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Kai, however, was too preoccupied trying to breathe to even reply. He simply couldn't breathe no matter how much he tried!

Hearing no reply, Gerald simply watched in silence as Kai's death swiftly approached.

Throughout the process, the old man seemed completely unfazed about what was taking place before him. Remaining indifferent, the old man simply opted to have more tea as he read through a few books that were laying around. Kai's subordinate, on the other hand, was so terrified that he was paralyzed in place.

By the time Kai finally died, his hands had been grasping so tightly onto his neck this entire time that they remained frozen there, an agonized expression etched on his face. Till the very moment he died, Kai had failed to realize what had killed him, though none of that mattered anymore.

Either way, now that the boy was dead, the old man tossed his book aside before looking at Gerald with a smile as he said, "As expected, you truly are strong..."

"That was nothing compared to what you're capable of," replied Gerald in a slightly embarrassed tone as he scratched the back of his head. After all, he had previously witnessed the old man summon a flame in his palm out of thin air. Now, that was awe worthy. Before the old man could reply, his nose suddenly twitched as he asked with a frown, "What's that smell..?"

"Smells like... urine...?" muttered Gerald. For people like Gerald and the elder, discerning even the faintest of smells was nothing to them.

"I-I'm sorry...! I couldn't hold it in...!" whimpered the terrified subordinate who was traumatized after watching Kai die so miserably.

Shaking his head, Gerald then waved his hand before saying, "Leave. I won't kill you."

"... R-really...?" asked the subordinate who didn't want to be given false hope.

After watching Gerald nod, the subordinate instantly bolted out of the room! As he ran helter-skelter away from the manor, the subordinate thought about how he needed to leave the country as soon as possible. He needed to find someplace where nobody knew him so that Gerald wouldn't ever be able to track him down...!

Regardless, after the subordinate ran out of his manor, the puzzled old man was prompted to ask, "... Are you really sure you're fine letting him off like this? Aren't you worried that he'll cause you more trouble by revealing what you've done after this?"

Laughing in response, Gerald simply replied, "I only said that I wouldn't be the one to kill him. That doesn't mean he's going to leave this place alive."

Upon hearing that, the old man simply nodded before gesturing at one of the Yamashitas who was standing at the door as he said, "Dispose of him."

Immediately doing as he was told, it was less than ten sounds later when an agonizing scream could be heard Soon after, the man returned. Getting to his knees, the Yamashita member then declared, "He's been dealt with, sir."

"Good. Now get rid of their corpses," replied the old man with a satisfied smile as he pointed at Kai's corpse.

Once the corpse was dragged out and the door to the living room was closed, the old man took a sip of tea before facing Gerald as he asked, "So... That person you killed was the youngest master of the Kanagawa family, correct?"

"He's the one," replied Gerald with a nod.

"I see. You've done a good job deciding to deal with him here. It'll surely eliminate a lot of potential trouble for you," said the old man in an approving tone. "Thank you, though I do have to apologize for causing you trouble," replied Gerald in a slightly embarrassed tone.

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This was pretty much the best place Gerald could think of to safely dispose of Kai. Otherwise, he wouldn't have decided to bring trouble to the old man's doorstep.

"Oh please, this is just a trivial affair. Regardless, if people do come looking for them, I'll just tell them that they left with you shortly after. In other words, I have no idea where those two Kanagawas are," replied the old man with a wink.

"I appreciate it. Speaking of which, though I came here mainly to dispose of Kai, I also have something to discuss," said Gerald with a much more serious tone.

"Go on..." replied the old man with a nod.

"Well... I've found a way to get to Yearning Island," said Gerald after taking a deep breath. Honestly, just talking about it made it difficult to even breathe.

"... Hmm? Then what are you still sitting here for? Hurry and rescue your parents and sister! We can't let Daryl continue to use them to threaten you anymore!" declared the old man with a stern expression.

"To clarify, at the moment, I've only found out where I can get information on how to get to the island. You see, the Seadom tribe has apparently placed everything related to Yearning Island in the ancient ruins in Yanam. Once I get there, I should be able to get the information I need," replied Gerald with a faint smile. Though he had only met this old man a few times, he couldn't help but respect him as an elder. It was a feeling Gerald hadn't experienced in the longest time.

"The ancient ruins in Yanam you say... Can't say I've heard of that place before. Hopefully you'll find it after searching around for a bit. Also, keep in mind that it probably won't be easy to enter," muttered the old man after thinking for a bit.

"I've been there before," replied Gerald with a nod.

"Oh? That's a great start! Was it easy to access?" asked the old man, his expression returning to a relaxed one.

"Well... I did bump into an old man guarding the place, but due to my Herculean Primordial Spirit, he ended up greatly respecting me. In fact, he even said that everything there belonged to me, and that I was free to take whatever I wanted. I had no idea why that was when I first visited that place a few months ago, and quite frankly, I still have no idea why all that happened," replied Gerald with a shrug.

"Now isn't the time to be bothered by that. You should head over quickly to learn how to get to Yearning Island already!" grumbled the old man, sounding much hastier than usual. After all, not only did he want to help Gerald, but he was also curious to find out why Daryl had ended up the way he currently was.

"I'll head off once I've settled the Futaba family's issues. While it's true that I initially only got in touch with them to get in contact with the Seadom tribe, now that I've gotten this involved with them, I can't just leave," replied Gerald as he shook his head.

"And how long do you plan to help them exactly?" asked the old man.

"I'll be off once their current issues are resolved," replied Gerald who really didn't want to leave the Futabas to fend for themselves, especially since they had now pointed him in the right direction. While it was true that he could've eventually learned that the secrets of the Seadom tribe were in the secret ruins in Yanam, by that point, there was a high possibility that he would've been too late to save his parents and sister, and that was a possibility that Gerald didn't want to even think about.

"... I can get my family to help you," suggested the old man after thinking for a while.

"I appreciate it. Then let's go after the Hanyus first. I really can't rest easy knowing that family is still up and about," replied Gerald.

"Negative. Focus on saving your family first. You can deal with the Hanyus once you're done with that," said the old man after giving it some thought.

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Upon hearing that, Gerald momentarily fell silent. While it was true that Amare had told him that his parents and sister were being treated humanely, he was still worried that things could change at any moment.

However, simply leaving to save them felt irresponsible toward the Futabas. After all, the second the Kanagawas and Hanyus learned that he had left, they would surely start harassing the Futabas again, and Gerald was pretty sure that the Fareast Consortium could do little to stop them.

Now that the old man was volunteering to help, however, Gerald couldn't help but feel more assured.

After all, the most mysterious family in Japan was stepping in! Knowing how strong the Yamashitas were, Gerald believed that nobody would be able to touch the Futabas if they were really going to help him.

Seeing how silent Gerald had gotten, the old man was prompted to ask, "So... made your decision?"

Looking at the old man for a while, Gerald then replied, "Are... you really willing to help me...?"

"But of course! In the end, you're still Daryl's grandson, so helping you is only right. Besides, I'm curious to find out why that old man underwent such drastic changes since we last met... Honestly, I still find it hard to believe that he locked your family up!" declared the old man with a smile.

"Well, alright then! I won't be as worried as long as you're involved! While I'm sure you're already going to do this, please do your best to help the Futabas once I'm gone. I'll definitely return to help out once I've rescued my parents and sister!" said Gerald in a determined voice as he slapped his thigh.

"Oh, I won't be involved," replied the old man as he shook his head.

"Come again?" asked Gerald, rightfully puzzled.

Laughing in response, the old man then took a sip of tea before replying, "Allow me to clarify. In return for getting the Yamashitas to guard over the Futabas, I only ask that I be allowed to join you on your quest to save your parents. I believe that my family is more than capable of handling themselves, and you'll get extra help on your journey there too. What's more, though it's been ages since we've last met, I trust that once Daryl meets up with me, he'll be compelled to treat your family better. So? What do you say?"

Frowning slightly, Gerald then said, "But... remember, we still need to head to the ancient ruins in Yanam first in order to locate Yearning Island. What more, I have a feeling that we'll come across quite a few Crawford cultivators along the way..."

"Hmm? Worried that I'll end up burdening you?" asked the old man with a smile.

"Of course not! You're much more powerful than me..." muttered Gerald as he shook his head.

"Then what's the issue? Listen, I advise you to head back and prepare yourself as soon as possible. I'll be getting my family ready to protect the Futabas as well. If everything goes smoothly, then we should leave by dawn. How's that?" asked the old man with a wave of his hand.

"... Fine. Let's go with that," replied Gerald in resignation. Though he had agreed with the plan, Gerald was honestly still worried that the old man would suffer some injuries in the end. After all, though the old man was strong, the Crawford cultivators weren't pushovers either.

Whatever the case was, Gerald then left the Yamashita family's territory before driving straight back to the Futaba manor.

Gerald, for one, wasn't worried about Kai's murder at all. After all, he trusted that the old man would know what to do with the corpses. While it was true that the Kanagawas would surely fly into a rage once they realized that Kai was dead, Gerald was sure that this would also deter them from dealing with the Futabas any time soon.

Either way, by the time he finally arrived at the Futaba manor, the sky was already starting to darken. Come to think of it, Gerald had wasted two entire days just to get rid of Kai.

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Whatever the case was, upon entering the manor, Gerald quickly told everyone to gather in the living room.

Once Takuya and Fujiko were sitting by his sides, Gerald casually said, "...Alright, so... I've killed Kai."

"You've... what?! Gerald, isn't that a bit too rash?! My family's just gotten back on track you know? Once the Kanagawas find out about this, the Futabas will surely be in hot water!" exclaimed Takuya as he leaped to his feet.

"Don't worry, patriarch, I killed him in the Yamashita family's territory. With that said, the Yamashitas will be settling any subsequent issues that arise from Kai's murder," explained Gerald with a wave of his hand.

"I see. Well... that's good then," replied Takuya with a sigh of relief. Thank God Gerald and the Yamashitas were on good terms...

"Speaking of which, I'll also be leaving tomorrow morning to head to the ancient ruins in Yanam. Don't worry, after notifying the Yamashitas about it, they agreed to send some men to guard all of you. With that in mind, you won't need to worry about any trouble from the other families," said Gerald to ensure that Takuya wouldn't get unnecessarily worried.

Naturally, Takuya ended up frowning slightly. After all, it was best if Gerald stayed with them forever.

However, knowing that it was impossible, Takuya simply replied, "That's good! The sooner you leave, the less suffering your parents will face on Yearning Island. We wish you luck, Gerald!"

"Thank you. Well, those were the two things I wanted to talk about. Also, once I've saved them, I'll be sure to return to properly help you deal with the two families," said Gerald with a nod.

"After you've dealt with the Hanyus and Kanagawas, will you remain with my family...?" asked Takuya.

"Unfortunately, I simply can't, " replied Gerald with a subtle smile. While it was impossible for him to remain in Japan, Gerald promised himself that he would visit them from time to time. After all, he had honestly grown fond of the Futabas.

"Will we be coming along?" asked Master Ghost.

"That'd be nice, but I don't mind if you guys wish to remain here either," replied Gerald.

"I'm coming along!" declared Aiden, and though Master Ghost said nothing else, his expression made it evident that he was doing the same.

As all this was happening, Fujiko remained seated silently at the side. While she knew that Gerald would have to leave someday, she hadn't expected it to be this soon. Truth be told, she simply had a feeling that she would never be able to meet him again once he left.

Regardless, after drinking some tea, Gerald, Aiden, and Master Ghost returned to their respective rooms. Once they were gone, Takuya sighed before turning to look at his dazed daughter before asking, "Well you were oddly silent earlier."

"I... I'm just feeling a little tired..." muttered Fujiko as she shook her head.

Before Takuya could say anything else, she simply got to her feet before walking off. Sighing once she left, Takuya couldn't help but say, "This girl..."

Still, as her father, he knew exactly what was going on in her mind. Then again, he was also well aware that Gerald had zero interest in his daughter.

Fast forward to the next morning, Gerald could be seen standing in the living room at the break of dawn.

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Having only a backpack and a cigarette in hand, it wasn't long before Gerald was joined by Master Ghost and Aiden. Taking one final look at the manor, Gerald then sighed before saying, "Let's go."

After getting into the SUV, the three of them were about to head off when all of a sudden, knocking could be heard at the side of the car. Momentarily surprised to see who it was, Gerald then lowered the car's window pulling the cigarette out of his mouth, before asking with a smile, "Is there anything I can do for you, Miss Futaba?"

"I... I'm coming with you!" declared Fujiko, her tone showing just how determined she was to come along.

Naturally surprised to hear that, Gerald simply replied, "While you may be Japan's Queen of Soldiers, I hope you understand that the journey isn't going to be some cakewalk. With that said, I'll have to refuse."

"Since you already know my title, you should be well aware that I'm perfectly capable of lending you a hand!" said Fujiko as she circled the SUV before knocking the door to the shotgun seat.

Unsure what to do, Aiden who was sitting there then opened the door before saying, "Miss Futaba-"

Not even letting Aiden finish his sentence, Fujiko simply yanked him out before getting onto the car and saying, "You sit at the back."

After placing her bag down, Fujiko then added, "I've already thought this through. You've been continuously helping us this entire time. With that in mind, if you just leave like that, then won't I be considered an ungrateful person?"

As Gerald wondered how to even reply, Aiden sighed before sitting by Master Ghost's side at the back while muttering, "Why do I get the bad treatment..."

Ignoring Aiden, Fujiko simply pointed ahead before saying, "Drive."

"Are you really sure that you want to come with us...?" asked Gerald, finding it difficult to reject her kind intentions.

"But of course! I'd never joke about something this serious!" declared Fujiko as she nodded determinedly. "Fine... However, I emphasize that this is going to be a very dangerous mission. In fact, I'm sure there are going to be plenty of opponents that even Aiden can't take down, " replied Gerald after taking in a deep breath.

"Worry not! I definitely won't end up burdening you! If there's anything you need, just say the word and I'll definitely help you!" said Fujiko.

"Where have I heard those words before..." muttered Aiden as he stretched his head to look at her.

"You pretty much said the same thing when you asked to come with me back then," replied Gerald with a faint chuckle.

Upon hearing that and recalling the events in Yanam, Aiden couldn't help but grin as he said, "Just a heads up, but our opponents will most likely be in a completely different league compared to those we usually face during regular missions. Before such opponents, even I have to admit that I'll be a burden at best!"

"I'm aware..." muttered Fujiko who only had Gerald's strength as a referential point. Aside from that, she had no idea just how much stronger their opponents could get.

Seeing that nothing else needed to be said, Gerald then began driving.

It was nearing noon by the time they arrived at the Yamashita family's territory. Upon nearing the front gates, however, Gerald was surprised to see that aside from the familiar Yamashita who had initially greeted him back when he brought Kai over, the old man was also already waiting there for them.

Quickly stopping the car, Gerald then got out before jogging toward the old man while asking, "Sir? How long have you been waiting here?"

Aside from being Daryl's old acquaintance and bearing the status of an elder, the old man had also helped him on numerous occasions. With that in mind, it only made sense for Gerald to respect the old man.