

Chapter 1751-1753

Chuckling in response, Xanry then smiled before saying, "Before that, I'd like to head to the washroom first!"

"Sure thing!" replied Gerald with a nod. While he knew that Xanry was trying to escape, Gerald didn't feel the need to expose him.

Whatever the case was, Xanry then got up and quickly left for the washroom.

Now that he had finally managed to escape from Gerald's evil grasp, there was no way in hell that he was going to dare offend Gerald anymore.

Soon enough, the classmate party ended smoothly and Gerald drove home together with Juno...

The second they stepped into her house, Juno instantly smiled as she turned to look at Gerald before saying, "You've teased Xanry so much today, Gerald!"

Laughing heartily in response, Gerald then replied, "He's at fault for offending me in the first place! I certainly couldn't just let him off after he did that, could I? Besides, you're happy that I teased him too, no?"

Upon hearing that, Juno nodded before delightedly saying, "Of course I'm happy! That guy's been pestering me since my university days, you know? At long last, someone humiliated him!"

Since Gerald had humiliated him so much, she was sure that Xanry wouldn't pester her ever again. That was one troublesome person done with...

At that moment, a tiny creak was heard...

Turning to face the door that had opened, the duo watched as Ray slowly walked out...

Upon seeing them, he then quickly jogged toward them while saying, "Mr. Crawford! Miss Zorn! You're back!"

"We are, but why are you still up, Ray?" asked Juno.

"I... I've been waiting for you to return! Old Flint sent you something!" explained Ray.

"What? He did? What did he send over?" asked Gerald curiously.

Upon hearing that, Ray re-entered his room before returning with a box and handing it to Gerald.

"It's this unopened box with a letter attached to it! I'm guessing that Old Flint wrote the letter!" explained Ray.

Hearing that, Gerald then took the box and quickly opened it... only to reveal a perfume bag inside that constantly emitted a faint, pleasant smell...

"...That smells so wonderful! I wonder why Old Flint sent you a perfume bag of all things..." muttered Ray.

While the gift was a pleasant surprise to both Ray and Juno, they quickly realized that Gerald was instead, frowning. Did the perfume bag symbolize something...?

Not even bothering to reply to Ray's statement, Gerald then quickly began reading through Old Flint's letter... and by the time he was done, his frown was much, much deeper than before.

Seeing how furrowed Gerald's brows now were, Ray—who had never seen Gerald show such an expression before—couldn't help but ask in a concerned tone, "What's wrong, Mr. Crawford? What happened? Your expression looks so unpleasant!"

"Indeed! What did Old Flint say, Gerald?" asked Juno.

"...First of all, this perfume bag... It's called ghost-luring perfume, and as its name suggests, it's used to lure ghosts. Moving on to the letter, Old Flint apparently wants to head to a place called Grimhelm to investigate some secrets regarding vampires. Though he's asking me if I'm willing to go with him, since he sent me this perfume bag, I'm sure he means business. After all, I told him to only send this particular kind of perfume bag over if major issues came up!"

After hearing Gerald's explanation, both of them finally got the whole story. As it turned out, the perfume bag really did symbolize something.

"...Still... couldn't the 'major issue' be a good affair?" asked Ray.

Shaking his head, Gerald then replied, "Unfortunately, I've heard tales of Grimhelm before as well. It's an extremely vicious place, so the fact that he's gone there must mean that he's bumped into some trouble."

Gerald also knew that Old Flint was wise enough not to send such a perfume bag over under normal circumstances. He would've only posted it when he was in urgent need of help...

"...I see! Then... When are we leaving?"

"We leave at nine tomorrow morning!" declared Gerald, knowing how urgent the situation was.

Following that, he turned to face Ray and Juno before instructing, "Ray, Juno, go wake Nori up and detail her on all this. Once that's done, start packing up. I'll be needing you three to follow me there!"

With how serious the matter was, Gerald needed all the help he could get. After all, with every additional person they had, the more power their party would possess.

Hearing that, Juno then replied, “Got it!”

Ray had no objections either, so the duo quickly parted ways with Gerald.

After that, all four of them quickly began packing up and readying themselves for the trip tomorrow morning...

While Gerald finished packing relatively early, he naturally had a restless night...

By early morning, all four of them were already up, and after cleaning themselves and having their breakfast, the party of four then set off.

With Ray being the driver, the party then drove all the way to the highway entrance—which took about half an hour—near the sea. According to the meeting time in the letter, Old Flint should be waiting for them there by then...

True enough, upon arriving at the highway entrance, all four of them saw an old person wearing a black windbreaker—as well as a black hat—sitting by the roadside, a sandalwood scepter in hand. It wasn’t hard to discern that that was none other than Old Flint. With that, Gerald then told Ray to stop the car next to him.

The second the car stopped, Gerald stepped out before respectfully greeting, “Old Flint!”

Nodding slightly with a grunt, the old man then got into the shotgun seat with Gerald’s help.

With that done, Gerald then told Ray that he would be driving next.

It wasn't as though Ray had bad driving skills or anything, but the fact remained that only Gerald and Old Flint knew where their destination was. With that in mind, it would be better that Gerald drove rather than having to point out the directions to Ray throughout the entire journey.

Before leaving, Gerald made sure to ask, "Is there anyone else joining us, Old Flint?"

Shaking his head slightly, Old Flint then leaned against his seat, not saying a word...

Since he had a pair of sunglasses on, nobody truly knew whether his eyes were open or closed.

Regardless, seeing that he wasn't going to get a reply, Gerald then stepped on the accelerator, driving straight into the highway...

"It'll be about ten hours before we get to our destination. The three of you can get some rest if you want to. After all, we woke up pretty early!" suggested Gerald.

Hearing that, all three of them nodded. After all, there was not much else to do on the highway unless they came across any rest areas. With that, it wasn't long before all three of Gerald's companions dozed off...

When that happened, there was complete silence in the car. After all, Gerald was driving attentively whereas Old Flint remained as silent as ever.

Though such a situation would surely be tiresome for regular people—since a ten-hour drive was rather long—, it was a rather easy affair for Gerald. He wasn't tired in the least...

It was at around eleven that night when Gerald and the others finally arrived at the Emerald Realm. The

vampires' territory was an old forest located on an ancient mountain there, and since ancient times, few had ventured into the forest to meet them...

Fortunately for the party, there were still some operating hotels and inns in the vicinity. With that in mind, the group of five could finally settle down and get some proper rest...

After booking some rooms, he allowed everyone to head to their respective rooms to get some well-deserved sleep. After all, they needed to be fully rested before officially entering vampire territory early the next morning...

By dawn, all of them checked out early and immediately began driving toward the old forest in the mountains...

After about forty minutes of driving, the car finally came to a halt at the foot of the mountain. Since the car couldn't be driven any further, they had no other choice but to continue forward on foot.

Once they got their luggage, they began their journey up the mountain...

As they were walking, Ray couldn't help but declare, "...I'm not sure about the rest of you, but the air here is amazingly fresh! It feels rather nice to be away from the hustle and bustle of the city!"

The others knew what he meant. After all, the environment here was definitely fresher compared to the city's. Aside from the crisp air, they were also surrounded by the rejuvenating aura of the plants around them...

Regardless, after walking for about half an hour, the five of them eventually arrived at a village.

The village itself was built by the local vampires, and since they lived in such seclusion, their customs were naturally different.

With that in mind, the second the surrounding vampires noticed Gerald and his party's presence, they instantly stopped whatever they were doing. As all the vampires stood up and stared vigilantly at the group, a man wearing a leather jacket walked up to Gerald, glaring at the youth as he asked, "Who are you people?"

Naturally stopping in their tracks, Gerald then smiled subtly as he replied, "Greetings! We're merchants!"

"Hah! A merchant, you say? Look, I've seen tons of people like you, so cut the act already! Tell me, are you here for the treasure in the forest?" sneered the man.

Frowning slightly upon hearing that, Gerald couldn't help but think that the vampires were a bit more difficult to deal with than he had initially anticipated.

After a slight pause, he then ordered, "Ray, bring the food out!"

Upon hearing that, Ray immediately took all the food out of his backpack before handing some to Gerald.

Taking the food, Gerald then handed them to the leather-coated man before saying, "We really are merchants! We're here in exchange for some goods and local specialties! If you still don't believe us, come examine our wares!"

Of course, Gerald was saying this to avoid the man from further being suspicious of them.

After hearing Gerald's words and seeing the food, the man lowered his guard slightly before taking the food that Gerald had handed out to him.

Even as the leather-coated man was still inspecting the food, the other vampires were already rushing toward Gerald and his group.

While Gerald and the others quickly became the most welcome people in the village, it also caused their food supply to rapidly diminish as the villagers readily traded in gold for the wares.

Naturally, this made Ray, Nori, and Juno slightly worried. After all, if they had no food left, what were they going to eat when they ventured deeper into the old forest?

At that moment, a gruff voice could be heard shouting, “Step aside!”

Following that, everyone watched as a fat man fumbled forward with a few shabbily-dressed subordinates following behind him.

“Oho! Outsiders, hmm? What good things have you brought over?” Looking at the large-bellied man—who was staring at Gerald and his group—, Gerald already knew that he was trouble. More accurately, he felt that the fat man was a bandit and a plain bully in the village.

While Gerald wasn’t too keen on getting into contact with him or his subordinates, he still put on a smile as he replied, “It’s just some food, but all of it has already been exchanged and taken by the villagers!”

Hearing that, the big-bellied man then raised his head before declaring, “Listen here! I’m called Fane and I’m the boss of this village! Since you’ve come to my village, you should hand us something as a welcome gift! Otherwise, it’ll be hard for me to allow you to stay here!”

Upon hearing that, Gerald instantly knew that Fane was merely a gangster trying to blackmail them for money. While the threats would surely fool the more gullible people, Gerald was experienced with people like Fane. With that in mind, he wasn’t about to allow Fane to take advantage of them.

Regardless, before Gerald could even reply, Fane—who had his gaze fixed on Juno and Nori for a while

now—revealed a sinister smile before saying, “Oho, those two beauties at the back look rather nice!”

Hearing that, Gerald instantly stepped in between him and the two girls before staring straight in the eye at Fane while saying, “Sir, we’re merchants who are here to do business! Now that we’ve sold all our goods, we should leave!”

Just as he signaled for Juno and Nori to begin leaving, Gerald heard as Fane angrily shouted, “Stop right there! Did I say you could leave? I told you, if you wish to leave, you have to leave something behind! Otherwise, don’t even dream of getting out of the village!”

When he heard that, Gerald’s expression instantly soured. Looking at Fane—who was glaring all high and mightily at him—Gerald was pretty sure that the fat man wasn’t about to take him seriously anytime soon.

With that in mind, Gerald could only think, ‘How absolutely shameless... To think that he so badly wants to stand against me! Well, that’s just great! I won’t hesitate to deal with you too, then! Daring to even have ulterior motives against me... You truly are courting death!’

“Then, what exactly do you wish for me to leave behind?” asked Gerald in a casual tone.

Laughing out loud, Fane then declared, “You can either hand over all your money or leave those two women behind!” scoffed Fane as he snorted while looking lustfully at Juno and Nori.

“And if I’m reluctant to do either?” replied Gerald.

“You mother*cker! Are you playing dumb now? If you want to be this defiant, I’ll just order my men to ruin you!” growled Fane.

Before Fane could say anything else, however, he quickly found himself flying backward!

Naturally, this was because Gerald had made a move.

Not only was Fane vulgar toward him, but he even had such ulterior motives on Juno and Nori! The combination of the two was definitely enough to warrant being taught a lesson by Gerald.

Regardless, after seeing their boss getting beaten up, Fane's subordinates instantly rushed toward Gerald to avenge him.

Of course, Gerald simply countered their assaults with lightning-fast kicks without the slightest hesitation.

As all of them were promptly taken out in a single hit, Gerald couldn't help but feel that they were all idiots for even daring to look for trouble with him when they were so weak.

Ray and the others, on the other hand, simply watched the scene play out in silence. After all, they knew that nothing bad would happen to them with Gerald there.