

Bloodline 361

Chapter 361 Now... it's your turn

As soon as Kyle's words fell, a small crack appeared in the middle of the shield. Then, like a spiderweb, the crack spread across the entire surface. Immediately, everyone floating around him or standing beneath him panicked and used every protection skill or spell they had to shield themselves from the flames.

Kyle's forehead turned sweaty when the effect of the enchantment pill he had taken a minute ago finally kicked in.

'I'm gonna beat that dwarf if I saw him again... He said it wouldn't be painful, but it's hurting like hell!'

A vein flared up on his neck and his strength shot up with incredible speed. He vanished from his spot, only to reappear amidst the shining symbols above him. The symbols trembled and zoomed toward his body with lightning-fast speed.

Kyle clenched his fists when an even sharper pain coursed through his entire body. Yet, he stubbornly absorbed every drop of mana that came his way. The chaos and noises ringing in his ears disappeared, and everything around him became quiet for a split second.

At that moment, Mia lost her balance, but before she could fall, Carcel grabbed her waist with knitted brows. She closed her eyes with a gasp on his shoulder, not even daring to look at the shield.

The crowd's hearts raced as they fixated their gaze on the shield, some even started running backward toward the border. But just as the shield was about to crumble into countless pieces, the symbols around Kyle disappeared and he whispered under his breath.

"Ice Domain.."

A drop of blood oozed from his mouth as a tremendous amount of mana left his body and traveled towards the shield. The air grew extremely cold, and a translucent dome materialized out of thin air, enveloping the shield and the surging flames in a chilly embrace. The dome shook a little due to the amount of heat radiating from the flames, but countless icicles formed in the air, and thick clouds gathered in the sky to pour ice on the fire.

The monster lord, watching everything from the other side, retreated further back with dilated eyes as he witnessed the ice melting into water, extinguishing the once domineering flames.

Clouds of black smoke rose to cover the sky in a dark blanket, and the cold air became humid. The crowd snapped out of their reverie when the icy dome dropped down with a loud bang, and the remaining ice scattered into mesmerizing ice flakes that floated gracefully in the air.

Kyle raised his hand, and an ice flake landed on his finger. His lips curled into a snarl as he locked eyes with the monster lord through the smoky curtain. Anger, frustration, and a multitude of troubling emotions filled the monster lord's gaze. It was no surprise, considering the latter had witnessed its entire army crumble before its eyes.

"Now... it's your turn."

Kyle wasn't sure if the monster lord heard him because his body went limp from exhaustion. The enchantment pill's effect would vanish after an hour, and he mentally prepared himself to endure the

same exhaustion for a whole day. Nevertheless, putting aside the pill's side effects, it's unbelievable that the West Continent possessed such a powerful object and never shared it with the other continents.

Kyle closed his eyes and let his body fall. Well, he still had a little bit of mana to make himself float before he crashed into the ground. But he hummed when he felt Bia's presence underneath himself. The phoenix clicked her tongue and soared through the sky when his body landed on her back.

-Jeez... you know you always overdo things.'

Kyle chuckled at her words.

'I just want to finish it as soon as possible. Let's find Ray and Neon after we are done with the monster lord. I saw them with Nine for a brief second... but I do not know where the trio went afterward.'

The phoenix frowned a little when she felt Kyle's body temperature. It was way too cold, even colder than his usual temperature. But maybe it's because he exerted so much strength in such a short time. So she just brushed it off.

-Okay... okay, just rest for a while or else you will faint even before you find them.'

Kyle sensed another familiar presence floating above him and opened his eyes to see Yue's face, looking at him with a worried smile.

He stared without blinking. She had her hand crossed on her chest, and her long hair was flowing down towards his face.

Yue tilted her head and began speaking in a soft voice that only the two of them could hear.

"You scared me when you dropped down so suddenly. Are you alright?"

Kyle smiled and closed his eyes.

"I'm fine. What about you and the others? You all also used the array."

He felt her gaze lingering on his face, but he didn't say anything. Then, a warm finger landed on his forehead.

"If you're fine... why are you knitting your brows? I noticed you've been doing it for a while now."

Kyle grabbed the finger on his forehead, and Yue blinked in surprise. Normally, she would have noticed Kyle's temperature, but she got distracted when he pulled her and patted the spot next to him with his other hand.

"Stop floating above me and sit down... I'm getting dizzy."

"...Oh, okay."

She sat down beside him and gazed at his face again, completely unaware that a certain phoenix was grumbling inside Kyle's mind, speaking about how others shouldn't be allowed to sit on her back. Bia grumbled for a while but stopped when she sensed Kyle's peaceful mood.

-Well, just this one time is fine.'

Kyle's ears twitched when he heard Alec's loud voice calling for others to surround the monster lord who tried to escape after it realized it was alone. From Alec's shouts, Kyle was certain that the monster lord would suffer twice as much as they did.

Chapter 362 I'll bet on Kyle

After some time, Kyle opened his eyes and propped himself up with his elbows. He couldn't just sleep now because once the pill's effect wore off, he knew he wouldn't be able to do anything.

Yue was startled by his sudden movement. She turned her face away and started floating to create some distance between them.

Kyle stared at her back, fully aware that she had been staring at him since the moment she sat beside him. His eyes couldn't help but be drawn to her exposed neck and ears, which had a subtle hint of crimson. He was taken aback for a moment, then let out a soft sigh.

'Bia, I know it might be a bit random, but do you think she likes me?'

-'You just noticed? Almost everyone knows except you.'

The phoenix burst into laughter when she sensed Kyle's emotions. He had been troubled for a while, and the reason was unclear. But now, his mood seemed to have returned to normal, or maybe even better than normal.

-'I thought you were clueless about this and it would take you a long time to accept it, but you're actually quite natural.'

'Shut up... and why do you know so much about all this?'

Kyle ignored the phoenix's reply and started floating. He gazed into the distance, where Alec, Carcel, and many strong individuals were busy fighting the monster lord. Yue glanced at him and pointed toward the monster lord.

"I'm going to join them. Come over when you're fine."

Kyle tried to reply, but she hurriedly left before he could say anything. He shook his head and let out a faint chuckle. Bia got smaller and landed on his shoulder, giving him a piercing look with narrowed eyes.

-'You like her as well, right?'

'Well, I'm not sure... but I don't dislike this feeling. Maybe it's because I've known her for a long time, and that familiarity makes me comfortable around her. Right now, I can't even protect myself, so first I'll find a way to remove the artifact from my body. Only then will I consider getting involved in someone else's life.'

-'Tsk... tsk, you're too self-absorbed. She's pretty. Don't you think she might find someone better?'

Kyle's eyebrow twitched. He wanted to toss the phoenix away, but he ignored that impulse. Instead, he stretched his stiff body mid-air and looked down, feeling the gaze of countless people upon him.

He knew it would become a hassle in the future with all the attention he was getting. At first, he chose to join the fight for his friends, but then he continued because of the debt he owed to Kingdom tersia. If it were up to him, maybe he wouldn't have joined the battle against the monster

lords. After all, it's not his duty to protect them. He's not like Alec, who has a motto to assist anyone in need.

"I'm feeling restless again..."

Kyle spotted a few monsters lingering near the border, but their numbers were manageable. He was confident that the soldiers would quickly take care of them in no time.

He raised his hand with a smile and waved when he saw a familiar face in the crowd. Neon shouted back and waved, but Kyle knitted his brows when he noticed the dread etched on Neon's face.

"What happened?"

Kyle wanted to go check, but he was stopped by a familiar voice. He turned around to see Jian approaching with a sweaty forehead.

"Hey bro, you okay? I wanted to go check on you, but Carcel stopped me when he saw Yue coming your way."

"I'm fine. Just used too much strength."

Jian nodded and grabbed his arm.

"Come on, Alec's trying to steal my kill! He said I could take down the second monster lord, but I am sure he's going back on his word! No matter what, I can't let him steal my prey this time!"

Kyle raised his brow, counting in his head. He still had time before the pill's effect wore off, so if he didn't use his skills, he could fight for a while.

"Hold on a sec..."

He glanced back to see Neon but the latter had disappeared from his original spot.

"Where did he go?"

Jian grabbed his arm, urging him with pleading eyes. No way, he couldn't let Alec take all the credit! He needed to kill at least one monster lord!

Kyle nodded and followed him. As the duo floated, Kyle glanced down at the devastation he and the others had caused. A huge area of the forest was gone, replaced by barren land filled with water, burned trees, and monster bodies. The air still held a hint of smoke, even though the smoke clouds had vanished.

The moment they arrived in front of the scene where the monster lord was getting beaten up, Kyle's eyes narrowed at Sinon and Regius. A speechless expression appeared on his face. The moment they arrived in front of the scene where the monster lord was getting beaten up, Kyle's eyes narrowed at face because the duo was placing bets on who would hit the monster lord more. The monster lord's painful cries echoed in the air as Alec, Carcel, and a few others attacked it repeatedly.

Kyle's eyebrow twitched when he saw Han, Retric, George, and King Cedric standing behind Sinon, placing their money on the kids to reward those who were performing exceptionally.

"Are we really fighting a monster lord...? I think it's the first time in the history of the East Continent that a monster lord has been beaten so badly that no other would dare to emerge for the next hundreds of years."

He shook his head and cracked his knuckles before glancing at Jian, who nodded at him with a smirk. Instantly, the duo dove towards the huge bat.

Jian laughed and caught everyone's attention. Many people waved at Kyle, relieved to see him doing well. Elder Han smiled and quickly placed a big bet that Kyle would kill the monster lord!

King Cedric raised his brow at the old man and instantly put money on his sons, not backing down even slightly. George smiled and bet on Alec and Jian. Retric shook his head at their childish behavior.

"What are you three doing? Make way..."

He paused and grabbed a pouch from his storage ring, placing it above everyone else's money.

"I'll bet on Kyle!"

The old principal cheered and waved his hand to support Kyle, leaving everyone around him speechless.

Chapter 363 Don't speak

"He's become strong in such a short time. And it's not just him, the kids around him, they all have promising futures."

A calm voice resonated through the air as a pair of golden eyes observed the battle against a bat-like monster. The person in the purple robe floated mid-air, their gaze fixed on the silver-haired man who burst into laughter when the red-haired person beside them began to cry for some reason.

"It's strange... When I first saw him, I didn't sense anything extraordinary."

The golden eyes remained devoid of emotion as they continued to witness the unfolding scene below.

"What a pity. Just blame yourself that out of all the people on this planet, you were the one I picked as the host for the soul-eating crystal."

He shook his head and reached out to retrieve the nail-size crystal from the other person's body. After spending so many years on this hidden planet, he had healed his injuries. He wanted to leave two years ago, but then, like that strange tower, the kid ended up in another mysterious place where his presence couldn't be detected.

The man thought that perhaps the divine bead was lost, but the moment Kyle emerged from the secret realm, he once again sensed the presence of the divine artifact. It was the same artifact that would help him increase his divine strength, the strength that had been stagnant for the last fifty years.

There wasn't even a bit of hesitation in his eyes when he ordered the bead to tear the young man's soul into pieces and devour it completely.

"I know that with your soul devoured, you will never be able to enter the cycle of reincarnation, but I hope your consciousness rests in peace."

He raised his head to stare into the distance. Above the clouds, a vast shield covered the planet in its protective embrace, but then a tiny crack appeared on its surface.

"I need to leave. They are here. Well, at least, they won't pursue me for a while because they'll be busy with this beautiful planet."

.....

The monster lord was flung backward by Carcel, but then Alec appeared in front of him. He had a deadpan expression as he stared at Jian, Carcel, and Kyle, who were determined to deliver the finishing blow to the monster lord. Alec widened his eyes when Yue, Lara, and Mia joined the trio. In the next second, everyone else also joined, all wanting to be the one to kill the monster lord.

Alec raised his hand and stopped them all in their tracks.

"Guys... let me kill this one. I promise-!"

His sentence was cut short because Jian, who had been weeping beside Kyle, raised his head with a furious expression.

"You think I'll trust you this time? No chance! I'm the one who's gonna finish off the monster lord, no matter what!"

The red-haired man raised his chin and crossed his arms over his chest before looking at Kyle, who sighed with a faint smile.

"Well, just let him do it. It's not a big deal."

After Kyle spoke, Carcel shrugged his shoulders and took a step back. In the next second, almost everyone else stepped back with a sigh. Now that the strongest person had spoken up, who would dare to disobey?

Alec fixed his eyes on Kyle with a serious expression.

"You sure you won't interfere and Jian will be the one to kill it?"

Kyle blinked, not sure why Alec was asking, but he nodded nonetheless. Alec hummed and turned his head towards Jian.

"Alright, let's make a deal."

Jian scoffed.

"You think one (A)-Rank skill core would make me change my mind? No way! And why the heck do you want to kill it so badly? Just let me handle it!"

Alec smirked and raised an eyebrow as a round core materialized above his palm.

"How about an (S)-Rank skill core?"

Jian's eyebrow twitched.

"You think I'll agree?"

Kyle looked at Jian, along with everyone else, surprised that he was rejecting such a valuable offer. But they were all left speechless when Jian stepped forward and snatched the core from Alec's hand, sporting a smirk.

"Of course, I'll agree. Who wouldn't?"

The monster lord, who had been watching everything from behind, wanted to cry. It couldn't believe they were fighting over who would end its life. The bat, sensing an opportunity, began crawling in the opposite direction, ready to escape. But its large size caught the attention of countless eyes, all fixated on it with a deadly glare.

Jian gave Alec a pat on the shoulder, sporting a serious expression.

"Go for it, dear, it's all yours!"

The people around them burst into laughter when Alec almost lost his balance mid-air upon hearing the word 'dear'. The blue-

haired man regained his composure, swatted Jian's hand away, and raised his sword to swiftly finish off the monster lord. The creature let out a final cry, its eyes closing with a hint of regret.

Alec grinned when he got another notification from the system. It said he had acquired a divine skill. He closed his eyes for a moment, and all the details about the skill rushed into his mind.

They all cheered for their victory, but their celebration came to a halt when they heard a loud voice. All eyes turned towards George, who had a bunch of pouches, a pile of mana stones, and gold coins in front of him.

"I won!"

George raised his fist in the sky, sporting a smirk, and glanced at Elder Han, who wore an unpleasant expression. Retric and Cedric also had solemn faces, having lost their bets.

To make sure nobody could go back on their words, George swiftly stashed everything in his storage ring and hurried over to the kids to congratulate them on their incredible victory against such a formidable opponent.

George gazed at the many individuals floating in front of him, and his eyes lit up with happiness. All of them turned around to face him, floating together as a group.

Retric, Han, and a few more elderly individuals floated behind King Cedric, who had arrived in front of the youngsters to praise them. However, Han noticed with a blink that Kyle hadn't moved from his spot for quite some time.

Almost everyone had gathered in front of the King, but Kyle had his back turned towards them. He floated mid-air at the same spot where Jian had left him.

"Kyle..?"

Han called out slowly and furrowed his brow when Kyle didn't respond. After Han, Yue also tried to get Kyle's attention, but he remained silent.

Alec moved to grab Kyle's shoulder when a piercing scream echoed through the air.

"Kyle!!"

All eyes instantly turned towards the two men with black hair, who just emerged from behind a boulder, completely soaked and covered in dirt. It was evident that the duo had traveled on foot to reach this place.

Elder Han instantly recognized the new arrivals. How could he not? He had visited them a few times before.

"Neon and Ray, why are you two here?"

His voice echoed through the air, but instead of replying, the duo stared at Kyle with fear written all over their faces.

"Kyle...?"

Neon called out, and a sense of foreboding filled everyone's hearts. Alec quickly grabbed Kyle's shoulder, but he and everyone around Kyle were pushed backward when a dark red aura enveloped his body.

Kyle lost his balance and plummeted towards the ground at lightning speed. Bia, who was sitting on Mia's shoulder, looked at him with wide eyes. She didn't sense anything, it was too sudden. The phoenix cried out and swiftly flew towards him.

However, before she could reach him, Yue and Jian grabbed Kyle. They called out his name repeatedly, but his eyes were unfocused as if he couldn't comprehend what was happening around him. The red energy surrounding him grew more intense with each passing second. The trio landed on the ground, and Neon and Ray rushed over to Kyle. Bia's eyes were filled with tears when she landed beside his neck, gently nuzzling her beak against him.

-'What happened? Kyle! Kyle, wake up!'

Kyle blinked as a warm tear fell on his cheek. Through the pain, he saw a few blurry figures. He felt Bia's presence beside his neck, a gentle touch behind his head, and a hand holding his hand.

Amidst the clamor of voices, he sensed a liquid being poured into his mouth, probably a healing potion. Kyle reached out his hand and caressed the little bird that was crying by his neck.

'I...I'm fine. Just a little sle...'

His eyes cleared up a bit, but the dark red aura around him became even more noticeable. He wanted to scream, but he stopped when he saw the beautiful elf sitting beside him, eyes filled with tears, and his brother's worried expression. Elder Han was shouting, holding multiple glass vials in his hand. Jian, Alec, Carcel, Mia, Lara, and nearly everyone gathered around him from every direction.

Another tear dropped onto his cheek, and he let out a soft sigh before weakly raising his other hand to wipe Yue's eyes.

"I'm... fine."

Yue's eyes widened, and she shouted at him with a faint sob.

"Don't speak!"

Chapter 364 His soul

Not just Yue, Ray also shouted at him, telling him to be quiet. Kyle blinked, unsure of what was happening, but he noticed they were staring at him with a horrified expression.

'What...?'

He felt something wet, not tears, something else. The hand that tried to wipe Yue's tears paused as it reached beneath his eyes.

He lifted his fingers and examined them. They were red, completely soaked in blood.

Oh, it seems his eyes were bleeding. Kyle closed his eyes, but then Neon slapped his chest and urged him to stay conscious no matter what. Kyle let out a chuckle.

"... You're still getting the better of me..."

Another potion was poured into his mouth, but nothing seemed to work. Kyle glanced at Yue and a faint smile appeared on his face.

"Don't cry... You... look ugly when you cry."

Yue paused, blinking in disbelief. She wanted to give him a piece of her mind, as he seemed to be joking in such a serious situation. But before she could respond, a familiar sentence echoed in her mind. She tried to recall the blurry memory, but suddenly, a tearing sound filled the air. Her gaze shifted to Kyle, realizing that the sound was coming from his body.

Kyle's eyes dilated, and he finally let out a piercing scream that sent shivers down the spines of everyone present. All the people around him froze in their tracks, and the air turned eerily silent.

Instantly, the red aura around his body gathered above his chest, and with a faint ripping sound, a small dark red crystal sprang out from his chest.

The crystal pulsed with a sinister energy, emanating a faint golden light along its edges. When Alec laid eyes on the crystal, his eyes widened and he let out a terrified shout. After all, unlike others, he could see everything about the crystal because the system window showed him the details.

Alec reached out to grab the crystal. However, as he tried to grab it, a powerful blast of energy was unleashed, causing everyone around Kyle to be forcefully thrown back as if their strength meant nothing.

Kyle's body lifted off the ground when the crystal moved. Amidst the chaos, faint voices called out to him, but he shut his eyes as a numbing, heart-wrenching pain consumed him. It felt like a part of him was swallowed by darkness. Deep down, he knew this moment would come someday, but he couldn't help but question why now, and why so soon.

His body dropped to the ground with a soft thud and the crystal zoomed towards something above in the clouds. Yue, Neon, Ray, and a few others rushed to his side, but Kyle wasn't responding anymore.

The phoenix cried out loudly when the connection she had with Kyle broke. She couldn't sense anything from him anymore, nothing at all.

Alec screamed at Jian and a few others to follow the crystal, but they froze in their tracks when a pair of emotionless golden eyes appeared in the sky. In the next second, a bone-crushing pressure weighed down on their shoulders.

Not just them, even Cedric, Retric, and the many older individuals around Kyle felt the same pressure on their shoulders as they dropped to their knees. Alec stared at the man with bloodshot eyes.

"Why the hell did you do it? How dare you!?"

He used his newly acquired divine skill on the man. The man in purple robes was taken aback for a moment. However, instead of fighting back, he grabbed the crystal and vanished before Alec's skill could even reach him.

Alec's eyes widened. He couldn't believe he had let the man slip through his fingers so easily. He froze when a notification popped up, telling him that the mission to kill the man who was harming the planet's core had failed.

"So... "

He looked back at where Yue and the others were trying to wake up Kyle. Then, Retric shouted and asked everyone to take Kyle to the Academy for better treatment, but Alec knew no one could treat Kyle now. His eyes welled up with tears, and he raised his head to hold them back.

'His soul...'

Jian, who had been beside him, started shouting with anger. He promised to find the man who harmed his friend. But just as the situation calmed down, a loud rumble shook the entire sky.

"Huh..?"

Alec looked up, and not just him, everyone around the planet raised their heads to stare at the sky. It cracked like fragile glass, breaking into countless fragments.

"No way...?"

Alec let out a disbelieving laugh. He couldn't believe he had failed so badly. He wasn't able to save his friend, nor was he able to stop the destruction that awaited the planet, even if only for a few months.

...

At the far end of the planet, as the cracks emerged, a pair of astonished eyes peered inside, gazing at the world through the fissures.

"Huh... another hidden planet?"

The woman let out a soft sigh, and the black three-petal flower engraved on her forehead glimmered faintly. She glanced back at the man floating beside her, a wicked grin spreading across her face.

"Hay, tell me, how long do you think it would take for the fourth shadow general's army to arrive and conquer this planet?"

Hay, the man with pointy ears, pondered the question. He had been oblivious to the planet's existence for so many years. Despite his concealed presence, a hoarse voice escaped his lips as he responded.

"I'm not sure about the fourth general, but a portion of the third general's army is on planet azure. It's pretty close, so I think it would take a week or two, maybe?"

The pink ears on top of the woman's head perked up slightly as she narrowed her eyes with mischief.

"Let's have some fun, shall we? We haven't found the man who stole the general's divine artifact and ran away. Plus, I didn't receive any recognition when I reported back about the universe

projection. So, why not take credit for discovering this planet? Maybe it'll help lighten our punishment."

Hay hummed and nodded in agreement.

"You're stronger, Diora. As always, I'll follow your lead."

Diora, the demi-human, burst into laughter. She wiped her eyes and smiled at Hay, batting her thick lashes.

"You know, I sensed a few divine presences on this planet, but they're not very strong, almost like fragments of their consciousness. How about we go and take them out first?"

"Okay."

The duo locked eyes for a moment before leaping into the planet through the cracks.

Diora took a deep breath and the corners of her eyes lifted.

"Ah... the air is so fresh. I don't like it one bit. And you know what? If I don't like something, I'll change it to my liking, right?"

In an instant, a whip materialized in her hand, and a dark aura enveloped her. The aura extended towards the lush trees below, causing them to wither and the land to dry up.

Chapter 365 The unknown enemy

The moment the cracks appeared in the sky, strong individuals from each continent started floating to investigate. After finding nothing, they contacted the other continents to see if they had any information.

Eventually, they all gathered together because no one could figure out the reason behind the cracks. Just then, their communication crystals buzzed, and they received unbelievable news from the East Continent. The same continent they had ignored for the past few months.

Cedric and the other kings from the East Continent personally delivered the news that the planet was in danger. They lacked proof to support their claims, relying solely on what Alec, a young man who claimed to have found many secrets in the ancient realm, had told them.

However, when the cracks appeared in the sky, they knew something was wrong. That's why they did their best to spread the word and urged everyone to gather together to prepare for the unknown enemies that would soon attack.

All the continents reacted differently to the news. Some people believed, but the majority didn't. Instead, they scoffed and ignored the absurd warning given by the East Continent.

It was a shock when the Sea Continent suddenly cut off all contact with the land and disappeared deep into the sea. They even called back all their people and closed off all their entrances without saying a word. As time passed, the cracks in the sky grew wider, and the signs became undeniable. Slowly, skepticism turned into fear, and those who had dismissed the warning began to realize the gravity of the situation.

But it was too late because, before they could even prepare, the West Continent, which had been the safest of all, was attacked by a strange woman and a man. The enemy's number was only two, but the duo managed to destroy one of the biggest cities on the continent in just a single day.

The West Continent was the most developed compared to the other three, but its vast collection of arrays and weapons became useless in the face of the sudden attack.

The woman, named Diora, who led the attack with her companion, was incredibly powerful. Instead of targeting the weak, she sought out the strongest guardians of the Continent and mercilessly killed them in front of a horrified crowd.

Diora wanted to destroy the Tower of Opportunity, which stood tall in the center of the West Continent, but she failed. That's why her anger increased. Within a short time, news of Diora and Hay's actions quickly spread to the East and Central Continents.

King Istalian, who had been secretly plotting to capture the fire phoenix, slumped into his chair with a solemn expression. He may have been a bad person, but he knew that if the West Continent collapsed, the Central Continent would be the next to fall. That's why he immediately dispatched his strongest soldiers to aid the West Continent.

Istalian wanted to join the soldiers as well because he knew he was the strongest in his continent. But then, the shadow hiding behind his back materialized and stared at him with an emotionless expression.

"I don't care about the people who die... but I know if you fall, I'll also suffer the consequences. No, maybe the remnant of my consciousness will completely disappear from this universe. That's why let me give you some advice."

"Instead of fighting head-on, first secure your own place. I believe you have a lot of array masters. Call upon them and construct something that could save you when the real enemy attacks. The two people who are attacking the West Continent are nothing in front of the army that will soon... come knocking at your door."

Istalian's eyes widened as he stared at the shadow. He paused, and after a few seconds, nodded and quickly contacted all the array masters and every capable individual he knew. He ordered them to first construct a sturdy shield with countless arrays around his Kingdom and then around the whole Central Continent. He didn't care about the resources and emptied his treasury to ensure immediate results.

Amidst the chaos, Istalian forgot about the phoenix he was supposed to capture for the shadow.

In the East Continent, Cedric and the other kings gathered their strongest soldiers and sent them to the West Continent to help. They didn't receive help when they needed it the most, but how could they just let their fellow people die at the hands of some evil individuals?

Yet, the news of failure arrived earlier than they expected. Afterward, Alec, Jian, Carcel, and many others stepped forward to fight the two individuals who were causing havoc in the West Continent.

King Cedric was reluctant to send the kids, but he knew he had no other choice. That's why he agreed and sent them with a large group of people. He wanted to join as well, but Alec told him that more enemies would arrive soon. That's why he stayed behind to gather Retric and all the array masters so they could construct a shield that could protect his people if more enemies were to attack.

....

Alec and Jian were furious about what happened with Kyle. That's why they used everything they had to fight against Diora and Hay. However, the power difference was too great, and they were pushed back, almost losing their lives. Fortunately, a short dwarf with brown hair and eyes suddenly appeared and saved them.

The dwarf had a large bag on his back as he rubbed his chin, wearing a serious expression.

"I had a feeling something was wrong, but how could this happen?"

He glanced at Diora and Hay, who wore unpleasant expressions on their faces.

"You two are killing mortals when you're clearly much stronger? Do you think I would let that happen?"

Jian stared at the dwarf, or rather, at the storage rings on the dwarf's fingers, his eyes filled with shock. The red-haired man raised his finger with a gasp.

"Those... rings... aren't they mine and Kelvin's??"

He shouted without caring about his injuries. The dwarf moved forward and grabbed Hay's neck with his hand before tossing him aside as if he were nothing more than a piece of clothing. Hay's body was thrown backward, crashing into a tall building.

Diora's eyes widened, she gritted her teeth and retreated because she knew that the dwarf in front of her was not someone she could fight. The dwarf raised his eyebrow and turned back to stare at Jian, who had his jaw dropped to the ground in astonishment.

"Kid... these rings are mine? How could you accuse me of theft when I just saved your life?"

Chapter 366 Now I like the air

Jian snapped out of his daze and stared at the rings. There was no way in hell he would forget those rings! The same rings he and Kelvin lost when they came out of the tower of opportunity.

He wanted to argue with the dwarf, but suddenly blood oozed out from the dwarf's mouth. The dwarf raised his hand and wiped his lips.

"Ah, I am too old to exert so much strength. I don't think I can help you kiddos for much longer. I will hold off these two people until I can. You better get ready because I know the planet's location has been revealed, and more enemies will be arriving soon."

The dwarf landed beside Jian, removing his storage rings and the big bag from his back. He placed them beside the stunned red-haired man.

"Alright... alright, I admit I stole them. Now, don't give me that glare, okay? But, in return, I gave you a divine artifact, didn't I? And now, I'm giving this all back as well!"

The dwarf scoffed and rolled his eyes at Jian. It seemed that even after experiencing so much, Jian still had no idea that he had a divine artifact with him. How can someone be so clueless? Then, he turned his gaze to Alec, who had an angry look on his face as he stared at Diora and Hay.

"Hey, I can sense that you also have a divine artifact. So, don't just jump into danger without thinking about the consequences. You all have a lot to achieve, so don't risk your lives as if they mean nothing."

He started floating and waved at the kids with a sigh.

"Stop staring and leave. Take the others with you too. I knew this day would come someday, but I never thought it would come so abruptly. If only I had enough mental power, I could have realized that something was wrong with the planet's core."

Alec stood up and glanced at the dwarf's back before he and Jian helped everyone around them.

The dwarf watched their fading backs, his heart aching as he saw how Jian dragged the bag filled with his lifelong earnings.

'That brat! Doesn't he know that it took me a hundred years to gather this much money and wealth?'

He wanted to go and knock some sense into Jian's head, but he had other business to take care of. The dwarf glanced back at Diora and Hay, cracking his knuckles, but then groaned in pain. He shrugged it off and rolled up his sleeves.

"Well, the kids didn't ask, but let me tell you about myself. I'm Zron, the last divine guardian of this planet. I stayed behind to steal... Ahem I mean protect this place until the others return."

He let out a chuckle and launched an attack on the duo with all his might. Diora and Hay were pushed back, but the dwarf's movements became sluggish with each passing minute.

Diora's ears twitched atop her head and she let out a mocking laugh.

"You think you can stop us? Well, maybe for now. Let's see what you will do when the third shadow general's army comes and destroys this lovely planet."

She raised her chin high, and the whip in her hand trembled, emitting black smoke.

Zron clicked his tongue and fought with them for a day. But then Diora retreated in frustration because, although the dwarf couldn't kill them, he was strong enough to stop them. She clicked her tongue and raised her head, gazing at the sky.

"Just a few more days... I'll be back, old man. You'll see me again soon."

She grabbed Hay's arm and lifted him before quickly disappearing in the opposite direction.

Zron gazed at their fading back, wanting to follow, but his body didn't obey his instructions. He let out a soft sigh and looked up at the sky as he slowly landed amidst the broken buildings. His knees gave out, and blood trickled down his jaw.

"Huh... I overdid it again. I don't think I can fight anymore."

He closed his eyes, and when he sensed the duo had gone far away, his body started to crumble into countless golden particles. He had used up all his strength to fight them head-

on. After spending so many years, he had grown old, and his strength had stagnated.

"At least the planet has a few more days. I wonder where that kid is... did he die? At first, I wanted to give him the divine artifact, but I stopped because... I sensed something sinister hidden inside his heart."

His voice faded as the golden particles drifted away with the wind. Yet, a sly smile appeared at the corner of his lips after all that drama. His soul won't scatter because he has already reached the Transcendent rank. It will take some time, but he knows he will be able to reconstruct his body again.

'I haven't finished my lifelong quote yet. No way, I am gonna die so easily. Hoho...'

.....

Alec, Jian, Carcel, and the others returned to their continent, but they couldn't rest for even an hour before being called back to their own kingdoms. The kings realized the impending threat was powerful enough to destroy them, so no one wanted to take any chances.

Yue wanted to check on Kyle one last time, but her father arrived with Aira and forced her to go back. Not just her, but Regius, Sinon, Faith, and everyone from the elven kingdom. Aira drew a teleportation array in front of the Kingdom Escalante Royal Castle and instantly asked the kids to step inside.

Yue gazed back toward the castle before stepping into the teleportation array. After Kyle didn't wake up, Bia lost control and went into a frenzy. She destroyed the nearby trees and ground in her anger. In the end, King Cedric ordered Elder Han to bring Kyle to the castle where the best healers could treat him or maybe help him wake up. But even after so much time, they weren't able to find out what happened to him.

Kyle's body turned extremely cold, enough to freeze anyone who dared to touch him, and his hair lost its brilliant color. Yue raised her head to hold back the tears that threatened to spill from her eyes. She knew that even though his heart had stopped beating, as long as he continued to breathe, there was hope that he would wake up.

After them, Jian and Kelvin also departed with the people from their Kingdom. Alec looked at Carcel, Mia, and Lara. The four of them were assigned by the King to assist the array masters in constructing the shield around the Kingdom. They all worked tirelessly, with no time for rest.

However, when the enemies arrived, the destruction that followed was beyond anyone's wildest dreams. The borders and shield, constructed with all the resources the East Continent could gather, crumbled in just a week. And it wasn't just the East Continent; the Central Continent was also left half-destroyed.

An army of countless individuals, belonging to different races, descended upon the planet through the cracks. The cracks that shattered into countless bright particles, leaving the planet vulnerable to the prying eyes of those who sought to conquer it.

The individuals in the third general's army had different appearances. Some were elves, some were demi-humans, some from the dark race, and some had horned and lizard-like features. There were even those who called themselves demons. However, they all shared a common symbol, a one-petal flower engraved in the middle of their foreheads, representing their allegiance to darkness.

Leading the army were none other than Diora and Hay. A sinister, dark aura wrapped around the entire planet, embracing it tightly. Diora took a deep breath, feeling a sense of satisfaction.

"Ah... now I like the air. It reminds me of our home planet."

She looked back at Hay and the few people floating behind her, wearing a sweet smile.

"How about we go find that old dwarf? I promised him I would visit him again. I really want to give him a scare and see if his old bones can handle it!"

But after two days, she let out a scream of frustration because the old dwarf had vanished into thin air. Not only that, she wasn't able to destroy the towers that stood in the middle of each continent.

Chapter 367 Where is his body

The air was thick with the scent of smoke and dust, a haunting reminder of the battle that had raged through the land. Amidst the broken buildings, crumbling houses, and countless screams, Alec knelt on his knees with an expression filled with despair.

His forehead was dampened with sweat as he grabbed the hand of the beautiful woman cradled in his arms and started mumbling under his breath.

"Please wake up..."

His expression grew paler with each passing second after the hand in his grasp turned limp. The clothes draped on his body were torn from various places, with blood oozing out from the numerous injuries all around his body.

He let out a disbelieving laugh and screamed, no way, no way... But Lara's eyes remained shut, even after he poured many healing potions into her mouth. He could only watch as thick, dark lines slowly crept up her neck, threatening to steal her last remaining breaths.

How could this happen? After everyone scattered due to the circumstances, Alec and Lara, along with many other old individuals, were assigned to protect the western part of the East Continent. He thought everything would be fine as long as they didn't admit defeat, but nothing was fine.

The sky above him was shrouded in darkness, emanating from the whip of the woman floating in the air. Diora let out a sad sigh, but her eyes were twinkling with mirth. She looked at the blue-haired man kneeling below her, fluttering her thick lashes.

She was alone, with just a small army of one thousand people by her side. Hay and the other powerful individuals, along with the remaining third shadow general's army, were launching attacks on the planet from different places.

Diora came here to settle a past grudge with the blue-haired man because, even after so many days, she wasn't able to locate that old dwarf.

But who could've guessed her opponent would fall so easily?

Well, she would be lying if she said the man didn't have any potential to grow stronger than her. The moment she fought with him, she knew he could achieve a lot.

She let out a smirk when Alec raised his head to glare at her.

"What? You're standing on the weaker side. A side that was destined to fail the moment master wanted to conquer this whole universe."

Diora wanted to have a bit more fun with her prey, but then Alec closed his eyes and a faint voice escaped his trembling lips.

"Stop... You want to harm me, right? So, please don't kill her... please."

The woman's lips curled into a snarl, her shoulders trembling as laughter threatened to escape. She couldn't believe that the proud man, who fought her head-on despite being weaker, was now pleading to save the woman in his arms. She placed her finger on her lips and smiled at Alec.

"What if I don't want to? How about begging a little more?"

Alec's eyes trembled a little, but then he gazed at Lara. However, at that moment, the sky shook violently, and a tremendous amount of mana gathered in a faraway place.

Diora lifted her head, gazing into the distance. Her eyes widened, and in an instant, she fell to her knees. Her previous arrogance and elegance vanished in the presence of the person who had just arrived on the planet.

Not only her, but all the people fighting alongside her also dropped to their knees as the petals on their foreheads glowed brightly.

Alec's grip on his sword tightened as he stared at Diora with a blank expression. In his mind, there was only one thought—he needed to kill her, and everything would be fine. But his breath hitched when a figure zoomed toward him and Diora, moving so fast that he couldn't even see a blur. The sword in his hand was flung backward as the person solidified in front of them.

Alec spat out a mouthful of blood when his eyes met a pair of mesmerizing sapphire eyes staring directly at him. He thought the man was looking through his soul, and his mind went completely blank for a few seconds, only to be jolted awake when the system window rang out with countless warning signs. He gasped and abruptly closed his eyes because the ethereal glow in the man's eyes was somewhat eerie.

The dust flew around as Diora let out a faint welcoming cry, calling out to the man with utmost respect. Alec slowly opened his eyes and gazed at the man when he turned around to face the woman kneeling in front of him.

'So this is what a shadow general looked like...?'

The man looked just like a human with the pristine brown robe hanging loosely on his body, or maybe he was a human, except for the blooming five-petal flower in the middle of his forehead. His eyes flickered with annoyance when he saw Diora, who, for some reason, didn't dare to make eye contact with him.

Then, he gazed at Alec, who tightened his grip on Lara and moved back a little with gritted teeth. But what happened next made Alec's scalp go numb. The man actually offered to help save Lara's life, but the smile at the corner of his lips was anything but good as he landed in front of Alec.

"You know... there's a saying, if you want something, you should give something in return, right?"

Alec's eyes widened when a familiar red crystal appeared in front of him. He stared at the floating crystal with dilated eyes. It was the same crystal that harmed Kyle, the one who devoured Kyle's soul.

The man glanced down at the crystal, and it trembled a little.

"I just found the person who dared to steal my belongings and remained hidden for so many years. He deserves punishment for the crime he committed. But I was astonished when I saw the brimming and pure divine energy in the soul-consuming crystal. So, before killing him, I asked him to tell me where and whose soul the crystal consumed."

The man paused and grabbed the crystal before staring directly at Alec with his sapphire eyes that glowed faintly to captivate the young man.

"I know the person whose soul was eaten is dead, so tell me, where is his body?"

Chapter 368 Enthrall

The man waited for Alec's answer, but after a few seconds, his patience ran low. Alec gasped when a sharp pain traveled throughout his body.

Despite that, he shook his head and kept his mouth shut, not daring to reply. But then, his eyes widened when the man attacked Lara.

"Wait!"

The man stopped with an 'Oh' and gestured for him to spill everything. Otherwise, he would kill them both and dig into their skulls to search for the location of the person's dead body.

However, he didn't want to dirty his clothes. Plus, the chances of finding something useful after digging out their skulls were only five percent. He wasn't willing to take that risk when he was here to find something ethereal.

'How can someone have such a powerful soul... with energy strong enough to equal at least ten divine beings?'

'I am sure that person had something special in their body!'

Maybe he was mistaken, but even if there was a small chance that his prediction was right, there was no way he would let the opportunity pass by.

Alec gazed at Lara and asked the man to save her first, then he would tell.

The man raised his brow and, just with a flick of his finger, the dark lines on Lara's body disappeared and her complexion returned to normal. He stared at Alec, impatiently waiting for an answer. Alec gazed back and closed his eyes for a second.

"His body is buried among the countless dead bodies of people who lost their lives under your army. Just head north, and you will see a big graveyard."

The man narrowed his eyes. After a few seconds, he let out a chuckle and a glowing paper with a pen appeared in front of him.

"Not my army, it belongs to the third general, who happens to be the laziest among us all. If I were the one who attacked this planet, it wouldn't still be standing. It would have already crumbled into countless pieces."

The man blinked and Alec's hand went against his command. It started moving and grabbed the floating pen with faint symbols. Alec tried to pull his hand back, but the man in front of him clicked his tongue.

"Now, now, no need to struggle. It's just a precaution. I don't like going back on my word, so I won't kill you now. Just sign the paper, that way if I ever want a loyal follower with a pure soul, I'll be able to call you."

He smirked when Alec's expression crumbled, and his hand holding the pen started trembling. The system's voice kept ringing inside Alec's head, telling him not to sign the paper, but he could do nothing but watch as his hand moved on its own.

After the paper was signed, it vanished into thin air with a faint glow. The man started floating and gazed at Alec from mid-air.

"Congratulations, you just sold yourself to the devil. Don't worry though, you will gain strength in return. Strength that can help you protect your people. Well, at least until I'm occupied."

He let out a chuckle and vanished, heading in the opposite direction to search for the body he had come for.

Alec gazed at the back of his hand, where a faint black petal appeared. A tear trickled down his cheek, landing softly on Lara's face.

Diora, who had been watching from the sidelines, let out a frustrated groan. She knew she couldn't kill Alec anymore, since he had become the possession of the fourth shadow general.

.....

Enthrall, the fourth shadow general, arrived above the graveyard. His gaze scanned the area, and after a long minute, a frown formed on his face. The piece of paper that Alec had signed had long been rolled up and thrown into a large chamber filled with similar papers.

He closed his eyes, and a dark aura spread from his body, enveloping everything around him, but he found nothing.

"Don't tell me that bastard lied...? It can't be. I would've sensed it if he did."

However, even after a few minutes, he still didn't find anything. An angry vein bulged on his forehead.

"Seems like my prediction was wrong, and the body I'm searching for belongs to an ordinary individual who just happens to have a strong soul."

His eyes grew emotionless as he stared at the pulsating crystal in his hand. In the next moment, the vast graveyard below him crumbled into dust, as if it had never existed.

Enthrall wanted to obliterate at least a big part of the planet before leaving, but all of a sudden, the flower on his forehead began to glow.

"What's up with 2nd now? Why is he calling me? It's been so many years, and the war on the other end is still ongoing. It's not like we can leave this universe, so why doesn't master just step forward and wipe the struggling ones completely?"

He looked at the space around him. Despite its abundant resources, the planet was not vast. It was one of the smallest in this area. So, he knew the third general would handle it, even though the latter was rather lazy.

Nonetheless, before he left, he raised his hand with a smirk, and sapphire-colored particles filled the air.

"Now, I don't need to worry. Third is useless, but even if he didn't take care of this place, it would wither on its own if the air isn't cleaned on time."

The already polluted environment of the planet grew even darker within just a few days. The ones affected by the air were none other than the monsters inside the dark forest.

The monsters were on edge because of the sudden arrival of so many people on the planet. However, after the sapphire particles seeped into their bodies, they lost their minds and began attacking everything around them, without any regard for their own lives.

The scenario was similar to before, the only difference was that this time they were not controlled by a monster lord.

Chapter 369 Ah... finally

Alec entered a serene and quiet room, where gentle curtains gracefully adorned the windows. The air inside was icy, with a delicate layer of frost casting an ethereal glow.

His gaze wandered, until it settled upon the majestic bed, positioned at the room's center. Alec walked up to the bed and stood in front of it, his gaze fixed on the peaceful figure lying there, half-covered by a flowing fabric.

Overwhelmed with emotion, he dropped to his knees, unable to contain the words that escaped his lips.

"If only you were awake... would everything have been better?"

Alec couldn't help but let out a chuckle as he wiped the tears that had welled up in his eyes.

Kyle's eyes were tightly shut, as if he was lost in a dream world. His skin appeared even paler, and a delicate layer of frost covered his body, softly shimmering in the dim light of the room.

"You were always carefree... but whenever you were around, you never let anything happen to those close to you."

"I remember when we were in the secret realm, you once said that it wasn't your duty to step forward and help if the world was in danger. But how strange, you always ended up helping others."

Alec stood up in front of the bed, brushing off his clothes even though there was nothing on them.

"Don't worry, Bia is fine. It took a lot, but Yue and Mia managed to calm her down. Right now, she's helping the others, and let me tell you, she's gotten a lot stronger..."

"So please, wake up... or else she'll be angry. You know... I lied to save your body, so you owe me now."

He rubbed his hands together because the air around him was so cold that he could see his breath.

"Bastard... always so lazy. How long are you going to sleep for?"

Alec shook his head and began to leave the room. But just as he turned away, the person lying on the bed made a slight movement. It was so subtle that no one noticed it. The moment, Alec stepped out, he noticed another figure squinting in front of the door.

The man with red hair had messy clothes and his face was hidden in his knees. Alec shook the man's shoulder with a serious expression.

"Jian... why are you here?"

Jian let out a long sigh, his usually sparkling eyes devoid of any emotions.

"It's been two months and he's still sleeping?"

He waved Alec's hand away.

"Just like you, I came here to cry. After the King's death, Kelvin could have taken the throne... but given the circumstances, he gave up. He said we should follow the Central Continent's orders. That way, we would be able to save a lot of people."

Alec stared at Jian, realizing they had all been through so much in such a short time. Many people from the older generation sacrificed themselves to save the younger generation. His eyes paused when he noticed a strange white bracelet on Jian's wrist.

"What's that...?"

Jian raised his wrist and frowned at the bracelet.

"I don't know, found it among the treasures in the bag that old dwarf left with me. The bracelet was trapped in a bottle, but when I opened the bottle, it jumped out and wrapped itself around my wrist, and now..."

He waved his hand roughly.

"It's stuck like a leech."

Alec narrowed his eyes at the bracelet. He tried using the system appraisal skill but didn't find anything suspicious.

"You sure it's not harmful...?"

Jian grabbed his knees and stood up.

"I think it's just a normal bracelet, except it won't let go of my wrist-!"

His sentence was interrupted when the bracelet on his wrist suddenly glowed and leaped in the opposite direction.

"Huh...?"

Jian's eyes widened as he quickly jumped and grabbed it in his fist. But then white smoke sizzled out from his fingers. Alec stared at Jian's hand as he opened his fist, but the bracelet had vanished into thin air.

"What the hell just happened?"

The duo was interrupted when Alec's communication crystal buzzed. He sighed and pulled out the crystal, then looked at Jian.

"We need to leave... the ones who retreated are attacking again."

Jian furrowed his brows. The west Continent had fallen completely, and the east Continent would have fallen too if it wasn't for Alec forcing Dora to retreat somehow.

Now, all the remaining Kingdoms have decided to unite and create a single Continent, with four Kingdoms representing each race. The elves, the dwarves, the humans, and the demi-

humans. As for the Sea Continent, it hasn't shown up even when they called for help.

Jian gazed at Alec and massaged his temples.

"Are you sure it's okay to let Istalian be the King of the human race? You know I don't like him. Why didn't King Cedric say anything? He is the last surviving King of the East Continent."

Alec floated mid-air as he replied with a tired voice.

"We don't have a choice. I don't know how he did it, but he created a massive shield around his Kingdom that can gather mana from the air to attack enemies. Right now, the safest place to build the new Continent is right in the center of the Central Continent."

Jian turned around and glanced at the door behind him.

"What about Kyle? Should we move his body to a safe place?"

Alec chuckled and shook his head.

"I thought you would have noticed."

He paused for a moment, scanning the corridor they were standing in.

"Despite the entire continent being attacked from different directions... this massive castle hasn't been touched by anyone. It's hard to believe they overlooked such a huge place as if it doesn't exist at all."

Jian's eyes widened slightly as he understood the meaning behind Alec's words. It couldn't be a coincidence. He gazed at the faint icy layer slowly spreading from Kyle's room. A faint smile appeared at the corner of his lips.

"Once he wakes up, I want to know the rank of his luck stat."

The duo left together, but after they left, the bracelet that had vanished into smoke crawled out from behind a shadow. It traveled toward Kyle's room before slowly seeping into the cracks.

Soon, the bracelet crawled up to the bed and paused above the man sleeping peacefully on the bed. A hoarse voice echoed in the room.

"Ah... finally."

Chapter 370 I am not here to cry

The bracelet slowly crawled towards Kyle's wrist and, with a click, snugly settled itself around his wrist.

Instantly, a wisp of white smoke hissed out from its surface, causing the icy layer on Kyle's wrist to melt a little.

However, only after a minute, a faint cry pierced the room, and the bracelet was flung in a different direction. Countless tiny blue particles gathered around Kyle's wrist, and once again, a delicate layer of ice formed on his skin.

Another frustrated voice resonated from the bracelet as it crawled back towards the bed. Yet, the peculiar cycle repeated itself, and the bracelet was once again forcefully flung away from Kyle.

"This pesky... mortal!"

Once again, the bracelet crawled its way toward Kyle's wrist, but this time it wasn't flung backward. Instead, the blue particles around Kyle's wrist seeped into its body, and a crack appeared on its surface.

"Fuck...??"

A loud curse filled the air, and this time the bracelet distanced itself from Kyle on its own. The blue particles tightly clinging to Kyle's skin finally calmed down and settled on his skin once again.

"No way... what's wrong with this bastard? Doesn't he know how much I've suffered under that dwarf for the past few years just to reach him again? I do want to eat his lifespan, but how am I going to enter his consciousness?"

After grumbling for a while, the bracelet tried once more, but once again, it failed. Nevertheless, the delicious treat right in front of it was too tempting to resist. And so, the cycle continued for a long time... until the room door slowly creaked open and a beautiful figure stepped inside.

The bracelet next to Kyle's hand completely stilled as it watched the figure slowly approaching the bed.

Her amber eyes had a faint coral color in the center, and her hair flowed down in long, lustrous waves. The strands shimmered in the soft light, like spun gold cascading over her shoulders. The attire she wore was crafted with intricate details and exquisite fabrics, almost as if she had just come from a grand occasion. It hugged her figure in a way that accentuated her grace and elegance.

And in her hand, she carried a silver crown adorned with delicate jewels that glimmered in the dim light.

She sat down beside Kyle and looked at him with a faint smile.

"It's been a while, right?"

Yue hummed softly and placed the crown beside Kyle. Her eyes were faintly red, but she didn't say anything for a while. She silently stared at his face.

"I remember..."

She raised her hand and touched Kyle's forehead. It felt cold, even colder than she remembered. Her finger slowly traveled to the tip of his nose.

"We have met before, haven't we? A long time ago, when we were kids. It took me a while, but I remember."

Once again, there was silence in the room, which was broken by a faint sob. She didn't want to cry, but she had experienced too much in such a short time that it felt a little unbearable.

"I'm not crying! Okay... I know Alec and the others come here when they want to cry, but I'm not here for that!"

She wiped her eyes and looked at Kyle.

"I'm just here to see you."

After another pause, she started speaking again, trying to tell the man beside her that she had lost her father. The newly constructed elven Kingdom was named after her father because he had sacrificed his life to defeat a powerful enemy.

"You know, Dad left behind something special... Those two porcelain bracelets, do you remember them? They were actually pieces of an artifact. He collected all the parts and left behind another divine artifact for me."

A tear trickled down her cheek, but she quickly wiped it away.

"Now I have two divine artifacts... The first one was given to me by my brother before his death."

"But they're not useful at all..."

More tears trickled down her cheeks, and she bent down to place her forehead above his.

"Now that mom and I are alone... the elves crowned me as the new queen because the elven King died. Also, I just reached the (SSS+)-Rank. You might be wondering how I did it when my talent was lower. It's because of the artifact Dad left behind. The artifact is a little bit different. It didn't give me power. Instead, it summoned someone from a faraway place..."

She closed her eyes, and a few tears dropped onto Kyle's face. The layer of ice on his face cracked a little, and one of his fingers twitched slightly. However, the elf beside him had her eyes closed.

The bracelet, which had been observing everything from the sidelines, quietly leaped out and clung to Kyle's wrist the moment it noticed the small crack in his defenses. Yue raised her head slightly and let out a faint smile.

"Just look at me crying beside you when I said I'm not here to cry."

She stood up and smoothed out the faint wrinkles in her clothes.

"I won't be able to come see you for a while. Maybe the others won't come as well. We have a lot of work to do. Don't be lonely."

"Ah... right, Bia, she also reached (SSS+)-Rank recently. Now she has the authority of a monster lord. She wanted to come see you too, but as one of the guardians of the new continent named Coaxis, she has been staying around the border with your family to control the monsters, who, for some reason, have lost their minds."

She paused in her tracks and once again bent down to drop a fleeting kiss on his forehead.

"Ah... your skin is cold. Well, it's not like you will know."

Yue stepped back and left the room, wearing a faint smile. She had a lot of work to do, and after she was done, she had to leave for a faraway place with that woman who appeared after she activated the artifact.