

## Chapter 2141

“When you put it that way... I guess it is possible. After all, the culprit was daring enough to deal with such a strong, special forces soldier here, of all places. Normally, only you could pull something like this off, which means that the culprit is probably only slightly weaker than you. With that said, maybe he really is a Crawford cultivator... However, why would that person look for trouble with a special forces soldier from Yanam? Is there some sort of dispute between the Crawfords and the Yanam military...?” muttered Master Ghost as he stroked his goatee.

“There’s no point thinking about it. Good for him that he’s only here to deal with the special forces soldiers from Yanam. Regardless, even if he does come for us, there’s nothing to be scared of with me here,” scoffed Gerald as he crossed his arms while narrowing his eyes.

By the time Gerald’s sentence ended, the competition had already begun and special forces soldiers could be seen lined up in a neat row. Each of them had the latest sniper rifle models in hand, and everyone watched as they aimed for their targets for the shooting competition that stood nine hundred feet away from them.

Multiple shots could soon be heard, and the results were announced shortly after.

Gerald himself had little interest in this kind of competition, so after spectating for a while, he eventually got up and left. Seeing that, Master Ghost made sure to follow him closely as well.

The second the duo left, a car came to a stop at the training ground’s entrance...

Shortly after, a youth in a floral suit stepped out, followed by four of his bodyguards. As the group of five walked into the training grounds, they were just seconds too late to notice Gerald and Master Ghost taking a turn to enter an elevator, disallowing the two parties from meeting...

As expected, the youth was none other than Kai.

Since Ryugu hadn't assassinated Gerald even after a week had passed, Kai decided to take things into his own hands. He knew for a fact that Gerald would attend the competition, which explained his presence here today.

Whatever the case was, whenever he thought about the humiliation he suffered that night, Kai's desire to put Gerald down for good only increased. With that in mind, he wasn't against using his high status to get the military to step forward and subdue Gerald. Regardless, when the colonel saw Kai, he immediately got to his feet before asking, "Oh? Mr. Kanagawa!

Fancy meeting you here, of all places!"

"I'm just here to have a look around," replied Kai as he waved his hand, his eyes darting around the entire time.

"Well, whatever the case is, welcome, Mr. Kanagawa! It's unfortunate, but since we're currently hosting a competition, I'm afraid we won't have much time to attend to you. With that said, I hope you won't affect our event either. Don't worry, once the competition is over, I'll make sure to treat you to a proper drink!" said the colonel, not daring to offend Kai.

"Affect? Why would I do anything like that? I was just bored so I came out for a stroll. In other words, I'm just here through sheer coincidence. Regardless, just continue doing whatever you were doing and don't bother about me. I'll just be having a look around!" replied Kai with a smile.

Following that, Kai made a small gesture, prompting his bodyguards to scatter. The hunt for Gerald was on...!

Hearing that, the colonel opted to believe Kai and simply continued paying attention to the competition. The colonel, for one, knew that this wasn't Kai's first time here anyway, so as long as that youth wasn't here to cause any trouble, he didn't really care where Kai went.

It was half an hour later when Kai's subordinates reunited with him.

The second Kai saw them, he immediately growled in a low voice, "Well? Did any of you manage to find him?"

"Apologies, but we couldn't find him no matter how hard we looked! The only people present are the international special forces soldiers!" replied one of the subordinates as the rest of them shook their heads.

"What? Was that b\*stard Ryugu lying to me...?" grumbled Kai, a deep frown on his face...

## Chapter 2142

Through this period, Kai had constantly been contacting Ryugu to get updates on Gerald's assassination. However, not only did Ryugu fail to assassinate him, but that b\*stard actually dared to tell him this morning that he had to temporarily cancel all his assassination missions!

Though it annoyed Ryugu to no end, it wasn't as though he could do anything about it. Thankfully, Ryugu did mention that Gerald was going to participate in the special forces competition, which was why Kai had rushed over in the first place.

Even so, to think that he'd fail to find Gerald after searching for a good half-hour!

"I'll have to disagree with that. Ryugu wouldn't ever dare to lie to you," replied another bodyguard as he shook his head.

The guards had previously met Ryugu together with Kai, and they knew for a fact that Ryugu respected Kai a lot. Since Ryugu didn't even dare to raise his voice back then, there was no way he would be daring enough to lie to Kai!

"You say that, but did you manage to find Gerald?" grumbled Kai.

“... Unfortunately, no...” replied the guards as they shook their heads once more.

“...Let’s head back for now. I’m meeting Ryugu in the flesh to see what he has to say about this!” scowled Kai as he clenched his fists, clearly assuming that Ryugu was playing tricks on him. After all, thinking back, though Ryugu had told him that Gerald was here to participate in the special forces competition, Gerald wasn’t a special forces soldier. With that in mind, there was no way he would be a participant here!

Besides, Kai had seen Fujiko earlier, and if Gerald truly was here, he should be by her side. With his mind made up, Kai then gestured for his men to leave the training ground...

Noticing that Kai and his men were leaving, the colonel walked up to him before asking, “Oh? Leaving already, Mr. Kanagawa?”

“Indeed. I have some affairs to attend to, so I’ll be heading back first,” replied Kai as he got into his car. Watching as the car swiftly left the scene, the colonel couldn’t help but mutter, “Why on earth did he come here in the first place...?”

Hearing the colonel’s comment, a military officer took the chance to reply, “He may have come here to look for someone. After all, his subordinates were scanning this place high and low earlier. I’m assuming they left since they couldn’t find the person they were looking for.”

“Hmm? As if there’d be anyone he’s looking for here, of all places...” muttered the colonel as he shook his head in disbelief...

Moving back to Kai, while he was in the car, he made sure to call Ryugu to tell him to meet him in the teahouse where they had previously met... and it was about half an hour later when Kai himself arrived at the appointed venue.

Watching as Kai stepped out, Ryugu who looked slightly reluctant to be there forced a smile before

walking up to Kai and saying, “Mr. Kanagawa, I apologize, but I’m extremely busy at the moment. Just skip the formalities and tell me what you need. I have to leave as soon as I can...”

Scoffing in response, Kai then sneered, “Hah! Before anything else, allow me to congratulate you for successfully making a fool out of me!”

Raising a slight brow as he watched Kai walk past him, the puzzled Ryugu was prompted to ask, “... Make a fool out of you? Why would I ever do such a thing...?”

Though he never really liked Kai, he wouldn’t ever dare to make a fool out of Kai. With that in mind, he ran after Kai who had already entered the teahouse before hurriedly adding, “Please elaborate, Mr. Kanagawa. How exactly did I make a fool out of you? You can’t just label me a liar that unfairly!”

Ignoring Ryugu, Kai simply looked at the shop’s owner before ordering, “Two pots of tea.”

Completely confused by this point, Ryugu who didn’t want Kai to be offended any further then said, “Please tell me what the problem is, Mr. Kanagawa...”

## Chapter 2143

“Playing dumb? Fine! Since you wish to know so much, I’ll spell it out for you! You told me that Gerald had gone to the military training grounds this morning, remember? Then why the hell wasn’t he there?” growled Kai as he glared at Ryugu.

“You... went over?” replied the surprised Ryugu.

“Did I stutter? Regardless, my subordinates searched for half an hour to no avail! While Fujiko was there, there were no traces of Gerald at all! With that said, are you trying to continue fooling me or something?” sneered Kai.

“... I know for a fact that Gerald participated in the special forces competition together with Fujiko. With that said, he should be there with her. Could he have noticed you before you saw him? That would’ve definitely prompted him to hide till you left!” suggested Ryugu as he scratched the back of his head.

“It’s needless to say that now. Either way, since we’re already here, allow me to ask why you haven’t gotten rid of Gerald even after that week I gave you. Hell, you even told me not to make a move on him for the time being. Are the Hanyu assassins not capable enough to take him on?” scoffed Ryugu, not wanting to hear any of Ryugu’s excuses.

Hearing that, Ryugu could only sigh as he replied, “... It is a bit inconvenient for us to deal with this case...”

After all, not only had he yet to save Endo and Izumi, but he had lost several other Hanyu assassins in the process as well. With how humiliating this defeat was, there was no way Ryugu was going to willingly embarrass himself by telling Kai what had happened.

“Inconvenient? I’ve been cooperating with the Hanyus this entire time, no? Actually, I do wonder if you’re hiding something from me,” growled Kai as he frowned.

For Ryugu to fail to take Gerald out even after being given all this time... What was the issue? He had to get to the bottom of all this today! Otherwise, Gerald would simply be able to continue living free and easy!

Though he was reluctant to talk about it, Ryugu knew that Kai wasn’t going to let him off that easily if he continued keeping his mouth shut. With that in mind, Ryugu then asked, “Do... you really wish to know the entire situation...?”

“Cut the cr\*p and just tell me already!” grumbled Kai as he took a sip of tea before slamming the teacup onto the table.

Sighing, Ryugu then replied, “I... think you know Endo and Izumi, right...?”

“Of course. They’re both team leaders of your family’s many assassination teams, no? You know, if you had just sent those two to get rid of Gerald, I’m sure the mission would have been over in a single night! Are you worried that I can’t afford to commission those two or something?” said Kai slightly impatiently.

“... Actually, they were the first I sent out- ”

“Then what’s the issue? Did they go rogue or something?”

Taking a deep breath, Ryugu then said, “... If you could just let me finish, Mr. Kanagawa... The truth is, they’ve gone missing ever since they entered the Futaba manor!”

“... Missing?” replied Kai with a deep frown.

Though he wasn’t a Hanyu, he was well aware of how strong Endo and Izumi were. Killing Gerald should’ve been a cinch for them...

“Indeed... Ever since they entered, I haven’t gotten news about them till this very day...” muttered Ryugu with a heavy sigh, making it clear that this was an extremely worrying incident to him. After all, if Endo and Izumi really were dead, then his family wouldn’t be able to bear the losses...

## Chapter 2144

What more, as long as Gerald was in the picture, there was a high chance that the Hanyus wouldn’t ever be able to kidnap Fujiko to threaten Takuya.

“... What? You sent both of them yet neither of them has reported back?” replied Kai in bewilderment.

“I wouldn’t lie about something like this... Regardless, after losing contact with them, I pursued Gerald a few days ago... Unfortunately, he killed several of my men in the process. If you want proof, just head to

the Yamashita family's deserted mountain... I left their corpses there..." explained Ryugu as he shook his head in resignation. This was honestly beyond humiliating for him to admit. After all, this loss was unlike anything the Hanyus had ever faced before...

"... Is Gerald really that strong...?" muttered Kai with a frown. Kai, for one, had only briefly met Gerald. As far as he knew, Gerald was just an average Joe. While he could've hired an ordinary killer to go after Gerald, he had opted to get Ryugu's help since he wanted the murder to be perfect. It truly hadn't occurred to him that the Hanyus would have trouble taking Gerald out!

"We would've taken him out ages ago if he wasn't!" replied Ryugu as he sighed again, wondering how he was going to get more information about Endo and Izumi's situation. Ryugu, for one, figured that the patriarch hadn't learned of the duo's disappearance yet. Once he did, however, the patriarch would surely fly into a rage...

"... How truly odd... How did the Futabas get acquainted with such a strong person..? I heard that Gerald was just a family guest. However, if Takuya's family had such a powerful ally, why did he only ask for Gerald's help after his family got reduced to such a state?" muttered Kai as he poured another cup of tea for himself before taking a sip.

"That's the reason I told you to lay low for the time being. I wish to investigate further into Gerald's background first. Speaking of which, since I've already said this much, you should know about an incident that happened back when we were on that deserted mountain. You see, we bumped into an elder of the Yamashita family. Some things happened, but long story short, that old man gave Gerald and Fujiko a chance to escape while I wasn't paying attention!" explained Ryugu in a slightly reluctant tone.

Though he didn't really want to share this information, he figured that Kai would only continue to misunderstand the situation if he didn't tell him the full story. By telling Kai all this, not only would Ryugu avoid more unnecessary trouble, but he could also potentially get some help from the Kanagawas.

"... What? You're telling me that the Yamashitas have a relationship with the Futabas? That's impossible! I've never heard of this before!" replied Kai.



“...Whatever the case is, I’ll be focusing on investigating Gerald’s strength and background for the time being. I’ll also be looking into the relationship between the Futabas and the Yamashitas. With that said, the Hanyus won’t be making a move till we get sufficient information on the situation. After all, while we can afford to offend the Futabas, offending the Yamashitas will surely spell doom for my family...”

## Chapter 2145

Since he had already said this much, Ryugu figured that he may as well just reveal all his thoughts on the situation.

“... I see. Thank god I asked you about this first... Otherwise, I could’ve easily gotten myself killed if I continued pursuing Gerald today!” replied Kai who was already drenched in cold sweat after hearing all that. After all, who could’ve guessed that Gerald was actually this strong? He was strong enough to take on two of the Hanyu family’s strongest assassins for heaven’s sake!

Thinking about it, had Kai bumped into Gerald earlier and caused a scene, he was now worried that the soldiers wouldn’t have been able to protect him at all...

“Indeed... Regardless, what’s your decision on the matter...?” asked Ryugu.

“... I’ll be heading back first to consider all this... However, I still want Gerald dead by the end of all this. No matter how much it takes, I won’t rest easy till he’s six feet under!” growled Kai, gritting his teeth as he clenched his fists tightly.

Nodding in response, Ryugu then rubbed his hands for a while before asking, “...Before that... There’s something I’d like you to clarify, if you don’t mind...”

“Ask away,” replied Kai.

“Well... your family will soon be united with the Futabas, right...? Through marriage? With that in mind, isn’t Gerald a guest of the Futabas? Why are you so hell bent on killing him...? That’s just me being curious, feel free not to answer...” said Ryugu, worried that Kai would overthink his question.

“... That doesn’t concern you. Also, don’t ever ask me about this again!” grumbled Kai as his gaze turned gloomy. He was going to carry this secret to his grave! Had it not been for the fact that Ryugu was the leader of the Hanyu’s assassin team and that Ryugu was still slightly useful to him, Kai would’ve already ordered his subordinates to kill that man for asking such an outrageous question!

“... Understood,” replied Ryugu, not wanting any unnecessary trouble from Kai.

“Either way, let’s just call it a day for now. I’ll start investigating Gerald and the Futabas once I get back. I’ll be sure to inform you if I find anything. As for you, don’t think about slacking off on this mission. Remember, as long as you kill Gerald, I’m willing to pay triple of what I initially promised!” declared Kai as he finished his tea and got to his feet.

Watching as Kai walked out, Ryugu simply replied, “No problem...”

Ryugu, for one, was sure that the Kanagawas would be able to find out more about Gerald without too much trouble.

Regardless, once Kai got into the car, he lit a cigarette before crossing his legs.

With the car doors now closed, one of his men couldn’t help but say, “... He’s lying, right...? There’s no way Gerald would be strong enough to kill so many of the Hanyu family’s assassins. It’s even more unbelievable to think that he’s capable enough to defeat Endo and Izumi! And the Futabas having a good relationship with the Yamashitas? As if that would ever happen!”

Chapter 2146

“... I feel that Ryugu wouldn’t lie about this,” replied Kai as he shook his head. Though he didn’t contact Ryugu much, he understood the man’s character well.

“... But if what he said was true, then Gerald truly has inhuman strength...! He’s definitely not someone

we can deal with! Do you think he's related to those Weston cultivators...?" asked the subordinate who knew about these things since he had been working for Kai for so many years.

"Can it!" retorted Kai as he frowned deeply. Cultivators, in general, couldn't be talked about so casually. Even though Kai and his subordinate weren't cultivators, if word got out about the existence of cultivators -and the cultivators found that they were the source of the information leak-, they would surely be ruined!

Even though Kai was no stranger to using his family's name to commit all sorts of crimes, he knew better than to pick a bone with cultivators. He, for one, understood that even his family would be burdened by all this if such a scenario came to be, so he wasn't counting on them to protect him.

"I-I'm sorry, Mr. Kanagawa! P-putting that aside... Should we start investigating Gerald...?" asked the subordinate as he immediately lowered his head.

"... Leave him be for the moment. There's something else that's much more important at the moment," said Kai with a sigh.

"... Are... you referring to the relationship between the Futabas and the Yamashitas...?" asked the subordinate.

"Indeed. The existence of ninjas has always been a tricky topic to confirm. After all, nobody's ever claimed to see one before. However, now that Ryugu's personally witnessed one, things could get a lot messier if there really is something between those two families," replied Kai as he took a deep breath. Though he desperately wanted Gerald gone, with the

Yamashitas now in the equation, he knew better than to act rashly.

It certainly didn't help that Gerald was capable of defeating Endo and Izumi despite their combined strength. Unless he hired the top international hitmen in the world, Kai was pretty sure he wouldn't ever pose a threat to Gerald...

Thinking about it, Kai raised his hand before saying, "... Stay silent for a moment"

It was about ten minutes later when his frown finally eased a little. In fact, Kai soon revealed a victorious smile as he said, "... Tell me, what's Endo and Izumi's rank in the international assassin list?"

"They should be somewhere near rank twenty," replied the subordinate who as Kai's subordinate needed to know the positions of all the influential people in Japan.

"If that's the case, I just need to hire the top ten assassins to finish Gerald off, right? With their level of expertise, I'm sure they can do the deed without the Futaba and Yamashita family's knowledge!" declared Kai as he held onto his chin.

"That's definitely a viable solution, Mr. Kanagawa! However... if Gerald really is as strong as Ryugu described him to be... What if the assassins fail to take him out...?" asked the subordinate.

"... What? Those from the top ten are capable enough to assassinate presidents from the Western Union! With that said, there's no way they'd have trouble dealing with a small fry like Gerald! At the very least, even if they do fail to kill him, I believe that their professional ethics will protect our identities! Because of that, I have no doubts that this mission will be completed without a hitch once I hire them!"

## Chapter 2147

After hearing what Kai had to say, the four subordinates exchanged glances before saying, "... We suppose you're right!"

Just as Kai had said, even if the assassins did fail to kill Gerald, they probably wouldn't expose who had hired them. While this probably meant that more money needed to be spent, what was money to the Kanagawas? Honestly, hiring a hitman was probably cheaper than what Kai was used to spending at bars every night!

“Then that settles it! Hurry and use my name to contact the top ten assassins on the list! The closer they are to us, the sooner that b\*stard dies! Also, make sure to tell them that if they fulfill their mission, I’ll increase their payment to up to thirty percent higher than the market price!” declared Kai as he slapped his thigh.

After all that had happened, Kai knew better than to trust the Hanyus with this case. Not only would relying on them be a waste of time, but he was pretty sure that the deposit he paid them was going to end up being a complete waste of money as well.

Regardless, just as Kai’s subordinate fished his phone out, the man suddenly froze before turning to look at Kai and whispering, “...Um... Mr. Kanagawa...?”

“...What? Just say it already!” muttered the impatient Kai.

Gulping, the subordinate then stuttered, “W-well... If the master learns about all this...”

Aside from being Kai’s subordinates, these men were also members of the Kanagawa family. With that in mind, the subordinates knew that if anything happened to Kai, they would have to bear full responsibility. It was the reason why they always notified the Kanagawa patriarch whenever Kai stepped out of line. Doing so prompted the patriarch to step forward and resolve the matter...

Either way, upon hearing that, Kai who hated it when his subordinates used his father’s name to threaten or discipline him then retorted, “He won’t find out as long as all of us keep it a secret, right?”

After working as Kai’s subordinates for so many years, these men were honestly no different than his confidants. While they knew everything about Kai, Kai himself knew that they were only hired by his father to keep a close eye on him.

Though that meant that his father now knew every move he made, Kai couldn’t just banish his men away. After all, not only would doing so lose him his freedom, but he also needed them to do lots of things for him.

Whatever the case was, Kai was well aware that his father usually turned a blind eye as long as he didn't do anything excessive. Even if he did end up creating a mess, as long as it wasn't over the line, his father would surely step in. However, now that he was hiring the top ten assassins, even Kai knew that he was clearly pushing it.

"B-but the master told us to inform him of your every move, Mr. Kanagawa...! If you're really going through with this, it's impossible that we hide it from him!

After all, if those assassins create a mess here, the unprepared master won't be able to resolve it that easily!" cried out one of the subordinates.

All of Kai's men knew that if things went south and they didn't report any of this to the patriarch, none of them would be able to bear the responsibility...!

Hearing that, Kai sighed before taking a cigarette out and lighting it. Puffing onto it for a moment, he eventually said in a low voice, "... How long have you men worked for me?"

"Almost ten years by now, young master!" replied the men in unison.

"Since I've never asked about the specifics of what you reported to my father throughout these years not that I'm blaming you, I only ask in return that you don't inform him about what I'm about to do. Just this once," said Kai with a frown.

## Chapter 2148

Kai, for one, understood that this was his best shot at getting rid of Gerald. If Gerald somehow left Japan before he managed to do the deed, then Kai was positive that he would lose track of Gerald for good. If that came to be, then he'd have to keep all this bitterness in his heart forever!

"... T-that..." muttered his men as they looked at each other in dismay, wondering how to even proceed.

Seeing how worried they were, Kai then fished a few bank cards out from the car's compartment and handed one to each of them before saying, "Here. Each of these has a million dollars in them. Feel free to finish the cash up."

After looking at the cards for a while, eventually, all the subordinates could do was accept them. For one, they knew that Kai was really desperate to end Gerald's life and that this was his best chance of doing so. However, they were also well aware that they would have to face his mighty wrath if they declined.

Whatever the case was, as all of Kai's subordinates thought about it, they slowly assured themselves that such high profile assassins were extremely confidential with their information. With that in mind, as long as nobody said anything, the patriarch would never find out.

Regardless, after the last of his subordinates accepted his cards, Kai was prompted to ask, "... I assume we're all in agreement, then?"

"... Only this once, young master... However, know that if the master learns about this, we'll be in boiling hot water..." muttered one of his subordinates. Though the stakes were high, the subordinates couldn't deny that a million dollars was equivalent to six years' worth of salary.

"Cut the cr\*p and contact those assassins already! We still need to see who's willing to take the mission! Remember, the sooner we get rid of Gerald, the sooner this affair will be done with!" replied Kai as he gestured for them to get to it in a slightly impatient tone.

"Loud and clear!" declared his subordinates who immediately got to work...

Back at the training grounds, an entire day of competitions had passed, and it was finally time for the results. Though Aiden didn't score too high, his results weren't bad either. At the very least, his results were above average.

Gerald himself had no idea that Kai had come looking for him in the first place. Since he had rested in

the morning, he felt particularly energetic by the time night came. With that in mind, before Aiden returned, Gerald made sure to head to a nearby restaurant to buy him a mountain of food for dinner.

Soon after, Aiden entered the room, looking quite bewildered as he said, "... You're not going to believe this but... Ms. Fujiko got much higher results than me...!"

"How much higher?" asked Gerald as he watched Aiden take his coat off.

"She got fourth place in the competition today, which means that she's ten ranks above me!" replied Aiden with a shrug. Honestly, he had expected her to rank last.

"Fujiko wasn't given the title of 'Queen of Soldiers' for nothing, you know? I have a feeling that if you two duel against each other, she'll probably win. You could invite her for a duel if you'd like to test that statement!" replied Gerald with a smile.

Gerald was confident in Fujiko's martial arts skills. After all, he had witnessed how well she had held her ground back when she was being attacked behind the hotel that night. Had it not been for the fact that her physique held her back, she could have definitely taken her assailant out. If that had happened, then Gerald wouldn't have had to step forward to save her.

"I'd rather not... I'm exhausted enough after competing for an entire day... Now I just want to have dinner and rest for a while before preparing for tomorrow's events..." said Aiden as he shook his head. After a full day of competitions, he felt that he was going to collapse at any moment.

"Then let's eat so you can head to bed early once we're done," replied Gerald as he gestured toward the dining table.

With that said, they then began having their meals, making sure to discuss any other issues that needed resolving in between bites...



Fast forward to the next morning, Aiden and Fujiko left for the training ground again to resume the competition. Gerald and Master Ghost, on the other hand, remained in the living room to discuss the secrets of the sea map...

Shortly after, a fishing ship could be seen docking the coast of Japan...

## Chapter 2149

Following that, a man donning black clothes who looked to be around six feet tall got out of the ship. Since his face was covered by a mask, only his sharp eyes were visible...

Though he wasn't holding onto anything, anyone who came across him kept their distance. There was just something off with his aura...

Regardless, the man eventually entered a black car by the coast before being driven off...

Fast forward to half an hour later, Kai could be seen smoking in a villa near the Kanagawa manor. Sitting on his left and right, were two young, naked women, and standing before him, were a few of his subordinates.

Though Kai's hands continuously groped the two beauties, the subordinates looked completely unfazed, almost as though they were already used to witnessing such scenes. Aside from occasionally glimpsing at their bodies, the subordinates mostly kept their eyes to themselves. After all, they knew that they'd eventually get to play with the women as well.

Usually, after Kai had his fun with his women, he would then pass them over to his men as 'rewards'. Due to that, Kai's subordinates had had the pleasure of playing around with not only prostitution models, but also some of the lower ranked celebrities in Japan!

Either way, it wasn't long before Kai's phone began to ring. After picking it up, Kai remained silent for a while before lowering it and saying, "He's here."

“... Huh? Who’s here?” asked one of the subordinates.

“What do you mean who’s here? It’s the assassin! He’s arrived in Japan and is currently on his way over in his car! He should be here within the hour...” grumbled Kai.

“Oh? Should we leave, then?” asked the two women.

“Just stay here. However, I want both of you to immediately forget what you’ve heard later on, got it? Expose us and it won’t be long before the consequences catch up to you. And don’t say anything unnecessary, understand?” replied Kai as he firmly grasped their shoulders. Kai, for one, hadn’t satisfied his lust yet. So what if they were meeting an assassin? It wasn’t as though he was doing anything wrong.

Hearing that and understanding how important this was, the women immediately nodded before saying, “Understood!”

The two girls had already witnessed how terribly things could go wrong if people like them failed to obey their orders. With that in mind, as long as they obeyed Kai’s words, not only would they be granted just about anything, but they’d also avoid a horrible death.

Nodding in response, Kai then looked at one of his subordinates and asked, “So, where’s the assassin from?”

“He’s from the southeast and his code name is Vulture. Ranked eighth on the assassin list, he’s wanted by both the Western Union and a few of the European countries. Though he’s a world-class criminal, nobody’s been able to capture him,” replied his subordinate as he read out the information on his phone.

“As expected, those from the top ten truly are extraordinary... To think that he’s been able to escape the Western Union’s grasp this entire time! With how capable he is, I’m sure it won’t be long till Gerald finally meets his end!” declared Kai as he nodded in satisfaction.

Had he thought about this earlier, he wouldn't even have bothered looking for the Hanyus. With how vicious those on the top ten were, Gerald could've been dead by now! Being professionals, Kai was also sure that Gerald's corpse would be dealt with so efficiently that his murder would never be solved...

Not long after, a knock could be heard on the door, prompting Kai to immediately get to his feet as he exclaimed, "Vulture is here!"

Upon hearing that, the door was opened and in stepped the man in black from before...

The second he entered, everyone could immediately feel how immensely pressuring his aura was. Even the two women from before immediately looked toward the floor, not daring to look the assassin in the face...

## Chapter 2150

After glancing around for a bit, Vulture immediately stared straight at Kai before asking in a low and hoarse, "... Kanagawa Kai, I presume?"

"That, I am. Since you came all the way from the southeast, do get some rest first. Speaking of which, I've also prepared these two beauties for you. Feel free to do whatever you want with them," replied Kai as he gestured toward the two women.

"I see. Then I'll be thanking you in advance, then!" declared Vulture who wasn't about to say no to such beautiful women. After all, the women from where he came from were all unsightly, to say the least. They were incomparable to Japanese women!

With that said, Vulture then removed his coat before placing his arms on the two women's shoulders and guiding them into one of the rooms.

Once they were inside, one of Kai's subordinates couldn't help but ask, "... Um... Mr. Kanagawa...? What

if they end up... you know... dead...?"

While it was true that Kai's men were no strangers to crime and they weren't against hurting women, murder was a line none of them dared to cross.

Hearing that, Kai simply waved his hand before replying rather nonchalantly, "What's there to be afraid of? They're just two random university students. As long as he kills Gerald, I'm willing to let him have his way with even famous local stars!"

With that said, Kai then lit a cigarette before smiling, prompting his men to remain silent as they waited for Vulture to be done. From how pleased Kai looked, it was almost as though he could already see Gerald's demise in Vulture's hands...

Whatever the case was, it wasn't long before Vulture exited the room. Slipping his clothes on, he then said, "Apologies for keeping you waiting, Mr. Kanagawa."

Taking a peek into the room, Kai saw that the two women were lying on the bed, motionless. It almost felt like they were dead... Even so, Kai felt more envious than anything. After all, after binging on wine and women throughout the years, his body had been completely ruined to the point where he found it hard to even get erect.

As Kai was resenting that fact, Vulture finished buttoning up his coat and sat on the couch before laughing as he added, "Still, those two were far too weak!"

Feeling more humiliated than ever after hearing that, Kai then nodded before replying, "... Either way, now that you've had your fun, could we get to business, sir?"

Shrugging, Vulture simply said, "Fine with me."

"Alright, so... There's this person called Gerald Crawford, and he's a guest of the Futaba family. I haven't

managed to fully investigate his background, but I do know that he's rather strong. After all, not even the Hanyus were able to hurt him," explained Kai as he gestured for his men to bring over Gerald's details before handing them to Vulture.

"Hah! What kind of crappy family is the Hanyus? Do they even deserve to be called assassins?" scoffed Vulture, not even bothering to read the notes he had been handed. All he did was stare at Gerald's photograph for a while before snorting disdainfully.

Though Kai was left momentarily stunned, he quickly laughed aloud before replying, "You got that right!"

While it was true that Endo and Izumi were ranked quite high on the assassin list, there was undoubtedly a massive gap between them and the top ten assassins... With that in mind, Vulture had every right to look down on the Hanyus...

## Chapter 2151

With how confident Vulture sounded, Kai was sure that Gerald would definitely be murdered this time...!

After looking at Gerald's picture for a while and memorizing it, Vulture couldn't help but feel that Gerald looked slightly familiar. While he couldn't tell why that was, he made sure to hide his curiosity by asking, "Regardless, while I can definitely finish him off, about the commission..."

Hearing that, Kai gestured at one of his men before saying, "Bring it over."

Nodding in response, the subordinate then disappeared into another room before quickly returning with a suitcase...

Watching as his subordinate opened it before Vulture, Kai then crossed his legs before adding, "There's two million dollars in there. If you kill Gerald within three days, I'll transfer five million more dollars into your bank account as the rest of your commission. If it extends past three days, however, I'll have to lower it to four million dollars instead. Even so, I believe you'll need a week at most to take him out.

What do you say?"

"Fine by me," replied Vulture. After all, he was being given seven million dollars when the target wasn't even a tycoon or senior government official! As long as he planned right and did everything correctly, this mission was going to be a cinch!

"Very well, then! Your task begins tomorrow morning! Speaking of which, feel free to rest here in the next few days, sir. Those two women will naturally remain here for your pleasure. However, if you don't think they're enough, feel free to ask for more! As long as you're able to kill Gerald within the allocated time, I'll grant you anything!" declared Kai with a smile.

Following that, Vulture watched as Kai and his subordinates left the villa. Once they were gone, he took a sip of water before returning to his room...

As for Kai and his men, after getting into their car, one of his subordinates couldn't help but ask, "Where to now, Mr. Kanagawa...?"

"To the entertainment company. They organized a selection event recently, right? Let's see if there are any beauties around! It's high time we celebrated!" replied Kai delightedly. Since Gerald was now as good as dead to him, Kai was so elated that he honestly wanted to have a car race just to show how overjoyed he was.

"Got it!" replied his subordinate with a nod before driving the car toward the Kanagawa's entertainment company...

As for Gerald, he naturally had no idea about any of this. Regardless, after a good night's rest, the energized youth decided to walk around the training grounds alone while Aiden and Fujiko headed off to participate in more competitions.

Naturally, he wasn't doing this just to have a stroll. The truth was, Gerald wanted to locate the Crawford cultivator from before.

After all, before hitting the hay the night before, he had momentarily sensed that person's presence. From what he could tell, the person was either within the training ground or somewhere near it. Since this was an urban area, there were numerous hotels for that cultivator to hide in.

While Gerald wasn't really afraid of that person, he was worried that trouble could brew if he allowed the cultivator to do as he pleased. Gerald, for one, didn't want those close to him to get affected by that.

As he was walking around, Gerald bumped into Ichiro who was quick to jog over before asking, "Oh? What are you doing here, Mr. Crawford?"

"I'm just taking a stroll," replied Gerald with a faint smile.

## Chapter 2152

"If you don't mind, could we talk for a bit, Mr. Crawford?" asked Ichiro as he heaved a sigh. Ichiro, for one, couldn't talk to his colleagues about some things and he didn't have any close friends nearby. With that in mind, he figured that Gerald would be the perfect listener.

"Sure. I don't mind," replied Gerald with a nod, figuring that he could possibly learn more clues about the person who had murdered the Yanam special forces soldier. What more, this was his chance to see if the Japanese military had managed to figure out that he was Adler's murderer.

"I'm glad you agreed! Please, follow me. You know, my family mailed some good tea to me recently, I'll let you try some," said Ichiro with a smile.

Following that, the duo soon found themselves walking into Ichiro's office. Upon entering, Ichiro immediately told his secretary to get some tea ready before gesturing for Gerald to take a seat

"The problems keep stacking up, Mr. Crawford... If I'm to be honest, I don't even know where I should start investigating! But if I don't start getting results, I may not even be able to keep my job!" muttered

Ichiro in resignation.

“You’re telling me. There truly has been quite a bit going on around the Japanese training grounds recently Still, haven’t you managed to obtain other clues about the two murders since the last time we talked?” asked Gerald with a nod.

“Nothing with Adler’s case... To think that we haven’t been able to find anything even after half a month has passed! There just doesn’t seem to be any traces of the man left! I truly think that Adler’s disappearance is an unsolvable case... As for the other person, we’ve found his corpse and sent it back to Yanam. While we’re currently doing a thorough investigation based on the clues the murderer left behind, we don’t know if we’ll be able to sniff him out in the end...” explained Ichiro.

Ichiro was only speaking this casually about all this since he knew that Gerald wasn’t part of the military. He was also pretty sure that Gerald wasn’t involved with either of the cases, which was why he didn’t mind sharing all these details to let off some steam.

“I see... For your sake, I hope you’ll be able to find the culprit soon...” replied Gerald with a nod.

“Thank you... You know, the colonel told me that if I continue failing to uncover these two cases, not only will the colonel be fired, but I’ll be forced to resign as well. You can tell that they’re serious just by how many Japanese military soldiers are standing guard over the training grounds now. After all, a third case would be disastrous... I’ll be frank and say that I’m thankful that the only victims are those from Yanam. It means that we only need to compensate Yanam with gifts or something else. If the cases involved someone from Weston, the Western Union, or any of the European countries, we’d truly be in hot water!” said Ichiro as he shook his head with a sigh, clearly vexed out of his mind.

As Ichiro’s secretary returned with some tea prompting Ichiro to hand a glass over to Gerald, Gerald couldn’t help but ask, “Indeed... Speaking of which, there’s a lot of hotels nearby, right? Since you have the murderer’s height and general body description, maybe you could find him within the hotels in the area. Just a thought...”

Naturally, Gerald was only suggesting this since he was planning to do so himself in the first place. However, Ichiro simply replied, “I’ve already done that to no avail Hell, we did it the day after the



incident, but there simply were no traces of our culprit. I suspect he must have immediately fled after doing the deed...”

Frowning slightly, Gerald was prompted to ask, “... Are you absolutely sure...?”

While he initially had his doubts that the person was a Crawford cultivator, after what Ichiro had just told him, it seemed that the culprit really was a cultivator...

### Chapter 2153

However, the fact that the Japanese Military hadn't been able to locate him even though Gerald had clearly sensed that person's presence the night before was puzzling, to say the least.

“Of course, I am! Don't worry, the investigation isn't anything confidential so there's no reason for me to lie,” replied Ichiro as he waved his hand.

“Indeed... Well, I wish you luck with your investigations! Do tell me if you require any help. I don't mind since I feel we get along well,” said Gerald with a subtle smile.

“... Do... Do you really mean that, Mr. Crawford?” asked Ichiro after momentarily freezing.

“What reason would I have to lie?” replied Gerald with a chuckle.

“That... That's wonderful! With how strong you are, the culprit will definitely be caught in no time!” exclaimed Ichiro rather excitedly. Ichiro, for one, knew that Gerald alone had caused quite a mess within the Yanam Military, and only someone exceedingly strong could achieve such a feat.

“You flatter me. Regardless, I'll stick to my word,” replied Gerald as he stuck his hand out for a handshake, knowing full well that he was only doing this in hopes of easing his search for the Crawford cultivator.

What more, with the Japanese military's investigation team involved, the culprit couldn't just reveal his cultivator abilities, thus forcing him to take on Gerald with only his martial arts skills.

Regardless, once Ichiro calmed down a little, he couldn't help but ask, "...Come to think of it, what benefit do you get from all this, Mr. Crawford...? After all, you'll only be wasting time and energy by helping us..."

Chuckling in response, Gerald thought up an excuse on the spot before replying, "As I've said, I just feel that we get along well. Besides, though Aiden's busy with the competition, I don't have anything better to do."

"I see... Well, whatever the case is, please accept my thanks on behalf of the military investigation team! If you manage to capture the culprit, I'll surely ask my military superior to record your merits!" said Ichiro as he returned Gerald's handshake. Since Gerald was willing to lend his aid at his lowest, Ichiro now saw Gerald as a good friend.

Laughing in response, Gerald released their handshake soon after before replying, "Let's work hard and capture the crook as soon as we can, then!"

Since Gerald had agreed to help, Ichiro wasted no time and immediately led Gerald to the colonel's office.

Upon hearing from the colonel's secretary that the case could potentially be solved soon, the colonel prioritized returning to his office instead of continuing to watch the competition.

Once the colonel got there and sat at his desk, Ichiro immediately began reporting all the recent incidents to him while Gerald remained seated on a couch within the room.

A few minutes later, the colonel got to his feet and scanned Gerald from head to toe before asking, "... Gerald Crawford, correct?"

“That, I am,” replied Gerald as he got up before nodding.

“As you already know, I’m the colonel of the Japanese military, and I go by Shin Oda. Ichiro has told me that you’re willing to help us solve the two murders. While I’m happy to hear that, I do wonder if you have any hidden agendas...” said Oda as he returned a nod...

#### Chapter 2154

“Oh...? What agendas could I probably have?” asked Gerald as he raised a slight brow, clearly not expecting the colonel to ask that.

“Don’t get me wrong, but since I’m the one in charge, I need to remain vigilant at all times. We’re all aware of the giant mess you created back in Yanam, Gerald. With the Yanam military’s leader missing which is why Carter is now in charge I’m simply worried that you may do the same to our military,” replied Oda as he stated at Gerald.

With how dangerous this mission was, Oda knew that if things got out of control, there was a high chance that anyone present would be as good as dead...

Hearing that, Gerald burst out laughing before explaining, “While I can understand where you’re coming from, I’m afraid you still don’t understand how I operate. You see, I only did that to the Yanam military since they kidnapped my friend. They even used his life to threaten me, you see. With that in mind, I assume you’ll see things from my point of View?”

“I have heard about that too,” replied Oda who had previously been told the same thing while he was researching the Yanam incident.

Honestly, Oda would’ve tried his best to save his friend as well if they were kidnapped by the Yanam military. Of course, he wasn’t as strong as Gerald, so he would’ve used other methods to do so.

Whatever the case was, Gerald then said, "Either way, I'm just helping you since I get along well with Noda. I won't deny that I'm just doing this because I'm bored either. However, if you still think I'm too dangerous, feel free to reject my offer. If you do, I won't ask any further about this affair," said Gerald in a low voice.

While there was an instant change in Ichiro's expression upon hearing that, since Oda was present, Ichiro remained silent on the spot...

Shaking his head, the colonel quickly replied, "Just to be clear, this affair is between you and Ichiro. I have nothing to do with any of this, and I'm just making a routine inquiry. With that said, you're free to help, though if anything happens, know that Ichiro's to bear full responsibility."

Oda, for one, knew better than to mess with a strong person like Gerald. Even so, he couldn't deny that Gerald was a very viable solution to capturing the culprit. Regardless, since this conversation had been recorded by the recording system in the office, Oda now knew that if any trouble arose, Ichiro would be the one to blame instead of him.

"Don't worry, sir! Gerald and I will definitely capture all the culprits in no time flat!" declared Ichiro as he patted his chest.

"I await your good news, then. Speaking of which, you're a Westoner, right, Gerald? I'll be giving you a temporary identity in the meantime since I can't think of any other way to justify you working for our military's investigation team. This'll make things much more convenient for you as well," replied Oda as he opened his drawer and took an insignia out before handing it to Gerald.

Looking at the words on the insignia, Gerald then read out, "Investigation team temporary investigator..."

"Indeed. That will be your current identity. Thankfully, you don't hold any governmental positions in Weston or this would be against your country's laws... Regardless, go ahead and start investigating. I'll be heading back to monitor the competition, but if there's anything you two find, inform me immediately, got that?" said Oda as he nodded before leaving the office.

Regardless, now that Oda had agreed, Ichiro instantly felt relieved. With Gerald's help, they were certainly going to crack the case in the nick of time! Now fully motivated, Ichiro turned to face Gerald before declaring, "I'll be counting on you from now on, Gerald!"

"Likewise. And don't worry too much, I'm just using this as an excuse to pass time," replied Gerald as he smiled while shaking his head...

## Chapter 2155

"Either way, let's get you to the office first! I'll call over the other investigation team members to introduce you to them. While we're at it, I'll take the chance to explain your temporary role in this investigation!" said Ichiro as he placed his hand on Gerald's shoulder.

"Can we talk while eating?" asked Gerald as he patted his belly.

"Of course! You know where my office is, right? Go wait there for me first as I head out to get some food!" replied Ichiro. Forget eating, even if Gerald had requested to be someplace else, Ichiro would've readily rented someplace within the military grounds.

Fast forward to half an hour later, everyone from the investigation team had arrived. Naturally, upon seeing Gerald there, they were all rightfully curious. After all, to all of them, he was a suspect in Adler's disappearance. While they had no evidence that he had committed the deed, in the end, Gerald still had a motive to commit the crime. With that in mind, since Gerald was just sitting there, many of them thought that Gerald had taken the initiative to surrender himself.

Just as they were deep in thought, Ichiro entered the office with a few bags in hand. As the pleasant scent of roasted chicken filled the room, Ichiro declared, "I've brought over some roasted chicken, so be sure to share among yourselves. I'll detail all of you as you eat."

Following that, he placed a roasted chicken in front of Gerald making sure to hand out the rest to the other team members as well before sitting on the main seat and drinking a glass of water.

After clearing his throat, Ichiro then said, "Now that everyone's here... I'll cut straight to the chase. Gerald and I have just returned from the colonel's office, and we've gotten the green light to make Gerald a temporary investigator. With that said, he'll be helping us investigate the two murders from today onward."

"...What? Why is he suddenly joining our investigation team?"

Ichiro's announcement was like an exploding bombshell, and everyone couldn't help but look at Gerald with incredulous gazes. After all, how on earth had a suspect suddenly become their colleague?

On the contrary, Gerald looked cool as a cucumber as he ate his roasted chicken, barely even caring about their gazes and comments.

"I'm excluding Gerald from our list of suspects. After all, the case is already half a month old and we still have no evidence against him. Due to that, I say that that's enough to prove his innocence! Besides, Gerald's been kind enough to willingly help us with this investigation! With that said, please put your shock aside and start revealing any information you've obtained! It's high time we solved these cases!" explained Ichiro.

"Loud and clear!" declared everyone as they nodded, not daring to disobey Ichiro.

Following that, they all placed their written reports on the table, prompting Ichiro who had just sipped on more water to say, "Alright, take turns explaining what you found in the past two days."

Hearing that, everyone did as Ichiro ordered. While everyone else was dead serious as they read their reports, Gerald who had his legs crossed simply continued eating his roasted chicken...

Chapter 2156

By the time the others were done, Gerald had just finished his roasted chicken.

Watching as Gerald wiped his hands, Ichiro handed two tissues to the youth before asking, "So... Figured anything out?"

"Hardly. To be completely frank, the information was near useless, so I wasn't really paying attention. Though I have to say, the roasted chicken is pretty good, so you guys should eat it while it's hot," replied Gerald as he wiped his mouth.

"You...!" growled the other investigators, clearly annoyed that Gerald was just dissing on all their hard work. What a waste of breath!

"What's wrong?" asked Ichiro.

"Don't worry, it's nothing major. Regardless, you guys should start investigating the hotels around the training ground. I advise you to register every non Japanese staying in the vicinity! Believe me when I say that that's the only information that's going to be useful for now!" replied Gerald as he waved his hand.

"Do you honestly think that we haven't already investigated the surrounding area? Also, all the foreigners? Do you think registering all of them and putting them on file is going to be a cinch or something? You're not even a proper member of the investigation team! What would you know about our work and authority?" retorted several of the other members.

"Just do as he says. Remember, the colonel has given him permission to be on our team, so the colonel and I will be bearing all the consequences. With that said, if you disagree with Gerald, you can either take this to the colonel's office or leave!" growled Ichiro as he slammed his fist onto the table.

Hearing that, everyone became so frightened that they instantly fell silent. While Ichiro was usually an amiable person, everyone in the investigation team knew that Ichiro was the kind of person who didn't make any exceptions to who he grew angry at, not even his family. In fact, he had such a bad temper in his earlier years that he was known for driving several people out!

With that in mind, the rest of the investigation team could only yell, "Loud and clear!"

Knowing that they could only obey Gerald's orders for now, the group of people quickly tidied up their documents before walking out of the office...

Gerald himself simply shook his head before saying, "It's such a pity that they didn't eat their roasted chickens..."

Watching as Gerald took the remaining chicken and began feasting once more, Ichiro waited for his secretary to close the door before looking at Gerald and asking, "Truth be told, I'm finding it hard to see the logic of your order... After all, we've already scanned through all the hotels in the vicinity multiple times. While it's true that there are multiple foreigners, none of them look like the murderer at all..."

"Tell me again what that murderer's physique was like. And did he leave behind any footprints?" asked Gerald as he looked back at Ichiro.

"From what we've gathered, the person is around six feet tall and has a rather sturdy looking figure. Aside from that, his footprints were size twelve... As I've previously said, we found nobody who matched the description, which is why we assume that the culprit has left the area," explained Ichiro.

"Just a thought, but couldn't the culprit have worn platform shoes? Also, it's easy to look sturdy if you have piles of clothes on. As for the shoe size, couldn't the murderer just have worn larger shoes?" asked Gerald in between chews.

"... That..." muttered the stupefied Ichiro as his voice momentarily trailed off...

## Chapter 2157

Though he was in the investigation team, Ichiro didn't specialize in solving mysteries. The cases he usually dealt with were dangerous, but straightforward. With that in mind, what Gerald had just said had never crossed his mind.



It was also at that moment when Ichiro realized that the footage from the surveillance camera could be completely useless. While it was true that they had managed to capture the man's face, after hearing what Gerald had to say, Ichiro now wondered if the culprit had been wearing a rubber mask as well...

"I don't blame you for being speechless. Regardless, that's why I said the information your subordinates provided earlier was completely useless. It's also why I told them to quickly identify any foreigners living in nearby hotels. Call it a gut feeling, but I have a hunch that the person is still here," replied Gerald with a subtle smile.

"... Hold on, why only foreigners?" asked the confused Ichiro.

"You're free to investigate the locals if you want, but I feel that the murder is more of an act of revenge. After all, the culprit only killed those from Yanam, which is why I don't think the locals did it. I could be wrong, though," replied Gerald.

Gerald, for one, knew for a fact that he was only 'helping' them in order for him to locate the Crawford cultivator. While he admitted that it was a selfish motive of his, he also believed that the cultivator was the murderer of the Yanam special forces soldier. With that in mind, he had reason to believe that investigating the locals would only be a waste of energy.

"... I see! Either way, don't you worry! I'll order my subordinates to run thorough investigations on all the surrounding hotels!" declared Ichiro who now trusted Gerald more than ever. After all, Gerald had just given them new leads to look into. Now, there truly was a chance for them to crack the case!

Gerald himself who had just finished his second roasted chicken released a large burp before saying, "I'm sure you will. By the way, the roasted chicken really is delectable. You wouldn't mind me taking the rest back, would you?"

As Gerald was thinking about letting Master Ghost have a taste as well, Ichiro simply laughed heartily as he replied, "Feel free! Honestly, if you like them so much, I'm willing to send them to you every day!"

“There’s no need for that. Either way, I’ll be heading back first. I’ll contact you again tonight,” replied Gerald as he carried the remaining roasted chicken away with him...

Watching as Gerald left, Ichiro then stood on the spot for a while, slowly taking the time to process all that Gerald had said. Eventually, he grabbed his coat before dashing off to keep an eye on the investigation efforts...

Gerald himself soon got back with the roasted chicken in hand. Upon entering the room, Master Ghost who was watching television couldn’t help but get to his feet as he asked, “Is that roasted chicken I smell?”

“Bingo. Noda Ichiro, the head of the Japanese military’s investigation team, got them for us. Well, me. I ended up becoming a temporary investigator for them to hopefully ease my search for the Crawford cultivator,” explained Gerald.

“I see. With the investigation team on our side, not only will your odds of finding the cultivator increase, but even if the cultivator discovers you, he probably won’t dare to attack,” replied Master Ghost after thinking about it for a bit.

“Indeed. Either way, eat up. The chicken’s untouched, if you’re worried about that,” said Gerald with a nod as he placed the chicken before Master Ghost.

“Glad to hear. You know, I was just about to head out to get some food earlier, but it seems you returned in the nick of time,” replied Master Ghost as he took a good whiff of the chicken before tearing off a drumstick and stuffing it into his mouth.

“I suppose. Speaking of which, I’m heading out to the hotel tonight to have a look around. With any luck, I’ll find the Crawford cultivator and quickly get rid of him,” said Gerald as he sat before Master Ghost. “Would you like me to join you?” asked Master Ghost with a nod.

“Well, with the investigation team there, you should be safe. With that said, sure, why not?” replied Gerald after thinking about it for a bit.

## Chapter 2158

With night swiftly approaching sometime later, Gerald and Master Ghost quickly began making their way to where Ichiro and the others were.

As for the members of the investigation team, after investigating throughout the day while constantly being urged by Ichiro, they managed to scan through at least half of the surrounding hotels and guesthouses. Aside from being registered, any foreigner living in those places were temporarily detained under the Japanese military, and were currently being guarded by Japanese soldiers...

Regardless, as the duo continued making their way to where Ichiro was, Gerald made sure to detail what he had encountered in the past two days to Master Ghost. After listening to all that, Master Ghost couldn't help but say, “It honestly surprises me that the investigation team would obey your orders like this...”

To Master Ghost, Gerald should've been the prime suspect of Adler's disappearance. Even so, he was simultaneously glad that the investigation team hadn't been monitoring Gerald too closely. After all, it allowed Gerald to actually join their team! What more, Ichiro sounded like he really trusted Gerald.

“Truth be told, I wasn't expecting things to go this smoothly either, though I'm not complaining. Regardless, since I'm making my move under the guise of an investigation team member, the Crawford cultivator will surely not anticipate the presence of

Another cultivator. With that in mind, once I gain sufficient knowledge about him, it'll be easy for me to take him out,” replied Gerald with a nod as he continued walking forward.

Shortly after they left the training ground, the two of them were greeted by the sight of several investigation team members and nearly endless Japanese soldiers on both sides of the street, all of them vigilantly guarding the entrances of all hotels and guesthouses in the vicinity.

Though several drivers immediately turned to leave the area upon seeing all this, there were still quite a number of spectators. These people lived around the training ground, and they were well aware that it was a rare occasion for the military to get this riled up. With that in mind, it was only natural for them to start discussing what was happening among themselves.

Either way, upon noticing Gerald's presence, Ichiro immediately dropped whatever he was doing and jogged over to the youth while shouting, "Gerald! Over here!"

Since Gerald had agreed to help him, Ichiro treated him like a friend now, which explained why he dropped the formalities when addressing Gerald.

Smiling in response, Gerald was prompted to ask, "How are things going, Mr. Noda?"

"Things are going well. We've temporarily detained all the foreigners living in the vicinity, and they're currently being guarded by soldiers. Though you told me not to, I also registered all the locals in the area, just in case. Regardless, we've found a few suspicious people throughout our investigation, and I'd like you to have a look at them," replied Ichiro with a grin, clearly expecting the case to be cracked soon.

Ichiro, for one, had a hunch that the culprit was among the people whom he deemed were suspicious. From what he could guess, the person had probably remained here since he still wanted to murder more of Yanam's soldiers.

"That's great to hear. Do lead the way," said Gerald as he turned to look at Master Ghost with a smile.

Following that, the spectators watched as the duo followed Ichiro into one of the hotels...

After walking past the soldiers guarding the hotel's entrance, Gerald was greeted by the sight of several hotel staff members gathered at the lobby. Though there were soldiers in here as well each armed with a gun, Gerald was more interested in the six people seated on the couch.

Watching as Ichiro pointed at them, Ichiro himself then said, "Those are the suspects, Gerald. Though you told me that the culprit was probably an expert at disguising himself, I went ahead and gathered people who looked similar to the individual captured on the surveillance system. I don't plan to let them go till you have a good look at them."

The second Gerald's name was mentioned, one of the men seated on the sofa who was wearing a Windbreaker slowly lifted his head. Upon seeing Gerald, he couldn't help but frown.

The man himself was none other than Amare, the Crawford cultivator...!

## Chapter 2159

Based on the time limit the patriarch had given him, this was supposed to be Amare's sixth and final day in Japan. If he was still unable to locate Gerald, he would still have to leave tomorrow, thus failing to complete the mission Will had assigned him...

Just as he was feeling that all hope was lost and that he was going to fail to get on Will's good side, Gerald appeared before him! Amare couldn't have asked for anything better! Still, with so many Japanese soldiers in the vicinity, Amare knew better than to act rashly. With that in mind, he took a brief glance at Gerald just to confirm his identity before quickly averting his gaze.

The second Amare averted his gaze, Gerald immediately noticed that someone had been staring at him. Raising a slight brow, Gerald then turned to look at the individuals seated on the sofa...

While he couldn't pinpoint who had been staring at him earlier, the person in the middle stuck out a bit more from the rest. With that in mind, Gerald took a deep breath before activating a small portion of his Herculean Primordial Spirit... Only to realize that there wasn't even the slightest fluctuation of essential qi. With that, he quickly retracted his primordial spirit.

Though there weren't any essential qi fluctuations, Gerald couldn't help but feel that that person wasn't an ordinary man. Trusting his gut, Gerald made sure to take note of that man...

Seeing that Gerald was staring so intently at those people, Ichiro leaned closer to him to ask, “Do you have any methods to get the truth out from them? Since they’re all foreigners, we can’t just lock them up and interrogate them since that will cause trouble with the embassy.”

“Unfortunately, I’m not the best at interrogating, so I’ll leave that to you guys. Regardless, there are some things that I’d like to think through first,” replied Gerald, his gaze still fixed on the man with the Windbreaker.

Gerald’s intuition was practically screaming that the man in the Windbreaker was the Crawford cultivator. Even so, Gerald wasn’t planning on doing anything till he sensed essential qi from that suspicious individual...

Regardless, upon hearing that, the slightly disappointed Ichiro could only say, “... Alright...”

However, Ichiro’s mood quickly lifted after he reminded himself that Gerald wasn’t a professional investigator. He was just here to help, and it wouldn’t make sense for him to know how to properly interrogate people...

Either way, if they really wanted to get information out of these foreigners, the best course of action would probably be to get the local police officers over. If they set up a temporary interrogation room instead of bringing the foreigners to the police station, it would only become a ‘questioning session’, thus avoiding the embassy’s involvement. Besides, if they did that and the suspects became vindictive, it wouldn’t affect him or his team.

Whatever the case was, after sizing the man up for one final time, Gerald turned to look at Master Ghost before saying, “... Let’s head back for now. We shouldn’t interfere with their jobs.”

Master Ghost had already been with Gerald for such a long time that he could already tell what Gerald’s slightest actions or movements indicated. With that in mind, he simply nodded in response, prompting the duo to leave the hotel...

Ichiro immediately got to work as well, quickly contacting the local police station to get some interrogators over...

Though Gerald remained silent throughout their journey back, upon entering their room and closing the door behind them, Gerald immediately heaved a heavy sigh as he took his coat off. Following that, he lit a cigarette and took two puffs of it...

## Chapter 2160

"Sensed anything back there?" asked Master Ghost who had a vague idea of what Gerald had experienced.

"Indeed... Remember that man in the Windbreaker? One of the suspects sitting on the sofa?" replied Gerald with a slight frown.

"I do. I made sure to memorize all their appearances," said Master Ghost with a nod.

"Well, I have a feeling that he's the Crawford cultivator, though I can't be certain just yet...

Regardless, I'm heading out later tonight," replied Gerald as he continued huffing on his cigarette. In no time flat, the cigarette's lifespan had ended...

"Are you planning to secretly get rid of him?" asked Master Ghost.

"Negative. Again, I specify that it was only a gut feeling. Until I'm sure, I won't lay a finger on him. Regardless, since I was able to notice him, I'm sure he noticed me as well. In fact, it was probably when Ichiro first mentioned my name when I realized I was being stared at. Either way, my plan tonight is to slightly expose my cultivation to draw that person out. Once I confirm that he's a Crawford cultivator, I'll get rid of him swiftly," explained Gerald as he placed his burnt out cigarette in an ashtray.

"I see... Speaking of which, were you able to get a grasp of how strong he was? After calculating for a bit, I feel he's weaker than you, though you shouldn't let your guard down till you're absolutely sure," replied Master Ghost in a slightly worried tone.

"Don't worry about it. I don't really treat anyone from the Crawford family seriously aside from Will who wants to compete with me so much just to secure his position as 'heir of the Crawfords'. Quite honestly, I'd like to meet him just to see how well my grandpa's insight is," scoffed Gerald before shaking his head with a smile.

"Well... Since you've said that, I won't ask any further than that... Still, do be careful. After all, in the end, the Crawfords are still a cultivating family. After suffering consecutive losses in your hands, I'm just worried that they sent a stronger cultivator after your head this time..." muttered Master Ghost. While it was true that Gerald was inhumanly strong, the Crawfords still had hundreds of years' worth of experience as cultivators. With that in mind, nobody truly knew how strong that family was...

Hearing that, Gerald simply chuckled before patting Master Ghost's shoulder as he said, "If you're so worried, why don't you do some calculations to see how dangerous this encounter will be."

"That's unnecessary," replied Master Ghost as he waved his hand...

Following that, Gerald took a cold shower. Once he was done, he took the photographs of his parents, elder sister, and Mila out... By the time he finally peeled his gaze from the pictures, the sky was already darkening...

Upon hearing a few messy footsteps walking past his window, he carefully returned the photographs into his pocket before lighting a cigarette and heading toward the window to look downstairs... Only to see Ichiro and the rest of the investigation team walking away.

From how dejected they looked, Gerald figured that they hadn't been able to gather anything. Then again, if the Crawford cultivator truly was the one responsible for that death, then it was pretty much impossible for regular people like them to gain any new hints.



Whatever the case was, once they were out of sight, Gerald tossed his cigarette away before slipping his coat on...

Soon enough, he was walking past the training ground's large entrance... and the second he left the area, Gerald immediately activated his Herculean Primordial Spirit, making sure to expel some essential qi at the same time...

Barely even seconds later, Amare who had just been cleared of his suspicion was alerted to the sudden fluctuation of essential qi.

With that, he opened his room window... and in no time at all, his figure vanished from the spot.

He only had a day left before he had to leave Japan... He needed to act quickly or Daryl would surely punish him for returning late...

## Chapter 2161

Just thinking about the hundreds of poisonous snakes in his family's infamous pit sent shivers down his spine.

...

Shaking his head, Amare knew that he had to stay focused. Tonight was his best shot at killing Gerald. If he failed, there was a high chance that he wasn't going to be able to hunt Gerald down in time tomorrow. What more, even if he did miraculously find Gerald again then, he wouldn't be able to do anything in broad daylight unless he wanted to attract unnecessary attention to himself.

Whatever the case was, after silently touching down on the ground after leaping from the sixth floor a cold smile formed on Amare's face as he growled, "To think that you'd actually release your essential qi... Don't you know you're being hunted down?"

With that said, Amare began bolting toward the direction where he had sensed the essential qi. With how fast he was, he was barely even visible, and anyone he passed would've only been able to sense a cold breeze passing by...

Gerald himself was already standing in an open area while puffing a cigarette, the cigarette's smoke looking particularly conspicuous in the darkening sky...

The youth had learned about this place from Ichiro from one of their casual conversations. Apparently, this area had been bought by the war department to build a new training ground. However, due to some issues, the project had been suspended till this very day. Regardless, since this piece of land was owned by the war department, nobody dared to come to this place. Those from the war department didn't have any reason to come all the way out here just to train either, which made this the perfect place to deal with the Crawford cultivator.

Either way, it wasn't long after before Gerald felt someone closing in at rapid speeds, prompting him to mutter, "Well aren't you a fast one..."

Though it was already pretty dark, with the help of the Herculean Primordial Spirit, Gerald could now see clearly in the dark. In fact, being a cultivator, he could even see the blood circulation and essential qi running through people. With that said, Gerald soon saw Amare appear not too far away from him...

"Gerald, right?" asked Amare as he stared at the youth. Since Gerald had already released his essential qi, Amare saw no reason to hide his anymore either.

Watching as Amare released his own essential qi, Gerald simply crossed his arms before calmly replying, "That, I am."

"You're just an abandoned descendant of the Crawford family, you know? If you had just lived in the secular world properly, none of us would've even bothered about you. With that said, to think that you would suddenly appear and attempt to snatch Master Will's rightful position as the heir of our family! Due to your actions, can you really blame us for hunting you down?" scoffed Amare as he tossed his

jacket off, exposing his muscular body...

Not only was he strong in cultivation, but he also had one of the best physiques within his family. With that said, a cultivator of the same level wouldn't be his match at all, and this was proven in the many competitions within his clan that he had won over the years. Hell, it was because of his strength that Daryl had appointed him for this errand.

Regardless, upon hearing what Amare had to say, Gerald was momentarily surprised, though he quickly smiled before replying, "You think I'm competing against Will for that position...? Putting that aside, from what you've said, I'm assuming you're here under Will's orders. After all, I'm pretty sure Daryl didn't allow any of you to harm me. If he finds out, I wonder if you'll be subjected to serious consequences...?"

"That... That has nothing to do with you!" growled Amare as he clenched his fists tightly. Truth be told, he didn't even dare to imagine the consequence once the patriarch found out about all this...

"Well, whatever the case is, come at me. Show me how strong you Crawford cultivators can get. Then again, after beating up two of Will's men back then, I have a feeling that you're going to be a let down as well," scoffed Gerald who barely felt any pressure despite being in the presence of one of the Crawford family's top cultivators...

## Chapter 2162

"Shut it!" scowled Amare who was itching to finish Gerald off. Amare wasn't a person who liked small talk, and since Gerald was his target, there was even less reason for him to say anything. With that, Amare suddenly disappeared...!

Immediately sensing a surge of essential qi around him, it quickly became obvious to Gerald that this person was much stronger than the men Will had previously sent after him. As he was thinking about this, Amare reappeared before Gerald, his fist already aimed at his chest!

Feeling a gale of cold wind coming his way as Amare launched his punch toward Gerald, Gerald simply took a few steps back to dodge the attack. Naturally, Gerald wasn't afraid of fighting back. He only

avoided the attack since he wanted to better grasp how strong Amare truly was.

Realizing that Gerald had managed to dodge his attack, Amare's eyes turned even redder than before as he declared, "You're pretty fast!"

Following that, he immediately restabilized himself before lunging toward Gerald again!

Instead of dodging, however, Gerald simply used his arm to deflect Amare's attack, sending Amare stumbling to the side! Unable to balance himself in time, the immense force of Gerald's deflection caused Amare to crash into a pile of rocks...! Howling as his head collided against some rocks, Amare soon felt blood trickling down his now throbbing forehead...

Fumbling to his feet, Amare glared at Gerald as blood flowed down his chin and dripped all over his clothes...

Pain was nothing to him. After all, though the injury would've been terrible for regular people, he could just rapidly patch himself up with his essential qi.

Even so, that didn't save him the humiliation of stumbling so stupidly before Gerald... He just couldn't stand it...! It didn't help that Amare knew that Gerald hadn't even used much force to deal this much damage to him...! This scene would've been much less humiliating if he simply wasn't strong enough or got injured due to his carelessness...!

Amare had never felt this stifled in his many years within the Crawford family...!

As Amare was thinking about all this, Gerald couldn't help but shake his head with a smile before saying, "Seems that you're not that good in martial arts after all. Just so you know, I only used the most basic of techniques in Tai Chi earlier. Is that all it takes to defeat you?"

And here Gerald thought that this person would be an expert. As it turned out, he wasn't really much

stronger than Will's previous men.

"Don't get too cocky...! I was just careless earlier!" growled Amare who was glad that nobody else was around to witness his blunder. After all, if his family found out about this, he would surely lose face...!

Though Gerald wanted to reply, he quickly shut his mouth again. There was... a red dot on Amare's shoulder and seconds later, it disappeared.

Knowing that the red dot had been moving in his direction, Gerald immediately activated his essential qi to bolt to the side...!

#### Chapter 2163

A split second later, a muffled gunshot could be heard, followed by the sound of something whizzing across the air at lightspeed...! Barely a second later, a bullet flew past the spot Gerald had initially been standing, hitting a rock and causing it to explode into a million pieces...!

Had Gerald not reacted in time earlier, the bullet would've surely pierced through his heart! Even if he had his essential qi to protect him, Gerald knew that in the end, the essential qi would only leak out uncontrollably, causing his body to break down which would disallow him to recover...!

Wiping the blood off his chin with his sleeve, Amare couldn't help but sneer, "Seems that you've offended quite a lot of people!"

With the unknown assailant's help, Amare now knew that he would definitely be able to kill Gerald...!

"Mind your own business," replied Gerald as he took a deep breath... before releasing an immensely murderous aura.

Gerald, for one, knew that if this unknown sniper and the Crawford cultivator worked together, there

was a chance that he wouldn't make it out alive tonight. After all, though his Herculean Primordial Spirit was strong, it didn't make him invincible. What more, he still wasn't able to use the full power of his spirit...!

Regardless, that earlier shot was naturally from Vulture. After Kai had told him that Gerald was in the training ground, Vulture had constantly been keeping an eye on Gerald, patiently waiting for an opportunity to strike.

Though he could've killed Gerald earlier during the day, he didn't want to create a chaotic scene since Gerald was with the investigation team, which explained why he waited till now to act. Though it was much darker now, Amare's constant shouting made it easy for Vulture to tell which figure belonged to Gerald. Still, to think that Gerald could dodge his attack...!

While he had previously scoffed at the idea that Gerald was as strong as Kai had said, Vulture was now starting to believe Kai's words. After all, being able to dodge such a precise attack in such a short amount of time was something no ordinary person could hope to do.

Whatever the case was, Vulture then tossed his sniper rifle away before expertly leaping off the fourth floor! Making sure he didn't fall too quickly by stepping on the sides of the building, Vulture soon landed on the ground and began walking toward the duo...

Raising a slight brow, Gerald was prompted to ask, "... And you are?"

"Just know that I'm here to take your life. No further questions," scoffed Vulture.

Watching as the man donning a trench coat, cap, and even a black mask swiftly approached, Gerald stared right into Vulture's grim eyes before rolling up his sleeves and replying, "I see. Then let's settle this together."

Ever since he got rid of the three large clans in Yanam, he hadn't had a proper battle like this.

Either way, after healing the wound on his forehead, Amare looked at Vulture before shouting, "Let's team up to take him down, brother!"

Vulture, however, didn't reply. Instead, he simply pulled out a shiny bayonet from his back before rushing toward Gerald! While he wasn't as quick as Amare was, he was still pretty fast. After all, he was already fighting against Gerald in the blink of an eye.

Seeing that, Amare wasted no time and immediately mobilized his essential qi before rushing forward as well! Amare, for one, knew that he needed Vulture's help to finish Gerald off, even though he had no idea who Vulture was or what conflicts he had with Gerald...

#### Chapter 2164

Regardless, Vulture and Amare wasted no time launching an onslaught of attacks on Gerald from both sides!

Though Vulture wasn't as strong as Amare, his outstanding fighting skills made up for that. As for Amare, though he lacked Vulture's arsenal of skills, all his attacks were infused with essential qi. With that in mind, Gerald was well aware of how deadly this duo was. One slip on his side and he would definitely suffer heavy injuries...

Understanding that, Gerald remained on the defensive for three minutes straight... then five... and ten...

Despite being in a two on one battle, Gerald was nowhere close to being at a disadvantage as he evaded their attacks. In fact, he was now capable of sneaking in kicks and punches! Due to those attacks, Gerald eventually managed to force Vulture to start backing away from him.

In the end, unlike Gerald and Amare, Vulture didn't have the support of essential qi. In other words, he had been relying on his own strength throughout this fight, and he was starting to slow down. Vulture was well aware that this continued on, he would eventually find it hard to even handle Gerald's single-handed attacks.

Just as Vulture was thinking about this, Gerald noticed an exposed weak spot when Vulture was retracting his arm. Not wanting to miss the chance to strike, Gerald immediately launched a punch at Vulture's chest!

Eyes instantly widening as his face paled, Vulture quickly took a few steps back, holding onto his chest and panting the entire time. Had Vulture been an ordinary man, that punch could've either knocked him out or even killed him...! However, Vulture's physique was far from ordinary, so he was still able to stand. Even so, that didn't mean that he hadn't suffered substantial damage.

From how painful his chest felt whenever he breathed, Vulture figured that several bones in his ribcage had been broken, resulting in the broken bones piercing his organs...! Knowing how badly injured he was, beads of sweat rolled down Vulture's forehead as he considered his options while watching Amare continue fighting Gerald. In the end, Vulture knew that continuing to move any further would surely result in his death. With that, Vulture gritted his teeth before slowly inching toward a pile of bricks where he then sat...

After gently feeling around his chest, Vulture slammed his fist onto the ground while growling, "...Four."

Every time his face went pale in agony, Vulture had counted that as a broken rib. With his forehead now drenched in sweat, he knew how terrible his current condition was. Vulture's best course of action now was to lie still. Moving any further would only cause his injuries to worsen to the point where death was extremely possible...

"Gerald Crawford..." grumbled Vulture as he glared at the youth while regretting his arrogance. If only he had heeded Kai's warnings and taken Gerald more seriously, Vulture would've surely been more careful with his moves. Thinking back, he should've immediately retreated after his first shot failed to hit its mark. Had he done that, he wouldn't have ended up in such a pitiful state...

Either way, with Vulture now out of combat, the winner of the fight was clear.

Though Gerald's attacks slowly became more frequent, Amare like Vulture lacked Gerald's stamina, and soon began blocking more than he attacked. While Amare could still sneak in a few counterattacks, the longer the battle went on, the more evident it became that this was going to be Gerald's victory.



With that said, soon enough, Gerald managed to strike Amare's left arm hard enough to dislodge it! Seeing that Amare was temporarily handicapped, Gerald took the chance to grab the man by the neck!

With how forceful Gerald was choking him, Amare knew for a fact that it would only require a bit more force for his neck to snap...!

Smiling as he continued squeezing Amare's neck, Gerald then said, "Since we have the same surname, I may consider sparing your life if you share interesting information with me..."

Chapter 2165

"I have nothing to say! I admit defeat! You're stronger than me, what else do you want?!" growled Amare, knowing that his life was now in Gerald's hands.

"How dauntless," retorted Gerald with a laugh before activating the power of his Herculean Primordial Spirit and poking a few spots on Amare's body... Gerald was now temporarily paralyzing Amare, and once he was done, he tossed the defeated man onto the ground...

Though Amare immediately attempted to get to his feet, he quickly realized that he couldn't move an inch...!

Understanding that he wasn't going anywhere anytime soon, Amare could only watch as Gerald walked toward Vulture...

After lighting a cigarette, Gerald squatted in front of the injured man, shaking his box of cigarettes while asking, "Want one?"

Glaring at Gerald, Vulture who was still clutching onto his chest growled, "What do you want?"

Honestly, in his body's current state, even saying that one sentence caused him enough pain for any regular person to pass out...

"I just want to know who hired you, that's all. Not going to lie, you're pretty strong, so I'm sure you're quite a famous assassin. With that said, I can only imagine the Kanagawas hiring you. Am I wrong?" asked Gerald as he narrowed his eyes. Aside from Kai, who else would hire such a high ranking assassin to finish him off?

Gritting his teeth in response, Vulture simply sneered, "I know nothing!"

Being in the top ten in the assassin list meant that he had to fully adhere to the professional ethics of assassins which meant that he couldn't expose any of his employer's information, even if he had to die.

This rule had been rooted in his mind ever since he joined this field of work, and he had never abandoned it.

Upon hearing that, Gerald simply shook his head before laughing as he turned to look at Amare before looking back at Vulture and scoffing, "Another dauntless person..."

The fact that neither of them was cooperating was honestly starting to annoy him... With that, Gerald stopped laughing before stepping on Vulture's chest as he growled, "Are you really sure you don't know anything?"

With the bones now piercing straight into his organs, Vulture's eyes widened as he began coughing mouthfuls of blood... By this point, even breathing was getting difficult..!

"Don't make me repeat the question," said Gerald as he narrowed his eyes.

Knowing full well that he'd die if he said anything, Vulture simply retorted, "Just kill me already! I'll never say it...!"

“Since you suggested it, be my guest,” replied Gerald as his eyes went stern. He already knew that Kai had sent him, so there was no reason for him to keep this man alive. With that, the sickening crack of bones could be heard as Gerald’s foot completely crushed Vulture’s ribcage...!

Drowning in his own blood, Vulture could only manage a gurgle before the life in his eyes vanished... Though his body was now limp and lifeless, Vulture’s eyes retained their furious glare. It almost seemed as though Vulture had still been racking his brains on how to murder Gerald, seconds before his death...

“Now that he’s taken care of, it’s time I returned to you,” said Gerald as he turned to look at Amare, not even bothering to look at Vulture’s corpse. After all, he just needed to use his essential qi to completely evaporate the body, leaving zero traces of Vulture behind...

## Chapter 2166

After witnessing Vulture’s horrible death, Amare no longer attempted to hide his utter horror as he yelled, “I... Impossible...! None of this should be possible...!”

He was the top cultivator of the Crawford family...!

How on earth had Gerald defeated him so miserably...?!

Honestly, he wouldn’t be having such a hard time grasping this situation if Gerald had grown up with him in the family! After all, everyone had different talents!

However, Amare knew for a fact that Gerald had been an abandoned descendant who had been living in the secular world this entire time! Even if there were cultivators out here, none of them should’ve been strong enough to be able to teach Gerald such powerful skills! Skills that disallowed Amare, the cream of the crop in his family, to not even land a single hit on the boy...!

“Impossible? What is it?” asked Gerald as he stared at the paralyzed man.

“Y—your inhuman strength...! You shouldn’t be this strong! You can’t be!” retorted Amare as he continued glaring at Gerald.

“It’s a long story that I’d rather not talk about. Regardless, tell me everything you know about the Crawford family and I may just spare you. After all, we still share the same surname. If I let you off alive, however, know that I’ll have to scrap your cultivation as well. Deal?” replied Gerald with a laugh.

“...That...” muttered Amare as he seriously began considering his options...

In the end, killing Gerald wasn’t even a mission from the patriarch. It was just Will’s secret order. With that in mind, while the patriarch would eventually learn about all this thus making punishment unavoidable for Amare, if he shared everything Gerald wished to know, at the very least, he would be spared to live another day. What more, since this was still Will’s order, perhaps the patriarch would sentence Amare to a lighter punishment...

Looking at how seriously Amare was considering all this, Gerald fished his phone out to check the time. It was already one in the morning, and he knew that soldiers would begin patrolling the area in another two hours. Knowing that he had to clear the scene up before they arrived, Gerald was prompted to say, “You have ten minutes to consider your options. Nothing more.”

Ten minutes passed quickly enough, and since Amare hadn’t said a word, Gerald knew what this meant.

Though he couldn’t get any information out of Amare, Gerald already had news about the Seadom tribe. With that in mind, he knew that uncovering the secrets of Yeaning Island was simply a matter of time...

Regardless, Gerald then narrowed his eyes as his hand slowly began moving toward Amare’s neck...

Since Amare was completely paralyzed, all he could do was widen his eyes as Gerald’s hand came dangerously close to his neck...! The fear of death was finally sinking in on him...!

Just moments before Gerald's hand was against his neck, Amare quickly gulped before crying out in a trembling voice, "P-please...! Wait...!"

"Finally willing to talk?" replied Gerald as he slowly withdrew his hand...

## Chapter 2167

"J-just ask me anything you wish to know! I'll share anything that I can answer...!" said Amare as he breathed a sigh of relief when he saw Gerald's hand retracting.

Sitting right in front of him, Gerald simply replied in a hushed tone, "First off, was it Will who told you to assassinate me?"

"I-it was... You see, the patriarch sent me off to do some errands for him, but just before I left, Will called me over to his room to give me the assassination order. Since he's the patriarch's successor, I couldn't just refuse..."

Smiling subtly in response, Gerald then said, "I see. Come to think of it, aren't you worried that Daryl will find out about this?"

Gerald, for one, had figured that only Will wanted him dead. As far as he knew, Daryl was only interested in testing his abilities.

"W-well... as long as I return in time, the patriarch shouldn't find out... I was already planning to leave this afternoon, you know? But then you suddenly showed up...! What more, just as I was wondering how to make a move on you earlier, you took the initiative to bait me out here with your essential qi! I couldn't say no to that!" replied Amare with a sigh.

Had he known that things would end this way, he would've never agreed to Will's request...

Nodding in response, Gerald thought for a bit before asking, "... And are you the one who killed that special forces agent from Yanam?"

"... That... was me, yes..." replied Amare as he reluctantly nodded.

"I see... Putting that aside, I have one final question. As long as you give me an honest answer, I'll spare your life and let you leave unharmed. How do I get to Yearning Island?" asked Gerald as he narrowed his eyes at Amare.

Now that all his other questions had been answered, Gerald made sure to save the best for last. While it was true that he had managed to find Fujiko thus potentially allowing him to contact the Seadom tribe, if he managed to get the information straight from Amare, then he'd be able to start making plans much earlier.

"... Trust me when I say... I don't know either..." muttered Amare.

"... What? Aren't you a top cultivator of the Crawford family? How could you not know about this?" replied Gerald with a slight frown. This was the exact same reply he had gotten from Will's previous men!

"I swear! I really don't know! Aside from the patriarch and a few core clansmen, the rest of us are left in the dark about all this...!" explained Amare.

"Then how did you leave the island? And how are you going to return?" asked Gerald as he raised a brow.

"Leaving the island is easy... All we need to do is to take a boat and sail for about ten kilometers before we enter the ocean... However, if we wish to go back, we'll need to inform the family in advance... Following that, either the patriarch or a senior member will guide us back..." explained Amare.

“... I’ll ask one final time. Do you truly not know the way back to the island?” asked Gerald as he lit a cigarette and began puffing it.

“My answer remains the same... While Yearning Island may seem like a regular island, I’ve never been able to see it on my way back from sea... The only way I can get to the island is if I send a message to the family and sail for a little while more... Shortly after, I’ll be able to see the vague outlines of the island, and that’s howl usually get back..” replied Amare as he shook his head.

Truth be told, Amare was just as curious about the island as Gerald was. In fact, he had even tried asking the other family members about this in the past, though he would end up getting harshly reprimanded every time he did so. Due to that, he eventually stopped asking...

Regardless, after a brief silence, Gerald nodded before saying, “... I believe you.”

Though he didn’t believe Will’s men before this, Amare’s case was different. After all, Amare was currently in a life or death situation. Because of that, Gerald knew he wouldn’t lie. Besides, Amare’s answer was way too similar to what Will’s men had said for it to be a mere coincidence.

However, even if Amare and Will’s men had simply been trained to give the exact same answer if they were caught, Gerald didn’t really mind. After all, he knew that he was going to learn the secrets of Yearning Island from the Seadom tribe sooner or later...

## Chapter 2168

“Is... there anything else you’d like to know? I’ll answer honestly!” replied Amare who was now feeling that Gerald wasn’t the person he had previously assumed to be.

The truth was, he had initially thought that Gerald was an evil and ruthless person who would do anything to breach into the Crawford family and exploit them once he became the patriarch. After their brief interaction, however, he now felt that Gerald was actually a rather gentle soul, contrary to his initial belief.

While it was true that he still killed the assassin from before, Gerald had every right to do so since he was ambush-attacked by him... Regardless, Gerald had also made it a point that he was going to spare his life just because they shared the same surname. It was honestly making Amare feel slightly touched...

Amare's train of thought was cut short when Gerald calmly replied, "That's all I needed to know."

"I see... Well, as promised, you can scrap my cultivation now and I'll head home immediately..." said Amare in an equally calm tone despite knowing full well what would happen once his cultivation was taken away from him.

Essentially, he'd turn into an ordinary person, and Amare was pretty sure that those he had previously offended would take the chance to treat him harshly...

Even so, having to experience that was worth it as long as he could remain alive. After all, all wasn't lost. He simply had to start from scratch again. If he died now, however, everything would truly end.

Hearing that, Gerald simply poked twice on the chakras on Amare's chest before replying in an indifferent tone, "Just leave."

"... Huh?" asked Amare as he slowly regained control over his body. Hopping to his feet, Amare couldn't help but feel exceedingly confused at the moment. After all, Gerald scraping his cultivation in exchange for his life was already extremely merciful of the youth. So why was he letting him leave just like that? Had Gerald forgotten that he had attempted to assassinate him earlier?

"Unless you're secretly a masochist, I suggest you leave while you can," said Gerald with a chuckle.

"... I... Of course, I'm not..." muttered Amare who couldn't feel any murderous intent from Gerald as he slowly walked toward the youth.

Taking in a deep breath, Amare then asked, "... I just don't get it. That man and I were tasked to



assassinate you, you know? With that said, since you killed him, why aren't you ending my life as well?"

Puffing on his cigarette, Gerald eventually replied, "... It's simple, really. It's because you're a Crawford and he isn't. While I didn't grow up with the rest of the cultivating Crawfords, I'm still Daryl's grandson. As a child, I made quite a few fond memories with him, you know? While I still have no idea why he abducted my family which is the reason why I'm trying so hard to meet him on Yearning Island, you see that doesn't change the fact that you're still a Crawford. Just so you know, given the choice, I'd very much prefer saving people rather than killing them..."

"... I..." muttered Amare as his voice slowly trailed off.

After all, he had never stopped to wonder why Gerald was trying so hard to get to Yearning Island. Now, he was finally aware that the patriarch had captured his family... Still, since the patriarch was Gerald's grandfather, that essentially meant that he had abducted his own son and daughter-in-law!

Whatever the case was, Gerald then handed Amare a cigarette before asking, "Have you seen them?"

"... Only once, but even that was quite a while ago..." replied Amare as he took the cigarette and lit it with Gerald's lighter.

Hearing that, Gerald momentarily trembled as his eyes grew slightly watery. Shaking his head, Gerald then asked, "... How were they doing back then?"

After thinking for a moment, Amare eventually replied, "... Well, they were being treated rather well, honestly. The patriarch emphasized that none of them could be mistreated, so though they're being kept in the backyard, they should still be well fed and clothed... At the very least, they still were back then... Regardless, apart from the patriarch and his cronies, nobody else is allowed to enter..."

"... I see. Is Will allowed to enter?" asked Gerald as his expression turned gloomy...

## Chapter 2169

“No, actually... While it’s true that Will is the patriarch’s adopted child and that he has a high status within the family, the patriarch has honestly always been on guard around him... In fact, the patriarch has made sure to disallow Will from entering

Several important places on the island, including the backyard where the patriarch lives. I, for one, have never seen Will enter that place...” muttered Amare with a slight frown.

“... I see. Well, what matters is that they’re still safe... I’m at least relieved to hear that...” said Gerald as he let out a sigh, the weight of his immense worry finally lifted.

A brief moment later, Gerald turned to look at Amare before saying, “... Either way, you can leave now. Also, if you wish to remain alive, remember not to say a thing about what happened here tonight. Understand?”

“Got it. If Will asks me about this, I’ll just tell him that I failed to locate you in Japan,” replied Amare with a nod.

“I trust you, now leave,” said Gerald as he gestured for Amare to go.

Bowing toward Gerald, it was clear that he was feeling thankful toward the youth. At that moment, he made up his mind that if Gerald ever set foot on Yearning Island one day, he would adamantly refuse to fight against him, even though the family would punish him for it.

Regardless, after tossing away his cigarette butt, Amare quickly disappeared into the darkness. Gerald himself simply continued smoking his own cigarette as a cold breeze caressed his cheek...

Shortly after, the cigarette burned out, and Gerald shook his head before starting to walk toward Vulture’s corpse...

Searching the dead man's body, Gerald couldn't help but mutter, "So you Kanagawas still aren't willing to give up, huh? Then there's no need for your family to remain in Japan...!"

Whatever the case was, aside from a pack of cigarettes and a few bullets, Gerald couldn't find any form of identification on Vulture. Since these didn't interest Gerald, the youth simply sighed as he placed a hand on the corpse's body...

Mobilizing his Herculean Primordial Spirit, he then began releasing a blazing heat from his palm... and in just a few seconds, Vulture's body completely evaporated. Since Gerald had used his essential qi to do the deed, not even the corpse's smell remained. Just like Adler, Vulture would simply mysteriously vanish from the face of the planet... Either way, now that that was taken care of, Gerald quickly turned around to leave.

...

Soon after, he arrived at his guest room where Master Ghost and Aiden could be seen waiting patiently on the sofa.

Upon seeing Gerald, Aiden immediately hopped to his feet before checking around Gerald's body while asking, "Brother Gerald! You aren't injured, are you?"

"Of course, not. Shouldn't you be well aware of my strength by now?" replied Gerald with a laugh as he closed the door behind him.

"Has everything been settled?" asked Master Ghost as he stepped forward as well.

"In a way. As it turned out, the Yanam soldier really was murdered by the Crawford cultivator. I fought him earlier, and though he definitely wasn't weak, he wasn't as strong as I had initially anticipated either. With that said, I just let him off the hook," replied Gerald as he took his jacket off before walking to the water dispenser to get himself a drink.

“You... let him go...? Why?” asked Master Ghost and Aiden, feeling rightfully puzzled.

“I just don’t want to kill other Crawfords if I can help it. After all, the one who abducted my parents was Daryl, not them. Besides, since I spared his life, he now owes me a favor,” replied Gerald as he put his paper cup down...

Chapter 2170

“So... You only let him off to get his help once you finally get on the island...?” asked Master Ghost.

“Thinking back, it was still mostly the fact that I didn’t want to kill another Crawford,” replied Gerald as he shook his head.

With how important saving his parents was to him, Gerald wasn’t about to place his trust on any of the cultivating Crawford’s ‘help’.

“...If that’s the case, then didn’t you just free a tiger back into the mountains...?” asked Master Ghost who was starting to get slightly worried.

Though he hadn’t told Gerald about this, Master Ghost had secretly made a fortune telling for Gerald some time back, and he found out that Gerald would encounter something dangerous potentially even life threatening once he arrived at the island...

“Again, his strength was pretty average, so I don’t really see him as a threat. If he even dares to come after me again, I’ll just kill him,” replied Gerald rather nonchalantly as he waved his hand.

Seeing how confident Gerald was, Master Ghost simply said, “...Well, I’ll trust your judgment since you sound so sure about this...”

“I’m glad. Speaking of which, while fighting that cultivator, I came across another assassin who tried to

kill me in the process. With how strong he was, I feel that he could've been a ranked assassin on the assassin list. Call it a hunch, but I have a feeling that only Kai would think of something like this," replied Gerald.

"A high-ranking assassin? Where's his body, brother Gerald? I've investigated over fifty assassins on the assassin list, so I can recognize most of them pretty well!" exclaimed Aiden who suddenly appeared much more excited than before.

Smiling helplessly, Gerald simply replied, "I'm afraid there's no body to speak of..."

"...Huh? Did he manage to escape...?" asked Aiden, feeling slightly disappointed. Still, if they managed to catch that assassin later on, Aiden would surely be able to recognize the assailant. Following that, there was a chance that they'd be able to find out who hired the assassin in the first place!

"Not at all. What I'm saying is that I evaporated his corpse!" explained Gerald.

Aiden had already seen what Gerald was capable of, so he hardly had any trouble accepting this. With that in mind, Aiden simply sighed before replying in a slightly disappointed tone, "I see... What a shame... It would've been nice to leave him alive..."

"Well, there's no point talking about him anymore. How about things on your end? Is the competition over yet?" asked Gerald.

"It is, though it'll still be a few days till we get the results. While I wasn't as good as Miss Fujiko, I don't think I scored too badly. In fact, I have a feeling that I should be close to the top!" explained Aiden as he thought about his performance in the previous days.

"That's good to hear. Well, since there's nothing to be done in the meantime, let's contact Fujiko first to discuss the matter about us staying with her family. I'm saying it now that you two have to be extra careful from now on. After all, we're now simultaneously dealing with an extremely prestigious family and a family of assassins. While I wouldn't normally see the

Kanagawas as a threat, I still believe that Kai was the one who hired that assassin I killed earlier. With that said, please be alert at all times,” said Gerald as he narrowed his eyes.

The Kanagawas had pissed him off enough. Everyone from that family needed to die...!

“Sure thing! The higher ups have already told me that I’ll be given a month’s worth of rest after the competition. With that said, hopefully things can be settled before then,” replied Aiden who really wanted to help Gerald save his parents. Even so, Aiden was still Weston’s ‘King of Soldiers’. In other words, if he suddenly received orders to return, Aiden wasn’t about to disobey his orders...

Regardless, Gerald then replied, “Things should be settled Within the month.”

“Should we start making our move tomorrow, then?” asked Master Ghost.

“Indeed. We’ll meet up with Fujiko then before heading to the Futaba manor together. We’ll start discussing our next moves once we’re there,” said Gerald with a nod.

Nodding as well, Aiden then placed his hand on his stomach before muttering, “Um... Brother Gerald...? Are you hungry? I can head out to get some food for you...”

Chapter 2171

“Go on ahead,” replied Gerald.

Fast forward to half an hour later, Aiden returned with some food he got from the nearby convenience store. Following that, the trio sat around the table and ate together. Honestly, after eating so much Japanese food, they had started seeing the appeal in its taste. Of course, there was still a pretty big gap between the food here and good old Westoner food...

Regardless, once they finished their meals, the trio returned to their rooms to rest...

Once morning came, Gerald and Master Ghost headed to the training ground's entrance to wait while Aiden ran off to look for Fujiko. Shortly after, however, the duo came across Ichiro and his secretary instead.

Realizing that Gerald was all packed up to leave, Ichiro told his secretary to wait at the side as he quickly walked toward Gerald before saying, "Oh? Leaving already, brother Gerald?"

"Indeed. My friend's done with his competition, so I may as well just leave with him," explained Gerald with a nod.

"I see... It's a shame that you have to leave before the case gets solved... Regardless, I should mention that while we were investigating earlier this morning, a person apparently left one of the hotels last night! Our surveillance cameras followed him till the point he entered a barren area that was too far for the final camera to capture... In other words, the suspicious

Individual should be long gone now..." muttered Ichiro in a slightly disappointed tone.

"The final surveillance camera? I'm assuming you don't have any cameras set up in the barren area, then?" asked Gerald despite knowing the answer to his question.

"Well, it wouldn't make sense to place surveillance cameras in a barren area... Either way, that man probably realized this and used it to his advantage to escape... Still, we do have his picture and some footage of him, so if we manage to issue a tracking warrant, we may be able to track him down!" explained Ichiro who didn't mind sharing all this with Gerald. After all, it

Was Gerald's pointers that allowed them to pinpoint the escaping man in the first place.

Nodding in response, Gerald then replied, "I see. All the best in capturing him!"

Honestly, Gerald was finding the situation to be quite funny. After all, with how quick Amare was, Gerald was pretty sure that he could've easily evaded the investigation team and left Japan's borders unnoticed. Even if Amare slipped up and the investigation team found him, they wouldn't have been able to harm him at all...

Whatever the case was, Ichiro then saluted as he declared, "Thank you, brother Gerald!"

Shortly after, Aiden and Fujiko arrived, and the four got into a car before leaving the training ground for good...

Throughout their journey to the Futaba manor, Gerald kept one hand on the steering wheel while his arm rested against the car's window. After a brief silence in the car, Gerald eventually said in a casual tone, "You know, an assassin tried to kill me last night. With how capable he was, I have a feeling that he's from the international assassin list. Due to how pricey it can get to hire such men, I'm assuming he was hired by Kai."

Naturally, that statement was for Fujiko since Aiden and Master Ghost already knew about this. Regardless, upon hearing that, Fujiko immediately tensed up before scanning Gerald from head to toe as she asked, "Are you hurt?!"

"Don't worry, I'm fine. In fact, I got rid of the assassin as well," replied Gerald as he shook his head.

Though she was relieved to hear that, Fujiko soon smacked the dashboard before angrily yelling, "The Kanagawas truly have gone too far this time...! First they hired the Hanyus... Now international assassins?!"

"Indeed... How do you plan on settling this?" asked Gerald. In the end, this had to do with the Futabas as well, so it was best to make things as clear as possible...



“... We should discuss this with my father. With how big the issue’s gotten to the point where Kai’s started hiring international assassins, I’d rather not make the final call on my own...” muttered Fujiko as she shook her head, prompting Gerald to remain silent...

It was around noon when the four of them arrived at the Futaba manor. Thankfully, Gerald didn’t sense any hiding individuals nearby anymore.

Either way, upon stepping out of the car, the group was greeted by the sight of Takuya’s secretary who had been waiting outside for them this entire time. Upon seeing them, the secretary quickly held onto the things Fujiko was carrying before saying, “Miss Fujiko! Mr. Crawford! Do come in! The master’s been waiting for you!”

Simply nodding in response, the group then entered the manor... and soon enough, they came across Takuya who had been waiting for them in the parlor.

Getting to his feet the moment he saw them, Takuya took a brief glance at Aiden and Master Ghost before turning to look at Gerald and exclaiming, “You’re back! I’ve already told my servants to prepare a grand meals so hurry on in! As for the two brothers at the back, just make yourselves at home and join us!”

Nodding in response, the group of five then entered the dining room and sat around the table. Once seated, Fujiko was prompted to say, “Um... There’s something I need to tell you, father...”

“Oh? What is it?” asked Takuya as he turned to look at his daughter.

Before Fujiko could say anything else, Gerald quickly interrupted, “It’s nothing major. It can certainly wait till lunch is over!”

Gerald, for one, knew that if Fujiko told Takuya all this before lunch, Takuya would probably lose his appetite. Telling him a bit later wouldn’t make much of a difference anyway.

Suddenly seeing things from Gerald's perspective, Fujiko quickly added, "... Yeah, it can definitely wait!"

"... I see! Well, then after lunch it is! Speaking of which, I hired a new chef two days ago, and he's a Westoner! With that said, do tell me whether the food is to your liking later!" replied Takuya who was much too glad to see Gerald home to be bothered by his daughter's hesitance.

"Definitely!" declared Gerald with a hearty laugh. With that, the group of five chatted happily among themselves for the next half hour till food began being served.

Seeing that they were going to eat soon, Takuya quickly cleared his throat before saying, "Just to make things clear, Gerald's friends are my friends, so you two won't have many rules restricting you within the manor. With that said, while I'd love to let you two stay here for a few days and potentially even get someone to guide you around for a tour, the manor's not exactly the safest place for you to stay in now..."

Takuya, for one, was well aware that he couldn't afford to bear the responsibility of those two's injuries if he allowed them to stay here and something happened to them...

Clearing his own throat, Gerald then replied, "...Well, you see, I was planning on letting them stay here for the time being. I'll have to trouble you to prepare two guest rooms for them that are close to where I'm currently staying..."

"But... You, of all people, should know my family's current conditions, brother Gerald... If they stay here, there's a good chance that they'll..." muttered Takuya, looking rightfully embarrassed.

"Trust me when I say that it'll be more dangerous for them if they don't stay here. Don't worry, I'll make sure they remain safe. Even if something does happen to them, I'll be the one responsible. None of it will have anything to do with the Futabas!" declared Gerald with a smile.

"... Since you put it that way... Fine. I'll agree to it! You there, go arrange for two guest rooms close to Mr. Crawford's room!" ordered Takuya after momentarily hesitating as he looked at his secretary.

## Chapter 2173

“Understood!” replied the secretary with a nod before quickly leaving the parlor...

Soon enough, all the dishes were served, and before everyone laid at least a dozen Weston dishes. Aside from the chicken and fish, the rest honestly looked like ordinary home cooked dishes. Even so, just the foods' smell alone and the way they were presented made everyone aware that this was the work of a top notch chef...

Since all the food had arrived, the smiling Takuya quickly began distributing chopsticks as he said, “Come on, enjoy the food while it's hot, and tell me if it's to your liking! Honestly, ever since brother Gerald came, I've been growing fonder and fonder of Weston food! Truth be told, I wasn't even sure if I'd ever get used to Weston food back when Fujiko implored me to try some!”

“See? I told you so!” replied the pleased Fujiko.

Following that, everyone enjoyed their meals without saying much in between bites. Once all the dishes were finished, Takuya ordered his servants to clear the table and serve them some tea.

After the tea arrived, Takuya turned to look at everyone else at the table before asking, “So... I remember you saying that there was something you wanted to tell me earlier... Now that we've had our meals, care to share?”

Sipping on the tea that Takuya had just handed him, Gerald then calmly replied, “Well, I was attacked by an assassin from the international assassin list. I'm assuming he was hired by the Kanagawas.”

Upon hearing that, Takuya was so surprised that he almost dropped the teapot! His hands now trembling, Takuya quickly asked in a hushed tone, “... What?”

“Again, I'm only assuming that it was the Kanagawas, so there's no need to get too worked up,” replied

Gerald with a slight frown.

“How couldn’t I get worked up? In case you’ve forgotten, the two assassins from before are still in this manor!” muttered Takuya after taking in a few deep breaths.

“Speaking of those two, they’re apparently known as Endo and Izumi. They’re both Hanyus sent by Hanyu Ryugu of the Hanyu assassination department. As with the previous case, I have a feeling that the Kanagawas are behind this, though I can’t say for sure,” replied Gerald.

“They’re... Hanyus...?” muttered Takuya as his face turned slightly pale.

Their families had been living peacefully for over a hundred years now... How could all that change in less than a month? Not only had the Hanyus sent people to assassinate his daughter, but they also attempted to assassinate his guest! Had Gerald not been present in those two events, his daughter could’ve been dead by now...!

“Indeed... Either way, the Kanagawas are my prime suspect in all this... After all, the Hanyus are an assassin family. Why on earth would they hire an international assassin to do their dirty work instead? And since Endo and Izumi went after me instead of Fujiko, it only gives me more reason to believe that Kai’s the one behind all this. With that said, how are you planning to solve all this, patriarch Takuya?” asked Gerald as he sipped on more tea.

“... I’ll need time to think about this... After all, one wrong decision may bring harm to us all...” muttered the now frowning Takuya as he leaned against his chair, wondering how to go about all this...

Honestly, he was tempted to just pick a fight with both families and attempt to brute force his way to Victory.

However, Takuya knew better than to do that. After all, while Gerald would certainly be able to guarantee his daughter’s safety, the rest of his family would quickly crumble against the other two families. But if they just remained on the defensive, they’d surely be attacked over and over again till

they eventually lost...

Feeling helpless, Takuya was prompted to ask, "... What about you, Gerald...? What do you think?"

"Well... I can get rid of the Kanagawas first. Though I could choose to finish off the Hanyus first, they're still an entire family of assassins. With that said, I'll need more time to prepare if I wish to take the Hanyus out," replied Gerald who had honestly been waiting for Takuya to ask...

#### Chapter 2174

Upon hearing that, Takuya immediately shook his head with a chuckle before saying, "... You're joking, right...?"

While it was true that Gerald was inhumanly strong, there was no way he was going to be able to take on such a large and powerful family alone, right...?

"Oh, I meant every word I said, patriarch Takuya. Do you not believe me?" asked Gerald in a serious tone, signifying that he wouldn't joke about something like this. After all, getting the Futabas out of this crisis was his one way ticket to learning the secrets of the Seadom tribe.

Thinking about all the times Gerald had protected his daughter and putting Gerald's serious tone into consideration, Takuya eventually replied, "... I believe you!"

"Good. With that said, just give me some time to exterminate the Kanagawas. As for Endo and Izumi, I propose that we end them as soon as possible," replied Gerald with a smile.

"Well, had they not had the information we needed, I would've killed them ages ago. Now that we know their identities, however, there's no reason to continue letting them live!" declared Takuya as he nodded in agreement.

“That’s good to hear. Well, if you’ll excuse me, I’ll be heading out first. I’ll be back before night,” replied Gerald as he got to his feet.

“Oh? Where to?” asked Takuya.

“I’m just going to where the Yamashitas are. I still have some questions that need answering,” replied Gerald, remembering the promise that old man had made with him back then. Gerald still found it hard to believe that that old man had helped them slip past Ryugu...

Hearing that, Takuya was momentarily taken aback as he exclaimed, “You... Know the Yamashitas?”

“Actually, before that, have you contacted them before, father?” asked Fujiko who just recalled what that old man had said to her back then.

“... Huh? Why would I have contacted them? If I had, our family wouldn’t be in such a poor state today! After all, there are infamous rumors that the Yamashitas have ninjas in their family!” replied Takuya as he shook his head.

“... But... that old man said...” muttered Fujiko, clearly at a loss. After all, if her father hadn’t contacted that old man before, why would that old man have said that he had met her before as a child?

Knowing that her father wouldn’t lie to her, a sudden thought came to Fujiko, prompting her to look at Gerald. From what she could now guess, the old man had probably only stepped in because of Gerald. In other words, he must have only said that to deceive Ryugu.

“... Old man? What old man? Actually, hold on, why’s the Yamashita family suddenly involved?” asked the confused Takuya.

“Just know that it isn’t a bad thing, patriarch Takuya. Regardless, I’ll be off now. If anything happens, I’ll be sure to tell you when I return,” replied Gerald.

Hearing that, Takuya breathed a sigh of relief before saying, "... Alright, then. Take care!"

Watching as Gerald headed outside, Fujiko quickly got up as well as she shouted, "Wait! I'm coming with you!"

As the two left the scene, Takuya could only scratch the back of his head as he turned to look at Aideen and

Master Ghost who were still drinking tea there.

"Just so you know, all this happened without us being there. With that said, there's no point in asking about the situation from us, patriarch Takuya," explained Master Ghost.

Chapter 2175

"... I see. Well, you two go ahead and rest first, then. If there's anything you need, just tell me," replied Takuya, who knew that he could only await Gerald's return if he wanted any answers.

Moving back to Gerald and Fujiko, the duo quickly got into one of the Futaba cars and began driving to where the Yamashitas lived...

On their way there, Fujiko couldn't help but look at Gerald as she asked, "You... really don't know anything about that old man...?"

To Futaba, Gerald was like a rubik's cube. Despite the fact that he had been living in her manor and she had known him for about a month now, she still felt that she knew very little about him...

"Fujiko, you and your family are locals and you hardly know anything about them. What makes you think I'd know anything about the Yamashitas? To be quite frank, I'm heading there to learn more about that

old man myself,” replied Gerald as he shook his head.

“I see... Still, if we had the Yamashitas supporting us, things would definitely go much smoother...” muttered Fujiko with a sigh. Even though she was the ‘Queen of Soldiers’, she was still much weaker than them...

“Though things may be difficult, I’m willing to fight through it all,” replied Gerald with a nod.

Soon enough, the sky started turning dark. It was then when the duo finally saw the barren mountain again...

Once they were at the foot of the mountain, Gerald parked the car there. They were now in Yamashita territory, and he knew that the area where he had fought the Hanyu assassins was not far ahead.

However, upon walking further into the territory, both of them realized that the corpses had been cleared away. Though the tang of blood no longer remained, upon paying closer attention, dry bloodstains still remained on the ground. Unless the Yamashitas turned the soil over or added a layer of soil on top, the bloodstains would probably remain for a month or two.

With how few people actually came here, there was little chance for the stains to be trodden on as well, thus leaving the stains visible for much longer...

Shortly after, eight men each wielding a longsword donning traditional Japanese garments came running over to the two. Once they stood before the duo, one of the men asked, “Who are you two?”

“Greetings. I am Futaba Fujiko from the Futaba family. I’m here to pay your family a visit,” replied Fujiko in a polite tone.

“You should know that the Yamashitas don’t accept guests, so please leave at once. If the elders realize that you’re here, we’ll surely be punished!” replied the same man.



“Before that, allow me to explain a bit further. You see, we came here a few days ago and ended up fighting with the Hanyus at this very spot. Back then, an old gentleman stepped in to help us settle things, and he told me to return someday. With that said, I’m here now, so please report our arrival to him, brother,” explained Gerald who couldn’t help but feel that he was

Conversing with a cultivating family back in Weston.

After all, based on how they dressed and what they said, it seemed that they were still upholding traditions that had been passed down for thousands of years...

“...Hmm? So you’re the Westoner who killed all those Hanyu assassins?” replied the man, feeling slightly startled as he scanned Gerald from head to toe.

“The one and only,” said Gerald with a smile.

“...I see. Please wait here as I report this, then. Actually, before that... If you wish to fight next time, please don’t do it here... We spent an entire day clearing this place up, you know? It gets pretty tiring,” muttered the man as she nodded.

“I apologize for all the trouble,” replied Gerald with a sheepish grin.

“You’d better be... Just look at those bloodstains! They’re nearly impossible to remove...” said the man as he pointed at the stains while shaking his head.

Following that, the eight men left together.

Chapter 2176

A short while later, the man returned alone before saying, “Elder has invited you in!”

“Thank you for sending him the message,” replied Gerald as he placed his palm and fist together before entering the area with Fujiko...

After walking for about ten minutes, the duo finally arrived at the old man’s home. Since the man hadn’t guided them there, the duo had made their way here solely from memory.

Regardless, as Gerald pushed the house’s door open, he made sure to whisper, “Speaking of which, once we meet the old man, don’t say a thing. I’d like to test him first...”

“Got it,” replied Fujiko with a nod.

With that, the duo walked toward the parlor where the old man could be seen sitting on the tatami floor.

Before him, was a bottle kettle, and despite noticing Gerald and Fujiko’s presence, he didn’t move an inch. Knowing that the old man could speak in the Weston language and since there wasn’t anyone else around, Gerald didn’t bother speaking in his awkward Japanese and simply said, “I’ve come to visit you, old man.”

“So you have. Is the competition over?” asked the old man as he turned to look at Gerald.

“It just ended,” replied Gerald as he sat in front of the old man.

“I see... Are you here to ask about why I helped you back then?” asked the old man as he served some tea to both Gerald and Fujiko.

“Pretty much,” replied Gerald who saw no reason to lie.

“Truth be told, I just didn’t want you to have another conflict with that man. After all, you had already killed several of his men by that point, and I didn’t want to have to clean up more bodies. So there you have it, the reason I allowed you to sneak off,” explained the old man with a smile as he stroked his beard.

“... Is that truly all?” asked Gerald in slight disbelief.

“What other reasons could there be? After all, we had never met before at that point in time. Either way, since you’re already here, why don’t you have some tea with me?” asked the old man as he gestured at the teacup before Gerald.

Getting the old man’s hint, Gerald turned to look at Fujiko before saying, “... Could you look around outside for the moment, Fujiko? There’s something I’d like to discuss with him in private...”

“Pardon me, then,” replied Fujiko as she got to her feet and left the room...

Gerald made sure to follow her to the door before closing it behind her. With the door now shut, Gerald turned to look at the old man before calmly saying, “Now that we’re alone, you can say anything you want... I assure you that anything you say won’t leave this room.”

“Oh? You surprisingly know quite a lot, kid!” replied the old man with a chuckle.

“Well, you did help us escape Ryugu that day. What’s more, you even revealed that you were a Westoner before we left. How couldn’t I figure that there was more to why you did all that?” said Gerald.

“I see... Before that, I’d like to clarify that I had been keeping an eye out on you ever since you entered our territory... With that said, with your abilities, taking Ryugu down would’ve been a cinch for you, no?” asked the old man as he continued stroking his beard.

“You’re not wrong,” replied Gerald.

“Hmm... Well, at the very least, the part where I didn’t want you two to get into too much trouble is true,” said the old man.

“But why even bother? After all, we had just met for the first time and as far as I know, the Yamashitas hardly have any contact with the outside world,” replied Gerald in a curious tone.

“You truly do know quite a lot...”

## Chapter 2177

“As you’ve said, the Yamashitas don’t contact other families a lot, but putting that aside... You have the Herculean Primordial Spirit within you, correct?” asked the old man after staring at Gerald for a while.

Upon hearing that, Gerald could only chuckle awkwardly. Though the old man had seen through him, he didn’t really want to admit it. After all, Gerald was well aware that talented and capable people were targeted a lot. In fact, it was exactly because of his power that resulted in his trouble with the military department as well as the three large families of Yanam!

“So it is true... Well, I’m just glad that you know how to conceal your treasure well,” added the old man with a grin.

Nodding slowly, Gerald then looked at the old man for a while before finally asking, “Who... exactly are you, old man...? I’m sure you’re not just the elder of the Yamashita family, right...?”

Gerald had a multitude of questions in his head. First off, how was a Westoner the elder of the Yamashita family? How had he gotten involved in this family rumored to have ninjas? And how did he even know about the Herculean Primordial Spirit? Not many cultivators from Weston even knew about it!

Upon hearing Gerald’s question, the old man’s tone suddenly became serious as he replied, “... Do you

really wish to know?"

Watching as Gerald nodded in response, the old man then sighed as his cloudy eyes momentarily hinted that he was reminiscing... And shortly after, the old man said, "Well... For one, I knew your grandfather pretty well back then... We used to travel together in Weston many years ago, you know? Unfortunately, we ended up parting ways due to our differing opinions... Truth be told, when I first saw you, I almost thought you were him. You're his spitting image, from your physique,

Appearance, right down to your personality!"

"... What? You know Daryl?" replied Gerald as he instantly frowned. With how tightly he was holding onto the now quivering teacup, the old man felt that if Gerald gripped any harder, the cup would surely shatter.

...

"I did... Well, the old him, at least Also, he's your grandfather, no? Why are you calling him by his name?" asked the old man as he raised a slight brow.

"I'd very much prefer not to have a grandfather like him," replied Gerald with a snort.

While it was true that the grandfather he remembered as a child was a kind old man before he disappeared from his life, the revelation that Daryl was his parents' and sister's abductor was simply too much for Gerald to willingly overlook.

Regardless, upon hearing that, the shocked old man was prompted to ask, "Is... there some sort of misunderstanding between the two of you...?"

"I'd rather not talk about him, old man... Either way, I'm just wondering if you helped us back then due to the fact that I'm Daryl's grandson?" replied Gerald as he raised his hand to stop the old man from

asking any further.

“... No, of course not. I merely felt like talking about him since you’re his descendant. Regardless, the main reason I helped you is because you’re currently hosting the Herculean Primordial Spirit,” explained the old man as he shook his head with a smile.

Suddenly feeling much more vigilant, Gerald then asked, “...Could you elaborate?”

If this old man truly was after his Herculean Primordial Spirit, then he would have to figure out how to quickly leave this place with Fujiko. Naturally, that meant that he would have to offend yet another powerful family...

Looking at how vigilant Gerald had suddenly become, the old man couldn’t help but laugh before saying, “It’s a long story. If you’re interested in hearing the full thing, do stay for a few more days. In return, I just want you to update me on Daryl’s situation. After all, it’s been ages since I’ve last met him.”

“... Deal!” replied Gerald.

## Chapter 2178

Gerald was only agreeing since this old man seemed to know Daryl well. With that in mind, Gerald couldn’t deny that he was curious about his grandfather’s past. After all, though he had met him as a child, his memories of Daryl were vague, to say the least. Perhaps with this old man’s help, he would be able to learn why his present grandfather underwent such a drastic change...

“Excellent. Then do have some more tea as we continue chatting. I’ll get a room prepared for you two by tonight. Speaking of which, isn’t it high time you told her to come back inside? After all, there really isn’t anything to hide. Besides, you two are a couple, no?” replied the old man with a smile.

“You knew...?” said Gerald as he scratched the back of his head.

“While we don’t directly contact those from the outside world, it doesn’t mean that we’re left oblivious about what happens out there,” replied the old man with a nod.

Not knowing how to respond to that, Gerald then invited Fujiko in again, making sure to shut the door tight once she was inside. After all, he didn’t want any strangers hearing anything about Daryl’s past.

Once Gerald and Fujiko were seated at the table, the old man who was holding onto a cup of hot tea slowly began rocking back and forth as he said, “Let’s see... It was about fifty years ago when the incident between me and your grandfather occurred... ”

As it turned out, Daryl and this old man were once disciples of Brecken Longman, a famous cultivator in Weston, at least at the time. Learning under Brecken atop a hill, the two were senior and junior for at least a decade before they both graduated. After graduation, Daryl returned to his family, determined to make it prosper. As for the old man, he chose to follow Daryl, wanting to help his senior.

It was when the Crawford family started rising the ranks in the cultivation world when Daryl and the old man started having differing views. For one, Daryl wanted to bring the Crawfords into the secular world. His plan was to use the family’s power in exchange for riches. However, the old man was against this. After all, Weston cultivators hardly ever got involved with the secular world, yet Daryl was proposing to start a business!

Due to their differing views, in the end, the two ended up parting ways. After leaving the Crawford family, the old man traveled the world until eventually, he ended up getting chosen to become the elder of the Yamashita family after helping the family out when they needed it most.

After hearing the old man’s side of the story, Gerald couldn’t help but feel slightly emotional.

As for the old man, he then sighed before adding, “So... Yes, that’s pretty much the summarized version of what happened... Thinking back, your grandfather’s decision was honestly the right one. After all, he genuinely was considering the future of the family...”

While it was true that the old man had considered moving back to Weston before this, he had simply grown too used to staying here by that point.

Whatever the case was, Gerald who hadn't heard about all this from his father before simply nodded in response...

Now that he was done sharing his part of the story, the old man looked expectantly at Gerald before asking, "So... Now that I'm done, how are things with your grandfather? Is he still living with you?"

"Not really," replied Gerald as he shook his head.

Momentarily stunned to hear that, the old man's hands started shaking to the point where tea was starting to spill before he eventually asked, "Has... he passed away...?"

"He's alive and well, though he's no longer in the Crawford family... Or should I say, he's no longer in the old Crawford family," replied Gerald with a bitter smile. To be completely honest, he secretly still hoped that Daryl was the same grandfather he used to know as a child...

Chapter 2179

"... Hmm? What do you mean by that...?" asked the old man, clearly feeling confused.

"Well, he's left my family to establish a new cultivating Crawford family atop an island beyond the Yanam sea that I've unfortunately yet to locate..." replied Gerald with a sigh.

"He's... established another Crawford family...? But that can't be! The old Daryl valued his family more than his old life! With that said, why would he just abandon you and establish a new family?" exclaimed the old man as his eyes widened in disbelief.

Shrugging, Gerald simply replied, "Beats me..."



Now feeling that he was hearing something more akin to a fairy tale, the old man asked, "...Alright, so... How's the relationship between the two families...?"

"Well, my Crawford family isn't connected with the other one. I should also note that I'm the only one left in my family," explained Gerald.

"... What? What about your parents? While I don't know much about you, I clearly remember my sister-in-law giving birth to a girl before I left. That should be your sister, right? What happened to her and your parents? Don't tell me all three of them met with misfortune...?" replied the old man with a frown.

"Negative. Currently, they've been abducted by Daryl..." muttered Gerald as he shook his head.

"... They were... what? You... you're just making all this up, right...?" asked the old man in his utter shock. After all, all this was simply too bizarre! His old friend couldn't just start a new family of his own before abducting his son and daughter-in-law's family, right...?

"Unfortunately, it's the truth. My parents and sister are currently being locked up somewhere on their island. I should also note that though my girlfriend's been abducted by the Sun League, I have a feeling that my grandfather's involved..." replied Gerald with a sigh.

Unable to handle all this information, the old man leaped to his feet, his face contorted in disbelief as he yelled, "What?!"

"I only speak the truth..." muttered Gerald who honestly wanted all this to just be fake.

"... Unbelievable... I clearly remember how cordially Daryl treated your parents and the rest of your family back then... How did all this come to be...?" said the old man as he slowly sat down again.

Gerald himself remained silent, not knowing what else to say about Daryl...

Back when he was six, he had thought that his grandfather was the kindest man alive... However, one day, he simply left... To think that when Daryl finally returned once Gerald was an adult, his first move was to abduct his parents and sister! This Daryl was nothing like the grandfather Gerald used to love!

Regardless, after pondering for a while, the old man eventually asked, "... You mentioned an island, right? What's the island called?"

"Yearning Island!" replied Gerald without the slightest hesitation. Since the old man was extremely capable and was also the elder of the Yamashitas, Gerald secretly hoped that the old man would know something about that island.

Unfortunately, Gerald was quickly disappointed when the old man stroked his beard for a while before shaking his head and saying, "...I'm afraid I've never heard of that island before..."

"... Don't worry, I just found out about it quite recently as well," replied Gerald as he sighed. Still, he wasn't overly disappointed since he kind of expected this answer as well.

"I see... Don't worry, I'll try my best to locate it for you. I should specify that I still believe that Daryl isn't the kind of person to do all this without a good reason," muttered the old man as he shook his head.

## Chapter 2180

Following that, the three avoided talking about Daryl for a while, choosing to drink their tea instead...

Sometime later, the old man turned to look at Fujiko before asking, "... The Futabas have had a long standing feud with the Hanyus, correct?"

Momentarily caught off guard, Fujiko quickly snapped out of it before replying, "... Indeed... Though, I

didn't expect you to know about this..."

"I'll have you know that we Yamashitas are quite knowledgeable about what happens beyond our territory... Regardless, while we did know about your feud, we never expected your families to actually start attacking each other," explained the old man who was now feeling much better after not talking about Daryl for a while.

"To be honest, the feud only began again quite recently. While I still don't know what the Hanyu family's motive is, they suddenly sent assassins after my head some time ago... Had Gerald not stepped in to help me back then, I could've died back there..." muttered Fujiko as she wondered what was going on in the Hanyu family members' minds.

After all, in the past, the most they did was ignore each other's presence when their families crossed paths.

"I see... Further investigation is definitely needed... Putting that aside for now, since your family's currently in trouble, I'm willing to lend a hand," replied the old man.

"You... wish to help the Futabas?" asked Fujiko as she turned to look at Gerald.

"More specifically, I'm doing this for Gerald's sake. Since he's currently living with your family, it's only natural that I make sure he stays safe. While I'm at it, I may as well protect the Futabas," explained the old man.

"Even so, I thank you from the bottom of my heart!" replied Fujiko who wasn't about to say no to this since her family was still in danger. With the Yamashita family's help, they now had a chance to stand against the Kanagawas and the Hanyus...!

Nodding in response, the old man then faced his window before shouting, "Alright, gather some of our men and tell them to head to the Futaba manor! Once you're there, tell Takuya that you're friends of Gerald's and have him arrange some rooms for you to stay in! After all that, make sure to keep your

eyes peeled at all times! If anyone tries to look for trouble with the Futabas, get rid of them immediately!”

Almost immediately after, dozens of footsteps could suddenly be heard running off into the distance.

Raising a slight brow, Gerald curiously asked, “Say... Are there really ninjas in this family...?”

“Indeed.”

“Could you show one to me...?” asked Gerald, who had always wanted to see a real ninja.

Upon hearing that, the old man exposed his palm and all of a sudden, a flame appeared out of thin air! From what Gerald could tell, the old man wasn’t hiding anything that could’ve produced the flame. It was almost magical...

As for Fujiko, she was so shocked that her mouth was already gaping by this point. Scenes like these only happened in movies... How was any of this real...?

“The power to control elements is a ninja’s true power,” explained the old man as the flame slowly died out. Even so, the warmth of the fire remained.

“Ninjas really do exist...!” muttered Gerald, feeling slightly excited now.

Chapter 2181

“Do you want to learn this?” Seeing Gerald’s expression, the old man asked with a smile.

“I’m a cultivator. How am I supposed to learn ninjutsu?” Gerald’s smile faded, and he asked in confusion.

“Of course you can. Cultivation and ninjutsu are of the same origin. They both draw on the natural power between heaven and earth. There are just some slight differences. You are a cultivator yourself, and you have the power of the Herculean Primordial Spirit. Learning ninjutsu on such a basis is very easy, so I guess you can get started in a few days,” said the old man as he looked at Gerald.

“That’s good news.” Gerald didn’t refuse. If he could learn this ability and enhance his power, his chances of saving his parents and then his sister, who was in the Sun League, would increase greatly.

“Do you want to learn now?” The old man couldn’t wait to start.

“It’s better to settle the matter at hand first. I’m a little uneasy as the Kanagawa family and the Hanyu family issues are not settled yet.” Gerald shook his head. He wanted to learn, but it was not the time yet.

Or rather, he should say that he had no time to learn at all.

He couldn’t just let go of the Futaba family’s affairs and focus on studying here. That would go against his original intention of coming to Japan.

“Okay, then. I shall wait until you have settled this mess.” The old man did not insist and asked Fujiko, “Do you want to stay here for the night or go back home?”

“I think we’d better go back. The Kanagawa family hired an assassin in the international assassin list to kill me last night. Judging from his skills, he should be in the top twenty. I need to settle this matter. Besides, the Kanagawa family cannot continue to exist.”

Gerald took a deep breath. Thinking of what had happened yesterday, his face turned dark all of a sudden.

“Go ahead, then. If it’s like what you’ve said, they should be removed.” The old man nodded.

“Well then, we shall go back first. We will come to visit again when we have the time.” Gerald stood up and gave him a fist and palm salute.

“That’s not necessary. You can leave your phone number and just call me directly if there is anything.”

The old man fished out a pen and paper from under the table, wrote a phone number on it, and handed it to Gerald.

“I had forgotten about this.” Gerald smiled in embarrassment as he took the paper.

From the time he had arrived at the foot of the barren mountain, he had felt that this was a very traditional family. They seemed to do things like how they were done a hundred years ago. After being here for a long time, he had forgotten all about these modern tools. If the old man hadn’t mentioned it, Gerald wouldn’t have remembered that there was such a thing as a telephone.

After exchanging phone numbers, Gerald left with Fujiko.

On the way back, Gerald kept thinking about what the old man had said. Indeed, What was said today was too much for Gerald to digest for the time being. He didn’t expect this old man from the Yamashita family to have such a relationship with Daryl.

Of course, Gerald felt a bit relaxed now. No matter if it was the matter of Yearning Island or the Kanagawa and Hanyu families, with help from the Yamashita family in the investigation, it was clearly better than fighting alone.

However, Gerald didn’t have high hopes for them to find out the location of Yearning Island.

“Are you a cultivator?” Fujiko turned her head.

“Yes.” Gerald did not hide it and answered in a low voice. “About my identity, you must not tell anyone about it, including the power of the Herculean Primordial Spirit in me. If outsiders know about it, I will get into endless trouble.”

“I understand. I will not tell anyone about it.” Fujiko nodded and replied very seriously.

“Hmm...” Gerald knew what Fujiko had in mind. “With the Yamashita family’s help this time, I think the matters of your family should be resolved soon.”

## Chapter 2182

Soon, the two arrived at the Futaba Mansion.

Before they arrived, the experts arranged by the old man had already arrived.

“Gerald, who are these people? I asked them just now, but they wouldn’t tell me. They simply told me that they came here on orders. Are they the helpers you found?” At that moment, Takuya was standing at the entrance of the manor. When he saw Gerald, he quickly walked to him and asked, pointing to the people on both sides of the manor.

“I think it’s better to go inside before we talk about this.”

“Thank you for your help. Please tell me if you need anything!”

Gerald wasn’t prepared to explain this in front of these people. Instead, he waved at them and brought Takuya and Fujiko into the house.

In the parlor, once they got inside, Takuya repeated his question.

Now, the situation of this family was very complicated. They did not just have to face the Kanagawa and Hanyu families, but even the people inside the family were coveting his position. One mistake could push him to the end of the world.

“Don’t worry, Patriarch Takuya. The people outside are members of the Yamashita family. They were ordered by the old man to come and protect us.” Gerald sensed Takuya’s anxiety, so he explained quickly as soon as they were seated.

“Why would the Yamashita family help us?” Takuya opened his eyes wide, his face full of disbelief.

“About this, you should just rest assured. That old man was an old friend of my grandfather, so, he was willing to help us,” said Gerald with a smile.

“I see...” Hearing Gerald’s words, Takuya felt relieved.

“By the way, Gerald, we will have another family meeting the day after tomorrow. They insist that you must be present.” Takuya was relieved, but then, he turned to Gerald and continued.

“Was it the white haired old man’s idea?” Gerald narrowed his eyes and said with a smile.

The last time when he had first come to the Futaba family, Gerald had attended the so called family meeting once. During the meeting, the people who rarely came had actually wanted to force Takuya to abdicate his position. Gerald remembered this very clearly.

“I can’t say that it’s him. Now that our family is no longer as prosperous as before, it’s logical that they would want to appoint a new patriarch. However, I can’t let them drain the family of its last sustenance.



You are our honored guest and now Fujiko's boyfriend, though superficially, so no matter what, you have to attend the meeting."

Takuya couldn't help but sigh when it came to his family matter.

"No problem, I can attend." Gerald nodded in agreement. He would never make it difficult for Takuya.

"Then, I am very grateful for this. For what has happened to the family recently, if it was not for your help, I'm afraid we wouldn't be sitting here safely at all." Seeing Gerald agree to it, Takuya immediately showed a relaxed smile, and the look he gave Gerald became more and more benevolent.

"This is what I should do." Gerald waved his hand. He had never gotten used to accepting people's thanks, and it would make him feel very awkward.

"Still, there's one thing I cannot understand." After laughing, Takuya was clearly relaxed.

"What is it?" asked Gerald, "If I know about it, I will surely tell you."

## Chapter 2183

"It's still the same question. You've helped us so much and even put yourself in danger. Besides, you even offended the Kanagawa and Hanyu families. Although you are very strong, you don't have to get yourself into so much trouble at all. I just want to know why you're doing this. What is your purpose? Or is it for Fujiko's sake?"

Takuya rubbed his hands and asked in embarrassment.

This question had been lingering in his mind. He had thought about it countless times, but still, he could not find an answer. So, he could no longer hold it in and asked outright.

Fujiko looked at Gerald.

“There is indeed a purpose.” Gerald looked at them and hesitated for a while, but then, he still told them the truth.

“That’s not a problem. As long as you say it, we will definitely meet your request.” Hearing what Gerald had said, only then did Takuya feel that this was a bit more normal. For someone so strong, he didn’t have to offend other people for the sake of a small family like his at all.

“We will talk about this after settling the matter at hand.” After contemplating, Gerald did not say anything else about Yearning Island.

“Okay. Since you don’t want to talk about it now, I won’t ask you anymore. But again, for the reason that you’ve helped us so much during this time, I will try my best to fulfill your wish. Even if you want the position of the patriarch of this family, I will give it to you.” Takuya banged on the table and said in a deep voice.

“This is really not necessary.” Gerald waved his hand and laughed. He had never wanted to become a patriarch or anything. Not only would he not get any benefits, but he would also bring himself a lot of trouble.

“You have just come back from the Yamashita family, it is better to go and rest first. I will tell the members of the family to come here tonight, and we will discuss everything clearly. If they want to take advantage of the fall of the family to get something, I will put them off the idea!” With Gerald here, Takuya spoke with great confidence.

“Yes.” Gerald nodded.

Gerald parted with Fujiko at the door of the parlor and returned to his room.

The afternoon passed quietly. When the sky was turning dark, only then did Gerald wake up.

He really had to say that although he was facing a lot of trouble at the moment, he could always sleep well in the Futaba Mansion. He could sleep peacefully almost

He really had to say that although he was facing a lot of trouble at the moment, he could always sleep well in the Futaba Mansion. He could sleep peacefully almost every night.

After lying on the bed for a while, Gerald rolled out of the bed and pushed the door open.

“Brother Gerald, you’re awake.” As soon as he opened the door, Aiden immediately ran into the room.

“Why are you here?” Gerald was shocked and took two steps backward. When he saw Aiden, who was standing in front of him, he asked.

“Hehe, I’m still not used to this place. Besides, I have rested for a whole day, and I don’t feel tired anymore. I don’t know where to go, so I just waited for you here. Someone told me that I have to attend a dinner or something tonight.” Aiden scratched his head.

“Where’s Master Ghost?” Gerald glanced at the door twice.

“He has been called for by Patriarch Takuya,” replied Aiden quickly.

“It’s getting late, let’s go.” Gerald looked at the time and said, “Perhaps everyone in the Futaba Mansion will not have a peaceful time today.”

Thinking about the situation last time, Gerald knew what he would encounter this evening.

“There’s a conflict in this family?” Aiden was not a fool. He knew what Gerald meant when he said that.

“If there was no conflict, maybe the Futaba family would not have fallen to their current state.” Gerald shook his head with a smile. He would not bother with the matters of the family. As long as he kept Takuya and Fujiko safe, he would be able to learn the secrets of Yearning Island.

#### Chapter 2184

As Gerald and Aiden were talking, they walked to the parlor.

It could be seen that after all these people had come, the security of the manor had obviously been enhanced. He could even see security guards in other uniforms. This should be because Takuya was worried that these people might encounter an accident in the manor, so he had hired the security guards from a security company outside.

After all, they were still members of the Futaba family even though they had left the family a long time ago. If they encountered any danger here, he would be in trouble.

“Aren’t you Futaba Suke?” The moment Gerald entered through the door, he saw a young man standing inside.

He was the young man who had threatened him in the garden after the meeting last time. Now that Gerald had seen him, he would not pretend that he didn’t see him, but was ready to talk to him instead.

“You are indeed a lucky one!” Suke knew what had happened to Gerald recently, and he murmured under his breath with gloomy eyes.

If it was not for Gerald blocking the way, he would have achieved his goal a long time ago.

Now, because of Gerald, their chances had been destroyed again and again. He was even considered an untrustworthy villain in the eyes of the other party as he had always given them inaccurate information.

Not only did the other party not get any benefits, but they had even lost many people because of this.

“How did you know that I’ve been in danger recently?”

Other people might not have heard Suke, but Gerald’s hearing was much stronger than an ordinary person’s. He walked straight to Suke and asked as he took out a cigarette and lit it.

“What a joke! How would I know?!” Suke was so shocked that he broke out in a cold sweat.

He lowered his head and kept avoiding eye contact. If he was caught red-handed, he would have to spend the rest of his life in jail.

“It’s best that you don’t know. Sometimes, in this world, the more you know, the more dangerous it is for you. Maybe, at one point, you might even lose your life.” Gerald smoked the cigarette and stretched out his hand. Then, he patted Suke’s shoulder and asked indifferently, “You should know this well, right?”

“I know, I know.” Suke was so scared that he didn’t even dare to breathe.

He knew about the mysterious disappearances of Endo and Izumi. Instead of saying that they had disappeared, it would be more accurate to say that they had obviously been defeated by Gerald. Moreover, they didn’t even have the chance to send out a message. For someone to have the ability to do that, killing him would be as simple as flicking his hand.

“Patriarch Takuya!” After pressuring Suke, Gerald walked two steps forward and saluted to Takuya.

“Well, it seems that I didn’t introduce you clearly to everyone last time. Let’s reintroduce you this time.”

Takuya nodded and pointed at Gerald. He said loudly, “This is Mr. Gerald Crawford from Weston. He is the honored guest of the Futaba family. He’s also Fujiko’s current boyfriend.”

“Patriarch, you cannot say that. Fujiko has a marriage contract with Kanagawa Kai of the Kanagawa family. Our family is already in a difficult situation. If we break the contract at this time, I’m afraid we can’t afford the consequences!”

“Yes, Patriarch. We can accept him as our guest. As for the matter between him and Fujiko, please reconsider it!”

Sure enough, once Takuya had said that, many voices rang out. These people did not respect him as the patriarch at all, and among them, some were already doing great in their businesses by taking advantage of the influence and privileges of the family.

“There is no need to discuss this matter anymore. I am the patriarch of the Futaba family, and I am also Fujiko’s father. I have the absolute say in this. Enough. If anyone mentions this again, don’t blame me for not showing mercy!” Takuya frowned and said in a low voice.

## Chapter 2185

He was expecting the opposing voices and had prepared for it, but when they began arguing, he felt very uneasy. After all, he was the patriarch, but even his words were questioned and rejected by his clansmen. There was no difference at all for him to hold the position as the patriarch or not.

“Then, what is it that you want to tell us that you’ve summoned us today?”

“If it’s just about this, we didn’t have to go through all this trouble at all. You could have just called and informed us. You won’t listen to our opinions anyway!”

Seeing Takuya get angry, the other people did not dare to say anything. But when the parlor was silent, Masaru said these words in a hoarse voice. After all, he was Takuya’s uncle, and he could still afford to completely ignore Takuya’s words.

Once Masaru had said that, everyone nodded in agreement.

“It is indeed about this matter. However, I thought that we had not met each other for a long time, so I took this opportunity to gather you here to discuss the future of the family.” Although Takuya hated this, Masaru was still his uncle. With all the clansmen here, he still had to show Masaru some respect.

“You are Gerald Crawford?” Masaru didn’t reply to Takuya and looked at Gerald instead.

“That’s right.” Gerald put his hands behind his back, standing tall and straight modestly.

“Your temperament is not bad. Takuya said that you are a Westoner. I wonder which family you belong to and what kind of status you have in Weston. The Futaba family is a famous family in Japan anyhow. Although it is gradually declining now, not just anyone can come and marry Fujiko!”

Masaru sized Gerald up.

Right after praising him, his tone became sharp. Everyone looked at Gerald immediately. They had been hoping for Fujiko to marry Kai because of the status of the Kanagawa family.

But now, if Gerald had a high status in Weston, they wouldn’t need to consider the Kanagawa family anymore as they could get more benefits from Weston.

“I’m sorry to let you down. I don’t have a glamorous family background nor do I have any power,” replied Gerald with a smile.

“You have no power and no influence, yet you are dreaming of marrying Fujiko. This is simply not going to happen. It would have been nothing when the family was still strong, but now, the Futaba family is on the verge of falling. We must let Fujiko marry Kanagawa Kai and get assistance from the Kanagawa family. Only then will our family be able to get out of this crisis!”

Hearing what Gerald had said, Masaru rejected him at once.

“Uncle, Fujiko is my daughter and your grandniece. We must think about her happiness and not simply treat her as a sacrifice for the sake of the development of the family. Haven’t you heard those things about Kanagawa Kai?” Takuya took a deep breath and tried his best to reign in his anger.

“Of course I know that. Still, this can’t be helped. If Gerald Crawford had a high status in Weston, I would have certainly agreed.” Masaru’s face showed that he did not allow any refusal. He obviously did not see Takuya as the patriarch.

Bang!

“When I say no, I mean no!”

Finally, Takuya couldn’t hold it in anymore and banged his fist on the table.

Chapter 2186

Takuya’s sudden anger made everyone stunned, and they did not dare to speak. Even though they didn’t have any respect for this patriarch at all, this didn’t mean that his power wasn’t still there.



Based on Japanese laws, if someone in a family went against the patriarch's order, not only did they need to bear the consequences of both family law and legal aspects.

The fact that they dared to leave the family and even use the family's name to gain certain benefits was all because they saw Takuya as a down to earth man, and that he wouldn't do anything to them seeing as how they were all part of the Futaba family.

"Takuya, I know that Fujiko is your daughter, and that is why you want the best for her, but as a patriarch, you have to put the whole family first! We need the Kanagawa family's help anyway. If we break the marriage promise, not only will the Kanagawa family not help us, but they might even turn around and attack us. We really can't bear the consequences anymore!"

Seeing Takuya become enraged, Masaru tried to persuade Takuya, trying to make it seem as though he had always wanted the best for the whole family, which was why he had asked whether Gerald had any power or status that could possibly help the family.

"If Gerald could get some help from his family, maybe we won't be in danger anymore. However, with the feud from the Hanyu and Kanagawa families whom he offended, regular families might not be able to help us out."

"If you can get help from the Yamashita family, we wouldn't care about the matter between you and Fujiko anymore!"

Right then, Futaba Suke, who had been quiet the whole time, spoke up suddenly, fixing his eyes upon Gerald as he snickered.

"What are you joking about? The Yamashitas have never had any connections with any of the families in Japan. It would practically be impossible for Gerald, someone from Weston, to even talk with the Yamashita family let alone ask them for help."

"That's right, I think it's better not to waste any time anymore!"

The others all agreed. Putting Gerald aside, none of them would be able to talk with anyone from the Yamashita family either.

“Hahaha!”

Out of the blue, Takuya burst out laughing.

“Did you all see the people standing at the manor’s gate upon entering?” Gerald held his hands behind him as he smiled lightly.

“What does it matter whether we saw them or not? Don’t tell me those people are from the Yamashita family who are here to protect you?” Suke sneered. He was confident that Gerald wouldn’t be able to form a connection with the Yamashita family, which was why he had said all of this to make a fool out of Gerald in front of the other family members.

“You’re quite smart aren’t you.” Gerald raised his eyebrow.

“How shameless can you be, Gerald?! The Yamashita family has never made any connections with any other families at all, and this isn’t a secret in Japan. You’re actually telling us that the tens of men standing at the gate are from the Yamashita family. This is the best joke I’ve ever heard in years.”

Suke glared at Gerald as he tapped his feet against the floor continuously.

“Let them in, Aiden,” Gerald turned around and spoke to Aiden, who was standing behind him. He couldn’t be bothered to explain it any further to Suke.

“Alright.” Although Aiden didn’t understand what was happening, he listened to Gerald’s words and

walked outside.

“What a joke! You’re actually saying that they’re the Yamashita family’s men. I’ll see who they truly are now.” Suke was still sneering. “However, if they’re not the Yamashita family’s men, you have to crawl beneath my crotch and scam out of here, Gerald.”

“Of course.”

Chapter 2187

Gerald shrugged and agreed easily. “However, if they are indeed the Yamashita family’s men...”

“Then I’ll crawl under your crotch and scam my way out of here!” Without waiting for Gerald to finish his words, Suke had already spoken up. He believed that Gerald was just boasting. After all, even he himself had never seen any members of the Yamashita family in his entire life, not to mention having any sort of connections with them.

“No problem!” Gerald instantly replied.

Not long after, a few men followed Aiden into the room with everyone’s eyes on them.

“Brother Gerald.” Aiden nodded toward Gerald and stood at the back.

“My brothers, these men are highly doubtful about the fact that you are from the Yamashita family. Do you have anything to prove your identities?” Gerald asked with his eyes set on them.

“Of course we do.” The man standing at the most upfront row took his identification card out from his pocket.

Japanese identification cards were different from other countries. Due to prioritization on one's family status or financial group, everyone's identification card contained the information as to which family or financial group they belonged to.

"Do you see this?" Gerald took the card from him and waved it before everyone.

They moved their eyes onto Gerald's hand, and as expected, they saw the tiny line below the card stating that this man belonged to the Yamashita family.

"This is impossible! You must have made a fake identification card!" Suke saw it clearly as well, but his face darkened, as he had never expected Gerald to truly be able to find the Yamashita family. It simply seemed like something impossible to him.

"So, could it be possible that I have the ability to predict the unknown to know that you would ask me about having connections with the Yamashita family and to have them make fake identification cards to bring along here?" Hearing this, Gerald couldn't help but snicker as he returned the card to its owner.

"I..." Suke became speechless for a moment.

It was indeed true that he had come up with the idea of making a fool out of Gerald in front of everyone on a whim. Gerald would obviously not know about this before hand to ask them to prepare the fake IDs, but even so, he still couldn't bring himself to believe that Gerald could actually call the Yamashita family's men over here to take care of the Futaba family's safety.

It wasn't just him, but everyone else couldn't believe what's happening either.

The Yamashita family, who never came into contact with any other families nor financial groups at all, was actually standing guard in front of the Futaba family's manor.

“Now do you believe it?” Gerald squinted his eyes at Suke as he looked around and asked.

“Yes, we do,” everyone replied in unison. They had immediately done the calculations silently. The Yamashita family was much stronger than the Kanagawa family, so, they would definitely gain more benefits if the Yamashita family helped them out. “Now, it’s time for you to fulfill your promise. Do you still remember what you said?” Gerald asked with his eyes on Suke.

“Don’t even think of doing this, Gerald!” Suke’s face turned pink. He would lose his dignity and respect entirely for sure if he really were to crawl underneath Gerald’s crotch and scam out of there.

“Suke, as a man, you should do what you’ve promised. If you don’t even dare to do what you said yourself, you shouldn’t even be a part of our Futaba family!” Futaba Masaru’s face turned serious as he reprimanded Suke in a deep voice.

Seeing how Gerald had such a good relationship with the Yamashita family, Masaru could almost see the Futaba family overcoming the great obstacle before them and reach even greater heights with the help from the Yamashita family. He was on Gerald’s side even as he spoke.

## Chapter 2188

“Exactly. If anyone knows how you can’t even do what you yourself promised, it would be a total shame on our family!”

“Just get it over with quickly! Don’t have us all waiting for you. You’re not even a man if you’re all bark and no bite!”

The others were now on Gerald’s side as well. It had not even been two minutes’ worth of effort, yet they had all forgotten how they had been just a While ago.

Still, facing these people, Gerald did not express any comments. As long as he could help Takuya and Fujiko, these men had no business with him.

“Alright!”

Under so many people’s pressure, Suke knew that anything he said wouldn’t be of help anymore.

He ground his teeth hard with a red face as he slowly crouched onto the ground and crawled toward Gerald, his body trembling all over. He knew that after crawling beneath Gerald, he wouldn’t be able to lift his head up ever again in the family.

Gerald was being cooperative too. He even lifted his leg and rested it on the table.

Under everyone’s gaze, Suke squeezed himself through Gerald’s crotch area. As he crawled out of it, he was trembling so hard as he glared at Gerald with fury and monstrosity. He had entirely lost every last shred of respect everyone else had for him at this very moment.

“Satisfied?” Suke asked through clenched teeth as he stared hard at Gerald.

“What does that mean? Isn’t this a bet between you and I?” Gerald arched his eyebrow. “But there’s still one more thing left.”

“What’s that?” Suke asked.

“Getting your ass out of here,” Gerald continued, “You’re not going to go against your own words, are you?”

“You’re brutal! Don’t forget this, Gerald Crawford. I will make you pay for what you’ve done today for sure, beware!” Suke threw one last look at Gerald and spouted warnings at him before scrambling out of here.

However, no one was bothered by him at all. Everyone's attention was on Gerald. All that was on their minds was how to make use of Gerald's connection with the Yamashita family and get the most benefits out of them.

"You can go home now. Thanks for the hard work," Gerald made a gesture of appreciation toward the Yamashita family's men and spoke in a low voice.

"This is nothing. Please tell us anytime you need help, Mr. Gerald. We'll do our best for you!" The man returned the same gesture and spoke politely.

Seeing this, everyone started to analyze the situation again. Not only did Gerald know these people from the Yamashita family, but he might even have good relations with them, which could be the only explanation as to why they were being so respectful toward him.

After they had left, Takuya straightened his back and stood even taller.

"Does anyone still disagree in regards to the relationship between Gerald and Fujiko?" Takuya scanned his eyes across the crowd with his head lifted up high. After all this time, this was the first time in five years that he felt like a true patriarch of this family even though it was all because of Gerald's presence.

No one spoke a word.

However, Masaru coughed and spoke up, "Looks like Gerald can truly help our family this time. There's no need for Fujiko to be married to Kanagawa Kai anymore, then. It will do these two good too seeing as how they make a good pair and have feelings for each other."

Chapter 2189

"You're not truly marrying her, are you?"

Aiden inched closer to Gerald's back and asked with a low voice.

"No, this is just a show for them. We will still leave here after solving their family's problem." Gerald shook his head. His heart only belonged to Mila Smith, and Gerald wasn't interested even though Fujiko was indeed very beautiful in addition to being a good person in and out.

"This doesn't really matter, though. I know a lot of countries that support husbands having two wives at the same time. Seeing how Ms. Fujiko is interested in you as well, why don't you just accept it!" Aiden chuckled as he spoke.

"I'll kick you out of here if you say anything more." Gerald frowned.

Aiden stuck his tongue out but kept quiet.

"This is true. It's not a bad thing for Fujiko to get married to Gerald. Still, Gerald, you have to help us out this time! You too know our family's current situation, we will all face great troubles if you don't help!"

After Masaru had spoken up, the others gathered the courage to speak as well.

"No problem." Gerald waved them down. He had promised to help anyway, so he would help Takuya in kicking these people with ulterior motives out of the family and not allow them to drag the Futaba family down.

"Well then, take a seat everyone. I'll tell you about the future plan," Takuya waved them down as well and said.

Seeing how they were going to discuss family matters, Gerald closed his eyes as he sat on a bench at the back, not wanting to listen at all.



...

Meanwhile, after leaving the manor, Suke didn't bother to have a change of clothes, and he drove straight to the Hanyu family's place, specifically requesting to see Hanyu Ryugu.

After a few minutes, Ryugu appeared at the doorsteps and pulled him inside right away.

"Are you crazy for coming here without telling me sooner?! If anyone else knows about this, the worst can happen to our family after you!" Ryugu sneaked a glance outside to make sure no one was there before scolding Suke in a low voice.

"I don't care anymore. I want to kill Gerald Crawford as soon as possible. You can even reduce half the benefits you promised if you really can do this!"

Suke's eyes were bloodshot. He was even considering death after recalling how he had crawled under Gerald's crotch and scrambled out of the family in front of so many people.

"What's this? Didn't you say to stop things temporarily and act only after I told you so? Now that you suddenly want me to do this, I have no idea how to do it as well,"

As Ryugu spoke, he dragged Suke along and went further inside.

"I'm telling you, it'll be too late if you don't act now. Gerald has strong abilities. Two of your top assassins failed their mission because of him, and he even knows the Yamashita family. It even seems that they share a close relationship!" Suke released a heavy sigh.

"What? He has good relations with the Yamashita family?!" Hearing this, Ryugu stopped in his tracks right away.

“That’s right. I’ve seen it myself. The Yamashita family arranged for tens of their men to guard the Futaba manor, and those people seemed to have high respect for Gerald!”

Now, Suke wasn’t trying to hide anything at all anymore. His only goal was to kill Gerald as fast as possible to make him pay for what he had done.

“You should go rest in the guest room first. I have something to report to our patriarch.” After thinking while standing in the same spot, Ryugu headed toward where Hanyu Suijin was resting immediately.

“Just half an hour. I’ll come to find you in half an hour!” Suke couldn’t wait for that long, and he shouted at Ryugu’s back.

However, Ryugu couldn’t hear anything at all. He had to report this situation to the patriarch as soon as he could. Originally, he had only suspected that Gerald might have some sort of connection with the Yamashita family. Now, he was as certain as ever.

## Chapter 2190

In the room furthest back in the Hanyu family’s place. At that moment, Hanyu Suijin was sitting inside with his young concubine. Although he was old and his body didn’t work as well as before, it was comfortable enough for him to be able to ogle at a young lady with delicate skin lying on his bed.

Slam!

Just as Suijin was about to get into action after he was done ogling the lady, the door was pushed open suddenly.

Following that was the guard’s voice from outside the door, “Team Leader, the patriarch is doing

something inside! You can't just go in!"

Without waiting for him to finish, Ryugu was already dashing into the living room.

"Patriarch, I have something urgent to report to you."

Ryugu's eyes scanned his surroundings only to find Suijin naked on the bed and a pretty, young lady hurriedly wearing her clothes by the bedside.

Ryugu knew this lady. She was the one whom he had brought home today for the patriarch's enjoyment with the only intention of protecting his position as the team leader of the Assassin Team when so many things were happening now.

"What is it about that you can't even wait a while outside instead of barging in like this?!" Suijin was upset that he had been halted by someone just as he was about to do something. It was lucky that it was Ryugu. If it had been anyone else, he or she would have been kicked out of the family for sure.

"This is too important that it can't be delayed." Ryugu didn't bother the lady and entered the room after Suijin had put on his pants.

"Spill it. What's the matter?" The lady hadn't even finished putting on her clothes, exposing her pale white chest in the cold air. Suijin wasn't really bothered either, asking in a low voice as he held her tiny, delicate hand.

"Futaba Suke has just arrived at our place, saying that Gerald Crawford is on good terms with the Yamashita family. The Yamashita family even sent tens of men to guard the Futaba family's manor," Ryugu gulped and reported instantly.

"Which Yamashita family are you talking about?" Suijin didn't even think of that.

In the whole of Japan, there were tens or even hundreds of families named Yamashita, so he didn't know which one Ryugu was referring to at all. Plus, these families posed no threat to him.

He could easily eradicate them if anything happened anyway.

"Of course it's that Yamashita family! If it was any other, I wouldn't have bothered to tell you about it. You know what kind of person I am too, Patriarch." After following Suijin for so many years, Ryugu knew what he was thinking too, so he quickly explained after hearing what Suijin had said.

"You can go out first!"

Hearing that, Suijin immediately became alert.

He released the young lady's wrist and patted her back before calling out to her in a soft voice.

The lady put on a jacket and exited hurriedly, closing the door behind her.

"What's happening!" Suijin's face darkened instantly as she got up and walked in circles. He asked that after lighting up his cigarette and smoking it twice.

"I don't know what exactly this is about either. This is what Suke told me just now. I've asked him to go rest in the guest room." Ryugu shook his head. All he knew were these few sentences of information. "Oh, yeah! I've made sure that there's no one suspicious outside either."

Chapter 2191

Nodding, Suijin then put his cigarette that he had barely even puffed out before saying, "... Tell him to

meet me at the reception room.”

Fast forward to twenty minutes later, Suijin could be seen sitting on a bamboo chair in the reception room when Suke rushed in under Ryugu’s lead. Upon seeing Suijin, Suke immediately yelled, “Patriarch! As long as you help me kill Gerald, I’m willing to let go of half the benefits that we previously agreed upon!”

“Calm yourself and slowly elaborate the situation to me,” muttered Suijin as he held onto his temple, feeling a slight headache coming. Honestly, all these problems stemmed from the moment he had told Saburo to go after Fujiko... Come to think of it, if Gerald wasn’t in the picture, everything would’ve gone smoothly! However, there simply was no getting rid of that youth no matter what tactics they used!

“Well, the Futabas held a family meeting tonight, and Gerald revealed that he got people from the Yamashita family to guard over our manor! While he was showing them to us, those Yamashitas appeared to greatly respect Gerald as well!” explained Suke as his face turned red, remembering how humiliated he had felt earlier. All he wanted now was to have Gerald dead, even if he would be left with nothing at all!

“Are you absolutely sure that they were from that Yamashita family? Could he not have hired actors just to lie to you guys?” replied Suijin as he tried to rationalize the situation despite his bewilderment.

After all, Gerald simply didn’t seem like the kind of person who would have any form of contact with the Yamashitas.

“I was doubtful at the start as well, but after they showed us their IDs, I’m forced to believe that they’re the real deal,” muttered Suke.

“How truly strange... I’ve never heard of anyone contacting the Yamashitas before... Gerald’s a Westoner, no? How did he even manage to build such a close relationship with that family?” said Suijin, puzzled out of his mind. What an improbable situation!

As Suijin continued struggling to accept Suke's unbelievable statement, Suke clenched his fist before replying, "While I don't know how all this is possible, I assure you that everything I said was true. Hell, those Yamashitas are still standing right outside my manor! If you don't believe me, send some of your men over to have a look! Better yet, just contact the others from my family! They all witnessed the same thing!"

"I don't think any of this is staged, patriarch. Remember, that old man from the Yamashita family helped Gerald and Fujiko escape back then. With that said, I truly believe that Gerald has a relationship with the Yamashitas..." whispered Ryugu after leaning closer to Suijin.

Upon hearing that, Suijin pondered about it for a moment before eventually saying, "Regardless, feel free to stay at my place for the next few days. If everything you've said is true, then I guarantee that I'll get rid of Gerald for you! However, about the benefits..."

"Half! I just need half of the benefits that we previously agreed upon!" declared Suke.

"You have my word, then! Now go get some rest as I further investigate this affair!" replied Suijin.

In the beginning, he had planned to cooperate with Suke, presenting Suke some benefits in return, in order to annex the Futabas since their family was currently in decline. However, things took a turn when Gerald stepped in. With that in mind, as long as they managed to get rid of Gerald, they would surely be able to resume their plan without any trouble.

This was what Ryugu had hoped to achieve this entire time...!

## Chapter 2192

Regardless, after hearing that, Suke bowed toward Suijin before leaving the area.

Once Suke was gone, Suijin slammed his fist against the table before growling, "Who exactly is Gerald?!"

Why the hell does he have contacts within the Yamashita family?! And where the hell are Endo and Izumi!”

This was supposed to be an easy affair! How had things gotten this complicated? Whatever the case was, until they got rid of Gerald, nothing could proceed!

Upon hearing Endo and Izumi’s names, Ryugu was momentarily stunned. After all, he hadn’t told Suijin about their disappearances yet! Now that he knew that he couldn’t hide it any longer, Ryugu gulped as he stuttered, “T-they...”

Watching as Suijin raised a slight brow clearly confused by his hesitance, Ryugu shook his head before saying, “T-they’ve... Well... They’ve gone missing ever since I previously sent them out to assassinate Gerald...! I have a feeling that they’re currently trapped in the Futaba manor, and I’m still thinking of ways to get them out!”

“What? Both of them got captured despite them working together...?!” yelled Suijin as he abruptly got to his feet before pointing at Ryugu.

“I-indeed...!” replied Ryugu as he gritted his teeth.

“Astonishing...! What absolute misfortune our family is under to have accidentally offended such a powerful individual...! Again, who exactly is Gerald and how is he so inhumanly strong? What’s his status like in Weston? We’re talking about someone who’s able to contact the Yamashitas here!” grumbled Suijin, slowly sitting down again as he pondered the situation.

After thinking about it for a bit, Suijin realized that all this began when Saburo was trying to assassinate Fujiko and Gerald stepped in to save her, which was odd since they weren’t trying to offend him in the first place. While it was true that the Hanyus had previously received Weston assassination missions as well, Suijin was sure that each of those assassinations had been perfect, with zero traces left behind.

Whatever the case was, Suijin ended up with two possible conclusions. Either Gerald had come here

specifically to have his revenge on them, or they simply had terrible luck for accidentally bumping into him at such a critical moment.

“Well... even after thorough investigation, it doesn't seem that Gerald has any familial background in Weston... He just... seems to be an average Joe who's never even been to Japan before! Quite honestly, it's highly improbable that he's ever contacted the Yamashitas before this...!” explained Ryugu.

“Impossible!” yelled Suijin as he slammed his fist onto his table again. Having no discernible background and never coming to Japan before... How the hell had Gerald become this powerful then? Besides, the Yamashitas wouldn't have helped Gerald on a whim! Suijin was pretty sure that the Yamashitas didn't deal with families outside Japan, so there was simply no way they would have helped him without meeting him prior!

“U-unfortunately that's all we got...!” muttered Ryugu who was equally in disbelief, though what else could he think with what little they knew?

“Keep investigating! Gerald can't be as simple as he seems! However, if you still can't get anything about his background, don't lay a finger on him first. Remember, he has the Yamashitas on his side now, and that family is not to be trifled with!” replied Suijin as he began puffing on another cigarette.

Nodding in response, Ryugu paused for a moment lowering his voice as he asked, “Um... Patriarch...? Are there really ninjas in that family...?”

Though he was the leader of the assassin team, Ryugu knew very little about the Yamashitas outside of the rumors he heard.

Chapter 2193

“What? Haven't you already entered their territory?” asked Suijin with a slight frown.



“Well, while it’s true that that old man was extremely strong, I couldn’t tell whether he was a ninja... After all, I’ve never met a ninja before so I can’t really tell them apart from regular people...” muttered Ryugu, who knew better than to assume that the old man was a ninja just because he had immense speed.

“Then investigate further into this. However, only make your move once you’ve completed your investigation! Remember, the stakes are very high this time around! Also, while I won’t be arguing about Endo and Izumi’s case for the moment, you’d best bring them back safely or I’ll replace you from your role as leader of the assassin team with someone more capable!” growled Suijin as he glared at Ryugu.

“C-copy that...!” replied Ryugu who got so frightened that his forehead was drenched in cold sweat in no time.

...

Meanwhile, Kai had just awoken back at his manor. After making himself look a bit more presentable, he entered the living room before sitting on a couch and muttering, “That Vulture claimed that he would take care of Gerald in two days... It’s now the third day yet I haven’t heard a word from him yet...!”

Upon hearing that, his confidant who was standing close by couldn’t help but reply, “Do you think that he could’ve... you know... ended up like Endo and Izumi...?”

“Can it!” growled Kai as he glared at his new confidant. Though his previous confidant never spoke out of turn, due to that little incident, Kai had paid him a few thousand dollars to get lost. Unfortunately, that meant that Kai had to allow this idiot to be his next confidant!

“While you may be mad to hear it, the possibility exists... After all, the Hanyus remained silent the entire time till we eventually inquired with them about Gerald. If you ask me, Vulture’s behavior is strikingly similar to what they did...” muttered the subordinate who was well aware that he was stepping out of line. However, not only was he a straightforward person, but he was also here to guide Kai under the patriarch’s orders. This explained his urge to reveal anything that he thought of the situation.

“I know, I know, there’s no need for you to remind me!” growled Kai. He, for one, was no fool, and he had been worrying about this scenario ever since Vulture set off on his mission. With that in mind, it made sense why he would get annoyed when he was reminded of it.

After his subordinate went silent, Kai gestured for him to leave before fishing his phone out and dialing Vulture’s number.

However, when he couldn’t contact Vulture even after three tries, Kai’s worries began to intensify. While it was true that Kai didn’t have to worry about his identity being exposed even if Vulture was taken down, it still meant that Gerald had managed to take Vulture down...! If someone from the top ten assassin list couldn’t take Gerald down, then what hope did Kai have to get rid of him...?!

While Vulture’s death hadn’t been confirmed, Kai didn’t even dare to think about the implications if that really was the case. However, Kai did start regretting offending Gerald this much...!

Though Kai was in a pickle, Gerald, on the other hand, was as cool as a cucumber at the moment. After all, ever since he revealed his relationship with the Yamashitas, all the Futabas had been fawning over him, clearly trying to get into his good books...

#### Chapter 2194

The second the meeting ended, all the other Futabas began flocking around Gerald, handing him their business cards as they said, “We’ve truly had some misunderstandings in the past, mister! But putting that aside, we’ll now be counting on you to revive our family’s glory!”

“Yeah, what he said! Speaking of which, here’s my contact number! If you require any help in the future, don’t hesitate to call! I’ll be sure to help as best as I can!”

“Make sure to take my number too!”

Smiling subtly in response at everyone's overenthusiasm, Gerald simply accepted the cards as he replied, "One at a time, I'll be taking all your cards. Don't worry..."

Gerald, for one, didn't really know the other Futabas by name, at least previously. Now that he had their name cards, he would know who to look for should the Futabas required help getting rid of 'problematic individuals' in the future.

Either way, since everyone was surrounding Gerald, Takuya who was still sitting on the main seat ended up getting completely ignored.

It was only after everyone was done handing out their business cards, when they finally turned to look at Takuya again before saying, "Well, we'll be taking our leave first, patriarch. We'd rather not disturb you any longer. By the way, if you ever require any help from us in future, just say the word. In times of trouble, we Futabas should and will stick together!"

Unable to bear how pretentious his family was being, the pained Takuya who could now distinguish the family members who sincerely cared about the family and those who just wanted to use the family to gain more wealth simply yelled, "Just leave already!"

With that said, it took only ten minutes for everyone except for those who were already living in the manor to leave.

Now that everyone was gone, Takuya heaved a heavy sigh.

Seeing how unhappy Takuya was, Gerald smiled as he slipped the name cards into his pocket before saying, "Don't bother about them, patriarch. I'll deal with them later on."

Once all the current troubles were out of the way, Gerald promised himself that he would kick all of those insincere family members out of this family...! Gerald, for one, believed that Takuya would agree with his decision.

Regardless, upon hearing Gerald's statement, Takuya couldn't help but worry. After all, he knew his family's true colors best, and he didn't want Gerald falling for their insincere fawning. With that in mind, Takuya was prompted to reply, "Do be careful around those exploiters. They're definitely just trying to get on your good side to reap benefits from you! Just so you know,

Had you not shown evidence that the Yamashitas were on your side, I'm sure they wouldn't have been this easily satisfied."

Chuckling in response, Gerald casually said, "If they truly manage to take advantage of me, then you can be sure that I'm not the real Gerald!"

Nodding in response, Takuya was then prompted to ask, "I'm glad to hear that... Putting them aside, how are you planning to deal with the Hanyus?"

Despite being the Futaba patriarch, Takuya had gotten used to asking for Gerald's opinion on things, especially when it involved major things like these. Honestly, Gerald now felt like the true backbone of the Futaba family.

Either way, upon hearing that, Gerald asked in return, "Well... any suggestions, patriarch?"

"Let's hear your opinion first," replied Takuya with a smile as he gestured for Gerald to proceed.

"Well, I plan to meet up with the Hanyus and talk to them face to face in hopes of getting some things clear," replied Gerald after thinking about it for a while.

"...Come again? You're attempting to talk things out with the family that's resorted to assassination so many times?" said Takuya as his smile turned into a frown.

“That’s honestly part of the reason why I plan to meet them in person,” replied Gerald with a nod.

Upon hearing that, Takuya figured that Gerald must have devised a solid plan. With that in mind, Takuya eventually said, “Alright, let’s go with that, then. I’ll make sure to send some of my men over to keep you safe. Since the Yamashitas are on your side, it’ll do you good to bring some of them along. Don’t worry about the manor, I’m pretty confident that we’ll remain safe

Till your return.”

“I’ll have to disagree there, patriarch. After all, I only plan to bring two people with me,” replied Gerald as he waved his hand.

#### Chapter 2195

Rather than helping, Gerald believed that the ‘reinforcements’ would only end up being burdens that he needed to protect once they were there.

“Who will you be bringing along?” asked Takuya.

“Just Fujiko and Aiden. Both of them are plenty enough,” replied Gerald as he turned to look at the duo that he had just mentioned.

Upon hearing that, Aiden who would follow Gerald to the ends of earth, regardless of how dangerous it was immediately declared, “We’re ready when you are!”

“I see... Well, Fujiko has my approval,” said Takuya with a nod, believing that Gerald would keep his daughter safe.

Nodding in response, Fujiko then got to her feet as she asked, “When are we heading off?”

“Well, rather than wait around any longer, I say we meet them now. As the old Weston saying goes, ‘strike while the iron’s hot’. Let’s see how the Hanyus respond to our little visit,” replied Gerald with a faint smile.

Shortly after, the trio left the manor. Though they left Master Ghost behind, Gerald was sure that the Yamashitas were strong enough to keep him safe. Even if another assassin from the assassin list attempted to launch an attack, Gerald had faith that the Yamashitas were capable of holding them back, at least till he returned.

Whatever the case was, it was about three hours later under Fujiko’s guidance when the trio’s car finally arrived at the entrance of the Hanyu manor. Once the car was parked, Gerald who had a cigarette in his mouth got out before heading toward the entrance.

Looking at Gerald, the guard at the entrance was prompted to ask, “Do you have an appointment?”

“Not at all. Either way, just report that Gerald’s come for a visit,” replied Gerald in a commanding, yet immensely charismatic tone.

“C-come again...? You’re Gerald...?” stuttered the guard as he took two steps back. Though he wasn’t anyone noteworthy in the family, even he had heard rumors about Gerald, the immensely strong Westoner!

“Is it that unbelievable?” asked Gerald as he flicked some ash off his cigarette.

“... Please wait a moment as I report this!” replied the guard who didn’t dare to make Gerald wait for a second longer as he bolted into the manor.

At that moment, Suijin was having his dinner in the living room. Before him, stood Ryugu and the leaders of the other assassin teams, all of them patiently waiting for Suijin to finish his meal so that they could start planning Endo and Izumi’s rescue mission.

Just as Suijin was about to take another bite of his dinner, the guard from earlier came busting into the room nearly tripping in the process as he exclaimed, “P-patriarch...! There’s a man outside who claims to be Gerald...!”

“What?!” yelled Suijin as he tossed his rice ball onto the floor!

“It’s probably just someone looking for trouble! As if the real Gerald would ever come here on his own accord! That’d just be courting death! Send that person away immediately!” sneered one of the team leaders in a disdainful tone.

“...Hold it. There’s no way an ordinary person would even know about our grudge against Gerald. Even if they somehow found out about it, why would they willingly put themselves in trouble?” said Ryugu as he quickly grabbed onto the guard before he could run off to do as he was told.

After a brief pause, Suijin slowly sat down again as he ordered, “Regardless of whether he’s the real Gerald or not, I’d like to meet him. Let him in!”

Watching as the guard quickly nodded before rushing off, Suijin then thought for a while before facing Ryugu and adding, “Get all the members of the second team over. If it really is Gerald, then he must be extremely well prepared! With that said, remain vigilant at all times! With any luck, we’ll be able to force him to release Endo and Izumi...!”

## Chapter 2196

Nodding in response, Ryugu immediately began heading off to do as he was ordered. However, before leaving the room, he turned to look at the other team leaders before declaring, “While I’m away, make sure to guard the patriarch well. Gerald’s extremely strong, and believe me when I say that even if all of you attack him at the same time, he’ll probably remain unscathed! With that said, if anything happens to the patriarch, I’ll be sure to have your heads!”

“We’ll be vigilant, team leader!” replied a few of the team leaders, prompting Ryugu to resume his task.

Moving back to Gerald and his party, they soon saw the guard returning to let them in. As they were led deeper into the area, none of them bothered to look around.

After all, traditional Japanese manors like this looked pretty much the same as any other. Whatever the case was, from the looks of it, they were headed to the innermost area of the manor.

Though Gerald didn’t show it, he had honestly been vigilant ever since they stepped foot into the manor. After all, he was well aware that this was still the home of an assassin family. Knowing that it was better to be safe than sorry, Gerald had made sure to spread his Herculean Primordial Spirit around to get a better grasp of his surroundings. It was also because of that that Gerald couldn’t help but smirk.

After all, he could already sense the presence of a group of people about thirty feet away from them who were rapidly approaching them. From what he could assume, this was the Hanyu family’s way of preparing to deal with him. Of course, Gerald didn’t tell Aiden or Fujiko about this.

Either way, the trio was soon greeted by the sight of a row of villas...

Briefly glancing around, Gerald soon yelled, “Is anyone there?”

“But of course! Still, what a surprise that you’d pay my family a visit at such an hour!” declared a voice that emanated from one of the villas. Shortly after, Suijin and a few of the team leaders showed themselves.

Though Suijin gave off the impression that he was a courteous person, he had honestly been wary of Gerald this entire time. Still, since Gerald was daring enough to enter his territory, Suijin was definitely going to make it difficult for Gerald to leave. Hell, if things went swimmingly, this could be his chance of getting rid of the boy!



Regardless, after a brief silence, Gerald turned to look at Aiden and Fujiko before saying, "Shall we?"

Upon hearing that, Suijin couldn't help but frown slightly. To think that Gerald would just ignore him! Still, he quickly reverted to his polite façade as he replied, "Yes, please, come in!"

As Gerald sat cross legged in the reception room, Suijin realized that his family's assassins whom he had requested to come over earlier were already closing in. Finding solace in that, Suijin then straightened his back before asking, "Now then... To what do I owe the pleasure?"

"Hmm? I was just passing by so I figured why not pay your family a visit. Besides, I'm pretty sure there's a misunderstanding between us, so why not take this chance to talk things out?" replied Gerald who looked much more relaxed in comparison. For those who didn't know any better, they'd probably assume that it was Suijin that had entered Gerald's territory.

"I agree. For one, I believe that Endo and Izumi are currently being locked up in the Futaba manor, correct?" asked Suijin as he narrowed his eyes, a faint smile on his face...

"That's correct," replied Gerald.

Taking a deep breath, Suijin then said, "Then please release them. The two are extremely important family members."

"I'm afraid I can't do that. In case you weren't aware, they attempted to assassinate me. With that said, after taking them down, I handed them to the Futaba family's patriarch so that he could interrogate them. After all, it's only fair for me to want to know who sent them over. Regardless, though we were initially planning to let them off after they told us who they worked for, neither of them said a word, even after continuously being tortured."

“With that said, both of them are currently on the verge of death. I’m afraid you’ll have to bring stretchers along if you truly wish to rescue them. Otherwise, they’ll probably not make it,” replied Gerald as he stared Suijin directly in the eye.

“... I-is that so...” replied Suijin, his hands already trembling slightly as he desperately attempted to keep his cool.

“Release them, you mother\*cker! Otherwise, you won’t be leaving this place alive!” roared Ryugu as he rushed into the room!

Since he was the one who had sent Endo and Izumi out on the mission without Suijin’s knowledge, Ryugu knew that he was going to be held responsible for whatever happened to them. With that said, as long as they were still alive, he would probably just have to endure a punishment or two. However, if they were dead, there was a high chance that he would be too...!

Either way, upon seeing Ryugu rush over, Aiden immediately got to his feet! Within seconds, the two were already exchanging dozens of blows!

Sensing that Aiden was no pushover, Suijin quickly scowled, “Ryugu! Step down!”

Upon hearing that, the now gasping Ryugu immediately took a few steps back. To think that not only had he failed to gain the upper hand against Aiden, but he was almost hit a few times as well!

Secretly pleased to see that Aiden had managed to remain unscathed, Gerald then placed his hands on his knees before looking at Suijin with a smile as he asked, “Now then... Since the interrogation didn’t work, I may as well ask straight from the source. Tell me, why would Endo and Izumi suddenly try to assassinate me? As far as I’m concerned, I’ve never had any beef with them. Hell, the night they attempted that assassination was the first time I met them! Either way, do explain why they came after me.”

“I wasn’t aware of their actions at the time, so I can’t say for sure. Had I known that they were after your

head, I would've definitely tried to stop them!" replied Suijin who knew that playing dumb was his only way out of this.

"I see... Could you also be imaware of the assassination attempt on Miss Futaba then?" asked Gerald.

"With all due respect, that's a matter between the Hanyus and the Futabas, mister. As nothing but a guest, don't you think you lack the right to ask about such things?" replied Suijin who's expression had gotten slightly ugly. He couldn't answer any of Gerald's questions at all...!

"Point taken," replied Gerald with a brief nod.

Shaking his head, Suijin then gestured at one of his subordinates before ordering, "Get us some tea!"

A short while later, Gerald was prompted to ask, "Actually, there's one more thing I'd like to confirm. You see, back when I was at the Japanese military training grounds a few days ago, I was attacked by an assassin from the assassin list who's probably quite high-ranked. With that said, I was wondering if you were the ones who sent him after me."

While Gerald was pretty sure that Kai was the one who had hired that assassin, he wanted to catch the Hanyus off guard.

As expected, upon hearing that, Suijin and Ryugu immediately yelled, "Impossible!"

"Oh? Then why did he tell me that you were the ones who hired him?" fibbed Gerald even though he could already confirm based on their reactions that they weren't involved with that assassin.

"... Mister, we're an assassin family. Hiring another assassin to do our job would be absolutely humiliating!" explained Suijin in resignation.

## Chapter 2198

After saying that, however, Suijin couldn't help but look at Ryugu. While he definitely hadn't hired that assassin, it didn't mean that Ryugu couldn't have done the deed. After all, he had already sent Endo and Izumi out on that mission without his knowledge.

"Is that so..." replied Gerald as he turned to look at Ryugu as well.

Realizing that they were both staring at him, Ryugu couldn't help but grit his teeth. Suijin's distrust toward him now was all thanks to Gerald! With that in mind, he then glared at the youth before growling, "I didn't do it..! I'd never do such a humiliating thing! Now cut the cr\*p and return Endo and Izumi to us already!"

"Feel free to take them away! After all, keeping them in the Futaba manor is pretty pointless now. Oh, and don't forget the stretchers!" replied Gerald as he casually shrugged.

"You...!" hissed Ryugu in utter resentment. Endo and Izumi were both mighty Hanyu assassins! If they truly ended up dying, then Ryugu would need at least ten more years to raise two similar leaders, and that only applied if the ones he trained were naturally talented assassins...!

Though Suijin was equally as angry since he was the patriarch, he kept his emotions concealed as he asked, "... Allow me to ask again. Why have you come here today, mister?"

"As I've said, I just happened to pass by, so I figured why not pay your family a visit," replied Gerald in a casual tone.

"Nobody would buy that, mister. Look, I get along better with straightforward people. With that said, if you still refuse to say a thing, I implore you to just leave already," sneered Suijin.

Laughing in response, Gerald then replied, "You? Straightforward? Would a straightforward person send

assassins over to kill me and miss Futaba?”

Frowning, Suijin then said, “Are you still trying to get an explanation?”

“I’m glad you’re capable of reading between the lines,” replied Gerald who wanted to resolve the grudges between the Hanyus and Futabas before dealing with the Kanagawas.

“As I’ve previously said, this is a feud between my family and the Futabas. Since you’re merely a guest, it’d do you good not to get involved in this. As for why we attacked you, let’s just say that it was a mistake on our part!” growled Suijin as he continued to suppress his rage, not wanting to accidentally infuriate Gerald.

After all, Suijin knew for a fact that the assassin team outside wouldn’t be able to take Gerald on if the boy really wanted them dead. Following that, his life would be next on the line.

“A mistake, you say... Well, if that truly is the case, then I’ll be able to say this next part much easier. On behalf of the Futaba family, I hereby declare that we won’t provoke the Hanyus from this day onward! In return, I hope that you’ll cease your ulterior motives and stop coveting after the Futabas, patriarch! Deal?” asked Gerald as he raised a slight brow.

“Deal!” declared Suijin without the slightest hesitation, much to Gerald’s surprise.

“... Well, then. Since you’ve agreed to it, we’ll see how things play out. I warn you, however. If any of you even dare lay a finger on the Futabas, I won’t let you off that easily! Hell, even if you send someone to kill one of their chickens, my response will be the same!”

Chapter 2199

Following that, Gerald laughed heartily before getting to his feet and saying, “Alright, let’s head back. We’re already an eyesore to them by this point!”

Nodding in response, Aiden and Fujiko then followed closely behind him. However, before they left, Aiden made sure to roughly brush his shoulder against Ryugu's, causing Ryugu to almost fall!

"You... !" growled Ryugu as he turned to glare at Aiden.

Aiden, however, paid him no notice and simply walked out with Gerald and Fujiko.

Once the trio was no longer in sight, Ryugu who had been actively suppressing his rage this entire time immediately ran toward Suijin before asking, "Patriarch! Why did you just let them leave like that...?"

Snorting in response, Suijin then scoffed, "Why would you want them to stay? Are you planning to treat them to dinner or something?"

Honestly, if it wasn't for the fact that Ryugu was an important family member whom Suijin couldn't easily replace, he would've driven Ryugu away ages ago.

"With all due respect, patriarch, I had a small team lying in wait to ambush them! As long as you ordered it s to attack, my men would've instantly rushed in to subdue them!" exclaimed Ryugu as he clenched his fist, unable to accept that he had missed yet another chance to take Gerald down.

Glaring at Ryugu, Suijin simply scoffed, "Subdue? You couldn't even defeat that special forces soldier! Do you honestly think you can subdue Gerald? Just think about it You, of all people, should know how strong Endo and Izumi can get when they work together. They were able to stealthily take down a terrorist organization, for heaven's sake! Yet what happened when they attempted to assassinate Gerald? Not only did he manage to take both of them down, but he barely has a scratch on him! It's clear as day that his strength is far beyond yours! If he really wanted us dead, we'd all be nothing but a puddle of flesh and blood within minutes!"

Watching as Suijin then sighed before starting to pace back and forth in the reception room, Ryugu who was still unwilling to just accept all this then replied, "But we can't just agree with all this...! If we really

do as he says, then all our plans in the past few years will be for naught!”

Ryugu, for one, had invested a lot in the plan to take over the Futaba family since Suijin had ordered him to do most of the research. With that in mind, it made sense why he was so unwilling to just go with Gerald’s whims.

“Naturally, I only agreed so that he’d leave for now. Regardless, we need to be careful when we make our next move. Things should go fine as long as Gerald doesn’t find out about what we’ve done. Speaking of which, I want all of you to lay low in the next few days. I have zero doubts that Gerald will be keeping a close eye on us for quite a while, and since he even has the Yamashitas on his side, we really can’t afford to offend him,” muttered Suijin.

Understanding how powerless they were, Ryugu was forced to nod as he replied, “... Understood!”

“Good. Also, I’ll need you to find some time to get Endo and Izumi back. Though they probably won’t be capable of participating in any further assassination missions, they can still serve as mentors for our other assassins. At the very least, it’s better than keeping them locked up in the Futaba manor,” said Suijin, who just wanted to get some rest now.

Clenching his fists at the mention of those two, Ryugu then growled, “... Got it!”

Meanwhile, Suke who had been anxiously waiting for Ryugu’s return in his guest room couldn’t help but fear that the Futabas would find out that he was here.

## Chapter 2200

Upon hearing knocks on his door, Suke immediately opened it. Seeing that it was Ryugu, Suke then tugged him into his room, closing the door behind him before asking, “You’re finally here! So, what did the patriarch say? Just so you know, we can still discuss the benefits! As long as Gerald dies, I won’t even mind taking a third of the benefits! If that isn’t enough, a fifth will do...!”

Suke was rightfully desperate for Gerald's death. After all, he knew that as long as Gerald remained alive, it would be too shameful for him to ever face the other Futabas again.

To Suke's dismay, however, Ryugu simply responded by lighting a cigarette after taking a seat and saying, "Gerald's just left."

"... Huh? Well, why didn't you stop him, then? And why did he come over in the first place?" replied Suke, clearly panicking as he quickly stuck his head out the window.

Instantly pulling him back in, Ryugu immediately scowled in a hushed tone, "What the hell are you doing? If Gerald and his party see you here, we'll be in hot soup!"

"What am I doing? What are you doing?! Gerald was already in the manor! You could've just sent some of your assassins to finish him off, no...?" grumbled Suke, feeling slightly dispirited that they had missed such a prime opportunity to strike! Who knew when they were going to get a chance like this again!

"What the hell do you even know...?" growled Ryugu who didn't want to bother explaining the situation to such an idiot.

"Regardless, tell me how long it'll take for you to finish Gerald off," muttered Suke who couldn't be bothered about the details or benefits anymore. He just wanted Gerald dead!

"Unfortunately, I can't provide a specific answer to that," replied Ryugu as he shook his head while closing the window.

"What?! As if the Hanyus would have trouble taking Gerald down!" scoffed Suke before laughing coldly.

"Oh really? Just so you know, we've already lost two team leaders in our pursuit of killing Gerald...! The only reason we allowed him to walk off is because we can't get rid of him that easily! We need a better plan first! So just shut up and behave already! Have some patience!" growled Ryugu who was already in



a bad mood before Suke further infuriated him.

“Fine, then! If you won’t get rid of him, I’ll just get someone else to do the deed!” scowled the equally short fused Suke as he turned to leave.

Squinting his eyes as he grabbed Suke by his coat, Ryugu then asked, “And where do you think you’re going?”

“I’m leaving the manor of course!” scoffed Suke as he struggled to break free, eventually opting to just slip his coat off instead.

To his dismay, Ryugu then swiftly blocked Suke’s path before saying in a low voice, “Negative. You already knew my family’s secrets, so you’ll have to remain here. Leaving isn’t an option.”

“What?! Am I being confined here?” replied Suke, his expression quickly changing.

“You’re free to assume that,” said Ryugu as his other hand moved to open the door behind him. Upon seeing the two subordinates who had been positioned right outside Suke’s room, Ryugu added, “Both of you. Keep an eye out on Mr. Futaba. If he dares to even leave this room, you have my permission to break his legs!”

“This is a cooperative relationship, Ryugu! What is the meaning of this...?!” exclaimed Suke who was terrified to hear what Ryugu just had to say. After all, while he had initially assumed that this place was going to be his refuge, as it turned out, it wasn’t any less dangerous!

“It’s exactly as I said. Stay here, and I’ll serve you well with good food and drinks. Leave, however... well, you heard what I said,” sneered Ryugu in response.