

## A Ghost 191

### Chapter 191

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After the discussion finished and the plans were set, I had gone back to the rabbit-kin and decided to check on the quarantined elderly, the ones that were the most affected by the fever. There was certainly something within them that was affecting them more than the young, aside from their weaker bodies and the lack of more antibodies...

Syllis was very affected by the disease, and left rather worn down. Despite that, he was quite healthy after he was cured. So what made him grow so weak against the disease if the others near his age are able to contain it or resist it? Perhaps Syllis himself is weaker to the disease like... innately?

Maybe that could be? Or perhaps the lack of food and water is what made him grow so weak. There are certainly many factors that could decide what made him weaker, but perhaps the lack of food and water was the most likely of them.

The other younger rabbit-kin had been well feed now, with both meat and vegetables, alongside grains, fruits, and anything we could offer, until they all had their bellies filled. The elderly that is the most affected can barely eat, but we managed to feed them with vegetable puree and also herb tea, which seemed to calm down the pain they were feeling.

It was getting rather late, so I left the preparation of dinner to Lucifer and the rest, while I moved with Emeraldine towards another camp where I had put a setup to do some alchemy, putting a lot of glasses, flasks, and all sorts of alchemy items that I've stolen over the time I've been stealing stuff. I remember that the Necromancer guy that had the slaves and the bandits had a lot of alchemy items underground, probably from there I got a bunch.

I installed them around the camp and Emeraldine was ready, she had even made her long hair into a ponytail, and her sharp emerald eyes seemed ready to work. The elven girl was very beautiful all the time, but now she looked even prettier when she was decided to help me out.

We had taken into consideration bringing helpers, there were various people within the former slaves that were proficient in alchemy to an extent, even if only a little bit, they at least had the Skill at Level 1 or 2, but that was mostly because they were those that were forced to work by the Necromancer guy.

However, for now, Emeraldine said that it was better to simply do it ourselves, and then, at a later occasion, ask for assistance after we grasped the recipe and process, so we could get helpers that would aid us into making more potion faster.

“Do we got the ingredients ready?” wondered Emeraldine.

“Yeah, we got a pile of magic crystals which Catarina helped me triturate into dust, there’s also a lot of fresh water we got from a nearby river, there are also the herbs that worked with Syllis, and then, I got a nice pile of spider liver and pancreas, I had checked them before and disinfected them with your help, so things are more than ready.” I said.

“Very well... Then let’s do it.” said Emeraldine.

Alchemy was often kind of like cooking, you just add ingredients and begin boiling them, grilling them, extracting their “flavor” and essence, and all of that crap.

Emeraldine started through the basic recipe of making healing potions, where she added water with dust made of magic crystals and boiled it, while it boiled, the water slowly turned red-colored.

After that, we cut down the herbs and added them as thing as possible over the boiling water. And for the spider’s organs, we didn’t just threw them there, we first put them into large glasses and used techniques with Alchemy to “extract” the essence, which leaked like a purple-colored juice.

After around two hours, the only thing left was purple liquid, while the organs dried out. After that, we decided to add it into the red potion-like liquid that was left by boiling the water with the magic crystal dust.

And what came out of it would be seen tomorrow, as Emeraldine said that it had to boil for at least ten hours. She had conjured some spells using Alchemy, such as the Synthesis Spell, specially useful to merge ingredients into new components.

“Phew... That was it... It wasn’t so rough, well, I had to keep conjuring Alchemy so the things would bind together well, but it seems that it is finally done now...” sighed Emeraldine.

“Yeah, amazing work, Emeraldine, thanks for the insight too! I hope I can learn Alchemy one day... I wonder if you can teach me? Would it bother you?” I wondered.

“T-Teach you? It wouldn’t bother me at all! In fact, I would gladly teach you as many things as you want, Maria...” said Emeraldine while smiling gently.

“Really? Thanks a lot... I was counting on you this entire time for this... And also when we healed Syllis, you were the one that helped the most as well... Your magic and knowledge might save the life of many people soon... Well, you’ve already been doing that for a while now...” I said.

“Oh, well... I am happy that I can help those that need me... It makes me feel fulfilled to be able to help other people... So I am happy to help in anything I can...” said Emeraldine.

“I see. You’re a pretty good girl, aren’t you? I wonder if that feeling you have might come from your Job, I’ve heard that depending in the Job we have, we change a bit how we act. It is as if it defines how we are supposed to be.” I said.

“Hmm... Certainly, I suppose there is some influence in that... But it is also Skills and Titles, right? I’ve heard that depending in the Soul Book Status, we are shaped as people... But well, I’ve been like this since I was a child...” said Emeraldine.

“Is that so...?”

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After we were done with the potions, Emeraldine and I realized it was already midnight, so we just moved back to my carriage while eating some of the porridge left and some tea alongside a loaf of bread.

There, she continued her conversation with me. I was very interested in her and, well, her story. I've always been with her, and being my third companion ever. She had been someone that has always been there to help me and had even participated in many important fights.

I do remember that her mother was someone interesting, but she decided to elaborate further on what she taught her.

"I remember that my mother always used to tell me to use my power and wield it to help other people in need. She always said that empathy was the greatest virtue and what made us people. It was one of the things that differentiated us from monsters and beasts, and something that broke through the barriers of race, ethnicity, and even language..." said Emeraldine.

"Your mother... Was quite wise. I suppose there is a beautiful thing about such virtue as empathy. You're probably one of the nicest people I've met in my life... In a world like this, filled with monsters and dangers everywhere, it's pretty hard to find people like this, you know?" I said.

"Yeah, I know... I've... gone through my fair share of that harsh world, with people only filled with selfishness, indifference, and aberrancy..." she sighed.

Emeraldine looked at the floor rather sorrowfully all of a sudden. She had gone through a lot of ugly stuff herself... A lot of... traumatic things that I wouldn't really want to go through myself.

But because I had not gone through such things, I cannot completely relate to her suffering. Nonetheless, I've also suffered in other things, and I've grown a strong empathy for the things she had gone through and even more for the strong will she possessed.

Even after going through becoming a slave and being forced to work in the underground alchemy facility and then made into a sex slave to satisfy the lust of the grotesque monsters she was with before, she was doing so well... she was very strong-willed.

Despite the adversities that people go through when you see them still standing and looking in front of their path, and walking through that path, even with all the scars and traumas holding them back... it's when you realize that these people are really the strong ones.

“Your mother must have been an amazing person, Emeraldine....” I said.

“Ah... Yeah... She was a strong woman... She raised me well...” she sighed.

“What... about your father?” I asked.

“My father? I... I never meet him. Mother said that father perished in battle,” Said Emeraldine.

“Oh... And what happened to your mother? Maybe we could go visit her one day,” I suggested.

“Ah... Maybe we could go see her in the grave... I wonder if you could see her soul?” Asked Emeraldine.

“Oh... She’s... I didn’t know....”

“Ah! I-I should have told you... Mother... My mother died when I was 12... She passed away after protecting the village from an Owlbear attack,” Said Emeraldine.

“I see... She was a strong warrior. I bet she was doing it for you too,” I said.

“Hmm... Mother was a former royal soldier of an Elven Kingdom... She moved on from that, though, when she got pregnant and moved to live inside a small elven village with me, but father had passed away before she moved out, sadly... even before she could give birth,” Sighed Emeraldine.

“That’s... I am sorry for your loss,” I said.

“Oh, don’t worry about it... it has been such a long time since then,” Said Emeraldine.

We stopped talking as we ate for a bit. I began to think about what I should say now as I had just made her remember the death of her mother and father, and now I felt terrible!

But I couldn't help but wonder where that village of hers was located. If her mother died when she was 12, she was surely raised by the people there, right? So I really want to meet them...

I wonder if there are elves in there...

"I wonder where is that village of yours... Are there elves there?" I wondered.

"Oh? My village? Yes... It is located close to the small Elven Kingdom within this continent I mentioned earlier. We Elves originate from the Alfheim Continent, but the Midgard Continent is in the middle of the world, so races all around the world have traveled here. There was once a large immigration of elves thousands of years ago. They moved into the unscathed woodlands and formed a Kingdom of their own. It is one of the few demi-human Kingdoms that have an important position in the continent!" said Emeraldine.

"Oooh... That's interesting, you know? I had always thought this continent was rotten. Maybe it is just the Albraun Kingdom?" I wondered.

"I don't really know, but I moved to the Albraun Kingdom looking for work as an Adventurer. I mostly just wanted to explore the world since I was a little girl. I've always wanted to wander through the world and see everything there has to be seen... But I ended up spending my money badly, and I ended up sticking to that Duchy for over two years while slowly saving money by doing small works like hunting smaller monsters or collecting herbs for the Adventurer Guild..." sighed Emeraldine.

"Ah... That must have sucked," I sighed.

"Yeah, money is very important, and although I was someone that could take care of myself in the wild, I wasn't strong enough to go into a Dungeon on my own, nor was I strong enough to take down many enemies at once... I had tried making parties before offering my services as a healer, mage, and archer hybrid, but the parties I acquired were always filled with horny guys that only wanted me for my body..." sighed Emeraldine.

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“...And when I tried to find girls-only parties, they hated me for being popular with the handsome guys... so they never let me in...” sighed Emeraldine.

“E-Eh? What’s that kind of nonsense? These people are really stupid,” I sighed.

“I wouldn’t call them stupid. I guess I understand them... I just wish everyone wouldn’t simply judge me for my appearance... Guys only saw me as a sexy woman before seeing me as the person I was... and women also only saw my appearance as a nuisance without trying to know me better... My abilities were useful, but I was still a low-rank Adventurer too, and I didn’t have any fame other than being attractive, apparently... Ugh...” she sighed once again.

“Well, I have to agree with them in some of what they thought... You’re indeed a very pretty woman... But they should have tried to learn more about you. People are often very superficial, and I can understand that pain very well....” I sighed.

“Haha... Yeah... It is quite painful when you think about it... People think that because I was pretty, I had everything easy for me... but that wasn’t the case... things were hard... I tried to work hard on myself... in my strength, and in becoming a better person, but the first thing they judge in the end by looking at me is that I am some kind of whore...” sighed Emeraldine.

“Calm down... That happened long ago. We all know how you are here, and we love you for who you are, Emeraldine,” I said.

Emeraldine blushed a bit as she nodded.

“Y-Yeah... I know... Maybe I went too hard in my rant...” said Emeraldine.

“Hahah... it’s fine. It always feels nice to get out all the things you save inside for a while... It makes you feel freer,” I said.

“Yeah, you’re right...” said Emeraldine.

“Anyways, now that you’re here with us, how do you feel? I’ve always wondered if you’re comfortable, even when we move around way too much,” I said.

“Yeah, I feel comfortable... Since you saved me, I’ve decided to help you out, Maria... I worked very hard because I really wanted to stay at your side,” Said Emeraldine.

“And I am very glad I let you come with us! If I didn’t, everything might have gone awry and would have become way harder....” I sighed.

“Hehehe, I am glad I was useful! I worked my ass off... Ah! I-I shouldn’t have said that...” said Emeraldine.

“Hahahaha! Don’t worry! I like it when you talk more roughly. You don’t have to be so polite when you’re around your friends, dear,” I said.

“I-It still makes me feel a bit bad... But... I am glad I am not judged by talking more carefreely. Even if we end up being chased by the entire world, I like being with you and with everyone else, Maria... It feels like I’ve finally found the family I’ve been looking for since my mother’s death...” said Emeraldine.

“Really? I see... That just makes me want to hug you a lot, you know?” I sighed.

I hugged Emeraldine from her back, giving her a big bear hug and letting her head rest on my chest.

Emeraldine smiled warmly back at me while looking into my eyes from below.

“Thank you, Maria... For everything, you’ve done... I am happy with how things are, so don’t worry about me....” she said.

“I-Is that so? I-I wasn’t worrying or something....”

“You’re blushing....”



"I-I am? Well... I just wanted to tell you that I will always be there for you whenever you need a friend to talk with- No, a family... I-I want to become your family...." I said.

"Family?" she muttered.

"Yeah... I just want you to count me for everything... A-As long as it is not something overly complicated like doing Math...." I said.

"I am sure I will not ask stuff like that, so don't worry about that either..." said Emeraldine.

She lightly touched my hand and then held it tightly.

I looked at her hand, filled with life and light. Her aura was of pure radiance, the complete opposite of my own.

She was very warm too.

Touching my phantasmal hand must feel bad... since, as a ghost, I am extremely cold.

As a ghost... I cannot give warmth to anyone...

"I am sorry for not being able to give you the warmth you deserve... I am only but a ghost... I wish I could do more than this...." I sighed.

Emeraldine looked at me with a surprised expression.

"I-It's fine... Don't worry about it! I am just happy was things are... Even if you're a ghost, even if you were whatever other thing... I am sure I will still be with you, Maria... It doesn't matter if you can't give me warmth... I will make sure to warm you with my own body if you want," said Emeraldine.

"O-Oh... Y-Your own body?" I asked.

“Yeah, like this... Don’t you like to be hugged?” she asked.

Emeraldine then hugged me tightly over the floor. I ended up realizing we were resting over my bed already.

She was very warm... it was very comfortable to touch her.

“I like it... It feels nice... You soothe my heart, Emeraldine....” I said.

Emeraldine blushed a bit, growing redder.

“I-I do?” she asked.

“Yeah... I like being with you.” I said.

“I-I like being with you too...” she said.

“ ... ”

“ ... ”

An awkward silence came out of nowhere, and it became more and more awkward as we continued resting without talking...

“M-Maria...” she said.

“Y-Yes?” I asked.

"I hope we can continue having nights like these... Would you mind if I came here to sleep like this with you from time to time? Hugging you?" she asked.

"I wouldn't mind...." I said.

"That's nice to know..." said Emeraldine.

And like this, we ended up sleeping together, cuddling while holding hands.

It wasn't until the morning of the next day that I realized we slept in such a lewd way... as the sun of the sky illuminated our day.

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## Chapter 194

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A beautiful blonde girl was sleeping at my side.

She was resting her pretty face over my chest while sleeping soundly.

Her emerald eyes were closed, sleeping completely relaxed.

Her hair shone brightly, with a golden glow like as light of the morning sun reached her.

And her body was... very beautiful as well! More than once, I've envied her body... But I am also beginning to find it like a fine piece of art by itself.

God, this girl is way too pretty.

Is she the incarnation of a goddess or something?

Her slender legs moved around the bed as her breasts pressed tightly over my torso.

Her arms hugged my belly while her face rubbed itself over my chest.

The sunlight suddenly reached her face as she slowly woke up due to the light of the sun.

“Good morning, sunshine,” I said.

“Ueh? Ah...” Emeraldine looked at me with a sleepy face, and her hair was actually a mess.

“Did you sleep well? You can sleep some more, don’t worry,” I said.

“Hmm... I am so comfy here...” she said as she hugged me even more tightly.

“You really like hugging a ghost like me, don’t you?” I sighed.

“You’re more than a ghost... You’re so squishy and soft...” she said.

“I-I am? Maybe it’s the lack of bones?” I muttered.

“Haha... M-Maybe...” said Emeraldine.

I’ve been thinking for a while about my situation with the people I am currently living with every day.

Aside from the problems regarding the rabbit-kin and everything, there’s also the problem with them.

Well, it is not really a “problem,” but it is something I had never suffered before, so it is very similar to a “problem” to me...

It is, of course, being... loved so much.

But I am still unsure... I've always been an insecure person when it comes to romantic situations.

I am not even sure of my own feelings sometimes because my mind is always filled with many thoughts everywhere. It becomes progressively harder to assess them and gather them together.

Ugh, I guess this is why a brain is very useful. It lets you sort out your thoughts.

But when you got only a soul for all your thinking, it becomes harder because a stream of thoughts is flying everywhere.

I end up needing many minds to assess all my thoughts, and that only make it progressively harder to achieve all I have inside of my minds...

Ugh... It is even harder to explain than I thought.

The thing is, I am drowned in so many thoughts, emotions, and a lot of this "hate" or "negative emotions energy thingy" that all ghosts have, so it's harder to think if my very emotions are the sincere ones and not just the result of a spark of insanity within me.

But the last thing... when I spoke with Emeraldine, and we had such a cute night... I felt so happy.

It made me so happy to speak with her... to sense her feelings and learn more about her past.

It honestly... I don't know how to explain it...

But it made me see her as someone so precious.

Ahh...

Is this love? Do I like her?

I think I do...

"E-Emeraldine...?" I asked.

"Hm?" she responded.

"Do you... do you like me?" I wondered.

"Eh?!"

Emeraldine was taken aback.

"Sorry... Was it too sudden?" I asked.

"W-Well, a bit... Have you been thinking about this?" she asked.

"For a while now...." I responded.

"Oh... Well, if it wasn't obvious enough... Yes, I do like... I do like you..." said Emeraldine, only with a bit of shyness.

I suppose she had already accepted this long ago.

But I couldn't help but feel embarrassed even more when I confessed like this.

“R-Really? You like a ghost like me? You know I am a dead person, right? Y-You know I will never be able to... give you all the things that a living being can, right?” I sighed.

“I don’t think so... Maria, you’ve brought to me way more things than any living person has ever done... In fact, I feel like you’re the liveliest and most charismatic person I’ve ever met in my life! It is very hard not to think about you... All the time...” said Emeraldine.

“Uwah... Do you really think about all that... of me? I feel like I don’t deserve it....” I sighed.

“You do... You do deserve it... Don’t worry...” said Emeraldine.

“Emeraldine... You... you’re also one of the people I have a hard time with... because I cannot stop thinking about you all the time... Even when I wasn’t at your side when I went out, it was very hard for me to not think about you... Or Partner... or Lucifer... I guess I hold you three very deeply within my heart... But now that I got you here... I can’t help but think that... I-I... really like you too....” I said.

“M-Maria...” said Emeraldine in surprise.

She grew redder and redder.

“I feel like I had to say it... I just couldn’t contain myself anymore... I was about to explode if I didn’t say it... You’re so precious and cute, Emeraldine... I cannot... I cannot help but like you....” I said.

“P-Precious and cute? Uwawawahh...” Emeraldine began to cover her face while rolling on the bed.

She was very embarrassed.

“Y-You didn’t expect that I shared the same feelings?” I wondered.

“I-I didn’t! I thought you just liked me like a friend, but... y-you’re saying it in a more romantic way... right?” she asked.

"Yes..." I said.

"Oh my god... Oh my god!" she began to roll again on the bed.

"Ah... C-Calm down... It is okay... I won't do anything rash...." I said.

"I-I am not saying that because I think you'll do something, I won't like... In fact, I am honestly down for anything you could ever want to do with me..." she said.

"E-Eh? Th-That much?!" I asked.

"Yes..." she said, holding my hand.

"W-Well... I... I am still coming to think about these feelings... I feel like it's not right if I hurry up and end up doing something that I might regret later... We could progress through this slowly, right?" I asked.

"I-I guess... Th-There's no problem with me..." said Emeraldine.

"D-Do you have a problem with Partner and Lucifer? I like you, but... I also like both of them too... I feel like... I cannot stop liking them either...." I sighed.

"I-It doesn't matter... I already know that you kind of did... Since I began to like you that I did... I am fine with it because they're honestly my friends too... I want them to be happy as well..." said Emeraldine.

"Emeraldine... Thank you for... understanding this dumb ghost...." I sighed.

"B-But..."

Suddenly, Emeraldine got closer to me, very close. Her face was almost sticking to me.



"E-Emeraldine, you're a bit too close...." I said.

"C-Can we kiss?" she asked.

"K-Kiss? Seriously? Isn't that a bit too advanced?" I asked.

"I thought so... I guess we cannot yet..." she sighed.

"Lucifer and Partner would get so mad if they learned of this...." I sighed.

"Y-Yeah, I guessed so... Don't worry about it," she said.

Ah... If she says it like that, I really just want to give her a small kiss.

"Okay... come here...." I said.

"Eh? M-Maria- Muh?!"

Emeraldine was surprised as my lips touched her.

It was a beautiful feeling...

Ahh... So this is a kiss.

I have never kissed another person that I loved like this before.

It feels so nice.

It is so warm, soft, fluttering... like a delicious meal... a meal of love and passion.

The sound of our lips kissing could be heard around the carriage.

We ended up kissing rather passionately for more than just a few seconds.

When I moved my lips away from hers, Emeraldine looked at me with an enamored look that I had never seen before. She was red and breathing heavily. Her entire body seemed to be steaming as we stared into each other's eyes.

"Hahhh... Maria... Kiss... Give me another..." she demanded.

"Emeraldine..." I said.

And I ended up kissing her again, and again...

Ahhh~

I can't stop.

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Chapter 195

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Within a dark space atop the very skies of the world, several figures sat down around a large table. All of them were glowing with bright auras of elemental energies, and they seemed filled with antiquity and wisdom.

Even though they all looked like they were of different ages, they were all just as old as one another... perhaps, some were older though.

And those that were older... were actually the ones that looked the youngest.

Despite this discrepancy, these figures, all these dozens of figures, looked at a single figure within the table.

Many of them were in factions.

Despite how powerful they were individually, there was always someone stronger than them. The selected group of the strongest of them made groups, factions, or, as others called them, Pantheons.

These figures were... of course, the 86 Gods of the world.

Such mystical figures of incredible wisdom that had seemingly created and shaped a world by themselves...

Or was that true?

Did they do all that was said of them in religion?

Honestly speaking, it is all a mystery. Even the origin of the Fragments of Evil that come from the Evil God, the former God of War that had gone berserk for power but was ultimately defeated and divided into pieces by the other Gods... could be all just an invention of the people.

What was true, and what was right?

Even these powerful figures filled with mystery wouldn't simply and easily reveal the mysteries of the world of Yggdrasil to one another.

After all, as they had seen it all, given it for granted, why would they even speak about it?

However, there were many continents in the world. Most of them overlooked different continents and assessed their population, and saw what the civilizations were up to.

Although they were not dedicated to interfering, and most of the time, they didn't give much attention to things, they had gathered in a council after one of their Gods, the God of Light, who had managed to become a prominent god within the Pantheon of Asgard and had called for a meeting.

The figure of an enormous and wise man sitting over a throne made of gold overlooked the other gods. His long white beard, his golden patch, and the two crows sitting at each side of his shoulders...

The mysterious God of Light that the Holy Church of Asgard praised as the one true God whom all others served looked at a certain figure sitting down right in front of him, in the opposite direction of this gargantuan table.

His sharp golden eye seemed filled with a certain tinge of... anger.

This anger was multiplied even more as the one sitting in the opposite direction of him, right in front of him through the table, was smiling.

Another figure, the God of Thunder, a beautiful man with long blonde hair and beard, wearing silvery-white armor and having a stoic expression, glared at the God of Light.

The man had pale-white skin and sharp aquamarine eyes, and his entire presence was domineering and powerful, stable and strong, like a mountain. His aura exuded the power of thunderstorms, and on his right hand, there was a large golden hammer.

"Why have you called us here, father? Do you know how busy we are?"

"Busy? Hahahaha! You? Busy? Don't make me laugh, dear brother!"

Suddenly, a second figure laughed.

This figure resembled a slim and tall man, with pale white skin and long purple hair reaching up to his chest. There was makeup over his face, making him resemble more of a woman.

His smile seemed filled with a jester-like vibe to it, and his laughter made him look like a clown laughing at a very good joke.

His clothes were dark, mildly decorated as if he were really some sort of jester or a buffoon.

He held a long staff that had a black jewel on top of it, flashing with bright darkness that twisted around endlessly.

His presence might look ridiculous, but he exuded a great amount of power. Dark, chaotic power.

The God of Thunder glared at this god... his brother, the God of Chaos.

"Why are you laughing at me, you jester?" asked the God of Thunder.

"There is nothing to be busy with, isn't it? What else is there for us to do than sit and watch the world around us?" asked the God of Chaos.

"...Enough. I didn't call you here to argue. I have brought you here because of the recent issues occurring..." sighed the God of Light.

Several other figures, all exuding strong and colorful auras, glared at the God of Light while squinting their eyes. They didn't seem to agree too much with this God's policies and what he has been doing with the humans of Midgard.

However, they kept themselves quiet, as they didn't really like conflicts. Of course, some of them were bolder and asked away.

"God of Light, you've brought us here without properly telling us what is happening. Let me tell you that I am not someone that you can easily order around. Just because you're dominating Midgard with your

church doesn't mean that you've become the chief of the gods out of nowhere... I have come here, like most of the Gods here, because we thought something of dire emergency was happening, and it better be something worth our time." Said a beautiful elven man with long blonde hair and green robes decorated with paintings of forests, animals, and nature.

His sharp emerald eyes shone brightly, as this was the God of Nature.

"I agree with my brother... God of Light quickly explains yourself. Instead of pondering for more minutes, I want to go back to my divine realm. I am not in the mood to gather here to talk about meaningless things..." sighed another God, a Goddess, to be exact, the twin sister of the God of Nature, the Goddess of Fertility and Love.

Her appearance was mildly similar to her brother, although her more feminine and domineering air made her resemble a beautiful empress.

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## Chapter 196

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The God of Light's sharp yellow-gold eye glared down at the twin gods with a domineering presence. His entire aura encompassed the entire place, flashing with bright light.

His sharp eye seemed to glare at the two as if saying, "Shut up."

However, the two Gods, who had a lot of pride, fought back against his domineering presence. They were not going to let themselves be intimidated by him.

Their presence which exuded the colors of green and gold, seemed powerful when combined... the God of Light slowly moved back his aura, realizing he had stepped a bit too ahead of his own boundaries.

After all, all the Gods were powerful. Even the God of Light had to know this and not step ahead of his boundaries and do something reckless... well, not yet...

The Gods looked at the scene in silence.

Until things finally calmed down, and the God of Light closed his eye and sighed.

“You’re right. I apologize for calling all of you as if it were an emergency, but for my current situation and those within my Pantheon, it might truly be like one... There has recently been a series of reincarnated souls that had arrived within Midgard. I am concerned about what this might truly mean...” said the God of Light.

“Reincarnated souls?”

“You mean those born with Unique Skills?”

“Well, there had been more recent cases....”

“But can we really do much against this? What we can do is very limited....”

“True.”

“It all comes down to....”

“Hm...”

The Gods suddenly glanced at the figure of a young-looking woman with long silvery-white hair and sharp crimson-red eyes sitting on a throne of darkness and bones. An eerie, dark, and phantasmal presence was exuded from her very being.

“Why don’t we cut the formalities and your attempt at making this meeting seem like the problem is of the entire continent when your issue is with me, Odin?” announced the girl.

Everyone was shocked by her boldness! The gods that belonged to the God of Light pantheon seemed shocked by the goddess' insolence over their holy figure, but the rest of the gods, especially the stronger ones such as the God of Nature and the Goddess of Fertility and Love, began to smile a bit.

Having been called by his name, the God of Light couldn't help but give an angered smile back at the girl, as the veins on his forehead looked like they were about to burst at any moment now.

"Hel... Do you think you have the right to call me by my name so defiantly?" he asked.

"Why wouldn't I? I can call anyone however I want to. I am death." Said Hel, the Goddess of Death, and the major problem before Odin's plans!

And of course... she was also the major benefactor of the one that Odin had begun to hate a lot recently, a mere mortal being that... couldn't be called mortal anymore. A phantasmal entity, a herald of death and darkness that had been messing with the reincarnation circle, and had been raising Undead from left and right even more than other Necromancers that had surged through history...

In a year since her death, she had already become a complete nuisance to him, and having slain several of his most devoted priests, whom he had even blessed, was already the turning point.

After she was given the title of the Evil of the World, he already saw her as a menace that his mortals must defeat before she was to grow any stronger. Still, now that she had directly acquired the title of "God of Light Nemesis," there was no turning point anymore...

Of course, who else was better to blame for this annoying eyesore than her benefactor and the one that actually gave her the opportunity to rise back from the dead, Hel herself?

"...You're certainly death. Hel, tell me something, do you hate Midgard?" asked the God of Light.

"What nonsense are you spitting now? Why would I hate Midgard? It is clear as water that you're salty over my herald," said the Goddess of Death.

"Goddess of Death, mind your manners with our holy lord!"



“You can’t just be so bold with your words!”

“You dare call our lord... salty?!”

“Haha! Hahahaha! That’s your granddaughter for you!” laughed the God of Chaos.

“...”

The God of Light didn’t consider the Goddess of Death, his granddaughter. After all, Loki, the God of Chaos, was adopted.

She didn’t have any blood relation with him... and he couldn’t see her as anything more than an obstacle.

Of course, although it was a well-known secret that Loki, the God of Chaos, was the son of Ymir, the God of Titans...

“God of Chaos, stop messing around!”

“This is a serious matter. You shouldn’t be laughing at this....”

“Such a jester....”

“Goddess of Death, there is something wrong with you. What is your intention? Why are you letting this being thrive so much? You’re declaring war against me?” asked the God of Light.

“War? You can’t fight death. Death comes to all...” said the Goddess of Death.

"I am not in the mood for your nonsense. Is this being... the entity you've awakened, a herald of your own opinions and thoughts? Of your own intentions?" asked the God of Light.

"No? I just gave her my Divine Protection because she looked promising to me. I've been looking at the scene for way too long sometimes. I just wanted to see if I could do something now, even if a little move on the chess table can change the tide of a game completely..." said the Goddess of Death.

The illusion of a chess table suddenly emerged atop the table where the gods sat around, made of her own phantasmal powers.

The gods all around glanced at the scene in surprise, noticing that something was happening right before their noses. The two gods... had already begun to fight, even if indirectly.

The Goddess of Death against the God of Light...

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Chapter 197

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"Don't worry, father, I have already set countless challenges! And I've continued to do so! Humanity- no, all races must undergo evolution. Stagnation will do no good!" said the God of Chaos while laughing mischievously.

"I think you've done way more than you were requested to do, God of Chaos." Said the God of Light.

"What's wrong, grandfather? My father merely enjoys a good show..." said the Goddess of Death.

The God of Light showed clear annoyance and discomfort as he looked at Loki and Hel.

These two figures really got on his nerves, and it's not as if those outside his pantheon were making things better. They were only worsening the situation by looking defiantly at Odin as if they were saying, "serves you right!".

But what was this issue that Odin had? Certainly, having his priests killed by this ghost couldn't be enough to anger him, right?

Or was it?

"And why are you getting angry over mortals dying? I never thought you were so fixated on them... Don't worry, I am taking good care of their souls- Oh, right, she can eat and destroy souls, my bad, they might not even have a nice afterlife then, hahaha!" laughed the Goddess of Death.

The God of Chaos laughed at the side of his daughter.

"Hahahahaha! She's hilarious, isn't she?" he laughed.

"..."

The God of Light seemed to grow more and more infuriated.

"Loki! Stop messing around! Do you dare offend our own father?! Calm down, your daughter!" said the God of Thunder as lightning came out of his body.

"Thor, this doesn't have anything to do with you. Shut up." Said Loki with a serious and annoyed expression on his effeminate face.

"You bastard... If it has to do with my father, then it has to do with me too!" roared the God of Thunder: Thor.

The conflicting interest between the two was clear. The God of Light wanted to expand his influence, and to do that, he required his church priests, the strongest he had and the ones blessed by him, to spread the religion and his words to the people.

The more influence there was, the more power he would gain. He wanted the entire Continent of Midgard to become his domain and then expand to other areas using his humans as pawns.

This is how Gods fought. They didn't fight against one another, but instead, they used humans and mortals as their chess pieces. Pantheons fought one another through this method as well; the factions used their mortals to represent them.

Of course, the problem arose when the "nuisances" showed up on the continent of Midgard... The Dragon Tribe, the Majin Tribe, the Demon King... Well, more like, they were always there, to begin with.

Odin simply saw them as a nuisance that shouldn't be here... and things escalated quickly into a full-fledged war. He wanted the entire continent to be the land of humans, not the land of humans AND other races... simply put, humans were the race that was the most compatible with him. They were the ones most compatible with his element, his words, his teachings, his soul even...

This is why some even called him "The God of Humans" although he was always annoyed by such words, they held a strong truth to them. Of course, other gods were playing a role in the war against the Demon King. But even when they lost and the Demon Kingdom and the Dragon Tribe were exterminated, there were still nuisances lurking around. Little tribes left that wandered around aimlessly.

He wanted to clean all this from Midgard, so his humans could dedicate themselves to a full-fledged expansion and multiplication of their population ALL around the entire continent.

It seemed unrealistic, to be honest. Midgard was a planet-sized continent. It was bound to happen for people of other races to show up there and begin growing their own kingdoms, nations, and more, primarily due to how the other continents were connected to the Midgard continent through the Bifrost, the rainbow ice that connected the continents together across the oceans.

For eons, the populations of each continent had walked out of their homes and populated other areas, looking for places where they could find more comfortable places to live. It was bound to happen for demi-humans to emerge in Midgard, despite humans being the most common.

Odin's obsession with humans and Midgard was sick, but he called Hel and Loki the insane ones because they didn't want the world to stagnate. Loki brought challenges, which he found annoying, despite them

being useful to bring evolution to the people and not stagnate in place, challenges, dangers, and prizes and wonders. It was something that was needed for a world to keep moving forward.

The common danger in monsters brought unity to the people. They worked hard to stay together and survive together. Odin didn't realize this completely and thought that Loki's schemes were going beyond this, despite the adoptive son having good intentions, but his antics and personality made it hard to believe...

Hel, in the other case, seemed more mysterious, but she seemed to "want to participate" in this entire fight between gods as she had stayed in the back for way too long. More than anything, she desired an avatar, someone that would represent her.

And also... she wanted someone that would take a role similar to a Soul Reaper, a person that brought down those that wanted to fake death, such as the immortal Vampires that had lived for decades and had been messing around with people for way too long, or to fight back against Odin's intentions by attacking his church through her, even though she had not provoked any of this, as it was mostly all this ghost girl's doing.

But was this all the gods' intentions? Was this truly everything there was to it and nothing else? There was certainly something more... something more to it...

The meeting between gods simply brought more discord than anything, and it was quickly closed by the God of Light after he decided that he didn't want to look at Hel in the face anymore.

There was no point in trying to reason with the Goddess of Death...

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## Chapter 198

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The God of Chaos looked down into the entire world of Yggdrasil with a pleasant smile.

The enormous world tree towered upwards into the skies, covering the vastness of the world with its enormous branches.

It was located in the middle of all continents, right in the middle of the oceans. It was a mystical place that not all races could easily access.

He suddenly sat down over one of its branches, as his darkness suddenly began to seep within its branch, infecting it with the power of chaos.

“Hm...”

He quickly stopped infecting the branch as his darkness went back to his body. He had done this without realizing it. Sometimes he had to be careful.

“Now, now... I wonder what my precious little children are doing...” he said with a smile.

He wasn't looking exactly at Hel or his other two children, Fenrir and Jormungandr, but he was looking at something even further away from the place where they lived, in the underground depths of Helheim, but above the surface, where the fragments of evil had spread after their fragmentation.

Loki was a god of trickery. He enjoyed doing pranks and scheming, weaving countless cunning schemes while planning what to do with others. His goals were unknown to most people, but those that knew him well could easily tell he was up for the ride.

He wanted a fun time.

Of course, there was another meaning to his actions, a much noble one.

To stop stagnation.

He wanted mortals to continue fighting for survival and growing from each of their experiences.

In a world without dungeons or monsters, what else would there be for these people than everything easily accessible?

As the god of chaos, a primordial element of the universe, he couldn't let them simply stagnate like the God of Light desired and fought back against his own father's desires.

Many gods agreed with his decision, and Odin couldn't do much against him either. The gods disliked fighting one another unless they posed a threat to the gods themselves, but none of Loki's antics ever made any threat to the gods. It was just a challenge to mortals.

And it wasn't as if the challenges and trials were not without rewards. Monsters brought their meat, pelt, bones, and materials to the mortals, which the mortals used to advance their technology, to eat, to survive, and to build better places, make new armor, and weapons, and fight back more efficiently.

Magic Crystals were an abundant resource that was used daily in several types of ways and had become a staple for the society of the world. This resource was brought to the world through the power of the God of Chaos, of course.

Loki smiled pleasantly as he noticed the several auras of darkness leaking from within.

Although the fragments of evil had been sealed, other catastrophes were slowly growing...

And even then, these fragments of evil... one of them which was closely related with the girl that had become troublesome for Odin, was being, as of now, played with by mortals.

"These mortals are really stepping out of their boundaries, even more than the Vampires... But even then, does Odin realize they're moving the strings behind most of the Albraun Kingdom? Well, this is not even the main Empire of where the church dominates, so I suppose he seems to not care as much, despite playing around with such a dangerous power..." sighed Loki.

The Fragments of Evil contained incredible power within them, merely extracting the growths coming from a sealed fragment brought to humans and the Vampires behind them a series of new materials and tools to play around with. Maria had already faced several foes that were using them for evil...

Even Takeshi and Laura, who were created as chimeras capable of harboring the power made out of materials grown from the sealed fragment of evil, were a mere experiment for what they were planning. Even the black potions that could bring great power to those that drank them but turned them insane, or Cursed Weapons made of these materials, which contained great power... it was all slowly escalating out of control with each new invention.

“Humans,... you shouldn’t really mess around with these fragments. You’re only going to worsen the situation for you more than anything... \*Sigh\*... Oh well, I know that my daughter’s herald was specifically made to deal with them... as the one from the family that was tasked to defend and protect this fragment from being used for vile purposes... I have great expectations that you might resolve the conflict... but if not, well... I have already prepared and orchestrated several other calamities to befall over those that dare to disobey the will of the Gods...” laughed Loki.

He looked into the several spots of darkness, and as he quickly smiled, a sickly and rather sadistic smile surged on his beautiful and feminine face.

His eyes shone with bright crimson-red light as he looked down into Midgard.

Within this place, there was a large foggy forest filled with spiders.

And within this forest, there was a large dungeon that extended underground...

In there, a Calamity was slowly growing.

“Hm... She had gotten in its way... I wonder if the two will clash? It would certainly be a sight to see! Oooh! I am getting pumped up! But will Hel be angry if she dies? Ah... Well, if she’s smart enough, she’ll evade this. Nobody that is sane enough would battle something so strong unless they got a death wish... Well, she’s already dead, hahaha!”

The God of Chaos laughed carefreely while sitting over the branch of the world tree. A gigantic squirrel wandered around the branches, noticing the insane man laughing while sitting on a branch.

“Oi! Why are you in here, huma- Aaaaan?!”



The squirrel was about to tell him to get out of the tree before it actually realized it was a God...

“Hm~? Oh, little squirrel... What are you up to today~?” laughed Loki.

“L-Lord Loki! I-It is nice to meet you... My name is Ratatoskr, by the way... Haha...” the squirrel sighed.

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## Chapter 199

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“Right, right! I almost forgot your name, little squirrel,”

Loki looked at the large squirrel that was sometimes seen wandering around the branches of the world tree. The beautiful squirrel was actually filled with a large quantity of divine power and could be said to be a legendary divine beast.

Ratatoskr was the messenger of the gods, sending messages from branch to branch from god to god... however, it suddenly noticed someone sitting on a branch and thought it was some human.

It was uncommon for any mortal to reach the world tree so easily, but there was already a big city down there, made of many mortals across the world that had gone through the turbulent seas and reached this tree, seeking riches and adventures.

However, for a mortal to reach this high in the sky, they clearly required something more than just the ability to fly, as there were several layers of pressure that emerged with the higher altitude they flew, inhibiting those with magic capable of allowing them to fly into the skies from advancing any further.

So those that have reached high in the branches were mortals amongst mortals, powerful heroes of legend... they were uncommon but existed, and the squirrel had seen various of them firsthand.

It was said that those capable of reaching the top of the Yggdrasil Tree would be given the blood of the gods and become gods themselves...

But how many people had been able to accomplish such a feat?

Were the legends true, anyway?

Well, in such legends, every hero that had gone into the higher floors of the Yggdrasil Tree never stepped down anymore, strengthening the beliefs of such a legend.

After all, the World's Tree could also be considered to be one of the greatest trials in the entire world of Yggdrasil, as its interior was an immense maze.

Gods, of course, were able to do whatever they wanted. If one wanted to sit on the branch of the world tree, there wasn't much stopping them from doing so.

The God of Chaos enjoyed the view from high in the tree and admired the beauty of the world... a world that has been shaped through eons of history.

"What have you been up to, Ratatoskr? We just had a meeting with the Gods, so I came here to relax." Said the God of Chaos.

"I-I am delivering some messages..." said Ratatoskr.

"Oh? May I see them?" asked the God of Chaos.

"L-Lord Loki, it would be better if you didn't intrude in the privacy of other Gods..." said the squirrel.

"Bleh, so boring..." sighed Loki.

"T-Then, I will be going. Please make sure to not... infect the tree branches with your chaos..." said the squirrel.

Loki smiled back at the squirrel, a smile that seemed filled with an eerie dreadfulness that made the squirrel almost feel that time had stopped.

“Fufu, don’t worry~,” he said.

“M-May you have your own fun then...” said the squirrel before walking away hastily.

Loki looked at the squirrel walk away, as he desired to touch that very cute and fluffy tail one of these days, but that might have to wait for another day in the far future.

He looked down into Midgard, sensing the presence of the Calamities...

A smile surged on his lips.

“The Arachneia Empress is growing bigger by the day... I wonder what’s next...” he thought with a smile.

...

Meanwhile, within the Continent of Midgard, there was a Vampire sitting over a seat while reading many documents over a desk. Despite being an important figure within the entire Vampire Family behind the scenes in the Kingdom of Albraun, he was not devoid of paperwork... after all, he had to do a lot of things behind the scenes, which included illegal transaction deals and more.

His long silver-white hair shone brightly as the moonlight encompassed it from the window. His crimson-red eyes looked into the documents as he signed the last one of the batch. His eyes quickly fixated on the man standing in front of him, a young Vampire Subordinate that had been reporting him things.

He was a resilient young man, capable of resisting his bad treatment pretty well, although being a Vampire already brought a great deal of resilience and regeneration factor, so it was probably thanks to that as well. Who knows...

“I hope you’ve brought me good news. I am very busy here...” he said.

“My lord... Catarina’s team... Well, it was reported that they ended up finding the Ghost woman. Still, they also found the group of Priests and Mercenaries sent to exterminate the Goblin Menace near the Duchy of Affnaria... One thing led to the other and- Agh!”

The young Vampire’s neck was suddenly grasped by an invisible force, making it impossible for him to breathe properly. He felt like coughing now, but he couldn’t really cough either. He felt as if he was asphyxiating at every passing second. The mercilessness of the one doing this knew no bounds.

“Aghhh! P-Please... spare me, my lord! Unngghhh...” he cried.

The man in front of him seemed pissed. This was already... how many times has it been already?

Problems after problems all circling around this one woman...

This one damn woman who he thought he was able to easily get rid of alongside her damned family!

So why? Why was she pestering him even now, after her death?!

This felt like irony.

This one-woman... was she so relentless she wouldn’t let him rest even after she died?

And now that he realized it was that very woman... That very woman... that one that after the revelation in the Duchy of Benettina finally revealed herself as that witch...

“You’re telling me my special Sunlight-resistant group... led by Catarina, lost to her?! But weren’t they A Rank in power?! Wasn’t Catarina able to breakthrough?! Such a useless investment!” roared the man, hitting the young vampire man to the floor mercilessly...

BAAM!

“Ugh... My lord... It wasn’t your fault...” he muttered.

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Chapter 200

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“Of course, it wasn’t my fault! Whose fault would it be than on you all, incompetent servants?!” roared the man, hitting the table and standing up.

BOOM!

The entire table turned into pieces in an instant of his incredible physical strength. He glared down at the man on the floor as he quickly stood up and bowed down to him once more.

“I-I am sorry, my lord!” he cried.

“Explain to me more! What happened?!” roared the man.

His entire presence grew larger as his entire aura began to come out of his body like an endless ocean of crimson-red light, encompassing the entire room with its deadly embrace.

“The Priests! The Mercenaries and the Priests got in the way!” cried the man.

“ ... ”

The Lord walked around the room while thinking.

“So the priests will most likely also try to get rid of her, what a pain... If they were a church that only originated from Albraun, then it wouldn’t be hard to take it over, but they come from their own

Empire... They're simply meddling with every single kingdom they can get their claws into after all..." sighed the man.

Perhaps by using his connections, power, and resources, he would be able to take over certain branches of the church in this country. Still, the root of the entire church was a completely external nation, so he couldn't do much before he was to get caught in the end.

And even despite all of that, those corrupt enough to help him and cooperate with him would be easily taken down, while the faithful would use this opportunity to get rid of the menaces of the continent, the Vampires, which the church of the God of Light saw as enemies and monsters.

He had to sadly bear with the church fanatics and find other alternatives to finding a way out of this conflict, if possible, but the possibilities and chances were dim. What else could he accomplish?

"Such a nuisance, truly..." he sighed.

The church was a real eyesore to his plans. Although the royal family of the Kingdom, the Albraun Royal Family, was cooperating with him, and he had reached as far as even retrieving the fragment of evil from them, the church had already begun to try to dig their hands into it, desiring the fragment for themselves.

Of course, they were a mere church, not a nation that could force their way into others, and the King and the royal family had the Fragment of Evil well-guarded using the help of the Vampires and their underworld connections.

But how long would it be until the church attempted to be more aggressive with its approach?

And now that the ghost woman has begun to get involved in all these problems... Things were really getting worse.

Already two of his forces were destroyed by her: the one producing the black potions and the others producing the chimeras that could utilize the power of the Fragment of Evil somehow...

They were important losses, and he actually regretted them quite a lot. They were important for his research and also for his money-making potential, but now all of it was gone, completely gone.

The losses were big because those potions were being imported to various duchies that planned to use them to fight against one another. Now that the supply was cut, this entire process was cut down, which would have been very beneficial to him.

And the chimera's ultimate goal was to create powerful mass-produced units capable of wielding the power of the fragment of evil and quite possibly be able to fuse with the real deal ultimately!

But now, all of that was gone from his grasp, even more, when he had hopes that the last one could be achieved soon as the knowledge about a pair of twins that were the first "perfect" test subjects that were able to take over the power of the fragments of evil... or well, the black crystal that grew out of it, a powerful and highly corrosive material.

And now the church was getting their claws into his own problems, trying to take her down in his place. Perhaps this wouldn't be so bad if it wasn't because he really wanted to take revenge on her, and these pesky servants of the God of Light were simply getting in the way at this point.

"Hahh..."

The man sat down over his chair once more as he looked down at the floor.

"..."

The other Vampire looked at him with a bit of fear. He didn't know what his lord would do now as his temperament grew more and more unstable over the years, as if he were growing senile.

"Go away." He said.

The young Vampire nodded nervously and quickly rushed outside of the room.

“Well, she hasn’t been seen for a while. Should I just forget about her for now and hope she doesn’t show up once more to ruin my plans? ...If she’s really Maria, the Maria from the family that descended from the heroes given the task of protecting the sealed fragment of Evil... it is a matter of time before we clash once more... and the time she has been away might only be a way for her to grow stronger somehow...” he sighed.

Hope seemed rather dim, as the situation was only worsening with every day, and things would only continue getting worse as time went by. Could there be something that could be done now? Or was there the only thing left but to resign?

Well, not really. This Vampire wasn’t a person that easily gave up. He didn’t achieve all these things by giving up and being a coward. He got this far thanks to him grasping every opportunity he got, even if he had to betray his former allies in the past, even if he had to sell them off, even when he had to do all the things he never thought he would have done before.

And it’s not as if he didn’t have the resources or the personnel to strike back against the witch that had now come back in the form of a powerful and highly intelligent specter.

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