

## Death Guns 861

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While Alex was sleeping because he finally awakened his unique ability, Leon and the girls decided to play a game. Saeko didn't play because she was chosen to stay behind and watch over Alex, she would be the one to explain to Alex where they went.

The five entered different dungeons with different difficulties; Leon, Maria, and Sakuya's dungeons had the same difficulty, while Gracier's dungeon got the lowest. Artemia selected a dungeon of the highest difficulty because she was the strongest of the five, a demigod rank.

At first, the other four didn't want her to participate, but she refused to back; she even selected the dungeon of the highest difficulty to show them she wouldn't back down no matter what they said. They knew it was a game, so naturally, to make it more fun, they shouldn't refuse anyone.

Half of an hour after the game began, Gracier had already arrived on the fifth floor, the first boss room of the dungeon.

Seven hours was the time limit for this game.

"I wonder how the others were doing," Gracier mumbled as she pushed the door open and walked in.

Immediately she was surrounded by hobgoblins; there was even a goblin shaman near the boss. As for the boss, it was a two-meter-tall goblin covered in explosive muscles, holding a war hammer.

The boss lifted his war hammer before violently slamming it against the ground creating a shockwave that engulfed its subordinates; many died.

Gracier chuckled, acknowledging the boss's instinct, but he stood no chance since the start.

"Blossom Fire lotus!"

To produce more destruction, Gracier, instead of using the standard language to cast the fire lotus skill, used dragon tongue, and the entire fifth floor was engulfed in a flame.

Kabooooom!

The flame swallowed up everything except for Gracier; the luckiest goblins died instantly, while the unluckiest had their body blown apart while being cooked alive.

The smell of burning flesh wafted in the air. The goblin shaman had his lower body reduced to dust, only leaving his upper body starting from the stomach. The poor goblin lay on the ground, twitching; glancing at their leader; the goblin shaman saw he was still standing with no head.

"Hiiiih hiiii!"

Gracier approached the dying goblin shaman emitting unintelligible sounds before blowing its head with a fireball.

"Sigh! Even after killing so many, I haven't reached half the goal. It is sure hard to level up once you become high level. Well, let's continue. I hope on the next floors I will find a monster capable of making

me sweet; for now, I have it easy." Gracier said as she entered the sixth floor; from then onward, she began killing monsters like a joke until the tenth floor.

"A fortress?" Gracier said, surprised to discover a fortress on the tenth floor. She called it a fortress, but it was not expressive as one human-made, this fortress was built using trees, and it was not that big, with only two watchtowers.

Gracier hid her presence and observed the fortress from afar and couldn't help but smile, seeing how well guarded this fortress was. There were more than a hundred monsters inside the fortress.

The corners of Gracier's lips couldn't help but tilt upward.

"If it was someone else, they might have a hard time raiding this fortress, but for me, it could be easier as I have the perfect skill for fortress among my skill. Why not try this time using the dragon tongue? I'm sure it would produce bigger fireworks and a beautiful explosion."

The expression she had on her face as she was saying those words could send a chill down to anyone watching her spine, even the boss who was not present felt something.

In the biggest building inside the fortress, the high orc sleeping with what he called the finest goblin women woke up from his sleep because he suddenly felt a chill run down his back. He didn't know exactly why either, but all of his fine hairs were standing on end.

To be sure that nothing would go wrong, the boss summoned his subordinates and ordered them to double the numbers of goblins patrolling and the numbers of guards in the watchtowers. He thought with so many precautions; that nothing would go wrong; if an enemy were to get closer to his fortress, they would immediately be alerted, and no one could easily infiltrate without him or his men knowing.

The high orc was about to go to sleep when he heard a commotion outside; furious, he ran outside, prepared to smash a few heads as an example, when he felt heat, something that shouldn't have been possible considering that they were in winter.

Unconsciously, the boss lifted his head and immediately regretted doing so because if he hadn't done that, he might have died, not knowing what had killed them.

Coming toward them at extreme speed was a meteor so big that even two fortresses put together wouldn't be able to surpass this meteor.

Kabooooom!

None of the monsters inside the fortress had the time to prepare when the giant meteor summoned by Gracier using the dragon tongue smashed the entire fortress into smithereens. The ground was gouged before turning into a magma pool, and Gracier, who was watching everything from the sky, let a smile escape from her mouth; she felt proud of being the one that created something so wonderful.

Using the dragon tongue to cast spells would double their destructiveness, making them stronger with many downsides. It consumes too much MP, and it was taxing mentally; she felt like vomiting every time she used the dragon tongue. She knew why it was because her INT was still not high enough; she would need to increase it to remove that side effect.

Gracier heaved a sigh before drinking a mana recovery potion; afterward, she checked her progress and was pleasantly shocked to discover that she had reached more than half of the goal; she had now accumulated 65 000 XP, with only 35 000 XP to go. She believed with 3 hours left; she could do it.

After resting for fifteen minutes, she left for the next floor; like on the previous floors, she was able to quickly clean the 11th to 14th floor in one hour and a half.

Currently, she was standing before the door of the fifteenth floor, and unlike the previous boss floor, she knew this one was different, totally on a different level compared to the previous two; still, there was no need to hesitate as no matter how strong the boss in the room was she would kill it and progress.

Checking her remaining MP, she had more than half left, sighing because she had forgotten to resupply her mana recovery potion, the last one she had; she had already used it on the tenth floor.

"Let's go!" Gracier pushed the door open and walked in, the room was dark, and just as she was about to scan the floor because she was unaffected by the darkness, all the hair on her back rose, and without hesitation, she rolled on the ground dodging a sword aiming at her neck.

Even though Gracier reacted fast enough, she still got a few strands of her hair cut off, which made the little princess angry, but she managed to calm down and stared at the one responsible for this.

Gracier's eyes widened because the thing standing before her couldn't be called human despite having a human appearance, the most fitting description to describe the thing before she would be a human golem or robot if Alex and those that came from Earth were here.

[Earth Golem Level 130] was written above the boss's head, it was Gracier's first time seeing this since she entered the dungeon, but she had no time to be concerned about such detail because, in the next moment, the earth golem vanished as though she had teleported, her sword was already before Gracier eyes. She snorted and blocked the blow with her scythe; however, her expression changed when she felt a vibration traveling through the ground.

Without hesitation, Gracier jumped into the air, and right after that, many spikes came out from the ground; if she were late by a millisecond, she would have been skewered by those spikes.

"What?"

Just as Gracier was about to counterattack, she was forcibly dragged back to the ground by an invisible force; it was gravity. To not get impaled, Gracier threw a fireball at the ground.

Boom!

Bang!

"Gah!" She grunted in pain as she got violently slammed into the ground; the earth golem followed with dozen slashes but jumped back when she sensed an attack coming.

"Tch! You are pretty sharp, but it won't go as you want." Gracier wiped away the blood on her mouth before using the dragon tongue again.

"Dragon Form: Fear Mode!"

BOOOM!

The entire floor trembled as if afraid of something. Gracier had become taller, with dark gold dragon horns, a long dragon tail blacker than the night itself, and her eyes were dark gold. Her whole body was covered in dark dragon scale; it was frightening yet beautiful.

With a grin that revealed her canines, she said.

"Shall we kill each other?"

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BOOOM!

The entire floor trembled as if afraid of something.

Dark golden light enveloped Gracier like a cocoon for a moment. When the dark gold cocoon disappeared, Gracier reappeared; she had become taller, with dark gold dragon horns, a long dragon tail blacker than the night itself, and her eyes were dark gold. Her whole body was covered in dark dragon scale; it was frightening yet beautiful.

With a grin that revealed her canines, she said.

"Shall we kill each other?"

The Earth Golem, even without not possessing intelligence like other species, had something every other species had, the survival instinct. The moment she saw the transformed Gracier, she knew she was dangerous and could be destroyed if she was not careful enough.

There was a saying that in a situation like this, the best defense was offense, so the Earth Golem went on the offensive; the whole floor was like her domain. With a simple thought, many earth spikes shot out from the ground at incredible speed toward the dragonified Gracier; the earth spikes were coming from all sides, so normally, it should have been impossible to defend against something like that unless the opponent was too strong.

However, facing dozens of earth spikes trying to turn into porcupines, Gracier was eerily calm. She lifted her foot ever so lightly and stomped on the ground.

"This should do."

BOOM!

With that casual stomp, the ground was leveled up, and the recoil of the stomp crushed the incoming earth spikes.

Although surprised the Earth Golem had expected something like that, she had already moved on to her next attack; she somersaulted in the air and created a gigantic mace which was directed towards Gracier's head; she stood still and waited until the giant mace was above her head before punching it, her punch was super fast only the shadow of this punch was seen.

Crack! Boom!

Numerous cracks appeared on the giant mace before it was broken into pieces.

This attack was faint; the real attack came soon after the giant earth mace broke into pieces; those pieces transformed into chains that restrained Gracier's movements, and she did nothing to stop them.

As if she had been waiting for this occasion, the earth golem appeared with something around her fists; if Alex or any of those from Earth were here, there would have identified the thing around the Earth Golem's fists as American brass knuckles.

But even when facing this attack, Gracier was still calm, as if nothing could reach her, as if nothing could surprise her. She appeared like an omnipotent being that had already thought of all possibilities; she was playing along.

"I think that is enough for a warmup." When Gracier opened her mouth, those were the words she uttered; immediately, the earth golem knew she had fallen into a trap and tried to fall back, but unexpectedly it was Gracier's head that attacked her; it was an unavoidable headbutt.

**BANG!**

The Earth Golem's skull almost cracked as she was sent flying dozens of meters back.

**Crack! Boom!**

During that time, Gracier easily broke apart the chains restraining her. The Earth Golem who heard this tried to search for her with her earth pulse; it was akin to presence detection but more advanced, she could read the earth's pulse to locate any foreign presence except for her, but she was unable to locate Gracier after she destroyed the chains restraining her.

**"!!!!"**

The next moment the Earth Golem's eyes widened; she tried to put a shield around her body because Gracier wearing a smile, appeared before her like a phantom.

Everything was happening at speed impossible to describe; with a godly speed, Gracier reached her instantaneously.

"Time to get serious; I don't know if you can survive, though as I'm still learning, this form is new to me, you see."

Turning around in a flash, she fiercely smashed her fist covered in dragon's scale into the earth golem's chest.

**BOOOOM**

A world-ending blast occurred, turning into a gigantic mushroom cloud.

The Earth Golem flew to the other side of the fifteenth floor.

Simultaneously, black flames swirling with golden flame rippled outwards as shockwaves trying to swallow the earth golem; she immediately conjured a thick wall made of the earth around her body before getting swallowed by the black flame.

Kabooooom!

Her surrounding was transformed into magma by the black flame, while more than half of the thick wall was reduced into lava alongside half of her body.

The Earth Golem could be seen half kneeling, however, her ruby-like eyes never lost their luster as she glared at Gracier floating in the air like a goddess of flame.

Gracier was surprised that the boss was still alive after that attack; she had put everything she had into that attack, especially that last attack. The combination of her dragon mode and her dark mode resulted in this frightening form where she could freely control her dark side; naturally, she was more powerful than in her normal dragon form. It would not be an understatement to say that in this form, she was comparable to low-rank Demigod but even, so a level 130 boss survived.

This made Gracier question her assumption, and she decided to finish the fight when suddenly all the floor vibrated, starting from the ground to the wall and then the ceiling.

[Careful!!] Ignia, who rarely intervenes in her fight, couldn't stay still as she warned Gracier, who immediately jumped back but still received an injury; she could not see what injured her, just that it was something swift.

"What was that?" Gracier questioned, but before she could further ponder about what happened, the remaining body of the Earth Golem disappeared and got assimilated with the ground before those vibrations stopped, and immediately Gracier, who was floating in the air, got slammed into the ground.

BAM!

She was violently slammed against the ground, and she was unable to lift even a muscle; Gracier's sturdy dragon's scales started to break apart slowly. She felt like her entire body was falling apart; the gravitational force trying to reduce her body into a meat past was so strong. Like nothing she had ever experienced, the whole floor was turned into a gravitational field.

[Pull yourself together, or else you will die.] Ignia's voice awakened her, her consciousness was slowly leaving her body, her right hand was reduced to dust, and her left foot was soon about to follow. She was bleeding from her seven orifices, and Gracier knew if nothing were done, she would meet her demise here.

She would have never expected to meet such a strong opponent here; it seemed that after this floor, there weren't any more floors; the boss of the fifteenth floor was the ultimate boss; it was why she could do something like this, turning the whole floor into a gravitational field thrice Mysthia's gravitational force.

"Ugh!" Gracier vomited blood trying to lift her head but was unable to do so, and to make matters worse, her fear mode was getting canceled, which meant the moment that happened, she would be reduced to dust in an instant.

Gracier started to think about a possible solution to escape her current predicament; she thought about using the black flame. Still, with her current MP, she couldn't use it, so she must find another solution.

She closed her eyes and thought when suddenly she remembered that she was the Lord of hundred flames; she could use this to her advantage. Spreading her dragon's sense, she scanned the room in search of flames to use.

Flames are everywhere like the air, like mana; you just had to find the right one; suddenly, she found two flames, one blue while the other was crimson, and without hesitation, she called the two using the dragon tongue.

"Combine dragon flame."

Using the last bit of the mana she had, she combined the abundance of blue and crimson flame into one flame, a purple flame.

As the Lord of hundred flames, she ordered.

"If you turn the whole floor into your domain, I just have to burn the whole floor: Cosmic Fire!"

Siiiiiiii!

Kabooooom!

Like gasoline ignited by a flame, the whole floor was set ablaze by the purple flame; the cosmic fire traveled until the dungeon core burned everything on its path. In an instant, the whole dungeon was leveling up; it was the first time something like this was happening in the empire.

In the destroyed dungeon, a one-armed Gracier was lying unconscious with a window floating above her head.

[Mid Level dungeon cleared: + 1 Level

Cosmic Fire

Seal lifted!!!!!!]

Alex, who happened to have woken up at that moment, ran to the scene to see his sister lying unconscious in the middle of the now destroyed dungeon.

"What the fuck is that?" While taking Gracier with him, he was surprised to see the window floating above her sister; he was sure he was not the only one that saw it, he wondered what the hell was happening, but for now, he must leave to treat his sister.

"Let's go!" Alex said to Leon and others who had arrived.

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"Have you heard it?"

"Heard what?"

"About one of the dungeons getting destroyed?"

"What since when it happened? I thought dungeons are almost indestructible."

"You said almost, but they can be destroyed if you find the core and destroy it. It's pretty difficult to achieve this but not impossible. The reason why people tend to believe that it's because it's strictly forbidden to destroy a dungeon because dungeons are a valuable source of income for a nation-

"Enough with the lesson, just tell us what happened."

"Sigh! Ok, a few hours ago, a little girl destroyed a mid-level dungeon. I saw it with my own eyes. It was the eighth sister, Alexander's sister. It's the truth."

"It's the truth; I've also seen it."

"What do you think the emperor will do? After all, Alexander is prince Leon's good friend."

"Dunno, we will wait and see."

Here and there, this kind of conversation could be heard all over the capital. It was normal considering what happened, dungeon being destroyed was not something common; it had happened only thrice since the creation of the Lionheart Empire.

One of the past heroes destroyed a dungeon to save the city from an outbreak, and a few years later, Leon's grandfather destroyed another dungeon; he was the second one who did it, and his reason being it was because he wanted to see if he could also do it and finally the third time today, a foreigner destroyed a dungeon.

Not expecting the city to become so lively after what happened and people gossiping wouldn't be normal.

Alex sighed heavily, which made Leon in front of his chuckle.

"Relax, it's not that bad. You have to say Hi to my father and bunch of old men." Leon tried to comfort his friend, but he would have succeeded maybe if he was not wearing that Cheshire grin showing he was enjoying his misfortune.

"You are enjoying this, right?" Alex asked him, a little bit annoyed, and Leon admitted.

"Pretty much. Seeing you so tense as if you are about to face a bunch of hyenas left me amused."

Alex felt compelled to massage his forehead as he said.

"Pardon my bluntness, but they are indeed a bunch of hyenas. I can always imagine what their reactions are going to be. This situation is a god-sent opportunity."

Leon waved his hand.

"You don't have to be a future ruler. I know what you meant, and if I were in their shoes, I would do the same. Well, let's just quickly get over it, they might be a bunch of hyenas, but I believe my friend has more than one way to deal with them, right?"

Looking at his friend smiling like that as if he was sure that he already had a solution to deal with those hungry hyenas even without seeing them, Alex was amused and couldn't help but shrugs his shoulders. He wouldn't want to admit it, but Leon had a pretty good grasp of him.

"Hahahaha! Whatever, let's go. You can ask for my help if things aren't going your way, but you are going to pay a huge price." Leon said while licking his lips. Alex laughed hard.

"What a bad friend."

"As you friend, I should squeeze you from time to time."

Alex ignored him as they entered the beautiful golden palace, heading toward the throne hall.

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Great braziers surrounding each of the fourteen soapstone columns light up the lower levels of the throne hall and cover the hall in dancing shadows and a warm radiance. The intricately carved woodwork hanging from the terraced ceiling danced in the flickering light while statuettes looked down upon the mosaic floor of this monumental hall.

A ruby rug splits the entire room in half from the doors to the throne, while forked banners with golden fringes cover parts of the walls. Between each banner hangs a torch; many of them have been lit and, in turn illuminate the paintings of heroes and leaders below them.

Hefty, washed glass windows were neighbored by curtains colored the same ruby as the banners. The curtains have been adorned with gilded linings and burnished corners.

A radiant throne of gold sat beneath an impressively decorated baldachin (canopy) and was adjoined by two rather plain-looking seats for visiting royalty of other nations.

The throne was covered in holy emblems, and fixed on each of the broad feet was a carved lion head. The fluffy pillows were a light gold, and these too have been adorned with dark golden edges.

Those wishing to listen to their royal highness could do so on the countless long and rather bulky brass benches, all of which were perfectly aligned in rows. Those of higher standing can instead take seats in the exuberant balustrades facing the throne.

Currently, the throne hall was filled with people, most of the emperor's aids, and members of the elder's council.

The moment Leon and Alex arrived, all eyes were on them.

"The crown prince has arrived together with his friend Alexander."

Leon immediately went to his knees.

"Greetings, your majesty, your son has brought his friend Alex as you requested."

"Hum! Well done, my son, you can rise and sit over there." The emperor said while pointing to his left, and Leon did as he was ordered after exchanging a look with Alex, who smiled at him.

Finally, it was Alex's turn; he gave a bow.

"Greetings, your imperial majesty. I hope you have been well since the last time we met."

"I'm doing well, Alex. We meet again." The emperor said as he stood up, and Alex couldn't help but admit that he was tall. You could see that he was tall even when sitting, but his height was impressive

when he stood. The emperor had almost reached 3 meters; his physics was impressive full of muscles, each muscle packed with strength.

Alex wondered how much strength his fists would carry; he could not help but inwardly chuckle. If things go according to the plan, he would soon find out, but first, he would have to deal with those geezers looking at him.

While Alex was thinking about how to deal with the geezer, the emperor of the Lionheart Empire, Leo Zaiden Lionheart, had one desire.

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Alex wondered how much strength the emperor's fists would carry; he could not help but inwardly chuckle. If things go according to the plan, he would soon find out, but first, he would have to deal with those geezers looking at him.

While Alex was thinking about how to deal with the geezer, the emperor of the Lionheart Empire, Leo Zaiden Lionheart, had one desire, which was to test Alex's strength, like his son had said his friend had stepped into the Demi-God realm. Seeing the hidden strength inside the boy's body, there was no wonder Lucius got done in as he was careless. Leo knew there was more to the story, there was something none of them except for Alex knew, and it was not his place to search for an answer as it was evident that Alex wouldn't want to go into the details as to how he accomplished what he did, at least not with a stranger such as him. Leo's only desire was to fight, to exchange blows with this exceptional young man, one of his friends did it (Julius), and he also wanted to do it.

However, now wasn't the time; he must appease those old-timers as he could feel them getting impatient.

'Sigh!'

The emperor sighed inwardly before pointing at the seat in the middle of the hall. Somehow, a seat appeared behind him, and he was completely unaware of it; this made Alex reevaluate the Lionheart's strength; they must be underestimated. Because he destroyed one empire doesn't mean the other empires could easily get destroyed; the Holy Crux empire's demise happened because of their carelessness and series of events that eventually led to their destruction; it was not something he could reproduce easily.

Without saying anything, Alex took a seat and scanned the hall; only old faces were the only thing he could see; some of them had curious looks in their eyes while some were expressionless; however, most of them had one thing in common, that light in their eyes, the light of someone that couldn't wait but suck their prey dry.

Lowering his head, Alex's lips twitched, and he thought, 'It won't be easy.'

"Alex, do you know why I called you here? Why I called this meeting!"

Finally, the emperor, Leon's father, decided to discuss why Alex had been brought into the throne hall.

Alex nodded his head. "I'm well aware of the reason for my presence here. I'm here because my sister involuntary destroyed one of your dungeons."

Leo nodded and was about to say something, but someone acted faster.

"Involuntary or not. It has already happened, so what you need to do right now is to compensate." It was one of the elders of the Elder's council.

Leon crossed his arms and watched everything from where he sat. If it wouldn't, because it would have been disrespectful, he would have brought out some popcorn to eat while enjoying the great show that was about to happen.

Leo glared at that elder, but he only sighed but refused to back down; the emperor could only massage his forehead and look at Alex.

"As Elder Timoleon has said, be it was involuntary or not, the damage has been done. What you need to do is to compensate us."

"As you are aware, dungeons are our biggest source of income, so imagine what would happen when one of them got destroyed? It means losing the money you can get over many years. It's a big loss, and we need to compensate for it somehow." Leo added.

Alex nodded; what the emperor said was not wrong; dungeons are a source of income while at the same time serving as grinding stones for the population to get stronger. In the ages when dungeons were the most valuable source of income for kingdoms and empires, losing one of them was like losing a huge amount of money, not only money but also your rank, so he understood their desire to be compensated, and he had never thought of walking away without compensation.

"I understand; what do you want?" Alex asked after a long moment of silence, and during that time, nobody urged him to talk as they knew it must be easy; he had a lot of things to think about, so naturally, they should let him take his time until he was ready.

Instead of talking, the one who spoke this time was the oldest of the Elder's council; he was also the prime minister, more than a hundred years older with toned arms and a face full of scars, testimony of his wildlife when he was younger.

Elder Othneil caressed his beautiful white beard, the same hue as his hair, and said.

"Forfeit your percentage over our share in the Holy Crux empire."

He didn't beat around the bush and directly told Alex what they had decided. Every one of them had their eyes shining, almost as if they couldn't wait for Alex to accept. Gracier destroying a dungeon was God's opportunity to ask Alex not to ask for a percentage of the territory they would acquire in the Holy Crux empire.

And who said territory said dungeons and mines, thinking about getting things without having to pay anything put them in extreme joy.

However, they knew it wouldn't go as they wished, and soon Alex proved that.

"I refuse; I'll give you a 5% discount. This is all I can do." Alex refused and immediately made an offer.

Most of the members of the elder's council were furious, and just as they were about to say something, Alex raised his hand, forcing them to stop.

"Let's do this; I know you believe in the saying that fist talks louder than words, right? I want to exchange blow with his imperial majesty."

Every one eye widened; they wondered if Alex had become crazy to propose something like that; no matter how strong he had become, he might be the youngest Demigod, but thinking of challenging their emperor was tantamount to committing suicide; however, they could wait to hear what he had to say.

Leon covered his mouth because if he didn't do it, he would have been unable to kill his laugh. He had expected his friend to pull out something crazy but not something like this; he couldn't help but glance in his father's direction, and seeing the wide grin on his face, Leon knew even without hearing what his friend had to say, his father had taken the bait, he had fallen into Alex's trap.

"Okay, let's hear your proposition," Leo said.

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Leon covered his mouth because if he didn't do it, he would have been unable to kill his laugh. He had expected his friend to pull out something crazy but not something like this; he couldn't help but glance in his father's direction, and seeing the wide grin plastered on his face Leon knew even without hearing what his friend had to say, his father had taken the bait, he had fallen into Alex's trap.

"Okay, let's hear your proposition," Leo said.

Alex took a deep breath and explained.

"My proposal is simple, his imperial majesty and I will fight. I said fight, but it was not a proper fight. I'll receive one of his punches if I'm not seriously injured; if I don't cough blood, then it is my win and-"

Leo cut off Alex and asked. "And what if you did?"

The emperor seemed more impatient to start the duel immediately. Previously he was curious about how strong Alex was, but now he got the opportunity to test it out; while what they would do couldn't be called a proper fight, it was still more than enough to gauge Alex's level, as for the reward it was just a bonus.

"I will accept to cut off more than sixty percent of my shares over the territory you will receive."

"What?"

Alex's declaration was like a bomb inside the elder's minds; they couldn't believe what they had just heard; some thought they were dreaming.

Although previously they were saying he should let go over of his shares, they hadn't indeed meant it just to provoke him; while the 5 % he had proposed was little, they wouldn't mind a little increase, for example, 10%, however, more than sixty percent was too much, they might be greedy, but they were not some fools. His offer was too good to be true; it reeked of the trap from a miles away.

"And what if you win?" Leo calmed down his building excitement and asked the question everyone present wished to know.

Alex smiled, "If I win, we will maintain my first offer plus, I don't want any of you to come complaining when a situation like this happens as you all knew why we are here."

The elders' faces darkened when they heard the condition they would have to satisfy if Alex were to win. None of them doubted that something like what happened with Gracier or even worse would not happen as their crown prince invited this destruction magnet to raid their dungeons in the form of training.

If previously they had thought they could use this opportunity, the opportunity of him visiting their home to curry some favor from the Black prince, this time they wished he could leave as soon as possible not to reduce the number of dungeons they possessed.

"Hum! Okay, I accept your offer. Let's begin right away." Leo declared before standing up.

Even though the elders wished to say something, they understood better than anybody that once their emperor decided on doing something, especially something that turned him into his current state, you better stop whatever plan or words you have to convince him as it would not work anyway.

During the meeting, only Leon was calm and was always smiling. Elder Othneil looked at the future emperor and chuckled, thinking.

'Only my grandchild understood that we were dancing under that young man's hand. Before coming here, he had already prepared this, knowing our race's weakness; we are weak in front of a challenge, especially when we are interested in fighting the said challenger. Hahaha! You have found a good friend.'

As if he could feel what his grandfather was thinking, Leon bowed to him before running after Alex and his father, who had disappeared somewhere.

A few minutes later, in one of the palace's underground training rooms. Alex and the emperor were standing face to face, separated only by a few meters.

Both had changed into normal training gear, with the emperor wearing golden gear matching his hair and eyes while Alex wore an all-black training gear.

Elder Othneil acted as referee; except for those present at the meeting, no one else was present as it was not something to be made public.

Elder Othneil between the two looked at the two before lowering the hand he had previously put into the air. This announced the beginning of the fight, but nobody between the two made the first move; they just stood there doing nothing.

As for the spectators, they were watching silently. They were not frustrated when the two did not move yet because they understood that in a fight like this, moving recklessly was not the answer and who said that standing still, those two were not fighting? It was a mental fight to gauge each other.

Finally, Leo sighed before vanishing; he didn't use any skill; it was his speed that made him cross twelve meters in a single step, he arrived before Alex and sent a casual punch toward his chest, but this punch had nothing of casual as it broke space apart, lightning covered this fist and even without confronting

this punch Alex was being pushed back his time ability seemed unable to slow down the emperor's punch.

He couldn't help but sigh; even if he had expected something like this, it was still unsettling. He immediately switched form, activating his Asura's Form; the change happened in a split second, in milliseconds.

The emperor was not surprised by this change; on the contrary, he was smiling; it would have been boring; otherwise; he didn't stop his punch, not many in this world could take his punch unscathed, and he didn't believe Alex could even in this form that gave him a threatening feeling.

Alex, in his Asura's Form, punched the air with his right hand enveloped in invisible black chains; he was no fool; he knew even with all these preparations, he couldn't stop the other party punch; therefore, he strengthened his body using the Wind element, he also added another layer of protection, he activated the invisible, eternal chain unique ability to devour, he wished to devour the force contained in that terrific punch.

Finally, the two punches clashed.

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Finally, the two punches clashed.

There was absolute silence as if those two were playing around, not fighting, but everything changed instantly. The ground under their feet was leveled up.

**BOOM!**

Alex was sent flying, crashing to the other side of the underground training room; Leon and the others hastily left their seats, or else they would have been caught.

Dust filled the room, and once the dust settled down, Alex stood up and dusted his clothes; he was completely fine.

"So it's my win." He said while pointing at the emperor.

Those elders who wanted to say what the hell you are saying when you're the one that got sent flying? They couldn't believe it when they saw the emperor had taken two steps back; he was surprised he kept looking at his fist in disbelief.

God knows that he wants all out and used his Overlord's fist, yet he still lost? It was pretty surprising, and the emperor was more surprised that Alex was completely uninjured; he couldn't fool so many experts present. It was true that he had been sent flying, but he sustained no injury, which was pretty much astonishing.

Leo could not help but wonder what kind of terrifying physics this young man had?

"Puhahahaha! It's your win. We honor what we said. You can get some rest." Leo laughed and admitted that Alex was the winner of this fight.

The elders could only sigh in defeat that they had missed out on such a golden opportunity to earn money; they secretly vowed to find out more opportunities in the future.

Accompanied by Leon, Alex, who was extremely tired as to win this fight, used almost all of his mana, they left, and Leon left him to rest for a few minutes in one of his rooms.

In the now wrecked underground training room, the emperor stood; the other elders had left except for Elder Othneil, who just stood there observing his son-in-law.

"Who was it?" Finally, he asked, and the emperor chuckled.

"He is strong, really strong; when he will be at my level, I can't even last ten seconds. He is still immature." The emperor explained while still remembering how his hand was feeling numb after that clash. Among the lion beastmen, he was proud of his physics which is said to be the strongest of all physics in the current world. Still, when facing Alex, Leo learned a hard truth which was that Alex possessed a physics with no equal; maybe only the mysterious dragon's race in a book could compete physically with him.

"Let's go. Leon has found a great friend. I'm considering letting them into that dungeon once they raided the other dungeons; what do you think, gramps?"

"Don't call like that; it makes me sound too old." Elder Othneil tried to hit Leo, the emperor, on the head, but he easily dodged.

p 'You are clearly the oldest, yet you still act as though you're some young man. How shameless.' Leo thought. He didn't dare to say this aloud because he would get beaten up twice, by his father-in-law and his wife once she heard that he treated her father as old man.

"Ok, I will try to convince the other geezers not to cause a commotion. Do as you see fit; you're the emperor after all." Elder Othneil said before vanishing.

Leo was unable to say in which direction his father-in-law had left.

"As expected of the previous strongest of the empire, the God of lions," Leo said before vanishing in turn.

In Lionheart's language, Othneil means 'lion of God.'

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Half an hour later, Alex had already recuperated enough and was now following Leon, who was showing him around. They visited many famous places inside the palace, such as the museum where the weapons of the previous emperors and the strongest existences within the empire were kept; it was called Sword's cemetery.

Leon said that it was possible for an outsider also to leave their weapons here; they just had to beat the strongest in the empire, not necessarily someone from the royal family, for example, someone from the coliseum; the coliseum was another world where many strong existences are.

This information made Alex more interested in the coliseum; he wished to challenge the strongest existence, the strongest gladiator of the coliseum. When he asked why Leon had not done that, the latter scratched his head and told him it was because he was still too weak.

This made Alex wonder how strong the gladiator king was? Maybe a Demi-God?

'Well, I will eventually find out soon enough. For now, let's enjoy this tour.' Alex thought before asking his friend.

"Where are we going next?"

Leon paused for a second before saying.

"Let's visit her."

Alex didn't need to ask whom he was talking about as only one person had Leon making this kind of face even when they were still students in the academy. Her sister.

'Finally, I will see her. I wonder how she would be?' Alex thought while following Leon until they stopped before a big door red gold door.

After taking a deep breath, Leon pushed open the door and walked in; immediately, they were welcomed by a wonderful world, a world full of flowers and filled with the scent of nature; it was a beautiful forest filled with flowers, chirping birds and...

Human's cry.

"Ahhhhhhhh!"

Alex felt a chill down his spine when he heard this cry. Leon facepalmed, sighing he said.

"Not again, I wonder from who she got this sadistic side."

"Let's go!" Leon said before heading toward the direction where the sound was coming from. Alex followed him, and shortly they arrived at their destination, and Alex was shocked by the scene in front of him.

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"Let's go!" Leon said before heading toward the direction where the sound was coming from. Alex followed him, and shortly they arrived at their destination, and Alex was shocked by the scene in front of him.

In the middle of the garden, surrounded by flowers, the flowers were a dancing rainbow, as if light and music had found a new way to blossom together.

Everything would have been perfect if it weren't for the disturbing scene in the middle of the beautiful garden.

An adult was lying helplessly on the ground, and a little girl was sitting on top of him, wearing an angelic smile like an innocent lamb.

However, what the little girl was doing was nothing but innocent.

The little girl's eyes sparkled in wonder; like a child discovering a new world, she once again flickered her fingers at him.

Swish! Swish!

One after another, strands of lightning raced out of her fingers and hit Dracon, one of her guardians.

Dracon clamped his mouth tight and tried to ignore the lightning flowing into him. He did his best not to think of how his skin was charred and his flesh cut.

Sadly, his attempts failed yet again. The lightning discharging from the girl's fingers didn't stop, and in a matter of minutes, he started screaming.

"AHHHHHHHHH!"

For the nth time he screamed, he wondered why he was being so unlucky to fall into the little devil's hands today. If he knew it wouldn't have come today, but because he was curious to see what the little princess would do today, what kind of torture she would perform on those unlucky souls today he came but never he would have expected that he would be the target for today experiment. It was to the extent that Dracon wondered if it was karma playing a joke on him after all the services he enjoyed (A/N: Watching others getting tortured.)

Just as Dracon was falling into despair, praying for a savior to arrive to save him from the little devil's hands, he heard a voice.

"Little Leandra, what are you doing?"

"Prince?" Dracon was overjoyed while the little girl jumped from Dracon's chest as if she had seen a ghost.

She spun around; the little girl was clever. She immediately found the right answer.

"Welcome, brother, I was just practicing my lightning which has evolved from blue rank to white rank."

Just as Leon was about to ask his sister if she needed to test her new lightning on a human's target, his sister was faster.

"Who is your friend?" Leandra asked while pointing her finger at Alex, who was looking at her in wonder.

Leandra was seven years old, she could be considered beautiful at her age, with long golden hair and eyes, but her hair was more on the darker side. She was dressed in a black gothic robe with black high heels.

Leon scratched his head before introducing Alex; during this time, Dracon managed to escape because Leandra had lost interest in him.

"This is my good friend, soon-to-be best friend Alexander Kael Touch, and Alex, this is my sister, Leandra Zariel Lionheart."

"Oh, nice to meet you, little princess. I have heard so much about you. Now that I have the chance to meet you, I understand why your brother was so proud of you." Alex said, trying to get closer to the cute little creature, but she jumped back and bared her fangs like a mother protecting her child in front of a predator.

Seeing her action, Alex was lost for words; he froze, not knowing what to do. Among all responses he had anticipated, there wasn't anything like this.

Leon was about to burst into laughter but still managed to suppress it. However, just as he was about to say something to help his friend in a pinch, his sister once again talked faster.

"Aha! So you're the thief trying to steal my brother from me?" Leandra said with her arms around her hips; the way she stood was like a general on the battlefield. It was too cute, but Alex couldn't laugh, he decided to play with this cute little girl.

"No, no, I would never do something like that. I also have a sister, so I'll never try to steal another sister's brother no matter how cute this brother was." Alex declared with his hands up.

Leon felt like smashing his friend's face against the ground because he dared to call him cute, but he succeeded in controlling his urge. Leon decided to watch how his friend would handle his sister calmly. Would he be able to subdue the little devil quickly? He couldn't wait to see how he would do that.

Crossing his arms, Leon stood on the side, watching the interaction between Alex and his beloved sister.

Meanwhile, Leandra, who had gone on the defensive, couldn't help but lessen her defense, but she didn't want to appear cheap; therefore, looking at Alex, she tried to appear tough.

"It is that so?"

Alex nodded to show her that he was being sincere. This made the little girl smile, but she was not totally convinced; therefore, she proposed.

"I don't believe in you. However, I will if you can accept to become my worse for fifteen minutes." She proposed, from the story her brother had told her, that Alex was exceptional, almost like her father; he was like an emperor, so he would never accept playing children's games because it would be beneath him.

Leandra would have never expected Alex to go all four and look at her.

"Sure! Let's play."

The little devil was shocked; she had never expected Alex to accept playing a game with her. Unknowingly, the little dissatisfaction she had toward him diminished. Every time she would talk with her brother wanting his attention, he would only talk about his new awesome friend. It was to the extent that the little girl began hating Alex even when she had never seen him. She felt like he was like a big thief trying to steal her beloved brother.

However, everything changed when he encountered Alex; he was nothing like she thought.

"Ok, let's but don't come complaining later." Leandra declared before mounting Alex's back.

"Don't worry, I won't complain," Alex promised before starting to move.

This development dumbfounded Leon.

'I guess you will always keep surprising me.' He thought.

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Alex played with Leon's sister until she was tired. He couldn't help but admit that the little girl was exceptional; they played until evening. For a seven years girl, she had monstrous stamina.

Leon silently accompanied the two until their played enough. Taking his sister, who had fallen asleep with him, he bid farewell to Alex, who returned to their temporary villa.

En route, he couldn't help smiling.

He was smiling like a fool, so much that Silveria decided to tease him.

〔If you want to play with children so much, why not make one?〕

Her question was to tease her master; never she would have expected him to consider her suggestion seriously.

"Well, maybe I should consider whether I should have a child or not. Children are such wonderful things; they are the proof that you existed in this world."

〔Oi! Can't you be seriously saying that, right? I was joking. You don't have to consider what I've said seriously. It is good to want a child, but you know better than me now that it is not the best time to have a child. So chill out and stop seriously considering my joke. Got it?〕 Silveria said, seriously panicking; she had never been so panicked before. It was to the extent that it made Alex laugh; he felt like he had discovered another side of her.

"Hahaha! Don't worry. I was joking. I know that right now, I can't start a family. The world is not peaceful, and I could never let my children live in a world that could be destroyed at any moment. As a parent, it would be irresponsible to do that."

Silveria sighed in relief after hearing Alex's words. She finally understood that her master had been playing with her.

〔It is good that you understand that. Let's first clear the universe from chaos beings. I believe we can do that.〕 She said, and Alex nodded while silently walking back to their villa. He could have directly teleported inside the villa but doing that would have been boring, so he decided to walk there; he would use this time to organize his thoughts.

Meanwhile, while Alex was heading toward the villa, his sister Gracier was waiting anxiously. Since she woke up, she had been like this. Even though Maria and the others told her not to think about it because knowing Alex he would take care of everything, this didn't stop Gracier from feeling anxious.

She was worried that if her actions made her brother lose a considerable amount of money, she could never forget herself if this were to happen.

Just as her frustration was about to peak, her brother arrived, and she immediately ran toward him.

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"Big brother, you're back," Gracier said as she threw herself into her brother's chest, and Alex, who had seen her coming, immediately embraced his sister, comforting her as he could feel her anxiety. She must be worried about what happened, not knowing how the discussion between her brother and the emperor went; she was waiting for him to come back to know if her brother had lost big.

"I'm back. Where are the others?" Alex asked while caressing his sister's hair.

"They are waiting in the meeting room," Gracier responded before heading toward the meeting room.

Soon Alex saw the others waiting for him.

"How it was?" Maria asked the moment she saw Alex and Gracier walking in.

After taking a seat, he told them how things went.

"I see, so now we can raid dungeons without hesitation from now on?" It was Sakuya who asked this question.

"Well yeah, but this doesn't mean you should create trouble now that you got a free pass. Don't destroy another dungeon, please, I'm begging you." Alex said, and the others could feel that he was not joking; they all nodded their heads.

"I'm going to sleep for a while. I need to rest; even though I'm not tired physically, I'm more exhausted mentally after playing with Leandra. By the way, she is really cute; you should have seen her face when she pouts. It's so adorable." Alex told them before excusing himself, leaving the girls alone.

Maria and the others exchanged a look, amused that Alex played games with Leon's little sister. As women, they couldn't wait to meet that little girl who made Alex so happy. He was smiling all the time that he talked about Leandra, almost like a father who was extremely proud of his daughter. To what extent that they wonder what kind of wonderful father he would make for their future children. This made them laugh, thinking about the future.

The girls chatted until evening, and together they cooked dinner, which they all shared with Alex before he left, saying he must catch up with his friend Leon.

"They probably gonna tour all bars tonight," Saeko said, watching Alex leave.

"Well, that's men for you. What shall we do tonight?" Luna asked as she was feeling nostalgic; she wished they could play.

"I'm not feeling well. Sorry, I'll go to sleep. Maybe next time." Gracier said before excusing herself. Saeko wished to play with the others as it would be her first time, but finally, she decided not to participate in tonight's game; she would instead accompany Gracier than play. She was closer to Gracier than the others, and as her friend, she wished to be there for her.

"I will be leaving as well," Saeko said before following Gracier.

p "Well, there are only the four of us now. What kind of game are we playing?" Artemia asked after Gracier and Saeko left.

Luna thought for a moment before suggesting.

"Let's share one of our secrets."

"Wow! Let's do that." Sakuya nodded, already selecting which secret to share. Maria and Artemia nodded. They moved toward Maria's room.

Meanwhile, Gracier, after pushing Saeko to sleep, first sat on the bed in contemplation. After some time, she called out her status.

『[Gracier Alexandra Touch]

Rank 14 [Saint]

Level 134

Class: Fire Empress

Age: 16

Female

Race: High Half-Elf

Experience Value: 0/400700

Magic Power: 4015/4015

Magic: Fire Magic

Attack: 1715

Defense: 1415

Agility: 1515

Intelligence: 1205

Luck: 1015

BP: 10

SP: 7

Gift: Ignia's Bracelet

Skills: [Cooking Level 4] [Sewing Level 3] [Fireball Level 5] [Fire Arrows Level 5] [Meteor Level 10] [Fire Snake Level 5] [Flame Shield Level 5] [Presence Detection Level 5] [Chantless Magic Level 8] [Fire Lotus Level 10] [Archery Level Max] [Blaze Steps Level 10] [Golden Arrows Level 10]

Special Abilities: [Dragon Eye Level 10 Max] [Flame Wings Level 3] [Dragon's Breath Level Level 5] [Lord of Hundred Flames] [Dragon Form: Fear Mode]

Titles: [Avenger] [Child of Fire] [The Awakened] [The Diligent] [Lord of Flames]

"Sigh! I thought I would have gained one or two skills, but unfortunately, I didn't get anything. However, it feels like my stats increased when I was in that state; also, I wish to destroy things. Hmmh! Let's hope it's temporary, and I can get rid of this side effect, or else I might be forced to seal this wonderful ability."

"Ah! Let's sleep for now and continue thinking about it later."

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"Who will start first?" Maria asked after they changed into their pajamas and sat forming a circle.

"I will be the one to talk first," Sakuya said before licking her lips.

"There was one day I went out alone, and men couldn't stop hitting on me. One extremely persistent person refused to leave as I was shopping. I racked my brain to find something to say to make leave, but nothing came to my mind until I got an idea."

The others were all silent, waiting for Sakuya to tell them.

"I told him that I'm transsexual. He fled even before I could even finish my sentence. That day I laughed until my belly hurt. From that onward, I found the perfect solution for men that harass me."

Both Maria and Luna laughed hard; it was their first time hearing their friends share something like this. Now their thought about it, there was that time when a man saw Sakuya and fled as soon they met; he was quivering as if he had seen a ghost. It was now that the two understood the reason behind the young man's behavior.

"What is a transsexual?" Artemia, who had heard for the first time about the word transsexual, could not help but ask.

"Ah!" Luna exclaimed, finally remembering that there was someone among them who wouldn't know what that word meant.

"Transsexual refers to somebody who has had sex reassignment surgery," Sakuya explained.

It took a few seconds for Artemia to register what the Sakuya meant, and soon she burst into laughter.

"Poor guy, he must have gotten the scar of his life. Next, it's my turn." Artemia laughing said.

It was her turn now to share one of her secrets.

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Meanwhile, as the girls were chatting and exchanging secrets, Alex and Leon, disguised, decided to tour a few bars.

They walked into their first bar, colonized the booth, and ordered a round of neat spirits. That was how they got the night started.

And now they are at their third bar. The two friends sat around a table in the bar. The wooden table was a rainbow in browns, the kind that brought sweet memories up for air. Mixed with the heavy scent of alcohol and smoke, this reminds you that this place was indeed a bar.

"Ah! I must admit that your bars were more likely than those on the human continent. I haven't visited every bar on the other side, but I'm sure my assumption was not wrong." Alex declared as he grabbed his drink and took a sip.

Leon, who had now disguised as an ordinary lion beastman, brown hair, and eyes, common color among the lion beastman. He chuckled and also grabbed his drink like his friend and took a sip.

The strong alcohol went down his throat.

"Well, you're not wrong. Beastmen are heavy drinkers. The only ones that could beat us are the dwarves who have gone extinct." Leon replied before taking another sip of the strong alcohol.

Alex also did the same; for a moment, there was a silence between them; only the hundreds of conversations told in loud voices, all of them competing with the rock music, could be heard.

Finally Alex said something he had always been curious about.

"Are you sure there aren't any surviving dwarfs left?"

Leon stayed silent for a moment as if organizing his thoughts before answering.

"Well, they must be some dwarf left, but as to where there are, I'm oblivious to this, and I can assure you that even they are, they wouldn't reach a thousand."

The last part was said in the form of a whisper which made Alex curious.

"And why is that so?" He asked.

"It is because rumor has it that like Mysthia cursed never to see God-level existence, the dwarves have been exterminated and cursed to be unable to reproduce," Leon explained.

"Pffft!" Alex spat his drink. What I just heard was too shocking not to react as he did. He had expected a lot of reasons but damn, getting cursed to be unable to reproduce? That was too vicious of a curse. It was to the extent that he wondered what they had done to piss off Bahamut to put this vicious curse on them on top of wiping them, leveling their entire continent.

"What did they do to make that dragon furious?" Alex asked, and Leon chuckled before he began explaining but first with a question.

"You know that dwarves are genius when it comes to creating things, right?"

Alex nodded, and Leon continued.

"From the record, they seemed to have created an artifact, a bow strong enough to pierce a hole in the dragon's wing, injuring the monster."

"I see; no wonder he would wipe them out after what they did. Proudful as he was, he couldn't tolerate that. To cut the problem at its root, he annihilated them while cursing the survivors, those not present

on the continent at that moment, to never having the ability to reproduce because he feared another genius creating a similar artifact or even more dangerous artifact. Well, if I were in his situation, I would have done the same thing as I'm doing this to protect myself."

Alex emptied his cup as soon as he finished talking; he immediately ordered another one.

Meanwhile, Leon was smiling; he didn't find Bahamut's action despicable because only a fool would be compassionate when his life was on the line.

"You are right. We must never be compassionate when someone is after our life."

"Yeah!" Alex when suddenly remembered something and sighed heavily.

"What is it?" Leon asked as he felt like something was bothering his friend.

"Well, I'm thinking what awful friend am I."

"Do develop."

"You see, you know all my women, the future women as well, but I know nothing about your woman. So, please forgive me for never asking. However, now I'll do it. Who is your woman? Or do you have someone you love?"

To his friend's unexpected question, Leon was left speechless, he had never thought his friend would react like that because of something so trivial, but on further thought, he understood. Like a good friend that shares each other joy and sorrow, you must know who would be sharing your friend's life, especially if he did the same thing with you.

"Ah! Don't worry; it's nothing. You have a lot on your mind, so I understand, and to answer your question, I do have someone in mind, but it's quite complicated."

"I see. Please explain; I may be of some help." Alex said, waiting for his friend to go into the details.

Leon did not immediately explain; he first emptied his cup before ordering another one and emptied it.

[[Seriously, how complicated this must be for him to act like this?]] Silveria wondered, but Alex had no way of answering this question, at least not until he heard the whole story.

After letting the strong alcohol run through his system, Leon began explaining.

"You know that our royalty rarely has the chance to choose who we want to spend the rest of our life with, right?"

Alex nodded; before coming to this world, he had read many stories about royalty marrying someone their parents had chosen.

"I'm the crown prince, the future ruler of this empire, so naturally, I don't have the right to choose, at least not the empress because while it's true that it was my family that created this empire and we continued to rule till this day, we are not the only family that makes this empire function, it was not only our family that pushed the Lionheart Empire to its current level. To show the other families that we have never forgotten about their efforts. Every emperor will choose from one of the three big families apart from the Lionheart family."

Leon stopped and ordered another drink.

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Alex didn't say anything and waited for his friend to order his drink.

After the bartender brought another glass of whiskey, Leon took a sip before continuing with his story.

"The three prominent families after our Lionheart's family are:

✓ The Safari family. They are in charge of the capital's infrastructure and other big cities.

✓ The Zira family. They are in charge of the finance; they are the second most powerful family in Lionheart after our family.

✓ Lastly, there is the Tiaret family in charge of the military. There are just behind the Zira family.

My fiancée happened to be from this family. Ariel Kefira Tiaret."

Alex was surprised because he had thought that his friend's fiancée would be from the second family, the Zira family, because there were the second strongest; logically, the Lionheart family should have aimed at that family.

As if he could exactly read his friend's mind, Leon chuckled.

"You must be thinking why my family didn't choose someone from the Zaria family, right?"

To Leon's question, Alex nodded because it was precisely what he was thinking.

"Well, you're right, but as I had previously told you, every new emperor must choose from one of the three big families. My mother happened to be from the Zaria family, so it's not right for me to choose from the Zaria family, at least not in this generation."

"Ah! I've forgotten. So, it was the Tiaret's family turn now?" Alex asked after he was reminded of what Leon had previously said.

"Well, you could say that. So, I was talking. My fiancée is someone from a powerful military family; all generals are from that family. In terms of strength, truth be told, there is the second family, but because the Zaria family is strong economically, they are in the second place. In truth, the Tiaret family is the fiercest family; nobody wants to mess with them."

Leon's eyes were shining as he talked about the Tiaret family; it was to the extent that he appeared like a fanatic talking about his idol.

"So what happened with your fiancée?" Alex asked, cutting directly to the heart of the problem; he would have liked to continue hearing more about this family. Still, he guessed that his friend would keep singing how awesome this family was without really going into the details of the problem.

Leon sighed before explaining.

"You know that when you are forced to marry a perfect stranger by your family, obviously you will not be happy as you didn't choose this person yourself, right?"

Once again, Alex nodded, and Leon continued.

"My fiancée and I were like that. At first, I didn't really think too deeply about this relationship. It was like I did what they wanted without putting effort into improving our relationship to create great chemistry. Our first meeting was bland as the word bland could be but what I would have never expected was that after that meeting, I would keep thinking about my fiancée, what should I say it was-

"It was like you could only think about her every time you were not thinking about anything else." Alex cut off his friend and said. Surprisingly Leon nodded as it was exactly how he felt, he had never expected to feel like that after their meeting.

It was to the extent that for two months after their meeting, he could only think about her alluring figure. He had met many beauties, for example, that seductress Kuina Leon; no other woman could be a seductress like Kuina. He would have never expected that a less beautiful woman, a less seductress, would turn him into something like that.

"So what is the problem? What did you do after finding that you started developing feelings for your forced fiancée." Alex asked while sipping his whiskey.

Leon opened and closed his mouth as if he wished to say something but, in the end, decided not to.

"Well, I tried with several meetings to make us closer, but she was like a piece of wood unmoving. It was hard to know what she was thinking. She is like she was just there just for the sake of being there. She just accepted our relationship because it was why her family, our families had decided. As for how she really felt, I couldn't say. It was not like I did not try, but unfortunately, I have never succeeded." Leon explained while heaving a long sigh.

Alex stayed silent for a moment before asking his friend. There was something he needed to confirm first.

"Tell me how you feel? Have you really fallen in love with Ariel?" Alex asked, but Leon didn't say anything as if he didn't really know what fallen in love meant. As if it was a foreign emotion.

Alex was forced to reformulate his question.

"When you think about Ariel, what do you feel?"

To this question, Leon didn't take too much time before answering.

"I feel like I found a missing piece, something I've been searching for in a long time." Leon honestly answered.

Alex chuckled.

"So, did you tell her what you just told me?"

Leon rolled his eyes at him.

"How can I do that? I'm not good with words. Besides, she is what you can call a muscle head only thinking about training and challenge."

"That's perfect. It would be best if you used this chance. Between you, who is stronger?" Alex asked after hearing his friend's answer.

"Previously, we were evenly matched, but now I'm not sure maybe I'm stronger, maybe I'm not. She is a monster; I'm not joking when I say this." Leon seemed fearful when he said this. Alex wondered how monstrous Leon's fiancée could be for him to exaggerate like this, but this was not the point.

"I'm sure she can read, right?" Alex asked while hoping that Ariel would be like the female knight in the story, which hobby was to read stories about knights.

Leon nodded. Fortunately, it was precisely like Alex expected; he couldn't stop a smile from forming on his face. He felt like he was a cupid.

"Then I've got the perfect solution for ya."