It was Vince York's first time facing such dire pressure in his entire life.

There was no one to protect him. For the next five minutes, he only had himself to rely on.

Bang bang bang!

Right when Vince was hesitating whether to climb out from the sewer or not, a barrage of gunshots could be heard.

The cement board in the sewer violently shook before it cracked ...

Vince laid low while showing a horrible look on his face. He had never needed to hide in such a disgusting place before!

This was his biggest humiliation!

Vince frowned while gritting his teeth. He was confused. Why would the sniper even do such a useless thing?

Vince was sitting in a blind spot. The sniper knew where he was, but there was no way Vince could be shot for the time being.

Typically speaking, the cement board was his life raft. He could use it to block the next attack...

Vince's face darkened instantly. He realized that the cement board was starting to sway after being shaken by a barrage of gunshots.

"Not good!"

The cement board slammed down, nearly smashing Vince hiding under the sewer.

"B*stard!"

Vince had no choice but to expose himself. He could only scream while he rolled back out.

Right when he showed himself, a sense of dread could be felt deep in his bones.

His sixth sense was constantly telling him that he was in danger!

Bang bang bang!

Another barrage of bullets was flying right toward Vince.

Vince rolled on the ground, barely evading the bullets. It was a horrible sight.

If it were not for the explosives planted underground that had weakened him...

With his strength as a God of War, he would have easily dodged the bullets and pursued the sniper.

It was a shame that things happened this way. It was useless thinking about it at this point.

Vince had no choice but to survive and wait for reinforcements to arrive.

Bang!

The moment Vince dodged behind a cracked marble pillar, a flaming bullet flew right toward him.

Vince closed his eyes, thinking that he was dead before a hint of fragrance wafted in the air.

A woman in a white robe showed up in front of Vince while her sword quivered, glimmering vigorously around the place.

A bullet fell to the ground after a loud sound was heard.

The woman remained still with a straight face.

The place was utterly destroyed, but the moment she showed up, it had turned into the most beautiful scenery.

The woman was none other than the Maiden of the Five Virtues Temple, Teal Leithold herself.

Even Vince, who was showing a wretched look on his face, felt a burning passion in his eyes. This was the woman he had constantly been thinking about but could never ask for...

"Maiden..."

When Teal looked at the top of an old water tower not far away from her, she did not say a word.

A few women in green robes appeared out of nowhere before swiftly running toward the tower.

On the water tower around five hundred yards away from the abandoned villa, a person with a leopard mask quickly escaped after seeing Teal vigilantly guarding Vince.

At Hong Kong's Maria Hospital.

Lexie York, who got here as quickly as she could, gritted her teeth while patiently waiting for Vince York to be done with his operation.

"Damnit! That damn half-blood dares to go against Vince?!

"I'll kill her!

"I'll kill her!!!"

Lexie thought Vince would get his way and fool the fourth princess, killing Jason Leo in the process.

But she did not expect that the so-called collaboration was just a death trap set up by the enemy.

A few dozen of Vince's trusted subordinates were already dead. Even Vince was on death's door himself.

If it were not for the Five Virtues Temple, everything Vince had worked for would collapse instantly.

Other than a sense of dread, Lexie was filled with immense fear.

"Those b*stards, Harvey York and Queenie York... If it weren't for them using someone else to do their dirty work, the fourth princess wouldn't have risked it either!

"Those b*stards need to die!

"Come! Get me my troops! I want Harvey to pay with his blood!"

While Lexie was giving out her command...

The door of the operating room opened.

"Don't be reckless, Auntie. I'm fine."

Vince, who was sitting in a wheelchair, was pushed by a few of his subordinates.

"We can't do anything to Harvey or Queenie at this point," said Vince, forcing out a smile.

"We both know that they're the ones behind all this...

"But, we don't have any proof.

"Don't forget. Harvey's now Lord York's most important guest, and Queenie is the executive CEO of the Loxus Consortium.

"Both are core people of the Yorks of Hong Kong. Their identities are immense.

"If we go at them without any solid proof, we'll end up like Julian York and get our bones broken."

Vince barely escaped death, but the anesthetics he had gotten during his operation completely cleared his head.

At the same time, a sullen look was showing on his face.

"What do you mean we have no proof?!"

Lexie was showing a cold expression while gritting her teeth.

"That b*stard, Harvey, was the one who told Jason to kill you so he could survive in Mordu Casino-Palace! "You're telling me that this isn't enough to be the proof?!

"The fourth princess called to work together with you, but what happened? It's all just a setup to kill you off!

"These two b*stards almost got you killed! Even if my position as the lady of Dragon Palace gets robbed from me, I'll chase them till the ends of the earth!"

Vince weakly shook his head.

"Now's not a good time to tell you this, but I'm going to tell you anyway...

"We need patience to achieve great things...

"Many people know about what happened in Mordu Casino-Palace, but we don't have any footage of what happened at that time. Witnesses there have no use for us.

"If Harvey just denies everything he said, what can we even do? We'll get nowhere with this!

"He could even say that he was just kidding with Jason and that he was the one who bought the joke. We can't do anything about that either...

"As for what happened before, the fourth princess did ask to work with us. She even told us the entire place and asked to see us at the villa. Maybe she's there waiting for us right now.

"That's why. Even if we know now that it's all just a setup, we won't be able to find any proof if we take the initiative.

"If we cause more trouble right now, we'll only be forced further

back.

"This is humiliating enough for me. Let's just not make a bigger mess than it already is..."

A resentful look was showing on Vince York's face after he said those words.

Did he want to just forget what happened to him?!

No!

But he had no other choice!

If he took action without any solid proof, reason would side with the enemies!

He was a seasoned man. He would not be that reckless to do such a thing.

Lexie York felt speechless. Her heart was filled with rage. She would not allow this incident to slide that easily.

But, if she were to cause trouble to Harvey York and the fourth princess like Vince aforementioned, she would be making a big mess for no reason.

Rhyme and reason would not be on her side.

The enemies might even use the opportunity to make accusations.

If that were to happen, Lexie and Vince would end up suffering significant losses.

Lexie managed to calm herself down a little bit at this point.

"Are we just going to let this go?

"You almost got killed!"

Vince let out a sigh as he pondered over the situation.

"This might not be bad for us either, Auntie. We have people all around the hospital."

"I'll just keep lying here and pretend to be an injured civilian.

"On one hand, we'll be able to confuse our enemies, making them put their guard down.

"On the other hand, we'll be able to play the victim card.

"Grandma York herself will surely eat it all up, right?

"If we send her three different notices of critical condition in a single day, she won't be able to sit still. I'm sure of it.

"Our enemies will get ahold of us if we take action, but if Grandma York herself were to do the things we'd do, then it'd be devastating for them!

"We'll take advantage of the situation!

"As for the Mordu Casino-Palace, Jason Leo, the fourth princess, and the incident with the abandoned villa, we'll give up all of our sources and stop looking for more information. We'll pretend like we're done pursuing the incident.

"At the same time, we must insist that the fourth princess has nothing to do with the abandoned villa.

"Enemy forces were trying to ruin Grandma York's birthday, so I went there to stop them, almost giving up my own life in the process!

"Other than letting people know that I'm always concerned about Grandma York, we'd be able to pull Lord York away from Grandma York!

"We'll let her know that only her beloved grandson is the only one who would take care of her!

"Only then will my position as the lord of the family be solidified!

"She'll realize that Fourth Uncle and his family are totally unreliable!"

Vince took a deep breath.

He had no chance to take revenge for his near-death experience.

At this point, his best plan would be to take advantage of the situation and maximize his interests.

He would have died of his own unbridled rage if he did not even do such a thing.

Only with this would Vince feel like he had the upper hand.

After seeing Vince calm down and make all those arrangements, Lexie's rage finally dissipated.

"You really are the chosen one, Vince.

"I didn't think you'd remain this calm given such circumstances.

"There's no way Queenie York even has a chance to win against you.

"Don't be mistaken. Queenie's just a tool for Lord York," replied Vince calmly.

Vince suddenly remembered something else after that.

"Right, Auntie. I want you to send an extravagant gift to the Five Virtues Temple for me."

Vince York's eyes lit up. Even at this moment, a burning passion could be felt inside him.

"Other than that, we'll let go of all those things we've been pressing about the Five Virtues Temple. We'll return a huge favor to them.

"Tell them that they have my thanks for saving my life.

"And the Five Virtues Temple will remain South Light's sacred martial art training ground for as long as I live!

"Nobody would be able to challenge their authority!"

Lexie York frowned. She secretly gave out a sigh after realizing what Vince was planning to do.

"Don't worry, Vince.

"The Five Virtues Temple has always been your loyal shield.

"I'll make them your biggest support, even if I have to beg for that eunuch to show up."

Lexie tenderly looked at the man, as if he was her own child while showing a hint of hesitation.

"But remember this. No matter what, don't be unrealistic.

"You can toy with the other girls in the Five Virtues Temple if

you want...

"But, don't get any strange ideas about the Maiden.

"The Five Virtues Temple did everything in their power to raise her. They see her as their own child.

"She is destined to become the next successor.

"If you go for her, you'll be going for the Five Virtues Temple.

"The grandmaster will kill you if she knows about this.

"Not only will we lose our greatest ally that way, but we'll also get another enemy on our backs."

Lexie was showing a cautious look on her face. She was heartbroken, but she had to snap Vince out of it no matter what.

Vince sighed.

"I understand, Auntie. Don't worry.

"I only have respect toward the Maiden. Nothing else..."

"It's best if you stay this way. It'll be devastating to all of us if this isn't the case...

"The Maiden can be your sword, shield, support, and pawn if you wish...

"But, she can never be your woman. This is the line we shall never cross."

Vince remained quiet.

Lexie showed a warm smile after seeing Vince's look on his face.

"Don't worry. If you solidify your position and attain more power, you'll have all the women you want in the entire world!

"You can find any woman of equal rank! If you want beautiful women, you can also have that!"

"I have connections with the Bauer family just recently. Their princess seems to be a pretty decent match for you.

"It's perfectly fine if you don't like her anyway."

Lexie was showing a playful look on her face.

"I heard that the Big Boss has a daughter as well. That said, she never showed up in public at all.

"After all, men and women should get married once they're of age...

"Maybe you'll get a chance when the Big Boss invites the five hidden families to participate in the national ceremony..."

Vince gasped.

"A marriage with the Big Boss' family?

"But he's ...

"Many people have the same idea.

"After all, the person would become the consort of the country if the marriage succeeds.

"The status of that identity alone is immense.

"The Yorks of Hong Kong is at the bottom of the five hidden families. Do we really have a chance?"

"If we were ranked too high, we wouldn't have a chance," replied Lexie calmly.

"After all, balance is what the Big Boss needs right now.

"He'll have a pretty hard time if a family were to become way too powerful..."

After pondering Lexie York's words, Vince York calmly replied, "Auntie, let's not talk about things too far ahead.

"We'll first deal with the problem at hand.

"If I don't rise and become the new lord of the Yorks...

"I'll have no chance of becoming a consort.

"For now, we need to disseminate all the information that needs to be spread."

Lexie took a deep breath. She seemed to have understood what Vince meant then.

The best thing they could do then was to seize the opportunity and make arrangements before the banquet.

It did not matter if Grandma York were to get angry or sad. As long as Vince could rise to power, everything else was inconsequential.

While Vince and Lexie were planning after a close shave...

Harvey York was attentively listening to Edwin Mendoza's report.

"The fourth princess did take action, Sir York.

"She even dispatched many of her spies in Hong Kong and Las Vegas and exposed many of her connections.

"My sister's getting her people to investigate the situation.

"We'll know every single person conspiring with The Empire soon enough."

Edwin was impressed.

Even though the Chief Instructor did not take action himself, he could still change the situation in his favor.

The footage and a few pictures were enough to upset Walsh, the city thousands of miles away, making many secrets come to light in the process.

No matter what would happen next, the forces of The Empire representing the fourth princess were destined to fight against Vince till the bitter end.

Vince had suffered quite a huge blow as well.

Not only were the people around him hurt, but his prestige, power, and status were also crushed.

Simply put, Harvey's plan was an impressive display of his strength.

"It's a shame that Vince is still alive."

Harvey's expression did not change too much at that moment.

"But this is normal anyway. He's a new God of War, after all. Even though he only got this far by choking on drugs, he's a man that's been to war before. He won't die that easily.

"This Young Lord York is quite surprising, though. He didn't even send anyone after me or the fourth princess after all that's transpired.

"His patience is impressive..."

Edwin instinctively replied, "Perhaps he wouldn't dare."

Harvey smiled while shaking his head.

"There's no chance a man like that got scared off.

"But I'm guessing after his close shave with Death, he must've calmed himself down.

"Since he isn't going to take his revenge publicly, he'll definitely use the opportunity to take advantage of the situation...

"He might even play the victim card, ruining all of our well-laid plans in the process for him to rise more smoothly."

Edwin wanted to say something when his phone violently shook.

After picking up the call, his facial expression instantly darkened.

"You were right, Sir York.

"Vince's men sent word just now.

"They said that the enemy forces trying to ruin Grandma York's birthday banquet were gathered inside the abandoned villa.

"After knowing this, Vince took the enemies head-on and suffered serious injuries.

"A critical notice has already been issued from the hospital.

"It's said that Grandma York couldn't even swallow her own food after hearing about the news."

Harvey York squinted indifferently, without showing too much emotion.

"I heard that Grandma York herself used to be quite the killer during her prime," said Harvey, with a faint smile.

"Many people were after her, but they were all piled up into a mountain of corpses...

"Did that really happen?

"At this point, it's all old news. The previous lord of the Yorks had issued a gag order many years ago. That's why all we have are rumors. Nobody knows if it's the real deal.

"That said, Grandma York is quite the formidable woman.

"If Vince York manages to force her out by playing victim, Queenie York would have to deal with a lot of pressure."

Harvey chuckled.

"That's nothing to be scared about. We're not the ones trying to ruin her banquet anyway. We're upstanding citizens here.

"Don't forget, Leslie Clarke still owes me my Good Citizen Award!

"But if Grandma York's going to take action, we might have to lend a hand to the fourth princess...

"I'll have a pretty big headache if she doesn't manage to hold her own against that old lady..."

Harvey then showed a warm smile before segueing to a different subject.

"So, what's going on with our dear Young Master Leo? Is he begging for mercy yet?

"I'm still waiting for him to conquer lands for his fourth princess here."

"Sir York, I locked him in an air-conditioned room for forty-eight hours as you ordered," replied Edwin Mendoza.

"He gets his coffee that smells like sh*t every hour and a cold bucket of water every two hours to clear his head.

"The air-cons are also turned up all the way.

"It's hard to imagine that a high and mighty God of War looks that miserable now...

"It won't be long before he pisses his pants."

"Good."

Harvey calmly smiled.

"I have to admit, this trick used by the government of Hong Kong against corrupt officials is pretty effective.

"Even a man that stubborn is about to give in.

"Soon enough, he'll listen to every single word I say..."

Harvey was the one who wanted to deal with Jason Leo this way.

After all, he knew there was no point in torturing a God of War's

body. If that were the case, it would only make Jason more rebellious.

Only by using means like this, Jason's self-proclaimed indestructible will could be crushed.

"Come. Let's take a look at how Young Master Leo's doing."

Harvey stood up and wiped his hand with some tissues.

"Get me some nice food while you're at it."

Edwin nodded lightly before he went off.

Ten minutes later, in an air-conditioned room under the Mordu Casino-Palace.

A long table with various delicacies was placed in the middle of the room.

The fragrant smell of all sorts of tea wafted in the air, enough to make anyone drool.

In front of the table was a man completely chained to a special steel chair while his body was dripping wet.

He was trembling uncontrollably, his mouth completely parched, and his expression utterly miserable. His aura of a God of War was already long gone.

The arrogant attitude on him was also completely dissipated.

He could not help but shudder after seeing the coffee placed in front of him.

Under such extreme cold and lack of food and drinks, he could not help but quench his thirst with the coffee.

A sharp pain could be felt in his throat while his stomach was burning.

His desire to eat or drink something was endless...