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Story by Paul Michaels

## **I Got Isekai'd! Well Shyt!**

### **Chapter 143 Duval's Mistake**

The day went by fast before Duval arrived at the Divalo Manor with two of his closest allies, Count Sebastian Ingham and Viscount Octavius Blackwood.

Alaric was wearing his best attire and was waiting at the front entrance for his guests. He had a fake smile on his face as he saw the Marquess's carriage coming into the courtyard.

'The fool is here... Time to see how long he can keep that fake smile of his up.'

As soon as the carriage stopped. A footman who was riding with the driver came down to open the door. Duval got out first and then helped his two allies out.

Alaric couldn't help but feel the smugness radiate off of the three men.

"Your grace, you are looking surprisingly well," Duval said as he approached the Duke.

"How could I not be? When you get a second chance at life you learn to appreciate it even more."

Duval shook his head and said, "You are a lucky man indeed. If I hadn't swooped in. Who knows how the King would have paraded around your corpse."

Alaric laughed and said, "I must say, Marquess... I'm surprised you did that in the first place... Wait, where are my manners? Let's continue this conversation inside, shall we? I will not have my guests be neglected while standing outside in the cold."

"Y-You seem more friendlier than normal, Alaric... You better not be planning anything, unsavory," said Viscount Octavius Blackwood in an uneasy voice. The Duke was acting similarly to the Viscount's wife when she was furious at him. And it put him on edge.

Blackwood is Duval's right-hand man.

"What? Me? How could you accuse me of something so vile? And after all the work that Marquess Duval did to save me. The betrayal will kill me, Octavius."

"T-That's enough, your Grace... My apologies, Lord Blackwood. The Duke is simply happy to have his life spared." Duval said.

Viscount Octavius Blackwood nods his head and then keeps quiet.

"Well then... You can follow me, gentlemen. And Ingham? You can join our conversation if you like. You were always the smart one of the bunch." Alaric said with a fake smile.

"I prefer to listen and observe." Count Sebastian Ingham said with a stoic look.

"Of course, you would, Sebastian. One of these days I will get you to open up."

Ingham shook his head before the three men followed the Duke.

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Alaric led them inside and they started walking through the halls as the Marquess and his friends commented on how beautiful the architecture and design were.

"It's a shame that it won't be in your possession anymore, Alaric."

"Oh. Why is that, Marquess?"

"I'm sure with the lack of funds and assets. It will only be a matter of time before you have to sell off this manor."

"No... I believe I will be able to keep it for myself."

"That is doubtful. How will you pay the taxes? You lost 50% of your wealth and lost an additional 75% of your income."

"I have plenty of assets I can sell off to make ends meet. And if I must then I will cut my staff down to the minimum and live a modest lifestyle. Besides, I have other ways of making money."

The Marquess smiled and said, "Ah. You mean selling off the artifacts in the Revelia Treasury?"

"You want my mother's family heirloom? The Core Crystal Compass? I never knew you were interested in dungeon diving, Duval. But sadly, the artifact is not for sale."

"Oh, I was never interested in it. I was just curious about its value."

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The Duke and the other three men arrived in the dining room and sat down. The footmen came and placed a bowl of soup and some stale bread in front of each guest except the Duke who had a nice steak with roasted potatoes and a salad.

"I apologize for the food, gentlemen. You see the kingdom claimed half of my assets and that includes my food storage. So, this is the best the cook could put together." Alaric said with a smart-ass smirk.

Duval looked at his allies before turning towards the Duke.

"So, is the Duchess and your children coming to join us as well?"

"No. They had more important things to do than entertain three old fools."

The Marquess was silent for a few seconds and looked like he was offended by what the Duke had said.

"Well... I guess it's better to have a serious discussion with no distractions."

Alaric cut a small piece of his steak and took a bite before saying, "So, you wish to have a serious discussion with me. Is that why you brought your allies here with you?"

"Of course. They are my most trusted friends. And we came here in order to help you in your time of need."

Duke Alaric burst out laughing and then stopped to say, "My time of need? Hah! Wasn't it you who advised my brother to weaken me financially?"

The Marquess didn't flinch or show any discomfort.

The Duke continued, "You know... I was racking my brain trying to find out why on the Goddess's green Tertius you would come in and stop my brother from executing me... And it finally came to me... You were worried that an uprising would occur. Isn't that right, Duval?"

Marquess Duval stayed calm and responded, "Of course not, I didn't want to see your head rolling in the mud, Alaric. We may have our disagreements, but you are of royal blood. Your father would have been disappointed in me if I-

"BYAHHAHAH!" Alaric laughed again causing the three men to flinch.

When Alaric stopped laughing and looked at Duval with a serious expression.

"Cut the shit, Duval. I'm not a fool, and you don't have the balls to come up with an idea to help me. You would have kept your mouth shut if it weren't for the fear of a potential civil war... And you were hoping that I would agree to whatever scraps you want to throw my way in order to get my support? You are the most predictable Prime Minister in Fiafyrian history... And you're so short-sighted that you will damn the Kingdom to ruin."

The Marquess was still smiling as if he was enjoying himself.

"So, Alaric. Since you think you're so smart. Tell me, how did you hire an assassin to get through all of the palace's security only to have them change their allegiance, not because of monetary reasons? But because she truly respects the crown and the royal family?"

Alaric froze up. The Marquess had a good point.

The Duke then wipes his lips with the napkin. Before looking at Duval.

"How is it that a Prime Minister is having trouble getting the loyalty of the minor lords? Are you so inept that you need me to become indebted to you in order to secure their loyalty? You're the one that should be asking yourself these questions, not me. If I didn't know any better. I would say that all those weak offers for minister positions are all you have for keeping Baroness Ysandra Fairchild and Baron Thaddeus Windermere from giving their support back to the King. If you're going to use your resources and position to make an alliance. Then you should know how to keep the loyalty of your new allies."

Count Sebastian Ingham shook his head as he saw the Prime Minister's confidence break.

"We come here to offer an olive branch to a traitor of the kingdom, and this is the thanks we get? Your Grace, if you have no desire to accept the generosity of the Prime Minister. Then I see no reason why we shouldn't have let the King execute you in the first place." Octavius said with a hint of anger in his voice.

Alaric looked at the Viscount and then to the Marquess.

"And have the kingdom plunged into a civil war? That's mighty risky, Viscount. You were meant to be in Duval's shadow."

Octavius gritted his teeth.

"That's what I thought... Listen, I took my one chance to get the throne for my son. And now I'm paying the price. But I can promise you one thing, Duval... I will never let the Alliance of the Divine Three take over my Kingdom by letting one of their whores spread their legs wide open to my nephew. That bitch has no place in the court of Fiafyr."

Alaric slammed his fists down onto the table.

"You can't stop the marriage from happening, Alaric. And all your fear-mongering over the Divine Three trying to claim my kingdom is nothing short of lunacy! All because you think Quinus's heir won't be Fiafyrian enough? It's a waste of my time reasoning with you. This Kingdom will become safer with this marriage, whether you like it or not."

"And the moment that a half-blooded Diviner takes the throne. Is the moment the Alliance takes control over my country."

"You're being paranoid. We can't have conflict be the answer to all of our foreign problems! What would happen if the Kingdom of Fiafyr became an empire? Huh? Do you think the other races will sit idly by and let us humans have our bastion? You've read the history books just like I have. We would be lucky if it was only the High Elves coming after us!"

Alaric leaned back into his chair and smirked at Duval.

"Stagnation leads to failure, Duval."

"NO! Keeping ourselves from overreaching will be the only way to prevent our kingdom's downfall. You're too blinded by your ambition for power that you don't see the dangers that we are in."

"Who wrote those texts about the downfall of our ancestors? It was in the Demon's texts, the vampire's texts, and the High Elves' texts. Strange how it was never written by our forefathers. Don't you think?"

Duval sighed and shook his head.

"Or they are giving us a warning!"

"It's all hearsay to make humanity lag behind. If we don't make our move now. Then we will lose our advantage over the other races."

Duval stands up.

"I see there's no reasoning with you. If you lose your support, Alaric. I will be the first one to suggest that you be executed."

"Tell me Duval... What happens if the Alliance claims our kingdom... Wouldn't they be a step closer to becoming what you fear?"

"They won't!"

"Are you certain of that? If I recall, the Alliance is a coalition of kingdoms... They will have to make compromises in order to survive and evolve. But you are too short-sighted to have realized that."

"You talk nonsense! Come Prime Minister. Let's leave this fool to plot his next steps alone. I'm sure it will backfire on him just like what happened when he hired an assassin," Octavius said.

Marquess Duval gave the Duke a long look of disappointment. Before leaving with his allies.

Once they left the dining room. Alaric went back to enjoying his meal.

"Hahaha... If he hadn't insisted on meeting with me a day after I was punished I probably wouldn't have known that he was afraid of an uprising. That was a big mistake, Duval... I just need to make sure my friends don't leave my side."