

Chapter 2041

“...What? Gerald’s reached Japan?” replied Will with a frown.

“Indeed. I saw him arriving at the dock with two other people! They’re currently in a hotel in one of Japan’s coastal cities!” reported the person on the other end of the line.

“...Odd... Why’d he suddenly decided to head there...?” muttered Will as he pondered the situation.

“If I may, could it be that he’s come to Weston to look for more helpers...?” replied the caller.

“It’s a possibility, though the guess could also be wrong. Regardless, keep an eye on him and don’t let him find out that he’s being tailed. I want to know every move he makes, so don’t you dare lose him or there’ll be consequences!” retorted Will before hanging up.

As he continued sitting in the living room, Will couldn’t help but continue wondering why Gerald headed to Japan.

After all, according to the information he obtained through thorough investigations, all of Gerald’s main connections were in Weston. As for any involvements Gerald had with powers outside Weston, the only thing Will could think of was Gerald’s reign of chaos in Yanam. Aside from destroying the three major families there, did Gerald really have any other involvements with powers outside of Weston?

In the end, Will simply couldn’t figure out why Gerald had gone there. With that in mind, Will knew that constantly monitoring Gerald was his best shot at gaining a better understanding of the youth’s actions. If everything went swimmingly, perhaps he would finally be able to kill Gerald...!

At that moment, several knocks could be heard from his door, prompting Will to get up and open it... And to Will’s surprise, it was Daryl!

Supporting himself with a walking stick, Daryl smiled at Will before asking, “Ah, here you are, Will! Have you heard about what happened on Gong Island...?”

“I have. Gerald brought the people along and ran off, right?” replied Will.

“Indeed. Still, his strength has gone well beyond my expectations... To think that the two groups of people you sent over failed to even lay a scratch on him... Regardless, do you have any idea where he’s gone?” asked Daryl as he stroked his beard.

Upon hearing that, Will’s legs quivered slightly as he said, “I... I’m afraid I don’t...”

Will was rightfully nervous since Daryl should’ve only been aware of the initial four people he had sent over to the island. After all, those were the ones he sent under Daryl’s orders to test Gerald’s strength.

By right, Daryl shouldn’t have known about the two confidants he had secretly sent over to assassinate Gerald. Despite that, after hearing Daryl’s statement, Will knew without a doubt that the old man knew about his actions. Thinking back, had Daryl actually come to violently interrogate or warn him that night...?

Seeing how nervous Will was, Daryl simply smiled as he patted Will’s shoulder while saying, “There’s no need to be so ill at ease...”

While he was still stunned, Will eventually snapped out of it before replying, “...I... I only did that to test Gerald’s strength... To be quite frank, I had no idea that Gerald was that strong... Neither of my confidants was even able to pose a challenge to him... In fact, one of them ended up having a broken arm! Due to that, his cultivation will surely be influenced negatively from now on...”

Waving his hand to signify that he didn’t mind, Will then said, “I see... Either way, again, do you have any idea where he is now?”

“I... don’t... From the moment he left Gong Island, I’ve lost all news about him...” replied Will as he shook his head.

Will, for one, had kept his network of information so confidential that he was sure that Daryl had never found out about it throughout the years. With that in mind, there was no way in hell he was going to tell Daryl about it now.

“...I see. Well, if that’s the case, it’s unfortunate, but I guess we won’t be able to tell when he’ll return...” muttered Daryl in a cold and stern voice...

Chapter 2042

After a slight pause, Will eventually brought himself to say, “...Do... you really want to meet him that much, sir...?”

“To kill him, yes. I’ve told you time and again that you’re the only heir of the Crawford family, haven’t I? If you still refuse to believe that, then you can just leave!” retorted Daryl as a frown formed on his face.

“I-I apologize for doubting you! I believe you! I truly do...!” replied Will, quivering in fear.

“If you do, then why did you secretly plan that assassination that night?” replied Daryl in a hoarse voice as he stubbed his cigarette out before loudly tapping his walking stick against the floor.

“...T-that...” muttered Will, momentarily at a loss at what to say.

Will, for one, had always thought that his plans were flawless. He never imagined that despite all his efforts to hide it from Daryl, that old man still managed to find out...!

“I’ll say it right now that you nearly ruined all my plans!” scowled Daryl with a snort.

“I-I know what I did was wrong now, sir...!” replied Will as he lowered his head.

In the end, Will was merely an adopted child, and his ultimate fear was having Daryl suddenly give up on him. It definitely explained why he generally didn’t

dare to disobey Daryl's orders. Still, if Daryl truly did decide to drop his protection and care for Will, then not only would Will lose his high position in Yearning Island, but there was a high chance that he would be driven away as well!

Knowing that Will had been scared straight, Daryl then said in a frigid tone, "This had better be the last time... If I ever find out that you disobeyed me again, you can just pack up and leave Yearning Island for good!"

Following that, Will left the room without another word, leaving Will frozen on the spot for quite some time.

Eventually, a cold breeze blew into the room, snapping Will out of it. Heaving a heavy sigh, Will then flopped onto a chair...

Though Daryl's words were law, Will's resolve to kill Gerald was even greater than his fear of abandonment. The truth was, he simply couldn't bring himself to believe that Daryl wanted Gerald dead. With that in mind, Will knew that until he had personally killed Gerald, his position as the Crawford family's heir would remain uncertain...

Gnashing his teeth as he grabbed a glass of water, Will then growled, "Gerald...! I'll kill you if it's the last thing I do...!"

Seconds later, the glass shattered from his immense grip, sending glass shards falling all over the place...

Moving back to Gerald, his body had returned to peak condition after a night's rest in Japan. After breakfast, the three of them sat in their room to begin discussing things...

"Even after asking around last night, I wasn't able to get any news about the Seadom tribe. However, it's a fair assumption that this family has remained very well hidden in the real world's Japan. After all, they've yet to be discovered by others," said Master Ghost.

"I suppose so. There goes the hope of finding them in a day or two. I guess we'll only be able to find the tribe after some time. We can't get too hasty either or we may end up scaring them away when we actually find them..."

replied Gerald—who didn't find their current situation to be overly disappointing—with a nod.

“...Um... What are you talking about...?” muttered Aiden who was completely at a loss...

“Essentially, the Seadom tribe is a tribe that's existed for thousands of years... We're looking for them since according to rumors, they know a way of locating and entering Yearning Island. With that in mind, if the rumors are true and we do manage to find them, we can finally have a head start above Daryl,” explained Gerald, knowing that Aiden no longer had to focus on protecting Lindsay.

Chapter 2043

After hearing what Gerald had to say, Aiden's expression momentarily stiffened before he replied, “...But... we don't even know which area of Japan they're in! Aren't we essentially just on a wild goose chase?”

“...Unfortunately, we are,” replied Gerald with a sigh.

“Regardless, there's really no rush. I'm sure we'll find the Seadom tribe sooner or later,” said Master Ghost.

“Indeed. Speaking of which, what's up with that special forces competition of yours? Let's start investigating from there. It's better than staying cooped up in this room anyway,” asked Gerald as he looked at Aiden.

“Well, according to my force's leader, it's really just an ordinary competition that selects the most powerful people from each country's special forces to eventually compete in Japan. While it's not a standard competition, there's honestly not much honor to be gained by participating. Still, it is an international competition, so emphasis still needs to be placed on it,” explained Aiden.

“I see... Well, it wouldn't hurt to go have a look at it, right?” replied Gerald.

“We may as well since we don't really know where to start looking anyway. Still, since it's being held in Japan, I'm sure most of the participants will be influential and powerful... With that in mind, we could possibly gain more clues about the Seadom tribe from them,” added Master Ghost.

“Then it's settled, I suppose! I'll go contact the organizer!” said Aiden as he fished his phone out to make a call.

Though the call itself was short, Aiden successfully got the organizer to send a car over—to their hotel—to pick them up. The organizer didn't seem to mind Gerald and Master Ghost coming along either.

Either way, it was about half an hour later when a few men from the Japanese military came over to pick them up. After checking out, the trio then headed to the competition's venue...

The competition itself wasn't being held in the Japanese military's headquarters, but instead, on a training ground. Regardless, upon arriving, the trio saw that several of the houses were constructed with composite boards, a clear sign that they were temporary structures for the special forces to live in.

Aside from that, it was also noteworthy that many people were already there. As it turned out, though the competition was still half a month away, many of the participants had arrived in advance to practice and get themselves used to the environment in hopes that it would contribute to getting them the win. After all, who wouldn't want to do their countries proud?

Regardless, the person in charge eventually stopped before one of the houses. Getting out of the car, he then pointed at the house while handing Aiden a key before saying, “That's the place. Since you're the special forces from Weston, you'll be staying here for now.”

Upon receiving the key, Aiden couldn't help but widen his eyes. After all, if it wasn't for the fact that he had been told that this was the Japanese soldiers' training grounds, he would've surely assumed that the entire area was just a construction zone! With how shabby the houses looked, it almost felt like they would topple the second strong winds blew!

With that in mind, once the person in charge left the scene, Aiden turned to look at Gerald before apologetically saying, "...Had I known the living conditions would be this poor here, we should've just remained in the hotel..."

"Well, since we're here anyway, let's just take it easy. Besides, living here for half a month won't kill us," replied Gerald as he took the key from Aiden and opened the door...

Though the house was only meant to be lived in temporarily, it was by no means small. In total, there was a living room, three bedrooms, a washroom, and a dining room...

Either way, once they were done unpacking, Gerald looked out the window to see what the situation was like outside...

Shortly after, Aiden entered Gerald's room before saying, "It's almost noon, Gerald. Are you hungry? I'm about to ask for some food, myself!"

"Go ahead," replied Gerald with a subtle smile.

Once Aiden left, Gerald fished out the sea map from his pocket... As expected, Yearning Island had disappeared from the map... Aside from that, the island where the Seadom Tribe held their sacrificial ritual was nowhere to be seen as well...

Chapter 2044

Since the map itself looked like scrap paper, had Gerald not witnessed the disappearing islands before this, he wouldn't have believed that the map was actually more complex than it looked.

At that moment, Master Ghost walked in and asked, "Anything new on the map?"

"Nothing. I don't even know when Yearning Island will reappear again. It seems that the sea map truly has a lot of unresolved mysteries... Had I known about this back then, I wouldn't have left the ancient ruins so quickly... That

old man could've possibly helped with this!" replied Gerald as he shook his head with a sigh.

True enough, had he known about all these mysteries back then, he would've surely remained in the ancient ruins till he uncovered all the mysteries of the sea map, no matter how long it took.

"Indeed... Do you think we should return to the ancient ruins?" asked Master Ghost.

"Just forget about it... So what if we manage to uncover the sea map's secrets? All we'd be able to do is locate Yearning Island a little easier. In the end, we'd still have to look for the Seadom tribe to even get there," replied Gerald as he shook his head.

Hearing how dispirited Gerlad was, Master Ghost then patted him on the shoulder before saying, "Don't get too anxious. Just so you know, we're progressing quite speedily. After all, not only do we have the sea map now, but we also know about the island where the Crawfords are staying on. Once we find the Seadom tribe, we'll definitely be able to rescue your parents..."

Hearing that, Gerald then took in a deep breath before smiling as he said, "...I know..."

Shortly after, Aiden returned with some food prepared by the Japanese military. Completely different from the common dishes in Weston, lunch appeared to be extremely traditional Bibimbap and Kimbap, served together with a large bowl of Miso soup...

Regardless, the trio then surrounded the dining table to have their lunch.

Halfway through, however, they were suddenly greeted by the sound of rapid knocking, followed by someone yelling, "Is Aiden in there? Aiden Baker from Weston!"

Sipping on his soup, Gerald then said, "Looks like someone's looking for you."

"Who is it?" asked Aiden as he lowered his bowl and chopsticks before heading toward the door...

Upon opening it, he was greeted by the sight of a few Asian special forces, all of them wearing combat uniforms...

After sizing Aiden up, one of the men angrily growled, "Are you Aiden? I go by Adler Lightbody, and I'm a special force member from the Yanam military. From what I've heard, you came to my military's headquarters one and created a giant mess there with your friend, no?"

Not wanting to bother with him, Aiden simply said, "You're mistaking me for someone else."

Before Aiden could even close the door, Adler grabbed onto it, getting a good look at Gerald and Master Ghost.

"Who are those two? Is one of them Gerald?" asked Adler.

"With all due respect, we aren't in Yanam, good sir. If there's anything you wish to clarify, then go look for Carter! He's your current acting leader, no? Now stop trying to mess with us!" retorted Aiden as he frowned. After all, not only was Adler challenging him, but he was also challenging Weston.

By this point, the racket had attracted the attention of several other special forces from overseas. From the looks of it, they seemed to be enjoying the scene, with many even advocating Aiden to challenge Adler to a duel...

Chapter 2045

"So you even know the name of my military's acting leader! I'm now more certain than ever that you're the ones who made the mess! Had I not been out on a mission back then, I would've definitely prevented you from leaving all willy-nilly! Regardless, now that we've finally met, why don't you start explaining about the mysterious disappearance of my leader?!" growled Adler as he glared at Aiden.

Had it not been for the fact that so many people were currently looking at him, he would've surely beat up Aiden by now.

“...What? Yanam’s leader has gone missing?” exclaimed several of the onlookers at that moment.

Following that, almost everyone turned to look at Aiden. Making a national leader ‘mysteriously’ disappear was no easy feat, but if a member of Yanam’s special forces was saying so, it must be true. Besides, if it was just a hoax, Adler wouldn’t have declared all this in the presence of so many people!

Staring at Adler for a while, Aiden then replied, “As I’ve said, it’s useless to ask me about this. Just go back and ask Carter if you’re that keen on the topic. Either way, now that you’ve successfully ruined my appetite, I implore you to leave. Otherwise, I’ll assume you’re challenging Weston’s special forces.”

“...Fine! Have it your way!” retorted Adler as he released his grip on their door. As much as Adler wanted to get rid of Aiden, he knew better than to make a move in front of so many people. After all, offending Weston as a whole would surely spell major trouble...

Before he left, however, Adler made sure to lower his head as he whispered, “I advise you to behave properly in the next few days. If you act out of line, you may just get whisked away by someone...!”

“Just leave already,” replied Aiden as he closed the door behind him. He really couldn’t be bothered by Adler’s taunts.

Once he got back to the dining table, Aiden simply resumed his meal as if nothing had ever happened.

Gerald himself had heard everything. With that in mind, once he finished his Kimbap, he smiled faintly before saying, “It seems that this competition isn’t as peaceful as we imagined.”

“Don’t worry, if he comes looking for trouble again, I’ll just get rid of him. We won’t get into trouble either since we’ll only be practicing self-defense,” replied Aiden as he clenched his fists. While he knew he couldn’t match against cultivators, he was still quite confident in his ability to get rid of a regular member of the special forces.

“Negative. Remember, you’re representing Weston in this competition. If you make a move, it’ll only paint Weston in a bad name. Just let me handle this trivial affair. You just have to focus on the competition,” replied Gerald as he waved his hand.

Gerald, for one, didn’t want Aiden to get into trouble. Besides, if Gerald was to be completely honest, Aiden had simply accompanied him to Yanam back then. Even when Aiden was there, he barely did anything.

“It’s alright, brother Gerald! Just leave everything to me! I can handle this much!” declared Aiden as he patted his chest confidently.

“Look, either you leave this affair to me, or Master Ghost and I are leaving right now,” replied Gerald as he wiped the corner of his mouth with his sleeve.

Before flabbergasted Aiden could even reply, Gerald had already gotten up and entered his room...

Looking at the stupefied Aiden, Master Ghost simply smiled before saying, “As Gerald had said, it’s best that you leave this to him. Remember, you’re a member of the special forces. If you fight them before the competition and get caught by the Japanese military, you’ll surely be disqualified in no time...”

Following that conversation, evening soon came, and everyone had their dinner before returning to their rooms to rest...

Once he was full, Gerald himself laid on his bed, a cigarette in hand as he intently observed the map...

Chapter 2046

It had been nearly a week since he had last seen Yearning Island on the map. Despite the fact that he kept a close eye on the map whenever he was free, the island simply refused to show up again...

As Gerald continued looking at the map, he suddenly heard someone say, “You’ve got some nerve looking for trouble with us...!”

Slipping the sea map back into his pocket, Gerald simply smiled wryly as he left his room...

Upon exiting, he saw Master Ghost and Aiden—who were seated in the living room—staring at the front door, making it quite evident that they had heard the same voice.

Just as Aiden was about to get up, however, Gerald firmly pushed him back into his chair.

“Just stay here. This has nothing to do with you,” replied Gerald in a casual tone as he exited the house and closed the door behind him.

Of course, the owner of the voice was none other than Adler...

“Ironic that you say that we’re looking for trouble when you’re doing the same,” said Gerald as he narrowed his eyes.

Ignoring that comment, Adler simply crossed his arms, looking completely unafraid of Gerald as he replied, “You’re Gerald, right? Before coming to Japan, I’ve heard about the incidents that happened in Yanam. There were rumors that you were responsible for my leader’s disappearance, you know. In fact, it was also said that you were the one who killed so many of those men in the military! With that in mind, it’s my duty to not let you leave this place alive...!”

“It appears that you know little about me. I’ll say it now that my issues with Yanam have been resolved, and I see no reason to cause any trouble. With that in mind, leave now and I’ll pretend this conversation never happened. How about it?” said Gerald with a subtle smile before pointing to the side, clearly indicating for Adler to leave.

“Cut the cr*p! You’re coming back to Yanam with me now!” growled Adler as he reached out to grab Gerald’s collar.

However, before he could even do so, Gerald quickly smacked the back of Adler’s hand! Due to how rapid Gerald’s counterattack had been, Adler was only able to register what had happened when he felt the searing pain in his hand!

“M-My hand...!” hissed Adler as he desperately tried to keep his voice down.

Looking at his swollen hand, it was already as red as a beet. It was barely an exaggeration that his hand felt like it had just been smashed by a hammer! With such immense pain, for a moment, he couldn't even feel his fingers...

Whatever the case was, Gerald—who was now frowning—then said, “I'm giving you one final chance. Get the hell out of my sight.”

Honestly, had it not been for the fact that he didn't want to cause any unnecessary issues for Aiden—from the other special forces from overseas—he would've gotten rid of Adler the second he came looking for trouble.

“Tell me where my leader is...!” retorted Adler as he drew out an army dagger after realizing that Gerald hadn't injured him too seriously.

After thinking about it for a while, Gerald then said, “No idea. He's probably in some forest.”

Enraged, Adler then lifted his dagger, aiming it at Gerald's heart as he yelled, “To hell with you!”

Gerald didn't move an inch as the dagger came diving straight for his chest! Adler himself smiled wickedly as he felt the dagger collide against Gerald... before it stopped.

Eyes widening, Adler's immediate thought was that something must have been placed on Gerald's chest to prevent the dagger from stabbing though. With that in mind, he increased the force of his thrust, figuring that whatever the armor was, it would eventually get pierced through.

However, no matter how much force he applied, the dagger simply wouldn't budge...!

“Are you done?” replied Gerald with a slight frown.

While he was previously still worried about negatively affecting Aiden's performance in the competition, Adler was courting death a bit too much by this point...

Chapter 2047

“...W-who are you...?!” said Adler, his fear now apparent in his eyes. After all, he was now certain that there was nothing on Gerald’s chest. However, that meant that the tip of the dagger was currently against his skin! Why the hell hadn’t it pierced through him yet? Was his skin made of steel or something?!

“I’m just a person from Weston,” replied Gerald as he grabbed Adler by the neck, not wanting to play any more games with this person.

Before Adler could even resist, a loud, ‘snap’ could be heard... and just like that, Adler was dead.

After looking at the corpse for a while, Gerald dragged it to the back of the house. Following that, he used the Herculean Primordial Spirit to gather immense heat in his hand... and within a blink of an eye, Adler’s corpse completely evaporated.

With the body now gone, Gerald dusted his hands and looked around to see if there were any witnesses. Seeing no one, Gerald then re-entered the house...

Seeing that Gerald was now back, Aiden—who had earlier heard signs of fighting outside—immediately got to his feet and asked, “Is he still trying to look for trouble, brother Gerald?”

Had Gerald not prohibited him from leaving, he would’ve surely picked a fight with Adler earlier...

Whatever the case was, Gerald simply waved his hand as he replied, “He’s no more. With that said, nobody is allowed to bring this incident up again.”

Before Aiden could ask for more details, Gerald had already returned to his room, closing the door behind him...

Though he was puzzled, Aiden eventually sat back down to finish his soup. He didn’t even bother asking Master Ghost about it since both of them had remained seated there earlier, completely unaware of what Gerald had done.

Knowing that he wasn't going to get any answers, once he was done with his soup, Aiden then returned to his room to sleep...

The very next morning, instead of being awoken by Gerald or Master Ghost, Aiden was snapped awake by a racket not too far from their house.

Wondering if something serious had happened again, Aiden then hopped out of bed and put on a coat before walking out of his room. Upon walking past the dining room, he saw that Gerald was having his breakfast, cool as a cucumber. It almost seemed like he didn't hear all the noise outside at all.

Raising a slight brow, Aiden then opened the front door... Only to realize that a group of people had gathered right outside their house! Including the person in charge of Japan—that they had previously met—, the group consisted of special forces from various other countries.

Wondering what all the ruckus was about, Aiden frowned slightly as he asked, "...What seems to be the problem here?"

Hearing that, the person in charge showed Aiden his identification card before replying, "Yes, well, before anything else, we'd like to ask whether you've seen Mr. Adler from Yanam recently, Mr. Baker. From what I've heard, you and him had a dispute yesterday, and I find it quite odd that he mysteriously disappeared right after that!"

Remembering what Gerald had said the previous night, Aiden simply replied, "No, I haven't."

"I beg your pardon? Look, some of the participants heard him looking for trouble with you last night. Are you absolutely sure you didn't meet him then?" said the person in charge.

For a special forces member from overseas to go missing in a foreign country, the person in charge knew that he had to find the culprit. Otherwise, he would surely be held accountable for this incident. This was no longer a small matter...

“While it’s true that he tried to bother us last night, we simply ignored him. Following that, he left and we have no idea where he went off to. Not that it concerns us,” replied Aiden.

Upon hearing that, the person in charge then turned to look at those behind him while asking, “Have any of you seen him since then?”

Naturally, all of them shook their heads, unwilling to be involved in the incident. After all, if Adler truly was in trouble—or even dead—everyone knew that the matter wouldn’t be easily resolved...

Chapter 2048

Scratching the back of his head, the person in charge then sighed as he said, “How strange... It doesn’t really help that he disappeared right after he had some conflict with you yesterday... If this incident can’t be resolved, what do I even say to the Japanese military!”

When he first heard about Adler picking a fight with Aiden, he figured that it would just end in a fistfight. After all, incidents like that weren’t uncommon during competitions involving special forces. Unfortunately, now that someone had gone missing, death wasn’t completely off the table. With that in mind, the entire situation had become more troublesome than it should have been.

As the person in charge, he knew that he had to be held responsible no matter the outcome. Honestly, resigning from his position was a light punishment compared to having to bear the consequences if the case turned out to be a serious one...

“That’s for you to investigate. I hope you understand that that doesn’t concern us in the least,” replied Aiden as he waved his hand. As Gerald had said, he had gotten rid of Adler last night, so all Aiden could do was act dumb so that Gerald wouldn’t get into trouble...

“...Well... Alright, then. You can continue resting now. However, if you do find anything, remember to report back to me as soon as possible,” said the person in charge, knowing that he wasn’t going to get any more information from Aiden.

It certainly didn’t help that this newly established place didn’t have any surveillance cameras. With that, all he could do was investigate the incident step by step. Honestly, he didn’t really need to immediately report the case to the headquarters.

After all, if Adler truly had been murdered, there would definitely be traces of the crime. With that in mind, the person in charge figured that reporting to the headquarters—and Yanam—about the case after he caught the murderer would definitely take care of the situation...

He couldn’t just blame Aiden right off the bat either since he didn’t have any evidence. Japan, for one, couldn’t afford to offend Weston without solid proof, and the person in charge was well aware of that.

Whatever the case was, Aiden then nodded before replying, “Will do.”

With that said, he then returned into the house, closing the door behind him. Now that he was inside again, he made sure to close all the curtains and windows as well.

Walking up to Gerald, he then asked, “Brother Gerald... Did you really get rid of Adler...?”

Before Gerald re-entered the house last night, Aiden distinctly remembered hearing faint shuffling outside. Though he was pretty sure that this wasn’t Gerald’s first rodeo at disposing of a body, Aiden couldn’t help but feel worried. After all, he was participating in the special forces competition. If evidence about the murder was found, it would surely trouble him and Weston—as a whole—greatly...

“Of course,” replied Gerald with a subtle smile.

“You... didn’t leave any traces behind, right...?” muttered Aiden.

“Are you doubting my capabilities?” replied Gerald as he lit a cigarette.

“No, of course not... I’m just worried that they’ll find proof that we did it. After all, we’re in foreign territory now. If they somehow manage to find out that we’re the culprits, then the entire Weston will surely be in hot water...” said Aiden as he shook his head. If he alone was to bear the burden, Aiden wouldn’t have been this worried. However, now that the entirety of Weston was involved...

Understanding Aiden’s worries, Gerald then patted his shoulder before replying, “Don’t worry, I’ve made sure to be extra careful while I was doing the deed. You won’t end up in trouble.”

Hearing that, Aiden then slowly nodded as he said, “...Well, if you’re that certain, I feel rest assured...!”

Moving back to the person in charge, he had decided to stick with his plan to not report the incident to the Japanese headquarters till he found the murderer. To his disappointment, however, even after scouring the training grounds, they weren’t able to find a single clue as to where Adler had disappeared to.

Currently, the person in charge was sitting in his office, and before him, stood a team of special forces—that belonged to the headquarters—who were specifically here to maintain order...

Chapter 2049

“So... Any of you find anything...?” asked the person in charge as he looked at them.

“Unfortunately, even after all our investigation efforts, Mr. Komura seems to have vanished into thin air! We haven’t even been able to find a single clue!” replied the leader of the small team.

“Not one?!” replied Komura as he slammed his fist onto the table in his frustration.

“Zero. Regardless, do you think Adler could’ve simply returned to Yanam last night...?” asked another special forces soldier.

“Negative. Even if he did receive an urgent mission and had to return to Yanam, the Yanam headquarters would’ve surely informed us about it first. Him leaving without a word is highly improbable, especially since he’s someone working with the military. Besides, even if he did return to Yanam, why would he leave all his luggage behind?” replied Mr. Komura.

“Then... Could those men from Weston really have killed him...? After all, I remember Adler saying something along the lines of three major families in Yanam being completely destroyed quite recently... He also said something about several of Yanam’s men—in the military—losing their lives! However, his biggest claim yesterday was that those Weston men caused the mysterious disappearance of Godwin Lindod, his leader!” explained the leader of the small group.

“...While even I’ve heard about that incident a while back, we have no evidence that those Weston men murdered anyone. Even if they’re related to the actual people who did the deed, we can’t just place the blame on them without having any solid evidence! Regardless, continue investigating the case! If we’re still unable to find any clues about Adler, I’ll eventually have to report this to headquarters, and all of you know that punishment comes next!” growled Komura as he slammed his fist onto the table again.

Truth be told, Komura had only volunteered to be in charge of this competition so that he could get a promotion. If things went smoothly, his military rank would surely get promoted right after the new year. Now that such an incident had happened, however, Komura had a feeling that demotion awaited him...

“Loud and clear, Mr. Komura!” declared the members of the team as they nodded.

“...Well? Hurry on, then! Even if the headquarters doesn’t trouble you, I will if you still fail to find any clues! For Christ’s sake... To think that a special forces soldier would suddenly disappear during a competition... It’s simply too humiliating! I can only pray that word about this doesn’t get out!” grumbled Komura as he sighed.

After exchanging glances with each other, the other men then left the room without another word...

In the following two days, Gerald and his party mostly remained indoors and only left to get their meals. Though Komura had come to interrogate them four times by this point, Aiden always claimed that he knew nothing about the case. With that, All Komura could do was leave, dejected...

It was on the third day when all the participants were informed by the Japanese Military that the venue of the competition was going to be changed. Aside from that, the participants were also told to look for their own places to stay, with the Japanese Military paying for any accommodation expenses.

The sudden announcement evidently stemmed from the fact that Komura had reported the case to the Japanese Military. After all, he hadn't managed to find a single clue on Adler's whereabouts even after all this time...

Since nothing could be done about the disappearance, the Japanese Military could only separate the participants to prevent similar incidents from repeating...

Chapter 2050

Still, if Adler truly was murdered by the men from Weston—or any other special forces soldiers from other powerful countries, for that matter—the Japanese Military knew that they were going to be in hot water...

While getting the soldiers to look for their own accommodations would make things slightly messier, at the very least, the Japanese Military would have to take less responsibility if a similar case took place...

Gerald himself could guess why the Japanese military was doing this. With that, after hearing the news, he simply smiled before saying, "Guess the Japanese Military is getting worried."

"Indeed, though I can't blame them. After all, I'm sure the Japanese Military has ever encountered a case like this before. Nobody would've been able to foresee the disappearance of such an outstanding special force soldier," replied Master Ghost.

“Regardless, let’s focus on finding ourselves a new place to stay first. I doubt safety will be an issue since aside from those from Yanam, there aren’t any others here who’d pick a bone with us. Still, locating the Seadom tribe has proved to be quite difficult... I wonder if they’ve already integrated themselves into Japanese society...” muttered Gerald as he felt a slight headache coming.

To think that they had to locate the Seadom tribe members who could be anywhere in this country... It certainly didn’t help that there was a high chance that they kept their identities well hidden... While the task was as difficult as looking for Yearning Island, it was thankfully not as dangerous...

Whatever the case was, after leaving the Japanese training grounds, Gerald and his party ultimately decided to return to their initial hotel. Since the competition was still half a month away, they figured that as long as they asked for the competition’s new venue two days before it was held, they would definitely make it there in time.

Just as they were checking into the hotel, Gerald couldn’t help but notice that Master Ghost was staring at a woman—who wore clothes that suggested that she was part of the Japanese special forces—who was also checking in. While not as common as men, most countries also had women in their special forces. After all, some missions could be carried out easier by women instead of men.

Regardless, with how intently Master Ghost was staring at her, Gerald couldn’t help but chuckle before asking, “What? Have you fallen for her?”

“As if I’d fall for such a woman! Either way, I’m just interested in her necklace,” replied Master Ghost as he shook his head, his eyes never leaving the woman.

Frowning slightly in response, Gerald then said, “...And... Why exactly are you so interested in that? Did you bump your head hard this morning or something?”

“Look, it’s no ordinary necklace! If my hunch is correct, it seems to be a pendant of the Seadom tribe. After all, one of the tribe’s special totems is on it, or at least I think it is. I’m still not too familiar with the tribe so I could be wrong,” muttered Master Ghost.

Though Master Ghost had been speaking softly this entire time, Gerald found the revelation to be explosively loud!

“...A pendant of the Seadom tribe, you say...” replied Gerald as he narrowed his eyes at the woman. True enough, she had a pendant around her neck, though she was a bit too far for him to have a good look at it...

“Again, I could be wrong. Just keep that in mind,” said Master Ghost when he saw how excited Gerald was. He was just worried that Gerald would end up sorely disappointed again if he ended up getting it wrong.

Taking in a deep breath, Gerald—whose hands were now shaking slightly—then replied, “It isn’t easy to stumble across such a specific-looking totem. With that in mind, we could very well be on the right trail.”

“Well, what do you plan to do? Are you going to just ask her about it?” asked Master Ghost in his low voice.

“I’m... not too sure yet. Let’s just observe her for a while first,” replied Gerald as he shook his head, wondering how he should face the Seadom tribe member without frightening or disgusting her. A bad first impression would surely hinder their efforts of learning the secrets of Yearning Island...

“Agreed. Then I’ll be bringing Aiden upstairs first,” said Master Ghost as he took their room card from the receptionist and dragged Aiden toward the elevator...

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"Agreed. Then I'll be bringing Aiden upstairs first," said Master Ghost as he took their room card from the receptionist and dragged Aiden toward the elevator...

Chapter 2051

Nodding in response, Gerald then continued observing the woman who finally completed the check-in procedures shortly after.

Following the woman into the elevator, Gerald kept a close eye on her all the way up to the twelfth floor where she eventually stepped out. While he didn't follow her out, Gerald had a feeling that knowing which floor she was staying on was as good a start as any.

After all, Gerald knew better than to converse with her straight off the bat. If he really did end up frightening her, she would surely be unwilling to talk about the Seadom tribe no matter how much he asked...

Whatever the case was, Gerald then returned to his room...

Flopping onto the couch, Gerald then began smoking a cigarette as he pondered his next step.

Seeing that, Aiden—who hadn't heard Gerald and Master Ghost's conversation earlier since he was busy thinking about the conversation—was prompted to ask, "Where exactly did he-"

"Just leave him be for a while. We should focus on getting our own rest in the meantime," replied Master Ghost as he cut Aiden's question short and pushed him into his room. With that done, Master Ghost entered his own room, making sure to close the door behind him...

Gerald himself didn't budge an inch, and he spent most of his time staring out the window while occasionally puffing on his cigarette...

It was quite a while later when Gerald finally crossed his legs. Honestly, he had expected to have much more trouble locating members of the Seadom tribe. That was pretty much his main worry from the moment he left the Japanese training grounds. To think that one of the tribe's members would just show herself like that within a few hours!

What more, since she had that pendant, it seemed that she had a special rank within the Seadom tribe. With that in mind, Gerald knew that there was now a higher chance of him unlocking the secrets of Yearning Island...

As he thought about his parents and elder sister—who were still on Yearning Island—, Gerald’s heart began to ache, and it ached so much that Gerald ended up choking on some cigarette smoke...

It was sometime later when Gerald finally got to his feet again. Looking at the many cigarettes he had burnt through, Gerald then turned to look out the window as he reminisced about his childhood...

Daryl had always had a lasting impression on him, even in his earliest memories. Now that he was getting closer to his grandfather, that feeling was honestly getting overpowering. Still, to think that he still didn’t know what kind of person Daryl actually was.

Why did he have to kidnap his sister and parents? What was his true goal...?

After thinking about it for a while longer, Gerald eventually turned to look at the two other rooms and said, "...Hey, both of you... Come out for a while."

Seconds later, Master Ghost and Aiden opened the doors to their rooms...

Clearly concerned, Aiden—who had been wondering about Gerald’s sudden silence and change in mood the entire time he was inside his room—was first to ask, "...Um... Why are you feeling down all of a sudden...?"

"You see, back when we were in the lobby, Master Ghost saw a Japanese female special forces soldier wearing a special pendant that appeared to be native to the Seadom Tribe," explained Gerald, figuring it was high time that Aiden knew...

Chapter 2052

"...Huh? If that’s the case, what are we still waiting here for? Let’s go ask her about the Seadom tribe while we can! What’ll we do if she suddenly runs off?" asked Aiden in a slightly nervous tone.

"Calm yourself," replied Gerald as he patted Aiden’s shoulder. He had already expected the boy to get anxious the second he heard about the news...

“What do you mean, ‘calm myself’? This may be our best shot of finding someone from the Seadom tribe! We can’t let her leave! If she does, what are we going to do? Extend our stay in Japan indefinitely?!” grumbled Aiden as he flopped onto the couch.

Watching as Aiden then lit one of his cigarettes and began puffing it, Gerald explained, “First off, since she’s in special forces, it’s evident that she’s here for the competition. With that in mind, she won’t be leaving anytime soon. Besides, the hotel has a record of her registration. Regardless, if we head there all willy-nilly, what makes you think we won’t end up scaring her? Forget calling for help from her tribesmen, she may even call the police!”

“Gerald’s right. I say we slowly get to know her first. That way, we can prevent a situation where she feels disgusted with us right off the bat. Regardless, we should only start asking about the Seadom tribe when we’re on friendlier terms. With any luck, we’ll finally be able to learn more about Yearning Island then...” added Master Ghost.

“My thoughts exactly,” replied Gerald as he nodded in agreement.

“...So... We just wait here for now...?” muttered Aiden. Though he now got where they were coming from, he couldn’t help but feel that they were simply procrastinating.

Shrugging, Gerald then said, “We wait for an opportunity to present itself. If she really does leave before we get a chance to talk to her, we’ll just have to look for another way...”

“Now that would be a great pity...” replied Aiden with a sigh.

“If it happens, it happens...” replied Gerald with a bitter smile before starting to head downstairs alone...

Since they were going to be staying here for a while, Gerald made it a point to learn more about the area. While he didn’t have any Japanese enemies, that didn’t mean that his enemies wouldn’t pursue him all the way over here. Regardless, this wasn’t Weston, all he could do was rely on himself to do all this. What more, he couldn’t just do things casually like how he had done back in Yanam.

Whatever the case was, upon seeing that Gerald was leaving, Master Ghost and Aiden immediately wanted to follow. However, Gerald quickly rejected the idea.

After all, Master Ghost wasn't capable of defending himself. With that in mind, he would only end up becoming someone Gerald had to protect if they bumped into any trouble. As for Aiden, he was here for that big competition, so Gerald didn't want to involve him in his affairs. With his point made, the duo could only remain in their rooms as Gerald took the elevator downstairs, a cigarette in his mouth...

Night had already fallen by this point, and after staring at the endless stream of pedestrians for a while, Gerald found himself getting more relaxed as he came to terms with the situation.

While his sister and parents had been on Yearning Island for a while now, Gerald had a feeling that his grandfather hadn't mistreated them too badly. After all, in the end, they were still blood-related with Daryl, so his grandfather probably wouldn't kill them right off the bat. His hunch was further supported by some things his father had previously told him regarding his grandfather...

Either way, as he continued walking down the street, he began thinking about how he should get to know the woman from the Seadom tribe. After all, he was pretty sure that the term 'Seadom tribe' itself was a taboo among those from that tribe. But if that was the case, how was he going to ask her about it?

Just as Gerald was feeling a slight headache coming, he noticed a supermarket nearby. Figuring that he may as well get himself more cigarettes, Gerald then began walking toward the building... Only to suddenly stop in his tracks.

With the aid of his Herculean Primordial Spirit, Gerald was able to sense dangerous situations around him. Due to that, he could now sense a fight happening in the alley behind the hotel and the supermarket...!

Though he remained momentarily stunned, Gerald eventually snapped out of it and entered the supermarket...

Chapter 2053

In the end, this wasn't Weston, and he wasn't some superhero obligated to save the world. With that in mind, Gerald reminded himself that he didn't need to meddle in their business and land himself in unnecessary trouble...

Shortly after he had entered the supermarket, however, Gerald ended up freezing again. Thinking back, his Herculean Primordial Spirit would only react to dangerous fights between cultivators. With that in mind, this wasn't a normal fight at all...!

Realizing that, Gerald then walked to the counter and said, "A pack of cigarettes. And make it snappy."

After paying for his purchase, he then walked over to where the fight was happening. If there really were cultivators staying nearby, it would do him good to silently assess the situation, with emphasis on the 'silently'. Until he knew who he was dealing with, Gerald preferred remaining hidden...

Whatever the case was, Gerald stuck close to the wall as he made his way down the small, dark alley between the supermarket and hotel. Contrary to the hotel's luxurious-looking front, construction waste lay everywhere behind it.

Regardless, the more he inched his way to the back, the more motion—from the fight—he could feel. Still, now that he was much closer, he couldn't help but feel that these people weren't exactly cultivators. That, however, didn't mean that they were weak.

Either way, once he got to a corner, Gerald slowly peeked out... and from where he stood, he was able to see a man and woman fighting amongst the construction waste. From what he could tell, the man had the upper hand, and the woman wasn't going to be able to last much longer...

Still, since they weren't cultivators, he didn't feel the need to get himself involved in the fight. With that in mind, he lit another cigarette, prepared to return to his hotel after watching for a while longer...

Just as he was about to leave, however, he suddenly realized that the woman in battle looked awfully familiar... As Gerald pondered where he had met her

before, her chest area was momentarily illuminated by moonlight, causing something hanging from her neck to glint... and the second he saw the pendant she was wearing, Gerald's jaw instantly dropped.

It was the woman from the Seadom tribe! Now that he knew who she was, he immediately tossed his cigarette away and dashed toward the scene!

He had already thought long and hard about how to approach her to no avail. With that in mind, now that this opportunity was presenting itself, he was definitely grabbing it.

Though he had been at least thirty feet away from the two at the start, it barely took him a second to intercept the man who was about to stab a dagger right into the woman's chest!

The woman herself already had her eyes closed by that point, knowing full well that she didn't have the strength to fight back anymore. However, instead of searing pain, she was instead greeted by the feeling of a massive gust of wind that stopped right before her...

Following a soft, 'thud,' the woman was prompted to open her eyes... and standing before her, was a man who had successfully deflected the attack!

Though she was confused, she snapped out of it when the man—that she had been fighting—frowned before growling, "Who the hell are you? Why are you meddling in our affairs?"

Ignoring him, Gerald simply spread his arms out before glancing at the woman and saying, "Stay behind me."

Chapter 2054

By this point, Gerald was a hundred percent sure that the woman was someone from the Seadom tribe. With that in mind, he needed to protect her at all costs.

While she had no idea why Gerald wanted to help her in the first place, she simply agreed and remained close to his back...

“Answer me! Why are you meddling in our affairs? Which family do you belong to? Are you even Japanese?” growled the man who was understandably annoyed since he was so close to finishing Futaba Fujiko off just now.

Continuing to ignore him, Gerald then turned to look at Fujiko before asking, “Do you want him dead?”

“Don’t kill him... Just get him to leave...” whispered Fujiko.

Nodding in response, Gerald then faced the man again... and with lightning speed, he punched him right in the chest! Unable to even react in time, the man was instantly sent flying a good thirty feet from where he initially stood!

After the cloud of dust finally settled, the man slowly got to his feet, clutching his injured chest as he stared fearfully at Gerald. He, for one, was no idiot, and he knew better than to fight someone so inhumanly strong. Forget failing to accomplish the mission his family had given him, there was a high chance he would end up dead if he continued to fight back!

With all that in mind, the man then speedily disappeared into the night...

Watching as the man left the scene, Gerald couldn’t help but smile. After all, he was pretty sure that he had now left a good first impression on her. With that in mind, all he needed to do now was to slowly get to know her better, and with any luck, he would soon be able to ask about the Seadom tribe...

As he turned back to face her, he made sure to peek at her pendant to see if she truly was the person he was looking for. Once he confirmed it, Gerald scratched his cheek before looking to the side and asking, “...Um... Are you hurt...?”

“...It’s just a few bruises. Nothing serious. Regardless, I don’t think we’ve met before... Why did you help me out of the blue?” asked Fujiko as she stared at Gerald.

“I just enjoy playing the white knight,” replied Gerald.

“...I see. Thank... you...” said Fujiko in a soft tone as her body began to sway...

Luckily, Gerald caught her in time before she fell. After calling out to her a few times and getting no response, Gerald raised a slight brow as he placed his finger right under her nose... Thankfully, she was still breathing, and Gerald found himself heaving a sigh of relief...

Following that, Gerald then carried her back to the hotel...

While he knew which floor she was staying on, he hadn't the slightest clue what her room number was. Since he couldn't just bring her back to his room either, in the end, Gerald decided to simply book her a new room.

After placing her on the bed, Gerald couldn't help but sigh. Like hell she had only suffered from minor bruises...

For her to faint like this, she must have taken quite a bit of damage. However, since there weren't any bloodstains on her, he had a feeling that the injuries were internal... In order to confirm that, however, he first needed to undress her...

Chapter 2055

The second the thought crossed his mind, Gerald quickly ran to the washroom to splash his face with water.

While he didn't really want to undress her, this was a life-or-death situation. It had taken forever for him to find a member of the Seadom tribe, and since she had that special pendant, Gerald had a feeling that she had quite the status in her family as well.

With that in mind, if she ended up dying, Gerald knew that the chances of him finding another member of the Seadom tribe—with her rank—would surely be close to zero...

After thinking about it, Gerald sighed as he tried to calm himself. This wasn't the time to be thinking of such earthly desires. With that, he walked out of the bathroom and carefully began undressing her...

It was around two hours later when Gerald completely healed her internal injuries with his Herculean Primordial Spirit. With that done, he quickly draped her with a blanket before taking a cold shower to calm himself. Thankfully, it seemed to work.

Now that he was much calmer, Gerald sat on the couch and began smoking cigarette after cigarette as he waited for her to wake up...

It was a few hours later when Gerald suddenly heard shuffling sounds coming from the bed. Turning around, he saw that the undressed woman had finally woken up!

Immediately looking away, Gerald loudly explained, "B-before you say anything, you fainted back there... Just so you know, I'm proficient with medicine, and fearing that you could be fatally injured, I took the initiative to try healing you. Thankfully, I think I managed to heal most of your wounds... R-regardless, please put your clothes on first..."

Blushing in response, Fujiko—who knew he wasn't lying since she was feeling much better now—then replied, "T-thank you...!"

Honestly, even if Gerald hadn't said a thing, she wouldn't have been mad. After all, he had saved her twice tonight... She now saw Gerald as her benefactor, and she honestly didn't mind if he requested for her to be in a relationship with him...

Whatever the case was, upon realizing that his efforts hadn't been misunderstood, Gerald was so glad that he quickly waved his hand before saying, "You're very welcome."

"...Speaking of which, I still don't know what your name is... Also, you're not Japanese, right...? I may be wrong, but could you be from Weston...?" asked Fujiko as she stared at Gerald's back. Unknowingly, she was already starting to develop feelings for him...

“Well, yes, I’m from Weston, and you can call me Gerald Crawford. I came to Japan to settle some affairs,” replied Gerald in a casual tone.

“I see... I go by Futaba Fujiko, and I’m part of Japan’s special forces. I’m here to participate in a special forces competition. Unfortunately, I somehow ended up getting sneak attacked by enemies of my family. Had you not stepped in, I would’ve surely died back there...” explained Fujiko as she shook her head.

Not even her family had been able to predict that their enemy would strike there and then. Honestly, she did think about taking out the enemy since they were both already there back then. In the end, however, she was defeated... Thankfully, Gerald saved her in the nick of time. Still, when she thought about how she could’ve died back there, Fujiko couldn’t help but shiver in fear... Then again, things could’ve gone much worse if the enemy had chosen to use her as a hostage instead to threaten her family...

“...Don’t worry about it. I just so happened to be passing by, so I lent you a hand. I’m sure anyone would’ve done the same,” replied Gerald whose face was still reddened after seeing her undressed figure.

As Gerald continued suppressing his earthly desires, he heard Fujiko sigh before saying, “...Even if you say that, I still have to thank you for helping me today.”

Upon hearing the familiar rustle of clothes—and gathering that she must finally be putting her clothes on—Gerald heaved a sigh of relief before replying, “Don’t worry about it... I’m just glad you’re all healed up now...”

Chapter 2056

“Speaking of which... you said that the person who attacked you was an enemy of your family?” asked Gerald, refusing to turn around in case she hadn’t fully dressed herself yet.

“Indeed... His family has consistently been hostile toward mine. I don’t even know how he managed to find out I was staying here, but he did and he immediately attempted to assassinate me...” replied Fujiko as she shook her

head. Her family was clearly not expecting the attack either since they hadn't warned her in advance...

Whatever the case was, upon realizing that Gerald was still facing away, she couldn't help but laugh before saying, "I'm dressed now, so you can turn around..."

Hearing that, Gerald gave a sigh of relief as he finally turned to face her again...

"So... you came here to settle some affairs, you said... Pardon my assumption, but based on what I saw earlier, you seemed to be much stronger than that man who tried to kill me. With that in mind, could you be representing Weston for the competition...?" asked Fujiko as she stared at Gerald with dreamy eyes.

Though how they had met was rather cliché—with a heroic man like Gerald saving her, a damsel in distress, in the nick of time—Fujiko couldn't help but adore every second of it.

Waving his hand in response, Gerald then smiled before replying, "Unfortunately, that isn't the case. My friend's the person participating, and I only accompanied him here."

"I see! Regardless, I think I should mention that by helping me, you've unfortunately offended the Hanyu family... They're an organization of top assassins here, and I'm afraid they won't be letting you off that easily..." muttered Fujiko, her worry clearly reflected in her eyes. After all, though she knew that Gerald was strong, no amount of strength could take on an entire family of world-famous assassins that had a history spanning hundreds of years... Hell, not even the Japanese military dared to mess with them...

Upon hearing that, Gerald raised a slight brow as he replied, "...Oh? The Hanyus, you say..."

"Indeed... Have you heard about them before?" asked Fujiko.

"Well, they're quite famous so it shouldn't really be a surprise if I have," replied Gerald with a smile as he began reaching for a cigarette. However, the

moment he considered Fujiko's presence, Gerald immediately refrained from smoking.

Whatever the case was, after thinking for a while, Fujiko eventually said, "...Well, since you're in all this trouble because of me, why don't you live with my family for the moment? I'll explain what happened today to my father, and from there, we'll have a proper discussion to guarantee your safety... Though the Futabas may not be as strong as the Hanyus, we're still quite influential in Japan. With that in mind, I have a feeling that the Hanyus won't attack you all willy-nilly once they realize that you're under our protection..."

"I don't mind going with that," replied Gerald with a subtle smile.

Truth be told, he wasn't afraid of the Hanyus at all. After all, even if all that family's elites came after him in one go, he was pretty sure that he wouldn't even suffer a scratch. Still, this was his prime opportunity to get to know Fujiko better. Better yet, if her family truly was part of the Seadom tribe—and he managed to get close to them—, he would surely obtain a greater chance of inquiring about the secrets of Yearning Island. With all that in mind, there was no way in hell he was ever going to reject that idea.

"Then it's settled! Go ahead and tell your friend that you'll be returning with me for the time being. The Hanyus usually act fast and I'm worried that they'll send people over before we even manage to get out of this place," said Fujiko as she gave a good stretch, revealing quite a bit of her well-endowed figure beneath her simple clothes. The sight of it alone was enough to make Gerald look away...

Seeing that Gerald wasn't budging from the couch, Fujiko then nudged him on the shoulder before adding, "Um... Hello? We're burning daylight here... The Hanyus could cause trouble for us at any moment, you know?"

Chapter 2057

"...Got it. I'll go inform my friend first, then! Give me ten minutes! I'll regroup with you at the hotel lobby by then!" replied Gerald as he got to his feet and left the room...

Soon enough, he got back to his room and told Master Ghost and Aiden all that had happened. Once they were updated about the situation, he then slipped his coat on before heading to the lobby where Fujiko was waiting for him...

After regrouping, the duo got into his car, and under Fujiko's guidance, he speedily began driving toward her home...

Fast forward to a few minutes later, a small group of dagger-wielding men in black could be seen rushing toward the back of the hotel where Gerald had first saved Fujiko... If one was close and attentive enough, they'd surely be able to smell the familiar tang of blood drenched all over their bodies...

Looking at all the construction waste that lay around, the leader of the group was prompted to ask, "...Is this the place, Third?"

"It is. Just as I was about to heavily wound Fujiko, some man suddenly appeared and got in my way! He was so powerful that I had no choice but to retreat!" replied the person who had earlier attacked Fujiko.

"I see. Find out where he's currently staying, and once you do, end him!" ordered the leader in his low voice...

Since the Hanyus rarely had any issues with other parties when they carried out their missions, Gerald's sudden involvement was definitely infuriating. After all, had they succeeded in their mission—given by the head of their clan—of capturing the injured Fujiko earlier, they'd surely have been able to use her to threaten the Futabas...

Unfortunately, someone meddled at the very last moment! Now all their plans were in ruins! As if that wasn't already enough, the enemy was now aware of them as well! From this point on, locating Fujiko again was surely going to be more difficult...

"...Speaking of which, are you aware of the meddlesome man's goals? Did he simply wish to save her or was he actually trying to take revenge on you or our family?" asked the leader after thinking about it for a while, wondering if Gerald was someone that the Hanyus had previously offended...

“I don’t know much about him, though I do know that he isn’t Japanese. From what I can guess, he’s probably from Weston,” replied Fujiko’s attacker.

“A person from Weston you say... Well, Weston or not, he meddled with the wrong family! Due to that, he’ll die by our hands if it’s the last thing we do!” declared the leader of the group as he clenched his fists determinedly...

Moving back to Gerald and Fujiko, it was about three hours later when they finally arrived at the city her family was living in. Though Gerald didn’t directly inquire about her family, he could tell that she was being rather secretive about them. After all, whenever the conversation led to her family, she would only provide the most basic of information.

Since she was being so reserved about sharing more about her family, Gerald decided to stop questioning her about them after some time. After all, the last thing he needed was her growing unnecessarily vigilant with him...

Regardless, it was about half an hour later when Gerald’s car pulled up in front of a manor. Before they were even able to leave the car, a uniformed young man had already walked up to them. Seeing him, Fujiko then got out of the car first.

Pointing at Gerald, she then said, “Calm down, he’s a friend of mine. I’ve brought him back here to discuss some important affairs with dad.”

Chapter 2058

Clearly appearing to be in a dilemma, the young person then walked closer to her before whispering, “You, of all people, should know very well that the master always opposes the idea of strangers coming over, miss...”

Though the man had whispered, Gerald was able to hear every word he said. With that in mind, he quickly found himself smiling. After all, based on what that man had said, the possibility of the Futabas being part of the Seadom tribe grew exponentially.

Whatever the case was, Fujiko then frowned slightly as she replied, “Just so you know, I was attacked by one of the Hanyus earlier! Had this man not stepped in to save me earlier, I would’ve been dead by now!”

Upon hearing that, the young man’s eyes instantly widened. However, he quickly snapped out of it before turning to look at Gerald and respectfully saying, “I-I see! Please, come in, sir!”

Stepping out of the car, Gerald was prompted to say, “It seems that you’re pretty highly ranked in your family...”

Smiling slightly awkwardly, Fujiko then replied, “Well, my dad’s the master of the family, you see...”

Honestly, it was exactly because of that that she kept getting into dangerous situations, even on the most normal of days...

Before Gerald could reply, the young man from before—who had noticed that Gerald was holding onto a bag—extended his hand before saying, “Please allow me to carry your belongings!”

Waving his hand in response, Gerald replied, “It’s fine.”

Following that, Gerald then followed Fujiko into the manor. Since she had contacted her father in advance, the two were immediately granted access to the reception room at the end of the manor...

Shortly after, a paunchy middle-aged man came rushing toward them. The second he saw Fujiko, he immediately grabbed her by her arms—completely ignoring Gerald—and began scanning her from head to toe while exclaiming, “Fujiko! I heard from the guard at the door that you were faced with danger earlier! What on earth happened? Tell me, quick...!”

Understanding that her father was simply concerned for her safety, Fujiko simply smiled as she replied, “I’m fine, dad... I’m not hurt at all!”

“That’s a relief to hear...! I was so worried the second I heard that the Hanyus attacked you! Still, how did they find out where you were...? Regardless, weren’t you participating in a special forces competition? Why the hell did the

military keep this from me?!” asked the middle-aged man as he sighed in relief.

“I’m not sure how they located me either, but just to be clear, I didn’t report this incident to the military. Call it a hunch, but I have a feeling that there’s a Hanyu hiding within the military. That would surely explain how the Hanyus found me,” replied Fujiko with a slight frown.

“I see... Whatever the case is, just stay home for now and leave the rest to me. I’ll be sending out some of our men to investigate further into this! You may not like what I’m about to say, but I’m also contacting the military to cancel your entry in the competition!” declared the middle-aged man, his eyes still filled with worry...

“...Alright... Regardless, this is Gerald Crawford from Weston, dad, and he was the one who saved me!” said Fujiko as she clung onto her father’s arms and pulled him closer to Gerald.

“Gerald... Crawford...? What a familiar name... Could it be that... you’re the one responsible for all that chaos in Yanam a while back...?” asked the middle-aged man as he looked closely at Gerald.

He, for one, was definitely influential enough to know about things like this. Besides, due to how impactful Gerald’s actions had been, it would surely be difficult to forget his name after hearing it...

Realizing that the man recognized who he was, Gerald found no reason to lie and simply replied, “Well, yes, that was me...”

Chapter 2059

“No wonder your name sounded so familiar! So you really are the person who had single-handedly taken out those three major families in Yanam! If I remember correctly, you caused the Yanam military quite a bit of trouble as well!” exclaimed Fujiko’s father.

Upon hearing that, Fujiko instantly saw Gerald in a new light. Truth be told, she had found his name to be oddly familiar as well when she first learned of it. To think that this was the very Gerald who had wreaked havoc in Yanam!

Realizing that he had brought something awkward up, Fujiko's father then cleared his throat before waving his hand as he added, "...Regardless, there's no need to explain why you did it. I don't have any interest in the affairs of Yanam, and I'm sure you had your reasons for doing that as well. Putting all that aside, the important thing is that you saved my dearest daughter... Had you not stepped in, she would've surely... Well, whatever the case is, from today onward, you're a benefactor of my family! If you ever need anything, just say the word and the Futabas will try our best to help you!"

"I appreciate it," replied Gerald with a smile, pleased that he had gotten into Fujiko's father's good books. That alone was enough for now, and Gerald knew better than to ask about the Seadom tribe straight off the bat.

"Indeed! Speaking of which, allow me to introduce myself! As you may have already known, I'm Futaba's father and also the master of this family. You can call me Futaba Takuya," said Takuya as he patted his forehead before extending his arm for a handshake.

"A pleasure to meet you. The name's Gerald Crawford, and I'm from Weston," replied Gerald as he shook hands with Takuya.

After their hands parted, Takuya thought for a while before saying, "Hmm... From past experience, I have a feeling that the Hanyus should already be investigating you. With that in mind, do stay with us in the meantime as I send my men out to deal with them for you. Also, if you need anything, just say the word!"

"It's fine, I can handle myself. Though I am interested in knowing why an assassin family like the Hanyus—that even accepts employment orders from outside Japan throughout the year—would be involved with your family..." replied Gerald as he lit a cigarette.

"It's... a long story, to say the least. Historically, my family has simply always had a grudge against the Hanyus, and detailing the story is going to take

much too long. Regardless, I'll have a nanny prepare a meal for you first," said Takuya as he shook his head with a smile.

"Well, I am slightly hungry..." muttered Gerald as he gently patted his stomach...

It was a short while later when the nanny returned to the main dining room—where the trio had earlier been led to—with several dishes...

While waiting for their meal to arrive, Takuya had made sure to order his men to investigate how news about Fujiko's participation in the military competition had been exposed. He also instructed them to keep an eye out around the hotel Master Ghost and Aiden were staying in.

Though the Hanyus were technically much stronger than the Futabas, under Takuya's guidance, the Futabas became considerably harder for the assassin family to deal with. Takuya's vigilance, for one, stemmed from the fact that he deeply adored his daughter, and would do anything to keep her safe. With that in mind, now that she had almost been assassinated, he very badly wanted to rush to the Hanyus to demand an explanation about all this.

Suppressing the urge to do so, Takuya then handed some chopsticks to Gerald as he asked, "Speaking of which, what's your reason for coming to Japan, Mr. Crawford?"

"Well, my friend is a special forces soldier, you see, and I'm keeping him company for the competition. I'm also here to gather some information," replied Gerald as he began eating.

"Oh? What information are you interested in obtaining? While my family isn't all that large, we still have quite a number of connections in Japan. With that said, do share what you need to know. I may just be able to help," said Takuya as he looked at the youth.

"Don't worry about it, I'll hunt for the information myself," replied Gerald with a smile, knowing full well that if he mentioned the Seadom tribe now, the duo would instantly get vigilant, and the last thing he needed was for them to become his enemies now.

“Well, I’m sure you have your reasons for that, so I won’t pry any further... Still, do remember that you’re my family’s benefactor, mister. If there’s anything you ever need help with, just say the word. We’ll try to help as best as we can!”

Chapter 2060

Since Takuya didn’t press into it, the meal soon ended without much else to note.

Following that, Takuya arranged for Gerald to stay in one of the manor’s top guest houses. With the arrangements made, Gerald then bid farewell to Fujiko before following a butler to his guest house...

Upon arriving, Gerald couldn’t help but whistle. Though this was just an ordinary house, it was rather luxuriously decorated... Regardless, a quick look around revealed that there were two halls and three rooms in the entire house, along with all the basic living facilities.

After closing his room door behind him, Gerald then placed his bag down and called Aiden... Once the call connected, Gerald was first to ask, “How’s it going back at the hotel?”

Realizing that Gerald was the one calling, Aiden then quickly walked to the window before looking down and muttering, “Well... there have been quite a number of people patrolling right outside our hotel... I have a feeling they’re looking for you.”

Hearing that, Gerald simply nodded. It was just as he had expected.

Watching as those men continued loitering in front of the hotel—with some of them even occasionally going in and out of it—, Aiden then added, “Honestly, should I just go down and get rid of them...?”

“Negative. If they don’t look for trouble with you, just continue pretending that you don’t know a thing,” replied Gerald before immediately hanging up.

Realizing that Gerald had hung up, Aiden could only sigh.

Seeing that, Master Ghost—who had become all too familiar with Aiden’s body language by now—could help but ask, “He told you not to make a move, right?”

“Indeed... He said that we should only strike back if they look for trouble from us...” muttered Aiden with another sigh.

“He’s right, you know? After all, we’re in Japan, and it’s not like we know how strong or influential the other party is yet. Either way, offending them will most probably only spell trouble for us. Also, I advise you to restrain your rash personality... If you don’t, one of these days, you’ll get both of us into trouble. How will you explain that to Gerald then?” replied Master Ghost as he continued fiddling with his compass.

Since the sea map was with Gerald, all Master Ghost could do was continue calculating and checking the manifestation of divination to foresee whether Gerald would bump into any danger.

“I mean, I’m trying, aren’t I? Why do you think I called Gerald first before making a move?” grumbled Aiden as he scratched the back of his head. He wasn’t some simple-minded fool who only knew how to act recklessly! Still, he had to admit that he sometimes had trouble controlling his fiery nature. Even so, he had already made it a point to always ask for Gerald’s opinion first before making a move...

“Point taken. Either way, let’s head to bed early. Now that Gerald’s gotten in touch with the Seadom tribe, we don’t know when he could need our help,” said Master Ghost as he sipped some water before returning to his room with the compass in hand...

Before Master Ghost could enter, however, Gerald grabbed the man by his arm before asking, “...Are you really sure that they’re members of the Seadom tribe...?”

“Nothing’s set in stone yet, but it’s highly possible,” replied Master Ghost, knowing full well that they could be wrong. After all, they only had a few clues

to go with, and the members of the Seadom tribe had done a particularly good job at keeping themselves concealed...

"...Alright, then..." replied Aiden with a sigh before shrugging and releasing his hand...

The second he woke up early the next morning, Gerald reminded himself that his goal was to locate evidence to prove that the Futabas were members of the Seadom tribe. With that in mind, he then readied himself to start the day...

To his surprise, the second he left his room, Gerald saw Takuya standing not too far away.

Seeing Gerald, Takuya then beamed as he walked over while saying, "Well you're up early, Mr. Crawford!"