

## Earths GMagus 421

### Chapter 421: The Seed

As the problem with his dark core was completely solved and even got upgraded in the process, not only could Emery once again use [Spatial Gate] to move outside the Khaos space, he also felt the spell was much easier to cast and the gate formed was more stable than before.

When he walked out of the gate and stepped onto the stone formation, Emery swiftly checked his darkness spells one by one out of curiosity to see their improvement, as he was sure all of those spells had been certainly enhanced as well.

[Hide in Shadow], [Enfeeble Blade] and [Dark Matter]; one at the time, Emery casted each spell and witnessed their current prowess. As expected, they had undergone a substantial improvement, which definitely would help him in the future.

Another unexpected benefit was his [Spatial Storage] spell, allowing him to have his own personal space pocket inside of him to use. Now, that space was enlarged two fold, which was a really great boon for him.

The previously one meter cubic space had become a 2 meter cubic, and more space meant more objects to store, which resulted in convenience. This was definitely something to be happy about.

Unfortunately, no matter how much his spells had improved, Emery certainly got a mixed feeling regarding this 'upgrade'. He couldn't accept the fact that, from now on, he wouldn't be able to access his three other elements, which automatically translated into the spells on their branches.

He couldn't access his [Shadow Root Binding], [Jade Skin], [Shadow Mist] and all the other spells. Among the list of now inaccessible spells were even his two important spells: [Fragmentation] and [Nature Grasp], especially the latter, which was something he couldn't live without.

Therefore, Emery swiftly casted [Spatial Gate] and headed to the shrine. He had to see the High Priestess. Hopefully, she had a more acceptable solution for him.

The moment he stepped into the shrine, the Lady of the Lake apparently had been waiting for him with a concerned look on her face.

"I can see that you're having a huge trouble, Emery."

Emery was surprised for a moment and then said, "Please, High Priestess. If you have any way to better fix this problem, please tell me."

High Priestess Nimue slowly walked over to him and touched his forehead to check his current condition. After a while, Emery could see the former's face turned even more troubled than before.

The High Priestess let go and walked towards the tree before putting her hand on it. She kept her touch on the tree for quite some time, but Emery knew he couldn't interrupt whatever the former was doing at the moment. With how big of a problem he got himself into, he patiently waited for the former's answer.

A few minutes later, the High Priestess finally turned to him. "Emery..."

Emery could see the High Priestess still troubled, as she fell into thoughts for a moment.

"What is it, High Priestess? You can tell me directly."

High Priestess Nimue looked at him with a complicated gaze and eventually opened her mouth. "Gaia may have something for you, but it will take days to prepare. Therefore, you should leave this place and come back later."

Hearing there was an opportunity for him was enough to bring joy to Emery's face.

He then gave his utmost gratitude to the High Priestess as well as Gaia, before he exited the shrine. While waiting for that 'something', Emery decided to spend his time in the village together with the Fey sisters.

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Three days had passed, and Emery still hadn't been summoned by the High Priestess. He wasn't sure why, but these few days he was more anxious than usual. He considered barging into the shrine when Chief Brenun came looking for him and handed him a small box.

Emery had a confused look on his face as he received the box.

Hearing it was from the High Priestess, he swiftly opened the box with gusto. Inside, there was a green seed as big as a peanut lying peacefully.

There was a certain glowing from a seed that quickly made him realize how precious this seed was.

Bewildered expression once again decorated Emery's face as he asked the village chief. "What is this, chief?"

As if he had expected the question, Chief Brenun quickly replied, "This is from the High Priestess. She said you should try casting your spells again after you eat it."

Emery nodded at that. Then, he asked a question that bothered him. "Chief, why didn't the High Priestess give me this herself?"

"The High Priestess, at the moment, was unavailable. But she said she will see you when you can make it bloom."

Emery was stunned by the message the High Priestess left for him. It was too cryptic, especially the mysterious seed.

The spell the High Priestess meant must be [Nature Grasp]. But if he couldn't even access his spirit then how could he cast the spell?

Leaving with questions in his mind, Emery made his way deep into the Forbidden Forest. He headed in the direction of a special spot that would allow him to cultivate in silence.

The moment he reached his usual spot, Emery took out the small seed from the box. Before consuming it, he decided to use [Analyze] on it because he was curious what exactly the object the High Priestess gave him.

[Analyze]

A moment later, a notification appeared on his mind, displaying the information of the seed; it surprised him.

[Heart of the Tree]

There was nothing except the name of the seed, which was truly surprising.

Though still in doubt, Emery eventually threw the seed into his mouth and waited for it to take effect. At first, there was nothing, but then, he slowly felt a warm sensation coming to his chest which was definitely from the seed. Therefore, Emery quickly delved into his body to see what was going on.

He could see the seed gradually dissolving and being absorbed into his body. After a few moments, there was a certain jolt in his body and Emery suddenly felt a foreign force going inside his spirit core and starting to gradually form next to his dark core. It was forming into a light in the shape of the seed itself.

After a while, Emery then realized the process was complete and, strangely, there was no notification in his mind at all or any information from his palm.

What was it that the high priestess just gave to him?

#### **Chapter 422: Insignificant**

Hours had passed since the little seed formed inside of him. The tiny seed hovered over his dark core and spun slowly, surrounded by the three-colored elements.

He concentrated for quite a while, before he managed to feel a subtle connection with the seed. The feeling was similar to having a long vine coiled on all four of his limbs, and each of his movements felt more in tune with nature now.

As instructed by the High Priestess, Emery tried to cast the [Nature Grasp] spell.

Now that he was trying it consciously, it took him a few minutes of intense concentration before his mind became one with his surroundings again, a sign of the skill's activation.

Oddly, the spirit energy he received from the spell did channel into his dark core. Instead, it was absorbed by the seed.

While [Nature Grasp] was active, he could tell the three elements inside his body were glowing a little bit brighter.

Right now, he wanted to savor the victory of being able to cast this single plant spell; however, he couldn't cast any other spells he had, be it plant, earth or water.

It seemed like the path connecting his core to those three elements had disappeared, leaving him unable to harness their power even though he was still able to perceive those elements.

Whatever was happening, it's definitely out of his current comprehension.

Emery spent the next few days concentrating on his core and cultivating the natural elements, still to no avail. Normally he would receive a notification of spirit force increase. But this time, he couldn't feel anything rather than a constant glow of the colorful elements and the seeds.

Not sure if he was doing it right and not willing to waste time, Emery was forced to once again seek the High Priestess for counsel, but yet again, he was stopped by the chief. Something about the high priestess doing a close door cultivation for a while.

At this point he had no choice but to consult another 'expert'.

He ran towards the stone formation and entered the Khaos space, only to feel Killgragah's annoyed stare at him. The dragon was enraged that, after receiving an upgrade to his dark core, Emery was still wasting too much time outside the khaos space.

The dragon kept on sarcastically asking him to cultivate his dark core, before he stopped talking and narrowed its eyes at Emery. Killgragah had finally realized an anomaly in his spirit core.

Emery mentioned the seed, but it appeared the all-knowing dragon had no knowledge of it. But for the dragon, the anomaly seemed to be too tiny, insignificant to become a problem to Emery's dark core.

He sighed and added.

"Boy... For a human, rank 8 is the peak of one's spirit foundation, while rank 9 is known as the core formation... It means, reaching rank 9 would finalize your foundation and solidify your core. I will say it again, stop playing around outside and focus on cultivating your dark core!"

Usually, Emery would dismiss the dragon's words as unimportant, but this time, he could feel the dragon's sincerity, so he answered with a nod. It was true, he had not practiced in the Khaos space for a while, and thus he decided to take a few days to focus on training here.

He sat cross-legged on the floor and began to concentrate on the flow of energy all around him.

[Your spirit force has increased]

[Your spirit force has increased]

Emery rubbed his sore legs and stood up, before checking his spirit force using the symbol on his palm. A week had passed and the Khaos space shockingly gave him a six point increase in spirit force. That meant, his spirit force increased at double the rate then before.

To make sure he wasn't seeing things, he spent another week meditating in the place. Yet again, the same thing happened.

[Emery Ambrose]

[Battle Power : 61 (46)]

[Spirit Force : 324 (248)]

[Spirit Core of Darkness – Stage 5]

[Fey Bloodline – Rank 3]

[Acolyte Rank: 8]

Twelve points of increase in spirit force within a mere two weeks. He nodded and smiled while staring at the notification screen. At this rate, he could reach his target of 500 points in less than a year.

Right after he finished thinking, the dragon spoke, as if reading his mind.

"Hahahaha, kid... I told you so! In no time, you would be able to open that door! Did you see now? I should have severed those elements ages ago! Aren't I brilliant?! Hahaha!"

Emery's brows twitched. No matter what the dragon said, he was still unwilling to neglect his three other elements just like that. But on the other hand, he had been struggling for these past two years cultivating at such a slow pace and he would be lying if he said that speed increase did not make him happy.

He was riding on top of his glee and he once more concentrated, not wanting to waste any of the energy all around him. Right as he closed his eyes, he felt energy rush into his dark core.

[Your spirit force has increased]

[Your spirit force has increased]

He cultivated his spirit force for another week, before suddenly a movement from outside the stone formation caught his attention. Emery walked out of the space and saw Morgana approaching. Well, he did tell Morgana before to find him if something important happened.

Besides, it was high time for him to take a break. He did make a lot of progress, after all.

He walked closer and asked, "What is it?"

Morgana showed him a little white parchment with a tiny writing in them

"It's a bird message from Camelot."

Emery nodded, uncapped the scroll case and looked at the letter inside. There was only one simple message.

"We have a lead on the witch's whereabouts, come here and check – Arthur."

### **Chapter 423: Tracks**

It has been months since Emery last heard of anything regarding sightings of Maeve. The last time he heard anything, the witch was seen skulking around at the north barbarians' territory, across the border.

At that moment, Arthur sent him the letter to ask for his presence in Camelot.

The letter came right on time, as this could be a good time for Emery to start helping Arthur progress on his spirit force training as well.

"You are going to Camelot then, it seems?" The red-haired girl next to him asked. "Can I come?"

Surely, Emery had no plans to bring her with him.

This girl clearly had no persuasion-related talents, but on the contrary, her gaze was enough for him to reconsider his decision. It reminded him of the fact he did not dedicate much time to train her in the last six months.

Unfortunately, if he brought her along, he would waste too much time on the road. Besides, he couldn't bring her through the [Spatial Gate]...

Or could he?

With his improvement in the darkness element, plus his stage 5 dark core advancement, perhaps he would be strong enough to take someone else with him this time??

"Alright," Emery nodded, while Morgana stared at him in confusion. "Let's give it a try."

First, Emery concentrated and opened a gate somewhere close.

If he was traveling by himself, it would be easier to interact with the gate, as his dark core and the gate would channel together. This time, he would need more energy and concentration to maintain the stability of the gate for someone else to get through.

He asked Morgana to follow him and the girl entered without hesitation. They arrived in the middle of the woods, a few meters away from the village.

As he thought, this time he really was able to. He smiled and cast another gate further away, connecting to the stone formation he set near the edge of Camelot Forest.

"Let's go!"

Again, it was a successful cast, and both of them arrived in the Camelot Forest together.

The first time Emery tried it, Morgana had already looked at him in amazement, but the second time, she took in her surroundings with wide eyes full of wonder, still unable to believe she had arrived in Camelot.

Emery and Morgana went to the hall of the Divine Order Knights, as written in the letter.

He knocked the door, peeked in and walked inside along with Morgana, to the shock of Gaious and Arthur.

"I just sent the message this morning! Damn, you must be using some sort of magic spell, aren't you?"

Emery merely shrugged. He had no obligation to explain. Instead, he changed the topic and quickly inquired about Maeve.

Arthur and Gaious looked at each other, nodded, and brought Emery to another room. The room was small, in the middle there was a table with three things covered in white sheets. The foul smell from them made Emery scrunch his nose and made Morgana turn away from the sight.

Gaious uncovered the white sheet and showed three corpses and, as suspected, all three of them had the mark of the witch's attack. Their body had turned into a pile of skin and bone.

"This is Sir Robert, Logress' golden knight and these two are his silver knights."

There was no doubt, their deaths were the work of the witch. Emery asked for the place where they were found. It was on the border between Logress and Norgales.

As of now, it was a long shot and there was no reason to believe the witch would linger around there. Nonetheless, Emery still decided to check on that place.

This time, he decided to take Morgana with him. Leaving her in Logress would probably be safer, but on the other hand, it also brought back a lot of bad memories.

Besides, Morgana had improved a lot ever since Emery kept giving her the Gaia serum.

Just like their trip here, Emery took Morgana using his [Spatial Gate]. Due to the distance, it will take multiple casts, but Emery could feel that, since he reached rank 8, his spirit sense range jumped three times further than before.

In three jumps, they arrived at the place marked on their map.

As the corpses were found four days ago, there was probably nothing else left for him to find.

With the help of his spirit sense, he could pinpoint the location of the fight. Though it has largely faded, he could still smell the light iron from blood in the place.

After finding the exact spot of the fight, Emery had another way to track her.

[Fey Transformation]

Morgana looked at him transform and followed suit.

With the innate skill [Wild Hunt], Emery was able to track the witch. The scent trail looked similar to a glowing smoke-like aura in his vision, and the distinct scent felt sharper than ever due to his enhanced nose.

The two started running through the woods following the smell. It was supposed to be impossible to track a 4-days old smell, especially one that has been washed with mud, leaves and animals, but to his surprise it seemed his recent bloodline purification really helped to make it possible. Beside Maeve was also a fey and those of the fey race carried a distinct scent, hence, it was much easier to follow.

The two raced through the woods for around half a day, crossed the border, and arrived at the Norgales capital city of Sterlingard, right as the sun started to set.

Unfortunately, the track was lost around here, as it was mixed with hundreds to thousands of Norgales citizens wandering around. The capital city was just beginning to stop their activities for the day, with shops preparing to close down and citizens walking home carrying their tools. Guards had started their night patrol and some people started lighting their torches.

Emery and Morgana returned to their human form and quietly entered the city.

#### **Chapter 424: News**

The duo had been walking through the streets for several hours without having spotted any sign of the witch. Hence, it was confirmed he had lost that vixen's trail.

Emery was annoyed at this disappointing development because it wouldn't be an easy matter to once again get a sniff of the witch's trail. Even more so, when the citizens of the capital city of one of the 7 kingdoms was included in the equation.

Knowing he wouldn't get anything by staying, Emery casted [Spatial Gate] and returned back to Camelot together with Morgana.

When he stepped into Camelot, Emery went to Arthur and told him he lost track of the witch in the capital city of Norgales Kingdom, Sterlingrad.

Upon hearing Sterlingrad being included in, Gaious wonder.

"Is the witch collaborating with the Norgales Kingdom?"

Norgales Kingdom was the second ranked kingdom in terms of military might among the 7 kingdoms and the former had been known to have a deep rivalry with Arthur's homeland, Logress Kingdom.

Thus, it would be concerning to know Norgales had some kind of connection with the witch.

"I only tracked her trail and it ended at Sterlingrad, it could possibly mean anything, or nothing"

"Alright. I guess what you are saying makes sense. As a matter of fact, Merlin, two of the Norgales Kingdom's golden knights also fell victim within the last three months."

"By the witch?" Emery asked with a serious expression.

If their death was indeed caused by Meave, then they could possibly rule out the Norgales collaborating with the witch. No kingdom could stomach the death of their important figures.

"It was said to be during a battle, but we don't know for sure. What I'm trying to tell you is that the Norgales' has been fighting with the northern barbarians for so long, their commitment to the 7 kingdoms is true. Therefore, there shouldn't be a reason for them to collaborate with a witch.``"

Emery nodded, but, at the moment, his thoughts were about the witch tricks and cunning; for him such a thing was possible.

Now that the track had gone cold, Arthur would have to follow up with his people in Norgales to search for the witch's whereabouts.

Next, as Emery had no plan to immediately head back yet, he decided to tell the Logress Prince about the potion he made. He showed the latter a golden vial containing [Gaia Serum - Tier 1] - the potion he used to increase the Fey sisters' spirit force.

He then asked for a little bit of blood from Arthur and started analyzing it.

[Human, male]

[Battle power 29]

[Spirit force 21]

[Element affinity: Light]



[Spirit Aptitude: C]

Looking at the letter C on Arthur's information caused Emery to take a deep breath. As an existence with the lowest aptitude among all of the Magus Academy's acolytes, having the chance to see someone with lower aptitude than him somehow cheered Emery and secretly made him gloat.

When the old magician, Gaious, asked what Emery was doing and the latter told him, the former surprisingly wanted to be tested as well. As the matter took practically no effort from him, Emery gladly helped the former in his request.

[Human, male]

[Battle power 12]

[Spirit force 62]

[Element affinity: Fire and Plant]

[Spirit Aptitude: B]

This old man Gaious certainly had better talent compared to Arthur. Unfortunately, he didn't have Emery's luck: to be enrolled in Magic Academy. Though Emery was sure the former would certainly be bullied even more severely than him.

After checking their stats, Emery decided to give them two [Gaia Serum] potions, one each.

Arthur didn't think much of what Emery gave him and immediately drank it without question, showing how much he trusted him. Meanwhile, Gaious stored the potion, as he was planning to experiment on it instead.

Emery didn't mind, nor was offended that the old magician wanted to experiment on his recipe. Who knew, the man could possibly improve on it for him.

After drinking the potion, Arthur did get the sensation of his body strengthening. Thus, as a safety precaution, Emery decided to stay in Camelot for two days, observing the former's body reaction to the potion.

Taking this chance, Arthur brought Emery and Morgana for a complete tour around the capital of Logress Kingdom, Camelot City. Though he had taken Morgana around the city a few times in the past, it was the first for Emery.

It was also at this activity that Emery realized the two were actually closer than he thought. Seeing Morgana, who usually acted distant toward others, able to joke around with Arthur seemed a little strange to him.

Two days later, Emery did another thorough examination on Arthur and checked his stats one more time. Evidently, the Logress Prince received an increase of 2 spirit force points from the potion.

Hearing the boost he received, Arthur became confident and gave the sword another try. Unfortunately, like his previous attempts, it didn't budge in the slightest.

Emery gave Arthur his last three [Gaia Serum] potions and told him to drink one bottle every week. Moreover, he instructed the latter to send him a message if he had any side effects.

Before he left though, Arthur approached him with a suspicious gait and whispered, "Merlin, you are close to the Lioness heir, Princess Gwenneth, aren't you?"

Emery was surprised and raised his eyebrows at his words. He didn't want to talk about her, but if the prince had some information, it wouldn't hurt to listen.

"We are acquaintances, yes." Emery answered in a calm voice.

"May I ask what kind of person she is? You know, as an individual, as well as a princess of your kingdom."

Emery's brows twitched slightly at Arthur's question. At first, he assumed the latter wanted to share some classified information about Gwen. Who could have thought his suspicious behavior turned out to be gossiping?

"I'm sorry, prince. I don't really know her that well. May I ask why you are asking this question?"

Arthur nodded his head at Emery's answer, as if he had expected it. He was then startled by the question. "You see, Merlin. My father has chosen her to be the best candidate for the next queen of Logress. Unfortunately, we haven't got a reply back. I am currently thinking of going there to ask myself."

"..."

Emery had known about the King and prince's plan, when he eavesdropped before. But to actually being asked directly about the matter, he was a little lost for words.

### **Chapter 425: Troubling**

Emery surprisingly found the possibility of the Logress Prince marrying Gwen to be quite disturbing. As for the reason...

He understood the two individuals would make a good match, as they both were from a royal family of one of the seven kingdoms. However, he just couldn't picture her marrying the guy standing in front of him.

Though his mind was filled with countless thoughts flying around, Emery still managed to keep his composure as he said, "You should just go and ask her yourself, prince."

Arthur nodded his head slowly when he heard Emery's words. "Yeah... Maybe I should."

He was silent for a while and Emery could see the former seemed to think of something else.

"Merlin, I heard from my source that the relationship between Lioness and Cantiaci is in critical condition."

Even though Emery had somehow guessed the development between the two kingdoms after he left, he still showed a surprised expression for a second before giving his piece of thought. "I guess, you have more reason to go and meet her."

In his mind, Emery subconsciously hoped the prince could be a good protector for Gwen and the Lioness Kingdom as whole - something he himself was incapable of due to various reasons.

Seeing Arthur was about to say more, probably his next question, Emery had already interrupted him by saying, "I need to be leaving now, prince."

In all honesty, Emery didn't want to discuss any topics regarding the Lioness Princess anymore. Hence, he just made excuses to Arthur and left, taking Morgana who was standing beside him and had been listening ever since.

Right after they exited the Camelot Palace and reached outside, he and Morgana walked into [Spatial Gate], returning home.

This time, the home they arrived at was the estate given by the Quintins to him.

Contrary to all expectations, the first thing Emery did when they arrived was checking his garden, which was located at the back of the estate.

Elated feelings enveloped him, as he saw the plants planted in the garden were growing nice and strong. Two dozen plants of various types could be seen covering the entire backyard of the estate, creating a verdant and lukewarm spectacle to the eye.

Looking at the plants, which appeared lustrous under the sunlight, Emery once again concerned about his cultivation.

One of the main problems that occurred as the aftermath of solving his dark core problem was his inability to use [Fragmentation]. The loss of this ability would certainly greatly impact Emery's progress in apothecary, something he definitely didn't want to happen.

When the dark shroud arrived and covered the blue expansion, Emery and Morgana had dinner together. It went on in a quiet atmosphere until Morgana decided to break the silence.

"You didn't seem too concerned when you found out about Meave. But after hearing about the princess, you were strangely troubled."

Emery, who was about to take another portion of food, stopped his action when he heard Morgana's words. He slowly put the cutlery in his hand down and looked at her. The two were silent until a sigh escaped Emery's mouth.

Morgana and her directness; in the last six months, Emery had gotten used to the Fey bloodline connection, especially since he purified his blood and the connection between them had grown even more deep and profound. Both of them knew they could tell the other party's feelings and thoughts, albeit vaguely.

"She's a good friend of mine and she might be in trouble. That's why I'm troubled."

Hearing Emery's explanation, Morgana tilted her head to the side. "Then... why don't you help her?"

Emery fell silent, before shaking his head and picking up the cutlery again. "No... I would only bring more trouble."

The red-haired girl who sat opposite of Emery stared deeply at him for several seconds before saying, "Liar..."

Emery only smiled at her words and didn't explain, as the two went back to their dinner.

After finishing the dinner and doing the dishes, Emery returned to his room with countless thoughts in his mind. In order to stop his restless heart, he decided to cast [Nature Grasp] and cultivate.

The night passed quietly.

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Apparently, Luna wanted Emery to visit, as the latter rarely came to the estate given to him. Thus the next morning, he received an invitation from the Quintins to come to their estate.

Bringing Morgana, who was also invited together with him, Emery got the opportunity to see the Akavi warriors, who had been integrated under the Quintins' care. He smiled as he watched the usually ferocious Akavis become disciplined and orderly.

At the moment, there were three dozen of them already. Their addition, as well as the mercenary guards dressed in grey, made the Quintins a force to be reckoned with.

Emery, Morgana and Luna were chatting casually while they were having breakfast, when Kastan suddenly entered the dining room and handed Luna an envelope. She quickly opened the envelope and Emery could see the shocked look on her face as she read the letter inside.

"What happened?"

Luna jerked her head upwards when she heard Emery's question. "Merlin, my men at the border have just reported the Cantiaci soldiers just crossed the border last night. In estimation, there were a few hundred of them. It was a march that sneaked into the kingdom under the cover of the night; those people were definitely looking for trouble."

Hearing this, Emery was quiet. After a while, he asked Morgana to release the messenger bird given by Gaious, telling Arthur about the situation and hoping for him to give assistance.

Emery's action brought confusion for Luna as she asked, "You asked Longress for help? Even if they could help immediately, they would still need at least two days to arrive, Merlin. Who knows what will happen in two days?"

Truthfully, Emery was conflicted. He wanted to help, but he already promised himself to not get involved. And right now, he did exactly what the latter stated.

"I'm sure there are many people protecting the princess. They should have enough time." Emery replied to Luna to reassure her, while in fact he was reassuring himself.

He then added, "Moreover, this is the Lioness Kingdom's territory. It won't be that easy for the Cantiancis to do what they want."

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As the hours passed, the expression on Emery's face changed more and more, different from the one he had shown at the beginning.

During the day, a commotion suddenly ensued, when someone wearing a bloody uniform tried to barge into the estate, catching the attention of people inside. Walking out to see what had happened, Emery was surprised to recognize who the trespasser was.

It was none other than Minister Fantumar's son, Abe Fantumar. What surprised Emery was the young man came with wounds and bruises all over his body, as if he had gone through a difficult battle to come here. It also surprised him Abe knew about this place.

The moment Abe saw Emery, he also recognized him and hurriedly spoke despite his breaths being ragged.

"Emery... You must... rescue the princess."

### **Chapter 426: Save Lives**

The entire situation was rather confusing for him.

How could Abe possibly have known about his identity? Was the princess the one who told him? But knowing Gwenneth's character, it was very unlikely.

Emery could see Abe's body was dented by both sword and arrow wounds.

Abe's strength could be considered to be on the same level as a silver rank knight. With his strength and status as the son of the most prominent figure in the kingdom, this entire conflict disturbed him to no end. There was a high chance it could be a trap.

Emery quickly cast his Spirit Sense and tried to feel the area around Venta Town to see if there was anything coming for him. Fortunately, according to the spell, there wasn't.

"What are you doing here, Abe? How did you know to come looking for me here?"

The young man lying before him tried his best to stay awake despite the fact that his eyes were heavy and half lidded. He weakly reached for his bag.

Taking note of the gesture, Emery immediately grabbed the bag from his side and opened it. To his surprise, he found his Moon Dagger tucked safely inside.

"This is... Where did you..."

It suddenly dawned on Emery he didn't really see Abe on the night he rescued the princess. And Abe definitely did not join the others in the convoy that night.

The most likely answer regarding his whereabouts? At the time, Abe was probably either hiding in the shadows or blending in with the enemy. As for finding Emery's dagger, he had to have been there in the woods at the place he fought against the witch.

The dagger somehow proved Abe had been keeping his secret, for what reason he didn't know.

The young knight noticed the perplexed look on Emery's face. In response, he began to choke out an explanation.

"Emery... I saw you that night, but I was too scared to do anything. I couldn't choose a side... But not anymore... You must save the princess... It might be too late for me, but I have seen your strength... You... You probably still have a chance."

Abe spoke so quietly, his breath heavy, that it became apparent he really did force himself to come here. Emery noted his injuries were worsening the more they were left untreated, especially since his speech started to become affected.

Evidently, the situation was dire and, at the moment, Emery decided that wondering about the princess' situation was the last thing he should be doing. His first priority should be saving a life.

After he clasped the dagger onto the belt looped around his waist, he took a few steps backward in order to cast the Spatial Gate Spell. He had just started to mentally prepare himself to cast it when once again, Morgana asked to come along with him.

Her request made Emery feel conflicted. The task itself would probably be dangerous, but at this point Morgana probably possessed a strength level that was on par with a gold ranked knight.

He sighed, closing his eyes. He was not really sure whether he should decline the request for the sake of her safety. Eventually, though, Emery decided he should not be so overprotective of her. Despite his reservations, he finally gave in and a smile spread delicately on her usually stoic features.

"But be careful, okay!" Emery reminded her, trying to sound as firm as possible.

Before leaving, he turned towards Luna's direction, asking her to prepare the men just in case they were needed.

Luna grinned enthusiastically in reply, a determined expression on her face. "I'll send as many as I can, Emery! Lioness is my kingdom, after all."

Emery nodded, once more feeling thankful for her help. Once again, he looked back and saw Abe's face twisted in a weak, sickly expression. He was pale and cold sweat was dripping down his brow. Their eyes locked. With a helpless stare, Abe silently mouthed "save her", right before Emery opened up the Spatial Gate.

As he stepped through, the soles of his shoes were met with thick vines and grass. The spell had brought both him and Morgana in the midst of the deep, lush woods situated outside of the Lioness castle.

Just as he arrived, he immediately used his Spirit Sense to check their surroundings. Upon analyzing the information he had just received, he suddenly realized the sheer gravity of the situation at hand.

Lioness castle was under siege. He could feel thousands of people surrounding it.

He began to wonder. Had the battle already started?!

Emery instantly passed Morgana a sword before saying curtly, "Only use magic when necessary. But definitely do not use transformation."

Morgana assured him she understood, nodding in acknowledgment.

Emery quickly utilized his [Shapeshifting] skill. It took only a few seconds for his face to change and his physique began to transform as well. He decided that arriving at the scene as Lancelot would work in his favor, as the other knights would recognize him as friendly.

Afterwards, the two rushed toward the castle, cutting through the rough branches and shrubbery within the forest. The sound of steel weapons screaming as they clashed violently onto one another could be heard, as they drew nearer to the castle.

In the distance, Emery saw smoke rising into the sky, which was never a good sign. Finally, both him and Morgana finally got out of the woods and passed through into the palace grounds.

They rushed in, only to see that there were two banners among the thousands of people that were gathered outside of the gate. Emblazoned on the banners were the black and white birds of the Cantiaci emblem, and the red gold lion of the Lioness emblem.

But to his surprise, both colors were not fighting with each other at all. Both of their forces were attacking the castle together.

To make things worse, the gate had already been broken open, smoke could be seen flowing from inside the Lioness castle.

"We are too late, aren't we?" Said the girl standing next to him.

#### **Chapter 427: They are here!**

Earlier that morning, at the Lioness Castle

A knight was seen running through the long hallway of the Lioness Castle. One could see the apparent panic on his face, ignoring the severe panting he was currently experiencing.

The knight stopped in front of a throne where a young girl dressed in shiny armor was sitting on it.

"Princess, they are already here!!" shouted the knight in a loud voice.

The news immediately made the princess and the half a dozen knights around her shocked. She swiftly ran towards the balcony and saw a sight that made her face pale.

Thousands of enemy soldiers were seen coming from the east, slowly filling the clearing on the horizon.

"How could they arrive so fast?!" exclaimed one of the knights besides the princess. It was apparent that he was shocked and bewildered by how the enemies managed to make their way here faster than their estimation.

The princess turned to the knight who brought the news and asked, "Baron Ibelin should be the one guarding the eastern border, where is he?"

"Forgive me, princess but no one has seen or heard from the baron since yesterday." the knight answered.

Actually, the princess already knew the answer before she asked the question. It was just, she couldn't admit the harsh reality that the baron had betrayed the kingdom.

With her father King Richard's health having worsened, she was left in charge to find a way out of this disaster.

Seeing the quickly approaching enemy troops, the princess quickly gave order to her subordinates.

"Lioness knights!! Follow me!" exclaimed Gwen loudly as she rushed to grab her warhorse.

The moment the princess' voice faded into the air, everyone swiftly followed the former's order.

Shortly after, the Lioness Princess, Sir Yvain, and 200 of Lioness knights could be seen galloping out of the castle and making their way toward Lionarch City.

As they crossed through the streets of the city, the group instructed the people around to run to the castle for protection.

"People of the Lioness, go and take shelter in the castle! We shall hold up there and wait until the reinforcement from the west comes!"

Gwen did her best to warn every citizen that they came across, but there were just too many people in Lionarch City and the city was too massive.

The princess couldn't know what the enemy's plan was for these citizens, but leaving them out here defenseless would only invite a disaster. This thought made her grit her teeth and urge her horse to move even faster.

Gwen galloped through the city, instructing those who were strong to run toward the west while the women, children, and elderly were told to go to the castle.

The streets gradually became congested by the Lioness citizens as more and more of them headed toward the castle like a herd of sheep. As a result, it took too long for the people to move. It also didn't help the fact that the people could hear the faint rumbling sound of the enemy troops in the distance, which made them fall into a panic.

Gwen and the others knew that the budding chaos would grow and become uncontrollable if they didn't do something about it.

Understanding the situation, Sir Yvain gave a salute to Gwen and said, "Princess, you should stay and bring our people to safety. I will bring the knights to hold the enemies down."

Gwen turned her head and looked deeply at the golden knight who was assigned to her, Sir Yvain. The look on his face told her that the man was ready to sacrifice himself along with his knights to hold back the enemy troops.

Seeing the running citizens, Gwen could only nod her head and said in a loud yet shaky voice, "Yvain! You... and the others.. You all must return safely!"

Even though those hundred knights were Yvain's knights, Gwen held a deep care toward them as she had been with them for the last two years.



During those two years, they had gone through high and low together. So, it wasn't strange for her to be reluctant to let them go. Alas, Gwen had her duty as the princess of the kingdom and they had their duty as the knights of the kingdom.

Yvain nodded his head at Gwen's words and turned around. The moment he did so, the one known as the Knight of the Lion called out the knights.

"Knights of the Lioness, we will hold the enemy as long as we can in order to give our people time!!"

Following the declaration that managed to silence the panicking citizens was a ferocious group charge as Yvain and the knights headed toward the east direction.

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Two hours later, Gwen had managed to return to the castle. Along with her were more than two thousands civilians as well as the other hundred knights who stayed to keep the order. All of the civilians were terrified by the unexpected situation to variously different extent, but they still obediently followed the knights' orders as they entered the castle.

After settling the civilians, Gwen stood right at the castle's gate, waiting for her knights to return.

"Please.. Please let them be safe.." said Gwen in her heart as her hands cupped in front of her chest while her gaze was fixed in the east direction.

Several minutes later, she was about to lose her patience and head to the battlefield herself when she spotted a group of people coming from the east. The moment they entered the distance where Gwen could clearly see them, her eyes widened when she saw who they were.

"Yvain!!"

The person walking at the front of the group of Sir Yvain, while behind him were his knights. Their condition looked as if they had just returned from hell - wounds were seen all over while their body was completely soaked by red color.

Gwen swiftly did her calculations, and she was shocked to find that there were no more than a dozen men seen behind Yvain. That meant more than 80 knights had lost their lives in the battle. The sight was enough to devastate her, but she must not give in. As of right now, the Lioness would face an impending siege on the castle.

Seeing the overwhelming enemy number in front and the hundreds she has in the castle, she couldn't help but ask about the reinforcements.

"Where are all the nobles? Anyone has heard from lord Fantumar?!"

The princess stood among the crowd, seeing all their faces; citizens, guards, or knights all of them full of concern. She tried her best to be strong for her people, but at the peak of it all she was afraid.

### **Chapter 428: Reinforcement**

Right after the Lioness Castle's gate was closed, the Cantiaci knights could be seen making their way to the outskirts of the castle and setting a camp there.

The one leading the battle was an old senior gold knight and the queen of Cantiaci herself. She was accompanied by four other Cantiaci golden knights as they entered the commander tent, where two people were already waiting inside.

Princess Gwenneth would certainly be shocked if she could see the two people waiting inside the tent.

"Congratulations on your first victory, My Queen," said a man wearing the aristocratic garb of the Lioness Kingdom.

The Cantiaci Queen glanced at the person who just spoke and said, "Good work, Lord Fantumar. If it weren't for you, it wouldn't have been so easy for us to pass the border and enter the capital."

Fantumar beamed a wide smile when he heard the queen's compliment.

"My only concern is my son, Prince Edward. Are you really sure that he is safe, Lord Fantumar?" asked the Cantiaci Queen calmly, but Fantumar could hear the coldness in her voice.

Upon hearing the question, he clasped his hands together as he said, "Don't worry, My Queen. Everything has been going according to plan, your son is certainly safe."

The queen nodded her head. "Very good, Lord Fantumar." And as if she could read his mind, she added, "Don't worry, I will assure you the Cantiaci will be forever grateful for your service."

Fantumar's smile grew wider when he heard the queen's words "Thank you, My Queen. I only hope for what has been promised and nothing more."

The senior knight, known as Lord Malcolm suddenly asked, "When will Prince Edward arrive? We need to quickly attack the castle before reinforcements come!"

Hearing the golden knight's words, Fantumar let out a chuckle. "Reinforcement? Hahaha, Lord Malcolm, you don't need to worry about that. I have made preparations regarding that."

Right at this moment, a Cantiaci knight walked inside the tent, gave his salute, and said, "Report! We have spotted 600 Lioness knights coming from the west."

Hearing there were Lioness knights coming, Lord Malcolm was surprised and about to rebuke Fantumar when he noticed the queen still maintained her calm. Noticing the look the old knight had, the latter said, "Don't worry, Lord Malcolm. Those people aren't reinforcement, instead they are Lord Fantumar's men."

"Exactly, My Queen. Just like what I told you in my letter, those knights were lent to me by the other nobles to show their loyalty to the Cantiaci Kingdom."

Everyone in the tent was surprised when they heard this information. Then, gleeful looks could be seen on their faces, as with this kind of arrangement, their victory was completely guaranteed.

Lord Malcolm also showed a smile as he turned to Fantumar. "Well done, Lord Fantumar. What a detailed preparation. Though we probably don't need that many knights to destroy the castle."

Unexpectedly, Fantumar laughed at Lord Malcolm's words.

"Hahaha, you don't understand, Lord Malcolm. They don't need to fight, but their presence will be enough to crush any wisp of resistance in the king's heart and, with this, we can win without even having a fight at all. There's no need to spill unnecessary blood, after all."

Everyone was impressed hearing his words.

"You are a very talented and capable man, Lord Fantumar." Lord Malcolm praised.

Fantumar received the compliment humbly before he turned to the Cantianci Queen and said, "I have to once again advise you, My Queen, that the best way is to just negotiate. I know Richard like the back of my hand and I assure you he's already a fish trapped in a net."

Queen Cantianci acted as if she just remembered things as she said, "Lord Fantumar, the King has agreed to your plan, but he also insists to make sure there won't be any future problems. Therefore, he believes ending the Lioness line is necessary."

The words that came out of Queen Cantianci's mouth startled Fantumar, but it was Abe, who was very surprised to hear it. It was even more shocking to him when he heard his father agree.

"Yes, My Queen. I'm afraid I must agree. I also believe that, at this point, even a forced political marriage is no longer possible. Hence, there's no need to keep the Lioness lineage anymore." Fantumar replied, after being silent for a while.

It was at this moment that Abe seemed to discover a courage he never thought he had. He stood up to his father as he delivered his disagreement.

"Father! This was not the plan..."

Abe's sudden remark caught his father off-guard and thus made the latter angry.

"Not here, Abe!" Fantumar snapped.

He was so disappointed his son would say such a thing in front of the queen. He didn't expect the son he dearly spoiled would embarrass him. As a result of his action, Abe was immediately scolded by the former and forced to stay in the tent, while his father went towards the castle to 'persuade' the Lioness king.

Being left in the tent, Abe's heart was troubled, as there was never a plan to kill the princess. Young Fantumar had always liked the girl since childhood, hearing such sudden decisions made him conflicted.

From the tent, Abe could only see his father had started to prepare the army to go to the Lioness Castle. With that many numbers, there was no way anyone could safely get out of that place and he knew too well there would be no nobility willing to come to the rescue due to his father's interference.

This meant the princess' life was in grave danger.

The young Abe was committed to rescue the princess, but he knew he had no such capability by himself. In his helplessness and desperation, Abe suddenly recalled a certain someone who could help.

Therefore, he quickly stole a horse from the stable and sneaked out of the Cantianci camp.

A group of Cantianci knights spotted him leaving and assumed he was a spy. Hence, they chased him.

Abe was attacked and shot by the knights, but he kept galloping away. Venta Town was only three hours away from Lionarch City, so he galloped as fast as he could.

"Archers go on the wall!!"

"Take out all the weapons in the armory! Quickly, we don't have much time!"

"Anyone who thinks they can fight can grab a weapon right away!"

At the moment, the Lioness Castle was completely surrounded by the enemies in all directions. As if the situation wasn't precarious enough, there were only a hundred knights and two hundred guards stationed in the castle, protecting it. On top of it, there were around two thousand Lionarch City's residents, mostly women and children, who needed to be taken care of.

Then, when Gwen thought the situation couldn't go any worse, they came.

Hundreds of knights wearing the Lioness Kingdom armor could be seen making their way to the castle from the west and Gwen exhaled a sigh of relief at the thought of the reinforcement's timely arrival. Unfortunately, the hope was quickly annihilated and replaced by despair, when they saw their own knights pass where they were and join the enemy camp.

Gwen couldn't help but feel a tremendous amount of anger welling up inside her. She was so angry that both her hands started violently shaking. Deep down, she knew she wasn't strong enough to change the impending reality of these two thousand people and she was terrified because of that.

However, though she understood she, as well as her people, might not be able to come out of this alive, Gwen still forced herself to stand on top of the walls and did her best to address the people - her people.

Looking at thousands of humans before her, Gwen inhaled a deep breath and loudly said, "People of the Lioness... Don't be afraid! We-"

Before she could finish her attempt to calm down the masses, a group of knights was seen approaching the castle wall. They were knights wearing Lioness Kingdom's armor, but Gwen could see at the front of the group was a knight dressed in a black armor - the Dread Knight, Sir Breunor. Next to that renowned figure was the one who betrayed the Lioness Kingdom, Fantumar.

"Your Majesty!!" The Lioness Kingdom's minister shouted loudly.

The knights around Gwen quickly drew their bows and pointed them at the traitor. The only reason they hadn't fired was because their princess still hadn't given the order.

However, even though his presence was clearly unwanted, Fantumar still confidently walked up to the wall and said, "Princess, listen to me! I have come here bringing great news!"

There was no way Gwen would believe the traitor's words, as she could vividly see the latter's wicked smile from miles away.

"Say your piece and begone!"

Contrary to all expectations, Fantumar seemed to become even more excited when he heard Gwen's harsh reply. Tidying his aristocratic garb and sweeping the imaginary dust off it, he calmly said, "Princess, I came here bringing good news from the king of the Cantiaci Kingdom. They are willing to accept your surrender if you do. There shall be no blood spilled in the land of the Lioness today!

Not even giving the suggestion a second thought, Gwen answered with confidence. "No! Never! We will not surrender!"

After hearing Gwen's answer, Fantumar laughed for a while before saying, "No, no, no. Princess, I was afraid you would." He then added with a wicked smile, "It seems you don't understand the situation you are in, Princess."

Gwen was very annoyed by the man's smile, it just had its own ways of making her angry. However, she tried to stay calm as she couldn't afford to lose it at this point.

"Princess... You are still too young. You made the mistake of bringing the civilians to the castle, because now, they will be the reason for your surrender. "

An ominous feeling rose in her heart as Gwen heard Fantumar's words. Before she could say anything, the latter once again shouted, this time even louder than before.

"Listen up, People of the Lioness! The King of Cantiaci promises that his men will not harm anyone as long as they agree to yield and accept His Majesty King Randall of the Cantiaci as their new ruler!"

Fantumar's words were heard by the many civilians gathered inside the castle. In an instant, the sound of people clamoring resounded in the air as a ruckus quickly arose between them.

"We cannot win!"

"We should give up!"

"We will surrender!"

"Let us go!"

Shouts of people gradually overwhelmed the knights as well as the guards, who gave their best to calm the disorderly people. The sight unfolded before her eyes caused Gwen to be conflicted.

She had so much information and proofs about Fantumar that surely would make him untrustworthy in the eyes of people, but she didn't have the chance to do so, as the place where the people gathered had turned into a bundle of chaos by now.

Then, as if what he just did wasn't enough, Fantumar proceeded to tell the people how the nobles had all surrendered and the fact there won't be any reinforcement coming to help them. The last part, in particular, became the thing that broke the last straw as the people began to frantically try to get out of the castle.

At this point, Gwen wasn't sure on what she should do. She couldn't tell if the man was lying or telling the truth and she couldn't do anything to her people because they had basically been influenced by Fantumar's words that no amount of persuasion could recover them.

Then, in the midst of her helplessness, a figure came out from the main entrance of the royal palace. A man in golden armor could be seen walking towards the castle wall. The figure was Gwen's father, King Richard of the Lioness.

The man was already in his battle armor and his demeanor told everyone he was ready for battle. While everyone's gazes were on the illustrious figure, Gwen was looking at her father with a clear worry on her face. She knew her father forced his sickly body for this.

The moment the Lioness King appeared, the crowd that had previously been making a fuss with all their might suddenly became extremely quiet. The castle became so silent that one could even clearly hear the sound of their own breathing.

Meanwhile, the said king took a deep breath and slowly said, "People of Lioness..."

Just one word and the people began kneeling on the ground, as they gave their respect to the king.

King Richard was about to speak when his body suddenly swayed to the side. The king's aide swiftly held him, while those who saw this wore a sorrowful look on their face. The Lioness King's condition looked so pitiful.

Coughing, King Richard opened his mouth and spoke, albeit slowly. "My people... I... I regret the fact that I'm not well... I regret the reality that I'm not strong enough..."

He took another breath and by that time Gwen already stood next to him holding his trembling body still.

"My people, at this moment... I... regret to say I can't protect you anymore..." King Richard stopped, inhaled another deep breath and exhaled a deep sigh, "Please... I ask you all to save yourself and surrender."

The words that came out of the Lioness King's mouth made Gwen as well as everyone who heard it shocked - extremely so. From outside, Gwen could hear Fantumar's loud laughter and that made her silently gritted her teeth.

Ignoring the reactions of the people around, King Richard continued on his words. "Open the gate."

The knights who manned the gate were reluctant, but they followed the order eventually.

The moment the castle gate was opened, everyone could clearly see Fantumar's smiling face. However, no one was willing to step outside, contrary to their previous commotion.

There was silence as no one moved.

Then, one of the old knights suddenly asked the Lioness King. "My King, what about you?"

King Richard seemed to recognize who was speaking as he said, "Sir Bruce?! Old friend, is that you? I'm sorry I can't see you because my eyes aren't clear anymore."

The one who called Sir Bruce stepped forward and knelt. "Yes, My Lord. It's me."

King Richard nodded his head at the blurry sight of his old friend. "It's good that you're fine, old friend. As for your question, Sir Bruce, I will stay here until the end."

After hearing the Lioness King's answer, the crowd suddenly started shouting together about how they too wanted to stay.

King Richard frowned when he heard that. Thus, he once again spoke, this time he shouted with all the strength in his body.

"ENOUGH!"

The crowd was once again silenced by the Lioness King.

"My people, I order you to surrender. I don't want to see more blood spilled... Please, think about your children, your wife, your family... Just go..." said King Richard. "Sir Bruce, you too. Please help me take care of them."

Afterwards, the Lioness King turned his head to the open gate and looked straight at where Fantumar was. "Fantumar! I knew you were greedy, but you're not heartless. They are just civilians! Don't you dare harm them!"

Seeing their king was firm in his decision, the people gradually started walking to the gate. After one person walked out, a dozen more would follow, until even the guards then the knights. In the end, there were only 50 people still in the castle yard.

Fantumar looked at them and said, "Don't make it harder than it should be. Just surrender."

King Richard turned to the knights who decided to stay. His aged face showed genuine gratitude. "My knights, it is an honor for me to be your king."

Hundreds of knights were seen approaching the castle, those were the Lioness knights under Fantumar.

Seeing that, King Richard was in rage. "You really are a bastard! You brought my own people against me."

"Richard, it's time already. Just give up!"

"Fantumar, you can have my head. But will you spare my daughter's life?"

### **Chapter 430: Knight's Honor**

"The princess' life?! Your majesty, you have nothing else to bargain for! Just surrender yourself! Accept that this is the end for Lioness."

The king was so weak he could barely stand, stumbling over himself as he tried to stay on his feet. Beside him, Gwen held him tight, trying to prop him upright.

He looked into her eyes, his expression as helpless as his shaky hands that grabbed hers. "I am sorry daughter, but we have lost..."

"Father... I..." The princess was so overcome with emotion she could barely choke out the words to respond. With glassy eyes, she suddenly straightened her composure and grasped the king's shoulders tightly. "We haven't, father! I am still here. Your knights are still here!"

At this moment, there were over three hundred knights accumulated in front of the gate, completely covering the front of the Lioness castle yard, chanting aggressively and demanding the king to stand down. Upon seeing this, the fact so many of his own men decided to betray their kingdom hurt the king more than his declining health did.

He then looked towards the 50 knights who were still standing with him. Yvain and some of the young knights as they drew their swords from their sheaths, bracing themselves for the upcoming attacks.

Once more, Fantumar raised his hand to halt them momentarily. Again, he tried to convince the men not to join the fight.

"You fools!" He yelled, brows furrowed. "There is no honor in death! There is no shame in laying down your weapons to live another day!"

"Cih!"

A young knight spat on the ground by Fantumar's feet. The knight was Marc, one of the princess' new knights that had joined the rest of the group to protect the kingdom.

"We are the protectors of the realm..." Marc started to cite the knight's oath and as he spoke, the knight standing next to him began to follow suit. Then the next knight followed and the next, until the entire group was chanting the oath in unison.

"We are slayers of evil. We will always be brave and upright. Speak the truth even if it leads to our death. Safeguard the helpless and do no wrong. This is our oath!"

Hearing this, Fantumar only became more annoyed. A vein on his forehead twitched as he gritted his teeth.

"Richard!" He roared indignantly. "Order your knights to stand down! Or they will all die right now!"

With a weak, creaking voice, the king began to answer him slowly. "Fantumar, they are here by choice and I will not order them to relinquish their honor... It is simply something you will never understand."

The king then turned towards Gwen, expression solemn. He caressed his daughter's face delicately, smiling slightly before pulling his sword from the sheath resting on his hip. He drew it slowly, his movements were stunted and clearly tinged with pain. He raised the blade, pointing it skywards.

"My brave knights of the Lioness kingdom... I order you to FIGHT! Don't let your ..."

Shhhhttt!!

An arrow stabbed the king clean through his chest.

"Nooooo!!!" The wail that emanated from Gwen's throat echoed throughout the yard, full of despair as she hunched over the body of her wounded father.

It was the Dread Knight who had fired the shot, standing behind the group of knights, having gone completely unnoticed. He then drew his sword swiftly and began to call his men to battle.

"Attack!!!" He screamed.



Yvain quickly led his group of knights to go against the Dread Knight, who was standing tall as he looked down on the horde of men, who were sent to fight him.

"Protect the King!" Dont let them pass!"

Clank!! Clank!!

With this, the fight had finally broken out; it was, after all, an inevitable occurrence. The two sides clashed into one another in a violent frenzy, the loud grating of metal reverberating all throughout.

Meanwhile, Gwen was cradling her father desperately in her hands, still screaming in shock as a pool of blood gushed through the chain mail that protected his chest.

Marc and Lucas quickly jumped in and carried the king back inside. They laid the king gently down on the floor next to his throne and hurried to find something that would stop the bleeding.

Gwen could only put her tiny, trembling hands to stop the blood that was continuously coming out of the king's chest, fruitlessly attempting to halt the bleeding.

The sound of the fight, weapons clashing and screaming was drawing closer and closer as more of the Lioness knights eventually began to step back inside the castle, overwhelmed by the enemy forces.

"Form a line!" Yvain shouted, trying to block their opponents from coming in.

Clank! Clank!

One by one, the Lioness knights fell as there were just too many of them. Within just a few short minutes only two dozen knights were left fighting in front of the thrones while Fantumar's knights just kept on filing in. A hundred of them had already entered the palace hall.

"Knights of Lioness, this is our last stand!!" shouted sir Yvain.

The princess could see that her knights were dying, but there was really not much she could do. Her hands were grasped on the king's chest tightly, almost like if she let go, her father would die.

The king tried his best to talk, choking out words as droplets of blood began to trail out of his mouth.  
"Leave... Me... Daughter, go..."

Tears ran down her cheeks. All she could do was weep helplessly. She cried... And she cried. Unconsciously, she began to whimper out a desperate prayer for help.

"Help... Help... Anyone... Help."

Once again, the image of a young man's figure appeared in her mind. How she wished he was here right now.

As if her prayer had been answered, a harsh wind suddenly blew a few steps away from her. A black line materialized out of thin air, almost as if the space in front of her had been cut out. The line slowly turned, forming a dark circle, and from the void out walked a young man.

It was him, he has finally come.