

## Chapter 2485

Otis had always been in love with Lillian. When he saw her in such an embarrassing state, his previous disagreement with Darryl had led him to the conclusion that Darryl was the culprit who had caused it. Instantly, the rage within him exploded. The other members seemed to have come to the same realization and started to make their way toward Darryl, as well.

Darryl remained composed and instead turned to look at Lillian with a crooked smile. "It seems like there's some unfair prejudice against me among your teammates, my adorable little sister. Care to explain?"

'What the! This scum dared to call our leader his adorable little sister?' Pushed further into his blinding rage, Otis picked up his

pace.

"Stop!" Otis's sword was about to cut into Darryl when Lillian interfered and rebuked him, "That's enough, okay?"

When he realized that Lillian was upset, Otis and the others stopped instantly, not daring to provoke her further. Otis could not seem to let it slip and asked, "Leader, what happened?" The two of them were taken by Earle and his gang, yet only two of them returned in the same type of outfit made from animal skin.

Irritated, Lillian replied impatiently, "Mind your own business."

Otis's face froze at the remark, and instead of retorting, he turned to glare at Darryl.

'F\*ck! This has to be this scum's fault,' he

concluded inwardly.

Their previous adventure had Lillian feeling far too exhausted and frustrated to continue on their journey, and hence, she ordered the others to find somewhere safe to set up camp for the night.

At night, Darryl laid on the grass and pondered. He planned on making another attempt at convincing Lillian and her men to leave the area first thing the next day, and if they insisted on moving forward, he simply had to let them go. Suddenly, he heard Otis and a few other men whispered to one another. Darryl sat up hurriedly and sobered as he tried to listen to what they were saying.

"F\*ck! That scum, Darren, must have done something to upset our leader."

"I just want to punch him in the face every

time I see him. Vice Leader, what do you say we do?"

"Let's put poison into his meal tomorrow morning. That ought to help us get rid of him once and for all."

Otis and the others kept their voices at the bare minimum as they discussed it, but Darryl, in his rank of power, was simply far too sensitive to his surroundings and had no trouble catching every single word they said.

'Who knew that Otis could be vicious to the extent of plotting to poison me. Fine then, if it's a game you want, then it's a game you will get,' Darryl thought as a sneer emerged on his face. Then he went back to sleep until before dawn when Otis and the others were all sound asleep. He strolled toward them and began to inspect their bags thoroughly. Finally, he managed to find a small flask for

Otis. A mysterious smile appeared on Darryl's lips as he looked at the flask.

The next morning, Otis and the others sneered once they woke up to find Darryl still sound asleep. Two members threw a black pill into Darryl's water bottle under Otis's instruction, and once that was done, they strolled off, pretending that nothing had happened. They began to start a fire to roast the animal meat they had hunted along the way. Soon, their camp was filled with the mouth-watering aroma of barbequed meat. Otis and the others were visibly excited and started to drink the liquor they had brought with them. It was not until they were halfway down the bottle when Otis seemed to have realized something and frowned thoughtfully.

'Something is off. I was fine earlier, but why am I starting to feel weak all of a sudden?

Besides, isn't this similar to the symptoms of taking the Bone Dissolving Pill I brought with me?' he thought in a panic.

Simultaneously, the other members of the group paled and sweated in pain. Lillian was still sulking from a distance and had failed to notice the abnormality.

Darryl sat up from his position and cast a mischievous glance at Otis and the others as he said, "How does it feel to get a taste of your own medicine?"

He asked, "Are you starting to feel weak and cold, and yet can't seem to stop sweating? Not a bad pill you got there." Darryl approached the bonfire, ripped a piece of the meat that was still roasting, and stuffed it into his mouth. "The meat doesn't taste so good, though," he said as he pouted.

Otis and the others were stupefied by shock and rage as they watched Darryl's every

move. How did he find out about their plan?  
When did he swipe the pill without anyone  
noticing?

## Chapter 2486

Darryl grinned when he saw the expressions of Otis and the others. "One should never intend to bring harm to others, but should always be alert to the harm others might do to him."

'That scum dares to act tough in front of us?' Otis thought as he glared at the man. He reached into his pocket hastily to search for the antidote. Otis had it all figured out. It did not matter how Darryl figured it out; they simply had to take the antidote and teach him a lesson directly. After all, there was no point in playing innocent if the truth was already out. Once decided, Otis did not waste another second retrieving the antidote and handing it out to the other members. Each one of them took the antidote hurriedly. To Otis's surprise, not only did his situation not



improve, but it worsened. All his strength was instantly drained from his body and, within a matter of seconds, none of them could stand up straight.

"What have you given us?" Otis roared.

"Don't you even have a cure for your own poison? How pathetic," Darryl said as he looked down at the men with a smile.

Indeed, Darryl had added something to the poison right before he put it into their drinks. It was easy for a talented Pill Refining Master to alter a pill as they had superb skills in medication.

Otis's eyes widened in surprise and frustration as he struggled to comprehend that the scum that he had previously thought was useless could be so cunning.

On the other side of the camp, Lillian

seemed to have finally realized that something was wrong and went over to them, only to find Otis and the others on the ground. Lillian frowned in confusion as she turned to look at Darryl. "What is going on here? What did you do to them?" The man in front of her seemed to become weirder by the minute. Not only was he familiar with the Valley of Death, but his behavior was simply as unpredictable as the weather.

Darryl sat leisurely as if he was not involved in the situation and said, "I did not do anything to them. Ask them yourself if you want to know what happened."

Lillian scowled and turned around to look at Otis and the others. Since he had no choice, Otis explained the situation nervously.

"What?" Lillian stomped her feet in frustration and scolded, "Otis, you have gone too far." She might have thought

Darren was a repulsive man, but that did not mean he deserved to die from poison.

"Brother Darren, I was wrong, I was wrong..." Otis was on the edge of a mental breakdown as he bowed and apologized to Darryl continuously. He felt weak as strength was drained from his body, and he knew that he would be beyond saving soon. On the other hand, Darryl pretended like he did not hear a thing at all despite his pleading.

"Leader, please plead mercy for us. I don't want to die," Otis pleaded helplessly to Lillian. Otis would not have asked for help from their leader if he was not out of options, but there was no compromise too great for him to stay alive.

Lillian gave him a death stare before she walked to stand before Darryl.

"Darren, please spare them. They were only messing around. I'm sure they did not intend to have you killed truly," she said gently.

"I was lucky to have found out about that in time. Otherwise, it would have been me collapsed on the ground right now," Darryl responded emotionlessly. "Why should I help them when they want me dead?"

"You—" Lillian felt her face heat up as she struggled to find the words.

As he took in the changes in her expression, Darryl sighed before he said in a casual tone, "I can consider saving them if you ask nicely."

Lillian jumped at his words as she immediately realized what he meant in frustration. "Darren, you are way out of line here," she responded.

"Out of line?" Darryl snickered as he looked at Lillian and said, "Honestly, who is out of line here? They tried to kill me. I'm pretty sure that what I am asking for right now pales in comparison to that."

Lillian took a deep breath before she muttered, "My good big brother, I'm begging you to please help them."

Otis and the others stared in shock at those words, not trusting their own ears about what they believed they had heard or what they felt they had truly heard.

## Chapter 2487

Did their leader refer to that brat as her good big brother? The question echoed in their minds when they heard those words. Lillian had always been highly respected as their leader in the Blood Thorn Mercenary Team. Even though she was a woman, she had never compromised or surrendered no matter the obstacle, and yet, she spoke in such a gentle tone to that scum. The men were furious, Otis more so than the others. Lillian was a goddess in his heart and the woman of his dream. To watch her flirt with another man right in front of him was simply torture, but he knew that he had to endure through it if he wished to live.

Satisfied that Lillian had finally come down from her high horse, Darryl nodded in contentment and beamed. "Fine, since you

asked nicely, I'll save them as you wish." He strolled over to stand before Otis and the others and said, "I am going to spare you today in respect to your leader, but be warned that there won't be another chance if you try your luck again. If you want the antidote, I think all of you owe me a sincere apology, don't you?" Darryl was familiar with back-stabbing rats like the men before him, and he knew that it would have been pointless to try to play nice with them.

"I was wrong. I know that now, I really do," Otis pleaded frantically on the ground. His comrades were all on the edge of breaking down in despair.

"Is that how you ask for a favor?" Darryl chuckled. "Get down on your knees and call me Daddy, then maybe I'll be convinced to give you the antidote."

'That brat is really going out of his way to

make things difficult for us, even after our leader has personally asked for his help,' Otis thought as his expression darkened into a boiling rage.

"Or don't," Darryl said impatiently and turned around as if he was about to leave.

"I'll do it." Terrified of losing his chance, Otis finally caved and let go of his pride. He bent his knees and kneeled before Darryl; the other members followed suit. "Brother Darren, I won't do it again. Please give us the antidote. I'm begging you," Otis pleaded as tears welled in his eyes.

"I'll give you the antidote." Darryl gave Otis a slight smile before he asked, "But what was it you called me?" Darryl bowed slightly to look the man in the eyes.

Otis's heart sank at the words; he knew what



Darryl meant by the question. "Daddy," he mumbled as he avoided Darryl's eyes.

"Daddy..." The other members followed hurriedly. All of them were extremely frustrated at the time. They had thought that it would be easy to get rid of the useless man, but they had fallen into his trap and had to call him Daddy. How insulting!

Darryl was pleased; he nodded and chuckled. "Be sure to keep up that respectful attitude from now on whenever you see me, get it?"

Otis nodded frantically in response and, without further ado, Darryl retrieved the antidote and threw it toward the men. Otis and the others picked it up before swallowing the antidote without hesitation. Soon enough, they slowly began to regain their strength, along with the color on their faces.

Lillian was not sure how she felt about the interaction she had witnessed. She was taken by surprise at how skilled Darryl was in scheming against others. It was not something anyone could achieve to tame those prideful men, who would have never submitted to anyone without putting up a fight. When he noticed her stare, Darryl walked toward her, grinned, and teased, "Why are you looking at me like that? Have you fallen in love with me?"

Lillian blushed at the question and retorted, "Get over yourself."

"By the way." Darryl chuckled before shifting to a more serious tone. "Do you really want to carry on with your adventure in the Valley of Death? A word of advice, you were lucky that you managed to kill a few Black Sand Pythons, considering your limited skills. You are going to die if you

insist on moving forward." Darryl was not lying when he said that the Valley of Death was the most dangerous region in the Wild Deserted Secret Region. Even a level two Martial King like Lillian could not face what laid ahead there.

Lillian was shocked for a moment before she collected herself. "I don't need your advice. I was going to head back anyway," she retorted as she bit her lips.

## Chapter 2488

Lillian was reluctant to leave. After all, it had taken them over a month of preparation to go there. It seemed like such a waste to leave so early into their journey, but she knew they were out of options. The technology and equipment they had with them were falling apart, and they were all exhausted. If they were to carry on, it would result in nothing but their demise.

Darryl beamed at her words. "Great, I plan on leaving this area as well. Let's stick together and take care of one another for now."

Darryl was relieved that Lillian had come to her senses. He would have left them behind if she had insisted on continuing their journey.

"Whatever," Lillian retorted impatiently. For a split second, she had wanted to refuse his offer. That man was far too cunning to keep around, and, most importantly, she desperately wished to be rid of him once and for all, considering the embarrassing experience between them. However, that area was extremely dangerous, and to have someone like Darryl, who was familiar with that region, might just be the safest option for them.

A few minutes later, Lillian and her men packed up their belongings swiftly and proceeded to exit the Valley of Death with Darryl. He looked back as they stepped out of the Valley of Death, overwhelmed with emotions and memories.

It took another two hours before Darryl, Lillian, and the others arrived at a town situated on the border between the Wild

Deserted Secret Region and the Nine Mainlands. Darryl's jaw dropped in awe the moment they stepped into the town. He remembered distinctly that that area was nothing but ruins that were close to the battlefield three years ago but had evolved into a town in such a short period.

The town, named Black Water Town, was formed over the years as more people ventured into the Wild Deserted Secret Region from various places in the Nine Mainlands. Naturally, the people in that town mainly were cultivators; ordinary people were as rare as hens' teeth. Darryl followed Lillian and her men as they strolled the streets of Black Water Town. His appearance resembled a caveman with clothes made of animal skin, untrimmed hair, and the scars on his cheeks soon became the center of attention. Darryl ignored the stares directed his way and

scanned the town with interest. He noticed that, even though Black Water Town was not a big town, there were countless shops along the way, and the streets were packed with people.

Once they reached the most bustling street, Lillian ordered the others to return to their hostel for some rest while she headed to the black market to sell the inner cores and skin they had harvested from the Black Sand Pythons which they had kept with care during their hunt. The Black Sand Pythons' skin is a one-of-a-kind item that could be turned into luxurious leather goods that would be extremely valuable in the market.

Darryl's interest immediately peeked at the mention of a black market. "I want to go too," he said with a smile.

"What for?" Lillian turned to stare at him

reluctantly.

"I need to sell the inner cores I have too, don't I? You can't keep all the good stuff to yourself," he said. Lillian could not argue with his logic and allowed him to follow her with resignation.

They arrived at a private trading center a few minutes later, which was nothing but a glorified name for the black market. The scale of the trading center was incredible, with the entire six-story building by itself, with an inscribed board that read Yellow Sky Trading above the entrance.

"Yellow Sky Trading?"

"What a unique name," Darryl muttered to himself.

"Seriously? Haven't you heard about Yellow Sky Trading before? Are you really from the



Nine Mainland?" Lillian mocked.

"Why?" Intrigued, Darryl went on to ask,

"Are they famous or something?"

Lillian smiled mockingly and began to explain. Over the past years, as the number of cultivators that venture into the Wild Deserted Secret Region continued to increase, the establishment of black markets, namely private trading centers, thrived at an incredible speed. Yellow Sky Trading was the largest organization among them, with its branches widely spread across the Nine Mainlands, with an enormous influence. However, the founder of Yellow Sky Trading had remained anonymous. No one had heard or seen him in person.

'Who could have imagined that a trading center could grow to such a scale?' Darryl pondered. "By the way, have you heard of

the Elysium Gate?" It had been three years since he had returned, and he could not help but wonder about the well-being of the Elysium Gate.

"Oh, the Elysium Gate." Lillian's eyes glittered with admiration at the words, "It's the most powerful sect on the Nine Mainlands. Their Sect Master Darryl Darby is my idol. It's a shame that he had gone missing."

Her words immediately lifted Darryl's spirit.

## Chapter 2489

It was a pleasant surprise to learn that Lillian was a fan of his. As they spoke, the two entered the trading center's hall. People were speaking with the staff as far as the eye could see. Most of them were fairly powerful cultivators, in general. The trading center featured a big lobby and VIP areas, cafes, and lounges with luxurious interiors, making it the most magnificent structure in Black Water Town.

Many people looked over as soon as Darryl and Lillian walked in, mainly because Darryl's appearance piqued their interest. Soon, the crowd began to gossip.

"Where did that caveman come from?"

"I'm guessing from some deserted mountain or something, how hideous."

"Definitely a bumpkin from the looks of it."

Lillian's face reddened in embarrassment at the discussion. She had told him not to follow her. He would not listen and insist on clinging to her shamelessly, and she had been dragged into the center of attention because of him. Darryl, on the other hand, did not seem to care.

One of the staff walked toward Lillian with a professional smile before she asked, "Madame, is there anything I can help you with?" She cast a look of disdain at Darryl as she spoke. The lady could not be older than 25 years old and dressed in professional black attire. Her lovely features were a refreshing sight.

'I did not think there would be such a cutie in that trading center. Though she seems a bit too materialistic for my liking,' Darryl

thought as he remained silent with a smile.

Lillian retrieved the inner cores from her possessions and handed them to the lady.

"If it's not too much trouble, I would like to trade these, please," she said.

"Of course." The lady nodded respectfully in response.

Darryl was about to retrieve the inner cores from the enchanted beast pouch to see how much he could trade with them when he realized that the lady had left to fulfill Lillian's request without sparing him another look.

Just then, a well-dressed young man approached with his eyes fixated on Lillian.

"My, my, my. If it's not Ms. Willis. It has been a while," he said with a smile.

The young man looked around 20 years old

and was followed by two bodyguards. The way he scanned Lillian up and down as he spoke made it evident that he was one of those rich playboys. He was Adenoid Collins, the young master of a cultivator bloodline that originated from the Yellow Stone Continent. His family had also extended their business to Black Water Town over the years as more people passed the town into the Wild Deserted Secret Region.

"Young Master Collins!" Lillian was visibly anxious about his presence. She bit her lips and whispered, "I will be able to pay you back soon. Please allow me more time, will you?" She spoke softly, afraid that others would overhear her.

A year ago, Lillian's father fell ill, and they were in desperate need of money. So she went to one of the financial companies that Adenoid was managing and got an

enormous loan. Sadly, even with sufficient funds to seek medical help, her father did not make it. Lillian had set off to the Wild Deserted Secret Region with the Blood Thorn Mercenary Team to repay her debt. If she had a choice, she would not have entered such a dangerous environment.

Adenoid kept his smile without responding while his eyes still wandered toward Lillian. It was at that moment that the staff came back with the money. Lillian took it and handed it to Adenoid hastily. "Young Master Collins, this is all the money I have managed to earn in the past few days. Please accept this for now. I will pay the remaining balance as soon as possible."

## Chapter 2490

Adenoid did not accept it but instead pushed it back toward her. With a smile, he said, "Ms. Willis, you know that I'm not a man that makes it all about money. Be my woman, and you will be relieved of your debt once and for all. If you're with me, you can live in luxury without having to worry about anything.

His words had visibly irritated Lillian, but she managed to remain composed before she smiled back at him and said, "No, thank you."

Adenoid's expression darkened at the rejection. "Lillian, I am serious. We've known each other for such a long time already. Do you not know how I feel about you?" He scowled and continued to speak in a sincere tone, "Look at you, a pretty young



thing risking your life by going all the way into dangerous places like the Wild Deserted Secret Region. What happens if you encounter danger when you are out there? I am truly saying this for your sake; I could not bear to see you struggle any longer."

"Thank you for your generosity." Lillian bit her lower lip and rejected his offer again. "I have no plan of marrying so soon, and I don't think we are compatible." She had known the man for years and was well-familiarized with what kind of a man he was: just another rich playboy who indulged in everything he wanted, which made him the last man a woman should consider marrying.

Adenoid's tone instantly turned cold at the repeated rejections. "How unappreciative." Then he turned around and commanded

bodyguards behind him. "Take her; I want her to accompany me to the hotel for a few drinks."

The two bodyguards immediately started to approach Lilian when they got their order. Lilian's face changed from humiliation to frustration; she never imagined Adenoid would be so lawless as to assault her in the trading center in full view of everyone. She desperately wanted to resist, but she also knew that Adenoid was a cultivator himself, ranking at the same level as she was, which was level two Martial King. Plus, he had two bodyguards with him, who seemed rather formidable. She would not win in a fight with them.

"Hang on!" Suddenly, a voice emerged from between them. Indeed, it was Darryl. "It is broad daylight. Be nice to the lady," Darryl said as he looked directly into Adenoid's

eyes. His voice was low but somehow authoritative.

What?

Adenoid scanned Darryl from head to toe and was caught by surprise for a brief moment before he barked in disdain, "Where did this beggar come from? F\*ck off!" The man who stood before him was dressed in an animal's skin and was filthier than any beggar he had ever seen. The crowd around them began to look over at them as they started to whisper to one another.

"Has that brat gone mad? How dare he challenge Young Master Collins?"

"He is just a bumpkin. What makes him think he has what it takes to be a hero here?"

"Yes, how arrogant!"

Lillian pulled Darryl aside hastily and said, "Darren, this is my business. Don't try to butt in." Adenoid was a powerful man, and Darren was only a man; how could he possibly compete with him?

Darryl gave her a gentle smile and motioned for her not to worry.

When he realized that Darryl had no intention of moving out of the way, Adenoid's patience ran out, and he gave the ultimatum. "Brat, are you still going to stand there? That is your last chance; leave on the count of three." How dare a mere bumpkin like him pry into his affairs? The man must have a death wish.

Simultaneously, the bodyguards had their eyes locked onto Darryl and were ready to attack at any second. That was when a slim figure stepped into the hall and said, "Oh my, what is it that got Young Master Collins

all riled up?"

Everyone in the hall snapped their heads around and turned their attention to the source of the voice. The woman looked to be about 30 years old and was dressed in a white dress with the hem opened all the way up her long slim legs, emphasizing her alluring curves. Her elegant features were outlined by makeup that oozed seduction. She was the Yellow Sky Trading's branch manager in Black Water Town, Rita Wells.

Most of the men could not take their eyes off her from the moment she stepped into the room. Even Darryl could not refrain from looking at her. What a pleasant surprise to find such beauty in a small town like Black Water Town! The woman lacked innocence compared to Lillian, but she made up for that with maturity and an enchanting charm

that any man would fall on his knees for her.

"Madam Wells!"