

UNTOUCHABLE

### Chapter 231: Mysterious Willow Stone

“The chessboard is a balance of white and black squares, and so is life. Life is just like a game of chess.”

Finn Taylor said only two sentences, but that threw Willow Stone into deep thought. *‘Is the black that I see really black? What’s the white that you see?’*

“Yvette, where’s the chessboard?”

Hearing that, Clarine Landon got excited. She knew that Willow Stone was finally going to show off her chess skills for the first time in a long while.

She was naturally going to bring Finn Taylor down this time.

“In the chess room.” Yvette Larson walked into the chess room with the rest following behind her.

“Since Ms. Stone says that I have a bad reputation, I shall take the white pieces.”

Willow Stone didn’t refuse and sat on the side with the black chess pieces.

Finn Taylor started first, making a simple move.

Willow Stone put up a fight, not allowing her opponent to take the lead.

Then, the tiny chessboard became a fierce battleground.

The chess pieces were no different from valiant soldiers that were fighting tooth and nail with no rest.

Neither Yvette Larson nor Clarine Landon were exceptionally good at chess, but they did know a thing or two about it because of Willow Stone’s influence. It was exactly because they understood the game that they felt shocked.

In their hearts, Willow Stone was undefeated, yet she was being suppressed by Finn Taylor throughout the game and didn’t even have the chance to fight back!

Finn Taylor made his last move, bringing the game to an end.

Willow Stone had lost, and she couldn’t help but wonder if Finn Taylor had even let her off easy because of what he had said earlier. Yet, she hoped that she was wrong and that everything was simply a coincidence.

The thought of it being otherwise was terrifying. Not only had he won, but that wasn’t even his best!

Willow Stone wasn’t one who could admit defeat easily, but she stood up and stared at her opponent.

“You won.”

Before Finn Taylor could say anything, Clarine Landon spoke up. "Humph! Don't get so smug. You only won because you started the game."

Finn Taylor was helpless. "Yes, yes. I got lucky this time."

The more humble Finn Taylor behaved, the more afraid Willow Stone got of him.

Along her way here, she'd heard a lot about the useless matrilineal son-in-law of the Larson family. But now, those rumors seemed like nothing but lies.

Unknown to her, Finn Taylor was sizing her up too. *'There's much more to this girl than what meets the eye.'*

Yvette Larson had made the other out to be an average and meek girl, but one's true personality would show when they were unaware. For example, Willow Stone's thirst for victory was nothing like the gentle and meek personality Yvette Larson described her to have.

Of course, it could also be that Finn Taylor was overthinking it—perhaps she simply wanted to win.

Willow Stone didn't know how to feel when she heard her friend speaking up for her. Although she felt grateful toward the latter, she knew full well that it would be difficult for her to beat Finn Taylor even if she started first.

"Are you participating in the competition too?"

"Yes."

"I look forward to playing against you then."

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The next day, Finn Taylor received a call from Logan Yeats, saying that Hunter Sullivan had returned but was now in the hospital!

"What's going on?" He was stunned. *'I asked Hunter Sullivan to finish Jerry Wood off. Logically speaking, Jerry Wood isn't strong enough to hurt him, so why is he in the hospital? I'd better not over-analyze it and just go to take a look at him first.'*

"Are you going out?" Finn Taylor was just about to leave when Willow Stone walked down the stairs. She was dressed in a pink mini-skirt that revealed her long and slender legs.

Last night, Finn Taylor had been chased out of his room by the three girls, who had also taken over his bed.

"Yes, I have something to do."

"Last night, Yvette said that you're always very busy. Don't tell me that you're hooking up with other women."

Finn Taylor said only half-jokingly, "You seem to be very interested in me."

“No, not really. I just don’t want Yvette to be hurt.”

“If you’re really worried about her, you can use your own powers.”

Willow Stone evidently paused after hearing the other, but she quickly regained her senses and smiled. “Protect her using my chess skills?”

Finn Taylor merely smiled in return and waved at her. “I’m leaving.”

His earlier words had been meant to test Willow Stone. Based on her reaction, he couldn’t help but suspect that her personality and character were nothing more than a front. *‘She didn’t turn up at our wedding, not because she didn’t want to come but because she couldn’t. If that’s the case, I really have to conduct a thorough investigation on this girl. Who knows what else she’s hiding?’*

Very quickly, Finn Taylor arrived at the hospital.

The situation was much worse than he had expected—both of Hunter Sullivan’s hands were fractured.

This was Wampus of Peregrine Hall they were talking about. Even with his skills, he couldn’t protect the other!

“Who was it?” The first person who came to mind was none other than his own mother—Wendy Jensen—because the other knew that he wanted to kill Jerry Wood.

“I don’t know. When I arrived at Jerry Wood’s house, a man suddenly appeared and beat me up. I couldn’t defend myself, and he broke both my hands.”

“Could you recognize him? Is he from Peregrine Hall? Did Wendy Jensen send him?”

“No, he probably isn’t from Peregrine Hall. I don’t think Madam sent him either because he didn’t even know me. He just said that my martial arts skills resembled those of someone he used to know and that he wanted to test me.”

Hunter Sullivan’s words threw the others into confusion. *‘Who’s this mysterious person that showed up out of nowhere?’*

“Help me look into this person.” Finn Taylor took out a photo and handed it to Alexander Scott.

The latter glanced at the photo of Willow Stone. “Who’s this?”

“My wife’s close friend.”

The four guardians were stupefied. In fact, their expressions seemed as though they were looking straight at a monster.

They were just short of saying that he wouldn’t even let his wife’s best friend off. Was he still human?

“Don’t think too much about it. She’s Yvette’s college friend and a good friend of hers. She recently visited us, and I feel that she’s a little mysterious.”

Hearing that, everyone’s eyes shot toward the photo. Yet, not a single one of them could understand what Finn Taylor meant by that. *‘She looks like a very typical and beautiful young lady. If we were to talk*

*about her unique points, it'd probably be her long and slender legs. However, there are tons of women with such long legs! Do you mean they're all mysterious? Finn Taylor is just making an excuse.'*

Finn Taylor couldn't be bothered to explain himself, and he simply asked Hunter Sullivan an important question. "Do you have any way of finding that person?"

"You can try the beach."

Finn Taylor nodded as Hunter Sullivan described a location to him..

## **Chapter 232: Mysterious Person**

Just as Finn Taylor was about to leave the hospital, he spotted Andre Cavill entering.

With him was Ginger—who had been beaten up to the brink of death on Finn Taylor's instruction.

Of course, Finn Taylor wasn't going to kill him since he'd be of good use in the future. However, Ginger had evoked his wrath, and the latter had to teach him a lesson.

Not sparing Ginger a glance, Finn Taylor turned on his heels and left—he headed straight for the beach.

*'Since Hunter Sullivan has already said that it's possible to bump into that person here, there is no harm in trying my luck. I'm about to leave for Chicago for the competition, yet a dangerous figure has shown up here in San Francisco all of a sudden! I can't let my guard down.'*

Very quickly, Finn Taylor arrived at the beach.

The waves were washing up on shore, and the weather was wonderful. Yet, Finn Taylor couldn't care less about this magnificent view.

All his senses were focused on looking for that person alone.

All of a sudden, a man strolled over. Although his steps seemed light, they were firm and grounded.

He'd been trained. Perhaps an ordinary person wouldn't have spotted it, but Finn Taylor noticed it at once.

Without saying a word, that man immediately threw a punch toward Finn Taylor. Of course, the latter didn't waste his breath either before fighting back right away.

*Bang!*

Their fists smashed against each other, a loud sound resonating as they both flew back and away from each other.

*Thud!*

That man swept his foot over, trying to land a kick on his opponent.

Finn Taylor wasn't to be beaten and returned a kick.

*Bang!*

Their legs crashed against each other, a thunderous sound erupting.

This battle lasted a good five hours—with no end in sight.

When Finn Taylor returned home, he felt sore all over. But he knew full well that his opponent would probably feel much worse than him and was probably much more severely injured.

When he arrived home, he realized that his wife was still awake. It seemed like she had stayed up to wait for his return.

"I'm back."

"Mm."

Finn Taylor acted as though nothing had happened as he tried to conceal the excruciating pain. But the moment his wife touched him, he couldn't help but hiss.

"What's wrong?" Yvette Larson realized that something was amiss the moment she posed that question. She quickly shut her mouth and decided not to pursue the matter. "You must be hungry. What do you want?"

"Spaghetti."

"Alright, I'll go make some."

"Where are your friends?"

"They all left."

"Oh." Finn Taylor seemed indifferent.

The spaghetti was ready before long, and Finn Taylor slurped it up. However, every bite made him shudder inwardly in pain.

Yet, he tried his very best to endure it and act as though there was nothing wrong.

"Oh right, what does Willow Stone's family do? Maybe you can collaborate with her."

"Nope. She doesn't care about the family business. I think we'd better not ruin our friendship with the talk of money."

Finn Taylor nodded, agreeing with his wife. In reality, however, he had been trying to get information about Willow Stone out of her.

What Finn Taylor hadn't expected was for an opportunity to come his way so quickly.

Yvette Larson handed him a plane ticket. "Willow bought this. She'll travel to Chicago with you for the competition."

Finn Taylor glanced at the ticket, not saying anything as he continued eating his meal. However, his mind was in a mess.

Given his observations, Willow Stone wasn't a simple woman.

*'She definitely has something up her sleeve by asking me to go with her this time. What does she really want?'* Finn Taylor thought long and hard about it but couldn't think of anything.

San Francisco, in a certain hut by the sea.

*Slap!*

Willow Stone slapped the man in front of her viciously. "Who asked you to interact with him?"

The man Willow Stone had slapped was none other than the man who fought Finn Taylor that very afternoon. His name was Nigel Stone.

"I didn't reveal my identity. I was just trying to test his skills."

"Of course, I know that. If you revealed yourself, do you think you'd be alive and talking to me here?"

"But I didn't do anything wrong."

"No? What do you think you are? You're just a dog that our family keeps. Father asked you to come here to protect me. What you did was wrong!"

"But..."

"Scram!"

Nigel Stone remained silent even though he was inwardly fuming as he left the room.

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The next day.

Finn Taylor arrived at the San Francisco Chess Association.

There, the old men who had threatened him were all gathered. All their gazes were filled with disdain as they glanced at Finn Taylor.

Even though they had personally witnessed Finn Taylor beating Jessica Daimler, that didn't change the fact that he was simply the useless matrilocal son-in-law of the Larson family.

"Are you here to apologize?" An elder spoke up, disdain evident in his eyes.

"Why should I apologize?" Finn Taylor scoffed as he looked at that man.

"Does a piece of trash need a reason to apologize?"

"Piece of trash?"

“Are you not? You’re just a useless matrilocal son-in-law of the Larson family. Are you going to deny that?”

“Oh, I heard some rumors about my wife’s company working with your company recently.”

That elder waved his hand, cutting the other off. “We’re not working together. Your wife was desperate for our help. Your family offended the Sullivan family and is on the verge of bankruptcy. Without our help, the Larson family will surely crumble.”

“Actually, we didn’t offend you. Besides, it’ll benefit you as well if I rank well in this upcoming competition. It’s obvious that you’re just trying to control me.”

These men seemed intelligent on the surface, but their intentions wouldn’t get past Finn Taylor’s eyes. If he were to win the competition, he would definitely have power and a say in the American Chess Association.

Then, these old men wouldn’t even be able to compare themselves to him. That was why they had put him on the spot now, even dragging his wife into the equation.

What they wanted was for Finn Taylor to be under their control. Then, they’d have a say in the American Chess Association once he won!

Finn Taylor would be a fool if he couldn’t even come to such a simple conclusion.

“Wait!” The old men were in shock when they heard Finn Taylor’s words. It was obvious that they hadn’t expected Finn Taylor to think of that.

“I never thought that you’d be able to guess what we’re up to.” Even though Finn Taylor had already said so, these men still refused to believe that Finn Taylor had any abilities at all.

The word they had used was ‘guess.’ To them, it was pure luck that someone like Finn Taylor had managed to draw such a conclusion.

It was simply impossible for him to have thought of something like that.

But Finn Taylor didn’t take that to heart. “Threaten me or Yvette Larson, and you can wait to collect some corpses after this competition.”

With that, Finn Taylor turned to leave..

## **Chapter 233: You Have No Right to Know**

On a flight from San Francisco to Chicago, First Class.

Finn Taylor was seated next to Willow Stone. Neither of them said anything as they were both engrossed in their own books.

Finn Taylor was reading a book titled 'Walled City,' while the other was reading a book titled 'Storm.'

There was another pair seated in first class that was much noisier as compared to Finn Taylor and Willow Stone. That couple even treated this as a karaoke lounge and started singing right from the start of the flight.

"Are you guys done?" At last, Willow Stone could no longer hold it in and exploded. She charged up to the other couple and splashed the glass of water next to her onto the man.

Understandably, that man flew into a rage and threw a punch at Willow Stone.

Finn Taylor hadn't intended on stepping in, but he knew that his wife would definitely hold him accountable if her friend were to get injured in his presence.

Left with no other choice, he reached out and grabbed the other man's hand.

That man's name was Sean Kleine, while that woman's name was Mia Henney.

Sean Kleine was the young master of a second-tier family in Chicago, while Mia Henney was an air stewardess. Because of how often the former flew, he had gotten to know Mia Henney.

One of them was a gold-digger, while the other one was lustful—they made for a great pair.

Men loved acting as though they were the most powerful person in the world in front of their women. But now, a woman had just splashed him with a glass of water.

It would be humiliating for him to simply take that without retaliating, yet he had never expected Finn Taylor to step forward.

The moment Finn Taylor grabbed his hand, he couldn't help but feel like he had lost all control over his hand. It felt as though a machine had taken over control of his hand.

"Let go," Sean Kleine yelled, but that didn't have any effect. "If you don't let go, I'm going to call for the flight attendants. You're going to be arrested."

Sean Kleine knew full well that he wasn't going to win against Finn Taylor, yet he didn't want to admit to that. That was why he tried to find an excuse for himself and shouted at his opponent.

Finn Taylor chuckled. "Go ahead."

As he said so, Finn Taylor throttled the other in the neck.

It was hard for Sean Kleine to breathe, much less shout.

"Go on. Why aren't you shouting?" Finn Taylor had a dead-hold on Sean Kleine, whose face only got more flushed by the second. The latter felt as though he was about to suffocate to death.

"If you agree to what I say, blink your eyes. Otherwise, don't blink." Finn Taylor continued in no hurry at all, "We need a quiet environment. Shut up and stop singing."

Sean Kleine blinked furiously.



“You tried to attack this lady earlier on. Apologize to her later.”

Sean Kleine blinked furiously yet again.

“By an apology, I mean kneeling down to her.”

This time, Sean Kleine hesitated.

Right then, Finn Taylor tightened his grip around the other’s neck.

Sean Kleine felt awful, and he had no choice but to blink furiously yet again.

Finn Taylor finally loosened his grip. He wasn’t the slightest bit afraid that the other would go back on his word.

If this man stuck to his promise, Finn Taylor would let the other off because he wasn’t one to bear grudges. But if the other man went back on his word, he would make sure that death was his only way out.

Thankfully, Sean Kleine didn’t disappoint Finn Taylor and kneeled down to express his sincere apology to Willow Stone.

The latter couldn’t help but feel awkward.

When they returned to their seats, Willow Stone turned to Finn Taylor. “Is ‘Walled City’ interesting?”

“Well, it’s rather philosophical.”

“Tell me about it.”

“People outside the walled city try their best to enter, while those inside try their best to escape.”

“So are you planning on getting a divorce from Yvette?”

Finn Taylor had to resist the urge to slap her. *‘Look at what you’re saying. I just saved you, but you’re talking about me in this way?’*

“What’s ‘Storm’ about?”

“Life is just like a storm. We go through trials and tribulations but end up with nothing.”

Finn Taylor smiled but didn’t try to argue with Willow Stone about her interpretation of the book.

Sean Kleine didn’t dare to make a sound, but he glanced at Finn Taylor from time to time.

To be honest, he now held a deep grudge against the other. It was only natural for Young Master Kleine to act that way since he had been utterly humiliated after all, but he couldn’t get his revenge here on this flight.

If he were to make a fuss this time, it wouldn’t only be Finn Taylor who would get in trouble. He would be implicated as well.

However, Finn Taylor was dead meat once they arrived in Chicago.

Finally, the plane landed in Chicago.

As soon as they got off the plane, Finn Taylor led Willow Stone to a corner.

“That’s not the way out.”

“Follow me.” Finn Taylor naturally wouldn’t leave from the official exit. His instincts told him that his mother would be waiting for him there.

Finn Taylor and Willow Stone hadn’t walked for long before someone walked up to them.

She was a beauty who looked like an angel that had descended from heaven, and she immediately took the luggage from Finn Taylor. “Did you have a good flight?”

“Not really. I haven’t taken a plane in a long time.”

The lady who had come to pick Finn Taylor was none other than Queen Felicity.

“Who’s this?” Willow Stone pointed at Felicity Rouge warily. “Finn Taylor, I knew it. You’re having an affair behind Yvette’s back!”

“Go ahead and tell Yvette about this.”

“Are you threatening me? Do you think that I won’t dare to do it?” As she said so, Willow Stone picked up her phone and snapped a few photos of Finn Taylor with Queen Felicity. “Yvette, a woman came to pick your husband up at the airport. I suspect that something is going on between the two of them.”

Yvette Larson replied very quickly. “Willow Stone, why are you and Clarine so suspicious of Finn?”

Willow Stone nearly exploded because of her best friend’s stupidity. *‘I just caught her husband in the midst of an affair. I even sent her a photo, yet she still doesn’t believe me!’*

“Yvette, I really saw your husband behaving strangely with that woman. Are you sure you don’t want me to catch her for you?”

“I know Finn very well.” After her experience with Chloe Yeats, Yvette Larson had already mentally prepared herself for Finn Taylor knowing all sorts of people around the world. Besides, she would trust in her husband no matter what.

“You’re killing me!” Willow Stone was enraged, but Yvette Larson was her best friend after all. *‘Since I’ve caught them in the act, I won’t just let this go.’*

“Stop right there! What’s your name?”

Queen Felicity didn’t reply to Willow Stone but instead turned to Finn Taylor. She was obviously asking for the latter’s permission.

Finn Taylor nodded.

“Felicity.”

“What kind of stupid name is that? What’s your relationship with Finn Taylor?”

“You have no right to know..”

## Chapter 234: Interrogation

Willow Stone monitored Felicity's every movement carefully. She wanted to catch the latter red-handed, flirting with Finn Taylor.

But the more she observed them, the more she couldn't help but feel that Felicity was more like a slave than a mistress. *'It seems like this man is different from what the rumors make him out to be. He has some ability after all.'*

After settling Finn Taylor and Willow Stone down in the hotel, Felicity left.

The duo was left in the hotel room alone.

While showing off her long and slender legs, Willow Stone held a wine glass in her hand.

"You're very different from what Yvette described."

"Did she say I was a meek and quiet girl?"

"That's right."

"Do you think all meek and quiet girls are fools who always submit to others?"

"At least you aren't like that."

"People change. I just want you to get to know a different side of me."

"There's no need for that. You're just my wife's best friend."

*'Why isn't she resting? What's she doing in my room? Besides, why is she drinking here? Yvette trusts me, and that's why she allowed me to come here with Willow Stone. I can't let her down.'*

"Is she really that important?"

"Isn't she your best friend? Is she not important to you?"

All of a sudden, Willow Stone put the wine glass down and stood up. "I'm leaving."

She then strutted off.

Finn Taylor listened closely for the footsteps—Willow Stone's room was right next to his. However, it was obvious from her footsteps that she had returned to her room.

Then, she went out again.

*'What's she going to do? This woman is so mysterious, and she's hiding too many secrets.'*

Willow Stone headed out of the hotel and went toward the suburbs of Chicago.

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The suburbs of Chicago.

A man and woman were kneeling down on the ground. They were none other than Sean Kleine and Mia Henney.

The moment the couple got off the plane, they rushed home, contemplating how to take their revenge against Finn Taylor.

However, they were struck unconscious the moment they left the airport. When they came to, they were already kneeling here.

In Nigel Stone's hands was a sharp dagger. "You're really daring to sing on board a flight, disturbing others in the process. When our young lady asked you to shut up, you even tried to hit her!"

Sean Kleine eyed that glistening dagger, feeling fear rise up in his heart. "Bro, are you talking about that woman on the plane?"

Sean Kleine had now given up all thoughts of getting his revenge. He had to ensure his own safety first.

"How much do you want, Bro? I can give you as much as you want as long as you don't kill me." Sean Kleine only dared to bully the weak but feared those stronger than him. As expected, he immediately gave in to someone like Nigel Stone.

"What the heck can money do? What I want is your apology."

"An apology to that b\*tch? Who is she to deserve an apology from us?" But Mia Henney was different—she was terribly jealous of Willow Stone's beauty. Moreover, she had shown herself to be extremely ignorant by entertaining herself through singing on the plane.

On the other hand, Willow Stone had been reading throughout the entire flight.

Although she knew that Willow Stone was probably more cultured and intelligent than her, she hated the other and thought that she was simply faking it. Mia Henney wanted to scold her and make her understand that she was the most beautiful.

"B\*tch? How dare you scold my young lady?" With that, Nigel Stone waved his dagger.

All Sean Kleine felt was coldness at his neck.

It was only then that he regained his senses. *'The one Nigel Stone just killed was me! Wasn't Mia Henney the one who scolded that young lady? W-why did he kill me?'*

"Ah!!" Mia Henney—who had personally witnessed that sight—let out a blood-curdling scream just as Sean Kleine's blood spurted onto her.

She felt fear from deep within her soul, and her eyes were filled with terror. But soon after that, she was killed too.

*'They humiliated my young lady, so they have to die. Since Mia Henney scolded my young lady, she can't die an easy death. She has to experience the worst form of terror before dying.'* With that done, Nigel Stone tossed the dagger aside before leaving.

Willow Stone met Nigel Stone outside Chicago. "You killed them?"

The moment she spotted Nigel Stone, Willow Stone had already felt the murderous aura the former was emitting.

Such an aura was difficult for a layperson to detect, but it existed, and Willow Stone had felt it.

"They deserved death for insulting you."

"What if he finds out about what you did?"

"He's just a piece of trash. I tested him."

"What?" It was obvious that Willow Stone knew nothing about the situation. "What was the result of that?"

"Neither of us won—he isn't dead."

"Dead?!" Willow Stone suddenly chuckled. "Can you kill him?"

That question hit the bullseye.

Indeed... From what Nigel Stone experienced that day, he knew he wouldn't be able to kill the other.

He had said everything for nothing.

"But why did you choose him? He's clearly a piece of trash."

"You're such a fool. All you care about is what others think of him. Don't you know that people like him won't show their true selves in front of others, much less care about their opinions?"

"I might be a fool. All I think about is you, but what about him? All he thinks about is Yvette Larson!"

"How dare you!"

"Forgive me, Miss!"

"Nigel Stone, you'd better know your place. You're just a stray dog our family took in. If you really want to be our family head, we'll have to see if you can solve our family's troubles first."

Nigel Stone swung his fist across the air. *'Solve the family's troubles? If I were that capable, we wouldn't have needed to return from abroad. We're here to find someone who can do that job.'*

Willow Stone had never expected to find that person so quickly. It was none other than her best friend's husband—Finn Taylor.

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When Willow Stone returned to the hotel, Finn Taylor happened to chance upon the news that Sean Kleine and Mia Henney had been killed.

He had no idea why the couple had suddenly died. *'They offended Willow Stone and me. Since I haven't done anything, is Willow Stone the culprit? But that's impossible! If she really is the culprit, that's petrifying! That woman looks so weak and harmless, but I didn't expect her to be such a vicious and heartless killer!'*

When Willow Stone returned, he simply informed her, "Those two people on the plane are dead."

"Huh? Dead?" Willow Stone expressed her shock.

Finn Taylor stared straight into her eyes to catch a lie.

Eventually, Finn Taylor brought up the question: "Were you the one who killed them?"

He didn't even flinch when posing it..

## **Chapter 235: Ploy**

"Of course not!" Willow Stone denied it vehemently. Her eyes were set and resolute.

Finn Taylor stared straight at her and eventually chose to believe her. He was now sure that Willow Stone indeed wasn't the killer. *'But who could it be if not her? Were they really so unlucky to have bumped into an enemy? But since I can't think of an answer, I shouldn't think about it anymore. The competition is starting tomorrow, and we have to draw lots in the afternoon today.'*

Finn Taylor glanced at Willow Stone. "It looks like things are a mess outside. You'd better not go out."

"Why? Are you scared that I'd ask you to go with me?" Willow Stone said half-jokingly.

"I only shop with my wife," Finn Taylor answered seriously.

Hearing that, Willow Stone was clearly stunned. *'Why would he suddenly bring Yvette Larson up? Is he trying to annoy me on purpose, or was it unintentional?'*

That afternoon, Megan Daimler visited them at the hotel. She was there to pick Finn Taylor and Willow Stone up for the drawing of lots.

Along the way there, Megan Daimler explained the competition rules to the duo.

Each country had two competitors, with more than 60 countries participating in total.

Each match was an elimination match, but the length of each game was undetermined. They would make a decision regarding that on the spot during the competition.

Also, the ones making the decision wouldn't be the American Chess Association but the Japanese Chess Association. This was because the Japanese had won the previous championship.

Megan Daimler then told Finn Taylor to watch out for a certain player—Kuro Takeda.

He was a genius chess player from Japan and a disciple of Yoshie Masaki. When playing against opponents of the same skill level, he never took more than 100 moves to utterly crush them.

Megan Daimler even told Finn Taylor that he could consider himself victorious if he were to force Kuro Takeda to make his 101st move, even if he eventually lost the game.

Finn Taylor nearly vomited blood after hearing that. *‘What does that even mean? Victorious even if I lose the game? Winning is winning, and losing is losing. There’s no such thing as being victorious if you lose.’*

“Do you have the confidence to win the championship?” Willow Stone grew a little frantic as she listened on by the side, so she couldn’t help but question Finn Taylor.

“Full confidence.”

That stunned both Willow Stone and Megan Daimler speechless.

Just earlier, Megan Daimler had gone on and on to knock it into Finn Taylor that Kuro Takeda was a strong contender the former had to be careful about. Yet, it seemed like he had taken nothing to heart and was going to go on his own merry ways.

After arriving at the American Chess Association, Finn Taylor and Willow Stone drew their lots.

Finn Taylor was number 8, while Willow Stone was number 13.

It was a good thing that they had gotten into separate groups.

“Look over there.” Megan Daimler pointed in a direction, and the other two quickly followed.

In that direction were two men—one young and one old.

The elder was dressed in a long, white robe, his hair silvery.

The man—on the other hand—was dressed in all-black, his eyes filled with viciousness.

“They’re Kuro Takeda and Yoshie Masaki.”

Finn Taylor studied the two men carefully. *‘I guess my greatest opponent will be Kuro Takeda. I promised Yvette I’d bring home the championship. I can’t go back on my word.’*

To be honest, Finn Taylor didn’t have much interest in defeating Kuro Takeda. The one he wanted to defeat was Yoshie Masaki—the top in the world!

Even Jessica Daimler couldn’t hold a candle to him.

Since this competition was organized by the American Chess Association and both accommodation and food were provided, the competitors didn’t need to leave the venue and could simply stay here.

“Master said that I should follow you back after this competition. She thinks that you have very interesting and unique chess skills that even she doesn’t understand. She wants me to learn from you,” Megan Daimler said, a little abashed.

Although Finn Taylor didn't say anything, Willow Stone's gaze changed. "I don't think that's appropriate. Don't you think you'll affect his relationship with his wife?"

"No, I'm going to learn chess. What does that have to do with his marriage?"

"This..." Willow Stone didn't want Megan Daimler to butt in. She was sure that Finn Taylor was an outstanding man—so much so that she was willing to betray her best friend to have him for herself.

She didn't want to have to go against so many women for a single man. Besides, these other women were all brilliant in their own right.

In San Francisco were Yvette Larson, Clarine Landon, and Kimberly Gold.

From San Diego was Lindsey Taylor.

Los Angeles, Chloe Yeats.

Chicago, Felicity.

*'Do I have to compete with even Megan Daimler now?'*

These women were all well-known figures in their own industries, yet they all submitted to Finn Taylor.

Everyone else thought that Finn Taylor was nothing more than a piece of trash and the matriloal son-in-law of the Larson family. Who would've expected him to be this outstanding?

Nothing came out of Willow Stone and Megan Daimler's fight because Finn Taylor refused to step in. After all, neither of them was the woman he cared about most.

The next day, the competition proceeded as planned.

Both Finn Taylor and Willow Stone very easily defeated their opponents.

But when the results for the lot drawing came out that afternoon, Willow Stone nearly burst into tears—she was about to face Kuro Takeda!

"It seems like I'm going to test the waters for you. I'll try my best to force him to reveal his strategy. You'd better observe closely."

A chess player had many paths to choose from, yet they would most likely favor one subconsciously when driven into a corner.

It was dangerous for chess players to reveal such a strategy to their opponents. It was only natural for their opponents to set up traps for them in that case.

Finn Taylor remained indifferent and merely thanked Willow Stone.

The next day, the competition went on.

Finn Taylor defeated his opponent with no challenge at all.

Just like Willow Stone had said, she went all-out to try to force Kuro Takeda into showing his hand.



But reality was cruel—she still had no idea about Kuro Takeda’s strategy.

When faced with the same scenario, Kuro Takeda had used three different methods to draw himself out in the same match.

Willow Stone was crushed and eventually lost the match.

Of course, Finn Taylor had been observing the entire match.

After the match ended, Kuro Takeda took the initiative to approach him. “You must be the other competitor from America. Tomorrow, I’ll make you kneel at my feet.”

His eyes were filled with murderous intent.

Finn Taylor hated people who were this smug.

“I’ll defeat you,” Finn Taylor roared back.

Kuro Takeda obviously didn’t believe a word the other said and simply left.

Finn Taylor was fixated on the word ‘tomorrow.’

*‘Why did he say that? Can he control the drawing of lots? What if we don’t have a face-off tomorrow? Wouldn’t he have said that in vain then, or is there something more to this?’*

## **Chapter 236: Unfair Finals**

That night, Jessica Daimler invited both Finn Taylor and Willow Stone to dinner.

“Finn Taylor, I saw Kuro Takeda approach you after the match today.” Jessica Daimler suddenly brought up what she had seen that afternoon.

“Oh right, I wanted to ask you about that too. He told me that he’d defeat me tomorrow. What does that mean? Do you mean that he can control the matches?”

Jessica Daimler’s gaze was filled with worry when she heard that. “It seems like they’re going to go all-out.”

“What do you mean? Tell me about it.”

“In recent years, the Japanese chess team has been suppressing the American team. However, we’re still the governing team of the International Chess Association. They’ve always been unhappy about that, but it looks like they’re finally going to do something about it this time.”

“Finn Taylor, the Japanese team is definitely going to have some tricks up their sleeves tomorrow. You’d better watch out.”

There had been some grudges between Finn Taylor and Jessica Daimler in the past, but they were still representing the same team. Now that it concerned another country, the two were on the same line.

“Please rest assured, Ms. Daimler. I’ll do my best.”

...

The next day, the competition resumed.

Finn Taylor went against a competitor from Thailand. Before long, he managed to defeat the other.

What surprised Finn Taylor was that his next opponent came forward the moment the previous match ended.

“What’s going on? Why doesn’t Finn Taylor get any time to rest?” Jessica Daimler expressed her suspicions.

But that was useless. After all, it was the Japanese team that had arranged the competition schedule.

Just like that, Finn Taylor played consecutive matches.

By the time afternoon came, Kuro Takeda had finished all his matches.

Almost everyone who had been scheduled against him had practically given up the moment they realized that they were up against him. With that, Kuro Takeda ended the matches in record time and was thrust right into the finals.

He was already resting while Finn Taylor still competed, playing one match after another.

Although these competitors were no match for Finn Taylor, they tried to prolong the games.

Each match lasted almost an hour. Because of that, the competition lasted all the way until half-past 11 at night.

Eventually, Finn Taylor defeated all the other competitors to qualify for the finals. He had gone without food or drink the entire day.

Finn Taylor stood up unsteadily, gazing at Yoshie Masaki. “Tomorrow, I’ll be sure to crush your disciple and Japan under my feet. No matter what you do, you won’t match up to us.”

Yoshie Masaki acted as though he hadn’t heard a single word of Finn Taylor’s threat. Instead, he simply stood up and turned to the audience. “I’m sorry, everyone. I just received news that my family member was suddenly sent to the emergency room. I have to rush back, so Japan will bow out of this competition this time. We’ll give up the championship title to these little kids here.”

Yoshie Masaki stunned everyone at the scene, and Finn Taylor and Jessica Daimler shared a gaze.

Everyone’s eyes were filled with confusion. *‘What is Yoshie Masaki trying to do?’*

“Mr. Yoshie, you’re the top chess player in the world. What’s the point of this competition going on if you forfeit your place?”

“That’s right. There’d be no point in this competition if we win this championship with no competition at all.”

“Mr. Yoshie, you’re being very disrespectful.” The representatives of each country stood up one after another, expressing their discontent.

“But I really can’t stay till the end of this competition.” Yoshie Masaki expressed his sincere apology once again.

Just then, someone shouted, “Why don’t we start the finals now? You’ll be able to return home once we end. That should be fine, right?”

“That’s right. We should start the finals right away.”

“Ms. Daimler, you wouldn’t mind, would you?”

It was only then that Finn Taylor and the others from his team realized the reason behind Yoshie Masaki’s show.

Finn Taylor had been competing for over ten consecutive hours. On the other hand, Kuro Takeda had ended his matches quickly and gone back to rest.

One was dog-tired, while the other was full of energy.

It was an unfair match to begin with, and Jessica Daimler started to refuse their suggestions. “There’s no point in playing such an unfair match.”

“What do you mean, Jessica Daimler?”

“Mr. Yoshie’s wife is sick, and he needs to rush back. Don’t you think you’re really cold and uncaring by denying him that right?”

“That’s right. Are all American chess players this heartless?”

“Start the competition right away. Otherwise, we’ll never attend American-organized competitions again.”

“I agree.”

“Me too.” One by one, the other competitors stood up for the Japanese team, criticizing the American team.

It was obvious that the Japanese team had set this up, yet everyone chose to ignore that fact.

Of course, it wasn’t because they chose to do so but because they had been in cahoots with the Japanese team from the very beginning.

Finn Taylor stood up and glared at Yoshie Masaki. “I can start the match now, but I have a request.”

As soon as Finn Taylor finished his sentence, everyone erupted in disagreement. “How dare you!”

“You’re just a boy who’s still wet behind the ears. How dare you make a request of Mr. Yoshie!”

“Look at these young players from America. They know nothing about respect.”

But Finn Taylor remained indifferent.

“What’s your request?”

“After defeating your disciple, I want to challenge you. I don’t think you’re worthy of being the top in the world.”

*Hiss!*

Everyone drew a sharp breath in. *‘He’s too smug! It’s been years since anyone has ever gone against Yoshie Masaki. In our eyes, he’s unbeatable and a legend! He’s asking to be humiliated by going against Yoshie Masaki!’*

“Mr. Yoshie, you mustn’t agree to that.”

“That’s right. If even this boy can challenge you, you’ll be disrespected.”

To everyone’s surprise, Yoshie Masaki replied blandly, “Alright. I’ll take it as giving my juniors some advice.”

With that, the audience started praising Yoshie Masaki. “You’re so humble, Mr. Yoshie.”

“That’s right! You’re really the top in the world, Mr. Yoshie. Not only are you good at chess, but your character is also superb!”

“Yes, this is a man worthy of being the top in the world. Look at how he carries himself. He’s nothing like those people who ride on the laurels of their predecessors but aren’t capable of doing anything themselves.”

Jessica Daimler knew that they were criticizing her, yet there was nothing she could do.

The truth was that she couldn’t match up to Mr. Yoshie.

In order to maintain the nation’s reputation, she had no choice but to give herself the title of the world’s best female player. Yet, that was exactly why she had become the subject of ridicule..

## **Chapter 237: Yvette Larson Kidnapped**

Finn Taylor and Kuro Takeda took their seats.

Eventually, Kuro Takeda was allowed to make the first move. Sitting in front of Finn Taylor, he appeared composed.

He knew full well that this wasn’t a fair match to begin with, yet he hadn’t refused when his master first offered him this solution.

Fairness didn't exist in this world.

Japan had won the championship several times, yet they still weren't the governing committee of the International Chess Association. Was that fair?

*'Today, we'll use such unfair methods to crush our opponents—and with that, the entire American chess world. My master even said that this is merely the beginning. There is more to come—that will ensure my victory.'*

The two players made their moves.

Finn Taylor was quick, but Kuro Takeda was extremely slow. In fact, he took five minutes to make a move.

This was Kuro Takeda's strategy. He was well-rested, while his opponent was exhausted.

With that, he would drag the match past midnight and into the wee hours of the morning. He simply didn't believe that Finn Taylor would still have the mental capacity to continue playing.

When that time came, victory would eventually be his.

Although Finn Taylor was indeed slightly groggy and unsteady, he still made his moves just as quickly.

Kuro Takeda stared on in disbelief. *'Can humans really be this strong?'*

In the blink of an eye, another half an hour passed.

The clock struck midnight.

On the chessboard, it was clear that Finn Taylor had started to take the lead.

Yet, Kuro Takeda wasn't the slightest bit nervous. *'It has only been half an hour. In another half an hour's time, I will be sure to take the win.'*

"Go get some glucose over," Jessica Daimler instructed her disciple.

Afraid of disrupting the game, Megan Daimler immediately set off. But it was midnight, and it was almost impossible to find what she wanted.

Finally, Megan Daimler knocked on the door of a pharmacy.

This was a pharmacist that Megan Daimler knew—he was over 90 years of age. "Sir, do you have any glucose?"

"Yes. Are you feeling unwell?"

"No, but I have no time to explain this to you right now. Just give me some glucose for now."

Immediately, Megan Daimler ran back with the glucose and poured it into a cup before returning to the competition site.

With light steps, she walked up to Finn Taylor and fed him with a spoon.

Finn Taylor wasn't in any position to refuse. After all, he was on the verge of collapsing.

He desperately needed to replenish his energy.

"If you're not a competitor, please leave the stage." Yoshie Masaki nodded furtively at a judge to chase Megan Daimler away.

"He needs to replenish his energy."

"Please leave."

"He won't be able to continue unless he eats something."

"Please leave right now. You'll be disrupting the competition otherwise, and your country will lose this match."

As Megan Daimler glared at the judge, Finn Taylor snatched the cup over and gulped the glucose solution down. "I'm fine. You can leave."

Only then did Megan Daimler finally leave reluctantly.

The competition continued, and Finn Taylor seemed to be taking an even greater lead. Yet, Kuro Takeda was in no hurry at all. *'Does Finn Taylor think that he'll be able to replenish his energy just by taking some glucose? The biggest thing he has going against him is fatigue. It's been hours since he's gotten a proper rest. I'm sure that his brain is about to explode and that he's on the verge of breaking down.'*

Another half an hour passed.

Almost all the pieces left on the board were Finn Taylor's—it looked like the competition was about to end soon.

Just then, Finn Taylor received a video on his phone.

...

San Francisco.

On the day that Finn Taylor and Willow Stone had left San Francisco, Yvette Larson had gone out shopping with her best friend. Following that, the best friends had been kidnapped.

Now, in a dimly lit room.

The two women had been tied up with ropes, their eyes and mouths taped shut. If not for the fact that they had been placed next to each other and could feel each other's presence, they might very well have lost it.

"Bro, these two ladies are so pretty. Why don't you play with them?"

There were another two men in the room—one was sitting while the other was standing.

The man sitting was the mastermind of the kidnapping—Black Fox.

The one standing was none other than Quince Larson.

After selling the company, he had earned a huge sum of money. It was the first time he had so much money on hand, and someone had invited him to a casino.

In the short span of three days, not only had he lost all his assets, but he had even gotten himself into debt!

He was clearly to be blamed for this, yet he pushed the blame to his cousin. *'If not for Yvette Larson resigning from her position, I never would've landed in this state.'*

Through his connections, he heard that someone planned to kidnap Yvette Larson and was looking for lackeys. Naturally, he was game.

After joining the organization, he went all-out, not caring about his dignity at all.

Eventually, he became Black Fox's most trusted right-hand man.

Black Fox glanced at Yvette Larson and Clarine Landon. *'Indeed. The women we caught this time are wonderful. If not for the fact that I had gotten strict instructions to leave them alone, I would've violated them a long time ago.'*

"Shut the f\*ck up! I might be a thief, but I have my morals."

Quince Larson was disappointed and couldn't help but look down on Black Fox. *'What do you mean? I bet you're just afraid that you won't get paid.'*

"Boss, you can go have some fun. Leave this to me."

Black Fox nodded. His thirst for women was now insatiable since he couldn't touch these gorgeous women in front of him.

He had to go out to have some fun on his own.

When Black Fox left, Quince Larson walked up to his cousin and slapped her in the face. "B\*tch!"

Then, he ripped the tape off her mouth.

Ever since Quince Larson had entered the organization, he had learned to change his voice at will. As such, he believed that the other wouldn't be able to recognize his voice.

"Who are you?"

"Your ancestor." With that, he slapped Yvette Larson once more.

"Boohoo." Clarine Landon couldn't hold it in any longer, and Quince Larson ripped the tape off her mouth as well.

"Why are you shouting? No matter how much you shout, nobody is going to come to your rescue! Do you two b\*tches know just what you've done? Now that I've caught you, I'm going to kill both of you!"

Yvette Larson was intelligent and knew from his words that they knew each other.

This kidnapping seemed fishy.

“We’ve done nothing wrong. Why don’t you tell us what we’ve done?”

“You b\*tch, how dare you deny it! You married a useless husband, ruined your family’s reputation, and made them go bankrupt! Don’t you think that’s bad enough?”

“Quince Larson!” Even though he had changed his voice, Yvette Larson recognized him. “Quince Larson, we’re relatives no matter what. I can’t believe that you’re doing this!”

Quince Larson had only said those words out of spite, but he’d never expected his cousin to recognize him!

In an instant, he flew into a frenzy..

### **Chapter 238: Scram, You Old Hag**

Quince Larson quickly sealed the duo’s mouths yet again.

Two or three days after Yvette Larson and her best friend had been captured, Quince Larson took the opportunity when Black Fox was distracted to slash the latter in the neck with a dagger, killing him instantly.

While Black Fox wasn’t a renowned figure, he still had dozens of subordinates. He’d never expected to die in such a pathetic manner.

The only reason Quince Larson had killed him was that he had gotten into a fight with him the previous day.

Quince Larson wanted to threaten Yvette Larson to hand over even more money since her family was rich, yet Black Fox refused immediately, saying that it was against the industry’s rules.

At that time, Quince Larson hadn’t rebutted him, but he couldn’t help but get more incensed the more he thought about it.

It felt terrible to let Yvette Larson go just like that. As such, he made a decision to kill Black Fox and cut off all contact from their superiors.

With his cousin’s phone, he shot a video of Yvette Larson and Clarine Landon in captivity and sent it directly to Finn Taylor.

...

Finn Taylor was still in the middle of his match against Kuro Takeda when he received that video. The moment he opened it, he nearly leaped up.

He exuded a strong murderous intent, and his gaze was fixed on Yoshie Masaki.

However, the latter acted as though he knew nothing. He simply sat there, unmoving.



"It's your turn." Kuro Takeda spoke up.

He was no longer taking that long to make each move, but Finn Taylor had already grown annoyed a long time ago. *'Kuro Takeda is obviously losing. What's he trying to do by extending this game?'*

"You've lost, alright?" Finn Taylor—who was already frustrated to begin with—wanted his opponent to admit his defeat.

"I've lost? I don't think so. There are so many more moves I can make, so why should I admit defeat now?" With that, Kuro Takeda made his move.

However, his moves were now meaningless. He simply didn't want to admit defeat and wanted to drag the match on.

That irritated Finn Taylor even more.

One move and then another.

Finn Taylor had to resist the urge to flip the table. *'What's the point of continuing with this match?'*

"Yoshie Masaki, can't you tell that your disciple has already lost?" Finally, Jessica Daimler could no longer hold herself back and started lambasting Yoshie Masaki.

However, that bore no effect.

"No, there are still some moves he can make. Don't tell me that you guys are such cowards that you have to surrender?" Not only was Yoshie Masaki shameless, but he even tried to insult them instead!

"You..."

Finn Taylor gritted his teeth.

Just then, he received a message on his phone: "I'll give you three days. I want a billion dollars; otherwise, I'll kill them."

*'Huh?'* Finn Taylor felt that something was amiss the moment he read the message. *'If Yoshie Masaki was the one to kidnap my wife, the kidnapper should've asked me to surrender immediately. Why is he asking me to pay him in three days' time? Either this kidnapper wasn't hired by Yoshie Masaki, or there's been some miscommunication between them. No matter what it is, this is good news. For now, Yvette is safe.'*

Three days were more than sufficient for Finn Taylor to return to San Francisco to look for his wife.

...

San Francisco.

Within the hut, Quince Larson tore the tape off his captives' mouths and even eyes. "You're very smart, Yvette. You recognized my voice, but so what? Do you think you can escape?"

Yvette Larson glared at her cousin. "Quince Larson, you'll die a pathetic death! You won't even have a proper burial!"

"Oh, great. So be it then." Quince Larson laughed and handed the phone over to his cousin. "I asked your husband for a billion dollars in three days' time. Do you think that piece of trash will sell Number One Pacific Heights to save you, or do you think he'll marry a younger and more beautiful woman once you die? After all, he hasn't had a good life over the past three years."

This was a pertinent question.

Even birds would try to save themselves in the face of danger. Would Finn Taylor do the same?

"Shut up! Finn Taylor will definitely come for us!" Clarine Landon lashed out at Quince Larson. She couldn't stand the sight of him.

"What do you have to do with this? She's my relative, so I can't do anything to her. Do you think I don't dare to strip you naked?"

Quince Larson's threat shut Clarine Landon up.

"Heh!"

...

The tides were now turning again in the game between Finn Taylor and Kuro Takeda. The latter was starting to move quickly, while the former seemed to be unbothered and started to slow down.

Of course, this didn't go unnoticed by Kuro Takeda and Yoshie Masaki. It was hard for them to understand what had happened.

*'He should've already received news of his wife being kidnapped. Shouldn't he be frantic now? He made that clear earlier, but what's going on now?'*

The two players made one move after another.

Kuro Takeda initially thought that his opponent had simply put up a brave front to scare him, but he realized that the latter was getting more steady as time went on.

The result of him carelessly making his moves earlier was that he was going to die a quick death now.

In the past, anyone who could force him into making 100 moves could be considered to have won the match. But now, they had nearly made 100 moves, yet there was still no end in sight.

Almost all the chess pieces were off the board, and Kuro Takeda had taken a great hit. It seemed as though his soul had been taken out of him.

He stood up and dropped the chess piece in his hand. "I lost."

Time seemed to come to a standstill.

The audience had egged Finn Taylor into this unfair match against Kuro Takeda, but who would've expected such a result?

Kuro Takeda still lost in the end!

The moment his disciple admitted defeat, Yoshie Masaki seemed to exude murderous intent.

Right then, Finn Taylor landed his gaze on Yoshie Masaki. "Come down here, you old hag. I'm going to strip you of your title as the top chess player in the world."

*'Old hag!'*

The moment Finn Taylor said those words, the entire hall fell into silence. The atmosphere was stifling.

Yet, nobody dared to say a thing against Finn Taylor because he had defeated Kuro Takeda! Nobody had seen this coming!

Of course, nobody but Yoshie Masaki had the right to criticize Finn Taylor.

Everyone was waiting to see how the former would react.

Eventually, the man in question stood up and glanced at Finn Taylor. "What a disrespectful young man.. Just wait and see how I'll destroy you!"



### **Chapter 239: Insult to the Chess Circle**

Yoshie Masaki slowly stepped forward toward Finn Taylor until the two men were face to face with each other. "I'm not going to go easy on you. I'm going to crush you under my feet."

Finn Taylor simply ignored him. *'Yesterday, I wanted to put the Japanese team in their place after hearing Jessica Daimler's words. Today, I experienced such unfairness.'*

He hated Yoshie Masaki to the guts, especially after what had happened to his wife

But for Yoshie Masaki, he'd never admit that he was second to anyone in chess!

Finn Taylor swore to himself that he was going to defeat Yoshie Masaki in the most brutal way possible.

As soon as the two men took their seats, Finn Taylor placed one hand on the chessboard.

"Three rules. First, you'll go first, and I'll go second."

"Secondly, you'll win if you finish within 100 moves. Over that, and I'll lose."

“Lastly, speed is key here. Five seconds is the limit, and you’ll lose if you take any longer than that. Are you up to the challenge, old man?”

Yoshie Masaki couldn’t help but feel that he was being humiliated by his opponent. *‘Given Finn Taylor’s rules, it wouldn’t be glorious for me even if I were to win.’*

“That doesn’t sound right.”

“Scram then, old man! This is America—my turf. You’re in no place to speak. Those are the rules. Are you still up for it?”

Yoshie Masaki was so infuriated that he nearly blew his top. “Young man, you’re crazy. But since you insist, I’ll let you see the difference between us.”

Following that, the two men started the game.

The five-second rule was nearly useless in this game.

The two players took no more than a second or two to make their moves—the speed was phenomenal.

The audience didn’t even have time to think about their next moves before the chess pieces were moved.

Just like that, 50 moves were made—half of the 100 Finn Taylor had mentioned.

Yoshie Masaki was indeed deserving of being the top chess player in the world. It was clear to the audience that he held the upper hand.

“It looks like Finn Taylor is in trouble.”

Megan Daimler couldn’t help but furrow her brows in worry.

Even her master started breaking out into cold sweat. “We must believe in him.”

It wasn’t just Finn Taylor’s reputation on the line, but the entire American chess circle’s! If he were to lose this match, the American chess circle would definitely have to give in to Yoshie Masaki from now on.

The match went on—it was nearly checkmate.

“Young man, you’re going to lose.”

Finn Taylor ignored the other and continued making his move.

Even though he had had his turn, he was still on the losing end.

The result seemed set.

“Is there still a need to continue?”

Finn Taylor chuckled. “Don’t we still have 30 moves? We’re almost there then.”

It was obvious to the audience that something had changed in Finn Taylor as he said those words.

“Dead!”

The moment Finn Taylor made his next move, Yoshie Masaki’s face paled. *‘I’ve been taken for a ride.’*

That’s right. Finn Taylor had played him!

From the very beginning, Finn Taylor’s so-called unfavorable situation was no more than a ploy he had been setting up, and his opponent had taken the bait!

Yoshie Masaki tried his best to turn the tides, yet he realized that he was only falling deeper into the trap no matter how hard he tried.

On his 95th move, Yoshie Masaki’s moves were numbered.

On his 96th, he was in grave danger.

On his 97th, he had already lost whatever advantage he previously held.

On his 98th, he had no way out.

On the 99th, he lost.

As Finn Taylor made the 100th move, he looked at Yoshie Masaki. “You lost, old man. I see that the Japanese aren’t very impressive after all. You said that I’m still wet behind the ears, but even the top player of Japan can’t beat me.”

It’s true that I’m not the top in the world. In fact, I’m not even ranked amongst the top ten in the USA. I have teachers and seniors who are more skilled than me, but the top player of Japan can’t even beat me. How dare you call yourself the top in the world? Hehe! I’ve never seen such a shameless person in my life!” Finn Taylor tore into Yoshie Masaki with every word.

The latter felt utterly miserable. He’d just been completely humiliated.

He had started the game, yet he’d been thrashed!

From now on, he’d no longer be the top chess player in the world. In fact, he’d be viewed as a joke in the chess circle.

“Ah!” Yoshie Masaki spat out blood as he collapsed.

That was how he passed on.

Finn Taylor casually tossed his last chess piece on Yoshie Masaki’s face.

The Japanese team had been defeated, and simultaneously, the American team had been propelled to the forefront.

Finn Taylor glanced around, but none of the other players dared to meet his gaze.

Of course, the former had no time to care about them.

He rushed out of the hall and made a call to Felicity. "Book me the earliest flight back to San Francisco immediately."

Jessica Daimler and the rest of the team were no fools, and they instantly realized that something was wrong. *'Something must've happened earlier.'*

"What's going on, Finn?" Willow Stone chased behind him and asked, "Yvette's in trouble? Huh? What do you mean?"

Although Willow Stone liked Finn Taylor and wanted to snatch him from her best friend, Yvette Larson was still her best friend. It was only natural for her to worry about the other.

"She's been kidnapped. I still don't know who's behind this."

"Kidnapped?" Jessica Daimler was stupefied.

"Do you think it was Yoshie Masaki?" Megan Daimler voiced out Jessica Daimler's thoughts.

"Don't spout nonsense. However, that isn't entirely impossible either." While Jessica Daimler seemed to be chiding her disciple, it was obviously a reminder to Finn Taylor as well.

"They did it."

Jessica Daimler had never expected Finn Taylor to admit to it right away. "Then, why are you leaving? You should arrest them and get to the bottom of this!"

"Forget it. There was a breakdown in communication between the kidnappers. Yvette and Clarine Landon are no longer under the control of Yoshie Masaki."

Although none of them understood what Finn Taylor was saying, they chose to trust him.

"Mr. Taylor, the flight has been reserved." No sooner had Finn Taylor walked out of the hall than Felicity presented him with the plane tickets.

"Let's go."

Willow Stone was in a frenzy.

"Me too."

Megan Daimler concurred. While her face was flushed, she appeared resolute..

## **Chapter 240: Culprit**

Finn Taylor had no time nor capacity to care about these two women for the time being. He simply took the ticket from Felicity and headed straight for the airport.

Anyway, Felicity had only bought a single ticket. The women could find their own way back to San Francisco.

The results of the championship in Chicago soon spread to San Francisco. At the same time, Finn Taylor was on the way back.

Those old men in San Francisco were naturally delighted to learn that Finn Taylor had won the competition. Based on their logic, it seemed that the San Francisco Chess Association was the one that won the competition since Finn Taylor had represented them.

Since they were part of the association, they had won the competition too!

But when they heard that Finn Taylor had forgone attending the award ceremony and would return without a trophy or medal, the old men fumed.

The few dozen old men rushed into Carl Gillies's office. "Carl what is going on? Why didn't Finn Taylor attend the award ceremony?"

"That's right. That trophy is mine. How am I going to show it off to others now that he didn't collect it?"

"Yes, he didn't take the medal either!"

The old men were so shameless that it was embarrassing, but Carl Gillies was dumbfounded.

"Hold on. Didn't Finn Taylor attend the competition alone? Why are the trophy and medal yours? It's his choice not to collect them, so why should he have to answer to you?"

Of course, they weren't going to take Carl Gillies's advice in.

"He's just a useless matrilocal son-in-law, so what right does he have to own that trophy and medal? If not for us, he wouldn't even have had the chance to attend that competition. It's only right that we get the trophy and medal!"

"This won't do. I'm going to the Larson family's residence!"

"Hey, I received a message that Finn Taylor is on the way back. He'll arrive at the airport in half an hour's time."

"Come on. Let's go stop him there."

"Yes, he has to give us a good answer!" The few dozen old men stormed off to the airport.

To that, Carl Gillies could only sigh. *'This will probably be the last time I'm meeting these men. They're courting death. How could they offend Master Peregrine of all people?'*

...

San Francisco, the airport.

By then, dozens of old men had arrived in full force at the airport.

The people of San Francisco were no stranger to them—they were prominent figures in the city after all.

If one were to combine all of their assets, they would probably own more than half of the entire San Francisco!

*'Why are they all gathered here? Are they welcoming someone? But who would that be? Even Third Master Gold wouldn't be that respected.'* Everyone couldn't help but stop in their tracks to watch on in curiosity. *'Who could it possibly be?'*

Finn Taylor was in a rush to get off the plane to look for his wife, yet he was surrounded by a whole gang of old men as soon as he stepped out of the plane.

"Stop right there, Finn Taylor!"

"Where's my trophy?"

"Where's my medal?"

Their chatter annoyed Finn Taylor to no end.

"Scram!" Finn Taylor could no longer hold his irritation in and lashed out at them.

"How dare you scold us?"

"You're just a piece of trash! How dare you!"

"F\*ck! Just wait and see how I'll kill you!" All the old men were raging and raring to have their turn at punching Finn Taylor, who no longer held himself back either.

With one kick, he threw the fiercest of the lot onto the ground.

While these old men were no strangers to kicking up such a huge fuss, they still feared death.

Eventually, they opened up a path for Finn Taylor, who flew straight to Hunter Sullivan's residence.

When he arrived, the four guardians were all kneeling on the ground.

They were petrified to say the least. The four guardians were amongst the top bosses in the city, yet even they couldn't help but tremble in fear.

They had committed a grave error this time—Yvette Larson had been kidnapped.

Finn Taylor had instructed them to watch out for his wife before leaving the city, yet they had allowed her to be kidnapped! The more troubling fact was that they hadn't noticed her disappearance for three whole days.

In fact, it was Finn Taylor who had informed them about this.

Now, all they could do was pray for Yvette Larson to be safe. If anything happened to her, they could forget about keeping their lives!

"How impressive. Pukwudgie, Thunderbird, Horned Serpent, and Wampus—the four guardians who are said to have no rivals in this whole world. You're a bunch of idiots! A bunch of idiots!"



Not a single one of the four guardians dared to rebut Finn Taylor as he lashed out at them.

“Get up, all of you. Zachary Kennedy, find Yvette’s location.”

Scolding them wasn’t going to solve the problem. What mattered was saving his wife.

“Analyze this video.” Finn Taylor threw his phone over to Logan Yeats.

“Go to the Larson family’s residence and see who’s not there,” Finn Taylor instructed Alexander Scott.

Now, only Hunter Sullivan remained.

“You’ve had the most interactions with Yvette. You’d better hope that she’s fine!”

Hunter Sullivan was on the verge of breaking down. He knew that Finn Taylor trusted him the most amongst the four guardians.

With trust came power, and with power came responsibility. If anything happened, he’d have to take the blame for the team.

“Don’t worry, Master Peregrine. She’ll be fine.” Hunter Sullivan didn’t know what else to say. His words seemed more of a comfort to him than for Finn Taylor.

“Master Peregrine, look at Ms. Larson’s eyes.” Logan Yeats spotted the first problem.

He enlarged Yvette Larson’s eyes and saw a figure reflected in them.

“Can you recognize that person?”

“That’s a tough one. I’ll need some time.” As he said so, Logan Yeats continued his analysis.

Before long, Alexander Scott returned. “Master Peregrine, Quince Larson and Eleanor Larson aren’t at home and have been missing for quite a long time.”

*‘Could they have been the ones?’* Finn Taylor’s suspicions arose.

“Look, Master Peregrine.” Finally, Logan Yeats made a discovery.

He blew up the photo of the figure.

They all turned to the screen, only to realize that the face staring right back at them was Quince Larson!

“Master Peregrine, I’ve found their location. They’re in this abandoned warehouse.” Alexander Scott’s skills were exceptional. Nobody could escape his tracking unless they were dead.

“Alexander Scott, go to St. Cloud Hospital and get Joseph Larson out of his coma. It’s time that old man wakes up. Logan Yeats, go to Quince Larson’s residence and bring his parents to the Larson family’s residence. Zachary Kennedy, continue tracking their locations and give us updates. Hunter Sullivan, come with me. You have the biggest responsibility. If you don’t manage to save Yvette this time, your head is going to roll..”