

D. of Pride 631

Chapter 631 631- Deception (2)

Melinda had no doubt in her mind, if that many attacks hit her she would no doubt die. Perhaps she might have been able to do something about them had she been at her peak strength.

However, after using her [Evil Eyes of Temptation] on the demon, she had completely spent herself. As such, she did not even have enough mana to muster the weakest of defence.

"Chant Anthem... [Indra's Spear]"

Annette was uncompromising at her enemy's plight. The hundreds of thunder spears that she manifested in the sky were pulled into one to create an enormous orange-white spear to pulsed with an extinction level of power.

"Die" A cold word came from Annette's mouth as she dropped the orange white spear on top of the queen of harpies.

Melinda's face was aghast in terror as she glanced at the spear inching closer to her. What kind of magic was that? What kind of attacks carried such a destructive aura? The power bestowed inside that spear, was something that she had never seen before in her hundreds of years of reign as one of the Seven Kings.

As the spear approached closer, Melinda vividly felt her entire body trembling, her nerves became numb and all her energy left her.

She was going to die. Just as this realisation came to her, she commanded the demon who flew towards the trajectory of the spear and stood before her like a shield.

This was a bold move, a gamble that might have ended up with both of them losing their lives. However, she had won the gamble. The spear had stopped right before it could pierce the demon.

The maid had stopped her attack. It was just like what she had predicted, the other party was unable to harm her master.

"Hehe... I see now" Melinda laughed despicably. She looked at the demon and at the maid who seemed to have suffered the shock of her life and nodded her head in understanding.

What great luck, she was thankful she made the right choice by activating the [Evil Eyes of Temptation] to control the demon instead of killing him. Now that she had the demon under her control, didn't it mean that the maid was unable to do anything to her?

"Disperse your attack, or else I'll command the demon to kill himself" Melinda threatened.

Immediately, the hands of the demon started clenching his neck. Seeing this, Annette plead with the queen of the harpies to stop and immediately dispersed her attack.

"Good, now go back. Tell the other maids and those golems to stop their attacks if they want their master to live".

Melinda ordered, the hand of the demon clutching his own neck strengthened all of a sudden.

Unable to disobey her order, Annette grit her teeth and fell back. Just before she left, she glanced at her master and arched her brows.

After Annette returned to the mountaintop and relayed the order, the chaotic battle stopped. The harpies took this opportunity to catch their breaths.

The enemy they were fighting did not need rest nor did they feel any pain. What's more surprising was that these golems seemed to have been aware of their attack pattern and every skill that they possessed. Thus making the battle quite difficult for the harpies.

Fortunately, it looked like the queen had triumph on her side and brought the enemy leader under her control.

"My Queen"

The two calamity class harpies greeted Melinda the moment she arrived onto the mountaintop. Their gazes fell on the demon who was silently following her like a servant and their eyes immediately became awed.

The enemy leader was under the control of their queen, which meant that they had won this battle. That said... " Are you alright my Queen?" The Queen of the Harpies looked quite injured and severely exhausted.

"I'm fine, it's just that I'm completely exhausted after activating my [Evil eyes of Temptation]" Melinda replied.

"Why don't you rest a little my queen?" the harpies worried after seeing the condition of their queen, requested.

Nonetheless, Melinda shook her head and continued to walk forward towards the place where the enemies were currently gathered at. Now was not the time for rest, she had the greatest trump card on her hand that she could play on her enemies.

This was the perfect time to seize the advantage while she still had it.

Seeing the Queen appear personally on the frontline, the low ranking harpies bowed their heads. Melinda did not mind them, instead, her attention was on the enemy lines, from start to end.

At the front of the group stood four beings. Three women wearing maid outfits over their armours, one of whom tried to kill her and the last was a Warhorse whose presence was no less than her two strongest guards who were in the calamity class.

Looking at them glaring at her, Melinda displayed a pleased smile. This frustrating feeling, she finally repaid it all back.

With the demon in her control, she was sure that none of them would be able to do anything to her. At first, she just wanted the demon; however, after seeing the prowess of the maids, she wasn't satisfied with just that, she wanted more.

"Good... good it seems like you did just what I asked you to. Now then, shall we start the negotiation? Hehe... as you can see, the demon is now under my control. As such, if you want me to release him, you must do as I say from now on".

"My wish shall be your command and from this day on, you shall call me queen too. Am I clear?"

Melinda was an ambitious and scheming woman. That's right, she wanted to gobble up the forces of the demon into her own. If she could bring those powerful maids and that army of golems on her side, then she would no longer have to fear the other seven kings.

She could even take revenge on Gil-Garna and absorb his forces into his own. No, she didn't just want to remain as one of the Seven Kings, she wanted to become the ruler of the entire Gahstly Winding Forest and expand her territory even further.

For that to happen, she needed to absorb the forces of the demon. Those three maids, the calamity class beast and the golem army would become incredible pawns to realise her ambitions.

As for them obeying her or not, she believed that as long as she held onto the trump card called the demon noble, there was no need to question that.

Also as a last case scenario, she can always use her [Evil eyes of Temptation] once she recovers to bring the others under her control just like the demon.

Melinda was busy hypothesizing a beautiful future when suddenly she noticed that the eyes of the maids looked strange. They should be angry, furious and even show killing intent towards her for capturing their master, should be normal.

However, under no circumstances should their eyes be indifferent and calm like that.

"Why aren't you guys replying?"

What was going on? Why were the maids all silently and calmly looking at her? Did they perhaps not understand the situation?

Just as these various thoughts popped into her mind, she realised that the maids weren't looking at her, more exactly they were looking at the person behind her.

Simultaneously, she heard a dark coarse voice sound next to her ears.

"They are not replying because there is no need to play along with this farce anymore...[Chilling Touch], [Dark Deprivation]".

"What?"

Melinda was just about to turn around when she felt her neck being ceased and a dark cold energy seeped inside her body. That energy locked her mana in place and deprived her of all her strength.

"Kuhehe... that was quite an amusing act from me wouldn't you say?" Simon laughed looking at Melinda's pale terror stricken face.

"Impossible how did you..."

"How did I break out from the effects of your Evil Eyes? Frankly, that was a pleasant surprise for me too. I didn't know that the fragments were capable of that" Simon muttered.

He did fall for the effects of the Evil Eyes of Temptation and was in a partially awake and partially asleep state. In that state, he was aware of his surroundings; however, he had no control of his body.

If not for the fragments of Pride activating and negating the effects of the Evil Eyes, Simon would still have been in that state.

From this, one could tell how formidable those Evil Eyes were. One mistake and he had almost lost the grasp he had on victory. As such, right after breaking out of the effects of the Evil Eyes, Simon did not rush to confront the Harpy queen but instead went with the flow.

The Harpy Queen was extremely scheming as such, he needed to be equally cunning if he wanted to win against her. Simon followed her orders, even going as far as to stand in front of Annette's attacks to lower her guard.

He silently followed behind her and finally, when the opportunity presented itself in front of him, he grabbed it.

"Do not move. If I sense you struggling even a little bit, I'll snap your neck"

Simon threatened seeing that the queen of the harpies was trying to get away from his clutches. Since he had already informed the Valkyries about his plans, they did not look fazed; however, the same couldn't be said for the harpies who looked like they had suffered a great shock.

"You bastard, quickly unhand the queen" The two calamity class harpies who were the closest to them, roared out in fury and rushed towards Simon to hack him to pieces.

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However, before their attacks could hit him, he swiftly turned around using [Flash Steps] and used the queen of harpies as his shield.

The two calamity class harpies widened their eyes in surprise and immediately tried to stop their attacks. Nevertheless, it was too late.

The attacks that were meant to cut the demon to pieces hit Melinda. Two deep gashes formed on the Harpy Queen's armour and reached her body causing blood to flow out.

"Arrghhh!!!" the queen of the harpies screamed in pain. Maybe because her two subordinates had curbed the powers of their attacks at the last second, the gash wasn't able to cut through too deep.

"You bastard!!!"

the harpies cursed, they were just about to rush towards Simon in an all out fight when the latter stopped them with his frightening cold words.

"The next person to move will be responsible for their Queen's death"

Those simple words carried a bone chilling coldness and threat. to prove that he was not lying, he even increased the grasping strength he had on the neck of their queen.

As if their bodies have been frozen in ice, none of the harpies dared to move after that warning. They could only watch from the distance as their queen struggled and curse the demon inside their heads.

"Good, now that's more like it"

Simon complimented the harpies who had become docile now that he had their weakness in his grasp.

With the background mobs taken care of, Simon turned his attention to the queen of the harpies who seemed to not understand the meaning of do not struggle.

"It's useless to resist, I have locked your powers using [Chilling Touch] and [Dark Deprivation]. Right now, you are no different than an ordinary person"

Simon slowly enunciated into the ears of the queen of the harpies. [Chilling Touch] was a skill that inserted a dark eerie aura inside the target's body corrupting their mana and slowing down its circulation.

[Dark Deprivation] on the other hand locks down the target's skills and makes them unable to use them for a short period of time.

Of course, both of these skills wouldn't have worked on a target like the queen of harpies if she wasn't in her exhausted state and hadn't let her guard down. Melinda struggled for a while but after seeing that it was futile, she came to a halt.

"Now then, shall we get down to business? Swear loyalty to me or die"

To put more force in his words, he gestured to the Valkyries who immediately understood the meaning behind his words and released their auras. The Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse did the same and so did the army of Andromedas.

The meaning behind their action was clear, if the queen of the harpies did not submit to him, he would not hesitate to kill all of her subordinates.

Given the true power of the maids that she witnessed herself, Melinda was sure that none of her subordinates would be able to handle them if they were to go all out. Her options were already sealed before she could even make a choice.

Submit or watch her subordinates be killed, that's what the demon was telling her. And from her understanding of the demon, she knew that he wouldn't hesitate to do so.

However, if she submitted to him, wouldn't it mean that everything that she had worked hard for all these years would be taken away from her? She would no longer be one of the seven kings of the forest.

Seeing the Queen of the Harpies dilly-dally, Simon snapped his fingers and the Andromedas immediately took out their weapons and locked onto their targets.

The Harpies did not look like they had the state of mind to fight when their queen was captured by the enemy. As such, it would be easy for the Andromedas to sweep the floor with them.

"Alright... I submit" the cannon on the arms of the Andromedas were just about to fire when Melinda spoke in a low dispirited tone.

Clearly, it was difficult for her to arrive at that decision; however, now that she had said it, she weirdly felt relaxed and at peace. As if a huge burden had been lifted from her shoulders.

"My Queen... please don't worry about us. We are willing to lay our lives down if it is for your sake" The harpies hurriedly shouted. It really looked like they were willing to lay their lives down if it meant that their queen wouldn't have to worry about them.

Looking at that display of loyalty, even Simon was a little impressed.

"I have already made my decision" Melinda however, rebuked them with a stern tone. She might be a calculating and ambitious woman, but she did indeed care for her subordinates.

Before the harpies could say anything further, Melinda cut them off and spoke towards the demon who still had a death grip on her.

"There I have submitted. You don't have any reason to kill them anymore right?".

Simon did not reply, he gave a wicked smile made a small cut on his finger and started drawing some cryptic lines on the air. The red lines drawn from his blood quickly formed into some demonic seal and floated in front of Simon.

Once the seal was completed, Simon finally opened his mouth "This is the Blood Demon Contract that only the true Demon Nobles can evoke. Once you make the oath with the blood demon inside this seal, I'll accept your loyalty".

Looking at that seal, Melinda's eyes widened, she felt a strong compelling power from that seal. Although she did not know what a Blood Demon Contract was, she had no doubt in her mind that once she made an oath with this seal she would never be able to scheme against or backstab the demon.

Aldebaran had specifically cautioned him not to let his guard down until she completed the seal as such, Simon was being very thorough. Even if the Queen of Harpies had verbally sworn her loyalty to him, it meant nothing unless enforced by a seal or contract.

The Blood Demon Contract was the stronger and more powerful version of the Blood Contract that he used on the Deep Sea Alligator King. Even for a being like the Queen of Harpies, breaking such a contract would be extremely foolish since she would suffer a severe repercussion from doing so.

Therefore, unless the Queen of Harpies made an oath with the Blood demon contract he had no intention of loosening his grip nor ordering his subordinates to stand down.

As if understanding that, Melinda dejectedly accepted her fate.

"How do I make the oath?" she asked.

"It's simple, extend your hand towards the blood demon in the centre of the seal and feed it some of your blood" Simon answered.

When Melinda did as she was told and extended her hand towards the blood demon who bit her finger and slowly sucked her blood. Next, the Blood Demon Contract started glowing with a glaring crimson light and seeped into the skin of the harpy queen and disappeared.

Only after he saw the contract is completed, did Simon release Melinda who coughed severely trying to catch her breath.

"My queen..." the moment she was released, the nearby harpies flocked to her in concern. Seeing the deep print on her neck, they couldn't help but glare at the demon with hatred.

Simon did not react to their glares and instead declared in a loud stern voice.

"From this day forth, the clan of Harpy is a vessel clan of mine and all of you are my subordinates. If any of you have a problem with that, step forward".

"You..." one of the two calamity class harpy was just about to step forward, when they were stopped by Melinda.

"We the clan of harpies accept your rule from this day forward" She declared bowing her head.

With the Queen of Harpies personally bowing her, even though the Harpy clan looked unwilling, they had no choice but to bow their head too.

"Good, now that the hierarchy has been established, I shall immediately give you your first orders...".

With the queen of the harpies now subdued by him, he told her about his various plans and the future he had in mind for the harpies.

Up until now, he had only shown them the stick, now it was time for him to give them the carrot. If Simon wanted the continued loyalty of the clan of harpies, he had to show them a beautiful future, one that was far more glorious than their current one.

Of course, only a small number of Harpies who were the personal guard of Melinda and Simon's own subordinates had the opportunity to attend the discussion. The rest were sent back to their post.

The discussion took a long time and by the time they cemented out all the details, the sun had already set. Also, it needs to be mentioned that by the time Simon finished telling them about his plans, the attitude of the harpies towards him had also changed.

Although they did not completely trust everything that he said, they were at least satisfied by the fact that Simon did not have any intention of ruling them instead of their queen. He did not impose any new rules or regulations on them and allowed them to live just like they have been up until now.

Basically, Simon had given them a free rein to govern themselves. Of course, he made sure that they aided him whenever he required their help.

Other than that fact, he had strained on one particular condition.

"You want me to allow these golems to mine in some areas of my territory?" Melinda asked pointing her finger at the Andromedas who were waiting on standby on the mountaintop.

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"Not these ones per se but the ones I'll be sending later. So yeah, that's right" Simon nodded his head.

According to the survey of the land that the Revenant Crows made on the territory of the harpies, their soil contained large deposits of Mythril. A metal that ranked very high on the list of mystical metals that possessed uncanny sturdiness.

Because it was extremely difficult for such kinds of high ranking metals to form, only a few areas rich in mystical energy can form them. And the territory of the Harpies happens to be one of those areas.

Although Dungeon Laplace was making steady progress towards that area, it was still a little away from producing Mythril.

The mining and acquisition of large quantities of Mythril would no doubt become an immense factor in producing more and higher models of the Andromedas and upgrading the factories of the [Workshop].

Not only that, the possibility of the creation of other versions of warmachines, also depended on the mining of the Mythril. As such, Simon did not want to waste this opportunity and start mining them.

The clan of harpies also knew that their territory was rich in a certain kind of metal. The armours of the Queen of the Harpies and a few other personal guards of hers seemed to be made of Mythril too.

Melinda had no qualms with Simon mining their areas. Rather even if she had, she had no choice but to suppress it down.

Finished discussing everything that he needed to, Simon glanced towards Annette who immediately sent a message to Bea to open a gate at their location.

As Bea had already been notified about it, it didn't take her long to create a gate.

Seeing a spatial gate slowly form in front of them, Melinda and the other harpies couldn't help but get stunned.

Space Magic was after all very rare and not often does one get to see it. Not only that, the fact that the demon could command someone who could use space magic, made them re-evaluate him in their minds.

"Let us leave"

Simon and his subordinates proceeded towards the gate. Just as he was about to step into the portal Simon remembered something and turned around.

"Ah! that's right. Give me that seed the ogre king gave you. As the first benefit for carrying out my orders, I shall make the seed bloom into a brand new Six Nether Flower" He declared with a smile.

Just as Simon had expected, the moment he said that Melinda made a face that was quite a sight to see.

"Y-you can do that?" There was disbelief, expectation, anxiousness and even a little hope in her eyes.

"Of course, even if it is a seed formed from the residual energy, I should be able to grow it into a flower in my dungeon" Simon replied. His words were based on the fact that those species in his dungeon would be able to grow it.

"This..." Melinda seemed to be hesitating, even though she had become the subordinate of the demon, she had yet to fully trust him.

"Well, it's up to you whether you chose to believe me or not. The seed is of no use in your hand whereas, I on the other hand can grow it into a flower. If even that is not enough for you to believe me then I can tell you that I have no use for the flower. One of my subordinates will deliver it to you once you complete your orders".

Simon didn't wait for the other party, he lifted his foot and was about to step into the portal when.

"Hold up, I'll give it to you. It is just as you said, it is useless in my hand. If you can grow it into a flower then I have no qualms giving it to you" Melinda spoke walking closer to Simon.

"Mister Demon Noble can take it from here"...

"From where?"...

"From here" Melinda pointed at her ample cleavage between her armour. The volume of those mounds and the way they were emphasised by her clothing, caused everyone from Simon's side to be taken aback.

Thinking that he heard incorrectly, Simon blinked his eyes a few times before they became weird. What was this woman thinking? She couldn't be trying to scheme something at this point, could she?

While Simon thought that Melinda was trying to play some tricks on him, the Valkyries who saw the action of the Harpy Queen arrived at a different conclusion.

"This Bitch!!" Annette and the others grit their teeth and glared at Melinda causing the latter to flinch. She hurriedly stopped with her teasing and took out a ruby coloured seed from her bosom.

After the demon and his group left, Melinda continued to stare at the fading gate before making a dissatisfied face.

"He is quite the catch. No wonder those females always surround him. Perhaps it might not be too bad to work under him".

Main Floor, White Palace...

"Welcome back Master" The moment Simon stepped out of the gate, he was greeted by Bea who opened the gate for him and the jubilant voice of two children who immediately hugged him like baby koalas.

"Yeah, I'm back Bea, Maybell, Theodore"

Simon greeted his subordinates. He picked up the two children who appeared to be around ten or eleven years old and headed towards the Main Hall.

While on his way, he played with the two children who filled the place with their laughter and giggle.

The two children who were getting a free ride on his arms, were twins. Maybell Bloodrite was a petite little girl with short black, pale white skin and blood coloured eyes. She had dark eyelashes, a beautiful face and small lips that hid her tiny fangs which appeared whenever she smiled.

She had a cat ear accessory on her head and carried a cute plushie that looked like a humanoid snowman on her at all times. Her dress was reminiscent of the gothic culture. She wore a black dress with red frills and stockings. Her upper body was dressed in a tailored jacket decorated with red laces.

Theodore Bloodrite on the other hand was a boy with a cheerful and mischievous smile. He had short black and blood coloured eyes just like his sister. He was dressed in clothes which made him look like a child aspiring to be a magician.

He wore a black top hat, a white shirt and a crimson black vest that seemed to have been made of some mysterious material over. Below, he had a matching set of black trousers and pair of black shoes. And at last, he wore a reversible red-black cape.

What was common about the twins apart from their looks was their uncanny pale white skin and their frigid cold bodies. Simon felt his arms go cold just by carrying them for a little while.

Apart from that, both the twins looked extremely innocent and adorable. However, one shouldn't be fooled by their appearance after all, the twins weren't just ordinary people, but Two of the Twelve Powerful Heroes that Simon had created while building the game.

Not only that, they were the [S] rank vampires, the Antediluvian Ancestors reigning at the very top of the Vampire hierarchy.

They were summoned by Simon from that mysterious abyss of his [Main Menu] when he used six emblems at once. The moment he summoned them, a huge commotion occurred inside his dungeon.

Monsters and adventurers started fainting and a powerful quake shook the dungeon. It was so devastating that deep gullies started forming in the tower town causing mass panic.

Fortunately, the commotion died down after a short while. Nevertheless, this incident is still spoken about by the adventurers whenever they go for a drink or dive inside the dungeon.

Given the high rank of the twins, they were naturally very powerful. However, because of the bugged option of his menu, they were summoned with a part of their strength sealed just like the Valkyries.

Though that being said their levels were still in the upper 800's and strength wise, they were second only to Irene.

Carrying Maybell and Theodore, Simon arrived at the main hall where all of his subordinates were waiting for him.

"Welcome back... how was your trip?" Irene asked sitting opposite him.

Simon took a sip of the tea that Annette poured for before he started explaining the incredible events he went through in the harpy's territory.

"I can't believe you managed to subdue one of the Seven Kings all on your own. That was an incredible stroke of luck".

It was as Irene had said, if the Harpy Queen wasn't exhausted after using her [Evil Eyes] already, it would have been impossible for Simon alone to subdue her.

"Though you subdued her, it couldn't be said that you won against her. Nevertheless, a win is a win. With this you have subdued one of the seven kings" Irene commented.

"Yeah" With the Queen of the Harpies out of the equation, there were only six more kings to go. Close to three years have already passed since he made the seven years agreement with Aldebaran.

He had already reached the rank of Demon Earl from a Demon Baron since then. According to the agreement, he needs to reach the rank of Demon Duke within the remaining four years and subdue the other Six kings.

Although still a little farfetched, at the rate he was growing, it didn't seem that impossible anymore.

"Ungggh!!... you had your time, now switch places with me!!" Cecilia clamoured.

While Simon and Irene were discussing some serious stuff, the children were being boisterous. It looked like Cecilia came across an argument with the twins once again.

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They were both sitting on Simon's legs and enjoying his pampering. As such, Cecilia who got jealous couldn't help but argue with the twins to get down.

Theodore: "Nope don't wanna~"

Maybell: "No"...

Cecilia wanted the twins to get down so she could sit on Simon's lap herself and the twins who didn't want to obey. It was like a daily occurrence and nothing new to anyone.

"Hehe, we were the first to greet master therefore we are allowed to sit on his lap as long as we want. If Princess Cecilia has any problems, she can just beat it"

Theodore commented in an attempt to further incite Cecilia.

"Alright you two, it's time to get down" Simon put the twins who tried to protest down from his lap.

"What did I tell you? Cecilia is older than you, so you should listen to her" Though he said that, Cecilia was only one year older than the twin so it couldn't be said that there was much difference in their mentality. Thus they always tend to argue and bicker even about the smallest of things.

"That's right, it is as big brother said. I'm your elder. Besides, I'm the Second Guardian and you guys are the Fourth and the Fifth. So you should listen to me" Cecilia stressed particularly on the words second fourth and fifth to make the twins realise their place.

Suffering a powerful blow, Theodore nor Maybell had anything to respond with. It was as Cecilia had said, they were appointed as the Fourth and Fifth Guardians by the dungeon while Cecilia was second. In terms of seniority, she was older than them.

"Ahh.. dammit" Theodore shouted and ran out of the room.

"Eh? Brother wait for me" and Maybell ran after him.

"Hehe" Now triumphant, Cecilia flashed a V sign.

"That was impressive Princess Cecilia, the way you handled those too" Alice who watched the entire scuffle praised from the side.

"Hehe, when we were still living in the old forest spring village, I used to play with such stubborn kids. I know exactly how to handle them" Cecilia puffed her chest and replied.

"Hoh, as expected of Princess Cecilia. You should teach me that sometimes... ouch!! Elder sister, why did you hit me?" Alice cried out in grief after getting a karate chop on her head.

"Silence. Don't create more mess for the master" Annette chided. Mentally, Alice too wasn't far apart from those children.

Looking at the rowdy crowd in his main hall, Simon shook his head and smiled. The Main Floor which was all lonely and silent before, was starting to get lively with the appearance of these people.

Each and every one of them were his precious subordinates that gave him a sense of belonging.

"Sigh... alright Cecilia, go and make up with Theodore and Maybell" Irene spoke. Now that there were so many children among the subordinates of Simon, it was up to Irene and Annette to play the role of the Elder sister.

"But"...

"No Buts, go and do it. Aren't you all friends?"

Cecilia seemed like she had something to say but against Irene's stern eyes, she could only nod her head and do as she was told.

"Alice you go too"...

"Yes".

Now that the hall had descended back into silence, Simon and Irene started discussing more important topics.

"So, will it be alright to leave the King of the Ogres as it is? Isn't he creating an alliance to siege the dungeon? Although with the current level of your subordinates, I don't think they will be able to create any storms, but the tower town might still get destroyed like the time with the orcs"

Irene stated her concerns. She had now fully adapted to her role as the proxy dungeon master.

"Maybe we should have destroyed them after all, Master" Bea added uttering some dangerous words. From the serious expression on her face, it doesn't seem like she was joking.

"We cannot do that"...

"Why not?"

Annette answered for her clueless sister.

"For a while now, the Seven Kings have maintained a balance of sorts in the Ghastly Winding Forest where they keep each other in check. Now imagine what would happen to this equilibrium if one of the Seven King clans is destroyed and that too by a new powerhouse that has recently emerged in the eastern region of the forest?" ...

"Um, the balance would break?" ...

"That's right; however, that is not all. The other Seven kings with the exception of Aldebaran would see the dungeon as a threat and join forces to destroy it first" Annette hit the nail.

What Simon was worried about was precisely that. Due to making that agreement with Aldebaran, he was in a position where he couldn't kill the Seven Kings nor can he use the power of his subordinates to subdue them. He has to do it himself.

But after fighting the Queen of the Harpies Simon realised that he was still far away from contending with one. He needed to get stronger and rank up and for that, he needed time. Aldebaran had given him seven years of time (now only four remaining) but it meant nothing if the seven kings joined forces to attack him first.

As such, Simon wanted to avoid such a scenario in any case.

"They dare" Bea fumed. Although she wasn't created to be the smartest, even she understood what it meant for the seven kings to come together.

"That's alright, I have played my own card so that something like that doesn't happen" Simon revealed a wicked smile.

Subduing the Queen of the Harpy this early had immensely benefitted him. Now not only can he play it safe, he wouldn't have to worry about the Seven Kings attacking him any soon.

Plus with the production of more Revenant Crows, in time he will be able to monitor everything that goes around in this Ghastly Winding Forest.

Simon did not say anything further, after explaining everything he needed to, he got up and headed for the [Training Floor]. If not for the matter this time was urgent, Simon wouldn't have left his training. He was about to grasp a new power that he had been working for weeks now.

Seeing him eager to dive back into training right after he just returned, Irene couldn't help but display a helpless smile. They were just about to teleport to the [Training Floor] when Simon remembered something.

"Ah!! Hold up, I need to go to the garden".

The Main Floor had many areas, one of these areas was the orchard or one could also call it the garden that Irene and Cecilia had created. As he stood in front of the garden, Simon couldn't help but get taken aback by the marvelling seen that lay ahead in front of him.

The picturesque pond of serenity was one thing, but the garden created by Irene and Cecilia wasn't any short of being a legendary sight. A vast field filled with varieties of flowers, shrubs, vines and speckles of light made for an enthralling scene.

What's more, after being nourished by the mystical rain, many of the flowers have evolved to become legendary flowers and plants that are extremely rare in the surface world. even if you pick one flower from here blindly, it worth would be no less than the Six Nether Flower.

When Simon's body was destroyed by the spatial storm and he lay unconscious on his bed, many of the herbs that helped sustain his life, were taken from here. Many of the items here are ingredients for High tier potions and miraculous elixirs.

As such, if any Alchemist saw this sight, they would immediately faint. The garden created by the girls was one of its kind.

A rejuvenating feeling embraced Simon as soon as he came to the garden. He felt like his mind calming down and his body heal every second just by being exposed to it. That said, he was not here for flower viewing.

Simon made his way further inside the garden where he saw a row of huge flowers in the shape of Rafflesia, popping out of the ground. They were huge, compared to the ones on earth, they were ten times bigger.

However the biggest unique point of these flowers was not their huge size, but the fact that they housed something. Each of the flowers had something moving around inside them.

When Simon moved closer to the flowers, the being that was inside the flower, popped their heads out perceiving his presence.

They had green skin, long ears and hair like leaves and a humanoid body that resembled a woman. In terms of appearance, they looked closer to an elf or a fairy.

However, they had their own distinctive features that separated them from the other species in that they are tied to their homes. In this case, the flowers in which they reside.

The creatures that were looking at Simon shyly, were none other than Dryads, the caretaker of the woods. They were born after Cecilia activated her skills and bestowed a large amount of vitality inside those flowers saying that the garden needed someone to take care of them.

At that time, Simon couldn't even have imagined that she would end up reviving a species that had almost gone extinct in the surface world. Of course, it was a pleasant and welcoming surprise for his dungeon.

With the addition of the dryads, the Main Floor now had a caretaker to look after its garden. Additionally, these Dryads were extremely loyal to Cecilia who in return indoctrinated them to be loyal to him. As such, Simon did not have to worry about them becoming hostile to him.

Chapter 635 635- Yin Yang Koi Fish

That being said, the motive behind him coming to the garden was also to meet the dryads.

"I have a favour to ask of you all, can you grow a flower from this seed?"

Simon took out the ruby coloured seed he got from Melinda. It was the seed of the Six Nether Flower.

One of the Dryads took the seed from his hand, inspected it for a second or two before nodding its head. It appeared that it was possible to grow a flower with this incomplete seed, as expected of a race that is held as the caretaker of the woods.

With this taken care of, Simon no longer had to worry about eating his own words. Although at that time he said to Melinda that he would be able to grow the seed into a Six Nether Flower, he was not entirely sure.

However, with the confident nod of the dryads, he didn't have to worry about it anymore. Simon could have also gone to the Forest Spring Spirits for this task but he felt like the Dryads more suited.

Of course it was not like the Forest Spring Spirits are unable to grow the seed, after all, the two species had similar kinds of powers. However, it must be noted that a Forest Spring Spirit is blessed by the nature and has the ability to control and produce all kinds of things associated with it.

Whereas, a dryad's power is focused more towards the control of plants, trees, flowers and such. It is said that the communication they hold with the flora, is very strong.

A forest spring spirit with the exception of royal like Cecilia, is unable to understand the words of a plant or a tree. As could be seen when the forest spirits had trouble understanding the infant spirit tree. However, that was not the case for dryads whose abilities shine in this forte.

They could perfectly communicate with the flora as if it was a part of their own. In a way, it could be said that the dryads were the assistants of the Forest Spring Spirits who maintain the forest for them.

As such, Simon felt like it would be better if he gave this task to the dryads.

After handing out the seed, Simon was just about to leave the place, when he saw the clouds above rain down mystical energy. This was a part of the endless mystical cycle of condensation, precipitation and evaporation.

With his dungeon ranking up, the numerous Mystical Veins underneath the Main Floor, had evolved into Heart Veins. As such, the density of mana had reached a point where the condensation of mystical energy was no longer confined to the area near the vicinity of the pond.

Instead, the clouds now covered almost the entirety of the Main Floor. That was not all, the Heart Veins contained such enormous amount of mystical energy, that they started leaking out of the ground of the Main Floor in a spectacular display of light.

The presence of the abundant amount of mana was what nurtured the various treasures present on the Main Floor.

As Simon marvelled the changes that occurred on his Main Floor in these past ten months, out from the corner of his eyes he saw two balls of light, one black and one white, jump in and out of the clouds as if swimming.

These intertwining black and white objects might look like balls of light, but they are not. If one looked carefully, they would be able to see that inside each of the two lights was a fish. One black and one white, the lights were instead coming from these fish.

Yin Yang Koi Fish... that was what Irene called them. That's right, these fish were summoned from that mysterious abyss like option of his Main Menu when he used two emblems of his dungeon.

Simon was hoping that he would be able to summon the other heroes after the twins, but instead, he got these fish.

So what did these Yin Yang Fish do? Were they as powerful as the twelve heroes? Simon did not know, the evolved skill of analysis, [Appraisal] did not work on these fish.

When he asked Irene what these fish were? She told him that they were the Yin Yang Koi fish while making a face full of surprise.

Just like the time when she first saw Simon summoning the Null Elemental, this time too, she wore that rare stunned disbelief expression. She told him how she couldn't believe he was able to summon the thing that should have been swimming in the river of samsara and started looking at the Abyss in a bizarre way.

After that, she started talking about things like how the Yin Yang Koi fish represents the duality of the world, balance and harmony.

Things that are opposite and at the same time inseparable and forces like black and white, darkness and light, positive and negative, male and female, good and bad... She kept going on.

"In any case, it is an extremely good symbol and one that will have a great impact in your destiny. The fact that they came here from the River of Samsara, means that they had seen through your past, present and future and have acknowledged you".

"You might not be able to comprehend their importance right now, but in the future, you will surely do. Additionally, and I can't stress this word any more, but 'protect' them at any cost. The Yin Yang koi Fish, are now deeply connected with your fate and destiny. As such, they must never come to harm at any cost. So protect them".

With Irene asserting so much, Simon could only nod his head at that time. He did not understand how they were related to his fate and destiny but what he did understand was that something very bad would happen to him if these fish were ever harmed as such he must protect them at all cost.

"Even if you say to protect them, how can I do that with them moving all around my dungeon" Simon muttered to himself as he looked at the Yin Yang koi Fish swimming in the mystical clouds.

The concept of spatial laws did not apply to them as such, they could move all around his dungeon. Right now, they were here, but soon they will start swimming towards a different place.

No one can control the movements of the Yin Yang Koi Fish. So how do he protect them? Fortunately for him, Irene told him that she would take care of their protection for the time being.

However, Irene was already busy as she was now, he felt bad to pile up even more work on her shoulders. That being said, he could only leave their protection to her until such a time came where he could guarantee their safety.

"I need to summon the other heroes"

That was the only natural conclusion he could come to. If Simon had more of the Twelve Heroes with him, he could assign one of them with the protection of the Yin yang Koi Fish all the time.

That way, even if they were to swim up to the upper floors, he wouldn't have to worry.

The Valkyries were sworn to their maid duties, the twins might be powerful; however, they were still a child. Their carefree and playful nature would only serve to worry Simon further if he assigned them with the protection of the Yin Yang koi fish.

"The best option should be her huh" Simon had the image of a particular hero in mind which was the best person for this task.

"Well with the option being as unpredictable and random, who knows when I'll be able to summon all the Twelve Heroes"

It might take him years or even a decade. Nevertheless, he at least knew that it was possible to summon the Twelve Heroes from the [????????] option.

Simon watched as the Yin Yang koi fish move away from the main floor and got moving too. The next time he appeared, he was already on the [Training Floor]. Irene was waiting for him there.

"It took you a while, did you meet with the Dryads?" she asked.

"Yeah, it turns out that they can grow that incomplete seed into a flower" Simon responded. Irene knew that he was planning to use the Six Nether Flower as the carrot to move the heart of the Queen of the Harpies and slowly instil loyalty into her.

"Anyways, how did you feel when fighting the queen of the harpies?"...

"I could tell that I have definitely grown; however, there was still a definite gap between us" Simon responded after recalling his battle with Melinda.

"That's obvious, her level is far higher than yours. Even if she is the weakest among the seven kings when it comes to pure physical strength, the fact that you can stand your ground against her means that you can fight an opponent one rank higher than you without falling into a disadvantage. Plus if we also train your magic control and mana, you might even be able to defeat them".

Irene clarified, she was more clear than anyone on how high Simon's ceiling was. He not only had a better foundation than most beings out there, he even had the ability to freely rank up without worrying about the restrictions of the world.

Just these couple factors alone made him one of the most unique beings in this world. However, with the addition of his training in magic, he might really become an existence that can jump ranks in a battle.

Chapter 636 636- Invitation

When Simon left for the territory of the harpies, Irene had barred Simon from using his magic even if he came to clash against the queen of the harpies. The reason for that was because she wanted him to realise how far he could go just by relying on his physical combat and skills.

"Now then, let us start your magic training. Create a basic fireball for now"

As Irene instructed, Simon create a basic fireball. However, due to his mana now being in a state of liquid, the fireball he created was the size of a boulder. This was not done intentionally but was instinctive.

"Alright, you can disperse that magic. Now, do you know why you are able to cast magic so easily? Something that came to humans and other races after years of training?" Irene asked looking at him with those crystal blue eyes of hers.

Now that she mentioned it, Simon had never thought about how he was able to use magic up until this moment. The moment he was reincarnated in this world, he was attacked by a direwolf.

To repel the monster away, Simon instinctively used magic without even thinking about how he did it.

Wait, there was something that he knew. At that time when death was staring into his eyes, he heard a fiery voice beckon to him to make the direwolf disappear.

If it was the previous Simon before he became a Demon Earl, he might not have understood it. However, the current him was different. After ranking up and grasping some of the essence of the mystical energy, many profundities that eluded him before, came to him naturally.

Thus he knew what that phenomenon was.

"It looks like you have arrived at an answer. That's right, what you heard when you used magic for the first time, was the voice of that magic itself. But have you wondered why you were able to hear that voice?" Irene questioned.

"Because I'm a Demon Noble..." The Demon Nobles were one of the race that were extremely adept in magic.

"That right, what would have otherwise taken other species years of practice, just came to you naturally. However, this also means that you have gone through no training. You might have a better understanding of magic than other species; however, your control and skill over the magic are still lacking".

"For example, the fireball magic that you just cast, how much mana did you use up for that?"

Hearing Irene's question Simon arched his brows. His MP was well over 300,000 now. And thanks to his skills and body's natural ability to recover, it didn't take him any time to recover the mana he expended casting the novice tier magic.

Nevertheless, he was still able to tell how much mana he had used to cast that fireball.

"Around 300 MP" Simon responded.

Irene nodded her head and added "That's a lot counting the fact that you possess the [Minimal Mana Consumption] and your [Mana Lines] evolved into [Superior Mana Lines]. In your current state, you should be able to cast a magic like fireball by expending less than 100 MP. Try it".

Simon did as he was told and cast a fireball. This time though the fire ball was a lot less big, about the size of a football. However, what was surprising was that it took him more than 300 MP to cast the same fireball he had cast a few seconds earlier.

"Do you see your lacking control in magic now? You cannot even cast the same magic using a fixed amount of mana every time. Not only that, there is too much mana wastage in your casting. For your magic training, we will start by focusing on your magic control"

Irene spoke in a strict tone. After training with her for ten months, Simon was already used to that side of her.

With Irene monitoring his progress, Simon started training. He was forced to repeatedly cast the novice tier fireball magic again and again. It was only after seeing the various size of the same fireball, did it dawn onto Simon how serious his lack over magic control was.

He had cast over a hundred fireballs however none of the fireballs was of the same size and mana output, not even one.

There was no mistake in casting, all of the fireball was the same magic. However, each of them had a random amount of mana bestowed into them. His magic control was so all over the place that it wasn't even funny anymore.

One fireball magic even took him more than 1000 MP to cast. That was simply wastage of mana.

"The only reason you were able to reach the Advance tier in some magic, is because of your race and the large Mana Pool that you possessed made up for your severe lack over magic control".

"You might have already realised it by now, but you have reached a bottleneck in magic. Your Amalgamation magic is not progressing further. Even though you have reached the advanced tier in some of the attributes of the mana, you can only use amalgamation magic up to the intermediate tier".

"You might have wondered about that too. If you want to progress further, than you will have to perfect your flaws, and magic control is just one of them".

With Irene throwing facts at his face, Simon could only nod his head. It was not like she said anything false, he had really been relying on his racial advantages to cast magic since the beginning.

It was not bad per se, but it would not take him much further. Its true that demon Nobles were one of the race much more proficient in magic. However, any weapon can become blunt if abused too much.

One needed to sharpen their weapon from time to time to make sure the weapon can perform its task. It was the same in this regard too, Simon might have been born with a sharp weapon that can slice through many things.

However, it meant nothing if he didn't continuously improve himself and just relied on that factor alone. Simon understood this point very well, and thus continued to train like a madman.

That said, change is a gradual process and not something that could be seen in one day. Unless one is a genius, it would take others a long time.

Irene had created a strict training routine for Simon. For as long as he trained, he would have to work just as much. The task of the dungeon master wasn't going to complete on its own.

Rest? That was a luxury, a demon noble's body was different than a human, it did not need much sleep or rest.

Currently, Simon was seated in a room inside the White Palace that he designated as his new office. With how boisterous the main hall had become, he could no longer work there. He needed a different room to attend to his work.

Even after assigning the valkyries and the twins their own rooms, the white palace was big enough to have plenty of spare rooms. Of course, in the near future with more and more subordinates joining him, even with these many rooms it might fall short.

At that time, he could just add more rooms. The palace was an item that was purchased from the [shop] and was the last defensive line that fortified and nourished the dungeon core. It can be upgraded with the dungeon points to not only be more fortified, but also more spacious.

Right now, after Simon upgraded the White Palace twice, the dungeon core that was sitting in the basement of the palace, was secured by three layers of arrays that was not any weaker than the one Irene had laid out in the Forest Spirit village.

Of course, the majority of the upgrade cost went into those arrays that was the most important part of the White Palace.

Fascinated by the arrays, Simon was also currently looking into that area. After his dungeon became an intermediate ranking dungeon, many items and elements in the [shop] now became available for purchase to him.

For example, it was possible for him to plant the Trees of Mana Crystals without he need of Cecilia mutating them from Mana Trees. Not only that, he could also install various types of Mineral Mountains and Mana Crystal Quarries to his dungeon.

The same was with the Arrays. Simon was now able to choose from a wide range of arrays to install in his dungeon. Of course, the higher grade ones which were the most powerful were still inaccessible to him. One could only buy those when their dungeon evolves to a high ranking dungeon.

That being said, there was still a lot of arrays to choose from for an intermediate tier dungeon.

For example, there were arrays that are strictly used for protection like the Grand Protection Array that Irene had created in the forest spirit village. The Flame Trance Array which increases the power of all types of flame magic while inside the formation.

Blizzard Array that increases the ice magic, Howling Wind Array and so on and so forth. Other than these Elemental types arrays, there were also the special types of arrays like Illusory Mist Formation that produces mist and traps anyone that enters the array inside an illusion.

Then there was also the special arrays filled with the laws of space that sends anyone that enters that area into a special realm.

Of course, these arrays wasn't all powerful, there were various tricks and techniques to break these array. However, if used masterfully, these arrays can become some really annoying objects.

Chapter 637 637- Invitation (2)

Simon could already imagine installing them on various floors of his dungeon and aggravating the adventurers to no end.

That said, there was another thing about the arrays that one needed to know. They cannot be installed just anywhere. To activate an array one needed a stable and powerful source of energy to power them.

As such, it made sense to install them in a place which has a Mystical Vein passing through underneath it. One can also substitute the energy source with mana crystals; however to power even

the weakest and the smallest of arrays, one needed tens of thousands of mana crystals above grade [3].

Given how rare and scarce mana crystals above grade [3] was, not just anyone can splurge them on the arrays. But Simon was not just any person, he was the dungeon master of Laplace, an intermediate tier dungeon.

Not only that, the resources that he has available to him, thanks to the heaven defying abilities of his subordinate, even some high ranking demon noble cannot match it.

Be it the Mystical veins inside his dungeon or the Mana crystals, he had an abundance of them. Of course not to the point of splurging freely, but he could still spare some for the activation of the arrays when needed.

The rows of Trees of Mana Crystals near the pond of serenity, which have grown from saplings to become an adult trees, were now a sight to see. They not only produce crystals grade [4] and above, but the branches of the trees are now full of mana crystals which shines with beautiful multicolour light adding to the splendour of the place.

Aside from that place, there was another area on the Main Floor called the Mana Crystal Forest as well as other floors with Trees of Mana Crystals planted. Even now, they were steadily producing Mana crystals to meet the growing needs of the dungeon.

If he also added the numerous quarries into the mix, dungeon Laplace had plenty of them. As such, Simon could freely install the arrays in any place he wants without worrying much about the expenditure.

He was just looking forward to how he could make the most out of the arrays when suddenly, he received a mental communication from one of the [Helpers].

"Is this Jarred? For you to call me directly... is there a problem?"...

"Yes my lord, there is a situation here on the 58th floor and we don't know how to quite handle it" Jarred replied from the other end of the communication.

"Is the situation dangerous?" Simon asked.

Seeing that the other party did not reply, he stopped what he was doing and added "I'm heading over there, make sure you guys do not get involved before I arrive".

Simon ended the communication, got up from his seat and immediately headed over to the 58th floor.

58th floor, a vast wildland. Concealed at the centre of the floor by those tall overgrown trees, was a passageway that led towards a dark pavement inside.

Simon teleported near the place and immediately spotted his subordinates who were waiting for him.

"My lord" they all kneeled the moment they saw him. Simon nodded his head in acknowledgement and asked them about the situation.

Jarred who was the one monitoring the situation with a few new [Helpers] on the 58th floor, immediately gave him a summary.

"What?!... Hmm, so you are saying that they are not hostile?" Simon questioned.

"Yes my lord, they have been sitting there motionlessly in that place for a long time now. They do not respond even when we call out to them. It is as if their soul had already left their bodies and they are just lifeless dolls now" Jarred explained.

Hearing his words, Simon fell into contemplation. After a while, he opened his mouth and spoke.

"If its as you said, let us head inside. I want to see them myself".

Simon took the lead with the [Helpers] closely following behind and headed inside the hidden chamber. That's right, the passageway concealed within the trees on the 58th floor, was none other than a hidden chamber that Fey, Maya and the other [Helpers] had created.

'If I remember correctly, the monster guarding this place should be a Giant Earth Golem' Simon recalled as he walked forward. Since he was the dungeon master of this entire place, the traps did not activate when he stepped on them.

The same was for the [Helpers] who were the inhabitants recognised by the dungeon.

Soon after walking through a winding long path, the passageway expanded to reveal a giant chamber in front.

"They are inside my lord" Jarred stated.

Simon stepped forward and the huge metallic gates of the chamber slowly strut open to reveal an enormous dark chamber inside. At the end of the chamber, two huge blue lights could be seen penetrating through the darkness.

Those were the eyes of the Giant Earth Golem whose figure was obscured by the darkness. Had it been an intruder and not him, those eyes would have immediately turned from blue to red and the door behind him would have been shut closed trapping him inside.

The fate of those trapped inside this chamber need not be imagined since it was right in front of his eyes. A group of adventurers, who dared to enter this chamber blinded by their greed, lay splattered and dead all across the ground in front of him.

It was a bloody sight with gore that had been turned into a paste by something heavy, littering the chamber. A nauseating smell filled the place.

At the centre of the floor, on top of a small stone pedestal was an exquisite looking treasure box that glimmered even within the darkness. That was the objective of the adventurers; unfortunately, their life came to a premature end when they met the guardian of this chamber, the earth golem.

Simon shifted his eyes away from the treasure chest and looked around. His crimson eyes quickly spotted the shadows cuddling around a corner of the chamber. The reason why he was here, was because of these people.

As Simon approached closer, he was able to see their appearance, more clearly.

"Demihumans!!" there was no other way to describe them. There was a total of six demihumans in the chamber. They were all dressed in a clothing of a slave and had collars marked with runes on their neck indicating their status.

To put it bluntly, these demihumans were the slaves of the adventurers who perished here.

"It looks like their mind have been broken. Their bodies might just as well be soulless dolls now. No wonder the Earth Golem did not kill them" Simon commented as he observed the condition of the demihumans.

Two male Weretigers, one Cienthrope, one Elf, one Dark Elf and one Cat kin. Other than the two male Weretigers all the other demihumans were females.

The bodies of the two tiger kins were battered and bruised indicating that they were badly abused. The females on the other hand were forced to wear revealing clothes and from the many scar marks that their bodies bore, it wasn't hard to guess that they have been defiled and were reduced to a plaything of the adventurers.

What sickened Simon was the fact that these demihumans have been subjected to the revolting hobbies of their masters.

The two male Weretiger had their tails cut, the female elf who were known for their long beautiful blonde hair, had her head shaved. The female dark elf had her face scarred by acid, the cat kin had her mouth mutilated so she cannot purr anymore and the cienthrope girl had her ears cut.

Each of them were subjected to cruel torture and suffered a horrendous life up until now. It was no wonder that they were mentally broken and their eyes looked hollow. How could one have the will to leave even after that?

Even Simon had a trace of pity for them. These kinds of acts went beyond his liking.

Sigh... he sighed a deep breath of air and unsheathed his weapon. Simon felt sorry for these demihumans and as such, he was going to free them of their misery. Death would be the best salvation for them.

Just as Simon was about to swing his sword to kill them in one swift motion, Jarred opened his mouth and asked—

"Is my lord going to kill them?".

Simon stopped his movement and turned towards Jarred who was looking at the demihumans with pitying eyes. No, his eyes had much deeper emotions within them.

'Is he perhaps empathising with these demihumans?'. It was not only him, the others [Helpers] had similar emotions in their eyes while looking at the demihumans.

Ah! It was only now that Simon realised that the Forest Spring Spirits had suffered a similar fate throughout history. Once they are captured, they are either killed for their orbs or made a slave of some high ranking individual who paid a hefty sum for them.

If Simon had not saved the Forest Spring Spirits that night, perhaps their ending would have been even more miserable than the demihumans.

Simon fell into a dilemma, he could see the despairing eyes of the demihumans that sought death, liberation from this misery. However, after thinking about the Forest Spring Spirits, he felt like he couldn't kill them. T

hat said, letting these demihumans to live in their current state, could it even be called living? Haa... what should he do? Simon suddenly felt like the sword in his hand become heavier making him unable to swing it anymore.

He sheathed his sword back, scratched his hair and contemplated for a good few minutes. Unable to come up with an answer even after that, he decided to... "Take them to prison".

He decided to keep them there for the time being.

Chapter 639 639- Invitation (4)

Simon would like to ask the same question.

As he glanced at the door, he noticed Irene and the Valkyries standing near the gate. They seemed to be observing the thing.

"You are here. Quickly check out this letter, I found it stuck to the gate"

When Simon arrived before the gate, Irene passed him a letter.

Simon took the letter in his hand and observed it. The material of this letter seemed to be very unique and old. At the centre of the letter was an ancient seal that seemed to have been forged with blood.

The moment Simon touched the seal, it bit his finger and swallowed some of his blood. Right afterwards, the letter flew out of his hand and started shaking fiercely.

As Simon and the others looked on in astonishment, the letter turned itself into pieces before bursting out into flames. The ashes then composed themselves into the contents of the letter.

[To all Demonkinds.

I Grimvul invite you all to the most anticipated event in all of the years- The Auction of the Damned. It will open at midnight one week from now, so make sure to arrive on time.

Dress to impress, for this is no ordinary gathering. This year, I have brought you all the finest of things from the thousands of worlds and the vast reaches of the universe. So make sure you prepare plenty of DP for the upcoming bidding war that is about to begin.

To participate in the auction simply pass through the gates that will open on the day of the auction. Please note, every demon can only bring a total of two guests with them. I look forward to seeing you all at the Auction of the Damned.

Yours truly,

Merchant Grimvul].

The contents of the letter floated in front of them for a while before disappearing.

"This is..." the Valkyries looked lost, they did not know who this Grimvul was and what this auction was all about. However, how could it be possible for Simon to not know it? Being a true Demon Noble now, he was of course aware of who this Grimvul was.

"Merchant of the Damned, that's what the demon nobles call him" Simon opened his mouth and explained.

"He is a peculiar existence that is foreign to this world. He comes to Althaea every 101 years to sell his wares, artefacts and various miscellaneous things that he has collected over the years. This event is what we Demon Nobles call the Auction of the Damned".

The Valkyries nodded their heads.

"So how did this gate come here?" Annette asked.

"Merchant Grimvul is extremely secretive, no one knows where he lurks or where he holds his auctions at. Only one thing is known about him and that is many of the things he collects and sells are no doubt treasures beyond any treasures".

"You will never find anything ordinary there. Of course, the reputation of the merchant is not without reason, he is extremely scheming and if one is not careful they will find themselves completely scammed. Because of this reason, many high ranking demon nobles who had been picked clean by him, hate him and would no doubt try everything in their power to search for his location".

"That is why, nobody knows where the auction takes place, only that whoever is invited, will find this gate pop inside their dungeon that will lead them to the location of the auction" Simon answered.

Now that he had become a Demon Noble, he knew a lot of things about this world. But of course, he didn't know everything, he only knew what he knew.

"Are you planning to attend this auction?" Irene inquired from the side seemingly thinking something deeply.

Simon nodded his head "Of course, there is no reason for me to not attend. It is one of the most anticipated events that all demon nobles look forward to. From what I know of the Auction of the

Damned, it brings out very unusual items that one cannot buy from the [Shop], every time it opens. It would be foolish of me to miss out on this opportunity".

The auction of the Damned came every 101 years, if he missed this opportunity, he would have to wait another 101 years for the merchant Grimvul to visit Althaea once again.

Besides, Simon wanted to see for himself what this hype about the auction was all about and at the same time purchase a thing or two that fancied him.

Over the years, Dungeon Lapalce had produced a lot of DP. Of course, a significant amount of that went into upgrading and expanding the dungeon and some into the [Ga?????].

Nevertheless, with more and more adventurers flooding into his dungeon from the surrounding countries, the DP that his dungeon generated every day was still quite a lot.

If he compared the DP income of Laplace, it would be around that of a High ranking dungeon. The master of a dungeon of that rank, is usually a Demon Duke or higher. As such, it could be said that the DP Simon possessed, was comparable to that of a Demon Duke.

With that much amount he should be able to purchase a couple of things.

"You said that it is an event that is looked forward to by all the Demon nobles? Then doesn't it mean that all of them would be in attendance for that event? Wouldn't it be dangerous?" It looked like Irene was concerned over the safety of Simon.

A high ranking demon was still a high ranking demon, even if Simon had grown a lot in the past few years, they were demons who had lived for hundreds or even thousands of years.

When Irene mentioned that, the Valkyries too showed various faces of concern. Seeing them worry for him, Simon couldn't help but feel moved. He took a deep breath and dispersed their concerns.

"You guys need not be too worried, in the Auction the demon nobles would be too busy by the event to pay any attention to me. Besides, I do not have any grudge against any demon nobles, if I just keep a low key, nobody should bother with me".

Simon was reminded of the time when he first attended the Walpurgis that was initiated by the Demon Archdukes. At that time, he had ended up making enemies with a Demon Viscount.

But that was largely to the latter's attitude and him being an impulsive demon who newly arrived in this world and was unaware of its vastness. Simon felt like he had grown out of that shell of his, unless the opponent struck a nerve and activated his Pride Fragments, he should be good.

Moreover, the Auction of the Damned was different than the Walpurgis in that...

"Everyone would be in disguise in the event. As I told you before, many of the High ranking Demon Nobles hate Merchant Grimvul. As such, the auction will be a place where one has to come in disguise".

"Plus the arena where the auction would be held is a special place that was created by Grimvul, the demon nobles would have some sort of restriction placed over them".

That is to say, as long as he kept his distance from the others, he should be fine. Even though he explained so much, his subordinates still looked worried. To ease them up, he told them that he wouldn't be going alone.

Each invitee is allowed to bring two guests with them, as such Simon was going to bring his subordinates with him to the auction.

That being said, a new question popped up. Which two subordinates was he going to bring with him? As there was still one week left for the auction to start, Simon did not rush to come to an answer.

He went back to his normal day to day activities. In any case, they had determined that the emergence of the gate was due to the upcoming auction. He stationed a few revenant Crows to monitor the gate while he went back to attend to his work.

One day passed by just like that. On the second day, while Simon was busily training his magic control, he received a level 1 communication, a Mental Transmission from Jarred saying that the demihumans were starting to act unusually.

The six demihumans barely showed any emotions when he found them so why did they start acting unusually now?

Simon decided to go there and find it for himself. He was already on the [Training Floor], so the prison was not very far from him.

After going through an underground tunnel, Simon arrived in front of a large cavern that was divided by numerous bars and cells.

Walking towards the area where he felt the presence of the [helpers], he saw the demihumans in one of the cells. They were quietly huddled in one corner and barely moved, just like when he found them.

"You told me they are behaving unusually? I don't see any different" Simon commented looking at the demihumans.

"My lord, while I was monitoring them a while ago, I heard one of them clearly mutter something" Jarred explained pointing at one of the Weretigers.

Simon shifted his eyes to that demihuman, and pondered something for a while before heading inside the cell.

The bodies of the demihumans smelled probably because they haven't taken care of themselves in a long while. Though this did not bother Simon, he looked at all of them and crouched near the weretiger who was the only one among the group whose eyes flashed with some lucidity.

Make no mistake, the Weretiger too looked like the rest of the demihumans, soulless and broken. However, there seemed to be some kind of light flashing at the depth of his eyes.

That light although very bleak, seemed to be still struggling and fighting.

Looking at the hollow eyes of that weretiger, Simon for some reason felt like the spirit of this demihuman was still alive.

"Hey were you the one who said something earlier? Tell me, what should I do with you guys? I can liberate you from all your misery, it will be quick and painless death. Or do you still want to live?"

Simon spoke staring at the eyes of the weretiger.

The latter must have perceived something because for the first time in a while, there was some movements in those eyes.

Chapter 640 640- The Story Of A Certain Slave (Weretiger) (1)

There were some movements in those eyes, they glimmered for a second and the motionless body of the weretiger slowly showed some activity.

"R...E..." the weretiger muttered.

"RE?"...

"RE..VENG..E" ...

"Revenge?!!" Simon finally understood what the weretiger was trying to tell him.

"You want to take revenge?" Simon scoffed "Let me tell you something, I don't know who you want to take revenge on, but give it up. The way you guys are right now, forget about revenge, it would be a miracle to even call you alive".

"The best outcome would be for you guys to die, that way you all will be liberated from your misery" The demon glared at the weretiger with his piercing crimson eyes as he enunciated every word slowly.

Right afterwards though, he flashed a wicked smile and added: "That said, I like your spirit. Revenge huh, now that's a much better answer. Had you said something as boring as wanting to live, I would have left the place without bothering to come here ever again".

"But you said something much more interesting. Hehe... Revenge, that's not something a person who has given up all hopes of living would ask for. Still, the way you are right now, you cannot take your revenge"...

"H...elp... re... venge" a voice muttered from the corner.

The voice that came this time, wasn't from the weretiger but rather the Elf who had her head shaved. Her hollow eyes were stained with two teardrops that slid down her cheek.

"Help? Why should I help you? What's in there for me?" the demon questioned.

"O..ur....every... thing" the Dark Elf replied after the Elf. Since the Dark Elf's face was scarred with a substance like an acid, it was impossible to know what kind of expression she was making.

"Every... thing"...

"Every...thing"

The CatKin and the Cienrhope also joined in.

"Hehehe" Hearing their answer, the demon's wicked smile broadened even further.

"Are you guys saying that you are willing to trade everything you have to me in return for helping you take revenge?".

The demihumans all nodded their heads slowly.

"Very well, I shall take your souls in return for bestowing you power" the demon laughed before taking out something from thin air and throwing it towards the demihumans.

It was a small vial filled with some mysterious crimson coloured content.

"Drink it" Leaving behind those words, the demon got out of the cell.

"That's right, in a while, my subordinates are going to visit you and bestow upon you a very very special power. From then on, it will be on you all. Do try to survive with all of your might. I wonder how many of you will still be alive after that"

The laughter of the demon rang out inside the dark dreary cave until it completely disappeared.

"Where is this place?"

When he opened his eyes, everything had changed. He was no longer in the village. He seemed to have been brought over to some mansion of some human noble. This meant that he had been defeated.

"Noo!!!" he cried out and struggled but the restraints around him barred him from moving around too much.

If he was captured, it could only mean that his village was destroyed and his clansmen enslaved. He had failed to protect his village.

As a Weretiger from the White Tooth Tribe, he was one of the warriors tasked with the protection of the village. However, he had failed, his strength wasn't enough to fend off the enemies.

His homeplace was destroyed, the children and women enslaved. And because he in particular showed fierce resistance against them, to make an example those bastards had killed his wife and daughter right in front of his eyes.

"I'm sorry Selnia, Shaerra... I wasn't strong enough to protect you all" He cried, droplets of tears falling down from his tiger like eyes.

After the sadness and self-loathing, came the hatred for his enemies. Weretigers were a warrior race, his keen instincts and senses immediately picked up a few presences walking towards him from the hallway in the front.

ROARR... He gave a savage roar, his claws extended out of his hands and he immediately charged towards the short stature obese man walking in the front.

He was about to tear the man apart when a handle of the sword came from the side and dug deep into his abdomen. The power in that blow was so great that it nearly knocked him unconscious.

He was blown back. He tried to get back up on his feet but the restraints around his body made him slow. Just as he looked up and gazed towards his assailant, a foot came crashing down on him, planting his face on the ground.

"So my lord, what should we do with his one?" the assailant asked turning towards the fat man.

This voice was familiar to him, the ears of the weretiger twitched. This man was one of the figures that attacked his village.

"The Weretigers fetch an excellent price in the slave market because of their strong physique and powerful abilities. This one in particular was far stronger than the rest of its tribe. I would have liked to sell this one just like the others, but it needs some discipline. If it attacks its own master the reputation will go down. Sell him to that person"..

"Alright"...

These were the last words he heard before he was knocked unconscious. The next time he opened his eyes, he was inside some basement. A strong bloody scent powerful enough to make one nauseate, filled this room.

The eyes of the weretiger were adept at even seeing at night as such, even though the room did not have sufficient lighting he was still able to make out the things lying around in this place.

These things looked very disturbing and had blood covering them. He did not have to think much to know what kind of place this was.

"Oh! So you finally woke up huh? I was about to wake you up" A voice sounded and a person walked out from behind him.

He wanted to turn around, but the weretiger realised that he was unable to. He was restrained and fixed into something. His limbs and even his mouth were tied up.

"Khehehe... it's pointless, there is no escape from here. You have been sold to me by that fatty, so you are now mine".

The other party said, they had a disturbing appearance with numerous stitches all around their face. They had hunched back and cancer like protrusions covering their body.

Finding the stench coming from this person unbearable, he tried to move; however, it was impossible.

"Hehe, there is no need to be shy, you are now one of my dear experimental subjects. We will spend a lot of time together from now" the person smiled.

After that, it was just a series of endless torture day and night for the Weretiger. The person he was sold to seemed to be some kind of mad scientist as they repeatedly researched and modified his body.

The pain was outlandish at first, having your guts being stroked, muscles and cells being destroyed, bones melted and so and so forth. Until a point came where he became completely unfeeling to these experiments.

He did not know how many times he wanted to die; however every time these thoughts sprang up in his mind, he suppressed it. He couldn't die, not unless he took revenge for his clans and killed the man who killed his daughter and wife.

And so he struggled to keep his sanity but it came at the price of his spirit.

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How many years passed by, he lost track after the first few years but he knew that more than ten years had passed already. Finally, as if he had run his use, he was sold off by that scientist to a slave merchant who then trafficked him to the Central Continent.

He had been collared, became the slave of multiple masters and on the way, exchanged hands to some Adventurers guild who bought him for a hefty price. It was there, he met another member of his tribe.

But just like him, that tribesman's spirit was completely broken and they had just become a soulless slave that only followed orders. The guild used them as dispensable pawns to do all kinds of dirty and dangerous tasks that were too much for the adventurers.

In his many years in that guild, he had seen many slaves being bought and sacrificed. There were so many familiar and foreign races among them; nevertheless, all of them died or were discarded upon their use.

The only reason he and his tribesman hadn't been discarded yet was because they were from the Weretiger tribe and had powerful racial abilities and physiques.

A lot of time must have passed since that incident in his village. He had grown tired of everything, it was no longer possible to keep his sanity and spirit intact.

Should he just give up on revenge and die? These thoughts continuously plagued his mind. He had decided, he was ready to give up his life on the next mission.

But maybe fate had something else planned for him. Along with a new batch of demihuman slaves, the adventurers guild transported them to a new place. It was a town that was on the verge of becoming a city.

The place had an influx of people coming in and out. They looked very active and vibrant, the town was thriving. But for them slaves, it was all the same.

The reason they were brought to this town was to be used as expendables inside the dungeon and fight bloody battles.

Yes, the town was a dungeon town.