

Extras 131

Chapter 131 Leader Gus

'He... He's hereee!!!'

Gary was overjoyed beyond compare.

He didn't think he had ever been this happy from the day he was born until now.

'H-he must have woken up due to all the noise...'

Once he concluded that, Gary convinced himself that the reason he had been screaming and shouting like a pathetic little rat was so he could get the Leader's attention.

Yes... this was all a part of the plan!

'N-now that Leader Gus is here, I'm saved!' Gary thought to himself with glee.

"Looks like you're the only one who survived. Of all my capable men, it had to be you..."

Gary felt his body rise from the pool of blood. It was being lifted by the Leader, who tightly grabbed his head with one hand,

Leader Gus was an extremely robust man—many could call him very fat.

However, he wasn't particularly obese. No, he claimed that the reason for his huge size and round potbelly was due to the strong muscles he gathered there.

The fact that he could effortlessly raise a grown man like Gary as if it was nothing proved his assertion.

Leader Gus was extremely strong!

"S-sorry, Leader. Haha... I'll try my best..."

Gary felt his body draw closer to the huge face of his leader as the man grinned at him with some sort of evil gleam in his eyes.

"Oh, I'm sure you will. But first..." Gus' unoccupied hand was stretched out, as if expecting something.

Gary felt confused.

He stared at the raised eyebrow of his Leader, but even then it took a while before he finally understood what Gus meant.

"A-ahh... the ring!"

His only viable hand trembled as he struggled to remove the pouch from his crotch and present it to the overweight man.

Gary wasn't particularly keen on parting with such a treasure, but he was more interested in living.

Besides, perhaps he could get a cut from the whole thing if the Leader sold the ring.

'We just have to get through these guys first...!' As Gary thought this, while dropping the pouch on his Leader's outstretched hand, he felt something squeeze his head tightly.

"U-um... Leader, y-you're squeezing a little too—"

~SQUELCH!~

Before Gary could let out his words completely, his entire head burst into pieces.

Pink chunks of brain matter splattered around the area as blood splashed from his headless body.

His lifeless form fell to the ground in a heavy thud, and his naked body awkwardly lay in the pool of both blood and vomit.

Before Gary could have even imagined it, he was already long dead.

"Huhu... what a useless guy..." Gus grinned with a big ol' smile on his face.

His flabby neck and fluffy-looking cheeks danced as he made a chuckle.

He gently caressed the pouch in his grasp, not even minding that it had previously occupied his subordinate's Nether region.

"I heard everything, you know? I've been awake for some time now, so I know..."

Gus dangled the pouch, which was now upside down, forcing out the gleaming treasure inside.

And then, the ring landed on his fatty palm.

While he did all this, his audience—The pink-haired warrior, Aldred, and the leader Ralyks—merely watched in silence.

The initial two were standing a distance from the latter, since he had already said to leave it to him.

However, that was for dealing with Gary.

With Gus present, the situation had changed drastically.

"Oho! This looks like an amazing find! The craftsmanship... the Magic Energy... this is... I've never seen anything like it before!"

As Gus gleamed in delight, his overweight body danced in joy.

He was thick from head to toe, so other than his flabby cheeks and slightly malleable neck, the rest of his body was dense.

As a result, even though he jumped in excitement, his body didn't particularly jumble up and about.

"Where did this come from? Where did you guys get it? These sorts of exceptional stuff usually come with their distinct brand, right?"

Gus wasn't answered by the ones who watched in silence.

Instead, they left the discovery to him.

As someone who had stolen a lot of things in his life—and even had the chance to experience a few luxury items—Gus knew exactly what and where to check in order to find what he was looking for.

It didn't take him a few seconds to do so.

And then—

"E-ehh... the K-KariBlanc... Group...?"

All the excitement on his face drained away at that very moment,

It was like he instantly knew how screwed he was.

Instead, sweat fell from his face as he looked at the ring a second time to confirm the hidden logo details that only experts would be able to find.

He wasn't wrong.

It was made by the KariBlanc Group!

"H-hold on... this can't be...!"

The KariBlanc Group never sold their items to other stores, which meant the only way to get their products was to walk through the doors of any of their buildings.

They were also capable of sniffing out any trade in the Black Market—and even the surface world—that involved their goods.

They held a strict monopoly on certain types of items—especially in the capital.

And, it was rumored that they were deeply affiliated with the Obsidian Council.

Anyone who messed with them was as good as dead

Those who stole from them met miserable ends.

The few who challenged them were inevitably destroyed.

The KariBlanc Group was an incredible force to be reckoned with, and just recently... they had started expanding their power.

At their current pace, it was safe to say they could become the most powerful of the Companies within the Black Market and perhaps even the mainstream.

Gus knew most of these things from hearsay, but as someone who had been in the game this long, he knew there were certain things that were as immutable as death itself.

One of those things was the hierarchy.

"I-I deeply apologize!" Gus swiftly fell to his knees, not caring that blood and gore splashed on his body in the process.

Right now, he was more concerned about sparing his life than anything else.

Even though it was his foolish subordinate that committed such an idiotic act, he knew he would be the one to pay for it.

Such was the law of this world of darkness.

"P-please spare me! I'll do anything!" He pleaded, more sweat dripping down his body.

He could feel his heart racing as an uncomfortably tense air of silence hung above him.

He felt like a blade might descend from above and end his life.

He also knew he couldn't do anything if that happened.

Gus could only pray he would be spared.

"I told that man... that he wouldn't die a quick death."

As Gus heard the voice of the dark one known as Ralyks, he felt a chill permeate his entire body.

"Yet you killed him so easily..."

Gus instantly knew he was screwed.

'I messed up! I screwed up! I'm so dead!' His bulging eyes showed his thoughts very clearly.

"... So how do you plan on taking responsibility?"

The moment Gus heard this, he knew he had been extended a lifeline.

This was the only chance he could get if he wanted to live.

He had to take it!

"T-the girl you're searching for! I know where she is!"

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Chapter 132 A World Of Darkness [Pt 1]

'I feel sick...'

As Rey looked at the man before him, and at the space he found himself in, he honestly felt disgusted beyond words.

Killing monsters had already become a part of his normal life, but there was no way to get used to this;

Blood.

Gore.

Death.

The death of humans.

'Haaa... calm down, Rey.'

Right now, he was playing the character of Ralyks—the dark and gritty man of the shadows.

He couldn't afford to blow his cover here.

'But this is too awful...'

Rey had read and watched a lot of violent stories. He was a big fan of things like this, and anytime he read them, he found them fun and engaging.

The same feeling came to mind when he slaughtered monsters without consequence.

But now... now that he was faced with actual mutilated corpses, Rey couldn't help but feel the urge to throw up.

The overwhelming smell in the air, and the sight of so many sliced-up bodies along with their internal organs, were more than enough to put anyone off.

'To think that girl did all this...'

Yuri was the one who horribly mutilated all of these bodies at his command.

The surprise on his face when he saw how she summoned a blade out of nowhere and so easily ended human lives was indescribable.

It was puzzling how someone who appeared as sweet as her could switch up so easily and rid so many of their lives—in horrible ways for that matter.

Yuri had certainly made sure each of the men suffered greatly before they died.

It was horrible! Both for the men and for Rey, who watched everything.

He had chosen to stay in a corner and observe since he didn't want to draw close to the site of carnage, but he knew he couldn't stay away forever.

Ralyks could not appear weak.

That was why, when he approached Gary to deal a devastating strike, he was very slow.

Hesitation filled his steps, though he wasn't sure if anyone besides him noticed.

The more he saw the face of the man he was about to kill, the more he felt his heart racing and disgust churning in his stomach.

'I've never killed any human before. I don't... I don't think I want to.'

His plan was to torture him a bit and make Yuri finish him off, just to make himself seem like a brutal man.

Rey wasn't brutal at all—at least, not to humans.

He was just a 16-year-old boy who now realized that he was in over his head.

Frankly speaking, he was scared.

'I shouldn't have forgotten... just because I was able to establish myself with a big place like KariBlanc... I should not have forgotten what kind of place this is.'

This was the criminal underbelly.

Murderers, rapists, and a bunch of other kinds of despicable scum dwelled here.

How could he have thought of hacking and slashing his way through, just as he did in Dungeons.

He wasn't fighting monsters this time.

These were monsters who wore the skins of human beings.

'And them...' Rey glanced at Yuri and Aldred.

They appeared perfectly calm despite all of the carnage that filled their line of sight.

There was a chance that they were just pretending to be unbothered by it, but something told Ray that they genuinely didn't care.

They were probably used to stuff like this already.

'... They're monsters too.'

He could see that now—far clearer than ever before.

'None of the people here are my allies. None of them can be trusted.'

Sure, the KariBlanc Group was on his side now, but only because of profit.

That was all their relationship extended to.

If the mastermind, or some other third party made a better deal with them, and made him a target, they were definitely going to bite.

He already knew that before, but now that he was here... it all solidified in his head.

"Euk... p-please..."

Whimpers from the kneeling man before him brought Rey back to reality.

He overcame his disgust and did his best to concentrate. He reminded himself of the reason why he was here in the first place.

'Alicia! And he knows where she is!'

Rey had already recognized the blunder he made by assuming the ring would be with Alicia.

He didn't know how it got off her, but he knew how to get the answers.

"The girl... was she wearing the ring when you last saw her?" Rey asked.

"N-not when I last saw her. I... I... when she first came with the boy, she was wearing it, but..."

"Boy? Billy?"

"Y-yes! Yes... Billy!"

Rey's brows crinkled slightly as he confirmed that Alicia truly was with Billy.

What were they doing together?

"I saw everything using my Skill... but... I got distracted by that other woman... and I didn't see the rest." The man kept on blabbering.

"The next time I saw her... she had no ring..."

There were a bunch of thoughts that swirled around Rey's thoughts as he listened to the bits and pieces that he could decipher from the pathetic Gus.

'He was there when it all happened, then? I guess I'll find out everything from him.'

However, before he could extract any further information, Rey knew he had to take some precautions.

"Both of you, go outside. I want to have a private talk with him."

The moment Rey said this, Aldred and Yuri nodded, though the latter glanced at Aldred to see his reaction.

It showed Rey that she was first of all loyal and subservient to the Broker before him.

'I suppose that should have been expected...'

They were both members of the KariBlanc Group, after all.

Rey watched as they left the room, their footsteps ringing hollow the further the distance they created.

Soon, Rey was sure that they weren't nearby—relatively speaking.

'[Grand Sound Magic].' Rey activated a Skill, ensuring that none of the sound that would subsequently emanate from either him or Gus would be heard outside the room.

He also ensured to activate [Perception] and his other sensory Skills to make sure they weren't somehow spying on him.

After taking all necessary precautions and making sure the area was clear, Rey finally heaved a sigh of relief.

"Now, then... Gus." Rey had heard his name when the lanky idiot shouted it in relief.

If only the fool could see the future. He would have known not to have been relieved in the slightest.

"Raise your head."

In response to Rey—no, Ralyks' voice—Gus raised his head with trembling and fervor.

"Tell me everything you know."

Yuri and Aldred stood a considerable distance from the worn-down base of the men they had just annihilated, awkwardly waiting for Ralyks.

They both knew better than to spy on him or try to listen in for any info.

The KariBlanc Group feared and respected Ralyks far too much for two of their members to do something so unwise.

For a long while, there was silence among the two.

Until—

"Why do you think he didn't kill anyone?"

—Yuri asked a question.

In response to it, Aldred gave a small smile

It was like he understood everything perfectly.

"Why would he need to?" As he spoke, he watched the despairing Gus and regal Ralyks proceed out of the shack.

"Just as I do not need to kill my enemies when you are by my side, he also probably sees it that way."

Despite saying words like this, Aldred Winsley did not frown or feel bad.

Instead, his respect for the man called Ralyks deepened.

"We are his tools for destructions. Why would he need to act?"

That was all there was to it.

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Chapter 133 A World Of Darkness [Pt 2]

As Rey stepped out of the abandoned shack with Gus, he kept his entire body under control.

He could tell that he was trembling within, but thankfully no one could notice it.

Ah, and this time it wasn't due to fear, or some other fickle emotion like that.

'Billy, you...!'

There was only one feeling that currently swiped within Rey at this point—enough to make him grit his teeth and widen his eyes with emotion.

... Pure, unbridled rage.

'You did all this!' He fought not to clench his fist, or hit anything in sight.

But his overflowing anger needed a conduit.

He needed one so badly.

Alas! They were out in the open, within the slums of the Black Market,

Rey knew he couldn't act very brashly now, especially with Aldred and Yuri watching him so intently since he appeared from a distance.

'I don't know if they're suspicious of me for not killing anyone, but...'

For now, they probably weren't going to make a move against him.

Rey just knew he had to keep his guard up.

'Right now, I better save up all I'm feeling for when we arrive at the location...'

He pictured Alicia in trouble, and the foolish Billy being right beside her.

'The idiot let himself be captured as well... he's just—!'

"So, what now, Sir Ralyks?"

Rey was interrupted by Aldred's words, causing him to snap out of the realm of thoughts.

He had already made it to the presence of his two KariBlanc helpers, and with Gus right next to him, the next thing on the list was what the next step would be.

"We're heading to the Slave Trading Storage Facility—the one where they keep some of their merchandise."

Rey wanted to tell Aldred and Yuri that they could leave the rest to him, since he didn't want them to have any knowledge of Alicia.

If they knew of Alicia's identity, they could either deduce his, or use her as leverage on him.

'I don't want her to be a weak link...'

However, Rey found it difficult to send them off.

Excluding the fact that the two didn't seem like they were interested in leaving yet, Rey still needed them for dirty work.

He still hadn't killed a human and he wasn't intending to.

'I have to keep my hands as clean as possible, just in case a case with the TruthSeeker comes up again and I'm asked something along those lines...'

This was Rey's excuse, but the true reason he didn't want to take a life was far simpler.

He really couldn't do it.

Rey was by no means a hardened killer, and the very thought of ending human life and living with those consequences made him nearly retch.

Killing Monsters in Dungeons felt like a game. In video games, no matter how realistic, you could always kill anyone and go scot free.

There would be no guilt associated with it, and most people ended up having fun with it.

That was how Rey had always felt with the monsters.

But people.. those were different.

'I... I just...'

"I'm guessing this one here will be leading us to the place?"

Rey nodded gently, his facade of stoicism working perfectly beneath his obsidian mask.

"Perfect! Shall we get going, then?"

"Yeah..."

The four left the hideout, leaving the bloodied interior just the way it was.

The reason behind that could only be guessed.

'I feel... really weak...'

Alicia had thought that a night's rest would make her feel better, but she was dead wrong.

She had never felt so terrible in her life.

'My body won't even move...'

It felt like she was paralyzed, unable to move even the tiniest parts of her body.

Her heartbeat also slowed down despite how scared she was. This darkness that surrounded her... it felt all-consuming.

No one spoke, so the entire expanse was filled with dread.

Even Billy, whose words—despite how annoying they were—kept her company, was nowhere to be heard.

He was probably just sitting down helplessly in a corner, unable to do anything of note.

From what Alicia could gather, this was a box-like room, with quite a decent amount of space within.

When she first woke up within it, she only saw Billy. However, by the time she regained consciousness and looked around her, Alicia could notice a few presences.

There were two other individuals in the room with them.

Alicia couldn't properly see their faces, but based on the shapes of their bodies that she could make out their identities.

One was a girl, appearing slightly shorter than her. They were probably the same age.

The other looked like a boy, and he seemed much younger than anyone else in the room.

That was all she could manage to detect in the room.

'Just how long has passed? I have no idea...'

Alicia was growing desperate by the minute—specifically because of what Billy told her.

They were getting sold today!

'Please... someone out there... please help!'

Gus led Rey and his two entourages to the place within one of the most secluded areas within the community of darkness.

A place he called the Warehouse.

This place was a massive structure that covered quite a wide area of land. It had a large fence surrounding it, along with guards who were either fixed in their positions, or took patrols.

All of this grandiose display showed just how important the building behind the walls was.

The Workshop—

It was a place where his Boss kept his merchandise—in essence, those who would be sold as slaves.

Rey could only feel disgust when he thought of the concept. He wondered if men like Gus and his Boss ought to even be alive.

As rage seared within him, he heard the disgusting voice of Gus.

"We drop them off at the entrance. We're not allowed to go any further in."

There were two entrances to the building.

One was at the far back, where the 'Special' products were stored, but the front gate led to the normal place where slaves were kept.

According to Gus, he and his goons went to the far back since both Alicia and Billy were confirmed to be Skill-Holders and had a Class.

In H'Trae, it was rare for young ones like them to possess impressive Class and multiple Skills.

Even a single Skill and an E or D-Tier Class would make you special as a young product.

As a result, they were going to fetch a lot of money.

"T-this is all I know... I swear!" Gus pleaded, once again kneeling and prostrating to 'Sir Ralyks.'

Rey was too distracted to take Gus very seriously.

His thoughts lay on the building, and the fact that Alicia and Billy would be somewhere inside.

'Isn't this too conspicuous, though?'

From the little he knew, even within the criminal underworld, Slave Trade was kept on the downlow.

'With such a massive structure and several guards, it's bound to draw attention.'

However, when Rey thought about it, that also meant it was secure.

'Hmm...'

He and his two momentary allies were watching from an elevated platform in the distance, so they could hardly see any detail within the building.

In the end, Rey did the only thing he could.

"What do you think about all this, Aldred?"

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Chapter 134 The Warehouse

"What do you think about all this, Aldred?"

As Rey's question echoed in the air, Aldred gave a knowing smile—as if he already expected the question.

"It's probably a ruse. The real Warehouse should be underground."

Rey made a slight grimace underneath his mask.

'Just as I suspected...'

Even with this discovery, it didn't change what they had to do.

'We still have to invade. I'm sure the entrance to the underground path is somewhere inside.'

Rey almost felt like he was invading the domain of a mafia group, or some sort of cartel. He hadn't done it before, but it seemed like this was how it often felt like.

"This establishment is run by Evals Redart, the biggest guy in business in the South." Aldred went on, his tone still containing the same kind of amusement from earlier.

"I don't imagine that we'd meet him here, but if we do, then the KariBlanc Group would like to stay out of it."

Rey sighed and gave a light shrug.

"I wasn't planning on the two of you venturing inside with me, to begin with."

He had been contemplating what route to take when it came to these two, but with Aldred giving him caveats to his cooperation, now seemed like a good time to end things.

"I'll go inside alone. I'm sure the KariBlanc Group would like to maintain a close relationship with someone like Evals Redart."

Rey knew it was just how business functioned in the underworld. It was the same way they desired a good relationship with him.

"We are grateful for your understanding. Though, if we were to pick between you and Redart, our Group would go with you."

Rey shrugged off those words, taking them with as much levity as possible,

'Trying to butter me up, huh? Is this also what he'll also tell Redart?'

No matter what Aldred said, Rey knew he couldn't wholeheartedly believe and trust him.

"In any case, I'm heading in. You can leave now." Rey took a few steps forward, his gaze focused on the building that stood a distance from him.

"And what of the fatso?"

Rey turned back a little, watching Aldred make a sadistic smile and Yuri supporting him with her own innocent smile as well.

Gus kept banging his head on the ground, profusely apologizing—even as blood gushed out.

At this point, Rey's gaze when he saw these things was sheer lethargy.

He just didn't care anymore.

"He's all yours." Rey waved away the pleading Gus, causing him to mutter an "E-eh...?"

Before he could double down on his begging and make an appeal, though, Yuri knocked him unconscious with the hilt of her blade.

Once again, Rey noticed how it appeared seemingly out of nowhere.

Once Gus fell to the ground in a heavy thud, Rey returned his focus on the building and didn't bother looking back a second time.

"We look forward to your victory. Come patronize us again when you're done."

"It's been a pleasure, Sir Ralyks!"

Rey simply ignored their words of farewell and leaked out a heavy sigh

'They're all crazy people.'

The Warehouse was a two-storey building which covered at least an acre of land.

It was surrounded by a tall and sturdy fence that prevented anyone from seeing anything that happened inside.

Unless someone flew overhead the entire place, there was no way to see anything beyond the grimy walls that imposingly stood tall.

Both the main building and the surrounding fence were covered with black paint, and they seemed like old structures that would collapse at any moment.

Rey wondered if having one's building like this contributed something to the slave-owner Aesthetic, but once again found his thoughts to be a useless tangent.

'Let's focus on the matter at hand.'

He activated the [Stealth], [Projection], got ready to use [Phase], and even added the [Camouflage] Skill he just learned from the Bigfoots... just in case.

With his preparations complete, he walked straight past the armored guards despite their vigilant demeanors.

None of them even noticed him nearing them, walking past them, or passing through the fence to reach the other side.

It was a smooth infiltration that didn't even take any effort.

"Looks like I'm in, huh...?" Rey mumbled under his breath as he took a good look around him.

The compound was crawling with even more security personnel.

So many guards—a lot with blades, though a few had staffs in hand.

'This is enough for a small army. I guess the Slave Trade business is no joke...'

It was also possible that this was a special day, hence the need for so many security personnel in the same area.

Despite their numbers, though, Rey easily walked past all of them.

It wasn't even a challenge.

'I could have ended all their lives, but... I guess I don't need to.'

If he had chosen the direct approach, things could have gotten messier than he desired,

At least, this way was more efficient,

'Though I feel bad for the other Slaves that are here, or that will be brought in eventually, my only goal here is Alicia... and also Billy.'

He couldn't allow any further distractions.

Rey followed Gus' words and took the second entrance that led to the Special Center of the holding facility.

The result?

'... Empty, huh? figured.'

After getting past the entrance and easily breezing through the guards, Rey was finally greeted by an empty room.

'I'll assume the general area is also like this.'

All of them were distractions—tangents to throw him off the scent.

But Rey could already see through it all.

He also knew his way forward.

'This place surely has a manager that is not Evals Redart.' His lips began to broaden ever so slightly.

'I should pay him a visit.'

With a dark gleam in his eyes, and a very deep resolution in his heart, Rey continued his advance.

'Wait for me, Alicia! I'm coming!'

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Chapter 135 Warehouse Manager

Sylvia loved money.

As she sat on her chair, piles of Coins were arranged to form towers before her.

There were quite a few Bronze Coin Towers, a couple made up of Silver Coins, and finally...

... A Golden Coin Tower!

She was grinning like a baby as she played with the tower of coins before her.

Sylvia had a dark ebony skin, with black hair and pure black eyes.

They say the eyes are the windows to the soul, but Sylvia's dark irises showed nothing, prompting many to call her soulless.

She didn't mind, though. Of what she was a Soul if one didn't have the money needed to enjoy it?

That was her philosophy.

"Looks like no one is invading today as well. What a bummer..." Sylvia sighed, placing a hand on her cheek as she poured a little.

Her office was within the Warehouse Building, and it was considerably large. Since she was the Manager, it was only a given.

Several panels, similar to System Panels, were floating in the air before her, thus occupying her line of sight.

"Nothing out of the ordinary..."

The only thing Sylvia could expect to happen today was the transportation of their merchandise to the Auction.

'I wish I could go. I bet it's far more eventful than this dreary place...'

Despite her office being much larger than most other managers in her position—and the fact that she literally did nothing but sit in her office—Sylvia couldn't help but complain.

As her ugly face, caked in makeup, formed a twisted smile, her tongue licked her especially large lips.

"Lord Evals Redart will also be there. It's a shame he hardly visits this place. I miss him..."

Sylvia was very fond of Evals—one could say to an obsessive level. She often had thoughts like a common whore, and dressed as one too.

Unfortunately, she wasn't blessed with the looks necessary to complete the equation.

Sylvia was very ugly, and her body lacked the right proportions that made a woman incredibly attractive to men.

That was why, despite slowly reaching her expiration date, she was yet to settle down.

No man—not in the underworld or the surface—even paid her any heed.

Those who did would eventually leave her after one or two months.

That was the reason why she loved money so much.

"You'll never leave me, will you?" She spoke to her adorable stack of coins.

"My lovely things. Huhuhu—!"

Before Sylvia could croak out another laugh, she suddenly felt something wrapping around her neck from behind.

'H-huh...?!'

It all happened instantly, and the tight grip took her by surprise, threatening to snap her neck if she took one careless move.

'W-what's happening...?'

"You will answer my questions and cooperate with me if you want to leave, I'll give you a few seconds to speak. If you take longer, or lie to me, I'll be killing you instantly."

The moment Sylvia heard this, a chill went down her spine.

The voice that echoed was so deep and threatening that it nearly gave her a heart attack. Her body froze, unable to move even the slightest inch.

Sylvia knew right there and then... she was on death's door.

"Y-yes, I understand."

Self-preservation was the natural instinct of any living being. No one wants to die.

"Good. You're the manager of this establishment, correct!"

Sylvia gulped and thought the question through.

'If I answer honestly, he might kill me because he is looking for the manager...'

On the other end, if she delayed in her response, he would also dispose of her.

Now stuck between a rock and a hard place, she felt the back of her neck being squeezed tighter.

Any more, and she would break.

"I-I am!" Sylvia finally spoke out, fearing what would happen if the guy found out she lied in the case that she did.

'There's no guarantee that he'll kill now because I'm the manager, right? Compared to staying silent and lying, I'm cooperating!'

In Sylvia's mind, she prayed she wouldn't get killed.

'I-I don't want to die...'

There were still tons of money to be made, and she still hadn't settled down yet.

She couldn't die now.

"I want you to take me to the slaves."

The moment Sylvia heard this, only a single croak came out of her lips.

"E-eh...?"

As the Manager of this Warehouse, she knew the underground passage that led to the real Slave Center.

But why would she reveal such details?

"D-doing that is... it's the same as sentencing me to death..." Sylvia whispered.

She didn't know who was asking the questions, and despite her incredible senses, she couldn't even detect anyone in the room.

It was almost as if she was talking to a ghost.

"I-If Lord Eval's Redart finds out I led you there... then my life is over. I'll suffer and die in the worst way imaginable."

Sylvia didn't think her words would elicit some kind of empathy from the man behind her, and she wasn't honestly counting on that.

However, it was just a bad choice to reveal the passageway to someone when she would be killed brutally for it.

'At least, for this one... I'm not sure what he'll do to me...'

She was well aware of the power of her Boss, and he was just as brutal as he was intelligent.

There was no escaping him.

"I don't have time for this..." She heard the deep voice suddenly say.

A hand instantly sat atop her head, as if someone was grabbing tightly.

And then—

~FSHUUUUU!~

"ARGGHHHHHH!!!"

Heat seared through her head as the hand that held her burned through her hair and began to dig into her flesh.

Smoke rushed from her burning skin as simmering sounds echoed within the room.

"STOOOOPP! I'LL TAAALLLK! I'll... I'll talk..."

The heat ceased, though the remnant heat that was ingrained in her head and mind remained.

Smoke rose from the top of Sylvia's head as she felt strands of her hair falling down.

The man behind her had just shown her a taste of what he could do.

Sylvia already knew there was more in store for her if she refused him any longer.

"I'll... talk..."

There was no way to resist any longer.

*

Chapter 136 The Underground Passage

'Finally...'

Rey heaved a sigh as he deactivated [Heat Touch]. It was a Skill he recently acquired in the 10th Floor, along with another pretty intense one.

Since the Manager was ready to talk, he removed his hand from her head, though he still had his other one wrapped around her neck.

If she tried anything funny, he was going to use Lightning to teach her a lesson.

'I thought it would take very long, but thankfully she's very cooperative.'

"Stand." Rey told Sylvia, and she instantly obeyed.

"Lead me there."

"W-wha—?!"

"I said... lead me there." The moment he emphasized this, tightening his grip around her, she no longer rendered any complaint.

"Let's go."

The path to the Underground Area was, without being a surprise, on the Ground Floor.

It existed in a room disguised as a mere storage room where old furniture and cleaning tools could be found lying around.

However, right on the ground, there existed a clearing that could be opened up—as one would a kid in a jar.

'Impressive... ' Rey thought to himself as he saw Sylvia open the entrance while he watched a short distance away.

'I wouldn't have guessed you could remove the flooring like that.'

He was still invisible, perfectly blended with his environment too, so Sylvia could not see him at all.

And so, after she was done, she looked around the room and spoke—not knowing who to address and where he stood.

"H-here it is!"

"And are there other secret entrances or openings I should know of?" Rey asked.

It would suck if he found traps or a confusing passageway, or some kind of dead end that could only be solved by someone on the know.

"N-no! To the left is the Special Center, and to the right is the General Center."

Rey looked at the scared woman's face and didn't think she was lying.

'She looks hideous.' Thanks to most of her hair falling out thanks to his Skill, and her naturally ugly face, Rey found her disgusting.

The makeup on her face was already melting off, and her massive lips add her appear more like a clown than anything else.

"S-so, I can go... right?" Sylvia slowly rose to her feet, her eyes pleading for mercy.

'If I let her go, she'll basically expose my identity and plan.'

However, he couldn't just kill her.

As a result, Rey went for the safest alternative.

'[Sleep].'

In an instant, Sylvia collapsed to the ground in a heavy thud.

Her head clashed with the hard floor, causing a loud echo to reverberate in the room.

'A-ahh... that'll hurt.' Rey winced slightly.

"I-Is everything fine, Lady Sylvia?" A guard yelled from outside

'Tch! Annoying...'

Reg activated his [Voice Mimic] Skill and yelled out in Sylvia's voice.

"Yeah, I'm fine! Now focus on your job!"

"Y-yes ma'am!"

Rey sighed and felt relieved that it worked out so well.

'Now then...!' He drew closer to the considerably large opening in the ground.

'Let's go get Alicia!'

Rey plunged into the depths of darkness and was met with blindness.

His feet hit the ground sooner than he thought, revealing how the underground area wasn't as far down expected,

Still, thanks to the perpetual darkness surrounding him, he couldn't properly see.

'I can't believe I still don't have a [Night Vision] Skill...'

All of this was no problem for Rey, though since he simply used [Flare] to brighten up the place nearly instantly.

As one would expect from an underground passageway, it was surrounded by dirt.

The paths were already carved out, albeit crudely. Pillars connected the ground and ceiling together, and perhaps the most notable of all was how the paths were designed.

'It's a straight line, and then this is the exit...'

According to what Sylvia told him, he would find the Special Center if he went left.

'So left it is!' Rey was curious about how regular slaves were, and he even thought of helping them, but his first priority was Alicia.

If he had more time, or an opportunity that could bring it into fruition, then he would.

'But not now. I have no idea if I'm running out of time or not!'

Once Rey had this thought, activated [Super Speed] and [Flight].

Then, within a second—

~WHOOOOSZHHH!!!~

—Rey had flown off in search of Alicia.

"Well, well, well. Isn't this an interesting development?"

Outside the Warehouse, maintaining their safe distance from the structure, were Aldred and Yuri.

Instead of returning, since their work was done, Aldred decided he wanted to stick around and see how everything would end.

Behind both of them was Gus, who was naked and tied up ropes all over his body.

The robes seemed enchanted, since they glowed, paralyzing the massive man very easily.

As for Aldred, he was smiling widely as he narrowed his gaze on the entrance of the massive structure.

A man was walking towards it, having an entourage of two well-dressed individuals—one man and one woman.

One of them had a Warrior's armor on, while the other—the woman—was dressed as a Mage.

The man who led them, however, had a completely different look.

He had long dark hair, with an eyepatch covering one of his eyes. His attire was regal, clearly displaying his status.

He had a sly grin on his face as he neared the guards who stood around the entrance.

All of the guards instantly bowed their heads, welcoming him and the two behind with profound respect.

"Looks like Sir Ralyks will be having a bit of an interruption on his plans."

After all, the man who just entered the building was none other than the owner himself.

The Slave Trade Kingpin of the Southern Territories—Evals Redart.

"Are we really not going to assist him?" Yuri asked her superior in a calm tone.

"There's no need to."

Aldred's voice contained nothing but certainty, with a sparkling hint of amusement in his eyes.

"It's about time to see what our mysterious seller can do."

There was no doubt in Aldred's mind, though.

'Sir Ralyks will win.'

It was only a matter of 'how'.

*

Chapter 137 Saving The Captives

"This... is it."

Right in front of Rey was a door. It was so poorly made that it seemed crooked at best.

Any sufficient pressure applied to it would be enough to break the door into bits.

'They put slaves behind this? Are they not worried they'll try to escape?'

Rey surmised that the captors were probably confident that the captives would be unable to escape, so he shrugged the thought from his mind.

'Alicia and Billy are both strong. The people here must have a way to restrain them.'

That told Rey that he couldn't be complacent.

He activated [Safe Haven], just in case, and proceeded to open the door.

~CREAK~

The door easily opened without Rey exerting much of an effort, and it revealed a room shrouded in darkness to him.

'What's this smell...?' A sickly sweet smell filled the air, making Rey nearly nauseated.

Thankfully, his [Full Resistance] kicked in. Still, he felt like it would be safer to leave as quickly as possible.

'This is probably a sedative that keeps them this way.'

Rey used his Flare to lighten up the place, seeing four people inside.

His eyes instantly darted to the one that mattered most to him.

'Alicia!'

The dirty ground stained her unkempt brown hair, and her casual outfit had the form of rags. Her pure skin was marred with dirt, and her eyes were tightly shut.

She was unconscious, and her body seemed frail as she lay in a corner.

She honestly seemed like a fresh corpse.

Rey's eyes widened as he rushed to her side with unimaginable speed.

As he touched her body, he realized she felt cold—too cold!

'A-ah!' He placed his ears close to her chest, not minding the softness that greeted him as he did so.

'She's still alive!' His thoughts echoed within.

Rey swiftly brought out the White Amber and slipped it into its rightful place.

The moment he did this, a bright light suddenly enveloped Alicia.

~FSHUUUUU!~

The light warmly radiated all across her body, causing her pale skin to receive color as her breathing returned to normal.

Slowly, she was regaining her strength.

'Looks like the ring's effects work perfectly fine...!' Rey made a slight smile under his imposing mask.

However—

"U-urghh..."

—A single voice made all his joy sink right under.

'This guy...!'

Rey turned to his side, a small distance off, and noticed Billy slowly stirring into consciousness.

If looks could kill, then Rey's glare at Billy should have destroyed him a million times over. His eyes glowed bright crimson as he looked at the muscular boy who was covered in filth.

'No, Rey... he's not worth it.' He calmed himself.

There was no need to go so far when all of this would be revealed to the Royal Council.

'[Sleep].' He used the Skill on Billy, causing the boy to sink back into slumber.

Rey also noticed that Alicia was regaining consciousness, so he did the same to her.

'They can't know who I am. Or that I came to save them...'

As the one known as Ralyks, he wasn't one known to walk the path of light.

Unless...!

'Ahh! A brilliant idea just came to mind.' Rey's eyes widened as he made a wide grin.

'That could work!'

Once Rey secured Alicia's safety, and confirmed that Billy's condition—albeit not stable—would not lead to his death, he decided to leave the room.

'There are two others here, but I don't think they're any of my concern.'

The most he could do was report to the soldiers and have the Alliance take it from there.

'I'm not abandoning them. They'll still be saved...'

It was just that Alicia and—unfortunately enough—Billy had more priority.

Using [Absolute Wind Magic], he raised the two in the air and decided to take them out using this measure.

Before he did this, however, he covered their entire bodies with long cloaks and hid their faces in masks—items that he took from his [Inventory].

'I guess I should be happy about having spares...' Rey made a wry smile.

'At least, this way, their identities would remain hidden even if I am seen with them. I'll activate [Projection] as well, but there's a chance that won't work.'

All the preparations were complete, so Rey made his way to the exit.

That was when he heard a voice.

"R-Rey..."

'H-huh?!' Rey paused right in his tracks as soon as his name echoed in the air.

It came as a soft whisper—barely audible—but he heard it clearly.

'Who... said that...?' His gaze slowly traveled to his side, where someone was lying on the ground.

His eyes widened as he noticed her hand gripping the edge of his cloak—albeit weakly.

She looked like a teenager—perhaps the same age as Alicia. Her short black hair and glowing blue eyes told him she was using some kind of Skill.

"H-help me... R-Rey... S-Skylar..."

Rey recoiled in confusion as he stared at her barely moving face.

Other than her lips and her shaky hand, which now crumbled back to the ground, the girl was paralyzed.

'She's definitely using a Skill. What is it?'

Since Rey had just seen her eyes glow, and she had said his name, he could confirm that he 'technically' saw her using an ability.

"Status Window." He murmured under his breath.

[STATUS WINDOW]

- Name: Rey Skylar.
- Race: Human (Otherworlder)
- Class: Elite Enigma (B-Tier)
- Level: 33 (14.93% EXP)
- Life Force: 22 (+32)
- Mana Level: 84 (+32)
- Combat Ability: 30 (+32)
- Stat Points: 57

- Skills (Exclusive): [Doppel]
- Skills (Non-Exclusive): Nil
- Alignment: Neutral

[Additional Information]

You are a mystery to the world. While the underworld trembles in your presence, those on the surface do not understand your true strength

[End Of Information]

Rey tapped on his [Doppel] Skill to see what kind of ability he had just encountered.

[Skill Categories]

~ Attack Category: 29

~ Defense Category: 11

~ Buff Category: 10

~ Miscellaneous: 7

[New Skills: Please Select Their Categories]

~ S-Tier: Absolute Appraisal

[Total Skills: 58]

'What the hell?!' Rey's eyes nearly popped out of his head the moment he saw the Skill before him.

'She appraised me!'

*

Chapter 138 Absolute Appraisal

[Skill Details]

[Absolute Appraisal]

Tier: S

Ability: Allows the user to see the Status Windows of the targets with perfect accuracy. Exception only occurs when faced with Tiers higher than the Tier of this Skill.

[End Of Information]

Rey could feel his jaw dropping as he looked at the panel before him.

'The hell? So she checked my Status Window and got my name?'

The girl kept staring at him with her doll-like face, her glowing blue eyes begging him to help.

'She seems to be in an even worse state than Alicia. That means she's been here for longer.'

Rather than just relying on the little information he had, Rey decided to use the Skill she used on him and see the truth for himself.

'It's an S-Tier Skill, so it's bound to consume some Mana. Still...'

Rey was dying of curiosity.

He had to know!

'[Absolute Appraisal].'

[STATUS WINDOW]

- Name: Esme
- Race: Half-Elf (Human and Elf)
- Class: Commoner (F-Tier)
- Level: 1 (91.34% EXP)
- Life Force: 2/100 [Critical]
- Mana Level: 50/200 [Partially Locked]
- Combat Ability: 3 [Locked]
- Stat Points: 0
- Skills (Exclusive): [Absolute Appraisal]
- Skills (Non-Exclusive): [Grand Magic Mastery]. [Grand Magic Application]. [Greater Mana Recovery]
- Alignment: Neutral Good

[Additional Information]

A genius due to her superior Elf bloodline, but has been limited by her human genes and her unfortunate circumstances. She is currently poisoned and desperately needs help.

... Help her.

[End Of Information]

'W-what? Help her...?'

This was the first time Rey had seen the System tell him to do something.

It was usually a passive kind of interface. It didn't tell him anything about Quests, neither did it interact with him in any meaningful way.

It didn't even alert him anytime he Leveled Up.

'But now, it's... hold on, is this like a Quest?' Before Rey could follow that train of thought any further, he backtracked and reread the Status Window.

That was when he fully grasped what he read.

'H-hold on... what the hell are these Stats?!'

They were unbelievable, to say the least.

At just Level 1, and with the Class of a Commoner, this girl had Stats that exceeded his when he was Level 20 or so.

'Is it because of her Race. A Half-Elf, huh...?' Rey looked at her ears, yet he didn't notice it peeking up.

'No pointy ears. How is she a Half-Elf, then?' He couldn't deny what he read, though, and it wasn't like the System would lie about stuff like this.

'This is also an S-Tier Skill, and it perfectly shows the Status Information of my targets. It shouldn't have errors...'

Now that he thought of it, the fact that this girl could use such a High-Tier Skill despite her current state showed that she had to be the real deal.

'She even has Lucielle's [Grand Magic Mastery] Skill and an even better version of her [Magic Application].

It was all so unreal.

'This is crazy.' Rey found himself sighing as he slapped his hand on his face.

'She knows my identity, she is such a monster, and the System is telling me to help her...'

Rey sighed deeply at this point.

All the factors of the situation told him that he had no choice but to act.

'And it wouldn't be fair if I left the last one here...'

Rey wondered if the last kid also had some sort of special ability that made him a monster as well, so he used his [Absolute Appraisal] on him as well.

[STATUS WINDOW]

- Name: Jake Landon
- Race: Human
- Class: Junior Caster (E-Tier)
- Level: 3 (1.44% EXP)
- Life Force: 1/3 [Critical]
- Mana Level: 5/15 [Locked]
- Combat Ability: 5 [Locked]
- Stat Points: 0
- Skills (Exclusive): [Fast Learner]
- Skills (Non-Exclusive): [Wind Magic Mastery]. [Fast Casting].
- Alignment: Neutral

[Additional Information]

A human genius who, despite his young age, shows a lot of promise. He's going to be a talented Mage in the future. He is poisoned.

[End Of Information]

'I see. By regular standards, he's a genius...'

But for Rey, he didn't seem all that special at the moment. Lucielle was more of a genius when she was born, and when she was his age, she had far surpassed his current state.

'And while Lucielle is recognized as the greatest Mage in the entire Alliance, her skills pale in comparison to the Otherworlders she helped summon.'

As such, Rey's interest in the boy diminished.

Besides, the System didn't even tell him to save the boy.

'But... well, I can't just abandon him now that I'm here.' It wasn't Otherworlders she helped summon.'

As such, Rey's interest in the boy diminished.

like he would be going out of his way to add the kid to the total number of people he was saving.

Once Rey decided on that, he used his [Absolute Wind Magic] to carry both the Half-Elf Girl and the Junior Caster.

Once they were all safely floating in the air, he decided to leave the bleak dark room.

But not after casting [Sleep] on Esme.

"Don't worry, kid. I'll save you."

Rey initially didn't want to bother going to the right in order to rescue the other slaves.

However, after a rethink, he decided to tweak his plans in order to accommodate them.

'I guess it'll sound better that way...'

With that in mind, he went to the other room and found a similar situation.

The door was barely a door, and there was a sickly sweet smell permeating the air.

What he didn't expect, however, were the number of potential slaves that were placed in the room.

'They're close to a hundred, aren't they?'

Women. Men. Children—the whole bunch of them.

'How am I supposed to handle such a number...?' Rey wondered within himself.

He obviously knew the answer to that question already.

'[Absolute Wind Magic]'

As an S-Tier Skill, the limits of [Absolute Wind Magic] was yet to be seen.

Rey decided to use it partly because he wanted to see for himself just how far he could go.

Unsurprisingly, he was able to carry just about everyone with his Wind.

They all floated above ground, drawing close to him, or to whatever direction he desired.

'It's a good thing I learned how to properly use this Skill.'

A Magic Skill was the trickiest to use since it required certain Spells to bring out its full potential and achieve varying results.

The Spell Rey was using was one called 'Levitate', and it was activated on all a hundred plus people who were under his influence.

Once he confirmed yet again that he was in control, Rey sighed and turned his attention to the exit.

"Let's leave this hellhole, shall we?"

*

Chapter 139 Meeting Evals Redart

'Interesting...'

As Rey proceeded to leave the underground space, he used his Absolute Appraisal two more times.

Once on Alicia, and the other time on Billy.

As a result, he was able to check out their Status Windows and gauge their abilities.

'They're strong. Their Classes really help them out too...'

Still, since their Levels were quite low, their current abilities were nowhere close to his.

He was just much stronger.

'Alicia, as expected, is Lawful Good. But, I can't understand Billy's Alignment. How is he Good?'

Billy's Alignment showed 'Chaotic Good', but Rey found the 'Chaotic' irrelevant since he didn't think the jerk was any good.

'Haaa... this idiot started this whole mess...'

Rey was just happy to know that it was all going to be over pretty soon.

'It's almost evening already. A lot of time has passed since I started the day, but I'm happy it's done.'

Rey wondered about Adonis and his own mission, wondering if it was a success.

'From what I overheard, they should be out of there before nightfall.'

The goal was to instantly teleport to the bottom level of the Dungeon and quickly escape to an upper Floor—somewhere around the 30s.

If they were able to achieve that, then, all they had to do was rush past the Monsters and return home.

Worst case scenario would be Adonis blowing open the Floor Ceiling so they could gain a shortcut to escape as fast as possible.

'In any case, they should be done by the time I return to the Estate...'

Rey smiled in relief, finally happy that everything was going to be pretty much resolved.

~VWUUSH!~

Using [Flight], he hovered to the ceiling and exited the open space that served as the entrance/exit of the underground passageway.

He intended on bringing the slaves up once he confirmed the coast was clear.

But—

'Hmm...?'

—He quickly discovered that there was trouble.

The first thing that greeted his sight was the mutilated body of the woman who led him here—
Sylvia.

Her internal organs—intestines, liver, lungs, etc.—were bare open for all to see.

Her naked corpse was lying in her own puddle of blood, and her indescribably bruised body made it evident that she was put through much suffering before she died.

Her corpse hung on the wall as a welcome for Rey's sight as he ascended upward.

'Urgh... why does everyone here like doing this?' He thought to himself, feeling disgusted once again.

This place was a savage wasteland, and the denizens within it were too much for Rey's tastes.

Even if one wanted to kill humans, couldn't they just do it and be done with it?

'I don't even enjoy torturing monsters or anything. There has to be a limit...'

These people knew no limits, though, and that was why he constantly felt disgusted by them.

"Are you the one who did this?" Rey sighed, not bothering to look behind him as he could already sense three individuals there already.

With the hanging statue greeting his sight, though, he decided it was better to face his adversaries.

"I was waiting for you. Had to do something in the meantime..."

As Rey's eyes finally captured the three, his focus fell on the man in the center.

He was currently seated on a stool that was previously among the pile of old furniture within the room.

The man had a black eyepatch on one eye, with long black hair flowing down his shoulders.

He had strands of beards protruding from his chin, and he was outfitted in a high-quality black cloak, with a formal suit underneath.

In all regards, he looked like a top-tier shady individual, but his playful smile made it seem like he was just putting on a costume.

"What do you think? Pretty artsy, right? I took human sculpting as a hobby a few years ago when I got bored with plain old murder."

As the man said this, he gestured to the two individuals who stood beside him.

The male among them was outfitted in an elaborate Warrior's armor, while the woman had a dark cloak on.

They both seemed to be powerful individuals with years of experience in the job.

They stepped forward the moment their Boss gestured to them.

"My name is Evals Redart. Heard that name before?"

Rey shrugged the moment he heard this. "Once or twice."

There was a dangerous pressure building up in the room, but both of the main players maintained their positions.

Rey was still floating in the air while Evals kept staring at him while being seated.

"Haha! I see, I see. Makes sense..." Evals chuckled, before covering his face with a palm.

"If you did something like this, it must mean you don't know me too well."

As his menacing tone went forth, his two subordinates took battle stances.

Rey stared at them, tempted to use [Absolute Appraisal], but decided not to.

'It drains too much Mana. I'll just go a little hard on them while taking proper caution...'

As Rey thought this, he ensured his defense [Safe Haven] was still activated.

Once this was confirmed, he began to deliberate on the next move to make.

'Maybe I should go with—'

Before he could conclude his line of thought, though, a swift blur made its way towards him.

It belonged to the male warrior.

He had closed the distance within a second while the female Mage was already casting a Spell.

'Chanting, eh? I guess she doesn't have the [Magic Application] Skill. Must be rarer than I thought.'

[Magic Application] ensured that a Spell maintained its natural power even without the use of Chants.

Lucielle had it. Esmé had it. Rey had it as well.

'I guess it doesn't matter to her since, even though Chanting takes time, she has a partner who does the attacking first.'

Their combined effort made it hardly a disadvantage that she had to chant.

Besides, from the looks of it, she would be done at any moment.

And so, as the Warrior's sword neared Rey, and the Mage neared completion of her Spell... the boy's mind went into overdrive.

'I guess I can't slack off.'

*

Chapter 140 Azul And Fey

The first wave of attack came like lightning.

Azul, the warrior mercenary that Evals Redart often employed at his side, was incredibly strong.

However, his true ability lay in his speed.

And so...

~WHOOSH!~

... He had closed the distance between himself and his target before the latter could even notice. He pulled out a sword from its scabbard, and the thing glowed blue, revealing the Mana that was locked within.

Azul's sword was enchanted—and that pretty much applied to the rest of his armor.

He had enhanced strength, durability, focus, resistance, and most important of all... speed!

~ZZTZZ!~

His blade cackled with electricity as his entire armor began sparking with the entire thing.

Using his [Lightning Field] Skill early on, in order to stun the enemy, was not necessary, since he was simply meant to distract and lure the enemy in while his partner—Fey—did the rest.

However, Azul found such a complicated maneuver to be a chore.

Especially considering their enemy.

"Haaa!" His blade descended in a perfect vertical slash, sending ripples of shock—literal shock—flying all around.

It took a few seconds for the dust to die down, and for Azul to realize what just went down.

'W-what?!'

He didn't hit his target?!

"[Transmute]." He suddenly heard behind him.

~VWUUUUSHH!~

A wave of energy went through his armor, causing the entire thing to break apart that very instant.

"A-ahhh!"

Azul found himself naked, save for his underwear. His only layer of clothing had been broken down, leaving him powerless and defenseless.

'H-how fast... is he...?!'

Azul didn't have time to dwell on such thoughts, though. He could feel the enemy's hand drawing closer to his bare back.

His bulging eyes turned bloodshot in shock... and fear.

Azul was impulsive, yes, but he wasn't stupid.

Based on his experience with the armor, he knew what would happen if the same power was sent coursing through his flesh.

Due to many years of training and practice, Azul had tempered his body to its limits.

His muscles were rock-solid, and he took pride in his immense durability—as well as his superior speed—that made him invincible as a warrior.

But...

'If he could so easily get rid of that rough armor, what the hell is my body in comparison?!

The fear of death assailed Azul, forcing the extremely prideful man to yell out the words he didn't want to.

"F-FEYYYYY!!"

Like a baby, he cried out the name of his ally.

And then, a bolt of electricity surged forth from her location—almost as if she was waiting for him to scream her name.

~BZZZTTTTZZZ!~

Compared to Azul's [Lightning Field], the burst of lightning this time was unreal.

It charged in a straight, horizontal line, with its power ripping through the very air that filled the air.

Everything vibrated as it lunged at the man who stood behind Azul.

However...

"Arghhhhhhhhh!!!"

Azul felt a sharp bolt of lightning course through him, sending him to a whole new realm of pain.

He screamed as his entire body tingled with the overflowing currents that the Spell sent to his body.

He could feel his blood boiling and his bones jittering. His eyeballs danced in their sockets as his flailing lips wouldn't stop moving.

And then, after a few seconds of this agony, Azul collapsed to the ground.

"Urghh..."

Fortunately, since the Lightning Spell was meant to make the target unconscious, Azul wasn't dead.

His world just faded into black as frustration coursed through him.

Fey was younger than him in both age and experience in the organization, yet her talent and incredible skill made her stand on the same level as him.

Many even claimed that she was stronger than Azul, just because she was the one always ending up finishing off all their adversaries.

'She's not! It's because I take the vanguard and deal the first couple of strikes to the enemy so that she can finish them off!'

Their teamwork was a surefire way to win, but Azul had grown sick of it.

Unfortunately, he was now paying the price.

'Boss... I'm so sorry...'

Right until he lost consciousness, he didn't know where his opponent was... or what he would do next.

He simply closed his eyes and lost himself to the darkness.

Fey's eyes were wide open on shock as her Spell missed its mark.

No, that wasn't it.

Her Spell had gone straight for the target, but it ended up passing through it... almost as if he was an afterimage.

'What in the world is happening?!' As she thought this, she took a step back.

She had always had a weak constitution, so frontline battle was never her thing.

That was why, despite not liking the man, she had to rely on Azul to deal the first strike and distract the enemy before she took her time and overwhelmed them with her Magic.

'Why... why didn't that idiot follow the plan?!'

If he had, they wouldn't be in this situation right now! It was all his fault.

Fey quickly proceeded to use another Spell, this time something quick that could guarantee her protection.

Her affinity was in Wind and Lightning Magic, combined with her Quick-Casting Skill, made her a formidable Mage.

She wasn't talented or anything. She just dedicated herself to the craft of Magic.

... All of herself.

And the reward for that was her immense skill and power in Magic.

"Wind Barrier!" After chanting rapidly, Fey was able to quickly generate a defensive dome around her while preparing to use a new attack.

However—

~WHOOSH!~

Fey suddenly felt herself being pulled forward.

'E-eh...?'

She had no idea why. Only a blank space existed in front of her, yet she could feel an irresistible attraction to it.

'N-no! No stop!'

Her body uncontrollably left her barrier, and she was thrust out into the open by something she could not understand.

'No!'

Fey began moving her lips, chanting another Spell. Right as she got in the middle of it, though.

"Keuk!"

A sharp sensation spread to her throat as she felt something strong grabbing her neck.

Her chanting abruptly ended, and she found herself being thrust to the ground beneath her.

'No... no stop!'

~BOOOOM!~

Fey's frail body powerlessly crashed to her ground, sending sensations of shock and pain spreading across it.

"Gurgh!"

She passed out almost instantly, her blurry vision seeing a silhouette that stood above her.

It was the masked man!

'No... no please don't kill me...!'

She couldn't move her body, though.

Fey could only plead with her thoughts as she lost all feeling within her body and sank into an abyss.

... Not knowing what would come next.

'This guy...'

Evals Redart watched the whole battle on his seat from beginning to end.

He saw how the masked man had supposedly vanished, moving up and about, to deceive his enemies while striking their blind spots.

A broad smile coursed through his face.

'I've figured out your trick.' Evals slowly rose to his feet as he stared at the now apparent being before him

'He's using an Illusionary Skill.'

Unfortunately for this masked fellow, such things weren't going to work on someone like Evals.

'I see everything!'