

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 661 -

Chapter 661

“How do you plan to deal with this, Mr. Harmon?” Dustin asked.

“Since the Dark Lord is drawing near, I’ll have to make arrangements in advance. Just to be prepared, I’ll spare no expense to hire skilled martial artists to guard the house,” Hector declared in all seriousness.

Not only was the Dark Lord exceptionally skilled in martial art, but he was also accomplished in the mystic arts. The Harmon family’s shadow guards alone were no match for him, so he would need to hire backup. Not only will this strengthen their forces, but it would also minimize potential losses for the Harmons.

“Mr. Harmon, the Dark Lord will not act alone. He has many disciples, and each one of them possesses remarkable skills. You will have to consider that too,” Dustin reminded.

“Yes, I’ll take note of that. The Harmon family will be under strict security measures for the next few days to prevent any unwanted visitors.” Hector nodded.

“Dad, I remember Grandfather saying that we have a trump card. What is it?” Natasha asked out of the blue.

“It’s a person,” Hector replied, his voice lowered.

“A person? Who is it?” Natasha’s curiosity was piqued.

“There are five ultimate grandmasters in Balerno-Paul Hill, Zachary Graves, Ronald Reeds, Clarence Lawson, and Michael Robinson. The person I’m talking about is none other than one of the five ultimate grandmasters, Michael Robinson!”

Hector’s words shocked both Natasha and Dustin.

“The grandmaster Michael Robinson?” Natasha’s eyes widened in extreme astonishment.

The five ultimate grandmasters of Balerno were formidable figures with reputations that extended across the entire nation! They were like towering mountains, magnificent and awe-inspiring, yet seemingly out of reach. When faced with grandmasters, the presence of regular people and low-level martial artists was no different from those of ants. There was even a widely circulated saying that everyone below the level of a grandmaster was like ants, and this went to show the immense power of a grandmaster.

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that any one of the five ultimate grandmasters alone could easily wipe out the entire Harmon family. So, when Natasha heard her father say that their trump card was Michael Robinson, her first reaction was shock, followed by doubt.

"Dad, you're not joking, are you? How do we have a connection with Michael Robinson?" Natasha asked, both surprised and skeptical.

"The Harmon family has had its time of glory. What's the surprise in us having connections with some big shots?" Hector calmly sipped on his tea.

"Dad, what does he look like? Does he look imposing?" Natasha began to gossip.

"I'm not entirely sure how he looks. I haven't met him in person, either. Your grandfather's the only one who knows. Your grandfather helped him ten years ago, so he owes us a favor," Hector

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explained

"The favor of a grandmaster martial artist is priceless! With Michael Robinson backing us up, dealing with the Dark Lord would be a piece of cake!" Natasha looked overjoyed. "Dad, why haven't you used this valuable trump card earlier? We wouldn't have to worry so much then."

Over the years, the Harmons had been oppressed by the Dark Lord. Every year, several bizarre deaths would happen in the family, wreaking havoc and instilling fear in their hearts. The Harmons would have long since fallen if they had not been so strong and resilient.

“I, too, would like to get rid of the Dark Lord once and for all, but your grandfather had given me strict instructions that unless the safety of the entire Harmon family is at stake, I am not to use the favor.” Hector shook his head.

The Harmons could only ask for Michael’s help once. It only made sense that they should not waste the opportunity on trivial matters. Besides, the Dark Lord had always been cautious, acting in the dark and never showing his face to anyone. Even someone as powerful as Michael would find it arduous to catch him. For a cat to catch the mouse, the mouse had to first come out of hiding...

“Dad, the Dark Lord could barge through our doors at any moment now! Are we still not going to use it?” Natasha insisted. She was impressed by her father’s resilience.

“There’s no rush. I have my plans,” Hector said calmly before adding, “When the time comes, all it takes is a signal from our end, and Michael will be here in no time.”

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“Alright, you’re the leader of the family. It’s your decision ” Natasha didn’t voice much of her

opinion. It was true that they shouldn’t play their trump card, Michael Robinson, so easily. The best outcome would be to resolve the crisis and eliminate the Dark Lord of their own means so that not only will they still be in possession of their trump card, but it would also boost the entire family’s morale.

“Mr. Harmon, I’m curious. What grudge the Dark Lord holds against the Harmon family?” Dustin suddenly questioned.

“Well...” Hector seemed to hesitate for a moment.

“Mr. Harmon, I asked because I’m curious. If you don’t feel like telling me, don’t stress about it.” Dustin smiled. He knew better than to probe if it involved any of the family’s secrets.

“Dad, there’s no harm in spilling the truth. Dustin isn’t an outsider,” Natasha coaxed. She, too, didn’t know much about the grievances between her family and the Dark Lord.

“Alright then, if you must know, I’ll tell you.” After some contemplation, Hector began. “The reason behind the resentment between us Harmons and the Dark Lord is simple. It’s all because of riches. “Back in the days, the Harmon ancestors used to be royalty, and we had our period of glory. Back then, our ancestors amassed a huge amount of treasure, and to put things simply, we were immensely wealthy. But as time passed, things happened, and there was a change of monarchies. In order to safeguard the treasure, our ancestors buried them in a safe place and drew out a map pointing to the exact location where the treasure was buried. As a precaution, the treasure map was split into three parts. They were to be kept by the three sons of the Harmon family.

“The original plan had been to use the treasure to aid the Harmon family in regaining their former glory when the time came. But beyond everyone’s expectation, the three sons eventually turned on each other and disappeared with their part of the map. From then on, the Harmon family split into three branches and made their way in the world independent of one another.

“After centuries of ups and downs, the three lineages of the Harmon family eventually reached different outcomes. Some grew stronger, while others declined. And the maps were passed on from one generation to the next. It wasn’t until a decade ago, when Stonia went through some changes which brought about the great earthquake in Dragonmarsh, that something happened. The strongest branch of the Harmon family mysteriously just disappeared overnight! And the two remaining branches were implicated in varying degrees too. We were one of them.

“Fortunately for us, we pulled through it and made it out stronger than before. The other branch, however, did not fare so well and eventually perished.” At the mention of that, Hector stopped abruptly and sighed lightly.

“Dad, I’ve seen the history on the genealogical register, but what has the Dark Lord got to do with this?” Natasha asked.

“All these years, the Dark Lord has had many chances to kill me, but he has always held back. Do you know why?” Hector countered.

“Was it because of the treasure map?” Natasha quickly understood.

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“That’s right.” Hector nodded. “Who wouldn’t want to get their hands on immeasurable riches? The Dark Lord is no different. The only reason he hasn’t killed me is because he hasn’t got the map. All this time, he’d been pressuring me in every way imaginable in order to make me give up the map.

“Hang on...” Dustin suddenly asked curiously, “Mr. Harmon, surely this matter about the treasure map is a secret known by only Harmons?”

“Of course.” Hector nodded yet again.

“Well, if this is a Harmon family secret, how would the Dark Lord know about it?” Dustin could not contain his concern.

“Seems like you’ve noticed.” Hector sighed before continuing, “Out of the three lineages of Harmons, one has mysteriously disappeared, one has perished, and we are the last one standing. As for the Dark Lord, he is the sole survivor of the lineage that had perished!”

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“The sole survivor?” Dustin and Natasha exchanged a look of surprise. It was truly astonishing to them that the Dark Lord was also a Harmon! And not only that, but one from the same ancestry! No wonder he knew so many of their secrets.

“The three branches stemmed from the same ancestry, but due to the Dark Lord’s selfishness, he went so far as to harm his kinsmen. How inhumane!” Natasha slammed her hand on the table out of frustration. She was even more irked after learning about the truth. She could have been more understanding if their current predicament had been caused by some deep grudge between both parties, but to think it was all because of a treasure map? The Dark Lord actually assassinated members of the Harmon family for so many years, all for a mere map? He was extremely deranged! “Men’s greed is endless. The temptation of the treasure is immense, and the Dark Lord will never back off till he gets his hands on them,” Hector said.

“One of the three branches has already disappeared, which means that a part of the map is missing. Even if the Dark Lord manages to obtain our part of the map through all his vile schemes, what use has he of it? Isn’t it pointless?” Natasha asked coldly. The Dark Lord would not be able to find the treasure with an incomplete map. From how Natasha saw it, he was only caught up in his wishful thinking.

“The Dark Lord has been blinded by greed. He has long since lost all sense of rationality. When you become the next leader of the family, I’ll personally hand our part of the map to you. When the time comes, you must protect it to the best of your ability,” Hector said solemnly.

“No, you hold on to your position as the patriarch. I’m not interested in it.” Natasha waved her hands dismissively. The treasure map was no doubt troublesome. If she were to take over, she could only begin to imagine the problem she’d have to deal with.

“Alright, we’ll discuss this in the future. I don’t want to force you into anything, either. The most pressing matter at hand is to defeat the Dark Lord Hector continued after a pause, “For the next three days, just stay put in the Harmon estate. Don’t go running around lest we get singled out. I’ll hire some skilled martial artists to back us up. If the Dark Lord shows up, he’ll be walking straight into our trap.”

“No matter the price, we must get ahold of the Dark Lord this time round to put an end to things!” Natasha narrowed her eyes, a cold glint flashing in them.

The Dark Lord had placed huge pressure on the Harmon family and needed to be dealt with as soon as possible. However, the problem was that he hid himself too well and never revealed his identity. Now that the chance finally presented itself, the Harmons were definitely not going to let it pass without taking action.

“Mr. Harmon...” Just then, Jack entered after knocking on the door.

“What is it?” Hector looked up at him.

“Someone has requested to meet you, sir. They claim to be disciples of the Invincible Guardians.”

“The Invincible Guardians?” Hector was pleasantly surprised. “They’re here so soon? Quick, show

them in.”

“Yes, sir, Jack said and swiftly left.

“Dad, who are the Invincible Guardians? Why have I never heard of them?” Natasha asked, curious, “The Invincible Guardians is a huge guild in Glenstead. However, they prefer to keep a low profile, and since you’re not a part of the martial world, it’s only natural that you’ve never heard of them before,” Hector explained.

“Did you invite them here?” Natasha probed.

“Yes, I have some connections with the guild master of the Invincible Guardians. After I learned about the Dark Lord’s intentions last night, I immediately contacted him. Never expected them to be here so soon, though,” Hector chuckled.

The Invincible Guardians were well-known in the martial world. Though they were few in number, every one of their members was a genius of exceptional talent. With their help, Hector felt the Harmons would stand a greater chance of going against the Dark Lord.

“Mr. Harmon, they are here.” As they were conversing, Jack returned with three people behind him. Two young women and a young man, all wearing white attire with a long sword on each of their backs. Their gazes were sharp, and they carried themselves with extraordinary demeanor.

“Caelus Amos, senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians, at your service, Mr. Harmon!” The young -man in white greeted Hector the moment he came in through the door.

However, when his gaze fell on Natasha, his eyes lit up.

“What a beauty! She’s incredibly beautiful!” he thought.

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As expected of the number one bombshell on the Beauty Ranking!

“Maria Dunham, second disciple of the Invisible Guardians, at your service, Mr. Harmon!”

“Ivy Dennis, third disciple of the Invisible Guardians, at your service, Mr. Harmon!”

The two girls in white also introduced themselves.

“Alright, alright. You’ve all come at the right time. Come have some tea.” Hector smiled gently, motioning for Jack to serve the tea and pastries.

“Mr. Harmon, we heard you’re in trouble, so we’re here on our master’s orders to lend a hand. If you need anything, just let us know. We promise to help you handle it with ease!” Caelus said confidently.

“The three of you must be exhausted from such a long journey. Please get some rest first. We can discuss this tomorrow. Oh, by the way, why haven’t I seen your master?” Hector asked, changing the subject.

Just three disciples from the Invincible Guardians were obviously not enough. It was best if a few elders or even the leader stepped in..

“Don’t worry, Mr. Harmon. My master and his colleague will be here in two days,” Caelus replied. “Great.” Hector secretly let out a breath he had been holding.

“Actually, something small like this doesn’t even require my master and his colleague to step in. No matter what it is, I can slay it with just one slash!” Caelus shrugged, and a longsword immediately appeared on his back. He grabbed it with one hand, gripped the hilt, and slashed down on a chair about ten feet away.

The sword glinted, and the wooden chair split into several pieces.

“Amazing swordsmanship, Caelus!” Maria and Ivy said in unison, gasping in shock. The external manifestation of true energy was a sign of a divine-level martial artist. To be able to cast such a quick and fierce aura in his early thirties was truly no small feat.

“Mr. Harmon, what do you think of my sword?” Caelus smiled slightly with a hint of pride. As he spoke, he even snuck a glance at Natasha as if to say, “Did you see how cool I was?”

“Not bad. You have accomplished a lot at a young age, surpassing your peers. You even outdo your master when he was your age,” Hector said, nodding with a smile.

“Heh, so long as I’m here, nothing will dare come close to the Harmon family,” Caelus boasted. As the most senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians and the future successor to the leader role, he was the cream of the crop among the youths in Glenstead in terms of both talent and skills.

“With the Invincible Guardians here, I definitely feel more at ease.” Hector smiled:

“Mr. Harmon, actually, there’s another reason I came today,” Caelus said, moving to a different topic.

“Oh? What is it?” Hector’s smile didn’t waver.

“I heard that you have two daughters as beautiful as the flowers blooming outside, Mr. Harmon, and they are yet to be married. Thus, I wanted to ask for your daughter’s hand in marriage!” Caelus didn’t beat around the bush.

The moment those words left his mouth, Hector and the two others were stunned. They had invited the Invincible Guardians to go against the Dark Lord, so how did the topic turn to marriage?

“Caelus, I think it’s too sudden to be talking about marriage, considering how we just met,” Hector said.

“You and my master are old friends. We should be strengthening our ties. If that means marriage, I would be open to it.” Caelus laughed.

“Caelus, is this your idea or your master’s?” Hector asked.

“My master will fully support my decision. So long as you give your nod of approval, Mr. Hector, this is a done deal,” Caelus said, brimming with confidence.

“Well...” Hector hesitated.

“What’s the matter? Could it be that you look down on me, Mr. Harmon? You don’t think I’m worthy of becoming your son-in-law?” Caelus narrowed his

gaze. With his status, he more than deserved to marry the daughter of a wealthy family.

Not to mention, if he simply gave the word, countless excellent girls would come looking for him. "It's not like that at all, Caelus. It's just rather sudden. I'd have to ask my daughters' opinions," Hector said, trying to avoid giving an answer.

"There's no need for such trouble. I'll ask her myself." Caelus turned around, his eyes blazing, and said, "Ms. Natasha, I've heard so much about you. The moment I saw you today, my heart fell for you. Will you marry me?"

Natasha was first caught off guard. Then, she coldly spat out, "Get lost!"

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Chapter 665

"Get lost!" Natasha's answer was simple and direct.

The smile on Caelus' face froze. He had never thought she wouldn't even try to spare his feelings. After all, he was the senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians and a universally acknowledged martial arts genius. No matter where he went, people kissed the ground he walked on, and no one dared look down on him.

But today, of all days, when he tried to ask for someone's hand in marriage, all he received in response was a simple "Get lost!" His reputation was going down the drain.

"Natasha, don't be rude!" Hector chastised. He then said regretfully, "Caelus, my daughter impulsively spoke out of turn. Please don't take it to heart."

Caelus was the senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians, after all. He had to show him some form of respect.

"Mr. Harmon, I consider myself a handsome and exceptionally talented man. I don't think it's a tall order to become your son-in-law. Now, I'm sincerely proposing to your daughter, and this is the attitude I get in return?" Caelus frowned slightly.

“This is a misunderstanding, Caelus. Actually, my daughter is already betrothed. All I can say is that you two are not destined to be,” Hector explained, shaking his head.

“Betrothed? To whom?” Caelus was taken aback.

“To this young man next to me, Dustin.” Hector gestured toward him.

In an instant, everyone’s eyes were drawn to Dustin.

Dustin’s mouth twitched. The only choice he had was to go along with it. At this point, no matter whether it was real or not, he couldn’t expose the bluff.

“Dustin?” Caelus narrowed his eyes slightly. The moment he stepped through the door, he noticed this man. At first, he simply thought Dustin was an ordinary disciple of the Harmon family. Never in a million years did he think the man was Nathasha’s fiancé.

Caelus peered at him closely. Besides being somewhat good-looking, there was nothing outstanding about him. He dressed ordinarily and gave off an aura of ordinariness. He seemed to be the farthest thing from a powerful martial artist, and he didn’t have the energy that young talent should have.

His entire being screamed average.

“Mr. Harmon, I don’t understand. In what way is this guy worthy of your daughter?” Caelus said, not hiding the disdain on his face. How could a mediocre young man like Dustin be put on par with the senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians?

“Dustin is talented in both medicine and martial arts. And he’s way better than you. Why wouldn’t he be worthy?” Natasha piped up suddenly.

There was always going to be that arrogant bastard who liked to look down on others.

“Talented in both medicine and martial arts?” Caelus snorted coldly. “Fine. Since he’s so

impressive, why don’t we have a duel?”

“How do you want to compete?” Dustin said indifferently.

“It’s simple. Let’s follow the example of our ancestors and have a martial arts battle. The winner will get Natasha’s hand in marriage!” Caelus raised his head slightly.

Dustin said nothing, instead turning to look at Natasha. Although he was certain he could win, he didn’t agree with treating women as objects to be won, so he had some concerns.

“What, are you scared? If you are, then just forfeit,” Caelus said with a cold laugh.

“Isn’t it just a fight? Fine, we agree!” Natasha replied.

At that moment, Hector suddenly slammed his hand on the table and shouted, “This is ridiculous! The enemy hasn’t appeared yet, but we’re already starting to tear each other apart. This is unacceptable!”

“Dad, that bastard”

“Enough!” Hector raised a hand, interrupting Natasha. Sternly, he said, “Do not bring up the martial arts battle again. If you youngsters are brimming with energy, you can go outside and run a few laps!”

It was one thing to bicker, but if a fight broke out, things would get complicated. One side was the young man that he had his eyes on, while the other was the Invincible Guardians. No matter who won, it would be unfavorable to the Harmons.

Before the big enemy appeared, any internal conflict would just be an opportunity for the Dark Lord to take advantage of.

“Caelus, you must be exhausted from the long journey. Go get some rest. We can talk about it later,

Hector said lightly.

“Yes.” Seeing that Hector was upset, Caelus couldn’t refuse. After all, Hector was on good terms with his master. He had to show him respect, at the very least.

“Jack, please take our three guests to the guest wing and show them the Harmons’ hospitality,” Hector instructed.

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“Please follow me.” Jack bowed and escorted them out.

“You got lucky today, punk. However, you won’t be this lucky next time.” Caelus shot Dustin a cold glare before leaving with the two young women.

“Dad, why do I feel like you’ve invited wolves into our house?” Natasha said meaningfully.

“These are special circumstances. Let’s put the interests of the whole above anything else. Now, we need the power of the Invincible Guardians, so let’s not turn them against us,” Hector reminded them.

“If he doesn’t get on my nerves, there won’t be a problem.” Natasha arched an eyebrow.

“You...” Hector shook his head helplessly. “Enough You two should head out. I still have things to attend to.”

The two nodded. They quickly said their goodbyes without saying much.

After leaving the study, Natasha specially arranged a luxurious guest suite for Dustin, complete with a hot bath.

To put it nicely, a private bodyguard would get special perks.

Dustin wanted to turn it down at first, but he couldn’t stand the pleading and pestering, so he decided to stay for now. His main concern was Natasha’s safety.

The Dark Lord could attack at any time. Considering his treacherous tricks, he could easily take out several people at once. If he didn’t stay by Natasha’s side protecting her and something ended up happening to her, he’d regret it for the rest of his life.

Dustin practically lived in the Harmons’ home for the next few days. In his spare time, he gave martial arts training to Abigail or went flower viewing with Natasha. Occasionally, he’d call Nelson to ask about the results of the investigation.

Something to rejoice about was that Nelson had already identified the culprit—a resident doctor at the hospital. After committing the murders, the resident fled

to escape punishment. The Flame Dragon Gang and the Charging Tiger Gang were pursuing him.

Capturing the culprit was only a matter of time. Once they caught him, it would be clear who the mastermind was.

Three days later, on New Year's Eve, large, fluffy snowflakes descended from the sky, covering the ground in a layer of white.

Houses everywhere were brightly lit to welcome the new year, except the Harmons' home. The Harmon estate was heavily guarded, with outposts everywhere. In order to catch the Dark Lord, Hector had gone all out and invited a large number of martial arts experts to protect their home. Among them were several notable figures.

The Harmons' armed forces had strengthened greatly. However, it came with a downside, the entire courtyard was a mix of good and bad people

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