

## **The Man's Decree 681-690**

### Chapter 681 Not Everything Yet

As a blinding green arc streaked across the air, the giant pair of hands were slashed open right in the center. Recoiling from the attack, the hands that Xander had formed with his energy disintegrated into dust.

Instead of getting the better of Jared, Xander was beaten back instead, which came as a shock to everyone.

As Xander narrowed his gaze, the murderous intent in his eyes intensified. Without another word, he prepared to launch another attack.

Regardless of whether Jared was hurt, Xander didn't plan to allow him to catch his breath. Since he couldn't kill Jared in a single blow, he had to fight a battle of attrition instead. After all, as a Martial Arts Grandmaster, he was confident that Jared wouldn't be able to last too long.

Balling his fingers into fists, Xander threw a punch from tens of meters away. He had unleashed an invisible ball of energy in Jared's direction. Due to how fast the attack was, the crowd only saw a residual trail of smoke in the air, similar to those left by airplanes in the sky.

Bam!

Jared returned another energy slash that was significantly more powerful than the one earlier. Evidently, he had not used his full strength then.

With a loud rumble, the arc that Jared shot out slashed at Xander's energy attack. Even though Jared had intercepted most of the attack, part of it still rammed into Jared's chest.

At that moment, the massive impact pushed Jared back across the arena, leaving two deep grooves where his feet had slid backward. It wasn't until he reached the edge of the arena that he finally came to a stop.

In response, Jared furrowed his brows slightly. I cannot underestimate the power of a Martial Arts Grandmaster. Evidently, Xander's energy level is different from that of an ordinary martial artist.

Under normal circumstances, a martial artist's energy was generated from fighting and cultivation. Therefore, only a Grandmaster was able to emanate energy at will. However, due to the limits of a martial artist's cultivation, they could not sustain the energy for long, let alone crystallize its form.

Evidently, this energy was still significantly inferior to spiritual energy. That was the reason why Jared could easily defeat two powerful Grandmasters even though he was only an energy cultivator in the Transcendence Phase.

Nevertheless, Xander's energy was different from that of other martial artists. In fact, it resembled Jared's spiritual energy more.

No wonder Rayleigh reminded me not to underestimate Martial Arts Grandmasters, for they are indeed formidable foes. It appears that once a martial artist achieves that state, he will be elevated to a whole new level. I finally understand why so many of them dream of reaching the heights of a Martial Arts

Grandmaster and train tirelessly for it. In spite of that, it isn't a walk in the park at all. Other than the endless amount of cultivation and talent needed, one has to also be lucky.

"Having defended against my attacks twice, you are considered the strongest Grandmaster I have met ever since I came out of seclusion. In fact, your body's constitution has exceeded my expectations. Therefore, I'm sure you must have taken some pills to supplement your training. If you're willing to give them to me, I'll consider sparing you."

Xander was filled with envy when he saw Jared's bronze-colored complexion.

"Sparing me? I'm the one who killed your son and nephew. Hence, are you really going to let me go?" Jared replied with a smirk.

"When one reaches my state of cultivation, familial ties are nothing but an impedance. Once I have achieved immortality, there's no need for me to worry about having descendants. If you're willing to give me the pills you use to train your body, I will definitely let you go."

Xander's words shocked everyone present. No one expected him to forgo seeking revenge for his son over some pills.

#### Chapter 682 Battle Of Attrition

Staring at Xander with disdain, Jared scoffed, "You might want to let me go, but I'm not going to allow you the same luxury. Today, you are going to die in this arena."

Just as he spoke, Jared formed the shape of a blade with his fingers and drew a meter-long green energy arc with it.

Swinging his hand forcefully, he sent it flying in Xander's direction.

As the arc shot across the arena, the trail it left on the ground ignited in flames. The sparks that flew looked just like exploding fireworks underneath the illumination of the sun.

Narrowing his gaze, Xander waved his hands frantically to form an energy wall in front of him. Visible to the naked eye, the wall was stronger than one made of bronze or steel.

The moment Jared's arc slammed into the wall, the crisp sound of clanging metal echoed through the air.

As the arc continued to cut through the wall, sparks flew everywhere. Furthermore, it sounded as if it was a high-speed grinder slicing its way through a wall made of bronze.

"Jared, it seems your strength is still lacking. Did you actually expect such a weak attack to break through my defenses?"

A contemptuous look was written all over Xander's face, for he knew that the arc would soon disappear. As it was also formed by energy, he was confident that it would not be able to sustain itself. Once the user's energy was used up, the arc would naturally disintegrate.

Consequently, Xander's plan was to exhaust Jared's energy. On the contrary, Jared was delighted to have learned that. Although Xander was stronger than Jared in absolute terms, he did not have the stamina to keep up with the latter.

Given the huge amount of spiritual energy stored in Jared's elixir field, he would definitely beat Xander in a battle of attrition.

As Jared's arc continued to grind against Xander's energy wall, its intensity did not waver with the passage of time. Instead, it gradually grew more powerful.

Meanwhile, Xander began to break out in cold sweat as he stared at Jared in disbelief. Moreover, the energy wall he conjured began to turn transparent, indicating that his reservoir of energy was weakening.

"Mr. Knox, why does Jared have so much energy in him? Even a Martial Arts Grandmaster like Xander is on the brink of faltering," Donald asked after watching the battle for some time.

Axton was equally baffled as to what Jared was trying to do.

"How can this be? Isn't Jared just a Fifth Level Grandmaster? How can he have so much energy within him? Can it be that he took an explosion pill before the battle?" Axton frowned curiously.

"Mr. Knox, wouldn't it be suicide for him to take the pill? Furthermore, its effects only last for ten minutes, and they have now fought for a much longer time than that," Donald disagreed with Axton's assessment.

Even though the explosion pill could enhance one's power in a short time, it came at a price. Taking it would damage one's internal organs, on top of the fact that the pills' effects wouldn't last for long.

"This is really strange. It appears that Jared has plenty of secrets we don't know of."

Squinting his eyes at Jared, Axton looked as if he was trying to decipher all of Jared's secrets.

Meanwhile, Melanie commented, "Mr. Deragon, it seems that Jared still has a chance to win. I guess you don't have to intervene this time."

Rayleigh nodded. "Jared's victory is secured. Thus, it's time for us to go."

With that, Rayleigh strode out of the arena with Melanie following closely behind him.

Back in the arena, Jared hadn't noticed that Rayleigh had left. Instead, he was using the Focus Technique to enhance his arc's explosiveness.

#### Chapter 683 Taste Of Death

At that moment, the ground below Xander had begun to crater. Despite how astounded he was at Jared's boundless energy, Xander continued to hold his ground with gritted teeth.

Crack! Crack!

Soon, hairline cracks emerged on the energy wall before growing increasingly large.

With a drastic change in expression, Xander threw himself back.

Crash!

Upon his retreat, the wall disintegrated into thin air. Subsequently, the green arc that Jared had launched slammed into the ground by Xander's feet.

On the arena, it left a trail of destruction so powerful that there was a one-meter-deep trench in the ground with rocks strewn in every direction.

By then, Xander had retreated to the edge of the arena where he dodged Jared's attack by a whisker.

When he saw how pathetic Xander looked, Jared narrowed his gaze. "If I were holding a real sword, you would already be dead."

Staring at Jared, Xander didn't rebut, for he knew that Jared was speaking the truth. If Jared had used a real sword instead of one shaped from energy, Xander wouldn't have been able to escape the attack.

"Jared, it's too early for you to gloat. After training in seclusion for many years, I have managed to use the Cooper family's techniques to achieve the level of a Martial Arts Grandmaster. Consequently, a Grandmaster like you won't be able to defeat me easily."

Just as Xander spoke, he released a terrifying aura from his body, stirring up howling gales in the arena.

Soon, Xander's hair began to stand while he waved at the air as if he was dancing like a madman. Every time he got hold of something, he would hurl it forward. In the blink of an eye, razor-like lights were being shot out from his hands.

From Jared's end, he realized the lights looked like bullets being fired at his vital organs.

Unfazed by the attacks, Jared didn't dodge and allowed them to hit his body.

After their earlier exchanges, he had gained a good understanding of Xander's strength and his own defensive capabilities. Only with that knowledge was Jared confident enough to absorb the attacks.

When the lights struck Jared's body, a soft sound was heard. Nevertheless, it didn't leave a single scratch on him.

Xander's expression turned grim. "Jared, are you wearing a chain mail? I have never seen anyone who trained their body to this level of hardness before."

Snorting, Jared took off the bronze breastplate he was wearing and threw it to the side.

"Do you think you can actually hurt me even if I'm not wearing anything?"

Jared's words utterly humiliated Xander.

At the sight of Jared taking off his breastplate, a solemn expression descended on Xander's face.

The fact that Jared dared to do so demonstrated his confidence.

Xander took a deep breath and stared coldly at Jared. "Given how arrogant you are, it's time for you to know what death tastes like."

With that, Xander unleashed his aura again. With his body as the focal point, a terrifying force expanded in all directions. Waving his right hand slowly, rays of light began concentrating within it. It was as if he had control of the sun in his hand.

Soon, the light in his hand began to grow until it was shining brighter than the sun itself. Consequently, the light was so jarring that everyone could barely open their eyes.

“What technique is Xander using? It looks truly terrifying.”

“I can’t believe how amazing it is. Despite being so far away, I can even feel the heat being emitted.”

“There’s no way Jared can intercept that attack. It seems the gulf in skills is just too big to bridge.”

“That’s it. Jared will be defeated by this move.”

As the crowd discussed how powerful Xander’s technique was, those who sat in front covered their eyes with their hands.

#### Chapter 684 Interesting Development

As for Josephine and the others, all of them watched while being on the edge of their seats.

“Argh!” Xander let out a thunderous roar before hurling the ball of light at Jared.

Other than a heatwave, Jared could feel an intense pressure moving in his direction. He felt like he had the weight of a mountain on his shoulders.

As the floor he was on began to crack, the arena soon collapsed underneath him, causing him to fall onto the ground.

Meanwhile, the ball of light that was thrown at him went through the hole and struck Jared directly.

Having watched the ball of light disappear underneath the arena, no one could see what Jared’s condition was.

“He’s doomed.”

“The idea that a Senior Grandmaster can defeat a Martial Arts Grandmaster remains nothing but a fool’s dream.”

“Even though Jared is a genius and has a terrifyingly strong body, some humility would’ve done him some good. Unfortunately, he has wasted such a powerful body.”

As the crowd lamented Jared’s defeat, they got up from their seats and prepared to leave.

“Mr. Knox, is that the end?” Donald asked.

Axton felt a tad disappointed. “It is. I was expecting Jared to deliver us a surprise, but a Martial Arts Grandmaster is just way too powerful. Solely relying on a strong constitution and technique alone isn’t enough to bridge the gap.”

“In that case, Mr. Knox, why didn’t you save Jared so that you can ask him for the pill?” Donald didn’t understand Axton’s decision.

“Even I couldn’t save Jared from Xander’s attack just now. To be honest, I wasn’t even aware that the Cooper family had such powerful techniques,” Axton lamented with a sigh.

At that moment, Xander stood in the middle of the arena with a smug and confident expression. When he swept his gaze across the crowd, everyone lowered their heads for fear of making eye contact with him.

Now that the battle was over, Xander’s ranking in the martial arts world would definitely make a significant leap. ‘A rising tide lifts all boats’, the Cooper family’s reputation in Jadeborough would be greatly enhanced.

“Let’s hurry and welcome Xander down from the arena,” Sean exclaimed jubilantly. He then ordered his subordinates to line up in two rows to receive Xander when he was about to descend from the arena.

However, just when Xander turned around and prepared to leave, a golden hue shone out from the hole Jared was in.

Filled with astonishment, everyone stared in the direction of the golden light.

Even Xander stopped in his tracks and stared at it in disbelief.

No one had any idea what was going on, but they were certain that the golden light had something to do with Jared.

As Jared’s body gradually rose from the hole, he was enveloped by the golden hue and looked just like an angel who had descended from heaven.

“Da\*n it, Jared isn’t dead yet. Has he become an immortal?”

“He’s like an unkillable pest that just refuses to die.”

“No, this is getting interesting!”

At that moment, the crowd who were just about to leave returned to their seats, expecting the battle to get even more interesting.

After Jared landed gently on the arena, the golden hue surrounding him began to dissipate.

Not only did he not have a scratch on him, but his energy was also replenished significantly.

“Xander, if that’s all you have, let’s just end this.”

Just as Jared spoke, he suddenly exploded in Xander’s direction and slammed his hammer-like fist straight at the latter’s face.

This time, Jared no longer used any flashy moves. The basic punch he launched was so fast that it created a vacuum in the air.

Turning around at the crucial moment, Xander threw a punch to intercept Jared’s attack.

Chapter 685 Not Worthy Of Knowing

As this was their first physical exchange ever since their duel started, everyone watched anxiously, hoping to see a miracle.

If a Senior Grandmaster was able to defeat a Martial Arts Grandmaster, it would give every martial artist hope that it was possible to bridge the gulf in levels.

Boom!

The moment both fists clashed, a thunderous rumble rang out. With both men at the epicenter, the audience could see the residual shockwaves that emanated from them.

Those who were sitting in the first row sprang to their feet and unleashed their own aura to block the shockwave from traveling any further. Even then, the fact that all of them were trembling was a testament to how powerful the impact was.

Crack!

The crisp sound of a fracture rang out. At that, Xander's wrist was broken after being contorted at a strange angle after having overexerted himself in battle. Furthermore, his body was flung backward by the tremendous force that resulted.

Given that he was already close to the edge of the arena, he was finally thrown out of it this time and was about to crash onto the ground.

"Xander..."

Sean's face lost all color as he jumped to his feet to break Xander's fall.

As for the Cooper family's men, they too leaped into the air hoping to catch Xander.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

At that moment, Xander crashed into them and sent them all flying backward with his unstoppable inertia.

Despite the huge group of people, they were not enough to break Xander's fall. The momentum he flew with was a testament to how powerful Jared's punch was.

Subsequently, Xander, Sean, and their men crashed onto the ground and threw a plume of dust into the air.

At that moment, everyone had their minds blown by how powerful Jared's punch was.

Tommy sprang to his feet jubilantly and cried out, "Mr. Chance is so amazing that he can take on the entire Cooper family all by himself."

"Mr. Knox, Mr. Knox..."

Donald anxiously wanted to seek Axton's opinion over the turnaround but realized that the latter was frozen still from gawking at Jared.

After struggling to get up, Xander had a sullen expression on his face.

His right hand fell limp and was no longer of any use.

Staring at his broken wrist, he wondered how a Senior Grandmaster like Jared wielded so much power. He had also noticed that Jared had an unlimited supply of energy. In fact, the longer they fought, the stronger Jared became.

There's no way a Senior Grandmaster can be so powerful. In that case, did I make a mistake in my assessment?

"Jared, I admit defeat and recognize that you're the stronger one between us. Also, you're not a Senior Grandmaster. Tell me, where did your power come from? What secrets does your body hold?" Xander asked as he narrowed his eyes at Jared.

After they heard what Xander said, everyone turned to look at Jared. They too assessed that Jared was a Senior Grandmaster. But now that he had defeated Xander, they wondered if they had also made a mistake, or if Jared had a secret hidden up his sleeve.

"You are not worthy of knowing my secret," Jared sneered.

Despite being infuriated, Xander couldn't fight in the arena anymore. With his wrist now broken, he was no match for Jared at all.

"Fine. Today, I accept my defeat at your hands. Till next time..."

Too ashamed to stay any longer, Xander turned and prepared to leave with his men.

"Did I say you can leave?" Jared's voice rang out the moment Xander turned around.

Jumping down from the arena in a flash, Jared blocked Xander's way.

#### Chapter 686 I Admit Defeat

Xander furrowed his brows. "Jared, I have admitted defeat. What else do you want?"

"Admitted defeat?" Jared smirked. "When I offered to spare you if you apologized on your knees, you rejected it. Therefore, there's no way I'm going to let you leave today."

"Do you want to kill me then?" Xander didn't expect Jared to not let him go despite his submission.

"Today's battle was to the death. If I had lost, would you have spared me?" Jared said with a grim expression.

The truth was he had never planned to let Xander leave alive. He believed that showing the enemy mercy would only result in one's demise. Evidently, he wasn't a man with compassion in the face of his enemy.

When the crowd heard that Jared wanted to kill Xander, they gaped in shock.

It's unbelievable that a Senior Grandmaster is insisting on killing a Martial Arts Grandmaster. On top of that, the Cooper family is present with many Senior Grandmasters among them. Does Jared plan to take on the entire Cooper family alone?



“Jared, you had better not go overboard. My brother has admitted defeat, and yet, you insist on taking his life. Don’t you dare assume that the Cooper family is afraid of you!”

Sean stepped forward while the rest of the Cooper family surrounded Jared.

“Sean, today’s battle to the death is between me and Xander. All of you should back off if you do not wish to die. Or else, no one is going to leave this place alive.”

With a solemn look on his face, Jared unleashed a murderous aura.

“This is Horington, not Jadeborough. If you think you can cause trouble for Mr. Chance, you have certainly picked the wrong place.”

Tommy jumped out of the crowd, followed by Phoenix, Theodore, Samuel, Luke, and many other prominent figures of the Jazona martial arts world.

At the same time, members of both the Templar and Phoenix Regiments, who were in charge of security, swarmed in and surrounded Xander and his men.

“Sean, this battle is between Mr. Chance and Xander based on the challenge Xander issued himself. Therefore, are you trying to wiggle your way out just because you outnumber him?” Samuel asserted as he glared at Sean.

“Sean, as the General of the Department of Justice, I don’t care who wins or loses in a legal duel. However, if you don’t respect the rules, I cannot sit idly by and ignore your actions,” Theodore warned them sternly.

He had long been irritated by the sight of them. Furthermore, he was furious when they compared him to a dog in the break room earlier.

“Hmph, how dare you try and intimidate us with your numbers. Although there are fewer of us, these are the Cooper family elites who are at least Fifth Level Grandmasters. In fact, there are even a few Senior Grandmasters among us. Therefore, if you lot try and take us on, there’s still no guarantee that you will win!” Sean snorted as he had no intention of backing down.

There was no way he would allow Xander to be killed. Without Xander, the Cooper family would collapse.

Theodore and the others were filled with frustration because Sean was right. Even though they had more people, there weren’t many of them who were stronger than Grandmasters. As for the rest of their men, some hadn’t even trained on their energy before. Consequently, strength in numbers was futile in the face of elite martial artists.

At that moment, the situation fell into a stalemate where no one dared to move or leave. All that was left was a tense Mexican standoff.

“Let me mediate this situation,” Axton suddenly suggested before walking gradually into the crowd.

As he strode forward, an invisible force opened a path in front of him by splitting apart the crowd.

With Donald following Axton from behind, both of them walked to the center of the group.

While many in the crowd were curious to know who Axton was, Xander, Samuel, and Theodore were shocked to see him.

Chapter 687 A Respected Predecessor

Theodore hurried forward and greeted respectfully, "I'm surprised to see you here, Mr. Knox. It's indeed an honor."

"You have flattered me, General Jackson. I just popped by out of curiosity." Axton smiled plainly.

"Mr. Knox..."

At that moment, Samuel and Xander took turns to greet him with deference.

When everyone saw the respect accorded to Axton by the big shots, they quickly made way for him, for they were unable to bear the overwhelming pressure emanating from him.

After giving Axton and Donald a glance, Jared asked in an indifferent tone, "Are both of you planning to get involved?"

"Mr. Chance, this is Mr. Axton Knox of the Medicine God Sect. The Medicine God Sect is—"

When Theodore sensed Jared's hostility toward Axton, he quickly introduced Axton and explained who he was.

However, before he finished, Axton waved for him to stop. He remarked with a chuckle, "General Jackson, no introductions are needed. Jared and I know each other."

His words stunned Theodore and Samuel, who wondered when Jared had gotten to know Axton.

As for Xander, a sense of dread crept into him upon learning the same.

If Jared truly knew Axton and was on good terms with him, the Cooper family would no longer dare to touch him going forward.

"I'm sorry. I didn't realize both of you have known each other for a long time," Theodore apologized awkwardly.

"Not really long. To be precise, it was just last night. Both of them sneaked into my mansion in the middle of the night to steal my pills. We only knew each other after getting into a fight."

The moment Jared finished, everyone's mind was blown, especially that of Samuel and Theodore. It would never have crossed their mind that Jared had fought Axton before.

On top of that, they were shocked to learn that Axton was trying to steal Jared's pills given the Medicine God Sect's reputation as an honorable faction. They had earned the martial arts world's respect having healed and cured many of its members.

It was just that they were known to be mysterious. Therefore, other than the elites or those from prominent families, the majority of martial artists didn't know who the members of the Medicine God Sect were.

Consequently, it was an embarrassment for them to be accused of stealing someone else's pills.

“Kid, don’t spout nonsense. Since when did we rob you of your pills? Mr. Knox just wanted to take a look at them. If we really wanted to take them from you, do you think you would still be alive considering how powerful Mr. Knox is?” Donald retorted loudly as he glared at Jared.

Elated by what he heard, Xander bellowed at Jared, “Precisely. Mr. Knox has achieved the level of a Martial Arts Grandmaster a long time ago. Even I have to greet him as one of my seniors. Hence, do you actually think you’re a match for him? Furthermore, the Medicine God Sect is famous for alchemy. How is it possible that you have something that they want to steal from you? Obviously, you’re just making baseless accusations.”

As long as he could get Axton to take his side, he no longer had anything to fear from Jared. Moreover, Jared would be doomed if he was to make an enemy of the Medicine God Sect.

At that moment, Sean looked at Jared as if he was an idiot, wondering if the latter was just faking it when he offended the men from the Medicine God Sect.

“Mr. Chance, this must be a misunderstanding. Mr. Knox would definitely not do something like that.”

Samuel desperately gave Jared a knowing look.

Oblivious to it, Jared sneered, “By trespassing into my mansion at night, their true objectives couldn’t be any more obvious.”

#### Chapter 688 Apology

Considering everyone in the martial arts world knew of the Medicine God Sect, they were shocked by Jared’s revelation. What made matters worse was that Jared had made the accusation right in front of its most senior elder, which was the equivalent of suicide.

In fact, Samuel and Theodore broke out in cold sweat, worried that Axton would be enraged.

On the contrary, Xander and Sean were ecstatic over what was going on.

“Kid, you must have a death wish for maligning the Medicine God Sect,” Donald threatened with an angry stare.

“So what? Are you trying to attack me? As someone who has been defeated by me, you have no right to speak here,” Jared replied coldly.

“You...”

Donald was outraged being humiliated in front of everyone by Jared’s words. Losing his temper, he attempted to charge at Jared.

“Donald!”

Holding Donald back, Axton smiled at Jared. “Jared, you must have misunderstood our intentions. We were not there to steal the pill at all. Nevertheless, I apologize for our recklessness last night.”

As Medicine God Sect’s most senior elder, why is Mr. Knox apologizing?

Everyone present, including Jared, had not expected Axton to express his regret.

Now that Axton had apologized, Jared no longer held a grudge.

When the Cooper brothers saw what happened, their initial courage began to dampen. They were baffled as to what made Jared so special that someone like Axton had to apologize to him.

“Mr. Knox, wh-why did you say sorry to him?”

Donald couldn't believe his ears. After all, there were many members of the martial arts world present. If word about the matter got out, it would be detrimental to the Medicine God Sect's reputation.

“Shut up!” Axton shot Donald a glare before sweeping his gaze across the crowd. “Today, I will mediate this matter as a representative of the Medicine God Sect. The duel held here is a battle to resolve a conflict between two persons. I hope that no one will interfere until it is completed. Whoever breaks the rules of the martial arts world will feel the wrath of the Medicine God Sect.”

Xander was stunned to hear Axton's words. Is he trying to get me killed?

With one hand broken and all his martial energy spent, Xander would meet certain death if he was to continue fighting Jared.

“We will comply with Mr. Knox's words,” Samuel declared before giving both Tommy and Phoenix a look.

After both of them nodded in acknowledgment, they signaled both the Templar and Phoenix Regiment to back down.

Now that Jared obviously had the advantage, there was no need for them to interfere.

However, Sean continued to protect Xander with the Cooper family's men. He refused to leave, for he was sure that Jared would definitely take Xander's life.

“Did you not hear what I just said?” Axton shot Sean an icy gaze.

Sean pleaded, “Mr. Knox, the Cooper family has no quarrel with the Medicine God Sect. If you're able to help us out this once, we will be greatly indebted-”

“What are you trying to say? Are you bribing me in front of everyone?” Axton interrupted with a narrowed gaze. “As an honorable faction, the Medicine God Sect is duty-bound to protect the rules of the martial arts world and ensure that no one breaks them. Given that it was your family that issued the challenge, you have no excuse to go against the rules. Now, all of you should stand down.”

Not bothered to show Sean any respect, Axton put him in a difficult position.

Upon Sean's defiance, Axton unleashed a frightening aura and thundered, “Stand down!”

#### Chapter 689 Destroying Oneself

As the aura enveloped Sean and everyone from the Cooper family, they felt a tremendous pressure being forced upon them. Unable to withstand the pressure, the weaker members of the family vomited blood before collapsing onto the ground.

The fact that Axton's aura alone was capable of bringing a Grandmaster to his knees demonstrated the former's terrifying power.

"Just stand down," Xander ordered Sean.

Left without a choice, Sean backed down with the Cooper family's men. As for Xander, he steeled his resolve to give his all despite knowing that death awaited him.

"Jared, you can continue. No one will interfere now." Axton smiled at Jared before leaving the arena with Donald.

After giving Axton a grateful look, Jared turned to face Xander with murderous rage in his eyes.

"Today, I will send you to Hell to join your son."

The moment Jared finished, he leaped into the air and appeared in front of Xander in a flash.

Caught off-guard by Jared's speed, Xander desperately retreated but it was already too late.

Jared had landed a slap on his face.

Slap!

As a crisp sound rang out, Xander's body spun in the air before crashing back onto the ground.

The slap had caused one side of Xander's face to swell. Not only was blood oozing out the corner of his mouth, but he had also lost a few teeth from the impact.

Jared had slapped Xander in public on purpose to humiliate him and to let the matter serve as a warning to the wider martial arts world to not get in his way.

It was not because he was fearful, but he had no time to waste. He needed to use whatever time he had left to train for his trip to Nameless Island on July 15.

Everyone gulped when they saw how pathetic Xander looked. As a result, no one dared to cause Jared trouble anymore.

When Xander finally struggled to his feet, he stared daggers at Jared. Just when he was about to say something, he realized he was unable to do so due to how painful and swollen his face was.

"Do you still refuse to submit?" Jared slapped him again.

This time, Xander's whole face was swollen like a pig while the rest of his teeth flew out upon impact.

Suddenly, his eyes turned bloodshot as he roared into the air, "Argh!"

A red mist then emanated from his body. It carried the stench of blood as if his own blood was evaporating from boiling point.

Meanwhile, everyone gasped at the sudden turn of events.

"Oh no, Xander plans to self-destruct in a suicide attack on Mr. Chance," Theodore exclaimed in shock.

At that moment, everyone feared for Jared's life. As a Martial Arts Grandmaster, Xander was akin to a bomb if he self-destructed. In fact, the blast itself would destroy the entire arena.

Consequently, many in the audience began to flee. Those who were strong enough began to unleash their energy to form a protective barrier in front of them.

"Mr. Knox, Xander is planning to blow himself up. He doesn't plan on leaving even his soul behind," Donald remarked in consternation.

Martial artists who were at Grandmaster level and above were able to concentrate their energy within their elixir field and detonate, resulting in a massive explosion.

By doing so, one's body and soul would disintegrate into thin air. Without a soul, one wouldn't be able to reincarnate anymore.

Consequently, very few would choose to self-destruct even if they going to die. Furthermore, if the gap in power was too big, detonating oneself wasn't going to make a difference.

#### Chapter 690 Dead

"I didn't expect Xander to be so relentless."

Just as he spoke, Axton gestured with his hands to form a barrier and cover Jared and Xander in it.

By doing so, the explosion from Xander's detonation would be contained inside the barrier, protecting those who were outside from harm. Or else, an explosion caused by a Martial Arts Grandmaster would definitely kill the crowd en-masse.

However, the barrier had also prevented Jared from escaping. He had no choice but to brace himself for the massive energy surge from the explosion.

As the martial energy within Xander expanded rapidly, his body began to balloon as if it was being inflated by air.

Instead of releasing it, he concentrated his martial energy within his body, causing it to be bizarrely contorted by the swelling.

Unable to speak, all Xander could do was scowl at Jared to express his rage.

Despite Xander's vicious expression, Jared was unfazed. In fact, he seemed to be delighted by his predicament.

"Being fat makes you look adorable."

Cracking a smile, Jared released a white mist from his body that quickly intertwined with Xander's red mist.

With both their figures enveloped in the mist, no one could see what was going on inside the barrier.

At that moment, Xander was surprised by Jared's lack of fear. After all, a Martial Arts Grandmaster was about to self-destruct which was unheard of within the last century. Furthermore, he was the first Martial Arts Grandmaster forced by Jared into detonating himself.

Initially, he was looking forward to seeing the panic on Jared's face before his death. Much to his disappointment and bewilderment, Jared was filled with excitement instead of fear.

In the midst of his confusion, something even more unbelievable happened. All of a sudden, he felt the energy within his body being drained from him.

To be able to detonate oneself, one had to concentrate one's energy within one's elixir field. If one's energy were to flow out, one would lose the capability to self-destruct.

Just when his elixir field was charged to its limit and on the brink of detonation, Xander suddenly felt his energy being drawn away in an uncontrollable manner.

When he finally stared intently through the mist, he was greeted by an unforgettable sight. Jared was smiling smugly while absorbing all of the red mist into his body.

Xander was stupefied at what he saw. What is this technique Jared is using? How can he suck someone else's energy into his own body?

When Xander attempted to stop his elixir field from flowing out, he realized his efforts were useless. All he could do was idly watch as his elixir field was drained empty.

At that moment, Xander lost the opportunity to self-destruct. His previously bloated body was rapidly deflating into a scrawny figure.

Even at death, Xander had no idea what sort of power Jared used.

As time ticked by, everyone began to grow curious as to why the explosion never happened.

Once the white mist had cleared, Jared and Xander's figures emerged. However, Jared was the only one left standing, while Xander was reduced to a withered corpse with his eyes staring blankly into space.

When everyone saw what happened, they were dumbstruck. Axton removed the barrier with a wave of his hand and hurried forward.

Soon, everyone swarmed ahead, wanting to find out if Xander was truly dead.

"Xander is... dead."

Upon verifying the fact, the arena fell into a deathly silence. No one had expected Xander who was about to self-destruct to stop abruptly at the last minute.