

Chapter 613 Forging His Own Reputation

In the delta region.

Inside the stronghold of the Dark Night Organization, A private plane touched down at the temporary airport, and Liam and Theo successfully arrived at their destination.

At this point, Liam had worn a human skin mask, and no one could tell it was him.

With Theo, he entered the stronghold without a hitch.

In the meeting room of the Dark Night Organization in delta region, its senior executives had convened. With determined strides, Liam and Theo swung the door open and entered without hesitation. But, what greeted them was an air of despondency that hung heavy in the room.

Cigarette butts lay strewn across the floor, and a serious expression was etched on their faces.

Spotting Theo, the middle-aged man occupying the central seat arose and offered a deferential bow. He then inquired in astonishment, "Theo, why have you come? Is there a pressing issue?"

The man speaking was Prometheus Martel, a third-rank member and the leader of the Dark Night Organization in the delta region.

Theo wasted no time and introduced Liam to the assembly. "Meet Javen, a second-rank member of the Dark Night Organization. Due to the unfortunate demise of your resource team's deputy leader, Javen has been sent down here from the headquarters to assume the role."

With the identity of the other man revealed, save for the team overseeing the rare-earth mine, the others extended polite greetings.

Prometheus proceeded to acquaint Liam with the workings of the local Dark Night Organization branch.

In the delta region, the organization was

divided into two teams.

The first team was the resource team. They contended for various natural resources and currently held charge over the rare-earth mine.

The other team was the operational team, which managed branch affairs and gathered intelligence within the delta region.

Prometheus beamed with pride and extended his assistance. "I hold the position of general manager here. If you encounter difficulties, don't hesitate to seek my help."

An imposing elder accompanied by a few individuals emerged from the resource team.

The elder cast an angry glance at Liam and said, "I had expected strong reinforcements from headquarters, not some mainland youth thrust into deputy leadership. Your skills won't keep you afloat here!"

Frowning, Prometheus sternly reprimanded, "Mehdi, hold your tongue!"

Unrestrained, Mehdi Singh huffed derisively, "My words stand. Had it not been for this newcomer's interference, I would have held the deputy leadership. He's ill-suited for the role!"

Theo's brows knitted. He was a bit annoyed, but he abstained from speaking. Hiding Liam's true identity necessitated subtlety.

Meeting Theo's gaze, Liam got the message. This place was more dangerous than the mainland and the brawls in the delta region were aboveboard and intense.

Theo had the authority to defend him, but the assembled members were unlikely to readily accept it. Such an overt intervention would only hinder his future endeavors.

Moreover, Theo hid his true identity, too. If Theo openly defended him, it would undoubtedly raise suspicions about him.

Given these circumstances, he needed to forge his own reputation and establish a foundation for his subsequent actions.

With a derisive smile, Liam strode toward the elder and angrily asserted, "The headquarters appointed me deputy leader because of the debacle at the rare-earth mine, overseen by none other than you! You're all good-for-nothings! If you aspire to leadership, demonstrate your competence rather than mere words. I remain unconvinced!"



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Chapter 614 Showing His Strength

Liam's words triggered a fiery anger in Mehdi.

Though he held no official title, his position in the team commanded respect.

"What an insolent lad! Yusuf, teach him a lesson!"

Mehdi preferred not to engage personally, so a slender young man with pink-dyed hair stepped forward from the resource team.

Yusuf Moran, the man in question, had his own reservations about Liam's appointment as deputy leader due to his youthful appearance. He immediately complied to Mehdi's easy request.

"Young boy, the delta region isn't a place for you. It's worlds apart from the mainland. Take my counsel and don't get involved in the matters here. Leave now, while you can."

Liam shook his head slightly. He sensed Yusuf's intentions were not malicious. Despite the imminent clash, Liam opted to spare him.

Seeing Liam stand his ground, Yusuf sighed and remarked, "Why are you not taking my advice? Since that's the case and Mr. Singh has given me an instruction, I would have to teach you a lesson!"

With a composed demeanor, Liam replied, "Then show me your strength."

Yusuf grinned and shook his head. "Perhaps you're unaware of your situation. While we both are in the second rank, that standing bears far greater weight here in the delta region than on the mainland."

In an instant, Yusuf's figure flashed like a ghost.

Swiftly, he lunged at Liam with a punch. Liam was quite surprised. He immediately raised his hand and blocked the blow. Though he managed to block Yusuf's attack, the force behind it pushed him back a few steps.



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Although unscathed, Liam gained a rough sense of the man's strength.

The might of the Dark Night Organization in the delta region was truly formidable. While the person before him held a second-rank status, his strength far surpassed that of the typical second-rank members.

His strength was likely even a match for some third-rank members on the mainland.

Realizing Liam withstood his initial strike, Yusuf was astonished. "Seems you have more strength than I reckoned. No more mercy. Let's test your true power!"

Following his declaration, Yusuf launched another attack as his fist hurtled toward Liam swiftly.

However, Liam, having gauged Yusuf's might, exhibited a controlled strength that wouldn't harm him. Regardless of the fastness of Yusuf's strikes, he handled them with ease. Their fight ended with Yusuf failing to even graze Liam's clothes.

Yusuf's countenance grew increasingly serious, prompting Liam to seize the moment.

In the last round, Liam stopped dodging abruptly and thrust a punch forward.

Their fists collided with a resounding boom.

This time, Liam remained still while Yusuf stumbled back a few steps. He struggled to keep his balance and eventually fell to the floor.

It became evident to everyone who the victor was!

"Nice move!" Yusuf managed a bitter smile. He returned to his team and shook his head at Mehdi.

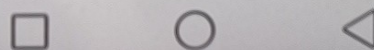
Having watched the scene play out, the leader of the resource group, Aaron Montgomery, stepped in to mediate. "Okay, okay. We're all part of the Dark Night Organization. Let's not make things difficult for one



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another. Mehdi, don't hold grudges. We're all working for the same cause here. Don't take things too seriously."

Mehdi's hostile gaze at Liam subsided at Aaron's words, and he chose to remain silent.

With a grin, Aaron continued, "Javen, you and Yusuf can be friends after this fight. Tell you what, take your things to your room first. I'll have Yusuf show you around later to help you get acquainted with this place."

Yusuf eagerly agreed, "You can count on me!"

Since his objective was accomplished, Liam's lips curved into a slight smile. He got up and left. Theo, realizing all was set, followed suit.

Once in the room assigned to him, Liam felt content. Though the conditions weren't as great as those on the mainland, having such a room arranged for him in the delta region was still quite a privilege.

As Liam unpacked his belongings, he glanced out the window at the unfamiliar city. The yearning for Julie grew stronger, and his determination intensified.

"Julie, just hold on a little longer. I will find the mole soon and rescue you!"



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Chapter 615 Intelligence

In the evening, on Iveagh Avenue, the most well-off area in the delta region, Yusuf led Liam to their first stop.

In the remote delta region, prosperity was a rare sight. Even though the street was illuminated at night, most of the establishments were tied to entertainment.

Several provocatively dressed women were putting in efforts to entice patrons.

Many youngsters on the street appeared fragile and wild, while some unfortunate gamblers, having lost everything, were attacked and left on the roadside.

Liam took in the scene with a serious expression, feeling a strong aversion to this place.

It could be said to be the decadent heaven, but this was the last place Liam wanted to be!

Yusuf, however, was different. He had lived here for a very long time. He was familiar with life in the delta region and couldn't escape its influence.

He took Liam's arm and led him to a club, which felt like a home return for him. He chuckled and told Liam, "Mr. Rivera, the delta region might not have much goodness, but it's brimming with women. This is my treat time. Let me introduce you to the delta region's unique service. Consider it my welcome gift to you!"

Liam shook his head and declined, "Don't bother about that. Have fun. I will be waiting for you here."

Yusuf halted, his smile tinged with bitterness. "How can you say that? Going alone wouldn't look right. I will appear very unreasonable, don't you think?"

Yusuf recognized Liam's decency and explained, "Iveagh Avenue is filled with gamblers and addicts. I'm just here for the company of some women. It won't do any harm. It's a way to unwind."

In the midst of their conversation, a woman with yellow teeth and an aggressive demeanor unexpectedly grabbed onto Liam.

She implored, "Young man, please, have some compassion. Let me have some drugs, and tonight, you can have me!"

Reacting quickly, Yusuf pushed her away and sent her off. Turning to Liam, he pointed out, "Did you see? Such addicts are rare on the mainland, but they're rampant here."

Liam's expression turned colder at this sight. "Do our organization's members behave similarly?"

Yusuf shook his head and explained, "Dark Night Organization doesn't allow drug use, right? It's the same here. Drugs are off-limits. They're not too concerned about other matters though. The operational team mostly deals in arms and makes contact with local gangs."

Upon hearing this, Liam felt a bit relieved. He then pressed further, "Given the numerous illegal activities, doesn't the government intervene?"

Yusuf's lips curled into a smirk. "Hahaha, no one cares about killings here, let alone these matters. Officials are scarcely taken seriously in this territory, as they're mainly preoccupied with safeguarding the government building."

Subsequently, Yusuf gave him a comprehensive account of the entire delta region, elucidating its intricacies. Through their conversation, Liam gradually gained a

holistic understanding of the area.

One could label it as a place of complete anarchy, tainted by vices, gambling, and drugs. Life was seen as expendable as danger lurked at every turn.

After a brief pause, Liam inquired, "I have a basic grasp of the delta region's situation now. What about the Black Spider? How much information do you have about them?"

Yusuf remained silent upon hearing this and guided Liam to a secluded spot. He then earnestly stated, "Mr. Rivera, there's one thing you must be cautious about. In the delta region, never delve into the matters of the Black Spider. Despite our Dark Night Organization having the upper hand against them in many regions, in the delta region, they reign supreme."

As Yusuf continued, Liam began to grasp the extent of the Black Spider's power in the delta region.

All drug trafficking in the entire delta region was orchestrated by the Black Spider. They were involved in the running of casinos and brothels as well.

However, while Black Spider was known to all

in the delta region, few were aware of their headquarters' location. Even members of the Dark Night Organization hadn't been able to unearth it. Most appearances were made by lower-tier factions of the Black Spider and subsidiary local gangs.

Liam furrowed his brows and questioned, "Has their force grown so much?"

Yusuf cast a glance at the club he had intended to take Liam into and said in hushed tones, "I can only say it's far more complicated than you imagine. This club, for instance, is owned by a gang under the control of Black Spider, named Blaze Gang."

With a sour expression, Liam struggled to suppress the urge to destroy the club.

Having absorbed Yusuf's account, Liam finally understood that to locate Julie, he would have to begin with that traitor.

He would make some progress soon!



Chapter 616 The Patrol Mission

Late in the night, after their conversation ended, Liam bade Yusuf farewell and made his way back to his residence alone.

Meanwhile, a figure stood at the door of his room. It turned out to be Mehdi, the same person who had caused issues for Liam earlier that day.

Contrary to his confrontational demeanor earlier, Mehdi now entered the room with courteousness.

Once inside, he respectfully bowed and addressed Liam, "Mr. Hoffman, my intention in causing you trouble earlier was to help with your fast assimilation into the branch. Please accept my apology."

Liam nodded, not harboring any hard feelings, as he was already privy to the truth.

During their flight, Theo had disclosed that

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Once inside, he respectfully bowed and addressed Liam, "Mr. Hoffman, my intention in causing you trouble earlier was to help with your fast assimilation into the branch. Please accept my apology."

Liam nodded, not harboring any hard feelings, as he was already privy to the truth.

During their flight, Theo had disclosed that someone in the branch of Dark Night Organization would be partnering with him.

He figured out Mehdi's intention during the meeting, and this late-night visit now solidified his hunch.

Under the light, Liam could see Mehdi's features more closely and noted the resemblance between him and Theo. The reason behind Theo's confidence in Mehdi became apparent.

"I've heard that you have key details about the mole in the resource team. Share them with me," Liam inquired.

Mehdi replied in a hushed tone, "My knowledge is more than just key details. I'm almost certain that the traitor is none other than Aaron."

"Is there any direct evidence?" Liam queried, a crease forming on his forehead.

Mehdi shook his head and explained, "He's being cautious. I haven't gotten concrete evidence yet."

Narrowing his gaze, Liam ruminated for a moment before suggesting, "Regardless of the truth, since you hold suspicions, let's engage with him subtly."

He proceeded to glean from Mehdi the specifics of the Black Spider's assault on the resource team members.

After he heard the report, Liam clasped his hands behind his back and said deliberately,

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"Given the Black Spider's adept intelligence, they'll likely discern I was sent by the Hoffman family to deal with the issue. We must watch out for their next move. I intend to engineer a situation where injuries occur, which will prompt some resource team members to leave the rare-earth mine. As their numbers dwindle, it'll facilitate Aaron's exposure."

Mehdi pondered for a moment and agreed, "Understood. I'll work closely with you."

The secret meeting extended into the late hours, and it wasn't until midnight that Mehdi took his leave. As the night progressed, Liam's plans crystallized in his mind.

The following day, the resource team members congregated at the entrance of the rare-earth mine, preparing for their daily patrols.

Mehdi maintained his facade of aversion towards Liam. Among the familiar faces from yesterday, there was a striking woman

named Fiona Carrillo. Like Mehdi, she despised Liam.

The assembly consisted of five people, representing the entirety of the resource team.

The patrol mission wasn't overly intricate. Their task was to protect the rare-earth materials and ensure their safe transport back to the stronghold.

After briefly introducing the day's tasks to Liam, Aaron proceeded to organize the patrol routes.

"For today, we'll split into two groups. Javen, our new addition, will partner with Yusuf to cover the west. The rest of us will take the eastern route. Any objections?"

Since everyone was quiet, Aaron signaled the start of their mission.

Once the two groups were on their separate ways, Yusuf began to regale Liam with the remarkable experiences he had had the

previous night.

"Mr. Rivera, you truly missed out by not joining me yesterday. The woman was a real beauty with a stunning figure! Unfortunately, she seemed new and wasn't the friendliest."

Liam's interest didn't lie in such matters. He gave a perfunctory nod while keenly observing their surroundings.

Interpreting Liam's silence as concern for his safety, Yusuf smirked and quipped, "Why so tense? Let me assure you, the leader and the others are just bluffing. I've been here for nearly two months, and there hasn't been a single attack from Black Spider. Also, with your skills, you have nothing to worry about."

Liam frowned slightly. Yusuf's words seemed to hold true, as their journey continued smoothly.

Time went by quickly. By dusk, they had successfully gathered the day's rare-earth haul and were poised to head back.

As they were on their way back, a minor alteration in their route was made, but it still closely resembled the path they had taken earlier. However, just as they arrived at a valley, an unforeseen incident took place.

A contingent of armed soldiers, lying in ambush, abruptly surged forth. Their intentions were clear as they immediately opened fire on Liam and Yusuf from above!



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Chapter 617 A Sudden Attack

"Fuck! Talk about terrible timing!" Yusuf yelled, taken aback by the sudden assault as he frantically searched for cover.

Liam, despite his vigilance, was also caught off guard by the unexpected onslaught.

He hadn't anticipated the traitor making a move so soon.

Clearly, their enemies were well-armed and ready. Their assault was relentless. This delta region was unlike any other, filled with heavy artillery and devastating weapons. Liam had to abandon his initial hiding spot thanks to a barrage of Molotov cocktails.

It seemed the enemy fire was primarily aimed at Liam.

In contrast, only a couple of bullets brushed past Yusuf. The intensity of the attacks on the two was noticeably unequal.

Both men recognized this disparity.

Being a part of the Dark Night Organization, Yusuf was skilled in combat. He sought the right moment, readying himself to provide Liam with backup.

But that was easier thought than executed.

Their enemies had the high ground, putting Yusuf at a disadvantage. Even when he managed a counterattack, it seemed inconsequential to their well-positioned enemies.

Meanwhile, Liam dodged bullets like a pro, weaving through the battlefield.

Despite the enemies holding strategic positions, hitting him proved to be a challenging feat.

Seizing a moment when the enemies were reloading, Liam pulled out his pistol and retaliated.

It had been a perilous dance up to that point. Had it not been for Liam's skill, anyone else would have met a fatal end.

In that instant, Liam grasped the danger that the delta region held.

Still, he felt a glimmer of hope. He and Yusuf might have been outnumbered, but when it came to combat skills, they were leaps and bounds ahead of these armed soldiers, who clearly weren't as trained as second-rank members of Dark Night Organization.

Had the soldiers not used the element of surprise and overwhelming firepower, they wouldn't have scored even those initial hits on Liam and Yusuf.

Now, Liam had neutralized the initial assault. Prepared and vigilant, he and Yusuf were more than these amateurs could handle.

As Liam continued to reduce their numbers, the soldiers seemed increasingly inclined to fall back.

Bang!

A smoke bomb erupted before Liam, clouding his vision. Seizing the moment, the soldiers started to withdraw.

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Liam was sure of one thing. These men had ties to the Black Spider. And he had vowed that anyone connected to Black Spider would meet their end!

His eyes blazed with loathing. Despite the odds, he was unwilling to let even one escape.

In a split second, he was poised to pursue them, ignoring the smokescreen that clouded his vision.

Unbeknownst to him, as the soldiers retreated, one had left a grenade behind. The smoke concealed it from Liam, but Yusuf, coming from another direction, saw it clearly.

Yusuf shouted, "Damn it! Look out!"

Alerted by Yusuf's voice, Liam spotted the grenade just in time.

Yet he was perilously close to the explosive, too close to take evasive action. Acting on instinct the moment he heard Yusuf, he found himself pushed out of harm's way.



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Boom!

Saved by Yusuf's quick thinking, Liam was spared from the blast's impact.

In a heroic switch, it was Yusuf who took the brunt of the explosion!



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Chapter 618 Internal Conflict

With a deafening crash, Liam found himself knocked to the ground, ears ringing.

As the shockwave cleared, he immediately turned his eyes toward Yusuf.

By now, one of Yusuf's legs was soaked in blood, its wounds darkened by the blast's residue.

Overwhelmed with gratitude, Liam couldn't believe that Yusuf had risked his life to protect him, especially considering they'd known each other for just a single day.

How genuine must Yusuf be to do such a thing! In that instant, Liam recognized Yusuf as a true friend and his animosity toward the Black Spider heightened.

Swiftly, Liam approached to assess Yusuf's condition. After a quick examination, he exhaled in relief.

Miraculously, despite the brutal explosion, Yusuf was alive. However, his leg was critically

injured and needed immediate attention to avoid amputation.

Scooping up the unconscious Yusuf, Liam prepared to make his exit.

As they crossed a hill, Aaron's squad rushed toward them. Evidently, they'd been anxiously awaiting their arrival and had sensed that something was amiss.

Upon seeing Yusuf slung over Liam's shoulder, they exclaimed. "What's going on? Who did it?"

Mehdi had a sinking suspicion and cast a concerned glance at Liam.

In a hushed tone, Liam revealed, "We just got ambushed. Yusuf took a hit from a grenade to shield me. Luckily, he's not in a critical condition. I suspect it's the work of the Black Spider again!"

Mehdi, noting that Liam seemed unharmed, retorted sharply, "I doubt it's that simple. We've been safe for quite some time, and yet you were ambushed the moment you arrived. Sounds like you've set up Yusuf!"

Unfazed by Mehdi's accusation, the rest of the team seemed unbothered. Yusuf and Mehdi had always shared a strong bond, with Mehdi considering Yusuf as something of a protege.

Given that Yusuf was now injured while Javen, who Mehdi had a grudge against, remained unharmed, it made sense for Mehdi to react so passionately.

Fiona's expression grew somber, but she held her tongue.

Noticing Liam's lack of response, Mehdi became even more angry. Turning to Aaron, he insisted, "Something's off with this kid. Let's take him back for questioning. I have ways to make him talk!"

Internally, Liam held a newfound respect for Mehdi.

This was an opportunity!

Maintaining an innocent facade, Liam clarified, "I swear, I'm not involved. You can confirm with Yusuf himself when he comes to."

Upon hearing this, both recognized the unspoken understanding between them.

Seizing the moment, Mehdi scoffed, "When he comes to? I suspect the only reason you didn't finish him off was that we showed up. If we don't apprehend you now, who knows if Yusuf will ever awaken?"

The tension between them escalated, teetering on the brink of physical conflict.


As the team leader, Aaron had to intervene. He yelled, "Enough, Mehdi! No more baseless accusations. Let's prioritize getting Yusuf medical attention. We'll look into this later!"

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Chapter 619 Acting

Within the base of the Dark Night Organization, everyone had convened in the conference room, save for Yusuf, who had been rushed to the emergency room.

Mehdi was still acting. He exclaimed, "Just like he said, Yusuf got blown up while he escaped without a scratch. Doesn't that seem odd to you?"

His act was convincing. Several operational team members were swayed and began to express their outrage.

"It doesn't add up. How can one person be seriously hurt and the other walk away fine?"

"Right, it's been quiet for months, but trouble started again as soon as he arrived. Coincidence? I think not. If he's not bad news, he's certainly a bad omen. We should send him back where he came from!"

Voices started to rise against Liam.

Aaron couldn't contain himself any longer. He leapt to Liam's defense. "Hold on. Let's not jump to conclusions. The truth will reveal itself when Yusuf regains consciousness. No need to throw accusations around!"

Prometheus, seated authoritatively at the head of the table, chimed in with icy detachment, "So, all we have here are speculations, am I correct? Show me evidence if you have any. Otherwise, shut up."

The room fell into silence at Prometheus' words.

Still, Mehdi remained defiant. "Fine, you want evidence? I don't have it now. But I'll be at the hospital watching over Yusuf, so no one tries any funny business."

With that, Mehdi shot Liam an unmasked icy stare.

No one challenged Mehdi's decision. It was common knowledge that he and Yusuf were close as family. Naturally, he would want to be by Yusuf's side.

Yet, a problem lingered.

The resource team was down to just five members. With Yusuf gravely hurt and Mehdi acting as his caretaker, only three remained for active duty.

Yet, the mission couldn't be paused. The entire rare-earth mine's operations depended on it. The problem was, there weren't enough hands to patrol two separate routes.

Prometheus swiftly turned his gaze toward Aaron and inquired, "Aaron, what's your take on handling the daily patrols with your resource team?"

Furrowing his brow slightly, Aaron responded, "I lead the resource team. I can manage solo patrols temporarily. If we're all vigilant, we'll make it work."

Aaron's statement was music to Liam's ears. It was precisely the outcome he'd hoped for.

This arrangement could potentially expose the undercover traitor who could provide leads about Julie.

Meanwhile, in Tihirang.

In a hospital room, Julie lay on her bed, shivering as though caught in a nightmare.

"Liam! Liam!" She cried out Liam's name repeatedly.

Eventually, she came to her senses and scanned her surroundings warily.

Her frequent lapses into unconsciousness had started to cloud her memory. It took her a while to piece things together, and when she grasped the peril she was in, her heart pounded uncontrollably.

However, she was still too weak to make any sort of escape. Her unfamiliar surroundings filled her with dread. After a thorough self-examination, she finally exhaled in relief.

Nobody had violated her!

