

Chapter 906

“Cheers!”

As Jasmine had said the night before, a church fair was held in town the very next morning. With everything looking so grand, it was no wonder why it was so crowded.

“How lively!” said Mindy excitedly as she stood in the middle of the crowd.

“Could you please be a little more reserved, Mindy?” said Jasmine rather helplessly.

“Why should I be? Today’s an exciting day! Can’t you feel it? Seeing all the people here just makes me all giddy!” replied Mindy as Jasmine shook her head.

“It’s fine once in a while, isn’t it Jasmine? Let’s just have a short stroll around before heading to the church to pray for our blessings later,” said their second aunt as she turned to look at the youth who had silently been following them from behind this entire time.

“I apologize that you have to see the childish side of our family,” said the second aunt as she smiled.

In response, Gerald shook his head.

To be honest, even if they had prohibited Gerald from coming along, he would’ve still done so sneakily. After all, how couldn’t he when he was well aware that the Schuylers were actively eyeing the two sisters.

“...Hey, look over there, Jasmine. Aren’t those our classmates?” asked Mindy out of the blue as she pointed toward a few people.

As she said that, their six classmates took notice of them as well.

Since Mandy and Jasmine had both been mysterious girls who had remained cold and aloof toward them for the longest time, nobody in the group—regardless of gender—actually dared to take the initiative to greet them.

However, since Mindy was now waving at them with a smile, they naturally felt the need to walk over. After all, regardless of how distant they were, the two girls had still been their classmates for years.

“I didn’t expect to see you here!” said a woman—who appeared to be the leader of the group—as she smiled.

“Indeed! It’s high time Jasmine and I came out to have a bit of fun! I was honestly wondering if we would bump into any of our classmates here earlier. Speak of the devil, I guess! How long have you been here? Have you had your fun yet?” asked Mindy with a smile.

“Actually, we just arrived!” said the other women in the group.

“I see! Why not walk around together then? After all, aside from Stella, we’ve never had a proper chance to chat with each other, even though we were classmates for so many years! Right, Jasmine?”

Hearing what Mindy said, Jasmine nodded before smiling.

Jasmine and Mindy were more acquainted with Stella since both she and Gerald had momentarily given a hand to the two girls during the incident half a year ago.

“Also, you may not know this, but though we never talked much in class, we know all about you!” declared Mindy.

“You’re Isabelle, aren’t you? You’re the monitor of the class right next to ours! As for this beauty, your name is Maia, right? We met at the Taekwondo championship back then, remember? If I properly recall, you got transferred to our university some time ago together with that handsome guy, Warren!”

Hearing that, Maia smiled faintly at Mindy before saying, "Yeah, it was quite a while ago since that happened. We got to know Isabelle a bit better after that incident, so in a way, the events of that day had a silver lining."

"Alright, since all of you are young people, why don't all of you go ahead and have some fun together? Your Third aunt and I will just be walking around if you need us," said Second aunt as she looked at the two girls.

Upon agreeing with that, Jasmine and Mindy joined their classmates, leaving Gerald sighing internally as he followed them. And here he had thought that he wouldn't ever have to meet those people again. To think that 'never' turned out to be only half a year later.

Still, it was clear that all of them had changed slightly.

For one, Isabelle wasn't as impetuous as she used to be. Stella herself had gotten a shorter haircut, though she still remained beautiful all the same. As for Maia, she seemed to have grown a bit more mature, and that amplified her beauty even more.

"Ah, speaking of which! These are our classmates, Sanderson! Let's be sure to have fun together, alright?"

Gerald could only nod. It wasn't as though he could refuse the offer.

When Stella, Maia, and Isabelle saw that he was wearing a mask, they felt rather uneasy walking together with him. The fact that he didn't know how to speak didn't help with his situation.

However, since he came with Mindy and Jasmine, the girls kept to themselves, knowing it would be imprudent of them to say anything bad about Gerald.

While none of them said a thing about him, Maia herself took an extra step by deliberately distancing herself from him.

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She did so since half a year wasn't nearly enough to change her arrogant attitude. As was expected, Maia still preferred only being around people with high statuses in society like Warren, Jasmine, and Mindy.

Nobody could really blame her for that.

Regardless, Gerald was far too busy keeping an eye out on his surroundings to even notice the contemptuous gazes from both Maia and Isabelle.

"Hey Jasmine, look there! See those little candies those kids are holding? I like them a lot! I wonder where they bought those!" said Mindy a little while later as she pointed out the window at a few children who were passing by. The group was currently seated in a small shop while enjoying some coffee.

"Oh, you do? I know where they're selling them! It's a little further up north, but I could bring you there if you'd like!" replied Maia.

"That would be great!" said Mindy excitedly as she turned to look at Gerald.

Mindy then smiled and said, "Come on, Sanderson! Join me! After all, you don't seem like you have anything else to do!"

"He doesn't need to follow. We can just head there ourselves!" stated Maia, a hint of contempt in her voice.

Before Gerald could even take a good look at Maia's expression, Mindy had already grabbed on to his arm before shouting, "Let's go!"

Jasmine herself smiled before adding, "Just go ahead with Mindy, Sanderson... I'll feel much more assured knowing that you're keeping her company as well!"

Hearing that, Gerald could only shake his head in resignation as he followed Mindy and Maia to the candy stall.

Though he had assumed that Mindy would return to the group upon purchasing the candies, to his dismay, there were a lot of interesting things on sale which Mindy hadn't seen before. As a result, it turned into a mini shopping spree as Mindy spent quite some time looking through and buying more and more things.

Eventually, Gerald tapped Mindy's shoulder gently, indicating that they should return to the group.

"We're in no hurry, so just stay and have a look around!" said Mindy with a smile.

"If he wants to return so much, just let him leave first..." added Maia.

"No way! It'll be boring with just the two of us!" replied Mindy as she shook her head.

Just as he was about to persuade Mindy to return again, Gerald felt his ears twitch. A second later, his eyes turned stern as he turned to look behind them.

Though Maia and Mindy were blissfully unaware, Gerald could see ten figures slowly inching toward them!

When Gerald turned to warn Mindy, the figures immediately sped up!

It took less than a few seconds for the men to reach the trio, and the next thing Mindy knew, her arms had already been grabbed by several of the men.

Gerald himself felt a firm hand on his shoulder as the tip of a gun nudged against his back.

"Don't you dare move, you b*stard! Or I'll kill you!" growled the person standing behind Gerald viciously.

While it would honestly be quite easy for Gerald to resist them, he didn't do so. After all, with so many people there, he was afraid that the group of men would get careless and accidentally shoot an innocent bystander.

Besides, it was clear that the group of men was following a very well thought out plan. With that in mind, he didn't dare to act blindly since he wasn't sure whether Jasmine and the others were also facing the same thing.

"W-who are you...? What the hell do you want?" asked Mindy—who was also held at gunpoint—in a frightened voice.

"They're kidnapers of course!" growled Maia who looked like she wasn't new to the experience. Rather than fear, her expression showed more of a frown.

"Oh? This beauty's rather calm, isn't she! I'm afraid that calmness won't last for long though, haha!" sneered one of the men who was wearing a cap.

"Y-you're all bold, I'll give you that. However, do you even know whose territory you're currently in? Have you any idea who I even am? Just know that my sister's drinking coffee not too far off!" warned Mindy though her fear was still evident.

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"Hah! As if we wouldn't know who you are! You're Mindy, the second young lady of the Fenderson family! Also, Jasmine was indeed having coffee. Past tense of course, since she's already been captured! You're the only one left to deal with! Now walk!" ordered the man—who appeared to be the leader of the group—as he shoved Mindy rather harshly.

As soon as he said that, the distant revving of engines could be heard. Moments later, a minibus could be seen speeding through the crowd toward them!

"Get in the car!" commanded the man as soon as the vehicle came to a screeching halt before them. Not having any other choice, the trio simply obeyed.

At that point, Gerald was still considering whether he should make a move now or continue waiting for a bit. After all, even though these people had guns with them, he didn't really think that they were all that big a deal.

At that moment, a static voice could be heard coming from a walkie-talkie, stating, "Are you done?"

"Yes we are! It was a piece of cake!" replied the leader.

As the two continued talking through the walkie-talkie, at some point, Jasmine's voice could clearly be heard from the other end.

'So they weren't lying when they said they've already captured Jasmine and the rest!' Gerald thought to himself.

With that in mind, he decided not to make a move just yet. He would just have to think of something once he reunited with Jasmine and the others later.

Before being allowed to leave the minibus with curtained windows, Gerald and the others had their heads covered with tiny sacks.

"Move forward!"

Eventually, the sacks were removed once they reached their destination. To Gerald, it seemed like they were in a cellar of sorts.

Looking around, he saw that Jasmine, Isabelle, Stella, and Warren were already here, though all four of them had been tied against chairs.

"Mindy! Sanderson! Are both of you alright?" shouted Jasmine in a worried tone.

"I-I'm fine... Who are those people, Jasmine? How could they be so daring?" asked Mindy hurriedly.

“Them? Hah! They’re lackeys of the Schuyler family! Those ungrateful b*stards!” scolded Jasmine in rage.

“Now just stay here quietly! Others will be coming over to accompany you later!” said one of the captors before the group of men walked out of the cellar.

“...Regardless, to think that those people actually built a secret room within their house...” said Maia, breaking the awkward silence.

“Indeed. What more, the guns they’re using are the newest models the country’s produced! These people are definitely quite powerful!” said Warren with a frown.

Hearing that, Gerald remembered that both Warren and Maia had attended the university back then to investigate something. To think that they had remained undercover and active on the case for almost half a year by now.

“Stella, Isabelle, and Maia... I’m so sorry for burdening all of you... Worry not, I’ll definitely not allow the Schuylers to lay another finger on you!” apologized Jasmine.

“It’s fine, Miss Fenderson. The most important thing now, is to find a way to escape,” said Warren calmly.

Following that, a sigh was heard as Stella began crying out, “It’d be great if Gerald was here... With his capabilities, he’d definitely know what to do in such a situation!”

Unlike Maia, this was the first time Stella and Isabelle had found themselves in such a situation. It was natural for them to feel utterly terrified.

Upon hearing Gerald’s name being mentioned out of the blue, the other women in the room found themselves slightly stunned. This was especially the case for Jasmine though her expression turned somber soon enough.

“...Wishing for him to be here in this situation really won’t help... After all, he’s gone missing!” said Jasmine.

“...Huh? What? Since when? What happened?” asked Jasmine’s classmates in surprise.

“Nobody knows... It’s already been well over half a year, yet we don’t even know if he’s dead or alive!” explained Jasmine.

“How... How could that be...” said Stella in disbelief.

“...No wonder Marven’s company fell into bankruptcy so suddenly! So it had something to do with Gerald going missing!” added Isabelle, her tone downcast.

“Humph! It serves him right! After all, who told him to keep such a high profile? He thought he could do anything that he wished just because he was rich, but look what ended up happening to him after showing off so much! He’s just a man with a bad fortune!” growled Maia angrily as she remembered her past encounters with him.

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Gerald could only look at Maia in disbelief.

To think that he had assumed that she would have a somewhat better impression of him after lending her a hand back then. So it was all just wishful thinking. All he could do was smile bitterly in resignation as he looked at the lost cause of a woman.

“That’s enough. There’s no use talking about things like that now. What’s important is figuring out how we should escape!” said Warren.

As soon as he said that, a shout was heard as the iron door creaked open.

“Get in! All of you!”

Following that, around thirty people—both young and old—were shoved into the place. All of them had sacks over their heads, just like how their group had been brought in earlier.

When the sacks were removed, however, Jasmine was instantly shocked.

“What? It’s you? So the rest... Did they actually capture all of you?!” exclaimed Jasmine, stupefied by the turn of events.

“So you’ve been kidnapped as well, Miss! Those Schuylers truly are b*stards!” said one of the older members from the group.

The group of people all seemed quite close to Jasmine, and it was no wonder why.

After all, they were none other than key personnel from the families who were subservient to the Fendersons. There were over ten major and minor families who relied on the Fendersons for support, and Jasmine could tell that only the most loyal people—to her family—had been captured.

“Whatever you decide to do, please make it quick, miss! From what we can assume, the Schuylers are going to rebel against the Fenderson family very soon!” said another old man.

“Even if you say that, it’s not like I can do anything now... After all, I would’ve never expected them to rebel out of the blue after all these years! I don’t even know how long they’ve been planning for this!” replied Jasmine, clearly getting more and more worried by the second.

Meanwhile, Noah and a few other key members of the families subservient to the Fendersons arrived at the Fenderson family house. Everything was going according to plan.

“I apologize in advance, Mr. Schuyler and the rest of you here, but Lord Fenderson has just turned in for the night after taking his medicine,” said a butler as he watched the group of people enter the mansion.

“Tell him that this is an important affair. We’ll wait here while you inform him about it,” replied Noah.

Hearing that, the butler frowned. What a rude man! However, he couldn't really do anything about it, so he simply obeyed.

It wasn't long after before they were brought to Lord Fenderson's study where he sat waiting.

"So, what's the big emergency, Noah?" asked Bryson.

"You see, Lord Fenderson, a family member of mine who works in the headquarters was hospitalized due to some work injuries. However, the headquarters hasn't paid for his medical fees which he should rightfully receive!" replied Noah.

"...Hmm? Did you really come all the way here just to tell me about that incident?" asked Bryson with a frown on his face.

"Oh, that's not all! You see, since the headquarters refused to provide the medical fees in time, that family member of mine ended up passing away!" said Noah in a cold tone.

"...What exactly are you saying?" asked Bryson, slowly realizing Noah's underlying message.

"It's quite easy, honestly! You just need to punish the person in charge of the incident! Otherwise, my family won't ever be able to reconcile with his death!"

"And who exactly was in charge?"

"Alas, it was none other than Jasmine!"

Bryson's first response upon hearing that was to slam his study table with both his hands.

"How dare you, Noah! What's your ulterior motive?! Actually, since you've brought so many people along with you, you couldn't be thinking about finally rebelling against the Fenderson family, could you?"

“Humph! You’re exaggerating the situation, Lord Fenderson! My family’s always been loyal to yours! We just want to settle this incident once and for all! Since you’re so unwilling to punish her, how about this? As long as you sign your name on this agreement form, I’ll cease to pursue the incident!” declared Noah as he slid an agreement form in front of Bryson.

After reading through it, Bryson’s expression immediately turned hideous.

“What utter bullsh*t is this?! Know that you’re courting death tonight, Noah!” roared the old man as his eyes went bloodshot.

“Guards! Come in right this instant and kick them out!”

“Save your breath, Lord Fenderson. The four b*stards who usually protect you have already been subdued by my men. Nobody is coming to help you. Now that that’s out of the way, I hope that you’ll sign this agreement form for the sake of your granddaughters’, your sons’, and your own safety. Speaking of which, you’ll have to announce this in front of everyone else as well!”

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Immediately after saying that, Noah let out a sneer.

Bryson himself was finally catching on to how cornered he truly was. He would’ve never imagined that the Schuylers were actually this capable.

“You... Have you captured Jasmine and Mindy...?”

“Humph. You have five minutes to consider it, Lord Fenderson. Also, don’t even bother relying on the board of directors. Rest assured that even those loyalest to you will be quick to sign and approve of it,” replied Noah, disregarding Bryson’s question entirely.

“Fine, I’ll sign it! Still, I’d like you to clarify something. Have all of you truly become the Moldell’s lackeys?” asked Bryson with a resentful tone as he signed the agreement form.

“Lackey is an unpleasant term, Lord Fenderson. I’m simply choosing to work with the wiser person! Do note that you were the one who brought this upon yourself! After all, you refused the Moldell family’s proposal to cooperate with them in search of Gerald within the Salford Province!” said Noah.

“As part of our deal with the Moldells, once we’re in power, we’ll be using the Fenderson family’s name to seek Gerald out! Speaking of deals, once we’ve smoked him out, the Fenderson family’s surname will be no more! Instead, you’ll all be adopting the surname of Schuyler! As I said before, this is all your own doing, so don’t blame me!” added Noah.

“Now then, someone please take him back to his room so that he can get his rest. Guard him properly. We can’t delay the major occasion that’ll take place tomorrow.”

Finally done with his monologue, Noah then walked out of the room with his men.

Meanwhile, more and more kidnapped people were being brought to the Schuyler family’s secret room.

As was previously deduced, most, if not all, of the people there were those whom the Fendersons trusted or relied on a lot.

“This simply won’t do... I have a feeling that something bad is going to happen to grandpa... We need to think of a way to escape soon!” said Jasmine.

“We do. I’ve been thinking for a while, and the best we can probably do now is gather those in the room who have great martial art skills and attempt to break out!” replied Warren.

He then added, “From what I can tell and have personally experienced, you should be the most skilled martial artist among all of us here, Miss Jasmine. You seem to be proficient with guns as well. Including Maia and I, the three of us will be taking the vanguard on our way out. Still, that makes only three people...”

“I know martial arts as well! Count me in!”

“Me as well!”

It didn't take long for over ten new faces to step forward. Their courage had stemmed from their indignance about the entire situation, and nobody in the room was willing to bow down to that b*stard Noah without a fight.

"While I know you're itching to escape, do be careful out there, mister! Since you're not from the Fenderson family, I'm sure they won't make things too difficult for you. Even so, things could get nasty should Noah catch you during your escape attempt!" said one of the captured men in the room.

Gerald himself was gesturing his hands wildly, telling them to not act impetuously and simply wait a little longer.

"Humph! The weak should just let the strong take the lead," said Warren as he shook his head in resignation.

After looking at Gerald for a while, Jasmine nodded before adding, "I currently have to agree with Warren's statement. Attempting to break out of this place will be much better than simply resigning to our fates."

In her mind, she was thinking about how she could quickly inform the others about the Schuyler's plan should she make it out safely. If that were to happen, the Schuylers could be dealt with before they could implement whatever they had planned.

"I'm glad to hear that. Speaking of which, I've noticed that the defense system in the house is quite lenient. However, I have a feeling that things will be much stricter outside. Are you familiar with the exterior of the Schuyler family's mansion?" asked Warren.

"I am. Stick close to me on our way out. I'll lead you along the paths that I think should be less guarded. With any luck, we'll be able to break out of this place."

Hearing that, Gerald then said, "Ah! Ah ah!"

It was evident that he was telling them to bring him along.

“I know you’re afraid, Sanderson, but we may not even succeed in breaking out! What more, we don’t know how dangerous it is yet outside there!” replied Jasmine with a hint of concern in her voice.

Maia herself simply rolled her eyes at his suggestion.

“With our family in its current condition, I can’t just stay here doing nothing either, Jasmine! I’m coming along!” declared Mindy as she gritted her teeth.

Upon hearing that, Jasmine turned to look at the rest of the people stuck in there. While many had gained courage earlier when the escape plan had been mentioned, many more were still shivering in fright at the thought of being caught again by the Schuylers.

Since Mindy and Sanderson weren’t part of the group that was afraid, after considering it for a brief moment, Jasmine nodded with a sigh as she looked at Mindy.

“Hold on! I don’t agree with this! As was said before, we don’t know how dangerous it is out there yet! Coming with us when you don’t know any martial arts could very well end with something going terribly wrong, Miss Mindy and Sanderson!” said Maia.

“Let’s not waste our energy arguing about this. For now, let’s just discuss how we’ll escape while we wait till it’s dark,” stated Jasmine, preventing Maia from creating unnecessary tension.

As the group took a brief break to calm themselves, Gerald snuck to a corner of the room. Once he was there, he took out what seemed like a jade pendant from his pocket. Upon closer inspection, however, the ‘pendant’ had a button on it.

Taking in a deep breath, Gerald then pressed the button.

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Night came soon enough and it was now quite late.

However, the silence of the night was broken by the sound of a massive explosion! Present members of the Schuyler family were left stunned as they watched flames erupting from where their warehouse was located.

“What the hell is going on?” shouted Noah who had felt the tremor of the explosion alongside Berk and a few others. All of them had been seated in the Schuyler family’s large conference hall when the explosion took place.

“Master, something’s gone terribly wrong! Our warehouse just exploded in flames!” announced a butler as he burst into the room where the stunned men were in.

“What?!” replied Noah as he felt his lips twitch slightly.

He had reason to be as furious as he currently was. After all, throughout the years, the Schuylers hadn’t used their warehouse to store unimportant things. On the contrary, most of their important information and documents were stored there!

“Who is responsible for this?! Who dares do something like this to the Schuyler family?!” roared Noah in rage.

“I-I’ve already sent people over to investigate!” replied the butler instantaneously.

“That’s good! We must catch the perpetrators if it’s the last thing we do!” growled Noah as he immediately led the group of people out of the conference hall.

As all that was happening, around ten figures could be seen swiftly making their way through the forests located near the Schuyler family’s mansion. It didn’t take long for them to arrive at a few tents that had been pitched rather deep in the forest.

“Everything is done, Mr. Westley,” said the people as they approached the main tent.

“Excellent work. Your mission is now accomplished. From here on out, we’ll just have to wait and see what Mr. Crawford will do next,” replied Quest as he slid out of the tent before nodding.

“Speaking of Mr. Crawford, send the second team out. Tell them to be ready to provide help should Mr. Crawford or any of the other escapees require it,” ordered Quest.

The once arrogant youth was no longer disrespectful toward Gerald after previously witnessing his true capabilities.

In fact, he now respected him greatly. After all, Gerald had tasked him with doing something extremely chaotic, and chaos was something Quest enjoyed creating. Aside from creating trouble, Quest was also responsible for providing aid to Gerald whenever he needed it.

Their plan was currently running quite smoothly since Gerald had given Quest prior instructions from within the hidden room earlier. Even the location of the base camp they were currently in had been selected by Gerald. After all, he had ordered the two Schuyler subordinates—who were now dead—to detail the landscape surrounding the Schuyler family’s mansion back then.

After the tents were pitched, Gerald’s next order was for Quest to send people into the Schuyler’s mansion to start a fire. That wasn’t a problem for Quest either. Now that he had sent the second team over to watch over Gerald’s escape, all Quest had to do was wait for Gerald’s safe return.

“What was that sound, Jasmine? Did you feel that tremor? It’s so dark outside too! I can’t see anything!” said Mindy.

“I have no idea either though it’s safe to assume that there was an explosion... However, since things sound rather chaotic outside right now, I think that’ll actually work in our favor. I say we attempt our escape now! As far as we know, grandpa could have been the one who arranged for that explosion to take place! Let’s not waste this chance!” replied Jasmine as all those involved with the escape plan nodded in unison.

After making sure that everyone involved was ready, they silently pried open the door—that had earlier been pick locked—before making a dash for the exit following the paths that they had earlier planned out.

Though they crossed paths with a few subordinates down the corridor, they were barely an issue for Jasmine as she swiftly knocked them out.

Since the electricity had gone out as well, they had the element of surprise on their side. The chaos outside had drawn most of the subordinates away from the corridors as well, allowing them to rush out of the building without too much trouble.

With the vanguard now out of sight, the remaining captives—who were peeking at the escape group's progress this entire time from the hidden room's entrance—said, "It seems that they've made it out just fine!"

Hearing that, Mindy gave a sigh of relief. Contrary to what had initially been planned, Mindy ended up staying in the room, fearing that she would just end up becoming a burden as they made their escape.

"What should we do now, Stella? Isabelle...? It still seems to be rather chaotic out there... Should we use this chance to make our own escape?" asked Mindy anxiously.

At that moment, she felt someone grabbing onto her hand. Turning to look at who was responsible, Mindy's worries instantly dissolved when she saw that it was Sanderson.

"Sanderson? Didn't you rush out together with Jasmine and the others earlier?"

Shaking his head, Gerald then gestured for her to tell the others to make a mass escape while things were still going haywire outside.

"Will we be able to make it out safely? We don't even know if Jasmine and the others have truly made it out yet..." replied Mindy.

In response, Gerald gestured for her not to be worried since he was there for her.

"...Alright, then let's all rush out together. Everyone! We should use this chance to make a run for the mansion's back door!" shouted Mindy.

"She's right! With it being pitch dark outside, they won't dare to use their guns either! Let's go!"

With everyone there now in agreement, the group consisting of well over thirty people began getting into position to make their escape as Gerald slowly pushed the door open.

However, before they could even leave the room, a gunshot was heard!

“Where the hell do all of you think you’re going?!” shouted a voice that startled several of the people.

Shadows could be seen sprinting toward the hidden room’s entrance as six bodyguards holding industrial flashlights came running over.

As Gerald stepped away from the door, all of the guards—who were also wielding guns—entered the room, blocking their only escape route.

Glaring viciously at everyone in the room, it was no wonder why a few women instantly began screaming in fear.

“W-what should we do, Sanderson? They have guns with them...” whispered Mindy in fright as she hid behind him while tugging on to his sleeve.

“If you want to live, then stay far away from the entrance!” growled one of the guards as they began walking toward the group intimidatingly.

Gerald’s next action was so rapid that nobody even saw it happening.

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With pinpoint precision, Gerald swiftly jabbed the weakest points of all six of the guards. It barely took a second before all of them fell to the ground in unison, bleeding profusely from their mouths and noses.

“...H-huh...? So... You were this capable this entire time, Sanderson...?” said Mindy as she watched wide-eyed and in disbelief at what she had just witnessed.

Even Stella and Isabelle—who had met several Taekwondo experts before—knew that those experts couldn't even come close to comparing to that dumb Sanderson! To think that he was this powerful!

While everyone in the room was undoubtedly astonished by the turn of events, they simultaneously realized that they now had someone they could definitely rely on.

It didn't take long before Gerald turned to look at the crowd before signaling for them to rush out of the place under his lead.

Following his orders, all of them made a mad dash for the backyard.

The moment they got outside, everyone immediately saw the raging fire that was still engulfing the Schuyler family's warehouse. Due to their inability to control the flames, the fire was starting to spread to other parts of the mansion as well.

In other words, the Schuylers were currently in a great mess, and Gerald knew that this was the best chance they could get to escape safely.

Thanks to Jasmine and the others luring the main bodyguards away, the escaping group barely bumped into any trouble aside from a few people guarding the main gates. They, however, were naturally taken out easily by Gerald.

With that, everyone successfully made it out of the mansion! However, it wasn't time to celebrate yet.

Under Gerald's lead, the group ran quite a distance up north before finally stopping when several parked cars beside a forest could be seen.

Gesturing for Mindy to enter one of the cars, Mindy could finally breathe easy. However, her ease was short-lived when she finally noticed something.

"...Hold on... Something's wrong. Where's Stella? Weren't you running with Stella earlier, Isabelle? Why isn't she here?" asked Mindy in a worried tone.

As Isabelle began looking around frantically after hearing that, Gerald came to the conclusion that she must have accidentally strayed away earlier since it was so dark and chaotic.

Where was she?

Closing the door behind Mindy, Gerald then backtracked all the way back into the mansion. To his surprise, Stella never seemed to have left the cellar. When he finally found the girl, she was squatting in a corner of the hidden room, sobbing in silence.

The moment she saw Sanderson, however, she almost yelped in joy.

“Sanderson, I... I tripped earlier and sprained my ankle...” explained Stella as she bit her lower lip.

“Hurry, let me carry you!” replied Gerald as he hoisted her up against his back.

“...W-wait, what? You could talk this entire time, Sanderson?” asked Stella, extremely astonished by the sudden revelation.

“God d*mn it! Have you already forgotten what I sound like?” replied Gerald with a bitter smile on his face as he shook his head.

Upon hearing that, it took her a second to realize it, but when she did, her eyes immediately widened.

“...G-Gerald?! ...Actually that makes a lot of sense! From the moment I met you, I knew that gaze felt familiar! Why didn't I realize earlier that you had the same body shape? But wait, didn't something terrible befall you back then?” asked Stella, filled with questions.

“It's a long story. Let's just talk about that once we're out safely. Also, do keep my identity a secret for now. Nobody should know that I'm in the Salford Province. Do you understand?” said Gerald as he looked at her.

After seeing her firm nod, the duo then began making their escape.

The next two hours passed by almost painfully slowly for Jasmine and the others from the vanguard team.

Since they had bumped into Yael while making their escape earlier, they had dashed south into the mountainous area as Yael ordered his men to chase after them.

Though Yael's subordinates seemed to have lost track of them for now, Jasmine's group still wasn't out of the woods yet, quite literally. After all, they weren't even sure how many mountain paths they had already taken since they were so focused on evading Yael's men earlier.

Momentarily lost, they did eventually manage to come across a road at the foot of the mountain. However, nobody knew where it led to.

"Where are we, Jasmine...? There's not a village in sight! The way things are, we can't even make phone calls since there's no signal all the way out here!" said Maia.

"My guess is as good as yours... However, having a road to follow is better than nothing... I propose we swiftly make our way along it and see where we end up at. Hopefully we'll be able to get to an area with phone signals soon," replied Jasmine.

As the group nodded among themselves, they were just about to sneakily make a dash for it when suddenly, the distant revving of motors could be heard!

It wasn't long before several headlights could be seen driving toward them on the beaten-down road. From what they could guess, there were at least fifty cars in that group.

After completely blocking the road, several men dressed in black stepped out of the cars, seemingly waiting for someone.

"It's all over now!" said Jasmine as everyone from the vanguard team felt their hearts skip a beat.

Soon after, a wealthy-looking person—who seemed to be the leader of the massive group—stepped out of a car and began walking toward Jasmine.

With a smile, he then asked, “Could either of you be Miss Jasmine Fenderson?”

Chapter 913

“...Who are you? Did Yael send you here?” asked Jasmine in a rather doubtful tone.

Though night had come, the headlights from all the cars were bright enough for those within Jasmine’s group to see how imposingly solemn the bodyguards looked as they stood behind their leader.

It was clear that these bodyguards had received only the strictest of training, and from what Jasmine knew, only a few large families could afford to hire such powerful bodyguards.

What more, it was already so late yet the men had arrived with such grandeur. How couldn’t they be Yael’s subordinates? Knowing that only served to amplify Jasmine and the others’ anxiety as they stood close to each other in preparation to either attack or run.

“Humph. Yael? Who the hell is that?” sneered the young man of a leader before adding, “I was ordered by my master to transport you away from danger, Miss Fenderson. I hope that you’ll cooperate since we really don’t have much time to spare. Come with us.”

“This master of yours... Who is he?” asked Jasmine with a slightly raised brow.

The youth, however, said nothing and simply returned into his car.

As soon as he did that, two bodyguards walked over to Jasmine’s group before saying, “Please enter the car, Miss Fenderson, and the rest of you. We’ll be bringing you to someplace safe.”

Upon hearing that, Jasmine and the others could only look at each other.

If the men truly had vicious intentions, then they would’ve definitely attacked Jasmine and her group the moment they stood before them. However, they didn’t. There was also the issue with how many

powerful guards were present. Jasmine knew for a fact that none of them could handle that many trained guards at a time.

In the end, Jasmine simply nodded. What other choice did they have but to believe them?

After entering the car, all fifty over cars instantly began speeding down the road. It was a while later when the cars finally stopped again outside a large warehouse located somewhere within the suburbs of the city.

“Yael’s men shouldn’t be able to find this place easily, so you’re safe for now,” said the leader from before as he lit a cigarette while leading the group further into the place. After a brief walk, Jasmine and her group were instantly relieved to see that warm meals had been prepared for them.

“Thank you for saving us, sir... How should we address you?” asked Maia gratefully as she felt her heart flutter. She was weak toward people who had unyielding demeanors such as the leader who had just brought them here.

“Haha! You’re very welcome! Though it’s honestly not me you should be thanking. I’m just following orders from my master. Regardless, eat the food while it’s warm and get some rest. We’ll be sending you back to the Fenderson family mansion tomorrow.”

“...Um... Sir...?”

Just as Jasmine was about to ask him something, the young man turned around and tossed his cigarette to the ground. After stepping on it—to put it out—he walked out of the room before Jasmine could even finish her question.

With his departure, only about a dozen people remained inside the warehouse.

“Say Jasmine... Do you have any idea who saved us...? Since the Fendersons are so powerful and influential, could the person who helped us be one of your ancestors’ friends?” asked Maia.

Hearing that, Jasmine shook her head with a frown before saying, "I really doubt that... After all, anyone reliable from either my or the subservient families under us had already been captured by Noah as seen earlier within the hidden room. As for friends of the family, I don't remember any of them being this mysterious, powerful, or even influential! I really don't have the slightest clue of who could be doing all this..."

"I see... Regardless, due to their lack of hostility this entire time, I truly believe we can let our guard down around them," said Maia.

In response, the others nodded in agreement.

A brief moment later, Jasmine looked at both Maia and Warren before asking, "Both of you seem to have undergone professional training... It's evident through how proficient both of you are with your martial arts. Could it be that neither of you are mere transfer students?"

At that, Maia smiled before replying, "You're sharp. While it's true that being transfer students is merely a guise, I'm afraid we can't reveal our true identities to you... I hope you can understand."

Meanwhile, elsewhere, Gerald was slowly lowering Stella into a car as he ordered the driver to send her home.

She was shocked the moment she heard him say, "Head straight for home and have a good rest. By the time you wake up tomorrow morning, everything will be dealt with."

"Gerald, it's too dangerous out here! Why don't you just come with me and stay the night in my home?" replied Stella, her worry reflected in her tone.

"No can do. I still have some things to settle tonight."

"But thunder can already be heard... It'll be raining heavily soon... All of us are already saved! What else needs to be done?" said Stella, persistent that he leave with her.

“Just remember our promise. Aside from keeping the fact that you’ve seen me a secret, you don’t have to worry about anything else.”

Chapter 914

After saying that, Gerald patted Stella on her shoulder before nodding toward the driver.

Seeing that, the driver immediately started driving off the moment Gerald closed the car’s door.

When Stella turned to look at Gerald through the car’s rear window, a flash of lightning lit the sky behind him. Though he had barely moved from the spot he was standing in earlier, Stella felt a chill run down her spine as she saw the expression on his face for that split second when the lightning had struck.

It was at that moment when Stella knew that he was no longer the Gerald she once knew. This new Gerald was terrifying.

As he slowly disappeared from her view, roars of thunder could be heard, dark clouds completely covering the night sky. Torrential rains soon followed alongside massive gusts of strong wind.

With the storm already here, Gerald himself began making his next move...

Back at the Schuyler family mansion, several representatives from both the Long and Moldell family were now watching as Noah scolded his son.

“How the hell have all of them managed to escape?! Not only did you fail to catch the culprits involved with the fire, but now we’ve lost our hostages too?!” roared Noah in anger.

“While we were hot on Jasmine and her group’s trail earlier, they somehow managed to slip away when they ran into the forested area! Worry not, however! I’ll definitely catch them sooner or later, dad!” replied Yael as he wiped the cold rain off his face.

“Humph! You’ve messed up big time tonight, Yael! How am I supposed to feel confident letting you inherit such a large property in the future now?!” added Noah in his rage.

Throughout his long life, this was the first time he had ever been humiliated this deeply by someone, so it was no wonder why he was feeling so embarrassed.

“Don’t blame Master Yael anymore, Mr. Schuyler. It’s evident that the Fendersons secretly received help from others this time around. Regardless, Jasmine and the others escaping doesn’t really affect us. After all, we already have full control over Bryson. Let’s just focus on increasing our manpower there. No matter how capable our invisible enemy is, we’re certain that they won’t be able to create any further messes,” said a few members of both the Long and Moldell family as they stepped forward.

Hearing that, Noah calmed down slightly before nodding.

“...You’re right. Since both your families are helping us with this, I trust that things will still go fine. As you said, the captives making their escape doesn’t really affect the plan as a whole. Let’s just let that incident slide for now... Yes... Come! I’m sure all of you haven’t had enough wine earlier! Let’s drink as we chat the night away about our great success to come! Servants! Prepare more wine and dishes right this instant!” ordered Noah.

As one of the servants instantly ran over to fill Noah’s wine glass, he accidentally upset its contents all over Noah’s lap!

What followed was a tight slap to the servant’s face!

“F*cking hell! Do you have a death wish?!” roared Noah who was already in a bad mood.

“I-I’m sorry master! I’m so sorry!”

“This is so f*cking annoying... Where’s my wife anyway? She was here just moments ago, wasn’t she? Go call her over and tell her to make a toast! After all, there are so many distinguished guests here today!” grumbled Noah as he shook his head.

Cupping his swollen cheek, the servant quickly ran out of the room to call Noah’s wife over.

As soon as he was far enough, however, he turned back to face the room before spitting.

“You old b*stard! You’ll definitely die a horrible death one day! Haley, go call for his wife!” shouted the servant as he continued glaring at the door to the conference room.

Though he knew for a fact that Haley—a female servant—was among a few other servants who were posted at this specific corridor, no reply returned. Turning around, he then shouted the order again, though the only reply he got was a tremendously loud rumble of thunder.

The intensity of the thunder made him shiver in place.

“...What on earth...? Where are the other servants? Actually, where is everyone?” said the servant, baffled by how eerily empty the entire place was.

At that moment, the light in the yard flickered once before everything outside went dark.

Seeing this, the servant began walking toward the manor’s entrance in confusion as he said, “D*mn it all... Where the hell are all the bodyguards? Were they all struck by lightning or something?”

Just as he opened the mansion’s front door, a flash of lightning lit the entire yard. It was at that moment when the servant finally realized why the entire mansion was empty.

A scream of pure terror followed shortly after.

Chapter 915

The entire yard was filled with corpses regardless of gender!

As if the horrific scene wasn’t enough, the heavy rain had caused the yard to stagnate with a strikingly crimson liquid...

Shaking in utter fear, another flash of lightning notified the servant of the presence of someone else in the yard...

His eyes had already adjusted to the darkness by now, so when the servant turned to look at the person standing in the middle of the yard with an umbrella in hand, he swore on his life that he had just seen a demon in the flesh.

As the demon of a man turned to look at him, the servant became petrified in place, unable to even move his legs even though the demon—who had his other hand in his pocket—was now walking toward him.

In fact, he was so terrified that he couldn't even let out the tiniest whimper.

After what seemed like forever, the servant was surprised to see that the horrifying person had quite a handsome face. However, his surprise turned to fear again the moment he realized how feral the person's eyes were.

The demon's eyes alone reflected his bloodlust, and they were enough to make the servant hold his breath in fear as the man finally stood before him.

Closing his umbrella upon reaching the manor's porch, the demonic man shook it slightly before asking in a contrastingly kind voice, "Are the rest in here?"

Not knowing whether the dark stains on the umbrella were truly blood or just a trick of his eyes, the servant then replied in a stuttering voice, "Y-yes! They're all inside!"

"Thank you. Do hold on to this for me," said the youth as he handed the umbrella over to the servant.

"...V-very well..." replied the servant, trembling vigorously as he watched the demon walk further into the manor.

"A toast to the partnership among the Longs, Moldells, and Schuylers! Together, nobody in the world will be able to take us down! Haha! While celebrating, let's discuss the progress of tracking Gerald down, shall we?" said Noah as he laughed loudly.

“Honestly, Quentin and Trey, ever since the Longs asked us to help look for Gerald, my dad’s been in hot pursuit of him this entire time. If Gerald hadn’t had someone protecting him so viciously back then, I’m sure my dad would’ve already captured him half a year ago. Uncle Berk is well aware of that fact too,” added Yael.

Hearing that, Berk nodded in agreement.

“Indeed. We’re well aware that the Schuylers have been going all out in their hunt for Gerald this entire time!” said Quentin

Trey then added, “Worry not, we’ve already informed Jett about your family’s contributions. We’re certain he’ll remember all your help!”

“I’m glad to hear that! I hope that you’ll both compliment us more in Jett’s presence in the future! But enough of that for now. Let’s have another toast!” announced Noah as he raised his wine glass.

As a brief silence ensued while everyone drank from their glasses, slow echoes of footsteps could suddenly be heard coming from a distance in the corridor outside.

“Hmm? Could the lady finally be here?” asked one of the guests.

“Doesn’t sound like high heels so I don’t think so!” replied Noah with a bitter smile.

Eventually, the footsteps came to a halt right outside the door. With a long creak, the slowly opening door finally revealed the face of the demonic youth.

“...Y-you’re!-” said Noah aloud as his frown turned to an expression of utter delight.

“Who is that?” asked one of the guests.

“Haha! He’s Gerald!” announced Yael as he immediately stood up in excitement.

“What? That’s him?” said both Quentin and Trey as they looked at the youth standing at the door, stunned.

“That’s him alright. That b*stard ruined my two nephews... How bold of you to take the initiative to come here alone!” roared Berk as even he stood up in a rage.

“Courting death, are we? Capture him!” ordered the Quentin and Trey duo as the other two subordinates of the Moldell family sprang into action!

Chapter 916

Before both of them could even attack, Gerald launched a spinning kick aimed right for their heads the moment they were close enough!

In that brief moment, both of the Moldell subordinates could feel their eyes almost bulging out of their skulls, as they flew to the other end of the room. They were now both unconscious!

“What?!” shouted both Quentin and Trey in unison, their eyes widened in shock.

Those two were students of the Moldell family... Did they truly just go down from a single kick? And from Gerald of all people?!

If they hadn’t seen it with their own eyes, they wouldn’t have believed it. However, everyone had been present when the scene occurred.

Since when had Gerald become this powerful?

“So there’s only four Moldells present today? Well there’s only two of you left I guess. Come at me together then!” said Gerald with a faint smile on his face.

“Guards! Get in here, quickly!” ordered Noah as he felt cold sweat dripping down his forehead.

However, nobody came.

When Noah finally turned to look at Gerald again, his face immediately went pale when he saw the smirk on Gerald's face.

"Did... Did you take them all out...? Or did you kill them? Regardless, I hope you're aware that you've messed with the Moldell family! Do you and the other Crawfords have a death wish or something? Our uncle will definitely ruin your family for this!" threatened the Quentin and Trey duo.

Though they appeared calm, the duo were honestly terrified. They honestly wouldn't have brought up Kort's name if the situation wasn't this dire.

"Alas, Kort is definitely going after my family now! That is, if he hears about any of this in the first place. After all, as long as there are no witnesses to speak of, then nobody would ever know that I was the one who killed a nephew or two of his!" replied Gerald, his smile widening.

"You b*stard! Cease all of this at once before I report all of this to my uncle! Do you really want him to unleash all his wrath upon the Crawfords?!" growled Quentin furiously.

At that, Gerald simply shook his head.

"You don't get it, do you? Why are you assuming that any of you inside this room are going to make it out alive tonight?"

Hearing that, Quentin and Trey were engulfed in rage. Even Berk was traumatized by their feral gnashing as they shouted, "You utter b*stard! The Moldells are a highly respectable family with the strongest of all bloodlines! You're just a peasant compared to us! We're bringing your corpse back with us tonight if it's the last thing we do!"

With that said, the duo immediately pounced toward Gerald!

Unlike the previous two Moldells, Quentin and Trey were on a completely different level. After all, they were direct descendants of the family, and having pure Moldell blood within them made them all the more powerful.

However, they were clearly underestimating Gerald. He was now no longer the same person he was half a year ago.

Throughout that period, Gerald had been bathing in herbs that Finnley had provided him.

While the first three months doing that granted him slightly greater strength, it was the latter months that caused Gerald to transform into how he was today. He was honestly surprised at how potent the herb baths were when he finally tested out his true capabilities for the first time.

Knowing exactly how strong he was now was the reason why he wasn't afraid of the Moldells anymore. In fact, it wouldn't be far-fetched to claim that even Kort would find it difficult to personally kill him.

However, Gerald was still refraining from directly confronting Kort. After all, while he was sure that there was definitely a higher chance of surviving against him, Gerald didn't want to catch Kort's attention knowing the fact that his strength wasn't optimal to defeat him yet. He was honestly worried that if he didn't finish off Kort in one go, he wouldn't be strong enough to protect his family when Kort launched his inevitable counterattack.

Regardless, Gerald had also realized something else during his past six months together with Finnley.

While the old man made sure to always fight Gerald at least once a week, Gerald always ended up being one step behind Finnley. Though he had assumed that he would one day be able to defeat the old man—as long as he continued training hard—throughout that period of time, the day never came.

Whenever Gerald grew stronger, Finnley would suddenly seem much stronger as well! It took Gerald a while to finally understand that he couldn't even predict the extent of Finnley's true power. In a way, that humbled him down since he knew he wouldn't ever be as strong as the old man.

However, it wasn't hard for Gerald to estimate both Quentin and Trey's true strength. Even though they were working together, Gerald was well aware that they were still weaker than him.

His assumption proved to be correct when the sound of bones cracking filled the room a few hits later.

As blood flowed out of the two Moldells' gaping eyes and mouths, both of them finally fell to the ground with loud thuds.

Chapter 917

Almost instantly after, the sounds of wine glasses and plates clattering against each other could be heard.

When everyone turned to look at who was causing the racket, they saw that Berk, Noah, and Yael were all holding on to the table as they shivered tremendously in horror!

They had reason to be this terrified. After all, all three of them were aware of how mighty the Moldells were. Yet Gerald had just taken four of them out, right before their very eyes!

As Gerald took a step forward, Berk immediately fell to the ground, shouting, "P-please don't kill me, Gerald! Spare me, please!"

The over two hundred pound, brawny man was currently so terrified that mucous was dripping all the way down to his chin.

"Spare you? It was six months ago when I fled to the Salford Province you know? I had over thirty brothers and now none of them are alive because of your men. They were all my friends from Mayberry! Why didn't you spare them then?" said Gerald terrifyingly calmly as he patted Berk's head.

"I-it was wrong of me to do so! It was all my fault! Gerald, pleas-"

Before his sentence could even end, Gerald smacked him hard on the back of his head. It was as though nothing Berk had said even mattered to Gerald. The next thing everyone knew, Berk's eyes were bleeding as he flopped lifelessly to the ground with one final grunt.

As screams filled the air, all color drained from the Schuyler father and son. Both of them immediately found themselves retreating to a corner of the room. The person before them was no longer human... It was as though they were staring at the devil himself!

His attention now on the two quivering men, Gerald took a seat as he poured himself a glass of wine.

After biting into an abalone, he swallowed before saying, "So, I heard that both of you have been looking for me all over the Salford Province. You spent no small amount to hunt me down as well, as I recall. Well, here I am now. What do you need from me?" asked Gerald as he stared at them in the eye.

"T-there's nothing we need... Really! There's nothing important that we want!" stuttered Noah in fear.

'Nothing? Come now, you already spent all that cash looking for me. And here I was thinking that it must've been something extremely important! That was honestly the only reason why both of you are still alive today!' sneered Gerald in response as he finished the abalone and downed the glass of wine till there was nothing left.

Patting his thighs, Gerald then got up and began walking toward the two Schuylers. With every step that he took, the roars of thunder outside only seemed to grow louder and louder...

Until finally, the clashes stopped and so did the rain.

It was sometime later when bright lights were shone upon the Schuyler family mansion. The lights were so jarring that anyone from the inside could've easily assumed that it was noontime.

Silently, a caped figure grabbed a bag of things before leaving the Schuyler family house, undetected, and disappearing into the night.

When morning finally came, the weather was crisp due to the rain that had fallen the night before.

Inside a large storeroom, over ten mattresses could be seen laid out all over the place, and sleeping on them, were Jasmine and her group from the night before.

Upon hearing slowly fading footsteps, Jasmine's eyelids fluttered. It only took a split second for the girl to jolt awake and sit at attention. Looking around, she saw that Maia and the others were still sleeping comfortably.

Since daylight was already peeking through the windows yet nobody appeared to be outside the storeroom, Jasmine became curious, prompting her to shout, “Hey, wake up! Wake up, everyone!”

“What’s the matter, Jasmine...? I’m still sleepy...!” mumbled Maia as she yawned.

“Look around! There’s nobody left here but us!” said Jasmine.

Hearing that, everyone soon realized how odd that was.

“Indeed... I wonder where they went off to? There were quite a few others with us here last night but we didn’t even hear them leaving!”

Chapter 918

Warren had made that statement as he stood up. Jasmine herself frowned as she scanned through the storeroom.

Her gaze stopped when she saw a few joss sticks placed near a corner of the room.

“Those must’ve been the reason why we were so sleepy!” said Jasmine as she pointed at her discovery.

“So that’s why! Still, who were those people...? Why didn’t they just tell us who they were after saving us?” replied Maia.

Before anyone could even reply, one of the group’s members—who had already been exploring the place—shouted, “Hey, come over here, I think they left something for us!”

Hearing that, everyone encircled the box with a note on it.

The note itself wrote, ‘To: Maia.’

“Guess we know who gets to open it,” said yet another member of the team.

Maia herself was now feeling giddy with excitement. As she thought about what could be inside, she caught a glimpse of Warren bearing an extremely ugly expression on his face.

Noticing that she was looking at him, Warren then said with a hint of anger in his voice, "Go on and open it already! If you don't I will!"

"Hey, this is clearly for me! Only I get to open it!" retorted Maia in an annoyed tone.

"Well then open it! Carefully, though! We have no idea what's in it!" grumbled Warren as he looked at Maia, almost as though he wanted to pick a fight.

In all honesty, he was worried that if Maia truly liked the contents of that box, she would end up falling for somebody else.

Before an argument could take place, Jasmine shouted in a hushed tone, "Quit it! Can't you hear that? Someone's coming over!"

Upon saying that, she instantly headed to the storeroom's main door with soundless steps.

The tension rose as everyone prepared themselves to face whatever came next. After all, the people outside could very well be the Schuylers.

After a brief moment of silence, however, a sweet female voice could be heard saying, "Jasmine? Maia? Are you in there...?"

Jasmine recognized that voice anywhere.

"Mindy? Yes! We're here!"

As everyone heard that, the group's tension slowly eased again.

Opening the storeroom's door, Jasmine saw that Mindy had brought along two Fenderson bodyguards with her.

"Jasmine! I'm so relieved that the rest of you are fine!" cried out Mindy.

After the hellish night they had to experience the night before, being able to reunite with each other was definitely the cure that they very much needed and deserved.

"It's great that you're fine, Miss Fenderson! You have no idea how worried Lord Fenderson's been this entire time!" said one of the two bodyguards who were still standing behind Mindy.

"Worry not, I'm unscathed. Honestly, I'm even more surprised that you made it out already. Did everyone else manage to escape? Weren't there any guards impeding you from leaving?" asked Jasmine curiously.

Upon hearing her questions, Mindy began sobbing as she said, "We... We were rescued by Sanderson! He saved us all!"

"What? Sanderson? Actually, hold on, why are you crying? Did something happen to him?" asked Jasmine. Though she was initially shocked when she heard that, worry soon overtook that feeling when she saw Mindy's tears.

"I... I don't know... I think he's still in trouble... After all, once all of us were rescued, we found that Stella was missing! As a result, he ran back into the Schuyler family mansion and that was the last I saw him..." replied Jasmine, her sheer sadness reflected in her eyes.

"Calm yourself, Mindy... Sanderson will have luck on his side, I'm sure of it. Besides, don't start crying when we haven't even launched a search party for him! What would he think of that?" said Jasmine with a comforting smile on her face.

"...You're right... Sanderson's lived a tough life, even from when he was a child... I'm sure he's an equally tough person. We'll definitely find him safe and sound!" declared Mindy with a resolute nod.

While Jasmine was glad that Mindy was feeling positive again, she was curious as to where all that resolution came from. It was almost as though Mindy knew for sure that Sanderson would definitely be fine. However, Jasmine refrained from asking her anything about it for now. After all, their grandfather's safety was still her priority.

"What about grandpa? Is he safe? Did the Schuylers do anything to him? Also, how did you even know where to find us?"

"Hah! The Schuylers? Don't even talk about them! They must've personally offended a god or something! After all, not only was their entire mansion razed to the ground, all of them have officially been declared missing! To that, I say they got what they f*cking deserved!" grunted the other guard behind Mindy.

"...Wait, what? The Schuylers are... gone?"

"Yeah! There weren't even any bodies to speak of! Everyone from that family simply vanished into thin air!" replied Mindy as she wiped her tears away.

"Regardless, we should head back first, Miss Fenderson. Lord Fenderson will be hosting a family meeting soon, and it seems that he wants to announce something important!"

Chapter 919

And something important it was. Knowing full well that the Fenderson family had almost been wiped out due to his carelessness, Bryson was going to take responsibility for the incident no matter what.

After things calmed down a bit, Bryson thought about how they were nearly eliminated by a vassal family. If all that could happen under his rule, then he admitted that he was getting old and unreliable. The fact that he couldn't defend himself without help was further proof that it was finally time for change.

It explained why the mood of the Fenderson family meeting this time was so different. Everyone had their heads lowered as they waited for Bryson to speak.

Coughing to break the silence and get everyone's attention, Bryson cleared his throat before saying, "I... have some very important news to announce today... This announcement will also be the very last decision that I'll make as the head of this family!"

Hearing that, everyone lifted their heads as they looked at the old man.

"Listen closely, for the next head of the Fendersons will be Jasmine! I'm far too old now, and though Second and Third are both equally mature and reliable, I'm afraid they're far too complacent. They're both more suited to be supporters than leaders, not that there's anything wrong with that. Regardless, after careful consideration, I truly believe that Jasmine will be the one who will help develop and recover our family's glory!" announced Bryson.

As soon as his declaration ended, the entire meeting hall was abuzz with people discussing their opinions aloud. Jasmine herself hadn't expected the meeting to be about her.

Standing up, she then said, "While I'm honored to have been selected, I simply can't take the position of head, grandpa! I'm still far too young and there's still a lot for me to learn. I'm certain that I won't be able to handle the position of leader yet. What more, up till this point, there haven't been any female leaders in the Fenderson family!" replied Jasmine who honestly felt she wasn't ready for such responsibility.

In response, Bryson simply raised a single hand, prompting everyone to go silent.

"There's no need to discuss this any further. My decision is final. While I'm sure that you're doubtful about the whole thing, I believe in you, Jasmine. I believe that even if you were to marry the person you love, you'll still end up becoming an excellent family head. As for the rest of you, you should already know by now that I'd never appoint someone to be leader without a valid reason! Speaking of being a leader, I'll be granting you your first long-term task now, Jasmine! I see a lot of potential among those from your uncles' third and fourth generations. From today onward, you're responsible for training up the third and fourth generations to become better leaders!" concluded Bryson.

Upon hearing that, everyone started calming down again.

They were honestly most worried about the fact that the Fenderson would have to change their family surname once Jasmine got married to another person and bore a child. However, with Bryson sounding so sure with his final decision, the crowd was swept with a new determination.

"I... I fully support the decision to let Miss Jasmine be the head of the Fendersons!" shouted one of the family members.

"As do I!"

"You've definitely earned it!"

Bryson found himself smiling as he watched both his own family and the vassal families cheering on for Jasmine.

"There, you heard the people, Jasmine. With them supporting you, there really isn't a reason for you to turn down the position anymore. With that, I declare that from today onward, you, Jasmine Fenderson, will be the new head of our family!" said Bryson aloud.

Once the meeting ended, Bryson made his way back to his room, his butler supporting him as everyone else went over to congratulate Jasmine.

As Jasmine thanked all of them rather reluctantly, she couldn't help but notice something at the last minute. Where was Mindy?

The usually noisy girl hadn't been seen throughout the entire meeting... Once the crowd gave her some space, Jasmine walked over to Mindy's butler before asking, "Have you seen Mindy?"

She was at least certain that Mindy had been with her when both of them returned to the Fenderson family mansion earlier.

"Oh, Miss Mindy drove off before the meeting started! She said she was going to look for someone!"

“What? Look for someone?” repeated Jasmine, stunned.

It took her a second, but she finally realized what Mindy’s goal was. As the realization set within her, she mumbled, “Could you have gone out searching for Sanderson without me...?”

While Jasmine herself treated Sanderson like a good friend, she knew how much more Mindy treasured him. What more, he was now essentially missing because of their family’s issues!

Shaking her head, Jasmine said, “Get the car ready. It’s currently still too dangerous for her to be wandering outside alone!”

“Right away, Miss Jasmine!”