

CLEAVER OF SIN

#Chapter 1: Lectures - Read CLEAVER OF SIN Chapter 1: Lectures

Chapter 1: Lectures

A young man, no older than twenty-three, lay fast asleep upon his bed. Suddenly, the shrill chime of an alarm shattered the silence, pulling him from the depths of slumber and back into reality.

With a languid yawn, he rose, his eyes drifting toward the window beside him, where the morning light began to seep through the glass.

"I wonder what today has in store for me," he murmured, his voice still heavy with sleep as he made his way toward the bathroom, rubbing the fatigue from his eyes.

Upon entering, a large mirror mounted on the wall greeted him. He paused before it, studying his reflection for a moment.

Tall and lean, standing at 6'2", he possessed jet black hair and eyes to match, features that framed a face above average in appearance, though unassuming in his own eyes.

With a faint shake of his head, he lowered himself toward the sink, reaching for his toothbrush and toothpaste with practiced ease.

A few minutes later, he stepped into the shower, letting the steady stream of water rinse away the remnants of sleep.

He emerged from the bathroom with a towel wrapped loosely around his waist. To the average eye, his build might appear athletic, broad-shouldered with defined muscle, but to seasoned athletes, it was nothing extraordinary.

Just another physique shaped by effort, not excellence; the kind shared by countless hopefuls chasing the same ideal.

Crossing the room, he approached the wardrobe and selected a simple yet clean outfit, dressing without much thought. Soon after, he made his way to the kitchen for a quick, unceremonious meal.

With breakfast behind him, he returned to his room, grabbing his phone and a set of car keys from the nightstand.

"It's already 9:23 a.m. I still have some time before the lecture starts," he muttered under his breath, casting a quick glance at the screen of his phone.

With that, he made his way to the door, stepping out and heading toward the elevator. Once inside, he pressed the button for the garage level. The descent was swift and silent, and within moments, the doors slid open with a quiet chime.

Without hesitation, he walked directly to his car. The engine responded to his touch with a smooth, subdued hum, purring to life. Settling into the driver's seat, he eased out of the parking space and began the familiar drive toward campus, the city slowly awakening around him.

Within minutes, he arrived on campus and made his way into the lecture hall. The low hum of conversation washed over him, dozens of students chatting idly, their voices blending into a chorus of anticipation as they waited for the lecture to begin.

His eyes scanned the room, drifting over rows of faces. None struck him as familiar. With a quiet sigh, he made his way toward an empty seat near the back.

But just as he was about to sit down, a voice cut through the noise, calling his name.

"Hey Ethan. Over here!"

Ethan turned his head toward the voice, instantly recognizing it, Logan. Without hesitation, he altered his course and made his way over. Logan was already seated, surrounded by a few of their mutual friends.

"Good morning, everyone." Ethan greeted as he approached.

A chorus of nods and casual acknowledgments met his words, the group barely pausing their conversation. Logan shifted slightly, making room on the bench beside him for Ethan to sit.

"So, did you do the assignment? Lecture starts in twenty minutes, let me copy yours." Logan said casually, already reaching toward Ethan's bag.

"Why is it always mine you want to copy? Go ask someone else for once." Ethan replied with a sigh, brushing Logan's hand away.

Still, with a resigned shake of his head, he unzipped his bag and pulled out the assignment, handing it over without further protest.

Before Logan could respond, another friend from the group, Hills, interjected with a grin.

"Because we're friends, what other reason do you need?" he said, already reaching into his bag to retrieve a pen and notebook.

"We don't have time for your complaints today," Ella added, glancing toward Ethan's booklet. "Twenty minutes to copy the equations, before the lecture starts."

Ethan shook his head quietly. This group of friends was clearly using him to boost their CGPAs, but he said nothing. After all, wasn't that what friends were for?

Twenty minutes later, the lecturer arrived, and the session commenced. Three hours slipped by in what felt like eternity.

As the final words echoed through the hall, everyone rose, filing out toward their next class.

After a long day of back-to-back lectures, Ethan's final class ended around 4 p.m. He exchanged quick goodbyes with his friends before making his way to the parking garage and sliding into his car.

"This university is killing me," he sighed, resting his head briefly against the steering wheel.

Reaching for his phone, he scrolled through his contacts and tapped his girlfriend's name. Within seconds, she answered.

"Hey, boo! How are your classes? Are you done for the day? I can come pick you up." Ethan said, his voice relaxed as his phone connected seamlessly to the car's Bluetooth.

"Yeah, babe. I'm finished," Jennifer replied warmly. "I'll wait for you at my department."

They had been together for two years now, their relationship steady and strong. Plans for marriage after graduation were no longer just dreams, but quietly spoken promises between them.

Ethan's car roared to life as he headed toward Jennifer's department. She stood waiting outside, clad in her medical scrubs, a testament to the grueling path she had chosen as a medical student.

"How are you holding up?" Ethan asked as Jennifer slid into the passenger seat.

"Exhausted," she admitted with a weary sigh. "Doctors really don't have it easy. No wonder so many of them end up with a god complex later on."

Ethan smiled, a playful glint in his eyes. "Well, even if you develop one, I'll just open a church in your name."

She laughed softly as he steered toward his apartment. Once inside, they both showered and changed, their conversation drifting to lighter topics, laughter filling the space between them.

Later, they drove through the city's vibrant nightlife, seeking respite from the day's stresses. They shared a casual meal at a small eatery and played street games under

the glow of neon lights, moments like these a welcome escape from the pressures of their lectures.

They held each other's hands as they wandered into a jewelry store. Inside, delicate necklaces, rings, amulets, and bracelets of every hue and design were displayed meticulously behind glass cases, sparkling softly in the warm light.

"Should we measure your ring finger now, for when I finally propose?" Ethan asked with a playful smile, eyeing the neatly lined-up rings behind the glass.

Jennifer shook her head, a teasing smile curling her lips. "That might spoil the surprise when you do."

Ethan chuckled softly. "Not like you'd know exactly when I plan to propose, so no surprises ruined."

He picked up a delicate necklace and gently fastened it around Jennifer's neck. She browsed through the display a bit longer before selecting a few pieces she loved. After settling the payment with his card, they stepped back into the night and drove quietly toward home.

"Will you stay at my place tonight?" Ethan asked.

"I won't," Jennifer replied. "I have a 5 a.m. practical tomorrow. If I sleep at your place, I'm sure I'll wake up tired, and with a backache."

Ethan smirked, his confidence shining through. "Well, it's not my fault I'm just that good."

"Whatever," Jennifer said with a playful roll of her eyes. "Just drop me off at my hostel."

Ethan sighed but obliged, steering the car toward her dorm. Within minutes, they arrived.

"See you tomorrow," Jennifer said softly, leaning in to press a quick kiss to his lips before stepping out.

Ethan smiled, watching her walk inside. Shaking his head with fondness, he drove back to his own apartment.

Once inside, he peeled off his clothes and collapsed onto his bed in just his boxers. After scrolling through his phone for a while, he plugged it in to charge and drifted off to sleep.

Chapter 2: Hell Mode

Sunlight filtered gently through the windowpanes, casting a warm glow across the room. A boy lay beneath his duvet, peacefully asleep. Suddenly, a subtle twitch flickered across his eyelids.

Without warning, he eased himself upward from the bed, transitioning smoothly into a seated position. His eyes remained closed as he stretched languidly, still caught in the haze between sleep and wakefulness.

"A nice stretch," the boy murmured, his eyes fluttering open as the room slowly came into focus. Yet, he remained still, seated in stunned silence, a wave of confusion washing over him.

"How did I get here?" he whispered, his voice barely steady. Then, abruptly, he faltered, uncertainty deepening in his gaze.

'What happened to my bass voice?' he wondered, fingers instinctively brushing his throat. His eyes roamed the room, sharply taking in every detail, every shadowed corner, as if searching for answers.

'Is this the chamber of a king, or what?' he wondered, eyes sweeping over the sumptuous surroundings. The bed was impossibly soft, the duvet plush and inviting. Ornate gold-framed paintings adorned the walls, and every piece of furniture spoke of exquisite luxury.

He lifted his hands, noticing how they appeared smaller than his original body, yet paradoxically stronger. His skin felt unnaturally smooth beneath his gaze.

"What on earth is happening?" he muttered, the unfamiliar voice emerging from his throat, laced with disbelief.

Ethan's mind raced, cycling through every possible scenario that could explain his current predicament. This wasn't how his days were supposed to begin.

His routine was simple, consistent: wake up, attend lectures, laugh and gossip with his girlfriend, then fall asleep with no worries in the world.

But then, a single, jarring thought struck him like lightning.

Transmigration

'Impossible... is such a thing even real?' he thought, disbelief thick in his mind.

Sure, he'd read his fair share of web novels and watched enough anime to recognize the trope. But he had never once wished for it, never even entertained the idea. Why would he? His life was already ideal.

He was wealthy, tall, strikingly handsome, intelligent, and dating the most intelligent and charming girl in the medical department.

By all accounts, he was living the dream. His reality didn't even remotely fit the cliché prerequisites for reincarnation or transmigration. His life had no tragedy, no injustice, no regrets. It was simply... perfect.

After all, reincarnation and transmigration were for the broken, the forgotten, or the painfully average, those who had lived unremarkable lives or suffered in silence. But Ethan was none of those things. His life had been, by every measure, too perfect.

Yes, he had grown up in an orphanage. But unlike many children who, upon coming of age, longed to uncover their roots or reunite with lost parents, Ethan had never shared that sentiment. To him, the past was a closed door. They had given up on him, so he had simply returned the favor, with finality and without remorse.

His thoughts came to another sudden halt.

Jennifer

Memories of her flooded his mind in vivid detail, her laughter, the way she'd playfully steal glances during his lectures whenever she escorted him, the warmth of her hand in his.

He remembered when they first started dating, two years ago. Not once had they argued. Not once had they needed space. Jennifer had even given their relationship a name: ***Utopia***.

'Damn it. Take me back... take me back to my world' Ethan thought, the weight of his reality crashing down.

He didn't waste time denying what had happened. Acceptance had already settled in, no matter how surreal it felt.

But Jennifer... what would become of her? The heartbreak, the confusion, the devastation she would feel when his body, cold, unresponsive, was eventually found, or worse, reported missing.

The thought hollowed him out.

Ethan let his back sink into the softness of the bed, eyes fixed blankly on the polished ceiling above. His thoughts churned restlessly, tangled in disbelief and reluctant acceptance.

The typical transmigration trope played through his mind, bloodshed, battles, power struggles, tragic events, and endless family drama.

It was the kind of fantasy that fueled the dreams of many novel readers and otakus.

But not his.

He had no reason to fantasize about escape or reinvention. His reality had been near perfect, so perfect that the idea of trading it for chaos seemed utterly absurd.

Minutes slipped by as he lay there, motionless, his eyes unblinking. Eventually, driven by curiosity or perhaps quiet dread, he pushed himself off the bed and made his way to the full-length mirror mounted on the wall. If nothing else, he needed to see the face of the stranger he had become.

He rose from the bed and walked toward the mirror, each step slow, deliberate. As his gaze met the reflection before him, he paused, staring at a young man who looked to be no older than seventeen, yet possessed a presence beyond his years.

The figure stood tall at 6'1", with skin so fair and flawless it seemed untouched by even the faintest trace of dirt or hardship.

His eyes were a deep, ethereal purple, mirroring the tousled mop of hair atop his head, hair that, while clean and well-kept, had grown wild, as though no one had dared to trim it.

His features were sharp and dangerously attractive, the kind of face that could charm or silence a room with little effort.

'A lady killer' Ethan thought dryly.

But the thought was fleeting, chased quickly by a deeper, more urgent question.

'I thought transmigrations came with memories... so where the hell is mine?'

His gaze drifted to the closed door across the room. The temptation to open it, to peer into the unknown, tugged at him. But caution anchored his feet in place.

He had no memory, no context for where he was, who he was supposed to be, or how this world worked. Walking out blindly could be dangerous.

Besides, judging from the opulence of the room and the refinement of his new appearance, this body likely belonged to someone of considerable status. A noble family, perhaps.

Best to wait. A maid, a butler, someone was bound to come. And when they did, he'd have a chance to gather some much-needed information.

Turning on his heel, Ethan moved toward the window, hoping to catch a glimpse of the world beyond. But just as he took his second step, he froze. His breath caught. A sharp, unseen force crashed into his mind like a hammer to glass.

Pain.

It bloomed in his skull, violent and sudden.

He staggered, clutching his head with both hands as his knees buckled slightly. The urge to scream clawed at his throat, but he bit it back, forcing himself to stay silent.

Then, fragments.

Images began flashing in his mind like fractured memories stitched together by chaos. Scenes, faces, places he didn't recognize, yet now somehow knew. A motion picture of someone else's life unspooled violently behind his eyes.

Several agonizing minutes passed before the pain began to fade, then disappeared altogether, as suddenly as it had come. Ethan remained still, gasping softly for breath, his body trembling as he slowly pushed himself upright from his half-collapsed position.

His mind raced, reeling from the torrent of memories that had just been forced upon him.

They weren't his, but now, somehow, they were.

He had just witnessed the life of the soul that once inhabited this body. Every experience, every moment, every scar etched into the consciousness now fused with his own. And what he saw left him stunned.

"You've got to be kidding me." Ethan murmured, his voice low, almost breathless with disbelief.

Gone was the ease and privilege of his former life, his days of comfort, laughter, and effortless success. What lay before him now was chaos. Betrayal. Blood. And a legacy riddled with danger.

It was as though fate had ripped him from Easy Mode and hurled him headfirst into Hell Mode, without warning, without reason, and without mercy.

Chapter 3: Tenth Son

The body belonged to the son of a Duke, more precisely, Asher Wargrave, the tenth child of the esteemed Wargrave lineage. The Wargraves, Dukes of the Zarethorne Empire, were a family forged in the crucible of battle, a clan defined by warfare, renowned for their martial prowess and hardened by generations of conflict.

Asher was sixteen, soon to turn seventeen. As the Duke's tenth son, he commanded both respect and deference wherever he went. But in a household where excellence was the standard, mere birthright was not enough.

The Wargraves were a family of prodigies, every one of Asher's nine siblings was a genius in their own right, as were his parents, uncles, and aunts. Mediocrity had no place in such a lineage.

It was not enough to be talented; he was expected to be extraordinary. In truth, the Wargraves were less a noble family and more a lineage of monsters draped in glory.

In this new world, every individual, noble or commoner alike, underwent an awakening upon reaching the age of fifteen. It was a universal rite of passage, one that transcended status or lineage.

Yet, despite its inevitability, the true nature of the awakening remained a mystery to Ethan. Still, as an avid reader of fantasy novels, he possessed a general understanding of what it might entail.

The process of awakening occurred at fifteen, but success was not guaranteed. Not everyone was able to awaken. Each person was granted up to three attempts, at the ages of fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen.

Should they fail all three, their fate was sealed.

They would forever remain ordinary, destined to live a life devoid of power or potential in a world that revered strength above all else.

But Asher had done the unthinkable, he had failed his awakening at the age of fifteen. And that was where everything began to unravel.

Though the world granted a second and even a third chance in the years that followed, failure, however temporary, was an unspoken disgrace within the Wargrave household.

In a family where strength was not merely expected but demanded, such weakness was intolerable.

This was not just any noble house, it was the domain of monsters, a lineage bred for war, where power was legacy and mediocrity a sin.

After Asher failed his first awakening, the ridicule began. His siblings, who had never harbored affection for him to begin with, seized the opportunity to mock and belittle him. Love had no place among them, only ambition.

Each was vying to become the next head of the Wargrave family, and Asher's failure made him an easy target.

Even the servants, once courteous by duty, began to look upon him with thinly veiled disdain. Some of the maids had awakened on their first attempt, yet the youngest son of a Duke, born into privilege and legacy, had not.

In their eyes, he was a disgrace.

But Asher did not yield. He did not crumble beneath their scorn or the weight of their contemptuous gazes.

Instead, he turned inward and endured. He pushed his body beyond its limits, embraced the pain, and welcomed the silence.

Day after day, he followed a merciless routine: wake, eat, train, sleep, then repeat. No distractions. No excuses. Just sheer discipline.

When Asher turned sixteen, his second chance at awakening arrived. Every gaze was fixed on him, watchful, expectant, unforgiving. Could he redeem himself? Could he finally cast off the stain of his first failure?

Even if he succeeded, the whispers would not vanish. The shadow of that first disgrace would linger. But what followed silenced even those whispers, replacing them with stunned disbelief.

Asher failed again.

A second failure, unthinkable. Unforgivable.

This time, it broke him.

He felt their stares, piercing, mocking, heavy with scorn. The weight of their disdain crushed him, and the cruel satisfaction in their eyes, the schadenfreude, was unbearable.

He could no longer pretend to be unaffected. Retreating to his room, he shut out the world.

For days, perhaps weeks, he did nothing but cry, eat, and drink. He drowned his sorrow in alcohol, desperate to blur the sharp edges of his reality.

In that darkened room, surrounded by silence and the bitter scent of failure, Asher was no longer the tenth son of a Duke. He was just a broken boy, clinging to the bottom of a well he could no longer climb out of.

But none of it brought relief.

The drinking, the tears, the isolation, it solved nothing. If anything, it pulled him deeper into the abyss, swallowing what remained of his resolve. Day after day, the same cruel routine unfolded.

His siblings no longer needed to lift a hand against him. Their words, cutting, relentless, were far more effective than fists. Each passing comment chipped away at what little strength he had left.

Eventually, Asher broke.

One morning, unable to bear it any longer, he paid a maid to procure a drug. She didn't question him. She didn't dare to. It wasn't her place, she was but a mere maid.

That night, Asher made his choice.

He swallowed the drug, not out of recklessness, but with quiet, deliberate finality. For him, it was not a cry for help, it was an escape. A way to silence the voices, the judgment, the failure. A way to disappear from a world that had never offered him a place within it.

Asher Wargrave, the tenth son of a Duke, died not on the battlefield, but in a lonely room, defeated not by enemies, but by the weight of expectation and silence.

Ethan felt Asher's emotions crash into him like a tidal wave, fleeting moments of joy, fierce determination, quiet resolve... then sorrow, despair, and finally, death.

'At least it wasn't a painful death.' Ethan thought, his steps steady as he approached a small table. Resting atop it was a bottle, half full of the very drug Asher had used, and beside it, a folded letter stained faintly at the edges.

He didn't bother reading it. He already knew its contents. The memories were as vivid as if they were his own.

Without hesitation, Ethan tossed the bottle aside and shredded the letter, letting the torn fragments flutter to the floor like discarded regrets.

Despite having lived through Asher's final moments, Ethan could feel no lasting weight. The sorrow, the fear, the hopelessness, they belonged to Asher, not to him. And though they had touched him, they did not claim him.

'I wonder why none of Asher's memories carried any history of this world.' Ethan mused as he moved toward the window.

Outside, the compound exuded discipline and order. Armored guards patrolled the perimeter with mechanical precision, their eyes sharp and movements rehearsed.

Maids and butlers drifted across the walkways with practiced grace, their steps silent, their expressions composed. Everything moved with the harmony of a well-oiled machine.

Beyond them, tall, elegant trees stretched skyward, their branches twisting like serpents of green and gold. They dotted the landscape in spiraling formations, giving the estate a strange, cultivated beauty, as if even nature here had been trained to obey.

Yet even in all its grandeur, it felt unfamiliar. Alien. Beautiful, but not his.

'If I jumped from here... would I truly die?' Ethan wondered, eyes fixed on the distant ground below. Or would time simply rewind, dragging me back to the moment I awoke in this body?'

It was a strange thought, one that likely never crossed the minds of those who fantasized about reincarnation.

While others might revel in the thrill of a second chance, Ethan's mind traveled a darker, more curious path.

'What if someone, granted a new life in a new world, chose to throw it away immediately? Would the force behind the reincarnation intervene? Would it stop them, desperate to protect whatever plan or design it had for them? Or... would it let them die? Just like that. No resistance. No purpose. Just an end.'

The question gnawed at him.

He felt no attachment to this life. Not yet. The emotions he had inherited from Asher had already faded into the background like a story read too many times.

But somewhere in the back of his mind, the real question lingered:

'Would it end?'

'Would I go back to Jennifer?'

'Would I wake up once more in Asher's bed as if nothing had happened?'

The temptation to test the theory was real, dangerous, but real. Not born of despair... but of curiosity.

The kind that could kill a man just as swiftly as any sword.

"Isn't this the part where I'm supposed to hear that ding, system activation sound, right after I get my memories?" Ethan muttered under his breath, more to himself than anyone else.

He furrowed his brow, sinking deeper into thought. "Don't tell me I'm about to be the only transmigrator without a system."

He paused, weighing the possibilities.

"Well, in some stories the systems only activate during the awakening. Guess I'll just have to wait for mine."

With a resigned sigh, Ethan stepped away from the window, brushing off the nagging unease.

'I've been awake for over thirty minutes. Why hasn't a maid come by to check on me? Or at least to just greet me?' he wondered silently.

Before the question could linger much longer, a gentle knock echoed from the door, as if answering his unspoken curiosity.

Chapter 4: Primarch

Ethan's gaze snapped toward the door at the sound of the knock. After a brief pause, he called out calmly.

"Come in."

The door opened with a soft creak, revealing a woman dressed in a maid's uniform. She appeared to be in her forties, her movements measured and graceful.

With a quiet step, she entered, gently closing the door behind her before lowering herself into a polite bow.

"Good morning, Young Master," she greeted, her voice calm and measured, yet she deliberately avoided meeting Ethan's eyes.

Ethan studied her quietly for a moment. He recognized her from the memories, the personal maid assigned by the Duke himself.

Her name was Lyra.

Whenever the current head of the Wargrave family welcomed a new heir, it was customary to assign a personal maid or butler to the child.

These attendants served not only as assistants but also as protectors, silent guardians tasked with safeguarding the young master until their awakening.

The true strength of these maids and butlers remained a mystery to outsiders. No child was ever permitted to leave the Duke's estate before awakening, and as a result, none

of these attendants had ever been tested in combat. The law was ironclad, unfailing in its enforcement.

Typically, their service would conclude when the young master reached fifteen and successfully awakened. However, since Asher had failed the awakening twice, Lyra's duty extended indefinitely, binding her to serve him until he finally succeeded.

"Good morning, Lyra." Ethan greeted with a neutral tone, offering a slight nod of acknowledgment.

Lyra said nothing in response. She stepped forward, reaching to begin removing his clothes.

Ethan's face immediately tightened into a frown.

"Don't worry. I'll be taking my own baths from now on." he said firmly, halting her mid-motion.

For a few moments, Lyra stared at him, her eyes filled with quiet confusion.

Ethan understood why. She had cared for Asher since his birth, bathing him, dressing him, never missing a single day.

But Ethan wasn't Asher. He couldn't let an elderly woman, nor anyone, for that matter, handle something so personal.

It simply felt wrong and weird.

"As you command, Young Master," Lyra replied softly, stepping back with a respectful bow.

Ethan rose from the bed and made his way to the bathroom, guided by his memories.

'Though this world isn't technologically advanced, I'm glad I can still enjoy a proper bath.' he thought.

After some time, he emerged, feeling refreshed. Lyra was waiting patiently, holding a fresh set of clothes in her hands.

Without a word or a touch, Ethan took the garments and dressed himself, determined to maintain his newfound independence.

"Is my father in the estate?" Ethan asked, glancing at his reflection in the mirror.

"The Primarch is present within the estate, Young Master," Lyra replied promptly.

Ethan gave a slight nod in acknowledgment.

"And which alcohol would you prefer today, Young Master?" Lyra inquired with quiet politeness.

Ethan's thoughts stalled at her question. He knew from Asher's memories that after failing the second awakening, drinking had become a daily ritual, a desperate attempt to numb the growing despair.

'How hadn't this guy's physique deteriorated after all the alcohol he'd consumed?' Ethan wondered, unable to comprehend how Asher's body still appeared stronger and more resilient than his own, even after an entire year of drinking and neglecting any real effort.

'Truly, a family of monsters.' he thought, shaking his head in quiet disbelief.

"My seventeenth birthday is just a few days away, that means my third and final awakening is coming. I'll be making some changes before then. Don't bring me anything like alcohol anymore."

Ethan said calmly, his voice steady.

Lyra's eyes flickered with a sudden intensity as she studied him.

'Has his determination finally returned?' she wondered silently, watching Ethan stand leisurely before the mirror.

She knew all too well the stakes, if he failed this final awakening, banishment would be inevitable. And as someone bound to serve the Young Master until his awakening, that fate would be hers as well.

His failure was shared, but his success would belong to him alone.

"As you command, Young Master. I'll bring breakfast shortly." Lyra bowed respectfully before stepping out of the room.

Ethan's gaze shifted away from the mirror as he turned and sank into a chair. His mind was already racing ahead, planning his next moves.

With only a few days left until his awakening, there was no urgent need to train or prepare physically, he would simply wait for the day to arrive.

He never once doubted that he would pass. Asher may have stumbled twice, but that failure did not extend to him simply because he occupied the same body.

'It seemed Asher took his own life just days before his final awakening. He had already resigned himself to failure before even trying.' Ethan thought quietly.

But he didn't judge Asher. That wasn't his place. Everyone faced reality differently, some fled from it, others embraced it, some prayed for deliverance, and a few simply stared it down, uncaring and unbothered.

Though Ethan felt the weight of Asher's emotions, the despair, the anger, the desire for revenge before his final breath, he had no intention of carrying that burden for a stranger.

He wouldn't waste his time chasing vengeance for someone who couldn't accept his own fate.

The door creaked open as Lyra entered, pushing a cart laden with food toward Ethan. With swift, practiced motions, she arranged the dishes neatly on the table before him.

"Come back in twenty minutes," Ethan said calmly, lifting his cutlery and beginning to eat.

'I should start with the library,' he thought between bites. 'Since no information about this world came with the memories, that's where I'll find answers, right after breakfast.'

His movements were fluid, almost automatic, guided by the refined etiquette of nobility ingrained deep within Asher's body.

'I wonder what cliché twists this world might have,' Ethan mused silently as he ate. 'Will demons invade the land? Or perhaps dungeons will appear everywhere? Maybe there's a towering spire so tall it nearly pierces the heavens, with a hundred floors of deadly trials.'

Time slipped by unnoticed, and before he knew it, the twenty minutes had passed in an instant.

Chapter 5: Handkerchief

Ethan dabbed his mouth with the table napkin provided, signaling he had finished his meal.

The door creaked open behind him, and Lyra entered precisely twenty minutes later.

With practiced grace, she cleared the table, gathering the empty dishes and neatly placing them onto the cart.

Just as she prepared to wheel the cart back to the kitchen, Ethan's voice halted her.

"Have another maid take care of that. You and I are going to the Family Library," he said, rising smoothly from his chair.

"As you command, Young Master," Lyra replied, releasing the cart. She moved to the door, opened it with quiet precision, and Ethan strode through without a moment's pause.

Ethan's eyes swept across the grand hall as he walked, attempting to maintain a composed expression, but he failed. A subtle glimmer danced in his gaze, his eyes shining like distant stars.

The walls radiated with brilliance and color, as though someone polished them every moment of the day. Elegant light fixtures clung to the walls, their golden sheen giving the illusion of being gilded in actual gold.

Some sections of the walls were made entirely of crystal-clear glass, while the floor was blanketed in a rich, red carpet that whispered of luxury with every step.

Though Ethan had known wealth in his past life, what he now witnessed transcended affluence, this was opulence in its purest form.

Lyra, walking a few steps behind, failed to notice the subtle shifts in Ethan's expression. Had she seen his face in that moment, she might have mistaken him for a man intoxicated by the sheer scent of wealth.

In his early past life, Ethan had known only scarcity. Raised in an orphanage where even water was rationed, he had come to revere money, not merely as a luxury, but as a symbol of freedom and power. In his former world, wealth dictated influence; the richer one was, the stronger they stood.

'Although I'd love to explore every corner of this place, the library must take priority' Ethan mused inwardly.

Ethan's gaze briefly settled on a maid approaching from ahead. At once, his features shifted into a mask of indifference. All children of the Primarch were known for their stoic, unreadable expressions, a trait Ethan had quickly observed from Asher's memory.

Though he had no intention of permanently adopting their cold demeanor, now was not the time to stand out. Until he fully understood his current situation and status, playing along was the safest path.

"Good morning, Tenth Sun," the maid greeted, bowing respectfully.

Ethan offered no reply. He walked past her without so much as a glance, perfectly imitating the aloofness expected of Asher.

This was how Asher carried himself, detached, distant. For now, Ethan had no choice but to follow suit, lest he reveal his true nature too soon.

'According to Asher's memories, the male heirs are referred to as Suns, while the females bear the title of Moons. This world is fortunate feminism hasn't taken root, if it had, the backlash online would've been explosive' Ethan mused.

"Young Master, may I ask why we are heading to the library?" Lyra inquired, maintaining her respectful distance, two steps behind Ethan. Not too close to be intrusive, yet near enough to respond instantly if needed.

In the Wargrave household, it was considered taboo for maids or butlers to question a Young heir about anything outside their assigned duties. However, those personally appointed at the birth of a Sun or Moon, the Primarch's children, were granted a rare exception.

These select few served not only as attendants but almost as a secondary parental figures in duties, their standing determined by the strength of their bond and the class of service they maintained with their charge.

Lyra was one such attendant.

"As you know, my final chance at awakening is only a few days away," Ethan said, his tone calm and measured. "I'm sure you've heard the rumors, should I fail again, I'll be cast out from the family."

He neither turned nor slowed his pace as he continued down the corridor.

"I'm simply going to the library to find the most suitable place to live... should that outcome come to pass," he added, weaving the lie effortlessly into his words.

He couldn't exactly tell Lyra the truth, that he was heading to the library to study the world's lore and gather information. That would only raise questions. Besides, if the countless novels he had read were anything to go by, exile was never as simple as it sounded.

Ethan knew the moment he was declared banished, he wouldn't live to see the following day. Maybe not even the next hour.

Even with Lyra by his side, he understood all too well, they would send at least two individuals stronger than her to stall or neutralize her, just in case she decided to intervene.

The other Suns and Moons wouldn't hesitate. The moment he stepped beyond the family gates, an "accident" would be waiting.

Assassination was inevitable. Exile was simply a prettier word for execution.

Lyra's heart quickened, a silent tremor pulsing through her chest. Words caught in her throat, unsaid, uncertain. She had clothed him, fed him, bathed him since the day he was born. He was more than just her charge; he was a part of her world, etched into her every routine and memory.

But now, she could only walk in silence.

There was nothing she could say that wouldn't feel hollow, nothing that could ease the weight of his words. So she said nothing, and simply prayed. Prayed that, this time, he would awaken.

Unaware of Lyra's inner turmoil, Ethan's attention remained fixed on the grandeur surrounding him. He admired every intricate detail, his mind already drifting into fantasies of unimaginable wealth.

He paid no heed to the maids and butlers who crossed his path, their presence fading into the background as visions of the fortune he might inherit consumed him.

Within minutes, Ethan arrived at the grand entrance of the library. As he reached for the door, a voice cut through the silence.

"Hoo... if it isn't the Tenth Sun," came the mocking tone, dripping with disdain, without so much as an attempt to conceal it.

Ethan turned to see the Ninth Sun, Thalric Wargrave, standing there, a smug smile curling his lips.

Asher's memories flooded Ethan's mind. He recalled how Thalric had tormented Asher relentlessly, not with fists or swords, but with words sharper than any blade.

Physical violence had never been used against Asher, not because Thalric lacked the will, but because of the Primarch's strict decree: Suns and Moons were forbidden from touching one another outside the bounds of an official duel.

"It seems you've finally emerged from your hiding place, feeling confident this time that you'll pass the awakening?" Thalric sneered, his mocking smile never fading.

Normally, Asher would have shrunk back, or slipped away to avoid such encounters with his siblings. But Ethan was not and was never Asher.

That said, he had no intention of wasting time trading barbs with a fool, especially one barely a year older than him.

Ethan's hand slipped into his chest pocket and withdrew a handkerchief. Without a word, he raised it to cover his nose and mouth, then strode past Thalric, entering the library with calm indifference.

Though silent, the gesture was sharper than any insult, an unspoken rebuke that cut deeper than words ever could.

Thalric stood frozen, stunned into silence, unable to believe what he had just witnessed.

Behind Ethan, Lyra followed with a faint, knowing smile. After all, this was the first time Asher had ever dared to stand his ground.

No words were exchanged, but the damage was unmistakably done.

Chapter 6: Library

As Ethan stepped into the grand Library, his thoughts drifted back to his recent encounter with the enigmatic Ninth Sun. He found himself unable to reconcile the reality before him with the image of young masters he had long encountered in novels.

These scions of influential families possessed wealth, power, and undeniable talent. Yet, rather than savoring the privileges their lineage afforded, they squandered their time and energy tormenting those they deemed beneath them, driven solely by a cruel sense of superiority.

'Can they not simply relish the privileges bestowed upon them at birth? Marry as many women as they desire, indulge in leisure, and squander their fortunes without malice' Ethan mused with a weary sigh as he continued walking.

'At least, I doubt I'll cross paths with him again anytime soon. It seemed he was just departing the Library' he reflected quietly, drawing near to a table.

A man sat carelessly, legs casually draped atop the table. His hair was a striking contrast of black interspersed with silver strands, and his piercing green eyes hinted at a man likely in his forties. Without offering Ethan so much as a glance, he absently flipped through the magazine in his hand.

"Good morning, Great Elder," Ethan greeted respectfully.

The man slowly lifted his head from the pages, his indifferent green gaze meeting Ethan's with a steady, appraising stare that lingered for a moment.

"It's been a while, Asher. I wonder what brings you to the domain of this old man," the Great Elder, the librarian, remarked in a calm, measured voice.

"I am simply here to read, Great Elder," Ethan replied evenly, his expression unreadable, neither a smile nor a frown to betray his thoughts.

"Obviously," the Great Elder responded with a hint of amusement. "Anyone who enters a library comes to read, after all."

"Then I suppose there's nothing left to keep you," he added smoothly, his gaze shifting briefly to Lyra, who stood silently behind Ethan, before returning to the magazine in his hands.

'Hmmm. There's something different about him' the Great Elder mused, observing Ethan from the corner of his eye.

Unaware of the scrutiny, Ethan moved deliberately through the Library's aisles. Even if he had sensed the gaze upon him, it would not have altered his purpose that brought him here today.

"You may wait here or explore if you wish. I'll return in a few hours," Ethan said without turning.

At his words, Lyra halted mid-step and nodded silently. She remained rooted in place, her eyes calm as they followed Ethan's every movement.

Approaching a particular row of shelves, Ethan murmured to himself, "Hmmm. I first begin with world history, then branch out to other subjects from there."

He lifted his hand to retrieve an old heavy book titled; History of the World.

Without concern for appearances or status, Ethan settled onto the floor, his back resting casually against the bookshelf. As he opened the book and began to read, his mind absorbed the knowledge with effortless clarity and ease.

'Thank goodness my intelligence came with me. One can only wonder what sort of mind Asher possesses' Ethan mused silently as he read.

It was precisely his intellect that allowed him to maintain a flawless 5.0 CGPA with apparent ease, all the while finding time to study and read medical textbooks to assist Jennifer with her own exams.

From memory, Ethan had never seen Asher engrossed in a book. His years, from childhood at five to sixteen, had been consumed entirely by continuous physical training. Eleven years of ceaseless exertion, enough for any observer to dismiss him as 'all muscle and no brain.'

Ethan effortlessly flipped through the thick book, its hundreds of pages seeming weightless in his hands. Within minutes, he had absorbed its contents. A faint frown

crept across his face as he closed the book, his mind meticulously processing everything he had just read.

The world into which he had transmigrated was called Crymora. At first glance, it appeared an ordinary realm, its inhabitants going about their daily lives untouched by supernatural forces or extraordinary powers, much like his previous world. But, unlike his former home, Crymora lacked technological advancement.

Crymora was a world without nobles, kings, emperors, empires, kingdoms, or divisions. There were no gods to rule over it. Instead, it existed as a singular, unified entity, an apparent idyll of harmony and order.

Though crime persisted daily, offenders were swiftly apprehended and punished in accordance with the gravity of their offenses by the authorities entrusted with maintaining justice.

Until everything changed.

The first shift was recorded around twenty thousand years ago, though some whispered it may have occurred even earlier, shrouded in the mists of time. A fragment of a star plummeted from the sky, striking Crymora's ground with a cataclysmic impact. Upon contact, a pulse of energy radiated outward in a perfect ring, encircling the entire planet.

Witnesses to this extraordinary event rushed eagerly to the site of the star fragment's descent, driven by hope of treasure or revelation. Yet, all they found was a yawning sinkhole, carved deep into the earth by the force of the collision.

But that was only the beginning.

The pulse of energy, witnessed by many yet dismissed as an enigma beyond their understanding, especially since it appeared but once, had quietly set in motion a profound transformation.

As years passed, subtle changes began to manifest, impossible to ignore. Some people found themselves sensing an unfamiliar presence in the air, an intangible shift. Others experienced the sudden awakening of abilities, emerging seemingly from nowhere, altering the very fabric of their existence.

Crime surged as individuals began wielding their newfound abilities without restraint. Yet, with the rise of lawlessness, so too did justice rise to meet the challenge. The world grappled to comprehend the unfolding changes and the forces behind them, ultimately attributing the upheaval to the star fragment that had fallen from the sky.

And in this, they were not mistaken.

For the star fragment's influence extended far beyond merely awakening latent powers, it heralded something far greater, something yet to be fully understood.

Chapter 7: Library-2

Humans were not the only beings touched by the star fragment's influence. The transformation rippled through the natural world, reaching animals and plants alike.

Creatures awakened, their very biology reshaped, bodies grew larger, stronger, and swifter; claws lengthened, and fangs sharpened into deadly weapons. They became monsters in the truest sense.

These beasts tore through cities with terrifying ease, extinguishing lives day after day. Even those newly gifted with mysterious abilities found themselves powerless against the relentless onslaught.

Meanwhile, plants too underwent remarkable changes. They towered higher, their leaves a deeper, more vibrant green; their presence exuded a soothing calm. Fruits grew sweeter, and crops flourished with unprecedented speed, bringing bountiful harvests to the hands of grateful farmers.

But that was not all.

In Crymora, it was widely believed that what truly defined life was the soul, the essence capable of generating emotions: happiness, sorrow, anger, love, and hope.

Though never proven by science, this conviction endured. The soul was thought to both produce and harbor these emotions, while the body served as their vessel, responding in harmony, for body and soul were inseparable.

But the star fragment had wrought a deeper change.

The pulse of energy it unleashed shattered the delicate balance within the soul. Emotions, anger, love, hatred, no longer remained confined to the soul; they spilled forth into reality, manifesting within Crymora itself.

These living emotions were unlike any beasts or monsters before. They were more savage, more cunning, embodying a primal intelligence that made them all the more terrifying.

Thus began a new level of devastation, an unending war. Death tolls soared into the millions, lands lay in ruin, and civilizations teetered on the brink of extinction. Humanity faced the very edge of annihilation.

Yet humans did what they did best, they fought back. They hunted down these living emotions, obliterated the monsters and beasts, refusing to surrender. Crymora burned fiercely, the planet itself seeming on the verge of collapse under the weight of chaos.

But from Destruction arose Creation.

From Death blossomed Life.

Years passed in a vanishing blur.

Crymora was rebuilt anew, civilization resurrected from the ashes. Individuals gifted with abilities and powers became commonplace. Walls were erected, divisions formed, empires rose, and emperors ascended to rule. Nobles emerged, claiming their place in the new world.

Yet the war did not cease. The monsters born from normal animals endured, and the living emotions, those living manifestations of the soul, still roamed, haunting the land.

In time, names were bestowed upon these phenomena. The emotions given life came to be known as the Emovira, while the energy harnessed by people for their abilities was called Astra, a tribute to its celestial origin.

Four mighty empires now spanned the world, each commanding its own territories and wielding distinct power.

In the hierarchy of authority, the Emperor reigned supreme, followed by the Dukes, then the Marquis, the Counts, the Viscounts, and finally, the Barons.

These four empires bore the names Zarethorne, Thelvorn, Velkarin, and Vandross, ruling the West, North, South, and East respectively.

'I'm screwed, aren't I?' Ethan thought, his mind reeling as he absorbed the weight of history.

The star fragment.

The evolution of all life.

Emotions given form.

Death.

Carnage.

Humanity teetering on the brink of annihilation.

A wave of helplessness washed over him, and for a moment, Ethan felt the sting of tears. His former life had been so simple, so perfect, too perfect for the grim reality unfolding in these pages.

'Is the entity that reincarnated me punishing me for the ease of my past life?' Ethan mused with a self-deprecating smile.

A fleeting urge to pray washed over him, perhaps to fail his awakening and avoid stepping into this endless cycle of conflict.

But deep down, he knew the truth. He had never come across a novel where one was reincarnated or transmigrated and escaped the battle that inevitably followed. Reluctant or not, the fight was always waiting, pulling them in regardless of their choice or thought.

'Better to possess power and choose inaction than to be powerless and idle,' Ethan thought as he rose to his feet.

'Not that I intend to do nothing. This family I was born into won't permit it. I will gather every ounce of power I can and ascend to the pinnacle of this world, so I may live on my own terms. That's not a bad goal, is it?'

With resolve sharpening his steps, Ethan scanned the shelves for his next read. His gaze settled on a tome about the awakening he was to undergo in just a few days.

After a brief pause, he picked it up and began leafing through its pages, no need to sit this time, as the volume was far smaller than the history book he had just finished.

'So, awakening essentially unlocks one's Astra veins along with innate talents or abilities,' Ethan thought as he carefully returned the book to its place. 'It appears this world does not rely on mana or mana cores as I've encountered in other stories.'

The awakening forcibly activates dormant veins within the body, aptly named Astra veins, since they serve as reservoirs where Astra is stored.

'I should learn more about the Wargrave family,' Ethan thought as he wandered deeper into the library.

He spent several minutes poring over any volume that mentioned the Wargrave Ducal lineage.

Unconsciously, a whistle escaped him, a sound born of genuine admiration.

The Wargraves were renowned for their brutal, approach to thing; fight first, think later. Wherever the Emovira lurked, they were never far behind. Be it a monster's lair or a battlefield soaked in blood, the Wargraves thrived on conflict, living and dying by the flames of battle.

The Wargrave family was one of the prestigious Bloodline families within the Zarethorne Empire.

Upon awakening, every individual bearing the Wargrave bloodline summons a weapon unique to their very soul, a soul weapon. Unlike ordinary arms, these weapons need not be carried constantly; after use, they seamlessly return to the wielder's spirit.

Bound intrinsically to their owner's existence, these weapons cannot be stolen or sealed, and are utterly indestructible. When a Wargrave falls in battle, their soul weapon perishes alongside them.

The awakening of such a weapon signified exceptional innate talent with that particular form of combat.

But that was not all. Beyond awakening a soul-bound weapon, each Wargrave also awakened a singular elemental affinity, an element intrinsically linked to their weapon.

Lastly, there was their physique. While not as unique or extraordinary as their weapons or elemental powers, the Wargraves possessed naturally superior bodies.

Their strength and speed surpassed nearly all within their ranks, complemented by staggering stamina and resilience that set them apart on the battlefield.

'So this is why Asher never trained with any weapon. There's no way to know beforehand which weapon one would awaken. So everyone simply focuses on honing their physique first, only beginning weapon training after their awakening.' Ethan though

He had always found it odd that Asher had spent eleven years solely building muscle and endurance without ever touching a blade.

'No wonder that even after a year wasted drowning in alcohol, his body remains ridiculously fit. Truly a broken family.' Ethan thought with a sigh.

A weapon. An element. A physique. The Wargraves possessed it all.

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

Plural of Emovira is Emovirae. In case when you start seeing Emovirae you won't flag it as a mistake.

Thanks for reading.

Chapter 8: Bloodline

Ethan exhaled softly as he slid a thick book onto the shelf. His fate was clear now, unforgiving and absolute: kill or be killed. In this world, in this family, there was no middle ground.

Shaking his head with quiet resignation, he resumed his slow walk through the aisles, eyes drifting over the spines of countless books. Despite his keen intellect, he had never held much affection for books. He had no intention of returning to the library after today.

'After the Awakening, people became capable of drawing Astra from the air into their Astra veins. It's essentially cultivation,' Ethan mused, snapping another book shut with a hint of frustration.

'Yet, there are no cultivation manuals to be found. Everyone draws Astra at their own pace, some faster, some more efficiently, but there's no standardized path. No structured techniques. No classifications like mage or healer either; abilities manifest randomly during the Awakening,' he reflected, his footsteps echoing softly as he continued down the aisle.

'Everyone in this world is naturally fit, Astra passively enhances the body from birth, strength, speed, stamina, durability, all elevated by default. The Astra veins act as conduits, constantly reinforcing the body. It's as if everyone here is born a Superman.' Ethan mused as he walked.

Hours slipped by unnoticed, until Ethan finally came to a stop. His gaze settled on Lyra, standing a short distance away, her presence quiet but unmistakable.

"It seems you didn't even bother trying to read anything, you just followed me," Ethan said, shaking his head with a sigh.

"I've been alive a long time, Young Master," Lyra replied evenly, stepping forward until she stood precisely two paces behind him. "Long enough to have read more books than I care to count."

'Right,' Ethan mused as he resumed walking. 'The stronger someone is, the longer they tend to live. Shame there's no path to immortality through cultivation, I might've considered it. Then again, I've heard that for immortals, boredom becomes their greatest enemy. Maybe eternal life isn't such a great bargain after all.'

His thoughts drifted from one subject to another, his mind a quiet storm of reflection.

Ethan arrived at the same table where he had last seen the Great Elder seated.

"You're finished reading?" the Great Elder asked, glancing up from his book. "I must say, this is your first visit to the library, and you spent seven hours here. That might just be a new record."

'Asher really is the 'all brawn, no brain type,' Ethan mused privately. 'Not that it's his fault, just look at the family he comes from.'

Offering a polite smile, Ethan replied, "I'll be Awakening soon. I figured it would be wise to learn a bit of world history before then."

The Great Elder gave a slow nod, then returned his attention to the book in his hands, a subtle signal that their conversation had concluded.

Taking the hint, Ethan turned and walked out of the library, the weight of knowledge and answered questions trailing behind him.

From what Ethan had gathered in his hours at the library, the Wargrave family operated under a rigid hierarchy of power. At the top stood the Primarch, the head of the family, his father.

Below him were the Elders, comprised of the Primarch's siblings, making them Ethan's uncles and aunts. Above them were the Great Elders, the biological uncles and aunts of both the Primarch and the Elders, Ethan's grand uncles and grand aunts.

In the Wargrave family, only the Primarch was permitted to bear an heir. Any Elder or Great Elder found with a child would face immediate execution, alongside the child. Ethan could only regard this as cruel, yet he understood the reasoning behind it.

The rule existed to prevent internal strife, ensuring that no Elder or Great Elder would attempt to position their own offspring as a future Primarch. Power, in the Wargrave household, was not inherited through ambition but dictated by blood and order.

Even the women of the family were forbidden from marrying, whether within or outside the bloodline. If one was not the Primarch, one was not expected to have children, regardless of the circumstances.

The Wargrave bloodline was meant to remain pure, unchallenged, and tightly controlled.

The bloodline of the Wargrave stays and dies with the Wargrave.

'But what if the current Primarch were impotent?' Ethan couldn't help but entertain the thought. Would they simply replace him? Would the entire system collapse under its own rigidity?

He had come across records of some defiance, three members of the Wargrave family who had dared to secretly bear children. Their rebellion had been short-lived. Each one was discovered and executed, along with the child they tried to protect.

No mercy. No second chances.

'What kind of family did I reincarnate into?' Ethan wondered, his steps aimless as he wandered the halls.

Guided by Asher's memories, Ethan made his way to the training grounds. As he arrived, the sharp ring of clashing metal greeted him, an unrelenting symphony of precision and power.

Guards moved across the field in a blur, their speed far beyond what his eyes could follow. Seeing them was a generous term, he could only register afterimages, ghostlike flickers of motion that vanished as quickly as they appeared.

The rhythm of their strikes, the cadence of steel meeting steel, was the only indication of their movements.

Sparks flared beneath the sunlight, brief flashes of brilliance as their blades collided again and again. Despite his arrival, none of them paused. They remained entirely absorbed in their practice, dancing across the field like phantoms locked in a silent war.

Ethan's eyes gleamed with quiet awe, shining like distant stars as he watched the display unfold before him. He had seen scenes like this countless times in movies and anime, but witnessing it live, in raw, unfiltered reality, was an entirely different experience.

On the opposite side of the training ground, another guard balanced effortlessly on a single fingertip, the scorching sun beating down endlessly as beads of sweat traced slow paths down his chiseled form.

For a full thirty minutes, Ethan remained rooted in place, utterly captivated. He didn't so much as blink, completely absorbed by the continuous dance of strength, skill, and discipline before him.

After a while, the sparring guards came to a halt. Their eyes shifted toward Ethan, who stood frozen, a faint trail of drool at the corner of his lips. Startled, Ethan quickly wiped it away as their steady gazes pulled him back to reality.

They approached in unison, bowing respectfully as they spoke in chorus, "Good afternoon, Tenth Sun."

Ethan studied them silently for a moment before nodding in acknowledgment. "Good work," he replied curtly, then turned and walked away.

While some of the maids had cast disdainful glances at Asher whenever he wasn't looking, the guards showed no such disrespect.

Their loyalty ran deeper, their very lives were intertwined with the family's honor and legacy.

Ethan circled the building several times, deliberately avoiding the other Suns and Moons of the Wargrave family. He had no desire to encounter any of them before his Awakening.

As the sun dipped below the horizon, casting long shadows across the grounds, Ethan finally returned to his room, done for the day.

Lyra wasted no time. She arrived shortly after, carrying dinner. She hadn't brought lunch, knowing Ethan had spent the entire day either buried in books or wandering the estate.

It was already nine o'clock in the evening. Ethan sat on the edge of his bed, eyes fixed on the window where the moon hung low, its pale light casting a gentle glow across the room.

'Though I've come to accept this new life, if I fall asleep tonight and never wake in my old world, then I will fully embrace Asher. From this moment on, I will become him.' he thought quietly.

With that resolve, Ethan finally lay back and pulled the feather-soft, white duvet over himself, surrendering to the soothing embrace of sleep.

Chapter 9: Accepted

Four days had passed since Ethan's transmigration into this new world. In that brief span of time, he had come to terms with his reality. He had embraced this world... no, his world.

He had accepted this family as his own. He had accepted Asher, for he was now Asher. He had embraced it all. Yet, at his core, he remained unchanged. The world might have shifted around him, but it would not reshape who he truly was.

Over the past few days, Asher had largely confined himself to his room, limiting his interactions with the outside world and only emerging when absolutely necessary. During that time, he had grown somewhat closer to Lyra.

Yet, despite their increased familiarity, the dynamic between them remained unchanged, a clear line drawn between master and servant, nothing less and nothing more.

Within those four days, whispers had already begun to circulate, rumors that Asher had finally emerged after an entire year of self-imposed isolation. A year spent locked away, refusing to face reality. A year spent running from the world.

Now, talk spread not only of his return but of his newfound presence in the library, and the subtle yet undeniable shift in his demeanor.

And, of course, the Ninth Sun; Thalric, did not let the opportunity slip by. Seizing the moment, he began spreading malicious rumors: that Asher had been harassing the maids, and that his visits to the library were merely a ploy to browse Martial Arts techniques he intended to sell in preparation for his inevitable banishment.

Lyra was not spared from the swirling rumors. Her name passed from mouth to mouth, entangled in Asher's fate. If punishment awaited him, she would not escape it. Bound to him by duty and oath, she was destined to follow him, through disgrace, through exile, until the moment of his awakening. To live beside him. To fall with him.

Such was her path. A woman of formidable power, reduced to a shadow of status by the weight of her loyalty.

Yet Asher and Lyra remained unfazed. Unmoved by the rumors, they carried on in silence. From dawn until dusk, Lyra stood guard outside Ethan's door, by Asher's command. A precaution born not of paranoia, but of realism.

Asher understood all too well: in most worlds, power dictated truth. In a place governed by survival of the fittest, the one with the biggest fist was always right.

From the books he had read in the library, he knew the Wargraves were bound by strict codes: they were forbidden from killing or even striking one another, regardless of the depth of their hatred or personal grudges.

Disputes were settled only through formal duels or an ancient family tradition known as Death by Duel, where combatants fought until only one remained standing.

But the Wargraves' strict prohibition against physical violence outside of formal duels did not guarantee safety. It did not mean that no one would attempt to strike, or assassinate, him in secret.

After all, there was a first time for everything in this life, much like the unprecedented child birth by a non-Primarch.

Asher understood that even if he reported an assassination attempt, without concrete evidence identifying the culprit, no justice would be served, no matter how certain he was of their guilt.

Call it paranoia if you will, but it was far wiser to have Lyra standing guard outside his door, day in and day out.

Asher lay beneath a crimson duvet, his chest rising and falling in a gentle, steady rhythm as he drifted in deep sleep. Sunlight filtered through the window, its warmth tempered by the drawn curtains, casting soft shadows across the room.

Minutes later, his violet eyes fluttered open, adjusting to the quiet morning light. He sat up slowly, lingering for a moment as his thoughts clung to the fading remnants of a dream — Jennifer. She had appeared again, vivid and loving, in the fragile landscape of his mind.

He couldn't simply erase her from his heart, despite having accepted this world, this new reality. Jennifer was his first love, his first everything. Though he was whole as a man, it was she who made him feel truly complete. He couldn't casually cast her aside just because of his transmigration.

Yet deep down, he knew that, sooner or later, he would have to let go, whether he was ready or not.

Sometimes, he found himself wishing that Jennifer had transmigrated alongside him into this world. Yet, just as often, he chastised himself for such selfish thoughts. Unlike him, an orphan, isolated even among the children of the orphanage, Jennifer had a family.

A real family. Parents, siblings, cousins, grandparents. He could never wish the burden of transmigration upon her, knowing how it would shatter the bonds that held them together. After all, what family wouldn't swell with pride to have a medical doctor among their ranks?

To sever such a bond would be nothing short of selfish.

With a heavy sigh, he rose from his bed and approached the curtain. Drawing it aside, he let the golden rays of the sun spill across his flawless face, welcoming the new day.

"Some things never change," Asher murmured, recalling how, in his past life as Ethan, opening the curtain had always been the very first act upon waking. And here, in this new world, that habit remained unchanged.

His gaze drifted to the clock on the wall, noting the time before he turned and made his way toward the bathroom. As he prepared for his bath, his mind raced ahead to the day's impending event: The Awakening.

The day of the Awakening had finally arrived, and with it, Asher's seventeenth birthday. Yet no one had come to wish him a happy birthday, not that he expected it, for he barely knew anyone here.

He felt no nervousness about the Awakening itself. As a transmigrator, he was certain it would come to pass. What unsettled him was the thought of meeting the other members of his family.

During a Wargrave's Awakening, all family members, the Primarch, the Great Elders, the Elders, the Suns, and the Moons, were required to be present. It was a solemn occasion, marking the addition of a new member to their ranks.

For Asher's first Awakening, attendance had been mandatory, and the entire family had gathered. By the second, fewer had come, as their presence was no longer obligatory. Now, on the eve of his third Awakening,

Asher was almost certain that very few, if any, would appear. Yet, despite the slim chance, his heart quickened at the mere thought of encountering the Elders, or even the Primarch.

"Nothing will go wrong. I will turn this hell mode world into my easy mode, just like my past life," Ethan spoke to himself, continuing his bath with steady and calm pace.

Chapter 10: A gift

After a few moments, Asher emerged from the bathroom, a towel draped casually around his waist.

"You may come in, Lyra," he said, loosening the towel as he stood before the mirror clad only in his underwear, quietly admiring his stature.

Though he had never committed to a rigorous training regimen, he had grown accustomed to this body, incorporating modest exercises, a handful of push-ups, some squats, and light calisthenics. Not that his physique demanded it, but he resolved to maintain some semblance of discipline through these simple movements.

Lyra entered with quiet composure, the door closing softly behind her. She approached Asher and handed him the attire designated for the day.

Since this was the day of his awakening, and his final opportunity at it, he was expected to present himself impeccably, allowing for nothing less. Accepting the garments, Asher dressed with effortless grace: tailored black trousers, an ash-colored shirt intricately embroidered with subtle patterns in various hues, and polished black shoes completing the ensemble.

Asher had insisted to Lyra that he did not wish to appear ostentatious, yet even in his understated attire, he carried an undeniable air of distinction. 'Simply the face and physique of a born charmer.' he mused with a subtle smile.

"Happy seventeenth birthday, Young Master," Lyra said softly, the faintest hint of a smile touching her lips. She then lifted her hand, conjuring a small, square box that materialized effortlessly. Gently, she handed it to Asher.

'A space ring,' Asher thought, his eyes briefly flickering to the ring adorning Lyra's index finger. "Hoo... You've never given me a gift before, Lyra. What makes this birthday any different from the previous sixteen?" he asked as he accepted the small box and carefully opened it. Inside lay a wristwatch.

Having come from a technologically advanced world, Asher had witnessed timepieces of every imaginable design and caliber. Though the watches of this world could not rival those marvels, this one possessed a unique charm all its own.

"Thank you, Lyra. I truly appreciate this," he said with a warm smile, fastening the watch onto his wrist without hesitation.

Lyra observed silently as Asher fastened the wristwatch with swift ease. "I'm glad it pleases you, Young Master," she said quietly.

Asher nodded, a playful grin tugging at his lips. "You know, with our impending banishment, it's best to save every penny we can."

Lyra offered no laughter, her voice steady and resolute. "I'm certain this time you will awaken, and prove everyone wrong."

Asher shook his head with quiet conviction. "I have nothing to prove to anyone, Lyra." With that, he strode toward the chair where he took his breakfast each morning.

"Breakfast will be served shortly, Young Master," Lyra said calmly before stepping out of the room.

'Four days of boredom. No phones, no games, no internet. What do people my age do for amusement? Touch grass, perhaps?' Ethan mused silently as he ate the meal Lyra had brought him moments before.

Within minutes, he had finished. Rising from his seat, Asher approached the door but paused just before it. Drawing in a deep breath, he exhaled with measured calm. Today, he was to confront the outside world for the very first time. After a brief moment of quiet resolve, he opened the door and stepped beyond its threshold.

Lyra waited just outside, observing his emergence. "Shall we proceed, Lyra?" Asher said, already turning toward the chamber where the Awakening would take place. In the Wargrave family, every detail necessary for the awakening was meticulously prepared a day in advance.

Spotting a maid along the way, Asher gestured for her to clear his room, noting the plates still left behind. After a short walk, he arrived before a massive black door.

Two guards stood vigilantly at its sides, their weapons resting casually at their waists. Upon seeing Asher, they bowed in unison and greeted, "Good morning, Tenth Sun."

Asher paused briefly, returning their salute with a nod. "We wish the Tenth Sun success," they intoned simultaneously as the door glided open of its own accord, inviting him inside with a subtle motion. Without hesitation, Asher stepped through, Lyra following closely behind.

He walked with a calm, measured gait, his heart maintaining a steady, composed rhythm as he entered the hall. The chamber was vast, dominated at its center by a one-meter-tall pedestal, above which hovered a white, crystal-like orb, suspended mere centimeters from the surface.

Asher's eyes swept across the hall, absorbing his surroundings. Rising tiers of seats encircled the chamber like a colosseum, and scattered among them were figures, each bearing a distinct hair and eye color, yet all sharing an unmistakable aura of menace. Their physiques and attire spoke unequivocally of death.

These were the witnesses to Asher's final awakening. The Wargrave family bore no singular trait in hair or eye color; it was their awakening alone that set them apart, rendering each uniquely formidable.

'Two Great Elders, three Elders, three Suns, one Moon,' Asher counted silently as his footsteps came to a halt. 'It appears the Primarch and his wife are absent,' his thoughts lingered with a quiet curiosity.

Lyra had already retreated to a distant corner, standing silently in observance. This was Asher's moment, meant to be witnessed from the sidelines. The fate of both their lives would be determined here, in this very instant.

A heavy silence stretched across the hall, thick and unbroken. No one spoke; all eyes fixed on Asher, as if silently urging him to make the first move. Among the spectators, Thalric sat with a sardonic smile curling his lips.

He had arrived fully convinced of Asher's inevitable failure, and subsequent banishment. After all, if Asher had faltered twice before, why should the third attempt be any different?

Then, abruptly, the silence was broken. The door behind Asher swung open, revealing a man clad in a pristine butler's uniform, white immaculate gloves. He stood tall, six foot two, with striking black hair and piercing black eyes.

Zarek: the Primarch's personal butler and trusted right-hand man.