

Death Magic 351

Chapter 351: Declaration

Kreston invaded Dorchester and reached the capital city on the 1st of December. No declaration of war, nothing. They strolled in without justification. The day would soon become a pivoting point in the chronicles of Hidros. The day change occurred, the day tragedy struck and a day Staxius would forever torment.

'W-why,' thought Julius with an arm torn off. The castle burnt; numerous bodies laid on the ground. Ayleth and her husband died arm in arm. The inside was exposed to the outside. Tanks and trucks could be seen climbing in the distance. Up above, planes flew and threw bombs over critical points. None could have planned or reacted. Kreston was smart in hiding its intent. A masterful display of intellect, Dorchester was blind-sided.

'This can't be true,' Undrar returned to a massacre. Companions, friends, and families killed. The one responsible sat on the alter and hummed. She sat as if a kindergarten girl swaying left to right.

"How could you?"

"Are you speaking to me?" she turned innocently, "-justice had to be served. The Pope said that heathens who didn't follow our god were infecting and damaging our life. Hence, our declaration of war," landing with a hop, "-you're different," she walked around Undrar eyeing from top to bottom. "Yes, you're very much different," she said as if to confirm. "A dragon, a god, a dragon god? I feel it, you're strong," she winked.

"Is that the only reason?" fired Undrar, "-were these people nothing to you?"

"Listen," she paused with a cold expression, "-I shan't argue about why or how the people lived. There was justice to be delivered, thus my involvement," stopped to stare the lifeless bodies. "The blue-haired girl and that blond one, they're still alive. I'm not heartless," spoken righteously, "-there's a slim chance to save them." She jumped over to her carnage, "-the Duke of Dorchester is dead, I wonder who'll be his heir," breathing a laugh. "Lady Dragon, take those who survive for they were chosen to live. Dorchester is officially under our control."

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"Who are you?"

"Archangel of Clarity, Erna. I preside over life and death."

"Life and death, you say," a dark-aura enveloped the broken castle, "-how presumptuous," she sprouted wings. Blond hair turned black, eyes turned white, "-Death is under my master's rule. He's the only one who presides over death."

"Didn't people teach you lying is a bad habit?" snickered Erna.

"Don't get cocky," Viola instantly teleported behind the angel with a finger on the latter's neck.

"Impressive," she smiled, "-are you going to kill me?" she glanced over the shoulder.

"No," she took a step back and pressed her hands, "-I rather not sully my hands." A barrier conjured from her outwards. It pushed the angel away, "-these people that you've killed. They were close allies of someone you don't want to piss off. Kreston made their move. When this news hits; it would not surprise me if the whole Province is destroyed."

"If you're referring to Arda, that province is under Kreston's thumb as well. The monarchs were pretty easy to control. We have saints already planning to convert the whole country into a land of faithful. Our god will always win."

"Oh no," chuckled Undrar, "-poor child, I feel pity," the tightness in her chest was hidden by bravado. "What you speak of is not strength. A fake illusion of power. Kreston, thou hath blown the trumpet of he who controls the pathway to Elysium. Five years, I give you five years," she hovered with the bodies levitating beside, "-five years, that's all he'll need," she vanished in a blink.

"Five years," laughed the Archangel with a town burning in flame. Cries of the living, the smell of iron, the cries of those being assaulted. War began, the holy invasion of Kreston.

Only a few guests managed to survive and escape. Amongst them, the Prince Consort. He soon joined with Undrar who had brought the bodies of Silver Guardians, the groom, and Millicent. Julius, Fenrir, and Autumn were barely alive.

"I'll fly them to the hospital in Claireville. Doctor Jona will save them," parted on Savaview bridge, she flapped away. A heart in peril, the Bringer of Death was jaded. She had witnessed death plenty o' time. Not in this case, her heart ached, her mind confused and the chest tight. A sunken feeling, one that could be related to a low echoy clang. 'Erna isn't someone to be trifled with.' Her bravado was for good reason. 'If I had attempted her life, she would have taken the one's breathing. The dead can't be brought back to life. Those who still quench desperately must be given a chance. Don't worry, Julius, I'll make sure thou live.' She flew through the clouds and rain till the hospital. The journey was made in 10 minutes. Teleporting here to there and using her mana fully, they arrived. A hospital left baffled, Jona was soon overwhelmed by the critical patients.

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On the way back, Pier's mind shut. He didn't want to acknowledge the truth that his friends were gone. The place where once peace and harmony were supreme. An elated atmosphere many inhabitants yearned. The car drove, the windows raised, he held his phone in a tremble. It was hard to speak let alone breathe. Claustrophobic to the sudden change, the mind thought of one thing, call Gallienne. 'Fear isn't an option,' biting the side of his lips, the phone dialed.

"Gallienne, listen," he spoke sharply, "-Kreston has declared war."

"WHAT?" the word resounded across her chest to her feet. The heart pulsed louder, she who sat nearly stumbled. "Are you safe, what happened?" she stood with a petrified look.

"N-no..." the tone lowered to a sob, "-everyone's dead. Dorchester is lost, the Silver Guardians are gone... THEY'RE DEAD, YOU HEAR, DEAD!" the poor man slammed the empty seat cushion in frustration.

"Are you ok?" asked the driver startled by the outburst. No response came, only a woeful stare to the mirror.

“Piers, listen...”

“...”

“Ok good,” she breathed to gather her mind, “-get to the capital as soon as possible,” a high-pitched beep signaled the call ending.

‘I didn’t expect them to attack so fast,’ laid back, the queen thought of what was to come. ‘They’ve taken Dorchester by force. What’s the intent, are they planning to strike the capital. We might have to retake Castle Garsley or shut off Savaview bridge. I doubt they’ll march into Oxshield this early. I suppose my way of handling the issue was a bit much,’ spun the stare outside, ‘-the silver guardians are dead. On Ayleth’s marriage day no less. Whatever happens, Dorchester is lost.’

“Theodore,” she called after which the butler appeared.

“Rare of you to call mine name, how may I serve, majesty?”

“Call the General and bring Raulf to the round table. War is upon us.”

“Yes, majesty,” he dashed off shocked by the news. In less than a few minutes, the door to a secret room opened. One unused, one opened only if the state was in danger. Situated in the sanctity of an elevated circular tower towards the back, it gave onto the place where Staxius and Raulf fought once. Inside, a circular table with a map on board as well as logistical instruments.

The feel of the crisis had the castle in a state of unrest. The maids were quick on the gossip. Nobles scouring the halls were intrigued by the news.

“We’re here,” said Raulf with a differing attitude. The massive door locked with another man in uniform. General Noland, a man already past his fifties. One who had served countless times in the Imperial City. Wars on the borders, settling dispute nations and such, he was revered as an intellect. A genius born only a few centuries. Despite his fame, the Emperor saw it fit to have the man transferred to Hidros. As for the rumors, it ranged from scandalous to treasonous.

“Majesty,” spoke the General with a whisper, age had taken to his vocal cords, “-why have you called us?”

“Well,” sat in front of a map, “-we’re in a state of war.”

“Has Kreston made his move?” guessed Noland.

“Impressive,” complimented Gallienne, “-yes. Kreston invaded Dorchester without warning. They’ve claimed the capital. I was relayed this information by the prince.”

“We should act fast,” interjected Raulf, “-should they take Savaview bridge, the situation will be dire.”

“Yes, I understand that,” she turned to Noland, “-what do you think?”

“Raise the army from the Goldberg Dukedom,” he said confidently, “-they’re closer to the site. Have them reinforce the borders. Let’s move fast, they hold the advantage, we must slow the pace.” Flicked, the table displayed the map; she inputted information on what had been taken.

“Majesty,” spoke Noland once more, “-we need a relay. We’re fogged, getting blinded will be detrimental.”

“There’s a problem,” interjected Raulf. “Plaustan,” he pointed, “-Kreston could invade from the sea.”

“No need to worry,” smiled Gallienne, “-Plaustan has a Guardian Angel of their own.”

“Still, let’s send a Platoon just in case.”

Clang, the sound of swords clashing, arrows fired, spells cast. A battlefield, a fight for reclamation. ‘What’s this sudden feeling of dread,’ thought Staxius.

“MASTER,” an arrow dug into his chest.

“MAJESTY,” screamed Oenus with the whole team facing away from the enemy.

“Fight,” he pulled nonchalantly, “-don’t ever turn your backs,” a gust of wind blew. Five Frost Giants stood beheaded with him in the middle. Awed, the fighting resumed. The expedition reached the third checkpoint. A dungeon was built into the side of the mountain. Tis was the only way to the four. None had explored nor been here for decades. Traps, monsters, the unknown. Rasu thought it best to slowly investigate the ruins.

‘Why am I remembering that nightmare all of a sudden?’ he leaned against a mossy stone-bricked wall. The floor was damp from droplets of water. Slight cracks, rusty gates, the stench of rotten flesh – the perfect ingredients for a malady.

“Are you ok?” asked Intherna. A squeal followed behind as Oenus killed the last monster. Ashy, they changed into drops. Coins and items which Rasu held.

“Yeah, I’m fine,” he said, “-just remembering stuff.”

“What’s this?” asked the curious Kearen playing with an intricate lock system.

“Don’t play with that,” urged Magra with Achilles slightly gazing at what they did.

CLICK, “-LOOK IT WORKED!” she exclaimed.

PANG, a giant-ax swung straight for Staxius’s head. He pinched it to a stop. “Are you trying to kill me?”

“N-no,” her eyes opened wide, “-wasn’t me,” she looked away.

At the borders of Arda and Oxshield, a platoon of soldiers was sent from General Niroz. Done behind Xula’s back, she had no control over the matter. The Saints were hard at work usurping claims to land under the nobles’ noses. They didn’t care the least about what to do nor what would happen. With Kreston inside Dorchester; the army from Arda would meet the Archangel’s army. Missioned to create a rally point and ease of access; Arda’s secluded nature would be harmed. A speck of resistance had made themselves known to the shadows. Spearheaded by Haru and the guild leaders, they targeted the saints. Currently weak and without allies, it would take more than a few words of patriotism to have an uprising. Xula was secretly hoping for said opportunity. War, whether civil or not, would stop the Saints.

In that endeavor, she continued to play along and be as harsh as possible. To incite hatred and anger in the hearts of many, contempt. Becoming the enemy for hate allied people more than anything.

“Come on everyone,” spoke Staxius inside the moldy dungeon, “-let’s move. The fight is yet to be complete.”

“Gergusser, why hasn’t Nelpha returned. I explicitly told her to kill the pesky adventurers,” growled a heavy voice up above the clouds

“My liege, Nelpha has perished in the battle of Leon Fortress. Our forces were wiped by a single man; reports say he even captured the Griffin.”

“How troublesome,” it returned.

“Indeed,” stared Eira with heterochromatic eyes. Blue and red, two sides of the same coin; Lady of Ice and the Princess of Arda.

Chapter 352: Bravado

From the fort to the dungeon, the journey around Mont Blanc was treacherous. It could have resulted in death so many times. Fighting day and night, getting used to the climate. Staxius led the expedition. Every time the monsters grew strong and overwhelming, he would end the fight in a single stroke. Oenus and his crew were relieved, it meant to be able to finally leave the coldness of the Alps.

After the dungeon which was the third checkpoint; they reached a tower. One hosting multiple floors and differing monsters. The higher one got, the stronger they were. Going around wasn’t an option. The top-floor held a bridge linking to the next path along the mountain. It seemed as if a trial, one of wit, strength, and courage, to reach the top. A fable of a man conquering the world in search of knowledge. Tis was the feeling they got, a feeling that stuck.

“And we’re done,” said Staxius nonchalantly. Teamwork was flawless, Achilles, Oenus were the front line, the first contact. Rasu kept to the shadows and struck only when prey was weakened. Magra took on the role of support whilst Intherna used her magic offensively. Kearen kept to the back and fired arrows, ones that traveled peculiar paths and still hit their targets. As for Staxius, he kept to the sides chatting with Adete and Serene. The latter was assigned as his bodyguard. Reasoning brought by Oenus. ‘If they want to fight the boss, they have to go through us.’

It was logical for if the prey was weak, in no way could he have fun. On that, they cleared the tower and climbed to the remaining path. Two weeks had gone by, the date was the 15TH of January.

“We’re here,” said Rasu with the face covered. A blizzard hid the path. The snow stung as if bees, the cold made moving hard, the wind was far crueler. Using walking sticks, the crew arrived at the peak, close to it. An obelisk structure, one with dragon’s protruding out the sides. A landmark signaling the destination. The air was so thin in made breathing harder. Left to the obelisk, an archway further inside. The expectation was to see a ginormous peak. Instead, the sight before them was a clearing, flat land with stone tiles and statues. Ones of the dragons and ancient beings. Fondly, upon taking a step inside, the air soon grew calm and warm. The height felt as if nothing.

“Where are we?” asked Serene who was quick on jumping about.

"Be on guard," said Oenus sensing a strong aura.

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"Wait," voiced Rasu, "-look in the middle," he pointed to a stone statue. One very highly detailed. The craftsmanship seemed surreal, none could achieve its level of intricacies.

"Lord Death," came a familiar voice from behind, "-welcome," it spoke courteously, "-welcome to the Sky, the realm linking the mortal realm and the supreme beings."

"Highness," mumbled Serene, "-is that you?"

"No," the voice was cold, as cold as her clothes. Thin with a cape, a crown, staff, and blue hair. The heterochromatic eyes stood out, "-I'm Gergusser, the Lady of ice," she smiled.

"Gergusser," turned Oenus with a frown, "-are you one of the ancient dragons?"

"Yes, that is correct," her voice held a certain dignity, an accent only royalty could emulate, "-what brings thee, dragonkin?"

"What else," interjected Staxius, "-I've come to take my daughter," they stood a few steps apart. She strongly stared upwards whilst he returned a blank face.

"Thou does think Eira is alive?"

"I'd like to believe so," noticing the inconsistency, "-thy eyes are proof enough. My daughter lives, the Princess of Arda isn't a weakling."

"Bravado," she clapped, "-is that confidence or jest, if tis the latter, then I'm not laughing."

"GERGUSSEER," roared the statue, "-WHY IS THERE NOISE IN MY SANCTUARY?"

??My liege," she rushed over, "-don't mind us. Tis the pest who've passed the tests and reached the peak."

"Is that so," from stone, it crumbled into flesh and bones. "Mortals have completed my elaborate dungeon," he gave a once over to all, especially the ladies. Intherna in particular piqued his interest. "What brings you here?"

"Have you not heard?" returned Staxius smugly, "-I've come to take my daughter."

"Ahh, the father."

"Yes, the father," patience ran low, both parties knew talking would not get them far. "What do you say?" stood Staxius peering the short-man, "-should we fight?"

"Belligerent," he laughed, "-do you wish to say thou can defeat me?"

"No," fired Staxius cockily, "-my companions are strong enough to take you down. I need not raise a finger."

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“Such a dislikeable personality,” sighed the man, “-never thee mind,” the ground rumbled. The same as an earthquake, the vibration came from inside the mountain. Tunnels being dug, a projectile approaching. *Crack,* two figures broke out the tiles, “-I could say the same,” refuted the man. “My companions are strong enough to take thee down.”

Green hair, green skin complexion, and wings resembling a fly, “-what do we do, kill them?” it asked with a tiny buzz at the end of each sentence.

“No,” fired another made entirely of stone, “-we pummel, and pummel, and pummel again.”

“Stony, that ain’t right,” fired the green figure.

“Yes, I think so too, Buzz, I have a new plan,” it said with pride.

“What is it, what is it?”

“We pummel ’em.”

“Enough of the jests,” said Interna with lavary wings on her back, “-die already,” *Snap,* crimson fire engulfed the Green figure.

“AHHH, PLEASE STOP,” it screamed... “-ha, just kidding,” a gesture had her fire extinguished. “It ain’t hot enough to cause harm,” a disappointing sigh followed.

“Not hot enough,” she rolled her eyes to Staxius. The latter only but shrugged.

“My liege, what should we do?” asked the lady of ice.

“I suppose,” he turned to Staxius, “-a fight is in order.”

The weak flame and nonchalant conversation were to test the waters. “We’ll take Green dude,” voiced Serene with her ex-team running behind.

“I’ll take Eira,” said Achilles, “- I have a duty as her aunt,” sword drawn, she walked.

“I suppose I’ll take the pummel freak,” shrugged Intherna. One by one, they split into teams. The fight began meters from one another. Staxius and the leader stood face to face, “-are you strong?” asked the leader.

“I suppose,” fired Staxius, “-aren’t you supposed to be a dragon?”

“Yeah, we are all ancient dragons. Sadly, our bodies are locked because of a god. That’s why we have to contend with humans as vessels. This one is barely a week old. I tell you; they die so quickly.”

“Why did you decide to awaken?”

“No idea,” returned the man, “-I suppose I was bored. I wanted to have the thrill of battle again. I sensed the auras of the other gods waking.”

“Well,” they both stared the battlefield, “-I’m betting on my team,” commented Staxius.

“You sure are cocky. Aren’t we supposed to be enemies?”

“I don’t even know thy name, and thou tell me to fight someone unknown.”

"I do apologize, they call me Rull, don't know why and don't care, what about you?"

"Staxius Haggard, they call me Death Reaper for fun."

"Hold on..." the cheery smile turned sour, "-care to repeat that?"

"You heard me, they call me the Death Reaper for fun," The tension changed instantly.

"Is that just a nickname or are you the actual god of death?"

"Can't you see this," he touched his cheeks, "-the symbol of power."

"I see you bear the blessings from our monarch, Undrar."

"Well," *BANG,* a body crashed against a pillar. Rasu was sent flying from a punch. The battle between Serene caused more chaos than due. Spells after spells, Serene kept on summoning hordes of monsters. The Green figure seemed unharmed, the face he held was of arrogance. Each attack they threw, he didn't care to block nor dodge. A show of power, a show of his standing in the hierarchy. The arrogance had Oenus on fire.

"Magra..." he said.

"Understood," her staff struck onto the floor. "Oh spirits of fire and wind, heed my call," hands pressed, two spirals of differing hue manifested. *Body Enhancement,* no special incantation nor flashy moves, the floor turned to a burning wreck. An inferno of which made the fighters stronger, her companions felt the raw strength coursing.

"Don't underestimate the vampire-clan," *Blood-Arts: Slaughter,* her ghouls dissolved to then turn into spikes. Ones that impaled the green figure.

'Go die,' said Oenus with his sword carving half of the arena. The floor dug five-meters deep, he unleashed all his strength in a singular strike. The opponent died and was reduced to rubble.

"Over here," waved Intherna, "-what do I do now?" she asked next to a molten body of stone. "I think I killed him."

"No shit," fired Oenus from the other side.

"Shut up."

"I've got Eira," smiled Achilles. Going on destructive power, Eira was stronger than her. Despite this, the ancient held more experience. A single dodge had her in the blind spot. The Lady of Ice was unable to conjure her magic.

"Hey, hey, hey," called Rull, "-stop playing dead."

"Sorry, my bad," returned the voices simultaneously.

"Sorry Auntie," whispered Eira as well, *Ice Element Gergusser Variant: Niflheim.* The ground froze, *Ice Spear,* four projectiles struck Achilles' back with the sound of bones breaking.

"See," laughed Rull, "-they had their fun." The molten body reformed; the Green-figure regenerated from the dust.

“We were toying with you,” laughed the Stone man.

“Oh please,” *SMACK,* the body crumbled followed by another raging inferno. “This guy is pissing me off,” she gritted.

“I’m bored,” sighed Rull, “-you two, come here,” just as Serene’s team got ready to fight, the two figures teleported. “It’s time to end it, I want to sleep.” He changed from scrawny to well-built, the muscles expanded, the aura doubled in intensity, the face morphed into one of a dragon. “There’s a common misconception,” he said with a sloppy pronunciation, “-there exist only three dragons. Lady of Ice, Undrar, and I. I devoured the rest.” *SMACK,* a hard punch had Staxius flying over the mountain.

“Killed in a single punch, Gergusser, is that truly the god of death?” he spun baffled by how fast it ended.

“That sure wasn’t nice,” wings flapped.

“You are strong,” smiled Rull, “-I’ll finally have my revenge from so many years ago,” he sprouted wings as well. *POOF,* they vanished into thin air. Flashes of light went from left to right. They moved so fast the eyes couldn’t track the motion.

“Poor guy,” said Eira, “-he’s going to die by the hands of the Dark-Dragon-God.”

“It’s not wise to stare away from your opponent,”

ICE BARRIER, a sudden clash had the ears trembling in pain. The noise of metal against a rock. “How can you be standing?”

“Simple,” *Argonaut – Final Strike: Laser,* a horizontal beam lit with Eira falling to her knees. A shockwave had her internal organs in disarray, a skill used for killing lowered to one that could incapacitate. “Haven’t you forgotten something crucial?” *BANG,* the ground cracked with a body inside. “Lady of Ice, ancient dragons are weak.”

*I am he who slays without fear, I am he who shall be the last of what thy see.

Heed mine call, thou whomst dared to fight the natural order, tis the day thou ought to be destroyed, Ancient Magic – Astral Binding,* he held out his hand, the Triangle lit with a purple-light. Scythes were conjured around Rull.

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“Don’t forget that the one who brought down the Ancient Dragons was the God of Death. My teacher, I have his memories and I know that they mean nothing to us now. The strength has long faded. I pity thy soul, meager reflection of a lost past. Give it up, tis was you with the bravado, not us.”

“That godforsaken spell,” mumbled Rull, “-you’re right,” he forced to a stand, the barrier inflicted incomprehensible amount of pain, “-dragons are weak. All our powers were given to Undrar,” he gritted in pain, “-the Bringer of Death. What we are is nothing more than puppets,” he laughed, “-puppets for a being far stronger,” lightning struck.

Chapter 353: Angel Hamael

“Heir to the god of death,” came a whisper from the lightning, “-or should I say, the current god of death,” veiled in a whitened hue, an unknown figure walked. Medium hair held by a crystal-colored crown. The face of a lady with the body of a man walked with the grace that seemed to be angelic. One could almost mistaken the aura for a pair of wings, wings from a fallen angel.

“Who are you?” he asked with a frown.

“Angel Hamael,” came a reply accompanied by a glare at Rull who recoiled.

“Heh,” crackled the supposed dragon, “-we were used and you were framed, the god of death, we were dec-” a bolt of lightning grazed past Staxius’s cheek and left a wound. Behind, the bolt landed with an explosion of which had many fumbled. The ground shook on impact.

‘What...’ side-glanced Intherna. Rull was gone, a charred body of black and smoke.

“What’s the meaning of this?” fired the Lady of ice, “-have you no shame?” she stomped to a stop. The Angel made no efforts in moving, rather, he tracked her movements intently. Only the eyes moved, neither did the face nor body.

“Is that how you treat a companion?” she cried, “-are you insane!”

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“Mind thy tongue,” he fired with arms crossed, “-child, does thou insolence know no bounds?”

“HO-,” hands tight around the staff, Eira thought of smacking his face.

“Wait,” before thoughts turned to action, Staxius intervened coldly. His overbearing figure was quick to overshadow her body. A towering mountain standing as the barrier between the harshness of the world.

“Thou know mine name,” he said uninterested by Eira, “-what brings thee here? Surely, thou mustn’t have come for chitchat.”

“No,” he shouted, “-of course not,” the face sparkled, “-I’m here as but a mere messenger.”

“Which means that thou art not here for malice?”

“God forgive,” he gestured hastily as if calling upon who he served, “-I’m here to only relay news and enlighten thee to the ways of Hidros. Before we start, I have to say something,” to everyone’s bafflement, Hamael knelt. “In no way am I thy foe. I’ve known of thy invasion of Kreston so long ago. I was the one who helped behind the scene to maintain a certain level of secrecy,” lifting his gaze, “-Lord Death, hear mine story before judgment is passed.”

‘When Rull spoke of a puppet master, I thought of a grandiose fight,’ the sight of the angel made the mind confused, ‘-what’s the purpose in all of this. Is this a ploy, another effort to buy time or,’ casting gazes upon the team, many were exhausted.

“Thank you,” nodded Hamael for Staxius gave the go-ahead. “The reason why I chose to intervene today is to warn of certain destruction. I’m indebted to Creation for it was he who brought me to life. I was a hopeless soul unbound to reality, wandering the infinite reaches of time, till a light blessed my existence. I know of Lord Death as being the opposite of Creation. Death, the prior who held the title,

spent many o' time explaining the nature of the universe to an unknown like me. It filled my heart plentifully to the point of bliss. Tis was then and there that I swore to follow him as my master. Angels and demons, never mind the rank, are required to choose a leader. Sadly, an incident occurred where the God of Kreston forcefully stole many angelic beings. They are referred to as the Revenant – I'm part of said force. Duty-bound, I had to obey his orders. Thus, my arrival in Kreston, I was summoned by the Pope. Here, on the mortal plane, there's freedom. Freedom unlike any I've sensed or seen. It allowed me to speak to many o' friends and discover that Lord Death had an heir. One of which was rumored and hailed as being overly ominous and unreadable. From blood-thirsty to caring, the tales diverged from person to person. And yes, you're quite famous in the divine realm. The show against Zeus, managing to control Gophy's powers, many have their sights set on you. Hence my visit, Lord Staxius," he paused fearfully. "Dorchester has been laid to waste. I won't plead for forgiveness or make excuses, tis was I who formulated the plan to take thee away from that province. Kreston, the pope, in particular, has succeeded. The seed of doubt has been sown amidst Arda and Oxshield. The Saints inside Arda have accomplished their task. Nothing can stop the war. Queen Gallienne and her troops are already on the border."

"Wait a minute," he interjected, "-are you saying that Eira was just a decoy?"

"No," returned the Angel, "-she was being manipulated by Rull, or should I say, Lady of Ice." *SNAP,* "-that should lift the spell of mind control. The Ancient Dragons were a means to an end. There's nothing that can be done for them. The power resides in Undrar."

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"Let me get this straight," hands-on the chin, "-take me away from Arda and Dorchester. The crisis on Mont Blanc, Winged Wolves. How long must have this taken to scheme? There's depth; shrouded by mystery with each step."

"..."

"..."

'staxius...Staxius...STAXIUS.'

'What is it?' he asked with the neck tingling, a sensation coming from the Bringer of Death.

'Finally, it's working. Listen, there's a lot of shit that happened. I can't explain everything via the mind link, it's about to fade away. Just know that Dorchester was massacred. Everyone's dead, Ayleth's marriage was ruined. I'm at Claireville Academy's hospital. Make the trip when you can, the continent is on the verge of collapse,' the link cut without getting a word in.

"Lord Staxius?"

"Yes?" he snapped out of the dream, "-Dorchester has been laid to ruin..." the vision came true, a prophecy misread as a nightmare. A nightmare turned reality. 'I've completely fallen into the hands of my enemies. I let my guard down thinking that Dorchester was safe. I should have known that coming here would have other repercussions. Why did Eira cloud my judgment? The Lady of Ice swore to not do her harm, why then, why did I go to rescue her regardless.' The news assimilated slowly, '-she said that

there was a massacre. Everyone's dead, Undrar knows the weight of those words. She'd never voice in said manner, especially with the massacre.

"Hamael, when did Kreston attack Dorchester?"

"1st of January, why?"

"Was there any mention of a marriage?"

"The one in Castle Garsley, I got reports from the Archangel of an utter slaughter. She left none breathing, why, is there something the matter?"

"What of the bodies?" a somber feel rose from the towering figure. The blank stare swapped for anger and inquietude, the fist opened and closed slowly.

"I don't know, Archangel said a dragon took them with her."

??Took them with her..." the pressure dropped suddenly. The feeling of nausea, the feeling of dread, and a feeling of vertigo came in waves. Intherna, Serene, Oenus, Magra, Rasu, Kearen, and Eira were dropped in an endless cycle of malaise.

"A-are you ok?"

"I'm fine," he returned with a not so inviting smirk, "-angel Hamael. I have but one thing to say – if I find out that my friends and companions are dead. I swear Kreston will fall by my hands personally. Consider it my declaration of war; a war to the Archangel. Tell her I'm waiting."

On that afternoon, after a seemingly less than eventful fight, they returned. It would take four days to get back to the village. The Angel was left distraught at what was said. A vow to bring down a powerful province.

The 18th came, the team arrived at the village. There, after a few days, the village Elder pledged himself to the Blood-King's Faction. They saw that it was his majesty that came to their rescue. The state of the capital and its rule had them in fear. What if the queen forced them to pay, or took away their rations and even gathered soldiers. The fears were endless, and endlessly had they yearned for help.

"Oenus, I want your team to remain here a few weeks more. The Butler will be here to help. There shouldn't be trouble with monsters. We've dealt with the dragons. We can never be too safe. Why you say, heading to the capital would only create a problem," they huddled around Staxius and listened. The fireplace blazed away warmly, the wood crackled, the ascending smoke made a low-rumbling.

"The capital is in a vile state," mumbled Magra, "-what will happen?"

"Yeah..." lost and distant, the thoughts travel far and wide in search for a ray of hope.

"I won't let them win," refuted Staxius, "-Arda is my home too."

"What of you, majesty?" asked Kearen.

"I'll head for Noctis's Hallow first. I need information before moving forward," he handed out a scroll, "-have this, it's instant teleportation for a group of ten. Use in emergencies only."

"T-thank you."

'Since we came here by teleportation,' the mind focused, '-we'll return by teleportation.' *Ancient Magic,* on that, the greyish sky, emptied street, and ominous town welcomed its Master. Here, more details on the state of the country were given. The Nox's clan's connection came in handy. Many o' spies watched the country move about. Most prominently was the rumor of a resistance faction coming into play. All but a rumor.

Spending a day and night, off to Oxshield they went. Most specifically, the mansion where the retainers were shocked by his sudden appearance.

"Master," bowed Rosetta with Lizzie in a cradle, "-welcome home," she smiled. "I see that her highness is here too," she glanced towards a rather silent Eira.

"Where's the rest?"

"Rile insisted on accompanying Seiran into town. As for Laurance and Laura, they're tending to the back-garden, would you like for me to call them?" she scattered across with a foot-forward.

"No, please don't you mind," smiled her master, "-Eira and I shall be leaving soon. I'll be back soonest in 4 days," moving close, he leaned and kissed the babe's forehead.

"Master," waved Laura from across the yard, she spotted him walking to the garage. He returned the wave with the gates opening. Two cars, Void and Red-fury.

"Eira, are you going to speak or remain as silent as an image?"

"I d-don't have the right to speak," she stared the ground, "-I've done so much harm. I don't want to say anything, it's all my fault. If only I was strong enough to hold the Lady of Ice, none of this would have happened."

"Please," he cried, "-there's no need to be dramatic," rolling his eyes, "-get in the damned car. We're going to race to Claireville Academy," he threw the keys to Red. The door shut, he nodded across the window with a roar of the engine.

"How goes it, Elliot?" pulled the car close to the entrance, the sniper coughed.

"Master, when did you arrive?" he asked almost spitting his lollipop.

"Not so long ago. I'll be back in four days. Hold the fort till then," nodding courteously, the gates opened and the cars carved the road. Unnecessarily fast, Void jumped into Overdrive from the influx of mana. The triangle was yet to settle, it had remained glowing since the encounter with Hamael. Intherna slept peacefully inside his shadow. At that speed, they arrived after one day. A stop at night at a local dinner had the belly full and mind empty.

Leaves escaped trees and glided to the ground. The town of Claireville seemed relaxed for what the country was about to go through. The people moved and went about their day without much worry. 'The hospital,' thought Staxius who pulled into the lot. 'I'm back here again,' the door shut with Eira shadowing his actions. She chose not to speak for her heart raced. Vague snippets of what happened were given. The latter only served to make her sleep harder and stress higher. Each step resounded with

heaviness; Viola sat under a street with a listless gaze. Her attention was to the clouds opposed to in front.

“Viola?” came a soothing voice.

“Brother,” her head slowly lowered, the blinks were slower. A gaze at Eira didn’t seem to phase nor spike her interest, “-it’s horrible, I never knew that death could be so cruel.”

Chapter 354: Chronicle of War I

Clean streets, clean buildings, an emphasis on being pure. Nature held command over a singular park, a park close to the residential district. The sky seemed aching, the people walked and talked as if robots. A feeling of idleness, a feeling of longing for excitement. The park, named Green Orth; held a peculiar alter in the middle. The place was used for prayers, religion out in public was shunned by most. Voiced subtly as to not attract attention, those who prayed at said alter were given a side-glance. The deity in question was Goddess Syhton. One revered mainly in Hidros. As for Iqavea, especially the kingdom ruled by the Emperor said goddess was more of a curse. Once upon a time, many o’ folks would come to pray. Prayers that went straight into a priest’s hand to be given to her holiness.

Five years later, the same alter was swapped. Swapped for the deity of Kreston. A god of which bore many names, many faces, and many fanatical devotees. A park used for casual walks and chatter turned to one vile and unforgiving. Those who believed had the bad habit of forcing their belief. The popularity of Green Orth dwindled to the point of abandonment.

Not far from the park, in an apartment located behind many o’ sky-high buildings, lived a couple. One that arrived about five years ago. A few months prior to a world-changing event. A man with girly charm and a lady with fox-ears and pretty visage. The disparities between humans and non-humans weren’t common. Most gave curious gazes to then dismiss any difference. Education made the mind open to new ideas. Yet, despite that, religion was it who sullied their mind. Smart turned blind, abiding by ideals opposed to action.

Some could say it came about because of the revolt. A revolt that had the Empire shaking.

It all began around five years ago. The kingdom of Hidros, with its provinces, mainly Kreston, Dorchester, and Arda. The trio underwent a painful exchange.

Arda turned on their alliance with Hidros. Tis was what many thought for their force-marched into Dorchester on the 1st of January. The day would be remembered as Garsley’s slaughter. Kreston hit the still-recovering capital. Many o’ bodies were left, a merciless takeover. The one in charge even surrendered to no avail. Kreston took hostages, burnt buildings, and killed those who refused to convert.

6th January of XX89: Queen Gallienne, more precisely, the Dukedom of Goldberg, stood at the front line. They blocked and covered Savaview bridge. The two opposing factions had declared war.

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7th January of XX89: Queen Gallienne sent for help from her ally in Arda. The plan was to pincer and invade Dorchester from the North East, thus squandering the few Krestonian forces. Her plea was replied with nothing but a blank letter. One that meant either a declaration of war or that she was in peril.

14th January of XX89: An Ardanian platoon led by Saint Mich, rejoined with the Platoon led by Archangel Erna. This sent the message of Arda's allegiance to Hidros, who didn't take it lightly.

18th January of XX89: Kreston and Arda began their invasion of Dorchester. The province was unnecessarily big, the effects of wars lingered. Fortresses, castles, and bases of operation used in the previous war were still functional. The occupation began at a steady pace. The few non-combatants captured were forced into Death-Marches along the province. Used as labor and slaves without wasting money.

19th January of XX89: Queen Gallienne thought of breaking her alliance with Arda. The latter's status as a province was unknown. If that would come to pass, it meant going against two war-ready provinces. However, as rumors spread around the Royal Castle, a strange man bearing white and red hair's words sufficed. He convinced and explained the matter at hand. The seed of disruption if it wasn't for that man, would have bloomed. Arda and Hidros might not have gotten along.

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25th January of XX89: Arda's monarchy turned to ruin. The kingdom's coffers emptied. The council of representatives was in disaccord. They were on the verge of civil war.

7th April of XX89: The Lizardmen tribe denounced their allegiance with the Queen. They instead choose to back the noble-faction. Duke Mundy of Saratol, a beast-man, was the instigator. Plans for a coup went into play, to overturn Arda's rule with him becoming the new leader.

27th April of XX89: Kreston's invasion reached the borders of Arda. Town Eden, the link, was divided. Kreston forcefully took over the Eastern-side. The Guild Leaders: Haru, Skokdrag, Mieshre, and Ryul, went into hiding. They who represented the differing races fled.

6th May of XX89: Erna's main-force took to Town Eden due to civil unrest. Saint Tim, the ruler of Town Eden, was assassinated. Hearing the news, the Pope was angered. He swore to have revenge and thus dispatched a squadron of planes.

8th May of XX89: The bombardment of the Western-Side of Town Eden ended in naught. Eyewitness report said that the projectiles stopped in mid-air. The comfortable takeover encountered resistance. Angered, he sent over Erna.

15th May of XX89: Her Platoon reached the half-way mark. The reason she felt at ease abandoning Castle Garsley was that there was no news of forces from the Empire. The Emperor refused to send help. Hidros's forces were compromised of the Dukedom of Goldberg, about 1.5 thousand of none well-trained soldiers. The Dukedom of Haworth and Dukedom of Riviera had a combined force of 3 thousand. Sadly, they were to the south and it would take more than a week to move that number of troupes. The resistance in castle Garsley was 3 thousand men, the odds were two-to-one. Mages in Hidros were ordered to return to Iqavea as to not fight nor partake in the war.

16th May XX89: Krestonian platoon reached Krigi of old. It surprised many when reports of a team of black-wearing-tuxedos dropped in via helicopters. Many said that the one in charge was a figure of a lady who wore a mask. Not overly flashy and aided by their superior weaponry, castle Garsley's men were killed via projectiles. A small fighter-plane was the one responsible for destroying outpost after

outpost. In 5 hours, their defense was breached with 2.5 thousand fighter's left. Tis was were the Dukedom of Goldberg came in play. Goldberg's company split into ten platoons of 200 fighters.

18th May XX89: Three out of the ten platoons were wiped in the initial encounter. At that point, Lieutenant Colonel Kiser; managed to skillfully retain the sudden invasion by air. The black-team, unknown to this day, left mysteriously after taking out the defense. He hailed from Iqavea; an army officer who was under the Emperor's team. Many were baffled by the Emperor choosing to affiliate with Kreston, the revolting province, opposed to the Kingdom of Hidros.

25th May XX89: Goldberg's Company dwindled to five platoons of 200. The advancement was halted at a strong-point midway from the bridge to the castle. A mage of Earth affiliation constructed an outpost within a night. The stronghold was filled with weapons and kept on suppressing any advancement. Goldberg had only made it to an area after the bridge.

28th May XX89: Krestonian army pushed back the invasion of Horror. Erna and the pope heard the news of the battle. Still, she was ordered to advance to Town Eden. It would mean taking a portal conjured by the Ardianians. The handy work of General Niroz. Else, the normal trip would have them walk South-West into Arda. An area close to Noctis' Hallow. The latter gave into the Alps that soon gave into the Border of Dorchester if one went North East.

28th May XX89: Lady Goldberg had reached her end. At 13:00, the enemy had gain ground fast and took away another 3 platoons. Two remaining stayed back to cover her escape. It was then that lady luck smiled. Trucks, countless RFS, the TU-03 – reinforcement. In their midst, an experimental vehicle, a magic-powered Tank, the turret had a range of 3 kilometers. Only one came onto the field with the firing capacity of 5 till it ran out of juice. The trucks held the forces of the Dukedom of Haworth, a force of around 1.5 thousand. Each truck had capacity for 50 fighters. As for the plane, it carried 400 men, two-platoon that were dropped behind enemy lines. A blind-spot overlooked by the Lieutenant Colonel Kiser. Pincerred on each side, the five-hundred men died. Castle Garsley was left with 2 thousand.

30th May XX89: The fight escalated; Goldberg got the upper hand. The leadership of the entire Company changed to a mysterious man. One only a few saw him for he was reported to be accompanied by many ladies. Ladies of which held tremendous power. Instead of brute force, the strategies of hit-and-runs, using squads opposed to platoons, had the castle shaking. The bold-strategy would not have worked if Kreston held control over the now destroyed outpost.

2nd June XX89: Kiser sounded the alarm to retreat. His forces were one platoon strong. Left by the cover of night, a shell hit his transport and the Battle of Garsley ended.

7th June XX89: Erna's platoon arrived at Town Eden. The teleport took them a few hundred kilometers in a dense forest. Guided by the Ardianian, the latter made rounds around the forest without her suspecting. It gave ample time to evacuate Town Eden. The deception soon had ire to which she slaughtered the Ardianian's. Niroz soon heard the news and escorted the Archangel out of the province. Their alliance needed to be a secret. It felt weird, a sensation of being watched had Erna constantly lookout for a potential betrayal.

19th June of XX89: Razer, known as the Syndicate, the special-forces from Kreston that had spear-headed many tasks such as the Apostle's kidnapping, was at a lost for words. Their intelligence on the Battle of Garsley had many raising eyebrows. The pope demanded an answer on how a meager force

could have killed 3 thousand battle-hardened fighters. Naught was the only response returned. They who thought to have absolute control over the underground were soon to have a rude awakening.

23rd June of XX89: Savaview Bridge and Castle Garsley returned into Hidros's control.

24th June of XX89: The order to regroup at Dorchester's noble district was issued.

5th July of XX89: Kreston called for a non-aggression pact. One that would last six months. The war had taken many o' lives, and many efforts. Both parties knew it was just a convenient way to gather their forces. Thus, to that, queen Gallienne was quick to say yes. In condition that a border be erected. Twenty-kilometers around Castle Garsley was added to the Goldberg's land.

10th July of XX89: The Pope demanded Razer to find out who supported the battle of Garsley.

7th August of XX89: The search revealed nothing.

8th August of XX89: Arda's rule turned upside down. A disagreement between Saint Mich and General Niroz had the capital in chaos. The reason for said fight was that the general's wife was suspected to aid in giving out information. A leak, a traitor was in their midst. It showed in the first battle. Because of that, Kreston grew weary of Ardians.

16th August of XX89: More forces arrived into Arda via the teleporter. The Saints felt the control slip away slowly.

20th August of XX89: The tyranny and news of the dungeon got out. The few people who lived were angered.

24th August of XX89: Villagers around the capital revolted. Many overthrew the priests sent over to convert the province via culture.

5th September of XX89: The royal council of Arda broke into a differing faction.

6th September of XX89: Civil War raged rampantly. Magic wielding inhabitants forcefully entered the capital to free those being harmed.

10th September of XX89: Queen Shanna went into hiding.

11th September of XX89: Duke Mundy of Saratol, backed by the noble faction and Lizardmen tribe, took command of the capital.

Chapter 355: Chronicle of War II

15th September XX89: Duke Mundy sought for help from the Pope.

18th September XX89: Civil war reached the capital. The bottom floor was turned to ruin and flames. The few people that lived escaped, a revolution with an unsteady rule.

19th September XX89: Forces from Kreston arrived in Arda. The fighting soon took to the forest and around. Bloodshed, the rebels killed without mercy. The platoon that arrived was led by Erna, she took to the streets and hunted many. The revolt for finding the dungeon ended in naught.

23rd September XX89: The Civil war ended with many casualties. Duke Mundy assumed his place on the throne.

24th September XX89: A new council was formed. One that only hosted the General and the Lizardmen tribe. Tobira the Dryad didn't consent to the duke's demands and left for the forest.

29th September XX89: Forces from the south gathered at the Capital to march into Noctis's Hallow. The duke wanted to eliminate the rivaling faction of Nightwalkers.

2nd October XX89: Many who lived the torture of the Saint's rule fled North. They came upon an outpost with the Blood-King's Crest. A refuge hidden in plain sight. Julia Fawn of the Sabbath clan was stationed to lead and guide the refugees.

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5th October XX89: A force of 4 thousand compromised of Lizardmen, mercenaries, and holy-fighters, marched forth.

7th October XX89: Prince Consort Ernis flew to the Empire to negotiate with the emperor. The topic at hand was the debate on why he supported Kreston.

10th October XX89: The diplomatic effort ended in naught. The Emperor had one thing to say, "-those who ally with a province that alienated my rule shan't receive help." A reference to the Alliance between Arda and Hidros. "Go, you're a nuisance. Hidros has been freed from our control."

11th October XX89: Hidros was ousted from the Wracia Alliance.

12th October XX89: Queen Gallienne declared independence while Kreston pledged to the Emperor on the same day. Oxshield, Arda, Plaustan, and Totrya, were alienated. No support from the Empire.

13th October XX89: Many nobles from Oxshield defected to the emperor. Marquess Jeffrey Hart, Count Charle Gaulle, and Viscount Harry Flaire. A combined force of 8 thousand, took to the main-continent by ship. It left Oxshield's East and southeast without occupation.

18th October XX89: Duke Mundy appointed Count Henry III as Marshal.

19th October XX89: Count Henry III called for all the nobles to join forces. An army of 7 thousand. He called for a campaign to invade Oxshield from the East. An opportunistic play since nobles had defected.

22nd October XX89: Spies reported the plan to Queen Gallienne.

23rd October XX89: The army headed by Krask, made good progress on traversing the land.

24th October XX89: Count Henry III began their march into Oxshield. It would take approximately five weeks to reach the border.

29th October XX89: The General of Hidros's army proposed to willingly give land to Henry III. A fight would only serve to break their failing rule. No nobles to provide funds, no nobles to raise an army.

30th October XX89: The airports were full of planes taking off. The continent turned for the worst, merchants, traders, and tourists left without a second thought.

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1st November XX89: Krask's army were taken in an ambush on the outer edges of Noctis's Hallow. An army of undead ghouls took them by the cover of night. Food poisoned and supplies burnt, a tactic to force them into a war of attrition. The 4 thousand strong armies lost a platoon of 200 and almost all their supplies. The journey until the destination was around 6 days long.

3rd November XX89: The General's orders to give land was refuted by a single man. The same who had calmed Gallienne a few months ago. 'Let's form an alliance,' he proposed.

4th November XX89: The Blood-King's faction declared independency as their kingdom. Noctis's Hallow and the Alps, ruled by the Winged-Wolves, transferred to their rule. A play that had the entire North-East region under the Vampire's rule.

6th November XX89: King Staxius Haggard and Queen Gallienne Riverty formed an alliance and created a new rule: The Argashield Federation. The regime was focused on one thing, warfare.

7th November XX89: King Staxius Haggard declared war on Duke Mundy.

8th November XX89: Emperor Paradus sent a force of 5 thousand men to Kreston by sea. It would take around 7 months for the fleet to arrive.

9th November XX89: 3.7 thousand exhausted soldiers made it to Noctis's hallow. They were subjected to hits and runs at night. Food ran low, morale plummeted.

10th November XX89: Alaric of the Onyx's clan and Gabrielle from tied by blood took to the front-line. The area before Noctis's Hallow was named Hallow Ends.

11th November XX89: The Battle of Hallow End commenced. It would go down as the most brutal encounter by far. The Nightwalkers, with a force of 1.5 thousand – many fighters who rejoined because of the cure, met the 3.7 thousand without fear. No death nor tied by the sun, the massacre began.

16th November XX89: The Battle of Hallow End ended. Krask Jok, Bishop Libra, and Baron Stanley were captured. The three figureheads of the army. The remaining seven-hundred lizardmen were given the chance to surrender or fight. 'Never.' Rumor has it that a lady with dark-black hair beheaded each personally. The bodies were burnt to not cause maladies. Vampires suffered no loss.

17th November XX89: Duke Mundy's total force of 34 thousand took a major loss leaving them with 30 thousand.

18th November XX89: King Staxius appointed Serene Balthazar as Commander of the Nightwalker's army.

20th November XX89: A platoon of 200 fighters from the Winged-Wolves arrived at Noctis's Hallow. Headed by Oenus, the fighter came with a message of a pledge. A pledge to assist the Blood-King in War.

21st November XX89: Henry III's combined army arrived at the border. It split into two of 3.5 thousand strong. One headed to the southeast while the other headed for the northeast.

1st December XX89: The South East Regiment reached the Fortified Town of Ela in the County of Charle Gaulle. A military town erected in a valley which leads to the Azure wall. It had to be fortified to stop monsters from escaping.

2nd December XX89: The South East Regiment led by Viscount Mie, walked into the fortress.

3rd December XX89: Henry III's North East regiment was close to Claireville Academy.

4th December XX89: Combat began at the Town of Ela. All 3.5 thousand entered the fortress to be locked. A siege from an unknown force began.

5th December XX89: Henry III's force was ordered to retreat. A message came from Duke Mundy. The apparent threat was of Queen Gallienne sneaking past their forces and entering Arda. A pincer move with King Staxius from the North and Queen Gallienne from the South.

6th December XX89: On the verge of seeing combat, Claireville Academy stood with Sophie at the helm. However, Henry III's forces made a U-turn. Supplies were low and the threat of an invasion lingered. Advancing too much would result in utter disaster.

10th December XX89: The battle of Town Ela raged. The forces trapped inside ran out of food and water.

11th December XX89: The area felt quiet at dawn, no sign of the enemy. In the distance, a squadron of planes was seen approaching from the North East, in the direction of Rotherham.

12th December XX89: Reports of Viscount Mie's forces being annihilated reached Duke Mundy. 3.5 thousand men wiped by what witnesses say, a barrage of fire and explosion. A mushroom-shaped cloud was seen.

17th December XX89: Henry III's Regiment encountered the supposed army marching into Arda. It was naught but a decoy. Duke Mundy never issued the orders to retreat. With supplies low, the combined army returned for they were outsmarted.

20th December XX89: The vampires marched ever so close to the capital. They flew instead of walking; the trip was cut significantly.

21st December XX89: Henry III crossed the border into Arda.

22nd December XX89: The representatives, Mieshre, Haru, Skokdrag, and Ryul, came out of hiding with their individual army of 5 thousand strong.

23rd December XX89: Mieshre captured the castle of Elbo. One that stood in the way of Henry III's army. Haru and Skokdrag took to the East whilst Ryul led a special force of mages.

24th December XX89: The armies joined with King Staxius Haggard. Mieshre met combat with Henry III.

25th December XX89: Duke Mundy raised his army and called for help from the Pope. He was met with no response as the Saints fled out of Arda.

26th December XX89: Guild Leader Mieshre won the battle of Castle Elbo, she suffered a total death-count of 1 thousand. Marshal Henry III was the only noble captured, the rest were killed.

27th December XX89: The Battle for Arda commenced. The forts around the capital were under siege by factions of warriors. King Staxius took to the battlefield.

28th December XX89: Duke Mundy marched out the capital to meet the king on the battle-field to the North. Around 20 thousand fighters against King Staxius's force of 10 thousand.

31st December XX89: The Blood-King Faction won the battle of Arda. Witnesses say that the fight was one-sided. The king wielded tremendous power, ones on part with death. A dark-hemisphere covered part of the battlefield where he fought – Xenosious. In addition to that, a lady with a firey red-hair named Intherna reeked chaos. Reports said the King summoned a legendary beast to aid in the fight. Duke Mundy did well to move his force and fight. The defeat came when Mieshre marched from the South, she ambushed their outpost and ended the fight. Forests turned to a desert of blood and bodies.

1st January XX90: The Blood-King took his rightful place as Monarch. The dungeon was uncovered and those who lived were saved. Kreston's attempt at conquering Arda ended in defeat.

2nd January XX90: The rebuilding process began with the aid of workers from the Dwarves.

3rd January XX90: Mieshre, Haru, Ryul, and Skokdrag got given titles of Baron as well as land to rule over. Oenus and his team were Knighted. Serene chose to forgo the opportunity to be noble to serve her king.

4th January XX90: Queen Gallienne retakes the County of Eldo, Dukedom of Yolda, and Viscounty of Ilon.

5th January XX90: The Goldberg's are given the Dukedom of Yolda. Baron Luther Remington is awarded the Viscounty of Ilon. Duke Edmundy is given the County of Eldo. Prices for their efforts in taking Castle Garsley.

6th January XX90: The Nonaggression pact between Kreston and Oxshield ended.

10th January XX90: The Goldberg's army marched into castle Garsley with a force of 2 thousand.

13th January XX90: The Pope orders Archangel Erna to march into Arda from the North since the Blood-king faction has moved to the capital.

14th January XX90: Shockingly the Eastern and Western Kingdom of Easel Run-Gard came to peace. The difference in culture vanished on the verge of war. Rumors of Kreston planning to invade had reached their ears. The child-monarch of the Western Kingdom was married to the princess of the Eastern Kingdom. It was made possible by the intervention of the underground, mainly, Godfather Renaud who pressured the rule. The latter only did so as it was requested by a man he absolutely adored, Shadow.

18th January XX90: The newly established rule of Easel Run-Gard sought out for the famed Blood-king.

20th January XX90: Contact is made. An envoy came to Hidros via escort from Phantom. He came to the purpose of joining the Argashield Federation. It came with conditions for they wanted assurance that Easel Run-Gard would be allowed to run freely. An attempt at finding allies since the Emperor had rejected Hidros.

21st January XX90: After a long debate, King Staxius and Queen Gallienne welcomed the continent of Easel Run-Gard into the Argashield Federation. Weak compared to the Wracia empire, the risk of war

being declared had them in fear. However, behind closed doors, Phantom worked tirelessly to have Staxius's dream come to fruition.

22nd January XX90: The Universities of Arda were transferred to Rotherham where a massive base for research was built. Construction ended early since Cake took the liberty of employing engineers and intellectuals from other countries.

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24th January XX90: Arda's noble faction disbanded. Duke Mundy's reported missing after being captured. Henry III and Krask suffered the same fate.

27th January XX90: Easel Run-Gard sends a platoon of 150 soldiers to Hidros.

29th January XX90: The Pope denounces Sharon as a fake apostle, the devil's sent.

4th February XX90: The Empire's religious belief changed as a true apostle of the God of Kreston arrived.

9th February XX90: The new border between Castle Garsley, now under the Goldberg's and the whole of Dorchester under Kreston, is fortified.

17th February XX90: Arda's economical situation improves as demand for magical weaponry sky-rockets. Phantom becomes an influential arm's dealer.

20th February XX90: The Pope arrives at Iqavea per the Emperor's orders.

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27th February XX90: The first council meeting of the Argashield Federation is hosted. King Staxius, Queen Gallienne, and the young Prince of the Easel Kingdom met at a secretive location.

2nd March XX90: The accounts of advanced weaponry in Hidros's hand has the Emperor furious. The Cobalt Unit is called forth on a top-secret mission involving the project of a ship that could be used as a portable base.

5th March XX90: Phantom's research unit split into four divisions. Air, Water, Land, and weaponry. The profits from selling Gate Six's signature assault-rifle all over the world has had the company boom. As part of the Federation, Phantom agrees to give 25% of the profit to Hidros. Arda's mind was set on the extraction of precious metals and gemstones. The continent of Alpha, directly East of Iqavea has had an influx in demand for jewelry. The Alpha Empire revolved around the unity and well-being of its inhabitants. People of which held magic-like abilities. They didn't require mana to perform certain tasks. Special abilities obtain by birth, a race of humans named Sultria, based off Sultria I's name. The latter being the first Emperor. The current leaders were his descendant, Sultria VI.

10th March XX90: The Argashield Federation sends King Staxius Haggard to Alpha.

13th March XX90: The Pope performs a mass blessing to convert those who wish to partake in a rumored Crusade.

16th March XX90: King Staxius Haggard returns in victory. He persuaded the Emperor of Sultria to sign a non-agreement pact as well as a trading agreement. One that stated all their demands of rare precious ores and gemstones, would be handled by Arda.

17th March XX90: Queen Gallienne recruits mercenaries and adventurers from all over the continent. The Argashield Army is instated, one that would be under the Federation's command. It contained fighters from Arda and personal armies of the nobles still in Hidros.

19th March XX90: Kreston's standing as a province raises atop Hidros. The Emperor is baptized by the Pope thus officially changing the Wracia Empire.

20th March XX90: Discord among the Five Kingdoms is felt subtly as leaders expressed their discontent with the Emperor's selfish actions.

25th March XX90: Kreston, backed by the Wracia Empire, declares war on the Easel Kingdom. Troupes sent by the Emperor weren't for reinforcement, but an invasion. He had planned to use Kreston as a decoy and have Easel Run Gard blind-sided. 5 thousand men planned to arrive next month.

28th March XX90: The Prince of Easel Gard asks for help from the Federation.

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29th March XX90: Phantom, under King Staxius, answers the call for help. A squadron of fighter-planes is soon to fly over. Later on that day, the Emperor's fleet is taken by surprise. A bombardment of novelty weapons and planes; only sound was heard.

30th March XX90: Reports arrived of three ships carrying 500 men sunk.

31st March XX90: To everyone's surprise, Queen Shanna Islegust comes out of hiding in the company of Princess Lizzie.

1st April XX90: The Argashield Army is flown over to Easel Gard. King Staxius accompanied by his team join the fight as well.

7th April XX90: Preparations for an interception is made while in Hidros, Queen Gallienne has troops stationed around the borders.

10th April XX90: The public's sullied image of Queen Shanna is soon cleared by the news and an interview from the King. He explained in greater detail why things had to be done. Many of the turn-coats were given no mercy.

19th April XX90: Kreston's sight is set on taking Easel Gard.

27th April XX90: Ships are seen over the horizon. The battered ships approached over yonder.

28th April XX90: A squadron of planes with Phantom's on their tail, take flight. From shore, missiles built in a week had the ships in sight. King Haggard watched in the company of the Prince. What came out of the exchange was nothing but the image of a mushroom-shaped cloud and a fire. No sound nor shockwave, the fleet sank. Few managed to escape via boat, boats that were soon captured by Phantom.

29th April XX90: A close blood-cousin of the emperor was found among the survivors. Negotiations of his release went underway.

2nd May XX90: Emperor Paradus accepted King Staxius's terms. The cousin was set free under the conditions that a non-aggression pact of a year, excluding Kreston be signed. The deal was settled behind closed door as the pressure came from the underground.

5th May XX90: The Pope returns to Kreston. Rumors of weaponry and mercenaries being hired from the Wracia Empire has the Federation cautious.

6th May XX90: Queen Shanna's return was accepted by many. It was made possible not only because of the interview, but that the Blood-King became the ruling Monarch. A new faction, a new council, new nobles, and everything changed. A new rule and a new way of living.

10th May XX90: Pathways around Arda were built, the Dryad's accepted to the king's demands. They saw the threat and harm that was done without a stable means of transport. The capital would have fallen on the day of the revolt if not for Erna. She did slaughter many, thus saving the city.

11th May XX90: Arda is split into various districts to allow an easier rule. Haru is made in charge of district Ela which contained Town Eden. The latter is reopened to Oxshield. The populous is soon to make a steady growth back into a quiet life.

16th May XX90: The borders between Arda and Dorchester are reinforced by the Nightwalkers.

19th May XX90: Gate Six begin the testing phase of a new engine. One that would be used to power their projects.

24th May XX90: The world moves into a race to accomplish the first engine that could convert mana in the atmosphere to raw-output. The theory of Mana Dispersal is made public and subject to debates. The Author of said prospect was Staxius backed by Gate-Six. The reason was that the theories were getting smarter by the day. People were asking many questions, questions that were directed at the very fabric of the world. Hence, to stop the curiosity, a paper was published.

5th June XX90: Some shady characters moved behind the scene. The Wracia empire which had alienated Hidros were suddenly in trouble. The leaders were soon to dislike the Emperor. The council compromised of Kings wanted answers. Rumors, hate, sent a clear target, manipulation at it's finest.

6th June XX90: A council meeting of the Wracia empire was hosted. It came as a surprise when the King of Arda stood beside the Queen of Elendor. She wielded power over the West. A span of that rivaled the Emperor. The sheer amount of untapped resources had her as a prominent figure on the table. The Emperor was always used to staying on the low and avoiding her fury.

7th June XX90: The meeting ended with Staxius as the winner. The Emperor proposed of planning for an invasion of Easel Run Gard. The prospect was shunned rather angrily. Queen of Elendor fondly enough didn't speak. The king of Arda did so in her favor. Not to mention, the other kings seemed to agree on what he proposed. It was concluded that the Wracia Empire should have their King's think of what is best for their country. He fully exploited Paradus selfishly being baptized. Wracia Empire was nothing but a non-aggression pact.

8th June XX90: Kreston made moves on trying to sway nobles from the queen Gallienne's faction.

19th June XX90: The completion of the Azure wall reached 50%. It was set to finish in XX92.

20th June XX90: The tower of Aris with monster drops as coins, had Hidros's economy stabilized. The adventurers made a very good progress.

25th June XX90: Roth was reinstated as the Adventuring guild headquarters. Many in lack of work returned slowly. The guild leaders had very few recruits, the effects of a negative income Kingdom was felt across. Luckily, Staxius handled the crisis perfectly.

29th June XX90: King of Arda remained at Dreqai in the company of the Queen of Elendor. The duo became very good friends. The lady was smart, overly smart, smart to the point of her choosing to remain without a husband. She thought poorly of men in general, however, Staxius's allure felt different.

12th July XX90: Kreston's forces gathered and marched to Krigi of old.

15th July XX90: Erna aided by Hamael, took to the edge of Castle Garsley. In the time that had passed, a good network of transport was built.

16th July XX90: A formal declaration of war was sent via messenger by Erna. An act of courtesy since last time was a bit underhanded. Received, the reported force of 2 thousand station soldiers would be met by a force of 7 thousand. Since the Emperor wasn't allowed to fight, he delegated the activities to an outside man. Part of his force became mercenaries and took off for Kreston. The latter built an airport, thus allowing easy transport.

17th July XX90: The rumble of tanks and fighters replaced to the chirping of birds. Planes were seen circling the area. A gift in form of a Squadron of seven planes by Paradus. At noon, the forces moved to the hills and forest. A siege with the Goldberg's making a stand. The battle of Garsley II.

23rd July XX90: The castle was conquered by Kreston. A victory that came at the price of many o souls. The bell of retreat sounded sharply at dusk, the forces fled to Savaview bridge and burnt what remained behind.

27th July XX90: Kreston was soon to build a relay that curved inside Dorchester and headed for the border. A place where Arda, Oxshield, and Dorchester overlapped. The area was a massive ravine of which only a plane could fly. The climb would be met by nothing but water.

30th July XX90: The Pope proposed an idea, one of building a bridge using magic to cross the canyon.

2nd August XX90: The Federation focused its efforts on securing the Savaview bridge. The King of Arda remained in Dreqai since the Order called for him to explain the paper that was presented.

3rd August XX90: Staxius Haggard of Arda is given the Lodle-Award. The Lodle award, with its peculiar name, was a recompense given to people who made discoveries beyond what humanity could have envisioned.

5th August XX90: The Alchemist returned a hero. This boosted the popularity of the Argashield Federation, especially in Elendor's eyes.

7th August XX90: Disagreement stacked when Paradus rejected Queen of Elendor's offer of opening the borders for Arda to do business.

10th August XX90: Kreston is at war with Oxshield. The border is soon to be conquered.

15th August XX90: Intervention from Phantom stopped their progress. The planes given to Kreston didn't suffice since those own by the arm's company out-performed in every way. A clean-up operation was ordered; thus the combat-helicopters took to Castle Garsley.

16th August XX90: The supply chain was broken leaving Castle Garsley opened for a push.

18th August XX90: The Argashield Army pushed through Savaview Bridge.

20th August XX90: The Krestonian army is spotted inside Oxshield on a routine flight by Phantom. They made progress towards Dundee.

21st August XX90: Trucks rushed down East to flank Savaview bridge.

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22nd August XX90: Hidros is blindsided by a masterplan from Kreston. They invaded via a fully operating bridge. King Staxius who was in charge of the Argashield Federation's army was at Dreqai. Despite Phantom having spotted the movement, orders came to stand down for it could ruin their reputation as reliable arm's dealer.

24th August XX90: The Argashield force which pushed Savaview Bridge was caught in a crossfire. The General retook command of a losing battle. Pincerd on both sides with aerial weaponry raining death, the forces dwindled.

25th August XX90: The order to push further into the enemy line came from the top. Leading the charge was a Major named Macros, a bastard son from a noble. Shunned till the talents for warfare was discovered, the one who noticed was none other than Staxius. The installment of the Argashield Army meant that he would overlook most of the recruitment process.

26th August XX90: Kreston made an impressive move by catching their flanks. However, they didn't predict the tenacity of the Federation. From magical weaponry to new and state-of-the-art guns and ammo, funded by Phantom, the numbers didn't matter. Macros's leadership under pressure paired with the resolute training by the soldiers sufficed.

27th August XX90: Macros's platoon laid siege to the already destroyed Castle Garsley. Houses and buildings were used as cover, an urban battlefield with room for tactics. Kreston could but push back into Savaview in hopes of winning the war of attrition. The strategy of going forward almost neutralized the opportunity of flanking.

28th August XX90: A deadlock between the forces turn into who would give first. Kreston's supply route was cut a few weeks from an air-strike. As for Macros, back-up soon arrived by plane. The TU-03 with 2 platoons of newly trained fighters. Face painted with tribal symbology, they paid homage to the god of War.

29th August XX90: The bridge Kreston made was destroyed via another air-strike. Meanwhile, the battle for castle Garsley ended with a white-flag from Kreston. The flank reserved onto themselves as more forces arrived. In total, 850 Krestonian fighters were caught.

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30th August XX90: The fighters are imprisoned in Dundee where a dungeon rested for the sake of war. The Dungeon keeper had but one thing to say, 'these people are fanatics. They wish upon death so dearly I've witnessed brothers killing brothers for the sake of war. If tis the faith they believe in, I rather have myself alienated from the world.'

6th September XX90: Negotiations on what to do with the captured are underway.

20th September XX90: War rages, the prisoners were abandoned for their lack of faith. The 850 soon turned to 235 as people killed one another in the name of god. In god they believed till death, the passion and fanaticism showed could but have one wonder. What would have been if they were not so misled? What then, they could have done so much for their kingdom.

27th September XX90: The Argashield establishes good relations with Dreqai. The Queen allows for an embassy to be put in place. Since Wracia and Hidros were in a non-aggression pact, it made settling down easier.

6th November XX90: Queen of Elendor of the Wracia empire formally asks to leave the alliance. She broke off her connection to forge one anew with the Kingdom of Hidros.

7th November XX90: Queen of Elendor leaves for Hidros.

8th November XX90: The war on the border of Kreston and Oxshield continues without end.

10th November XX90: Queen of Elendor formally meets Queen Shanna of Arda.

11th November XX90: Wracia empire is shaken by the loss of their Queen. A large pool of resources vanished in a blink.

16th November XX90: News of a potential mine for precious stones hails from Dreqai. Some adventurers found a natural cave that went down a few hundred meters underground. It linked with many others, thus, the expertise from the Dwarves was called.

17th November XX90: A team leaves Arda for Dreqai.

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28th November XX90: King Juvey of the continent of Melida, located offshore to the North-West of Iqavea. He also held control over the Northern portion of the Main continent. A belligerent leader who only wished to invade and plunder. It took more than a few attempts to reach inside his thick-skull. With Queen of Elendor out of the Wracia empire, it allowed declaring war.

29th November XX90: The Order announces a new research unit to help in assisting the Cobalt Unit.

30th November XX90: Experiment engines are tested around the globe.

8th December XX90: Emperor Sultria VI of the Alpha Empire visits Arda. The occasion was Princess Eira Haggard's coming of age. It came to a surprise when Sultria VI arrived. The man was but a boy, and a boy of which aged was Eighteen. Obviously, King Staxius knew the true thought was sworn to secrecy. Especially since Alpha's economy revolved around the extraction of Gold.

9th December XX90: Emperor Sultria VI returned with a lost expression. The boy and the princess had gotten along quite nicely. The King of Arda, with the mind empty of emotions towards his loved ones, had but one thing to say, 'do as thou pleases for I'm naught but a guardian.' Words addressed in secrecy to Eira and Xula. The duo had made many mistakes, mistakes that changed the man for the worse. From a caring husband and father to a fully invested politician. The mind was on but one thing, strengthening Arda.

24th December XX90: Queen Gallienne calls for a rounding of the council, a guest came with the cover of night. Queen of Elendor, Ela III, went into hiding. One of her food testers died of poison, an assassination attempt. Her council of four Dukes took over as the current rulers. A Regnant was instated.

25th December XX90: Ela III, now under the name of Helda, took residence at the Haggard Manor in Rosespire. The place couldn't be any safer for many weapons, defense, and guards were made available by Phantom.

4th January XX91: King Juvey declares war for the possession of Bastion archipelagos. A collection of Iles that was worth the effort. It would allow easy take-off and departure for Iqavea in times of war.

5th January XX91: Duke Rubble of Elendor retaliates by sending his fleet.

6th January XX91: Prince Ernis announces his efforts at becoming a better ruler. The ceremony hosted was in favor of him coming to rule soon. A show to say, 'look, I'll be the next ruler, respect mine will.'

8th January XX91: The fleets met on the sea close to Bastion Archipelagos.

9th January XX91: An envoy arrived from Alpha the empire. The Emperor wished to have Princess Eira Haggard as the Empress of Alpha.

10th January XX91: King of Arda leaves the decision to Eira. The latter was distraught from her actions. 'I've no right to wish for happiness as I've instigated the war.'

11th January XX91: The battle of Bastion archipelagos ended with King Juvey as the victor. Tales of him personally taking to the battlefield of which was the sea, spread like wildfire. Juvey the cray, a nickname given for his body resembled a crayfish.

16th January XX91: The attack didn't stop at the archipelagos. He decided to set sail for the port of Lisbon. No declaration of war, nothing, the man was as belligerent as in the rumors.

18th January XX91: Princess Eira accepts the offer of getting married. Her only condition was to have it occur after she deemed so. Her goal of setting forth on an adventure with her dad was yet to be realized.

19th January XX91: Arda enters in alliance with Alpha empire. The people received the Emperor's decision to court Eira with smiles. Never had they seen such an icy-looking girl. Her face was plastered in the newspapers and television. It had them in excitement.

25th January XX91: Hearing the news of a player such as Alpha being allied with Arda. The Wracia empire's current order was destabilized. A feeling of envy had many drooling.

28th January XX91: King Juvey's fleet lands to pillage the port.

4th February XX91: the Kingdom of Elendor declares war on Juvey the Cray.

6th February XX91: A large cargo of weapons set sails from Hidros. The client being the Regnant of Elendor.

9th February XX91: Another cargo of weapon sets sails from the Cobalt Unit's headquarters. The recipient was Juvey's army. A conflict turned testing ground for weapons.

12th February XX91: Elendor stands tall. The lost port soon turns into a bloodied war of experimental weapons. Some recount of other weapons breaking and killing its host.

14th February XX91: Alphia Empire is infatuated with the Princess of Arda. The people want to see more of her, she turns into a celebrity in an empire of more than a few million people.

15th February XX91: Eira's status at school rises from Princess to would-be Empress. A title higher than her father. The decision was of her own volition. None forced her to act.

16th February XX91: Helda requests a favor from the King. She wished for him to take for Iqavea.

17th February XX91: The Goddess of Destruction, Gophy, is summoned by Staxius. She returned with her full power and might. Intherna, daughter of Rah, held her doubts about Gophy for rumors of her alliance with Zeus made her weary.

19th February XX91: Gophy pledges her body, soul, and the power to Staxius. Led by him, a team of godly entities is soon to head for the conflict zone at sea.

22nd February XX91: King Juvey returns to Melida for the fear of usurpation.

24th February XX91: King Staxius arrives at the already war-torn port of Bendy located inside the Dukedom of Melathorn, under the rule of Duke Melan II. A place that thrived on commerce turned to ruin. The weapons sent prior helped in pushing the invasion. Sadly, King Juvey's force of 4 thousand made it clear that they were superior.

25th February XX91: King Staxius meets with Duke Melan II. The latter pleads for support in the war.

26th February XX91: On behalf of the Argashield Federation, the king of Arda enters the war.

28th February XX91: The fighting comes to an end after an explosion rattled the port. Not the work of weapons, rather, Gophy went a little overboard with her newfound body. She unleashed a bit of her real strength; it nearly ravaged the whole district.

2nd March XX91: What remained of Juvey's forces returned home. The Wracia alliance could but sit ideally. Helping out in the war would mean breaking the non-aggression pact. Since Staxius acted as self-defense, there was no way in which they could blame and claim the compensation in funds.

5th March XX91: Yet another tale from the famed King of Arda spreads around the globe. The Argashield Federation catches the eye of many influential people.

7th March XX91: Queen of Elendor comes out of hiding. She's quick to move and award the Federation a recompense.

8th March XX91: Ela III rejoined the Federation. The latter now held King of Arda, Queen of Hidros, Prince of Easel Run Gard, Queen of Elendor as well as support from Alpha's empire thanks to Eira's courtship. A growing force in the world, one that allied to be readied to fight they who wielded power for so long; the Wracia Empire.

10th March XX91: Supplies and money was being lost on Kreston's petty fights. They all but did hit and runs.

16th March XX91: A formal letter is sent to Emperor Paradus from the Federation. One that requested for King Juvey to stop the senseless aggression.

17th March XX91: Messengers headed for King Juvey. Elendor's new alliance meant the non-aggression pact to be applied to her continent.

28th March XX91: Fighters are trained all over the world for the sole purpose of defending. The Federation spared no expense, especially Arda, Staxius made strides in having them work.

31st March XX91: Princess Eira is formally flown over to the Alpha empire.

1st April XX91: Her welcome is phenomenal. People from all over came to catch a glimpse. Her standoffish allure made many envious of what she was.

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2nd April XX91: The princess of Arda fell for the emperor's charm. The King of Arda remained by her side as per tradition. He watched and talked and surveyed. The focus solely on how to gather forces.

3rd April XX91: The newspapers are filled by the yet to be empress's picture. More of the word spread and more of the Federation's reach had the Wracia empire in fear. The leadership of the four-kings was held strong by Paradus. A strong-willed and scary connection, the Wracia empire wasn't only rumored to be strong, they were very strong.

5th April XX91: The General of Arda proposes to launch a full out attack to Kreston. The latter grew tiring, a campaign that could well last a few years.

7th April XX91: King of Arda returns. The Blood-king faction, most specifically, Serene, uncovered a plot to have Princess Lizzie assassinated. His people were asked to remain in the shadows and watch. Remnants of the fallen revolution, the noble-faction remained. A prediction and precaution that paid to be squandered.

9th April XX91: The whole province of Arda's leadership goes through another change. Everything is rebuilt from the ground-up. New laws, new rules, new taxes, and new everything, the king had foreseen the future, thus, change happened.

10th April XX91: Discussion of a potential declaration of war against Kreston goes through the hierarchy. Queen Gallienne was unusually supportive as many devotes of Kreston's god had the capital in chaos. Explosions, terrorist attacks, undue harm done to civilians.

16th April XX91: Gate Six goes into the testing phase for the first mana-converting engine.

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17th April XX91: Kreston's activity is subsided for an emissary came from Paradus. It asked for them to hold and watch.

19th April XX91: The test is successful; all requirements were met. A secretive project of Air, Land, and Sea. During the time at Drejai, King Staxius carefully planned and negotiated for Phantom. The arm's company collaborated with Candil; a research group overshadowed by the Cobalt Unit. They were those who suggested a new innovating and more streamlined model for a plane. Thus, a collaboration of a which past the one-year mark came to an end. The model, engineering, and design phase were complete. A few prototypes were made and flown as dismantled-parts on the TU-03. Assembled at Phantom's airfield, the planes had a flight of only a few hours. Their prowess was shown in full on the air-strike ordered for the supply route. A plane that flew faster than the eye could see.

25th April XX91: Plans for war goes into preparation. Spies are sent into Dorchester and Kreston.

26th April XX91: Crossing the border was more hassle than they would have liked. However, hope was an ever-elusive item. Help came in the form of a family member. Staxius's sister to be precise, Claudia Haggard, a member of Whisper. Ex-member for she retired after a near-death-experience. Her motherly love overwhelmed the duties of being a spy. A spy that held a copious amount of information on Kreston. In addition to that, Elliot and his sister were brought in.

30th April XX91: Conflicts around the world are calmed. An uneasy silence, one that had many rulers question the intention of their allies.

14th August XX91: The non-aggression pact between the Wracia Empire and the Federation is renewed for another year. The support of the Alpha Empire had many plot their moves diligently.

18th August XX91: Hidros recovers slowly from the prior war. The inhabitant ventured around. The recession uncured by loss of funds had Oxshield rethink their strategies.

23rd December XX91: Four months of people living in peace. A fleeting sensation for the Pope's team, the Syndicate, made moves in the underworld. Phantom's status as mere distributor of God's ale and Angel Dust is raised to family. The Haggard family with Staxius as the head. Families in the underworld were as guilds or clans. The Haggard's were soon to take advantage of their authority. Godfather Renaud Lone of the Lone family is soon to take the Haggard's under their wing. Respect and mutual love; Shadow's identity assumed by Courtney, had risen in threat level.

24th December XX92: Close to a year went by. Princess of Arda finished her studies at Claireville Academy. She's promoted and offered a scholarship at Iqavea.

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25th December XX92: Eira rejects the offer, she chose to enter a university inside Rosespire. One affiliated to Phantom for they funded most of the activities. Exceptional students with a talent for research were scouted to join Phantom's research unit. The smarter they were, the more they were paid. The more they gave, the more they got.

6th January XX93: The Azure wall is complete. The threat of Totrya is handled by weaponry sold by Phantom. Adventurers are trained more thoroughly. Monster slaying became the norm, a new culture for the people knew how to deal with the commons.

7th January XX93: A year of planning for the eventual full-out war against Kreston led to this particular day. Armies and resources are sent from the nations of the Federation. Many landed at the now extended airfield of Phantom.

8th January XX93: Report say that Kreston prepared for the same eventuality. Emperor Paradus gives his full-support. The Cobalt Unit made improvement upon improvement to the point of it being redundant. There came a time where they proposed correct and innovative theories each week.

9th January XX93: Kreston and the Federation sent envoys to meet in castle Garsley. An effort to resolve their difference through discussion.

10th January XX93: The talk ended in a bad spirit. The bishop didn't hear any of it. 'Our God shall bless this continent. The unfaithful are to be burnt. They are to be shunned and killed; they are to be treated worst than the devil. Those who wished us harm and did us wrong are to serve the righteous hand of justice for our god is always right.'

12th January XX93: What many feared came to pass. The Argashield army was readied to leave for combat. First-order was to capture castle Garsley.

13th January XX93: The Argashield Army ventures forth to war. Staxius leads one of the companies.

14th January XX93: The bell for the retreat was rung a few days ago. Kreston willingly gave up castle Garsley.

16th January XX93: Planes are sent to scout; tanks are deployed as a defense. Hidden from view and intelligence, GateSix who went dark for the past two years resurfaced with new guns, weapons, vehicles, and engines. Efforts in investing funds for the scouting of talented scholars paid.

17th January XX93: A command center is stationed at the Noble District. Kreston is yet to be seen.

18th January XX93: Staxius moves to Frostrest. Conquering the mountain was another task.

19th January XX93: The Argashield's army is ambushed whilst going around the mountain. The village of Frostrest soon turns into a battlefield. Forces of each side are paired equally with new technology and skill.

27th January XX93: The battle of Frostrest rages.

29th January XX93: Kreston flanks Argashield via the mountain. They moved by boats up a rather large river. Pincerred, the Army of which was but 5%, the suppression unit, fought with determination. However, it did naught as the remainder didn't ask for backup. King Staxius and part of his platoon were 2 days out of the unit.

31st January XX93: Explosion and gunfire break the quietude of the mountain. The battle was won by Kreston. Blindsided, the best strategy was to return to a more familiar area.

4th January XX93: Scouting planes from Kreston are shot by the Federation.

6th January XX93: Frostrest is deemed harder to control due to the terrain. A new plan of attack is brought forth.

9th January XX93: Ships containing 4 thousand men move from Arda to the North. The destination was a beach close to the Rotten-thicket.

10th January XX93: Forces are moved to Frostrest as a decoy.

17th January XX93: The decoy worked wonders. The platoon didn't suffer much. A game of cat and mouse. Meanwhile, the sea-bound unit soon enters the forest.

18th January XX93: An airstrike is called by Staxius. One that only he commanded for the planes belonged to Phantom. Bombs were dropped, the carnage had many retreat to the border.

19th January XX93: Tanks stationed a few hours off of the village move in for the capture. A successful operation.

20th January XX93: The returning forces of Kreston are ambushed by the sea-unit. Total annihilation due to a single piece of equipment. A collaboration of which Staxius took part personally. A suit design to have the user invisible for 15 minutes with a cool-down of 3 minutes. The latter was given only to members of Phantom as it cost a lot of money to make. To ensure the operation happened without fail, a force led by Elliot soon overwhelms the terrain.

25th January XX93: Rotten thicket is occupied by the Argashield Federation. The status of the war was followed closely by the other empires. Wracia Empire, in particular, Kreston was but a means to an end. A convenient way to test the waters.

30th January XX93: The push is halted; attention is turned to caution. Frostrest soon turns to a military outpost.

6th February XX93: An unknown squadron of planes lays Frostrest to ruin.

8th February XX93: The occupation is hindered by the sudden push from Kreston. Rotten Thicket turns into a bloodbath. Phantom's forces were long gone.

9th February XX93: The attack came from the Cobalt Unit. A revelation had many shudder. A mothership from which plane could land and take-off was seen few kilometers off-shore to Kreston. The Wracia empire's crest reigned supreme. The Cobalt Unit perfected warfare on the sea whilst Phantom's Research focused on Aerial combat.

20th February XX93: Each side suffers major damage.

21st February XX93: Wracia Empire blocked the trade route from the kingdom of Elendor. A strain that would push a stop to Hidros' economy. In attempts to fight back, the Alpha Empire shuts its trade route to Wracia.

26th February XX93: The fight escalated rapidly. The initial contact was to gauge their opponents. None wanted to shot their ace. However, the game of cat and mouse grew tiring.

28th February XX93: Archangel Erna rises from nothing. She leads a charge down into the forest leaving nothing in her wake. Complete defeat, her force kept on advancing. The new Paladin, Angel Hamael, members of the Syndicate who were ousted from the underground. The strongest team they had. Not only did it stop there, but she also came with an upgraded army of puppet soldiers. Fighters who never

died, a fight against the undead. The real project that the pope worked on for so long. War was a convenient way to draw attention away.

7th March XX93: The zombie army of Kreston teared through Dorchester. The Federation's weapons didn't help against never-dying fighters.

28th March XX93: The fight reached castle Garsley. The place where it all began. A figure stood atop the rebuilt castle, one surrounded by strong individuals.

"So, they've come," he said with a nonchalant voice. The Archangel stared the King of Arda

What followed next was a scene of which words wouldn't do justice. The fight raged Zombies against Phantom. The Argashield Federation army combined with the allies were left distraught. The king demanded that the fight be his and his only. The weather changed, the zombies stood waiting to pounce. Erna walked forth, "-Art thou he who the bringer of death referred to?"

"I might and might not be said person," he leaped to land with the ground carving into itself. The weather changed from somber to one of which signaled the coming of death. Goddess Gophy and Goddess Intherna stood beside. Serene remain close to his side.

"I never forgive and I never forget. I'll kill those who've taken from me and I'll take from them ten-fold of which they stole. Prepare to die, Archangel Erna." Xenosious, a pitch-black hemisphere shrouded the battlefield. Flames on one side and destruction on the other, the fight began.

30th March XX93: Krestonian's zombie army died by Intherna's hand. The vehicles and supplies were destroyed by Gophy. Last but not least, Death came to she who killed his companions.

Chapter 359: Krestonian's Holy Invasion

'It's a shame,' the wind blew sadly, the weather frowned, the sky cried. Darkness hailing from the darkened clouds as the weather grew worst. Four figures stood before a grave near to Claireville Academy's hospital. The trees were few and scattered. A lady with a parasol stood with her head to the floor. 'Five years,' thought the man with a breath. 'I can't believe you're all dead,' a shook of dismissal had the others shuffle to the side.

"Let's go, Eira, Viola," said Staxius now faced away. "They need to rest, I want them to rest. No more mourning, tis time to move on," the tone came across cold and distant. Eira, now taller and bigger, was more mature. Her feisty persona was replaced for one nonchalantish. One that resembled her father.

"Papa, papa," called an innocent voice, "-why is big sis crying?"

"Oh Lizzie," they walked hand in hand, "-I'll tell you all about it when the time comes. What do you say we have something to eat."

"Ok, papa, I want to taste auntie Rosetta's cake."

"Cake it is my dear," he returned with a smile, "-cake it is."

Nine months had passed since the fight of castle Garsley. The last to end the war, the one that decided all. The initial exchange felt one-sided, the Krestonian's held the advantage. An advantage of which they failed to grasp. Archangel Erna died by King Staxius's hand. The others were killed and annihilated by

Gophy and Intherna. Two of which decided to rest for the coming months as the battle took more than due. The Pope, upon the continent being breached by the winning force, surrendered. The villagers watched with agony, anger, hopelessness, and more. They were more conflicted than any other. It seemed a dream; a dream shattered when faced with reality. The mob mentality of their god being righteous was dismantled from the top down. The fall of their angel, the escape of their apostle, and their Pope holding his hand. They were confused and shamed. Deep emotional scars were left, many sought repentance by death, and death came in the end.

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Few days before the Pope surrendering, the mothership of the Wracia Empire named Von returned. An order to evacuate every force affiliated with the Wracia Empire came. That alone had the province exposed.

Surprised, the Pope demanded an answer from he who he baptized. The seldom response was but a dismissal. The Wracia Empire formally withdrew their alliance with Kreston. From being well-connected to suddenly on the rope, the hope of the Syndicate pulling through kept the Pope alive. Sadly, Phantom's reach in the underworld with Cake as the head made sure they were silenced. A grudging collaboration from the Assassination Sect. Godfather Stanley wasn't keen but did so for Shadow had helped in the past. Thus, the tyranny of their rule, their pressure, and their threat, was carefully picked apart. All from the efforts of a single man, not that many knew the truth. A master scheme that went into play long ago. Staxius Haggard, as most knew him for being the Hero-King of Arda, moved according to his vision. A vision to take everything from the Pope. Archangel Erna's defeat had yet to qualm the throbbing heart.

The War between Kreston and the Argashield Federation was named the Krestonian's holy invasion. Holy as to pay homage to the people who died, the people who followed the senseless ideals of right and wrong.

Thus when the King of Arda arrived at the cathedral of Munch, the Pope stood outside in holy-clothes. The head bowed with a book and a staff. Many o' devotees stood in a line behind. Giving a once over, the truth came to pass. The Pope's wrinkled face, the hunched posture, black spots, and white hair, time did more damage. He was but a shell of a former man. Beside him stood another, a lady familiar to the sight. The hair shorter and the garment of which nun's wore, the glare remained vivid. Elsa, ex-member of Desmond's team as well as a friend to Aiden. She swore to have revenge hence the result. Arda's turning of the council, the insinuation, the day the council broke, a clever concealment spell changed her visage. 'How could I have forgotten,' thought the King upon remembering the glare, "-it was you," he said in astonishment.

"Yes," she walked, "-it was I, it was I who swore to have my revenge."

"I suppose that's correct."

"You suppose?" she paused, "-you suppose?" she gave a once over with a look of disbelief, "-have you the idea of how much I had to work to make all this happen?"

"Are you expecting a reward?" he asked with the stare turned cold, "-my companions were killed, and I'm to blame, I've acknowledged said fact. Nevertheless, death came one way or the other."

"I did it," she laughed, "-I made you angry," insanity soon took over her mind, she crouched and rambled. The pope, an empty casket stood empty.

"Yeah you did it," he said in a muffle, "-you took care of my loose ties," he gestured. A barrage of bullets soon riddled they who stood, no-mercy nor compassion. He walked away with a cigar in mouth. 'I dreaded the day when I would have to cut ties with my old comrades. I hoped that them being married off and living peaceful lives would have sufficed. Suppose fate is cruel, they paid the ultimate price. My curse of misfortune, that was the reason for their death.

"What do we do with the bodies?" asked a suit-wearing man with a peculiar accent.

"Burn 'em," replied Staxius, "-we don't need evidence, the war is over." Kreston came to an end.

The greyish skyscape brightened a little. A monument carved in Ardanian craftsmanship had names engraved at the bottom. *In remembrance of those who died: Adelana Geua, Ayleth Venus, Ancret Geua, Alyson Geua, Annet Geua, Millicent Parcyvell, Duke Julius Garnet, and Autumn Garnet.* The list was followed by many others. None survived the attack, Erna made sure death came.

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The rule of Dorchester was given to Goldberg's. Queen Gallienne wanted to have it given to Staxius but he refused. Arda was sufficient, he didn't want to cause undue harm to those wishing peace. The Argashield Federation remained strong even after the war. An alliance made to fight, turn to sovereignty. Kreston would divide into two parts, one given to Easel Run Gard and the other to the Queen of Elendor. Railway lines connected the whole province, nine-months sufficed to have the continent evolve. The technology was soon to merge with people's lives. A new generation, a new world, a new life.

Later that day after the visit to the grave, a private party was hosted in Rosespire. The train took but 1 hour to travel the distance that was 2 days' worth at a time.

"King Staxius," welcomed one of the attending butlers, "-her majesty is waiting in the ball-room."

A tall ceiling with a circular chandelier glittering with diamonds and precious stones hung. Songs played, songs that came from a guitar. Each note fretted had the body light with a different hue. "I see that Aceline's here too," he moved across the shiny floor.

"Of course, I am," she stopped with a smile, "-my friend called me after all," the two rejoined in the middle of the hall.

"Auntie Acy," said the angelic voice, her puffy cheeks flushed readily.

"Awhh, Lizzie," she knelt and picked the girl, "-you're so sweeth."

"Calm it with the baby talk," refuted her father, "-she's grown."

"Whatever, Hero King," the idol now super-star, turned defiantly.

"They sure are lively," said Gallienne with a smile.

"I know, where's Piers?"

“Running some errands.”

“You still put the man through so much strain.”

“What do you expect,” she pointed at her belly, “-I’m carrying his child. The least he can do is fetch me something to eat,’ her eyes screamed of mischievousness.

“Here I thought the reason where servants are employed.”

“It matters not,” she rolled her eyes, “-food tastes better when brought by a loved one.”

“I see,” a chuckle escaped, “-why did you call for me?”

“Nothing much,” she sighed and walked to the parted curtains, “-I wanted to see you that’s all.”

“Is something the matter?” he followed.

“I guess,” she stared outside as if a heart-broken teenager, “-I’m worried about you.”

“Oh please,” he cried, “-don’t you dare speak about what is good or bad. I’ve had enough, my job is to have the people live a better life.”

“Isn’t that just running away?” she turned brusquely, “-look at you,” she said in an unfriendly manner, “-you’re the Hero -King, the one who saved Hidros and Arda against Kreston. You saved the people, you did so much behind the scene, assassination, schemes, and lord know what else to get here. Was it worth it?” she asked rather abruptly, “-was it worth it?”

“What do you mean,” he paused, “-don’t you see the change that happened. Hidros is advancing at a rapid pace, we’re becoming independent. Our military might is on par with the Cobalt Unit. The Federation has strong allies and connections around the globe. If you ask me, it was well worth all the effort.”

“What about you?” her eyes darted around, “-what about Queen Shanna, what of Eira, what of them? Are you saying that you’re willing to lose that for the chance at a better country?”

“Yes,” the response was immediate, “-I did what was needed. Shanna is my wife, and I admire her, Eira is my child yet she belongs to another. My focus is on what I can do. There’s a secret I haven’t told anyone yet. Kreston isn’t the real enemy,” he approached, “-it was Paradus all along. We knew he was involved, however, the religion, the pope, the saints, they were all under his command. I’ve done my research; sources have picked up on various records of a certain man. One who took up command and led the era’s into revolution. A spearhead of human existence. The details fit that of Paradus, it struck me as weird that the Wracia empire didn’t fall no matter the pressure.”

“Whatever do you mean?”

“What I mean is that the road ahead is still harsh.”

“What did I miss?” came a man with two-wine glasses.

“Piers,” smiled Staxius to which they shook hands, “-nothing much, thy wife was bickering of the assortment of fruit you gave her yesterday.”

“Really?” he turned in astonishment.

“Yes, really,” laughed Gallienne.

“My bad,” he apologized adorably.

“Apologies accepted,” smiled the Queen, the exchange felt heartwarming.

“It’s accomplished,” mumbled Staxius.

“What did you say?”

“I said it’s done,” he smiled to face away, “-the will of King Blaine Riverty is complete. The will of my father’s best friend, Hidros has been united. May the king find solace in what his daughter accomplished,” cries came from afar.

“Yeah, he would be proud,” added Piers.

“I’m sure Uncle Tempest would be just as proud,” the voice trailed off as he gave the signature wave.

‘I’m not sure father would be proud. My methods are more underhanded and go against his teachings,’ the cries grew close, ‘-I’m not sure he’d be proud.’ The swollen puffy cries stopped the moment he arrived, “-what happened?”

“Auntie Acy bit my cheeks,” she sniffled.

“Seriously,” sighed Staxius, “-why are you biting a child?”

“She looked so adorable I couldn’t resist,” her eyes watered as if a puppy.

“Come here,” hand in hand, “-I’ll be leaving. See you around, the pride of Hidros, the people are waiting,” the massive doors to the ballroom shut. Eira and Viola stood waiting for him to arrive.

“Cake, it’s me, we’re ready to leave,” Staxius said through a watch. The cutting of wind came a few moments later, a helicopter hovered to land.

“Very excessive,” said Undrar with a laugh.

“The showmanship must always go on,” he turned to Eira, “-come on, we’re going home,” a hand was held out.

“Y-yeah,” she grabbed and followed by the engine powering-up.

A new era, new obstacles, a new age, a new form of warfare, and a new threat. The world is never-ending, the change is ever perpetual. Five years went in a flash. The Argashield Federation walked hand in hand into the future.

Chapter 360: Exa

Buildings and even taller offices, Rosespire in the last 5 years, despite the war, managed to evolve. Many o’ companies from overseas such as the Elendor Kingdom’s enormous technological focus, took refuge in Oxshield. Part of the reason was the Federation and the other was the ease of access to contact the King of Arda. The latter, a somewhat big player, yet, unknown to the bigger forces, was rather hard to

get a hold of. Either go through the hierarchy at Arda or visit a few local bars in the dark district turned red-light district. Human trafficking at its peak, women, men, non-humans, and more, it was soon to change the perception of how people walked. Sex-slaves, ladies of pleasure, surrounded by men who'd take a shot given the opportunity. The vile nature of the underground, as some might have forgotten, was ever-present. The pillar holding said activities was Godfather Sable, the leader with a firm grasp. In the name was she Godfather but in actuality was a lady in her fifties. Swarming with jewelry and bodyguard to shoot with a gesture – one of the fiercer leaders in the Dark-Guild.

The chopper, a luxury model named U93-1 equipped with an automatic fire-response unit or AFR for short, a technology developed by Phantom's research group. One that was hidden from the public as it was one of the many aces kept up their sleeves. The AFR was a spirit derived from the imprisonment of Mana, a sub-topic of the Theory of Mana-Dispersal. It allowed the host to capture any sentient mana-existence to form a contract of which they turned into the brain of a section, a vehicle, or a weapon; the situation varied. Phantom's current attack and defense system were automated, as to not get into greater detail, a spirit named Eclair was the head-of-all AFR readied equipment. Any normal spirit would have broken due to the sheer pressure. Not Eclair for he was the opponent that fought against Intherna, a mid-tiered demon with the strength of a Demi-God. Long were the days where human intervention was necessary. Well, the use of humans was required all around the globe except for Phantom. The company was far more dangerous than kingdoms themselves.

U93-1 was soon to fly over to Rotherham. The roads below were big and filled with cars. Next to it on elevated tracks, trains moved without sound. Powered by Mana-engine, a collaboration between Elendor and Phantom. Mark IV Elstalion, the project name for a mana-powered train. The tracks didn't need any specificities for the train to do the work. Silvery-white against the blackened tarmac, a dart piercing the veil of normality to the realm of endless possibilities.

As the train turned right, U93-1 took a sharp left into Rotherham. The town of hoodlums or what was its prior reputation. From housing thugs to now factories of which spewed heavy twirling pillars of smoke, one that reached up high into the heavens, a sickness predicted to consume the planet itself. Laid out in order to promote efficiency, many o' companies had their plants build in Rotherham. The town was now heavily industrial. On foot, it'd have taken 15 hours to walk from one end to another, and on car about 2-5 hours depending on traffic. An approximate to give a vague idea of how big the town had grown. The expansion was to the Southeast. The big shots knew not to go North West, even the thugs were scared at adventuring around those parts.

Smoothly dodging the smoke, the U93-1, after escaping the hell of production had a gigantic compound in sight. The previous airfield, hosting two-runway, was copied two more times to the north. It now held six-runways; the hangars were secluded in a differing compound to the West. After the run-way, still going to the north, three sky-scrapers of 60 floors, erect with, *Phantom,* written on each office buildings. Beside the skyscrapers of which were of a shape streamlined into a sharp-triangle atop, another massive compound. One with buildings ranging from 5 stories to 8 stories high. A mini-town in of itself, *Phantom's Research Section,* was written on the gate to the compound. Separated by four-lane roads, the place was massive. Amidst all the sharp-looking buildings with dark-blue windows; a library with a dome-shaped roof next to brick-red slated roof buildings. The architecture mimicked many o' universities in Rosespire. It was Phantom's University. A place where future scholars would study. The

admission was private. Only 3 to 5 exceptional students picked from Sky United, a celebrated university, were given the option. The efforts came with a lot of money though bound to secrecy.

The chopper soon landed on a helipad on the 30th floor that protruded out the side of the main office. The wind blew harsh, Eira and Viola stepped out to a row of guards armed to the teeth. The glares were chilly, even more so than the wind itself.

“Boss, welcome back,” said a lady dressed formally. Her hair tied in a pony-tail with help of a hairclip of which had a small diamond dangle.

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“Feels good to be back,” he replied with a big inhale. A stare down the side showed how high they were.

“I suppose I’ll be leaving,” said Eira with a nod.

“A car shall be waiting downstairs,” replied Cake with a gesture. A guard soon came to escort her away.

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“I need to run some errands, goodbye,” without notice, Viola jumped off the side and sprouted wings. She worked as a trainer for Adventurers of Plaustan. A job she took perchance for the Tower of Aria took more lives.

“How long has it been?”

“I don’t know,” a cold reply came with the door opening automatically. A singular hallway followed by an elevator. The latter came with a ding, and off was Staxius to his office at the top of the tower.

Floor 60, a place above the clouds with casual sights of blimps over the horizon. The layout matched Kniq’s headquarters, a tribute to his old-guild. The only difference was that the rooms were twice as big.

“Was the visit fruitful?” asked Cake who was soon to sit behind a desk.

“I suppose,” he said and shuffled to the edge of which was glass giving into the open sky. One protected by barriers of which was controlled by the AFR. Phantom, over the five years, grew. The compound and buildings were proof enough, however, it didn’t do justice. The amount of money they made in the war was unthinkable. It reached in the billions in terms of assets. To that, a new currency was instated, Hidros used Exa. 1 Gold coin equated to 10 Exa. Thus, the new world began. Other kingdom’s around the world adopted the same idea. The exchange rate varied. For example, the U93-1 was worth 235,000 gold, which translated into 2,350,000 million Exa. As for the Phantom’s current worth, the information was kept secret. One of the sky-scrapers cost 10,000,000 Gold to build, 100,000,000 Exa.

Sat and relaxed, a single toggle had the table display a multiple of hovering screens. Five years of sheer research, how everything grew made many open their jaw. Rockets took to space, satellites that tracked the globe placed in orbit, evolution at its finest. Magic in accordance with Science, both leading their own field to better the survivability of the world. A concept talked only in idealism and fantasy for the real truth was warfare. More power, more strength, and more carnage. Tis was the real face of the world, a place that would suffer by the hands of its inhabitants. Their countless war, their insatiable greediness, it sufficed to make one’s stomach turn.

The leader of Phantom, Staxius, did naught but sit. Cake handled everything, from recruitment to sale and production. His focus was on gathering more people, more qualified individuals with the prospect of fame and fortune. Revered as the Hero-King, the words were worth their weight. Many spoke of his courage and many spoke of the thirst for killing.

Meanwhile, far, far away from Hidros. Near the little park turned haunted attraction. A couple, of which held a girly man and a fox-eared lady, strolled around the pavement of which was masked by dirt. Puddles of water gathered at blocked drains that served as a hazard for vehicles driving without care. It sprayed the murky gathering onto the walls. It crept as if stopped by time, the addition of the downpour all but helped in dirtying the once-spotless walls. Windows hidden by stained curtains; a small pub named Mom's love.

The door pushed opened with a ringing of a bell. Inside sat rough-looking individuals with either bandages or battle-scars. The couple walked without hesitance. Glares turned to softened cream, "how's it going, Avon and Auic, ya'll good?" asked him who sat at the front.

"Yeah," smiled Avon who took off the wet-trenched coat, "long time no see, old man Cap."

"I see that Auic is still as lovely as always," said the lady behind the counter, a fellow demi-human with wolf-ears.

"Mama,?? added Auic with a step forward, "let me help," she darted behind the counter to the kitchen.

"Look at you," said Mama with wrinkled cheeks, "poor Avon boy, should you not return to Hidros?" her mouth and hands moved independently as she mixed the batter.

"Drop it, grandma," said Old man Cap, "the boy is tired enough," he smiled reassuringly, "go on, have a seat," he moved over.

"Thanks," smiled Avon, "Auic and I are truly grateful for the hospitality."

"Ain't no need for that," came a reply across the room, the other guests rose their head, "we're all fellow companions from Hidros. Our motherland is what binds us together," they cheered.

"Hell YEAH!" screamed old man Cap, "another round of beer for my fellow mates," he said.

"There you go again," chuckled Mama, "always patriotic that's for sure." A small television recounted biased and propagandistic news of the current state between Kreston and Hidros.

"I tell you, Mama," said the flushed Old man Cap, "I always knew Kreston was up to something. That pope and their gods felt artificial... hicc."

"The old man is down already?" said one of the younger visitors with laughter as the backdrop.

"He's out for the count," smiled Avon who had given a shoulder to the drunken man, "I'll take him to his room."

"You're a darling, aren't cha."

The duo struggled and shuffled upstairs to a narrowed hall. Many o' door where many guests resided. A pub on the ground floor and apartment atop. A necessary step since Paradus ordered a cleansing of

those who bore inhuman features. It was his way of saying fuck you to Hidros and their multi-racial society. The discrimination birthed from said order led from one thing to another. Massacres, bodies dumped in ditches, the holy cleansing turned to bloodshed. None was allowed to live. The harshness of the status of life was never disclosed to the public as demi's lived in the abandoned sector 20. A place for the rejected, those alienated, those not care nor treated as living beings. A place where Auic and Avon called home, a place where many similar pubs and groups formed. They relied on one another to survive. Avon was one of the luckier folks thanks to the knowledge in magic. The Order reached out and employed him as a tutor for kids of nobles. A job that paid good but didn't come with shelter. Thus, he turned to Mama for assistance.

Opened brusquely, the man was soon to subconsciously move to the bed. 'Five years,' he thought and stared out a small window to the coming dusk, '-we ran away selfishly. I wonder how Master is doing. Auic and I are living rather comfortably. Her noble blood allows her to hide her demi-human features. In the eye of the empire, we're a normal couple. Sector 20, dark and always suffering, a melancholic settlement, the place I call home. Master, I hope you well.'

"Avon, come down already, we've got meat tonight."

'Auic,' he stood, '-you're the best,' the door shut, '-I love you.'