

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 341 -

Chapter 341

Kingston forced out a smile.

“Stop acting like we are close friends!” Adam wasn’t giving Kingston any respect. “Weren’t the Langfords full of themselves just minutes ago? Come on, show me how arrogant you can be!”

When Kingston heard that, his expression darkened. If it had been someone else who humiliated him today, he would have flipped his lid long ago. However, he just couldn’t afford to offend the man standing in front of him.

“Why aren’t you saying anything? Weren’t you all high and mighty just now? You even had the guts to bully my friend!” Adam pointed at them and hauled them over the coals.

Kingston and Luis dropped their heads, falling into silence.

At the sight of that, the guests were stunned. Who would have expected that there would be a day when Kingston from the Langford family would be chewed out publicly and dared not talk back?

It was indeed shocking.

“What are you waiting for? Kneel down and apologize to my friend now!” Adam shouted.

“This...” Kingston frowned, his expression gloomy

As the direct descendants of the Langfords, how could they possibly get down on their knees for

someone else?

If outsiders knew about it, their reputation would be tarnished.

“Adam, you shouldn’t go too far!” Luis was slightly bent out of shape.

Raising his hand, Adam slapped Luis in the face. “Do you think you can stop me?”

“You” Luis parted his lips. However, before he could say anything, he received another slap

across his cheek.

“I’ll break your legs if you don’t apologize today!” Adam was extremely assertive.

Luis’ eyes blazed murderously as he gritted his teeth. Although he was livid, deep down, he knew that he couldn’t afford to mess with such a powerful man.

“Get on your knees and apologize!” Adam shouted again.

Just as Luis was about to yield to them, a majestic voice floated across the air. “Adam, don’t you think

you are going to the extremes by treating my Langfords like this?”

At the same time, a bearded, burly middle-aged man with an imposing demeanor walked in.

It was the head of the Langford family, Ethan Langford!

“Uncle Ethan!”

“Ethan!”

When Kingston and Luis saw Ethan, their eyes lit up at once. It was as if they had found their savior. They couldn’t afford to offend Adam because they had no real power in their hands.

However, Ethan was different. Not only did he have an official position, but he also possessed great authority, just like Adam. When it came to seniority, even Adam had to show Ethan to show him a certain degree of respect.

With Ethan around, it was hard for Adam to take advantage of the situation.

“Oh, it’s Mr. Ethan I didn’t know you would be here too.” Adam was quite surprised.

“Today is my nephew’s engagement ceremony. As his elder, it’s natural for me to attend,” Ethan replied faintly. “Luckily, I came here in time, or else the Langfords would end up at the mercy of others ”

“Mr Ethan, it was them who threw their weights around. I was just helping you teach them a lesson” Adam faked a smile.

“Hmph! Even if they made a mistake, an outsider like you is in no position to punish them!” Ethan’s gaze was frosty.

“What if I insist on doing so?” Adam arched his brow.

“Well, then we’ll have to see if you have the ability to walk your talk.” Ethan waved his hand.

Right then, two white-haired men appeared behind Ethan. One of them was taller than the other. Just looking at their stance, one could tell they were unfathomably powerful.

Upon seeing them, even Adam couldn’t help but frown.

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It was said that the Langfords had two master-level martial artists working for them. They were an extremely powerful pair and wouldn’t show up normally. It seemed that they had come over

with Ethan today.

Adam rubbed his chin, thinking about how to seek revenge. It wasn’t easy to take the Langfords down with the pair around.

“Hmph, what’s so great about the God of War? He still can’t do anything to the Langfords when Uncle Ethan is here,” Luis muttered inwardly. There were traces of arrogance on his face.

“As expected of Ethan!” Kingston held his head up, having regained his previous confidence.

Although the Spanner family was powerful, the Langfords weren't weak either. Now that Ethan was around, members of the Langford family would become unrelenting.

Adam turned to look at Dustin and asked, "Dustin it seems like they are not going to let me have my way. Shall we force our way through?"

As long as Dustin agreed to it, Adam would launch his attacks straightaway. After all, someone else would deal with the aftermath.

"Since Mr. Ethan is here, forget it, then," Dustin said flatly.

He wasn't afraid of the Langfords, but he didn't want to cause trouble for Adam

"Alright, whatever you say." Adam shrugged.

"Discipline your nephew properly, Mr. Ethan. If this happens again, I won't let the matter slide easily," Dustin threatened firmly before he turned around to leave.

"Stop right there!" Ethan's expression darkened.

"Do you actually think you can just walk away like that after beating up my nephew and humiliating the Langfords? What do you take us as?"

"Exactly! You have to pay back for what you did!" Luis echoed from the side. He was determined to even the score with Dustin.

"Ethan, I'm holding back out of respect for you. You shouldn't go overboard!" Adam's gaze was laced with hostility.

"Adam, this is concerning the reputation of the Langford family. I can't just gloss it over! I can spare his life for your sake, but he has to get down on his knees and apologize to my nephew!" Ethan refused to back down.

Wealthy families cared about their reputations the most. If the Langfords let the matter go today, it would be equivalent to saying that anyone could walk all over them.

"Kneel down and apologize!" Luis looked down his nose at Dustin.

“So what if you have Adam backing you up? I can still trample you underfoot!” Luis mocked him in his heart..

“Kneel before you? Are you worthy of it?” Dustin was indifferent to their demands.

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“Hmph! Don’t assume that you can behave insolently just because you have the Spanner family behind you. The world is larger than you think,” Ethan warned coldly.

With the Langford family’s power, getting rid of a person was simply child’s play to them.

“Ethan, heed my warning. You can’t afford to offend this friend of mine. Don’t get yourself in the soup. If you are on the outs with him for real, it’ll be too late for you to beg for mercy,” Adam

warned them.

“What a joke!” Ethan snorted. “Adam, since when have you learned to boast so shamelessly? In the whole of Stonia, nobody stands a chance against me!”

Those he feared were all thousands of miles away.

“Ethan, are you sure you want to do this?” Adam raised his brows.

“Let me tell you frankly, I’m so going to take this punk down today. You’d better stay out of it!” With a snap of Ethan’s fingers, the skilled fighters of the Langford family drew their swords and surrounded Dustin, ready to fight.

“Ethan is not giving any respect to Adam. It looks like the punk will be doomed today!”

“Even the Emperor won’t be able to save him for disgracing the Langfords!”

“This is the price for offending someone powerful in Stonia”

The guests couldn’t help but sigh when they saw the scene. Dustin’s forces were indeed impressive. However, they were nothing in Ethan’s presence.

“Rhys’ Weren’t you acting like you were great earlier? Why aren’t you saying anything now? The Langford family has a long-standing reputation. Even if you have the Emperor backing you today, you will still have to show us respect! If Uncle Ethan orders you to die, you’ll have to do it too!” Luis cackled with arrogance.

In Ethan’s presence, Luis was a cock who crowed upon his own dunghill.

“Oh? Who is asking my son to die?”

Right then, a flat voice came through. It wasn’t loud, but everyone could hear the voice clearly. When they looked over, what hove into their view was a thin, middle-aged man limping in. His looks and clothes were ordinary, and so was his physique. Other than being a little lump and having a little hump on his back, there was nothing special about him. If he were to walk in a crowd, no one would pay any attention to him.

However, it was such an ordinary person who drained the color from Ethan’s face. His gaze was filled with not only shock but also fear.

“H-how could it be? No, this is impossible! He stays in the military encampment all year round. How can he be here?” Ethan was in a fit of panic.

The moment Ethan saw the hunchbacked man, it was as if he had bumped into a ghost. His

fingers couldn’t help trembling as he broke into a cold sweat.

“What’s wrong, Ethan? Do you know this person?” Kingston, who was standing at the side, quickly sensed that something was amiss.

“H-he. He is Rufus Rhys!” Ethan’s voice quavered.

That was a bolt from the blue. When Kingston heard that, his face turned pale at once. “What?! Rufus Rhys?”

Rufus Rhys, the current head of the Rhys family, was someone who had made great contributions to the nation. He was the bravest in the army when he was young and took the lives of eight hundred thousand people during his time.

He had watched over West Lucozia for 20 years and attacked countless barbarians. On top of that, his means of doing things were impartial, and he never infringed on the citizens' rights. His achievements were so great that he possessed the authority to go against anyone.

When he was 30 years old, he was appointed Prince of Theswe and was the second most powerful

person in the nation. His status was on par with that of the Emperor, and that made him a truly terrifying figure.

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Looking at the hunchbacked man, who appeared as if he had zero prestige, Ethan was scared out of his wits. He dared not say anything. This man in front of him was someone noble from Stonia. Even the crowned head would have to show him respect.

Hence, it wasn't exaggerating to say that Rufus could easily take their lives at will.

When Dustin saw him, his expression darkened. There was fury in his eyes.

"It looks like a good show is coming up." Curling up his lips, Adam gloated and immediately retreated to one side.

Under the crowd's gaze, Rufus limped in, looking like someone of ordinary status. Nevertheless, the people in the hall unconsciously made room for him to walk past them.

Finally, he stopped in front of Dustin. "It's been a while. I didn't expect you to have grown this

much."

Staring at Dustin, who was taller than him by half a head, Rufus couldn't help but part his lips and grin. His broken front teeth made him seem a little comical.

"I didn't expect you to be still alive too," Dustin said frostily with a sharp gaze.

Hearing that, Ethan and Kingston were shocked. They wondered who Dustin was for him to speak to Rufus in such a manner.

Rufus laughed. He didn't look like he was angry at all. "Well, it's said that good people die early but not the bad ones. Someone like me, of course, has to live longer.

"Really? But you don't look like someone with a long lifespan," Dustin replied coldly.

"Hey! How can you curse your dad like this?"

"Do I have anything to do with you? Don't think so highly of yourself."

"No matter what you say, it's not going to change the fact that you're my son." Rufus shrugged.

"Hmph! Ten years ago, I paid you back all that I needed to. We have nothing to do with each other anymore!"

Dustin had held a grudge against him for a decade

"It has been ten years, and you're still a stubborn one." Rufus shook his head helplessly.

Deep down, he knew that what happened between them couldn't be solved in a day or two. Nevertheless, he would do his best to make it up to his son.

"Hey, old man!" At that moment, Luis was starting to get impatient. "I have no time to see how affectionate you are with your son. If you don't want to die, buzz off quickly!"

Ethan and Kingston were stunned as Luis spoke. They stood there in a daze, feeling at a loss as to what to do. No one in Stonia ever had the guts to be so presumptuous toward Rufus. They wondered if Luis was out of his mind.

"And who are you?" Rufus spared him a glance.

“I’m Luis, a member of the Langford family.” With his head held high, he continued loudly, “Your son has humiliated us publicly today, and he needs to pay for that! If he isn’t willing to kneel down and make his apology, you’ll have to do it on his behalf!”

“You’re asking me to kneel?” Rufus let out a chuckle, appearing to be harmless.

“That’s right! You’re his father, after all!”

“Do you know who I am? I’m afraid you can’t afford to have me kneeling before you.” The corner of Rufus’ lip curled up into a smirk.

“I don’t care who you are! Even if the Emperor is here today, he will have to get down on his knees and apologize! Otherwise, he’ll have to die!”

As soon as Luis finished saying that, Kingston fainted on the spot.

Meanwhile, Ethan’s face was as pale as death, and his legs were trembling uncontrollably.

“It’s all over now. We’re doomed. Why does the Langford family have such an idiotic fool?” he thought.

“Ethan, your family member is quite a character.” Rufus faked a smile.

“I” Ethan opened his mouth to explain.

However, before he could say anything, Luis butted in, “Hey! Who do you think you are to be calling my uncle without any honorifics?”

“How should I address him, then?”

“Call him Mr. Ethan!”

Rufus laughed and looked at Ethan. “Mr. Ethan, is this the right way?”

The moment Ethan heard that, he fell directly to his knees. “I beg your mercy, Your Highness!”

Upon seeing such a scene, everyone was astonished

After all, that was Ethan, the head of the Langfords. They wondered who could make a big shot. like him kneel on the floor.

“Uncle Ethan, what’s wrong? What are you doing on the floor? Get up quickly!”

Luis immediately stretched out his hand to help Ethan up. However, before Luis could touch him. Ethan smacked him hard in the face. “Fuck! Don’t touch me! I have nothing to do with you! From now on, you are no longer a part of the Langford family!”

“What?” Covering his reddened cheek, Luis was confused “Uncle Ethan, what’s going on? Why are you kicking me out of the family all of a sudden? I’m your nephew!”

“Get lost! I don’t have such a moronic nephew like you!” Ethan sent another slap across Luis’ face. Even if the person who offended Rufus was his biological father, he would have to cut ties with him there and then, let alone his nephew. Sacrificing one person was better than dragging the whole family down.

“What’s going on exactly?” Luis was on the verge of tears

This person standing here is none other than the Prince of Theswe. How dare you act so

disrespectfully in front of him? Even the Emperor won’t be able to save you!” Ethan reprimanded him fiercely.

“What?”

Luis froze and stood there in a daze with disbelief on his face. It had never occurred to him that this ordinary man in front of him would be the dignified Prince of Theswe.

“Wait... If he is the Prince of Theswe, then isn’t Dustin the renowned skilled martial artist, Kirin? Oh, God! What kind of person have I offended?” Luis muttered inwardly.

At the thought of that, Luis’ legs turned to jelly, and he slumped down to the floor. His gaze was filled with despair. Not only did he fight with Kirin over a woman, but he also called the Prince of Theswe an old man.

Was there anyone in the world who would do anything much worse than him?!

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Meanwhile, Florence was frantically rummaging through the drawers and cabinets in the Nicholson Villa to pack up their things.

“Dahlia, quick! Go and get all the jewelry we have in the house! We can’t stay in Swinton anymore. Let’s quickly pack up and flee abroad for the time being. I’ve already bought the flight tickets. We still have several million dollars of savings and some valuables at home. Those will be enough for

us to survive for a while.” Florence was on tenterhooks.

Dahlia’s breach of promise had not only humiliated the Langfords but also offended the Glenstead

Nicholsons. Even if they were in Stonia, Dahlia and the rest wouldn’t be able to find a safe place to

stay, let alone in a small place like Swinton.

When Florence saw that Dahlia wasn’t responding to her, she became even more anxious. “Dahlia! What are you waiting for? Quickly pack your stuff!”

“Mom, the matter has yet to reach that extreme. We don’t need to run away.” Dahlia shook her head.

“Alas, don’t you realize how serious the current situation is?” Florence slapped her forehead in frustration. “It’s the Langfords, the cream of Stonia, that we have fallen out with! They are a terrifying existence. How can they possibly let us go when we have gotten them hot under the collar?”

“I understand what you’re trying to say. But Dustin said that he has a way to solve the problem. I believe in him,” Dahlia replied firmly.

“Are you crazy? How can you put your trust in that loser?” Florence was breathing fire at that point.

“Who does he think he is to go against the Langfords? If it weren’t for him, you wouldn’t have run away from the wedding, and we wouldn’t have come to this point. He’s simply a jinx!”

The Nicholsons could have led a silk-stockings life. However, Dustin ruined everything in the end. Florence just hated him to the core.

Dahlia frowned. “Mom! I breached the marriage promise on my own accord. It has nothing to do with Dustin!”

“You’re still defending him at times like this? Do you have to wait until our family is destroyed in his hands for you to come to your senses?” Florence asked bitterly.

“Enough. I won’t go anywhere without Dustin.” Dahlia was firm.

Bent out of shape, Florence reproached, “Y-you... You’re hopeless!”

“How did I raise her up to be such a foolish daughter? She’d rather be with someone penurious than marry into a rich family. What a stubborn child!” Florence muttered inwardly.

At that moment, James staggered down the stairs with the two large suitcases. “Mom, I’m done packing up our things. When are we leaving?”

“Hmph! Your sister is insisting on waiting for that loser!” Florence flumped onto the couch angrily.

“Sis, why are you waiting for him? Hasn’t he made our lives miserable enough?” James frowned.

“You leave with Mom first. Don’t worry about me.” Dahlia shook her head.

“Leave? Where do you think you are going?” Right then, Dakota burst through the door with several people following behind her. “Are you trying to shrug off all the responsibilities after what you have done?”

“What are you implying?” Dahlia knitted her brows

“It’s natural to be punished for making a mistake. I’ll have to hand you over to the Langfords so that the conflict between the two families can be resolved!” Dakota declared in a stern voice.

“What?” When Florence heard that, her expression changed in an instant. She stood up and put on an apologetic smile. “Dakota, you don’t have to be this ruthless, do you? Aren’t we family?”

“Ruthless?” Dakota snorted humorlessly. “It wasn’t easy to have the chance to be in-laws with the Langfords. However, not only did you not cherish this opportunity, but you also dragged the whole family down! Tell me, who is more ruthless?”

“Dakota, this has nothing to do with my daughter. It was all because of Dustin. If you need someone to blame, go and look for him!” Florence said in a hurry.

“You don’t have to worry about that. Dustin is with the Langfords. Perhaps he has already been skinned alive by now. But Dahlia has yet to make amends for what she did, so she has to come with us!”

As Dakota spoke, she made a gesture. Seconds later several burly bodyguards barged into the house.

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“Take her away!” Dakota pointed her finger at Dahlia

“Let’s see who has the guts to do that!”

All of a sudden, a loud and stern voice came through the door.

Then, Dustin strutted in with Maximus. “Don’t blame me for being merciless if you dare challenge

me today!”

“Dustin?” Dahlia brightened up.

At the sight of him, she finally felt relieved. He had promised her that he would come back safely.

Indeed, it wasn’t a lie.

“You. You’re still alive?” Dakota’s eyes widened in disbelief.

She clearly saw him surrounded by the Langfords before she left the banquet hall earlier. “How could he escape from that?” Dakota thought.

“Do you want me to die so badly? No matter what, I am still your mom’s life savior. Don’t you have any sense of gratitude toward me?” Dustin replied flatly.

“Hmph! Stop playing dumb! I don’t care how you escaped! You have offended the Langford family, and now you’re going to suffer because of that!” Dakota shot daggers at him.

“So what if I offended the Langfords? I have my ways of dealing with them.”

“You have your ways?” Dakota snorted. “Like what? A mere doctor like you is simply courting death by going against the Langfords.

“Don’t look down upon people. Not only can I resolve the current problem, but I can also get Luis to come here and apologize in person.”

“Apologize?” Hearing that, Dakota was stunned for a moment before she burst into laughter. “Dustin, are you in your right mind? Who do you think you are to ask Mr. Langford to apologize?”

“You’re only good at bragging. I seriously don’t understand why my daughter will take a fancy to you,” Florence said disdainfully.

Luis was a wealthy aristocrat from Stonia. He could easily get Swinton squashed if he said so. It was already considered extremely lucky to have one’s life spared after offending him. Asking a big shot like him to make an apology was simply wishful thinking.

“Well, what if I really do get Luis to apologize?” Dustin asked in a provoking manner.

“If you can do that, I will change my last name!” Dakota sneered.

As soon as she finished speaking, countless luxury cars roared and pulled up outside the Nicholson Villa. Within seconds, the villa was surrounded from all sides. Luis and his men hurriedly got out of the car.

When Dakota saw that, she couldn't help but laugh and gloat. "Rhys, you're dead meat! The Langford family is here to get you!"

"This is bad! Dustin, hurry up and leave!" Dahlia's expression also changed at the sight.

The other party was nowhere near friendly.

"It's all over now. We should've left just now, but you kept insisting on waiting for Dustin. Look, the Langfords have arrived. Now we can't leave even if we want to!" Florence's face fell.

"Alas! Why are we so unlucky?" James uttered mournfully.

Just as everyone thought that a great misfortune was impending over them, Luis walked up to Dahlia and directly fell to his knees without hesitation.

"Ms. Nicholson, I was too ignorant. Everything was my fault. I'm sorry. Please forgive me!" As Luis spoke, he repeatedly knocked his head to the floor as he bowed.

That was completely unexpected. Everyone at the scene was dumbfounded. They wondered why Luis, a powerful figure, would kneel down and apologize to Dahlia.

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"We beg for your forgiveness, Ms. Nicholson!"

The rest of the Langfords followed suit and kneeled down on the floor.

At the sight of that, Dahlia was stunned, and so was Dakota. Even Florence, who had been whining

until a moment ago, stood there in a trance.

They thought the Langfords were here to seek revenge. However, it had never occurred to the Nicholsons that the Langfords would behave so humbly all of a sudden.

“Ms. Nicholson, I’m sorry. I thought too highly of myself. Please forgive me!”

When Luis saw that Dahlia wasn’t making any responses, he began to slap his face like he was crazy, even though his cheeks were already red and swollen. Despite the pain, he dared not stop.

Half an hour ago, after finding out Dustin’s true identity at the banquet hall, Luis was frightened out of his wits. He thought he was doomed. Ethan even wanted to kick him out of the Langford family and cut ties with him.

However, to everyone’s surprise, Dustin was willing to let Luis off the hook on the premise that Luis had to ask for Dahlia’s forgiveness.

Luis was, of course, happy with what Dustin said. Hence, he immediately rushed over to the Nicholson Villa to apologize to Dahlia. As long as his life could be spared, he didn’t mind swallowing his pride.

“What is going on?” Dahlia raised her brows, at a loss as to what to do.

A while ago, Luis was still acting all high and mighty, having control over her life, and now he was kneeling before her. She found it hard to comprehend such a drastic change in character.

“Am I seeing this wrongly?” Florence kept rubbing her eyes in disbelief, wondering if that was still the powerful aristocrat.

When Dakota finally came to her senses, she immediately reached out her hands to help Luis up. What are you doing, Mr. Luis? Get up quickly! They aren’t worthy of having you kneel down to them.”

“Out of my sight!”

However, instead of letting her touch him, Luis slapped Dakota in the face so hard that she almost fell.

If Dakota hadn’t asked him to marry Dahlia, then he wouldn’t have offended Dustin.

“Mr. Luis, why did you hit me?” Dakota asked aggrievedly as she cupped her cheek.

Shut up, or I’ll rip out your tongue!”

After shooting a fierce glare at Dakota, Luis continued to apologize to Dahlia. It was a complete change of attitude.

Dakota bit the bullet and asked, “What happened exactly, Mr. Luis? Why don’t you get up first?”

“It’s okay. I’ll continue kneeling. It’s better this way.” He then said to Dahlia, “Ms. Nicholson, I’m

extremely remorseful for what I have done. Please give me a chance. I promise I’ll never show up in front of you again. If you’re still angry, I can cut off my finger to prove my sincerity!” As he spoke, he took out a knife and cut his finger off directly.

“Huh?” Dahlia was startled.

She did not expect Luis to cut his finger for real and be so cruel to himself.

“If it’s not enough, I’ll cut off another one!”

Clenching his teeth, Luis endured the severe pain and cut another of his fingers.

With beads of sweat forming on his forehead, he asked, “Ms. Nicholson, has your anger dissipated?”

“If it hasn’t, I can continue cutting them.”

“Enough... It’s enough.”

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Dahlia shook her head fervently with a bewildered expression. “Mr. Langford, we’d be more than thankful if you didn’t find any faults with us. We would never dare blame you for anything!”

“Exactly! Please get up, Mr. Langford. Look at you! You’re bleeding so much! I’ll go get you a Band- Aid!” Florence quickly went into the bedroom to get the first-aid kit.

“A Band-Aid?” Luis could not believe his ears. He’d severed two of his fingers, for goodness sake! What use did he have for Band-Aids?

“Why don’t you go to the hospital, Mr. Langford? Your bleeding doesn’t seem to be stopping,” Dahlia suggested cautiously.

“Have you forgiven me, Ms. Nicholson?” Luis asked expectantly.

“I guess so. As long as you don’t come and bother me anymore, you’re forgiven.” Dahlia nodded.

“No problem at all! I’ll make myself scarce now and never bother you again!” Luis was elated. He nodded at both Dustin and Dahlia as a sign of apology before he made a run for it with his men in

tow.

“Hey, Mr. Langford! Your Band-Aid!” Florence raised the bandage in her hand and waved it around, but Luis did not even turn back at all. If anything, he picked up his speed.

“Dahlia Nicholson, just you wait! I’m not done with you yet!” Dakota saw that the situation wasn’t favorable for her, so she escaped too. What happened today was nothing but peculiar. Why did the great Mr. Langford apologize to Dahlia? And he even got down on his knees! How unbelievable. How absurd! She had to thoroughly investigate what exactly was the reason behind all this. “Say, Dahlia, what exactly came over Luis Langford? Has he gone cuckoo?” When everyone had left, Florence couldn’t hold back her curiosity. From how she saw it, the only plausible reasoning behind everything was that Luis had lost his mind. Why else would he apologize to them? He even went to such lengths as to amputate himself! Which person in their sane mind would do something like that?

“I have no idea either.” Dahlia shook her head. Then, her gaze swiftly fell on Dustin. “Did you do something?”

“Truth be told, I did nothing. It was Luis himself who offended a big shot, so he had to atone for his actions today.” Dustin shrugged.

“Is that so?” Dahlia had her doubts. Dustin had told her before that if she faced any sort of difficulty, he would be able to straighten things out for her. And now he really did clear things out for her. She refused to believe that

there wasn't anything fishy going on behind the scenes. "Alright, alright, I'll admit, I'm acquainted with an influential person." Seeing that he could not hide things any further, Dustin decided to come clean.

"Do you remember the man I had dinner with the other night? He's the scion of the prestigious Spanner family. Both his power and his status greatly exceed those of Luis Langford. He was the one who helped me out."

Mr. Spanner?" Dahlia immediately recalled Adam Spanner.

"How do you know such a prominent person?" She asked dubiously.

"I helped him before, so I guess he's just repaying me a favor." Dustin chuckled.

Adam had been a sickly kid who had constantly been bullied, so Dustin would stand up against those rich and arrogant youths of Stonia for him and often taught them a lesson for messing with Adam. Because of that, Dustin even earned himself the nickname "vile demon".

"I never would have guessed that you'd be affiliated with such an important person. How did I not know this before?" Dahlia asked, curious.

"These are old-time stories. No point bringing them up." Dustin shook his head.

"Alright then. I will not probe too much into your past. But in the future, please do not act rashly," Dahlia warned in all earnestness. "It's not every day you get favors from people like him. If you bother him too often, Mr. Spanner won't want to help you all the time. You have to rely on yourself.

"You don't have to worry. I know what I'm doing." Dustin smiled.

As they spoke, a hunched, middle-aged man with gray hair knocked on the door and made his way in. It was none other than Rufus Rhys, the King of Theswe!

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“Wha-” Dustin’s smile immediately dropped from his face the moment he saw who it was that came in through the door His smile was replaced by hostility “Who let you in? Get out!”

“Don’t be mistaken, I’m just here to see my daughter-in-law This has nothing to do with you” Rufus chuckled merrily as he hobbled in through the door

“Do you do you know each other?” Dahlia looked from one to the other, perplexed.

“You’re Dahlia, aren’t you? As expected, what a beauty! Rufus beamed brightly “Oh, right, I haven’t introduced myself. I’m Dustin’s father, your father-in-law

“Dustin’s father?” Dahlia was taken aback by the piece of information Though there wasn’t exactly anything special about Dustin, he had exceptionally good looks He was a fine specimen of a man if anything However, this old man before her was the farthest thing from handsome The two were vastly different in the looks department

“What? We don’t look alike?” Rufus chuckled nonchalantly This lad looks like his mom, so it makes sense that we look nothing like each other If he looked like me, I guess he’d never find himself such a beautiful wife like you ”

‘Don’t say that, Mi Rhys You carry an air of prowess about you Dahlia felt a little awkward that he saw through her doubt so easily

“Rufus Rhys’ You saw the person you were here to meet Now, would you please leave? You’re not welcome here” Dustin exclaimed out of nowhere

“Hey, watch it! That’s rude” Dahlia shot Dustin a glare. Then, she swiftly turned around and smiled apologetically at Rufus ‘Mr Rhys, Dustin’s just in a foul mood today Don’t mind him. Please, have a seat I’ll go make you a cup of tea

“Great Rufus grinned

“Hmph’ Another freeloader” Florence looked Rufus up and down as she studied him haughtily. She could tell from his attire that he wasn’t a wealthy person Sure enough, the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree The slacker’s father was a bum too

"This must be my in-law Unfortunately, I haven't got much for you. As this is our first meeting, all I've got for you is this little gift. Please don't mind it Rufus produced a box from his pocket and handed it to her

Florence was awe-struck when she opened up the box to take a quick look inside. A sapphire the size of an egg was laid inside the box. It was so clear and exquisite. "This thing. It isn't a fake -stone, is it?"

Florence strongly doubted that it was a genuine gemstone. It was rare enough to come by a regular sapphire the size of one's fingernail. But this one was the size of an egg! It was shocking, to say the least.

"No way. This is a family heirloom" Rufus laughed

"An heirloom? That's great!" Florence immediately broke out into a wide smile when she heard that. She reckoned that he was a fool to give her something so precious. A sapphire of that size

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Chapter 349

"Lunch is ready!" Florence had quickly whipped up a lavish meal, and every dish looked.

sumptuous.

Dustin had been prepared to make an excuse and slip away but was stopped by Dahlia. In the end, he had no choice but to stay for the meal with Rufus. It was the first time the father and son pair had had a meal together at the same table.

As they ate, Rufus' eyes gradually welled up with tears. It felt like it'd been a lifetime for him, but the day finally came when he could sit down and have a meal with his son.

He had yet to receive his son's forgiveness, but what he had now was good enough. He was already very satisfied. Of course, many people out there would never believe that the ruthless and formidable Prince of Theswe would get teary-eyed over a meal.

Once he had his fill, Rufus tactfully took his leave. He knew that if he stayed on any longer, his son would most likely lose his temper.

Rufus left the Nicholson Villa with a spring in his step.

"How did things go, Sir?" When he got into the car, Albert, who sat in the passenger seat, asked inquisitively.

“Hahaha! I had a meal with my son today!” Rufus laughed heartily. Anyone could see that he was pleased

The driver found it strange that he’d be so glad because of a meal. “So you had a meal with your son, what’s the big deal? Does it really warrant such joy from you? You’re the Prince of Theswe! Where’d your dignity go?” He thought to himself.

“Congratulations, Sir! That’s one step closer to success!” Albert smiled. He was the only one who knew how much it meant to Rufus to have a meal with his son. Even winning ten cities was nowhere near as important as that.

“We’re indeed off to a good start, but knowing that rascal, it’ll be difficult to make much progress.” At the thought of that, Rufus was once again troubled.

“Take it slow, Sir. I believe that one day, Mr. Logan will find it in him to forgive you,” Albert consoled him.

“I sure hope so...” Rufus sighed before he continued “Oh before I forget, is my daughter-in-law related to the Nicholson family of Glenstead?”

“Yes, according to my investigations, she is from the prestigious Nicholson family of Glenstead. -Albert nodded.

“Very well, give that fella-what’s his name? Reggie?”

“Regulus Nicholson.”

“Ah, right, give Regulus a call. Have him take good care of my daughter-in-law, but make sure that he isn’t exposed. I wouldn’t want to frighten her,” Rufus said after some consideration. Gaining his son’s forgiveness would be a challenge, but he could get his daughter-in-law on his side first. That would make things much easier for him.

“Rest assured, Sir. I know what to do.” Albert nodded.

“Great. Let’s go visit the Drunken Maniac at Peaceful Medical Center. It’s been a long time. You old

buddies should catch up.”

Back at the Nicholson Villa, Dustin watched emotionlessly as Rufus’ car drove off. He knew perfectly well that what happened back then had nothing to do

with Rufus, but he still could not forgive him. He was but a mere mortal. He wasn't above his emotions.

All his life, he had known that kindness should be repaid with kindness and that revenge must be sought for any wrongs. He would willingly go against the world for his family and loved ones. It was different for Rufus, however. As a person of status, his priority was always what benefited him, and his gains and losses. Outsiders might think that Rufus did nothing wrong, but to Dustin, his one mistake was that he did absolutely nothing at all.

"Why are you spacing out?" Dahlia picked up a cup of hot tea and walked over to Dustin to pass it to him.

"Nothing." Dustin smiled and took a sip of tea.

"Didn't you tell me that both your parents had passed away? Who was this father of yours today?" Dahlia found things puzzling.

"He's as good as dead to me," Dustin stated calmly.

"I guess there must be some sort of major conflict going on between you. Can I ask what it is about?" Dahlia tried to make sense of the situation

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Chapter 350

Dahlia was genuinely curious about Dustin's past. After getting to know him better these days, she found that he was indeed a mystery.

"It's a long story." Dustin shook his head.

"Alright, I'll be here whenever you feel like talking about it." Dahlia gave him a warm smile.

"Sure." Dustin nodded.

"It's getting colder these days. Let's go to the mall to get some new clothes for winter," Dahlia suggested.

“Sure, we can get some new clothes, but I’ll have you know, I’m broke!” Dustin shrugged.

“Ugh! What a miser!” Dahlia rolled her eyes. “I’ll pay for everything today. Will that do?”

“Why, thank you, Ms. Nicholson!” Without another word, Dustin hurried off to bring the car over. It’s been three years since they got married, but they rarely went out shopping together.

The moment they left, Florence immediately took out the sapphire and had a good look at it. “Oh, my precious honeybunch of a sapphire! What luck I’m in to day!”

The more she studied it, the more she loved it.

“Aunt Florence, what are you looking at?” Right then, Julie walked in.

“Julie! You’ve come at just the right time! Come have a look at this!” Florence showed off the sapphire to Julie and handed it to her.

“A sapphire?” When Julie had a good look at it, her voice raised a pitch and she sounded so excited. “Aunt Florence, where did you get such an enormous sapphire? It must be worth a fortune!”

“Haha! You might not believe this, but it was Dustin’s father who gave this to me.” Florence beamed proudly.

“What? Dustin’s father?” Julie was shocked and could not believe her ears. “Aunt Florence, didn’t you say that Dustin’s as broke as can be? How can his father afford to give you something so precious?”

“I find it strange too.” Florence rubbed her chin. “I was wondering if Dustin secretly came from a wealthy family. Maybe he’s just kept a low profile all this while so we never noticed.”

“Him? The son of a wealthy family? Does he look like one?” Julie wondered out loud.

“If he isn’t, then how can his father afford to give me such a huge sapphire just like that?” Florence continued to expound on the situation.

“Aunt Florence, let’s put that aside for now. The matter of utmost importance now is whether you’ve found someone to verify if the sapphire’s genuine?” Julie piped up.

“But it’s so pretty! It can’t be a fake gem, can it? Besides, Dustin’s father said this is a family heirloom!” Florence refused to believe that the gem could be a fake.

“Aunt Florence, how can you believe everything he says? You’re too gullible! For safety’s sake, it’s best if you get it appraised! You never know if it’s a sham!” Julie instigated.

“You’re right.” Florence nodded. “But where should I get it appraised?”

“Don’t you worry, Aunt Florence. I know just the right person to get it appraised. Just let me have the sapphire for a while, and we’ll soon have our answer,” Julie affirmed confidently.

“Alright, then. I’ll be waiting.” Florence did not doubt Julie even for a moment, and passed the sapphire along with the box it came with to her.

Half an hour later, in the gemological laboratory.

“What? This is a genuine sapphire worth billions? You—you’re not mistaken, are you?” Julie was dumbfounded when she heard the results.

“We’ve run multiple tests on it. It can’t be wrong. In fact, this is an extremely rare variety of sapphire. If it were to be auctioned, the starting bid would be one billion, at the very least,” the expert appraiser told her.

“Great! This is just great! We’ve struck gold this time!” Julie burst out laughing. A sapphire worth billions! How did they run into such luck?

Just then, Julie’s phone rang. She answered the call. It was Florence.

“Hello, Julie. How did the appraisal go? Is it a genuine sapphire?”

“O—of course it’s... It’s a fake one!” An idea came to Julie. She feigned disappointment. “Aunt Florence, you’ve been

deceived by Dustin and his father! I just had the sapphire appraised. They confirmed that it's just a synthetic gemstone. It'll just cost you maybe 20 or 30 dollars to get your hands on one. It's trash. I've thrown it away!"

"What? It's synthetic? Those darned loafers! How dare they trick me! I'll make them pay!" She let out a curse and cut the call.