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Chapter 5

The Xaviers were the leaders of The Great Four in Cansington.

It was a day of celebration for them. Megatron Group, one of their many businesses, had signed an agreement with Celestial Group, and they were now the best of business partners. In other words, the Xaviers' influence would be even more widespread thanks to this agreement.

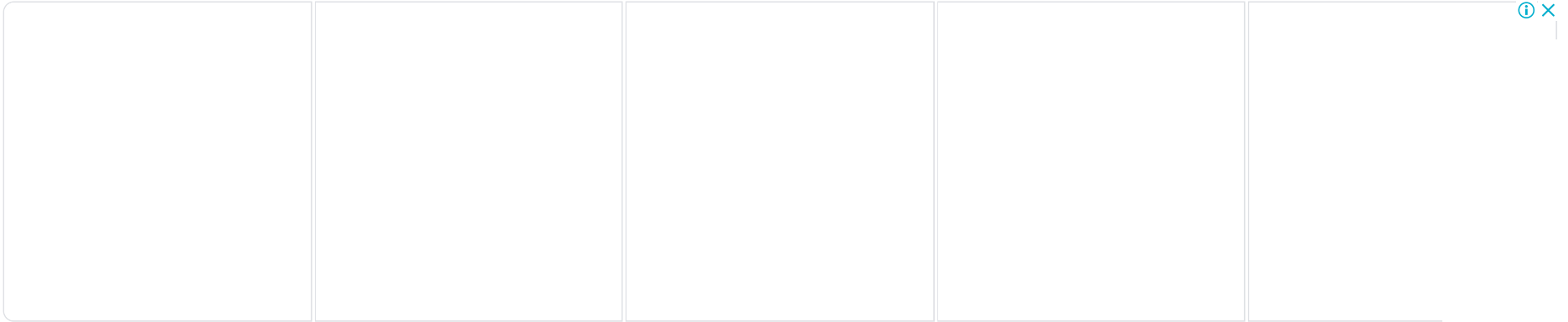
Also, the patriarch of the family, Warren Xavier, was turning 80.

Outside the Xaviers' villa, a fleet of luxurious cars gathered. All the celebrities in Cansington were there for the double celebration.

“This is a bottle of Retrouve wine worth eight million dollars, gifted by The Frasier. They wish Mister Warren Xavier many happy returns!”

“The Wilsons present a painting, The Black Thorn by Jacqui en Blanc, worth twelve million dollars, and they wish the Xaviers good wealth.”

“The Zimmermans have gifted Mister Xavier a Froit Mi watch worth eight point eight million dollars...”



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At the main entrance, a lady held a microphone in her hand. She enthusiastically announced the gifts that guests had brought for the entire room to hear.

In the foyer, Warren was dressed in a blue suit. Although he was 80, he looked fit and alert. Hearing about all the gifts he was getting, he looked as happy as a lark.

The banquet was full of people from important families in Cansington.

Even the second-rate Callahans had made it. In an attempt to suck up to the Xaviers, Lex Callahan had pulled out all the stops, spending a small fortune to get a Monique wallet for Warren.

Everyone was busy trying to make their own connections and expand their networks.

Outside the villa, a man wearing a brown coat and a mask on his face approached, carrying a coffin.

The coffin weighed at least 100 kilograms, but the man supported it with just one arm, carrying it with ease.

It was James.

His return was fueled by two purposes. To repay Thea, and to avenge his family.

Now that he was Thea's husband, he might be recognized. As he did not want to get her into trouble, he put on a black mask to conceal his identity.

Crash!

As he reached the entrance, he threw the coffin with all his might. It shattered the Xaviers' door and landed in the foyer of the Xaviers' villa.

Everyone was shocked at the sudden intrusion.

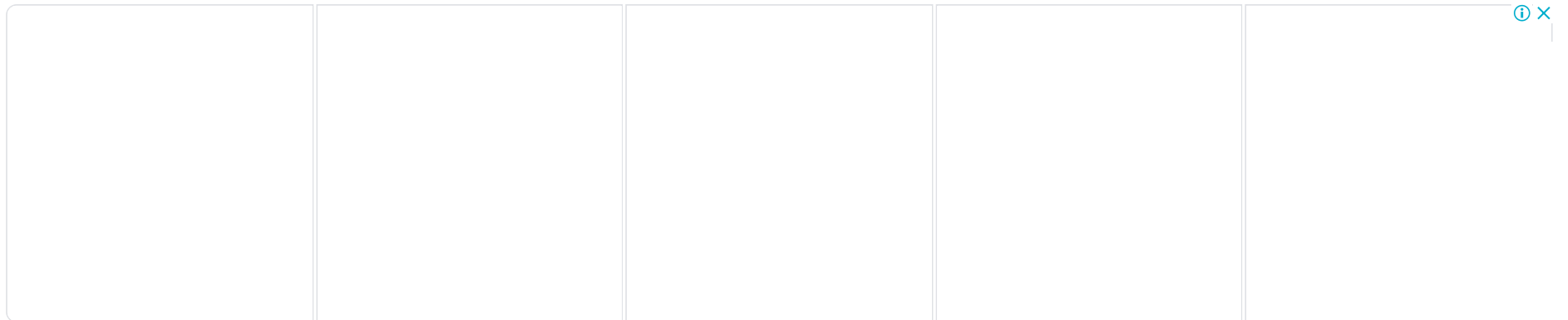
The noise stopped abruptly. It was so quiet one could hear a pin drop.

What was going on?

It was Warren Xavier's 80th birthday. Who was so bold as to actually bring a coffin to a celebration?

Warren was chatting with the other heads of family when the coffin came sailing through. His expression darkened and he shouted, "What's this? Where are the security guards? What are they doing? Who sent this? Take it away at once."

"Warren Xavier, may I present this coffin as your birthday gift? It's your eightieth birthday today, but this time next year, it will be your death anniversary."



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A voice rang out from outside the doors. A man with a brown coat and a ghost mask then sauntered in.

“Who... who are you?” Warren stared at James. This was the Xaviers’ place, and he was the head of the family, a very important person in Cansington. Who had the guts to cause trouble at his home?

“I’m someone who wants your life.”

The cold voice cut through the space. With the black ghost mask on his face, James stalked over to Warren.

“Not today.” A man in his twenties walked over and pointed at James. “I don’t care who you are. When you’re at the Xaviers, we’re in charge.”

That was William Xavier. Still pointing at James, William attempted to remove his mask. Coldly, he said, “You’re a coward for hiding behind a mask. Let’s see who you are.”

James attacked. He grabbed William’s arm and lifted him off the ground before twisting it.

Crack!

William’s arm was torn clean off his body. Blood fountained everywhere.

“Ah...”

William howled in agony.

All the guests were in shock. As they were people of status and lived in peace, they had never seen such gore or violence before. Many of them stumbled backward, worried that they would be the next target.

Looking just like a modern-day Ares, James threw the arm away carelessly. He had a confident, aggressive air about him. Coupled with his display of power earlier on, the Xaviers were so scared that they were trembling, backing away as much as they could.

Even Warren retreated slightly, his arm reaching behind his back, ready at a moment's notice to grab a weapon and kill the uninvited guest.

James stalked toward Warren slowly.

William's moans of pain echoed through the foyer.

After a while, he slumped into a dead faint, unable to take the pain anymore. The foyer suddenly quieted. Only James' footsteps echoed, sounding like the harbinger of doom.

"Kneel."

James' order rang out, clear as a bell.

James was extremely imposing. It was the cumulation of being a seasoned soldier and general with murder as second nature. Under his murderous stare, everyone was scared silly. Coupled with how easily he tore William's arm off, no one dared utter a single word.

Even Warren was affected, and he lost his bearings for a second.

At that moment, he forgot to fight back and his knees buckled. He fell to the ground, kneeling.

Crash.

Upon seeing this, the celebrities were stunned.

Warren Xavier, the patriarch of the Xaviers, the leader of The Great Four in Cansington, was kneeling on the ground.

James held a wire in his hand. It was an odd sort of wire with several joints. Upon closer inspection, one could tell that it was made out of countless needles.

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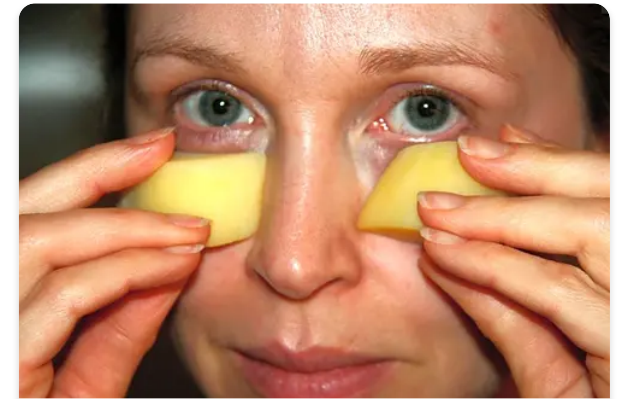
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“Warren Xavier, do you care to admit your sins?”

Just then, Warren realized that he was kneeling, though he did not know why. Sweat slid down his spine.

He wanted to stand up, but he did not have the strength anymore.

“Boy, do you know who you’re speaking to?” Even though he could not stand, Warren still looked strong. His arm was still behind his back, ready to attack with a weapon anytime.

The other Xaviers did not even try to protect Warren, worried that they would be hurt as well.

“I might as well tell you the reason. Ten years ago, a fire razed Flora Lakeside. It burned for an entire day. Thirty-eight lives were lost, and now, you’ll pay in blood.”

His cold, merciless voice rang through the foyer.

James moved. In a flash, he appeared behind Warren. He wound the silver needle wire around Warren’s neck and pulled.

Blood spurted, and Warren’s head thudded to the ground.

“Ah!”

Cansington’s celebrities screamed and fell to the ground, all of them shivering in fear. Upon Warren’s death, the Xaviers did not know what to do, frozen to the spot.

James produced a black bag. He scooped Warren’s head into it and turned to leave.

Long after he had left, The Xaviers’ villa remained dead quiet. Everyone squatted on the ground, cradling their heads in their hands. Warren’s headless corpse remained motionless in the foyer.

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At the Cadens’ cemetery, Thomas Caden’s grave.

James leaned the black bag against the tombstone.

He took a flask out and swigged a mouthful from it. He poured the rest of it in front of the grave.

“Grandfather, don’t worry. I’ll make sure that our entire family rests in peace. I’ll also get Moonlit Flowers on Cliffside's Edge back.”

After that, he got up and left.

When he returned to the House of Royals, he took a bath.

In the Xaviers' villa.

The celebrities who were there for the celebration left.

In the foyer stood a coffin. Warren's corpse lay on the ground.

William, who had lost an arm, had been sent to the hospital.

All the Xaviers were kneeling at Warren's corpse.

In the lead was a beautiful woman wearing a dress. She was Warren's youngest daughter, Rowena.

The same Rowena that destroyed the Cadens utterly.

She was in a terrible mood.

"Has anyone called Trent?"

Her roar echoed through the quiet foyer.

"Y-yes. We've called him."

"Leave everything as it is. We'll wait till Trent gets back."

...

It was a quiet night. In Cansington's military region, a few helicopters painted with the words "Western Border" landed.

A middle-aged man clad in a military uniform wearing a cold expression exited the helicopter.

Outside, a row of fully-armed soldiers stood in a line. They saluted the man.

A jeep appeared and the man got into it. It headed straight to the Xaviers' villa.

Upon his arrival, he assessed the situation in the villa and saw Warren's headless corpse. He removed his hat and fell to his knees.

"Dad, I'm sorry I'm late. I swear I'll bring the culprit to justice no matter who he is."

His voice, full of rage, echoed through the house.

"Trent." Rowena appeared suddenly.

The man was Warren's fourth son, Trent.

Trent was expressionless, his face dark. "I need the banquet's surveillance video."

"I'll get it right away." Rowena nodded and got someone to retrieve it.

Trent stood up and inspected Warren's wound before watching the video. He saw the entire process of James killing Warren.

Coldly, he asked, "What did he say before killing dad?"

Rowena said, "Ten years ago, a fire razed Flora Lakeside. It burned for an entire day. Thirty-eight lives were lost, and now, you'll pay in blood."

Trent clenched his fists upon hearing this and his expression darkened. "A survivor of the Cadens?"

"It must be."

Trent pressed his palms into his face and waved a hand at Rowena. "Bury dad. Keep it simple. I'll make a trip to the Capital and ask the big man there about potential Caden survivors."

