenched his walking stick tightly.

“The Crawford siblings truly are deliberately standing against the Longs! How pitiful Yunus is... Up till recently, I had no idea who had caused Yunus’s disappearance... As it turned out, it was the Crawford siblings yet again!” growled Master Long as his gaze went frigid.

“It seems that I need to meet them in person sometime. If they really are the perpetrators who caused both Yunus and Shane to disappear, I don’t care what kind of influential supporters they have! They’ll have to pay the heavy price of a terrible death!”

“Master! Those from the Quarrington family have arrived!” announced a servant as he approached the man who was still deep in resentment.

However, his mood instantly shifted the moment he realized who was here. With a delighted nod, he then said, “Well, hurry up and welcome them in!”

At their current strength, the Longs were still much too weak to go against the Crawford siblings. If the Longs truly wanted to take the siblings down, then their best bet to achieve that would be by cooperating with powerful people from all walks of life.

“Can’t we refuse to participate, Giya...?”

Outside the Long family's manor, a few women were nervously suggesting against joining the Long family's special occasion.

"What's there to be afraid of? While I'm equally unwilling to be here, I have to come on my father's behalf since the Longs invited my entire family over. Besides, I'm the one who bears grudges against them yet I'm hardly scared at all! Why are you the ones scared?" said Giya as she looked at Marilyn and her other friends.

"Well, the Longs are the most powerful family in Yanken... Of course I'd be nervous coming to a place like this... Besides, look around us! Everyone in there is probably a big shot!" replied Marilyn in a quivering voice.

"Well I'm here, aren't I? I've always kept you company in the past, so you'll have to keep me company this time around!" said Giya in a playful tone.

"Fine... We'll enter with you!" replied Marilyn as she stuck her tongue out.

"...Huh? Hey Marilyn, Giya! Look over there! There's a team of luxurious cars coming this way!" squealed one of Giya's friends in surprise as she pointed toward the cars that were driving toward the manor's gates.

Chapter 867

"How truly luxurious!" added the other women in surprise.

Curious to know what kinds of big shots drove such expensive-looking cars, Marilyn and the others chose to wait near the door to see who got out.

A few of them even got their compact mirrors out and started touching up their makeup! After all, if the ones who got out of the car were rich, young heirs, who's to say that they wouldn't end up falling for one of them? Haha!

Eventually, a group of black-suited bodyguards got out of the cars before finally opening the door to the most expensive-looking car. Out stepped a rather familiar-looking rich heir...

“...Hey. Isn’t... Isn’t that Gerald?” asked Marilyn, stupefied by what she was seeing.

“Giya, that’s... That’s Gerald, isn’t it?” repeated Marilyn as she started hopping excitedly in place.

In response, Giya nodded before saying, “It is!”

“My god! Gerald... To think that he actually has a team of cars... What exactly is going on here...?”

Her shock was warranted since previously, Marilyn had only found out that Gerald was rich. What she was seeing now was on a whole other level. She hadn’t expected Gerald to have this side to him.

Gerald himself was clearly unaware that Giya and the others were spying on him.

The girls then watched as Gerald led his subordinates all the way to the Long family manor’s entrance, filled with vigor.

“Did the Long family personally invite Gerald or something?” squealed Marilyn excitedly.

“There’s no way they could have... Something feels off... Come one, let’s get closer and have a look!” said Giya.

With that, Giya tugged Marilyn—who still looked baffled—by the hand, and together, they silently made their way into the manor as well. Upon entering, they saw both parties seemingly confronting each other.

“You’re Gerald, aren’t you? From what I can recall, my family didn’t invite you over!” said those from the Long family with hostile tones.

“Humph! How ballsy of you to come over! Fess up! Where’s Mr. Shane Long? And Mr. Yunus as well! Did you kidnap them both?” shouted another Long who couldn’t help but sneer coldly at Gerald and his men.

“Now, now, there’s no need to be rude. How could any of you say that without any evidence? What if Mr. Crawford isn’t involved at all?” said Master Long as he made his appearance, gesturing to his family members to back down.

He then looked at Gerald with a coy smile on his face before saying “Now isn’t that right, Mr. Crawford?”

“I’m afraid they’re right, Master Long! I was actively involved in both Yunus’s and Shane’s cases!” replied Gerald as he shook his head with a bitter smile on his face.

“...Hmm?” said Master Long as he felt his eyelids twitch rapidly.

Shane’s father’s eyes turned bloodshot the moment he heard Gerald’s confession.

“You b*stard! So it really was you Crawford siblings in both cases! What the hell did you do to both Yunus and Shane?!” growled Shane’s father coldly.

“Humph! Before that, I’d like to talk about some unresolved issues which I believe need to be handled today. You Longs have done plenty of wicked deeds throughout the years and it’s about time you paid your debt!” sneered Gerald.

“A debt? What do you mean by that?”

As several people began discussing what Gerald had meant among themselves, Marilyn herself was watching the scene unfold together with the other girls. Watching him now, Gerald looked almost foreign to her.

As it turned out, Gerald had come here today to deal with the Longs.

‘D*mn! Who the hell even is Gerald? How is he possibly standing up against the Longs?’

“Oh it’s all written down here!” said Gerald as one of his subordinates walked forward with an agreement in his hands.

‘This is an agreement signed by the first young master of the Long family, Shane. He deeply offended the Crawford family, and has therefore decided to compensate the Crawford family. All of the Long family’s properties that are under his supervision will now officially belong to the Crawford family.’

After reading through the agreement, Master Long could feel his lips twitching so quickly that it started to hurt.

Shane was in charge of at least a third of the Long family’s properties.

“This... This is clearly blackmail!” shouted Master Long.

“Hold on, I’m not done yet. That contract alone isn’t enough to settle everything,” replied Gerald calmly.

“Not enough?”

“Indeed. After all, Shane still needs to pay a compensation of fifteen billion dollars!”

Upon hearing that, many of the Long family members began looking at each other helplessly. Many others, including Master Long himself, simply glared angrily at Gerald.

“Now bring him in!” ordered Gerald as a few bodyguards carried a sack into the room and tossed it onto the floor.

Chapter 868

The moment the sack was opened, the others saw an unconscious young man who had been beaten up terribly.

“S-Shane!” shouted Master Long nervously when he saw how badly beaten up the boy was.

“Now, now, let’s not be impatient! There’s still more!” said Philip as he, too, stepped forward.

With a swift gesture, one of Philip’s men tossed a bag over to Master Long. As it landed at his feet, its contents spilled out.

“...What’s this?”

“I... I recognize whose clothes these are! They’re the kind of clothes that Mr. Yunus usually wears!” shouted someone from within the crowd.

“I’m sure you’ve been looking everywhere for him, right? The truth is, Yunus drove off a cliff and these tattered clothes were the only remains we could find,” explained Philip.

“W-what...?” Master Long was assaulted by both immense anger and grief as he heard those words.

“G-Gerald... How arrogant of you and your sister! Bullying us this way... Do you honestly think that there’s nobody capable of standing against you within the Long family?!” growled Master Long, his eyes bloodshot with rage.

At that, Gerald could only smile faintly.

Gerald wasn’t the kind of person to be easily infuriated. Honestly, if he could, he wouldn’t even use vicious means to achieve his goals. After all, he didn’t really enjoy creating unnecessary trouble for others.

However, Yunus had tried to harm him on multiple occasions before. He had almost killed Queta as well. And now Shane was involved with Bea’s kidnapping...

They had messed with the people he cared about most.

To think that they still bore grudges against his sister for what she had done over ten years ago. While his sister no longer had the time to even bother about a tiny family such as the Longs, Gerald had all the time in the world.

It was high time he got things over with.

Just as Master Long was prepared to fight Gerald to the death, his butler ran over to him while holding on to a wireless phone.

“M-master! There’s a call!”

“Get lost! I’m in no mood to answer a d*mned call!” roared Master Long.

“I-it’s not just any regular call, master! It’s from... that party,” added the butler with a gulp.

“...Hmm?”

As soon as he heard that, Master Long was stunned and his expression instantly changed. Clearing his throat, he then respectfully took the phone from his servant’s hand before answering the call.

“Yes...Yes. Y-yes!”

After the three consecutive ‘yesses,’ Master Long hung up the phone. However, his entire demeanor seemed to have switched from that single phone call.

Far from his initial stance, he now seemed to have become feeble, and he barely looked like he had the energy to even stand. Moments later, his grasp loosened and the phone fell to the floor as his butler immediately rushed over to support him.

When his gaze fell upon Gerald again, his expression changed once more.

The call had come from the party which had served as the backbone of the Long family. The contents of the call itself, however, revealed that the backbone that the Long family relied on so much had now collapsed.

In other words, there was nothing the Long family could do to Gerald anymore.

“Now then, if there isn’t anything else, please sign the agreement. Speaking of which, there’s another condition in the supplementary agreement. I want all the properties belonging to the Long family!” said Gerald.

“Don’t even bother with him anymore, dad! Let’s just beat him up already!”

“Indeed! We’re such a huge family with so many properties! Why should we be afraid of them?”

“What utter nonsense! Saying that he wants all our properties... Preposterous! You should first be thinking about whether you’ll be able to make it out of here alive!”

While shout after shout of anger came from those within the Long family, Master Long simply raised a hand, a sign for the others to silence themselves.

His face now deathly pale, he turned to slowly look at Gerald before saying, “...Fine. I’ll sign it. I’ll sign it, Mr. Crawford!”

Hearing that, everyone from the Long family was instantly stupefied.

While it was true that the Crawford family was both powerful and influential, the Longs certainly had the means and power to at least try to stand up against them.

Though the others remained puzzled, only Master Long currently understood the importance of his actions.

Upon signing the agreement, the Long family would cease to exist within Yanken. In exchange, the Long bloodline would still be allowed to continue existing elsewhere.

In other words, if the contract wasn't signed, the Long family's name could easily be wiped off the planet for good.

Chapter 869

"Appreciate the cooperation. We'll come over to take the properties from you in seven days," said Philip.

With that, Gerald began leaving and his subordinates followed behind him.

The other guests didn't dare remain there either after witnessing the terrible incident that had just befallen the Long family. They, too, hurried out after Gerald's men were gone.

"Dad... Why? Why did you sign it?! What's the big deal? We could've just fought against them! After all, we're not afraid to die!" cried out one of the middle-aged men.

A harsh slap from Master Long was his immediate response!

"You b*stard! Do you truly want our entire family to be ruined beyond the point of no return? Do you wish for the Longs to have no descendants to leave behind?!" roared Master Long glaring at him fiercely as his lips continued twitching furiously.

"We've been completely defeated by the Crawford siblings this time! While we've continuously plotted against them in secret all these years, their background is simply too powerful!" added Master Long as he clenched his fists tightly.

"But... But dad! We're left with nothing now!"

"That's true. We no longer own anything!" replied Master long with a nod.

“However, we still have our history spanning centuries! We won’t disappear from Weston that easily! After all, we still have a last resort!”

“A... last resort?”

Master Long nodded in response before saying, “Have you heard... of the Moldell family in Yanken?”

“The Moldells...?”

As the other Longs took turns shaking their heads, Master Long added, “That’s right. They’re the most secretive family in all of Weston. I believe that they’re our only shot at going against the Crawfords.”

He then squinted his eyes before continuing, “A dozen or so years ago, the Long family still had contact with that family. However, after a certain incident happened, we ceased all contact with them”

“What exactly happened, dad?” asked one of the Longs.

“Humph! It all happened the year the son of the Moldell’s Second Master came over as a guest! Since the Moldells preferred living in seclusion, its family members tended to stay out of affairs outside their own. The only exception was the Second Master’s son. He went by the name of Kort Moldell, and contrary to the rest of his family, he simply couldn’t stay away from all the sensual pleasures he could experience in the outside world!”

“Kort was an ambitious man, he was! In fact, he was so ambitious that on the day he came as a guest, he actually threatened us right off the bat! Putting it simply, he wanted to be the backbone of our family. If we had agreed back then, he would’ve secretly helped us become an internationally renowned and wealthy family! However, had we chosen to go down that route, the Longs would’ve essentially sealed their fate to be nothing more than his lackeys!” explained Master Long.

“What wishful thinking he had! Even if we would’ve become internationally renowned, we’d still only be his puppets in the end, unable to act against his bidding!” sneered the Long family’s eldest son.

“And that’s exactly why I rejected that offer! The Longs would’ve had to drop our surname if we had agreed, taking up the surname of Moldell instead! Even if riches and prestige were on the line, I couldn’t just abandon our family surname that our ancestors had carried on for so long!”

“Then... What happened after that? Since Kort had such great ambitions, surely he wouldn’t have allowed you to refuse that easily, right?” asked another Long.

“But of course not! Some twenty-five years ago, Kort finally had his revenge on our family. Do you still remember the incident where Shaw was attacked by others just moments after being born, Joel? As a result, Shaw grew up to be a fool who barely had any sanity!”

“Of course I do! Though I wanted to investigate it, you wouldn’t let me! It’s still a mystery to me now!”

“Yes, well... That was Kort’s doing. If we had investigated it, our family would’ve eventually fallen into ruin. It was his way of sending us a reminder!” replied Master Long.

Shaw was the second young master of the Long family who never made any appearances regardless of the occasion. After all, he truly was a person who bore no semblance of sanity.

“Speaking of which, where is Shaw?” asked Master Long.

“The Second young lady’s brought him out to have some fun!”

Chapter 870

In response, Master Long simply sighed.

“Well, that’s good too. It’s better to just let Shaw live happily...”

“However, even though we haven’t contacted Kort for so many years, our family’s still continued prospering!” said Joel.

“Humph! But of course! I assume Kort never launched another attack on us since his father died not too long after. Due to him passing on, Kort was involved in a fight for the post of the Moldell family’s second

master. That naturally meant that he wouldn't have had the time to bother us for a good, long while. While I'm not sure what became of him, based on the fact that he's a natural schemer, it wouldn't be far-fetched to assume that he truly did end up becoming the Moldell family's second master."

"I see... Do you plan to get help from Kort to deal with the Crawfords?" asked Joel who was starting to see the bigger picture now.

"Well, your guess is half right. I'm not directly asking him for help. After all, if I do that, then as I've said before, the Long family's fame and name will be as good as ruined! Humph! However, even that's better than having the Crawford siblings acquire our family! Be aware that once we lead Kort out, a great mess will be sure to follow! However, the messier it gets, the better it'll be for us! I'm positive that even the influential and powerful Crawfords won't have an easy time dealing with him!" declared Master Long sternly.

After taking in a deep breath, he added, "Joel, come with me. We're inviting Kort Mordell off the mountain..."

It was around three days later when a mysterious party was held by the Crawfords living in Northbay.

The party itself was so mysterious that most of the Crawfords themselves were prohibited from attending it.

Sometime during the party, two beautiful ladies took the chance to have a stroll outside the manor.

"I'm afraid I haven't even had the chance to thank you properly after you donated your blood to save my sister a few days ago... Thanks to you, she's now regained full consciousness," said one of the ladies walking beside Gerald with a smile on her face.

"You're certainly most welcome, Miss Yselle. After all, compared to the help us Crawfords are about to receive from the Moldell family, what I did was akin to nothing!" replied Gerald who smiled back.

It was truly a coincidence that on the day Gerald and Lady Yselle went to pay the Moldells a visit, they found that Winnie Moldell, the youngest lady of the Moldell family, was so terribly injured that she was already unconscious.

The Moldells had been searching high and low in secret to look for a person who had a suitable blood type to save her life. While it wasn't hard for them to find somewhat similar blood types, the Moldells were extremely strict in everything, even when it came to blood.

Fortunately, Gerald's blood met all their standards.

After donating his blood to save Winnie's life, Gerald's body became rather weak. It was the reason why he and Lady Yalaman had stayed with the Moldell family for about a week.

"Well, the party is still going on inside, Miss Winnie and Miss Yselle... I'll be heading back inside to serve the guests first," said Gerald as he turned around to leave.

As he walked away, Winnie—the other lady who hadn't looked at him at all throughout his entire conversation with Yselle—took a peek at him.

"Why are you like this, sister? Though Gerald is from the outside world, he still saved your life," reminded Yselle as she looked at Winnie.

"And who was it that said I wanted his lowly blood inside me? If it wasn't for him, my blood would have remained pure and prestigious!" said Winnie coldly.

"Now why would you say that? Gerald's a rather nice person!"

Hearing that, Winnie frowned slightly before looking at Yselle.

"I've been meaning to ask you, sister... From the moment I've regained consciousness, you've kept mentioning him in front of me. Could it be that you have a crush on him?"

"I... I don't! I'm just grateful to him for saving you... Besides, since we've been sent here to help him and his family anyway, I thought it'd be nice if the two of you built a good rapport!" answered Yselle who's cute face was now blushing slightly.

“Please, sister. I’ve had my fair share of experiences so I can see right through you. It’s obvious why you’d be so curious about him. After all, you probably haven’t met such a person even from when you were young! However, I’ll be frank and tell you now that it’s impossible! It’d do you good to rid yourself of all such thoughts before it’s too late. The truth is, no man on this entire planet is a good person! All of them are equally lowly and vicious! The utmost scum!”

Chapter 871

“Hey sis, I know you were hurt by Narc once but take a look at his wife. She’s such a materialistic person!” Yselle said.

Winnie glared at her angrily. “Shut up! How many times did I tell you not to remind me of him! Don’t even get me started with that woman!”

“Y-yes...I know, sis. I know how much you hate that dreaded woman. I swear I won’t repeat this again!” Yselle's eyes were tearing up as she spoke.

Realizing that she had been too harsh, Winnie caressed Yselle’s head and said, “I’m just trying to look out for you. That Gerald guy reeks of money. He only has what all materialistic people want. Money. He doesn’t deserve to have any ties with our family. We are only here to help him on behalf of our master’s son, to keep our promise with them. We, the Moldells’ unlike the rest of the world, take our promises seriously!”

“So, even if you have the slightest feelings for Gerald, there is no way the both of you could be together. I’ll definitely stand against it!” There was a glimpse of disdain peeking through Winnie’s eyes.

“Oh...I understand!” Yselle lowered her head.

“But, it’s not impossible to let you stay by Gerald’s side. There is a way.” Winnie said.

“Huh? What way?” Yselle asked.

Ten days ago when Gerald first arrived, Yselle found herself developing feelings for the young and lively man.

After getting to know him and listening to the stories of his adventures, Yselle was even more eager to find out more about that young man.

A girl's emotion can be really hard to comprehend sometimes. Falling for someone without rhyme or reason, and then hating the person in the same exact manner.

If asked at that moment whether Gerald was really that great or not, she'd answer 'No', but Yselle liked him regardless of that fact!

Yselle had always felt like that. She grew up behind the walls of Moldell and she never had the chance to fulfill her fantasies.

"That's a pretty simple job. Make him one of your servants and let him follow you around!" Winnie said.

"In fact, he'd live a longer life after becoming one of our servants and this is something that can hardly be bought by money!"

"I don't want him to be my servant, sis. Why, why do you look down on him so much? After all, he is..."

"That's enough! Other than this, there are no other alternatives. Don't blame me for not telling you about it!" Winnie left after she finished.

Dylan was talking to the third master of Moldell and the assistant of the Moldell family at the ball.

"This time, I'll be counting on all of you then!" Dylan said with a smile.

"You're most welcome, Master Crawford. We will do our best. We sure hope that the Crawfords and the Moldells would be pleased with the result of our collaboration this time!" Moldell's third master, Parker Moldell said.

"I suppose it won't be as pleasing as it seems huh?"

Suddenly, a 60-year-old man entered the hall with a group of people.

“Who are you? How did you come in?” Dylan was stunned when he saw the old man.

“Did you expect those useless brats to stop me?” The man sneered.

“Kort, what do you think you’re doing? Now that we are working with the Crawfords, how dare you disrespect them?” Parker shot up from his seat with a deep frown on his face.

“Collaborating with them? No way!” Kort responded coldly.

Chapter 872

He was a man in his sixties but he looked as if he was only 50. He had a pair of sharp and bright eyes that would create a sense of unease in the person who stood before his gaze.

“Why can’t we collaborate?” Parker asked.

“Master Parker, I understand that your son was rescued by the Yalemans and that you owe them the favor. However, you broke the rules when you made a promise with them to help out the Crawfords!”

“But you must know that Crawford's eldest heir, Gerald, has offended one of my good friends, the Long family. Hence, I demand an explanation from you folks on behalf of the Long family!”

“Do you think you’ll still be able to help them now?” Kort said.

Even though Kort addressed the 90-year-old Parker as ‘Master’, he was just the third master of the family and Kort was one step above him. Kort, being the Second Master, had a position that was higher than that of Parker in the family.

“Long family?” Gerald started pondering what the Long family had to do with the Moldells.

Jessica and himself had been at odds with the Long family for quite some time now, so what kind of explanation was Kort demanding?

“Nice to meet you, Master Kort. forgive me but, what sort of explanation are you demanding?” Dylan asked with a smile.

“Hah, that’s simple. I demand half of Crawfords’ assets be transferred to the Long family. As long as this is done, I shall not ask for anything more!” Kort sneered.

“How arrogant!”

The Crawfords looked at each other. They were stunned by Kort’s request.

Crawford’s assets? Half was too much, even a millesimal of that amount would be more than enough for the entire Long family. Kort was out of his mind! He was definitely not seeking an explanation but trying to rob the Crawford family!”

Gerald frowned.

“Master Crawford, please consider this offer. If my friends aren’t pleased, I’m not sure what I will be forced to do in order to make the Crawfords pay for their wrongs. I believe you wouldn’t question my powers right?” Kort smiled as he said.

He came in without registering because he wanted to deter the Crawfords.

If only the Crawfords knew that he was coming to exact his revenge, they would have tried to stop him at all cost!

“Master Kort, isn’t demanding half of their assets slightly too much? They’re the Long family we’re talking about. They’re nothing! How dare they demand half of Crawford’s assets?” Yselle stood up.

The Moldell family was actually divided into a few branches and Kort was a leader of one of the branches.

Everyone in the Moldell family knew that Kort was a man of the world. If we looked at the number of women he had around him, he had at least a handful of them at all times. That was why Yselle and Winnie despise Kort.

Including Parker, everyone in the Moldell family knew that Kort was not trying to appease the Long family. No, instead, he was trying to stir up a conflict with the Crawfords, with this as merely his excuse to do so.

Kort has taken over a few family businesses with this method. Even though he would never admit to such acts, rumor has it that the large family that Kort has secretly established came about exactly like that!

“Yselle, is that how you talk to your elders? Master Parker, I believe you would not interfere in this matter, yes? Even if you wish to, you have to think about the consequences. Is it worth exposing the Crawfords to such risks?” Kort hinted at Parker.

Parker was furious but he remained silent nonetheless.

Kort was too powerful for Parker to fend against.

“Master Crawford, I’ll give you thirty minutes to consider my offer. I want an answer half an hour later! No more, and no less!” Kort then left with his people...

Chapter 873

“It’s all my fault, dad. This happened because of me!” Gerald started to apologize when Dylan and the family arrived at the study to discuss their plan.

Dylan was caught off guard by this matter. He totally did not anticipate this to happen.

“No, Gerald. That’s not the crux of the matter. I’ve heard about Kort from your grandfather and I’ve always known that he’s a very greedy man. Your grandfather had business with him and that was why

we moved away from Weston to Northbay. We've all been trying to stay away from Kort Moldell, but the day has finally come, when we can run from him no longer!" said Dylan.

"Even if it wasn't for the Long family, he would still come after us, in the name of the Zabel or Letts families!" Dylan continued while frowning.

"Dad, the concerns that you had for the Moldells, was it because of this?"

Gerald remembered that his father had mentioned that if it was not for their current situation, he would never have sought help from the Moldells and he'd never conduct any business with those folks.

Dylan nodded his head with a worried expression.

"Gerald, do you know about the family that was once equally as powerful as us? I probably haven't told you this before but 40 years ago, there were three extremely wealthy families. One of them was our family and the other family was the Morningstars. But the Morningstars have changed over time into the Moldell family. Do you understand what I'm trying to tell you?" Gerald's mother said.

Gerald nodded his head.

"Sigh, without the help of the Moldells we wouldn't have been able to stand up against the League, nor would we have found your uncle Peter. That means nobody would ever know about the secret your uncle Peter is carrying!" Dylan slammed his fist onto the table.

"Dad, I never understood the curse that you keep talking about. Our family is so powerful. How is it possible that we would just perish?"

"Even if Kort is trying to seek his revenge, he can't do anything to us. How could we end up like the Morningstars and get swallowed up by the Moldells?"

"I don't believe this!" said Jessica.

Daryl waved his hand and said, "That's right, even if he was seeking revenge, he can't destroy us like how he did the Morningstars. But we sure as hell are in for a rough time!"

"I'm not worried about how tough it is going to be. As long as we could find your uncle Peter, we would be much stronger than before and even if we were destroyed, the Crawfords will always be the biggest tycoons. Do you understand what I'm trying to say? If we can't find him, I'm afraid we might be gone in less than 10 years!"

Dylan shook his head. "That is why we must look for your uncle Peter and we have to ask for help from the Moldells!"

Gerald knew that no matter how hard he tried asking about the curse, his father would never give him an exact answer.

"Dad, are you really going to give him half of your assets? Does he even deserve it?"

Jessica was upset. "I'm going to take him up on the challenge. I don't believe I can't defeat Kort with the powers I have in North Africa!"

"Sis, didn't dad just mentioned that it's not about challenging Kort but instead, working with the Moldells to come up with a solution? I don't think there are any alternatives here!" Gerald said.

"But what choice do we have? Do you really think the Moldells would still work with us?" Jessica was worried.

"There must be a way!" Gerald smiled bitterly.

Suddenly, he turned to his parents and sister. He smiled at them and said, "I have an idea!"

"Gerald? What...what do you mean?" Dylan could tell what Gerald was up to, which made him all the more anxious.

“Don’t worry about it, dad. I’ll handle this matter!” Gerald left after saying that.

“Kort, Master Crawford, and the Yalemans are all my friends. Don’t you cross the line!”

Outside, Parker and Kort were having a fight.

“Do you even think that you could take down the wealthiest family, the Crawfords? I don’t want to stick my nose into this matter but have you ever thought about their position globally? If the Crawfords are being threatened, the consequences are far beyond our imagination. The Crawfords aren’t the Morningstars! When news gets out, our grandmaster will surely take matters into his own hands, and by then, do you think you can actually take over half of their assets when it was you who instigated the squabble?” Parker waved his hand and sat down.

Kort frowned slightly. He had never given it that much thought. Kort had always wanted to take over the Crawfords but after a few rounds of exchanging punches, he realized that it was harder than climbing the stairs to heaven.

Chapter 874

Kort only shifted his target to the wealthiest family in Weston after the Crawfords’ move to Northbay but Parker’s words finally knocked some sense into him.

If this matter gets out of hand, Moldells’ grandmaster surely would never forgive him. But he was already on the brink of success. Kort was not ready to give it all up. Even if he wasn’t going to get half of their assets, he must take at least a quarter of it!

Kort was not ready to give up yet! He kept his cool and remained silent.

Meanwhile, Gerald walked out into the hall.

“Gerald, we are good friends, I’ll help you, and I’m sure Master Parker will too!” Yselle walked over and grabbed Gerald’s arm.

“I know, thanks Yselle!”

Gerald looked at Parker and said, "Uncle Parker, if the conflict between me and the Long family is settled, does that mean that you would continue to stay and help us?"

Parker was unsure what Gerald meant by that but he nodded and said, "You don't have to worry about that. Your grandmother has saved my son years ago and as long as it's you folks, I'd be willing to help. The Moldells never went back on their word!"

"That's great!" Gerald smiled and nodded.

Gerald then looked at Kort. "Master Kort, you said you're here to seek revenge on behalf of the Long family and you did admit that their conflict is between just me and their family. If that's so, then don't drag my family into this! If you really want an explanation, just come after me. There's no reason for you to pester the Crawfords!"

Kort sneered. "Hah! You're the heir of the family, so it is only natural that the Crawfords have to pay for your misbehavior!"

"You're wrong, Master Kort. From now on, I'm no longer the heir of Crawfords and you have no business with my family anymore!" Gerald smiled.

"What did you just say?" Kort squinted his eyes and then open them widely.

"Gerald, what the hell are you saying!" Dylan immediately walked out of the room and yelled at him.

Gerald smiled. "I mean what I just said. From now onwards, I'll be leaving the Crawfords and I'll no longer be Young Master Crawford! Master Kort, if you have any issues, please just come after me!"

"Master Parker, you promised you'd stay and help the Crawfords. Now that I am leaving the family, I take it that conflict with the Long family is no longer a problem the Crawfords have to deal with anymore?"

Parker was stunned. He never thought that Gerald would simply give up his title just like that.

He nodded his head. "Of course. Since you're no longer part of the Crawfords, nobody could seek trouble from them any more!" Parker glanced at Kort. He was giving him a warning not to cross the line!

Kort's eyes were red from rage. "Hah, leaving the family? Do you really think your bratty ass can survive without your family backing you up? Even if I don't do anything, your enemies will be coming after you and if the Crawfords decide to intervene, your work would have been in vain! That is because I'll still come after the Crawfords!"

"Don't worry about that. No one is going to help me. Of course, after I leave the house of the Crawfords, you're welcome to look for me!" Gerald said.

"Brother!" Jessica was worried-sick upon hearing Gerald's declaration.

She looked at Dylan. "Dad, say something!"

Dylan frowned slightly and his eyes were filled with tears.

His lips twitched slightly. "Since my son is going to take the responsibility and leave Crawfords for good, I, as your father, guarantee that whoever touches you in Northbay shall be facing the wrath of the entire Crawford family!"

"Bang!"

Dylan smashed a wine glass to pieces.

Kort was shocked.

"What are you talking about, dad?"

"Dylan, are you out of your mind?! That's our son!"

Jessica and Yulia were panicking!

Chapter 875

Dylan was upset.

If Gerald has stayed, Kort would surely find an excuse to challenge the Crawfords.

Even though the Crawfords had the power to fight Kort's repeated attacks, it was unavoidable that they'd be injured as well.

If their inheritance process was not stable enough it would be impossible for them to continue their search for the Sun League.

How long can the Crawfords survive if there was no peace?

Gerald's departure could buy the Crawfords some time and Dylan was perfectly aware of this.

However, by leaving the protection which his family offered him, Gerald's path would only grow harsher and more difficult to traverse. Both Kort and the Long family would never allow Gerald to slip off so easily.

Dylan held his fist tightly. He was struggling in his heart when he said those words.

"Wow! Never knew that Dylan Crawford would abandon his own son so readily when push comes to shove!" Kort frowned.

He sneered, "There is more to come! Master Parker, I shall save you some face today. I'll remember the Crawfords from now on!" He waved his hand and left.

Dylan gave up his own son to protect their family's assets. If things continued going downhill, he might be forced to do something even more insane.

If the Crawfords were to fight them with all of their power, Kort would never stand a chance.

Hence, it was not a good idea for him to linger around.

Even though Gerald's farewell gave him no excuse to attack, Kort knew that he would still be the key to swallowing the entire Crawford family and he wasn't at all fazed.

He left at the right time...

"Master Kort, are we really going to give up the Crawfords like that? They hold the most assets and it could be ten times more than what you have established at Logan Province!" One of Kort's subordinates said after they left the island.

"Do you think I'm that dumb? It's just not the right time to take them head-on now. We have too many enemies in our own family now. Even if we really conquered the Crawfords, we'd be left defenseless against the rest of the branches of our family."

"We have to think of a plan that could kill two birds with one stone and it must be used on Gerald!" Kort squinted.

"Then we will have Gerald in our hands no matter where he is and he won't be able to run away!" His subordinates smiled and nodded.

That night at the harbor of Hong Kong, Gerald brought along his luggage and walked down from the ship.

Gerald was emotional when he reminisced about the past 6 months. Everything felt like a dream to him. He transformed from a poor, disgusting student who was worth less than a pile of dirt to a rich and wealthy heir.

Now, he was far poorer than before this all even started. He knew that sacrifices would have to be made in order to secure peace for his family in the long term.

Gerald was not afraid of being poor but he was afraid that he might not see the sun of tomorrow.

Even though it was late, there were still many people at the harbor. As Gerald walked further out, he glanced backward. There were at least ten people following him.

'Am I going to die here tonight?'

Gerald held his fist tightly. He was not afraid, but feeling his impending doom, Gerald still felt the urge to keep on fighting. He wanted to live on no matter what.

Gerald hastened his pace.

The people following him were not ordinary men, as they immediately chased after him.

Suddenly, the blinding headlights of a car and the sound of tires skidding filled the air at one of Hong Kong's many harbors.

Chapter 876

Gerald, who had attempted to escape was blocked from all sides.

After that, the car door was opened.

A group of bodyguards dressed in black walked out of the car.

Their leader was none other than Joel.

He was the father of the three young masters of the Long family.

"Hahaha! Why if it isn't Mr. Crawford? Why the hurry? You going somewhere?"

A vicious look flashed across Joel's face.

“I heard that you’ve announced your self-imposed exile from the Crawford family today. I couldn’t believe it at first but looking at you right now, Mr. Crawford, it seems like the rumors are true!” Joel said.

“You’ve been waiting for this moment for a very long time now, aren’t you Joel? Instead of blabbering on and on about this, why don’t you take me away, as you’ve always wanted to!”

Gerald replied with a frown.

“Mr. Crawford, if it weren’t for the fact that I had been given strict orders not to take any action against you, I would have started hacking away the moment our eyes met. I would have cut off your flesh piece by piece so that it can serve as a tribute to Yunus!”

Joel roared with a grim expression on his face and his eyes, bloodshot.

“Men, come! Take him away!”

Joel commanded as he waved his hand.

His subordinates approached Gerald immediately.

“Vroom! Vroom! Vroom!”

Out of nowhere came the roaring sound of a mighty engine.

A modified off-road vehicle suddenly rushed towards them from the side of the road.

It was heading straight for Gerald, who had been surrounded.

Krash!

The off-road vehicle crushed all of the cars in its way as it rushed directly towards Gerald. After that, a pair of hands reached out and pulled Gerald into the passenger compartment.

“After them! Don’t let them escape!” Joel roared.

The attack came and went as quick as lightning.

The headlights of the vehicle caught them completely off-guard, blinding Joel’s men as Gerald was rescued.

“Mr. Crawford, are you okay? Sorry, we’re late!”

At this moment, the brothers, Drake and Tyson spoke up.

“I’m fine. Thank God, the both of you came in time!” Gerald nodded.

“By the way, why are you here? Did my elder sister tell you to come here?” Gerald asked.

“Yeah, Miss Crawford knew that somebody would spring an attack on you as soon as you left Northbay. She sent us over to pick you up!”

“Mr. Crawford, what are your plans for the future?” Drake asked.

There were no other alternatives. If it was possible, the two brothers would be more than willing to continue helping Gerald. They were glad to remain by Gerald’s side to protect him.

But there were many eyes keeping tabs on the Crawford family right now.

They could not allow Kort to have anything to use against them.

So, it was okay for them to help Gerald once. But helping him for the rest of his life was not going to happen.

“I am no longer Mr. Crawford. The both of you can just call me Gerald. I don’t know what is going to happen in the future but I’m going to Salford Province. I’d like to look for someone there!” Gerald replied after a brief moment of deliberation.

A specific someone had come up in his memories.

“Okay then, Mr. Crawford! We will escort you to Salford Province!”

Drake and Tyson replied.

“Vroom! Vroom! Vroom!”

Then came the sound of engines roaring.

Several modified off-road vehicles came rushing straight towards Drake and Tyson’s vehicle.

It was evident that these vehicles were being handled by the most skilled drivers around.

“F*ck!”

Drake hurriedly grabbed the steering wheel.

But it was too little too late. Simultaneously, these vehicles slammed into Drake’s vehicle, shaking the passengers up as if they were in a tin can

Chapter 877

“Boom!”

The sound of a violent explosion rocked the city.

There was a cloud of smoke at the scene and there was debris everywhere.

The light from the fire illuminated the night sky.

Several cars exploded simultaneously and started a huge fire within seconds.

“Mr. Crawford, are you okay?”

Drake protected Gerald as they rolled down the small slope.

Drake and Tyson brought Gerald with them as they jumped out of the car during the car crash just now.

Whoever that was after them was bat-sh*t insane.

“I’m fine, I think!”

Gerald shook his head and he felt as though the sky was spinning.

“They’re still hot on our asses!” Tyson yelled out at this time.

Many bodyguards dressed in black were brandished weapons as they rushed down the small slope from the main road.

“There are still sixteen of ‘em left, brother. Let’s deal with eight of them each. Mr. Crawford, start running north of our position! Mr. Lyle is already waiting for you under the hillside in the north. You can leave everything here to us!”

Zack was here too!

Gerald felt moved.

At the same time, he also knew that he would only cause more trouble for Drake and Tyson if he continued sticking with them.

Thus, he didn’t waste his time saying needless goodbyes. Instead, he gave them a single nod before running towards the north.

Ever since Finnley taught him some simple breathing techniques and the five fighting moves, Gerald’s physique became much greater than before.

Gerald exhausted all of his energy and strength as he desperately ran northwards.

“I am almost there!”

Gerald gritted his teeth as he reminded himself.

However, the more he ran, the darker it was. At one point, everything in front of him became pitch black.

Gerald suddenly missed a step.

He tripped forward and fell flat on his face.

After falling like a heavy sack of potatoes, he was caught up in a mental daze.

Suddenly, a burst of dazzling car lights blinded him.

Several bodyguards dressed in black came over and grabbed Gerald by the neck.

Gerald looked at the license plates of these cars.

These cars belonged to the Long family from Yanken!

“It’s all over! I have nowhere else to go now!”

Gerald closed his eyes, knowing that he had come to the end of his journey.

“Let go of him!”

Desperation was at an all-time high when he suddenly heard a familiar female voice.

Gerald’s eyelids peeled open to confirm his suspicion.

“Xavia?”

Gerald said in surprise.

Xavia marched right up to Gerald with her hands crossed over her chest.

“Hmph! Gerald, you would never have expected to fall right into my hands, right?” Xavia asked coldly.

“No, I did not,” Gerald replied with a wry smile on his face.

“Gerald, oh how amazing you are. To be the Young Master of the Crawford family, have you any idea how much people envied you? One word from you and the entire Long family would be annihilated. What a surprise to see your pathetic little face here!” said Xavia.

“Since I’m here, why don’t you just bring me back to your home, so you can get all the credit for capturing me? There’s no need for you to waste your time, saying all that. Finally, the chance has come for you to exact revenge!” Gerald responded with a bitter laugh.

Slap!

Xavia raised her hand and gave Gerald a slap across his face.

“Are you telling me to shut up? Listen here, I’ll keep talking whenever I feel like talking! I’m the one calling the shots here! Gerald, do you know how long I have been waiting for this moment? I’ve been waiting a long, long time for the day where you would stand before me with your head hung low!”

Slap!

Xavia gave Gerald another slap using the back of her hand.

Chapter 878

“Hahaha! I gave up everything when we were back in Salford Province. I asked for a clean slate with you but how did you respond? Arrogantly, haughtily, up on your high horse, you ignored me completely. You’ve hurt me so many times, but do you remember who was the one who remained by your side when you were still considered a pauper back in university? Who was the girl who held your hand stubbornly when you were walking through the campus, being ridiculed by everyone around you? Who was the only person who did not despise your existence back then!?”

Slap!

Xavia’s eyes were red with tears as she said, “It was me! But what about you? How did you treat me as soon as you gained some wealth and glory? You made me live in such a miserable state like a dog who had to go around begging for food! Even though Felicity was a bitch who had always despised you and looked down on you, you chose to help her when she asked for help! What about me? What happened when I needed help!?”

“You were the one who let me down!” Xavia said.

“Everything is simply perfect now. You have already left the Crawford family. Finally, I am no longer afraid to tell you this. Even if you really want to escape, will you really be able to do so? Even if you can really escape from the Long family’s clutches, there is still the Moldell family, and the Lynwood family. The entire world’s going for your throat! You are just a miserable outcast, the same as you were back then!”

“I have already said so much. So, why don’t you say something? Answer me!”

Slap! Slap! Slap!

Xavia was so furious that she slapped Gerald three more times, consecutively.

All this while, Gerald had always been a looming shadow that haunted Xavia’s heart.

Being buried deep within her heart for a very long time, it contorted Xavia’s perspective on the world negatively.

Since all of her anger and frustrations were released in one single go, Xavia started to get a little hysterical!

“What else can I say? You can insult and humiliate me now and you can even kill me if it eases your soul!” Gerald replied as he shook his head.

“Hahaha! You still are clueless about what kind of girl I am, even after all this time!”

Xavia replied as she shoved Gerald.

After that, Xavia took a deep breath.

“Gerald, to tell you the truth, I do not have the intention of dragging you back with me to gain recognition from my family for capturing you!”

“I can give you a way out. As long as you are willing to bow before me, admit your mistakes apologize for your wrongs, I will let you go!” Xavia replied as she clenched her fists tightly.

The time she spent in the Long family was spent on gaining the loyalty of these men around her.

Over time, they had grown to become obedient and submissive to her.

“You...you will let me go?”

Gerald was surprised when he heard those words.

Indeed, he hated Xavia because of certain things and there was no denying that he hurt her on multiple occasions.

After falling into her hands, Gerald thought it was no better than being captured by Joel and his men.

However, Xavia was proposing to let him go.

As for Xavia, although she absolutely hated Gerald and wanted him to suffer, she did not want to see Gerald lose his life.

She had mixed and complicated feelings. She did not want Gerald to live a good life, but she also could not bear to see Gerald getting hurt.

“Yes. As long as you are willing to apologize to me, and as long as you can touch the depths of my heart, then I will let you go!” Xavia replied.

Gerald started to self-reflect. In comparison to how heartless and cruel he had been towards her back then, it was surprising how Xavia was still actually able to say such things.

Gerald was paralyzed by guilt as realization set in.

“Alright, Xavia. If you really are going to let me go, then I, Gerald Crawford would like to apologize for mistreating you and for all the wrongs I did to you in the past. I will never forget the kindness and benevolence you have shown me today!”

“Hmph! How cheesy! Now get lost!”

Xavia turned her head around to look the other way as she crossed her arms in front of her chest.

Her subordinates began making way for Gerald to leave.

Gerald nodded as he looked at Xavia before he started running away.

“Wait a minute!”

Xavia suddenly yelled out to stop Gerald.

“What’s wrong?” Gerald asked.

“Gerald, I am not sure whether we will meet again in the future, so, I would like to remind you how powerful the Moldell family is. Moreover, it is not the first or second day that the Moldell family has been planning to bring the Crawford family down. They won’t let you slip away that easily. You’ve got to be more careful from now on. The Long family is now reduced to a dog working for the Moldell family. You can run all you want, but they’ll hunt you down eventually. If you manage to escape, I’d advise you to live anonymously. It’d be better if you don’t show up at the Crawford family from now on, no matter what happens!” said Xavia.

“I understand! Thank you, Xavia.”

“And one last thing. Do you know why I am choosing to let you go?” Xavia asked.

“Why?”

“Because after experiencing so many things, I finally realized that you really loved me with all your heart back then. However, it was me who failed to cherish your affection till the very end!”

Xavia said, with misty red eyes.

“Alright. You take good care of yourself, okay? I am leaving now!”

After he was done speaking, Gerald turned around and dashed into the darkness of the night...

Chapter 879

Seven days later.

At a construction site in a typical small county located in Salford Province.

“It is time for the wages to be distributed! You, twenty three dollars! Keep it well!”

“You, fourteen dollars!”

An overweight foreman with a perfectly-round belly was handing out the daily wages to a few men and women who were in their fifties.

Among them stood a young man, who stuck out like a sore thumb.

The others received twenty three dollars as their daily wage.

However, when it came to the young man's turn, he only received fourteen dollars.

The foreman spat on his fingers as he counted the cash to make sure the amount was right.

"Hold on. Haven't we already agreed on this matter before coming here? You don't need to pay me twenty three dollars a day, but didn't we settle on sixteen dollars a day instead?" The young man asked.

"Damn it! Didja forget the meal you ate earlier this afternoon!? Two dollars is taken off your pay for yer meal!"

"But the lunch we had just now was just two pieces of biscuits, and you're deducting two dollars from me!?"

"Damn it! I only gave you some work to do because I thought that you looked like an honest and decent young man. I am only going to give you fourteen dollars. It is up to you whether you want to take it or not. Ain't nuthin' you can do even if I don't pay you a single cent!"

It was around this moment.

"Huh? Why does that worker look so familiar?"

A couple holding hands were accompanied by several other people as they walked past this area.

"Familiar? Raquel, is something wrong with your eyes? Would you know a worker like this?"

The man who was richly bedecked asked contemptuously.

"No! No, he really looks very familiar. He's a good buddy of my bankrupt ex-boyfriend. He used to be really awesome in the past. There's no mistaking it! It's him!"

"Are you serious?" The boy asked.

The girl walked over to the worker.

“Gerald, it’s really you!”

The girl recognized who the young man was in an instant.

There were hints of ridicule and mockery on the girl’s face.

That’s right. This young man was none other than Gerald.

On that night, seven days ago, Xavia decided to let him go. After Zack picked him up, he faced many risks along the way but he finally arrived at Salford Province.

The first thing that Gerald did was to head to the countryside to look for Uncle Quick.

After all, Gerald knew where Uncle Quick’s house was.

However, his fellow villagers told him that it had been a few days since Uncle Quick left the village.

Gerald had no other place to go to and he could only wait patiently.

As he was embarrassingly short of money, he had no choice but to come here to take on a part time job.

Gerald had also thought about finding a secure job.

However, when he arrived at Merry City, he was surrounded by his enemies, which was when he lost his identity card and everything else he had on him.

Furthermore, Kort had sent various business tycoons out to sniff out about his whereabouts.

So, Gerald was forced to avoid places that were too formal and proper. Gerald had no other choice but to come to such places to hunker down.

He was given a taste of being a miserable and distressed homeless outcast.

“Raquel?”

Gerald also recognized this girl.

She was Marven’s girlfriend who practiced taekwondo.

A couple days ago, Gerald found out through the internet that following his downfall, Marven’s travel company came crashing down as well.

A perfect demonstration of a rippling effect.

“Hahaha! I really did not expect to bump into you here. Oh, why? I heard that the company that you share with that fatty has already closed down. I heard he’s working as a pathetic little tour guide now. Haha! Look at you! You’re even worse compared to him! To think that you’re working at a construction site owned by my hubby’s family!”

Raquel laughed with her hand over her mouth.

“Oh! Mr. Brown, Miss Raquel, do you know this young man?”

The foreman bowed as he asked respectfully.

“This has nothing to do with you! Move aside!” Raquel replied coldly.

The foreman hurriedly shuffled away.

After that, Raquel crossed her arms in front of her chest and sneered as she looked Gerald up and down.

“Man, I really didn’t expect to see you here. You used to be so cool back then. Too bad you had to end up in such a state. Or perhaps, you’re just putting on an act? Is this your twisted little hobby? To experience life as a penniless nobody?”

Raquel asked with a worried tone.

After all, Gerald had slapped her across the face once.

“If you’ve nothing else to say, I’m leaving.”

Chapter 880

When Gerald saw their employees staring in his direction, he was afraid that his identity would be discovered.

So, he wanted to leave.

“Why are you leaving? Don’t leave! After all, no matter what happened in the past, we’re at least acquaintances!”

Raquel grabbed Gerald by his collar.

More likely than not, Gerald had really turned into a pauper this time.

Hahaha! Raquel felt overjoyed and relieved to see him in such a pathetic state.

“Come! Come! I want all of you to take a good look at him! Let me introduce you to this young man, Mr. Gerald Crawford!”

Raquel said as she waved her hand at the employees working in the project department.

They were all sharply-dressed folks, with all of them sporting creaseless business suits.

They had obviously graduated from university not too long ago.

They covered their mouths as they giggled at Gerald.

“Oh my god! I would kill myself if I was forced to live like this!”

“That’s right! But isn’t he being really self-reliant? To think that he came out to look for a job for himself!”

However, as executives high up the pecking order, all of them obviously despised and looked down on Gerald.

“Don’t you look down on him! Have you any idea who he is? He used to be one of the ultra-rich, Mr. Crawford! He drove a luxury car that none of you will ever be able to afford in your lifetime!” said Raquel as she cackled away.

“Ahhh? Is that true? He was actually a rich man?”

“Tsk, tsk, tsk. How impressive!”

“I wasn’t able to tell though!”

The girls said as they laughed.

“Gerald, we do not have any other intentions but seeing the state you’re in right now, I believe that you do not even have a girlfriend anymore, right? Why don’t I introduce a few girls in our company to you then? Who knows, maybe one of them would be interested in you? What about you girls? What do you think?”

“What do all of you think about Gerald? Anyone who is interested in becoming his girlfriend?”

“Hahaha! Why don’t you go?”

The girls started laughing amongst themselves as they pushed one of the girls forward.

The girl who got singled-out started to sound rather anxious, “Why don’t you girls go instead? God, I hate you people sometimes!”

“Thanks but no thanks. Now, if you’ll excuse me!”

Gerald lowered his head as he turned around.

“Wait a minute! You haven’t resolved the issue about your wage yet, have you? I heard everything just now. You were arguing with Mr. Stone over your wage. I mean, it’s just two dollars anyway! We’re such a huge business, ain’t no way we’re underpaying you. Am I right, Mr. Brown?” Raquel said coquettishly.

“Of course! That is only natural!”

“So, I will settle your daily wage for you! I want you lot to cough up some change right now!”

Raquel spoke as she glanced at the few girls from the project department.

They responded in a blink of an eye.

It didn't take them long to come up with a large bag of five-cent coins.

"Here, sixteen dollars and not a single cent less. This is your wage for today!"

"Oops!"

Just as Raquel was about to hand the money over to Gerald, she dropped it all onto the ground.

The coins poured out of the bag immediately upon hitting the ground.

"So sorry Gerald, guess I wasn't holding the bag properly."

Raquel said apologetically.

"You know what? Why don't you pick up the coins? You can calculate the amount at the same time! As they say, 'killing two birds with one stone'."

After that, Raquel took a deep breath before she gulped down the bottled water that she was holding in her hand. She then threw the empty bottle at Gerald before she walked away.

Gerald knelt down before he carefully picked up the coins, one by one.

He placed it all back into the bag before he left the place. His lonesome, desolate figure receded into the distance.

As dusk arrived.

Gerald bought some food to eat.

He walked back to the village.

He kept walking and did not stop until he finally arrived in front of Finnley's house.

Gerald would come here after work every day to see if Finnley was back. But every time, he'd leave disappointed.

However, this time was different.

The door to Finnley's house was open and the lights inside were on.

Chapter 881

Gerald visited Finnley's house once in the past.

It was embarrassing to mention it but back then, Gerald felt that it was a little cumbersome to have Finnley by his side.

He wanted Finnley to be able to settle down at home.

However, Queta felt that it would be pitiful for Finnley to be left at home alone. Not to mention how fond Finnley was of Gerald, as reflected by how eager he was to follow him around all the time.

So, he brought Finnley back to live in the villa with him.

What a twist. The only person he could rely on now was Finnley.

Gerald ran into the house.

He saw a table full of delicacies on the table in the middle of the room.

"Uncle Quick? Are you here?" Gerald asked.

“Who is it?”

At this moment, a middle-aged woman wearing an apron came out from the room next door, holding a steaming-hot dish in her hands.

Gerald was taken aback.

“I...I am looking for Uncle Quick! Finnley Quick!”

The woman looked at Gerald, who reeked of sweat after toiling away the entire day and a look of disgust appeared on her face as she responded, Finnley has already gone up the mountain! He ain't back yet! Why are you looking for him?”

“Well, I have my reasons. I will wait for him to come back first. Since it looks like you're expecting guests, I'll be waiting outside the door!”

Gerald suddenly noticed that Finnley had gotten a pretty sweet deal for himself. Looks like he was able to get a wife for himself. If his memory served him right, before he left, Gerald left him a pretty big sum of money as pension.

However, Gerald felt too ashamed and embarrassed to ask about it. He stumbled out of the door and was about to wait by the doorway until Finnley came back.

“Hey, wait a minute! What is your name?”

The woman asked as if she had suddenly thought of something.

“Gerald Crawford!” Gerald replied.

“Oh! So you’re Gerald? We’ve been waiting for you for a few days now! He said that you’d come looking for him, so he asked me to welcome you and get you settled down. Still, why haven’t I seen you even though I come here everyday?”

“Uncle Quick knew that I was coming?”

“That’s right! He’d given me the instructions about a week ago. After that, he headed straight into the mountains! He told me that you are a rich young man! But you sure don’t look like one...hahaha!”

Gerald looked at his own clothes and he could not help but smiled wryly.

‘Was Finnley a psychic or something? How did he predict that I’d be in trouble?’ Gerald pondered.

But this was not the right time to be bothered with this now.

“You came at the right time. Finnley is coming back today. I’ve whipped up a table-full of dishes for him. Now that you’re here, hurry up and take a seat! You can have some tea first!” The woman said enthusiastically.

After chatting with the woman briefly, Gerald finally got the gist of things.

The woman came from the same village as Finnley. She requested for Gerald to refer to her as Aunt Maria. However, things weren’t as Gerald deduced. To be specific, Aunt Maria was not Finnley’s wife.

She was Finnley’s godsister.

Aunt Maria was a chatterbox.

She talked a lot.

As they spoke, he was told that something had really happened between Finnley and Aunt Maria.

This occurred around the time when Finnley first came back to the village.

Aunt Maria was a widow who was down with a severe illness and it was Finnley who saved her and got her ailment sorted out.

She could not understand how Finnley, who used to live such a carefree life suddenly became rich.

Saved by the hero, coupled with the fact that Finnley was actually a pretty decent man with above average qualities, Aunt Maria wanted to start a romantic relationship with him.

However, Finnley simply turned down her advances.

After that, Aunt Maria started treating him as her elder brother.

This was why she came to cook for the man today.

“Maria! Come and help me store these herbs I picked!”

A strong and loud voice came from outside the door.

As soon as Gerald heard the voice, he immediately knew who it was.

He stood up hastily.

“Uncle Quick?”

“My grandson? You are really here! How many days have you been here?”

Finnley was still the same as he had always been.

However, he looked a little neater compared to before.

Gerald assumed that it was Aunt Maria who forced him to dress up.

Chapter 882

Finnley's face looked rosier than compared to when Queta was taking care of him before this.

He was carrying a bag of herbs.

"I just arrived!" Gerald replied.

"Why, grandson? Things sure went tits-up didn't they?" Finnley asked as he chuckled.

"You can say that again!" Gerald replied, "I have nowhere else to go now, so I guess I'll be relying on you from now on!"

"Hahaha! I've already asked Maria to wait for you for a few days now! Judging by how you look, you must have suffered a lot in the past few days. Come, let's go. Maria has already prepared a table full of dishes. She's prepared it for you! Come in and have a little drink with your gramps!"

Finnley said as he patted Gerald on his shoulder.

"So, it turns out that the Moldell family had forced you into a dead end. What is wrong with the Crawford family anyway? Don't they have a lot of money? Did their balls drop off when facing the Moldell family?"

The two men started talking over wine and food.

Finnley was smoking a cigarette as he spoke in a light-hearted manner.

“Uncle Quick, how long have you known about the Moldells?”

The more Gerald interacted with Finnley, the more mysterious the man appeared to him.

No doubt, he knew a lot of things.

Finnley was very straightforward this time and he nodded slightly.

“I know a little about them, but as you young folks say nowadays, I can’t be bothered to know all the details about these second-rate noobs!”

“Second-rate?”

Gerald was startled.

“They’re a family made up exclusively by second-rate people. They are even referring to themselves as a hidden clan? Hmph! Clan my ass! Like hell they’re worthy enough to be considered a hidden clan, judging by how poorly they deal with matters.”

Finnley shook his head silently.

“I have seen how they operated. The Crawford family has a very tight-knitted defense and a long line of outstanding young masters. Which was why I was surprised to learn that Kort Moldell was able to break down the resistance completely while remaining largely unopposed with just a handful of his men!”

“Okay, okay, I get what you mean. Are the masters you mentioned similar to the brothers, Drake and Tyson? Hahaha! Could Drake and Tyson even be considered as masters? You ask them that and take a good look at their reactions!”

Finnley said as he waved his hand helplessly.

Gerald remained silent.

After a moment of deliberation, Gerald raised his head and asked, "Uncle Quick, do you know about the Sun League?"

"The Sun League? Why are you asking me about this?"

Finnley was evidently surprised to hear Gerald mention the name.

So, Gerald proceeded to explain the ins and outs of the situation to Finnley again.

"I know a little about them. Listen, it's not like I'm looking down on you, or underestimating the Crawford or Moldell families, but something tells me that you should dispel these ideas and thoughts for now!"

"Why?" Gerald asked.

"At this point in time, the less you know, the better it is for you. Grandson, did you practice the five moves and the breathing technique that I taught you before this?"

Finnley asked with a smile on his face.

"Sure did!"

Finnley nodded and said, "What are your plans in the future then?"

Gerald sighed as he said, "I am penniless now and Kort's men are searching all over for me. There is nowhere that I can go so I'm seeking refuge at your place now!"

“Hahaha! You did the right thing, grandson! To be honest, even if you didn’t come looking for me, I would have come searching for you sooner or later. This is our fate. So, you should just stay with me from now on. Sooner or later, you will understand why I said that the Moldells are just second-rate folks!”

Finnley patted Gerald on his head.

“Uncle Quick, I have another question!”

“Fire away!”

“Why did you find me in the first place back then? It could not have been because you felt like it, right?”

Gerald had always wanted to ask him this question.

“As I said, don’t ask me such questions for the time being. When the time is right, I will tell you everything! For now, you can just stay at my place with peace of mind and learn from me then!”

“Learn? What is there to learn?” Gerald asked.

“Learn to be skillful! My silly grandson! Haven’t you figured out the reason why you ended up in this state? If you had the appropriate skills, would you have allowed Kort to chase you around like a dog? I have already reminded you about this matter when I left back then!”

Finnley replied.

That’s right. When Finnley left back then, he already told Gerald that money wasn’t going to solve everything. He would have to be capable in other aspects as well.

However, Gerald did not have the time to pick up these “other” skills. He thought it was unnecessary.

It was only when Kort was hunting him down did he realize that aside from money, he had nothing significant that made up his identity in the past...

Chapter 883

“Uncle Quick, what do I need to learn?” Gerald asked.

“You have to learn everything that I know. You can slowly take your time. Gerald, your physique is actually not that bad. For the past seven days, I have been picking specific medicinal herbs for you to take a bath in so that you can recoup your strength and vitality. Besides that, I will also perform acupuncture on you. Don’t worry! Under my guidance, it won’t be long before you become a master!”

“You’ve been doing that for me for the past seven days?”

Gerald was really touched when he heard this sentence.

After all, his attitude back when he first met Finnley was not great. To think that the old man was willing to go to such great lengths just to help him. The man was actually concerned about his well being.

Finnley was not his biological grandfather, but Gerald felt that he was much closer to him compared to his own grandfather.

At this moment, there was nothing Gerald wished for more than to live up to Finnley’s expectations.

So, Gerald continued staying in the village, learning all sorts of skills from Finnley.

In a blink of an eye, half a year had already passed...

In a secret room in the Crawford family mansion in Northbay.

“How is it? Still nothing about Gerald?”

In the past six months, Dylan seemed to have grown a lot older.

His hair was already turning gray.

Yulia's face continued to be soaked in tears everyday.

"Master, I escorted the young master all the way to Salford Province back then. However, we came under attack in Salford Province. I stayed behind to cover Mr. Crawford and shield him from our enemies. All that I know is that he had already gone to a village to look for an old man whose last name is Quick. Miss Queta told me the old man's address. I have already visited the place a few times but the house had already been vacant a long time ago and there were no signs that Gerald had ever been there before!"

Zack had not been idle in the past six months, instead, he had been scouring the continent in search of Gerald while remaining undercover.

Unfortunately, for the past six months, Gerald seemed to have completely vanished from the face of the earth.

"This is all your fault! If you were just a little stronger and more powerful back then, there wouldn't have been the need for him to leave our family! We don't even know if Gerald is dead or alive now!" Yulia said anxiously.

Jessica was also crying as she comforted her mother.

"Gerald has lost everything, including his identity card. Not to mention the fact that that bastard, Kort Moldell is searching all over for him! How do you expect him to hide then? Who knows, maybe he had fallen into his hands a long time ago?!"

The more she spoke, the more upset Yulia became.

"No! If Gerald had really fallen into Kort's hands, then that bastard would have issued a threat already. He had been coming up with all sorts of excuses in the past six months but they're nothing but excuses, right? Gerald would have become his bargaining chip because he knows that we would compromise and give in for his sake! In other words, it's unlikely that Gerald has actually been captured yet," said Jessica.

“Jessica is right. Don’t worry. I believe in our son. He will be fine. Queta, help your aunt back to her room! Let her get some rest,” Dylan said.

Tears were also streaming down Queta’s face. She nodded and said, “Yes, uncle!”

“Alright then. Resume your duties. I’d like to have some time alone!” Dylan said.

After they left, Dylan clasped his hands together and a worried expression surfaced on his face.

“Gerald, my child, where are you hiding? If I knew that this would happen, dad would rather go all out to fight against Kort than allow you to risk your life out there!”

Dylan’s original plan was to send the strongest masters from the Crawford family to guard Gerald as long as he was out there. He would deny Kort any chance to strike out against his child.

That would not have been very difficult.

However, he had overestimated the strength and power of the masters that he had cultivated over the years, and he had greatly underestimated the strength and power of Kort’s subordinates.

That night, six months ago in Merry City, if it weren’t because of his subordinates risking their lives to save Gerald, his child would not have made it out alive.

Dylan clenched both of his fists tightly.

Despite how much money he had, he still found himself powerless against such an elusive foe.

‘Why can’t there be a way out of this!? Why!?’

“Master!”

At this moment, Dylan’s butler, Fynn walked in.

“What’s wrong?”

“Jett from the Moldell family is interested in the Mountain Top Villa that the young master bought in Mayberry City. He asks how much would you be willing to sell it for.”

Chapter 884

“Kort’s third son, Jett?”

Dylan clenched his fists.

“Yes sir, that’s him!”

“Hahaha! For the past 6 months, has there been anything that he did not want? Sell? Could he have been any more disrespectful? Tell him that we are not selling it!”

Dylan slammed his hands heavily on the table.

Although Kort could not come up with a valid justification to stop the Moldell family from assisting the Crawford family to track the Sun League, six months ago, he had asked his third son, Jett to join Parker’s team under the excuse that he should be gaining more experience.

However, upon Jett’s arrival, he had been trying to seize everything that he wanted by force and Dylan had been very tolerant of him all this while.

But this was the final straw.

“But master, Kort Moldell has had his eyes on the Crawford family for a long time now. If Jett is not satisfied and tries to cause trouble for us, it might end up in a disaster for us!”

The butler also replied helplessly.

“Okay, fine! Fine! Give it to them! He can have it if he wants it!

Dylan waved his hand impatiently.

Something that was worth \$123,000,000.00 was nothing in Dylan’s eyes.

Be that as it may, he was still infuriated by Jett’s blatant show of disrespect.

But he had no choice, did he?

“How about it? Has Dylan agreed to it?”

A fancy-looking young man with his legs crossed was sipping his tea outside.

“Greetings, Mr. Moldell. The master said that since you’re interested in it, he will give Mountain Top Villa to you as a gift. If you don’t mind me asking, why did you even ask about buying it in the first place?”

Despite the butler’s respectful tone, he felt the urge to eat the bastard alive.

“Okay! Very well! You know, credit where credit is due. Dylan Crawford is a man who understands the reality of things! I’ve got to give him that!”

“Brothers, let’s go! Let’s leave this boring place, and go to Mayberry City for a few days!”

Jett said as he walked away in an ostentatious manner in front of his men.

In a restaurant in a small town in Salford Province.

This was a restaurant that was similar to a farmhouse-converted-diner.

This was because it was located right next to a vast mountain.

There was a big river passing through the other side of the mountain.

It was indeed a beautiful mountain with crystal-clear waters.

So, many people from the so-called upper-class would often come here to travel and explore the area.

“No matter what it is, you have got to give me an explanation today! Do you know how expensive my clothes are?”

“That’s right! Ask your boss to come here! Wipe it? Maybe you’re sick and tired of living? Is that it?”

A woman in her thirties with heavy makeup on her face was holding onto a youth’s collar and she refused to let go.

She yelled loudly into his ear.

This was what happened. There were about seven to eight people in their group.

One glance was enough to tell that these weren’t your average law-abiding citizens.

When they came in to eat, a young waiter who was in charge of serving them accidentally splashed some of the vegetable soup on the woman’s body.

And things only went downhill from that point.

The main reason why there was such a huge ruckus was that they thought it would be easy and entertaining to bully the owner of this restaurant.

“I’m terribly sorry, please, let me wipe it off you!”

The youth apologized profusely as he came forward to wipe the soup off her dress.

Slap!

Unexpectedly, the woman slapped the boy across his face. “Damn it! Take your dirty hands off me! How dare you touch me! Berthold, look at how terrible his attitude is!”

The woman said in a rude, provocative tone.

She glanced at a burly man beside her, who had a dragon tattoo and a buzz cut.

Boom!

The burly man slammed his foot into the poor waiter’s stomach. The youth flew backward and smashed into the tables behind him.

There were many patrons at the restaurant, and they were all staring indifferently at the scene before them...

Chapter 885

“Brother!”

Suddenly, a girl with a ponytail ran out of the kitchen while still holding onto some vegetables.

She had seen the young man getting abused by their customers.

So, she hurriedly set aside what she was doing before running over to save her brother.

“Why did you hit my brother?”

The girl lunged over with tear-filled red eyes.

“Why did we hit him? Hmph! Look at this! He dirtied my clothes! What is wrong with your restaurant? How can you hire such a clueless waiter like him? He’s just asking for a beating at this point! Damn it! Tell me, what are you going to do now? If you don’t cough up some money as compensation, prepare to see your restaurant all smashed up!”

The woman said coldly.

“Don’t smash the shop! Please! I beg of you!”

The youth burst into tears as he groveled at their feet.

“Brother, don’t do that!”

The girl said anxiously.

The girl looked like she was just in her early twenties.

She was a hardworking and sensible girl.

That made it all the easier to bully this pathetic little family. The group of thugs got even more aggressive when they realized this.

The men behind Bertold started loosening their joints and cracking their knuckles, as they prepared themselves for a fight.

The people seated around them were also starting to get nervous. It was clear that these poor siblings were not going away without a beating. How pitiful.

“What’s wrong? Why is there a fight?”

At that moment.

A young man wearing a peaked cap arrived outside on an electric tricycle with a woman. They had obviously gone out to buy some supplies for the kitchen.

When the woman saw the fight that was going on inside, she hurriedly jumped off the electric tricycle and stormed into the restaurant.

On the other hand, the young man outside was still relatively calm and composed. He stole a glance at the folks inside the restaurant as he unloaded the supplies with a cigarette dangling between his lips. .

“Mom, they attacked him!”

The girl hurriedly said.

“Mom, they hit me!” said the young man as he continued sobbing away on the floor.

“Hunter, don’t be afraid! Mom’s here!”

“Who gave you the right to hit him?”

The woman felt very anxious at this time.

“Who gave me the right? Your imbecile son soiled my clothes for crying out loud!”

The woman replied with her arms crossed before her chest.

“They’re just clothes! I will compensate you! Tell me how much you want! Do you think you will get away with hitting my son!? Never! Why didn’t you ask around first? I, Maria, maybe a widow, but I’m not someone you’d dare to mess with!” yelled the young man’s mother.

“Fine! Optimistic aren’t you? I’ll tell you what this is! This is a Hermes product. A brand new one at that! I am wearing it for the first time today and it costs fourteen thousand dollars!”

The woman replied.

When Maria heard this, her arrogance faded away.

“How...how much is it? Fourteen thousand dollars? There are clothes that expensive?”

The annual profit for this farmhouse was only about eight or nine thousand dollars. Now they had to cough up fourteen thousand dollars just because somebody’s clothes had some vegetable soup on it? Preposterous!

“Hahaha! A country bumpkin will always be so ignorant! I doubt that you’d even heard of the brand before!” The woman replied arrogantly.

Maria was left speechless.

After all, these people had a Land Rover G500 and a variety of fancy cars parked outside and they did not seem like any ordinary people.

She was caught between a rock and a hard place.

The onlookers all wore sympathetic expressions when they looked at the restaurant owner.

There was no other way around it. This was just pure bad luck.

As both parties were confronting one another, the young man wearing a peaked cap, who had been unloading goods outside walked into the restaurant.

He walked right up to the woman's side. She was wearing a long one-piece dress.

He then grabbed the dress where her thigh was and started feeling the material of the fabric.

"Ahhh!"

The woman was so frightened that she screamed out in fright.

"You...what are you doing?"

Bertold was also pissed off. Cracking his neck, it was obvious that he was about to get into a fight.

"It's a fake!"

The young man with the peaked cap said as he shook his head, "You've been cheated, m'lady!"

Chapter 886

The young man took off his peaked cap before placing it aside. After that, he flicked his burning cigarette butt out of the restaurant.

As soon as he took off his cap, everyone inside the restaurant could clearly see that despite his skinny physique, he gave people an intimidating aura, and also how handsome and delicate his face was.

When the woman heard this, she started acting more anxiously.

“You must be blind! This is a genuine product! No way in hell will a person like you be able to distinguish between a genuine and a fake product! Why don’t you admit that you guys aren’t going to compensate me! Looks like I’ll have to teach you a lesson today lest you forget how powerful I am!”

The woman glanced at Bertold as she motioned for him to go ahead.

Bertold and his men started advancing on the young man.

“Alright, that’s enough. I know that all of you are great people. However, it’s really a knock-off! Why would I possibly lie to you?”

As he spoke, the young man grabbed the woman’s dress and tore it open.

“Ahhh!”

The woman started screaming out loud again.

“Take a look if you believe me. An authentic Hermes product is made out of raw materials that are treated with special care. But look at your dress. It is clearly made out of industrial cotton. You must have bought a counterfeit good somewhere, right? It costs three hundred and ten dollars at most!”

The young man said.

The woman wanted to scream into his ears.

However, she was stunned when she heard this.

Bertold, who was about to close in on him, was also stunned.

The both of them exchanged glances with one another.

This was because everything that the young man had said was right. This was indeed a counterfeit product that they had bought for three hundred and eight dollars at a discount sale.

“So, we can only compensate you three hundred and ten dollars at most!”

The young man said with a triumphant smile.

“Aunt Maria, bring three hundred and ten dollars here!”

“Aye!”

Maria nodded.

The young man handed the money over to Bertold.

Bertold felt embarrassed for being publicly humiliated by this young man in front of so many pairs of eyes. What ticked him off was the fact that he even took the opportunity to tear apart the dress of his woman.

How dare he point out so loudly that his woman was wearing a cheap knock-off dress!

If he were to leave without doing anything, then he, Bertold, would rather just be dead!

“Okay, young man. You have a good eye, I gotta give you that. However, even if it really was a knock-off, why did you have to tear my woman’s dress apart? I’ll turn you into a darned cripple for doing that!”

Bertold was fuming from the ears.

Without warning, he sent his fist straight into the young man's face.

Boom!

There was a sound.

The young man grabbed hold of Bertold's fist directly.

And then, he tightened his grip on the fist.

"Ouch! That hurts! Let go of my fist damn it!"

Bertold yelled out in pain.

He was shocked.

He could easily lift this man off the ground but how could he possibly exert so much strength using his fingers alone?

"You want to fight? Then you should have just said so!"

The young man replied with a subtle smile.

After shaking his wrist slightly, Bertold's arms started clicking and bending upwards at a bizarre angle.

After that, the young man gave Bertold a slight kick and he was flipped onto his back effortlessly.

"Ouch! My arm!"

Bertold yelled in pain.

His subordinates were all dumbfounded.

Hearing all the painful cracks when the young man was grappling Bertold's fist made them realize how powerful this seemingly harmless man was.

Seeing how Bertold's body moved, they knew instantly that his arm had become dislocated.

None of them dared to move a muscle.

"It's okay. It will not hurt anymore after a while!"

The young man said as he squatted next to the big guy.

Bertold, who was yelling incessantly, looked at his horribly deformed arm before realizing that he wasn't feeling any pain anymore.

However, the awkward position his arm was bent into looked really frightening.

At the same time, he saw the young man smiling indifferently at him. Chills crept up his spine when he started realizing how creepy the man's smile appeared.

He started sweating profusely as he said, "You...what are you going to do to me?"

The young man smiled as he patted Bertold's shoulder. "Bertold, with so many customers around, there's nothing I can do to you. Weren't you asking for compensation? Come! Why don't we step outside and talk about it?"

Chapter 887

Bertold gulped in fear.

The woman was starting to feel fearful as well.

She was afraid that this young man would also break her arm just like how he did to Bertold's.

She followed behind the young man as they walked into the backyard.

They finally arrived in a shack in their backyard.

Thud!

The young man shut the heavy door behind them loudly.

The both of them shivered in fright.

But they had no other choice. After all, Bertold could not allow his arm to remain the way that it was.

“You better fix my arm for me. Or I'll not let you go. Why don't you go around and ask...”

Bertold wasn't going to lose his pride that easily. So, he continued speaking with a hostile look in his eyes.

“Okay, that's enough. I already told you that I know how powerful both of you are. So, let's talk things over!”

The young man interrupted him before he could finish speaking.

“Heh heh. As long as you fix my man’s arm, we won’t be asking for any compensation!”

The woman said.

Slap!

The young man slapped the woman across her face.

The woman collapsed onto the ground after receiving the slap.

It came so suddenly that it momentarily stunned her. She was in such a disoriented state that she remained on the ground, staring up with a baffled look on her face.

Without waiting for her man to retaliate, the young man proceeded to break Bertold’s other arm.

In the end, both of Bertold’s arms were completely deformed and he could only lay on the ground as he squealed in pain.

He had fear written all over his face at the moment.

“How would you like to talk things over?”

The young man asked with a hint of hostility in his tone.

“No...we are not discussing anything anymore! Just let us go! We do not want to discuss anything anymore!”

Bertold replied out of fear.

“What about the three hundred and ten dollars?” The young man asked.

“I will give it back to you. We...we do not want it anymore!”

There was nothing they could do to intimidate this young man at all!

This was not the first time that Bertold had come looking for trouble but he knew that this time was different. This time, he had actually dug his own grave.

“Alright then. Remember clearly that you are giving it up voluntarily. I did not force the both of you to do so!” The young man said.

“Yes, it is voluntary! We did it voluntarily!”

At this time, the young man pulled out the three hundred and ten dollars that he had given to Bertold just now, from his pocket.

“Besides that, the both of you hit Hunter outside just now. I don't care what you're gonna say, you should at least give us three hundred and ten dollars to cover for his medical expenses, right? We will have to bring him to the hospital to get a scan and so forth. As you can already see, the small clinic in our town is not that well-equipped. We will have to bring him to the county hospital and I'm afraid, it'll cost a lot more than that!” The young man said.

“We will compensate you. Three hundred and ten dollars! Just take it!”

“And also...”

The young man said.

“There is still more?”

Bertold who was struggling for his breath due to the pain asked.

Slap!

The young man slapped him across the face “How dare you interrupt me when I’m speaking.”

“I’m so sorry, please go ahead!”

“And also, when you were beating Hunter up just now, you broke our tables, chairs, benches, pots and pans. You’ll have to pay up a hundred dollars for that, but I’ll make it easier by rounding it up to one hundred and fifty dollars! Now, pay up!”

“We will pay! We will pay! Mate, please help me. I cannot stand it anymore. My arms feel like there are thousands of bugs gnawing at it!”

Bertold’s face was pale from all the pain he was experiencing.

“Alright then. You should have had this kind of attitude from the very beginning and we would not have needed to waste our time like this! Just because you have money doesn’t mean sh*t, alright?”

The young man said.

After that, he held Bertold down as he fixed his arms.

Miraculously, Bertold felt his arms recover and the pain fade away.

“I remember now! Big brother, I will remember that!”

Bertold replied as he broke out in cold sweat.

“We will go out and make up for the balance we owe you. Not a single cent less, I swear on my mother!”

Bertold helped the woman, who had barely regained her senses to get on her feet before they hurriedly got back into the restaurant.

“Bertold, are we really leaving just like that? I am not satisfied at all!”

The woman complained while sobbing.

Her expression was as if she was the aggrieved party here.

Chapter 888

Bertold grabbed hold of the woman’s arm and got her to shut up.

After that, he thought to himself:

‘Am I going to leave like this? Hahaha! He should ask around and see what kind of a person I am. I may leave today but come tomorrow, I’ll be here with more of my men! When night falls, I will raze this place to the ground. After that, I will capture the young brat and I will cut the tendons in his arms and legs! Like hell I’m gonna let this slide so easily! Being impulsive will bring us nowhere. I can’t fight the kid head-on, not right now at least. After all, I don’t have enough men with me!’

“Bertold, wait a minute!”

At this time, the young man walked out of the room where they were tortured.

He waved his hand at Bertold.

“Ahh? Big brother, what’s wrong?” Bertold said.

“Come back here. I forgot something!” The young man said.

Bertold walked back to him.

“I forgot something just now. I don’t think I’ll be relieved if I let you just leave like that, would I?”

“Big brother, what are you worried about? I have already gotten a taste of how powerful you are. I will not dare to mess with you, I swear!” Bertold replied.

Although the young man looked like he was around twenty-two years old, Bertold had no choice but to refer to him as his big brother out of respect and fear.

“You might not dare to mess with me now but what if you go back and mobilize more of your men? What should I do if you decide to come back and destroy our shop in the middle of the night? Will you let me go when that happens? Who knows? Maybe you’ll end up severing the tendons in my limbs. I will end up being cripple for the rest of my life when that happens!” The young man said.

Bertold’s eyes were wide open in disbelief as he stared at the young man with a dumbfounded look on his face.

F*ck! He can read minds now?

Otherwise, how would he be able to repeat the same exact thing that he had been thinking of in his mind?

Bertold felt even more petrified. He looked at the young man as if he was staring at the devil himself!

“Big brother, why would I do that? I would not dare to do so!” Bertold replied nervously.

“I will have to get some insurance, just to be on the safe sides!”

After he was done speaking, the young man grabbed both Bertold and the woman’s cheeks before pinching their mouths open.

After that, he placed his index finger right inside their orifices.

“This...what is this? What did you feed the both of us?”

They were terrified.

“Twas a poisonous worm! Try feeling it now. Is there a slight pain in your stomach?”

“Ahhh?”

Their faces had already turned green.

They tried to feel it, as instructed by the young man. As he had said, they really felt a slight pain in their stomach!

“Big brother, please spare our lives! Please spare our lives!”

At this moment, Bertold and the woman began panicking.

“It’s fine. It will not take your life for the time being. On the contrary, it will actually be of great benefit to your body. For example, your kidney issue will return to normal in less than a month!”

The young man patted Bertold on his shoulder before he asked, “Do you feel a warm feeling in your kidneys now?”

Bertold took a moment to feel his kidneys before he started nodding, “Yes! Yes! I can really feel it!”

“Alright then. However, I have to warn you beforehand. Water can float a boat, as much as it can flood a boat. If both of you decide to retaliate, then this thing can also kill you at any time. It can gnaw away at your internal organs, and any type of medical procedure would not be able to save you at all!”

The young man’s face tensed up in seconds.

The both of them were so scared that their legs were already trembling in fear.

“Big brother, I understand now! I understand!”

The both of them nodded in unison.

“Alright then. Let’s go!” The young man said.

After that, the both of them walked to the front desk in panic as they put down eight hundred dollars on the table before they left with their men in a hurry.

“Don’t leave! Didn’t you say how impressive you were? Why leave now!?”

Maria yelled as she stood at the door with her hands on her waist.

She was laughing heartily as she counted the fat wad of bills.

“Gerald, this is all thanks to you! Hahaha! I made an extra eight hundred dollars today! I really have to depend on you when it comes to such unruly folks!”

Maria said with a smile on her face as she looked at the young man.

“Gerald, please tell us how you scared Bertold this time?”

That's right. This young man was none other than Mr. Crawford from the past...Gerald!

Gerald smiled wryly before he told them the entire story.

"Hahaha! Did you really feed them a poisonous worm?" The girl asked.

"Of course, not. I simply pressed on a few of their meridian points before fooling them!"

Gerald replied in a hushed tone.

"Ahh! There is no other way to deal with people like this! Otherwise, they'd definitely come back at us in the future.

Gerald shook his head with a helpless expression. After that, it seemed as though a new idea had popped into his mind when he told them, "That's right. I almost forgot something. I'll be right back with you guys!"

As soon as he was done speaking, Gerald ran out and left on his electric tricycle...

Chapter 889

The girl had a different look in her eyes when she looked at Gerald's back as he left.

"Ivy, what are you looking at?"

Maria could not help but ask when she noticed how distracted her daughter was.

"Ahhh? I was not looking at anything!"

Ivy pouted as she responded while shaking her head.

Maria was an expert in love and relationship matters when she was young. So, how could she possibly not know what her daughter was thinking about?

That's right. Gerald was a dashing young man after all.

He had lots of incredible skills, and he treated everyone kindly too.

Indeed, not many girls would be able to resist a man like him.

Therefore, it was inevitable that her daughter would start having feelings for him.

However, Maria sighed as she said, "Ivy, a word of advice. You will never be able to be together with Gerald."

Ivy was initially planning to deny and refute her mother's words.

But when she saw her mother's resolute attitude, she immediately replied, "Why? Gerald does not have a girlfriend anyway!"

"Who said so? It is just that something happened to his girlfriend. I don't really know about the details of what happened exactly. However, Gerald used to be a very powerful man and he loved his girlfriend very much. I am only telling you this because I do not want to see you getting hurt!" Aunt Maria said.

When Ivy heard those words, a gloomy and desolate expression appeared on her face. After that, she turned around and went into the kitchen wordlessly.

Gerald was outside, apparently trying to fetch something.

For the past six months, Gerald had been staying by Finnley's side.

He was constantly soaking in medicinal herbs, practicing and improving his physical fitness all day long. He had also undergone several training regimes under Finnley's instructions.

Gerald had also gone on several missions as specified by his master.

A lot has changed in the six months Gerald spent under Finnley's guidance.

As for their relocation, Finnley wanted to facilitate Gerald's training in the mountains. So, that was the reason why they moved to the small town.

And since Aunt Maria did not have any relatives in the village, she used the pension that Gerald had given to Finnley in the past to open the farmhouse restaurant.

Aunt Maria was the one who usually ran the restaurant.

In the past six months, Gerald's skills and strength had improved significantly. He had thought countless times about going back home to see his friends and family.

It would not be an easy task for Kort to try and kill Gerald now, and it could even be said to be a very difficult task.

However, Gerald was now running solo. He was all alone and he'd be hopelessly outnumbered if he were to go up against the big and powerful Moldell family now.

Therefore, Gerald had been holding back his urges all this while.

The most important thing now was for him to improve his strength.

As for Finnley, aside from giving detailed instructions to Gerald in the first three months, he'd always be away from home. This also meant that Gerald would always be practicing by himself.

Three days ago, Finnley suddenly left without even saying anything after receiving a token.

Gerald was already used to it though.

After getting to know Finnley and spending more time with him, Gerald realized that Finnley was indeed a very mysterious person. The people he knew were all surprisingly influential, and weren't the type of people you'd expect the old man to be so well-acquainted with!

Shriek!

Gerald's bike rolled to a halt before a fellow young man.

"Fatty, where are the items?" Gerald asked.

"Fear not, Gerald! Marven Wadley always gets things done! It is all inside the bag!"

The chubby fellow was none other than Marven.

When Gerald bumped into him earlier, he was being bullied by a ruthless bunch of strangers, so as a friend, he had to step in and save his ass.

It just so happened that whenever Gerald was out to perform his tasks, he would try to fish for some extra profits. And Marven was the exact type of person who you'd look for when it comes to fishing for profits.

Marven patted his bag as he jumped onto the electric tricycle.

"We will have to get it done as soon as possible!" Gerald said.

After that, he headed directly towards the street where they sold antique items.

There was a foreign antique inside the bag. Gerald snatched it from a wealthy foreign businessman's personal collection.

Of course, the businessman himself was also not a good person.

Gerald's training largely consisted of such activities, which was to obtain through illegal means, items that were obtained in the same unlawful manner.

Gerald had no other options but to do what he did. He could not contact the Crawford family now, and since he desperately needed money, this was the next best thing he could do.

Chapter 890

The both of them entered the antique shop.

There was a tall girl with a head of long hair standing at the counter.

"Take a look at this. How much is this jade bracelet worth?" The girl asked.

Gerald raised his brows slightly when he heard the girl's voice.

No way she's here, right?

Furthermore, the girl's back was facing the both of them.

Therefore, Gerald remained silent. Instead, he simply sat down at the waiting area next to the wall.

The shopkeeper was an overweight man in his fifties. He had a small beard and also a wretched look permanently etched onto his face.

He held the jade bracelet in his hand as he looked at it for a while.

After that, he shook his head and said, "The jade is actually pretty good. However, this type of jade is very common and its circulation rate on the market is very low. If you really are looking to sell it, then I can offer you five hundred dollars for it." The boss replied.

"What? Only five hundred dollars? But...but I looked it up on the internet and I saw that this kind of jade actually went for more than fifty thousand dollars! This is our family's heirloom that has been passed down from our ancestors!" The girl replied anxiously.

"Hahaha! What are you talking about? Over fifty thousand dollars? Miss, you looked like a reasonable person at first but your claim is downright ridiculous! Five hundred dollars is actually a very good offer already! You can't just believe what you see online!"

"Just take a look at your jade bracelet! See the polished spots? I don't think it's worth that much now that I've mentioned it. If you don't believe me, I happen to have a jade bracelet that is made out of the same exact material as your jade bracelet. I am selling it for one thousand and five hundred dollars but compared to yours, that jade bracelet has a much better color!"

The girl took the jade bracelet and examined it carefully. It was as he said, the material looked identical!

At this time, she said anxiously, "But boss, I need the money urgently. My mother is seriously ill and I am in urgent need of money right now! Can you give me one thousand and two hundred dollars for it at least?"

"Based on your accent, I can tell that you are not from Salford Province. You must be from the south, right? Why? Are you here to beg Master Jenkinson to treat your mother's illness?"

The girl nodded.

"Sigh. As much as I sympathize with you, if I give you one thousand and two hundred dollars for it, I'd be suffering a huge loss. Why don't we do this instead? I will give you another three hundred dollars for it. I will pay you eight hundred dollars for the jade bracelet. If that's not enough, I don't think how else I can help you!" The boss replied.

The girl thought for a moment. After that, she gritted her teeth and said, "Alright then. If you can give me eight hundred dollars, I'll take it!"

"Hey!"

At this time, the girl who was feeling very disconcerted and upset suddenly felt someone patting her shoulder.

She turned around to see who it was that called out to her.

When she saw the boy standing behind her, the girl's eyes lit up in delight.

She was surprised and overjoyed at the same time.

"Gerald?"

"Is it really you...Gerald!?"

The girl started jumping excitedly.

"Naomi! I almost didn't recognize you!"

Gerald started patting Naomi's head gently.

This girl was Naomi Milton.

Naomi's hair was obviously much longer compared to how it was before.

And she seemed to have grown a little taller.

No wonder she sounded so familiar when he first stepped into the shop.

But before seeing her face and confirming his suspicion, Gerald refrained from exposing his identity.

Speaking of it, he had not seen Naomi ever since he left Mayberry City.

Six months flew by in the blink of an eye.

Naomi was his best friend when they were still back in university.

In fact, she was still his best friend now.

“I have not seen you in such a long time!”

Gerald said with a smile.

“That’s right, Gerald. I heard Felicity saying that something happened to you and that your whereabouts are unknown. What a surprise to see you here in Salford Province!”

Naomi said with misty eyes.

She then stepped forward and wrapped her arms around Gerald.

Gerald patted Naomi gently on her shoulder as he said, “I’m doing fine. Look at me, there’s nothing wrong with me, right? By the way, didn’t Felicity and you start a company together? Why are you...”

Gerald asked curiously.

Naomi wiped the tears off her face.

After that, she choked up and said, “Gerald, you might not know this but Felicity, she...something happened to Felicity!”

Chapter 891

“...What? What’s wrong with Felicity? What happened?” asked Gerald hurriedly as soon as he saw Naomi’s expression.

Tears flowing down her cheeks again, Naomi cupped her mouth with a hand as she slowly began explaining what had taken place about half a year ago sometime after Gerald’s disappearance.

While the Crawfords had easily prevented the first flow of news—about Gerald’s disappearance—from getting out to the public, eventually, people still managed to catch on.

From there on out, rumor after rumor began popping up and spreading around like wildfire. Some of the rumors claimed that Gerald was kidnapped. Bolder rumors even stated that he had been murdered!

With the rumors spreading around so quickly, it was only a matter of time before Felicity and a few other acquaintances of Gerald caught wind of it. Felicity and Naomi themselves had particularly been more anxious compared to the others.

Because of that, Felicity wasted no time declaring that she would get to the bottom of the incident. Since she had once fallen for him, it really was no mystery why she was this determined to look for him.

Still, what had truly happened to Gerald? And why did it have to happen to him?

Though the two girls remained in a panicked state for quite a while, in the end, Felicity decided to head to Northbay with Naomi.

They were well aware that they first needed a clearer picture of the whole incident before they could even begin investigating, and who better to ask than Chairman Lyle? After all, they both knew that he had returned to Northbay right after Gerald went missing. Because of that, Mr. Lyle was simply the obvious go-to.

Upon arriving there, the two girls quickly headed over to Zack's company. To their dismay, however, they found that Chairman Lyle had already left for a business trip by then.

Seeing no other options, Felicity finally decided to make use of her best connections to aid with their investigation.

It took her a while, but she eventually managed to secure some help from a senior executive who worked for Zack. After agreeing to meet at a hotel's lobby, the two girls headed over and waited for him.

Unfortunately for them, a young man happened to cross paths with them that day. Seeing how beautiful the two girls were, the cunning youth immediately tried hitting on both of them.

When that failed, he ordered his men to forcefully drag them out of the hotel instead! From the lustful gaze in his eyes, it was clear that r*pe was the only thing on his mind!

However, the two girls held their ground. They weren't going down that easily. Felicity eventually got so nervous that she bit down hard on the youth's arm!

The youth was so infuriated by this that he dragged her all the way to the top of the building—with his badly injured arm—before tossing her off from the roof!

The chain of events was so alarming that even the Crawfords were made aware of it, and though Chairman Lyle had rushed back as soon as he heard the news, in the end, he wasn't really able to help with much.

As it turned out, the youth in question held immense power and influence. Because of that, he didn't even receive punishment for his evil deeds!

Though she had selflessly planned to locate Gerald in any way she could, in the end, Felicity ended up in a position arguably as pitiful as Gerald's.

While Felicity's lifeline was stabilized after several nights of doctors tirelessly working to save her, she had simply suffered too many injuries. As a result, though she wasn't in danger of losing her life anymore, she could only exist in a vegetative state now, and she would remain in this state for the rest of her life.

As if things weren't bad enough, Felicity's company was disbanded soon after.

"Who exactly is this person?" asked Gerald, his tone frigid as he raised his head. While he was now filled with anger, he was also filled with grief.

After all, upon becoming Mr. Crawford, Gerald was well aware that he had both ignored and let a lot of people down.

Felicity was definitely one of them.

To his surprise, the two girls had actually been worried about him from the moment they had heard that he had gone missing. What more, the only reason why Felicity was in her current state was because she wanted to help him.

Wiping her tears away, Naomi replied, "I've heard others address him as Mr. Jett Moldell... Even when I asked Chairman Lyle why Jett didn't have to take responsibility for his actions, Mr. Lyle completely ignored the question, telling me to quickly return to Mayberry instead."

"Jett Moldell?" repeated Gerald as he felt his right eyelid twitch.

When he had previously enquired about it, Gerald learned that Kort had three sons. One of them was Jett.

"So it's Kort and the Moldells again!" growled Gerald, clenching his fists tight.

Felicity wouldn't have ended up this way if Gerald hadn't been forced out of his own home in the first place.

Knowing that filled Gerald with immense resentment.

Chapter 892

However, upon seeing how sad and lonely Naomi looked, he instantly felt sorry for her. As a result, he was able to momentarily suppress his resentment.

“...Well... What about you, Naomi? What kind of illness is your mother suffering from?” asked Gerald.

“Well, after returning to Mayberry under Chairman Lyle’s protection, it didn’t take long for me to realize that my mom had contracted some sort of weird illness. Even after meeting countless doctors, nobody’s been able to cure her. As you can imagine, however, hiring doctors isn’t cheap... As a result, I ended up having to sell all of my family’s properties! It was about a month ago when all my resources finally ran dry. Having no other options, I came to the Salford Province to seek help from an uncle. During my time here, I found out that a famous doctor lives nearby! He goes by Master Jenkinson! However, since I barely have enough money to survive now, I can’t really meet up with him...” explained Naomi in an embarrassed tone.

Sighing, Gerald then replied, “To think that a single incident could cause such a massive ripple effect... Now even people acquainted with me have to share my burden...”

Guilt-ridden, Gerald then added, “It’ll be fine. Speaking of which, don’t pawn off this jade bracelet. After all, this person’s a liar! Such a bracelet is worth at least fifty-four thousand dollars! Regardless, I’m going to help find out what’s wrong with your mother and cure her.”

While Naomi was slightly confused to hear that, she believed that Gerald wouldn’t ever lie to her.

The boss himself seemed to give up after hearing Gerald say that.

“F*cking hell! You do realize you’ve ruined my business, don’t you?” said the boss angrily.

In response, Marvin sneered before whispering something into the boss’s ear. Seconds later, the boss’s face turned pale as he immediately shut up. For the rest of his duration there, he simply stood respectfully in place.

Knowing that Marven would know how to handle the rest, Gerald held Naomi by her hand and led her out of the place.

“Where’s your mother at?” asked Gerald.

“She’s currently staying up north at a hotel at the foot of Yorknorth Mountain... Do you know Master Jenkinson, Gerald?” asked Naomi in return.

“I do!” replied Gerald with a slightly bitter laugh.

“Speaking of which, what exactly happened to you in the past half year? Do you have any idea how worried all of us were for you?” said Naomi.

“Come, get in the car first. Your mother is our top priority now. I’ll tell you about it on the way there...”

Gerald didn’t really have any qualms when dealing with Naomi, so he found no reason not to tell her what truly happened.

Upon arriving up north, Gerald rented an electric tricycle and told Naomi to hop on. With Naomi sitting behind Gerald, both of them then rushed toward Yorknorth Mountain.

Since Gerald was quite close to Naomi, it was impossible for Gerald to just ignore her when he knew that she was in trouble.

Reaching the hotel shortly after, Gerald and Naomi were just about to get off the electric tricycle when they heard, “Hey! Isn’t that Naomi? Haha! She’s riding an electric tricycle!”

Turning to look at who had said that, the duo saw a few young men and women laughing at them as the group stood beside an Audi A6. Since the car’s doors were open, Gerald could only assume that they were about to leave before they spotted him and Naomi.

“They’re from my uncle’s family, Gerald,” said Naomi as she lowered her voice.

“I see...” replied Gerald while nodding slightly.

Getting off the tricycle, Naomi looked toward the group of people before asking, “Why are all of you here?”

“Why, we’re here to cancel your room of course! We were just about to call you! Dad said that since you don’t even have the money to meet Master Jenkinson, why should we continue paying for your room? I’ll tell you now that this high-ranked hotel only permitted a poor person like you to stay here since they wanted to pay respect to the Legh family! You’ve humiliated our family enough for staying here for far too long! This ends today!” sneered a woman dressed in luxurious clothes.

“Indeed! Look, if you really can’t afford it, just bring your mom home already. As if you don’t already know that only those who are influential and powerful are able to meet Master Jenkinson. With the small amount of money you have left, you won’t even make it halfway up the mountain!” added another man from the group contemptuously.

When Naomi’s family was still considerably rich in Mayberry, her family had contacted the Leghs from the Salford Province quite often.

Because of that, Naomi had gone to them to ask for their help after selling off all her properties. They had taken her in at the time since they didn’t know she was already poor by then. However, it only took a day for them to realize what she had done with her family’s properties.

Fearing that Naomi would only continue burdening them, from that day onward, they began treating her terribly like how they had just done. That was the gist of how things ended up this way.

“Yeah! Besides, my dad was already kind enough to find a family here for you to get married to! However, you ended up refusing it. Sure, the guy’s a bit slow in the head but at least he’s rich!” said yet another woman without filtering her words.

“I know right? Still, it’s no wonder why you refused it back then. So you already have a boyfriend! However, to think that he only rides on electric tricycles to move around!” added another woman.

Listening to all their ridicules, Gerald could only shake his head while laughing bitterly. If this had happened in the past, he would've already humiliated them by now. However, he knew better than to succumb to standards as low as theirs.

Chapter 893

"Tanya! Mollie! You're still here? Your grandma's heading up the mountain now so come along and help!" said a middle-aged woman as she walked toward the group at that moment.

"Oh? Alright, mom! Let's head there together then!" said both of the girls.

Seeing the two people who had just arrived, Naomi respectfully greeted, "Uncle, aunt..."

"Humph! So you're here too?" said the woman in a contemptuous manner while crossing her arms.

At that, Naomi nodded before saying, "Is grandma meeting Master Jenkinson to have her illness diagnosed? Is she feeling alright?"

"Hold it right there!" said her aunt in shock when she heard her question.

"Ignoring grandma for the moment, I'm telling you now that Master Jenkinson charges patients individually! You better not be getting any ideas!"

From what she had said, it was clear that she was afraid that Naomi wanted to bring her mother along.

On the contrary, however, the thought hadn't even crossed Naomi's mind!

"Look, Naomi. Since you won't be able to afford the medical expenses anyway, just bring your mom home. Don't worry, we'll cover the hotel expenses for the previous nights," added the woman, her arms still crossed.

"That's quite enough of that. As for you, Naomi, it's better that you just head up and take care of your mom," said her uncle in a casual tone.

Just as he was about to leave with his children, an extended luxury car slowly came to a halt right in front of the hotel. When the car's door opened, a distinguished and polite-looking middle-aged man stepped out before looking at Jorge and asking, "Good day, sir. Is it right to assume that this is Yorknorth Mountain? The area where Master Jenkinson lives?"

Since Jorge was the president of several furniture factories in the Salford Province, he had seen enough of the world to know that the middle-aged man standing before him was an extraordinary person.

Knowing that, he then respectfully replied, "You would be correct."

"I see. Thank you for your time," said the man as he nodded slightly.

"Well, Mr. Duncan? Is this the place? Why isn't there any parking space here?" asked a young man wearing a blazer as he got out of the car together with a young woman.

The man was so handsome that as he walked over to Mr. Duncan's side, almost all the women present began breathing heavily. What a prince charming!

As for the woman who had stepped out of the car with him, she was both tall and slim. While she was also extremely beautiful, the slight aloofness she projected on her face was enough to make anyone who looked at her feel slightly tense.

"Yes, this is the place," replied Mr. Duncan with another slight nod.

As Jorge looked at the youth before nodding with a smile, both Tanya and Mollie—who were still standing beside their father—cast flirtatious gazes at the handsome young man instead. To their disappointment, he didn't even take a glance at them.

"Whose electric tricycle is this? Move it aside so that we can park here!" said the youth as he loosened his tie while looking around before pointing at the tricycle.

Hearing that, the security guard standing at the hotel's entrance immediately ran over and pushed the tricycle aside. As a result, the tricycle began moving on its own and finally stopped once one of its wheels hit a large stone.

Upon seeing that, Tania, Mollie, and the others simply snorted.

"You!" said Naomi angrily.

'What was that supposed to mean?!

However, Gerald simply pulled her back before shaking his head at her.

"Let's get grandpa up the mountain already," said the young woman rather aloofly.

With that, the two youths began supporting an old man out of the car. The old man himself had a sallow complexion as the group slowly began ascending the mountain.

"Come on, let's head up together with them!" said Jorge to his own family.

As they left Gerald and Naomi behind, Naomi lowered her head with shame before saying in a resentful tone, "I'm so sorry, Gerald... Not only have I burdened you, but you had to suffer through that humiliation with me as well..."

"Hush, there's no need for that. Now let's head to your room to get your mother," replied Gerald.

"...Huh? Where are we taking her?"

Chapter 894

"We're taking her to Joshua Jenkinson to have him diagnose her illness of course!" said Gerald with a weak smile.

Gerald would've preferred treating Naomi's mother himself if he could. However, he was well aware that it simply wouldn't do to treat a patient in a hotel. Besides, he didn't have that many herbs or medicine with him at the moment.

In the end, it would be much better and convenient if Naomi's mother was treated at Joshua's place.

"Huh? We're seeking Master Jenkinson's help now? But didn't you say that you were no longer Mr. Crawford, Gerald?" asked Naomi curiously.

Naturally, she hadn't meant anything else when she asked that question. She simply hadn't expected that Gerald would still be able to maintain such connections in his current state.

"Haha! Just because I'm no longer Mr. Crawford, that doesn't mean that all my connections are now useless! Now let's get your mother up the mountain," replied Gerald.

With that, the trio then began ascending the mountain.

Since Master Jenkinson was extremely famous, it was no wonder why his clinic was so crowded. Though he was well known for his skill, he was also infamous for rejecting some of his patients.

According to rumors, a large family once wanted to hire Master Jenkinson to be their personal family doctor. Though they even offered him an immensely high salary, Master Jenkinson still ended up turning them down!

"How much longer do I have to wait here? To think that I've spent a good seventy-seven thousand dollars just to have to wait in line!" said a rich-looking businessman in an anxious tone before sighing.

"Just be patient. There are people who've paid over fifteen thousand dollars just for the registration fee, you know?" replied someone from the line.

Master Jenkinson's clinic was truly an extraordinary place. For one, the entire building looked like an antique clinic. Even the staff working there wore traditional attire that resembled clothes from the 1900s.

“We’ve spent almost forty-six thousand dollars yet we’re still only forty-fifth in place!” said Mollie as she made her way back to her family with a registration number in hand.

“I see... Well, the amount doesn’t matter...” replied Jorge with a somewhat bitter smile before sighing.

To think that the forty-six thousand dollars was merely for the registration number. They still had to pay a much higher fee for the diagnosis once it was done.

“Why do we need to pay just to line up here? And why are there people paying different amounts for the registration fee? I’ve noticed others paying fifteen thousand dollars, forty-six thousand dollars, and seventy-seven thousand dollars,” asked the cold woman from before.

“Well, it’s a lot like bidding... Essentially, the higher you pay, the faster you get to be diagnosed,” replied Jorge.

“Oh? Then what’s the highest amount one can pay?” asked the cold woman again.

“You can see it over there, beautiful! The top three clients have their names written there alongside their registration fees! Let me just go over and have a look... Holy cr*p! The highest registration fee ever made was two hundred and thirty thousand dollars!” said one of Naomi’s cousins who was obviously trying to please the woman.

“Thank you. Quest, go ahead and pay seven hundred and seventy thousand dollars at the registration area,” said the woman as she nodded slightly at the handsome youth.

“S-seven hundred and seventy-”

Somehow, the room was quiet enough at that moment for almost everyone to hear what the woman said. As a result, a massive uproar followed.

Soon enough, however, the noise died down again though everyone was now looking at her in astonishment.

Quest himself walked over to the registration area and swiped his debit card on the machine prepared there. Once the amount was paid, he returned with the registration number that had cost seven hundred and seventy thousand dollars.

With that, it was obvious that they were going to be first in line now.

“T-they’re so rich!” screamed several people in shock.

As everyone remained flabbergasted, Mollie—who had just so happened to turn around at that moment—suddenly said, “Mom! Look behind us! They’ve actually followed us up here!”

As Naomi’s aunt turned to look at the direction her daughter was pointing at, she anxiously said, “Oh my god! What are you doing, Naomi? Do you even know where you are right now? To think that you would actually follow us up here!”

‘Why on earth does Naomi and her family have to cling on to us like leeches?!’

Just as she was about to further mock Naomi, a staff member appeared before saying, “Our sincerest apologies, ladies and gentlemen, but the master can only diagnose two more patients today. Once that’s over, we’ll be closing for the day. Aside from the first two clients, the rest may leave and come again tomorrow.”

“...What? Did you just ask us to return tomorrow?” said Jorge, stunned.

The rest of the clients were left stupefied as well the moment they heard that.

“We won’t leave! We’ll just wait here till Master Jenkinson is ready to treat the patients again!” announced the people there, one after another.

“Please be considerate, ladies and gentlemen. Do understand that there are simply too many of you making a ruckus in here which isn’t good for our recuperating patients who are currently in the backyard.”

“Then we’ll quiet down... Besides, we’ve all already paid so much for the registration fee,” said a few businessmen there in aggrieved tones.

Naturally, this placed the staff member in a rather difficult position.

“They’re right. Since we had to pay to even be in line, we should all be considered VIP clients! Instead of asking us to leave, you should instead be chasing away those who didn’t pay to register! That should clear the masses quite a bit. We’ll be sure to remain silent as well,” added Naomi’s aunt.

Chapter 895

After saying that, she immediately looked at Naomi. Her action was clear enough for the staff member to instantly catch on to what she was trying to imply.

“Kind ladies and gentleman, could you please present your registration number to me?” asked the staff member as he walked over to Gerald’s group.

“We... We don’t have one...” said Naomi as she shook her head in embarrassment.

“Ah, then do head over there to pay for one,” said the staff member as his gaze grew slightly colder.

“We... Don’t have the money for that...” said Naomi as she bit her lower lip.

“What? Did they actually sneak into this place?”

“Hey now, take a look around you! Why would you even come here if you don’t have any money?”

“That’s right! Such a beautiful girl too... Too bad she behaves this way!”

Several of the businessmen in the lobby were now shaking their heads with disapproving smiles on their faces.

“G-Gerald, Naomi... Why don't we just leave for now?” said Naomi's mother as she tugged on her daughter's sleeve. After all, she was well aware that she was just making things difficult for both Gerald and her daughter.

“There's no need for that, Madam. Just leave it to me,” replied Gerald as he turned to face the staff member before glaring back with his own cold gaze.

“I'm sure you're new here, so I'll let it slide. Ask for Joshua Jenkinson to come out! Tell him that a young man with the surname of Crawford is looking for him!”

“Wha- Y-you... How dare you address the master by his name?! What do you mean by Crawford? You... You rude person, you!” replied the staff member in his shock.

The other businessmen in the room shared the same feeling as well, and they were all looking at Gerald now with dumbfounded expressions on their faces.

“F*ck! Just look at this guy! If Master Jenkinson ends up being infuriated by his rudeness, then nobody is going to be able to meet him today!” said Mollie aloud. She seemed to be enjoying fueling the flames.

Hearing that, the others in the room immediately grew angry.

“She's right! Where did this guy even come from? How utterly rude!”

Even the aloof woman and old man from earlier were now looking at Gerald.

“He truly is asking for it, isn't he!” said Quest as he sneered before walking over to Gerald.

While the old man and the woman clearly knew that Quest was looking for trouble, they didn't stop him. Perhaps they subconsciously felt that the fearless Gerald needed to be put in his place.

“Hey, you’re the b*stard who was riding the electric tricycle, weren’t you? If you’re penniless, then just get lost already! Stop disturbing those who want to meet the master to get diagnosed!” shouted Quest as he pressed his hand down hard on Gerald’s shoulder.

As Gerald looked at the hand on his shoulder, he said, “Move your hand away if you don’t want to regret it.”

Upon saying that, his calm aura was immediately replaced with a frigid coldness.

“Regret? Haha! I’m afraid you don’t know what I do for a living!” sneered Quest as he began intensifying the force of his palm.

To his surprise, he was only able to realize that Gerald had tilted his shoulder slightly before a sickening crack could be heard.

The sound that followed was the anguished cries of pain from Quest.

He immediately retreated from where he once stood as he held on to his pulsing hand while shouting, “M-my hand!”

Quest appeared to be in great pain as cold sweat dripped down his forehead. When he finally took a look at the condition of his hand, he could see that all his veins were bulging so much that they almost looked like earthworms.

“I... I’ll break your limbs!” roared Quest, feeling that he had just been greatly humiliated.

Just as he was about to pounce on Gerald, the ill old man shouted, “Quest! Stop, right this instant!”

Though Quest hadn’t realized it, the old man had already caught a glimpse of the back of his pulsing hand. Upon seeing the damage that had been done, the old man was filled with a mighty fear.

After all, he knew how strong Quest was. He was also well aware that Quest was proficient in fighting alone. Even if three specially trained soldiers were to face him, they'd surely be the ones losing terribly.

Despite all that, all it had taken for Gerald was a slight tilt of his shoulder for Quest to get hurt so badly. If that was the only thing Gerald needed to do to inflict so much damage, then the old man didn't even want to imagine how strong Gerald truly was.

"Step down I said!" ordered the old man again.

Even the aloof beauty who had been staring at Gerald for a while now had a slight frown on her face.

"I apologize, sir... My grandson was truly rude earlier..." said the old man.

As soon as his sentence ended, however, he instantly began coughing terribly.

Chapter 896

"Grandpa!" shouted both Quest and the cold beauty nervously.

"I'm fine. Sir, I'm willing to let Master Jenkinson diagnose the ill person from your group first. I can wait," said the old man, much to everyone else's surprise.

"...What? But why, grandpa? Why the hell should we let him go first? Who the hell even is he?!" growled Quest angrily.

"I appreciate it. After all, Joshua probably can't treat a terminally ill patient," said Gerald in a casual tone without any intention of being nice.

"...Y-you!" shouted both Quest and the beauty in rage.

Even the old man bore a rather ugly expression on his face at that moment.

“While I admit that you certainly are very powerful, you should watch your mouth and manners. I don’t really mind since I’m already this old, but if you say such things to others, trouble will definitely come your way,” said the old man, lengthening his words to express his clear dissatisfaction.

With daggers now drawn from both parties, the staff member—who had been watching all this unfold from the very beginning—immediately ran to the backyard.

“It’s fine, Gerald... I don’t need to see the doctor anymore... Please... We can’t afford to offend them...!” said Naomi’s mother who was getting increasingly frightened.

Meanwhile, a middle-aged man—who looked to be almost fifty—rubbed his hands with a towel within a room lit only by an oil burner.

As his patient left the room—that was located in the inner part of the building—after receiving his diagnosis, the staff member from earlier came running in while shouting, “M-master! A fight seems to be imminent in the lobby!”

“What? How dare people create trouble here! Kick all the people involved out!” ordered the man coldly. The man in question, was none other than Joshua.

“Before that, master... I must say that one of the parties involved with the fight is quite noteworthy. Their family name is Westley and they’re quite generous with their money. They paid seven hundred and seventy thousand dollars alone for their registration!”

“Westley?” asked Joshua with a cautious tone. Linking that surname with how lavish they were, Joshua was able to slightly get the gist of the situation.

“...Humph! I guess I’ll have to head out there myself now! Who exactly was foolish enough to offend the Westleys?” asked Joshua as he wiped his face.

“It was a poor, young man, master! Not only did he not pay for the registration fee, but he even talked big and wanted you to meet him in person! He’s strong too so I was hesitant about kicking him out... Regardless, if I remember correctly, his surname was Crawford!”

Upon hearing that, the towel Joshua was holding on to immediately fell to the ground.

“...What did you say his surname was? Crawford? You said he was a young man, right?” asked Joshua, expressions of both shock and fear on his face.

“Y-yes!” replied the staff member, clearly starting to feel frightened.

“...Could it actually be him?” said Joshua in a nervous tone before immediately running toward the lobby somewhat excitedly.

“He’s definitely ruined now! Not only did he offend Master Jenkinson, but he’s also offended such a high-status rich heir!” Hah! Let’s see how miserable he’ll end up becoming!” sneered Mollie.

“Indeed! We probably won’t be able to meet Naomi in the Salford Province ever again after this!” added Tania smugly.

The moment her sentence ended, several of the clients there began shouting, “Master Jenkinson!”

Joshua had finally made his appearance and his gaze was now locked on the spot where the two parties were still facing off.

Strangely enough, he looked more excited than anything as he quickly made his way toward Quest.

“God d*mn! I wonder what kind of power they truly have for Master Jenkinson to be this excited!”

“I know right? It’s so strange seeing him like that!”

While the others were surprised by how eager Joshua looked, their jaws truly dropped wide the moment they saw him walking past Quest and his family.

He was now standing before the poor guy! As if that wasn't shocking enough, Master Jenkinson immediately bowed before Gerald before saying, "Greetings, senior!"

Chapter 897

"...Senior?"

Everyone now had their mouths gaping wide. The mighty master, Joshua Jenkinson... Did he really just call that pauper his senior?!

While even Naomi was slightly surprised, the ones who were left the most stupefied were those from the Legh family.

"Good day. I just came here today to borrow your place for a bit," said Gerald in resignation. Though he wasn't sure whether he should've let Joshua address him as his senior, it was too late for Joshua to retract the title anyway.

"By all means, please use my facilities as you see fit, senior!" replied Joshua with utmost respect in his voice.

As Gerald, Naomi, and her mother moved on, those from the Westley family could only look at each other in dismay, deeply shocked.

Just as the old man had thought, the youth truly was extremely extraordinary.

About half an hour later, Naomi was anxiously pacing to and fro outside a guest room door. She had been sweating profusely from the moment Gerald and Joshua had entered the room with her mother.

"Humph! I just can't bring myself to believe that that guy actually knows how to treat illnesses!" growled Quest as he crossed his arms.

Aside from Naomi, the three Westleys were waiting behind her as well.

Quest's dissatisfaction was clear as day. After all, not only had he been humiliated by Gerald in terms of strength, but as it turned out, Gerald was also proficient in treating others!

Since he was used to being arrogant and ruthless, the embarrassment he suffered today had no doubt left his pride in shambles.

"Shut up!" said Master Westley coldly in response.

Bob had simply assumed that Gerald was being rude when he was earlier told that Master Jenkinson wouldn't be able to cure his illness.

However, from the moment he heard Master Jenkinson addressing Gerald as his senior, Bob Westley began fearing that what Gerald had claimed was true. That even Master Jenkinson wouldn't be able to help cure him.

It was due to that fear that Bob had waited respectfully for Gerald outside the guest room.

The moment Gerald stepped out, Naomi immediately rushed over to him before asking in an anxious voice, "How's my mom's condition, Gerald?"

"She should fully recover in three months if she takes her herbal medicine as prescribed," replied Gerald with a smile.

"Thank god... Speaking of which, when did you learn how to treat illnesses?" asked Naomi, feeling both delighted and surprised. After all, the Gerald currently standing before her felt almost foreign compared to the one she used to know.

"It's a long story. I'll explain it to you if there's a chance for me to in the future. For now, go on inside and have a look at your mom," replied Gerald.

As soon as he said that, Joshua himself stepped out of the room with a needle bag in hand. From the looks of it, it was evident that Gerald had been the main doctor this time around. At most, Joshua must have only assisted him throughout the half-hour period.

“Senior, please!” said Joshua respectfully while handing the bag of needles over to Gerald.

Looking back at Joshua, Gerald could only sigh internally.

It was about five months ago when he had first met Joshua. At the time, Finnley was still busy teaching Gerald all his medical and martial art skills.

The old man had even given Gerald a medical book, and Gerald was told to memorize all its contents. Since he was excellent at learning, it wasn't difficult for Gerald to completely grasp the concepts within that book.

In fact, all it took was a month for him to be able to recall the contents of the medical book by heart. However, though his theory was strong, his actual skill in handling medicine was far from perfect at the time.

Joshua first made his appearance around then.

From the way Joshua had begged Finnley to take him in again, it seemed that the old man had once taught medical knowledge to Joshua sometime in the past.

It was clear that he simply wanted to deepen his knowledge and skills, and he was extremely persistent. After kneeling outside Finnley's house for an entire day and night, the old man simply couldn't bear seeing him like that.

As a result, he told Gerald to teach Joshua some of the contents in the medical book. Finnley had hoped that by doing so, Gerald himself would be able to master the basic application skills.

While he allowed Gerald to educate Joshua for about a month, Finnley himself never took Joshua in as his apprentice. Due to that, Joshua habitually addressed Gerald as his senior even though Gerald told him not to.

“Mr. Crawford! Master Jenkinson! Both of you have worked hard!” said Bob respectfully as he approached both men.

“I’m sure you’ve already heard from my senior earlier but just to clarify, I’m aware of your illness, Master Westley. Even so, I have to admit that I truly am incapable of curing you,” replied Joshua rather ashamedly.

Chapter 898

“I did indeed hear that, yes. However, since Mr. Crawford was able to notice my illness with just a simple glance, I’m sure he has a way to cure it!” said Bob, a faint smile on his face.

“I apologize, but I’m no doctor. I don’t have the qualifications to treat you,” replied Gerald.

Since Gerald was now still susceptible to outside dangers, he was trying his best not to be overly conspicuous. It hadn’t crossed his mind that Bob would actually wait for him right outside the guest room.

“Hey, now! Have some self-awareness! Are you even aware that my grandpa’s never begged anybody for help? He’s even addressing you as Mr. Crawford out of respect! At least try to help him out!” growled Quest coldly.

Hearing that, Gerald turned to look at the youth with a frown on his face.

“Don’t be rude, Quest!” scolded Bob.

“I’m terribly sorry Mr. Crawford... If my grandson’s rude behavior offended you, I’m willing to apologize for his sake...” said the old man as he slowly began bowing.

Both Quest and the aloof beauty were immediately stunned silent. They had never seen their grandpa behaving this way.

Before Bob could properly bow, however, he was stopped by Gerald.

“I’ll let it slide, Master Westley. Since we ended up getting acquainted with each other, I’m sure that fate has a role in all of this. I’ll have a look at your illness though I won’t promise positive results,” replied Gerald.

Gerald had realized by now that since it would be inconvenient for him to look for members of the Crawford family, he may as well use this chance to get to know more distinguished people. After all, it was near impossible to make any progress without the aid of large families.

With any luck, he would be able to gain enough forces and influence to deal with the Moldell family properly in the future.

“T-thank you so much, Mr. Crawford!” said Bob happily.

“Before you thank me, I need you to agree to two conditions,” replied Gerald.

“Name them. I’ll definitely fulfill them!” declared Bob with a firm tone.

“They honestly shouldn’t be too difficult for you to fulfill. First off, is regarding my identity. I’ll just say that it’s currently inconvenient for my identity to be exposed to the public. I need you to keep it a secret.”

“Of course!”

“As for the second condition, I need to head to Mayberry in a few days. I need a smart, capable, and obedient person to be with me there at all times. Highlight the word, ‘obedient’ since the person you assign to me needs to listen to all my orders.”

“Humph! If it’s just a servant you want, the Westleys have plenty of them... As long as you’re able to cure my grandpa, I’ll personally give you a luxurious house with at least fifty maids and servants who’ll heed your every command!” sneered Quest.

"I don't require a luxurious residence, nor do I have a need for that many servants. Still, I can see that you're quite smart and capable yourself, Quest... I wonder..." said Gerald as he smiled faintly while looking at the boy.

"...What? You can't seriously be telling me to serve you! Are you out of your mind? I'm the young master of the Westley family!" replied Quest, obviously finding Gerald to be more ridiculous than he looked.

"He's rather reckless, but he's definitely a smart man. I was honestly having the same idea!" added Bob as he laughed loudly.

"...Wait, what? Grandpa?! Sister...!" said Quest, suddenly sounding much more dispirited than before.

"You'll be staying by Mr. Crawford's side from now on, Quest. Be sure to obey his every command, regardless of whether it's hard work or not," said Bob.

"But why me..."

"Why, you ask? Are you really daring enough to disobey me now?" replied Bob, a hint of anger in his voice.

Gnashing his teeth, Quest then replied sulkily, "Fine, I'll do it for you, grandpa..."

After hearing Quest's involuntary agreement, Gerald nodded and brought Bob into another room.

"Is that young man truly capable of curing my grandpa, Master Jenkinson?" asked the aloof woman as she watched the room's doors close. She simply felt that Gerald was too young to be this capable.

"Haha! Miss Quinley, you don't have to worry at all. Since my senior didn't flat out deny curing him, there's definitely a possibility of it happening! Besides, both of us share a master. Quite frankly, I used to be a gangster. After meeting my master, however, it only took a month for my master to completely change my ways. During that period, I was exposed to a lot of medical skills and knowledge. Sadly, I only got to learn a little over the basics."

“Senior, on the other hand, was taught the entire quintessence of our master’s knowledge. He’s practically a professional by now. He stayed with our master for half a year and my master even taught him in person every day, you know?” explained Joshua rather enviously.

“Who exactly is your master?” asked Quinley rather curiously.

“Can’t say anything about that!” replied Joshua, shaking his head.

It was about two hours later when the guest room’s doors finally opened again.

Chapter 899

“Grandpa!” said Quinley as she ran over to him.

“After you, Mr. Crawford,” said Bob, sounding very pleased as Gerald walked out first.

While only two hours had passed, Quinley could tell that there was already a great change in her grandfather’s complexion.

“You don’t have to worry, Quinley. As expected, Mr. Crawford was able to find a way to cure my illness. According to him, I’ll be able to fully recover soon,” explained Bob, his tone even more respectful now.

“I’ll congratulate you in advance then, Master Westley. Speaking of which, since he managed to help you, I wonder if you’d be willing to do him another favor...” said Joshua.

“Oh? Is there anything else I could help you with, Mr. Crawford?”

“Though he didn’t include it in his terms, he’s actually looking for an extremely rare herb in the southern border of the Salford Province. The herb itself is called the Ginseng King, and senior has been searching for it for a long time now. If you manage to locate it, I’m sure it would help him greatly,” added Joshua.

Upon hearing that, Gerald raised an eyebrow slightly.

To think that Joshua had actually beaten him to asking Bob about the Ginseng King. In truth, Gerald had been planning to ask the exact same thing to Master Westley if he had managed to cure him. It was honestly another reason why he had agreed to help Bob in the first place.

After all, though he had previously gone to the southern border of the Salford Province to look for the Ginseng King, he had realized back then that the search wouldn't yield any results if he was the only one looking for it.

Gerald was searching for it since Finnley had told him before that consuming the Ginseng King would greatly increase his body's strength and bloodline in general. Once he ate the herb, he would theoretically be as much of a threat to the Moldells as Finnley currently was.

Even so, based on his current capabilities and strength, it wasn't really a problem for him to defend himself. Gerald was honestly more worried that the Moldells would decide to attack his family living in Northbay instead.

After all, if that were to truly happen, it would only be a sign that he was still far too weak and incapable of protecting the Crawfords. To prevent that, he needed the Ginseng King to ensure that he would be strong enough should the Moldells ever launch an attack on his family.

Regardless, Joshua knew that Gerald was looking for it since he had also been present when Finnley explained about the Ginseng King. It touched Gerald slightly to know that Joshua still remembered that incident.

"So you're looking for the Ginseng King as well, Mr. Crawford. While I had planned on looking for it myself, I gave up about two years ago since I couldn't find it no matter how hard I looked. What more, I heard that should ordinary people consume the herb, it could very easily cause their blood circulatory system and physical strength to plummet," said Bob.

"However, since I'm already cured and you need it, consider it to be less a favor and more of an act of gratitude from the Westley family. Upon returning home, I'll immediately form and order a group to begin searching for it on your behalf."

"I greatly appreciate that, Master Westley," replied Gerald in a grateful tone.

“Now that that’s settled, I’ll be leaving for the southern border of the Salford Province to prepare for the task. As agreed upon earlier, Quest himself will temporarily be staying by your side,” said Bob.

It was a little while later when Naomi was about to check out of the hotel. As she held onto her luggage bag, she turned to look at Gerald before asking, “Could we head back to Mayberry together, Gerald?”

Naomi had asked since she had heard that he was returning there anyway to resolve some issues of his.

“Yeah, of course we’ll head back together,” replied Gerald with a smile.

Mayberry wasn’t the only stop on his mind. He planned to return to Northbay to check on how things were going as well. However, Northbay could wait.

His priority was Mayberry since Jett—the third young master of the Moldell family who had also hurt Felicity so terribly—was last seen in Mayberry from what Naomi had told him.

After suffering so much for him, Gerald knew that he would have endless restless nights if he didn’t avenge Felicity.

“That’s great to hear! We can now look out for each other!” said Naomi happily.

“Speaking of which, just leave your luggage here. Quest can take them down,” said Gerald as he pointed at the youth who was currently standing at the side with both hands in his pockets.

“Wait, why do I have to carry them?” asked Quest in disbelief that he had been ordered to do such a thing.

“What? Are you disobeying me already?” replied Gerald with a stern gaze.

Suppressing his anger, Quest then said, “Fine, I’ll take them! What’s the big deal anyway...”

After saying that, Quest then began carrying the luggage down in between huffs.

Since they were leaving in Quest's car, he was obviously going to be Gerald's personal driver for the time being as well.

However, the moment they entered the car, Gerald shouted, "Hold on a minute!"

"What is it this time?" asked Quest rather impatiently as he saw Gerald looking out the car's window.

Chapter 900

Looking at the same direction Gerald was, Quest saw that a team of similar-looking cars had just parked at the foot of Yorknorth Mountain. Upon squinting his eyes, he realized that Gerald was looking at two women who had just gotten out of one of the cars.

Seeing how stunned Gerald looked, Quest placed a finger under his chin as he said with a hint of interest in his tone, "Humph! You're a grown-up, aren't you Mr. Crawford? Are you going to tell me now that you've never seen beauties before? Though I have to admit that those two women are particularly stunning."

"Hush!" replied Gerald, his gaze stern as he continued looking at the two women.

Gerald really hadn't expected to bump into the two girls here of all places. The two beauties were in fact his old acquaintances, Jasmine and Mindy.

He hadn't met the two girls from the time he had bid farewell with them about half a year ago in the Salford Province.

After all, after the incident at the Fenderson family mansion, his father had told him that he was contractually bound to have a marriage with Jasmine. Upon finding out that his grandfather had been the one to sign the contract, Gerald could only feel helpless back then.

However, he understood his grandfather's motive. It was the trend back then to have strong alliances, after all.

Snapping out of it, Gerald then told Quest to stop the engine.

His intent wasn't to continue spying on them, nor was it for him to greet and catch up with them. The truth was, Gerald had noticed two figures seemingly stalking both Jasmine and Mindy from a distance. The stalkers were simply too suspicious for Gerald to ignore.

"Are you done looking at them yet, Mr. Crawford? They're already ascending the mountain," said Quest.

"I'm waiting for them to go a bit higher. Just wait here in the meantime."

After making sure that the two girls had ascended quite a distance, Gerald silently got out of the car and began inching toward the two sneaky people.

"F*cking hell! Is he actually planning to catch up with the two beauties to have a chat with them?" said Quest in resignation.

He then looked at Naomi before saying, "...Wait here, I'll go over there to see what he's up to."

With that, he walked up to Gerald.

Noticing that Quest was coming his way, Gerald waved at him before saying, "You came at the right time. See those two over there? They seem to be proficient in martial arts. I need you to taunt them. Once they start going after you, lead them to that corridor over there."

"What exactly are you hoping to achieve?"

"Just do it! Quickly!" ordered Gerald as he pushed Quest forward.

Seeing that he didn't really have a choice, Quest stood before the two men, shouting all sorts of profanities to get their attention. Gerald himself quickly got into position.

While it was true that he was now meddling in the affairs of both Jasmine and Mindy to a certain degree, Gerald wasn't doing it for the sake of it. He wasn't doing it because of the marriage contract his grandfather had signed either.

Rather, he was only doing this for his aunt and Queta's safety. After all, they too were members of the Fenderson family.

Since those from the Fenderson family could now be considered to be relatives and in-laws to the Crawfords, Gerald doubted that the Schuylers—the Fenderson family's former enemies—would even dare do anything bad to them. Knowing that made him even more curious to find out who the stalkers were working for.

As was expected, Quest was the prime candidate when it came to taunting. It didn't take long for the two stalkers to begin chasing after him.

Upon running into the corridor, however, one of them immediately sensed that something was wrong and shouted, "Hold it! We're being lured into a trap!"

Just as both men turned around to retreat, a dark figure flashed past them.

Before either of them could even react, the figure launched an extremely fluid motion. It took a second for them to realize the searing sensation on their chests. The pain was so great that it didn't take long for both men to start screaming in agony as they fell to the ground.

"Y-you... Who are you...? Do you even know who you're dealing with...?" warned one of the men as he held onto his chest while trying to get up.

In the end, however, both of them weren't even able to sit upright, let alone stand.

"I have no idea who you are, but know this. If you don't answer my questions honestly, you won't make it out alive," said Gerald coldly as he slipped a hand into his pocket before squatting down to take a closer look at the two stalkers.

Hearing that, both of them felt immense chills running down their spines.

Chapter 901

Immediately after saying that, Gerald lifted both of his hands and stuffed something into their mouths!

“W-what did you just feed us?!” sputtered both of them, stupefied by the turn of events.

It didn’t take long for the two men to realize that whatever it was, it hurt like hell. The effects were almost instantaneous as both men began holding on to their stomachs and rolling on the ground in pain, agonized expressions etched deeply on their faces.

Quest himself—who had been standing silently at the side this entire time—was left petrified as he watched them squirm in pain.

“Just poisonous worms. Do understand that the worms are probably already devouring your organs as we speak. It won’t be long before the agony ends and you’ll both be dead,” said Gerald with a cold smile on his face.

“P-please spare our lives! P-please...” begged the men.

“Only if you answer all my questions. First off, why were you stalking the Fenderson sisters? Which family do you belong to?”

While both men had sworn never to reveal the answers to those questions regardless of how much they were tortured, what they were experiencing now was already much worse than anything they could have ever imagined. A quick death would be better than what they were currently feeling!

“W-we were... sent here by the Schuyler family! We’re Master Yael’s subordinates...! Please... Please spare our lives...!” said the men as they lay twitching in pain on the ground.

“So it really is the Schuylers. What wicked things are they plotting up this time?” asked Gerald.

“W-we don’t know...!”

“I see. Well then, let’s just leave now, Quest.”

“N-no! Please wait! We’ll tell you! We’ll tell you everything we know!” shouted the men in panic.

“W-while we don’t know the exact details to what’s truly happening inside the Schuyler family, we’ve heard news that the Schuylers are secretly plotting something big to rebel against the Fendersons! Their end goal is to make the Fenderson family part of their own instead!”

“Oh? Correct me if I’m wrong, but I’m pretty sure that the Schuylers and the other minor families who are currently under the Fendersons wouldn’t have the capability to take on them,” replied Gerald with a frown.

“You’re right... B-but they’ve partnered with the Longs in Yanken! A family called the Moldells is involved as well! From what we could see, almost everyone that the Moldells sent over was exceedingly powerful! We’re pretty sure that the Fendersons are truly done for this time around!” explained the two men, spitting out everything they knew in hopes of getting Gerald’s mercy.

‘So that’s why!’ Gerald thought to himself.

“Tell me what little you know about the ‘big thing’ that the Schuylers are plotting up?”

“W-well... From what we’ve heard, Lord Fenderson is currently so sick that he’s literally at death’s door... As a result, the Schulers are going to make their move in the next three days...”

“I’ve properly handled the corpses, Mr. Crawford. What’s the next step?” asked Quest as he clapped the dirt off his hands.

The men were still alive some ten minutes ago. Not anymore.

Quest felt a shiver run down his spine as he recalled the agonized expressions on the two corpses. How equally terrible and frightening.

When they had first met, Quest had simply assumed that Gerald was a simple and honest man. Gerald certainly looked the part. It was the reason why Quest dared to speak so presumptuously to Gerald earlier.

Now, however, he finally understood why his grandfather had treated Gerald so respectfully and politely. Gerald had managed to completely instill fear within Quest's heart at this point.

'His means of gathering information is simply too cruel and vicious!'

"Since my family and the Fendersons are acquainted, I can't just ignore this. Change of plans. We'll be staying here for another three days. While I sneak into the Fenderson family to see what exactly is going on, you'll be responsible for taking care of Naomi and her mother," said Gerald as he looked at Quest.

Things were getting much more heated now with the involvement of the Moldells. It was clear that the Schuylers were now that family's lackeys as well.

There were three major wealthy families now. If the Moldells managed to subdue the Fendersons and acquire them, then the Moldells would essentially have two of the three major families under their control.

Once that happened, it wasn't hard to imagine them targeting the Crawford family's properties in Weston next.

How clever those from the Moldell family were to try acquiring his family by flanking the Crawfords.

Knowing very well what the Moldells were going for made it impossible for Gerald not to get involved in all this. However, now wasn't the time for him to simply barge in with his true identity. He needed a plan...

As he glanced over at Yorknorth Mountain, however, an idea emerged the moment he thought about Joshua.

The very next day, Bryson stood at the entrance of the Fenderson family mansion as he respectfully greeted, “Welcome to the Fenderson family mansion, Master Jenkinson. In case you’ve forgotten, I’m Bryson Fenderson and the people standing behind me are Fendersons as well. It’s a pleasure meeting you again.”

The old man—who needed a walking stick to support himself—then watched together with his family as Joshua got out of his car.

Chapter 902

As the old man had implied, Joshua had indeed met up with the Fendersons before a few years ago. In truth, it was the Fendersons who had wanted to hire Joshua as their family’s personal doctor back then. Though they had even offered an extremely high salary, in the end, Joshua still refused their offer.

“It’s a pleasure indeed,” replied Joshua with a faint smile on his face.

It was at that moment when Bryson noticed a new face. Or at least half a new face.

A young man was standing obediently next to Joshua as he carried a medical kit in hand. The odd thing about him, however, was the fact that the youth was wearing half a mask. It covered his upper facial features, and it wasn’t unlike a masquerade mask.

“Could I know who this might be?” asked Bryson with a smile.

“A-ah...! Ah!” replied the masked youth as he pointed at his own mouth before waving his hands slightly. He then pointed at Joshua before placing his palm near his heart.

Seeing that, Mindy chuckled before saying, “Sanderson is Master Jenkinson’s apprentice, grandpa! He’s dumb so he can’t talk!”

Since both Mindy and Jasmine had returned to the Fenderson family mansion with Joshua, Mindy had had the opportunity to get to know Sanderson a bit more. That definitely explained her enthusiastic introduction of the youth.

“How could you say that, Mindy?” replied Jasmine as she looked at the straightforward girl with a sigh.

“It’s fine! After all, I’m already quite close to him! We got acquainted atop Yorknorth Mountain the day before. Surprisingly, though that was the first time we had met each other, I instantly found him to be quite familiar! Regardless, though he can’t really talk, I feel that we got to understand each other a lot throughout our time together, aren’t I right, Sanderson?” said Mindy with a smile. The way she said it, it was almost as though she was a close friend of his.

“Ah! Ah!” replied Sanderson as he hurriedly nodded.

“Haha! I apologize for the awkwardness, Master Jenkinson... Though Mindy’s quite the straightforward and reckless girl, do understand that she’s been a loving and kind person her entire life!” said Bryson.

“I can certainly see that... Speaking of which, my apprentice here suffered from face burns when he was very young... It’s the reason why he’s wearing this mask. However, I hope you understand that he’s quite a diligent worker. I bring him everywhere I go now, and in return, he gets to learn more and more medical skills and knowledge from me.”

“Well then! With you being such a great teacher, I’m sure your student will be equally as great!” said Bryson as he held on to Master Jenkinson’s hand while leading him further into the Fenderson family mansion.

“Hah! Did you hear that, Jasmine? Grandpa said I was kind!” said Mindy as she playfully pouted.

“Sure, let’s go with that...” replied Jasmine as she shook her head slightly with an annoyed smile on her face.

Seeing this, Sanderson himself rolled his eyes at Mindy though he made sure she couldn’t see it.

‘Kindness my foot! You’ve just never met a person who talks through sign language! You’ve only been nice to me since you want to learn sign language as well!’ Sanderson thought to himself.

If it wasn’t already evident enough, Sanderson was none other than Gerald.

While his current persona certainly wasn't ideal, it was in fact, the most convenient way for him to successfully infiltrate the Fenderson family mansion.

"Allow me to help you carry that medical kit, Sanderson," said Jasmine as she nodded toward him.

At that, Gerald immediately began gesturing with his hands again before saying, "Ah! Ah!"

Since Jasmine was so much gentler and considerate compared to Mindy, Gerald couldn't help but take a few more glances at her. His attention, however, soon returned to Lord Fenderson.

Gerald had already fully diagnosed his illness earlier from just a glance.

As long as Lord Fenderson took his prescribed medicine and received acupuncture treatment for a few days, it was almost certain that he would make a full recovery. It honestly wasn't that difficult a task for Gerald.

The situation was ideal as well, since—as Gerald had previously discussed with Joshua—he had indeed planned to stay with the Fendersons for at least a few days.

During that period, Gerald planned to observe the Fendersons while also investigating for any activity from the Schuylers. Or at least that's what he had initially planned.

As time went on, Mindy continued to look for Gerald any moment she could, and it was honestly starting to annoy him at this point. It was almost as though she had gone mad!

Thinking that he was finally alone when night came, Gerald stood in the backyard as he thought about the 'great scheme' that the Schuylers were plotting.

As for the Moldells, how many people were they actually sending over to help the Schuylers this time around?

Just as the gears in his head were about to grind, he heard a voice saying, “What are you doing, Sanderson?”

Gerald was left speechless as he turned to look at Mindy. The girl had her hands behind her back as she skipped all the way toward him.

“Ah! Ah! Ah!” replied Gerald as he gestured his hands while pointing at the garden and the surrounding area.

“Oh, I see! So you wanted to enjoy the scenery! Haha! Since you probably only focus on studying medicine on Yorknorth Mountain, I’m sure you’ve never seen this grand a garden, have you?”

“Ah!” said Gerald with a nod.

“Speaking of which, since you’re currently free, could you keep me company for a bit?” said Mindy as she held on to his right hand.

Gerald was so stunned by that that he didn’t even know how to reply.

Chapter 903

With Mindy’s small hand being so smooth and warm, it wasn’t long before Gerald started feeling weird.

Before he could even say anything, however, Mindy began dragging him over to a few small stone stools in the garden where both of them sat.

“You know, Sanderson, I’ve been wondering why I keep finding you to be so familiar... After some thought, I think it’s because of how similar our past experiences are... While it’s true that I’m a rich young lady who’s been living in luxury all my life while you’ve had an extremely difficult past—even having to face such a miserable accident—both of us are similar in the way that neither of us had proper friends our entire lives,” explained Mindy.

Hearing that, Gerald simply nodded slightly.

"I resented that fact a lot when I was younger, you know? You may not know it, but because of a certain family, both Jasmine and I were grounded within the house for the longest time. That's akin to torture for me since I'm the kind of person who simply can't stay put in a place for long... I'm sure you're able to relate to that to a certain degree... Regardless, due to my lack of contact with others, I've never been in a relationship before. Before I knew it, almost twenty-three years have passed and till this very day, I don't think I've ever fallen for anyone, at least not in the way that soap operas usually play out," added Jasmine as she held onto her chin.

In response, Gerald pointed at Mindy before making a few more gestures.

"Hmm? Could you perhaps be saying that I'm pretty so it should be easy for me to get a boyfriend?" asked Mindy with a smile.

After seeing Gerald's nod, Mindy simply sighed before saying, "While I'm no longer grounded these days, I feel nothing for any of the rich heirs I've come across. It's true that I do want to fall in love, but none of the people I've met make my heart flutter at all!"

At that, Gerald nodded again.

"...Well, there was one person... However, I only got to be together with him for a short while... He's a good guy who I have to admit, is also quite cute..."

Raising an eyebrow, Gerald gestured again.

"Hmm? Why didn't I confess to him?"

After seeing him nod, Mindy sighed before saying, "Humph! It's a long story! To simplify, from what I've seen, he's a sc*mbag!"

"...Ah?" replied Gerald, shocked.

"Tell you what, Sanderson. That friend of mine? It's true that he's nice to people, but he's a little too nice to everyone, you know? Especially toward girls. It's kind of sc*mmy, don't you think? It's honestly

the thing I hate most about him! That's the reason why my feelings for him eventually ended," explained Mindy.

With that, Gerald made another gesture, akin to cheering her on.

"Worry not, I'll definitely find the love of my life one day..." replied Mindy as she looked at him with a faint smile on her face.

"Speaking of which, Sanderson, do you care a lot about how others view your physical appearance?" asked Mindy.

As he nodded, he pointed at his face before putting on a terrified expression. For now, he knew he had to keep the act up.

"Were you saying that your appearance would scare others away? You're afraid that no one will befriend you after seeing your burn marks?"

Upon seeing him nod in agreement, Mindy then asked, "Well I'm not afraid... And I won't give you a cold shoulder, even after seeing what you look like. So Sanderson... Would you please take your mask off for me?"

Hearing that, Gerald quickly shook his head.

"Well, since you're that reluctant, I won't force you... Keep in mind, however, that we're still close friends. No matter what you look like under that mask, I won't dislike you..." said Mindy firmly.

It truly hadn't crossed Gerald's mind that Mindy would say such things. In response, he simply nodded understandingly.

"Ah, here you are, sir!" said a servant out of the blue as she began walking over.

Hearing that, he stood up while tilting his head at the servant.

“See, the young lady’s left shoulder has been aching a lot of late. We’d like you to have a look at her condition, sir,” added the female servant.

Chapter 904

After seeing him nod, Mindy then said, “Go ahead and check on Jasmine first. Since she’s trained a lot recently, it’s probably the same issue again. I’ll wait for you here tomorrow night so that we can chat again!” said Mindy.

Gerald then nodded in agreement as he began following the female servant to Jasmine’s room with his medical kit in hand. Once they got there, Gerald was greeted by the sight of Jasmine wearing a sling nightgown.

Her hair hung loosely around her shoulders and her goddess-like appearance made Gerald momentarily stunned.

“Since you were with Master Jenkinson for most of the morning, I felt that it would be rude to bother you then. I’m afraid I can only ask for your help at night,” said Jasmine with a faint smile on her face.

“Ah! Ah!” replied Gerald as he gestured his response, an indication that he didn’t think much about it.

Seeing that, Jasmine sat down before saying, “I appreciate it... See, my shoulder’s been aching occasionally ever since it got hurt sometime in the past. Since my training has intensified recently, the aching has gotten more frequent and also more painful...”

Hearing that, Gerald gestured with his hands as though he was asking her how her shoulder got hurt in the first place.

“Let’s just say that a friend of mine accidentally hurt me... It was back during a Taekwondo championship... I had underestimated him, so due to my carelessness, I was flung out of the ring! In the process of breaking the fall, my left shoulder received substantial damage... Ever since that day, the ache never truly went away,” explained Jasmine.

Gerald was gently rubbing her left shoulder at the time, and after hearing her full explanation, he felt a shiver run down his spine.

'The one who caused the injury... It was me, wasn't it? To think that she's had this pain on her shoulder this entire time... Now that she's asking me to treat her, I'm not even sure if it's god's will anymore...'

After a brief examination, Gerald gave her a thumbs up before mimicking the action of holding a needle. Essentially, he was saying that after he performed acupuncture on her a few times, she should feel as good as new.

"Is that so? Thank you, sir! While we're at it, could I please request to not address you as sir? For some embarrassing reason, I feel rather uneasy to say it... Could I just call you Sanderson?" asked Jasmine with a subtle smile on her face.

Upon seeing his nod, Jasmine then asked, "You've always been staying by Master Jenkinson's side, right? Don't you ever get bored? When I saw you atop the mountain that morning, it seemed that you didn't have many friends either. After all, aside from the lively Mindy, not many people actually took the time to talk to you, is my deduction correct?"

For some odd reason, Jasmine felt that she could open up a bit more to Sanderson. He simply exuded an aura that made her feel safe to talk about such things. He made her feel assured.

While Jasmine had to admit that she was late in getting involved with society, she still felt that she was quite good at judging people.

At the very least, she was definitely sure that Sanderson didn't make her feel like the other men she had previously met. Unlike the obscene looks those men usually gave her, Sanderson's gazes were soothing.

What more, since Sanderson couldn't speak properly, she could speak her mind without having to worry about Sanderson blabbering out what she had told him. He was essentially the total opposite of Mindy.

All this contributed to Jasmine sincerely wanting to chat more with Gerald.

In response to her previous question, Gerald simply nodded.

“You’ve been living out there this entire time, Sanderson... Do you have any idea what love feels like? I don’t mean anything by that, I’m just curious...”

‘What on earth is wrong with these two sisters tonight...? To think that both of them had the same topic in mind to talk to me about...’ Gerald thought to himself as he shook his head.

“I see... Well that makes the both of us... While I’ve not been in a relationship before, I may have found myself having a crush on somebody... Though I say that, I’m not even sure when I started having feelings for him...” said Jasmine in a soft tone.

As Gerald listened on, she continued, “Maybe... Just maybe... Could these feelings for him have sprouted the moment he tossed me out of that ring? Or perhaps it was when he had saved me... How curious... Ah!”

Nearing the end of her sentence, Jasmine let out a tiny yelp as she felt an acute pain on her shoulder.

Immediately lifting his hands from her shoulder, he lowered his head in apology.

“I’m fine, don’t worry. Just continue, Sanderson,” replied Jasmine with a smile.

Chapter 905

It was no surprise why he had accidentally made that mistake. After all, Gerald was stunned to know that she actually had slight feelings for him.

As far as Gerald remembered, he only ever had brief conversations with Jasmine, though he did admit to manipulating her slightly during some incidents. To think that she would end up falling for him just because of that...

“Anyway, when the Fendersons went over to the Crawford family some time ago, we learned that he had gone missing. While I’ve sent a lot of people out to search for him, it’s already been a little over half a year by now yet there still isn’t any news about him... I still occasionally wonder whether he left on his own accord...” said Jasmine in a rather sad tone.

“...Regardless, are you done?” asked Jasmine as she turned to look at Sanderson.

At that, Gerald nodded before gesturing for her to get a good rest.

Just as he was about to leave with his medical kit, however, he caught a glimpse of some prayer tools lying around in her room.

With a slight frown, he then pointed at said objects before saying, “Ah, ah?”

He had meant to ask her whether there was something going on the next day, and though he was worried that the question wouldn’t get across, Jasmine seemed to understand him just fine.

With a smile on her face, she nodded before saying, “There’s a church fair tomorrow. My aunts, Mindy, and I will be heading there to pray for blessings together. Haha! You may not know this, but in the past, Mindy and I couldn’t leave the mansion all willy-nilly, Sanderson. We used to sneak out just to go to that fair! We don’t have to sneak out anymore, though, so we can thoroughly enjoy ourselves there without fear of getting caught!”

Upon hearing that, Gerald’s expression saddened.

“...Hmm? Could it be that you wish to go there too? Now that I think about it, you’ve probably never attended a church fair, have you?” asked Jasmine as she looked at his face.

In response, Gerald began gesturing happily.

“Alright then, it’s decided! If you aren’t too busy tomorrow, do keep us company and go out with us!” replied Jasmine with a smile.

Though Jasmine was rarely this friendly to someone she just met, she simply felt comfortable with him.

Perhaps it was his calming gaze and inability to talk properly—which meant that he was also naturally a better listener—that made Jasmine willing to befriend him.

Regardless of whatever the true reason was for her to feel the way that she currently did, she was comfortable with him and that was all that mattered.

As all this was happening, several people were celebrating an extraordinarily lively night in a secret room within the Schuyler family's mansion. The people involved were all seated at a large table, chatting merrily between sips of wine.

"The situation seems to have changed, dad. To think that that b*stard, Lord Fenderson, would actually hire Joshua to cure his illness! From what my subordinate reported to me, his complexion looks much better now after just a single session of the treatment!" said Yael in a worried tone.

"Master Yael, you worry too much! The Longs and the Schuylers are different now! Not only have both our families agreed to cooperate to ensure the success of this mission, but we're also getting valuable assistance from a few masters from the Moldell family! Bryson's no longer a threat!" sneer a middle-aged man who went by the name of Berk Long.

Berk was Master Long's youngest son, and just like Master Long's other sons, he had his own set of skills that separated him from the rest.

He was most prominently known for being both strong and powerful, just like how his name suggested.

Not only was he the leader of the Long family's secret forces, but he was also a key player during the attempt to capture Gerald alive in Merry City back then. Though Gerald had managed to escape, the fact that Gerald had only made it out by the skin of his teeth made him worthy enough to be trusted even by the Moldells.

"...I suppose you're right, Berk!" said Yael.

"Humph! But of course he is! You need to learn more from your elders from now on, Yael! Wit isn't everything, you know? Speaking of which, the first phase of the plan starts tomorrow. How goes the preparations?" asked Noah.

“Worry not, everything’s already in place. After all, with both Quentin and Trey on our side, phase one is most definitely already in the bag!” said Yael as he looked at the similar-looking brothers from the Moldell family.

“Well I’ll rest assured then! Since the Quentin & Trey duo are Master Jett’s younger cousins, I have reason to believe that their capabilities are on par with Master Jett’s!” added Noah with a flattering tone.

“You’ve got to be joking! There’s no way we could ever compare to our cousin!” said both of the brothers as they shook their heads with bitter smiles on their faces.

“There’s no need to be modest! Anyway, a toast to the success of the first phase tomorrow!”