

The Understated Dragon Lord

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Chapter 201 Brittany's Scheme

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"Oh, playing Mr. Nice Guy, huh? You country bumpkin, stop faking it here! Others might not see through your ugly mug, but I do," Brittany sneered at Daniel before turning to the others.

"Don't just stand around, toast that country boy! You all should know, he's a real 'good Samaritan' and can hold his liquor! Whoever can drink him under the table gets a promotion and a raise," she announced.

The crowd grabbed their glasses and began a relentless tag-team toast to Daniel. After a grueling half hour, nearly everyone was wiped out, sprawling across the floor in a drunken mess.

Only two remained sober: Daniel and Brittany.

"Brittany, they're all wasted, and you're still sober. If I'm not mistaken, you've been busy having them drink to me all night, without touching a glass yourself. How about we share a drink?" Daniel asked, his tone teasing.

"Drink with you? I'd rather not! You're not in my league!" Brittany was fuming.

Initially, she was convinced that gathering a bunch of seasoned drinkers would do the trick – many against one, and Daniel would've succumbed. But who would've thought all these people would get floored by him alone.

An angry Brittany had no choice but to call their families to collect the boozy bunch. After everyone was taken care of, she flopped onto the couch, exhausted.

Daniel, still with a smug look, asked, "Need a ride home, Brittany? I heard you moved into a newly renovated place. Why not invite me over?"

"You think you can drive?" she retorted.

"Of course!" he declared confidently.

Brittany came up with a new plan on the spot and agreed, "Alright then!"

She didn't actually want Daniel to drive her home. She wanted to set him up. Daniel had had enough to drink that, by now, he could be arrested for drunk driving. If he got caught, she figured she could put this country boy behind bars for at least six months.

Sitting shotgun in the car, Brittany directed Daniel. She was familiar with the local roads and knew where the cops would be, thus leading him straight into their path.

Under Brittany's guidance, the car approached an overpass with two lanes, one of which was blocked. Several uniformed police officers stood in the middle of the open lane, part of their daily patrol.

Daniel saw this and smiled. "Did you plan this?"

"What? Drive after drinking all that vodka tonight, and you didn't expect to get caught? Legally, you're looking at a minimum of six months in jail!"

"Did I drink tonight? News to me – I didn't have any. Don't believe me? Try this," he chuckled, then blew a breath of air directly at Brittany.

The strong smell of booze hit her, and Brittany quickly rolled down the window.

"Disgusting! Get lost!" she yelled, pounding on Daniel's shoulder with her fist.

"Hey, Brittany, if you ever lose your job, consider a career in massage therapy. You've got quite the touch – pretty cozy," he teased.

"You... you're about to get caught! Worry about yourself!"

Chapter 202 Law Above All

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With the strong smell of alcohol on Daniel's breath, Brittany was convinced he would end up in jail for drunk driving. The thought of that country boy locked up made her giddy with joy.

Soon, they approached the checkpoint, where a uniformed officer named Ava Davis, the squad leader, signaled for them to stop. Ava looked inside the vehicle through the tinted windows but couldn't see clearly, so she knocked on the window and ordered loudly, "Roll down the window!"

People driving this kind of luxury car were often rich kids, and Ava knew that a window left unrolled usually meant one thing: drunk driving! She hadn't caught a single offender that night, and Daniel seemed like he would be her first catch.

Seeing Daniel not respond immediately, Brittany leaned over and hit the window button, surprising him. He felt her brush against him, an oddly pleasant sensation that lingered in his mind.

Before Daniel could react, Brittany outright betrayed him to Ava. "Officer, this country boy has had a ton of vodka, he's definitely drunk driving! Just handcuff him already!"

Ava was taken aback. The woman beside Daniel was accusing him of drunk driving? It seemed like the man had crossed the line, and this woman wanted to teach him a lesson.

Ava surmised that Daniel must have been partying at a bar, then got caught by his girlfriend. The woman in the passenger seat must be his girlfriend wanting to throw her boyfriend in jail. Ava thought to herself, such scum deserves to be behind bars. Excellent.

With a stern face, Ava pulled out a breathalyzer, held it to Daniel's mouth, and commanded, "Blow into this!"

"Officer, I haven't been drinking," Daniel insisted.

"Everyone caught for DUI claims they haven't been drinking. So, whether you've had a drink or not has nothing to do with what you're saying. Don't think delaying will trick this device. It's very sensitive. Even if you've had just a sip and you wait here an hour, it can still detect the alcohol! Driving such a fancy car, and you can't even afford a designated driver. You're asking for trouble! Stop delaying and blow into this device, now!" Ava was blunt, lecturing Daniel as if she was scolding her own boyfriend.

"Fine! You're the one in uniform, so you call the shots." Daniel could only comply and gave a small blow into the breathalyzer.

The display showed a reading of 0. Ava was confused; Daniel clearly smelled of alcohol. Why wasn't the device detecting anything?

"Get serious and give it a few good blows," she insisted.

Following Ava's unceremonious request, Daniel blew vigorously several times, but the number remained 0.

This made no sense. Daniel definitely reeked of booze, so why wasn't the breathalyzer detecting it?

"Officer, I told you I didn't drink! Can I go now?" Daniel asked.

"You definitely had a drink! Pull over, we're going to do a blood test," Ava said.

Ava wasn't about to let Daniel go that easily; she knew devices could malfunction. A blood test would settle this once and for all, as she was sure he was driving under the influence.

Read Chapter 203 Defying Science

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Daniel was escorted to the nearby blood testing van. Inside sat a woman in a doctor's coat who was older and stern-looking, with a tough demeanor that suggested she was not one to be trifled with.

She glanced at Daniel and barked, "Stretch out your arm and roll up your sleeve."

"Yes, ma'am, please go easy on me!" responded Daniel.

Ava: ...

What was with this guy, calling every woman 'ma'am'?

But it worked. The woman's movements softened considerably after Daniel's compliment. The blood draw was quick and nearly painless.

The results came back in no time: Daniel's blood alcohol content was 0. Ava was stunned.

"You really didn't drink?" she asked incredulously.

"How could he not have drunk? He downed gallons of vodka! The test must be wrong; you should draw blood again and retest!" Brittany was adamant because she had seen him drink. How could his BAC be 0? It was downright unscientific!

That's when the doctor spoke up. "Are you questioning my test results? My professionalism? If I say he hasn't drunk, then he hasn't. Besides, have you ever seen anyone drink gallons of vodka?"

"Off you go!" she dismissed them.

Without evidence, Ava had no choice but to let them go.

Back on the road in the car, Brittany was fuming, clenching her fists, itching to give the country boy beside her a good punch. As the notion grew more peculiar, she asked with a scowl, "How is it that

after drinking so much, your blood has no trace of alcohol?"

"Because I have a miraculous ability! Ever since I was a kid, I discovered I could drink alcohol like water. No matter how much I drink, it doesn't stay in my body. So next time you want to mess with me, don't try to get me drunk, because it just won't happen – never!"

"You... What a waste of good vodka!" Brittany lamented, regretting the night's wasted efforts. But she hadn't entirely missed her mark; she did prevent him from having a candlelight dinner with Jessica. With his tolerance, what if he got Jessica drunk and took advantage?

The thought sent chills down her spine.

Just then, Brittany's phone rang.

"Hello?"

"What?"

"Don't panic, I'm on my way!"

She hung up and directed Daniel, "Turn here; we're going to Bell Street."

"Bell Street? What are we doing there? You gonna treat me to midnight snacks?"

"Zip it and just go!"

Soon, they arrived at Bell Street, a street bustling with food vendors. Brittany led Daniel to a snack bar owned by her cousin, Amelia Jones.

Unlike the other taco stands filled with customers, this place had only leftover dishes on the tables and not a single diner in sight. Instead, a group of tough-looking men with buzz cuts, tattoos, and carrying cleavers each occupied a table, marking their territory across the small eatery.

Chapter 204 The Girlfriend

Chapter 204 The Girlfriend

Daniel wasn't clueless; it only took one glance for him to figure out that the snack shop's owner must have angered someone, leading these menacing gang members to stir up trouble.

"Who's the owner of this shop?" Daniel inquired, turning to Brittany.

"My cousin," she replied.

"Is she pretty?"

"What's it to you?"

"Well, if she ain't pretty, I'm out of here. Just look at these troublemakers, they don't look friendly at all, and they've got cleavers - scary!"

"I dare you to leave! Aren't you all tough? You better solve this problem for me. Otherwise, I'll report you to Jessica!"

"Report me? For what?"

"For harassment! You, the country bumpkin, harassed me!"

"When did I harass you?"

"I say it happened, then it happened! I'm a woman, the victim, and my word is the final say!"

Daniel: ...

As they approached the entrance, one of the cleaver-wielding tough guys quickly positioned his blade at Daniel's throat.

"What are you doing here?" the tough guy demanded.

"Isn't this a snack shop? I came to grab a bite with my girlfriend!" Daniel bluffed.

Girlfriend?

Brittany ignored the knife and focused on that one word. This country boy had the nerve to take advantage of her?

Fuming, she frowned deeply. However, she held back from protesting because she needed Daniel's help. She decided, for the time being, to let him have this small victory, but she definitely wouldn't allow him to go too far.

"The shop's closed today, get out!" the tough guy wasn't interested in further conversation and wanted to shoo Daniel away.

"Whether it's open or not, is that up to you? What, you think you're the boss here?"

"Keep talking, and maybe I'll chop you down!"

The big guy waved his cleaver but didn't actually swing it. Even for the gang, random violence was unusual.

"Chop me? Go ahead!" Daniel pointed to his own neck, grinning. "Try here!"

"You're asking for it!" The tough guy really moved to strike, aiming a blow at Daniel's thigh instead of the neck!

But Daniel wasn't about to stand still and get chopped. As the blade neared his leg, he quickly kicked out, landing a solid blow to the tough guy's stomach and sent him flying.

"Boom!"

The big guy was large and flew horizontally, knocking down several other thugs like a bowling ball.

"Damn, kill him!" yelled one of the buzz-cut henchmen as the rest surged forward.

Unfazed by the group attack, Daniel fought back with fists and feet. In less than ten minutes, he had knocked down about twenty of them, and their cleavers clattered to the ground.

Having dispatched the goons outside, Daniel sauntered into the shop with Brittany in tow. As they reached the entrance, she whispered threateningly in his ear, "Country boy, don't you dare tell my cousin that I'm your girlfriend!"

"Why, do you think I'm not handsome enough?" Daniel replied with a cheeky grin.

Chapter 205 You Dare Slap Me

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"You..." Brittany stomped her foot in frustration. Unable to outwit Daniel, she reached out and twisted hard at his waist.

"You're not my girlfriend, what gives you the right to twist my waist?"

"Because you have a dirty mouth! If you take advantage of me again, it won't just be a twist – I'll rip your lying mouth apart!" Brittany threatened fiercely.

The door to the private room in the shop was closed, with voices seeping through. Brittany, looking anxious, ordered Daniel, "My cousin is in there – open that door!"

With a swift kick, Daniel smashed the door open.

"Boom!"

Inside the room, a pretty woman in a skirt and a burly man with a menacing face were taken by surprise. The woman was Brittany's cousin, Amelia, and the burly man was Beardog, the local gang leader.

Beardog was shocked by the sudden intrusion. He eyed the two newcomers – the woman was very attractive, but the man just looked like a simple country boy.

Confused, Beardog asked, "How did you get in?"

"We fought our way in!" Daniel replied, then countered, "So are you the one causing trouble? Are those buzz-cut guys with cleavers outside your men?"

Beardog peeked outside and was stunned. His men were all knocked down, writhing in pain on the ground.

"You did this?"

"Yes!"

"You've got some nerve hitting my guys!"

"It's you who've got the nerve coming after my cousin!"

"Amelia is your cousin?"

"She's my girlfriend's cousin, so by extension, she's mine!"

"Your girlfriend?" Beardog eyed Brittany up and down, and suddenly his interests piqued.

"She's your girlfriend?"

"Yes!"

"These two are both pretty! I only planned on having fun with one tonight. But since you've brought me another beauty, I can't refuse such a gift. Looks like it's going to be a party of three!"

As Beardog reached out his hand towards Brittany, Daniel didn't bother with words but responded with a resounding slap across Beardog's cheek.

The slap wasn't hard enough to send him flying, but Beardog's fleshy face immediately swelled up.

Holding his burning cheek, Beardog looked at Daniel in disbelief.

"You dare slap me?"

Faced with such a question, Daniel never favored words over action. He delivered another strong slap to Beardog's other cheek.

"Slap!"

This time, the slap was equally forceful, rendering Beardog's swollen face almost symmetrical.

After taking the second slap, Beardog was in a rage.

"You dare slap me again?"

"Slap!"

"You dare slap me one more time?"

How could Daniel not accommodate such a request? After all, he was a good person.

"Slap!"

Yet another slap landed on Beardog's cheek.

Now thoroughly infuriated, Beardog yelled, "I'm going to take you down!" In the heat of his fury, he pulled out a dagger and lunged at Daniel's chest.

Chapter 206 Thank You

Chapter 206 Thank You

Beardog's attack was swift and lethal; he wasn't the type to give his foes any chance to fight back. Just as his dagger was about to pierce Daniel's chest, Daniel deftly caught the blade between two fingers, stopping it dead.

With a quick twist and flick of his fingers, the dagger snapped in half. Daniel then delivered a powerful kick to Beardog's midsection, sending the gang leader flying out the window and into a dead-end alley filled with garbage bins brimming with swill.

"Splash!"

Beardog landed right in one of the bins.

"Damn it!" he cursed aloud, which turned out to be a bad idea since his mouth was open.

"Glug, glug, glug..."

He swallowed several mouthfuls of the disgusting liquid.

"Ptooeey!"

"Glug, glug, glug..."

"Ah, ptooeey!"

Deciding that cursing was no longer worth the risk, Beardog quickly clambered out of the bin. His men had been defeated, and he himself had been thrown into swill by a country bumpkin. The humiliation was intolerable, but Beardog knew he was no match for Daniel. He'd need help to settle the score.

Before leaving, Beardog decided to issue a warning. "Country boy, you think you can kick me around? Do you know who my boss is? I'm one of Justin's men!"

"Justin? Which Justin?"

"Justin from the Black Panther Club! So, if you've got the guts, don't leave. I'll be back with more men from the Black Panther Club, and you're a dead man tonight!"

With those words, a swill-drenched Beardog and his crew departed.

Once Beardog was gone, Amelia snapped out of her shock and expressed her gratitude to Daniel. "Thank you, Brittany's boyfriend!"

Hearing this, Brittany quickly corrected her, "Cousin, don't just say things – he's not my boyfriend! He's just a country bumpkin and a colleague! Plus, he's about to be fired from the company!"

"He's not your boyfriend, just a colleague?" Amelia looked puzzled as she turned to Daniel. "Are you two really just coworkers?"

"What do you think?" Daniel responded cheekily.

"You've already called me cousin, so you must be her boyfriend! Did you two have a spat? Did you make her mad? Brittany can be a bit hot-headed and stubborn, but she's a good person. You have to be patient with her!"

Daniel deliberately maintained the misunderstanding, much to Brittany's annoyance.

"Country boy, if you keep talking nonsense, I'll kick you out myself!" Brittany stomped her foot.

With a quick sidestep, Daniel ducked behind Amelia. "Cousin, she wants to kick me out! Do something about her!"

"Brittany, don't be so harsh with your boyfriend!" Amelia chided her.

Worry then crossed Amelia's face as she continued, "That Beardog works for Justin – he's definitely gone to get him. Brittany, you should take your boyfriend and leave quickly! I need to pack up and get out of here, too. Justin isn't someone to mess with; he's in the top 10 of Martial Club United, and he owns half the nightclubs in New York. If we've gotten on his bad side, he won't let us off easily. It's best if we go into hiding for a while."

Chapter 207 What Are You Saying?

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Upon hearing Justin's name, Brittany couldn't help but laugh. "Cousin, no need to worry. This country boy here has already beaten up that Justin several times. If Justin dares to come, he'll piss his pants and run the moment he sees this guy."

Brittany's words left Amelia in shock. She looked at Daniel with disbelief. "Your boyfriend is that powerful?"

"He's not powerful at all, he's just a country bumpkin! And for the last time, he's not my boyfriend! He is just a smelly country boy who's trying to take advantage of me!"

Amelia didn't buy Brittany's denial. "If he's not your boyfriend, why did you bring him here?"

"Cousin, you said on the phone that Beardog was causing trouble again. Knowing this guy's good in a fight, I brought him along to help out."

"Brittany, don't give your boyfriend nicknames like that; it's not polite to call him a country bumpkin," Amelia scolded.

"Cousin, don't worry, I won't argue with a lady. She can call me whatever she wants. Being called a country bumpkin doesn't make me any less."

"Look, Brittany. See how generous your boyfriend is?"

"Cousin, I haven't even had dinner yet! What kind of good stuff do you have here?"

"Wait here, I'll go to the kitchen and cook something special for you both. I'll whip up one of the signature dishes of my shop."

Brittany bristled at the thought of Amelia cooking for Daniel. "Cousin, you don't need to cook for this country boy, why should he get a free meal here?"

"Because I want to!" After rebuking Brittany, Amelia headed to the kitchen.

"Cousin's so pretty, I bet her cooking is delicious," Daniel commented with a sly grin.

"Country boy, you better behave yourself."

"I'm always well-behaved! I've been nothing but a good sport since I started at the company. You bully me every day, and I never once fought back. It's rare to find someone like me who can be pushed around so easily. You should treasure me, Brittany."

"Why are you suddenly calling me Brittany? Didn't you just pretend to be my boyfriend? And now you stop as soon as my cousin leaves? What are you trying to do?"

"Nothing! I just wanted your cousin to know you have a boyfriend. Once she knows, the rest of your family will know too. Then, if you date other guys or get a new boyfriend, you'll be seen as unfaithful in love."

"Country boy, how can you be so despicable?"

"Why do you keep calling me a country boy? Did you really think I wouldn't fight back?! As long as you call me that, I'll keep pretending to be your boyfriend in front of your cousin. It's you who can't find a boyfriend, so you'll be the one who's anxious."

"Country boy, don't cross the line!"

"I've only met your cousin so far. I haven't even met your mom, not to mention your dad. If you keep annoying me, I'll just find a chance to visit your parents. Maybe I can't do much, but making them think I'm their future son-in-law? That I can do easily."

"Oh yeah? You don't know how picky my mom is. You think you can handle her? Just try it!" Brittany scoffed with a dismissive laugh.

"Country boy, if you can win my mom over, I'll marry you!"

Chapter 208 What Do You Mean?

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Brittany had no intention of marrying Daniel. She was just using the statement to express how difficult her mother was to deal with. If the difficulty level to get along with an average person was 1, then getting along with Brittany's mom would be at least 100. Daniel was a country boy without money, power, or notable ability — how could he possibly win over her mother? Even a mayor who once tried to set Brittany up on a date was flatly rejected by her mom.

Daniel gaped at Brittany incredulously. "What did you say? You want to marry me?"

"If you have the ability to win over my mom, then I will marry you! But I know you won't be able to!" Brittany's whole reason for setting this condition was her damnable pride; she desperately wanted to see Daniel fail for once. Ever since meeting him, that country boy had been lucky every time. She just had to make him lose once!

Every time Brittany went home, her mother pressured her to get married. Brittany figured she'd use Daniel as a shield next time, and let her mom give him a good tongue-lashing while she was at it.

Resolved, Brittany decided she would keep Daniel at The Matthews Organization for the time being - after all, she didn't have the power to get rid of him just yet.

Currently, Daniel was Jessica's golden boy! For some reason, Jessica believed every word that came out of his mouth.

Just as Brittany thought about how she had been outmaneuvered by setting up this condition, Daniel suddenly spoke up.

"After all this talk, you still want to marry me? Well, I'm not going to marry you! You're a monster; whoever marries you will be cursed for life!"

Brittany was livid, stomping her foot in outrage. "What did you just say? You're saying you won't marry me? You think you're good enough for me?"

"Well, who knows? Maybe one day when I win over your mom, you'll be begging me to marry you. Then I'll refuse, just to see how you'll explain that to her!"

"You think you can win over my mom? In your dreams! Even I can barely handle her, let alone you."

"Can you stop blabbering already, just take me to your parent's house next time."

"Well, we'll see!"

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While the two were bickering, Amelia emerged from the kitchen with several plates of food, showcasing her culinary skills with the restaurant's signature dishes: confit de canard, magret de canard, cassoulet, lobster...

Seeing a table full of delicious food, a starving Daniel immediately sat down to feast. As he stuffed the succulent meat into his mouth, he spoke with greasy lips, "Thanks for the hospitality, cousin! I'm not gonna hold back!"

Brittany shot him a look of disdain. "You're thanking her after you've already started eating? Do you think that's appropriate?"

"Brittany, it's an honor that your boyfriend enjoys my cooking," Amelia said as she placed a large lobster into Daniel's bowl, polite as ever. "Try this – the lobster is our biggest specialty and my best dish. Let me know what you think."

Daniel, to the surprise of both women, passed the bowl to Brittany. Both women paused, taken aback by his gesture.

Brittany was the first to snap out of it and asked, "What do you mean?"

Chapter 209 Bullshit

Chapter 209 Bullshit

"There's no hidden meaning! I just want you to peel this shrimp for me. If you don't help me, should I ask our cousin to do it instead?" Daniel's words nearly made Brittany tremble with anger.

"Me peel it for you? Have you seen yourself? How dare you ask me to peel shrimp for you?"

"You're my girlfriend! What's wrong with peeling a shrimp for me?"

Amelia chuckled, picked up a slightly smaller lobster, peeled it skillfully, and placed the succulent meat into Daniel's bowl. Then, beaming, she said, "Daniel, eat! I peeled it for you."

Without hesitation, Daniel popped the lobster meat into his mouth, chewed twice, and swallowed. "Delicious!" He then turned to the furious Brittany and said, "Look at our cousin, then look at you! She's so nice! And you? You only know how to bully me, you're terrible!"

Brittany: ...

After a moment of shock, Brittany's anger flared. "Country boy, I'm warning you, don't go too far!"

Seeing her cousin flare up again, Amelia quickly stepped in to soothe her. "Brittany, treasure such a good boyfriend! Don't get angry so easily, girls should be gentle and ladylike!"

"Gentle? This country boy will only get worse if I'm gentle with him!"

Unable to convince Brittany, Amelia cleverly changed the subject. "Daniel, how exactly do you like the shrimp? I personally peeled it for you; you can't just appease me with 'it's delicious.'"

Amelia had no ulterior motives; she just wanted Daniel's honest opinion. This was the peak of summer, and the best-selling item in this street's restaurants was lobster. Amelia always thought her lobster dishes were pretty good, but she couldn't compete with the restaurant across the way. Everyone believed that the other place made the best lobster on Bell Street.

"Do you want the truth, or do you want me to lie?" Daniel asked.

"The truth, of course! If you dare lie, I won't acknowledge you as my niece's boyfriend."

"The lobster is too oily and over-fried. The freshness of the lobster has been completely lost due to the frying. Also, cousin, you're very generous with the seasonings, but it's a bit too much..."

"Heh!" Before Daniel could finish, Brittany interrupted him with a mocking laugh.

"Country boy, do you feel the need to put in your two cents on everything? Have you ever cooked before? How dare you critique our cousin's cooking?"

"Don't speak to your boyfriend like that, Brittany!" Amelia scolded. "Even though he hasn't cooked before, his feedback is on point. These are the same issues I've been pondering for several days."

"Cousin, talking about it won't do much good. Which way is your kitchen? Let me show you how to do it."

"You're offering to teach me? You know how to fix it?"

Brittany sensed something was off and quickly interjected, "He's just bragging, cousin. Don't listen to him. He's a country boy who can't even properly fry an egg—how could he possibly advise a gourmet chef like you?"

"Who says I can't fry an egg? The scrambled eggs I make are the best you'll ever eat in your life."

"Heh!" Brittany was unconvinced, rolling her eyes dismissively. "Sure you are! It's not like anyone would know."

"You'll find out soon enough." Daniel retorted, unfazed by her skepticism.

Chapter 210 The Bet

Chapter 210 The Bet

Brittany was struck by an idea at Daniel's words. "How about we make a bet? If the scrambled eggs you cook are so good that I eat five plates, then I lose. But if I don't eat five plates, you lose."

Daniel knew Brittany was trying to set him up, but he didn't mind and asked with a grin, "Since it's a bet, there should be stakes, right?"

Hooked, Brittany quickly laid out her terms. "Whoever loses has to agree to do one thing the winner says, no matter what it is."

"Okay!" Daniel agreed readily.

As they prepared to wager, Amelia quickly intervened. "If you two want to bet, take it home! Daniel, come into the kitchen and teach me how to cook this lobster."

Without further ado, Amelia dragged Daniel into the kitchen.

Upon entering, Daniel was amazed. This was no ordinary roadside establishment's kitchen—it was pristine, far cleaner than many home kitchens.

Brittany followed them in, arms crossed, glaring at Daniel derisively. "Country boy, go on, show us what you've got! I want to see if you can actually cook lobster. Just don't hurt yourself trying to kill it, okay?"

Brittany couldn't believe that this country boy could cook. In her eyes, Daniel was simply useless at everything.

Daniel took up a spoon in his right hand and a pan in his left, starting to work on the lobster. His movements were swift, and soon he had a plate of seemingly delicious lobster ready. The aroma alone was appetizing.

Amelia didn't care about the heat as she snipped off a leg and tasted the flavor right off the shell. "This is so delicious! Even the taste on the shell is much better than what I just made!"

Watching Amelia praise Daniel's lobster dish, Brittany felt a twinge of annoyance. So, in her typical fashion, she scoffed. "As if this country bumpkin could make tasty lobster—it's probably just the seasoning on the shell that's good. The meat itself is bound to be tough and chewy. If you don't believe me, cousin, you should try it yourself."

Brittany refused to accept that the lobster prepared by a country boy could taste better than Amelia's, whom she adored. Every time she visited Amelia's restaurant, lobster was her go-to dish—even if she was dining alone, she could finish an entire four- or five-pound lobster.

Amelia carefully extracted the lobster meat, which appeared white and springy. She took a bite, first savoring the perfect blend of seasonings that created a robust flavor burst, and then the delicious succulence of the meat.

It was incredibly delicious—the texture of the lobster was outstanding, and Daniel's cooking was beyond words.

Seeing Amelia's eyes widen with an exaggerated expression on her face, Brittany instinctively assumed the lobster must be horrible. And so, she let out a disdainful laugh.

"Heh!"

Chapter 211 Justin, I Got Hit

Chapter 211 Justin, I Got Hit

After laughing, Brittany's derision wasn't satisfied, so she brazenly went on, "Cousin, how is it? I told you the country boy's lobster would taste terrible, didn't I? It looks okay on the outside, but I bet it's no good to eat."

Amelia didn't answer right away; instead, she handed a piece of lobster to Brittany. "You try it," she insisted.

"I definitely won't! Anything cooked by that country boy won't taste good!"

Brittany refused to eat the lobster made by Daniel. Ignoring her stubbornness, Amelia peeled a piece and straight up placed it in Brittany's mouth. The moment the lobster's flavors burst on her palate, Brittany instinctively began to chew.

Before even finishing the first piece, Brittany reached for a second. Seeing her savor the dish, Amelia asked with a grin, "So, how's the lobster that your boyfriend made? Isn't it super delicious?"

"It's just okay, passable!" Brittany would never praise Daniel. No matter how delicious it was, she would only admit it was average at best. For her to even concede that much, she believed was high praise for Daniel.

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Elsewhere, a drenched Beardog, fresh from a bath and clothed anew, hastened to Windows Street. He was shocked to find the Black Panther Club members appearing to be moving out despite the late hour.

Feeling confused and unsure of what had happened, he ran upstairs to find Justin sitting despondently in his office, nursing a drink. On seeing Justin, Beardog rushed over to the desk like a man finding his long-lost father. "Justin! You have to help me!"

"And you are?" Justin squinted at him for several seconds before recognition dawned.

"You're Beardog?"

"Yeah, it's me, Justin, I'm Beardog!"

"Beardog, what happened to your face? How did it swell up like that? Your face looks like a pig's head."

"Justin, I've been beaten up, look at the state of my face!"

"Who did this to you?"

"A country bumpkin!"

curse! A country bumpkin dared to hit my men? Where is he? I'll go sort him out right now!" Justin was already seething with rage after being hit by Daniel and was seeking someone to unleash his anger upon.

"The country boy's at Bell Street!"

"Head there first, keep the country boy there, and make sure he doesn't escape. I'll organize things on my end and will bring people over shortly!"

Bell Street was a coveted location, New York's best food street, and Beardog had always managed it. The businesses on Bell Street paid substantial management fees annually, amounting to tens of millions of dollars, almost pure profit with minimal costs.

The fact someone had hit Beardog on Bell Street clearly meant that someone was trying to take over that street. Therefore, Justin needed to stand by Beardog. Moreover, he'd bring his club members with him to let whoever was there know not to mess with Justin.

Selecting a few of his best fighters, Justin sent them as bodyguards with Beardog. As for himself, he planned to touch up his image a bit before making a dramatic appearance.

Chapter 212 Alexander

Chapter 212 Alexander

Amelia, after tasting the lobster prepared by Daniel, requested that he teach her how he made it. Daniel, of course, didn't hesitate to share. He guided her through each step with a hands-on approach. Amelia, being a sharp woman, caught on quickly. Daniel taught her once, and she mastered nearly eighty percent of the technique.

In the room, three plates of lobster were laid out on the table. One was Amelia's initial attempt, one was Daniel's creation, and one was Amelia's second try after learning from Daniel. Naturally, the best-tasting plate was the one Daniel had prepared, which Brittany promptly claimed and set before herself.

The three of them were eating lobster and drinking, enjoying the moment when suddenly...

"Boom!"

With a loud bang, the door burst open. Beardog was back, followed by several men dressed in training outfits, each emblazoned with a snarling leopard's head – the emblem of the Black Panther Club.

Amelia spoke coldly, "Beardog, what brings you back? Didn't you get enough beating just now?"

With Daniel present, Amelia's fear of Beardog had vanished. After all, a woman's confidence often comes from the man by her side. If it weren't because Brittany was her cousin, Amelia might actually be tempted to snatch Daniel away. She couldn't help but wish to freeze time during those moments Daniel was teaching her in the kitchen; her heartbeat racing with excitement.

Beardog was shocked! Previously, Amelia had always treated him with extreme respect. And now, she dared address him by name?

"Amelia, you've got some nerve to use that tone with me. Do you think just because you've got some country boy backing you up, you can disrespect me?" Beardog pointed to the burly club members behind him, reminding her with a sneer. "See this? Black Panther Club! They're members of the Black Panther Club, and Justin will be here soon. So, if you kneel and admit your wrongs now, there's still time.

"No, just kneeling is far from enough. You and your cousin owe me a night of fun, you both have to make it worth my while!"

Turning his gaze to Daniel, Beardog added, "As for you, country boy, you got cocky, huh? Now kneel down before me, let me break your hands and feet, and soak you in that swill bin. Otherwise, when Justin arrives, he'll kill you on the spot!"

Daniel casually continued peeling his lobster, replying with a chuckle. "I don't care. If you think you're as tough as you claim, make me. And about this Justin you keep mentioning—he can't help you. Because even if Justin shows up, he'll have to kneel before me, sincerely apologize, and peel these lobsters for me."

Daniel's words enraged Alexander Brown, standing in Beardog's wake. Alexander, Justin's favorite and the club's number two, had never seen Daniel and immediately stepped forward, pointing at Daniel with a fierce tone.

"Country boy, what did you just say? You have the audacity to claim Justin will kneel before you and peel lobster for you? Do you even comprehend the gravity of your words?"

Chapter 213 Unable to Tolerate

Chapter 213 Unable to Tolerate

Without wasting any more words, Daniel flicked the shell of the lobster in his hand.

Whoosh!

The shell zipped towards Alexander's face, making a sharp 'slap' as it struck him. It was almost like Daniel had given him a harsh slap, swelling his face up in an instant.

Alexander was not only stunned but also livid. Never before had he been slapped across the face, let alone by a lobster shell. Although the hit itself wasn't particularly painful, the humiliation was severe. This was something Alexander found utterly intolerable.

His eyes nearly spitting fire, Alexander glared at Daniel and roared with a pointing finger, "You dare slap my face with a lobster shell?"

"Have you gone daft from hanging around Beardog too much? Why ask such a foolish question?" Daniel replied, and without pausing, he flicked another lobster shell.

Whoosh!

Like an arrow slicing through the air, the shell flew straight towards the other side of Alexander's face.

Slap!

Accompanied by a clear, pleasing sound, the other half of Alexander's face swelled up, achieving a sort of symmetry. No longer was one side swollen and the other not.

Alexander was shaken again. He couldn't believe that Daniel had the audacity not only to hit him once but to do so a second time. Alexander felt that Daniel had no idea who he was dealing with. He was determined to make Daniel regret ever crossing his path.

"You're looking for death!" Alexander bellowed, charging towards Daniel with raised fists. But before he could even take a step, Daniel sent another lobster shell flying.

Slap!

This time, it struck Alexander right on the nose. Warm blood instantly began gushing from his nostrils.

Whoosh!

Yet another shell flew, hitting Alexander on the shin. Pain shot through him, and his knees buckled, causing him to fall to the ground with a thud.

"Hey, what's all this, then? Kneeling down to pay respect to me? Are you trying to show your gratitude for me educating you about our differences with a lobster shell?" Daniel taunted while nonchalantly enjoying his lobster.

Humiliated once more, Alexander could no longer contain his fury. Gritting his teeth against the pain, he stood up and turned to the club members behind him, barking an order.

"Bros, get him! Take out this country boy!"

At his command, the club members surged forward in attack.

Whoosh! Whoosh! ...

Without even standing up, Daniel flung lobster shells at his assailants, sending the group out to storm him flying through the air. They landed hard, rolling in agony on the ground, screaming in pain. Daniel's throw was light, but these club members had such poor resistance that even the gentle hits caused them immense suffering.

Daniel estimated that it would take at least three months for them to get out of bed, ensuring that they'd be no trouble for the foreseeable future.

Daniel had laid out several Black Panther Club members without even rising from his seat? Daniel was proving to be far too powerful.

Was Daniel too manly?

Amelia, who was already favorably disposed towards Daniel, now found herself almost crazily infatuated.

Chapter 214 Justin Appears

Chapter 214 Justin Appears

Brittany immediately sensed something peculiar in Amelia's gaze and quickly called out, "Cousin, what are you looking at?"

"I... I wasn't looking at anything," Amelia stammered in denial. She dared not admit she had been watching Daniel or that she might have been developing inappropriate feelings for him.

Daniel cheekily took over the conversation, "Cousin was obviously admiring me, the handsome guy here!"

"Handsome? You?" Brittany rolled her eyes dismissively and rebuked, "Shameless country bumpkin!"

"How do you know I smell? You haven't even had a taste of me!"

"You are..." Brittany stammered, frustrated and ranting, "You're nothing but base scum!"

Having said that, Brittany grabbed a lobster shell from the table and threw it at Daniel. She aimed for his face, but just as the shell came within centimeters of touching him, Daniel casually flicked it away with a dining knife.

"Cling!"

Just like a ping-pong ball, the lobster shell ricocheted back, hitting Brittany right in her made-up face with a greasy slap.

Enraged, Brittany stormed over to Daniel and pummeled him fiercely. Her punches fell on Daniel's back and chest like torrential rain.

Amelia suddenly felt something odd stirring in her heart, almost like jealousy.

"Ahem," she coughed lightly, then suggested, "Can't you both get a room? Did you forget I don't have a boyfriend? I certainly don't need a couple showing off in front of me."

Amelia didn't know why she felt the need to mention her single status, almost as if she meant to direct the information at Daniel. After all, Brittany, her cousin, knew all too well she was unattached.

Meanwhile, a motorcade of several cars pulled up at the entrance of Bell Street. Leading the way was a BMW followed by a two-toned Maybach. A man in a training outfit got out of the BMW and opened the door of the Maybach, inviting Justin to step out.

Amidst the escort of many club members, Justin walked into Brittany's eatery. Upon entry, he saw his beaten members sprawled on the floor and Beardog with a newly swollen face.

"Who dares to mess with my people?" Justin bellowed. "Surround this place!" he commanded his crew.

Then, a familiar voice came from inside the room. "Justin? Are you here to peel lobster for me?"

The voice seemed eerily familiar to Justin, though he couldn't immediately recall who it belonged to. Regardless of who it might be, the very idea that someone would expect Justin to peel lobster for them was preposterous.

"Irradiated with rage, Justin retorted, "You want me to peel lobster for you? How about I give you two slaps across the face!"

He then kicked the door open with force.

"Bang!"

Justin sent the door crashing down. The wooden door was already old and cracked; Amelia had long planned to replace it. With Justin's powerful kick, it toppled over with a loud thud.

Chapter 215 Kneel Down

Chapter 215 Kneel Down

Seeing the door damaged, Daniel immediately spoke up. "Justin, that door was made of high-quality wood, and even the lock was a custom-made, high-end lock. So, that door is worth a million. You kicked it down; you have to compensate my cousin the full price. If you don't, I'll have to make you agree to pay it up by force!"

"You dare hit me? Why don't you come and try it?" Justin's voice was filled with bravado, not having seen who was speaking.

Then, as his voice trailed off, he stepped into the room and his bravado faltered instantly at the sight greeting him. It was Daniel, the man who had beaten him several times and extorted him for fifteen billion dollars!

"How... how is it you?" Justin stuttered, his tongue nearly tying itself into knots.

"Justin, what were you saying just now? Something about letting you try?" Daniel teased, recalling Justin's words.

"No, no! Daniel, you misunderstood; I said, I said I would peel the lobster for you." In a quick reversal, Justin began hastily peeling the lobster for Daniel.

"I don't eat lobster peeled by men, so stop wasting your time here. You've broken my cousin's door that's valued at a million. Shouldn't you compensate for it?"

"I will, I absolutely will!" Justin didn't dare provoke Daniel any further. Even if he wanted to, he would have to wait until Woods finished his training and secured the presidency of Martial Club United before plotting anything against Daniel. If he provoked Daniel now, he would just get beaten again.

Justin's submissive attitude left Beardog confused; had Justin been fooled by this country boy? Rushing to stand out, Beardog tried to remind Justin, "Justin, this is just some country bumpkin! A

nobody from the countryside - why are you being so polite with him? Paying a million dollars to him?"

Slap!

Justin's hand flew across Beardog's face, sending several teeth flying. "Shut your mouth! You fool, it's because of you that I've ended up offending Daniel! Daniel is not someone you can afford to mess with! Now kneel down and apologize to him!"

Beardog was dumbfounded, unable to believe the scene unfolding before his eyes. Was Justin actually telling him to kneel? To a country bumpkin?

All reason suggested Justin was out of his mind. Beardog was a proud man and naturally wouldn't kneel. He wouldn't provoke Justin either. So, he made what he thought was a smart decision—to act as if Justin hadn't spoken at all and just stood there as if nothing happened.

But then Daniel spoke up. "Justin, this Beardog works for you, right? You can't even control your own men; I'm really disappointed in you."

Daniel's words sent a chill down Justin's spine. Having suffered several beatings from Daniel, each one excruciating, Justin had no desire for a repeat.

With this in mind, Justin kicked Beardog's backside, knocking him to the ground. "Kneel down now and apologize to Daniel or I'll show you what real regret is!"

Hearing Justin's threat, Beardog was genuinely scared. Whenever Justin used that tone, it meant he was genuinely angry, and if Beardog ignored him again, the consequences would be severe.

Chapter 216 Surrender

Chapter 216 Surrender

Beardog, not knowing why Justin was so afraid of this country boy, dared not defy his order any longer and had to obey. He knelt in front of Daniel, apologizing while knocking his forehead on the ground, "Daniel, I've made a mistake! Please, I won't do it ever again! Please spare me this once!"

"Do you still want to sleep with my cousin?" Daniel inquired, pressing the point.

"I wouldn't dare! I promise from now on, I won't bother Amelia again! If Amelia ever needs anything, I'll do whatever it takes to help her out!" Beardog quickly pledged his future non-interference and even offered his protection to Amelia.

Daniel didn't want these guys to continue ruining the ambiance so that he could enjoy his lobster. He snapped coldly, "Now get out!"

Relieved by Daniel's dismissal, Justin hurried away with Beardog and the others in tow.

Amelia, who had faced persistent trouble at her Bell Street eatery for years without resolution, saw it all easily sorted out by Daniel. She thanked him profusely, "Thank you, Daniel! You really saved us today!"

Brittany promptly corrected her, "Cousin, he's not my boyfriend. Our relationship is purely professional; he's not my boyfriend!"

"If Daniel isn't your significant other, why are you here with him so late at night?"

"We were having a team get-together."

"A team get-together, and he's the one you ended up with?"

"Cousin, I..."

Brittany wanted to explain but realized she was at a loss for words. This country boy was truly ruining her life! No, she had to sort him out tonight. All this embarrassment was his fault!

Suddenly, Brittany remembered the bet they've made, "Country boy, remember the bet we had earlier?"

"What bet?"

"Thinking about renegeing on it, huh?"

"No! I genuinely don't remember. Remind me?"

"You claimed your scrambled eggs would make me eat five plates. If I couldn't, you would lose, and then you'd have to accept any one condition I put forward with no questions asked."

Brittany was setting a trap. Whether she ate or not was entirely up to her. All she had to do was not to eat and, Daniel would lose. Once he lost, he'd have to unconditionally

agree to her terms, which would involve Daniel willingly resigning from The Matthews Organization.

"I remember now. Wasn't it something like that?" Daniel looked her over, from head to toe, and quipped, "You've just filled yourself with lobster. Are you sure you want to make this bet now?"

"You didn't say I had to be hungry to eat five plates when we made this bet! Even if I'm stuffed, it doesn't affect the bet whatsoever. Soon as you bring the eggs out and I have a couple of bites and then stop, you lose."

Amelia couldn't help but laugh when she heard this. Covering her mouth, she giggled, "Brittany, don't bully your boyfriend like that!"

"He's not my boyfriend! And I'm not bullying him; it was his idea to make the bet!" Brittany defended, then challenging Daniel, she added, "Country boy, are you even a man?"

"Whether I'm a man or not, why don't you come and find out?" Daniel replied with a roguish grin.

Chapter 217 Witness

Chapter 217 Witness

"You..." Brittany stamped her foot in frustration, feeling as though she had once again been outplayed by the country boy. She was fed up with always being on the losing end. Tonight, she was determined to win. To double her victory.

Not wanting to waste any more time bantering with Daniel, knowing she couldn't outsmart him, Brittany directly issued her challenge. "If you're a man, make good on our bet now!"

"Okay!" Daniel agreed without hesitation and then offered a pointed reminder, "Just a friendly warning: you've already eaten so much lobster, if you tuck into five plates of scrambled eggs, your belly's going to swell up like you're pregnant. Don't blame me!"

"You think I'm a goldfish? Don't worry, even if your scrambled eggs taste amazing, I'll only eat a couple of bites at most, definitely not five whole plates. So just get ready to lose. And let me remind you, once you do, you'll have to agree to any condition I put forward with no ifs, ands, or buts!"

"Don't worry, if you somehow manage to scarf down five plates and I lose, I'll agree to any condition you propose, no backing out!"

"What are you planning to ask for?"

"I'm not telling you!"

"You..." Brittany fumed, stomping her foot again.

"Hmph!" She huffed dismissively and said, "It doesn't matter because you're the one who's going to lose. So, whatever you demand, I can agree to. Whoever backs out is a little dog!"

"Fine! Amelia can be the witness. If anyone backs out, they're the little dog!"

"Alright! I'll be a witness to your bet!" Amelia readily agreed.

Daniel disappeared into the kitchen and mere five minutes later, he returned with a large plate of scrambled eggs, using a total of ten eggs - five times the regular portion since one standard serving used only two eggs.

He placed the plate on the table, and the tantalizing aroma immediately wafted through the air. Amelia couldn't resist and scooped up a little to taste.

Instantly, she was astonished. "This is so delicious! No, this is the best scrambled eggs I've ever had!"

"Tsk!" Brittany rolled her eyes in disdain. "It's just scrambled eggs. No matter how tasty, you're exaggerating."

With that, she picked up a fork, planning to symbolically taste the egg before unleashing a torrent of mockery upon Daniel. Brittany impaled a small piece with her fork but instead of putting it in her mouth, she decided to make fun of Daniel first.

"This scrambled egg looks as unappetizing as crap, but that makes sense. Being from the countryside, you probably crawled out from a pile of cow dung, so of course, your cooking would taste as bad as it looks."

Amelia, who had just brought over two more plates, heard Brittany's commentary. Somewhat annoyed, she retorted, "What did you say? That Daniel's eggs are as unpalatable as crap? Go ahead, try it. I bet after you taste it, you'll instantly fall in love with crap's flavor, maybe you'll even fight to eat it!"

"I would never do that!" Brittany declared, placing the small piece of egg into her mouth.

Before she even began to chew, the egg's unique flavor assaulted her taste buds. In that moment, Brittany realized she had forgotten all the snide remarks she had prepared to throw at Daniel.

Chapter 218 The Dear Inspection

Chapter 218 The Dear Inspection

Seeing Brittany fall silent, Amelia couldn't help but tease with a grin, "How's the taste, Brittany, delicious, no? Or is it as bad as crap?"

"It's just an ordinary scrambled egg, nothing special really," Brittany grumbled, her pride preventing her from praising the dish. Yet she couldn't resist and picked up a bigger piece with her fork this time.

"Do you need a plate?" Amelia offered.

"Just a small bite! Just one!" Brittany accepted the plate from Amelia. The flavorful eggs were irresistible.

"I might just be hungry, not that this country boy's scrambled eggs are anything special. His cooking skills are nothing compared to mom's, let alone yours, cousin," Brittany rambled on while continuing to eat.

Soon enough, she had polished off three full plates of scrambled eggs, her stomach round and taut. But she still wanted more! Was there some kind of magic in these eggs prepared by the country boy? Why did she enjoy them so much?

As she kept loading her fork, finishing five plates in disbelief, her stomach swelled up as if she was months into a pregnancy.

Daniel looked at Brittany's protruding belly and teased, "You pregnant?"

"Pregnant, my ass!"

"You lost!"

"So what if I lost, what are you going to do?"

"I'm not going to ask you to do anything. I just want to ask you one question, and you have to answer it honestly."

"Ask away! Whether I'll answer is another matter."

"Have you ever slept with a man?"

"Sleep with a man, your ass! I still have my first kiss. What, you think I'm as shameless and debauched as you country bumpkins?"

Daniel nodded thoughtfully. "Oh."

But something in his question irked Brittany, and she shot back, "Country boy, why are you asking me this?"

"Nothing, just asking! After all, you've brought me to meet your cousin; I need to know about your past."

"You... you better not think about chasing after me!"

Brittany was convinced the country boy intended to pursue her. Due to her overly full stomach, she decided not to head home and instead stay over with Amelia.

So, Daniel was left to drive the Paramela back to his villa alone. As soon as he entered, he found a beautiful woman in a silk nightgown lounging on the sofa in the living room. Fresh from a bath, her whole being exuded an alluring fragrance. If she wasn't Jessica, who else could she be?

Jessica, turning off the soap opera with a click, looked up at Daniel with a smile. "Back so late?"

"Uh..." Daniel faltered, then nodded, responding, "Yes."

"Where did you go?"

"Night Rose KTV."

"And what did you do?"

"What could I do? They just kept trying to get me drunk, but everyone else ended up wasted while I stayed sober."

"Was Brittany drunk too?"

"No, she didn't drink a drop."

"Come here."

Jessica crooked her finger, beckoning Daniel to sit beside her. Then she leaned in close and sniffed him like a puppy, inspecting any lingering scents on him.

Chapter 219 The Sudden Invitation

Chapter 219 The Sudden Invitation

Sniffing as much as she could, Jessica only detected the scent of alcohol and some trace of cooking fumes on Daniel. There was no hint of any woman's perfume. And her eyes were busy too, scouring Daniel's appearance for any suspicious marks. There were no traces of women's hair or lipstick marks on him, so it seemed he hadn't got mixed up in anything inappropriate with his male colleagues.

Seeing Jessica stop sniffing, Daniel couldn't help but ask with a grin, "Wanting to know if I touched another woman?"

"You guess?"

"Rest assured, I wouldn't mess around with other women."

"You better not!" Jessica grabbed the small scissors from the coffee table and gave them a threatening squeeze.

Snap! Snap!

The sound alone was enough to send shivers down a person's spine.

"With such a beautiful dear as you, why would I dare to fool around? You're the only one I'd ever mess with."

With that, Daniel moved in closer to Jessica.

"Get lost!" Jessica playfully punched him away.

"Go take a shower! You stink!"

"Dear, wait for me!"

Daniel dashed into the bathroom. After a thorough scrubbing, he came out fresh and wrapped in a bath towel. However, Jessica was nowhere to be seen in the villa.

"Damn woman, she actually played me like that?" Daniel was annoyed. He had taken a shower for nothing.

The next day, Daniel lay in bed watching videos until noon. It was only when his stomach growled with hunger that he finally got up and headed to the office. But instead of going to his own office, he carried a KFC bucket to the president's office.

"Dear, I brought you lunch."

Jessica glanced at the bucket he was holding and remarked, "Is this your idea of lunch? Are you moonlighting at KFC?"

"Dear, won't you have some? These roasted wings are really good!"

As Daniel proffered a wing toward her mouth, Jessica bit a small piece and admitted, "Tasty! Thanks! And remember, don't call me 'dear'! Call me that again, and I swear I'll tape your mouth shut!"

At that moment...

Knock! Knock!

There was a sudden rapping at the door.

"Quick, hide this stuff," Jessica said to Daniel and then called out invitingly, "Come in!"

The office door opened, and Ryan stepped in. Jessica was somewhat surprised; she expected an employee, not Ryan.

"Ryan, hello! Sorry for coming unannounced; I'm here to deliver an invitation," he said.

"An invitation? Is your daughter getting married?"

"No, nothing like that. Next week, the Martial Club United will hold its presidential election, and I wanted to invite Jessica to watch."

Ryan handed the invitation to Jessica. The Martial Club United election had nothing to do with her; what could Ryan's angle be?

Though puzzled, Jessica checked the date and realized she was free that day. Thus, she nodded her agreement. "Alright!"

After all, she couldn't afford to snub Ryan's face.

"I'll leave you to your work, then. See you there, Jessica!"

With Ryan gone, Jessica shook the invitation in her hand and turned to Daniel, "This invitation from Ryan—is it for me, or for you?"

"Aren't we a package deal? Does it matter if he invites you or me? But seriously, what's with that old coot Ryan? He actually wrote Jessica on the invitation instead of Daniel. Does he think our household is run by a woman?"

Chapter 220 Arrogant Woods

Chapter 220 Arrogant Woods

Before Daniel could finish his remark, Jessica twisted hard at his waist.

"Ouch!" Daniel yelped in pain.

"What was that for?"

"You dare call me 'woman'? Looks like someone's itching for a beating."

"Aren't you a woman?"

"I'll kill you!" Jessica pinched Daniel's side again, causing another cry of pain from him.

Holding his gaze with her teasing smile, Jessica asked, "Can't I make decisions for you?"

"Of course you can," Daniel agreed without hesitation, wincing at the possibility of more pain.

...

On the outskirts of New York, far from the hustle and bustle of the city, lay an enclosed area previously used as a training ground and now owned by Martial Club United. It's where the club's presidential elections were held, with competitions conducted on a stage twice the size of a football field.

Standing in the middle of this colossal stage was a man with the physique of a tiger, his hands adorned with steel claws as sharp as talons, glinting dangerously in the light. He was Woods, ranked seventh among The 72, and these claws were known for tearing out the hearts of his adversaries.

The club allowed for the use of cold weapons in the competition, and participants could bring their own.

Woods flaunted his vicious claws and shouted arrogantly, "Who dares to challenge me? If no one steps up, then the position of president of Martial Club United will be mine!"

Club masters from other factions all knew Woods was a fearsome contender. Their worried glances darted about, but no one dared approach the stage.

At that moment, Ethan stepped up. Bouncing onto the stage, he declared, "I challenge you!"

Before he could finish his sentence, Woods lashed out with a claw, aiming for Ethan's chest. Ethan stumbled back just in time to avoid the first deadly swipe.

After narrowly evading the initial assault, Woods's second strike almost hit. Ethan had no room to dodge and could only retaliate with a kick. But against Woods's quick claw, it was no match. The claw clamped onto Ethan's leg, then with a pull and twist...

Snap!

With a crisp break, Woods had snapped Ethan's leg. Ethan collapsed onto the stage, clutching his leg, howling in pain.

"Anyone else dares to challenge me?" Woods bellowed after delivering a chilling warning. Ethan was one of the top four in Martial Club United, yet Woods had broken his leg with a single move. Who would dare to follow that?

With Woods's strength, challenging him could spell death for anyone. Seeing no volunteers, Woods's swagger grew. "If you can't beat me alone, group up! I'll allow you to team up and challenge me! All of you Martial Club United weaklings, even a hundred of you couldn't face me. I can knock all of you down! If you're all cowards, if none of you dare face me, then I, Woods, will be your president. Henceforth, everyone in Martial Club United will follow my orders. Anyone who defies me will die!"

Chapter 221 Ryan's Request

Chapter 221 Ryan's Request

Ryan approached Daniel with a sense of urgency. "Daniel, we can't let Woods become the president of Martial Club United! He will act without restraint if he does."

Having witnessed Woods's formidable abilities, Jessica naturally wouldn't allow Daniel to enter the ring. That was her man up for grabs, and she couldn't bear any threats to him. She flatly refused.

"Ryan, who heads Martial Club United is your affair. Daniel's my assistant, and I absolutely forbid him from getting involved in this!"

As she spoke, Jessica turned her gaze sharply to Daniel. "If you dare go up there, I'll break your legs myself!"

Ryan could only look at Daniel with a plea in his eyes, hoping he would ignore Jessica's commands this time. At the same time, he regretted ever sending that invitation. He shouldn't have given it to Jessica; he should've asked Daniel directly.

Women, especially pretty ones, just end up causing trouble, he thought bitterly.

"You can stop looking at me, Ryan! I can't help you! I dare not disobey Jessica's words. If I do, she might actually break my legs—or worse, I might end up sleeping on the couch tonight."

Sleep on the couch? Ryan immediately understood the gist of what Daniel was implying. He had long suspected that the relationship between Daniel and Jessica was not simply that of president and assistant, and now he could confirm that Daniel was no ordinary assistant – he was under 24- hour surveillance.

Unable to withstand this tension any longer, Brittany interjected with scorn. "Ryan, you're overestimating this country bumpkin. He has some fighting skills, and maybe he could win against

Justin if luck was on his side. But do you know who Woods is? He's one of The 72 and ranked seventh.

How can this country boy possibly defeat a top martial artist like that? If this country bumpkin dares to step on that platform, Woods will slay him with a single claw. He's always been a coward, afraid of death. He definitely won't dare to go up there. No matter how you plead with him, he won't accept the challenge!"

Brittany's harsh words were meant to provoke Daniel since she actually wanted him to enter the ring the most. The country boy surely wouldn't stand a chance against Woods, and even if Daniel didn't get killed, he might at least end up with a broken arm. It'd relieve her pent-up frustrations.

Additionally, Brittany longed to see Daniel lose: a defeat that would make her ecstatic. Just one loss for the country boy, one substantial mishap, and she could soar with joy.

Jessica, being astute, quickly caught onto Brittany's intentions and sharply reprimanded her, "Shut your mouth!"

With a playful stick out of her tongue, Brittany fell silent, no longer provoking the discussion.

Failing to get Daniel's consent, Ryan reluctantly stepped onto the stage himself. As he went up, Woods immediately began to mock him, "Hey, isn't this the former president of Martial Club United? Aren't you too old to fight?"

Ryan replied coolly, giving Woods a chilly stare, "Whether I can still fight, you'll soon find out. Martial Club United is an alliance of just warriors, and you must not become the president here!"

Chapter 222 Only I Deserve It

Chapter 222 Only I Deserve It

Woods burst into raucous laughter, his head thrown back as if he owned the world. Once he finished, he looked down at Ryan with sheer disdain, his face dripping with scorn.

"Ryan, have you got a death wish? Coming up here to challenge me? With that laughable fighting style of yours, I suggest you'd be better off at home babysitting the grandkids!"

"Big talk!"

Ryan, feeling insulted, charged forward with his fists at the ready. But before he could land a punch, Woods reached out with his clawed hand, aiming straight for Ryan's chest. Ryan quickly backed away, narrowly escaping the brutal strike. However, Woods's tiger claw still managed to leave several deep cuts across Ryan's chest.

Struck by the poisoned claws, Ryan felt fierce pain, followed by a wave of dizziness. Anyone caught by Woods's claws would weaken instantly and become unable to continue the fight.

"You're despicable, Woods! Poisoning your claws?" Ryan bellowed in realization.

No sooner had Ryan spoken than Woods lunged forward, grasping Ryan's neck with his clawed hand and hissed a cold threat.

"Going to throw in the towel? If you don't yield, I'll snap your neck in one twist and leave you dead in this ring!"

Seeing this, Jacob immediately jumped onto the ring.

"Let's take him down together! The presidency of Martial Club United must not fall into the hands of this vile fiend!"

As one of the top four members of Martial Club United, Jacob had strong influence, and his call to action spurred over a dozen fighters to join him in the ring.

Seeing himself outnumbered, Woods casually tossed Ryan out of the ring.

"Thud!"

Ryan crashed violently onto the floor beneath the stage. Daniel hurried over, kneeling to assess Ryan's condition.

"The injuries aren't serious. It's just some bruises and a few bones out of place."

As he said this, Daniel began to manipulate Ryan's bones back into alignment with snaps and crunches. Although Daniel made it look effortless, Ryan winced and grimaced in pain.

On the other side, the various club owners who had attacked Woods were being thrown off the stage one by one. Each had broken bones but no further harm. Woods did this deliberately; once he became president, these club owners would have to obey his commands. His aim was to beat them into submission, not to kill them.

After Jacob was thrown off, Woods stood alone in the ring and began to gloat.

"I always knew Martial Club United had no true champions, and today just proves it! What have I been challenged with today? You're all a bunch of nobodies!"

It seems the presidency is rightfully mine! You nobodies, from today on, you will submit to me and obey my orders! What happened just now was just a little 'welcome' from me! In the future, if anyone dares to disobey my commands, they won't get off so easily!"

Woods's words sent waves of anger through Ryan. Between Woods's usual recklessness and Joey's usual antics, Martial Club United was on the brink of becoming nothing more than a toy for

these two brothers.

Chapter 223 The Last Hope

Chapter 223 The Last Hope

Out of options, a desperate Ryan grabbed Daniel by the arm and pleaded, "Daniel, you're our last hope! The thousands of clubs and hundreds of thousands of members of Martial Club United can't become Woods's personal playthings!"

"Alright," Daniel stood up, ready to step in.

Just then, a convoy of vehicles drove into the venue, all rugged off-road types. Land Cruisers and Nissan Patrols – a fleet of sturdy Nissan vehicles.

The doors swung open, and out stepped a group dressed in samurai attire – members of the newly established Sato club, led by none other than their owner, Takashi Sato.

Takashi Sato, a prodigious talent from Japan, hadn't hit thirty yet but was already among Japan's top ten martial artists. His father, Haruki Sato, was even more eminent, holding the title of Grand President of Martial United in Japan and recognized as the country's most formidable martial artist.

After the humiliation that Kazuki Watanabe suffered in New York, which brought shame upon the entire Martial United of Japan, Takashi Sato had opened a club in New York. His mission was to wash away the disgrace that had befallen Watanabe.

Ryan was aware of Takashi Sato. He knew a new Sato club had opened in New York, and he was certain this Japanese man was up to no good.

Staring Takashi Sato down, Ryan asked, "What are you doing here?"

"Isn't today the election day for the president of Martial Club United? Whoever wins in the ring becomes the president. So, I'm here to defeat all members of Martial Club United and claim the presidency for myself," Takashi Sato declared with arrogance – an arrogance he could afford with his skills and reputation in Japan.

Becoming the president of a small Martial Club United was a simple task for someone ranked within Japan's top ten.

Takashi Sato stepped onto the ring, giving Woods a glance before asking with disdain, "Are you Woods? The one ranked seventh in the 72 stages of the M-country rankings?"

"Yes, I am! And what about you, Japanese man? Leaving your country to come here in this ring, are you courting death?" Woods may not have been the best example of virtue, but he was still a patriot at heart!

When facing a Japanese challenger, he, like all M-country citizens, harbored deep animosity. The disgrace of Pearl Harbor had not been forgotten.

"Death? You're the one who's going to die!" Takashi Sato goaded, signaling Woods to come at him with a cocky flick of his finger.

"Come on then, M-country's trash, M-country's sick cats! Let me have a good look at your pathetic martial arts!"

While Takashi Sato taunted, the members of Sato club swiftly dispersed around the ring, pulling out their phones and even some video cameras to live-stream the event.

One of the vehicles the Japanese had brought along was a small mobile broadcast van – they planned to stream the fight live online for the entire world to see. They wanted all of Japan and the entire globe to witness Takashi Sato defeating the M-country's martial artists, to watch as the Japanese humiliated the M-country.

Of course, they also intended to show everyone that Takashi Sato, after conquering the ring today, would defeat all the M-country fighters and become the president of Martial Club United.

"Seeking death!" Woods, enraged, lunged with his sharp claws at Takashi Sato.

But just as he was about to strike, the Japanese man swiftly sidestepped, avoiding the attack with agile grace.

Chapter 224 Woods's Dignity

Chapter 224 Woods's Dignity

With a thud, Woods crashed heavily to the ground. For safety, the ring's surface was just plain dirt, which now filled his mouth as he hit the earth.

The Japanese team, equipped with various devices and live-streaming the event, burst into merciless laughter, clearly enjoying the show.

"I heard you took on the entire Martial Club United all by yourself. I thought you would be impressive, but you're nothing more than a joke! No, a clown. What was that performance just now? A hungry dog eating dirt?"

"I'll give you a chance. Just lie down, show your submission, and if you act like a good little dog, I might consider giving you a good meal. At least you wouldn't have to lie on the ground eating dirt like this."

Takashi Sato laughed heartily, looking down on Woods, who lay defeated on the ground.

"Ha! You dare humiliate me like this? I'll kill you!" Despite falling, Woods kicked up from the ground like a sprung fish, launching himself toward Takashi Sato with incredible speed.

Flying towards Takashi, Woods lashed out with his clawed hand aimed at the Japanese man's mouth. The disrespectful words spouted by this foreigner insulted his country—Woods was determined to shred his mouth for it.

M-country citizens might fight amongst themselves when there are no outside threats, but when faced with an enemy, Americans must set aside their personal conflicts and stand together against their adversary. Even if they battled each other fiercely, the presence of a foreign foe meant instant unity. This was the spirit of America!

As Woods's claw neared him, Takashi Sato didn't dodge. With a swift motion, he reached out to grab Woods's hand. His fast reaction allowed him to precisely seize Woods's hand, twisting sharply at the wrist.

With a sickening crack, Woods's arm was twisted into a spiral, causing him to fall heavily to the ground with a thud.

"Ah... Ahhh..." Woods rolled on the ground clutching his broken arm, screaming in excruciating pain.

Takashi Sato approached and looked down upon him. "Do you submit?"

"I'd rather die than submit to you, a Japanese man! This is America's soil, and you Japanese need to get out!" Woods spat defiantly, despite the agony. With fierce determination, he propped himself up with his uninjured left arm and stood.

As an American, he refused to lie down before a Japanese man. He could be killed, but he would never bow down. Americans do not bow before the Japanese.

"Oh! I didn't expect such resilience from a nobody like you. But I do enjoy it when Americans show some backbone. After all, even the Americans with the stiffest spines must bow before our Japanese warriors and submit!" Takashi Sato proclaimed boastfully.

He came to America with a purpose, to stand above every martial artist in the Martial United and force American martial arts experts to grovel before him.

"I'll give my life if I have to, but I'm going to kick you out of America's land! America does not welcome the Japanese!" Woods declared, brimming with defiance and national pride.

Chapter 225 Death

Chapter 225 Death

Without hesitation, Woods leaped forward.

He channelled all his strength into his claws, aiming straight for Takashi Sato's heart, intending to rip it out. He envisioned throwing the Japanese man's heart to the ground, smashing it into a bloody pulp.

Woods had put his all into the attack. Both the force and speed were significantly stronger than before. But still, his claws came up short by just an inch or two away from Takashi Sato.

The Japanese man quickly grabbed Woods's claw and with a slight twist...

"Crack!"

Another sharp crack echoed, followed once again by Woods's agonized screams.

"Ah! Aaagh!"

With both arms now twisted out of shape, Woods writhed on the ground, his face contorted in intense pain as he tried to lessen the agony.

Takashi Sato stepped on Woods's face, displaying a contemptuous smirk. "Do you submit or not?"

"I will never submit!"

Woods's resolve was unyielding. Even with his face pressed under the Japanese man's foot, he refused to concede. While Woods had done plenty of wrong in his life, he would not become a traitor; he would not bow down to a Japanese man.

The heads of Americans could be taken, but they would never bow before the Japanese.

Unable to stand the injustice any longer, Daniel stepped onto the ring and coldly demanded, "Let him go!"

Takashi Sato lifted his foot and gave Woods a hard kick in the waist, sending him tumbling out of the ring. Then, turning to Daniel with disdain, he asked, "Is this the best America has to offer? Do you think you can fight me, or are you looking for death?"

"You Japanese, daring to come here and run amok on American soil... Today, I'll teach you how to behave!"

"How dare you, a country bumpkin, be so bold in my presence? One slap from me is all it takes to clap you to death," Takashi Sato sneered.

In a blink, he closed the distance between himself and Daniel, his palm racing towards Daniel's chest. Daniel was not about to back down from the Japanese challenger. He swung his own palm towards Takashi Sato's incoming strike.

The Japanese spectators grew excited at this sight.

"Is this country boy a fool? He's actually trying to match palms with Takashi Sato? I think he won't be able to keep his hand intact."

"He has the nerve to challenge Takashi Sato in the ring? It's not just his hand he'll be unable to keep, but his life too."

"This American bumpkin is truly foolish! Clearly he could have spared his life by begging on his knees, yet here he is on the ring, courting death!"

"Takashi Sato is the most merciful. If those American pigs would just kneel before him like good dogs and submit, he would certainly spare their lives. Unfortunately, these fools just don't understand!"

The Japanese observers mocked Daniel, their laughter tinged with scorn not only for him but for every American.

Today, Takashi Sato and his entourage had come to humiliate Martial Club United, to degrade the American people.

Chapter 226 See Them Boast

Chapter 226 See Them Boast

The caustic remarks of the Japanese people grated harshly on Brittany's ears, and she couldn't stand it anymore. Even though she wasn't fond of Daniel, he was representing America now.

Raising her voice, she shouted, "Go get 'em, country boy! Take down that arrogant Japanese man! Country boy, if you win this, I'll have a whole bunch of kids with you!"

Inspired by Brittany, all the Americans in the audience started to cheer Daniel on.

"Go Daniel!"

"Go country boy!"

"Go stinky country boy!"

The cheers for Daniel were plentiful and varied. Those who liked him echoed Ryan's chants for Daniel, while those less fond of him took up Brittany's calls of "country boy" and "stinky country boy."

And then, their palms touched.

The collision was like a meteor hitting the Earth.

"Boom!"

A thunderous boom kicked up clouds of dust on the ring, obscuring vision as if a dust-coated truck had just rumbled by.

Shrouded by the dust, no one could see what had happened. But a figure, like a cannonball, was sent flying through the air.

"Bang!"

The person slammed into a surrounding wall, collapsing it upon impact. Bricks tumbled down, burying the figure beneath them. That wall, built with three layers of bricks, had crumbled with a single hit – the force endured by the figure had to have been immense.

The Japanese spectators couldn't believe Takashi Sato was the one sent flying; they were convinced it had to be Daniel. Their excitement rose once more.

"Ha ha ha! That country boy got sent flying by Takashi Sato with just one palm strike, and he even knocked down the wall! He's been buried alive on the spot!"

"A country boy daring to match palms with Takashi Sato didn't realize the severity of his mistake. To die by one palm strike is a mercy for him."

"These pig-headed Americans should know by now the strength of a Japanese martial arts master, right?"

"How dare the USA provoke Japan! In the face of Japanese, Americans are just dogs, nothing but trash!"

"Yes, and these dogs not only need to lie down but also bark like one! Soon we'll make all the Americans here lie down and bark like dogs!"

One of the Japanese men then noticed Jessica and Brittany. Seeing the beauty of the two women, he was instantly filled with lewd intentions.

"American men may be worthless pigs, but their women are truly beautiful. Such beauties don't deserve those pig-headed American men. They should belong to us Japanese!"

"That's right! The beautiful American women are all ours."

"After we make these foolish American men lie down and bark like dogs, we'll take those pretty women with us. We'll show them what real men are. They will witness the true virility of a Japanese samurai!"

Just as these vile words left the mouths of the Japanese samurais...

"Slap!"

"Slap slap!"

"Slap slap slap!"

Numerous slaps landed on their faces, sending them sprawling across the ground.

Chapter 227 Something Doesn't Feel Right

Chapter 227 Something Doesn't Feel Right

The Japanese warriors' faces were swollen from the slaps, blood trailing from the corners of their mouths, even a few teeth knocked out.

"Who the hell slapped me?"

"Who dares slap a Japanese warrior? I'll kill him!"

"Who was it? If you have the guts, show yourself!"

...

Naturally, the slaps were delivered by Daniel. However, because of his incredible speed, none of the onlookers were able to see what really happened.

Daniel ceased his actions and simply stated, "Me."

That single word stunned all the Japanese there. Wasn't the country boy supposed to be buried under the collapsed wall of bricks?

Could it be that it wasn't the country boy who got buried?

Could it be Takashi Sato?

That was impossible!

Takashi Sato, one of Japan's top 10, couldn't possibly have been sent flying by a palm strike from a 'stupid American country boy', could he?

Seeing Daniel unharmed and slapping the Japanese so many times, Jessica looked at him with what seemed like a touch of infatuation.

"Daniel!" she exclaimed softly, pretending to chide him.

She had been truly worried when she saw a silhouette get knocked flying and then buried under the collapsing wall. But Jessica was a clever woman and quickly collected her thoughts, deducing that the person sent flying should definitely be Takashi Sato. However, she harbored some concern that maybe Daniel and the Japanese man had switched places during their palm strike.

Now that she saw Daniel standing there safe and sound, her heart, which had been suspended in worry, finally settled back into place.

Daniel turned his head towards Jessica and cheekily asked Brittany, "Who was it that said they'd have a bunch of kids with me?"

The question made Jessica's face fall, and she demanded, "Daniel, what did you say?"

"I want to know if it was you, Jessica, who said you'd have kids for me. If it's you, then let's go ahead and get started tonight. If not, then forget it. I fell for you the first time I met you. Otherwise, I wouldn't work as your assistant for a measly two thousand a month!"

"Daniel, look at the time! If you keep joking around and messing with me, I'll fire you tomorrow!" Jessica huffed, stamping her foot indignantly.

Then, addressing Daniel with a firm tone, she commanded, "Daniel, quickly take care of these Japanese and then we're going home—we need to talk!"

For some reason, Jessica suddenly felt that something was off between Brittany and Daniel. Brittany's declaration of wanting to have Daniel's children grated on her nerves. She had always thought Brittany was against Daniel simply because she didn't like him and wanted him gone. But now, Jessica started to feel...could it be possible that Brittany had fallen for Daniel? That her constant nagging was because she actually liked him?

After ensuring Daniel was unharmed, a few Japanese warriors began to clear the scattered bricks from the collapsed wall. Soon enough, they uncovered a deep hole, and the mangled face of a Japanese man emerged from the rubble.

Takashi Sato?

Yes, it was really Takashi Sato buried beneath the bricks!

The Japanese were in shock. They couldn't believe that Takashi Sato had truly been overthrown by a single palm strike from a country boy.

Chapter 228 Biting Back

Chapter 228 Biting Back

"Baka!" Takashi Sato cursed and then crawled out from the pile of bricks.

Takashi came from a family steeped in martial arts tradition and was a master of various Japanese martial disciplines, including ninjutsu. When the bricks had fallen, he had used his skills in ninjutsu to minimize the damage, resulting in only minor external injuries. Takashi was still in fighting condition.

Swoosh!

Taking advantage of Daniel's momentary distraction, Takashi flicked his wrist and sent a poisoned dart flying straight at Daniel. Unable to best Daniel in a fair fight, he resorted to dirty tricks—winning by any means necessary encapsulated the martial spirit of Japan and of Takashi Sato himself.

As the poisoned dart sped towards him, Daniel executed a stunning spinning kick and struck it mid-flight.

Snap!

With a crisp sound, the dart did a one-eighty and shot back towards Takashi Sato, who, caught unawares, did not brace himself for the return projectile. The dart bypassed taking his life but slashed a deep gash across his sinister face. Continuing its trajectory, the dart then lodged itself in the knee of the Japanese man standing behind Takashi—the very person who first proclaimed all Americans should kneel and bark like dogs.

Struck by the poison, the man immediately fell to his knees before all the members of Martial Club United, screaming in agony much like a stray dog with a broken leg.

Takashi Sato, now the victim of his own poisoned dart, clutched his sliced face and cried out.

"Ah... Aaagh..."

The poison on the dart wasn't lethal but inflicted searing, piercing pain to the injured. Overwhelmed by the unbearable agony, Takashi hastily took out the antidote and took one, finally finding relief from the relentless torment.

"You stupid Americans, are you all so despicable? Resorting to poison darts to ambush me, how low and shameless can you get!"

"Do you, a Japanese, even realize what you're saying? That poison dart was clearly shot by you, and simply a gust of wind blew it back your way, ultimately hitting you instead. Getting hit by your own dart is divine justice!"

To speak of despicability, shamelessness, and lowliness, those words perfectly describe you, a Japanese!"

Daniel coolly tucked his hands in his pockets as he spoke.

"You lot came all the way from Japan, with the audacity to cause trouble in America! Since you're here now, don't expect to leave so easily without my permission.

I don't have time to waste, so come at me all at once! I'll take on all of you by myself.

I'm aware you're live-streaming with your phones, so make sure to upload the footage of you getting thrashed in America. I want to use these videos to warn those in Japan not to cause trouble here in America! Whoever comes will get a beating!"

Daniel's words were an enormous affront to Takashi Sato's pride!

Chapter 229 The Kurogane Katana

Chapter 229 The Kurogane Katana

Takashi Sato, one of Japan's top 10 martial artists, had come to New York to redeem his family's honor. But instead, he found himself facing even more humiliation. Unable to bear the disgrace—as a son of the Grand President of Japan's Martial United—it was utterly unacceptable to be taunted by a lowly American country boy.

Hearing Daniel's taunts, the Japanese who were live-streaming the event started yelling and wanted to rush the stage to join in attacking Daniel. However, Takashi stopped them.

"He's just an American country boy; it's impossible for me to lose to him! Don't be hasty, watch me knock the crap out of him! I will make him kneel, begging for mercy like a dog. He will kneel on behalf of all Americans before the greatness of the Japanese!" Takashi exclaimed.

After his declaration, he ordered one of his samurai.

"Bring me the Kurogane katana!"

The Kurogane katana was forged from black steel, making it incredibly strong and sharp. There was only one such katana in all of Japan—a valued treasure of the Sato family. Passed down for 28 generations over nearly a thousand years, wielding this katana represented the glory of the Sato family!

Over that millenium, the Kurogane katana was wielded less than a hundred times—each instance against fearsome opponents that Sato family descendants could not defeat with any other weapon. History stated that whoever the Sato family faced with the katana met death by its blade.

Swoosh!

Takashi unsheathed the Kurogane katana, and immediately a dazzling black radiance burst forth. A crow happened to fly overhead at that moment, and the flash of dark light blinded it momentarily. It

crashed into a tree, dazed by the collision, and then flopped onto the ground.

Daniel glanced at the sword in Takashi's hands and asked cheerfully, "Is this the Kurogane katana? The supreme glory of Japanese martial arts?"

"You know of this sword?" retorted the incensed Takashi. "Correct! Today, I will use this Kurogane katana to sever your hands and legs, making you wish for death! This will be the consequence for an American country boy like you for defying Japanese martial arts and causing us shame!"

Takashi recognized that the 'country boy' in front of him was the same one who had humiliated Kazuki Watanabe, a master ranked among Japan's top fifty. His abilities were not to be taken lightly, and yet, he was publicly disgraced by Daniel—a testament to Daniel's own skills.

"Now that you've drawn that katana, I won't go easy on you. It represents the honor of Japanese martial arts, so I'll destroy that honor completely!"

"Here comes the blade!"

Takashi wasted no more words and slashed his katana at Daniel's chest.

Seeing the blade coming his way, Daniel quickly stepped back to dodge Takashi's attack. In a swift move, Daniel leaped onto a crooked willow tree.

Chapter 230 Sky Fall

Chapter 230 Sky Fall

"Snap!" Daniel broke off a willow branch and held it in his hand. Willow branches, though thin and flexible, were hardly a conventional choice for a weapon.

Then, with another leap, Daniel jumped down from the crooked willow and stood once again in front of Takashi Sato. He twirled the soft willow branch in his hand.

"You fought me with the Kurogane katana, and if I didn't pick up a weapon, it would almost be an insult. So, I'll use this willow branch to fight you! Although it may look ordinary, this American willow branch is enough to split your Japanese pride and katana in two!"

"You American yokel! Apart from boasting, what else can you do? You plan to fight my Kurogane katana with a willow branch? In your American terms, you're as good as dead!"

With that, Takashi Sato leaped impressively into the air, about three meters high. He descended from the sky, executing a technique called "Sky Fall" — like a bolt of lightning, his katana poised to strike from above.

This time though, Takashi didn't aim for Daniel's head; he didn't intend to kill him with one blow. He was set on humiliating him, so he targeted Daniel's right shoulder, the arm holding the willow branch. He wanted to sever the limb and jeer at Daniel afterward.

To ensure Daniel wouldn't dodge or anticipate the "Sky Fall," Takashi quietly dropped a smoke bomb as he fell. This ninja technique—ninjutsu—was a common stratagem among ninja.

"Bang!"

With the detonation, a cloud of black smoke enveloped Daniel, obscuring his sight completely. To ordinary eyes, the smoke would make it nearly impossible to see one's own fingers.

Daniel, familiar with such Japanese tactics from past encounters, knew how to guard against them. Within his body, seven dragon spirits enhanced his sensory abilities millions of times beyond that of a normal person, allowing him clear vision where others would see only pitch black.

As Takashi's blade came down, Daniel dodged and pulled one of Takashi's samurai warriors into his previous position. The billowing black smoke from the smoke bomb blinded Takashi as well, and he was unaware that the target had changed.

Unknowing and unrelenting, Takashi continued his attack.

"Crunch!"

An arm was severed brutally, followed by the agonized screams echoing from within the smoke.

"Ah... Aaagh..."

As Takashi thought he had succeeded in chopping off Daniel's arm, he felt elated.

"Stupid American, you dared to fight me with only a willow branch? Now, who's the winner? Your arm is chopped off by my hand now, isn't it?"

Meanwhile, Brittany was getting anxious because the smoke obscured her view, and she couldn't tell whether Daniel had been harmed or not.

"Country boy, are you okay?" she shouted out, concerned.

While Brittany worried, Jessica remained composed.

"Daniel will be fine," she said with conviction.

Chapter 231 I Will Kill You

Chapter 231 I Will Kill You

"Jessica, how can you be so sure Country Boy is alright? That Takashi Sato, that darned Japanese, isn't easy to handle. He's got many tricks up his sleeve, like throwing smoke bombs!"

"However he tries, that Japanese can't beat Daniel," Jessica replied confidently.

She had a woman's intuition about Daniel, which assured her that he was fine. The anguished cry that had come from the smoke was definitely not his—after all, she had fought with him before and knew what he sounded like. Daniel's screams were unmistakable.

Just then, the black smoke cleared.

On the ground was a bloodstain and a Japanese man holding his severed arm and wailing. Daniel was still standing, holding his willow branch with a grin, facing Takashi Sato.

"You Japanese are ruthless, aren't you? So harsh to your own people? You chopped off your man's arm with one swing."

Quick as a flash, Daniel closed the distance and used his willow branch to target Takashi Sato's face. Takashi, still stunned by the turn of events, woke up to this new attack and felt immense humiliation. An American country boy had hit him in the face with a willow branch, and it was all being broadcast live for the world to see.

"You stupid American, how dare you strike my face? How dare you hit my face with a willow branch?"

Slap! Slap slap!

Daniel didn't bother with a verbal reply; he let his actions speak as he gave Takashi Sato his answer.

"You American pig, how dare you? You dare hit me in the face again?"

Takashi Sato was truly furious, his anger rising like smoke from his nostrils.

Whoosh!

The Kurogane katana swished through the air, emitting a high-pitched whine as Takashi aimed another swing at Daniel's thigh. He still didn't want to kill Daniel outright; he planned to repay the humiliation he had received many times over.

Unfortunately for Takashi, the blade never reached Daniel's leg. Daniel kicked out, striking Takashi in the stomach and sending him flying once more.

"Thump!"

With a dull impact, Takashi hit another section of the wall. As the wall crumbled, bricks rained down upon him, burying him for the second time—though this time only halfway. Like a dog digging desperately, he eventually managed to excavate himself.

"You stupid American, I will kill you!"

Takashi charged at Daniel like a mad dog, no longer holding back, intent on chopping Daniel to death in a blind rage. He had forgotten all forms of technique, swinging the katana wildly through the air.

He wore himself out hacking at nothing, panting like a dog, but unfortunately for him, not one strike landed on Daniel. Daniel's evasive reactions were simply too fast.

Chapter 232 More Humiliation

Chapter 232 More Humiliation

Takashi Sato was flabbergasted. A buzzing noise filled his head as he tried to comprehend the situation. How could this American country boy be so formidable? He, a top 10 martial artist from Japan, couldn't even touch Daniel.

Takashi, desperate and gasping for air, momentarily gathered himself and then pointed at Daniel, shouting, "If you're a man, fight me fair and square, without dodging!"

"Why are you being so unreasonable? You come at me with the Kurogane katana and expect me not to dodge? Are all you Japanese so shameless and dishonorable?" Daniel countered, waving the willow branch in his hand effortlessly before continuing. "You want to fight me directly? No problem with that. But once I harden up, I'm afraid you won't be able to handle it! Your vaunted katana could very well end up in two pieces at the hands of my willow branch."

"What did you say? You think you can break my Kurogane katana with a measly willow branch? If you're really a man, then come and clash with my katana using that branch of yours. I'll slice it into two before you know it!"

"Since you're asking for more humiliation, I'm happy to oblige!"

"More humiliation? You're the one who's going to be humiliated!"

No longer wasting words, Takashi Sato raised his katana and struck at Daniel. This time, Daniel didn't dodge. Instead, he faced the blade with his willow branch.

The katana and the willow branch collided. Everyone expected Daniel to be the one who had lost his mind. But they were all proven wrong.

Boom!

Accompanied by a powerful impact noise...

Crack!

The Kurogane katana snapped, breaking into two pieces. Daniel's willow branch, on the other hand, didn't have even a single scratch on it.

Everyone was shocked, unable to believe their eyes.

This wasn't an ordinary sword; the Kurogane katana was the finest katana in Japan, capable of slicing through steel as if it were mud. Even a diamond could be split in half by this katana!

If Takashi Sato could not overcome Daniel, perhaps the Japanese spectators could have accepted it. After all, Takashi Sato's high ranking was partly due to the influence of his father, Haruki Sato, the President of Martial United in Japan. Competitors often deliberately lost to Takashi in Japan because of this.

But the Kurogane katana was Japan's true pride—Japan's number one katana—and now it had been shattered by an American country boy with a willow branch. The incident was an unprecedented insult to the entire Martial United of Japan.

Staring at the broken pieces of the Kurogane katana in his hands, Takashi Sato was stunned, not daring to trust his eyes. How could a mere country boy, armed only with a willow branch, break the number one katana in Japan, the Kurogane katana?

"I will kill you!"

Instinctively enraged, Takashi Sato lunged at Daniel with the remaining half of the Kurogane katana, determined to stab him. Just as the jagged remnant was about to poke Daniel's chest, Daniel lifted his willow branch and deftly flicked it aside.

Chapter 233 Kneel Down

Chapter 233 Kneel Down

With a crisping sound, the already half-snapped Kurogane katana broke off yet another piece. The once formidable blade, originally over fifty centimeters long, was now reduced to less than ten centimeters, almost like a dagger.

"Japanese man, we Americans believe in 'even'. You tried to stab me and missed—that's your problem. So it's only right that I give you one attack in return!" Daniel declared as he swung his willow branch.

Crack!

The willow branch made a sharp noise as it struck Takashi Sato's face, leaving a red welt resembling a centipede crawling across his cheek. Against a shameless nation like

Japan, a slap in the face was the best approach since they were not behaving like true people.

"You stupid American, how dare you hit my face? Baka!" Takashi Sato erupted once more in fury, his face reddened as he pointed the remaining stub of the Kurogane katana at Daniel's chest.

Then, with a sly press of a button, three black darts shot out. This was a hidden feature of the katana. Originally equipped with eighteen darts, only three remained after the blade was significantly shortened, but these last three were more than enough to end the life of the pesky American.

As the flying darts approached, Daniel waved his willow branch.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

With three crisp sounds, the darts were sent flying. Two struck Takashi Sato in each of his knees, forcing him to plop down to the ground. The last dart sliced his cheek, then ricocheted off at a sharp

angle, piercing the knees of several other Japanese fighters and causing them to kneel simultaneously.

"Ah... Aaaah..."

Takashi Sato writhed on the ground, howling in pain as he held his maimed legs. The other Japanese fighters, likewise injured, clutched their knees while screaming and rolling on the ground.

Daniel wouldn't let off the remaining unknelt Japanese, either. With swift swings of his willow branch, he promptly had everyone on their knees.

After the last Japanese fell, Daniel announced loudly, "Japanese fighters, today was just a small lesson. If you dare cause more trouble in America again, I'll take down every single one of you, no matter how many come!"

Turning to those from Martial Club United, he said, "Now that the Japanese fighters are incapacitated, do as you wish. If any of you want to vent, be my guest."

Daniel would not kill, but what followed would be beyond his jurisdiction. He knew those from Martial Club United might not be so forgiving.

After his declaration, Daniel left with Jessica and Brittany. The scene that was likely to unfold next could become gruesome, and he preferred not to expose the women to it.

Driving back to the office, Daniel was at the wheel with the two women sitting in the back seat. Suddenly, Brittany spoke to Jessica.

"Jessica, next week is my grandfather's eightieth birthday, and I'd like to take some time off to go back home."

"Okay," Jessica agreed without hesitation.

But Brittany had more to add.

"Jessica, I have another request."

"Go ahead."

"Well, I'd like to borrow the Country Boy. I want to bring him with me to my hometown."

The innocuous request hung in the air, laden with unspoken implications, as they continued their drive.

Chapter 234 Who is the President

Chapter 234 Who is the President

Brittany's statement blindsided Jessica.

"Why do you need to take Daniel with you? Do you want him to pretend to be your boyfriend?"

"Boyfriend? He doesn't qualify! I'm bringing the country boy back because my grandfather has some old ailments that many hospitals haven't been able to cure. So, I want him to take a look; maybe he has a way."

Jessica hesitated for a moment before nodding.

"Okay."

But Daniel seemed reluctant.

"Hone—"

Just as he was about to call her "dear," Jessica shot him a piercing look, and Daniel quickly changed his address.

"Boss, I'm your assistant. Isn't it inappropriate for you to lend me to another woman?"

"Really? I don't see why it would be," Jessica retorted, then sensing something odd about Daniel's statement, she scolded him. "What do you mean 'lend you to another woman'? Brittany's grandfather is ill, and I'm sending you to help look after him. You're helping a colleague. Is there a problem with that?"

After saying this, Jessica subtly reminded Daniel of company rules.

"Daniel, I want to remind you seriously, according to company policy, relationships between employees are not allowed. If an office romance occurs, the individual in the higher position must

resign of their own accord."

Though she appeared to be warning Daniel, Jessica's words were clearly meant for Brittany. If a relationship formed, the one who had to resign was undoubtedly Brittany, since she held the highest position in The Matthews Organization next to Jessica.

"So, Jessica, you're saying if I were to date you, you'd have to resign. And then I would take over The Matthews Organization?" Daniel teased Jessica, earning a light punch from her.

"Are you asking for trouble? How dare you scheme against me? If you ever talk like this again, I'll fire you on the spot!"

Meanwhile, elsewhere within Martial Club United, the members wasted no time in giving the Japanese fighters a sound thrashing. Although they didn't beat any of them to death, they left the Japanese fighters disabled, condemned to spend the remainder of their lives bedridden at best.

Eventually, they made all the remaining Japanese kneel and issue formal apologies.

"American martial arts are the strongest!"

"Japanese martial arts are trash!"

"We shall never set foot on American soil again from now on."

After extracting a series of promises and thoroughly humiliating the Japanese, they finally let them go.

With the Japanese fighter matter resolved, Woods stepped forward once more.

"Regarding today's election for president," Woods declared, "I defeated all of you. So, starting today, I am—Woods—the president of Martial Club United!"

Ryan immediately voiced his disagreement upon hearing this.

"You've certainly beaten us, but you also lost to the Japanese fighter. It was Daniel who defeated Takashi Sato. Therefore, Daniel should be the president of Martial Club United!"

"Daniel as president? He's not even a member of Martial Club United. He doesn't own any clubs, and let's not forget he left before everything was even over, showing he clearly doesn't want the position.

Since Daniel has chosen to step down, and as the strongest person here besides him, I should naturally take over his spot. I should be the president of Martial Club United!

If anyone has an issue with this, you have three days to challenge me one-on-one. If no one can beat me after three days, then the position of president is mine!"

Read Chapter 235 Ryan's Plea for Help

Chapter 235 Ryan's Plea for Help

Chapter 235 Ryan's Plea for Help

The condition Woods laid out left everyone with no room to argue. So, Ryan could only nod in agreement.

"Alright!"

Ryan couldn't think of any other way; he had to ask Daniel for help. He wanted Daniel to fight Woods in the ring and take over as the president of the Martial Club United.

After leaving the training ground, Ryan immediately headed to The Matthews Organization. He had to find Daniel fast and get him to take back the president's seat from Woods. Otherwise, the Martial Club United would truly become the plaything of those villains!

Back in his office, Daniel was munching on a Taco Bell burrito when suddenly, a familiar figure entered.

Ryan?

"Ryan, take a seat! This burrito is so good, are you hungry?" Daniel immediately invited Ryan to sit down and handed him a burrito.

"Daniel, I'm in big trouble! The president's seat of the Martial Club United is now Woods's."

"Oh." Daniel uttered indifferently, then continued with his meal. He knew what Ryan wanted, but he had no intention of becoming that so-called president. To take on a job with no equal return wasn't for him.

"Daniel, Woods is no good guy! If he becomes the president, the Martial Club United will just be his toy! So, I'm asking you to challenge Woods. If you win, you can be the president," Ryan pleaded.

"Ryan, I won't be the president. As for Woods, I'm not interested in challenging him. After all, he hasn't brought shame upon us in front of the Japanese today."

"Daniel, are you saying you're okay with Woods being the president, no matter what he does, even if he turns the Martial Club United into his private army?"

"Ryan, the president's role should be yours. So, it shouldn't be me going up against Woods; it should be you—Ryan! This is something you guys should sort out. I'm an outsider; I shouldn't and don't want to get involved."

"Daniel, are you joking with me? You saw what happened in the ring today. There's a huge gap between me and Woods; I can't beat him."

"Ryan, you're not unable to beat him; your issue is that your veins are blocked. Plus, you've been studying martial arts for decades but haven't grasped its essence. I will use acupuncture to treat you, then teach you some techniques. I guarantee after this, you'll be able to beat Woods!"

Daniel took out his Needle Of Seven Dragon and performed acupuncture on Ryan. He taught Ryan some techniques and imparted the essence of martial arts.

After all that training the night before, Daniel reassured Ryan.

"Once you fully understand everything I taught you, you can challenge Woods."

"But the match with Woods is in three days! I don't think I can fully grasp all this in three days!"

"Three days? Who set three days? When it comes to a challenge, power trumps everything! As long as you can beat Woods, even if you take thirty days before challenging him, you can torment him until he begs for mercy and hands over the president's seat willingly!"

"Isn't that kind of dishonest?"

"Honest? Is Woods an honest man?"

"No!"

"Problem solved."

Chapter 236 Stop

Chapter 236 Stop

After solving Ryan's problem, Daniel walked into the CEO's office with his half-eaten burrito. Jessica was deep in work, reviewing some reports.

She looked up and saw Daniel entering, "Close the door, please." Her request took Daniel by surprise.

With a click, the door shut behind him. "What's up, dear?" he asked with a grin.

"We're at the office, call me 'dear' one more time, and you're fired!"

"So what if we're at the office? You're still 'dear' to me."

"I'm your boss!"

Trying to lighten the mood, Daniel held out a burrito to her. "Dear boss, want a bite?"

"I said no!"

Before Jessica could protest further, Daniel playfully pushed the burrito into her mouth. "The hell, Daniel!"

She swatted him, slightly annoyed, but soon admitted, "Actually, it's pretty good."

"Anything I feed you will taste great. From now on, just eat whatever I give you," Daniel said with a mischievous undertone.

Jessica felt something was off with his words, and with her sharpness, she quickly caught on. Shooting him a fierce glare, she muttered through gritted teeth, "Get out!"

"Okay, I'm leaving!"

But as Daniel started to turn away, "Hold it right there!" Jessica called out to him.

"You just told me to leave, and now to stay. Do all beautiful women change their minds this fast? Or is it just stunning ones like you?"

"Cut the chatter. What's going on between you and Brittany?"

"Brittany and me? Don't you know? She's out to get me, would love to see me out of the company. You know she's after me every day, and still, you lent me to her, had her take me to her place. Don't you think she'll bully me?"

"Bully you? She's just one person, how could she bully you? It looks to me like you're the one who does the bullying! I want you to accompany her home this time because it's a business trip. Brittany is a longtime employee at The Matthews Organization, and it's her grandfather's 80th birthday. You're going to represent the company and bring him a gift."

"Are you coming with me? If you don't, then I won't go either."

"Why not?"

"Because I can't be away from you for even a day!"

"Get lost! I bet what you really want is for me to leave you alone! Go with Brittany to her house and keep me updated."

"Do you not trust me? Afraid I might get too cozy with Brittany?"

"You could try. If you dare let anything happen, I'll break your legs and make sure you spend the rest of your life in a wheelchair!"

...

At eleven o'clock that night, Jessica was working late in her office when hunger struck. She summoned Daniel to her office.

"Daniel, you good?"

"Why wouldn't I be?"

"If you're not busy, run and get me something to eat. I'm starving, and I want barbecue from The Third."

"The Third? That place is nearly ten miles away, behind King's."

"You think it's too far?"

"Yes!"

"Just go, no more talk!"

"Yes, dear!"

Facing the fierce Jessica, Daniel had no choice. When his 'dear' asked him to fetch something, did he really have other options? If he refused, he knew he'd face the consequences.

Chapter 237 A Forced Hand

Chapter 237 A Forced Hand

Daniel weaved his way through the streets on his electric bike, heading towards the area behind King's. Upon arriving, he found a crowd gathered nearby. Pushing through, he discovered that someone had jumped from a building—it was a woman in a King's uniform.

Looking closely, Daniel noticed something off about the woman's complexion; her face bore a tinge of darkness. It wasn't a willing act; she must have encountered something evil, something that drove her to jump.

Glancing upward, Daniel spotted a thin veil of black mist enveloping one of the windows on the thirteenth floor, invisible to the average person because it was the aura of an evil spirit. Only someone with special abilities, like Daniel, could see it.

If Daniel was correct, the woman must have visited that room on the thirteenth floor before her leap.

At that moment, Medical Examiner Shitstrong finished examining the body and came to a preliminary conclusion. He reported to Ava, "Detective, it looks like a suicide."

"Suicide?" Ava pondered for a moment, then nodded, "Let's have the staff make a record of it, complete the procedure, and close the case."

Daniel took a good look at the beautiful woman—it was Ava! The very same person who had checked him for DUI a few days ago. She was investigating another case now; she wasn't specialized in this kind of thing.

This server, he believed, was a victim—Daniel felt he must bring justice to light.

He was supposed to buy barbecue for his 'dear' but decided to set that aside to seek justice first. Stepping forward, he spoke out, "She didn't jump by her own accord, she was harmed by someone."

Ava looked up, recognizing the familiar pain in the neck after a moment's thought, "You? What scum is out and about so late? Where's your wife? Doesn't she care about you?"

"How am I scum? That woman last time wasn't my wife; she's just a colleague."

"A colleague? Your colleague would sit in the passenger seat? Your colleague would report you for drunk driving?"

"Did I drive drunk?"

"No."

"Right! I wasn't drunk driving, which proves she was lying to prank me! So I'm not scum!"

"You're not scum? Then why are you here spouting nonsense? Shitstrong concluded the girl committed suicide by jumping."

"Suicide by jumping? This is a living, breathing human life we're talking about! You're settling on a verdict so easily without a thorough investigation?"

"Who said we're concluding easily? From the statements we've taken and the victim's social media chat records, she was freshly heartbroken. It's that heartbreak that pushed her to the extreme. She jumped, it's tragic, but indeed a suicide."

"What if there's a second victim whose cause of death is also suicide?" Daniel's question stunned Ava.

"Second? What second?"

"If I'm right, on the thirteenth floor, there's another person who hung himself!" Daniel pointed to the window tinged with the spirit's aura, adding, "The person in that room should be a man, most likely

this girl's boyfriend."

Ava looked up to the room Daniel was pointing at. It was the hotel's changing room, number 1313— the room the girl jumped from.

Chapter 238 Check Again

Chapter 238 Check Again

Since room 1313 was the initial scene of the incident, the police had thoroughly searched it, and afterward, the door was sealed off. Therefore, it was impossible for someone to have committed suicide in the room.

"You're talking nonsense! Room 1313 is where the girl jumped from. We just checked it less than ten minutes ago, and there was nobody inside!"

"If you don't believe me, you should go up there and check again instead of trying to convince me."

"Check again? If there's no one in that room, I'll arrest you for obstructing official duties, and you'll face seven days in detention."

"And if there is someone who hanged themselves in that room, shouldn't you give me some kind of reward? After all, I did provide you with a vital clue, contributing to your case."

"Hmph!" Ava snorted coldly, not giving Daniel any direct answer, but led her team back to room 1313.

They'd barely reached the door when Shitstrong couldn't help but speak. "Sarge, look, the seal is intact, it hasn't been tampered with. It's impossible that someone got in! I say we ignore the jerk. He's just trying to get your attention because he thinks you're pretty."

Shitstrong always got tense around Daniel as if he was a rival in love, because he had been pursuing Ava without success. Men's intuition is as sharp as women's, and the moment Daniel showed up, Shitstrong felt something was off, suspecting Daniel might be interested in Ava too. Thus, to leave a bad impression on Ava, he deliberately referred to Daniel as scum.

"Shitstrong, are you chasing after your Sarge? If you are, I'd suggest not calling me scum in front of her. Heroes love beauties, and beauties love... the scum," Daniel shot back.

"You..." Shitstrong was so angry he couldn't find the words. He found Daniel to be an absolute scum, shameless, and a master of talking crap.

"Both of you, cut the crap," Ava interjected pointedly, gesturing toward the seal. "You sure you want me to break this seal and search again? Because if there's no one inside, I will arrest you."

"Of course! But if there is someone there, you owe me a reward."

"If you provide important clues, it's a \$200 reward."

"What? Just \$200? Why are you all so stingy? Had I known this, I would've left long ago."

"Having regrets?"

"Maybe? But since we're at this point, \$200 it is; better than nothing! At least it can buy me that barbecue meal."

Without further ado, Ava tore off the seal, and as the door swung open, everyone was shocked. Someone had indeed hanged himself inside the room, and it was a man.

Upon verifying the identity, Ava was even more stunned. The man who hung himself was named Handsome, the boyfriend of the suicide victim Jennflower. Both were employees at King's.

Shitstrong conducted a comprehensive examination of the body, being a professional medical examiner. It didn't take long for him to finish the autopsy and reach a conclusion.

"Handsome died from hanging, the results confirm he hanged himself. So, this is also a suicide. I found his suicide note in his pocket; it seems to be a case of a double suicide as a result of a love pact."

Chapter 239 Framed

Chapter 239 Framed

"Shitstrong, are you sure that the suicide note you have is actually written by Handsome? If I remember correctly, the most important evidence in a case is verified. Without even doing a handwriting comparison, you've come to a conclusion. Aren't you afraid your oversight might let the real perpetrator go free?" Daniel's pointed words left Shitstrong red in the face.

Shitstrong wanted to argue, but he couldn't, because Daniel was indeed correct; his conclusion was not as rigorous as it should have been. At that moment, a team member found a diary among Handsome's belongings, which appeared to be a love journal between Handsome and Jennflower. After comparing the handwriting, it was clear the suicide note was not written by Handsome.

"Shitstrong, even a blind man could see these two handwritings don't match. The suicide note and this journal are clearly not by the same hand. I think now you can retract your conclusion about Jennflower's suicide!" Daniel insisted.

"Heh!" Shitstrong scoffed, scolding Daniel, "You're just a civilian, what gives you the right to spout such nonsense here? Even if the suicide note is forged, it can't prove Handsome was murdered. It's possible that he had someone else write his note or even that he forged a suicide note before killing himself."

"He forged a suicide note and then killed himself? You think that's plausible?"

"Anything is possible."

After pondering for a moment, Shitstrong confidently replied, "Aside from the note! We had previously searched room 1313, and Handsome did not kill himself here at that time. Now he's dead in here, and from the crime scene, there's no evidence of a third party entering. This means, aside from the traces left by Handsome, we find no evidence of anyone else. So even if the suicide note isn't entirely reliable, it doesn't change the facts, and it doesn't impact the truth of Handsome's suicide."

"So, Shitstrong, your final conclusion is that both Handsome and Jennflower committed suicide, not murder? You're closing the case just like that? These were two lives; you're just going to brush it off?"

Daniel turned to Ava, asking with a stern face, "Sarge, is this your stance too?"

Ava didn't answer immediately; she was confused, unsure of how to approach the case. But with two sequential suicides, one leaving behind a questionable note, there had to be something more to the story. This wasn't a simple theft; these were human lives at stake. How could she, in good conscience, close the case as a double suicide when there were obvious problems?

Her aim as a police officer was to seek justice, to catch every criminal, and ensure that all victims are treated fairly.

Suddenly, Ava had an idea. She glared coldly at Daniel, "Scum, you're the one who insisted Handsome killed himself in this room, so you're a prime suspect. Therefore, you must assist us in clearing up this case; otherwise, you're the culprit!"

"Whoa, whoa! Just because you're pretty, do you get to falsely accuse me? I provided you with crucial information, and we had a deal. Once it was confirmed that someone had committed suicide in this room, you were to give me a \$200 reward. Now that I've been proven right, not only are you not paying me, but you're trying to arrest me as a suspect?"

Chapter 240 A Woman's Interrogation

Chapter 240 A Woman's Interrogation

"Heh!" Ava gave Daniel a cold laugh, looking at him as if she were staring down a notorious villain. She challenged him, "If Handsome wasn't killed by you, then how did you know he was here? If you want to avoid arrest, you'll need to prove your innocence!"

Ava might have been lacking a solution, but her instincts told her that this scoundrel probably knew something. She was determined to coax out whatever he was hiding.

"Prove my innocence?" Daniel saw right through Ava's intentions and responded with a cheerful demeanor. "Sarge, are you perhaps clueless about the key point of the case? Is that why you're trying to frame me, wanting my help to solve it?"

Exposing Ava's strategies left her seething with irritation. "Frame you? Why would I set up a lowlife like you? I'm just carrying out the law! How did you know Handsome was here if you didn't kill him? Moreover, right after Shitstrong brought out the suicide note, you immediately questioned the handwriting. So either you killed Handsome, or you know some undisclosed secrets!"

"If you're clueless about where to start with the case, you could simply ask for my advice. Don't play these games with me; do I look like a kid to you?" Daniel couldn't be bothered with her any longer and turned to leave. He had already sensed that the person responsible for killing Handsome and Jennflower had left the hotel and that this case wasn't going to be resolved quickly.

Daniel planned to wait until Ava cooled her head and humbly sought his guidance before showing her how to crack the case step by step.

"Stop!" Ava blocked Daniel's path, assertive in her words. "If you don't give me any information today, don't expect to leave here. I'll take you in for a 72-hour interrogation!"

Ava was serious. Even if she charged Daniel as a suspect, she could only detain him for 72 hours at most. If she didn't get any useful information within that time, she'd have to release him. After all,

Ava was well aware that despite being a scumbag, Daniel certainly wasn't a murderer. The night's two fatalities definitely weren't his doing. However, this scumbag had to know some inside information; otherwise, he couldn't have guessed so precisely.

As for why this scumbag inserted himself into trouble, it surely wasn't for justice; he was just trying to get Ava's attention. That's precisely why Ava harbored no fondness for Daniel. No beautiful woman could feel anything positive for a scumbag!

"Damn, girl, are you serious?" Daniel was speechless. To avoid arrest, he could only provide a bit of information. "This suicide note is the breakthrough. The person who killed Handsome and Jennflower is likely a hotel employee. So, you could compare the

handwriting on the note with that of all hotel employees; I bet you'll find all the useful information you need."

Ava immediately realized the value of his advice, thinking to herself, "This lowlife is actually quite clever. This approach is indeed a sound method."

Despite internally praising Daniel, Ava wasn't about to give him the satisfaction of acknowledging it aloud.

Chapter 241 A Dirty Cop

Chapter 241 A Dirty Cop

"Heh!" Ava first let out a cold laugh, then spoke sharply. "I thought you had some magical method, but what you suggested is a standard procedure in criminal investigation. We would have done it even if you hadn't mentioned anything. You wait here; until the case is clear, you're not to leave! If you try, I'll arrest you and detain you for 72 hours!"

After schooling Daniel, Ava ordered her team, "Get moving and collect handwriting samples from all hotel employees. We need to find the person who wrote this suicide note tonight."

Half an hour later, the team indeed found a matching handwriting sample. The note was written by a cleaning staff member at the hotel, Mia Taylor, who was off duty at the time. Ava immediately led a few team members to Mia's apartment. By the time they arrived, however, the place was eerily empty, and Mia wasn't answering her phone. Had Mia vanished?

In the apartment, the team found two dolls punctured with needles. Each doll was labeled with a name: one was Handsome, the other Jennflower.

"Search! Keep searching! Don't miss any corner; overlook no piece of evidence."

Even after discovering the dolls, they knew punctured dolls couldn't be submitted as evidence. After all, no one would believe such objects could commit murder.

Daniel picked up one of the dolls, examining it carefully. Seeing this, Shitstrong sensed an opportunity to accost him: "Scumbag, what do you think you're doing? That's evidence, and you're not part of our team; you can't just handle it! You better put it down! If you've left fingerprints, you're a suspect!"

"Shitstrong, what are you doing? Are you a dirty cop? You seem rather experienced in this!" said Daniel, handing the dolls over to Shitstrong with a chuckle. "Since you won't let me touch them, how about you examine them? Let's see if you know what these are and if you can crack the case."

"They're just two small dolls, big deal; they don't mean anything."

"These dolls hold Mia's holy soul. If we track her holy soul, we can find her unholy soul. A holy soul can exist outside the body, but an unholy soul cannot. If we can locate Mia's unholy soul, we can find her person and arrest her!"

"What? Holy soul? Unholy soul? Are you a priest or something? We're conducting an investigation here, not praying in church!"

"Shitstrong, how about you explain how Handsome got into room 1313 and hanged himself when the seal on the door was intact? Are you suggesting your theory is that Mia conducted some mystical ritual, binding an evil spirit to him, and that's why he went there to hang himself?"

Shitstrong didn't believe in the existence of evil spirits, so his questions were meant to mock Daniel.

What he didn't expect was Daniel to actually nod in agreement after hearing him out, "Shitstrong, the only correct thing you've said tonight is that. Handsome was indeed possessed by an evil spirit, which led to his suicide. As for the murderer, I think it should be Mia!"

Just then, a team member approached.

"Sarge, we've found out who Mia is -- she's Jennflower's mother."

Chapter 242 Mother

Chapter 242 Mother

Mia is Jennflower's biological mother?

This revelation left everyone present stunned, except for Daniel.

"Mia being Jennflower's mom, and Jennflower died because of Handsome's death. So indeed, Mia is a major suspect in Handsome's demise," Ava started piecing together the current situation.

Daniel interjected, "Jennflower was also killed by Mia."

Ava was shaken by his assertion. "What did you say? You're saying Mia killed Jennflower? You're telling me that a mother killed her own daughter?"

"Yes!" Daniel pointed at the two small dolls and stated, "These dolls are Mia's handiwork. Thus, I believe she's responsible for the deaths of Jennflower and Handsome."

Shitstrong could no longer tolerate Daniel's claims and took the opportunity to belittle him, "Sarge, I don't think you should listen to this scumbag's ramblings. I doubt he even understands what he's saying. At most, these dolls could suggest Mia might have joined a cult, but as to whether Jennflower and Handsome's deaths are linked to her, I don't think that's necessarily the case.

From my professional point of view, I can say with a hundred percent certainty that both Jennflower and Handsome committed suicide, not murder. Of course, whether their deaths are connected to Mia is another question. Having a mother involved in a cult indeed might lead to some psychological issues for a daughter. But even so, from a legal perspective, this cannot be used as evidence of murder!

Even if Mia caused psychological problems for Jennflower, perhaps leading to depression that ultimately resulted in her taking her own life, her suicide would still be legally defined as just that, a suicide. We absolutely cannot categorize this as Mia murdering Jennflower!"

Shitstrong's analysis was logical, to which Ava nodded in agreement. Yet, she only concurred with half of it.

"Shitstrong, the possibility you're suggesting is significant; Jennflower may indeed have taken her life due to psychological issues. But what about Handsome? If Mia joined a cult and she wasn't his mom, she shouldn't have affected his mental health, right?"

"Sarge," Shitstrong elaborated, "Handsome might have been deeply in love with Jennflower. After witnessing her leap, he no longer wanted to go on living alone, so he chose to hang himself and follow her in death."

"Follow her in death? Are there still men who would do that nowadays?" Ava questioned.

Shitstrong pointed at Daniel, using him as a counterexample.

"This scumbag definitely wouldn't, but Handsome is different. I checked out his background. He's a simple and honest man raised in the countryside, and Jennflower was his first love. So, it's entirely possible he died for her."

"Die for love my ass! Both Handsome and Jennflower were killed by Mia. If you don't bring her to justice immediately, who knows how many more she'll harm," Daniel insisted.

Daniel's warning was met with nothing more than a disparaging cold laugh from Shitstrong.

"Heh!"

After his scoffing, he taunted, "Harm more people? Mia is just an older lady, she's fifty-six this year, how could she harm anyone? You better not say she can control evil spirits to harm people!"

"In the vast rural areas of America, there exists a mysterious occupation called a demon raiser. Mia is likely a demon raiser."

Chapter 243 No Good

Chapter 243 No Good

"Ha ha ha ha..."

Daniel's words triggered Shitstrong's belly laughter. "What are you saying? Mia is a demon raiser? You wouldn't also claim that she killed her own daughter and her daughter's boyfriend with the aim to turn them into evil spirits, right?"

"That's right, she wants to turn Jennflower and Handsome into evil spirits. By their birthdays, they are particularly suitable as vessels for evil spirits." Daniel explained seriously, but Shitstrong didn't buy it.

"Ha ha ha ha..." Shitstrong's mocking laughter was his response to Daniel's remarks. "Sarge, listen to this guy. Not only is he scum, he's a cultist too! He actually believes in this evil spirit nonsense and expects us to buy into it? Ha ha ha ha..."

Ignoring Shitstrong, Daniel turned to Ava and asked, "Do you also think I'm lying to you?"

"Hmph!" Ava snorted coldly before admonishing him. "Just looking at you, you seem like a con artist! But whether you're lying or not isn't for me to say without proof. Since you claim Mia killed Jennflower and Handsome, I need evidence, not just these dolls."

Of course, Ava didn't believe in the existence of evil spirits; her response stemmed from wanting to see if Daniel could provide new evidence. Though he seemed shady, Daniel gave her the impression he was intelligent.

"Didn't I just tell you? These dolls retain a part of Mia's holy soul. I just need to coax it out, and it'll seek out Mia's unholy soul. Then we can find Mia."

"Ha ha ha ha..." Shitstrong couldn't help but burst out laughing again. "Holy soul? Unholy soul? You don't seem insane, but do you hear yourself? Do you think the Sarge will believe your strange

tales?"

Immediately after Shitstrong finished, Ava curiously asked Daniel, "How do you plan to coax out Mia's holy soul?"

Daniel turned to Shitstrong with a chuckle and inquired, "Do you smoke?"

"I do, why?"

"If you smoke, you'll have a lighter, right? So, I need to borrow it."

"Why should I lend it to you?" Shitstrong immediately objected.

Ava glared and ordered, "Lend it to him!"

"Yes, Sarge!" Shitstrong couldn't defy her order. He reluctantly pulled out the lighter he'd just bought that afternoon. Despite being only a dollar, the thought of his new lighter being tainted by a scumbag was too much to bear, and he knew he'd never use it again after Daniel touched it. Handing it over, he looked at Daniel with disdain.

"Scumbag, the lighter's yours; I don't want it back. Anything touched by scum like you gets dirty, and I'd never use it again."

"Shitstrong, if the woman you like was touched by a scumbag, would you give up on her?" Daniel posed the question, leaving Shitstrong red-faced and choked with indignation.

"You? You really are scum!"

Although Daniel was joking, Ava felt offended, being the woman Shitstrong most adored.

Chapter 244 Mia's Holy Soul

Chapter 244 Mia's Holy Soul

Ava, fuming with anger, glared at Daniel and scolded, "Scum, keep spouting nonsense and I'll tape your mouth shut!"

Daniel ignored her tirade, picking up the doll with Jennflower's name on it.

"Click."

He flicked the lighter and brought the flame to the doll's feet. Ava watched curiously, inquiring, "What are you doing?"

"I'm releasing Mia's holy soul from this doll! This was made for her daughter, and only through this can the holy soul within guide us to Mia."

"Ha ha ha ha..."

Shitstrong erupted into laughter again, his mockery as overt as ever. After his fit, he pointed to the thin wisp of smoke rising from the doll's head and asked, "You're not saying this smoke is Mia's holy soul, are you?"

"Exactly."

"Ha ha ha ha..."

Daniel's earnest answer drew further laughter from Shitstrong. "Scum, are you trying to insult the Sarge's intelligence? This doll is stuffed with grass and covered in a little flowery cloth. By lighting it from below, of course it'll give off smoke! To claim that smoke is Mia's holy soul, you must really think the Sarge is a child!"

Shitstrong dragged Ava into every sentence, his goal to make her despise Daniel. Hopefully, she'd kick Daniel out, ruling out any chance of him getting close to her, and therefore, eliminating a love

rival for Shitstrong.

"Smoke is smoke, a holy soul is a holy soul. Ordinary smoke can be blown away by the wind. A holy soul is different; it hovers mid-air, then slowly takes on a human shape."

After Daniel explained, Ava looked closer and saw the smoke indeed had not dispersed. The wisp was suspended in mid-air, forming a black spherical object that resembled a big dark globe. The scene defied rational science.

Shitstrong also saw the black sphere but remained unconvinced. Rummaging through his limited knowledge of physics, he mustered an explanation. "I get it; the black gas

mass must contain a composition similar to the density of air. That's why the sphere is floating."

After his explanation, he challenged Daniel, "Didn't you say the smoke would turn into human shape? I don't see that happening. Does anyone look like this big black ball?"

Daniel didn't bother to explain further, for as Shitstrong finished, the black mass began to morph. Slowly, the sphere turned into a human figure, the figure of a woman with an attractive silhouette - it was like watching the shadow of a striking woman take shape.

Shitstrong was dumbfounded!

Ava was shocked!

Everyone present widened their eyes in disbelief.

Could the smoke really be turning into a human form?

Could it be that the scumbag wasn't lying, he wasn't spouting nonsense, and this truly was Mia's holy soul?

Do evil spirits, ghosts, and such entities actually exist?

Chapter 245 Trick

Chapter 245 Trick

In America, many are Christians, firmly believing in God, evil spirits, Sodom, and the like. Thus, some of those present began to waver in their skepticism and started to entertain the possibility that Daniel's words might bear some truth.

The smoke silhouette that formed eventually settled on the ground, and Daniel spoke to it, "Let's go! Lead me to your master."

"Heh!" Shitstrong interrupted Daniel with a derisive sneer, then pointed at Daniel's nose and demanded, "What trick did you use here? You must have pulled some trick, some magic act or something."

Daniel chuckled in response, "I haven't done anything! The only one using tricks here is Mia! I'm just helping you catch her."

Then, turning to Ava, he continued, "Of course, if the Sarge doesn't need my help, I'll just leave now. After all, this case involving two lives is Sarge's responsibility, not mine."

Here I am just a concerned citizen who not only fails to receive a reward but is also subjected to mockery."

"Scum, quit your snide remarks and just lead us to Mia. I don't care what trick you used; if you can find Mia, you'll have made a significant contribution to this case!"

Ava didn't care about the methods Daniel used. She was after results. As long as Daniel's tactics weren't illegal, she wouldn't interfere. That was Ava's creed when it came to handling cases.

Daniel crouched down and spoke to the small figure, "Let's go! Find your master!"

The diminutive figure began to walk in a southeast direction, with everyone trailing behind it. After about thirty minutes of walking with no sign of stopping, Shitstrong grew impatient.

He stepped forward and accused, "Scum, are you playing us for fools? We've been following this little figure for so long, yet we haven't seen Mia."

"Shitstrong, if you're tired, you can leave now! And remember, the team leader here is Sarge, not you. So as long as Sarge keeps going, nobody stops!"

Daniel threw this retort back at Shitstrong before continuing to follow the figure, which, after another half hour, led them to Windows Street. This street used to have some liveliness when the Black Panther Club was around, but now, with the club gone, desolation had taken over, old rundown houses lining the street in a gloomy array.

The figure finally halted in front of a decrepit old house, which was built long ago, its half-broken door looking more like the entrance to a ruin. Daniel glanced at an apple tree in the yard in full bloom – an odd sight since it was summer, and apple trees typically blossomed in April or May.

The residence was evidently problematic.

"This house is inhabited by evil spirits, and I suspect many of them are very malevolent! Mia has probably made this her domain, rearing all the spirits inside. So be cautious! Don't let the evil spirits cling to you."

Chapter 246 Shitstrong's Plan

Chapter 246 Shitstrong's Plan

Shitstrong's scornful cold laugh met Daniel's warning. Afterwards, he mocked him with a sneering tone. "Scum, you think the Sarge is some naïve little girl? This old dilapidated

house was built a century ago. Plus, with Windows Street slated for demolition and the entire street deserted, it's no wonder the house strikes people as odd. You could certainly use it as a set for a horror movie. But your words can only scare dumb blondes, not the Sarge. She's not easy to frighten. You say there are spirits in here capable of killing people? Do you think such stories will fool the Sarge?"

Having said this, Shitstrong turned to Ava. "Sarge, since the scumbag claims Mia is in this house, let's just go in and search, right? If Mia is here, it proves the scumbag guessed correctly. Of course, it could also mean he's colluding with Mia; how else would he know she's here? We'll need to take him into custody for a thorough interrogation. At the very least, detain him for 72 hours.

If Mia isn't here, it would prove this scumbag is playing with us! He is obstructing our investigation, and we'll have to arrest him to teach him the consequences of such actions!"

Shitstrong's suggestion nodded through by Ava. "This scumbag is definitely suspicious. Whether or not Mia is inside, I will take him in for intense questioning myself. I'll interrogate him personally!"

For some reason, Ava found Daniel interesting. Even though he was a scumbag, he struck her as the most intriguing of all the men she had encountered. So, she needed to find a pretext to bring Daniel into the station for a more in-depth exploration of the man.

Daniel gave Ava an incredulous look and said, "Sarge, I am a concerned citizen helping you solve a case, and this is how you treat me? Despite your beauty, I never expected you to be so hideous on the inside!"

Daniel's words took Ava aback. Once she processed what he'd said, her eyebrows furrowed, and she scolded fiercely, "You scum, you've only met me twice; you have no right to judge me!"

Daniel didn't bother to pay her any more attention. With a click, he ignited the lighter and set alight the other doll, the one with Handsome's name. Soon, it was reduced to a small pile of ash. Dabbing his finger into the ash, he turned to Ava with a serious demand, "Come here with your face."

Not knowing what he was up to but for some reason, Ava extended her beautiful face towards Daniel. He gently dragged his ash-coated finger across her cheek, leaving a black streak as though she had just escaped from a fire scene.

Realizing what Daniel was doing, Ava shouted, "What are you doing?" while reaching up to wipe away the mark on her face. However, Daniel quickly grabbed her wrist.

"Don't move!"

Chapter 247 Possession by a Malevolent Spirit

Chapter 247 Possession by a Malevolent Spirit

"Why?" Ava asked with a touch of wistfulness.

She felt victimized, as if she was on the verge of tears from being bullied by this scumbag. Not only had he verbally mistreated her, but he had also marked her face with this ugly blemish. She had never been humiliated like this in her life!

"Your fate is closely intertwined with malevolent spirits. If you wipe this away, the moment you step into this building those spirits will latch onto you, and even the greater malevolent entities may come to trouble you. The best-case scenario is that they'll only cause you to have nightmares. In a worse case, they might kill you, and not just you but your family and friends as well," Daniel advised earnestly, but Shitstrong's untimely laughter rang out again.

"Ha ha ha ha..."

Once his laughter subsided, Shitstrong scornfully asked Daniel, "So, in your opinion, am I also someone likely to be targeted by malevolent spirits? If I don't do anything, will they also ensnare me?"

Daniel cast a glance at Shitstrong and nodded seriously, "Your fate is somewhat different, Shitstrong. Even if malevolent spirits get hold of you, they can't take your life. As long as I'm here, the spirits can't kill you. If you're unwilling to dirty your face, I don't mind. Anyway, once we enter this building, you're definitely going to wet your pants in fright."

Shitstrong felt tremendously insulted by Daniel's words and jumped to his feet. "What did you say? You think I'll pee my pants? Do you know what I do? I'm a forensic pathologist! I deal with dead bodies on a daily basis! Your little bag of tricks might convince gullible young girls, but do you really think I'd believe such nonsense?"

"I'm just kindly reminding you, but if you don't believe me, I don't care. After all, it won't be me who ends up scared witless later; it'll be you!"

Saying this, Daniel looked around at the other team members. "Do you guys need this? If you don't want it, don't blame me if you get possessed by malevolent spirits once we enter. The best outcome if you're haunted is a few nights of nightmares, possibly bedwetting. The worst case is you'll get tormented by the spirits into madness, or even, your body will be taken over, leading them to kill you and then your family members. I've said what I had to. Anyone willing to smear this ash on their face, come line up. I'll apply this ash to your faces in order."

"Ha ha ha ha..."

Daniel's speech provoked another burst of loud laughter from Shitstrong. "Scumbag, do you think these team members are like those gullible old residents from the countryside? They're smarter than you. Do you really think your words can frighten them? Do you really believe they'll buy into your bullshit?"

As soon as Shitstrong finished speaking, a few team members 'voted with their feet,' walking over to Daniel to line up for the doll ash. Their actions stunned Shitstrong.

"You... you actually believe this scumbag's nonsense? You seriously believe in the existence of evil spirits? You really think this building is inhabited by them? Are you living up to the uniform you wear?"

Shitstrong's questioning didn't change the team members' decision. "Shitstrong, why don't you try it too? Smearing some ash on your face won't do any harm. What if there genuinely are malevolent spirits inside, and what if this stuff actually works?"

Chapter 248 Better Than Nothing

Chapter 248 Better Than Nothing

LightS's response represented the sentiment of the majority of the team members. Although no one had ever seen a malevolent spirit, they'd all grown up hearing stories about them, leading to a mindset of 'better safe than sorry.' And indeed, smearing some ash on their faces wouldn't really hurt anything.

With most of the team members choosing to believe Daniel, those who were initially undecided also accepted Daniel's offer for help. Eventually, only Shitstrong remained consistent with his original attitude, being the sole person who didn't accept Daniel's assistance.

"Shitstrong, are you sure you don't want this?" Daniel offered one last reminder.

"No!" Shitstrong's reply remained decisive.

"Since Shitstrong doesn't believe my words, there's nothing more I can say. My advice is, to avoid getting scared to the point of wetting yourself later on when we enter this building, you might want to prepare a diaper or something like that."

Daniel's comment infuriated Shitstrong to the point of stomping his foot. "Scum, are you insulting me?"

"Let's go! Let's find Mia inside the building. She won't run away because she is ready; she wants to kill us all and use our bodies to nourish malevolent spirits."

With a wave of his hand, Daniel led the group into the building.

Creak...

Daniel pushed open the half-hanging, paint-peeled, and extremely worn wooden door, stepping inside first. The others followed, but as they did, a strange gust of wind caused the barely hanging door to sway back and forth.

Creak... creak...

The sound seemed like whispers from malevolent spirits. Oddly enough, there were no windows in the room, nor was there any wind outside. Yet, there was wind inside the building.

All the team members were spooked. Ava, looking frightened, asked Daniel, "Where's the wind coming from?"

"Because of the spirits running around inside! The energy from their incorporeal forms brings the wind."

"And the door? It's been creaking back and forth; surely it's not the spirits shaking it, is it?" Ava asked.

She was a clever girl. The wind in the room was blowing in one direction, so if it were truly the wind causing the door to sway, the door should only tilt in one direction. However, as it was creaking back and forth, something else must be shaking it.

"You do have smarts, Sarge. You guessed right," Daniel complimented her.

"Heh." Shitstrong scoffed, trying to explain away the phenomenon. "What malevolent spirits? It's just the wind. Maybe this room is architecturally unique, causing the airflow to seem chaotic. If the wind is blowing back and forth, it would make the door sway in that creaking manner."

To prove his point and dispel any notion of malevolent spirits, Shitstrong put on a brave face and declared, "Scum, didn't you say spirits are shaking this door? I'll go check it out now; I want to see if it's really a spirit rocking the door."

With that, Shitstrong walked towards the door.

"Shitstrong, you've got nothing on your face! I mean, you have no protection on you at all. If you go over there and a spirit attaches to you, you'll regret it. Although the spirit

shaking the door isn't particularly powerful and can't kill you, a spirit is a spirit, and if it can't kill you, it will still likely give you a rough time."

Chapter 249 Screaming

Chapter 249 Screaming

With seven dragon spirits inside him, Daniel could see everything in the world, including the malevolent spirits in the room. Shaking the door was a young boy-looking spirit, dressed in a red suit with a Mohawk hairstyle. Spirits like this little boy could only frighten people—they remain invisible when they choose, but they can also manifest before ordinary mortals when they wish to be seen.

Shitstrong walked up to the door, braced it with his hand to stop the shaking, and said with a hint of triumph, "Where are the evil spirits? Scum, you said there were malevolent spirits here, didn't you? Where are they? How come I don't see anything?"

While Shitstrong spoke, the small boy had already jumped onto his neck, wrapping his blood-stained hands around Shitstrong's head as if hugging a large ball.

"Shitstrong, do you feel anything on your neck?"

"What could be on my neck? I don't feel anything!"

Though Shitstrong was starting to feel a soreness in his neck, he absolutely refused to believe it had anything to do with a bizarre presence. If something were truly on his neck, he was convinced he'd be able to see it. He wasn't blind, after all.

Suddenly.

"Giggling..."

Laughter from the little boy echoed down from above Shitstrong's head, terrifying him to the point where his legs went weak, and his whole body shivered. Tentatively, he tried to lift his head, only to find that it felt as if a pair of hands were holding it down, making it impossible to move his neck.

What was happening? Was it because he hadn't slept well the night before?

"Shitstrong, do you need my help?" asked Daniel.

"Help with what?"

"A little boy is riding on your neck. If I don't do something, he'll stay there. Who knows? He might even decide to urinate on you."

Right after Daniel finished speaking, Shitstrong felt a chilling sensation on his neck. The little boy who was riding on him had actually started to pee.

"Giggling..."

The boy laughed once more, before lowering his head to make eye contact with Shitstrong.

"Ahh! Ahhh!" Shitstrong screamed at the top of his lungs.

"Giggling..."

The boy laughed again, this time seeing Daniel leave the room and then swiftly jumping off Shitstrong's neck and running into a neighboring room.

As soon as the boy left, Shitstrong felt an immediate relief around his neck, yet he still experienced a lingering coldness. After all, the little boy had peed on him, marking him with the urine of a malevolent spirit. Unless someone helped Shitstrong remove the mark, it would remain forever, attracting nearby malevolent spirits.

In other words, if Daniel didn't assist Shitstrong, from that point forward Shitstrong would encounter malevolent spirits every night. Every night he would wet the bed. While those spirits couldn't kill Shitstrong outright, he couldn't endure their presence over the long term. He would suffer from severe nervous exhaustion.

After all, Shitstrong would experience nightly nightmares; no matter how robust his body was, he wouldn't be able to withstand such torment.

"Shitstrong, you saw that little boy, right? Now you should believe that what I've been saying is true, shouldn't you?"

Chapter 250 What Little Boy

Chapter 250 What Little Boy

"What little boy? What are you talking about? Where did this boy come from? Stop your bullshitting, you scumbag, you waste!" Shitstrong, despite being close to involuntary urination from fear, still put on a tough act.

Indeed, Shitstrong had seen that little boy, and the sight had made him scream, but he did not believe it was a ghost; he thought it must have been a hallucination. Yes, a

hallucination! Ghosts couldn't be real, and if Shitstrong saw one, it could only be because of a tension-induced illusion.

To be a good forensic pathologist, one must have a strong psychological makeup, and Shitstrong knew a thing or two about psychology; he was confident in his mental fortitude. Quickly, he adjusted his mindset, pulling himself out of the panic and reverting to his usual professional composure.

"You said Mia is in this building, where is she?" Shitstrong asked Daniel, feigning calm while actually eager to leave the premises. Once they found Mia, they could exit.

"Mia is over there." Daniel pointed to the room next door – the room the little boy had entered. Malevolent spirits instinctively seek their master when in danger, so Daniel was confident Mia was in that room. Also, he sensed a strong presence of malevolent spirits there, and perhaps even more malevolent entities had amassed inside.

"You say Mia's in that room? Then let's hurry up and go arrest her!" Shitstrong said.

"Shitstrong, the presence of malevolent spirits is strong in that room. There are many spirits inside, and possibly other, more malevolent things. Are you sure you want to go in now? I warn you, if you enter like this, you're definitely going to pee your pants. To avoid embarrassing yourself, it's better you stay outside. I'll go in with the Sarge and the other team members, we capture Mia, and this case wraps up."

"What do you mean, scum? Are you trying to humiliate me? I'm the forensic pathologist; I'm the only one here, and I must be present at the crime scene. If Mia indeed turns out to be the killer, maybe there are other victims she murdered. Perhaps their bodies are in that room, and you'll need me to perform the autopsy! Plus, your so-called evil spirits and demons can't scare me. I don't believe that there are actual ghosts in that room!"

Shitstrong, aiming to impress Ava and to exhibit his courage, strode confidently into the room. As soon as he entered, he saw a woman in a white dress, hanging from a rope attached to the light, head drooping and hair covering her entire face, resembling a corpse that had died by hanging.

"Ahh... ahhh..." Shitstrong was so frightened that he let out screams as he ran out of the room.

His behavior shocked the other team members. LightS, curious, asked, "Shitstrong, what did you see?"

Trying to regain his composure and avoid further humiliation, Shitstrong attempted to downplay the situation. With a dismissive laugh, he said, "Nothing, I was just joking with you all, trying to lighten the mood, that's all."

