

Bloodline 571

Chapter 571 This familiar voice

Ceano sighed and joined Will. The duo sat before the demon statue and casually observed the numerous people below. Many eyes turned towards them, but the presence they emitted caused the onlookers to quickly look away.

Once the two shadow generals settled before the demon's statue, the demon, dark, and nightkin race individuals all chuckled and descended towards the numerous stages below amidst the towering walls.

The atmosphere grew heavy as dark energy filled the air. The individuals from the dark side sneered and taunted those around them with their words, but they knew they were not allowed to mess with the crowd.

The second shadow general who had brought them here had instructed them not to provoke anyone, but had also granted them the freedom to act as they pleased once the battles in the Gladiator Arena began and they stood above the stages.

The illusionary male and female figures floating around the stages all gathered around the people from the dark side when Old Hal gazed at them. He watched as the figures started handing the demon, dark, and nightkin race people nameplates.

The old man returned to his seat with a solemn face and instructed a woman to relocate all those seated beneath the demon's statue to a different place. This way, all the individuals from the dark side would sit in one single place and wouldn't secretly do something under their nose.

The woman nodded and disappeared from her spot. The air was filled with different voices, but the sickening laughter from the demons was now the loudest as they mocked every single person around them, yet refrained from physical conflict. After all, even if those they were taunting wanted to engage in combat, they couldn't do so in the presence of the illusionary figures. Also, anyone who broke the rules by starting a fight before the Arena officially began would get kicked out of the Arena.

Nine got up from his seat and started moving with the others because he was among the people seated beneath the demon's statue. He looked up at the two shadow generals, and his gaze lingered on Ceano. The familiar golden eyes similar to him and long hair... Undoubtedly, the man was the very person he had encountered on the demon's planet. He took a deep breath, remembering how close the shadow general's fingers had been to him when he narrowly escaped. If Kyle hadn't told him about that life-saving artifact, he would have been in big trouble.

"Just where is that silver-haired man? Is he going to join in or what?"

A man with ghostly pale skin and a pair of horns on his head walked past Nine, and Nine's eyes narrowed at the man's grin as the latter took the seat he had just left. The man belonged to the nightkin race.

Nine looked around and noticed more people from the dark side were filling the seats that were getting empty. His eyes narrowed, and a smirk played on his lips as all the chairs where he and the lizard race members had previously sat suddenly crumbled.

There was a collective gasp from the nightkin race individuals who had just taken the seats, only to find themselves slumping down as the sand-made chairs disintegrated. Laughter erupted from the onlookers. In an instant, the smiles on the faces of the nightkin race individuals faded as one of them realized the chairs' base had been sabotaged. He scanned the crowd with a challenging gaze.

"Who the hell did this? Step up!"

"Let's see if you even have the courage to come forward!"

Nine swiftly grabbed his hood and flung it up to cover his head, his lips mimicking the words the nightkin race individual had just spoken before he gazed back with a grin.

"Nah, I don't wanna, any problem?"

His hushed words drifted in the air, but all the lizard race members who had seen what he did with the chairs earlier stared at his head with blank expressions upon hearing his faint whisper.

Nine blinked innocently when he sensed some eyes on him and gestured towards a distant area where several empty chairs were available.

"Guys, there are some vacant seats. Let's hurry over there! What are you all doing watching the fate of some pitiful souls who were so heavy that their chairs broke?"

He shook his head with a sigh, causing everyone around him to roll their eyes at his words, and began floating toward the empty chairs. However, he paused and narrowed his eyes when he spotted a familiar figure in the distant crowd. He blinked a few times to confirm he wasn't mistaken since the man was quite far away.

A hearty laugh erupted from his mouth as he took a deep breath and shouted loudly enough for everyone around to hear.

"Jian, you bastard!"

The people around him all gave him strange looks as he yelled once more, even though Jian had already caught his voice and shifted his gaze towards him.

The man with red hair squinted in his direction, but after a few seconds, he laughed and swiftly moved away from the elves seated nearby. Yue also picked up on the voice and, upon seeing Jian leaving, she and Nox followed suit. Wesley shouted from behind the duo with an angry expression.

"Where the hell are you two going!? Stop, come back, it's dangerous!"

However, it was as if his words were drowned in the surrounding noise because the duo didn't even glance back at him.

Due to the sudden shouts, someone from another group of people, who were sitting a bit further from Nine's previous location, also caught his voice.

'This familiar voice...'

Carcel blinked. He had to rise with the others to vacate their seats as well because, according to the woman in the cream-colored robe who had just appeared in the air, only individuals from the dark

side would sit beneath the demon's statue. He whipped his head back, only to see the back of the hooded man floating in the distance and spoke up.

"Is that Nine?"

Chapter 572 He has a contract mark on him

Sinon's ears twitched at the familiar name that came from Carcel's mouth, and he whipped his head towards the man.

"Nine???"

His booming voice not only caught the attention of those nearby but also prompted Alec, Lara, Mia, Regius, Zron, Susan, and Yon to follow Carcel's gaze. Their eyes sparkled with excitement because although they couldn't see Nine's face, they noticed Yue and Jian floating towards the figure in the hoodie!

Sinon spread out his wings and disappeared with a hearty laugh to soar towards the man in the hoodie. Carcel and the others also vanished behind him. In the end, only Zron, Yon, and Susan remained standing before the chairs set within the towering walls. The three old figures' eyes displayed relief as they witnessed the younger ones reunite with their old friends who had been separated.

Nine gasped with a wide smile. His throat felt dry from all the shouting, but it was worth it when he saw Jian and Yue approaching him. However, the red-haired man paused in mid-air in the distance, his eyes widening with shock and joy as he looked behind Nine.

Nine blinked, wondering why he had stopped. Usually, Jian was the first to initiate a brotherly hug among them. He tried to tilt his head back to see what had caused the red-haired man to pause, but before he could, a swift presence he sensed but couldn't react to in time crashed into him from behind.

Nine almost coughed up blood from the impact and lost his balance mid-air. However, just as he was about to fall, someone seized the back of his hoodie, causing it to slip off his head, revealing the brown hair and golden eyes. Then, a familiar voice resonated in his ears.

"Wow, wow, it's really Nine, guys! Haha!"

Sinon released his grip on his hoodie and leaned forward to study his face with a broad grin and sparkling eyes.

Nine's fists, which had clenched in readiness to strike the audacious person who had knocked the wind out of him, relaxed. His heart filled with joy as he identified the familiar features of his long-lost, somewhat foolish friend.

"You... Nevermind..."

He reached out to grab the shoulder of the winged man staring at him and hugged Sinon tightly, feeling the warmth of their friendship rekindle after so long apart. Jian quickly joined the duo and wrapped his arms around their necks.

Alec, Regius, and Carcel glanced at each other and followed suit. Mia and Lara approached Yue and embraced the elven woman before inquiring about her whereabouts and well-being. The girls smiled as they floated together, enjoying the heartwarming reunion of the six men. They were

laughing and catching up with each other, their arms draped over each other's shoulders in mid-air, completely unconcerned about the numerous judgmental stares fixed upon them.

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Whispers fluttered through the surroundings as the onlookers swiftly distanced themselves from the group in reunion.

"What's happening over there?"

"Seems like they've lost their minds..."

"Why are they so joyous though... it seems like a reunion, but in the Gladiator Arena, one wouldn't anticipate such happiness."

"I have a feeling this group might be targeted by the dark side now, especially the demons. After all, they can't stand seeing such tranquility."

The atmosphere resonated with laughter and joyful tears as the group reunited.

Old Hal, seated in front of the mermaid statue, observed the heartwarming scene below. A smile graced his face, for although uncertain, he had a premonition that they all shared a connection.

Ned and others in cream-colored robes behind him also witnessed the scene – some smiled, some sneered, while others simply looked away with indifference.

Ceano and Will, the two shadow generals, also took note of the sudden wave of happiness in the air. Their eyes immediately shifted towards the group laughing and conversing with each other in mid-air.

Will rested his hand under his chin, his ivory-colored eyes gleaming lazily as he admired the beautiful and warm scene.

"It's so touching that I'm tempted to have them witness each other's death. I wonder how they would react then... would they help each other or run away to protect themselves?"

Ceano fixed his gaze on the man.

"They would flee. It's natural for every living being to prioritize their safety and sacrifice others to ensure their own survival..."

He stopped for a second and squinted as he observed Nine's silhouette.

"He belongs to the same race as me, but why does his presence feel familiar, almost as if I have encountered him before?"

Will tilted his head to stare at Nine.

"He's from the mer race? Well, it's hard to recognize the people of that race because on land they usually stay in their human form. But why do you feel like you have seen him before... he isn't even strong enough to stand before you."

His lips curled upward.

"How about we discuss the one with blue hair? I believe you can also feel that he has a contract mark on him. That means we can control him. Now, the Gladiator Arena is going to be a bit enjoyable."

Ceano shook his head at his words. It seems Will found a target to play with and pass his time until the gate of the 'Lost Treasure Tomb' opens.

In the middle of the crowd, Alec, who suddenly felt a chill down his spine, looked back with furrowed brows. Nine noticed his expression and asked what happened. The group had decided to sit together and were heading towards some empty seats when Zron, Yon, and Susan joined them.

The lizard race members who had come with Nine gave him some side eyes when he mentioned he found his friends and would be sitting with them. Wesley and the elves with Yue were a bit worried about her, but since she was sitting not too far from them, they allowed her to join the group she introduced as her friends. Meanwhile, Xavier and the two humans who had been with Jian decided to sit with the red-haired man after getting to know his friends.

Alec shook his head at Nine, composed his expression, and asked Jian with a smile.

"Anyway... what about Kyle and Bia? Both Kyle and Bia disappeared with you as well. So, why is it that I can see you and Yue but not that silver-haired man?"

Chapter 573 Such a beautiful creature...

Jian paused in mid-air and gave a wry smile at his words, causing everyone except Yue around him to feel concerned.

"Kyle actually got separated from me and Bia after we were sucked into the ethereal tunnel. But he's fine and managed to find Yue. Bia and I only recently caught up with him and reunited with Yue and Nox."

"Later, he and Bia disappeared together because Kyle wanted to boost his divine energy level. He did mention he would meet me and Yue at the Arena. So, we will just have to wait until he shows up."

Nine smacked his shoulder when he finished speaking with a deadpan expression.

"Then why are you wearing an expression that says he's not fine at all, huh?"

Jian clicked his tongue.

"Of course, it's because he didn't take me with him. I'm sure by now he has found so many treasures within the Sacred Divine Land... No, I fear he might have emptied the whole divine land with his luck..."

He groaned and settled into a seat next to Xavier on the chairs arranged within the towering walls as everyone else sat down around him. Alec furrowed his brows once more, this time turning his gaze towards the two shadow generals as a sense of foreboding gripped his heart.

"Those bastards..."

A curse slipped from his lips because he had a feeling that the shadow generals had somehow sensed the dark mark hidden on the back of his hand. The soft curse drew all eyes towards him since it was uncommon for him to curse.

However, before anyone could ask him what happened, a faint commotion broke out in the distance. Immediately, all eyes turned toward the noise, and Alec, who had his gaze on the shadow generals, shifted his eyes above their heads when a large shadow engulfed their bodies. He was the first one to take in a sharp intake of breath, and everyone sitting around him followed suit as their eyes widened in astonishment when they saw the huge figure casting the shadow not just over any individuals, but the two shadow generals themselves!

Although many bonded beasts were present in the Gladiator Arena, once inside, no one dared to transform back to their original forms. All were cautioned at the Arena gates by the illusionary figures that their bonded beasts were forbidden from assuming their original forms inside, as their substantial sizes could disrupt the peace of the surroundings. Yet, at this very moment, a fire phoenix made her entrance into the Arena in her massive form.

Whispers and murmurs erupted in the Arena as the spectators questioned the boldness and audacity of the phoenix. But a hushed silence fell over the crowd when they realized the phoenix had not breached the boundaries of the Gladiator Arena. Instead, she was floating a few inches above the towering walls encircling the numerous stages in the center.

Old Hal's eyes shifted toward the phoenix bathed in golden flames; he had already noticed the presence of the phoenix and the human with her but didn't take any action to stop them as they were still outside the boundaries of the Gladiator Arena. The individuals in robes seated behind the old man all furrowed their brows at the scene.

Despite the phoenix's beauty, she was only at the divine rank, yet she displayed such arrogance by floating above everyone to make her presence known. Not to mention, the phoenix even caught the attention of the two shadow generals...

The people sitting behind Old Hal couldn't help but shake their heads in disapproval, thinking the phoenix had acted recklessly given her lack of strength. Will gazed at the phoenix with a smirk.

"Such a beautiful creature..."

He wanted to capture her and place her among the numerous treasures he had amassed over his lifetime simply to decorate the dark abode he lived in.

He and Ceano both looked up when they sensed the presence that had just landed on the demon's statue behind them. The first thing they saw was an indifferent face, devoid of any trace of fear, even though he stood just a bit further away from two powerful dark figures dreaded by nearly everyone in the Arena. Then, they noticed the silver hair and bright green eyes gazing softly at the flying phoenix.

Kyle had already felt the numerous eyes on him and initially glanced down to lock eyes with the two shadow generals who greeted him with smiles. He raised a brow because even though their smiles looked harmless, he could feel the hidden malice beneath those smiles. Also, he wasn't able to sense their ranks, which means the duo were stronger than him.

He opened his mouth, and a smile eerily similar to the ones on the shadow generals' faces appeared on his lips.

"What are you staring at? Never seen a good-looking guy before?"

A wild laughter escaped Will's lips at his words, and Ceano's eyes flashed with a strange glint as he noticed the smile on the human's face.

A notion crossed the second shadow general's mind that this human was somewhat dangerous. Not because he was powerful, but because the aura surrounding him bore a striking resemblance to that of someone willing to go to any lengths to accomplish their objective. He sensed it because he was just like that too.

Kyle shifted his gaze and glanced at Bia, unaware that he had just spoken with the shadow generals. He had stopped using his scent perception skill as soon as he neared the Gladiator Arena because he was aware that numerous powerful individuals would be present inside the towering walls, and they would detect his skill the moment he activated it. The phoenix expressed her joy in his mind and reverted to her smaller forms before landing on his head.

-I have found Yue and Jian! They are not alone; the others are with them too!'

Kyle gazed down in the direction where Bia had pointed and noticed a group of people staring at him. He tilted his head, observing their faces, and tried his best to recall the memories he had with them, but unfortunately, he couldn't.

'I will remember with time... I guess.'

Chapter 574 How have you all been?

Kyle's feet lifted off the statue surface as he started to float, with Bia sitting on his head, his floating form entered the space within the towering walls.

The two young men sitting before the demon's statue were strangely fixated on him with amused expressions. Not just them, but he also noticed another group of individuals in cream-colored robes sitting before the mermaid statue, all looking at him with various expressions.

A pensive look crossed his face as he grasped that the people positioned above the audience in front of the statues are the ones supervising the Arena. However, as he descended towards the crowd, his eyes moved to the area beneath the demon's statue where the demons and other dark beings were seated. Even without his scent perception skill, he could feel the heavy dark energy filling the air in that region.

Kyle unconsciously wrinkled his nose, yet his expression remained impassive as he landed above one of the stages floating within the towering walls.

"What are the people from the dark side doing here? Can it be... they are also allowed to join the Arena?"

Bia cocked her head to glance back at the demons and the other two races she knew were from the dark and nighkin race.

-"Does it matter?"

She sneered and turned her gaze away because even a glance at them disgusted her. A cold glint flickered in her eyes as she recalled the challenges she, Jian, and Xavier had faced because of them.

-"Just take them out when they are up against you. They won't play fair against the others without cheating anyway."

Kyle hummed. At that moment, an illusionary figure of a woman clad in white paused before him and asked if he intended to join the Arena or simply observe.

"I'm here to participate."

The woman passed him a square nameplate, and he inspected it, unsure of its purpose. He looked over at the familiar group of people silently watching him from the audience and waved the nameplate at them with a smile that appeared on his face as he caught Yue's gaze.

Bia moved and peered down at his face, nearly blocking his view.

-"Why are you just waving? Let's go join them! I missed Mia, and even though the others are a bit idiotic, I missed them too. Let's go! I know you told me you don't remember them just like you forget me, but they do. So, don't get on my nerves."

Kyle let out a sigh at the pair of round eyes staring at him and gave her a nod. But he didn't forget to complain as he made his way toward the group.

"Just trying to avoid physical contact. You know, it's not really my thing."

Bia rolled her eyes at his words. He was okay hugging Jian even though he didn't remember the red-haired man, so what's the issue with others? Kyle moved toward the group and noticed the numerous onlookers staring at him and inexplicably trying to avoid his direction as if he had done something terribly wrong.

His feet touched the ground in front of Yon and Susan, who stared at him in silence. He let out a smile as he gazed at every face around him, trying his best to recall anything about them.

"Hey... How have you all been?"

There was silence for a few seconds before Nine stood up from his seat and fixed him with a serious look. Kyle blinked at the seriousness as the golden eyes scrutinized him from head to toe, but before he could say anything, Nine broke into a relieved smile and opened his arms wide.

"I see, your knack for attracting danger hasn't changed, huh? Still the same old Kyle! Get over here, you good-looking rascal, let me give you a hug!"

Kyle was taken aback by the warm gesture, and before he could react, Nine had already embraced him. He reciprocated the hug but was surprised when everyone around them burst into laughter, and his eyes widened as many others joined the brown-haired man. He almost stumbled but was steadied by the blue-haired man who grabbed his shoulder with a chuckle.

He really wanted to break free from the crowd surrounding him, especially the pair of wings belonging to the demi-human wrapped around his body, by using instant teleportation. However, for some reason, he refrained and took a deep breath. The furrows between his brows smoothed out as he allowed the group of people around him to do as they pleased. Bia had already left his side to go towards the blue-haired woman when Nine approached him.

Kyle let out a breath when he finally wriggled free from the hugs.

He went along and answered everyone patiently when they nudged him to sit down in the middle and bombarded him with questions about his well-being. His gaze drifted towards the white-haired elderly man who took the seat to his left and he spoke up in the phoenix's head.

'Who's this...?'

Bia, who had made herself comfortable on Mia's lap, looked back at the silver-haired man upon hearing his question. She then followed his gaze.

-It's Susan. Didn't Yue inform you about the tower Guardians?'

Kyle gazed at the old figure who tsked at him and labeled him a troublemaker who had pushed the old man to work day and night, only to vanish into thin air when the time for repayment arrived.

'Oh, Yue did tell me, but she didn't tell me everyone's appearance.'

Bia shook her head and, to make sure he didn't blurt out wrong names while calling others, she reluctantly left Mia's side and went back toward Kyle.

-'Ugh, just tell me whose name you want to know, then I will go to Mia.'

But to her surprise, he managed to get everyone else's names right, except Zron. He even got Yon's name right. At that moment, Sinon, who had sat down on the seat in front of Kyle, reached out and grabbed the nameplate from his hand.

"Ohoho, what title are you going to write on your nameplate? We have all finished, and you are the only one left. How about 'the silver-haired deity'? Haha."

Chapter 575 Thanks for the heads-up

The three old men sitting with the young ones shook their heads at the title that came out from Sinon's mouth as the man told Kyle that he needs to write a title for himself on the nameplate to register for the Gladiator Arena. No one really noticed the strangeness in Kyle's behavior because he was almost behaving the same as before, except for the occasional pause in his words before answering their questions, except Alec, Carcel, and Nine.

Alec eyed the silver-haired man, and for some reason, he could feel that even if he overlooked his somewhat strange behavior, something had changed within him.

On the other hand, Nine was seriously contemplating using his spiritual gaze on Kyle to get a glimpse of his fate to know if everything was fine with him because his eyes... they had become somewhat similar to the future Kyle he had seen in his vision. Not entirely though, because there was a constant smile on Kyle's face, unlike his future version that looked like he had stopped smiling a long time ago.

He clasped his hands over his chest with a solemn expression, but before he could make a decision, Carcel, who was seated on his other side, shook his shoulder. Nine glanced at the golden-haired man who shook his head at him.

"I am not sure what's on your mind, but I can sense from your expression that it's not something right."

He glanced at Kyle, who was listening to Sinon's explanation about the nameplate.

"I can also see the faint difference in Kyle's temperament. But instead of trying to figure it out on your own, why not approach him privately and ask what is wrong? I believe he would tell you if you asked."

Carcel flinched when Nine's eyes widened at him, disbelief evident on the man's face as he patted his shoulder.

"Wow... you know, since the moment I met you in the Arena, this is the first time you have talked to me so much! I almost forgot what your voice sounded like. And you are correct, I should just ask him what's wrong instead of trying to figure it out on my own."

Nine grinned and joined Sinon, who had finally returned the nameplate to Kyle, unaware that Kyle had already overheard his and Carcel's conversation. It was typical for Kyle to keep his ears open all the time and stay aware of his surroundings.

Regius leaned in towards Kyle from the back row of chairs and eyed his nameplate before suggesting with a smirk.

"Hey, both the Shadow Generals you talked with a while ago without even flinching are looking at you. How about you write your title as the Shadow Generals' favorite?"

Kyle's grip on the nameplate tightened as both he and Bia turned their heads back to stare at the green-haired elven man who had just spoken up, sporting a huge question mark on their faces. Observing their expressions, Regius blinked, and a sudden realization dawned on him.

"Wait, don't tell me you had no idea that the two men sitting before the demon's statue are the Shadow Generals?"

"Huh?"

Kyle's gaze shifted towards the two men seated across from the demon's statue, and a hint of amusement sparkled in his eyes. A chuckle slipped from his lips as he made eye contact with the two men, now known to him as the shadow generals.

"I had no clue... I thought those well-dressed men were one of the people overseeing the Arena. Their harmless appearance definitely threw me off."

He looked back at Regius, who seemed surprised after hearing him chuckle.

"Thanks for the heads-up. I would have regretted it if I had joined the Arena without knowing who was keeping an eye on me. But I'm curious, why do you think they didn't make a move against me and Bia?"

Nine patted his shoulder and gestured towards the figures in robes seated before the mermaid statue.

"It's because of them. They're the ones who opened the Gladiator Arena, and I believe if the Shadow Generals had gone after you in front of them, a clash would have gone down between the two sides."

Jian clicked his tongue as he glanced at the robed figures. He was seated further away from Kyle, but the silver-haired man heard his faint words loud and clear.

"Just a bunch of arrogant bastards. If they can't even handle the two shadow generals, then what's the point of their presence? Just showing off their power to the weaker ones by calling them worthless?"

Kyle's eyes gleamed with a chilling glint as he took in the red-haired man's words. He noticed that Yue and Nox also had a bit of a cold look when they glanced at the people in robes. It seems like the

group had a conflict with the robed individuals in his absence. He fiddled with his nameplate as he glanced at the individuals seated in front of the mermaid statue.

'I suppose the shadow generals are not the only ones I need to keep an eye on. I will also ensure to take down at least one from each side before the Gladiator Arena wraps up.'

Bia, who heard his words in her head, blinked, but instead of being shocked, her eyes showed a touch of interest. Having spent the last three months with Kyle and knowing his ways, she wasn't anxious; in fact, the phoenix genuinely wanted to know just how he planned to take down opponents much stronger than him.

-I wonder how? After all, they are a lot stronger than you and me both.'

Kyle's eyes returned to normal when he caught sight of Alec staring at him with a serious expression.

'You know, strength doesn't always stop someone from kicking the bucket. If they are destined to die, then no one can stop them from dying.'

He smiled, but the blue-haired man had already seen the strange glint in his eyes, so he changed the topic.

"What should I write on my title? No, the shadow general's favorite doesn't suit my taste. So, how about nature's favorite? After all, my luck stat is always active."

Bia couldn't help but laugh at his words because she was the only one who caught when Kyle emphasized the phrase 'my luck stat is always active'. This indicated his confidence in being able to kill the ones he wants and get away without a scratch.

-Now the Arena is going to be a bit fun... I thought as a beast I would be bored to death just watching everyone fight.'

Chapter 576 Hiding in the audience...?

After Kyle wrote down his title on his nameplate, a circle appeared on the back of his hand, and the people sitting in front of the statues all gazed at the projection to find out what title he had written on his nameplate to describe himself.

It was surprising for them to find out he was part of the group that stirred things up earlier, but when they remembered how he had caused a commotion the moment he appeared, they were already expecting him to be another arrogant person who would select an exaggerated title. However, their expectations were pleasantly contradicted when they read the simple yet somewhat profound title the man had chosen.

[Nature's favorite.]

Will, the third shadow general, tilted his head with a bored expression and lost all interest in the human after seeing his title.

"Don't tell me he is the weakest among them all. That's no fun. I thought with the arrogance he just showed, even though he was only at the divine rank, he would be somewhat powerful in another aspect... like with weapons or in normal combat. But you are telling me he is just a human who thinks he's nature's favorite?"

Unlike him, Ceano's eyes were still fixed on the group of people seated together. Not on Kyle, though; the second shadow general's gaze was fixed on the brown-haired man with golden pupils.

For some reason, he was certain he had sensed that merman's presence before, but he had just visited the last hidden mer race planet to conquer it recently. So, he wasn't sure if his instincts were correct or not.

On the other side, Old Hal's eyes turned somber as he looked at the silver-haired human. He had previously checked the fates of the group surrounding Kyle and knew that their fates were connected. So, when Kyle approached the group, Old Hal attempted to examine his fate as well.

But his astonishment peaked when he discovered that the silver-haired human was the one influencing the fates of those around him. Kyle was the very cause of the old man's inability to fully comprehend the genuine essence of their future paths... yet the young man's own fate was blank.

It was the first time Hal had witnessed someone's fate entirely blank, even after exerting all his spiritual power, as if no one was there to write anything for the young man. Or perhaps he had lost his fate along the way by evading a death that was predestined for him.

"There's something unique within him. How can he survive with a fate that's empty?"

He murmured softly to himself. Suddenly, the woman seated beside him interjected.

"Old man, you have been fixated on that group for some reason. They are all just at the divine rank, nothing exceptional. But if you had seen something special about them, should we keep an eye on them?"

A middle-aged man behind her chimed in with a contemplative expression.

"If the group isn't all talk and can genuinely achieve something in their futures, they could be quite useful."

Old Hal furrowed his brow. Just how many times does he have to remind these people not to fixate on superficial values? He let out a sigh as he looked at the people around him and shut his eyes.

"Just let them be. If they are truly exceptional, they will find a way to shine without our intervention."

The people surrounding the old man fell silent and disregarded the group. Instead, they began scanning the huge crowd for formidable competitors exuding a powerful aura, speculating on whether they would succeed in the Gladiator Arena or not.

Sitting in the audience seats, Kyle's eyes drifted towards the dark circle on the back of his hand. He hummed softly, and after Bia moved towards Mia, he closed his eyes and started absorbing the divine energy in the air to expand his divine energy reserve since he wasn't sure how many more days the registration would continue before the battles in the Gladiator Arena began.

Yue looked back at his calm expression. She was seated with Lara and Mia in the front row, a little way from him, but she could still witness his actions and calm replies to everyone's questions. A look of surprise crossed her face when she sensed Kyle's rank; he had already reached the third stage of divine energy, just one step behind her. But she couldn't help but wonder how he had progressed from the initial stage to the third stage in merely three months.

She smiled and looked at Bia. The phoenix had made it to the final stage of the divine rank, and she was sure Bia would smoothly move up to the transcendent rank in a few months. Yue had a feeling that Kyle would achieve the transcendent rank before her and everyone else, even though many of them had reached the final stage of the divine rank long before him.

Kyle opened his eyes when he felt her gaze, but she had already glanced away. His eyes softened, but suddenly he snapped his head to the right and narrowed his eyes at a distant place...

'I swear someone just tried to check my body... Did I make a mistake?'

A look of caution crossed his face because he could never make such a mistake. His senses were sharp, so whenever someone, strong or weak, tried to probe his body, he could always sense it.

Susan followed his gaze.

"What are you looking at?"

Kyle's lips curled upward as he withdrew his gaze and looked at the old man.

"Nothing... I just realized that the people sitting in front of the statues are not the only ones watching us. Also, it seems the one who is not in our direct line of sight is the most dangerous of them all."

Susan's gaze sharpened as she grasped Kyle's implication.

"Hiding in the audience...?"

Kyle chuckled and closed his eyes to continue absorbing divine energy, knowing that whoever it was, they couldn't attack him, at least not in the Gladiator Arena.

Chapter 577 He's quite sharp, isn't he?

Far from Kyle and the group, a woman, cloaked in a blue hoodie, couldn't help but let out a smirk when the young man, who had not yet reached the transcendent rank, noticed her presence.

"He's quite sharp, isn't he? It seems my journey here isn't entirely in vain."

She raised her head and looked in the direction of Kyle and the others with her pale violet eyes. The three old individuals, one human, and two dwarfs seated among the group seemed oddly familiar to her. They looked like she had seen them before, but she couldn't be sure because even after studying their faces, she couldn't remember where she had seen them before. It was like she had totally forgotten those faces because it's been such a long time.

"I guess I will enlist some talented youngsters to come with me and join the war this time."

"I just hope James approves of them. He's quite picky when it comes to adding new young members to his crew."

Her gaze shifted towards the figures in robes seated before the mermaid statue, and a sigh slipped past her lips.

"Now, I see why James sent so many incompetent individuals with old Hal... I suppose he intended for some of them to die under the two shadow generals due to their unreliable nature."

She shook her head and closed her eyes. As one of the seven elders leading the war happening at the other end of the universe, her reason for being here was clear. She needed to watch the two shadow

generals closely to know their true purpose for being here because the dark side had never previously shown interest in the Gladiator Arena. So, why the sudden interest? She was certain they had an ulterior motive.

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Another day passed, and the countless seats within the towering walls were filling up with people of different races streaming through the three massive gates to register themselves for the Arena.

Kyle spent his time absorbing the divine energy in the air, sensing that everyone else around him was doing the same, except for Zron, who, for some reason, made no effort to enhance his strength.

When Kyle questioned why the old dwarf was simply eating and sleeping without a care, Zron responded with a deeply solemn and regretful expression, explaining that unfortunately, he was already very old. Why would an elderly man in his final years push himself just to boost his strength? Kyle's eyebrow twitched at his response, and he decided to leave the old dwarf alone.

Susan and Yon scoffed at the shameless old man, but unlike them and everyone else who were already accustomed to Zron's behavior and didn't really bother to pay much attention to him. Kyle observed everything in his surroundings and, whether by good fortune or not, he detected it when at night Zron quietly vacated his seat to wander amidst the crowd.

At first, Kyle thought the old man was just tired of sitting and wanted to walk around, but he eventually figured out what Zron was up to because when the dwarf came back, he had valuable herbs and other items with him. Kyle's suspicion was confirmed when the next day many people in the crowd argued with each other because they had lost their belongings. He gazed at the old man with a speechless expression.

'He may be old, but his hands are surprisingly... adept. He succeeded in stealing right under the noses of so many people... even I wouldn't attempt that.'

Bia yawned with a sleepy look. She had come back to him to nap on his head.

-"I need some lessons from the old dwarf. He is truly skilled in this area. But honestly, people are foolish; if they have a mind space, why would they leave their valuable items outside? It's their fault; no one can blame our old man who is spending his final years of life..."

Kyle facepalmed as all eyes shifted towards him and the crimson bird perched on his head. It was then that Bia realized she had spoken aloud in response to his question instead speaking in his head.

Zron's eyes narrowed towards Bia; he wanted to know exactly what she meant by her words. Before he could get an answer, the phoenix fled towards Mia and made herself invisible in her arms.

The girls laughed at the phoenix, but when Nox attempted to join in to mock Bia, the phoenix swatted him away. Ultimately, Nox fell silent with aggrieved eyes and chose to stay away from the old bully because he knew he couldn't seek revenge, especially since he was much weaker than her. On the other hand, Kyle simply averted his gaze when Zron turned his eyes towards him to understand why Bia said what she did.

The elderly dwarf harrumphed loudly and left the group, stating that he needed some fresh air to soothe his wounded heart after the phoenix accused him of being a thief.

Nine grinned and shook his head. He extended his hand and rose to his feet.

"I'm going for a walk too.

After he departed, the rest followed suit one by one to stretch their legs as sitting for an extended period had left them feeling bored and fatigued. Eventually, only Kyle and Xavier remained together. Xavier scooted over to the chair next to the silver-haired man and cleared his throat.

"Well, Kyle... I was wondering, how did you and Bia first meet? What are the phoenix's likes and dislikes, can you tell me?"

He quickly moved back to his original chair when Kyle gave him a questioning look.

"Just curious, no hidden agenda..."

Kyle's eyes sparkled with amusement. The phoenix had already shared with him all about Xavier and how he had cared for her and Jian on his planet. That's why he didn't mind when the man inquired about Bia, even though he was aware that Xavier was trying to win over the phoenix.

"I understand... It's a bit late, but thanks for looking after Bia in my absence."

Chapter 578 I guess it's time to work

Xavier let out a wistful smile.

"It wasn't me who took care of her. She's the one who led an army of monsters and vanquished numerous foes threatening my planet. She was the greatest help my people could have hoped for."

Their conversation was quite ordinary as Xavier moved to the chair next to him and started talking enthusiastically about how Bia controlled a multitude of monsters and defeated their enemies. But Kyle sensed more than just admiration in the human's eyes beside him. A sudden realization flickered in his eyes, and Xavier flinched when he probed his suspicions.

"You saw her human form?"

Kyle was taken aback by Xavier's reaction. No way, he was spot on. Bia had told him about her ability to transform into a human, but the phoenix said she didn't like the human form because the body structure of a human was too different from her usual form. But now, finding Xavier's pining for his bonded beast, he couldn't help but feel like a protective parent who had caught his daughter's first suitor. Therefore, even though he didn't intend to, his voice unintentionally sounded stern.

"You are too old for her, and even if I overlook your age, you are too weak. So, don't even think about it."

Xavier's eyes widened. He wasn't that old, alright! He was the youngest transcendent rank on his planet!

He wanted to speak up for himself but quickly shifted to a distant chair when Kyle gazed at him with a look that said if he spoke even a single more word, his life might be shortened by a few years.

Kyle rubbed his forehead and stood up. He really shouldn't allow Bia to come anywhere near the grey-haired man. It posed a risk to his innocent little crimson bird. With a sigh, he left the area and started maneuvering through the audience seats.

His gaze shifted towards the shadow generals and the individuals seated in front of the mermaid statue. Upon ensuring they were preoccupied observing others in the crowd, spiritual energy began

to emanate from his fingertips, and delicate symbols that blended into the ground beneath him were imprinted with each step he took.

'I guess it's time to work.'

A smirk played at the corners of his lips as he touched the earring in his ear and made his presence invisible within the crowd. As he strolled in circles among the audience seats, Nine and all the others returned to their places shortly after.

Bia, who was sitting on Mia's shoulder, glanced at the empty seat where Kyle should have been seated. Now that their bond had regained its strength, she could clearly sense his location in a very distant place, quite far from their current location but still inside the Gladiator Arena.

-'What is he doing?'

She furrowed her brows and decided to ask him directly, but Kyle simply instructed her to stay with Mia, and he would return once he had finished something important.

-'What the hell are you up to now...'

Bia clicked her tongue and allowed him to do as he pleased. However, the silver-haired man did not return even after a whole day. Nine gazed at the vacant seat beside him and observed the phoenix.

"Do you have any idea where he went?"

Bia glanced back at him and gestured with one of her wings in the right direction.

"He's in the Arena, but not nearby. It seems like he's occupied with something, but I'm not sure what. Well, he did mention he would return once he's finished."

After hearing Bia's words, everyone decided to overlook Kyle's absence. After all, he was strong, and they were confident he wouldn't get into unnecessary trouble.

Unlike them, the powerful woman in the blue hoodie, who sought to recruit Kyle and the others for James, closely monitored everything the silver-haired man did.

Unfortunately, she wasn't well-versed in arrays, so even though she could spot the symbols Kyle was writing all over the Gladiator Arena, she wasn't certain of their purpose. Plus, she had never encountered such a multitude of intricate symbols scattered in various positions.

"What's he up to anyway? Is he really sure he can activate so many symbols and form an array when he's just a divine rank? Also, why does he have such a vast amount of spiritual energy in his body..."

She glanced at the array masters sitting behind Old Hal with a speechless look.

"They call themselves array masters yet they can't even sense that a mere divine rank individual has almost filled the entire area beneath them with symbols. If he can truly activate such a massive array, it's not the shadow generals who will be destroying the Arena. It's the human I should be more concerned about. I'm not even sure what the symbols are being used for..."

She stood up and tried to destroy the symbols Kyle engraved with his spiritual energy, but unfortunately, they had vanished into the ground without a trace.

"Damn it... What the actual hell??"

The people around her were startled when such a beautiful and poised woman, who looked so elegant, cursed out loudly with a frustrated expression. In the end, she sat down with a calm expression.

"What's the worst that can happen? He's just a divine rank anyway. I will give him a little beating if he does something wrong."

After three more arduous days, the atmosphere above the Arena exuded a sense of serenity. Unfazed by the external light or shadows, the interior of the Arena always remained bright. Suddenly, under everyone's gaze, the numerous illusionary figures handing out nametplates to the newcomers paused in their actions and floated away from the three massive gates that led into the Gladiator Arena.

Almost all the seats within the towering walls were filled with a diverse crowd who watched quietly with different emotions as three imposing barriers rose to seal the massive gates. Then, a ray of golden light flashed from the many statues above the walls, creating an invisible shield in the sky above the audience, signaling the end of registration for the Gladiator Arena.

Usually, the massive crowd would have cheered with enthusiasm, but due to the presence of the dark side, the air held a hint of unease, and only faint murmurs could be heard. But the demons, dark, nightkin races individuals all shouted with excitement.

The individuals still trying to get nameplates all cried out in distress as the three gates to the Gladiator Arena closed. Despite their efforts, they could only lament because they knew that even if they pounded on the barriers sealing the gates, they wouldn't be able to enter since once the registration was closed, no one could enter the Arena.

Chapter 579 Let the battles begin!

Old Hal glanced at the people in robes behind him, and many of them started floating above the numerous stages in the center of the towering walls. A middle-aged woman with long hair amplified her voice so that everyone could hear her clearly.

"It's a bit late, but I, Vexana, welcome everyone to the Gladiator Arena. It's been a hundred years, and I'm lucky to witness that once again, we are opening the platform where the winners will have a chance to enter the 'Lost Treasure Tomb'."

"This tomb is filled with otherworldly treasures that even a supreme rank like me desires. However, only those below the supreme rank are permitted to enter to ensure that the stronger individuals do not overpower the weaker ones."

She scrunched up her face when the people from the dark side barged in, hollering and cackling during her speech.

"Just kick off the Arena; My bones are practically rusting!"

"Ah, come on, zip it; we are not clueless. Start the Arena, old hag."

"I'm bored to death; start the Arena... itching for a brawl."

"Can someone shut her up?"

The rest of the crowd was eerily quiet as the two shadow generals chuckled softly at the middle-aged woman whose eyes blazed with pure fury. The people in robes hovering behind her exchanged

glances, and a young man among them, Ned, swiftly raised his hand and put up a barrier in front of the section where the dark side people were seated to silence their voices.

He whispered near the woman's ear.

"Keep going..."

Vexana took a deep breath and glared at the individuals from the dark side before continuing her speech. However, this time, she omitted all the unnecessary details and jumped right into explaining the rules for the first round of the Gladiator Arena.

"As you all know, in the Gladiator Arena, many battles occur, and every fighter must win a specific number of battles to move on to the next round. In the first round, ten individuals will be picked to battle on each stage, and only the last person standing on the stage will advance to the next round."

"The rules are straightforward. If a fighter concedes defeat or is thrown out from the stage, they will be immediately eliminated. Also, if the illusionary figures overseeing your stage intervene to prevent you from harming your defeated opponents, you must cease fighting. Remember, the aim is not to kill but to earn your place in the lost treasure tomb through fair competition."

Vexana scanned the massive crowd surrounding her, seated in the audience.

"That's it for the first round... Now, let's see who secures the top positions in this round because the time taken by the winners to defeat their opponents will be noted by the Arena, and the final list of top participants will be revealed at the end of the first round. The top hundred on that list will receive additional points towards their overall final score. After all, many ties happen in the final round, and the additional points can determine victory or defeat."

While she was talking, Kyle finally sauntered back to his seat with a pair of eyes that beamed with a smile. Nine, Alec, and the others all gave him curious looks, wondering what he had been up to, but they were left speechless when they saw he had changed his clothes and was now sporting a loose, pure white shirt and grey trousers. Sinon shook his head with a sigh.

"Bro, hate to break it to you, but that shirt's gonna be a mess real soon. I mean, with a bunch of fighters aiming to defeat you, keeping it clean's gonna be a challenge."

Kyle gazed down at his clothes, and because of his beaming eyes, everyone around knew he had done something that lifted his spirits. However, they weren't sure if they should worry about the potential outcome they had to face due to whatever he had done...

"Well, I will see..."

Kyle shrugged casually, not really bothered by the idea of his clothes getting dirty. He could just switch to a new pair if necessary. Bia and Nox both floated over to Zron to watch the fights since the bonded beasts weren't allowed to join. Just then, Vexana clapped her hands and wrapped up her speech with her final words.

"Alright, everyone, check the dark circle on the back of your hands. It will lead you to your stage. Let the battles begin! I wish everyone all the best on behalf of every guardian watching over the Arena."

As soon as her words finished, the circles on the back of each participant began to glow, and a number materialized on their skin. Kyle looked at the number that appeared on the back of his hand and whispered softly.

"Stage 199?"

Next to him, Nine was fervently hoping he wasn't assigned to the same stage as his friends because only one winner would be chosen in the end. Everyone quickly matched their numbers and breathed a sigh of relief when they realized they would be fighting on different stages. Nine stood up with a smirk and stretched his shoulders.

"Finally. Now, it's my time to shine! The lone Overload of the Sea is here!"

"Guys, I will be gone for a minute, but don't worry, I will be back soon."

He winked at everyone and floated off to find his stage. Sinon spread his wings and quickly followed him to locate his stage with a smirk.

"And I will be back in half a minute, haha."

Regius shook his head at the two shameless men with a sigh, but a grin appeared at the corner of his lips.

"Okay, I accept the challenge!"

"Let's see who can return to the audience seats faster than me!"

The others chuckled, and one by one, they also left their positions. Only Kyle stayed behind, slowly getting up from his seat and looking around to locate his stage for the upcoming battle. Zron, Bia, and Nox stared at his back, and the old dwarf spoke up.

"Hurry up, young man! Why are you dragging your feet? What if the illusionary figures kick off the fights without you?"

Chapter 580 Not bad, right?

Kyle glanced back at the speechless old man and began to levitate, gliding his way towards the many floating platforms. He briefly stopped to check the lit-up numbers above the platforms, looking for stage number 199. Among the people floating around him, he spotted the stage he was looking for and floated towards it before landing gracefully on one side.

A middle-aged elf and a young dwarf with dark short hair were already on the stage, waiting with the illusionary figure for the other eight members to join them. When Kyle landed on the stage, they scrutinized him with cautious eyes. Upon realizing that unlike them, who were at the transcendent rank, he was only at the divine rank, they silently decided to eliminate him as soon as the battle commenced.

Kyle started adjusting the sleeves of his white shirt as he observed the gathering individuals before him. One... two... three... he counted in his mind until the last person who would participate in the battle on his stage arrived. The illusionary figure then directed them to get ready for the impending fight.

Eventually, above stage 199, three elves, two dwarfs, two demi-humans, one human, one woman from the dark race, and one demon stood facing each other, displaying a range of emotions. The demon and the woman from the dark race united in one corner with smiles, ready to kill all others

on the stage together, with the intention of later facing off against each other to determine the ultimate victor.

As the illusionary figure started floating above the stage to begin the battle, all the fighters tightly gripped various weapons. It was odd when the silver-haired man in the pure white shirt remained empty-handed, casually rolling up his sleeves.

The only dwarven woman on the stage looked at Kyle and shook her head with a sympathetic sigh. Just like everyone else, she could sense that the silver-haired man was the weakest of the group. Now, seeing him without a weapon, she was certain he was a hand-to-hand fighter. She was sure everyone would target the human first.

However, she flinched when the human in white looked at her with a pair of cold eyes after sensing her sympathetic gaze on him. She quickly averted her eyes but was surprised by her own reaction.

Kyle glanced at the illusionary figure, prepared to start the fight, and curled his fingers into fists. The people around him scoffed at his arrogance when he spoke with a passive expression.

"Okay, I'm ready to eliminate the unnecessary people, except for the two from the dark side that I plan to kill. Let's begin the battle without any further delay."

The demon on the stage looked him up and down and started laughing. Then, he gazed at the woman from the dark race next to him with a sinister smirk.

"Kill the divine-rank human first. He's really getting on my nerves."

The woman flapped her bat-like wings and shot him a similar smirk.

"Leave him to me."

The duo had just finished speaking when the illusionary figure raised his hand, then waved it downward and shouted loudly.

"Commence the battle!"

The illusionary figure's words hadn't even faded in the air when a deafening boom echoed across the stage. The air crackled with energy as Kyle zoomed at full speed. He even triggered his swift steps skill to boost his already maddening speed. His eyes gleamed as he grabbed the collar of the nearest person and flung them off the stage. The elf, whose feet were suddenly lifted off the stage, hadn't even reacted yet, and Kyle had already delivered a swift kick to another person next to him before moving on to his next target.

He intentionally paused for a split second in front of the dwarven woman who had looked at him sympathetically to reveal the face of the person about to eliminate her. Her eyes widened at the familiar pair of eyes that appeared before her, but before she could react, his hand had seized her shoulder to flung her off the stage.

Kyle paused at the other end of the stage and rubbed his wrist as the three elves, two dwarfs, and two demi-humans were all flung outside the stage. The woman from the dark race, who had lunged towards his previous position, stopped as her hands grasped only emptiness.

She blinked, and her ears twitched when a few startled shouts echoed behind her. She slowly... very slowly glanced back, but her eyes widened because the only people she could see standing above

the stage were the demon who was rooted in his position, utterly shocked, and the back of the human clad in the pure white shirt.

The demon and the woman both flinched, and their expressions turned pale when the human pivoted to fix his gaze upon them.

"Eliminating seven people in three seconds... Not bad, right?"

The individuals who got eliminated in seconds all floated around the stage, their faces contorted in anger. They were itching to get back on the stage, but a barrier rose up to enclose the stage. The illusionary figure cast a glance their way to convey that they were eliminated the instant they stepped beyond the stage's boundary. They were ready to object because how could they be eliminated when they hadn't even started fighting... but they all fell silent when Kyle shot them a cold look.

The demon snapped out of his shock and, without caring about the stunned woman from the dark race, desperately shouted towards the illusionary figure.

"Wait!! I admit-!"

However, before he could finish his words, an extremely cold hand covered his mouth to silence him and then forcefully slammed his body to the ground.

The demon's eyes turned red in pain, and the eliminated participants watching from outside the stage gasped and instinctively moved back in the air because they were unable to follow the human's speed with their eyes! Moreover, after attacking the demon, he had already seized the woman from the dark race by the neck!