

# CLEAVER OF

## #Chapter 132: Kent - Read CLEAVER OF SIN Chapter 132: Kent

### Chapter 132: Kent

'I can't even sense any form of presence from him,' Asher thought, his gaze fixed on the man before him.

'Also, why is everyone in this world so tall?' His thoughts spiraled. 'Father is taller than Malrik, who's already eight feet in height. Then there's Cassandra, who stands at seven feet. And now, this man is nearly seven feet tall as well. Meanwhile, I'm already 6'6"... and I'm just eighteen.'

With that internal sigh, Asher took a step forward and calmly seated himself in the chair opposite the Commander.

"Nothing serious, Commander," Asher began evenly. "I just need your help with something."

"Hoo..." the Commander let out a deep hum. "Did someone make a move against the Tenth Sun?"

Though his voice remained calm, Asher's Omni Perception picked up the subtle shifts in their bodies. Both the Commander and Cassandra had slightly adjusted their stances, small, precise movements that suggested they were instantly ready to act, should the need arise.

"No, Commander," Asher responded. "I doubt anyone would dare. But I'm here to ensure that they never get the chance."

The Commander gave a thoughtful nod, then slowly took a seat himself. His eyes met Asher's, calm but piercing, as if urging him to go on.

Without any hesitation, Asher continued, "I'll be heading to an auction at The Orchid Auction House. I'd like you to accompany me as my personal Knight until the event concludes."

This was Asher's plan from the start when he said he would only take one guard along. If he was going to bring just one escort, then why not the strongest? In the off chance that someone tried something reckless, at least he could sit back and enjoy the spectacle. After all, he'd never witnessed a true battle between those at the peak of this world.

He didn't know the Commander's exact strength, but there was no reality in which the leader of the Wargrave Knights would be weak.

The Commander seemed to understand the unspoken concern behind Asher's request. "Why not simply inform us of what you want from the auction house?" he suggested. "One of the Knights could retrieve it and bring it to you."

"I don't need anything, Commander," Asher clarified. "I'm only going to look around. Nothing more."

The Commander raised a single brow, but after a moment of consideration, he nodded slowly in understanding.

"Then I must apologize, Tenth Sun. I won't be able to accompany you outside," he said plainly, without a hint of hesitation.

Asher's expression didn't shift. "Why?"

"As the Commander, it is my duty to guard the estate in the Primarch's absence. I cannot abandon my post, not even briefly."

Asher nodded in acceptance. He didn't argue, nor did he try to insist. He understood the man's position well. If the Commander had already decided, then there was nothing anyone could say to change it.

Asher wasn't foolish enough to act like a brain-dead young master, threatening the man with his Sun status or demanding who held more value: a Sun or a building filled with servants.

That wasn't who he was.

"I understand. Thank you for your time," Asher said respectfully, though mentally he sighed in disappointment. 'Looks like I'll have to recall those five Knights,' he thought to himself.

"Tenth Sun," Cassandra's voice suddenly rang from behind. "Although the Commander is unable to leave, I would be honored to accompany you. I dare not sound arrogant, but I believe my strength will suffice for this task."

Asher's head turned toward Cassandra, who stood beside Lyra with a composed expression. He then looked to the Commander. "Isn't she stationed here as well?"

"She is," the Commander confirmed, nodding slowly. "But she will eventually succeed me when this old man retires. Consider this an opportunity for her to gain experience."

Asher stood from his chair and offered a slight bow of his head. "Thank you, Commander. It was a pleasure meeting you."

"The pleasure is mine, Tenth Sun," the Commander replied with a faint smile.

Asher turned and walked toward the golden door. Upon reaching it, he paused, glancing back over his shoulder.

"I never did catch your name, Commander."

The old man smiled, his eyes gleaming with pride as he responded, "I'm Yevric, Commander of the Wargrave Knight Order, Eraser of all who dare oppose the will of the Wargrave."

'Another cool title and introduction,' Asher mused internally, a faint smirk playing at the corner of his lips. 'I need to get myself one of those.'

Without another word, he nodded and stepped out, his expression returning to calm neutrality, footsteps steady and soundless as the door closed behind him.

"Young Master," Lyra spoke gently from behind, "I'll move ahead to prepare the carriage for your arrival."

"No problem," Asher replied with a nod.

Without another word, Lyra turned and leapt straight through the nearest window. Asher paused, slightly startled, blinking at her sudden disappearance before shaking his head and chuckling softly.

He continued walking forward, Cassandra following silently behind. In just a few minutes, they stepped out into the sunlight, where the familiar golden-plated carriage stood waiting at the estate's entrance. The reins were already secured in the hands of the coachman. Asher's gaze shifted to the man, and recognition instantly dawned on him.

It was the same coachman who had brought him to the capital.

"It's been a while," Asher said calmly, his eyes settling on the older man.

"Good afternoon, Tenth Sun. It is an honor that you still remember me," the coachman, Kent, replied with a respectful bow.

"It's nothing special," Asher said with a light chuckle, stepping into the carriage. "I wouldn't be able to forget you even if I wanted to."

Kent stood frozen for a second, stunned by Asher's words. 'He... wouldn't be able to forget me?' The thought echoed in his mind, filling him with a strange mixture of awe and joy.

What Kent didn't realize, however, was that Asher had meant those words quite literally, his memory was flawless. His mind never forgot a face, a name, or even the faintest of details. He remembered everything he had ever seen or heard, perfectly.

Lyra stepped into the carriage behind him, giving the daydreaming coachman no attention whatsoever.

Vice Commander Cassandra, now clad in light armor, mounted her Enduron horse effortlessly. With that, the journey officially began.

The carriage creaked into motion, its wheels rolling smoothly over the estate's polished stone path. The Enduron horses trotted ahead with practiced ease, their bodies glistening under the sun.

### **Chapter 133: Disappointed**

The gates of the Wargrave Estate opened with a deep creak, and the carriage rolled forward smoothly, its wheels clattering against the stone path. Riding beside the carriage, astride her majestic Enduron horse, was Vice Commander Cassandra, her ash-colored eyes calm yet sharp, observing her surroundings with silent gaze.

The carriage entered the vast expanse of the Wargrave Ducal Territory with ease. As they moved through the familiar land, Asher slowly rolled open the window, his gaze sweeping across the territory. It had been six long months since he had last set eyes on these lands, and now, each passing tree and stone carried a sense of nostalgic familiarity.

His thoughts wandered, drifting back to the memory of the boy with a sick mother, swindled by thugs preying on the weak.

Asher imagined a different fate for himself, one in which he had been born not into nobility, but as a commoner. If he had reincarnated as a mere peasant, he knew one of the viable paths to survival, and perhaps success, would have been to become a Knight in service to a noble house or royalty.

And if one wished to serve nobility as a knight, then it was best to pledge allegiance to at least a Count's household. The higher the noble's rank, the more substantial the earnings, and the greater the chances of being elevated to nobility oneself.

As they continued, the carriage passed through the heart of the territory. Around them, citizens halted their steps the moment their eyes caught the Wargrave insignia

emblazoned on the carriage. The emblem commanded respect, reverence, and a silent awe that rippled through the crowds.

From within the carriage, Asher observed them closely. He could see the fascination in their expressions, the longing written across their faces. Some bowed deeply as the carriage passed by, honoring the symbol and the one it carried. His window remained open, allowing all to see him.

Yet, no one dared approach. Children, however, in their innocent defiance of decorum, waved cheerfully toward the carriage, their tiny hands outstretched as if trying to summon attention or approval.

Asher merely shook his head and shut his eyes momentarily, silently offering thanks to the stars above that, at the very least, he had been transmigrated into the body of a Duke's son.

A few minutes later, his eyes fluttered open once more. He continued to watch the passing scenery and casually lifted his hand to return the wave of one of the children. The simple gesture caused visible shock among the crowd.

A noble waving back? Unheard of.

Asher couldn't quite grasp the reason for their astonishment. It was, after all, just a wave. He exhaled lightly and decided not to dwell on it.

Instead, his gaze shifted toward Vice Commander Cassandra, who rode ahead gracefully. She was smiling and nodding at the commoners they passed, her gestures warm and sincere.

"Cassandra, you seem to have an interesting story. Care to share it with me?" Asher asked, his voice calm as his gaze returned to the road ahead.

"Story?" Vice Commander Cassandra echoed, her brow arching slightly in curiosity. She turned her ash colored eyes toward Asher, confusion playing on her features.

"I meant your origin, Cassandra," Asher clarified. "I've been watching how you smile and nod at them, so familiar, so natural. I just became curious."

A soft smile appeared on Vice Commander Cassandra's lips. She shook her head lightly and responded, "I am the daughter of a Viscount, Tenth Sun. However, I wasn't allowed to inherit our territory, as my father had already chosen to pass it down to my elder brother. He was the firstborn son, after all. Despite my capabilities in governance and my talents as a warrior, family traditions stood firm."

Asher listened intently without interrupting. He knew that many noble families followed similar customs. Some handed titles to their firstborn son, some to their firstborn child regardless of gender, and a few allowed their children to compete for succession.

"My father intended to marry me off to the son of a Count, someone who would assume the title over their land down the line," she continued, her tone calm and unbothered. "But I never wanted that kind of life. So I left. I ran away and came to Wargrave to become a Knight. After all, my father couldn't dare challenge a Duke, let alone one from the Wargrave family."

She chuckled softly at the end of her statement, the sound light-hearted, almost playful.

Asher nodded in understanding. It wasn't uncommon for nobles who weren't selected as heirs to either marry into another noble family or become knights in another noble's service, ideally someone higher in social standing.

It was a method of ensuring political ties and maintaining prestige.

But in Wargrave, such customs were not as flexible. If a child didn't become the Duke, they didn't marry into other noble families. Instead, they became Elders of the household, a role equally powerful. This practice helped preserve the purity of their bloodline and maintain the family's strength without external dilution.

"It seems you've had a hard life, Cassandra," Asher commented, still staring ahead.

Cassandra laughed gently, shaking her head. "I didn't have a hard life, Tenth Sun."

"You didn't? Then I must have jumped to conclusions," Asher said, raising an eyebrow.

She smiled as she clarified, "On the contrary, I was loved dearly by everyone in my family. My father's decision to marry me off came from a place of concern. He simply wanted to protect me from the dangers of battle. In our lineage, the noble title always goes to the first son. That's how it has always been. But I didn't want to live a life of tea parties and idle gossip. I chose a different path. I used my talents to join the Wargrave family. And despite everything, my brother still sends me gold coins regularly, just to ensure I'm well cared for."

'So it wasn't a tragic backstory after all,' Asher thought to himself, mildly disappointed. He had half expected some dramatic tale of betrayal or hardship.

"It seems you've been living a rather happy life, Vice Commander Cassandra," Asher said with a smirk.

"Well, I can't deny that," she replied lightly. "Possessing this level of talent and being born into a loving family, such fortune is rare."

Asher let out a small chuckle, then asked, "At what age did you join Wargrave?"

"I joined when I was twenty," she answered. "In noble families of our level, it's common to pass down the noble title early. That way, the heir gains experience in managing the territory early on while the former head advises from the sidelines."

Asher nodded again, fully understanding her point. But he didn't ask any more questions. Instead, he shut his window, leaned back against the cushioned seat, and closed his eyes.

He waited patiently for the journey to end, their next destination, The Orchid Auction House, drawing ever closer with each turn of the carriage wheel.

### **Chapter 134: Black Card**

A few minutes passed, and suddenly, the carriage came to a halt, causing Asher's eyes to flutter open.

"We've arrived at The Orchid Auction House, Young Master," came the soft, sweet voice of Lyra, the ever-present and ever-efficient maid.

At her words, Asher merely nodded, then calmly inquired, "How many minutes remain until the auction officially begins?"

Without hesitation, Lyra reached into her uniform and drew out a pocket watch attached to a long silver chain. She flicked it open with practiced elegance and responded, "Ten minutes, Young Master."

"Let's proceed then. I'd like to be settled before it begins," Asher said with a composed tone, his voice carrying a quiet authority.

"As you wish, Young Master," Lyra responded respectfully. She rose from her seat with grace and stepped out of the carriage, positioning herself beside the door, ready to close it after Asher exited.

With a soft exhale, Asher rose to his feet and stepped out of the carriage. The moment his polished boots touched the ground, a new reality presented itself before him. Carriages of various shapes, designs, and qualities lined the wide street, a clear sign that many people from different statuses had come for the same reason.

"Kent, find somewhere to park. We'll wait here for you," Asher instructed.

"As you order, Tenth Sun," Kent replied, nodding swiftly. The seasoned coachman guided the carriage toward an empty spot. Within moments, he returned, rejoining the group.

The entourage began to move forward, Asher leading the procession with silent poise. Kent, Lyra, and Vice Commander Cassandra followed two steps behind him, maintaining a respectful distance. Asher's gaze lifted to the structure ahead.

The Orchid Auction House loomed before them, tall, refined, and mildly imposing. Its grand facade spoke volumes of wealth and influence. Asher could appreciate the architectural artistry and the thoughtful detail carved into its pillars and walls, though he was not here to admire design. He had a different purpose.

Ahead, a long queue of people stretched before the building's entrance, each awaiting their turn to be allowed in. Commoners, merchants, minor nobles, they all stood patiently, hoping to secure a place inside before the auction commenced.

However, as Asher approached, he made no attempt to join the line. Though he believed in fairness and equality to a degree, he was a noble now, a Sun of Wargrave, and he had no intention of waiting in line like the rest.

As he and his retinue strode past the waiting crowd, a man near the front opened his mouth, preparing to voice a complaint. Before a word could escape his lips, a firm hand clamped over his mouth with a strength that made him freeze.

"Are you mad?" the man beside him whispered harshly into his ear. "I told you not to offend anyone here. Some of these people are hidden experts who could kill you the moment you step outside the auction house."

The man blinked in confusion and fear.

"Besides, are your eyes decorative? Can't you see the Wargrave insignia on the woman in armor? And the one leading them, he's a Sun. Possibly the Tenth Sun. Do you want to die today?"

A shiver ran through the man's body. His lips trembled, and sweat formed on his forehead. The name Wargrave alone was enough to paralyze his thoughts. He swallowed hard and mentally thanked his brother for intervening.

Around them, the once-chatty line fell into an eerie silence. All eyes turned toward the approaching figures. The whispers began immediately, barely audible but heavy with shock.

'A Wargrave...'

'A Sun...'

'Which Sun?'



None dared move. None dared speak. Fear and reverence rooted them in place as Asher walked past with calm elegance.

As they reached the front, the guard managing the entrance instantly recognized the Wargrave insignia and bowed deeply.

"We welcome the Wargrave to The Orchid Auction House," he declared with formality and trembling respect.

Asher nodded, just about to speak, when a sharply dressed man stepped forward with a composed smile and a voice brimming with reverence.

"It is an honor to personally welcome the Tenth Sun to my Orchid Auction House," he said smoothly.

Asher turned to face the man, "It's rare for someone to recognize me as the Tenth Sun," he remarked honestly. Few had ever seen him, so most didn't know what he looked like.

The man smiled knowingly. "I operate my business within the Wargrave territory, Tenth Sun. I have made it my personal law to know every member of the household, be they family, maid, butler, or knight. It's the best way to avoid any potential... misunderstandings."

His gaze momentarily shifted to Vice Commander Cassandra, who stood just behind Asher. Her relaxed expression had vanished. In its place stood the aura of a knight, one prepared to raze the entire building to the ground if her master so willed it.

"Impressive," Asher replied with a nod.

"Please, this way, Tenth Sun," the man said, motioning for them to follow. Asher proceeded without hesitation, with Cassandra, Lyra, and Kent trailing respectfully behind.

As they walked, the man asked politely, "Was there any particular material or item you had in mind before visiting? I could have it prepared for you, outside the bidding, of course."

"No," Asher replied with sincerity. "I'm merely here to observe, to see firsthand what an auction house actually auctions off."

The man nodded, never breaking his practiced smile. "A private bidding room has been prepared for your exclusive use, Tenth Sun. Would you prefer your attendants be led to the regular floor?"

"No need. We'll all stay in the same room," Asher stated firmly.

"Very well," the man responded, nodding slightly.

He led them to an elegant private room crafted of enchanted glass. From within, they could see everything outside, yet no one outside could peer in. It was designed for privacy, status, and security.

Once inside, the man respectfully held out a sleek black card. "Tenth Sun, this is a VVIP card of The Orchid Auction House. Please accept it as a token of honor for this being our first meeting."

Asher didn't immediately take it. Instead, he tilted his head slightly and asked, "How much is it?"

The manager's expression faltered, if only for a second. "I beg your pardon, Tenth Sun?"

"How much does one need to spend at your establishment to qualify as a VVIP?" Asher asked calmly, his tone neutral but firm.

The man hesitated for only a second before replying, "Three Platinum coins, Tenth Sun."

"Lyra," Asher called softly.

Lyra stepped forward without a word. No explanation was needed. She accepted the card, reached into her space ring, and handed the man three gleaming platinum coins.

"Thank you for your time, manager," Asher said politely, offering a small nod. Without another glance, he turned and entered the bidding room, leaving the stunned manager standing alone with the platinum coins resting cold in his hands.

### **Chapter 135: Extracurricular Activity**

Asher walked into the bidding room with an air of calm ease, his steps measured and confident. Within the room, two long black couches faced each other, each adorned with five small, neatly arranged throw pillows.

A long, polished table sat between the couches, its dark surface reflecting the soft glow of the ceiling lights. Atop the table rested two smooth blue orbs, each shimmering faintly as if holding secrets within.

The air itself seemed almost alive; Astra energy was so thick it felt as though it had replaced the very oxygen, saturating the space in an invisible but tangible veil of power.

Along the walls, intricate murals of varying designs told silent stories. Golden patterns intertwined with deep, bold colors, and the reflected light from above danced across

them like ripples in a pond. The room seemed built to exude wealth and exclusivity, every detail a deliberate statement of status.

Asher moved toward one of the couches and sat with deliberate composure, crossing one leg casually over the other. His eyes fell on one of the glowing orbs, curiosity flickering behind his gaze as though he were trying to discern its purpose.

"Tenth Sun, this is how one places a bid," Vice Commander Cassandra explained, her voice calm yet carrying the tone of instruction as she noticed his attention fixed on the orb. "You simply touch the orb and select the number of coins you wish to bid."

"Thank you," Asher replied, giving a polite nod, though he made no immediate move to touch the orb.

Behind him, Cassandra herself gave a small nod, but her eyes were sharp, darting from corner to corner as though she were searching for something, anything.

Asher had already performed the same precaution moments earlier, using his Omni Perception to sweep the room in search of hidden devices, recording tools, or any subtle trickery. Auction houses, after all, were notorious hubs for all manner of mischief and underhanded dealings.

Kent, who had entered alongside them, could hardly contain his awe. His eyes were wide, and his mouth hung slightly open as he looked about the room, entirely unashamed of his expression. He stared at the murals, the table, the orbs, everything was new and fascinating to him.

Asher considered telling three of them to sit instead of standing awkwardly at his back, but after a brief moment, he decided against it.

'They're probably used to standing,' he thought. 'If it were another noble, they might not even allow their coachman to share the same space with them.'

Asher had no such reservations. He had never fully adopted the ingrained noble versus commoner mindset of Crymora. Coming from a world where, in theory at least, everyone was 'equal,' Asher found the social divides here somewhat archaic.

That said, he wasn't about to start advocating for commoners' rights out of some moral crusade. That sounded far too exhausting for his liking. Besides, he enjoyed his position as the son of a Duke, a position that brought with it both privilege and convenience.

Why throw away an advantage that practically ran itself? He fully intended to milk his noble status until there was nothing left to take.

His mind drifted back to the Orchid Auction House's manager, who earlier had offered him a sleek black card. It had seemed like a simple courtesy, a gesture of goodwill.

But Asher, ever cautious, had declined to accept it for free. He had no interest in unknowingly weaving himself into a web of subtle favours. Even if the manager never spoke of it, a gift like that would have created a silent connection, a favor owed.

And Asher preferred to keep his dealings as clean and detached as possible. Perhaps he was overthinking it; perhaps the card was truly nothing more than a VVIP pass. Still, Asher had learned long ago that naivety could be far more costly than suspicion.

His gaze wandered below, past the glass of the private room, where rows of seats were filling up. People sat in clusters, some chatting idly, others silent and focused, simply waiting for the auction to begin.

Families were scattered among the seats: noble parents with sons and daughters, siblings sitting together. From what Asher could gauge, most of them were lower-ranking nobles, Barons, perhaps Viscounts.

Faint traces of aura leaked from their bodies, subtle displays of strength meant to establish their presence in the room without words. Asher's eyes drifted to one of the walls, and with casual ease, his Omni Perception phased through it.

In the adjacent VVIP room, he spotted a couple engaged in what could generously be described as a very private extracurricular activity.

He blinked, then immediately shook his head, wishing he could unsee it. Unfortunately, some things couldn't be erased from memory, no matter how much one wanted them gone.

Below, the door at the far end opened and closed softly as more guests entered. At the front of the hall, an elevated platform stood ready. Asher's eyes lingered on it; it was clear this was where the auctioneer would make their appearance.

'I wonder if the famous face-slapping moment will finally happen,' he thought with a small, amused smirk. In the novels he had read back in his past life as Ethan, such scenes were almost a cliché, heated arguments over prized items, loud declarations of wealth, and arrogant threats to make rivals back down when their coin purses inevitably ran dry.

He looked forward to seeing such a spectacle unfold, though he kept his expectations low. His anticipation for such drama at the Royal Party had amounted to nothing; no face-slapping had occurred then, and he suspected today might prove just as uneventful.

Suddenly, movement drew his attention. On the platform, the Orchid Auction House manager emerged from below, rising smoothly as if lifted by some concealed mechanism.

"Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Rich and poor. Noble and commoner. Strong and weak. Men and women," he began, his voice resonating with Astra-infused clarity, reaching every corner of the hall. "I welcome you to another of our fine auctions. As you may have noticed, the auctioneer was changed at the last moment due to unforeseen emergencies. I will personally be overseeing today's proceedings."

A ripple of curiosity swept through the crowd.

"The manager is going to personally handle the auction? What's the occasion?" one man asked aloud.

"Is there some rare treasure or unique material being sold today that requires his direct attention?" a woman's voice chimed in from the side. A faint, almost predatory glint flashed in her eyes.

"It seems you all don't know, do you?" a deep voice called out. A man in polished knight's armor had spoken, his tone carrying weight.

"Know what?" someone turned in their seat to ask.

"Well, it's understandable," the knight continued. "You were already seated before he arrived."

"Before who arrived? Just tell us and stop stalling," another voice snapped, its owner frowning in impatience.

The knight straightened, his armor catching the light as he spoke with deliberate gravity.

"The Tenth Sun of the Wargrave Ducal Household," he announced, his voice heavy with significance.

A wave of hushed whispers immediately followed. Heads turned toward the private bidding rooms, eyes darting from one to another as if hoping to pierce the glass and catch sight of this mysterious figure.

### **Chapter 136: One Copper Coin**

"Now, as usual, you all know the rules," the Orchid Auction House manager began, his voice calm but laced with authority. "Do not bid on anything you cannot pay for immediately, here and now. We neither can nor will wait for anyone to run home to gather more funds. I assume you all came with enough gold coins to meet your ambitions. There are to be no fights within the Orchid Auction House, any disputes must be settled once you've stepped beyond this property's walls... otherwise, things might get rather messy."

His tone shifted as the last word slipped from his lips, the cold edge of killing intent wrapping around it like a blade. It wasn't an empty threat.

No one spoke, no one moved. The silence wasn't born from fear, but rather familiarity; these rules were already known by everyone present. They were the kind of laws no one dared test.

As the owner of an auction house operating within a Ducal territory, the Orchid Auction House manager's strength was not something to be underestimated.

Without power, such a man could not possibly protect the volume of wealth, resources, and rare treasures that passed through this establishment. The wealth here was enough to tempt even the boldest of criminals, and yet, none dared cross him.

After all, platinum coins did not guard themselves.

"Let's start the bidding, shall we?" The manager's voice shifted, the steel in his tone melting back into cheerfulness. A smile curved his lips, and with that single change, the atmosphere loosened.

All around, people straightened in their seats, adjusting their posture as they readied the shimmering orbs in their hands. The first bidding war of the day was moments away.

"For our first item, we have the Ironroot Herb." A poised young woman stepped gracefully onto the elevated platform, carrying a polished tray. Upon it lay a sturdy, dark-green herb whose roots twisted and coiled like strands of iron wire.

"The Ironroot Herb," the auctioneer explained, "is a common but valuable ingredient used in the refinement of low-grade strengthening tonics. When consumed, these tonics enhance bone density and muscle firmness for Life Rankers below the Blazestar Life Rank. The starting price is thirty gold coins."

The bidding began instantly.

"Thirty-two gold coins."

"Thirty-five gold coins."

"Thirty-seven gold coins."

"Fifty gold coins."

The momentum stalled at fifty. Seeing no further offers, the auctioneer swiftly concluded, "Sold, for fifty gold coins!"

The woman carrying the tray stepped back, giving a polite bow. The buyer didn't so much as glance at her, their focus already elsewhere.

"For the second item of the day, a Windfeather Sparrow Egg. I hardly need to explain its uses to those who value discretion. For the... discreet among you, you understand this bird's value. After all, in this world, information is worth more than gold."

The starting bid was set at thirty gold coins.

"Forty gold coins."

"Forty-three gold coins."

"Sixty gold coins."

"Sixty-five gold coins."

The price doubled in the blink of an eye, bidders trading numbers like blows in a duel.

From his private bidding room, Asher watched silently, making no move to participate. The truth was, he was disappointed. He had entertained the idea that legendary weapons or priceless artifacts might make an appearance, with platinum coins flying recklessly as people fought over them.

But this... this was an auction clearly aimed at lower-tier nobles, ambitious commoners, and knights with deep enough pockets.

Still, he understood. Legendary treasures were not cabbage to be plucked from a market stall. Even if such an item somehow appeared, it would never be placed in the Orchid Auction House's listings.

And even if it was, none of the nobles present would dare compete, such treasures were reserved for Emperors, Dukes, and Marquises.

This was, simply put, an auction for the lower rungs of nobility.

Life-changing materials did not appear every day.

Asher sighed inwardly. 'So, no face-slapping moment today, huh?'

Still, he kept watching. The pace quickened as items came and went. A handful of sales even climbed into the realm of platinum coins.

"Now, for the second-to-last item of the day," the auctioneer announced, his voice carrying a subtle undercurrent of excitement. "We have the Spirit Wolf Fang Pendant."

From behind him, the same young woman stepped forward once more, this time carrying a mannequin draped with a striking red pendant.

"This pendant," the auctioneer began, "grants the wearer enhanced night vision and heightened alertness for short durations when infused with Astra. More importantly, it passively creates an instant barrier in moments of danger, capable of blocking attacks up to the Swiftstar Life Rank."

A few subtle glances were cast toward Asher's private booth by the the auctioneer. He hadn't bid on a single item yet, and the manager, despite Asher's earlier claim of being here only to sightsee, couldn't shake the feeling that this noble had other intentions.

"The starting price is three thousand gold coins," the auctioneer declared.

"Five thousand gold coins," a mechanical voice intoned from one private bidding room.

"Seven thousand gold coins," another voice echoed from elsewhere.

"Ten thousand gold coins," came a third.

A collective hiss of breath rippled through those seated below. Such sums were beyond them. What the giants above were fighting for was clear, the pendant's life-saving barrier. That ability alone was worth more than gold; it was the kind of protection that could turn certain death into survival.

Plans began to take root in darker minds. Some were already scheming to rob the winner after the auction. Others decided to keep their distance entirely, the kind of distance that ensured they wouldn't become collateral damage in the aftermath.

In the end, the pendant sold for fifteen thousand gold coins.

"And now," the auctioneer's voice deepened slightly, "the final item of the day."

Every head turned forward. The last item in any auction was the highlight, the crown jewel. Anticipation thickened in the air.

The young woman reappeared once more, tray in hand. Upon it sat... a rock. A small, black, dirt-encrusted rock.

"This," the auctioneer began solemnly, "was harvested from the place where the history of our current world began, where the Star fell from the heavens. Some call it the Cursed Land. Others, the Blessed Land. Though we do not yet know its nature, we do know it is... special. Bidding will begin with the first offer made."

His words were met with silence, and more than a few skeptical stares.



The so-called Starfall site had been visited countless times since ancient days. People returned with rocks, metals, or crystals, claiming they were fragments of the heavens. It was a well-worn scam. There had never been proof of anything extraordinary there. If something truly valuable had existed, it would have been taken millennia ago.

For the auctioneer to admit that he didn't even know what it was or what it was worth? That alone killed the room's excitement.

It was a balloon punctured in an instant, expectations collapsing into dull apathy.

Even if he hadn't admitted it, no one would still take him seriously or bid their hard earned gold coins on a rock.

And then, breaking the silence, a mechanical voice drifted from one of the private bidding rooms.

"One copper coin."

## **Chapter 137: Stone**

A few minutes earlier.

Within the confines of his private bidding room, Asher simply sat back and observed the lively scene without placing a single bid. Although he possessed more than enough wealth to outbid every single person present, perhaps even to do so just for amusement, he chose not to.

Instead, he contented himself with watching the spectacle unfold before him. There was a certain charm in seeing people throw around their names and reputations, hoping that their opponents would back down under the weight of status alone.

But of course, such expectations were little more than wishful thinking. Though no dramatic face-slapping moment occurred, no sudden reversal where a loud-mouthed braggart was utterly humiliated, Asher did not feel the least bit disappointed. He simply reminded himself to stop looking forward to such events in the first place. After all, those sorts of moments were rare, and expecting them was a recipe for needless frustration.

Besides, there was an obvious and rather amusing reality to consider: there were no Chinese people in Crymora, which, in his private musings, made such dramatic clichés even less likely to occur. With that thought in mind, he decided to focus entirely on enjoying himself as Lyra, ever attentive, served him fresh juice and a neatly arranged plate of fruit.

Asher still could not understand how Lyra always seemed prepared for every conceivable situation. Even for something as simple as attending an auction house, she had prepared juice and fruit in advance. It wasn't that he was complaining, far from it. In

fact, he admired her uncanny readiness. It was, in its own way, a talent worthy of recognition.

Then, the final item of the auction was unveiled: a black-and-brown, dirty-looking stone. Asher's plan was to watch as he had for the rest of the auction, paying it no more mind than any other irrelevant object.

That was until the system chimed in.

[Ding]

[The system advises the Host to purchase that item]

His gaze immediately shifted from the stage to the glowing system notification that had materialized in the air before him, and then back to the rock in question. Silently, he listened as the auctioneer gave a short explanation of the item's supposed origins.

He had heard of the Blessed Land before, a place famous for yielding absolutely nothing of value despite countless expeditions. Yet now the system was telling him to purchase a rock from that very location.

Asher did not doubt the system. Systems, in his understanding, were always mysterious, powerful, and almost unfathomable in purpose. This one had never misled him before, so he had no reason to doubt it now. That did not mean, however, that he wouldn't ask questions.

'System, what exactly is that rock?' he asked without hesitation.

[Ding]

[Upon the fall of the Star Fragment into Crymora millennia ago, although the Star Energy pulsed throughout the world, shaping it into what it is today, most of its essence was infused into a fragment of a core that descended with it]

Asher's eyes narrowed as he read the words.

His mind spun rapidly, attempting to piece together the implications. Wasn't this exactly like those classic tales where a protagonist bought a life-changing treasure for next to nothing?

Once again, his gaze settled on the rock. He still could not quite grasp how such an item had gone unnoticed for thousands of years.

But, thinking further, it made perfect sense. The so-called Star Core Fragment looked utterly indistinguishable from any ordinary pebble one might see along a roadside. If not

for the system's prompt, he himself would not have wasted even a single copper coin on it.

A faint smile curved his lips as he glanced around the auction hall. No one seemed interested in the rock; every person here clearly shared the same opinion he had moments earlier; it was worthless.

The auctioneer had declared that the first bidder would set the starting price, but Asher had no intention of beginning with something outrageous like a platinum coin or even a hundred gold coins. The last thing he wanted was for someone to suddenly fight over the item purely because he had bid a suspiciously high amount, which would inevitably lead people to suspect the rock's value.

And since he hadn't placed a single bid since the auction began, others might even think he had attended solely for this ugly little stone.

He smirked inwardly, silently praising his own foresight.

'System, if I buy this, what will it be used for?'

[When the Host acquires it, the system will guide the Host]

He didn't argue. He simply nodded, though his mind was already racing ahead with possibilities. If the Star Core Fragment truly contained an extraordinary quantity of Astra, then theoretically... wouldn't that mean he could instantly leap through multiple Life Ranks, perhaps even reaching the very peak of the world in a single stroke?

The thought made his smirk widen into a grin. He could already imagine it: the classic "strong acting weak" scenario. He would stroll through life pretending to be a monstrous genius, while secretly holding the power to shake the world, all at just eighteen years old.

As the auctioneer prepared to instruct the attendant to remove the stone from the stage, Asher calmly reached for one of the shimmering crystal orbs on the table before him.

The moment his fingertips brushed against it, the orb's surface rippled like liquid, displaying an array of numbers alongside coin denominations: copper, silver, gold, and platinum. Without hesitation, Asher selected the number one and the denomination copper.

He did not care whether The Orchid Auction House usually accepted anything less than gold, by the looks of it, they rarely even acknowledged silver coins, let alone copper. What mattered was that the auctioneer himself had said the first bidder could name any price.

When he confirmed his choice, the orb's voice echoed mechanically:

"One copper coin."

---

The moment the words rang out, dozens of heads turned toward Asher's private bidding room. The mystery deepened, this was the first time this unknown individual hadn't participated in the auction, and of all things, they were bidding a copper coin for a lump of rock.

Yet no one objected aloud. After all, the auctioneer had clearly stated the rules himself, and it was not their place to dispute them.

Still, many smirked in silent amusement. To them, this was nothing short of the auctioneer shooting himself in the foot.

Some even whispered that the manager should have set a mandatory starting price, perhaps one gold coin, to avoid such situations. How many lives had been risked and lost just to bring back that worthless pebble from the dangerous Blessed Land? And for what? A single copper?

The manager himself narrowed his eyes toward Asher's room. He knew exactly who sat inside.

'Was this his target from the start?' the man wondered. But he quickly dismissed the idea.

This was, after all, nothing more than a worthless stone he had hoped to pawn off on wealthy nobles, merchants, and knights to recoup some losses after a disastrous expedition to the Cursed Land. Instead, it seemed the plan had backfired.

Clicking his tongue in annoyance, he made a mental note: next time, he would impose an absurd minimum price and never again allow bidders to set their own.

'I'll take this as a lesson,' he thought grimly.

"Sold, for one copper coin," he announced at last. The cheer in his voice had diminished considerably.

"And with that," the auctioneer continued, forcing a polite smile, "this auction comes to a close. I wish you all a safe journey home."

With his duties complete, he stepped down from the elevated platform and vanished backstage. Attendees began rising from their seats, some glancing around cautiously as though worried others might be scrutinizing them.

Several made their way to the payment hall to settle their accounts. Those in private rooms, however, did not need to move, their purchases would be delivered directly.

Within minutes, a knock sounded at Asher's door. He already knew it would be the manager himself.

He turned to Lyra and gave her a subtle nod. With her usual grace, she crossed the room and opened the door.

The Orchid House's manager stepped inside, his smile polite but faintly strained. "How was the auction, Tenth Sun?"

Asher rose slowly from his seat, his movements calm and measured. "It was enjoyable. I've never attended an auction before, so it was quite the scene," he replied evenly.

At another nod from Asher, Lyra produced a single copper coin from her space ring and handed it over.

The manager passed her the stone, which was sealed inside a square-shaped glass case, as though it belonged in a museum.

"Thank you for your time, Manager. I hope fate allows our paths to cross again," Asher said as he walked past the man and exited the room.

Whether it was fate or mere coincidence that had brought him to this particular auction house out of boredom, and allowed him to acquire a Star Core Fragment, he neither knew nor cared.

With practiced elegance, he stepped into his carriage, Lyra following close behind. Vice Commander Cassandra mounted her Enduron horse, while Kent, the coachman, climbed into position. With a flick of the reins, the horses surged forward.

And thus, the auction drew to its end.

## **Chapter 138: What Now**

Asher sat in his carriage... restless. His though unfocused, burned with anticipation. Every passing second felt like an eternity gnawing away at his patience. He wanted to get home quickly, no, immediately, and uncover the mystery behind the stone... the Star Core Fragment. The unknown power it might hold gnawed at his mind like an insatiable itch. He couldn't wait.

This was an opportunity to become even more overpowered, perhaps incomparably so. Though his eyes were closed in what might have seemed like calm repose, his foot tapped relentlessly against the carriage floorboard, the rhythm quick and impatient, betraying the storm inside him.

Lyra and the Vice Commander, seated across and beside from him, exchanged quiet glances. From their position, they watched the Tenth Sun's strange demeanor with mounting curiosity, wondering what thoughts could be occupying his mind so deeply.

'Should I just activate the teleportation mark?' Asher mused to himself. If he teleported now, he would arrive far sooner, bypassing the tedious journey altogether.

Lyra, unable to contain her concern after a long moment of silence, finally asked, "Young Master, is something the matter? I'm ready to help if there's anything I can do."

Asher's eyelids opened, his piercing gaze meeting hers briefly. He exhaled in a slow, measured sigh before speaking. "Nothing in particular. I'm simply restless. I just hope this Academy session begins soon."

Lyra hesitated, unsure of what else to say, and merely nodded in acknowledgment. She had already entertained countless thoughts about how she might follow Asher to the Academy, yet she realized she knew almost nothing about it. Even so, she had silently resolved to find a way.

With a slight shake of her head, she chose, for now, to set the matter aside.

At the side, Vice Commander Cassandra tilted her head slightly, his eyes narrowing as she stared ahead. Noticing this subtle motion, Asher asked, "What's wrong?"

The Vice Commander turned her head toward Asher, answering with practiced calm, "Nothing serious, Tenth Sun. Just some people from the auction already killing over items they couldn't afford with gold coins at the auction house."

Asher nodded gently before allowing his eyes to close again. He knew this sort of thing was not uncommon. Within the auction houses, there were always some who came not to bid, but to watch, and to mark wealthy winners as prey for an ambush on their way home.

A thought crept into his mind. What if the Orchid Auction House itself was orchestrating this? Imagine: they sell items to bidders, then send out men to rob and kill those very buyers on their return journey.

This way, they would reclaim both the gold coins and the valuable items they had just auctioned off. Of course, they would not dare to do this for every trinket, lest suspicion spread like wildfire. No, only the rarest, most precious items would warrant such a scheme.

They would be using chaos as a smokescreen to harvest more profit.

But that was just Asher's speculation, nothing more. Whether it was true or not ultimately had nothing to do with him, unless it became his problem.

Within minutes, the carriage rolled to a stop before the gates of the Wargrave estate. Asher wasted no time. He offered a brief farewell to the Vice Commander and Kent before striding quickly toward the entrance, Lyra trailing close behind, her steps quick and soundless.

Kent and Cassandra exchanged curious looks as they watched him disappear into the estate.

Then, a sudden thought crossed Kent's mind, unbidden and somewhat ridiculous. 'It seems the Tenth Sun urgently needs to use the toilet... perhaps I should have urged the horses to move faster.'

If Asher had heard that particular thought, he would have sighed deeply at the man's uncanny ability to overthink the most absurd possibilities.

Before entering his private chambers, Asher turned to Lyra and spoke in a low, firm voice.

"Do not let anyone in. No matter who they are. Even if Zarek himself comes, tell him to wait outside until I am out."

Lyra nodded, understanding the weight behind his order. She did not know the reason, nor was it her place to ask. She was a shadow at his side, and shadows did not question the sun they served.

With a wave of her hand, she summoned the square-shaped glass case holding the black stone, then extended it toward him. Asher accepted it without a word.

Once inside his quarters, he moved with urgency. Clothes were shed and discarded without care as he headed straight for the training chamber. The glass case never left his grasp.

Within the chamber's sealed silence, he lowered himself into a lotus position on the polished floor. Setting the glass case before him, he opened it and lifted the black stone into his hand.

'System. Don't keep me waiting. What can this thing do?' he thought, a smile tugging at the corners of his lips. His mind was already alive with visions of the possibilities.

[Why talk about it, when the system can show you?]

The system's chime rang out in his mind, soft but crystalline.

'What do you even mea—'

Before he could finish his thought, the chime returned, this time carrying a far more serious tone.

[Creating a barrier to protect and cover the entire room, preventing anything from leaking out]

Without warning, Asher felt a surge of energy burst from his very being, spreading outward like invisible fire. It raced across the chamber's walls, ceiling, and floor, sealing everything with absolute precision, as though locking away the world outside from whatever was about to unfold within.

He remained silent, watching without interference as the system worked.

Then, as he examined the stone in his palm, a faint crack split across its surface. The sound was sharp, almost like the snap of breaking ice. The fissure branched rapidly, spreading in jagged lines until, with a soft pop and a burst of light, the stone shattered.

Instantly, a searing heat engulfed him. His vision was swallowed by blinding radiance, and pain like molten fire tore through every inch of his body. Before he could even open his mouth to scream, the agony vanished, erased as though it had never existed.

[Ding]

[Healing the Host back to peak condition. Defensive capabilities activated]

His breathing steadied almost instantly. Vision returned, though the moment his eyes opened, another wave of blinding light crashed against them. This time, however, the system's defensive protocols shielded his senses, allowing his sight to adjust in seconds.

What he saw before him froze him in awe.

Suspended in the air, no larger than a drop of water, hovered a perfect golden orb. It pulsed with a brilliance so pure and overpowering it seemed almost alive. Waves of overwhelming energy radiated from it, illuminating the entire chamber in a sea of golden light.

If not for the protective shield the system had deployed earlier, Asher was certain the sheer magnitude of this energy would have bled out into the world beyond, drawing countless powerful beings to his doorstep within moments.

He could feel the energy, its rhythm, its texture, its strange familiarity. And yet, it was distant, elusive, like a dream he could almost recall but never truly grasp. He didn't understand it, but that hardly mattered. He had the system, and the system would guide him.



'What now?' he asked silently.

[Merge?]

### **Chapter 139: Affinity**

Asher stared at the notification in front of him. The last time the system had asked him to merge with something, it had been the Absolute Physique, a choice that had brought him untold benefits.

He was not foolish. Asher knew very well that his absurd level of talent came directly from that physique. In his past life, all he had possessed was his mind and an above-average body, not even remotely comparable to what he had now.

On Crymora, a world that valued raw strength above all else, intellect alone could only take one so far. At best, without significant martial talent, he might have become an advisor to some noble house.

And even then, his life would have hung by a thread, subject to the whims of those with true power, who could have decided to end him at any moment simply because he was weak.

But that had been the Absolute Physique, and this, this was something entirely different.

He was staring at what could only be described as a literal Star Core Fragment. The sheer thought made his skin prickle. If he attempted to merge with it, wouldn't his body simply explode under the overwhelming energy?

Could Virelass, for all her power, even bring him back if his very being was reduced to scattered motes of cosmic dust?

And yet... how could he bring himself to refuse?

'The system would take care of everything... right?' he asked silently, half seeking reassurance.

The system did not reply. Instead, it simply sent the exact same message again as though hiding an evil smirk.

[Merge?]

Asher let out a long sigh, bracing himself.

'Merge,' he commanded in his mind.

There was no delay. The moment the thought formed, the core shot forward, embedding itself into his chest faster than his eyes could even blink.

His heartbeat faltered for a split second, as if something foreign, something far beyond his comprehension, was forcing itself into the very rhythm of his life.

Then the pain came.

It wasn't ordinary pain. It wasn't even the kind of agony a trained warrior could grit his teeth through. This pain shredded through his every nerve, tore apart the concept of endurance, and burned through the limits of his pain tolerance as if those limits had never existed.

A raw, involuntary scream erupted from his throat as every inch of his being felt as though it was being unmade and remade at the same time. His heart resumed its beating, but now it thundered like a war drum, each pulse sending blood surging through him at a speed that bordered on violent.

The sensation was overwhelming, his own body felt alien to him, a vessel caught in a storm too great to control.

He could sense that something profound was happening within, some monumental change altering the very essence of his existence. But the agony was so all-consuming that he couldn't focus on anything else.

Even so, no one came rushing in to investigate the cries of the Tenth Sun; the barrier the system had erected earlier not only sealed energy, but also sound.

Then, as suddenly as it had begun, the pain was gone. It didn't fade, it simply ceased to exist. He felt his consciousness tugged, as though an unseen hand had plucked it out from his body.

Slowly, his eyelids fluttered open.

What greeted him was unlike anything he had ever seen. His purple eyes drank in the sight of endless space, vast, silent, infinite. Stars sparkled like scattered diamonds across a sea of darkness. Colossal planets drifted lazily in the distance, aligned in strange yet elegant patterns.

'Is this... outer space? The galaxy itself?' he wondered.

No voice answered. No presence made itself known. Instead, the same invisible force pulled at him again. This time, he did not resist. His eyes drifted shut, and he surrendered to the current.

When they opened once more, he was back in his training chamber. The core that had once floated before him was gone. Instinctively, his hand went to his chest. Beneath his palm, his heart beat with steady, deliberate strength.

'The Star Core Fragment... it seems to have merged with my heart,' he thought.

'System. What happened? Where was that place?' he asked mentally.

[The System does not know what the Host is referring to]

He stared at the reply for a moment, but then dismissed it with a shake of his head. Whatever strange place he had seen could wait. The more pressing matter was the reward for enduring such excruciating pain.

'System. Show me my gains,' he ordered.

[Ding]

[Affirmative, Host]

[The Host has gained a new affinity: The Star]

[The Host now possesses perfect Astra energy control]

Asher froze, eyes widening. A new affinity, and not just any affinity, but the Star.

The words themselves felt unreal.

Shock gave way to exhilaration. He was already imagining himself hurling miniature stars into battle, obliterating empires with a single gesture.

His gaze shifted to the second notification.

Perfect Astra energy control.

Immediately, he could feel it, the Astra particles around him, responding to him as if he were their origin, their master. They pulsed in harmony with his will, as though pleading for him to command them.

With a single thought, he brought every Astra particle in the chamber to a complete halt. The air froze, not physically, but in essence.

Time itself seemed momentarily subdued.

'Cool,' he thought with a smirk. With this, he would no longer need to train his Astra control.

'System, continue with the benefits,' he prompted.

[Ding]

[That is all, Host]

His brow furrowed. 'That's all?'

'System, aren't these gains a bit... small for something as priceless as a Star Core Fragment?'

[It is not that the gains are small, Host. It is that the Host does not yet understand the magnitude of what has been gained by doing nothing more than enduring a little pain]

The frown on his face deepened. He didn't pretend to be ignorant of the system's meaning, he understood there was something here he hadn't fully grasped. Slowly, his mind began to turn over the possibilities.

'The Star affinity...'

A smile, subtle but growing, began to form on his lips.

[It seems the Host has finally realized it]

The system chimed.

[With the Star affinity, the Host can control space, gravity, and light with utmost ease. It is no different from possessing three separate affinities in one]

Asher had reached that same conclusion, but the system was not finished.

[The Host can now utilize true Star Energy, which naturally results in perfect Astra control. Every attack that uses Astra will now be exponentially more devastating]

He blinked. 'Wait... isn't Astra energy the same energy that burst out when the Star Fragment descended into the world? That's what I read in the history books.'

[Negative, Host. Astra energy is merely a byproduct of true Star Energy]

The words left him momentarily stunned. Then his mind spun back to when he had first felt the core. The energy he had felt, it had been familiar, yet distant, like something he'd always known but never understood.

And now, the implications sank in. If Star Energy could enhance every attack he made, if even his lightning strikes became far more lethal, then this was more than just an affinity. It was a complete rewriting of his combat potential.

A wide grin spread across his face. 'It seems I'll have to start training immediately. Now I finally have something worth burying myself in until the Academy begins, or whatever else comes my way.'

And without wasting another moment, he began.

## **Chapter 140: Twins**

A full month had passed since Asher had merged with the Star Core Fragment. In that time, his life had been consumed entirely within the walls of the training chamber. Day after day, he immersed himself in endless practice, his mind and body wholly dedicated to refining his mastery over the three new affinities he had gained, Light, Space, and Gravity.

He did not allow himself to favor one above the others; progress in each was balanced and deliberate. Not a single affinity was abandoned for the sake of another. Every session was measured, calculated, and exhaustive.

During this past month, he had not cultivated even once. All of his time and energy were devoted solely to exploring and strengthening these new powers. Yet, despite this focus, Asher did not neglect his lightning element. On the contrary, he devoted hours to conducting numerous experiments with it as well.

The results of these experiments had been nothing short of exhilarating. His lightning had changed, it now carried a sharper speed, a brighter intensity, and a fiercer, more turbulent energy. It no longer crackled; it roared.

Every strike felt like a thunderstorm condensed into a single instant. And Asher welcomed this transformation with an unrestrained smile.

At present, he could be seen seated comfortably in his room, a plate of food placed neatly before him on the table.

Roughly a week ago, a letter from his father had arrived, informing him that he would be sent to an Academy. That day, today, marked the moment of departure.

Not far away, Lyra was quietly folding his clothes and placing them into a large suitcase, preparing every garment with meticulous care for the journey ahead.

Minutes passed in quiet rhythm before Asher finally set down his cutlery. Reaching for a napkin, he dabbed his mouth with composed precision. Noticing this, Lyra rose from her position and, without a word, collected the empty plate before stepping out of the room.

With a faint sigh and a satisfied stomach, Asher rose from his chair, walked toward the bed, and collapsed face-first onto the mattress. Although part of him longed to return to

the training chamber even now, he knew that was impossible, there was a journey to embark upon.

His thoughts began to wander, drifting to his siblings. His mind shuffled through memories of each of them. In his father's letter, he had been told that one of his siblings would escort him to the Academy, though the letter had offered no hint as to which.

'It's probably Malrik or Wuthenya, they're the strongest,' he guessed silently as he rolled onto his back, his eyes settling on the plain ceiling above.

Before long, Lyra returned, continuing her meticulous packing while Asher lay in a thoughtful daze, awaiting the arrival of whichever brother or sister had been assigned to accompany him.

Time blurred. Eventually, Lyra finished arranging everything, stood, and offered a respectful bow before stepping outside once more.

'I might as well sleep while I wait,' Asher thought, eyelids beginning to lower.

But just as he was about to drift into slumber, Lyra reappeared at the door.

"What is it, Lyra?" he asked, his voice calm.

"Young Master, the Third Sun and Third Moon are here," she announced.

A faint exhale left Asher's lips. "It seems my guess was wrong then," he murmured as he pushed himself into a seated position.

With a mere thought, Astra pulsed faintly within him. Space itself seemed to ripple, and the luggage Lyra had neatly arranged moments ago was instantly pulled toward him. A simple wave of his hand made them vanish into his system's storage space.

This was one of the progress he had achieved over the past month, through spatial manipulation, he could now pull and push objects with ease.

He rose smoothly from the bed. "Lead me to them," he instructed.

Lyra gave a brief nod before turning, and Asher followed closely behind her.

Within moments, they stepped out of the main building. Asher's eyes immediately fell upon two figures standing beside a carriage, speaking to one another in quiet tones. One was a man, the other a woman; both exuded a quiet presence.

"It seems the youngest has finally arrived," the woman remarked.

"Are you ready?" the man asked, his calm gaze meeting Asher's.

Asher remembered them clearly from the day of his True Awakening, the Third Sun and the Third Moon, the only twins in the Wargrave family.

Xavian, the Third Sun.

Xavienne, the Third Moon.

"Good morning, Xavian. Xavienne. Yes, I'm ready. I've packed everything I need," Asher replied evenly.

"Then let's move, youngest. We're not the only ones heading there," Xavienne stated, her expression composed.

But just as they were about to step into the carriage, a familiar voice called out from behind Asher.

"I hope you can allow this old bone to join you on this journey."

Asher turned at once, recognizing the voice instantly. It belonged to Commander Yevric, head of the Wargrave Knight Order. The man walked toward them with an unhurried gait and a faint, good-natured smile.

Xavian's eyes narrowed slightly. "Uncle, what are you doing here?"

"Shouldn't you be protecting the estate in Father's absence?" Xavienne added, her tone a seamless continuation of her brother's question.

"The Primarch has permitted this old man to stretch his legs a bit. Don't worry, you won't even notice me," Commander Yevric replied with practiced calm.

The three siblings nodded silently.

Asher understood perfectly, Yevric was accompanying them for their protection. Should someone strong enough attack, losing three Wargraves in a single strike would be a devastating blow.

Without wasting more time, Asher turned toward the carriage and began to step inside. But his movement paused mid-stride. Turning back, he met Lyra's gaze.

"Thank you for everything up until now. Don't miss me too much," he said with an easy tone. With that, he stepped inside.

Lyra did not reply, she simply bowed deeply toward the carriage. As she held the bow, a faint, gentle smile softened her lips.

Inside, Asher took his seat. Xavienne entered and settled beside him, while Xavian positioned himself across from them.

"Uncle, aren't you coming in?" Xavienne asked, glancing toward the door.

"The roof will do. It's been too long since I've felt the open air," Yevric answered evenly. Without another word, his figure blurred and vanished, reappearing in the next instant atop the carriage, sitting cross-legged with the ease of one perfectly at home in such a position.

Xavienne nodded once, and the door closed. The two butlers seated at the front gave the reins a swift flick, and the pair of Enduron horses surged forward, pulling the carriage into motion.

And thus, the journey began, toward an Academy Asher knew nothing about.