

Earths GMagus 361

Chapter 361: The last 4 Months

As he looked at the red-haired girl who sprawled in the cage, Arthur believed she must have a clue, a hint about the mystery of the golden knight's death.

The state she was in when Arthur found her could only be described with one word: miserable. The conspicuousness of her weak condition, coupled with the torn clothes that barely stuck on her body, told him about the rough and difficult things she must have been through.

At first, Arthur wanted to directly bring her to the palace. However, when he took another look at her, he couldn't bring himself to do it, as her condition was extremely critical. Therefore, he decided to bring her to the physician he trusted.

As she was somehow involved in the case, Arthur asked the physician to put her in the basement after the treatment. She would be kept there until she awoke.

A day and a half later, he got the news that the girl woke up. Therefore, he immediately set out for her. But to his surprise, the girl barely knew how to speak.

His attempts to question her about the case failed before they could begin.

Other than finding out her name, which was Morgana, it was difficult for him to understand what she was saying.

Left with no choice, Arthur could only start the investigation by observing her physique and checking her current appearance, which in his opinion, quite peculiar. Even though she looked mature, she was sure the girl was barely past her teens, 15 or 16 years old at most.

Although her clothes mostly looked like normal Briton ones, there were some parts that looked odd, like the shoes and bracelets she was wearing. They looked primitive and old-fashioned - things no Briton citizen would choose to wear. Moreover, they were also not the kind that people from the north or the islands beyond would wear.

Arthur continued to observe, scanning from top to bottom, while the person being observed became uncomfortable from the intense gaze she received. It did not take long until he realized the girl in front of him was a Fey Crutin. The biggest giveaway to that were her unique eyes.

This fact, added with the death of the golden knight and the suspicion of the silver knight, made Arthur believe she was a piece of a much bigger mystery. One he couldn't possibly solve in a short time.

Therefore, he decided to keep the girl a secret for a while.

However, the physician, who was also his close mentor, Gaious disagreed with his decision. The man even gave the prince a piece of advice.

"Your Excellency, if she's really a fey. Then I suggest you be really careful."

Those words managed to make Arthur stop in his tracks. Even so, he still needed more time to decide what to do.

"What do you mean by that, Gaious?"

Gaious leaned closer to Arthur and spoke in a soft tone, as if he didn't want anyone else to hear what he had to say.

"It's highly probable that she's a witch."

The man's words made Arthur confused. He never understood the differences between a witch and a wizard. After all, the man in front of him was a wizard himself.

"I was always curious about one thing, Gaious. So tell me. Why do the kingdoms hate this so-called 'Fey Witch'? I mean... What's the difference between them and a wizard such as you?"

Instead of answering the prince's question, the old wizard walked towards his apothecary room, which happened to be in the basement as well. Arthur watched curiously as the man took several different ingredients from the shelf and began grinding them.

After the ingredients were grounded into a pile of fine powders. Gaious walked towards Morgana with the pestle in hand. Seeing his mentor's actions, Arthur's face changed drastically.

"Please stand back, Your Excellency."

"Gaious! What are you trying to do?!" Arthur became worried because he couldn't possibly let any harm befall the girl. She was the only clue to the unsolved mystery!

The old wizard didn't budge. His gaze was fixed on Morgana and he said in a firm tone, "We need to make sure, Your Excellency. Please stand back because this is important."

Without further ado, Gaious took the powder and blew it into the cell. Morgana, who saw all this happening, became alarmed. Unfortunately, there was nothing she could do but let the powder land on her body.

The prince watched as the girl gradually turned into a huge wolf with black and crimson fur in a matter of seconds.

It began to rampage inside the cell, trying its best to get out. Arthur was worried if the metal bars would be enough to hold the creature, and fortunately, it was. It took a while before the creature calms down and slowly return back into its human form.

Arthur was both terrified and amazed by what he had witnessed. Even so, he felt sympathy for the poor girl when he saw the girl lying on the ground with her clothes even more torn than before. He quickly grabbed a blanket to cover her almost naked body.

While making sure the blanket covered her entirety, Arthur asked the old wizard, "Gaious, is this what the Order is scared of?"

The old wizard was silent.

Receiving no response, Arthur turned and gazed intensely at his mentor, "You must know about this, Gaious. Tell me!"

Under the relentless pressure the prince gave off, the wizard finally relented and began explaining. Even though he didn't know all the details and reasons, he still knew some of the pieces and crumbs.

Apparently, around 50 years ago, the mysterious forest suddenly opened, at the same time, people are started to go missing and dying. There were corpses of people found in such a gruesome manner.? This kept happening until the 7 kingdoms were compelled to solve the situation.

20 years ago, the 7 kingdoms sent their best knights and envoys to communicate with the Fey, which unfortunately leads to such a disaster that took hundreds of lives. Regarding the disaster, Gaious had no clear idea of what happened since the details were kept secret. The truth was only available to the highest ranking knights.? But he knows for sure it involves fey witches.

Arthur knew that some parts of the story his mentor told him were matching with what was written on the information accessible by the golden knights. However, it seemed the real reason behind it was still a mystery.

That day, Arthur regretfully decided to force his mentor to keep the girl a secret, because he couldn't let an accident happen. He wanted to get to know the girl and the Fey Crutins better. He wanted to know the truth.

The process would definitely take time, as the girl herself didn't speak his tongue. Therefore, Arthur came back to the old wizard's place almost everyday to talk and teach the girl the Briton language.

With each passing week, the girl began to understand more and more of what Arthur was saying. But she refused to talk about the Feys every time Arthur asked her about them.

When she understands the language more, Arthur was curious about the extend of fey talent who was said to be a witch. A simple test of magic leads to daily practice. They discovered she had such extraordinary talent in practicing fire magic that her rate of improvement made the old wizard ashamed of himself.

It took three months for Arthur's trust to grow to let her out of the cage. It surprised him that the girl didn't leave immediately after being released.

Arthur trusted her enough to bring her out to the city, to learn more about the world. Naturally, she put on a cloak that covered her entire body.

As they walked through the streets, Arthur noticed she was very excited to try all kinds of food she laid her eyes on. Moreover, the girl had the appetite of a bear. He gaped at the sight of the food he ordered disappearing into the girl's stomach in an instant.

After weeks of being together, Arthur started to become attached to the girl. He believed she also felt the same way as he did.? He hoped this girl one day would want to return to the forest and take him to see her people.

During their many conversations, he learnt the girl was actually waiting for something or someone, but when he asked about the details, she never wanted to say it.

When the Yearly Tournament began, with the city becoming packed by the flows of squires and the fact that many golden knights across the 7 kingdoms arrived, Arthur forbade her to go outside. It will be troublesome if any of these knights saw her.

Then, the exact night after the Tournament was finally over, a stranger came to seek the girl.

Chapter 362: Explain!

"Morgana!" Emery exclaimed. Though her face was obscured with the cape's hood, the figure he took hostage under his arm was definitely her.

His shock made him almost forget about the battle, making him lower the dagger that was placed on the figure's neck.

Seeing an opening, the figure struck Emery's chest with her elbow, making him take a few steps back. He did not resist, but he used the force of the attack to grab the figure's black cape.

He knew from her familiar smell, but this way, he could be sure.

He flipped to regain his balance and turned around to see the face beneath the hood.

There she was. The familiar red-haired beauty that had been in the forefront of his mind for the past few months now stood in front of him.

"She's safe... That's a relief!" Emery muttered under his breath.

Ever since he returned from the Magus Academy, he had been searching for her with everything he could. From asking Luna to search for the missing silver knight, asking for help from the High Priestess and so much more. All that, and there were still no hints, but now she suddenly appeared in front of him.

They have been reunited after months of being apart, but Emery had no idea what to say to her, except for her name.

The woman in front of him seemed to be in shock and she kept on muttering some words. Emery tried to approach her, but a pillar of flame emerged from both her hands, before she threw it towards him.

[Firebolt]

The attack was thrown in such a close range, forcing Emery to use [Blink] to dodge to the side right before the flames hit him.

"... What?! ... It's me...!"

He was confused. Was it because of his [shapeshifting] ability that she didn't recognize him? But wasn't she able to recognize his scent?

"Morgana it's me! Look!" Emery dispelled his feywolf innate spell out of panic. Right now he couldn't think about anything else, just the woman who seemed to be staring at him with murderous eyes.

Morgana did not answer, she casted another fire spell and threw the resulting fireball at him. Once more, Emery used [Blink] to dodge.

What was it? What did the two-faced prince or the old wizard do to her mind? Did they use some mind alteration magic or something?

Morgana stared at him and finally said something "Is that the spell you used to disappear right in front of my eyes that time!?"

"What?! What are you-"

The angry woman concentrated on her hands again and fire started to ignite both her palms before it coalesced into a pair of medium-sized fireballs.? "Where have you been?! it's been months?! Not days, not weeks, months!"

Emery raised both his hands in defense. Now, he understood what the red-haired woman was talking about.

"Wait, wait! Stop! About that, I can explain!"

Morgana stopped her casting and the fireballs floating above her palms stopped expanding, though it was still blazing and casting an orange glow on her enraged expression. She stared at him, urging him to give a quick and serious answer.

"Explain right now!"

"Yes, yes, actually..."

Emery's voice disappeared and he felt like someone was muffling his voice. Right afterwards, a sentence came into his mind's eye.

[Restriction Spell activated. You are not allowed to say any information regarding the Academy to those who are not part of it.]

He paled right after reading the sentence.

"Oh... Dammit!"

[Firebolt!]

One of the fireballs floating above her palms were thrown towards him and he quickly dodged with a [Blink] as well. He looked at Morgana and she made a gesture of mock throwing with her empty hand. The second fireball was still blazing.

The implied threat was clear as day.

"Stop, stop! I said calm down, just give me a minute!"

Meanwhile, Arthur and the others all around them stared at each other with confused glances. At first, they thought these two appeared to be fighting, but he realized from their gesture and words, they knew each other.

Arthur approached Morgan.

"Morgana, what is going on here?"

Apparently, the prince had surprised both Morgana and the attacker, as they shouted towards him at the same time.

"STAY OUT OF IT!"

The prince took one step back and smiled in dark amusement. Whatever the case, this was enough to conclude they know each other. Although Morgana did seem to be angry at the attacker, if some of her actions were to be believed, the two seemed to have something more between them.

Realizing the man who came for Morgana was actually both a great fighter and a powerful wizard. He decided to treat this matter carefully.

One other thing he found rather concerning was the fact this wizard had the ability to change his face. That power was unheard of, at least from the few wizards he knew of.

Arthur raised his hand and his men both stepped back before sheathing their weapons. He wanted to give some space to Morgana and wait until the problem between the two of them was resolved.

He couldn't help but wonder who this young man actually was.

Morgana sighed, letting the remaining fireball dissipate. She took some deep breaths to calm herself down. Emery nodded and used [Blink] once more and this time, he appeared next to Morgana.

With a tender grip, he held Morgana's hand and said.

"I know it is my fault and for that, I am sorry, okay! It was not my intention to leave you for months like that. Can we talk somewhere, away from these people? Please..."

Morgana looked at him for a second before nodding.

Unfortunately, Emery's [Spatial Gate] were unable to carry people with him, or at least, he was still not yet strong enough to do that. He decided to grab her hand and lead her to the woods, away from the prying eyes all around them.

Morgana looked at the prince and he nodded before raising his arm. The knights who surrounded them parted and let them pass and they disappeared in the darkness of the forest.

Chapter 363: Promise

Emery took her to a clearing in the forest, For a few minutes, silence reigned between them, as Emery tried to circumvent the filter to no avail.

After multiple notifications about his current restriction, Emery was able to say one sentence.

"I was taken away against my will by a force I can't explain. When I was able to return, I came to search for you right away."

It was too ambiguous, it told her nothing about what actually happened during the months, but it seemed to be enough to calm her down. Emery hoped one day he could properly say the exact reason, but for now, this would have to do. Fortunately, her expression softened and her anger was gone, for now.

"What about you? I thought you were locked up or worse. Now, I see you actually free to roam as you wish, Why didn't you return to the forest?"

Morgana was silent for a second before she frowned and said.

"You come found me, not the opposite. Village no problem, they understand."

The girl said only a few words, but that was enough to give him a headache. That was quite the twisted logic, but for now, it would be a mistake to say that to her face...

"Yes, I can understand that... Again, I apologize and I am glad you are fine."

Emery's apology seemed to be working, as she appeared to calm down.

Emery glanced at the prince and the old man waiting a bit far from them, before whispering to her.

"Anyway, why are you helping them?"

"They help me, so I help them"

He half-expected a long explanation and had taken her to the clearing partly so they could speak freely with each other. To his surprise, the reason was much simpler.

Emery shook his head and said. "Those people could be using you, or even tricking you they must have their own agenda for helping you!"

When these words came out of his mouth, somehow it points to himself as well. He too has been fooled many times.

"I don't understand, don't think they are bad." Morgana answered with a flat expression.

He took a deep breath, calmed down, and scratched the back of his head. He cant believe this girl was more naive than him.

"That's it, you shall follow me now. I will take you back to the Forbidden Forest."

She thought for a while and said.

"No!"

"Why not?" Emery asked.

"Not now, I have many things to learn, so no!"

These words somehow remind him of what the lady of the lake said that Morgana was on her own path, but Emery really not comfortable leaving her to that two face prince at all.

"Look, Morgana, I can teach you whatever it is they can do. As for magic, believe me, I can do it much better than that old man."

Morgana was silent for a second then replied

"If you do that, then I will follow you."

"Great, then-"

Before Emery managed to finish his words, Morgana stared at him with a serious glare and said.

"Promise me. Tell me that you won't just leave me like before and you will do all those things you said."

Her speech was still a bit stilted, her tongue unused to speaking common, but that was the longest sentence he had ever heard from her. It only showed how serious she was.

Emery couldn't really understand women and all he knew from his interactions were they were so different from each other and guessing what they were really thinking was completely futile. But, it appears Morgana was much easier to understand.

She knew what she wanted and say it clearly. Emery just needs to make sure he can give what she asked.

Briton's language was something he could teach her easily, while fire magic was a little bit tricky as he has no affinity for the fire element, but not impossible.

To fulfill that, he thought about the possibility of taking her to the Khaos space. He knows the dragon possessed a fire affinity, so Emery believed he would be more than capable to help her... If that didn't work, at the very least he could find something to give her from the academy after returning from the third year.

Emery stared at the girl in front of him and nodded.

"I promise."

Emery was surprised to see her smile, he just realized the girl rarely do, but she looked away right before he could see it clearly.

"Okay, Morgana. We should go now!"

Morgana looked back at Arthur and for a moment, before looking back at Emery and nodded.

"Great."

As soon as they were about to leave, the knights quickly surrounded them.

"Wait, stop!" The golden prince shouted. He and the old man approached them.

He stared towards Morgana and said.

"You are leaving?"

Morgana didn't answer, she merely nodded in response.

"I see, so I guess, this is the one you have been waiting for..." The prince was silent for a moment, before smiling with his usual friendly face. "But, seriously, are you just going to leave like that with no words for us? You also haven't introduced your friend here"

Morgana still didn't answer and kept on staring at him in silence. Emery knew she was never good with words and this incident only confirmed it.

Emery sort of understood the situation decide to speak for her

"I believe you have been taking good care of her. For that, I thank you." Emery said and gave him a slight bow of respect. No matter how much he couldn't stand this prince, he believed Arthur actually did help Morgana.

The prince smiled, looked at him, and said.

"I am guessing you must be... Merlin, am I right?"

Hearing that made Emery remember why he hated smart opponents. At this moment, he regretted removing his disguise abruptly before. Hence, there was only one answer he can give.

"Yes. I am Merlin"

The prince appears excited for a second before returning to his serious expression.

"I apologize, Merlin, but Morgana is currently a suspect for a murder of a gold knight. Unless she is proven not guilty, I cannot let her go."

Chapter 364: Peace

Emery stared sharply at the prince, annoyed that the golden knight still had the audacity to say those words.

"How do you plan to stop us?" Emery said, showing he was ready to fight.

"Merlin, I might not be able to defeat you. However, you are currently in the heart of the Logress Kingdom. Even if you are able to pass us, you will not get out of here easily."

"We shall see," Emery provoked.

The prince fell silent upon hearing Emery's confident answer. He could see the wizard still had more power hidden on his sleeve.

Emery grasps Morgana's hand, pulls her closer "Stay close," he said before summoned the pitch black dagger and taking a fighting stance against the knights. Slowly but surely, everyone could feel the atmosphere becoming suffocating as the fight was about to break out.

Realizing things were not going as planned, the prince decided to return to his words instead.

"Wait!" Arthur called out. "Hear me out first! Merlin... If you go past me by force, you will take the only clue we have and I worried this investigation would only blow up and lead to another disaster for the fey Chrutin, just like 20 years ago!"

The sentence made Emery stop and it dawned on him his current rash actions might bring even more trouble to the forest people. The mention of the disaster 20 years ago also attracted his attention. He never came across any information related to it and he wished to know.

"What happened 20 years ago?" Emery asked.

"I... we... the Order itself only knows a part of the story. It is my wish to have a discussion with the fey to uncover the truth behind the tragedy."

The answer only made Emery become more suspicious about the prince. Even though his intentions sounded noble, the answer only made Emery believe the prince's kindness towards Morgana and all that's happening right now was only in the hopes of getting access to the forest people.

Seeing that Emery was silent, the prince continued his words.

"Merlin, I know you were part of the battle against the Crimson fang marauder. That means you were one of the last people who were seen with Sir Bagdemagus before his death. My investigation and from the corpses, I believe the death of Bagdemagus and his knights was caused by the Fey... creature. But, I really can't believe Morgana was the one who killed him."

Hearing these words, it could be concluded the prince knew about the fey transformation as well. The grip Emery had on his dagger became tighter, he would definitely attack the moment he had to.

"I know you know more about this, tell me what happened, so I can see this investigation through and find out the reason for the knight's death."

Emery finally decided to speak out.

"It wasn't her. Morgana didn't kill Sir Badgemagus. She is innocent." Emery said succinctly.

"Then, who was it? If you know anything, tell me. Trust me, I really hope... the enmity between us and the forest people will end."

Emery was silent for a moment. To end the hate towards the fey was definitely something that he wanted as well.

But then, he remembered the death of his father, the burning of the Ambrose estate, the hatred of the Lioness king and Sir Bagdemagus against the fey. He was reminded of the old knight's attempts to slaughter Morgana.

Emery let out a long sigh. he believe the prince's goal would have to stay as a pipe dream, as it was impossible to fulfill.

In addition, Emery did not trust the prince enough yet to exchange notes. He had thought about telling him directly he was responsible for the death of the golden knight and not the forest people, but what good would come from damning himself right here, before he could ascertain his and the prince's current position in the grand scheme of things?

The circumstances of his birth aside, although he was born a noble, he was still a part of the fey family, after all.? Confessing his crime of killing the golden knight would only complicate a lot of things in the future.

After giving the Prince words some thought, Emery finally came up with an answer

"Whoever the culprit was, whether they are fey or human... Does it even matter in the long run? You have seen for yourself, how deep the enmity is between fey and humans, I believe? Now, with this in mind, tell me, prince. In what way will you end this enmity? What steps have you thought about to reach this noble, yet lofty goal of yours?

"I..." The prince tried to reach the words, but he couldn't as he eventually turned silent.

"If you find the answer and then, we can talk again. Meanwhile the peace you long for and the truth you seek... They are not things that can be attained with just words!"

Emery had nothing else to say to this prince. It appeared, even if everything that the prince just told was the truth and his intention was true, the young prince has no real power to make any change.

Prince Arthur realized he was out of options. There was no other way to convince the wizard. In the end, he resorted to pleading once more.

"Please, Merlin, stay here a while and help me find a way to resolve this matter."

Emery turned back and was about to leave without answering, but right afterwards, his enhanced senses picked up the sound of horses getting closer towards them. Alarmed, Emery glanced at the prince and shouted.

"Is this what you were doing, prince? Just making talks to stall for reinforcements?!"

"No, I did not. Everyone here is my trusted knight and they would not do it." Arthur quickly answered, with panic visible on his face.

Emery decided to wait when he saw the genuine flustered look. Moreover, there were only three riders coming. Such a small amount of reinforcement wouldn't matter much against him and he was interested to know whether the prince was telling the truth.

The sounds of clopping slowed to a halt and three knights emerged from the cluster of trees. It was Sir Gawain, the golden knight who always stood near the prince, along with two silver knights working for him.

The golden knight looked at the situation and noticed the strangeness. Therefore, he asked. "My prince, what is going on here?"

The prince shook his head and answered.

"There is no need to worry, Sir Gawain. Tell me why did you come late at night like this?"

The golden knight seemed confused as to what was going. Wordlessly, he glanced at Emery and stared at the golden prince, unsure if he should continue with the mysterious enemy's presence.

"If it is important, just say it now. If not, you can come back tomorrow!"

"No, my prince." Sir Gawain gave a small bow. "It's about a marauder group. Dozens of them were spotted gathering along the borders."

Hearing this Arthur frowned,

"Sir Gawain, there are always marauders and reports of their sightings almost every week. is this really urgent? We can deal with them later. There are more urgent matters I must tend to right now."

Apparently, si Gawain was not finished

"Prince Arthur, it was because... You told me to pay special attention to the Lioness princess"

The sudden mention of the Lioness princess made Arthur's expression turn serious, and surely also Emery. He was just about to leave the place, but now he was drawn to their conversation. Emery glanced at Sir Gawain, interested in what news the golden knight bears about the princess.

Unconsciously for them both, all the conversation regarding the forest people almost instantly forgotten.

"What is it, Gawain?" Arthur asked.

"We have reason to believe the marauders are heading towards the Lioness convoy scheduled to pass through the border today, there is a sheer amount of them, I am afraid something bad is at plan my prince,? Should we dispatch knights to go and check it out?"

The prince's face swiftly turned pale, asking in a panicked voice. No matter what his father told him about the princess, Arthur had his own feelings to consider and he even told his personal knight to track her movements for her own safety. He didn't expect this thing could have happened.

"Of course, Gawain! In fact, why didn't you do it already?"

"I sincerely apologize, my prince." Gawain shook his head. "Beyond that border, lies the Lioness territory, so-"

"Dammit, Gawain! How long ago was this?!"

"The last bird message came just after nightfall, my prince."

Arthur took a deep breath, sighed and turned to look at Emery. "Merlin, I hope we can continue our conversation after I take care of this. I request you not to go anywhere. We will talk after this is over."

To the prince's surprise, the wizard nodded and agreed without much resistance.

Chapter 365: Leaving

Emery's heart was stirred upon hearing about the planned attack on the Lioness convoy. During his time fighting to represent the Lioness, he had grown close with the other squires and, if he didn't leave them to look for Morgana, he would be there with them.

It was also supposed to be his duty to protect that convoy. If anything bad happened to them while he was not there, it would somehow be under his conscience.

There was also the matter of the princess' safety...

His heart started beating fast as soon as he heard the news from the knight. If it were up to him, he wished he could just rush over to help, but he couldn't afford any mistake now. If Arthur found out that the wizard Merlin quickly took off to rescue the Lioness princess, more questions would be raised and from then on, his every movement would be even more scrutinized.

He needed to do it right, hence he thought for a moment for the best course of action.

First, he realizes the princess was protected by a dozen knights and the squires. There was also Yvain the knight of the Lion guarding her. Those marauders will not be able to give them trouble easily.

But, something in his heart told him that something was not right. A persistent bad feeling about the situation was gripping his mind and making him unable to think straight.

Logically, no marauders would be crazy enough to attack a fully guarded princess convoy. But, if Gawain's information was really true, then the princess was in grave danger.

Emery couldn't help but keep thinking that this event was part of some kind of planned attack. Marauders, groups of criminals with no affiliation and loyalty, had gathered together to attack despite knowing the princess was being escorted by knights and squires. This would only mean they came ready.

Thump, thump.

His heart started to beat chaotically. They definitely needed help.

With his familiarity with the Lioness to Logress path, he knows that even if the prince and Sir Gawain were fully galloping with their fastest horses, they would take at least four or five hours to reach the border.

Fortunately, with Emery's [Spatial Gate] spell, he could reach it in a matter of minutes. But, the problem was, he could only use? [Spatial Gate] for himself, he couldn't bring Morgana with him.

That's the main reason for his current hesitation, he needed to decide what to do with the girl standing next to him.

He thought about just taking her halfway and hiding her somewhere in Logress territory, then continuing by himself until the border. But it would become even more troublesome if she got found by other knights.

Emery didn't want to take another chance of her meeting other knights who may or may not like fey chrutins.

No matter how he looked at it, this place was currently the safest place to leave her while he's gone.

Which led to the decision of why he agreed when The Prince told him to wait for his return.

Emery decided to calmly wait as Arthur took one of the horses used by Sir Gawain's underling knight and rode away with the knights, leaving the old magician in charge of the situation.

When the prince was far enough that Emery could no longer hear the galloping of the horses. He turned to the girl standing next to him.

Apparently, Morgana was also confused with the decision he just made.

"Why are we staying here?" she asked

"Morgana I think my friend is in trouble, I really need to go help them"

"What?! Where are you going?." replied the girl in confusion

"I promise, I will need to go for just a few hours and I will return soon. Alright?"

"No!" The girl shouted, slight worry bleeding into her expression. "Whatever you are going to do, just let me help you!"

Emery was dismayed. He promised this girl only a few minutes ago he would not leave her, and he really didn't want to. Not after he finally found her after 4 months of constant worries.

But, time was short, the situation urgent and Emery believed none of the marauders were strong enough to take much of his time, let alone touch him.

There should be nothing that could go wrong, there was even a possibility the information was wrong and he would just go back and forth quickly.

No matter how he tried to find another way, the best solution he could think of was leaving Morgana for a few hours, deal with the problem and come back as soon as possible to ensure her safety.

While he struggled with his worries, seconds were ticking away and with each moment he wasted, another life may be claimed.

With a guilty expression, Emery looked towards the girl and said.

"I am sorry, Morgana." Emery sighed and looked away. "Just wait for me. I will be back before you know it."

Morgana didn't say anything back but Emery could tell that she didn't like this plan.

Emery turned away and glared at the old magician.

"I need to go for a while, I trust you will keep her safe"

The old magician seemed to want to argue with him about leaving but seeing Emery determination he nodded

Emery let out a sigh, before leaving he said

"If anything happens to her here, I promise even if you run to the ends of this world, I will come and hunt you down."

He concentrated on the air in front of him. Darkness began to shift and crack in front of him, forming a swirling void of darkness.

Before he stepped in, he glanced at Morgana once more, as if trying to reassure her without words that he would come back for her.

Chapter 366: Ambush

In the middle of the night, just outside the border of the Logress kingdom on a road path surrounded by trees.

A group of knights and squires were traveling, riding their horses in formation with a carriage in the middle.

The front line was filled with knights in full armor, while the back was mostly filled with squires and new knights who just received their title.

"Aaaa... Why don't we stop and camp for now?" one of the young knights said.

"They said the King sent a letter to the princess and we have to return as soon as possible. Why? Are you tired already, Marc?"

"Huh, what did you say? Tired? Of course not! Lucas, come on, we are no longer squires, we are real knights of Lion!"

Right when the new knights were busy chatting, a shout could be heard from nearby.

"It's an ambush! Defend the princess!!" a knight with long golden hair said.

Even in the dark of midnight, as a golden knight, Yvain had the ability to feel his surroundings, enough to sense the people hiding behind the bushes and trees along the narrow forest path. Before the enemy even started to attack, he shouted and commanded all the knights to prepare themselves.

"What happened, Yvain?"

Princess Gwenneth asked from inside the carriage.

"We are surrounded, my lady!"

"Who... Why?"

"I don't know, Princess, but please, stay inside and close the door."

The knight closed the carriage door tight, leaving the princess alone with the terrified maid inside the carriage. Undaunted by the situation, she grabbed her sword and peeked outside from the windows, ready for the worst.

Yvain looked at the cluster of trees on both sides of the road. On the right side, there was a cluster right next to a massive hill, while on the left side there was a slippery incline leading to a lower ground. It was obvious where the attackers came from.

"Knights, on the left side! Get ready and make a defense line!"

Their training paid off and, within seconds, about three dozen knights and squires in red and golden cape were all on their horses. All of them formed a tight line while facing the left side of the forest.

Not long after, the sounds of rustling leaves could be heard, followed by a dozen different voices shouting and a barrage of lit torches.

"Aaaaarrrgh! Kill them!"

Yvain was quite shocked. Though he was able to feel their presence, he did not expect to have more than one hundred attackers coming at them. But, his facial expression still showed the calm, unnerved gaze he displayed throughout most of his missions.

"Hold!! Hold!"

Yvain gave the order and every single horse rider stayed still. In a cavalry line, timing was crucial and knowing when to charge determined whether they could go home victorious or face their death.

When the attackers coming out of the trees were only a few steps away from them, Yvain shouted.

"Now! Attack!"

The 40 knights and squires all marched forward at the same time, using the power of their horses and the slashes of their blades to keep the attackers at bay.

Spllaaat! Splllaaat!

Blood and guts spilled on the ground, to be immediately trampled beneath the hooves of their horses. The smell of iron started to fill the chilly night air, while the sounds of terrified screams took over the quiet forest.

Fortunately, the marauders were no match against the Lioness knights.

It only took less than ten minutes for half of the marauders to fall to the ground, while the rest who could still move all ran back towards the forest.

Just like in training, half of the knights were assigned to charge towards the running marauders, while the other half would stay on guard near the carriage.

But, barely half a minute after half of their forces charged downhill, another shout was heard from the front and back of the road.

This time, dozens of marauders were charging atop horses from both sides.

"Dammit! Knights, return!"

Yvain couldn't hide his panic. He ordered the knights who were left around the carriage to recreate the lines. But, there weren't enough knights there and half of them were newbie squires, causing the new line to become uneven and disorganized.

"Protect the princess!" Yvain shouted. "Don't let even a single one of them push through!"

Again, they clashed. This time, the relentless attack from both sides caused a few of the knights and squires to fall off their horses.

The first marauder group had turned back along with the knights, overwhelming them from behind while they tried to reach the carriage.

Abe, Marcus and Lucas, along with a few others, were stuck close to the carriage. Marcus climbed up the carriage and used his bow and arrows to defend the princess, while the others tried to stop the remaining marauders from getting close to the carriage.

All went well, until a scream could be heard from behind them.

"Aaaaargh!"

Marcus, who was standing on top of the carriage, was stabbed by a black clothed fighter who managed to join in by jumping from atop the hill. Now, they were surrounded and a few of them had already been killed. Worse of all, there were still surrounded by hundreds of marauders ready to fight.

"They are on the top of the carriage, stop them!" The golden knight shouted while swinging his blade, taking down half a dozen marauders in one swing in an attempt to go back to the carriage.

The situation was chaotic and the carriage was left almost unguarded. The black cloth fighters in the carriage drove and tossed the corpse to the ground, before using the lashes to force the horses to run.

"They took the princess!"

Seeing the carriage push through, Yvain quickly gave it a chase leaving the other knights defending for themselves.

More knights and squires fell from the attacks. They were surrounded 3 to 1.

It was at this moment they saw a figure running toward them with two swords.

"Lanzo!!"

Chapter 367: Rampage

A distortion formed in the middle of wilderness and ripped the space right above the ground. Slowly but surely, a rainbow-colored circle appeared from the ripped space, while a figure walked out from it. The figure slightly gasped for air due to the exhaustion the action brought to him.

This was the fifth [Spatial Gate] Emery used in his attempt to reach the border between the Lioness and Logress Kingdom's territory as soon as possible.

As much as he willed himself to be faster, his current capability only allowed him to feel the space roughly five miles around him - which in turn limited the distance he could travel to.

This also directly meant Emery would have to make several more attempts to reach his final destination: the border, which lay tens of miles from where he was before.

In order to create each [Spatial Gate] at the farthest distance possible, Emery had to place his focus on the perceived area within the range for a few minutes, pinpointed the exact location where he wanted the gate to appear and lock on it while creating another gate to transport him there. All of this required tedious effort, unbroken concentration and a considerable amount of spirit power, which obviously took quite a toll on him.

Each of these [Spatial Gate] really depleted his spirit force in a fast manner, but Emery really had to hurry. The situation surrounding Gwen could become dangerous at any moment and he didn't want to have any of that.

When Emery walked out of his sixth [Spatial Gate], he could finally feel it - the reason he was here. Hundreds of people were perceived through his ability and they were all inside the forest. Not only could he see them, he could also faintly hear the sounds of battle from where he had appeared.

Emery swiftly changed his 'Merlin' clothes and used the [Shapeshift] ability to return back to Lanzo's appearance.

Worried he was too late, Emery instantly used his battle art technique to its maximum stage as he shot to the battlefield.

[Immortal Gate - stage 4]

[Battle power increased by 16]

[Battle power 65 (50)]

It was Emery's first time to use the fourth stage since his return to Earth. At the moment, he could feel the skill was harder to maintain, probably because of the restriction affecting it.

Emery clicked his tongue when he thought of the damned restriction.

Even so, Emery had no time to curse and had to keep up with it for the moment, because he had a battle to take care of.

With an increase in battle power, Emery dashed towards the sound of battle, rushing through the woods under the cover of darkness.

The battlefield looked extremely chaotic when he arrived. The Lioness entourage was surrounded from all sides, while the knights were entangled with hordes of enemies. They fought with all they had, while doing their best to ensure the safety of their own.

Through his enhanced senses, Emery could see that several squires were already laying on the ground, unmoving. Those who had the slightest logic would know those squires already breathed their last.

Seeing the few familiar faces gradually losing their color, Emery immediately became furious.

He swiftly took out two swords, wielding one with each arm, and began rushing to the battlefield to prevent further losses.

Splattt!! Splattt!!

Two marauders drops dead on the ground following the appearance of Emery in the battlefield. The marauders were so shocked by the sudden arrival of an unexpected person they weren't able to react to Emery's next moves.

Splattt!!

Another unsuspecting marauder got stabbed on the back by Emery's sword. He could only watch as the blade went through his chest in shock, while he could feel power leaving his body. A moment later, he fell to the ground as Emery pulled the sword out.

Emery was surprised to discover the swing of his swords became lighter with each blood that he spilled. He didn't know since when he cared much less about taking lives.

Has he really changed? Or was it just because he no longer thought of these marauders as humans, that made his swings easier?

Either way, Emery didn't think much of it anymore and he continued what he was doing, dashing towards his next target.

Splattt!! Splattt!!

Splattt!!

The marauders that previously attacked the Lioness entourage with ferocity became shocked as they watched Emery slaughtering their people. Some of them tried to stop him, only to be buried under his swords.

With each step that Emery took, one or two marauders would fall to the ground and bid their farewell to the world. The bloody sight frightened the other marauders who saw it, causing them to reconsider their actions.

In the midst of his streak, Emery realized the carriage was nowhere to be seen. He tried to find it amidst the chaos, but his efforts were in vain.

Emery hurried himself when he realized this fact. He swiftly dashed towards the struggling Lioness group, while also creating a path of blood in the middle of the battlefield.

With a jerk of his legs, Emery jumped towards the group.

"Lanzo!? How are you here?" asked Lucas, after Emery cut down the marauder who was entangled with him. There was a combination of shock and glee when they were seeing him.

Unfortunately, Emery didn't have time to explain even if he wanted to. He was very anxious when he saw many knights and squires already lying on the ground, some of them seriously injured while the unfortunate ones were dead. Among them, Emery saw Marcus lying on the ground bleeding from his chest, whimpering in pain.

"Lucas, where is the princess?!"

Even though Lucas was confused by Emery's anxiousness, he immediately told him what had happened.

"The carriage was taken by the attackers and Sir Yvain chased after them".

Upon hearing this, Emery didn't ask anything else and only threw him several healing pastes. Receiving Lucas's confused look, he told the latter to use it on the wounded.

Emery really wanted to go and help the princess, but he knew the situation here was extremely dire.

There were still hundreds of marauders on the battlefield, while only half of the knights and squires were able to fight. This was a 5 against 1 situation.

Emery noticed the marauders who didn't see his earlier rampage were becoming more ferocious as they saw the knights were in trouble. Therefore, if he decided to chase after the princess now, he was sure these people would be dead.

After a moment of calculation, Emery immediately jumped towards the sea of enemies.

"Arrggghhhh!!"

Splattt!! Splattt!!

The swords in Emery's hand continuously spelled death upon the marauders. The verdant grasses were painted crimson by the rain of blood. Emery attacked the marauders at breakneck speed, as any marauder who got in his way was either dead or gravely injured.

In addition, Emery secretly used the myriad spells in his repertoire to end this fight as soon as possible. He still had a princess to catch up, after all.

With a single cast of [Whip Splash], a Tier one Water Element spell, Emery extinguished every light source in the area. The marauders were surprised when they saw the torches suddenly doused with water that came from nowhere.

When the surroundings fell into darkness, Emery continued by casting [Entangled?] on the marauders. Some marauders shouts as they were strangely stumbled by roots on the ground. Some who heard their companions' screams rushed over, only to be tripped by other roots.

Within minutes, the situation experienced a turnaround where the knights and squires gradually pushed the marauders back. The Lioness knights and squires watched in confusion when their opponent suddenly fell to the ground from nowhere.

In the meantime, Lucas was doing the task Emery asked him to do. He went around the battlefield, continuously grabbing the wounded under the dim light the moon provided. Subsequently, he quickly applied the paste given by Emery to the wounded.

When the Lioness knights were finally able to rebuild their defensive line, they realized there was one person weaving through the enemy group. Continuous slashes shot out from the two swords in the figure's hands, which was followed by the screams of the marauders.

They tried to discern who this mysterious figure was, only to be shocked when they realized it was their kingdom's current brightest squire, Lanzo. That night, Emery once more creates another impression to their eyes, and this time by saving their life...

A few minutes later, the marauders understood they could do nothing about this figure. They could only watch helplessly as they were cut down one by one. With the other knight also starting to fight back, they finally decided to run away.

Seeing the marauders fleeing, Emery did not give chase. He couldn't waste any more time.

"I am going to chase after the carriage!" shouted Emery, as he slashed at the last marauder nearby.

Lucas was about to give him one of the horses, but Emery had disappeared into the forest.

The man was extremely confused.

"Is he going to go after it on foot?"

Chapter 368: Damsel in Distress

"Yvain! Who is attacking, and what do they want?!"

"Princess, please stay inside and close the door!"

The golden knight said, before shutting the carriage door closed.

The sounds of clashing blades rang clear all around her, mixed with screams of agony, Yvain's commands and the galloping of horses.

Princess Gwen's gaze fell towards the trembling, terrified maid hugging her knees sitting right across her.

"Don't be afraid! The Lioness knights will protect us!" The princess said, her eyes full of resolve.

Her own words also calmed not only the maid, as her fingers stopped trembling as well.

At first, voices she recognized shouted commands and encouragements towards each other, but now and then there were screams of pain, and the worst part was that she knew some of the voices. Even her loyal knight and protector joined the sea of voices, making her wonder just what was actually going on outside.

Right as she was about to peek outside, the small carriage started to shake and wobble. Sounds of wood could be heard from above.

"Princess?" Someone knocked on the roof and spoke from outside. "Please do not worry, we will stand guard."

Princess Gwen recognized the voice as one of the squires who received his knight title from the last competition. At first, they were able to push the attackers away, but it wasn't long until panicked voices and sounds of more people jumping up onto the carriage could be heard. From the windows, she could see the squire was thrown down from the carriage.

The next thing she heard was the pained scream of the knight in charge of controlling the carriage.

The carriage suddenly moved at high speeds and she quickly realized what was happening.

Most of the attack forces served as a distraction and, while the knights were occupied with them, another separate force was assigned to separate her. By taking the carriage with them, they had fulfilled that mission.

There was no way she could stay quiet while holed up in there. With each second she wasted, the carriage moved further away from her knights.

Gwenneth quickly unsheathed her sword, slightly opened the door of the moving carriage and peeked at the situation outside. The carriage was moving at almost breakneck speeds, the darkness of the night made her difficult to see around, especially with the speed.

The princess looked toward the front and planned to attack the rider in the front seat. Knowing what the princess was trying to do, her attendant shouted.

"No, princess! Don't do it!"

The terrified attendant's expression stopped her, prompting her to decide on a different plan. She held the door, sheathed her sword back and said.

"I need you to jump out of the carriage, now!"

There are two choices left for them. Either they stayed inside and got separated even further away from the knights, or they ran through the woods and hid until the situation passed. The longer they stayed, the further they got from people who could help.

Considering the speed at which their carriage was moving, it would not be easy to jump out safely. But if they managed to do so, they could hide in the darkness of night and rejoin the knights later on. All they needed to do was make sure not to get hit by the trees when they jumped.

Princess Gwenneth grabbed the attendant's hand tight and stared closely at the trees. The darkness of night had obscured them, causing them to be barely visible.

"Jump, now!"

Before the attendant could prepare herself, Gwen yanked her attendant's hand and forced her to jump.

The force of the pull caused the attendant to roll on the ground. She might get some scratches and bruises, but as long as she didn't hit the trees, she should be safe.

Now, it was her turn. She took a deep breath, but right before she could move, she heard the galloping of horses and saw three riders quickly gaining ground towards the carriage.

The rider was watching her, she had lost her chance to run into the woods.

One of the riders, a large man with an ugly face full of scars, could be heard jumping towards the carriage and climbing up from behind. The clang of metal could be heard as the axe slammed onto the wooden carriage roof.

When the attacker in black jumped onto the carriage. He looked around inside, only to see that the door was open and his target nowhere to be seen.

He walked towards the door to check if his target had jumped, but right as he was about to peek outside, the princess, who was hanging on the side, quickly pulled him out of the fast-moving carriage, causing him to hit face-first onto the trees hard.

More riders in black were now running towards her on foot, right behind the horse riders chasing her. But behind them, she saw hope.

A golden knight chased them from the back of a familiar red horse. It was Yvain, the golden knight and, though his face and body was marred with cuts, he looked no worse for wear.

"Sir Yvain!"

The knight pulled his horse's reins hard, causing Jewel to speed up and allowed him to catch one of the riders off guard with a well-timed slash to his midsection. The rider fell off his horse and got trampled by the crowd, right as Sir Yvain started fighting with the other rider.

Their sword clashed hard, each swing from Yvain's blade was enough to chip away parts of the rider's weapon. Within a few swings, the golden knight won the fight and kicked his opponent off his horse, leaving him to the same fate as the first one, before continuing to chase the carriage.

"Stay inside, Princess! I will take care of this!"

The knight passed her, caught up with the marauder driving the horse and jumped up onto his seat before stabbing him on the neck. Light quickly faded from his eyes and Yvain kicked the rider's corpse into the woods.

He slowed down the carriage, until it came to a stop, before he stepped off and helped the princess walk out of the ruined carriage. He was about to let her get onto Jewel when all of a sudden, the sound of horses could be heard coming from both sides of the road. Considering the noises, there seems to be at least a dozen of them.

"Let's run to the woods, Princess. It's the safest way." Yvain said.

Princess Gwen nodded and they prepared themselves to run, but suddenly she heard a familiar voice from the road.

"Princess, I have come to rescue you."

Considering the situation, she should have ignored such words. But, as she recognized the voice, she decided to wait.

She saw the people in black chasing her getting closer, while from the front side of the ruined carriage, another group of knights riding horses could be seen.

The group of knights wore a black cape with a white bird symbol, which the Princess recognized as the symbol of Cantiaci Kingdom, their neighbor. The voice was from Prince Edward the Black Knight, who rode in front of the other knights.

Chapter 369: Rescue

"Princess Gwenneth! I'm glad I found you! Are you alright?"

Gwen could clearly see the figure who spoke those words. A young man in silver armor that contrasted with his black hair. He rode at the front of the incoming group on a steed that looked as impressive as him. The young man was Prince Edward of the Cantiaci Kingdom.

Prince Edward noticed Gwen was only looking at him. Therefore, he quickly shouted at the knights behind him.

"Men!! Protect the princess!!"

Immediately after, the Cantiaci knights moved in between the princess and the group of men in black clothes. The sudden intervention of the former caused the latter to stop in their tracks.

Prince Edward pointed his finger at the black clothed group with an angry expression appearing on his face. "You marauders! How dare you have the audacity to attack the princess!?"

Upon hearing the prince's shout, the black clothed men unexpectedly turned around and left the place in a sudden manner. Seeing them running with their tails tucked into their bottoms, Prince Edward got off his horse and bowed to Gwen.

With a dazzling smile on his face, Prince Edward said, "Don't worry anymore, princess. You're safe now."

At the moment, Gwen was heaving a sigh of relief. She was glad the chasers were gone. However, she certainly knew she wasn't out of danger yet. The man in front of her, the one who was currently directing a bright smile at her, definitely could not be trusted.

Knowing there were only the two of them, while there were two dozen Cantiaci knights surrounding her, Gwen decided to take action to prevent the man from getting what he wanted.

"Thank you very much, Prince Edward, for your assistance." Gwen said with a polite smile attitude, the kind a royalty would use when meeting other royalty. There was no other sign than sincere gratitude for the prince's timely help.

"You're certainly welcome, my lady." Prince Edward answered with his smile getting wider.

After that, he stretched out his hand towards Gwen.

"Please, my lady. I heard there were hundreds of them. Thus, you should come with me right away. I will escort you to a safe place."

Gwen shook her head at Prince Edward's offer.

"There's no need for you to do so, my prince. I have to return to my men, I'm sure they are in a precarious situation at the moment."

Upon hearing Gwen's rejection, Prince Edward unexpectedly still kept his smile. He calmly waved his hand before speaking, as if he got everything under his control.

"You don't have to worry, my lady. I will send my men to them. Ah! How about this? They can go with Sir Yvain here to finish off the remaining marauders and save your men at the same time. As for you, my lady, you are much safer here with me."

Hearing this actually made Gwen feel disgusted at the man, instead of relieved. At first, she wasn't really sure. But the moment she heard those words, Gwen was ninety percent sure this was all his ploy.

Did he really thought she would be so stupid to obey such words?

Even so, Gwen didn't want to confront him about her suspicion. After all, doing that would only endanger her current situation. Hence, she suppressed the anger inside and said with a smile, "My prince, let me see my men first. I'm really worried about them."

Instead of answering her question, Prince Edward surprisingly let out a laughter, loud one.

"Hahaha! Princess, you... You really are hard to deal with, aren't you? What do you have to pretend and make this harder than it should?"

Hearing this, Sir Yvain immediately raised his sword and inched closer to Gwen. On the other hand, Prince Edward motioned his hand and the Cantianci knights instantly switched their stance.

Seeing these dozens of knights brandishing their weapons towards the two of them, Gwen's face turned pale.

"Why are you doing this, Edward?! I thought we were friends!"

As if he heard the most ridiculous thing in the world, Edward frowned.

"Huh? I never wanted to become your friend, 'my lady'." Edward said with a mocking tone. He looked over to the direction where Lioness Kingdom was. "What I want is your Lioness throne."

The anger inside her exploded as Gwen shouted, "You will never get it!!"

Edward laughed even harder.

"HAHAHA! I don't know if you are ignorant or plain stupid, but you are definitely blind, princess! The Lioness isn't even yours anymore!"

Gwen's face changed when she heard that.

"What is that supposed to mean?"

"Just come with me, princess and I will tell you everything. Be my queen and I promise to take good care of you!" Edward said with a wide smirk.

"Never! Especially to a lowly person like you!" Gwen said as she gripped her sword harder.

"Just give up, princess. Look around you. You have nowhere to run."

"No! I will not surrender, not without a fight!"

Gwen raised her sword, while Yvain set himself in the most optimal position.

"Hahaha... Princess, I knew this wasn't going to be easy. That's why I came prepared." Edward said with a mysterious smile. He blew a whistle and those black clothed men came back.

All of them took out the cover that hid their faces.

Gwen and Yvain were startled to see the faces of Cantiaci Kingdom's two golden knights among them.

"Sir Rendi?! Sir Afton?! What is the meaning of this?" Yvain shouted at the two.

"It's nothing personal, Yvain. We are just following the order of the prince." Answered Sir Rendi, a middle-aged man with complementary sideburns and a beard.

The two golden knights got off their horses and made their way toward Yvain and Gwen. Meanwhile, the Cantianci knights had raised their swords, ready to attack at a moment's notice.

Gwen turned towards Edward, who still kept his annoying smirk. Her expression was serious.

"Don't do this, Edward! This would mean war between our two kingdoms!"

Alas, Edward ignored her words and came up with his own.

"Last chance, princess. Come with me quietly and we can avoid more unnecessary death. Think about how many lives would be lost in the war if it really happened."

Before Gwen could open her mouth, Yvain spoke first.

"Don't listen to him, Your Highness! I will protect you!"

Realizing he was rejected once again, Edward raised his hand. In an instant, the two golden knights jumped at Yvain.

Clank!! Clank!! Clank!!

Continuous sound of metal clashing with each other resounded in the air.

Unexpectedly, Yvain was still able to handle the two together, albeit with difficulty. But it was clear the man was busy and had no chance to help Gwen. Thus, Edward could casually make his way towards her.

"Don't you dare get any closer, Edward!!" Gwen threatened as she pointed her sword at the approaching scoundrel.

"Hahaha! Princess, I heard you learn sword fighting as well. Come spar with me! If you win I will let you go!" Edward said, with unbridled confidence.

Realizing all roads were blocked, Gwen thrust her sword at Edward without any hesitation.

"Hahaha, feisty! I like you even more, princess."

Swish! Swish! Swish!

Clank!! Clank!!

A series of metal clashes happened between the two of them. Gwen tried her best to land a strike on Edward, but the latter seemed to have an easy time blocking and parrying her advances. It was obvious Edward, who was also a silver knight, was the better fighter.

He was just playing around with her.

Swish!

Gwen was careless and Edward managed to cut a part of her long golden hair. He picked it up and shockingly started sniffing it.

"Aah... You indeed smell really good!"

"HAHAHAHAHA!!!"

Hysterical laughter was coming out of Edward, causing all heads to turn at him for a moment.

It was exactly at this moment that a dagger suddenly planted itself on his shoulder, causing Edward to scream like a girl.

A figure, who was obviously the culprit, traversed the air and landed next to the still shocked Gwen.

"I am sorry, princess. I apologize for my late arrival."

Gwen couldn't believe what she saw when she looked at the figure who saved her.

"Lanzo!"

Chapter 370: Hostage

"Arrrrrgghhhh! It's you again!" The black prince shouted.

The grimace of his rage twisted into maniacal laughter that echoed amongst the trees.

"Urrg..! Good! Good! I was hoping I could kill you tonight! Knights, hear my order-"

Before he could finish his words, Emery disappeared from where he stood and the next moment, he was right in front of the prince with a gust of wind accompanying his flash step.

In an instant, Emery pulled the jet black dagger that pierced Edward's shoulder before and pressed it towards the prince's neck.

The prince's smile instantly disappeared, only to be replaced with a shudder down his back. His feet trembled like a fearful lamb going to the slaughterhouse, right in front of his loyal knights.

"What... How...?! Wait! Wait!"

Emery didn't obey, of course. He pressed the blade and made a small cut, not enough to be lethal, but enough to serve as a warning. Blood seeped out from the wound and stained the jet black blade with vivid red.

"Tell your knights to STOP!!" Emery said. His voice sounded low and threatening.

Prince Edward looked at his knights for a second, the hesitation clear from his expression, but Emery pressed the blade to the same spot again and he gulped before nodding.

"Yes! Yes! Stop! Rendi, Afton, stop it!"

Seeing his chance, Sir Yvain quickly ran back close to the princess and stood guard next to her, his right hand gripping the handle of the sword attached to his belt.

"Lanzo! You... How are you here?!"

Emery looked at the princess for a moment, before looking away and answering.

"I... I changed my mind and I decided to chase after you."

He expected nothing with that answer and a part of him waited for when the princess called out that bald-faced lie. Instead, he saw an expression he hadn't seen since their childhood times.

"That's good, Lanzo!" The princess said. "There is still hope for you, after all."

Even with this madness all around them, she was still able to give a radiant, sincere smile to Emery. Even though they had long separated, the smile still warmed his heart a little.

Yvain whistled and Jewel, the red horse, came galloping. The knights had been forced to stop; the more they waited, the more their chances slipped away.

"Lanzo, what about you?!" The princess reached out, while Yvain tried to take her atop the horse.

He gave her an encouraging smile before answering. "I will be right behind you, go!"

Right as she was about to jump onto the horse, the prince stopped trembling and shouted. "Don't let them fucking go!" The knights once more formed a barricade similar to the defensive line used by Sir Yvain, not letting them out.

"You lowly squire! You won't dare kill me, for I am the famous Black Prince of the Cantiaci Kingdom! If you dare hurt me, the Cantiaci... No, my father will burn all of Lioness territory!"

"Sure, sure." Emery flashed a condescending smile at the prince, before pressing the knife deeper again as a warning. "As long as you let my princess go, I will not hurt you, 'prince'."

"Don't you even dare listen to this fucking lowli—"

Before the prince could finish his sentence, Emery hit the prince on the back of his head, making him half-unconscious. With the prince's now momentarily blurred vision, Emery shouted. "Give way to the princess, NOW!"

The knights were confused and Yvain quickly used the chance to make a decision. He grabbed the princess and pulled her onto the horse, before shouting and kicking the horse's side.

The horse neighed loudly and ran, crashing onto the knights who blocked their way.

"Lanzo, quick!"

The princess shouted towards him, right as the horse slipped away into the woods and disappeared in the shadows of the night.

Edward's knights looked at the direction the princess went, annoyed that their target had escaped.

Noises from the horse's fast gallop started to disappear, when Prince Edward regained a part of his consciousness. He stared at the direction the two golden knights were staring at and realized what happened. Once more, he shouted.

"What!! All of you Moron!! My father King will not..."

Bam!

Once more, Emery knocked the prince out with a hit on the back of the head. The famous Cantiaci prince, the silver knight adored by nobles and commoners alike for his strength, family name and looks, was turned into a plaything for a mere squire, who had received his title no more than a day ago.

Seeing this, all the prince protectors turn to rage "You can't escape, boy!" said one of the golden knights "Let go of our prince and we will go easy on you!"

Emery nonchalantly let the prince go, dropping the half-unconscious Edward, He fell and kneeled on the ground.

Emery smiled and spoke to the two golden knights.

"Who ever said anything about escaping? I'm taking the prince to our king and as for you all, you shall receive your punishment for hurting my friends."

"Hah!" One of the golden knights snorted, while another let out a boisterous laugh.

"Look at this kid! He received his silver title no more than a day ago and he has already become so arrogant!"

One of the golden knights jumped off from his horse, approached Emery and gripped the handle of his blade.

"I am Randi, the Swift Blade Knight. For standing against us, let me show you the difference between us!"

The knight unsheathed his curved blade and started swinging it around. Each swing was fast and almost invisible to the untrained eyes, a hint to where his title came from.

When he dashed towards Emery, the golden knight didn't even activate his divine blessing, a sure sign he was underestimating him.

"I'm sorry, kid!" Randi swung his two curve blades and laughed. "You won in blazing glory, sadly you get to enjoy it only for one day! Hahaha!"

Emery dodged each strike without much effort. Each time the knight was about to hit, he merely leaned his body to the opposite side, just enough to avoid the swings without getting hurt. When the knight started to realize Emery was not as weak as he thought he was, it was too late.

Splash!

Sir Randi's famous sword flew through the air with both of the golden knight's hands still attached to it.

The eyes of all the other knights followed it as it dropped to the ground.

No one dared to speak and silence reigned for a second.

"Aaaaarrrrrggghhhhh!"

The silence was broken by Randi's pained scream. In an instant, the golden knight lost both his arms, his future most likely severed along with it.

He fell right in front of Emery, who glared at him with empty, cruel eyes. The other golden knight shouted, calling the other knights.

"This kid!!... Everyone, attack!"

Two dozen knights circled around Emery at the same time, while Sir Afton activated his 'Divine Blessing'. He could feel the change in atmosphere as the aura surrounded the golden knight's body. This battle would be no joke.

But with the help of his stage 4 [Immortal Gate] none of those knights would be able to follow his speed. That speed, combined with his skill in the ways of the blade, allowed Emery to cut and slash anyone who dared to even come near him.

The only one who could give him trouble was the golden knight, with this divine blessing, each slash of the golden knight was filled with power, surely different compared to the others.

The golden knight jumped up and prepared a strong downward slash towards Emery, who merely stared at him with a gaze as calm as ever. Right as his sword was about to hit its target, Emery pulled out the new sword he obtained from the Order and used his [Heroic Slash] move.

Emery swung his sword in a wide arc, hitting the golden knight's blade right near the hilt.

Crack!

The knight's sword instantly broke into tiny pieces of metal while Afton was left speechless. Emery took the chance and grabbed the muscular knight, using him as a makeshift shield, as the two dozen knights attacked him at almost the same time.

One of the knights' stabbed Sir Afton's shoulder with his sword, while Emery slashed another incoming knight. At this moment every second, the more knights tried to attack, the more the corpse pile beneath Emery's feet grew.

While the chaos was adrift, Sir Randi was crawling on his stomach like a worm even though the stumps of his hands were still oozing thick, dark blood. Behind him, only half of the Cantiaci knights were still able to stand. Emery took his stance, prepared to deal with the rest of them in one fell swoop.

But, right when he was about to swing his sword, he felt a distortion in the air.

The telltale heavy air could only mean one thing, a powerful opponent was coming.

Emery turned his head "Who is it?!"