

Read Earth's Greatest Magus online free

Chapter 2 Emery

Two Days Earlier

Tak! Tak!

Emery's focus was at its peak as he intricately attached the last carved wooden figure on top of the box he had made. He had been spending months studying and working with their family's scholar to give it to someone very special for him.

The box clicked and Emery's eyes widened. Should it have clicked or not he didn't know. He lifted the small box and looked around. Nothing though seemed to have fallen. He then slightly tilted the box with his other hand ready to catch the wooden figure in case it dropped but it didn't fall. Slowly, he pulled down the lip of the box and the figurine descended into the box until it was closed; he opened it again and the figure ascended from the inside.

"Phew, it worked!" said Emery, wiping the sweat from his forehead. He blew the lit candle beside him, which had dropped a lot of wax on the table. He didn't realize it was so late in the night when he had finished carving the small figurine. As he thought of the person receiving this gift, he fell asleep with a big grin on his face.

Emery only had a few hours of sleep but still woke up just the right time next morning. He stood up, stretched. His body and mind was still urging him to sleep more, but when he saw the small box he had made last night on top of the table, he smiled because today was a special day. Her coming of age ceremony.

On the hallway, he stumbled onto his father, Geoffrey, the Head of the Ambrose Nobility.

"Are you well, my boy? You look like you're still sleepy," Geoffrey asked.

"I... Uhh, yes," said Emery, scratching his head.

"I know you're excited about the princess' coming of age ceremony, but I need you to think about your body. You also need to practice later, and we'll have to leave by noon," said Geoffrey as he tried to rub Emery's head.

Emery shook off his father's calloused hands and pouted, "I'm not a kid anymore, father. Don't worry, I'll practice."

"Haha, whatever you say, you'll still be my little boy," said Geoffrey, grabbing Emery.

Emery struggled but didn't have the strength to break free from his father's hug; he had no other choice then but to glare at his father's wrinkled face.

"Off you go now, my child," said Geoffrey when he let go of Emery.

Every morning Emery spent a few hours practicing the sword with one of the family knights even though he had inherited the weak constitution of his late mother. Nevertheless, that didn't stop Emery from wanting to train. He wanted to be a knight and make his father proud.

Emery slashed on the empty air with his thin arms. After a few strikes, however, he was already catching his breath and fell to the ground exhausted. He really couldn't fight against what destiny had given him, years he had been doing this but there was little to no improvement.

"Young master."

"It's time for your lesson," said the scholar.

"Okay."

The student and teacher made their way to the estate's library. The room was filled with scrolls, parchments, even some herbs for the cauldron nearby. Here, Emery continued his studies by browsing the scrolls with the scholar explaining them. He actually found studying these scrolls much easier than sword fighting.

He had been studying scrolls about crafting and architectural construction, which he found to be interesting lately. But the scroll on herbs and potion-making from his late mother was his favorite topic of all.

During his childhood, other than practicing and studying, he loved spending time in the woods. He often liked to find the plants and herbs his mother had written and experiment with it afterward. Emery also found the forest to be his safe space. Maybe it was because of how his father had told the stories of his late mother and how similar they were that he found the woods relaxing.

He also never had been afraid of wild beasts, he felt the creatures of the forest were more like a friend unlike those other noble kids who loved bullying him for some reason. His father, however, had once seen him petting a wolf and chased it away. What transpired after were days of scolding on how dangerous the woods were from his father. Still, Emery snuck to the woods from time to time to make himself relaxed and enjoy nature.

When the noon had arrived, Emery rose up with excitement in his heart, he took a quick lunch and after washing himself, wore the best attire he had. It was a leather jerkin made from a cow's hide with a white linen garment on the inside. He didn't want to wear

it because it smelled a little but what choice did he have? It was the nicest looking clothes he had, all the other garments he had were tattered. He didn't have anything like those other higher-ranking nobles with their fancy, good-smelling clothes.

Although the Ambrose family was the lowest ranking nobles, ranking 5th among their peers. Emery never complained since he had a good family, good home, and food on the table.

With fast steps, he grabbed the wooden box, put it in a pouch before going outside to the stables. The stable boy had already prepared the brown horses which he and his father would ride together.

"This is it. All is prepared," said Emery, double-checking his pouch.

Emery couldn't wait to arrive in the estate of the Lioness family, the highest-ranking noble in the kingdom and see Princess Gwen once more.

3 The Lioness

The Lioness' estate had high wooden spiked walls placed in a circle to protect the elevated stone castle in the middle, a lot of commoners were moving around, entering and exiting the outside of the wall, guards were patrolling everywhere, the market's atmosphere seemed so bright and lively, unlike his family's estate.

They soon arrived at the house of the Lioness', which even had more grandeur because of today's event. Its high walls displayed a red cloth, accented with gold-colored linings and an image of a lion's head in the middle.

The moment the father and son dismounted from their horses, a condescending voice called their attention.

"Well, well, well, if it isn't the Ambroses," said a bearded fat man wearing a luxurious coat.

"Good evening, Fantumar,???" replied Geoffrey with a slight bow.

Emery was still dazed at the banner of the castle and the prospect to meet the princess that he failed to properly greet the noble in front of him.

Fantumar clicked his tongue seeing such disrespect and said, "A boy with no manners. You should teach him better, Ambrose."

"Yes. Forgive me. I will," Geoffrey said.

Behind Fantumar was another large boy that appeared to be the same age as Emery and a head taller.

"He's smelly too, father," said the pig boy, pinching his nose.

"Don't worry yourself with such a lowborn, Abe," said Fantumar. "Let's go, my son, before their smell sticks with us."

Abe then smirked and issued a proud look before walking away with his father.

Emery feigned indifference as he stared at the pig nobles, behind him however, he had his fist clenched the whole time. He and his father were being insulted but he couldn't do anything since his father had always reminded him not to make any trouble in front of such a noble. After all, the Fantumar Nobility was the second highest ranking noble in the kingdom next to the king's family and was also the right hand of the king. Their statuses were worlds apart even if both families were nobility. Emery was smart enough to understand this.

It didn't take too long for the other families to arrive, some rode horses but some also in their carriages at the castle's front gate. Soon, they entered the castle one by one.

The hallway was large and had a lot of hanging decorations from varying colors of cloth. The walls had a lot of trophies, swords and shields, bows, spears, etc, showing how the king loved to hunt. In the middle of the room, a large table had been set and a feast of milk, mutton, bread, cheese, soup, vegetable, ales, etc. Music from the trumpets and cymbals filled the whole palace while the curvaceous dancers entertained the guests mingling with each other.

All the nobles stopped what they were doing and turned to the person who shouted.

"All hail his Royal Majesty, The First of His Name, The Fearsome Hunter, His Eminence, Richard the Lioness and his daughter, The First of Her Name, Princess Gwenneth!"

The guest's looked up on the main hall's grand stairs. Then, the king appeared wearing a coat filled with fur on its neck. The crown on his head showed an insignia of a standing lion. His amazing presence, however, was overshadowed by the beautiful girl descending beside him.

Her silky golden hair bounced like a golden waterfall in the air while the emerald circlet highlighted her beautiful unblemished cheeks, tiny nose and lips. The tight green dress she wore flowed smoothly from her chest down to the floor, displaying to the fullest her wonderful figure.

Emery stood in awe with his mouth agape, staring at the beautiful princess. Then he realized the Princess's gaze fell on him. She sweetly smiled at him briefly before looking down, watching her steps on the stairs. Emery's heart skipped. He looked to his left, right, behind, and below with a confused look but no one was there other than his

father. Did she just smile at him? Emery couldn't help but scratch his head while feeling his face hot.

The atmosphere became rowdy as the people raised their mugs and cheered for the princess' coming of age ceremony. The feast began; the lively music reverberated around the great hall as the king took a seat on his throne.

Princess Gwenneth stood beside the king and the nobles started to form a line to greet the king and his daughter. The line was in accordance with the ranking of the nobles, therefore, the Ambrose was the last to greet the king and the princess.

All the nobles before the Ambrose presented expensive gifts. Jewels, necklace, circlets, etc. Especially the Fantumar, when the son, Abe, presented a chest full of gold and silver. The other nobles gasped on how precious the gift was. Unfortunately, the gifts presented to the princess seemed to have not moved her. That was until it was the Ambroses' turn.

Emery and Geoffrey bowed before the king and the princess. Emery glanced at the princess and her eyes seemed to have lit up. He stepped forward and grabbed the pouch dangling in front of him but stopped.

Geoffrey noticed his son's hesitation and said, "We apologize that we are unable to provide a gift this time, our Royal Majesty and Royal Princess. We have had a tough year and thus do not have any worthy to bring out for Your Royal Presences."

"Pfft, such poor excuse and disgrace," commented Fantumar.

"It is fine, Fantumar," said Richard. He raised his hand and added, "You are forgiven, rise and enjoy my daughter's special day. We are here, after all, to celebrate my daughter's 16th birthday."

"All praise be to you, my king," said Geoffrey, bowing once more before leaving with Emery.

The two made their way to the long table and sat in the furthest corner. His father of course came as a respect to the king. In fact, it wasn't long ago that his father had once been a trusted confidant of the king. But it was a past that his father didn't wish to discuss.

The feast began and everyone enjoyed the meals presented by the king. Princess Gwen broke off from her father and decided to greet the nobles one by one.

She went by the order of the rankings of the nobles, of course, it was still up to her whether she would decide on greeting that family or not.

Emery began eating his meal with a sullen face. He wanted to give what he had worked on for months, but when he had seen what the others had to offer, he had become embarrassed of what he was about to present. A wooden figurine of the princess, what a laughable gift.

He looked up and found the princess mingling with the other guests. But again, Emery noticed she stole a glance toward his direction. Then finally, she seemed to have cut off her conversation with the other nobility and walked toward where he and his father were seated.

Emery's heart began to pound as the beautiful girl made her way with her handmaiden behind. But from a corner, a pig appeared with his entourage and blocked her way.

"Good evening, lovely princess," Abe said. He bowed with his fat belly twisting and added, "If I may say, your beauty is as wonderful as the stars that shine through the darkness of the night."

"Abe, how can I help you?" said Gwen, ignoring the boy's remark.

Emery grunted in his heart when this boy appeared. He seemed to have noticed but wasn't sure because of his dislike of the boy, but it felt like the princess' smile and mood turned sour.

4 The Princess

Her golden hair, green eyes and white porcelain skin earned her the adoration of many, making her the jewel of the kingdom. Tomorrow was her coming of age ceremony and many of the nobles would come to visit her father's castle.

"Hmm, which one do you think suits me better? The white or the gold one?" asked Gwen as she compared the two dresses the wooden mannequins were wearing with her emerald eyes.

"You are pretty in both dresses, my lady," answered her handmaiden.

She sneakily rolled her eyes since that wasn't helpful. Gwen stood beside the mannequin dressed in white and said, "I think the white one is perfect for me? What do you think?"

"Yes, you are lovely in white, my lady," said another handmaiden.

She switched positions and went to the other mannequin and said, "At second thought, I think the gold one would look better on me. It highlights my eyes, right?"

"Yes, you are absolutely right, my lady," replied the first handmaiden with a slight bow.

Another bland answer. Whenever she asked for the other's opinion, all she would hear was praise. No one dared oppose her or gave their real thoughts unlike her mother, the late queen.

She sighed as she took a seat and stared at the portrait of her mother hanging on the wall of her dressing room. Gwen bit her lips slightly wishing her mother was here, after all, tomorrow was her 16th birthday. And even though she was surrounded by a lot of handmaidens and a lot of people would come to see her, she couldn't help feeling more lonely.

The door knocked and one of the handmaidens opened it. One more handmaiden came in and gave Gwen the news.

She then rushed toward the king's study room. There were two men talking and one of them was the king, but her purpose for going here was to see the other person whom her father was talking to. She jumped at the man and said, "Uncle!"

"There she is! My lovely niece!" said Brett, returning her big hug.

Brett was the younger brother of Gwen's late mother. He wasn't like any other noblemen who loved to stay in their fiefs, instead he loved to go adventuring across the seven kingdoms and even farther. He would usually be gone for months, but his latest expedition had taken him almost two years.

"I miss you, uncle! Please tell me all your great adventures! Where did you go? How were the people? What did you s—" Gwen stopped as she heard her father's cough.

Brett laughed and said, "Hahaha, hold your horses, my niece. I'll tell you all about it tonight. I'm actually here because of your special day tomorrow! Don't think I've forgotten about it. For now, I'd like for you to close your eyes."

"Hold out your hands," Brett said.

As soon as she did, a rough but light item fell on her palms. Her eyes sparkled and saw the coarse, rolled-up parchment. Gwen unrolled it and stared at the drawing.

Richard sighed and said, "Brother, you're spoiling her again. I'm blaming you for her mischievous attitude."

"Please forgive me, my king. But she's the only remembrance the late queen has left us," said Brett with his fist on his chest.

Gwen turned the parchment to the left, right, and somehow realized. She said, "Uncle, is this?"

Brett smiled and said, "Yes, smart girl! This is called the world map. This was first created in Greek, but now almost all places I've travelled to in Europe use it."

"Such a wonderful gift, uncle! Thank you uncle" said Gwen, hugging her uncle once more. This was one of the best gifts she had received in advance, which was even more precious than any of the beautiful dresses or jewels.

"Well, off you go now, I have some things to discuss with the king."

"I understand, uncle. But promise me you'll spend time telling me about your adventure." Gwen gave him a big smile and issued a ladylike bow before leaving.

That night, Gwen enjoyed the stories of all the places her uncle had traveled to until she slept. And because of that, she dreamt about the different houses, the people, animals, and the world far far away.

When she had awoken, all she could still think about was the dream and all the places her uncle had mentioned. In fact, her mind was even more occupied with those thoughts rather than her coming of age ceremony. She really wished to talk to someone about it and while getting ready, a noble boy came to her mind. She said to herself, "Yes! I am sure he'll be here today."

The ceremony started and the moment she descended the stairs beside her father, her eyes immediately caught the sight of a boy who looked more like a commoner compared to the rest of the nobles in the area. She couldn't wait to walk over to him, but she must attend first to her duty, thus she was stealing glances at him.

The gift giving ended as well as greetings. Now, she must attend to her duties. She went and greeted the other nobles by herself with her handmaidens behind. Gwen said to the last noble family she had mingled with, "I hope you are enjoying yourselves." She looked once more at where the boy was and then added, "Please excuse me."

She made her way toward him but the son of her father's advisor, the Fantumar boy, blocked her path and said some cringy words. Gwen slightly furrowed her brows. She never liked this boy but as a respect to his family's status, she said, "Abe, how can I help you?"

"Your Royal Princess, I would like to—"

"My apologies, but I can't talk to you right now, Abe," said Gwen when she saw the boy stood up and tried to walk away.

Gwen walked straight to the boy and exclaimed, "Emery!"

And without notice, she grabbed his arm and dragged him outside.

That act surprised some nobles, especially the young noble, Abe, whom the princess had cut off and left for the lowborn boy.

5 The Dream

He was with her in the enchanting garden, the great view of the sea, the sound of the waves. The rays of the moon and stars reflected from the coast to her, making her beauty indescribable. Emery didn't want to let go of the smooth and soft hand of the most beautiful girl he had ever laid eyes upon. His heart thumped against his chest.

The footsteps of the handmaidens and guards neared and Gwen released her grip on him.

"Princess Gwen? We could get in trouble."

"Oh come on, Emery. You don't have to call me princess. We'll be fine. Anyway, the ceremony is over and I felt like suffocating there. I needed a breath of fresh air. Please, will you accompany me please?"

Unbeknownst to her, Emery was actually more concerned about how he would get scolded by his father, but he couldn't possibly refuse a request by the princess, could he? Besides, the view here with the jewel of the kingdom, how could he say no to that?

"Give me one second. I have a surprise for you," said Gwen as she turned around.

"Surprise? It's me who is supposed to—" Emery grabbed his pouch but Gwen wasn't listening to him one bit.

She found what she was looking for and said, "Look at this, Emery."

"Is this?" Emery's eyes shone, recognizing what Gwen took out from him.

"That's right!" approved Gwen with a smile. "This one below is called Africa. And the one on the farthest is China. It's like the story from parchment we had read before!"

Emery and Gwen had known each other for quite some time now. When all the other kids were riding horses and hunting, Emery loved to spend his time reading. He had finished all the parchments and scrolls he could find in his father's library. So, whenever his father had matters to attend to in the Lioness's castle, he always forced his father to let him come.

He had spent a lot of time reading the various stories found in the royal library. And that was where he had often met with Gwen.

Although they didn't often meet, they got along so fast probably because they had two things in common. The first was they both loved to study and read about the various

history, places and curiosity of the world, and the second was both of their mothers had died when they were young. Although much of it all thanks to the princess friendly attitude.

That evening, they talked for almost an hour about the places on those maps they had only heard in stories.

"I am sure you can. You are a princess, you can do anything you want!" said Emery.

Without realizing it, the princess's dream of exploring the world became part of Emery's dream too. Whether it was because he, himself, was interested in all the wonders of this world or because he would love to go on an adventure with her.

Gwen turned her face on Emery with a big smile and said, "That's very sweet of you to say. Thank you."

Before turning dark and added, "Thank you again. I feel really great now that I have talked with you, you really are a good friend."

Emery's heart slightly prickled. He liked her, but when he thought about it more, being labeled as a friend of the most beautiful lady in the kingdom was a fortune in itself. Maybe that was all they would ever be.

He then realized he still hadn't given the thing he had worked on for months. Reluctantly reaching his hand into the pouch, he embarrassedly said, "Gwe-Gwen... I also have something for you..."

"What is it?" asked Gwen, tilting her head on the side.

Emery handed out the pouch before pulling it back. He laughed.

"What's the hesitation? Is that for me? Thank you," said Gwen.

"What box is this Emery?"

Before she was able to open up the box, however, sounds of step got closer.

"Ehem!" coughed a big man wearing a luxurious coat, two men walking toward them.

"Father, Sir Fantumar," said Gwen.

Emery was shocked to see the king right next to him, and Fantumar the highest noble of the kingdom.

"Your Highness!" exclaimed Emery, bowing before the king.

The king recognized him. "You are Geoffrey's boy aren't you?"

"Yes, My Lord," replied Emery.

"I've heard many things about you from my daughter."

The fat noble interjected, "Your Highness, I suggest you stop the Princess from playing with this boy."

"!!!"

6 Half Blood

The Ambrose Family was already at the bottom of the barrel, but Fantumar's pressing further by asking the princess and the king not to socialize with Emery was pushing it.

Gwen stomped the ground and glared at the fat noble. Her voice had a sense of sharpness in them. "Lord Fantumar, you may be my father's right hand but you're out of line telling me who I can and cannot be friends with!"

Fantumar furrowed his brows. This princess had always been a pain in the ass for their family. He turned to the boy instead and ordered, "Boy, raise your head let us see your face."

Emery, feeling brave because of the princess backing him up, raised his face and looked Fantumar directly in the eyes.

Fantumar smirked. The light of the moonlight reflecting on Emery's eyes confirmed his suspicions. He wasn't sure when he had seen this kid earlier at the gate but now he confirmed. "Do you see it, sire? The boy has his mother's eyes."

"What do you mean Fantumar?" asked Richard.

"You see, sire." Fantumar leaned closer and whispered, "He's a half-blood. A—"

"A Fey Chrutin!" exclaimed Richard, staring at Emery's eyes.

Fey Chrutin were humans who lived in the deep forested areas of the Britons. It was said that they loved to socialize with the mysterious creatures of the forest, the fey creatures. The fey chrutin lived without following the kingdom rule.

For hundreds of years, the fey chrutin and the people of the kingdom people had always been at war. The Lioness Kingdom's military had attempted to burn these forests multiple times just to drive out the fey chrutin, but for reasons unknown, the fires never seem to spread out. Thus, all sorts of rumors from the fey chrutins knowing black magic, witchcraft, mythical creatures, etc. began to spread.

At this moment, another figure walked in. It was Geoffrey Ambrose, Emery's father. He didn't waste one more second and got down on one knee in front of the king. "My Liege, I apologize for the behavior of my son. I hope he didn't offend you in any way. I will discipline him better!"

The king stared at Geoffrey with a complicated look, he said, "Is what Fantumar said true? That your late wife — is a chrutin?"

Geoffrey replied with a heavy tone, "It-it is true, my king."

The king's face darkened; his wrinkles appeared, fist tightened and mouth clenched. The chrutins were the reason he had lost his wife. He hated them with all his being.

Emery also noticed how Gwen's face had changed. He still didn't understand what was happening. Everyone except him seemed to know what was going on.

"Gwen, come with me right now." Richard turned to the father and son and said a single word that was full of hate, "Leave."

"Father, I—"

"Now!" roared Richard.

Gwen was startled. Her father had never shouted at her, this was the first. She looked at Emery with a complicated face and said, "I'm sorry. I don't think we can be friends."

Richard grabbed Gwen, prompting her to drop the box Emery had given, and dragged her back into the palace.

Emery blankly stared at the broken box with figurine pieces on the ground. He was about to pick it up when the palace guard barred his way. They were then shown out of the palace.

Once they were outside, the gates behind them were shut. Emery was at a loss as he gazed at the towering wooden gate wondering what did he do wrong? Why did the princess and the king look at him like that?

He asked his father for answers, but all his father gave was a weak smile. The ride home was full of unbearable silence. Emery wished instead for his father to just scold him.

Back at the palace, Fantumar watched the Ambrose father and son riding their horses. He deviously smiled on how they were now on the king's bad side. However, that wasn't enough for him.

7 The Raid

Emery went to the main hall and saw his father still drinking. He had seen him drinking since afternoon, but he was still continuing this evening. Simply silent, drinking alcohol.

Emery walked to up his father and said to him almost a whisper, "Father... I am sorry..."

Geoffrey dazedly lifted his head and replied, "You're fine, my son. It wasn't your fault. It never has been your fault..."

Emery asked, "If it wasn't my fault, then what happened, father? Please, tell me."

Geoffrey opened his mouth, closed it, before saying, "It's—nothing my boy. I just miss your mother so much, that's all."

"Father, I know there's something going on. I am not a kid anymore."

For a moment, his father pondered something before taking another sip of his ale and said, "Okay... Tomorrow. I'll tell you tomorrow. It's already late now, you should get some sleep."

Emery was about to press the matter further when the sound of their horn for battle resounded from the distance. He and his father made their way to the window and saw silhouettes from the distance carrying torches.

The main hall's door banged open and one of the knights came in. "My Lord! Marauders have come to—"

A sword protruded from the knight's chest. The sword was pulled back and blood splashed on the ground. Three bloodied marauders arrived; their faces were covered with cloth.

"There they are boys!" exclaimed the marauder in front. "Kill these chrutin loving people!"

"Emery! Hide!" shouted Geoffrey as he withdrew the sword hanging on his sheath.

"No! I want to help you!" protested Emery.

"It's not the time to argue! Do what I ask!" said Geoffrey, clashing with the blade of one of the Marauders.

The other two tried to flank from the side, Geoffrey pushed the first marauder and jumped back, dodging the attacks from the sides. He waved his sword and two heads rolled down on the wooden floor. In just a matter of seconds, the marauder's comrades had died. The marauder then took a step back and ran away.

Geoffrey had once been a higher ranking noble. He had never played the politics of the kingdom to become a higher ranking noble, instead his great contributions in major battles with other kingdoms were well-known throughout the whole land earning him the title 'The Lion's Fang'. So, even when Geoffrey had been drinking since afternoon, his skills with the sword were still unparalleled.

Geoffrey said to his son, "Follow me!"

"But???"

"Now!" roared his father.

Geoffrey said, "Hurry! It'll be dark, so I need you to keep walking straight with your hand on the wall. At the end of the passage there'll be a ladder leading to the stables. Take a horse, go west and follow the river. You'll be safe there."

"What about you?" asked Emery.

"I'll hold them off here and make sure no one will be following. Once I've made sure everything is clear, I'll find—"

"Over here!" shouted an unknown person.

Shuffling steps neared to where they were and Geoffrey stopped his words. He whispered before pushing the torch, "You're my world, my son. Grow up and be strong. Go, now!"

"I—" Emery didn't finish his words because his father pushed him behind the closing cupboard. He got up and noticed the broken slit where he could peek through. He put his eyes on it and watched as dozens of marauders entered the cellar.

New novel chapters are published on Freewebnovel.com.

"Where's your boy? Chrutin lover?" asked the marauder. It was the same marauder who had run away. He went back after calling his comrades.

"You'll never find him! Now, enough talk and show me what you got!" declared Geoffrey, brandishing his steel sword.

"Kill him!" said the marauder.

Emery witnessed his father's might. One by one the marauders fell, but there were too many of them. Slowly, his father's breath became ragged and fell on one knee. The first marauder managed to sneak behind him and slash Geoffrey on the back.

Geoffrey faced flat the dusty ground and struggled to get up, but the marauder stomped on his back, preventing Geoffrey from getting up.

"Fa—" Emery stopped himself from shouting by putting his hands against his mouth. Tears were welling from his eyes. He felt helpless watching his father being struck down.

The marauder twisted his neck to the direction where the cupboard was and smirked.

Geoffrey's eyes widened. He had told his son to run away but he was still here! With the last bit of his strength, he pushed up, making the marauder lose his balance. Geoffrey then tightened his grip on his sword and impaled the marauder on the wall.

He shouted with all he could, "RUN!!!" before being struck with multiple swords on the back.

He was still alive, blood on his lips, chest and back, he swung his sword once more but hit no one. Geoffrey muttered, "Run..."

Finally, Geoffrey fell unmoving on the ground.

Emery froze, he didn't know what to do. The last words of his father just registered on his mind. Run. And that was what he did. He ran and ran. Got up the ladder to where the stables were, but all the horses were dead. The crackling flames, the clashing of swords, the cries of his people, rang out everywhere in the place where Emery had lived his whole life.

Emery gazed at where their house was and the roaring flames engulfed everything it touched. He then ran west, toward the forest, as his father had asked. As soon as he entered the forest, however, he heard horses galloping. One of the marauders had actually seen Emery from afar and gave chase.

He kept on running toward the river, but his weak legs couldn't bear it any longer, making him trip on one of the tree's roots. Emery rolled down onto the freezing river. He struggled to stay afloat and unintentionally drank water, making his every breath hurt like needles stinging his lungs.

There were two marauders that caught up and descended from their horses. They watched Emery drowning at the river's strong current.

"Let's leave, the boy won't be able to survive this freezing river," said the marauder.

"Shouldn't we at least confirm it?" asked the other marauder.

"Are you dumb? Can't you see how strong the current is? If he doesn't die from drowning, then he'll freeze to death. I am sure he'll die one way or another."

"Okay, whatever you say."

The two marauders mounted on their horses and left.

Emery sank, he couldn't do anything against the stream and fell down on a lake when the river ended. His heart pounded against his chest, it felt like his lungs were about to explode. He wished for something, anyone, anything to save him. Soon, he stopped struggling, he was losing consciousness until he arrived at the bottom of the lake.

"Is this the end..."

He didn't notice, however, that a vine was worming its way toward him. The vine wrapped against his leg and pulled him back on land. A few seconds later, he coughed violently, spitting out all the water he had drunk. Emery didn't know how he survived. He then crawled on the muddy ground.

He was now lying down, staring at the night sky. Every part of his body was hurting. He was shivering, his vision was blurring but his gaze fell once more on the three stars lined up in a row.

He wished upon the three stars, "Please, save me... I don't want to die. Father..."

Emery struggled to keep his eyes open but there was like a weight pulling it down to close until he was unable to open it any longer. He was weak, cold and dying. But then, the stars seemed to have answered his wish. The star in the middle of the three lit up as a ray of light hit Emery's frail body floated before vanishing.

8 Magus Class

Emery pondered the meaning of that sentence. But he was torn whether he wanted to go back or not, after all, was there anything else that would make him want to go back? His father had been killed, his entire estate had been burned to the ground, and even the princess. The princess who had said they couldn't even be at least friends. Maybe revenge against the marauders? But what power did he have to defeat them? He was weak and frail. Whatever excuse he could come up with to return, he always had something to contradict it with. For now, he just followed the group of young people in front of him.

Julian and Thrax were still giving each other a deadly stare while Chumo was still silent on the side, keeping a suspicious eye to everything around him. A beautiful woman, however, invaded Emery's vision and thoughts.

"Hello, you. Emery, right?" asked the bronze-skinned girl with her sweet voice. She added, "I hope you're different from that boy trying to pick a fight."

Emery slightly jumped back. This girl startled him. She was too close. He recollected himself and looked at this young lady.

Unconsciously, he compared her with Gwen. Gwen was like an ember for Emery, something warm and something he still couldn't touch but could get close to without getting burnt. But this girl, Klea, Emery felt like she was a fire that would eat him up if he got too close. Klea was young, the same age as them, but her dark hair, big round eyes coupled with black linings on the edges, and attire that showed off her brown curvaceous body, was enough to make Emery's heart jump against his chest. She was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. She had this unique womanly appeal that Gwen didn't have.

Klea gracefully crossed her arms and said, "I'm surprised you aren't more excited."

"Excited? What do you mean?" asked Emery, confused.

"We are in a mystical place." Klea pointed upward and added, "Look up there, there are floating islands and houses in the sky. They couldn't compare to the pyramids our mighty pharaohs built."

Emery followed the direction of her finger and fell into deep thought. She was right, how come he didn't notice it before? He stood there in awe of the magical events happening all around him.

"...Em... Emery? Hello, are you there? Emery!"

Emery shook his head and mindlessly asked, "Yes?"

Klea put her hands on her hips and leaned her face closer to Emery.

Emery could smell the wonderful fragrance emitting from her body and see the smooth curves that were the pride of women. His face felt flushed.

"Emery! Do you think I'm beautiful?"

"If that's the case, then listen when a beautiful woman is talking to you, understood!" said Klea in a sharp tone, but it was still like a melody to the ears.

Emery didn't have other choice but to nod multiple times.

Klea was about to lecture him more when their line suddenly stopped. They both looked in front.

"All who are in class 77, enter from this portal," said a man with the black and gold armor.

Portal was a term Emery hadn't heard of. However, based on what Emery had seen so far, this 'portal' acted like a door even though this door looked like it was made from the wind and light. It had a circle shape and appeared to be shining and there was nothing behind it.

"Let's go, Emery! That's our class!" exclaimed Klea without fear of the unknown. She grabbed his hand and dragged Emery toward the glowing circle.

"Aaa, wait." He tried to protest but her soft hand gripped him tight.

The boy and girl passed through the portal and their whole surroundings changed. They were now in a place that had white tiles, white walls, and golden pillars neatly arranged in symmetry. It was so elegant that the Lioness' throne room couldn't hold a candle against this.

The room had a platform in the middle while there were rows of stairs coupled with desks in each row, forming a semicircle. There were already other people, who appeared to be the same age as him, already seated facing toward the platform in front where a woman wearing a pointy hat that matched with the purple dress she had on her.

It was a unique sight for all of them, except for Julian who seemed to have been in a similar place before. He walked in front of the other four and took the lead to sit in the front row where there was another group of boys and girls sitting.

One of the boys though stood up and pointed on his chest. "You don't belong here, lower world citizens! Sit behind in the corner!"

Julian stayed silent but not shaken. He looked at the black haired boy wearing black and white uniform from head to toe.

Thrax, on the other hand, made his way in front of Julian and proceeded to shout. "What do you mean lower world! Are you looking for a fight!"

He readied his fist and the rest of the boys and girls in uniforms stood up. They were ready to fight.

Julian was still confident and touched Thrax on the shoulder before blocking him. He then smiled and said, "Sorry, sorry. I understand, we'll sit in the back."

He turned around, pulled Thrax and waved his head at the Chumo, Emery and Klea. They followed him.

After taking their seats, Thrax crossed his arms, spat on the floor and said, "Roman pig, coward!"

"Stupid, barbarian. Use your brains not muscles," replied Julian, unconcerned.

Thrax knew what Julian meant, however. After all, they were in an unfamiliar place and unfamiliar people. Still Thrax hated that boy in the black and white uniform's guts. He was always like this, fist first before talking.

Emery silently sighed to himself. It was the same even in a different world. There were always class differences, statuses, privileged people in all places.

Emery made a mental note to himself regarding these four people he had been interacting with. Julian, Thrax and Klea had open personalities while Chumo remained mysterious. In fact, since the beginning, Chumo just kept a knowing look at the others and didn't reveal anything other than his name and city of origins.

The portal closed and not long after, the woman dressed in purple from top to bottom clapped her hands that resounded throughout the whole room and began to speak. "It looks like everyone is here. Let me welcome all of you. The 100 new acolytes of class 77. You may call me Minerva and I will be your guide for the next 7 days. Listen to my instructions and if you are lucky, maybe a few of you can become a Spirit Magus."

"Spirit Magus?"

9 The Universe

"Magus? What do you mean by magus?" asked a random boy.

Minerva raised one hand and the wind around the whole room stirred. Trails of wind around headed to Minerva and converged into her hand. Wind wasn't usually visible, but there it was, a large sphere of wind spinning at the top of her hand. She casually explained, "Magus, sorcerer, witch, magician, wizard, shaman, warlock, element weaver, etc. These are all different terms for different worlds but all pertain to the same thing. People who have talents in wielding the universe's primordial energy around them. There are trillions of people in existence throughout our galaxy but only hundreds of thousands have the ability to handle the universe's power. And as you all can see, I am wielding the wind's energy."

Almost everyone had their eyes peeled out and mouths gaped in disbelief. For a lot of them, this was the first they had seen such a spectacle.

Minerva clasped her hand and the wind lightly exploded before dispersing to its natural state. She smirked as she looked around a little amused at these little boys and girls reacting with such expressions. She asked, "I wonder – have any of you seen magic done before?"

Less than a third of them raised their hands. That was including Klea.

"Klea, you as well?" Julian exclaimed in doubt.

Klea pulled back her hand and crossed her arm. "Of course. The priests in our court sometimes do rituals for a fruitful year by making it rain or having the Nile River flooded. On some special occasions as well, they put out a performance by turning staves into snakes."

Her elegance, arrogance at times, the way she referred to her people, Emery had noticed it and couldn't help but think she comes from a noble background.

Minerva nodded and asked another question. "Next, who among you are already capable of handling the universe's energy?"

This time fewer people raised their hands. It was like 1-2 in every 10 people. In fact, most of them even came from those arrogant boys and girls, sitting in the front with black and white uniforms that raised their hands.

Emery wanted to know more if there were others that could do magic. He found another, sitting in the corner opposite to them. Since he had good eyesight, he could make out what the girl somewhat looked like.

She had a long black hair that was peeking through the large dark veil she was wearing. Her pale skin was almost as white as the dress she was wearing.

And as Emery stared at her, her veil suddenly shifted toward his direction and Emery felt a chill run down his spine, making him look away and turning his attention back to Minerva.

The room darkened and her bracelet flashed an image in the middle of the room. At the center of the image, a big sphere was floating with four tails spiraling toward the edge of the image and lots of tiny shining dots in between the tails. The dots were of different colors: blue, white, yellow, orange, red, and of different sizes.

Minerva pointed her wrist at the group of young people and the floating image of lights zoomed in and focused on a green and blue ball. She said with an unimpressed tone, "World 0623, Kalios. So all of you came from a magus world. I guess it isn't surprising that 18 people from your world were chosen."

She flicked her wrist and the floating ball disappeared. Minerva said, "Our galaxy has hundreds of thousands of human worlds. Every year, 10,000 talented young people are selected from 1,000 lucky worlds..."

Since there were hundreds of thousands of worlds, it usually took hundreds of years before a world was re-elected. Of course, there were some worlds that got special treatment, such as Kalios.

The human worlds were divided into three categories: lower class worlds that still hadn't harnessed the power of nature; middle class worlds that made use of metals, water, earth to the human's advantage. It would be to describe middle class worlds as an industrial age. Lastly, the upper class worlds, wherein great inventions were made such as harnessing the power of electricity, like those who had reached the modern era or even better magus era.

Kalios belonged to the upper class worlds. At least there would be 10 people selected from upper class worlds. In fact, these worlds receive the opportunity once every 5 years.

Emery listened intently to Minerva's explanation. So, he couldn't help but think that those arrogant boys and girls were in their place to act high and mighty.

Julian commented, "Our world is so big but only five of us were chosen. It looks like our world gets selected at least tens of years or hundreds of years. It seems we are very lucky!"

Minerva continued her explanation. "Since first year acolytes only get seven days of studying, it is best that all of you study diligently. This may be a once in a lifetime for you and maybe your world. Do not waste the chance we are giving you."

Emery couldn't help but feel glad at the prospect of learning a skill called magic. Studying was what he was best at and he was always interested in learning new things.

"Now that we've got that settled, the first step in learning to become a magus is to know yourself." Minerva flicked her finger and another round object appeared. "I need everyone to stand up and wait for this crystal ball to fly over your head. Let's see how many talented children we have this year."

Minerva smiled as she waited for the 100 young people to stand up and did she had instructed. That smile, however, made Emery and the others uncomfortable.

10 The Elements

[Scan complete. Yellow. Earth Affinity.]

It spoke! Almost everyone was baffled. How could an object speak? Minerva didn't bother explaining as the crystal ball selected its new target and went above the mysterious young girl wearing a large veil with her long hair peeking on its edges and snowish-white skin. It didn't take long for the ball to turn to glow green.

[Scan complete. Green. Plant Affinity.]

The others who didn't understand started muttering. Minerva then started explaining while the crystal ball flew around, "A lot of you must be wondering. Let me explain here.

The whole universe was nothing but darkness in its infancy. And from that darkness, gods and goddesses emerged. The gods and goddesses, however, were split in what they wanted to accomplish. Some wanted to fill the worlds with life, some wanted eternal emptiness. It was inevitable that a battle would erupt between the gods and goddesses and it did.

"Aeons have passed and the gods and goddesses battles ended. Those who have wanted life won, obviously. The primordial energies that erupted from the battle from the gods and goddesses birthed uncountable galaxies and one of them is ours. These energies are what we call the Ten Elements.

"The Ten Elements are divided into four main elements namely the fire, wind, water, and earth. While the four sub elements are the lightning, ice, plant and metal. These are the eight elements that are the most abundant in the whole universe, but the last two elements are the ties that hold everything together. They are also the rarest to appear in a person, the darkness and light."

As soon as Minerva finished explaining, the crystal ball hovering over a bald and modestly clothed boy shone white.

[Scan complete. White. Light Affinity.]

Minerva turned slightly red, whether it was because of excitement or embarrassment only she knew. "As I've said, it is quite rare that we have an acolyte with light or dark elements every year."

The crystal ball selected people at random and it finally came back to the group of youths from Kalios, a magus world. Another young boy from their world was scanned and the crystal glowed red before its half turned purple.

[Scan complete. Red and purple. Dual affinity. Fire and wind.]

"Having multiple elemental affinity is like having a double-edged sword. It is both fortune and curse," Minerva commented at the young boy who had a smug look on his face at first.

A couple of minutes had passed and the crystal ball was almost finished scanning everyone. The 18 youths from Kalios had mostly single elemental affinity but five of them had dual elements.

Not long after, the crystal ball floated over Emery's group. They were the last people to be scanned. It first approached Julian and shot its beam. It turned yellow before being split in half with red.

[Yellow and red. Dual affinity. Earth and fire.]

Julian whistled with a smile on his face.

Thrax was the next to be scanned.

[Red. Fire affinity.]

Julian had half a smile as he watched Thrax trying to argue at the crystal ball why he had less elemental affinity compared to the roman pig. But Julian's cheeky smile turned into awe as he watched crystal divide itself into three above Klea. The colors inside the ball showed three distinct shades.

[Scan complete. Purple, blue, and indigo. Triple affinity. Wind, water and lightning.]

"Hmm. Out of the hundred youths in this class, so far you're the only acolyte who has three elements," Minerva commented with a knowing look.

The class started a slight uproar and faces of slight admiration, especially the boys. Indeed there were many of them and this beautiful, sexy, bronze-skinned woman had three affinities. The other girls' faces, however, told a different story. That showed how rare it was for a person to have three of the elements.

"Truly an extraordinary lady!" exclaimed Julian.

"It wasn't much," replied Klea, flicking her hair.

"Congratulations, Klea," said Emery with a grin.

"Thank you, cutie," smiled Klea with a wink.

Next, the crystal moved toward Chumo and showed a single color.

[Black. Darkness Affinity.]

Emery didn't have time to congratulate Chumo for the rare element because he was blinded by the light ray coming from the crystal ball.

He closed his eyes, slightly afraid of what he was about to hear and see. Since childhood, Emery believed he had never had success. The people around him always had low expectations from him. Even his father who had always treated him like a little boy. He never felt special nor a protagonist of the stories he had read in his father's library.

The crystal ball shone bright before becoming dark then transparent. It was quiet. The crystal ball only needed only a few seconds to finish a scan but this was a bit too long.

Emery opened his eyes and stared at the transparent crystal ball. He sighed, it was just as he had thought. He was nothing. He wasn't special. But why was he even here? Did someone or something make a mistake? He was about to sit down when Klea muttered his name.

"Emery..."

[Scan complete.]

[Blue]

The crystal ball showed blue. That meant he had water affinity. Emery's heart issued a slight jumped. He may be special after all. But then the crystal ball halved itself and showed another color.

[Yellow, Green]

Yellow, Earth affinity, and then a third color! Green, Plant affinity, a triple affinity!

Emery could feel everyone's eyes staring at him. He felt his breath shortening; he somewhat wanted to lower his head and hide underneath the desk. This was the first time he had everyone's attention solely to himself. It actually felt suffocating.

Then his ears piqued as he heard gasps of the others. He had his eyes on the floor, but when he looked at them before casting his gaze at the crystal ball. He was as surprised as them.

[Black]

"..."

[Blue, Yellow, Green, and Black. Quadruple affinity. Water, Earth, Plant, and Darkness.]

"A quadruple acolyte! Only one in every thousand acolytes have this!" Minerva exclaimed with a slight smile. She flew toward Emery and asked, "What's your name boy?"

"E—Emery," Emery stuttered.

Minerva recalled the crystal ball since everyone had finished being scanned. "You better work hard, boy. It looks like everyone's done but don't you guys get excited just yet. Having an affinity for an element isn't enough. Next, we'll see how much your aptitude is."

11 A Person's Talen

Affinity, however, was akin to having a heavy closed gate where the other side was the countless potential. You need to have the strength to push open that heavy gate and the aptitude to learn what the other side of the gate had to offer. Hence, the second test Minerva prepared was to examine the battle power and aptitude of each person in her class.

This time, she asked everyone to come in front after summoning a glowing symbol that appeared to be an eye. She said, "One by one, all of you will enter the eye of power. Who wants to be first?"

The bald youth who had a light affinity stepped forward and decided to go first. A few seconds after he entered the circle, it lit up and a number emblazoned on the symbol.

[Battle power: 10]

[Spirit power: 25]

[Spirit aptitude: Rank A]

"Everyone proceed as I explain," said Minerva. "Battle power is a measure of one's physical strength. 10 is the normal number for the average adult human. For young people to have this number means they have rigorously trained and unlocked their physical bodies potential to the point where they can fight on equal grounds against an adult despite being young. Battle power is judged based on the combination of strength, speed and endurance.

"Meanwhile, spirit power is the measure of one's talent in weaving the elemental energy of the universe. It is measured by three categories: spirit strength, spirit control and spirit capacity. Increasing spirit power will be everybody's main task and it won't be easy. Only when a person breaks through spirit power 30 will be the time anyone of you will be able to use basic elements and reach rank 2 acolyte.

"Lastly and the most important of these is the spirit aptitude. Aptitude is your talent in learning magic. One could have low spirit power because they never studied magic but anyone with high aptitude can quickly catch up."

[Battle power: 8]

[Spirit power: 23]

[Spirit aptitude: Rank A]

[Battle power: 6]

[Spirit power: 28]

[Spirit aptitude: Rank A]

[Battle power: 15]

[Spirit power: 22]

[Spirit aptitude: Rank A]

It was only expected that the youths spirited away among the billions to trillions of people in the galaxy would have spirit rank A.

[Battle power: 13]

[Spirit power: 29]

[Spirit aptitude: Rank S]

[Battle power: 18]

[Spirit power: 36]

[Spirit aptitude: Rank A]

[Spirit power: 32]

[Spirit aptitude: Rank S]

These were the numbers obtained from the group of young people in black and white uniform. There were only a few of them who had rank S but almost all of them had passed 30 spirit powers save for the few that didn't. They were being dubbed by the others as the geniuses hailing from the magus world called Kalios. This meant that almost all of them were able to use magic and were rank 2 acolytes.

Once a person managed to break through a certain barrier in the spirit power, their physical strength would also increase at the same time.

"No wonder they are arrogant. But words are meaningless. Ahh, I'm itching to pound those smug faces on the ground," Thrax said, spitting on the ground again.

"Barbarian, could you stop dirtying the floor? It only shows you're scared of them," commented Julian, moving the hem of his cloth away where Thrax had spat.

"Huh? Did you say something pig? I can't understand a word of what you're saying. I'm only hearing snorting," snapped Thrax, placing his ear near Julian.

Julian only shook his head, sighed and started ignoring Thrax again.

"Those boys, all they know is fighting. I'm so glad that silent boy over there and you, my cutie, aren't like them," said Klea, edging her face again near Emery.

"I..." muttered Emery, his heart was racing again while his face felt flushed.

Klea gave a teasing laugh before moving away from Emery.

The people on the front started exclaiming.

Chumo stuck out his head to see what's the commotion.

[Battle power: 22]

[Spirit power: 41]

[Spirit aptitude: Rank S]

A girl with a large veil, wearing greenish-white smooth dress, was standing on the eye of power. Her battle power was twice of the average adult and she already had spirit power 41 indicating she had reached rank 3 acolyte at her young age.

Minerva smiled and asked, "Let me see your face."

Slowly the girl opened her veil. And everyone who saw the woman was amazed. Not only is this woman so beautiful but there is something different about this woman's iris. Where the average human is round, this woman has a sunken, slender iris like a snake's eye.

One of the young people in uniform commented.

"Huh! A half breed bloodline race ... no wonder "

Minerva glared at the young man who commented and he fell silent.

"What's your name girl?" Minerva asked

"I am Silva"