

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 551 -

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“What? He threatened to send his troops?” Everyone was startled by the news Jacob brought. They had all thought that things would run smoothly. As long as Tyler agreed to their proposal, the marriage alliance would still be on. Who’d have thought that this was how things turned out?

“I just don’t get it. What am I lacking compared to Natasha? Why would Tyler refuse to marry me?” Kate hissed through gritted teeth, livid. As a woman, she had lowered herself so much by going to

the Grants

to offer her hand in marriage. Not only had Tyler not appreciated the gesture and thrown her out, but he also did not even spare her a glance once the entire time! It was pure

humiliation!

“So Tyler rejected the swap, and Natasha refuses to marry him. Now what?” Someone asked.

“I say we go head–on against them!” Kate exclaimed in frustration. “Since Tyler isn’t showing us any respect, I don’t see why we should honor them either!”

“Watch your words, Kate!” Trent immediately stopped her from continuing. They never knew who might be listening in on them, so they had to practice caution with every word they said.

“You’re the leader of the family, Hector. You decide!” Jacob took his seat huffily and downed an

entire cup of tea. He had been thoroughly put to shame at the Grants earlier on and needed something to calm his nerves.

“Since the suggestion for the swap has been rejected, we’ll have to find other means of getting out of the wedding alliance,” Hector said gravely.

“Here’s my plan. I’ll have my 50th birthday celebration in advance, and hold it on the same day as the wedding. I’ll organize a huge banquet and invite everyone we know.”

“A celebration for your 50th birthday?” Nobody seemed to understand what Hector had in mind. How would it help to have his birthday celebration in advance?

“What you’re suggesting, Hector, is to pressure the Grants into backing off with the celebration?” Trent seemed to catch on very quickly.

“Precisely.” Hector nodded. “Since Tyler insists on forcing Natasha into the marriage, I’ll hold a huge celebration on the same day, and invite all the rich and famous that we know. I’m sure the Grants would dare not act rashly in the presence of all the elites.”

“You make a good point there ...” Trent considered as he rubbed his chin. “We have always made sure to stay in others’ good books and made many valuable connections. It’s time we showed the Grants who we have behind us. It might make them stop and rethink their choices before acting recklessly.”

“Hector, your suggestion is only a temporary solution. At the end of the day, the root of the problem still exists. What will we do if Tyler really sends his troops?” Jacob went straight to the point. The Grants were so powerful because they had strong military backgrounds. That was the only reason why nobody dared to mess with them, and the sole reason why the Harmons feared

them

“I’ve considered that too, so I’ve contacted Sir Moran in hopes that he’d be able to help us,” Hector said. Sir Moran was a regional deputy chief who was immensely powerful, and based on military

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ranks, he was considered Tyler’s superior.

“Will Sir Moran agree to help us?” Jacob had his doubts.

“Jayla had put Sir Moran’s daughter in trouble before. Though she might be dead now, the hatred he has for them will not vanish just like that. We will make use of this and have him help us out,”

Hector explained.

“If you really do get Sir Moran on our side, then there’s still hope for us!” Trent looked hopeful.

“I’ll try my best to persuade Sir Moran before the birthday banquet!” Hector announced resolutely. Sir Moran’s powers were their only hope of getting through the mess with the Grants.

“Why would you need to go to anyone else for help when I’m here, Uncle Hector?” A deep voice boomed in the meeting room. Soon after, a well-built man in a military uniform walked in with his head held high, and trailing behind him were two adjutants.

“Dylan?” The crowd was pleasantly surprised to see the man because he was none other than Dylan Harmon, Jacob’s son!

Dylan was stationed at the country’s borders year-round and would only be home once a year. Nobody had expected him to be back so soon!

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“Why are you back so soon, Son? Weren’t you warding off enemies at the borders?” Jacob quickly went up to his son joyfully once he snapped out of the initial shock of seeing Dylan.

“Everything’s peaceful over at the borders now, so I took a few days off to come back for a bit.” Dylan chuckled.

“Good, that’s good... It’s great to see you back! I haven’t seen you in a year! You look even more ripped now!” Jacob patted Dylan on the back delightedly. He was pleased with his son’s achievements. Out of all the members of the younger generation in the Harmons, Dylan was the most accomplished of all.

“I’ve got good news, Dad. I’ve been promoted! I’m now a high-ranking commander in the Dark Panther Cavalry. I’ve got over a thousand men working under me!” Dylan announced proudly.

“What? A high-ranking commander?” An excited chatter broke out among the crowd, who were all delightfully surprised to hear that. There were also some who were envious of his progress.

As a high-ranking commander, he was just one step away from becoming a deputy general, and Dylan wasn’t even 30 years old yet! To achieve what he had now, especially at such a young age, Dylan had a bright future ahead!

“Hahaha! Great! That’s amazing!” Jacob laughed heartily. “My son is amazing! He’s been promoted again in just a year! I’m proud of you, Son!”

“Like father, like son!” Trent exclaimed enviously. “You’ll be as great as Tyler Grant, if not better than him in the future, Dylan!”

“The Harmon family has produced yet another amazing talent!” Hector was pleased too. Dylan wasn’t far off from becoming a general if he was already a high-ranking commander before the age of 30.

“Congratulations, Dylan! You’ve attained the greatest heights out of all of us! Don’t forget about me when you make it big one day!” Kate sucked up to Dylan.

“What are you saying, Kate? We’re family! If you ever need anything, just let me know!” Dylan reassured with a pat on his chest.

“Hahaha! You’re the best!” Kate giggled.

“Right, Dad, you were talking about the Grants. What about them?” Dylan changed the topic.

“Well, this is how things are right now...” Jacob briefed Dylan about everything that went on in the family.

After Dylan heard what had happened, he laughed. “Dad, Uncle Hector, don’t you worry! With me here, Tyler won’t dare to step out of line.”

“You may be a high-ranking commander, Dylan, but Tyler is a general. I’m afraid...” Jacob left his sentence hanging. It was true that his son was capable and brilliant, but he was still lower in power compared to Tyler.

“Dad! Don’t forget that I’m from the Dark Panther Cavalry! Even deputy generals have to treat me with respect!” Dylan boasted conceitedly.

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The Dark Panther Cavalry differed from ordinary units. They were the best of the best, and all the high-ranking commanders from the Dark Panther Cavalry were elites. If they were to be

transferred to other units, they could easily be promoted to deputy generals. That was the prestige of the Dark Panther Cavalry.

“Dylan, Tyler is not just a deputy general. He’s been given the title of General Lionheart, and he’s an official of the third rank!” Jacob reminded him.

“So what if he’s a third-ranking official?” Dylan scoffed condescendingly. “My general is the Scarlet Warrior, who is well-known across the whole of Dragonmarsh! And she’s a first-ranking official!”

“What? The Scarlet Warrior?” Everyone was astonished.

The Scarlet Warrior was one of the two aces of the Spanner family. She was on par with Adam Spanner, the God of War, and was also the only female general in Dragonmarsh, earning her the title of Goddess of War. Her achievements were extraordinary, and she was skilled in both civil and military strategies, which was why she had such high military standing. Almost everyone in Dragonmarsh knew her.

“My son! I never knew that your general was the Scarlet Warrior! That’s awesome!” Jacob was both surprised and elated. It was an honor not only for Dylan himself but even for the whole Harmon family to have him fight alongside the Scarlet Warrior.

“Well, Dad, do you still reckon that Tyler would act recklessly now?” Dylan asked with his chin lifted high. Though he did not exactly hold a high military

position himself, he had the Scarlet Warrior backing him up. With such strong connections, who would dare mess with him?

“Hahaha! Even Tyler has to give way to the Scarlet Warrior! He’s no match for her!” Jacob laughed triumphantly.

“That’s great! There’s hope for us!” The rest of the family cheered.

What a turn of events! With Dylan’s return, the Harmons finally had hopes of turning the tables. The Grants were in for a shock on the day of the birthday banquet!

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Over the next few days, the Harmons began sending out invitations and busied themselves with preparations for Hector’s 50th birthday celebration. As one of the Fabulous Five, the Harmons were a large family with lots of connections, and the leader of the family, Hector, was widely revered. Hence, when news got out that Hector was celebrating his birthday, it sent almost half the city into an excited frenzy. Countless celebrities, wealthy elites, and influential figures were eager to attend the event.

Bright and early in the Harmon estate five days later, the entire household bustled with activity. It was truly a grand affair, as not only was it Hector’s birthday celebration, but it was also the day that Tyler was coming for Natasha. The Harmons needed all the support they could get to pressure Tyler into backing off.

Back in her room, Natasha studied her face in the mirror, admiring how fair and supple her skin was now. She was pleasantly surprised by how well the wound healed. She had steered clear of mirrors for quite a while after her face was wounded, as she dreaded seeing the state her face was in.

But now, there was absolutely no trace of the ghastly wound, and it did not even leave behind a scar. In fact, her skin seemed to glow under Dustin’s careful nursing. It was apparent that Dustin’s ointment was not only capable of healing wounds, but it also had beautifying effects.

“Who’d have thought that your ointment was so effective, Dear? There’s not even the slightest hint of a scar!” Natasha caressed her face in awe.

“I told you that there wouldn’t be a scar, didn’t I? Do you trust me now?” Dustin smiled.

“This is brilliant! Immortunol can restore a person’s beauty, and this ointment can heal wounds without leaving a scar. If we put both of them together, they’d be a hit!” A superb idea hit Natasha then and there, and her eyes lit up. “Can you produce this ointment in large volumes, Dear? With advertising done right, I’m certain this will be our next bestseller!”

“You’ve got such a sharp mind! But I’m afraid I’m going to have to let you down this time.” Dustin shook his head with an amused smile. “The ingredients used for this ointment are too precious. Some of them are worth their weight in gold, so it’d be tough to manufacture them in bulk. I only make them for my own use.”

“What a shame.” Natasha was disappointed at the missed opportunity to haul in yet another fortune. As a self-made businesswoman, it was almost instinctive for her to identify and seize every opportunity to generate income and profit.

“Of course, if you think that it’s got potential, I can change up the formula a bit,” Dustin suggested. “I can swap out the rare herbs for other more common ingredients, and it’ll bring down the cost by

several folds. However, the effects will be affected

“How so? Will it still be able to heal wounds without leaving scars and rejuvenate the skin?” Natasha probed.

“Of course, it will, but it’ll take a longer time for wounds to heal,” Dustin answered.

“That wouldn’t be a problem as long as it could work.” Natasha’s eyes lit up again.

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“Alright, I’ll pass you the formula in a few days then.” Dustin smiled.

“We’ve got a deal! As usual, we’ll split the profit in half!” Natasha beamed at him. She was glad to have found yet another source of income, and she was confident that as long as they advertised it well, this ointment would generate no less income for them than the Immortunol had.

“Sis...” Just then, Ruth came in through the door. “Dad wants to meet you in the meeting room.”

“Okay.” Natasha nodded and was about to bring Dustin along with her.

“Sis, Dad said that he wants to meet you alone,” Ruth said.

“Alone?” Natasha raised a brow.

“Maybe it’s something private,” Dustin said as he shot her a smile. “Run along; I’ll wait for you in the banquet hall.”

“Okay. I’ll be back soon.” Natasha then quickly left with Ruth. Dustin stretched lazily before he left for the banquet hall.

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It was the day of Hector’s 50th birthday celebration, and many elites and prominent figures showed up for the event. Though the banquet had yet to commence, there was already quite a crowd in the banquet hall, and more guests arrived as time went on.

“Dustin? What are you doing here?” Dustin heard a woman ask from behind him. He turned around to see several familiar faces that he had met once, quite some time ago. They were Adriana, Zoey, Gordon, Zeke, and several others. These were Natasha’s classmates from her school days.

The first time he met them, Adriana had some troubles due to her contract and was harassed by a manager working for the Langfords. He had helped her out of the situation and beaten up the manager. After Luis Langford returned to Stonia, Dustin had never met these people again, so it was quite a surprise to meet them again.

“Hey! I asked you a question! Why are you not answering me? How rude!” Zoey was displeased by

his reaction, or rather, the lack of it.

“Of course, I’m here to celebrate Mr. Harmon’s birthday. Why else would I be here?” Dustin stated calmly. Apart from Adriana, this bunch of people had not left a good impression on him.

“Hah! I see you’re still hounding Natasha! Don’t you know where you stand?” Zeke ridiculed.

“I’ve got a piece of advice for you, Dustin. Natasha is the heiress of a wealthy family. She’s way out

of your league, so you better take a good look in the mirror before you come badgering her,” Gordon said meanly.

They saw Dustin as nothing more than a typical boy toy who had no means of providing for

himself and only knew how to sweet-talk women, so they deemed him unfit for their sophisticated circle.

“You should stop looking down on others. How do you know that she’s out of my league?” Dustin

asked.

“Hah! You’re just a country doctor with no social standing, a prominent background, or any skills. How could you ever be good enough for Natasha?” Gordon questioned condescendingly.

“How ignorant.” With a shake of his head, Dustin turned to leave. He could not be bothered to exchange words with such close-minded people. To begin with, it wasn’t like they were chummy, so he saw no need to engage in a conversation with them.

“You stand right there!” Zoey blocked his way and frowned as she reproached him. “What’s up with your attitude, Dustin? Had Gordon not spoken to Mr. Langford on your behalf back when you beat up their manager, they’d most likely have maimed you so badly

that you'd be crippled now! Gordon saved you! But not only are you unappreciative of his kindness, you even give him such an attitude? Do you have any manners?"

"Exactly! You've got Gordon to thank for helping you out! Do you think you'd still be alive had it not been for him?" Zeke echoed.

When Gordon heard what they had to say about him, he straightened up and puffed up his chest proudly.

"He saved me?"

Dustin found them ridiculous. "You lot must be deluded. I did teach the man a lesson; there's no mistaking that. But I definitely did not need any saving from Gordon. Besides, he isn't capable of doing so either."

"What?" Gordon's expression darkened when he heard Dustin's words. "Who do you think you are? And who are you to say whether or not I'm capable of doing anything?"

"Well, am I wrong? If you were capable of saving me, then why didn't you do anything when you were beaten up?" Dustin refuted.

"You-

"Gordon was silenced. It was still embarrassing for him to recall how the Langford manager had busted his head with a bottle.

"Stop spouting nonsense, Rhys!" Zeke glared at him and raised his voice. "They had the numbers, and we were at a disadvantage; that was the only reason why we endured it. We made them pay for it after!"

"That's right! Only a brute would act hastily. Gordon's a gentleman, it's only a given that he wouldn't lower his standards to that of a brute's!" Zoey parroted.

"Better to be a brute than a chicken." Dustin didn't hold back. "You took everything they did to you without so much as a protest; how dare you brag and talk smack to me now?"

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“Y-

you, you ... What did you just say?! Where are your manners, you uncultured swine? How vulgar!” Zoey was upset by Dustin’s words. Although Dustin calmly spoke, his words hit right where they hurt.

“You’re right! A country bumpkin will always be a country bumpkin! He’s got no manners at all!” Zeke was livid. With his privileged background and high educational status, he had never been insulted in such a manner, much less by someone who he considered much lower in status than him.

“The way I behave depends on the person I’m talking to. Do you expect me to treat you with respect when you’re blatantly belittling me?” Dustin asked coldly.

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“You!” Zoey clenched her jaws and found that she was at a loss for words.

“Come on, we’re all Natasha’s friends. Let’s not make things ugly over a small matter.” Adriana quickly tried to smooth things over and ease the tension when she saw that things were starting to escalate. It was Mr. Harmon’s 50th birthday celebration today. There was no doubt they’d be creating trouble for the Harmons if they were to have a row there.

“Forget it. Let’s just ignore the loser. We don’t want to stoop down to his level.” Gordon swiftly collected himself and shot Dustin a scornful look.

“You’re right. It’s wasted effort debating with uncultured people.” Zoey shot Dustin a side-eye.

“Hah! He’s just a boy toy with a glib tongue. What else is he capable of?” Zeke insulted.

“Chicken.” Dustin spat before finding a seat by the side and proceeded promptly to ignore them.

“You!” They were so irked that they almost lost their cool again. They had started out intending to disgrace Dustin in order to make him stay away from Natasha and to flaunt their superiority, but in the end, they failed miserably. Not only did they not gain an upper hand over Dustin, he even put them to shame. It was frustrating indeed!

Just as they were still indignant over the unpleasant exchange, a commotion broke out by the entrance. They looked up to see a hunky man clad in military uniform, with two adjutants following behind him. Following close beside him was a charming woman with a shapely figure.

“Hey, who’s the army man? He looks so cool!” Zoey’s eyes lit up.

“If I’m not mistaken, he should be Mr. Jacob’s son, Dylan Harmon!” Gordon answered.

“Dylan Harmon? What a nice name!” Zoey’s eyes remained glued to Dylan.

“As far as I know, Dylan’s a high-ranking commander in an elite unit. He’s just one step away from becoming a general. He has a mighty bright future ahead!” Gordon exclaimed enviously.

Dylan's return had been quite the talk of the town recently. Countless scions of prominent families tried their best to curry favor with him due to his high military position and also because he was from the Dark Panther Cavalry.

"He is hot, comes from a wealthy family, and to top it all off, he is crazy talented. Where do you find a man like this? I think I'm in love!" Zoey swooned over Dylan with hearts coming out of her eyes. He was powerful, rich, and, most importantly, handsome. Was he not the embodiment of the

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man of her dreams?

"Zoey, I don't mean to discourage you, but people like Dylan are bound to have crazy high standards. They won't fall for the regular girl," Gordon reminded her.

"Nothing is for sure. I have the advantage of having Natasha on my side. Who knows? Things might just work out?" Zoey wasn't the least bit discouraged by Gordon's reminder. She wasn't about to let such an exceptional man slip past her fingers now that he had appeared in front of

her.

"Hey Gordon, who's the lady beside Dylan Harmon? She's beautiful and very elegant, I must say!" As opposed to Zoey, Zeke had his eyes on the lady.

"She's Dylan's cousin and Mr. Trent's daughter, Kate Harmon," Gordon introduced.

"Kate Harmon? That's a sweet name!" Zeke rubbed his chin and asked cheekily, "Say, do you think I stand a chance, Gordon?"

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“You have just about as much chance of winning her over as I have with Natasha,” Gordon told him bluntly. Kate was as beautiful as Natasha, so it would not be easy to court her.

Zeke laughed. He said excitedly, “Then we’ll both have to work harder!”

“The Harmon family has such perfect genes! Every one of them looks gorgeous. If I marry Dylan, I’m sure we’ll have such beautiful babies!” Zoey exclaimed giddily. Her words left the rest of them speechless. She had not even so much as spoken a word with him, and she was already thinking about having his babies?

“Hey! It looks like they’re coming our way! Could he have noticed my beauty so soon? Oh no! Is my makeup in perfect condition?” Zoey was overjoyed to see Dylan walking in their direction and immediately whipped out her compact mirror to touch up her makeup. Gordon and Zeke swiftly sucked in their stomach and puffed up their chests, trying to look like distinguished gentlemen. “Dylan, that guy in white is Dustin Rhys, Natasha’s good-for-nothing boyfriend. Had it not been for him, our family would not be in such trouble. Besides, my brother Quentin’s death was also because of him!” Kate caught sight of Dustin sipping on his tea the moment she came in through the door. A cold glint of hatred flashed in her eyes.

“Why is Natasha still hanging around such a pain in the neck? Has she been blinded by him?” Dylan was annoyed by his presence.

“It’s too bad I’m a woman, or I’ll make sure to teach him a good lesson!” Kate egged on.

“Leave the dirty job to me, Kate. I’ll make sure he learns a lesson he’ll never forget!” A wicked smile spread across Dylan’s face as he took a glass of wine from a nearby waiter and discreetly added some unknown powder to it.

“What did you put in the wine, Dylan?” Kate was quick to notice Dylan’s actions as she stood right beside him.

“Nothing much, just a potent laxative.” Dylan smirked. “As soon as he drinks it, he will lose control over his bowels and shit himself within minutes. I like to see if he’ll still have the balls to stick around the Harmon family after that.”

“You have such a brilliant idea!” Kate’s eyes sparkled. Dustin wouldn’t be able to face anyone after wetting and soiling himself in front of an audience. What Dylan was about to pull would absolutely crush Dustin!

“Just wait and see, Kate. I’ll get you your revenge.” Dylan winked at her before approaching Dustin with his men.

“He’s coming, he’s coming! He’s really coming our way!” Zoey was so excited she was on the verge of losing her composure when she saw Dylan approaching. Without waiting any longer, she stood up to greet him. “Mr. Harmon ...” The rest of her sentence was left stuck in her throat as Dylan walked past her without sparing her a glance and stopped in front of Dustin.

“What?” They were all left frozen in place awkwardly, as they had all assumed that Dylan was heading toward them, when in fact, he had been heading toward Dustin.

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“You’re Dustin Rhys?” Dylan looked down his nose at Dustin arrogantly. “I’ve heard that you’re quite close with my cousin, Natasha, and that you’ve helped her out of some tough situations. As a token of my appreciation, I’d like to share a drink with you.”

With that, Dylan handed him the glass of wine he was holding. That left Zoey and the rest of them gaping in awe. It was beyond their expectation that someone like Dylan, who held a high military position and had a promising future, would offer Dustin a drink. Who was Dustin to deserve such a show of respect?

As Zoey, Gordon, and the rest looked on with envy, Dustin glanced at the glass of wine and spat icily, “I’m not drinking that. Get lost.” A deathly silence fell over the crowd.

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“I’m not drinking that. Get lost.” Dustin’s words were short and sweet, but he brought a deathly

hush over the hall.

All eyes were on Dylan the moment he entered. There were numerous people present who would do anything to gain his favor, so when they witnessed Dylan offering Dustin a drink, the onlookers, including Zoey, Gordon, and Zeke, were astonished. Jealous, even. It was definitely something worth bragging about to have someone like Dylan offer you a drink. However, they had never expected Dustin to actually turn him down and even arrogantly dismiss him. What was the meaning of that? Was Dustin really so full of himself?

“What did you just say?” Not only were the onlookers surprised, but even Dylan couldn’t believe his ears. He was a Harmon, a high-ranking commander in the Dark Panther Cavalry, and a future general! No matter where he went, people would fawn over him and go out of their way to please him. Just a smile from him could make someone’s day, so shouldn’t regular people feel honored

that he’d offer them a drink? How dare this rascal turn down the wine he had offered?

“Didn’t you hear me? I said, get lost,” Dustin repeated himself in the same cold manner.

“How dare you?”

“You insolent bastard!”

“You’ve crossed the line!”

The crowd was in an uproar. All those who were trying to get into Dylan’s good books stood up for him, hurling profanities at Dustin. People who weren’t in the know might have thought they held some deep-seated grudge against Dustin.

“Is that scoundrel out of his damn mind? How dare he speak so rudely to a commander?” Zoey was

bewildered. She had never imagined that Dustin would be so daring as to behave with such insolence toward Dylan. He obviously held no regard for Dylan's status and position.

"Hah! He's going to get what he deserves for being so arrogant! I'd like to see how Dylan is going to deal with him!" Zeke gloated gleefully at Dustin's impending misfortune.

"What an idiot!" Gordon shook his head with a smile on his face.

Adriana remained quiet, worry creeping into her eyes. Dustin had left quite a good impression on

her, and she could tell he was a responsible and courageous man. However, she had to admit that

he had acted too rashly.

"You bastard! How dare you disrespect my superior? I'll shoot you in the head!" An adjutant roared furiously, it had taken him a brief moment to react.

"I don't believe you will," Dustin calmly replied.

"You!" The adjutant choked on his words. Had they been at the borders, he'd already have shot Dustin many times over, but with so many civilian onlookers, he dared not act impulsively.

"Do you know who I am, punk? How dare you speak to me like that?" Dylan asked icily, a menacing glint in his eyes. He was not going to let this scoundrel, who had just humiliated him in public, off so easily.

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"So what if I do? My answer remains the same. I'm not drinking that, so buzz off." Dustin wasn't

intimidated by him.

Dylan was so infuriated that he burst out laughing. "I see you want to do this the hard way, you bastard! There has never been anyone who's disgraced me

in such a manner before. Let me make it clear, if you don't finish this glass of wine, there's no way you're walking out that door!" Dylan's

words were clearly a threat.

"Hey, it's an honor to have Mr. Harmon offer you a drink! If you know what's good for you, just take

it, man!"

"That's right! Drink up, or you'll be sorry!"

Many of the onlookers chimed in, taking Dylan's side.

"Dustin, my cousin has quite a nasty temper. You better drink up, or he'll be sure to kick up a fuss,

"Kate egged him

on with a mocking expression. She was dying for things to get out of hand so that Natasha and Dylan would be at opposite ends, and she'd be able to reap the greatest benefit

out of the fiasco, which was having Dylan on her side.

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Chapter 558

"Whoever wants the drink can have it, but it's not going to be me." Dustin remained unfazed by the comments and derogatory remarks hurled his way.

"Well, that's not up to you!" Dylan's expression turned cold. "Boys, make him drink it!"

'Yes, sir!' The two adjutants immediately went up to Dustin, ready to force the drink down his throat

"Buzz off." With two backhanded slaps, Dustin sent the two adjutants sprawling on the ground, blood streaming from their noses and their teeth broken. They scrambled to get back up but failed miserably.

“Holy shit! The guy’s getting violent!” The onlookers were startled and enraged by what they saw. Assaulting military personnel was a major offense, and when the situation called for it, they were authorized to use their guns.

“You’ve got a death wish, you bastard!” Dylan finally had it when he saw the two adjutants being slapped. He swiftly threw a punch at Dustin’s face. As a high-ranking commander of the Dark Panther Cavalry, it went without saying that he was skilled in martial arts. Currently, he was an entry level divine martial artist, considered one of the best among his peers.

Dustin did not duck or sidestep Dylan’s punch. Instead, he grabbed Dylan’s incoming fist with his bare hand. A dull thud resonated as Dylan’s fist made contact with Dustin’s palm. Dylan was utterly shocked, struggling to comprehend how Dustin could achieve such a feat. Though he had yet to exert his full force, he was a divine-level martial artist! Just a light punch from him was enough to send a regular person flying. He was certain that Dustin was also a skilled martial artist.

“I see you’re well-versed in martial arts too. No wonder you’re so arrogant. I suppose I’ll have to show you what I’m capable of today.” Dylan declared, removing his coat. He was ready to go all out. Though Dustin had managed to catch his punch, Dylan still had the confidence that he’d be able to pulverize him.

“I’ve been putting up with you for Natasha’s sake. I do not wish to hurt you, but if you insist on taking advantage of my kindness, I’m afraid I’ll not be so polite anymore,” Dustin said coldly.

“Hurt me? Hahaha! What a joke!” Dylan looked at Dustin contemptuously. “Do you think that you can act so arrogantly just because you think you know some martial arts? Just so you know, I could easily kill you with just a flick of my finger!”

“Is that so? By all means, go ahead.” Dustin remained unfazed.

“Very well, I’ll teach you a lesson today that there are always people out there who are better than you!”

Just as Dylan channeled his true energy and was about to attack, a loud voice boomed throughout the hall.

“Hold it right there!” Hector marched in with several others behind him. “What’s going on here? It’s my birthday celebration today, and you’re at each other’s throats?” Hector’s burning gaze swept across the hall. Anyone who met his eyes immediately lowered their heads, paying respect to the leader of the Harmon family.

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Chapter 558

“Uncle Hector, this guy started it!” Dylan pointed an accusing finger at Dustin. “I offered him a drink as a gesture of appreciation, but not only did he refuse it, he even went so far as to insult me! I couldn’t stand it, so I thought I’d teach him a lesson!”

“Is that true?” Hector’s eyes narrowed.

“I can vouch for Dylan, Uncle Hector. Dustin was so proud and rude, and he had completely no respect for the Harmon family,” Kate piped up.

“That’s right, we can attest to that too! The rascal had no regard for propriety, and he really crossed the line!” The onlookers stood up for Dylan. From what they saw, Dustin was clearly the one who picked the fight.

“Hang on, there must be some confusion. I don’t believe Dustin would do something like that!” Natasha defended Dustin.

“Natasha, with so many eyewitnesses here, are you really going to stand up for him?” Kate scoffed.

“Do you have anything to say about this, Dustin?” Hector turned his attention to him.

“It’s true that I refused the drink Dylan offered me.” Hector frowned when he heard that. Even Natasha was caught off guard.

“See, Uncle Hector? You heard it from him. He admitted it himself!” Dylan smirked, shooting Dustin a taunting look.

But what Dustin said next left the smirk frozen on his face. “And that’s because he spiked the drinkK
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“He spiked the wine?” Everyone looked at Dylan in shock. If that was the case , then it would make sense for Dustin to refuse the drink.

“You What nonsense!” Dylan had a sinking feeling, but he forced himself to appear composed as he roared, “Do you know who I am? Why would I spike your drink? You’re dragging my reputation through the mud!” He had no idea how Dustin could tell that the wine had been spiked, but there was no way he was going to admit to doing it.

“That’s right! My cousin offered you a drink, and you not only turned him down , but you even accused him of such dirty tricks? You truly are cunning!” Kate feigned anger.

“Hah! I think someone’s just here to cause trouble!”

“What a heinous crime to slander a military officer!”

“We should just kick him out! He’s despicable!”

In a clamor of voices, the crowd accused and scolded Dustin. With their preconceived notions, they clearly believed Dylan more than they did Dustin.

“Dustin, do you have any proof for claiming that Dylan spiked the wine?” Hector asked.

“Exactly! Don’t go around making accusations without any proof!” Some of the Harmons were indignant.

“You want proof? It’s simple.” Dustin picked up the glass of wine and placed it in front of Dylan. “Since you claim that you didn’t spike it, why don’t you drink it his to prove there’s nothing wrong with the wine?”

Dylan's face fell. He would make a mess of himself if he drank that.

"Why should he? Just because you say so? Who do you think you are?" Kate defended Dylan.

"That's right! Who do you think you are? And what right do you have to make me drink it?" Dylan challenged.

"Oh, so you dare not drink it then?" Dustin sniggered.

"If the wine hasn't been spiked, Dylan, then what's the harm in drinking it?" Natasha had a slight smile on her face. She could tell from his reaction that Dylan had indeed spiked the wine, but Dustin saw through his tricks at once, and that was what gave rise to the conflict between them.

"We believe in you, Mr. Harmon! It's just a glass of wine. Drink it and show him!"

"That's right! Prove it to him that you have done no such thing! Put him to shame!"

"Yes, Dylan, drink it! We're all rooting for you!"

The crowd began cheering Dylan on, acting like they were all that righteous.

The corners of Dylan's lips twitched as he sweated profusely. With so many eyes on him, he'd raise suspicion if he refused to drink the wine, but if he did, he'd lose control over his bowels and make a fool of himself. He'd be in such a terrible mess. Caught in a dilemma, he had no way out of the predicament. He had only intended to teach Dustin a lesson. Who'd have guessed he'd put

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himself in such a difficult position?

"Alright, alright! Let's not cause a scene here!" Noticing that something wasn't right, Trent called out to the crowd to defuse the situation. "Today's a special day. Let's not spoil it over some petty issues! Please be seated, everyone. The banquet will start shortly!"

The crowd quietened down upon hearing his words. Most of them who had their wits around could already guess the truth behind the whole debacle. However, out of respect for the Harmon family, they kept quiet and feigned ignorance.

“Consider yourself lucky, you bastard! I’m only letting you off the hook for Uncle Hector’s sake, as it’s his birthday celebration today!” Dylan spat menacingly before he turned and took his seat. He thanked his lucky stars that his Uncle Trent came out at the right moment to smooth things over, sparing him from an embarrassing situation. But despite the circumstances, he still had to gain an upper hand over Dustin.

The disturbance was finally brought to a halt by Trent’s interference. However, Natasha was left disgruntled. “Dad, Dylan was obviously the one who started it. Are you just going to let it slide?”

“We have more important matters to deal with today. We cannot afford to mess up now,” Hector said gravely as he shook his head. Of course, he could tell what had transpired, but at this point, they were banking on Dylan’s position to put pressure on Tyler, so he could not tell Dylan off even if he was at fault. At the moment, it was crucial for the family to stand united.

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Chapter 560

“That’s it?”

Natasha was extremely displeased. Naturally, she wasn’t willing to swallow her anger when her man was being mistreated.

“Natasha, let’s look at the big picture. Why don’t you sit down?” Hector gave her a look. Then, he led the others to sit at the tables allocated for the Harmons. The ten tables at the very front of the ballroom were designated for the core members of the Harmon family as well as the other bigwigs in the family. The regular guests were relegated to the back.

“Darling, I’m sorry for the injustice. I’ll definitely find an opportunity for a payback!” Natasha said through gritted teeth.

“It’s nothing but a petty issue. Don’t worry about me. Go and keep your father company.” Dustin smiled lightly. Her saying that was already good enough for him.

“What, you don’t want to sit with me?” Natasha raised an eyebrow.

“No, guests shouldn’t sit with the stars of the evening. I’ll just sit here. Not to mention, sitting too close to Dylan might invite trouble.” Dustin shook his head.

The front seats drew too much attention; he didn’t like being noticed by so many people.

“Alright.” Natasha didn’t push him further after he expressed his opinion. After greeting a few of her classmates, she returned to her seat.

After she left, Gordon suddenly said out of the blue, “Dustin, if I were you, I’d apologize to Dylan right now. You can’t afford to get on the bad side of a golden child like him!”

“Really? I guess...” Dustin couldn’t be bothered to entertain the nonsense and gave a half-assed reply.

“Hmph! You’ll find out soon enough!” Gordon chuckled coldly and said nothing more. In his eyes, with that arrogant attitude, Dustin was bound to face consequences sooner or later.

Time slowly ticked by, and more guests arrived to join the celebration. The entire ballroom was alive with chatter.

“Hey, isn’t that Mr. Reynolds from the Goldmore Group? I heard he’s worth billions and is also the top player in the mining industry!”

“Oh? Even the emerald tycoon, Mr. Dane is here?”

“Look, I think that’s Mr. Gills from the Royal Pavilion, also known as the all-powerful lord of the underworld!”

“As expected of the Harmons. I didn’t expect so many bigshots to show up. This is really impressive!”

Seeing these local celebrities enter the ballroom, Zoey and the others were bubbling with excitement. They never got to see such an extravagant display in their everyday lives. Looking across the room, they were met with the presence of prominent figures in their society, whether it was the filthy rich or the magnates in their respective fields.

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Any one of them could cause a huge ripple in the outside world. Yet, they had all gathered there.

Truly, this was an assembly of the elite and the powerful!

‘Not bad. It seems like our family still holds some influence,’ Trend said from the front-row seats, observing the lively ballroom with a wide grin.

‘Why, of course! When our family throws a birthday party, I can’t think of anyone who wouldn’t respect us enough to not attend,’ Jacob said proudly. As one of the Fabulous Five, certain connotations and pride came with it.

‘Trent, Jacob, don’t celebrate just yet. With just these people, I’m afraid we won’t be able to keep Tyler in check,’ Hector said indifferently.

‘Uncle Hector, don’t worry. With me here, Tyler wouldn’t dare act out of line!’ Dylan said haughtily. That’s right! My son holds a high position and has the support of the Scarlet Warrior. Even Tyler will have to show him some respect!’ Jacob laughed. When it came to his son, he had unconditional trust in him.

At that moment, a butler leaned close and whispered, ‘Mr. Hector, I just received word that the Grants have begun to make their move.’

‘Are they finally coming?’ Hector sucked in a deep breath. ‘Since we can’t hide, then let’s meet them head-on. We will stick to the plan!’