

A Ghost 291

Chapter 291 Welcomed Into The Duchess Residence

I was barely able to rescue the poor Julia from the hands of a sudden assassin attack. It was very shocking, didn't she had any sort of security in here? Well, now that I detect it, there are Barrier Stones set around the territory as pillars, which create a barrier that seems to not let things get inside that are not authorized... But somehow it didn't worked in the Vampire? Did he had some ability? I didn't even checked his status properly before choking him, oops.

Julia hugged my little snake clone body, which I said was like my familiar instead of just a detached piece of my soul, because that's way more believable than just telling her that... I've seen some magicians that can use spirits and familiars, so it is more probable. The difference between spirits and familiars is big though, Familiars are something like temporary artificial spirits that can be made out of magic to serve a purpose, sometimes they can attack automatically, scout the area, and connect with the user's mind. Advanced magicians use them for everything, even as assistants if they're like alchemists in a workshop.

They disappear after the mana they were given to exists is exhausted but can be given mana constantly so they can keep up alive for longer, they lack ego and intelligence, and are more like drones, magicians can use them as "phones" in a way, control them remotely, and use them to talk from long distances too. I guess my snake ghosts are like my own version of familiars, though I wonder if I could make the conventional ones.

Spirits are different from familiars as they are... well, the essence of elements in the world, they're the pillar of elements, small souls that create elements and are the embodiment of them, they're seen as sacred by mostly all people, and those that can use them are very few. I am supposed to be a Spirit Mage but I have yet to find one for myself in all this journey, which sucks a lot! Maybe I am too scary for any spirit to get closer, I remember that Emeraldine's spirits are scared of me, so maybe they don't get along with Undead like me, sigh..

Anyways, I tried to comfort Julia while she cried, she was very scared and she literally almost died there, it must have been a traumatic experience for her young heart. She's soon to reach the age of 17 I think, but she's still very young. I petted her head with my snake tail for a bit, while the soldiers began to inspect the body of the Vampire.

“Calm down, Julia, I am here for you, dear. I was actually coming here but I was stopped by some guards outside the Noble’s residence gate, and they didn’t let me get inside, even when I called for you...” I sighed.

“Eh? R-Really?! Geez! I remember that I told them some time ago to watch out for anyone named Maria that said to be a Shadow Magician, these incompetent fools forgot something so important?! I am firing them all!” Said Julia angrily.

“They were also trying to scam me for my money, and when I said I didn’t had any money, they tried to bring me to a closed room to probably do some very unsightly things to me! If it wasn’t for my friends, I would had killed them all for trying to do that...” I said.

“Eeeeh?! T-Those bastards! I am going to chop their heads! How dare they be so vulgar?! I cannot let such men be my guards, I’ll put them into the guillotine!” Said Julia angrily.

“Young Lady, I don’t think it is necessary to kill them...”

“T-They had yet to commit a crime, just being sent to the prison is enough...”

The two knight guards seemed a bit empathetic of the guards that were into raping girls, but I guess they were right in that, they don’t deserve to die... Most of the time I only kill when I am really pissed, feeling psycho, or the guys really did some fucked up shit beforehand. Which is most of the time, so I shouldn’t really be the one making decisions here.

But Julia was also in an emotional state so I guess she was impacted more than I thought, she immediately jumped into the guillotine, huh, that’s quite crazy. I guess a Duchess can just easily condemn someone to die if they wanted, so much power in a little girl body! I wish I could be a duchess too...

Well, technically I am like a queen in my little town, but there’s no way I would ever kill any of my lovely people, that’s horrendous! Anyways, enough of thinking nonsense for the day.

“Yeah, don’t kill them, just punish them in other ways.” I sighed. “It’s not like I am motivated to ruin the life of people so much today.”

“Hmph... Okay.” Sighed Julia. “W-Well, what are you two waiting for?! Bring this corpse outside of my sight! Also, call the maids and butlers to clean this mess, and send a servant to open the gate for Maria and her friends, NOW!” Julia’s words were domineering and she easily made the entire manor’s servants move to her will.

“Yaaay!”

And like that, when I opened my eyes in my main body, we found ourselves walking back to the gate. I convinced my lovely trio that I had managed to finally convince Julia, all while saving her from a sneaky Vampire Assassin, of course, the praises showered over my own self and I couldn’t help but laugh evilly as I feasted in my own ever-growing ego!

“You saved her from a Vampire?!” Asked Emeraldine in surprise. “Incredible, if it wasn’t for your, she would had died... That’s scary, are Vampires behind everything ONCE MORE? Can’t these guys take a break?”

“Good work.” Said Lucifer, petting my head. “You really saved her there.”

“Master is of course amazing!” Said Partner.

“Hehe, yes, yes! I am!” I laughed evilly.

After a few minutes, I went back to normal.

Chapter 292 Honorary Guests Of A Noble's Residence

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“All of you get out of my sight!” Julia roared angrily at the four soldiers that had stopped us from coming through, they mocked us and didn’t even acted politely, they could had just told just that we were not allowed to pass, but they had to go the extra mile insulting us, trying to ask for bribes, and even attempted something weird at the end.

...Anyways, Julia was roaring back at them as the soldiers were kneeling before her and asking for forgiveness, they really didn't wanted to lose their jobs now that they were being paid so much to literally do nothing at all.

"Please forgive us, our liege!"

"Lady Julia!"

"We are very sorry, we really didn't knew she was your friend!"

"W-We forgot that you told us about her, we are humans we can commit... mistakes!"

Julia crossed her arms while looking down at all of them while pouting, she seemed to be growing more and more furious each passing second. She felt offended as well for some reason, as if they had insulted her. Does she really appreciate me that much? We have barely meet until now... Maybe saving her life really gave her a good impression of me?

"You lowly scum!" Roared Julia, acting cockily just like actual royalty would usually do. "You dare think that you can just talk out of this situation? Do you think that because I am a young girl, you can easily ask for forgiveness and wait for the deepest of my heart to pity you?! You're messed up and missing a few screws. It was already notorious since the beginning of Maria's story, if you were really going to do something as outrageous as... v-violate her, I won't even allow you to be commoners anymore!"

Julia looked down at the guards, as they began to be shrouded in their own cold sweat, the stares of dozens of knights lined up from left and right around them pointing their spears at them really made up for the frightening sight, at any moment all of them could get stabbed to death if Julia wanted.

"Please, Lady Julia, we ask for forgiveness!"

"I don't want to lose this job, how will I feed my family?!"

"I-I have two kids!"

“P l e a s e!”

“Lies. I have investigated your families already, only one of you still lives with his parents but they own a bakery, so they don’t even need the money you earn... You’re all rotting in prison until you pay for the crime you’ve committed. I am being benevolent now because I am aware you did not commit that one crime yet, if you had even dared to touch Maria further, your heads would be rolling in the ground...”
Julia looked down at the guards, they were pissing themselves right now. Damn, this girl is really amazing at intimidating the lower classes. This is the might of a noble I guess.

“R-Rotting in prison?!”

“Y-You can’t do this to usssss!”

“Please, nooo!”

“W-Wait! I can’t rot in prison for all my life for just insulting some random whore- AGHH!”

C L A S H!

That last one suddenly got kicked by Julia in the face, she was wearing hard heels right now, and she had a decent Level at Level 20/100. She had the Strong Kick Skill as well, which went well with her Princess Knight Job, the man almost had his jaw dislocated. Yeah, in this world royalty was not just rich, they were strong as fuck.

...Well, most of the time, and even then, the ones I beat were strong but not strong enough to defeat a monster like me singlehandedly, I also got a lot of cheat abilities to facilitate murder, haha!

“G y y y a a a a h h h! A a g g h!”

The guard began to cry in agony as Julia looked down on him with disgust, as if she had stepped over a bug that had splattered over the ground, she wasn’t even pitying them. God, this girl is ruthless... yet she’s somehow the best noble I’ve ever meet yet!

“Bring them out of my sight!” Said Julia ruthlessly, as a group of knights quickly dragged the guards away, all of them looked at me hatefully and most of them were about to cry.

Hey, at least you didn’t die. What would have been better, staying in a comfy prison with free food or becoming my skelly servant? The first, right? Don’t complain! Seriously, these people nowadays is way too comfortable to realize how fortunate they are, shouldn’t have acted like an asshole. You got a good job, you should try to do it right, asshole.

Anyways, enough ranting, Julia finished roaring in anger as she sighed in relief, looking at me with her shiny eyes, she smiled a bit.

“Did I do it good? I was honestly a bit tired... I had not acted like this in a while.” Sighed Julia.

“Eh? Were you pretending?” I wondered.

“N-No, but I was really angry, I think I went overboard.” Sighed Julia.

“You really did, I don’t know you got this angry, we have barely met yet you treated this as if it were a insult to you...” I sighed.

“Well, you saved my life just now! Is it bad to be grateful for what you did for me by being ruthless against those that dared to do this to you?” Sighed Julia. “Well, I suppose we can strengthen our relationship over time. Now that things are wrapped up, we got a lot to talk about, so let’s go back to my house.” Julia led us into the house as she seemed rather tired and hungry.

“Hector, prepare the food for lunch.” Said Julia, as an old butler with a mustache nodded.

“Immediately, young master.” The butler said, quickly walking away into the kitchen.

“Sigh, are you hungry? Come with me, let’s enjoy some food while we talk.” Said Julia.

Chapter 293 I Am Quite The Deceiver

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As the food was going to take some time to prepare, Julia decided to quickly introduce us around the manor for a bit, giving us a small trip around the first and second floor of the manor, it was as big as I remember, it felt like a whole labyrinth from inside to be honest. She seemed happy to see us, and back then she only saw Emeraldine and Partner, but now she was able to see Lucifer as well, which she found rather handsome, as every time he spoke to her, she would blush a bit and avert her gaze shyly. I guess my man is really a handsome stud, isn't he? That's a dragon's charm after all, heh.

"Since you've come here, I assume you came to stay for a while, right? I got a lot of work to give you, Maria. I am still investigating things about the two people you said you wanted to meet... Any info about them seems to have been taken away from the archives of the Kingdom, and my ability to research is limited..." Sighed Julia.

"As long as you can help me in that regard I'll help you out as well, I am interested in helping you make of this place a better place... Of course, as long as you pay." I said with a greedy grin. "And well, we'll travel back and forth sometimes, going back to my territory to manage it and meet my people, so I won't be able to stay all the time here but I'll leave Familiars."

"That's good enough, as long as you don't go back and forth so frequently..." She said. "Anyways, you can stay in my residence! We got a lot of rooms so feel free to pick any, just ask the maids for a bathroom, there are several ones spread over the house. We can enjoy breakfast, lunch, and dinner together if you want to, but you're free to wander around the duchy whenever you got free time, but I doubt you'll have as much free time, there are many things going on right now, the attempted assassination won't be the first and last one..." Julia seemed overly serious, I suppose things had escalated quickly into something dangerous. Vampires were plotting her death and had already attempted to assassinate her with a special assassin with abilities that could even ignore magic barriers..

"There are many things we must discuss after all, the Vampires are once more on the move. It deeply saddens me that this family of once honorable Majin have turned into such devils..." Sighed Lucifer.

"I-Indeed... You're right." Said Julia. "But do you know Vampires or something, Sir Lucifer?" Wondered Julia while approaching Lucifer a bit and looking at him with shiny eyes. Lucifer felt a bit overwhelmed, as he decided to not reveal any more information.

"Not so much, I only read... in books about their past before the fall of the Demon King. They once served the Demon King as... a Family of noble knights." Said Lucifer.

"I see... So Vampires ended devolving into such vile acts, but for what purpose? To survive in our society?" Wondered Julia. "I have also heard rumors about Vampires getting involved in slavery, the mass production of strange black potions that strengthen people but also turn them insane, and also in the illegal experimentation of bodies and other things in the Duchy of Benettina..." Sighed Julia.

"Indeed, that's the case, we were there when it happened." I said. "It was exposed that the duke of that duchy was holding dozens of enslaved people underground and with the help of the Vampires, they were using them as experimental subjects to make chimeras... Then there was a woman that showed up, or well, a specter... She punished them for what they did, greatly surprising everyone."

"Oh! So you were there when it happened?! Is it true that the ghost of the Dark Witch, the woman that my uncle beheaded here was the one that did everything?! It has been circulating all around the Kingdom that she had come back from the dead to avenge her death and her family..." Sighed Julia. "The death of my damned uncle might had been by the hands of her, as it is suspected due to the trails of phantasmal energies."

"I think it was... Erm, I am not sure, it was all pretty confusing... But the nobles were indeed tortured and died after that... She left a long-standing impression, I guess." I sighed. I pretended to not know anything and it seemed to work well, I am quite the deceiver, heh.

Ding!

[You learned the [Deceiver: Lv1] Title Skill]

What? Seriously?!

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[Deceiver: Lv1]

Your ability to lie and deceive others is outstanding, making it extremely hard for someone to figure out you're lying to them, and your ability to gain inspiration and create completely invented scenarios to create elaborated lies is exceptional. This little enhances your ability to create lies, deceive, and trick people by +20% with each level.

What? There's even a numerical value based on how much I can deceive someone? Now I feel a bit bad for the little Julia, but I cannot really tell her that I am the actual... Witch. She already found it weird that I asked her to investigate about the Witch's little son and her aunt, which I gave her the excuse that it was because my family was indebted to them and I wanted to help them and pay for such a debt... She believed it of course, I am really a good deceiver, huh.

"I see, so that's how it is... I am glad you're here to help out, Maria, you seem to be a good person and I think I can trust you." Said Julia.

"Of course! You can call me Marie or Maria, although I am named Marie, they often call me Maria anyways." I said with a forced smile which she didn't noticed to be forced.

Ding!

[The Level of [Deceiver: Lv1] has increased to Level 2]

Agh, seriously?!

Chapter 294 Re Introducing Myself

I had successfully deceived the duchess more than once and I felt quite terrible by doing so, but can you blame me for it? I had no other option, as an undead ghost monster, and my band of monsters that I carry around, I gotta lie and deceive. No way a duchess would ally a literal ghost, right? So I cannot really tell her the truth completely, and I have to create lies after lies, which keep piling up... if I ever tell her one day what I am, her entire perception of me will change, but there's no other way.

To make friends of humans, there's no other option. But hey, at least I am walking away from my murderhood tendencies and trying to be decent! I have had enough slaughter for now, and the duchess is nice, she's new and fresh, and I don't got any grudge against her, she's a new generation, and I am sure she'll guide this duchy to the glory it once had. I am rather interested in making money honestly for

some time as well, and she can provide me with a lot of resources very easily too, without having to steal them and ruining the lives of people selling them, which has never been my intention.

As we sat down around a long table to eat, Julia began to bombard me with various questions regarding my job and my Rank as an Adventurer, and what other experiences in the field I've had..

"Well, like you saw the other time, I've been working mostly behind the shadows helping the needy. I got my own territory so I've been rescuing slaves any time I see them, I've despised slave trafficking for a long time, and I don't forgive those that slave people either. Slavery is allowed in most duchies, so killing slave traders could be considered illegal." I sighed. "But I know you think like me, this is why I am telling you this information."

"I see, so you registered yourself in the Adventurer Guild as a façade?" Wondered Julia.

"Yeah, we registered just so we could use it for our benefit, even being a F-Rank Adventurer makes you more trustworthy and people tend to lower their guard as well. It is also a good way to give a reason behind traveling around so much to people..." I said. "I was raised in a small village by my mother and my father, since I was a child that I developed magic and powers that people often think that only witches have, such as Darkness and Shadow Magic, and Necromancy."

"Necromancy... It is an uncommon power, and often monster such as Liches and Death Knights possess such power, so it is often attributed to monsters and evil things, but there are some people that have it and use it for good." Said Julia. "In a duchy of this Kingdom there is a famous Necromancer Adventurer who is also a Majin, he used to be a slave but won his freedom and is respected because he's a good alchemist... Majin are discriminated due to the church forcing stupid ideals on people, but there are some places where there are still some of them thriving, one of their greatest representatives is this man."

"I see... I am glad that Necromancy is not seen as the vilest thing." I sighed. "I was honestly quite afraid of revealing this to you, but I had to because it is an essential part of my capabilities... Such as that I can see the spirits of dead people."

"Eh? Really?" Asked the girl.

"Yes, people that had died in many ways often remain resentful in the world, people cannot see them unless they become an Undead such as a zombie, a skeleton, or a ghost... But when they don't transform, they're harmless wandering souls, some call them dead spirits. Spiritualists can also see them and communicate with them, but due to being a Necromancer, they feel naturally attracted to me and I can speak to them more easily..." I said. "That Familiar I showed to you is something like a dead spirit I have created. I call them Ghost Snakes."

"O-Oh..." Said Julia.

"I had actually left it here when you brought us to your manor... I apologize for having done something like that, but I wanted to make sure you were not someone that was deceiving me..." I sighed.

"Y-You spied on me?!" Asked Julia. "Sigh... W-Well, you saved my life so I guess I have to forgive you this time, but I hope you don't do that again... Geez..." Julia sighed while blushing a bit.

"I didn't spied you while you were nude, most of the time the snake was behind the bed sleeping..." I sighed. "Don't worry."

"Eh?! I-I didn't said anything of the sort!" She said while pouting.

"Haha, don't worry." I laughed. "Anyways, what do we do now that we are here? I was planning on searching for clues about the ones selling the drugs, are there more slave sellers we need to deal with?"

"Yes, I have already spotted the hideout of another big area where they're keeping around a dozen of slaves, but due to the lack of personnel I haven't been able to raid it, there is also a lot of unknown factors we need to investigate..." Sighed Julia.

She quickly took a folder filled with papers and gave them to me, they contained information about what she had found out, a group of thieves named Dark Eyes had been taking over the red-light district and kidnapping children who are homeless, from orphanages, and also women. There had been several cases of women that were even low-ranked adventurers that lived there and even prostitutes that suddenly disappeared, they all lead to these people, and some witnesses said that they were knocked out by some mysterious men before their friends or companions were taken away by force.

...Seriously, what's with this stupid country's obsession with slavery? Every little thug is just enslaving and enslaving, I guess they have yet to learn a lesson. Oh yes, they'll learn one in hell, that's it.

Chapter 295 The Threat Of The Dungeon And The Graveyard

"I wish we could do this as quickly as possible, but we had a lot of time restrains, and I was being constantly pestered with documents and paperwork I had to do to complete various transactions. I have begun to buy a lot of stone and pay constructors to repair the walls of the duchy, which have been torn apart and damaged after my uncle's passing from monsters that had been trying to attack it, if it wasn't for those last adventurers that had stayed in here protecting their home, I don't know if the knights would have been able to stop these monster waves..." Sighed Julia.

"The dungeon had suddenly begun acting once more after being dormant for months, and it has begun to spawn monsters that have started to roam outside, so the forests are not the most securest... And the graveyard... Well, there are Undead showing up every day by now, the miasma emanated from the dungeon is making them spawn, the priests of the church are working hard to exorcise them and cover the graves with holy runes, but they ask for way too much money sometimes, the very capital I am trying to build is fading away..."

"Hm... I see. There's certainly a lot of problems going on." I said. "Have you considered on stopping investing in the graveyard and just incinerate the corpses of the people into ashes? Cremation is a thing, you know? I've always wondered why people doesn't want this when there can be risks for undead to show up eventually in big graveyards like that place (My birthplace)."

"Cremation? Certainly, I had considered it a lot, but the noble families doesn't want that because they say that the bodies of their family members that had passed away would be desecrated and destroyed, something that many people find horrendous. I was also taught that it was horribly, but I have begun to realize that it is a good option, however, those nobles are the source of the income of this decaying duchy, if I go against them so much, they'll begin to dislike me more and more... Ah, what a pain." Julia sighed; she was really stressed. I wonder if she had slept at all? She had big black bags below her eyes which she was barely able to hide with makeup.

"How can they be so stupid? The Undead are already decimating their corpses, also I am sure that when they get purified most undead turn into ashes anyways, without even anything left unlike cremation..." I sighed. "You gotta find a way to convince them or... Well, there's another way I guess. I can go to the graveyard and use my Necromancy to tame the undead."

“Eh?! You can do that? I thought that Necromancers were only able to control the Undead they had risen, how come you can tame already risen Undead?” Wondered Julia in surprise. “That one Adventurer that is a Necromancer cannot tame wild Undead, but he had been seen to be able to reanimate dead bodies into Undead, or summon Undead like a person summon familiars as well... Because most people find it unsightly if he uses human undead, he mostly uses monsters and animal undead instead.”

“Yeah it is possible, it is part of my abilities, as long as the Undead are weaker than me, and even if they resist, I can use some sorts of ways to convince them.” I said. “However, will people be alright with me owning undead that used to be their family members?” I sighed.

“Maybe you can ask them to turn back into their graves?” Wondered Julia.

“I remember you were able to take away their souls, can’t you?” Asked Lucifer.

“She can do that?!” Asked Julia.

“Yeah, I am capable of forcefully taking the souls out of a body, Undead is easier... The stronger the person, the harder it is. This often results in... an instant death.” I said with a wicked smile, Julia began to sweat quickly and nervously, I wasn’t going to kill her or something.

“Hahaha! I am joking, I cannot really do it to living people.” I said. I decided to lie to not make my existence so threatening.

“Phew... You really scared me there, wouldn’t you be in the level of an S-Rank Adventurer if you can just one-shot people like that?” She wondered.

“As I said, it would be very difficult and I have not tried it yet, so it is just theory, it only works better with undead... Actually I lied, I did use it against monsters now that I remember...” I said.

“Huh... You’re really insanely strong. I wonder if I will be able to pay you well...” Said Julia. “C-Can you wait a bit for your pay? I would love to pay you upfront, but I am really trying to make my little capital grow a bit more.”

"I understand, don't worry about it." I said. "By the way, how do you usually make money?"

"Taxes." Said Julia. "People pay taxes, all commoners. I can invest in business that people is starting, or those of nobles as well, gain actions from their business and share part of their revenue, their taxes also increase if they earn a lot as well, this is a good method to increase my capital, but that often takes months to see any results, if not years."

"Well, that's a long time that you want me to wait, but I can receive payment in items and products as well. After all I came here because I need money to buy resources and food for my people, we are a small town and the cold temperatures there are really hell on earth. We are in a project to build a greenhouse and plant our crops, but it's taking a long time..." I sighed. "We need a lot of fresh veggies and fruits more than anything, and a lot of seeds."

"Seeds, alright, I think I can find you veggies, fruits, and all of that, I'll gather things up through the week and deliver it to you at the end of the week, is that acceptable?" She asked.

"Yep, all good to me."

Chapter 296 Black Crystal

The day passed rather quickly after lunch, which was a delicious steak of freshly caught wild boar that the hunters of the duchy caught for the Duchess with some mashed potatoes, a delicious, sweet sauce, and a lot of vegetable salad with cheesecake for dessert, we ended gathering inside an underground room with Julia, where the corpse of the Vampire that attempted to assassinate her was located. A Court Magician that serves her, named Emiliano, a well-known noble used the Conservation Life Attribute Spell to maintain the corpse in a state where it wouldn't get nasty nor it would begin to rot.

"So this is the corpse... beheaded." Said Julia. "Damn they were quite brutal now that I think about it, but I guess this is the best way you can kill Vampires, blasting their brains out." Sighed Julia as she looked at the corpse while containing her impulse to vomit.

"Hm, it appears this corpse is still quite filled with magic..." Said Lucifer, inspecting the corpse in detail.

"Magic? What do you mean? Its dead, right?" Wondered Julia..

"Precisely, but... I can see that there are certain substances and foreign objects inside of this corpse that seem to be increasing its power... The magic still lingers inside." Said Lucifer. "May I open it?" Asked Lucifer to Emiliano, who was a green-haired man, he had been briefly introduced to us and has been rather polite and silent.

"S-Sure, Sir Lucifer. If you feel bold enough... Here." Said Emiliano, as he helped Lucifer take out the clothes of the Vampire, which were all infused with Stealth Runes, which are created through the usage of the Stealth Skill into a Rune through what's called Rune Creation, a specific way of creating magic that can be infused into objects with certain effects.

After that, we covered the corpse's crotch, and Lucifer used his claws, which he made grow into long black knives, surprising everybody who saw him.

"W-Woah! He can do that?!" Asked Julia. "Y-You're not a human, aren't you?" Julia seemed shocked.

"No, I am a Majin." Said Lucifer. "I hid my real appearance using the Morph and Shapeshift Skill, most of us Majin can do this." Lucifer showed to Julia his "true" form, as he grew horns, a tail, and scales over his hands and around his neck. His presence suddenly grew more menacing, but Julia seemed to only grow more amazed by our group.

"A-Amazing! To think I would get to see a Majin so up close, they're such rare and mysterious people filled with amazing innate abilities!" Said Julia. "Let me tell you that I am not someone that discriminates Majin! My mother taught me to never discriminate people's races, and the bias against the Majin is built upon the hate against the Vampires and also the Demon King said to have terrorized the continent of Midgard back then... But I believe there are good Majin, just like there are good and bad humans."

"I am grateful for your acceptance and open-mindedness." Said Lucifer with a charming smile, as Julia seemed to be falling more for him. I don't know if that's good or not, he's my husband after all! But I guess he can have his club of admirers. I am containing my jealousy.

Emiliano did notice the eerie aura I was emanating a bit, as he quickly asked Julia to move a bit away from the corpse because it might spray blood as it is opened.

“Young Lady, please move a bit aside from the corpse as it might spray blood.” Said Emilian, as Julia quickly was brought to reality.

“R-Right!” Said Julia, quickly stepping away from my charming Lucifer, as he used his claws to open the stomach of the Vampire, putting his hand inside of his entrails rather disgustingly, the face of enchantment that Julia had a few seconds before was completely gone as she felt rather disgusted, making a face as if she was about to puke.

“Ueggh...” She muttered.

“Young Lady please hang in there!” Cried Emiliano, covering her with the “Rest” Spell, that calms a person’s heart and let them relax and heal their wounds at the same time.

Lucifer ignored what was going on around his surroundings as he called for me, the two of us, and then Partner who began to look into the corpse with a smile filled with hunger saw what Lucifer suddenly found, a black stone, or a black jewel. It was certainly more like a jewel than a stone, as it was semi-transparent, and shone brightly below the light of the candles.

It contained an eerie, dark, and miasmic aura from within, and it looked utterly frightening. This is a Black Crystal, a crystallization of the miasma taken from the Fragment of the Evil God... So the Vampires are indeed all related, this guy didn’t came from another faction but the same one that has been behind everything before! Seriously, can’t we get new villains for once?

“This is a Black Crystal, it is part of the Fragment of the Evil God.” Said Lucifer, showing the piece of material to Julia.

“W-We have confiscated some of these materials before! Some of the slavers had them with them for some reason, and there were some corpses of slaves we once found with these things inside their stomachs...” Said Julia. “Just what kind of thing are they doing with these things?”

“Think of them as monster’s magic crystals.” I said. “They’re filled with magic and miasma, and can enhance the strength of a person when it is inside their bodies, it can affect their behavior as well, but it brings them the ability to use magic better and easily, and increase the power of their bodies too... This Vampire most likely used it to enhance his power enough to get pass the barrier. He must have many more inside his body which he had either eaten or implanted.”

"I-I see... That's terrifying... The Gods themselves forbid humanity from meddling with the Fragments of the Evil God yet... they are still playing with them as if they were mere toys... Just how foolish can these people be?" Sighed Julia.

Chapter 297 A Rebellious Dead Spirit

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We ended finding around 12 more of these black crystals inside the Vampire's corpse, they were all almost drained of their energy, so the Vampire was using them all to somehow receive a great boost to his power. His body also looked worn down, passing through the barrier perhaps put a bit strain on his body, perhaps this is why he ended allowing Julia to struggle so much, as he ended weakened and tired when he came to finally kill her, and was surprised that she had some strength herself.

"We can assume that these Vampires are far too rotten..." Sighed Julia.

"Now what do we do with the corpse?" Wondered Emiliano. "I don't know if my magic is strong enough to purify such a high level Undead as Vampires."

"I could..." Said Emeraldine, who had been rather silent. "I could turn it into ashes easily, but I wouldn't really do it, the bodies of Vampires have materials that are good for alchemy. Can we keep it as payment too? Part of the payment." Said Emeraldine, she seemed to want the corpse for herself. She had indeed used corpse from Vampires to make special potions that served to calm the hunger of Partner, there are also special potions made from their eyes that grant Night Vision, and if used constantly, can even grant the Skill. There are also potions that enhance darkness magic power, which I've drank sometimes, but Partner often drank those too because they had blood.

We mostly want it for Partner, yeah..

"S-Sure, if that's what you want, I won't object against it, it's all yours, Emeraldine." Said Julia rather gently, just wanting this thing away from her sight.

"Hold it, we could also use it for our own research." Said Emiliano. "Of course I would purify it if the young lady wanted but if that's not the case, I would like to request it for my own house, the body of a Vampire is a rare sight, investigating their bodily functions is something I would like to partake." Emilia

said, he seemed to be a man passionate with biology, I guess that's what usually comes out when you're a life mage.

"Sorry not sorry, this is ours now." I said.

"You might have the favor of the young lady... But! You're still a commoner, I am a noble. If I request it, I will have it!" Emiliano said defiantly, his gentle demeanor gone. He was so passionate over biology he went to such lengths.

"We'll give you one whenever we kill another Vampire." Said Lucifer. "You don't have to make this complicated."

"We are not negotiating with food!" Said Partner angrily.

"W-What? Food?" Asked Emiliano.

"Oops..."

Partner you really had to go and say it, you glutton girl! I'll spank her ass this night to teach her a lesson! ...Although she'll probably enjoy that.

"Erm, she just talks about food all the time, she's a hungry girl after all." I said with a laughter. "Anyway, sorry Emiliano, it is ours." I said, touching the corpse as I put it inside of my inventory, the entire corpse disappeared without him being able to do anything.

"Ah! No... ugh..." Emiliano sighed. He wasn't a corrupt or evil man; he was just very passionate about biology to the point he would fight to get his hands into a vampire corpse.

"Haha, sorry about that man, I'll make sure to give you another one whenever we catch it!" I said. Of course, that's a lie as well, I won't give up Partner's food to him. Vampires are considered a delicacy to my beloved little Partner, so as her unofficial girlfriend, I cannot let her miss this meal.

“Heheheheh...” Partner began to laugh eerily as she hugged me and rubbed her face in my shoulder. Julia and Emiliano felt a bit creeped out, as the light in their eyes slowly faded away. She was really scary, especially when her eyes shone bright red.

“W-Well, now that we are done here, we should talk with the spirit of the vampire, shouldn’t we?” I asked casually, as Julia and Emiliano jumped out in surprise once more.

“S-Spirit!?” Asked Emiliano.

“I didn’t told you but she’s a Necromancer.” Said Julia.

“I-Incredible! Really?! Necromancers are so rare, especially a human!” Said Emiliano.

“Yeah... Now... Visualization!” I said, quickly conjuring a simple Death-Attribute Magic Spell that had yet to turn into a proper Skill, it covered the spirit with magic, making it visible. I had tied it with my shadow threads as if they were chains, and he seemed to be in pain and angered.

“Grrrr! Unhand me! I won’t obey you!!!” He roared angrily. This was a very rare sight to behold, dead spirits always obeyed my commands, but this guy didn’t. This probably meant that he either had a very strong soul, which was slightly stronger yeah, but not that overpowered, or that he had some sort of spell or power inside his soul made by someone else, and bingo! That was it.

“Usually dead spirits just obey me right away but this guy is very rebellious, it is because of this thing he got inside his soul. The Vampires somehow managed to infuse black crystals inside the souls of their servants....” I said, showing to everyone that the bluish-colored transparent body of the Vampire’s soul had a black jewel floating in the middle of the chest, which was covering his chest with roots made of darkness, as if he was infected with it.

“T-They have someone capable of manipulating souls?” Asked Emiliano in shock.

“I-Impossible, just how resourceful are these damned demons?” Asked Julia while crossing her arms.

"I remember fighting and killing two Necromancer Vampires in the past, both of them held slaves as prisoners for their own vile means. One of them forced them to do slavery work making potions and crafting items, while another used them for his experiments with alchemy... Vampires of high ranks tend to have Necromancy more commonly, I guess it is because they're very closely related with the Death Element." I said.

Chapter 298 You Have To Abuse The System!

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"Vampires are really tricky..." Sighed Julia. "To think they can have so many things, how can we possibly fight their organization? And they're even resentful! Probably they saw how I was slowly stopping their underground activities and attempted to murder me." Julia seemed very tired, sitting over a seat, and asking a butler for some tea. "bring me some tea, Hector."

"Very well my lady. With aromatic herbs?" He asked.

"Yes, I want to get this stench of dead vampire." Sighed Julia..

"Understood. Do you desire some cookies with it? recently we received a few new pastries as well." Said Hector.

"That would be good..." Said Julia while nodding like a spoiled girl, Hector seems to be a butler that had been sticking with her for a long time.

"Oh! May everyone want to continue this meeting upstairs now that I remember? Eating down here would be annoying, the stench won't go away in various days, drinking tea and eating here would be displeasing." The Butler was very considerate, and he convinced us to quickly walk upstairs from this crummy underground room, sitting around a small circular table, he quickly brought aromatic tea that soothed the heart and the mind, alongside a few cakes, cheesecake, and cookies.

It was so good! There were three types of cheesecake, with strawberry sauce on top and raw cream cheese, baked cheesecake that was very puffy and tasty, with chocolate coverture, and then there was fruit cheesecake kuchen, a combination of kuchen and cheesecake cream with a lot of varied and colorful fruits on top.

There were also chocolate cookies, some had jam on top, and they all looked so pretty, and to boot, there were pieces of chiffon cake as well as chocolate cake. Oh my god, this is the life of a true noble! Eating tasty and colorful pastries with some tea in a finely crafted teacup, wow! I think I can get used to this life, hehe.

Anyways, as we enjoyed teatime while the sun slowly fell from the horizon, we began to discuss the pain in the ass that Vampires were, Emiliano seemed to be sticking with us, we might see him more in the future as he is an important figure in the duchy as a Court Mage, an assistant magician of Julia, his life magic can come in handy, he has several spells that Emeraldine doesn't have. Emeraldine herself specializes more in Nature and Light than Life Magic after all.

Nature can sometimes have spells similar to Life magic, it can also heal and do other things, but it cannot be as specializing as Life Magic by itself, so Emiliano is a pretty good asset. Nonetheless, the topic of conversation was now... how deep were the damn Vampires.

As Julia learned more from what I've told to her, she grew more and more worried, she was almost assassinated some time ago already by a very strong Vampire that could have possibly slain all his knights if it wasn't because my ghost snake wasn't there to poison him and use my eyes on him to fuck him over.

And now, she learned that they got Necromancy at their side, amazing alchemists, the power of the Fragment of Evil for some reason and are most likely colluding with other nobles from different duchies. They are a massive organization of the underground, and the biggest threat of this entire Kingdom, if not the entire Continent of Midgard, but we have our own problems to take care of so we can't worry about the other Kingdoms, that's more late-game content.

"Vampires are... way too powerful! What do we even doooo? Uaaaaggggh! ...Sip." Julia cried, before calming down and then sipping some tea, sighing and then calming down. I guess she really wanted to scream that.

"They are powerful but not without weaknesses. We have slain a couple of them already. We know that they can get defeated with enough teamwork." I said. "You can leave the work to us, but... your knights, they're way too weak, and there might be the case where we'll need their assistance too."

"R-Right..." Sighed Julia. "I am happy you're so reliable, Marie, and the rest..." Sighed Julia once more. "But you mean my knights? Yeah they're trash."

Julia was talking more honestly with us now, she really relaxed very quickly. I guess after being shocked so many times her tongue got loosen and she started to talk from the depths of her soul.

“The average level of my Knights is around Level 25, most of them are Nobles, and some very talented commoner guards that became knights. They are supposedly strong! Some of them are born with innate Skills and the noble bloodlines provide high level caps, but the dungeon and the forest are too dangerous, training the newbies to gain EXP is always dangerous, and they often come back with many wounds and some even dead, it is a lot of sacrifices I have to put in resources to raise them into being stronger...” Sighed Julia.

“Hm, I guess we’ll also have to do some babysitting, helping them level up by beating the monsters so they can kill them together to gain EXP. Hahh, that takes me back.” I sighed. I remember those times I do that with my people so they can level up. Even when we arrived at the demon kingdom’s ruins, I still help them get EXP through giving them kills.

“Babysitting? Oh! Right! A-Are you willing to help them level up by letting them leech EXP from your kills, Marie?!” Asked Julia, smiling happily as her eyes shone brightly.

“Nah, I am making them do the entire kill! You know? I used to cut down the arms and legs of bandits we caught enslaving people, and then I made the slaves kill them by stabbing them, all the dozens of slaves got a little stab, so everyone gained EXP! You gotta abuse the system, Julia!” I said.

“E-Eeh? I-I see...” Muttered Julia, feeling frightened by just what I had said rather casually, oops.

Chapter 299 The Origin Of Dungeons

I had talked a lot with Julia while we were having tea with sweets and pastries, we began to think about the many things we would do from now on that I was here. She really needed somebody like me, this small duchy only had a single B-Rank Adventurer, and she wasn’t even present here as of now, as she was killing off monsters from a faraway village.

“The B-Rank Adventurer, Titania is the only Adventurer in this small duchy capable of doing something on her own to help us, but she had been very busy lately, going around each town surrounding the duchy because waves of monsters keep showing up. Various dungeons popped out of nowhere recently,

so it's a hassle, and they're too far away for us to investigate them into detail." Said Julia. "Sending some of the strongest members of the other guilds would leave my place completely defenseless if something strong enough show up... I can't investigate as much as I would had wanted."

"I see, you've gotten it pretty hard, princess." I sighed..

"I am not really a princess, I am a duchess!" Said Julia while pouting. "But I suppose you can call me one if you prefer, Marie... But not in front of other nobles or loyalty..."

"Haha, sorry. It just that you're cute enough that you fit a princess role..." I said.

"G-Geez! Do you have a thing for women or something? I-I will not fall for petty flattery!" Said Julia while crossing her arms, I think she misunderstood me, but I better not continue this awkward topic and go back to what we were talking before.

"Anyways!" Said Emeraldine, interrupting me. "Titania... This Adventurer, is she the only B-Rank? Are there no A-Rank or S-Rank?" Emeraldine wondered. Her memories of staying in this duchy must be faint of very few, she spent little time being an adventurer when she got here before being kidnaped, sadly.

"Eeeh? A B-Rank Adventurer is already an incredible person, capable of superhuman feats beyond everything... A-Rank and beyond are... very rare, and often too famous for my tiny and poor duchy. They wander the Kingdom's capital or are somewhere else, probably in high ranked dungeons or big labyrinths to the center of the continent. They're unbound by nobles and wander across the world as they like... There's no way I would ever find such powerful people to help me out." Julia lamented, as she sipped some of the black tea before resuming her speech.

"I am already very lucky to have you four with me. By merely glancing at you with my eyes and my [Mana Detection] Skill I can already tell you're all incredibly strong... Could you be between C or B Rank in terms of strength despite being lower ranked?"

All of us glanced at one another, as I quickly used Telepathy to speak with them. It was a basic ability that I was able to do by touching them with a small piece of my soul.

We discussed about if we should tell her that we are pretty fucking strong or not, but we decided to be humble in this, all four of us were already B+ Rank in the Status, if not higher if we add my buffs and everything else. However, we had to be humble so we wouldn't bring too much attention.

"To be honest I have no idea, this classification system also takes into consideration quests and everything else, right? We can't really estimate how strong we are and... We wouldn't like to have our Status seen if possible, it is part of our privacy policy." I said, making it seem as if it were our privacy policy as mercenaries.

"I-I see, I apologize for trying to intrude into your personal information and all of that, I am sure I can trust you already. You seem very capable as well, its not like I will order you to slay a high ranked vampire or a behemoth or something, it is mostly slightly strong thugs or magicians! No worries." She said. Perhaps she thought we were weak or something and we were ashamed to show our status. Well, that's for the better. She's very nice anyways, even if she is assuming that.

"Oh, don't worry about that, dear." I said while sipping some tea. "Anyways, me and my group are quite interested in leveling up, finding strong enough monsters is becoming harder. Do you know more information about this dungeon break you're talking about?"

"Oh, right, yeah." Julia said while nodding. She quickly took some papers from the pile at her side, as she began to read them attentively while furrowing her eyebrows in full concentration mode. "You see, lately in the nearby towns, four different dungeons appeared around a month ago. We have no idea how they just popped out, but some assume that there was a big fight between natural monsters that left large piles of corpses. You know? Dungeons are born with an excessive amount of miasma that is accumulated in a single place. Monsters for the most part secrete a lot of miasma when they rot away, so when there is a big pile, dungeons show up..."

"Oh, but four at the same time?!" Asked Emeraldine with intrigue. "Isn't that a bit too much? And... is one of those towns affected inhabited by a few Elves immigrants by any chance?"

"Elven immigrants? No, not that I know..." She said. "Don't worry, I think the village you're talking about is far from this danger. Did you live near the duchy?"

"Something like that..." Said Emeraldine, without wanting to elaborate further.

Now that I think about it, didn't we had a big fight against the Vampires and the guys from the church near that part of the surrounding land of this duchy? Huh, but we didn't killed any monsters- Ah, right, Catarina did broke the ground a lot. Maybe she ended killing a lot of wildlife like that... Did all those monsters dying there... provoked those dungeons? Oof.

Chapter 300 Let's Not Overthink It

I decided to not overthink it over the new dungeons for now, as I wanted to concentrate into the tasks of today. Before going to sleep we wanted to go clean the graveyard from undead right away, as even when it was quite far away from the city, it was still an imminent threat to the people. However, after I was done with the undead and then the Vampires giving out drugs to people, I probably would want to go explore those four villages. I will also be moving back and forth to my own territory to supervise how things are doing there, and probably attempt to get some recognition from the nearby kingdom in there. I'll also investigate the Ice Giants and what they're up to.

And aside from that, I also have to get some of my kill count done, so I will be moving to the Duchy of Veredictus, which probably will be a smooth trip. Although now that all the dukes are trying to protect themselves from an insane ghost, it wouldn't be weird for them to be prepared with a lot of priests from the God of Light Church. I have to rethink my strategy a bit more.

"Oh, by the way, in a few months there will be a big even going on in the Affnaria Kingdom, most of the Dukes will gather in the capital because the King wants to check how each of our duchies are doing..." Sighed Julia. "In our Kingdom, the King makes this every few years, and assess if we are capable enough to maintain each duchy... It is a bit tiring, but we have to somehow get everything well before this meeting. I don't know if we can get it all done in these months though, seems... quite impossible."

"Oh?!".

Without thinking it well, I ended letting out a surprised and excited exclamation. This was quite big, if there was a meeting between the Dukes, I could get there and just slaughter all of them in a big terrorist attack. No wait... there could be Julia there, and I haven't confirmed if all the idiots that I want dead will be there either... Okay, I have to calm down a bit.

"Will the other Dukes be there?" I wondered.

“Yeah, all of them... I think.” She said. “From Duchy of Affnaria which will be me and Emiliano, Benettina will also bring a new Duke... And then the dukes of Veredictus, Nesettia, and Netherine, Duke Roberto Albraun, Duke Hansel Albraun, and Duke Netheron Albraun... These last three are shady old men, I can’t trust them that well.”

Those are all the guys I want to kill! Yes! They will be there! I just have to find a way to pick the three of them together in some place and... BOOP! Dead, I can easily possess them with soul clones probably and replace them in the meeting or something... Well, I will think about it better when it finally happens.

And about a new Duke of Benettina... I remember I had a pretty hard time killing the duke from there as he had a strong priest defending him and all. Well, I still got them all good, I was chased down by knights and soldiers later, and I killed them all and converted them into Undead, which I used to attack the other survivors.

This is how I got myself a sizable army of Undead soldiers/knights holding weapons and wearing armor, which I am mostly using as helpers and guards in my village. Of course, I got some of them with me as well, to summon them at any time and bring them as backup for battle, or to blow them into bits using Undead Detonation.

Anyways, now the Duchy of Benettina has a new duke, I hope he’s not a bastard involved with the death of my family... Well, I should ask Julia.

“I see, so that’s how it is...” I said. “Is the new Duke of Benettina someone apt for the job?”

“Ah, well, mildly so. He’s my older brother, Joan. He’s a nice man, a bit of a Casanova sometimes, but he got his principles...” Said Julia. “I am not too fond of his personality, but rest assured, I think he’s a good person.”

“Huh, I see... the whole incident with the ghost and all must have been pretty hard on the population there. I bet they had a hard time recovering.” I sighed.

“...Well, to tell you the truth, not really.” Julia said while eating a piece of cheesecake. “After that incident the people was left shocked, yeah, but when it was revealed what the previous duke was doing behind the scenes, such as that laboratory that was experimenting with slaves and creating horrendous

chimeras, his reputation plummeted and many people began to outright say he deserved his death alongside the other two nobles that died by being... well, devoured alive by zombies.”

“Huh... I see. Maybe he deserved it at the end, eh?” I laughed.

“Yeah, haha.” Laughed Partner.

“Perhaps there is karma in this world.” Said Lucifer with a smirk.

“Fufu...” Emeraldine laughed eerily.

“Yeah, I guess! Although I am glad I wasn’t there to look at what was shown, but he died pretty gruesomely and the ghost... just escaped. It was said she managed to defeat anyone that was sent her way, and hasn’t been seen in months now.” Said Julia. “I am really worried if she’ll come for me now... I am a duchess after all, she seems to have a grudge against all of my family.”

“Nah, don’t worry, I am pretty sure she must be only punishing bastards that had done terrible and inhumane things. I bet some people believe she’s like a avenger of those incapable of fighting back.” I said. “Julia, you’re a good girl and you’re doing your best to help this duchy, I’m sure she’ll never come to bother you.”

“Haha, you’re being a bit too nice with me there, I am rather incompetent...” Sighed Julia. “But I appreciate your compliments nonetheless!”

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