

A Ghost 211

Chapter 211

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As a Ghost and a Death Attribute Mage, I have a certain ability. If I touch a soul, I can see through their past, even their memories, and perhaps a glimpse of the future they could go through.

It's nothing crazy, and it only works with souls that are already outside a body. It won't work on anything else. It is somehow a way to see what might happen to them.

By touching the souls of the people of the spider dungeon, I saw their past and what they went through. It wasn't pretty, but it was a swift death.

The venom the spiders injected into them almost instantly killed them, and then... well, their bodies were slowly drained out of their internal juice... yeaah, pretty horrible.

I suppose they were already dead when that happened, so it was okay... I still feel bad when I see these souls. Some of them had a very strong and terrible death and so agonizing that their appearances turned amorphous as if they had become a mass of venomous purple liquid.

Maybe if I use Fake Life on them, they could turn into Poison Ghosts or something... but I really don't want to do that.

I want to go with Syllis' wishes and... give these people a nice and peaceful ending, one where they'll go to the afterlife and rest once and for all.

I looked into the moonlight.

The little girl inside the dungeon... was she at fault for their deaths?

Most likely.

She didn't show herself in these memories, so she did things indirectly, but she still did them... she manipulates and controls the hive of spiders, after all.

So... in a way, she's the murderer of Syllis' family.

...

I don't really know what to think about this. I have so many conflicted emotions.

But I really don't want to kill her... Maybe because she has the body of a little human-like girl.

Perhaps if she were a mere monster, I wouldn't have doubted, right?

Even as a ghost, my mind is very human-like sometimes... and I am a big softie too.

I just can't bring myself to kill a child.

Maybe she's just inexperienced. Perhaps it is not too late to show her something different in life, to teach her how to use her strength...

This girl is very mysterious... I don't think I've told my friends about her yet.

I don't want to... I want to keep her a secret for now.

She's... what if they want to kill her to avenge Syllis' family?

What I fear is that I wouldn't be able to stop them because I know it is justified.

And I know she's just a monster deep down...

She's certainly not a normal girl...

Agh, who would have thought that a ghost would have morality problems? I really suck at these sorts of things... I am not cut out for this.

But really, what is she anyway? I can't tell. She's a girl-shaped monster generated by the dungeon? But... she's way too strong.

Was she born this strong? Or how does that go? I am wondering these things because I can't stop thinking about her... quite possibly because I am with her right now, using a clone.

The day passed normally, as she played with me and tried biting me a couple of times until she gave up. After that, she ended up going to read and then went to sleep again. She squeezed me into the bed with her... she likes my little snake clone, I guess.

But this girl... never walks outside.

Is she afraid of the outside world? Or, most likely, the spiders provide her with everything, so she doesn't need to walk outside.

But it feels as if sometimes she really wants to go outside, walk outside, and meet the world outside... I wonder if she really does not want to go to the outside world... maybe... she's afraid of coming out of her dungeon?

Well, seeing how powerful she is and the immense aura of power she emanates, plus the spiders working to her command, it's better if she doesn't go outside.

Yeah, better keep the little problem girl inside the dungeon for now! I will have to smother her down with my motherly love until she becomes a good girl and not a world-ending entity.

Because if she controls all these spiders... she could very much take down an entire Kingdom.

I think... she's very dangerous indeed! I think she's stronger than all of us combined too.

We can't even see her status yet, but she has such a powerful aura coming out of her. Is she a goddess or something?!

Well, not that strong but still... at least above A-Rank... maybe... S-Rank?

Ugh... aren't S-Rank threats... like... continental level and beyond? She's really troublesome.

Yeah, we better not go to the dungeon to waste away our lives. Thank you very much.

And she doesn't seem to want anything other than eat and read her books. In fact, she seems very childish.

Without any intention of conquest, she'll only make her spider hunt whatever they find to feed themselves and to feed her... so there isn't any real incentive for them to go out of their way and attack innocent people far away from here.

But the scale in which their strength is... Well, that's the problem, it is very big, and they're very strong too, so it's gonna be troublesome either way.

For now, it would be better to let her be. I want to use my clone to grow closer to her a bit. If I can slowly smother her down and make her into a nice girl that will not destroy the world with her army of giant spiders, we can get to a good ending.

But seriously, this girl is so strong she seems right out of some sort of Game Boss bestiary... Is she some sort of living calamity? If she's blessed by Loki, the God of Chaos... then she's certainly someone deserving of that Divine Protection, right?

This girl is really such a headache...

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We decided to purify and exorcise the souls of the Rabbit-kin with Emeraldine today in the morning, right as the sun emerges from the horizon. I think it is a fitting time of the day to do it.

There haven't been any monster spider attacks lately. I think they are not coming here for the moment, or they might try to avoid us... or something.

I suppose the spiders are not resentful, so that's good. Maybe they just don't even know we killed their squadron because they simply never came back.

So perhaps they don't know what happened or are still waiting for them to come back with food for the nest one day in the future... maybe.

Anyways, this is not important anymore.

We brought the bones, and the souls are with me.

The bones... we decided to burn them in a large bonfire, separately from one another.

I knew which bones were from which person thanks to their "essence" and "phantom," which I was able to identify coming from certain people.

The bones were calcinated until they became ashes, and each graveyard was where we put the ashes underground.

Syllis asked us to also put a seed from any plant in each grave. This was some sort of ritual, where they always put the corpses of their people in places where plants were growing and left seeds in there so the people would "revive" as the plants of the forest.

It was pretty beautiful... I felt moved.

We decided to do as they said, and we put a seed in each grave, honoring these people.

I hope that their essence and the nutrients of their ashes can turn into beautiful trees one day.

And then, their souls.

Syllis and his sister, Bellerine, looked at the two souls of their parents.

Everyone present looked at the souls of their lost family members.

They were all floating around. They seemed to not recognize their family members.

After four years of being trapped inside a dungeon, they had changed a lot.

It was better not to show the souls to them from a close distance and let the people try to discern them... because there were a few missing.

These souls most likely ended up reincarnating inside the dungeon, as dungeons absorb souls and push them into their own reincarnation cycle, where they turn the souls into monsters.

That's how dungeons get their monsters, so that's how it usually goes with people who die inside of them.

But these people... were pretty strong to resist it for a while, even with the pressure of the dungeon slowly trying to absorb them.

"Then... [Purification]."

Emeraldine conjured a simple Life, and Light Attribute spell, a compound spell made of two elements merged together.

It is capable of... well, purifying things, including the souls of the damned that have stayed resentful for way too long.

FLASH!

Emeraldine closed her eyes as she offered prayers to the souls, prayers that her mother had taught her.

The Elves were very spiritual with their beliefs, and they prayed to the God of Nature and the Goddess of Love and Fertility, Freyr and Freyja, respectively.

There wasn't any crappy Light God there, so they prayed to these more mystical gods, connected with nature and all things related with care and love.

Her embracing light covered the bodies of the souls as their appearances began to change...

The souls, covered in scars, pain, and suffering, slowly began to leave behind this darkness and began to glow brighter and brighter, turning into beautiful forms of yellowish-gold light.

They were so beautiful that it seemed that they were not at all what they were before a few seconds ago... I couldn't believe it myself.

They suddenly showed their true appearances. The appearances of the rabbit-kin they once used to be... and all of them began to slowly glow brighter.

They felt relieved and smiled warmly back at the people around them. Some recognized their friends and family members that had died back then, while others seemed to not be able to discern them... but felt within the light that these souls emanated that there was some sort of gratefulness to it.

Syllis and Bellerine tried to approach the souls of their parents slowly, as tears began to pour out of their eyes...

There were certainly many things they might have wanted to talk about with them.

Many things they wanted to experience with them.

Yet... I suppose their end was very abrupt.

Very cruel...

I could notice in their faces filled with sorrow how much they wanted to talk with them and keep living with them.

But it was very clear that they were more than dead now.

After four years, they had gotten over it and matured and lived on their own just fine.

But still, seeing them here... probably hurt them a lot.

"Mom... Dad..." muttered Syllis.

"Papa... mama!" cried Bellerine.

The figure of a beautiful rabbit-kin woman slowly approached them, alongside a slender and handsome rabbit-kin man.

They seemed to recognize their children even after four years of them having grown up and changed...

"You've grown a bit, Syllis... Bellerine..." said their father.

“My children... I’ve missed you... every single day...” cried their mother.

“You’re going away?” asked Bellerine.

“It is what we must do...” sighed her father.

“But I don’t wanna!” cried Bellerine.

“It has been four years since we died... Bellerine... I am sure that my little girl has gotten past it, right?” asked her mother while smiling warmly.

She petted her head as the little rabbit girl cried loudly and tried to hug her, but her mother was ethereal and couldn’t be easily hugged.

But her brother hugged the little girl tightly. They felt the hug from their parents around them, an encompassing and warm light blessing their very souls with the love that only parents could give to their children...

“We’ll watch over you...” said their father.

“So take care, okay? I love you... I love you more than anything...” said their mother.

“We love you too...” cried Syllis.

“Mama... Papa... I will take care of brother...” said Bellerine.

“Hm! That’s the spirit.” Said their mother.

“Then... we are going....” Said their father.

“Yeah...” said their mother.

The mother and father held hands as they flew away with the other souls into the horizon. The light of the sun slowly dissipated their bodies like bright particles of light.

And one by one, they slowly dissipated with the wind...

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As we saw the souls slowly dissipate on the horizon, I suddenly felt as if something leveled up.

I looked into my Soul Grimoire, which emerged as a phantasmal book in front of me, and realized a few Skills and Titles leveled up... huh, I guess?

The titles that level up were Undead Queen, the Dark Witch, and Spirit Mediator... Interesting. Ah, talking about Spirits, I wonder if I'll ever get one myself. That never went anywhere, mostly because of all the stuff thrown at me back then.

But now that I am free and relaxed, can I get a spirit?! I want one! I even got a job that is about Spirits, and I remember getting a lot of Skills and Titles out of it that enhanced my power. I think I even got Spirit Magic, but without a spirit to back them up, they're useless!

Ugh... Well, I am always seeking for one, but Darkness and Death Spirits are very rare, according to Emeraldine, so I have to keep looking.

She said that they're very rare to find because Spirits thrive where there is a lot of energy, but in places where there is death and darkness, there isn't ever any energy there.

Maybe the night? Yeah, but the night is temporary, so spirits of darkness cannot really make a home out on the surface.

So I can find them underground? I don't really know, but that's what my common sense is kind of trying to tell me. Perhaps I can find them in the underground...

No, I am not digging right now or something. I actually want to get going now. We are pretty close to our destination now: the ruins of the ancient Demon Kingdom ruled by the old Demon King...

If I find a spirit on the way, that's nice. But if not... that's nice too, I guess.

Seeing how things are progressing now, we should be done by now.

But we'll let the people mourn for now, and then we'll proceed with moving out tomorrow.

I just want to relax for now and go to take a nap.

Ding!

[You have acquired the [Saint of Death: Lv1] Title Skill]

Huh?! What is this? I got another Title Skill? Haven't I gotten plenty of them now? How convoluted you want my status to be! And it has an eerie-sounding name to boot! "Saint of Death" doesn't sound nice to me... Am I really the saint of death itself?

Ah, makes sense, seeing how Hel granted me her Divine Protection and everything... But why did I get such a Title? System, can you tell me?

Chapter 214

I had suddenly been dragged elsewhere.

Everywhere around me suddenly changed.

The scenery, everything...

I was suddenly in a completely different place...

It looked like a large and endless dark cave...

It felt different from being on the surface... Is this not a real place but some sort of illusion?

A divine illusion of some sort? No... this is...

"You're inside of my Divine Realm. It is an embodiment of the Realm of Helheim. I can bring you here easily because you're just a soul. If you had a physical body, it would be impossible, even less a living one..." she said.

"O-Oh..." I said.

"It also works because you're a ghost! You're just the perfect and ideal Saint of Death for me in everything, Maria." She said.

"I see... Erm, why am I here?" I asked.

"You're acting very casually in front of me. Are you holding back the fear?" She teasingly asked.

"Well, a bit, but you're honestly pretty cute, so I can bear the fear a bit," I said.

"Huh? Cute?" asked Hel while tilting her head in confusion.

"Don't mind what I just said... I often talk nonsense when I am nervous...." I said.

"Fufu, am I cute to you? Nobody had ever told me that before..." said Hel; she suddenly smiled beautifully.

Damn it... she was really a stunner.

Why are men and women in this world so handsome and beautiful?! First Lucifer, then Partner, Emeraldine, Syllis, Catarina, Silvio, Francesco, and... Agh! Too many!

And now Hel?!

"Erm... As I said... it was something I said recklessly. Please don't mind what I say...." I said.

"So you're taking it back?" she asked with a pitiful look in her eyes, like a sad puppy.

"Ah... No! Th-That's not what I meant! You're actually very beautiful... I am impressed. But I suppose that's how goddesses are." I said.

"Oh my... Maria, you're trying to hit on me or something?" she asked.

"Huh?! No! I am just being honest...." I said.

"That's only flattering me even more... Maria, you're trying to seduce death~?" asked Hel.

"Hel! Did you just call me here for us to flirt?!" I asked.

"Ooh! No! Hahaha! Sorry, sorry, it just shocked me... I have never received this much praise before... You're too amusing, Maria. You're my little treasure... I am working hard to make you stronger, but I require more payback from you, so bring me more souls. Those ones you sent here were very good." Said Hel.

“Oh... Souls? But don’t I keep them with me as a Necromancer?” I asked.

“Well, yes, but you’ll also be able to send them here whenever you feel like it. Although you can use the help of your elf friend to purify the souls, and as an Apostle of Death, you’ll gain the power to send them here automatically! How amazing, isn’t it?” she asked.

“That wasn’t in the Title description....” I said.

“Well, there are always special abilities in everything! They won’t show in descriptions because abilities within your Soul Book are not just a game thing... They’re an expression of your soul, and the expression of a soul can grow and develop naturally into many thingies...” said Hel.

Hel was right. This power, the Status and all... wasn’t some sort of MMO game where we get every detail of everything... I guess that even with the amazing details of the descriptions, there is always something more hidden.

“I-I see. Thanks for the head ups....” I said.

It was becoming a bit awkward.

“Maria, I called you here because I wanted to have a more personal talk with you. We met briefly before now, but now that you’ve advanced so far, I can’t help but be rooting for you at every step you take... Dear Maria, you must know that there are many things brewing everywhere, you have to be careful... You’ve just avoided a catastrophe. That little spider girl is special. Make sure to take care of her.” said Hel.

“You know about her? What is she anyway?” I asked.

“Hmm... You could call her a living catastrophe, yes...” said Hel.

“Huh?!” I asked.

“Well... She’s a Spawn of Chaos, a Seed of Chaos created by my father... They’re beings made to bring challenges to the world... And well, to punish those that dare to meddle with the Fragments of the Evil God. Mortals must not dare to touch them and use them for their own selfish motives, or they’ll end up being punished by divine power.” said Hel.

“W-What?! Wait, hold on a bit... So the little girl is... A creation from the God of Chaos?” I asked.

“Why yes... You could call her somewhat of my sister... But she’s not as powerful as a goddess, but her potential is great...” said Hel.

“I see... I have to take care of her indeed....” I sighed.

“For now, I require you to tread carefully... The world might go upside down soon. The world is changing. Challenges are approaching. Things will not remain the same.” Said Hel.

“What do you mean by that?” I asked.

“Hmm... The God of Light has made you his enemy, so make sure to kill any follower you ever see of him... they’ll all try to kill you one way or the other.” Said Hel.

“Okay, but...!”

“And make sure to develop your powers. You’ve got a lot of capabilities you have yet to fully comprehend and use to your advantage, so dedicate some time to them.” Said Hel.

She’s just telling me what to do like a mother or something! Does she see me as her daughter?

“Sure... Anyways, I...”

“And that’s it. Now, go back to your world, for now, dear Maria. I am eager to see where you’ll take me next... And well, if you’re still into me by any chance, we’ll see if you’ll be deserving of my attention in that regard...” she said while winking back at me.

“Hel, I think...! Wait! Don’t...!” I cried.

POOF!

And I was sent back.

Damn it, this woman!

She doesn’t even let me speak to her!

Ugh...

Wait, did she say something about flirting with her or something? Did I hear that right?!

Chapter 215

The Goddess of Death giggled after she spoke with Maria. She had never experienced such a funny conversation in her entire life before. Maria was way too funny, often speaking things that didn’t seem to make any sense.

She rested her legs over the sides of the throne as her beautiful and slender pale-white legs moved around as if she were bored.

Hel licked her lips as she grabbed an apple from a nearby table using a wave of her hands to bring it to her hand, and she looked into the beautiful red fruit.

She opened her mouth and gave it a gentle bite. The moment she did, the entire fruit turned black and began to rot... after rotting, it turned into black ashes and dissipated.

“Hahaha~ Maria is really someone amusing! To think I would hit the jackpot with her...” she laughed.

The Goddess of Death looked into the boring palace around her, completely empty of anything. It was only her and the occasional soul or skeleton wandering around, often being her servants, but unlike Maria and her other Undead friends, they were all dull, emotionless, and seemingly silent.

Hel sighed. She wished she could have her all for herself here. She would never be bored anymore with such a peculiar woman at her side.

She would happily laugh every day and go on crazy adventures with the little Maria... there wouldn't be a day she would be bored with her.

But well, Maria belonged to the surface for now, and she had many friends there already. Meanwhile, Hel was here, completely alone.

Her father, the God of Chaos, was always busy doing something else, and it wasn't as if she were a child to want her father here forcing himself to make her have some sort of fun.

Every god had their own duty regarding their divinity. The god of chaos seeded chaos, the god of light created the light of the world and guided humanity, the god of nature protected nature and life and guided the elves, the goddess of love and fertility protected love and fertility, and also the elves too. The goddess of ice and snow protected the ice giants, maintained the coldness and iciness of winter, and so on.

The goddess of death had to do what the goddess of death had to do, which was bring souls to her domain and grant them the afterlife. She embodied a natural phenomenon. Her mere existence made death a concept.

And that was it.

It wasn't as if she was permitted to go to the surface. Her existence would probably instantly kill almost anything within the continent she was to touch and turn them all into Undead to boot.

So that was a big no. Her power was way too much.

The surface was land for the mortals and the living.

Although there were Undead, they were considered some sort of "glitch" that shouldn't really be there, but due to her influence leaking to the surface of the world naturally, phantasmal beings and undead surge naturally in areas with a lot of concentrated mana.

Undead were supposed to belong to the Realm of Death, Helheim, where only a few of the living beings of the world had ever explored, and only momentarily and with divine power capable of resisting the death essence of Hel and her domain...

Therefore, this place was... very desolate. Hel was always alone most of the time. Although Fenrir and Jormungandr, her siblings, often wandered around Helheim, they were closer to the living than death and were part of another completely different group of gods named Beast Gods, with their own duties.

So they were not able to come interact with her very often, and they seemed not to take their sister too seriously to do it either. Unlike her, they had many descendants they had to take care of.

So due to all these factors, and quite naturally so, Hel was always alone.

And she found in Maria a diversion to her eternal boredom.

But something else was developing in her deathly heart, something else she had never felt before for someone.

It was something like... a mother worried for her child.

Or maybe a big sister worried for her little sister?

Hel had developed some sort of feeling for Maria, without having spoken to her more than once, and very briefly at that.

By merely looking at her do her things, survive, thrive, make friends, and more, she slowly grew closer to Maria's character.

Like looking at a very good TV Drama, but it was actually real life!

Hel couldn't help but feel attracted to Maria in such a way.

Maria... She was really an amusing woman...

Now that she spoke to her, she ended up barely letting Maria talk, but the time she had to speak ended up spitting nonsense that only made Hel laugh at how ridiculous and hilarious Maria could get.

Seriously, who would tell a goddess that she was beautiful just upfront? Maria was really someone way too insane!

But that's what Hel liked the most, how insane Maria could be. She was insane and fun, and that brought her fun too, and slowly, she felt like she was bonding with her as she saw her struggle and even began to have empathy for her.

When the God of Light tried to convince Hel to "disown" Maria from her Divine Protection, Hel went against his will and ended up declining his stupid request.

Before, she would have probably accepted so the old man would stop annoying her. But now? She couldn't possibly let go of Maria.

Maria was hers.

“To think you even came across one of my father’s little Catastrophes... I wonder what you’ll do with the little girl... I can’t believe you’re actually trying to befriend such a being... Maria, you’re really something else, huh?” sighed Hel as she drank a cup of wine and looked at Maria’s daily life through a projection in front of her made from a glowing blue orb.

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Chapter 216

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The God of Chaos, Loki, noticed that something had happened.

When he was sitting over the branch of the world, he hadn’t sensed anything like this, but suddenly, he felt it now that he was back inside of his divine realm.

It felt strange, was something messing around with her protected children?

The God of Chaos had put his Divine Protection in a few entities he had created indirectly through a Seed of Chaos.

He had been overseeing them for a while until he got bored and went to rest inside of his divine realm, but when he least expected it, one of the least developed but deadliest of them all was suddenly doing something odd.

It was interacting with another divine protection wielder! And who could it be this time? It was actually nobody else but Maria, the woman divine protected by her daughter!

Oh, well, he wasn’t so surprised after learning this. He always held Maria in high regard. She was a very strange entity, a ghost that kept her consciousness and part of her rationality to an extent and even acted as a mildly insane human. She was insane sometimes, but other times she acted very much like an average person.

Well, to be honest, Loki only thought of her as insane when she went ham against those that had done terrible things to innocent people or that had somehow been involved with her family when she was alive.

The mysterious God of Chaos looked down into what was happening as he saw the little spider girl happily play around with a cute little phantasmal, purple-colored snake, which began doing all sorts of jumps, acrobatics, and pirouettes to entertain her.

“Is this... Oh right, she’s a Gorgon... So she can create small clones of her own soul in the form of snakes... I see. So she’s having fun with the little child... Interesting, I never thought this would happen. I thought she would either run away or fight against her and die hopelessly, but this... Hm, I might have underestimated her more than I thought.” Said the God of Chaos with a smile while raising an eyebrow in surprise.

This little spider girl... despite her adorable appearance, was a Living Catastrophe, a being born from Chaos, a Seed of Chaos. It had many names, but nonetheless, she was a being destined to bring destruction, challenges, and change.

It was something that Chaos would have to do eventually. It was the duty of the God of Chaos, after all, to not let things stagnate. Challenges, danger, and more were necessary, and also, to thin out the population of mortals to an extent.

Of course, many Gods were very attached to their mortals, so they disliked what Loki did, even though it was his duty as a God of Chaos, but they couldn’t do much against his will because he was a pillar of the world the same as they were.

But lately, the God of Light had become more and more annoying, trying to make other gods think like him while forcing the smaller ones to join his forces. For some reason, he had been acting too selfish due to having grown overly attached to humans. He was growing addicted to their prayers and the power he was getting from them.

And because he was gaining more and more power from them, he had grown more arrogant, and with arrogancy came foolishness, ignorance, and stupidity, so he began to try to get involved in other gods’ affairs.

But would you blame him? Gods were beings above all creation. Their power was unparalleled with one another, and so they grew bored of creation and everything and wanted things to change for them too.

The God of Chaos only destroyed the stagnation of mortals, not of gods, and therefore, everything was dull. Therefore, the God of Light had grown with the intention to change things slowly, bit by bit. He wanted to change things and make humans more prevalent so he could gain more power and continue changing things.

But was he really as capable as he thought?

The God of Chaos didn't seem to care about him at the moment, as his mind and thoughts were completely different, and therefore he couldn't really understand the feeble mind of the God of Light.

'Hmm... Well, let's see where all of this goes... But those that mess with the Fragments of Evil will get punished one way or another... Normal humans cannot touch those things, or well... they'll only bring disaster to them....' Thought Loki.

Meanwhile, the little spider girl was playing around with a playful snake within her dungeon.

"Worm!"

The little girl raised her index finger as the little snake suddenly jumped out of the floor and began to float around, reaching her finger and touching it with her snout.

"Hehe..."

The girl giggled as she began to run around, raising her finger again. She was making the snake jump from the floor to reach her finger. Of course, it wasn't jumping and more like floating in midair, but for the little girl it felt like it was jumping.

The girl's beautiful red eyes seemed entertained by her new friend.

The other spiders had been looking at her for a while. Some seemed happy the girl got a friend, while others were concerned that she might deviate from her original purposes by having such a distraction.

The spiders, however, couldn't think more deeply than that, and as the servants of the girl, they simply obeyed her orders and didn't intrude into her relationship with the one she called "worm."

The little spider girl jumped around as she chased down the snake, and then the snake began chasing her down afterward.

The two played together until the little girl was tired, gasping for air over the floor.

"Hahh... Phew..."

The little girl knew very few words, but Maria realized how she was slowly learning more. It didn't seem particularly hard for her.

Chapter 217

From the little time Maria had spent with her, she realized she was a very innocent and cute girl... How could she even be a Living Catastrophe?

The only thing Maria feared from her was her cuteness, which was making her have the strong urge to adopt her...

Loki had never seen such a Living Catastrophe behave like this before, so he had grown more interested in Maria and apologized to her deep down for having underestimated her as someone interesting but still superficially bland.

O h, h ow wrong he was...

After having received the title of Saint of Death, I was sucked by Hel into her realm and then spit out rather rapidly after, without any proper explanation other than her telling me to take care of myself as if she were my new mother or something.

Seriously, I can take care of myself, Hel, thank you very much.

And the whole thing about flirting with her... I take it back, please. Let's not make misunderstandings here. I am already with my hands full with three wonderful love candidates, one of which I had already kissed! I don't need more.

The Harem Tag was already added to the story. We don't need to make it more convoluted, please.

But for now, we decided to settle down and take the day off.

I had decided to relax while keeping a watchful eye around for any spider friends that might want to join our dear Pyro, but it seemed that there were none. They were scared or simply not wandering around these areas anymore.

The trip to our destination will begin tomorrow in the morning. We'll go all the way down to the south of the continent, where the temperatures get pretty cold, and there's even snow sometimes in the year. This is because this area of the continent is close to another continent filled with ice and snow, Niflheim.

Asgard is usually a continent without any extreme environments. It is all grasslands, mountains, forests, jungles, and so on, but at the corners of the continent is where things get a bit more extreme as the continent gets closer to other continents, which are extreme.

To the north, things get hotter instead because the continent is closer to Muspelheim, a land of volcanic landmasses, dry deserts, and hot and damp jungles.

Therefore, I have to guess things get pretty uncomfortable there, but fear not! We are not going there or something, so there shouldn't be anything to fear for.

And even then, we are mostly Undead, so we'll be fine in any environment.

Although those with physical bodies might experience rotting fast if it gets too hot.

But! We might leave that expedition for another day, I do want to visit jungles, deserts, and more, but for now, we'll go to the south and chill with the snow. We'll make snowmen, build igloos, tame penguins, hunt orcas, and all of that.

It'll be fun!

All while we slowly make a small village with the protection of the ruins from the Demon Kingdom feels good.

It feels like my life is finally going somewhere after all this time being a ghost.

Yeah, I am pretty happy.

After what we did for those souls, I feel pretty lighthearted.

I could even kiss someone.

...Yeah, I better not do that.

But for now, what's better than chillaxing in the snow and everything? Maybe I could even make something like snowmen raised through Fake Life! I know that Fake Life works with inanimate objects and might raise inanimate undead, such as Skeletons, Haunted Weapons, or even a Haunted House or something... so there are many possibilities.

I kind of want something new, but we'll see what can come out of it. I was thinking of something nice like a giant snow golem and call it Frost! But wouldn't I need a strong core too? I can make it, but it'll need some nice support.

Hmmm... A-Anyways, enough of that.

We did some stuff throughout the day, mostly cleaning, preparing, packing things up, foraging for any herbs or edible mushrooms we could find around before leaving, and hunting for fresh meat.

I had once thought about eating the spiders by boiling them, but it's better if we didn't. They might bring diseases again, so the corpses of the zombie spiders were disinfected intensively, and the rest were put inside my inventory until I needed them later.

And like this, the day went by as usual...

Well, things are not normal anymore, to be honest.

After what happened with Emeraldine, our relationship had become a bit awkward.

Ugh, I knew we shouldn't have kissed, but the passion of the moment got the better of us.

But now, it feels awkward... we are in some sort of relationship but not really...

I mean, we kissed so lovingly, and it's clear we feel strong feelings for one another, but the uncertainty is eating us alive, and the sense that we have to slowly wait and know each other better is also hitting us hard.

We are trying our best to act as we did before that day, but things are clearly not going to go back... After that day, we clearly can't see each other the same way after all.

Emeraldine was already beautiful before, but now she's so pretty to me. She's stunning. I just want to hold her hand and protect her and whisper to her pointy ears how cute she is.

And her pointy ears, oh god, they're so cute. Elves are so god damn cute. She's so cute... I...

Ugh. This is really love, isn't it?

God almighty, save me from this predicament.

As a harem protagonist, the only thing I must do is romance the others to balance it out...

Sigh.

It's gonna be hard, but I know Emeraldine is doing her best to resist as well.

"Master, what's wrong?" asked Partner.

"You've been looking very weird lately. Are you doing alright?" asked Lucifer.

Chapter 218

Suddenly, noticing that I was spacing out with my intense romantic thoughts, Partner and Lucifer decided to wake me up from my daze.

"Master, what's wrong?" asked Partner.

"You've been looking very weird lately. Are you doing alright?" asked Lucifer.

"I-I have?! I am just... erm, melancholic... Yeah!" I said.

"Uhh... Okay..." said Lucifer.

“Well, don’t worry, Master, those souls are now in a better place, right?” asked Partner.

“Yep... They are... It’s all thanks to our beautiful Emeraldine’s help.” I said.

“E-Eh? Ah... It’s nothing...” said Emeraldine. She had woken up from her daze, and she had been looking at me intensively for a while now...

“Anyways, let me feed you today~,” said Partner, offering me a spoon with soup.

“W-Wait! I thought I was going... to do it...” said Lucifer.

“Huh? Since when do you do this?” asked Emeraldine.

“Y-You two always do it! I also want to... pamper... Maria...” said Lucifer.

He was getting shyer with every word he said, averting his gaze from me as his pale-white face became a bit red, and it was barely noticeable.

“Heeh~? So you want to do it? But only girls do this... You’re a guy!” said Partner.

“W-Who said that?!” asked Lucifer.

“Well, it’s kind of true. In the stories I’ve read, it’s the girl that feeds the love interest with food in a cute manner....” I said.

“Maria... So you think that... then I guess...” sighed Lucifer, as he was about to just forget about the idea.

I quickly took Partner’s spoon with warm soup and then cut a piece of grilled meat and offered it to Lucifer.

“Alright, come here and pick this up~,” I said.

“Huh?! Master! I want to be pampered too...” said Partner.

“Partner, I slept with you last night. You were very clingy and snuggled a lot, so it’s unfair if you want all the attention....” I said.

“Okay...” sighed Partner.

I petted her red-haired head as Lucifer shyly looked at the fork.

“Come on, what are you waiting for?” I asked.

“Th-This is an unsightly thing to do as a Dragon...” he sighed.

“Don’t be like that. Just accept it and eat it up.” I sighed.

“O-Okay...” he said.

Lucifer quickly received the meat. He couldn’t help but feel awkward, but he really wanted to do this kind of stuff for some reason, so I allowed him to.

“Is this really alright?” he wondered.

“Yeah, come on, it will get cold....” I said.

And like that, I ended up spoiling my dragon daddy a bit. He was always the shyest one and the one that got the least attention because he was very shy and more prideful than the girls, but he was opening up more now.

I was slowly softening him up, fufu.

In the end, Partner also asked to be fed this way, and I did, and then Emeraldine too, so I did...

And then Catarina asked for it and-

"Don't get ahead of yourself!" I said.

"Ah! S-Sorry..." said Catarina.

She had grown a bit humbler lately, to the point of even being able to say things such as "sorry."

After all the spoiling, the night quickly came after dinner, and I decided to go to sleep for tomorrow's journey, as it was going to be a long day, so I didn't want to waste any hours of sleep.

I didn't need to sleep, but my mind felt like it wanted a break from everything that had happened today and the previous days, so I flew to my carriage and decided to rest.

In the bed, there was Lucifer.

There was a deal where the trio would take turns when sleeping at my side. It's nothing really sexual, just sleeping near me, and it seems that it is what they like the most.

I don't really get it sometimes, but they're clingy with me, so that's that. Not like I am complaining, I like it, and I suppose I get it. They just like to feel themselves being loved... or something.

Anyways, with such a handsome old dragon at my side, it's hard to keep my composure...

"Maria..."

"Hm?"

Lucifer suddenly spoke to me as his expressionless face looked into the moonlight outside of the carriage. His crimson-red eyes shone with a sorrowful light to them.

"I don't even know what I am doing half the time..." he sighed.

"Ah... W-What do you mean?" I asked.

"I have lost track of what I was meant to do... I guess it all ended up revolving around you," he said.

"Huh? Well... I suppose you kind of wanted revenge against the humans that killed the demon king and all of that... which I don't want to remind you of...." I said.

"Yeah... I suppose our goals align so much that it feels like you're just carrying me towards them while I only stand there looking, while I grow more captivated on you..." he said.

"Y-You sound kind of sad because of me being awesome...." I said.

"Hah... I guess I am actually quite happy. I am happy that I managed to raise you as an Undead. You've changed my life- I mean, my death, more than I could have expected." Said Lucifer.

"Aw... You don't have to be so sweet over it." I said.

"Well, I have to... I am just... thinking many things all the time..." he said.

"You do?" I asked.

“Yes, but... I am sorry for not being able to express them all the time... It is hard to be as open as those two. I am not the same type of person as they are... I am sadly not someone you would like to be with, right?” asked Lucifer.

“Eh? What are you talking about? You’re here with me, so of course, I like to be with you, dummy. You’re trying to make me pity you, so I pamper you more?” I asked.

“E-Eh? No... I...” he muttered.

“Geez, you’re really a manipulative man... You don’t have to worry about either of those things, I am happy as I am, and that includes having you at my side. Let’s go meet your dragon family whenever we got time, alright?” I asked.

“Truly?” he asked.

“Yeah, why not? We have to go confirm if there are any survivors after all.” I said.

“Maria... Thanks... I am grateful to have met someone like you.” He said.

“Aw, come on, stop being so grateful... Now come here, let’s snuggle... Goodnight, Lucy.” I said.

“D-Don’t call me Lucy!” he roared angrily.

“Haha! That’s the Lucy I like!” I giggled.

Lucifer sighed as he waved his head and then caressed my face a bit.

“You’re beautiful when you giggle like that. It... soothes my troubled heart.” He said.

“H-huh?! What with that compliment?!” I asked.

“...Nothing, don’t mind it. Sometimes when we are alone, I feel the inspiration to praise you, as you are like a fine piece of art to me,” he said.

“Um, you’re still praising me....” I said.

“R-Right, sorry...” he said.

Lucifer fell silent for a bit as I slowly moved my hand to his own and held it tightly.

“...”

He didn’t say anything, but I could feel that he also strongly held it back.

“You’ll never be alone anymore. I am with you now... Okay?” I said.

“That came out of nowhere...” he answered.

“I-It didn’t! I was trying to be romantic! Geez...!”

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Chapter 219

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With our last job done here, we had decided to finally depart today in the morning. In the end, we decided to go around the forest instead of going through it, in fear of getting to encounter more spiders than we could handle but not the people around us.

I had checked the entire forest beforehand and found that there wasn't anything bad going on aside from this. There wasn't any more Rabbit-kin going around either, so it was safe to say that the place was clear.

We decided to move on with our travels this morning after breakfast, with Lucifer flying around the skies while we dedicated ourselves to travel across the area around the forest.

There was no road, and the terrain was pretty rough, but nothing that Undead Horses and Ghostly Carriages couldn't handle! Yes, I had infused souls into the carriages and used Fake Like on them, so they were able to become inanimate objects Undead, such as Ghostly Carriages, as I call them.

They're pretty weak and around D Rank in power, but they can push harder without any problem and don't get tired either- wait, carriages never get tired.

Anyways, the thing is, they can move by themselves, but we kept the Undead horses to make the whole Undead Kingdom army vibe, you know? Because I really like those vibes when I march with my Undead.

Maybe because I am an Apostle of Death or something, but it is really fun. I just like being with Undead... I had never had such an obsession before. Is this unhealthy? Do I need help?

Anyways, the thing is, we moved on.

...

The beautiful sky seemed very cloudy today. There was barely any direct sunlight. Also, there was a very chilly atmosphere, and strong winds began to devastate us without being able to do much on our own.

Ah... I guess it is not a really pretty day. I cannot go around describing it poetically if we are getting ravaged by icy winds!

FLAAAAASH!

“Th-These winds are a bit too strong!” said Partner.

“Wh-What the heck is going on now?!” asked Catarina.

“So chilly, my body is slowly fading away!” cried Silvio.

“Master, please give us shelter...” cried Francisco.

“You guys have to work hard! We can’t let you slack off. We need your fire to warm the people, so no shelter for you!” I said.

I infused Mana into the two fire ghosts as they suddenly gained new phantasmal mass and fiery flames around their phantasmal and ghostly bodies.

“Ooooh! We are back in town!” said Silvio.

“Th-This is it! I can feel it in every inch of my body... the power of fire!” said Francesco.

The icy winds continued to flow towards us, there was snow pilling up all over the caravan, and it seemed that it wasn’t going to stop any time soon. We were marching directly into a place with such cold temperatures! Is there really nowhere else where we can be accepted?

I guess... it is the only place that humans think twice before going there. With all the vast land they got with fresh temperatures and nice weather, getting into this ice wasteland was really not a good option, so they abandoned it.

The Fire Ghost pair quickly began to divide themselves into large flames, flying towards the rest of the caravan and warming up the people inside from the coldness. The cold also got into my shadows, so putting them there would also freeze them... it is no different.

Lucifer, despite that, was flying leisurely atop the skies while glancing down at what was happening. He seemed to be filled with contempt over today’s weather.

"Oi, Lucy! Come back down! You're going to freeze to death up there!" I shouted.

"I am fine, I am already dead anyways. And we are getting closer, just a few more kilometers! Bear with it! After we get to the ruins, we should be able to take a break in there!" said Lucifer.

"Alright then!" I said.

"He really doesn't want to come down, huh?" sighed Partner.

"Yeah, he appears to be fixated on reaching the place. I can understand him. After all, he used to be the Demon King's friend and all. He must be obsessed with going to that place." I said.

"I suppose he's really reminiscing of the past?" wondered Emeraldine.

"Maybe that's it," I said.

"Hmph, for now, we should concentrate on getting into that place to begin with. The weather is terrible, though, but not like we can do much... We are all Undead minus the elf, so we can bear with it." said Catarina.

"I-I am not an Undead!" said Takeshi.

"Me neither!" said Laura.

"W-Well, you two are monster freaks or something. Why are you crying so much over some chilly wind anyways?!" asked Catarina.

"Oi, don't treat the kids badly!" I said.

I smacked Catarina's head, but that barely caused any damage to her because she was a tough zombie, and I was a physically weak ghost...

"Okay, sorry... But my point is getting through, right? We have to just bear with it for the moment. It will eventually calm down." Said Catarina.

"Alright then, if you're so confident, you can keep watch," I said.

"I can! Wait, what?!" asked Catarina as she looked at us walk inside the carriage with the twins.

I had decided to get inside the carriage and cook some warm food to warm everyone, and also make some warm drinks as well. I remember that the Duchess Affnaria, Julia Memendin Albraun gave us a lot of stuff and admit that there was a brown powder.

This Brown Powder is not chocolate nor coffee, but it is also made out of toasted seeds that then are powdered and, by pouring some warm water, can turn into a tasty coffee-like drink named Bahu. It is a special seed discovered by beast-kin that was quickly spread all over the continent. It is toasted and then made into powder, and it makes an excellent warm drink.

Chapter 220

The powder even had information through a Status, and it was clearly some sort of material for alchemy or cooking. As I have Cooking Skills, I can see through an item and what they could make with it... I have yet to learn Alchemy from Emeraldine, so we have to get back to the lab and make some potions myself this time around to learn it... but that's not the point right now, but the Bahu!

[Roasted Bahu Seed Powder (D-Rank)]

A seed discovered by a tribe of Tanuki-kin over a thousand years ago is roasted and then powdered into a special bitter powder. When warm water is added alongside sugar, it becomes a delicious bitter drink that fills a person with energy and heat, especially good for winter and cold areas where people require to keep themselves warm over time.

Enhances the mind when digesting it through caffeine, a highly addictive substance.

—

So it pretty much is coffee but renamed? I guess it might be a completely new plant altogether, but the parallelism is big in this one. At the very least, I know that it gives people a lot of energy when digesting it.

“Brown powder? What’s this?” asked Partner.

“It is a special brown powder specially made for people to drink. By drinking this, they can recover their senses and more. It is pretty good. You should try it out.” I said.

“We could drink this to warm ourselves... Well, me. You Undead don’t really need it, don’t you?” asked Emeraldine.

“Yeah, not really.” Said Partner.

“Hm, but we’ll make for everyone nonetheless... We’ll also make some other warm food. How about baked potatoes?” I suggested.

“Sounds good! With lots of butter!” said Takeshi.

“I want fish...” said Laura.

“Fish is too rare, and we don’t have it for now, so baked potatoes with butter it is,” I said.

“Yaaaay!” cried Takeshi.

Like that, we ended up boiling a lot of water, and we made a lot of Bahu, or well, let’s call it coffee for now because that’s literally it anyways. I tried it out myself, and because I am not alive nor do I have a body to absorb nutrients, I didn’t feel any caffeine, but the thing that I felt was the delicious bitter, warm, and sweet flavors combining together.

This is really like coffee! Well, a very bitter coffee, but very delicious nonetheless.

After that, we quickly began to share it with everyone, and then we realized that we had already reached halfway through the route. Only a kilometer or so was left before we could reach our destination.

We sat down around a phantasmal flame made by Silvio as we began to eat baked potatoes with butter and drink coffee. It was a nice evening.

“Lucifer! Come down and eat with us!” I said, using a little snake ghost to annoy him.

However, he seemed too fixated on our objective.

“Sorry, maybe later...” he said.

“Geez... What’s gotten into you all of a sudden?” I asked.

“I just want to get there quickly...” he said.

“Okay... I get it. Fine, I am going to coil around your neck and stay with you through this little snake.” I said.

“I appreciate it...” he said faintly.

Meanwhile, down there, Emeraldine, Partner, Takeshi, and Laura were all cuddling with me while we rested over several cushions. There were at least three blankets over our legs to warm up the three living beings with us, Emeraldine and the twins.

Even Partner was getting warmer. I guess, now that she had evolved into this length, she was beginning to gain a few living traits that true vampires develop. If she evolves some more, she might regain them completely or something.

I was the only one that was cold! Although I discovered that my materialized body could change temperatures depending on the environment, thanks to everyone around me, I was slowly growing warmer.

Resting in here below the blankets with everyone really makes me want to take a nap with everyone...

"The potatoes are so good... I was so cold before, but now I feel warm..." said Takeshi.

"This drink is just like coffee..." said Laura.

"It is, isn't it? And the potatoes go pretty good with it, right, Takeshi?" I asked.

"Yeah, yeah! Can I get another potato?" asked Takeshi.

"You've already eaten three, Takeshi. Calm down with your eating habits. You're only a little boy!" said Emeraldine, reprimanding the boy.

"Oh..." sighed Takeshi.

"Potatoes are good... But I prefer blood. Some warm blood could warm me up easily." Said Partner as she looked down at the kids in front of us while licking her lips mischievously.

The two kids suddenly felt the presence of a predator behind them, as they slowly looked behind them as if their necks were cracking in fear and horror, like their bodies were stiff as a log!

“Hmm... Fresh... warm blood would be good...” said Partner.

What is she up to? Is this her Vampiric trait triggering out? We got vampires here, but they’re all dead, so they don’t get affected by such thirst as before. Is this what Partner might truly become?! I have to stop her! No drinking kids’ blood. That’s prohibited by the law of these lands!

“Partner, don’t think that! Calm down your Vampiric thirst!” I said.

Partner quickly woke up from her daze as she waved her head and giggled innocently a little bit...

“I-It is just a joke! A joke!” she said.

I know she wasn’t pretending; she was talking seriously back then.

“It was pretty obvious you were a bit serious there, but you should calm down and assess your vampiric lust.” Said Emeraldine.

“Y-Yes...” sighed Partner.

“You’ve drunk blood, right? We have given you fresh blood from whatever we hunt, and the reserves of the Blood from the other humans we killed ran out by now....” I said.

“Yes, I am fine... I just... humanoid blood is always more appetizing.” She said.

“Hm, must be part of the curse of being a Vampire...” said Emeraldine.

“It is indeed quite problematic....” I said.

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