

## Brand New 681

### [Brand New Life Online: Rise Of The Goddess Of Harvest](#)

#### Chapter 681: Upgrading The Buildings

Ding!

[You have exchanged [x1800 Mushroom-type Items] [x5000 Large Stones] [x10000 Wood Pieces] [25000 MP] [16000 Community Points]!]

[You have upgraded the [Mushroom Castle: Lv3/5] to Level 5/5!]

[The [Mushroom Castle: Lv5/5] has acquired two new Effects: [Magician's School] and [Warrior Dojo]!]

[Mushroom Castle: Lv5/5]

[Building Type]: [Castle] [Training Center] [School] [Dojo]

[Building Quality]: [A+]

[Level Up Cost]: [x4000 Mushroom-type Items] [x10000 Large Stones] [x25000 Wood Pieces] [30000 MP] [25000 Community Points] (Cannot Level Up, Level Cap Reached)

[Effect]: [Reign] [Territory Center] [Population Growth] [Ruler's Strength] [Training Camp] [Magician's School] [Warrior's Dojo]

[Description]

A beautiful and giant castle beautifully decorated with many colorful mushrooms and resembling a building straight out of a fairy tale. As a Castle, it has the authority to enhance the strength of the population and also of the King or Queen that sits on the throne, alongside other abilities that can be unlocked over time, through leveling up the building.

[Magician's School]: [A special, large adjacent facility to the Castle, where those with Magic Talents can be taught how to utilize their Magic properly. In this School, students will learn the basic Magic Conjunction Techniques of Old, such as Rune Creation and Magic Circle Conjunction. Increases Growth Speed and Magic Talent of those that attend by +100%.]

[Warrior's Dojo]: [A special, large adjacent facility to the Castle, where strong warriors go to train to become even stronger. However, even rookies can be taught how to properly fight and also slowly build up the tenacity of battle-hardened fighters. In this Dojo, students will learn how to use Fighting Techniques, Weapon Techniques, and Defensive Techniques such as Shield and Armor Techniques. Increases Growth Speed and Fighting Talent of those that attend by +100%.]

The first upgrade I wanted to do was of course, my castle! It became much larger and more glorious, with several new rooms, expanding several meters across the forest. It also gained two, really big adjacent buildings named Magician's School and Warrior's Dojo, where anybody can go and learn from professors.

As of now, Sporegon and Magius have volunteered to go teach in those, alongside a few experienced fairies that wanted to teach magic, and warriors from the gnome and brownie village. With that we've got things covered, although more personnel will always be more useful.

Ah, and of course, I have to pay them for their job, good thing I have billions of Gold now, so that's not really an issue. I tried to pay them around ten thousand gold per month to them, but they rejected, saying it was too much? They ended accepting a hundred gold a month... Is that alright? It's too little, no?

Maybe they're just doing it voluntarily, but accepted the money so I don't feel guilty about it? Ahh, well, it's kind of the same thing with the workers for the games and food carts too.

Moving on, I discovered I only had around 20k Community Points left, so I can only upgrade either the watchtower or the walls, so I decided to go for the walls, as they're more useful at protecting the entire place.

Oh, some of my friends were wondering how I could spend so much Mana even though my Max Mana wasn't that high. Well, the thing is, the Mana Requirements are constant, it is not a flat requirement, so I can just slowly imbue it until it's done. And because my Mana Regeneration Speed in the forest is incredible, there's no problem in that regard!

Anyways, Wall's time!

Ding!

[You have exchanged [x120000 Large Stones] [50000 MP] [20000 Community Points]!]

[You have upgraded the [Spiritual Stone Walls: Lv4/5] to Level 5/5!]

[The [Spiritual Stone Walls: Lv5/5] has acquired the new Effect: [Indestructible Living Fortress]!]

[Spiritual Stone Walls: Lv5/5]

[Building Type]: [Walls] [Fortress] [Pseudo Golem]

[Building Quality]: [A+]

[Level Up Cost]: [x200000 Large Stones] [80000 MP] [30000 Community Points] (Cannot Level Up, Level Cap Reached)

[Effect]: [Territory Walls] [Protection] [Self-Repair] [Magical Shield] [Impenetrable Walls] [Magic Walls] [Spiritual Empowerment] [Indestructible Living Fortress]

[Description]

An utterly gigantic wall made of spirit magic-imbued stones that protects the entire Territory of the Forest of Origins from threats of the outside world. It offers immense protection against all land invasions and can grow even bigger and stronger as it levels up. It has evolved into a pseudo golem, and it can now further improve itself by draining Mana from the environment.

[Indestructible Living Fortress]: [The Spiritual Stone Walls have improved to the level where they have developed a strong soul of their own, thanks to having been fused with thousands of Lesser Earth

Spirits. As a result, it has gained new Abilities that Walls usually don't possess. It can now Absorb Mana from the environment to keep itself supplied with it 24/7. By utilizing the absorbed Mana, it can negate up to 70% of all Damage Taken, and it will gain the [Unmovable] Trait, which will make it impossible to budge.]

"I-It became a golem?!" I asked, glancing at the huge walls at the distance, which were resting peacefully, as if nothing had ever happened to it.

"Golem?" Mark wondered, as he was hanging around with me while I flew around as I upgraded the buildings.

"T-The walls... I upgraded them to Level five and they gained the [Pseudo Golem] Trait..." I sighed.

"Eh?!" Mark was surprised. "Amazing, so the whole walls... Insane! Such a giant golem! Can it move?!"

"I-I don't think it can move; it is too heavy to move." I laughed. "But maybe if it grows stronger... It could do other things. We'll see. Though it's a bit surprising that it just "developed a soul"... But well, I did use Spirits as its materials to make it better."

"Hmm, well, it doesn't sound bad at all to me. It would be cool if we are in some dire situation and the walls suddenly transform into a giant titan made of stone, crushing our foes!" Mark seemed to be imagining the walls to go through some sort of transformation sequence like in Anime.

"Hahaha, well, that would be a bit hilarious... And interesting." I rubbed my chin. "For now, I'm content with what it can do... Anyways, I have something to ask Hammer, let's go down!"

"Oh, sure." Mark followed me. "Hmm, is it about Hephaestus?"

"Bingo." I nodded. "I figured out an ancient mushroom like him could know something, especially because he's a blacksmith."

"Makes sense. I hope he knows something..." Mark sighed.

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#### **Chapter 682: Finding New Clues**

Once I was done with the building upgrades, Mark decided to accompany me down to the Plaza again, as we walked into the Crafting House, where we found Hammer preparing things to start making some armor and weapons.

While he had yet to start working, we used this opportunity to ask him if he knew anything about someone called "Hephaestus" without implying anything like a God.

"Hephaestus, you ask?" Hammer wondered, rubbing his beard. "If my memory works fine, that is the God of all Blacksmiths! Ah... W-Wait, your Aura, Lady Planta. Did you...?!"

"Y-Yeah, I became his successor." I sighed. "I was changing my Subclass and suddenly saw the option available; I ended choosing it right away because. Well, why not?"

"An excellent and incredible choice!" Hammer raised his arms. "So that feeling I had before wasn't just my imagination! Everyone! Lady Planta has become Hephaestus Successor! She has become the successor of our God! I can't believe such a joyful event could ever happen in my second life!"

"H-Hephaestus Successor?!"

"R-Really?!"

"Lady Planta did?!"

"I never thought she would be a blacksmith..."

"Titan does look more that way, he can even manipulate fire and stuff!"

"Hahaha, no, my Subclass is actually Legendary Totem Sculptor." Mark pointed out.

"Oh, that does sound like bells."

"Not the Legendary Moonlight Sculptor?"

"Hey, that's another thing entirely..."

"A-Anyways, do you know something about him? After I choose this strange subclass, I acquired a few new Skills, and got a system message saying that I needed to find his inheritance or something." I said while wondering, sitting next to Hammer's table. "Look, this is the messages I got, I took a picture of it."

I showed Hammer a picture of the messages through the System. NPC could see pictures shown by Players, as long as they agreed to look at them to begin with.

[Because you've become Hephaestus' Only Successor, new Quests have been generated across the world. Seek the Blacksmithing God's legacy by finding what he had left behind!]

[New Special Areas known as [Hephaestus' Ancient Forgeries] have been Unsealed. You can find them by navigating through the [World Map]!]

[The weakened [Divine Will of Hephaestus] has yet to fully wake up. Whenever you create new pieces of equipment and weapons, he will gain a part of the leftover energy, until he can fully wake up.]

"I-I see how it is!" He said in surprise. "Hephaestus Ancient Forgeries... That's something all of us Blacksmiths believe to have been left as the God's legacies. Well, most of what I know is what I learned from my master."

"Master?" I asked.

"I used to be the apprentice of the Luminous Kingdom's most prestigious Blacksmith, Lord Ember. I have no idea if he's alive now, or if he had left some descendants. But I do remember that he always told me tales about Hephaestus, the Blacksmith God that taught humans how to create tools to defend themselves from monsters." Hammer explained. "The Blacksmith God left behind his legacies, the [Hephaestus' Ancient Forgeries], which were sealed behind."

"Like the message said..." I wondered.

"Yes, however, he told me that Hephaestus was very arrogant and prideful, and because it was impossible for him to find a successor among mortals, he sealed the forgeries and never allowed anybody to enter..." Hammer said. "Now that our world is somehow different than before, and the Demon Kings are back from different timelines, it might also be possible that Hephaestus is now gone forever. His forgeries and treasures left behind might be the last of his legacies."

"Hey, I've been wondering for a while now but are there other Gods than the main elemental gods?" Wondered Mark, crossing his arms.

"There were, or not? I am not well aware of what's happening right now out there since we died in the past and we've been summoned in this new future." Said Hammer, rubbing his beard. "Maybe many gods died... The reasons? Beats me." The old Mushroom shrugged.

"It says that I could collect the God's divine will fragments..." I said. "Do you think the forgeries have them?"

"Most likely. I don't have many clues, sorry... But I know someone that could have clues." Hammer said. "Lady Planta, if you're going to the Luminous Kingdom with your friends, could you check on an old friend and master of mine? Try to find the Forgery of the Old Blacksmith Ember. I am sure that if you can find him, or his son or grandson, you'll learn more about these forgeries. After all, he always bragged that he was one of the few with this ancient knowledge, as his family descended from a former member of the Ancient Blacksmith, a special cult created by Hephaestus."

"No way..." I was surprised by all the information I ended getting. "This was more than enough! Thanks a lot, Hammer! You've been of real help!"

I started caressing his huge mushroom cap as the old blacksmith laughed.

"It's nothing, Lady Planta! We live to serve you, our Hero's successor." He laughed.

"Oh, Titan, can you help me make him a gift?" I wondered.

"Huh? Sure, what's on your mind?" Titan wondered.

"Let's do this, and this... and this!" I said.

We quickly started creating a special hammer utilizing melted Fafnir's scales, fused with spirit wood and blazing spirit wood for the handle, further reinforced with Red Dragon Queen's scales, and then Spirits.

The end result was a prototype for a hammer I would eventually make myself, the recipe and process was saved, so I'll gift this one to Hammer, and later I might make one for myself, perhaps improved further.

Ding!

[You and [Player: Titan] have crafted the [Evil Dragon's Blazing Spirit Forging Hammer (A+ Grade)] x1!]

[Both of you have earned 2.500.000 EXP!]

[The created item's [Recipe] has been registered permanently.]

"Oooh! T-This is for me?! A-Amazing!" Hammer was fascinated. "With this... I could just make anything! Thanks a bunch, milady!"

"I've made some improved hammers for everyone too! So come and take a few too!" I said, quickly sharing what we made with the rest of the crafters.

"So nice!"

"Thanks you so much, Lady Planta!"

"You're the best!"

"A hammer like this would cost a fortune!"

"Uooohh!"

"Anyways, I'll get going, thanks for the info, Hammer!" I said, waving my hand.

"No problem, milady! Have a safe trip!" Hammer laughed.

Ding!

[A Brand-New [Special Subclass Quest] has been generated: [Find Clues About Hephaestus' Divine Forgeries]!]

[You've learned that someone named Ember in the Luminous Kingdom possessed the knowledge of Hephaestus Legacy and belonged to an old bloodline of his former apprentices.]

[Now it is your duty to find this person, or anybody related to him, and find any clues that could bring you closer to the place where the Legendary Forgeries could be found!]

[Clear Rewards]: [EXP] [Gold] [New Quest Chain]

[Time Limit]: [7 Days]

[Failure Penalty]: [Lose the possibility of improving your Subclass]

And just as we finished that, a new Quest popped up. I remember hearing that a Player can only have one quest active at a time, but I have two now. Is this a special privilege as a World Boss, or do World Quests don't count because they're special?

Hmmm, well, whatever's the case, I'm quite positive about this! We might end up killing three birds with one stone instead of two now!

...Ugh, that sounded a bit creepy.

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#### **Chapter 683: Relaxing At Home**

After doing many things maintaining my territory, we decided to log-off and make dinner. It was already getting quite late. I wanted to cuddle more with Mark in bed to be honest, but he had to go back home soon too.

"How about we order sushi to eat with your daughter and her friends?" Wondered Mark. "I'll order it if you don't mind."

"Oh, that sound great. I wasn't feeling like cooking after doing all of that..." I sighed. "It wasn't my real body but it does leaves me mentally exhausted."

"I can understand, haha." Mark laughed, gently caressing my head. "You've gone through a lot lately, so just take it easy for now. I wish I could stay tonight too, but I haven't gone back home on a while... I'm worried my house could get assaulted or something."

"I-I see, makes sense." I giggled. "Though... W-Well, I was wondering if maybe... Ah, never mind."

"Hm?" Mark raised an eyebrow. "Oh, were you thinking about living together?"

"H-How did you guessed so quickly?!" I was shocked.

"It is often obvious the moment I look you into your eyes. Sometimes you are so adorable, you hesitate a lot to say the most simplest of things. Don't worry too much, I was considering the same but... If I asked it myself, I might have sounded a bit weird, right?" He wondered, scratching his chin.

"O-Of course not! It's totally normal... I-I mean, we're in a relationship and all!" I said while crossing my arms. "It's totally, totally fine!"

"I see." He giggled. "But still, let's take a bit of time. I would also need to assess my own stuff, and see if it can even fit in here. Also you've gotta consider your daughter's feelings, and also think if I could become an annoyance if I am here all the time. Like... Wouldn't you get tired of seeing my dumb face all the time?"

"I-I would never!" I said while getting slightly angry. "Would you get tired of seeing my face all the time?"

"Of course not..." Mark said, blushing a bit.

"Then?" I wondered.

"I-I... Well, I am just... a bit shy about it." He sighed.

We've had sex multiple times but he's shier about living together. He's sure a handful, but that also makes him much cuter. He's really a gentle giant, he looks big and a bit dull, but deep down he's such a sweetheart that is always a bit too considerate about everything.

"Well, I guess you're right... Let's take it easy then!" I smiled. "Wherever you're ready."

I guess I should be more gentle about it, and more considerate myself. I am the one used to live with a partner because I was once married. But Mark's on his first ever relationship, so he lacks the experience that comes from having previous ones, making him quite nervous about the whole ordeal.

As he said, we should do things one step at a time... Although we jumped straight to the sex a bit too early, but we're responsible adults so it's fine.

"Let's do it one step at a time." I said, gently holding his hand. "Sorry for being a bit pushy there..."

"T-Thanks..." Mark blushed. "And it's fine, I can understand your reasoning behind it. I-It actually makes me really happy that you love me to the extent of wanting to live with me..."

"Aww, my cute bear~" I giggled, hugging him.

We got closer and closer until we started kissing lovingly over the bed, cuddling together. Then, he started gently grasping my butt down there, measuring its size with his big hands. One of the things he loved the most was touching my cheeks; it was definitely his kink...

"Huh? Do you have some business down there that you're checking that so much~?" I teased him with a sexy smile.

"I was just wondering, do you happen to have a license to carry such a big cake, ma'am?" He joked around.

"Hahaha! You dummy!" I laughed, giving him a gentle karate chop in the head.

"I was just being honest." He laughed. "Ah, the Sushi's about to get here. Call your daughter and her friends so we can enjoy the meal together, I ordered a bit too much."

"Alright~" I nodded, as I walked to my daughter's room and called the girls, they quickly disconnected.

Monica seemed much more... I don't know, brighter? Her pale skin was now of a much healthier color after playing BNLO a lot, and her eyes were once more with the light they had lost.

"You guys ordered sushi?" My daughter wondered.

Looks like she had already woken up from her little nap after having awakened and ended logging in with everyone else.

"Oh, is it from the Golden Sushi Restaurant?" Wondered Elisa. "That's the only acceptable sushi I would eat..."

"...Yeah, it's those." I said, lying because I didn't know which one Mark ordered anyways.

"Come on Elisa don't be so bratty, eat whatever is offered to you." Said Anna. "It's bad manners to say those things!"

"E-Eh?! I always have the best manners out of all of us, who are you tell me what good or bad manners are?!" Elisa protested.

"Steiner's been outside guarding the house, should I invite him?" I asked Elisa.

"Oh? S-Sure! Why is he out there with this cold? He's such an idiot sometimes..." Elisa facepalmed.

"Monica, you good?" I wondered. "Did you had fun?"

"A-Ah, yes..." Monica nodded, giving me a faint smile. "I-It was fun to play that game... I could had never afforded to buy it, so I never knew there was such a beautiful world inside. I-I'm thankful for everyone's help..."

"Come on, lessen some of your humility there, no need to be so shy about speaking out loud." Anna patted her shoulders.



"She made herself a rather unique avatar." My daughter said.

"Honestly I don't know why she choose that one." Elisa shrugged.

"I-I don't know either, it just felt like it was right. I didn't felt any strange motion control issues like other players that play that race experienced either..." Monica said.

"Huh? Which Race did she choose?" I wondered.

"Ghost..." Elena answered. "Her Class's Nightmare Mage."

Are you serious?!

Did one of the Gods lured her to choose those options because it fits her real body's talents?

Oh well... Monica's powers are still a mystery; I'll have to watch over her carefully.

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#### **Chapter 684: Initiating A Live Chat With The Gods?!**

After enjoying dinner together, Elisa and Anna went back home, and Monica and Elena decided to go to their room, probably to play some more BNLO before sleeping. Elena talked with us a bit over her powers before that, in my room.

She seemed rather surprised it tired her so much to use them, and with the Great Spirit and Mark's consultation, we decided to help her develop her Magic Power and Physical Fitness much more, through gym training, and other stuff.

My daughter didn't liked the idea that much, but there was no helping it, if she wanted to grow strong and use her powers to protect herself, she first needs to grow strong enough to actually use them.

Her magic is very unique, and it probably requires much more energy and strength than other magic spells or powers I've given to my friends, so she has to, perhaps, work harder than most of us from now on.

Going everyday to the gym was certainly not something she liked, but after that, she decided to accept it and went to her room. We had also addressed the World Quest we were doing at the Luminous Kingdom.

She would had not cared that much, but because we told her Arcadia was actually... quite literally real, she started to worry about its implications, and decided that she wanted to join us later. She and her party were currently pretty far away, on a Land known as the "Dragon Volcanoes", they were doing some Class Quests for Elisa and Anna, while helping Monica power-level.

Elena said they had already begun moving to where we were, so she'll take a bit of time before everyone else, and might arrive a bit late, but well, her help will be really useful, after all her character avatar is incredibly strong! She's not know as the "Player Hunter" for nothing.

Ah, it used to not be possible to power-level lower-level characters, monsters of twenty levels higher usually won't give any EXP, but that has actually changed in the latest updates after the Demon King of

Miasma's death, probably the reason why we've been able to acquire EXP by defeating higher leveled foes as well.

I don't know why this change happened so late into the game, but it has created a new market where high-level players help low level ones power-level and get paid for that, which is quite interesting... but not something we would ever do ourselves.

"Then I'm going, see you tomorrow. Once I'm done with work, shouldn't be too late." Mark said, giving me a kiss. I hugged him tightly in return.

"Alright, be safe!" I said. "Can't you come in the morning so we have breakfast together?"

"Hm, well, I think I can. I'll tell you tomorrow morning I can manage." He said. "See ya, love you."

"Love you too!" I said, sighing a bit, as he walked inside his car and went home.

Maybe I should buy myself a car too now that I think about it.

Like that, I dedicated the next two hours on searching for new schools around the city to send the girls, and also searching for cars.

I don't know how to drive, so I'll need to first do the whole license thing- Ugh, I can travel faster through my spells anyways, but a car is sure comfortable though.

I've got my flying broom too!

...But it is really uncomfortable, my butt always hurts when I use it. I can't believe they've brainwashed us thinking it is an actually good transporting method for witches, it's a lie!

Lastly, I connected back to BNLO for a couple of minutes, as I was feeling tired and wanted to go take a nap, I tried doing something I've wanted to do in a while.

As I've given the rights to do this, I decided to, once more, request a live chat with the Gods like I once did some time ago.

It was surprisingly quick, the Gods answered right away.

Ding!

[Live Chat] request has been accepted.]

[Initiating [Live Chat] with [Game Masters: Council of Gods]...]

[Live Chat has begun!]

Suddenly, all my surroundings changed. Pixels made by the system emerged one after the other, reforming all of my surroundings into a completely different space.

This space could only be described as some sort of outer space, or even the cosmos itself. I saw stars everywhere, the darkness of outer space, planets and even meteors everywhere.

It was a rather beautiful, and even enlightening sight, I had already seen this once in the previous Live Chat, but it is still a rather surprising sight.

I wonder if there's an outer space map or something.

Oh, and in the middle of everything, I was there, standing in my Avatar form, somehow.

In front of me there were the figures of many titans made out of the elements of this world. I could recognize Nyx and Gaia, but the rest were still quite a mystery.

The fire guy is most likely the God that favors Mark, the bearded man made of light is the God of Creation, and I think the one made of stars or something is the Space God?

"Planta, we see again." The God of Creation spoke. "I assume you didn't called us just to idly chat about anything."

"Y-Yeah, I honestly still have many things to ask, but I can already guess you won't answer all the questions I have." I sighed.

The Gods glanced at one another, as Gaia suddenly spoke.

"I think she has done enough to deserve at least the answer to a few questions. Knowledge is sometimes the best reward." Gaia said with a smile. "The Director also is fond of her and her allies and seems to approve of her."

The Director?

"Hmm, certainly..."

"Well..."

"It still..."

"Eventually, she'll have to learn everything anyways."

"Okay." The God of Creation sighed. "You've done a lot of great deeds, and for that we are thankful. We are also sorry that we've been powerless on helping you any further. If it can make you happy, we'll reward you by answering three questions. However, only three, and if they exceed what we can reveal right now, we will only answer cryptically."

"I-I see! Okay!" I nodded. "I agree to those terms."

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#### **Chapter 685: Many Questions And Cryptic Answers**

I had to think carefully what I could ask. If I commit a mistake, they could count a single question as two, so I have to word this correctly.

But how do I word it correctly, actually?! I've never been good at this either!

Err... Let's give it a shot anyways.

"Then I'll ask my first question..." I sighed. "Why was this game created?"

"..."

The Gods remained in silence for a few seconds, and then they decided to speak. The Goddess of Earth and Ore spoke first.

"We cannot answer that completely." She said. "However, we will answer what we can."

"You know well that there are things we cannot reveal... yet. For reasons we cannot explain either." Said the Goddess of Water. "However, be at ease that this is not because we are trying to hide the truth due to malicious or evil intentions."

"It's actually for a much higher... reason, one that you might eventually learn as you keep moving on your own journey." Said the God of Fire.

"Now, to answer that question." Said the God of Creation. "Brand New Life Online was made to stabilize the World of Arcadia. Think of it as... its Pillars."

"...Pillars."

"Indeed. The System is the largest and most important Pillar, and the façade of this world being a "virtual reality" is actually not... that far from the truth." He said. "Players have a special duty they're fulfilling even as we speak, without realizing nor harming them in any way. What that duty is, could be resumed to a simple word, as we cannot reveal you anymore than that."

"And that word is... Evolution." Said Gaia.

"..."

Evolution? What do you mean with that?! It barely answered any questions! And I doubt its just the evolution of humankind, right? Could it also relate to... the evolution of Arcadia and Earth?

But why do it anyways when Earth already had magic powers and monsters even before? There must be another reason, a reason they can't reveal to me yet.

And pillars... so Arcadia being transformed into a virtual reality game is what keeping the world from, perhaps collapsing on itself?

The System must be its largest pillar. But this also implies the System was not created by Arcadia, it is an external force.

Who made the System? Us humans? Nexus Corporations?

I doubt they'll answer that one properly either...

"Now you may ask your second question." The God of Creation spoke.

"My second question..." I said, while thinking about it.

Should I go for it anyways? But... there's also a few other things I would like to know, such as if this world was really destroyed and recreated, and if it's really true that the Eras are mixed together.

But those might seem easier to find out by myself as I investigate the Fragments of Cloudia, isn't it? So maybe... I should ask something related to Earth.

No, I actually want to ask something even higher, something I've been wondering for a long while now. Something that honestly felt strange.

"I've been thinking for a while now. You're not the Ancient Gods. Who are you exactly?"

Of course, my assumptions were not the complete truth, as I had no confirmation. But adding them before the question might make it seem like I know, and if it happens to be true, then I'll be killing two birds with one stone as they'll answer that question even if it's not one.

"A tricky question, you've thought this enough." The God of Creation sighed.

"We cannot answer them properly either..." The Goddess of Darkness sighed. "However, we can tell you a few clues."

"We are tasked with overseeing this world and managing it, pretty much as you would see a Game Moderator, or a Game Master combined together." Answered the God of Creation.

"Our powers are not absolute either." Said the Goddess of Water. "What we can do is sadly limited, the strength these bodies once possessed is long gone, and only a small quantity of its divinity is left."

"We are aware there were more Gods, but right now, they're trapped. We cannot bring them back." Said the God of Fire, suddenly tightly gripping his fists. "It's frustrating..."

They didn't tell me if they were or not, but it's pretty clear they are perhaps not the original gods. Then what are they? I am still so confused! Are the Gods dead or not? Or just a few? They lost their powers and then... What?

Well, at least that still answer a few questions, and pretty much confirms that they are not just the ancient gods. Could they be... humans using the body of gods as avatars?!

No way! That's... It is too crazy, isn't it?

But then it makes more sense the more I think about it. But still, without confirmations, I should keep myself from straight up believing everything completely.

"Now, ask your third and last question." The God of Creation spoke. "I hope it is something we can answer properly this time."

"I don't think that will be the case, sadly." I sighed. "Okay, here it goes..."

"I learned that Earth already had magic, monsters, and secret organizations before the Awakening, which happened when the Demon King of Miasma opened the gates to Earth. However, his attack still ended helping the majority of the population to awaken some sort of magic power." I said. "Where did all this magic power originate from?"

The gods once more glanced at one another. It was yet another tricky question that left to the interpretation, so I can get a lot of answers out of it from different perspectives, answering many questions at the same time.

"The Magic Power of Earth originated from Earth." Said Gaia. "It was always there since the beginning. Monsters and Magicians, and other magical races, mythical beings... there was a time when they existed the most, but due to the large organizations, they slowly reduced in numbers."

"However, it could also be said that Arcadia is the origin of this magic power, even before the First Contact." Answered Nyx, crossing her legs as she sat on her gigantic throne. "Yes, both worlds, are even more connected than you could have ever believed."

"We cannot answer more than that, but the reason behind this Magic Power, might also be related with Arcadia's Pillar." The God of Creation said.

Pillar? Wait, is Earth... a Pillar to Arcadia too?

Just what is going on anymore.

These answers only left me with even more questions!

Ugh, so frustrating...

"I-I see... I wish I could learn when I'll be allowed to learn more of this, and especially of what Nexus Corporations plans with Arcadia and Earth truly are." I said, looking at the God's bright eyes.

"Rest assured. It is nothing that will negatively affect others." Sighed the God. "In fact, it is a way to help Earth. Ah, I've answered more than I should. Well then, that's that."

"C-Can I ask a last question at least?!" I asked, while the live chat started to fade away.

"Sorry, Planta, but we can't. It is not really up to us to decide this." Gaia sighed. "I hope you can understand. Eventually, you will learn everything! Keep working hard! We're looking forward to your progress!"

"Ugh... You guys are so mysterious." I sighed.

But whoever was that "Director", it is a figure of greater authority than the Gods, and someone that can allow them to speak these things or not.

Just who is this person?

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#### **Chapter 686: An Unexpected Visit**

After having swallowed those half-assed answers, I decided to rest and slept at night, without doing absolutely nothing else than think through hours. I was only able to manage some sleep at around 3 AM...

Oh well, thanks to this Physique, I won't wake up feeling sleepy or too tired, but still! I would had wanted to sleep more, but this is more on my fault than anybody else's.

I would like to just learn everything, but as things are going, I should do things one step at a time. If I try to seek everything out forcefully, they might find me dangerous rather than helpful.

So it's better to continue on our friendly relationships, helping one another if possible. They kept saying I would eventually learn it all, so I hope they weren't just trying to make me feel better.

Anyways, I had found three possible high schools for my daughter, and maybe her friends, they were the better ones in the city, one of them was a school for all genders, and the other two were all-girl schools.

I'll have to see what they think about this, maybe they want to see boys too, or maybe not. Maybe it would be nice to bring them to each school, and of course, consult with their parents if they're okay with this and that.

But for now, breakfast time.

After taking a bath, I jumped into the kitchen and started making some tasty breakfast, not only for me and my daughter, but for Monica and also Mark, who just messaged me saying he'll come to have breakfast here before going to work.

Ding, dong~!

"Oh, that must be Mark!"

As I left the last pancake preparing on the pan, I noticed Blackie looking at the door as I opened it, his eyes seemed slightly wary. He had never been like this with Mark though.

"Mark, you came! Ah...?"

"Elayne, right?"

However, instead of Mark, it was someone else. A tall and slightly handsome man (though not as handsome as my Mark), Albert, that guy with the Demon from SWORD.

"Oh, it's you... Albert, isn't it?"

"Yes, that's my name."

"How... did you know where I live?"

"Rose told me... Ah, sorry, she shouldn't had? I just asked and she just told me nonchalantly."

"Ugh, that girl..." I facepalmed. "S-So anyways, did you need something?"

"Ah, well... I came to talk about something important and- Ugh, what is this pressure I'm feeling?" Albert wondered, as a tall man appeared behind him, glaring at him with blazing eyes and a forced smile.

"Mark!" I said, greeting him.

"Oi, do you need something with Elayne?" Mark asked, glaring at Albert. "I'm pretty sure she never told you where she lived. Is your SWORD people still trying to recruit her? Did you come to coerce her or something?"

"Hm? You... who are you?" Albert suddenly responded at Mark fearlessly. "Do you think you can speak to me in such a tone? Wanna have a go, bastard?"

"Hahaha... You really like joking around, don't you?" Mark seemed to be really forcing the smile now, he was beginning to crack his knuckles.

"C-Calm down you two!" I sighed, stepping in between the two. "Mark, don't be impolite with Albert. He's a friend of Rose, so he's our friend too, okay? But I can understand if you were worried... Also Albert, this is Mark, he was with us when the whole dungeon happened, and has been helping us all the time, he's also my boyfriend. So... don't treat him badly again, alright? Unless you want me to kill your demon next time."

"Geh...! O-Okay, okay, sorry. I just got surprised. He just pushed on me such a threatening aura. It was instinct more than anything." Albert shrugged. "I also have terrible memory, my bad for not remembering you, man."

"Why did you come here?" Mark asked with a dead-serious tone of voice. "This is the first time we ever talk after that incident, and last time I checked; you were a berserk demon-possessed nutjob. That Rose talks so freely about you doesn't mean we'll believe everything she says."

"I guess it's weird that a dangerous guy like me steps into your girlfriend's house, huh? Are you a bit jealous I could steal her from you, big guy?" Albert gave him a cocky smile.

"Demon Killing." I said, already summoning my staff.

"A-Anyways! I came in peace! I just wanted to talk about the powers I acquired, and about this sealing magic thing... It has been troubling me for a bit." He said. "Rose said she'll come later, okay?"

"You say okay a lot." I sighed. "Mark, take it easy, it's fine. If he gets cocky again I'm going to exorcism him."

"Hahh..." Mark sighed. "S-Sorry for acting like that. A lot of things have been happening lately, I was worried he had come to kill you or something... After all, it wouldn't be weird if he held a grudge against what we did."

"I am a SWORD agent! Why would I ever kill her?!" Albert was shaken. "D-Do I look that scary?!"

"Yep."

"Yep."

Mark and I answered at the same time, further decreasing Albert's self-esteem...

"Ugh..."

"A-Anyways, let's go in! You can have some pancakes- Ahhh! Right, the pancakes! I left them in!"

I ran inside the kitchen, only to see the pancakes burnt like charcoal... Ugh, well, I lost a bit of batter, that's... fine, yeah.

"Ugh, they're ruined." I sighed, about to throw out the pancakes.

"Can I eat them?" Albert wondered. "We like it really burnt."

"What?!" Mark and I once more were synchronized.



"He, I mean HE!" Albert felt embarrassed as his hand suddenly released a mass of red demonic energy, shaping into a small, demonic jaw eating the pancakes.

"Hmmm... burnt and crispy, like the beasts from hell... Crunch..."

It was Hellberos...

"Hmm? There's a lot of appealing delicacies here! Why do you humans throw them away?!" He suddenly started eating the trash, the chicken bones I threw yesterday, some stale minced meat, and other things. "Hmmm, nom, nom..."

"Honestly from all things I expected a demon to eat, trash was the last one in the list." Mark was shocked.

"F-For real..." I laughed a bit.

"Hey, are you a racoon or something?! Stop eating the trash!" Albert reprimanded him.

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### **Chapter 687: A Cocky Demon**

"Morning', what's for breakfast... Huh?" Elena raised an eyebrow as she glanced Albert sitting around the table.

"Your daughter?" Albert wondered, eating a sandwich.

"Y-Yes..." I sighed. "Elena, he's..."

"I never thought you would get into a polyamorous relationship, mom..." Elena sighed. "Do you like young men that much?"

"W-Wha...?! Elena! What are you saying! He's a friend! Goodness..." I sighed. "He's a... Well, he's part of SWORD. Remember Rose? She's his girlfriend."

"Ooooh..." Elena nodded. "S-Sorry about what I said..."

"No worries." Albert shrugged.

"He wasn't apologizing to you!" I sighed. "A-Anyways, you said you were feeling weird?"

"Yeah, not weird in the wrong way but... How can I put it into words?" Albert wondered. "Well, just look."

Albert suddenly opened the palm of his hands, as golden chains emerged from within, grabbing the phantom of Hellberos and dragging him back into his body.

"Guuaaakh!"

"Awesome." Elena looked at the scene in utter disbelief.

"So my sealing on Hellberos ended extending into some sort of ability you acquired." I nodded, comprehending the situation. "I originally made it so Hellberos would be sealed from doing whatever he pleased with you, looks like it has given you a new strength."

"I am rather afraid of this power too, I don't know how to properly use it, and it might affect me negatively because my body has permanently assimilated the Demonic Powers of Hellberos, so I am kind of half-demon now." Albert said. "I was wondering if you could keep it still or, take it out?"

"Hmm, I'm afraid I can't do much about that. The chains have merged with your soul." I said. "But I made it so they would never harm their vessel, well, wielder now. To take them out would mean breaking your soul apart, and Hellberos who is bound to it might also end up either freeing himself as some sort of demonic manifestation or dying."

"Dying?!" Hellberos manifested as a tiny red devil made of blood above Albert's head. "Hey ma'am, I've been a good demon! You don't have to kill me! Alright?! I-I'll take care of Albert!"

Since that traumatic incident where I beat him to almost death, he has become much more humbler, I see. I never thought demons could exist to begin with. Is there really a hell and heaven out there? I feel like I've been ignoring something incredibly important this entire time.

"Don't worry, it's fine." Albert sighed. "Well, I guess I'll have to bear with it. Though, the problem is that my skin kind of burns when I use them... I know you could say I just shouldn't use them but, my job is pretty dangerous, this tool... I just can't ignore it."

"I can understand..." I nodded, rubbing my chin.

"Hmph, then what do you want?" Mark wondered. "If you're asking for some sort of magical service, shouldn't you pay her first?"

"R-Right, my bad." Albert suddenly took out his phone. "Can you do something? How about twenty?"

"Twenty thousand?" Wandered my daughter.

"Millions." Albert replied.

"Oh, millions- WHAT?!" My daughter almost spat the cereal she was eating.

"E-Elena, calm down dear. Mom is busy dealing with a client, okay?" I asked my daughter.

"S-Sorry, I'll keep quiet." She said, drinking some milk.

"Twenty millions? Is that it?" Mark asked angrily. "What are you basing this pricing on?"

As always, he was being overprotective of me, but I kind of liked that out of him. He always worries about me.

"Usually magicians ask twenty million for some basic consulting or charm creation." Said Albert. "But we can increase the price if she wants. Are you her manager or something that you step into the conversation all the time?"

"He's my boyfriend and I allow him to do so." I crossed my arms. "He's right though, I don't plan on doing charity to you, so... Hmm, how about ten billion?"

"Eh?!" Albert was shocked. "T-That's... Well, I... I guess."

"You would really give me ten billion?! I was joking!" I sighed. "T-That's too much. Anyways, just... fifty is fine. I am planning on building some capital but I'll feel guilty if I ask you an eye out of your face."

"An eye out of his face? Usually that's the price demons ask for contracts or wishes." Hellberos spoke. "I knew it, she's a demon isn't it? I bet she's something like a Succubus! Would explain her massive fat tits-GREEGH!"

Hellberos was grasped by a hand made of light, mine, as he disappeared into red smoke.

"Sorry about that..." Albert apologized. "I'll add a hundred million for that. A-Anyways, do you know something so I don't feel so tired using them?"

"Yeah, I'll readjust the runic system and permeate your body with my sap." I said.

"Sap...?" Albert wondered.

"I'm like a Dryad, you see." I smiled, as my hand suddenly turned into countless of branches, leaking golden sap.

"W-Woah..." Albert was a bit grossed out. "This is the first time I see a Dryad in person, so cool!"

Oh? I didn't expected this facet out of him. It seems he's some sort of weeb but for fantasy creatures. Maybe that's the reason he got that demon inside of him, for reading too many books he shouldn't had. Rose did said something about Hellberos being sealed inside some sort of Grimoire Albert opened mistakenly.

"Ahem, anyways. Elena, what's wrong with Monica?" I wondered.

"She's taking a bath right now; she took a while to wake up." Elena apologized. "Sorry, she slept a bit too much... Ah, wait, why am I even waking up early today, not like there's any school left now!"

"I guess it's force of habit..." I laughed. "But finish your breakfast at least, okay?"

"Eh, sure." Elena shrugged. "It's not like every day we see a demon guy stepping into my house. Hey, are demons really real? What about angels?"

"Angels can suck my demonic dick!" Hellberos angrily barked.

"Shut up! Don't swear in front of a girl!" Albert was about to grasp him like a rat, but I did it first.

"How about we start the modifications right away?" I smiled menacingly. "First, let's add a few Rune arrangements so you don't just say whatever you want, hm?"

"Eeeep! A-Albert, help! Help meeee!"

FLAAASH!

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#### **Chapter 688: An Interesting Talk**

"Nah I'm not helping you. Hellberos, you promised to behave but you've been acting like a stupid idiot all the time, you're too unhinged sometimes." Albert sighed. "You deserve it, buddy. It's either this or you die. What do you prefer?"

"N-None!" Hellberos complained. "L-Let me go- UAAARGH!"

As I started modifying the Holy Sealing Chains of Spiritual Light, I added the [Silence] spell, which pretty much makes Hellberos mute every time he's about to say something really gross or off-putting, it doesn't activate against enemies though, so he can insult them all he wants, but he better be polite with people from now on.

Additionally, I changed the arrangements with the help of the Great Spirit of Harvest and made it so the chains don't emit so much light so Albert's hands, which are half-demon, don't burn as hard.

Lastly, I told Albert to go to my bathroom and take a bath on my sap, as I filled it with that. As he took the bath, he sent me the money, 150 million USD, just like that!

Uwaah! I could buy a bigger house with this, I could buy so much with this, actually! Maybe I should start doing some investments too?

Or just save it for special Earth-only items I can buy in here... Oh well, I'll see about that.

"Phew, that felt so good. My skin's smooth and the chains no longer burn me." He said. "How did it even work?"

"My Sap created a permanent veil around your body that gives you a good resistance against light and life attributes." I smiled. "It doesn't take away your weaknesses completely, but it helps."

"It sure does! This would cost billions, are you sure I shouldn't pay you more?" He wondered.

"Nah, you're Rose's friend, and she has done a lot for us." I smiled. "I hope we can get along from now on, Albert!"

"Sure! Then I'll get going for now, I'm sure I'm bothering you guys and-"

"Where do you think you're going?"

Suddenly, Rose appeared from within his shadows!

"Rose?!" Mark and I cried.

"Ah, hi. I just got here." She sighed, yawning.

"Oh, it's the Vampire girl!" Elena was excited.

Rose raised an eyebrow as she looked at my daughter, and then at me.

"Hm? Your daughter? Hey, what's going on?"

"Ah... well."

We told her that she became "one of us", she took it easier than I imagined. Also the reason Albert was trying to run away was because he didn't wanted to meet Rose and see her grow angrier the more she learned of how badly he acted when he arrived here.

Which she did.

"You did what?! You fucking idiot! They're our friends! How come you can act this dumb?!" Rose was a really cute and beautiful girl, but right now her face twisted, making her look like some half-bat monstrosity.

"S-Sorry..." Albert sighed, bearing with her bloodlust.

"Ugh, my soul hurts all over, what the- Hmm?! Agh, I can't swear now?!" Hellberos cried. "You da- Hmm?! NNGH? Eek!"

The Demon manifested as some sort of wolf-like red energy beast, but he couldn't swear no matter how much he tried.

"Hehehe, feeling better now?" Rose laughed. "Nicely done, Elayne! This bastard deserved this change. He's too cocky."

"My lifeblood... Taken away from me..." Hellberos looked genuinely depressed.

"Swearing is your lifeblood, seriously?" Rose crossed her arms. "A-Anyways, glad you resolved his problem! With this Albert's performance will improve much better."

"Yeah, I'm really thankful, and sorry for acting a bit... terrible at the beginning." Albert lowered his head. "Mark, too, I'm sorry. Stop staring me like that, dude."

"Hmph, well, if you're sorry, then it's alright." Mark crossed his big arms. "Just don't you dare act like a punk again in front of us."

"Well, I also have this gift too, something that Hellberos made. They usually sell for a really high price in the auctions." Albert said, suddenly materializing something out of some sort of dimensional bag he was carrying.

The thing he brought out resembled a ruby-colored rock, semi-transparent, and emanating a strong demonic energy from within. My Spiritual Eyes fused with the Voice of the World, showed me the item's description, barely.

[High Quality Demonic Crystal (A+ Grade)]

The crystallization of high concentrations of Demonic Energy expelled by the Soul of a Mid-Ranking Demon from Hell, Hellberos.

It contains dangerous quantities of demonic energy, but it could be made into powerful Demonic Equipment.

A Demonic Crystal? Wow, this is the first time I ever see something like this. The Demons of BNLO are surely different than Hellberos, I don't remember ever hearing or reading about Demonic Energy, which is what Albert manipulates.

"T-This is... Are you sure?" I wondered.

"Yeah, take it." Albert nodded. "It could become a really strong weapon or something else, I've heard from Rose that you can craft items."

"I can! Well, thanks a lot, Albert!" I gladly took the stone, storing it inside my Inventory.

"My stone!" Hellberos complained. "Hey, weren't we going to make a cool weapon with that, Albert?! You betrayed our promise!"

"You are nobody to say that when you literally sold me off to some demon king from another world or whatever, dude." Sighed Albert. "Just shut up."

"Uuugggh..." Hellberos groaned, incapable of insulting him verbally now.

"Anyways, before you guys leave, I was wondering something. Could you explain us more what's this Hell and Heaven thing? Does it really exist?" I wondered. "Despite being from a rather religious family I was always Atheist so... I never really believed any of those things."

"Well, in the sense of how religion portrays those places... No they don't really exist that way." Rose said. "Not even us are too knowledgeable of how they exist or how they interact with our World."

"Yeah, Hellberos lost most of his memories when he was sealed in the Grimoire. And because I am an orphan, there's no other family members to ever tell me what's up with him." Albert shrugged.

"But we do know that the Vatican prays to a "God" one that does not act like the Bible one, but that exists, somewhere. It is more like a cosmic horror than the good ol' bearded guy." Laughed Rose. "A manifestation of human's beliefs and their concentrated magical powers over thousands of years. There are several ways in how magical or mythical beings are born, magical mutations, external forces, or through our collective consciousness, which spontaneously can create them."

"I-Insane..." Elena was surprised. "Should we become religious now? Will God punish me if I'm gay or something?"

"Sigh, of course not, THAT type of god never existed, that's just manipulation from religion and stuff." Rose sighed. "Hell is some sort of pseudo dimension or something, the same for heaven. They cannot exist without Earth fueling them with collective magical energy and also souls. But we do know that souls never stay there forever, they eventually... well, this is a big secret, but they reincarnate."

"T-The cycle of reincarnation is a thing?" Mark gasped.

"Yep." Said Albert. "Sort of... We only deal with monsters, not with this type of investigation, that's something other organizations do, larger, and much more secretive ones. Some involving several countries working together. The Union of Magical and Supernatural Researchers of Europe is one of the big shots, followed by the China one."

To think this world became even bigger than I could had ever expected.

But God being a cosmic horror-type of entity is sending me shivers down my spine.

Is this the thing the Great Spirit referred to back then?!

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#### **Chapter 689: The Three Layers**

"We technically call these places "Pseudo Dimensions", but there's other names, such as Realms, or Planes of Existence." Rose said, suddenly conjuring some blood mist and manipulating it to resemble some sort of three-layered world. "Imagine our World as this. The middle layer is our Mortal World, the

layer beneath is Hell, and the layer above is Heaven. In between, there are also several fluctuating layers, which might be smaller realms created by other really strong entities."

"Hell is where negative energy ultimately accumulates." Said Albert. "Hollows are beings made out of Negative Energy that never feel complete, they seek Mana to feel complete, right? Well, they originated from Hell, and slowly crawl across the dimensional layer to our mortal world. The reason why non-magicians can't see them is because they're more ethereal than physical, and therefore their "existences" reside more within the Hell Layer. Naturally, those like us, who possess demonic powers, mana, and such, simultaneously exist within the three layers, constantly interacting with them."

"Crazy, but alright." I nodded, sipping some tea. "I imagine they're more like... just substances? Like there's not a big cloudy sky or something in heaven, right?"

"We don't know, nobody has ever visited those places in our agency, haha." Laughed Rose. "Though I used to work for the Vatican. Priests were strong because they created contracts with angelic beings, or god himself, and could channel their Holy Power. The same goes with Albert and the Demon he has. And as of us, we're usually considered "Innates", we simply possess magical power born from our very body. Though, the last thing I remember hearing about Vampires was that we descend from a Demon, so we possess demonic bloodline."

"S-So cool..." Elena was amazed.

"So, what's happening right now is that some sort of external world is trying interfering with the three layers of our world, generating fractures between the dimensions and making them collapse on each other, birthing Gates." Rose continued explaining. "Get it now?"

"And because of all this rich Mana coming from this alien world, everyone's now becoming an Innate." Albert explained. "Which was usually something only reserved to secret bloodlines. Most of the other supernatural fighters often relied on magical artifacts, or contracts with magical beings, such as mythical beasts, angelic beings, demonic beings, or "false gods", which is what we refer to any god weaker than the main God up there."

"There are multiple gods?!" Mark was surprised.

"Not so sure if every god ever created by humans exists right now, but they're creations of their beliefs, ethereal beings with great power, but with many restrictions." Yawned Rose. "And that's kind of it... We have yet to even find out what the heck is this alien world, but it is surely not related with our own."

"I remember that Hell was really hot." Hellberos said. "And I liked hunting demonic beasts and other things and eat them when they were very crispy! Heheheh..."

"I see... I can guess why you see Elayne as someone so incredible now." Mark nodded. "It is because she has the power to turn others into Innates, isn't it?"

"Yeah, that's usually something only crazy magic scientists that turn you into chimeras do, or vampires and werewolves." Laughed Rose.

"Not even the strongest magicians out there can turn an ordinary person into one." Said Albert. "You need the talent and innate power to learn magic, usually... Well, now with everyone becoming Innates due to the First Contact, our world's going to become more and more chaotic, or well, interesting."

"I wonder if Ancient Magicians and other Organizations are looking to recruit these new Awakened people." I wondered. "Seeing how they lacked so many personnel back then, this would be a good opportunity."

"It sure is, but it also brings a lot of unpredictable dangers. New monstrous beings from another world appearing, magics and powers we're not familiar with, and above all, the potential for the newly awakened to become villains and do all sorts of terrorist acts." Said Rose. "This is why governments are being so quick at the Hunter thing, so they keep everyone in check by making them public figures. Still, I bet they'll appear sooner or later."

"I see... Do you not know anything more?" I wondered. "I am really craving for more knowledge..."

"Nope, sorry, that's all." Rose shrugged. "If you want to know and learn more, you'll have to call a Data Broker Agency, they sell some packages that include information about the Planes, Monsters, and other organizations, they call it the "newbie pack" or something."

"How much are they?" I wondered.

"Millions, the most confidential information can go as high as billions." Said Albert. "But as they say, knowledge is power."

"Hmm, I see." I nodded. "Oh well, it was a rather enlightening morning! But it is getting late, dear, shouldn't you get going to work?"

"Ah... Right!" Mark quickly looked at the hour, packing up his things. "I'll come back for lunch, see you later! Love you."

He quickly gave me a kiss as he ran outside into his car, rushing to work.

"Well, that was really interesting, heh." My daughter smiled. "But I'm feeling sleepy..."

As Elena walked to her room, Monica showed up.

"Huh? Elena? You finished breakfast...?" Monica looked saddened she couldn't catch up.

"You can eat with me if you don't mind!" I called her.

"A-Ah, t-thanks." Monica smiled.

Rose and Albert were already gone, as the two disappeared within the shadows, through Rose's special shadow-manipulation abilities that rivaled those of Rita.

We sure learned a lot, but it also left me wondering about many more things. Earth... just how truly vast is it really?

All my beliefs seem shattered the more I learn about everything, it is just as crazy of a world as Arcadia, if not a bit more...

I do wonder though, does Arcadia have a Heaven and Hell too?

It does possess an "Underworld" which is more similar to the afterlife of other religions, such as those from Greek Myth or Norse Myth.



It's not a burning place, but a cold, desolate and dark cave-like area, filled with souls and Undead instead of just the usual demons.

But for now, I better just calm down and do things one step at a time.

"T-These pancakes are a bit burnt..." Monica sighed.

"A-Ah! Sorry, I'll change them!"

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#### **Chapter 690: Regret**

"How have you been feeling, Monica? Alright?"

"Y-Yeah."

Monica nodded timidly as she ate pancakes and drank some milk.

"No anomalies? Magic powers surging out or something?"

"I-I feel... something sometimes, in my chest. I-Is it something dangerous?"

"Hm, let me see."

I gave her a gentle head pat as I placed my hand above her head, connecting my magical powers with hers, and quickly detecting the "anomaly", it was just what I had detected before.

"Looks like your innate magical powers were awakened when you became possessed by that ghost... Dorothea."

"A-Ahh..." Monica sighed, her hands trembling.

That name probably brings her some sort of post-traumatic response.

"Calm down, dear. I'll take care of you until things are better." I smiled, sighing. "That magic power won't go crazy or something, it just what you possess. But if it hurts, I could help you seal it..."

"Seal it?" She wondered. "Would that make it go away?"

"Yes... But it would also take away the opportunity for you to become strong and defend yourself one day." I said. "If one day you're alone and in danger, there won't be anybody else but you to defend your own life."

"Hmm..." Monica sighed.

She looked at the pancakes while sighing, as she seemed to want to open up a bit more.

"I wish she hadn't betrayed me like she did..." Monica sighed. "I thought that... D-Dorothea was my friend, someone that understood me but... She only put bad words into my head, and always tried to manipulate me..."

Her hands started trembling as tears started flowing from her eyes.

"I did so many terrible things... I should have died with her, it's what... I deserved..." She started to break down.

"No... How could you ever say that?" I sighed, hugging her. "Calm down now, you were a victim here, Monica, it wasn't your fault."

"But... I also wanted those things, deep down, there was a voice telling me that I wanted to do them, that I wanted to hurt others..." She cried. "I'm a bad person... I'm a monster...!"

"You're not a monster." I sighed. "That's natural. All of us sometimes feel like killing or kicking someone annoying. Geez, even I when I was young was bullied a lot, there wasn't a day I didn't wish I could just kill them all. But that's like a natural thing, sometimes we think in the demise of the people we detest, but it's not like we'll genuinely want to do it. It's more like... a way for our consciousness to cope with reality. A reality we can't really accept so easily."

"Auntie..." Monica sighed, looking at me with her cute eyes.

"Maybe this is more of a personal opinion but... I think you could do good with the powers you possess; I think you could one day save the lives of your friends." I smiled. "Are you really sure you want those powers to disappear?"

"..." Monica looked at her own white hands, as some dark energy began emerging, and then quickly disappeared. "I... I don't know but... I want... to help others if that means... I make up for what I did..."

"Well said." I smiled. "For now, just take it easy and rest, okay?"

"Well, okay..." Monica sighed. "B-But there's something else I need to... tell you about."

"Yes?" I wondered.

"It's about... the bullies, those girls that appeared in the hospital... T-The people that I and Dorothea hurt..." Monica sighed.

"Huh? Wait, so... Ah, I see." I sighed. "They're still alive, but they're having a rather hard time. I have refrained myself from using my powers to heal others in the hospitals and such, because that would disturb the balance of the world, as Rose said or something."

"But could you... help me heal them?" Monica asked. "I feel so guilty... I need to do something."

"Hmm, fine." I nodded. "Let's go right away."

"E-Eh?! Now?" She asked while panicking.

"Yep, and you're getting there and apologizing." I said.

"A-Ah, b-but..." Monica was having a panic attack.

"Monica, if you really want to amend for what you've done, you have to face these things head-on." I said. "You won't be alone, I'll do it for you too, but I need you to apologize to these girls."

Monica stayed silent for a few seconds, lowering her head, and really thinking it hard.

"O-Okay..." Monica nodded. "I-I'll do... it. If it means... I can get off this guilty I feel..."

"Good girl."

Like that, once Monica got some better clothes, we decided to go. Elena ended accompanying us, after we gave her a brief explanation.

"Honestly you did it out of self-defense, those girls went too far leaving you half-dead on the floor like you said." Elena crossed her arms. "Those damn..."

"I know how you feel, but it is also wrong to do what she did." I sighed. "Even if Dorothea was mostly manipulating her, still, let's just allow her to redeem herself, even if a bit. Just because someone insults me or hits me, I won't just suddenly try to kill them. It's like a normal thing, right?"

"Right..." Elena sighed, looking up at the hospital building. "We're here."

"Uwah, I'm so nervous... W-What if they hate me, or try to attack me, or they sue me... Well, it should be fine even then, I would be paying for what I did..." Monica sighed.

"It isn't that different from what happened in the school, and as I said, it could be argued that Dorothea did it all, possessing you." I sighed. "Legal problems are complicated, but you should stop blaming you for the things that ghost did. She was utterly malicious and is long gone. You may feel guilty, but you're not a criminal, Monica."

"Hmm..." Monica nodded, still nervous.

Once we managed to arrange a visit using the excuse of being good friends of the girls from school, we managed to enter the room where they were, all three of the girls looked extremely old, as if their life force had been drained off them.

They've been in a comatose state ever since then but were still clinging to life. It was a much more extreme case compared to what happened in the school, where they were only cursed into temporary zombies, or put into eternal dreams by Dorothea.

"Let's see... This should work." I said.

I utilized a special spell I created, named [Life Infusion] and while conjuring it, I feed the girls some of my sap, swiftly healing them from their old-looking states, and giving them back the "youth" that Dorothea stole.

Perhaps this life force is what she used to later provoke the Dungeon Break, as she had drained them almost completely out of it. What a dangerous monster, I'm glad she's gone...

"H-Huh?"

"What...?"

"Eh?"

The three girls quickly woke up, looking around.

"Hello girls, I am... Elena's mother, and also, err, the person taking care of Monica. She had come here to heal you and ask for forgiveness. When she did that to you, she was actually being possessed by a ghost. You can see it in the news that it affected the school and all." I explained.

"Monica?"

The girls looked at Monica, who was lowering her head and crying.

"I'm sorry... I shouldn't had done the things I did..." Monica cried. "It was her, but... I still feel guilty. I am not expecting your forgiveness but..."

"N-No, actually... I... I remember it all. It wasn't you, something darker... a monster. Something possessed you..." One of the girls was trembling.

"At that moment, I thought it was karma, or something, because we did something so awful to you." Sighed the second.

"W-We're sorry... Ugh, what the heck did we do? It was as if we were being possessed by something when we did that, but it was just us..." The third sighed.

"Maybe it was Negative Energy that over accumulated on their psyche." The Great Spirit said. "It happens sometimes, when humans act irrationally, crazy, or berserk, it is because the negative energy is filling their bodies, making them go crazy. If you keep a normal lifestyle, it shouldn't happen at all, but it does happens if they go through a lot of stress."

"Y-You're not angry at me?" Monica was surprised.

"Of course not... we feel terrible."

"Sorry Monica..."

"C-Can we do something to make up for this?"

"E-Eh? But I... your bodies were..." Monica cried.

"It wasn't you; it was that monster; we all saw it anyways. You can't just blame yourself for that."

"Sometimes I forget our world has changed... there's monsters and stuff out there."

"Wait, our school got destroyed? Ugh..."

"A-Ah, well, this is awkward... I'm glad there's no... grudges." Monica sighed in relief. "You don't need to do anything for me. I think it's fine... as it is. Let's... get along, if we ever meet again, okay?"

Monica's innocence and forgiveness really hit hard the girls, they felt even more terrible for treating such a sweet girl so badly, beginning to cry.

"S-Sorryyy..."

"You're so sweet, oh my god..."

"We're the actual monsters..."

"C-Calm down, it's fine." Monica sighed, as she hugged the girls one after another.

At the end, they got along really well, but we swiftly escaped after that, because we didn't wanted to be found out as the ones that healed them, as it might get us too much unwanted attention.

Monica exchanged contact info with her former bullies. Maybe she got herself some new friends. I had checked them with magic multiple times, but they weren't lying either...

It was a surprising development, but it left me with a lighthearted feeling.

I guess people can indeed change for the best.