

# Extras 641

## Chapter 641 The Executioner [Pt 1]

"Haaa..."

Esme sat in a meditative pose as she closed her eyes, completely immersed in her practice of absolute concentration.

Once again, she attempted to key into the connection that Elves shared with The Oracle, but felt absolutely nothing. She was getting increasingly frustrated—almost to the point where she began to think her identity as a Half Elf was the problem.

'But... Ater said I would be able to.'

Ater wouldn't make such an assertion without reason to back it up. That meant there had to be some way she would be able to connect to The Oracle.

'Is there really a point, though? Rey is already on his way to the Shrine, and he'll probably be able to connect to her without my help...' Once again, she was the only one who had no real use among the members of the team.

Even Emil had played a more revelant role than her—and she was inside Rey most of the time!

"I don't know anymore." She opened her eyes and gave a frustrated sigh, slowly rising from her position on the cushiony ground.

Her room was a simple space that had a bed, sparse furniture, and nothing else. The entire lodging was made practically overnight, and while her dwelling was just adjascent to Rey's, the difference in quality between both was like heaven and earth.

'It's clear that the Elves are still hostile towards me, even if they revere Rey.' She sighed.

Esme knew she could always report the matter to Rey, and he would instantly take her side, but she really didn't want to burden him with more things. He already had more than enough worries on his shoulders, and bothering him about her problems would be insensitive of her.

'Their actions are harmless at most...' She smiled, though not completely believing the thoughts she just rendered to herself.

After standing in the room for a few seconds, she realized there was nothing else for her to do.

"I'm bored. I should have gone with Rey to—"

~BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!~

In an instant, before Esme could concludse her thoughts, a roaring explosion consumed her entire room, destroying every single thing inside. Plumes of smoke, and a raging inferno drowned every single remnant within until there was nothing but ashes left.

Everything remained invisible—buried under the thick smoke and dust—and it was also covered in a particular barrier that shielded the blast from everything else around.

As such, no one would be able to hear the explosion or even see the destruction.



—At least, not until it was too late.

"Hehehe! Did we do it?"

"I think we did it! Finally! We killed her, right?"

"The Half Elf vermin... she's finally dead! Lord Rey will finally be free of her blight!"

These voices were from none other than Young Ones, Elves who were yet to reach the age of maturity, as they stared at the thick smoke and violent flames that dwelled in their barrier.

A total of fifty watched this with brilliant smiles on their faces—completely certain that their actions were for the greater good.

"The Elders are all afraid of taking responsibility, but... we won't forget Nature's teachings!" One of the Elves grinned as she raised her fist in the air.

She seemed like their leader, and while she was a Young One, she had a rather mature look compared to the rest. Her long, blue hair danced with the wind as the rest also raised their fists to mimic her.

Their excitement was born out of innocence, though their actions bordered the realm of catastrophe.

After all... they had no idea what they had just done.

~BOOOOOOOOOOOM!~

In a mere instant, the barrier they created around the explosion shattered apart. As soon as it was blown into bits, the previously optimistic Elves gasped in shock as they looked at the cause.

The barrier was strong enough to hold the explosion caused by a combination of their Magic, hence for someone to break through it, they had to generate more power than the might of half the Elves present.

No matter how powerful an Half Elf was, such power from one so young was unexpected.

Unless....

"You people... what the hell?" As this voice echoed from the depths of the smoke, the unharmed figure of Esme proceeded out.

She had a deep frown on her face, and her face shone with bright blue fury.

"What do you think you're doing?" Her voice trembled slightly, almost as if she was about to cry. Despite her expression showing rage, her eyes had sadness written all over them.

"What do you think? Getting rid of an abomination like you!"

"You shouldn't exist in this world!"

"Your death is the only way to appease nature and restore order!"

The Elves uttered these harsh words without regard for the consequence associated with them. They prepared themselves for a fight, all of them taking their stances and readying their Mana.

There was no hesitation in their eyes at all.



'T-these people...' Esme's thoughts trailed as she spread her senses to the area around her, wondering if they were the only ones present.

Sure enough, they weren't.

'The others aren't making a move. Is it because they're Elders and will be held responsible? Ah... I see what's happening here.' A wry smile formed on her face and she deeply exhaled.

'The Elders are somehow hoping these Young Ones can eliminate me, hence creating the best-case scenario.'

Esme nearly laughed at their foolishness, even though their actions caused a sharp sting in their heart.

'If they do succeed, do they really think they will be spared by Rey?'

As someone who knew Rey well, she wondered what he would do to the Elves—young or old—if they managed to actually kill her.

A part of her even wanted to give them a chance... just to satisfy her curiosity.

But, she decided against it.

'I can't afford to die. At the very least, for their sake.' Raising one of her hands, she decided to use a Skill she didn't particularly like utilizing due to its nature.

"[Executioner]."

## **Chapter 642 The Executioner [Pt 2]**

Esme got the [Executioner] Skill at the most tragic part of her life.

Back when she witnessed the state of her family—how they had been subjected to such torture and were reduced into entities less than human.

She killed everyone back then, and as a result of that... the Skill awakened.

{Skill Details}

[Executioner]

Tier: A

Ability: Releasing an Aura of death that can have varying effects on your targets. From mere incapacitation to insanity, to even their demise; depending on the intensity of the aura and the resistance of the target.

[End Of Information]

And so, when push came to shove... Esme chose to rely on this Skill for the first time in a very long time.

And, just as she expected, it didn't end well.

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"G-guarrk!"



"Keuk!"

"Uuu-uwaahhhhh!!!"

The Young Ones fell to their knees as they held various parts of their body, screaming for help throughout. Some held their heads, others clutched their chest, and a few embraced themselves very tightly as they quivered in both pain and fear. Their screams pierced the air, up to the point where the non-intervening Elders finally began to move.

In just a few seconds, the Elves were foaming in the mouth, sprawling on the floor, as their faces begged for forgiveness—or at least some semblance of mercy.

"S-stop your actions!"

"You're... you're hurting them!"

"D-do you have any idea what you're doing! Cease at once!"

Once the Elders rushed to the scene to assist the Young Ones, their concerned voices catching Esme's attention, she looked at them with slightly annoyed eyes.

The next thing that happened was their downfall as well.

They too slowly crumpled to the ground, their bodies unable to move due to the intensity of her Skill. All the surrounding Elders gasped as they stared at Esme with both shock and fear—most especially the former.

They could never have imagined that a Half Elf would be able to subdue so many at once.

An average Elven Elder had a Level over one hundred, and she also had at least one A-Tier Skill. Stronger ones had multiple A-Tier Skills, with higher Levels reaching the two hundred mark. Esteemed Elders had Levels in the two hundreds, with at least an A-Tier Class, alongside one S-Tier Skill.

All of this was only possible because of their long lifespan, and since Half Elves didn't inherit such long lifespans, it was never the case to see one overpower an Elder.

It never happened!

But not only was Esme easily subduing one Elder, but she was doing so to every single one around her. Both the Youngs and Elders were kneeling before her, completely at her mercy as she coldly stared at them.

Then—

~Fshuuuu~

—The intense pressure disappeared, almost as soon as it appeared.

The Youngs had all passed out at this point, but the hundreds of Elders around still had their consciousness—albeit very weakly.

More Elders were also approaching, whether from their homes, or the procession with Rey, and Esme could see the look on their faces as they saw her and the scene that was playing out.

Her home was ruined, and all the Elves were at her feet: it was easy to deduce what happened.



Still, it was obvious what the Elves would think.

Before any of them could say anything to her, or accuse her of more offenses that they generated out of their biases, she opened her lips and spoke up.

"I am not a filthy vermin, neither am I an abomination! I have done nothing wrong to you people, so you have no right to treat me like this!"

Her strong voice echoed in the ears of all the Elves around—both nearby and far.

"Why can't you just accept that I am a part of you the same way you are a part of me. I have tried to deny and cut off my ties with you, but I can't. Is it so hard to understand that I share some connection to your Race?"

There was pure silence as all of the Elves looked at her.

"Come on! Say something! Anything! Why do you look at me with such eyes? I have done nothing wrong to you since I arrived here. Maybe consider that your views of me are wrong! Maybe get to know me before judging me!" Esme's voice quivered even more as she strained her voice to pour her heart out.

It puzzled her that an outsider like Rey—who was a human, as well as someone from another world—could be accepted by the Elves while she was completely dejected and hated.

'I wish I had some kind of great scent that could just solve all of this, or I could say the right words, or just show them that I'm not who they say I am, but...'

"But—!"

"Look here, Half Elf... those Young Ones made a mistake. They were ignorant, and their actions were... impulsive, albeit well-intentioned." One of the Elves finally spoke up, causing Esme to stop dead in her own words.

"We as Elders know better. We promise not to hurt you... but do not mistake it as a sense of kinship from our end at all." Another spoke up.

Esme's heart experienced a sharp sting as she heard that.

"Half Elves should not exist. You are only being kept alive due to Nature's mercy... so it is not in our place to inflict judgment on you."

Esme shook her head at this point, completely unable to balance the growing frustration she was feeling with the anger and sorrow that slowly consumed her heart.

"Y-you people... ARRGH!"

~WHUUUUM!~

In one swift ascent, Esme launched herself into the sky and flew off, leaving the Elves to cater to their stricken ones. They stared at her with both hints of fear and disgust still, none of them even the slightest bit sorry about their actions. In their own eyes, it was good riddance.

"What the hell happened here?!" Right as the Elves were still recoiling from Esme's departure, the voice of yet another unlikable person echoed in their midst. Her presence was enough to cause many to groan, but they turned to her regardless.



It was Kara Verte.

## **Chapter 643 Glass**

"Was that Esme just now?"

Kara appeared among the Elves, clearly aware of their deep glare as she spoke and entered their midst. She flexed her glasses a little as she looked around her.

"And this destruction... this was her residence, was it not? What happened here?"

The Elves completely ignored Kara as they went on to pick their comrades—first the Youngs, and then the Elders who couldn't stand on their own.

"I'm asking for an explanation here!" She yelled out, fuming as she folded her hands.

"Shut up, filthy human."

Kara's gaze shifted in the direction of the Elf who spoke up first. The older-looking lady shot her a disdainful look as she spoke up some more. "Can't you read the room?"

The girl laughed a little sheepishly as soon as she heard that.

"Humans and their beast-like intelligence..." Murmurs began to leak out of the lips of other Elves, and Kara found herself looking in the direction of each word.

She focused on the lips of the Elves, taking in insult after insult.

"She has no idea how badly she stinks..."

"Just leave us alone already! We don't need the likes of you here."

"We have nothing to say to you!"

After the Elves were done with their first round of insults, all of them now standing still as they stared at Kara with sheer animosity, it was her turn to respond.

"Haa... my bad." Raising her hands in the air, she sighed softly.

In one of her hands was a vial, and the moment she raised both hands, the object slipped from her hand and fell to the ground.

The glass vial shattered.

Then, its forbidden content spread out and covered the area in no time at all.

"AAAAAANNNNNGGGG!!!"

Loud moans instantly filled the air as the Elves all crumbled to their knees, all of them growing weak due to whatever Kara had them inhale.

"It's my bad for trying to reason with you lot like sensible people and not the animals that you are..."

Kara slowly took off her glasses, revealing less of the submissive shy persona she had been displaying all along, and more of a certain kind of person.



Her gaze was stone-cold, and her demeanor was completely stern.

"Stupid animals that have no idea of their actions... the repercussions they cause, and the spiraling effects those will lead to." Kara sighed once again, suddenly possessing two vials of the very same glass in her hands.

'It's a good thing I captured Rey's scent and mixed in a highly addictive component from the flowers from the Dungeon to make the effects stronger.'

She only had a handful of the vials, but Kara reckoned that they would be more than enough to serve her purposes.

"I didn't want to have to use this, but it seems this is all you can respond to."

Upon seeing the vials, the Elves began to drool as they weakly stretched out their hands. Their eyes were desperate, yet their bodies refused to listen.

"P-please... Mercy..."

"W-we're sorry... please..."

"J-just a whiff... please... I'll do anything?"

Kara smiled as she watched them, her lips slowly parting as she whispered the words, "Anything...?"

They all nodded like obedient dogs, their tongues out as they completely submitted to her power.

'I should feel bad for this, but there's no room left in my heart for empathy. Especially towards people like this...'

Kara only pretended not to know what happened to Esme, as she had been observing everything that happened from the start. She even saw when the Young Ones arrived to assassinate Esme, and she could have stopped it at any time.

But she didn't. Why?

'Master Ater knew this would happen... and he specifically told me not to act. I certainly hope all of this works out well.'

She felt bad for Esme, but she also understood that the girl had to see the Elves for what they were. Sometimes, changing the hearts of people just couldn't be done.

Perhaps Esme just had to learn that the hard way.

'And I guess there's a lesson that should be learned by me too. I really should start wearing Rey's scent as a perfume, but wouldn't that be weird?' A slight hint of pink covered her cheeks as she slowly shook her head.

'No! No, it's not weird! This is work-related!'

Upon telling herself this, she further reminded herself of her mission in the Land—the one she had been given from the very beginning.

'Master Ater wants to permanently colonize these people for Sir Rey. They will be perpetually useful to him—for any purpose he requires.'



Her mission was to secure every asset and lay the groundwork for a lot of the methods he would employ to make that a reality.

'Master Ater will take care of the rest, but I suppose I have to play my part for now.'

Getting the refinery up and running was an essential part of it, but that was only the beginning. According to Ater, there was no need to rush into things, and Rey was probably going to suggest some of those things himself.

'All I have to do is follow my orders... for the sake of my job!'

Now returning her attention to the Elves, who were now crying and begging for more—like little children—Kara's smile widened even further.

"I'll be asking you some questions, and if you answer them well... I'll reward you with some of this goodness. If you do not, then you'll never get this pleasure again. Understood?"

"YES!"

"YES, UNDERSTOOD!"

"UNDERSTOOD PERFECTLY!"

All the Elves nodded and prepared themselves to respond truthfully to any and all of Kara's questions—just as she intended from the start.

'I guess I can start now, pending the time Rey and the Esteemed Elders return. There's a lot I'm curious about, but I should also be able to uncover more beneficial information for the cause if I let them run their mouth on a bunch of other things.'

Kara brought out a notebook from her pocket and opened the pages where her questions were inscribed in bold ink.

"Let's begin, shall we?"

## **Chapter 644 The Shrine**

?The Elven Shrine was an elaborate garden of beauty.

It had a vast interior, with flowers decorating multiple ends. The entire space seemed to have been made of flowers, and the amazing aroma that filled the air within its embrace added a more natural feel to its interior.

From the compound alone, it was obvious to the eyes that this was hallowed ground.

The cobblestoned path that led to the entrance was immaculately woven, chiseled to perfection, so that all those who approached the shrine came with the utmost impression of the place.

There were lakes on sides of the cobblestoned path, almost making its surface similar to a bridge—at least, in terms of aesthetics.

Then, the interior—made purely of aged stone and flowery materials—was another realm on its own. It had multilayered colors, thanks to the ambiance of the flowers and also the varying tiny lights that illuminated the enclosed space.



There was no window in the shrine, neither were there any sources of ventilation. As a result, without the small balls of light—akin to dancing fireflies—as well as the brilliant gems that decorated the ceiling, the place would be a completely dark void.

'It's cool for a place without ventilation...' Rey thought to himself after admiring the beauty of the Shrine that he now entered.

He felt it could be the effect of some Elven Magic, but he sensed no cluster of Mana anywhere. It didn't seem to be Magic at work, so he figured it had something to do with the statue that stood a considerable distance from him.

'That is...' His eyes narrowed as he observed the life-sized figure of an Elf with six arms.

Two arms carried something similar to a planet—like Earth, or perhaps this world. Two of the arms held a staff, almost as if bequeathing it to another. And finally, the last set of hands had their palms clasped together in what appeared to be prayer.

The statue was perfectly sculpted. If not for its faded ashen color, and lifeless state, Rey would have almost thought it was alive.

'Six hands too, huh? Is that how The Oracle looks like, or is it symbolic?'

He was beginning to regret not asking more questions prior to this moment. Realizing how his excitement made him careless, he decided not to make the same mistakes again.

'In any case... I'm finally here.' He smiled, taking in the ambiance one final time as he approached the statue with as much deference as he could muster.

He was the only one within the Shrine, as the rest of the Elves were waiting for him outside. Rey reckoned most of the crowd would have dispersed at this point, with only the Elders waiting for him to be done.

"Huu... haa..." Taking in a deep breath and exhaling it almost immediately, he closed his eyes and did his absolute best to strengthen his concentration and connection to everything around him.

"Greetings, Oracle."

As soon as he said those words, echoes of his voice danced in the air. It would have startled him if he wasn't intentionally placing all of his emotions in check.

"My name is Rey Skylar, and I desire an audience with you. I pray to you, with the appeal of Nature, to grant me your presence."

He bowed his head humbly, even going down to his knees. Rey was ready to do anything it took to see The Oracle and get their blessing.

There was nothing like pride when it came to getting what he desired.

"I am an Otherworlder, O' Oracle. My allegiance is not with the humans, and therefore I do not associate myself as a beast of sorts. I have allies like myself who came from another reality to this place, and right now... one of them has fallen under a curse of this world."

Rey had debated whether or not to reveal his identity as an Otherworlder to The Oracle, but after considering it heavily, he decided that it was ultimately the best approach.



'I need to do everything I can to gain their attention. I don't care what I have to say or do to get to that point!'

For Rey, telling the truth was the most compelling thing he could do.

"I need you to help save her. Please, Oracle, grant me an audience with you so I may save my friend!" He yelled out.

There was no response.

"We were summoned to this world to eliminate the Dragons. It is to my understanding that Dragons are the enemies of your people as well. The girl who has fallen under this curse is incredibly powerful, and we might not be able to take the Dragons down without her assistance. We need her. We... we need you!"

Despite going a step further, not only to gather sympathy, but to provide proper utility for the Oracle's intervention... there was still no response.

Rey began to grow frustrated—and understandably so—but he sucked it all in and decided to be more patient.

"Please, Oracle. If you desire it, I will leave your land as soon as you grant me this audience and hearken to my desires. I am willing to do anything for your aid!"

Of course, by anything, Rey had certain caveats in mind. Still, all of those could wait until he got the audience.

Unfortunately, no response came to him.

'So that's how you want to play it, huh? Very well...' Rey smiled internally as he steeled his heart.

'... Let's keep going at this!'

[Moments Later]

'This is useless! I've tried everything, but its either I'm being ignored, or there is no Oracle here.'

Rey almost sighed in exasperation, but he had to watch his behavior in front of the statue. There was still a chance that The Oracle was listening to and watching him.

"Huu... very well." He rose to his feet in a soft and gentle manner. "I suppose I will return later for another round of prayers."

'The Elves told me that The Oracle doesn't often respond to their prayers, so I guess I'll just have to be a bit more patient.'

As Rey turned back, he suddenly felt a wave of energy fill the room.

~VWUUUUUSH!~

Instantly, his eyes widened and he swiftly turned to face the statue that stood still within the room. He froze at what he saw.

'Damn...'

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## Chapter 645 The Whisper

?A faint whisper.

It echoed within Rey's mind, almost like a suggestion. The voice told Rey to kneel, and he found himself obeying in no time at all.

As Rey saw the eyes of the statue shine brightly, with markings of blue and white covering its pristine body, he felt the presence of an entity.

Was this The Oracle? Was it not? He had absolutely no clue.

All he knew was that this being, whatever they were, was great enough to cause his body and mind to shiver. The strong and sweet aroma that suddenly filled the air caused him to swallow his fast-forming saliva, and he could sense an allure of something unseen.

Then, the very same voice came to him once again.

~Bring the Half Elf in your company with you for your next visit, and an audience shall be granted of you.~

Rey's eyes widened as he heard this in his thoughts. There was nothing more stated, and despite the many questions that appeared in his mind as a result of the instruction he had just received, he remained quiet.

After a few seconds, he finally spoke up.

"Understood."

As soon as his words of confirmation echoed in the hall, the energies in the room began to dissipate.

The statue lost all sense of life, and Rey was left all alone in the Shrine after that.

'That was intense!' As he thought this, he jumped to his feet. A bead of sweat had formed on his face, but he brushed it off quickly as he bowed his head before The Oracle once again.

Afterward, he departed from the Shrine.

As he opened the grand door that led outside, he couldn't help but indulge in his troubled, but also curious thoughts.

'Bring Esme along with me? Why...?'

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"Y-you had an encounter?!"

"D-did you see The Oracle? Did you gaze upon their magnificence?!"

"Please tell us everything!"

As soon as Rey came out of the Shrine and met the Esteemed Elders, he was bombarded with questions from all directions.

It seemed like they could somewhat smell the remnants of the sweet aroma that suddenly filled the room back when he heard the voice, so they figured he had an audience with The Oracle. At the very least, that was confirmation to Rey that he indeed spoke to the real deal.



Still, the Elves and their obsession with this deity of theirs didn't make him show any form of excitement for his achievement.

"Yes. The Oracle spoke to me. Though, I didn't see them. Just the voice from the statue..."

Gasps instantly filled the air as Rey mentioned this.

It wasn't just the Esteemed Elders that were present, but a vast number of Elves—at least over ten thousand—still waited outside the compound for his return. As soon as all of them heard this, they went into a frenzy.

"He spoke to The Oracle on his first try!"

"Lord Rey truly is divine!"

"He is truly amazing!"

With everyone staring at him with starstruck eyes, Rey would have normally felt flustered—perhaps a little proud as well—but his mind was numbed by all of these sensations.

Plus, he had something else occupying his thoughts; something far more pertinent.

"I need to bring Esme here before The Oracle grants me a proper audience." He muttered, turning away from the Esteemed Elders, as he looked into the distance.

Rey noticed how pale their faces became. They probably weren't expecting a Half Elf to be invited to their most holy place, but since this was the instruction of The Oracle, verified by himself, he doubted any of them would render a complaint.

And, as expected, none of them breathed a word against him.

'Now then, I should go fetch Esme so we can go in there as soon as possible.' Since The Oracle had confirmed an audience with him, there was no need to waste any time.

And so, in order to spread his sensory capabilities so it covered the entire Elven Community, Rey removed his eyepatch and opened both of his eyes.

"Huuu..."

Instantly, a world of color was granted to him.

He noticed every single detail around him, and with all of his spatial awareness, he absorbed all of the information at a tremendous rate. In no time at all, his mind covered the entire settlement in order to find Esme.

But—

"Hm. That's strange..."

—He couldn't detect her anywhere within the Community.

'I can see traces of her energy, but... hold on, her house... and... what in the world happened?' Rey could feel certain emotions course through his body as his glowing eyes took in all of the information around him.

He could even see the guilty faces of the Esteemed Elders around him, and he figured they had some knowledge of what happened.



'Calm down, Rey...' He told himself, changing his focus from the Elves to Kara, who was waiting for him in his room.

'She must know something. I'll just question her directly.'

Rey put his eyepatch back on and inhaled deeply, allowing himself to acclimate to his Normal Mode of vision after utilizing Light Mode for a considerable length of time.

"L-Lord Rey..."

"I-Is everything okay, Lord Rey?"

"Lord Rey, please say something!"

Rey glanced at the Elders and maintained his facade despite the millions of thoughts that went on in his mind.

"Don't move a single inch."

Before they could open their lips to respond, a brilliant ray of light shone from him and he vanished from where he stood.

~VWUSH~

At that very instant, he appeared in his room, finding Kara standing still like a lifeless doll.

"Kara..."

"Kyaaaaah!" The girl screamed as soon as he called her name, dropping the note and pen she held in her hand as a result.

Rey easily manipulated space and returned them to her hands

—good as new—but his expression was still as grim as ever.

"... Where is Esme?" As soon as he spoke, his body vanished from the distance and appeared right in front of her.

She was still flustered, gulping at every second that Rey breathed down on her, but he didn't care about that.

All he wanted were answers.

"W-well... about that..." Kara gave an awkward smile as she looked away from Rey.

It was at that moment that Rey was certain that he would get his answers. He just wasn't going to like it.

"... Let me explain."

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## **Chapter 646 Suffocated Emotions**

"THEY DID WHAT?!"

The moment Rey uttered those words, feeling a boiling anger within him that threatened to destroy the massive and elaborate room he and Kara occupied, all of his rage instantly simmered away.



"G-guh..." He held his chest, feeling the last bit of his anger flow away.

The very nature of it made him even more annoyed, but those emotions were also stolen from him in no time.

"Sir Rey, please calm yourself." Kara was not aware that Rey was already calm—calmer than ever—so she made a worried face as she spoke to him.

"The Elves made a terrible decision, but they mostly did so out of ignorance and their pre-existing bigotry. In fact, with all due respect, I would say all of this is due to the lack of attention you placed on Esme..."

As soon as Rey heard this, his brows were raised and he stared Kara dead in her eyes, causing her to squeak even more.

"What do you mean by that?"

"The Elves respect and worship you, but it's not the same for her. If you paid her more attention, perhaps you'd have noticed how they treated her even after you took control of their Community."

"But I commanded them not to hurt or harm her."

"Indeed. The Elders will listen, but the Youngs are a lot more malleable than that, especially since their actions usually go without consequence."

"What are you implying?"

Kara sighed, flexing her glasses as she spoke up. "Your commands to not hurt Esme contradicts a pre-existing directive that tells the Elves to eliminate her. It's not enough that you gave them an instruction like that."

His intentions, his commandments... those were never going to be enough to protect her.

"Haa... I knew I shouldn't have brought her here." He sighed, sitting on the bed as he rubbed his face with his hand.

"Please do not say that, Sir Rey."

Rey turned to Kara, who seemed genuinely concerned about the whole matter despite having no real reason to be. He opened his lips to ask a question to that effect, but quickly thought against it, shaking his head in the process.

"You're right. Esme probably had the same line of thought after everything that has happened." He murmured. "Reinforcing it will only make things worse."

Jumping back to his feet, he ignored the frustrations he was feeling and activated [Dead Calm] to perfectly lock in to the situation and his objectives at the moment.

"I'm going to go look for her. There's no time to waste."

Not only did he desperately want to meet The Oracle as soon as possible, but he was genuinely worried about Esme. In fact, the latter was more of a driving force for him at this point.

"Thank you, Sir Rey." Kara bowed politely, and he shrugged.

"What about you? What have you been up to?"



"I have been conducting... surveys on the Elves. I also plan to question the Esteemed Elders, but I'd like to have your direct permission and blessing so it can be produc—"

~VWUSH!~

Before Kara completed her statement, the entire environment around both her and Rey shifted, and they were transported to the compound of the Shrine.

Unsurprisingly, the Esteemed Elders and all the other spectators were still in place. Just as he commanded, none of them had moved a single inch from where he commanded them to remain.

"—tive. Ahh...?" Kara's eyes widened as she suddenly found herself surrounded by unfamiliar territory, while being gazed upon by the widened eyes of the Esteemed Elders and the remnant Elves that watched from beyond the compound.

"Listen to me..." Rey spoke, his tone low yet loud enough for everyone present to hear him perfectly well.

"You will cooperate completely with Kara, and you will answer all of her questions. Failure to meet my expectations will lead to severe punishments, do you understand?"

All of the Elves—even ones who were not Elders—nodded instantly.

"If you fully cooperate, then..." Rey released some of his scent out to the Elves, and they instantly became weak in their legs.

Not to the point of kneeling, but they certainly felt ecstasy.

"I believe I have made myself perfectly clear." Rey sounded stern, but not because he was angry. That emotion was already deprived of him to a large extent.

No, Rey felt impatient.

Anxiety for the whereabouts of Esme plagued his thoughts, but all of those were dulled by [Dead Calm]. His actions only reflected the urgency of the situation, and once he got an affirmative response from the Elves before him, he proceeded to the next phase.

"I leave the rest to you." He turned to Kara, removing his eyepatch at that very instant.

Once more, the world became a lot more detailed, and he could see the flow of all Mana around. The effects were especially rich in such a place as the Elven Community.

With his ability to detect and follow the flow of Mana, he was able to catch traces of Esme's and then trace its direction.

"Where did you fly off to...?" He wondered as he swiftly ascended to the sky and pursued the sparks of blue and white that glittered in the air.

'... Esme!'

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As soon as Rey flew off, leaving Kara with the Esteemed Elders, who now stared at the girl in glasses with complicated expressions.



On one end, they despised her—almost to the point of giving her deadly stares—but they were also bound to obey their Lord. Kara easily perceived this and smiled, taking off her glasses as she clapped her hands.

"Here's what's going to happen..." She began, taking steps forward while her fearless grin remained constant.

"You're going to tell me about a certain Elder that I've grown quite curious about." Kara reached the High Elder and whispered words into her ears.

"I'm referring to Ciela."

She noticed as the High Elder's body froze up, and the surrounding Esteemed Elders who heard this also had pale expressions on their faces.

'As expected... there is indeed more to this story than I imagined.' Kara licked her lips as she thanked her lucky stars that Rey commanded them to cooperate with her.

'I don't need to use that other method anymore.'

## **Chapter 647 Overwhelming Release**

'I've been thinking about it for some time now, but I still can't make sense of it. Why does The Oracle want Esme?'

As Rey sped through the air, his speed causing shockwaves as the space around him trembled, his mind was busy with thoughts as his eyes traced the trail of Esme's Mana.

His senses were also spread far and wide, so as soon as she entered his wavelength, he would sense her instantly.

Still, his head couldn't stop going through the condition that The Oracle gave him.

'Every Elf despises Half Elves. The way they treated Esme is further proof of that, and apparently it's because of the commands of Nature. Doesn't that mean The Oracle is directly responsible for this bigotry against Half Elves?'

Why would The Oracle want Esme in their presence then?

'Do they want to eliminate her? If that's the case, then is it really safe to do as The Oracle pleases?'

He didn't know what to think.

On one end, he didn't want to think that The Oracle had that nefarious intention. Even if they did, he wanted to assure himself that he could protect Esme.

However, on the other end... he didn't want to take the risk.

'I don't want to put her in such danger. But... if I don't do this, then my chance of saving Alicia has returned to zero.'

Rey was still in the process of sorting out these thoughts when he felt something enter his radar.

'ESME!' His eyes widened instantly as his heart skipped a beat.



In a flicker, he easily closed the gap that existed between himself and his target, creating a spatial rift as he rushed at full speed.

~VWUSH!~

His figure materialized behind her, and a shockwave followed his arrival due the built-up velocity he created from his sudden teleportation.

"Esme..." He whispered, watching her from a distance of only a few inches.

The way her pure white hair flowed behind her felt surreal. Her long gown danced with the wind as the two of them remained stationary in the clouds. It seemed as though she was standing on a firm surface despite stepping on nothing.

"Rey...? I didn't expect you to be done so quickly." She slowly turned and looked at him, her gem-like eyes greeting his glowing crimson ones.

At that moment, Esme looked like the prettiest thing in the world.

Rey didn't know if it was due to him viewing her, and the rest of reality with Light Mode Vision, or if it was just the atmosphere that caused it.

But... he felt his heart race tremendously as he stared at her. Before realizing it, he closed the short distance between them and hugged her deeply. "I'm sorry for neglecting you, Esme. I... I'm glad you're okay. You're safe. I heard everything from Kara! I should have been there, to... I won't let such a thing happen again!"

Esme hugged Rey back, but in a softer manner than the tight way he gripped her and pulled her close to his chest.

It almost felt like he didn't ever want to let her go.

"I'm fine, Rey. I just decided to take a flight to clear my head. And... well, thanks for worrying about me." Her last words were awkward, and her cheeks were flushed with shades of pink.

Rey couldn't see any of that, though, since he was hugging her.

He, instead, thought she was flustered by his sudden and overwhelming display of emotion, so right as Esme was making herself comfortable in his embrace—about to wrap her arms around him a little tighter—he pulled back.

"S-sorry! I guess I just got a little extra..." He laughed with awkwardness, scratching his head like an idiot.

He noticed a slight look of disappointment in Esme's eyes, but the expression was quickly snuffed out. Instead, Esme gave a slight giggle and shrugged it all off.

"It's fine. I didn't mind."

"Whew... I see..."

After that, the next few seconds that existed between them were occupied by silence. They both looked at each other with similar gazes—longing, but also not longing.



"Are you mad?" Rey asked, his voice a lot calmer now that he now had full rein of his emotions. He never used [Dead Calm] with Esme, so the moment he sensed her presence, the Skill was instantly done away with. That accounted for his outburst of emotions.

Right now, though, he was being intentionally mellow.

"Mad at who?"

"The Elves? Me? I-I don't know, but you look a bit distressed... concerned, maybe?"

Rey didn't want Esme to hide her pain from him—not anymore.

She had suffered enough in silence, and this only persisted thanks to his insensitivity. Now that he knew this, he wanted her to tell him everything.

"Oh, if you are referring to what happened earlier with those Elves, I'm fine. I got over my annoyance already." She responded.

Esme didn't seem to be lying, but Rey didn't know whether to believe her or not.

"You sure?"

"Yep! You rightly noticed my worry and concern, but it isn't because of them." Esme said, slowly turning away from Rey to point at something in the distance.

"Look at that."

For the first time since he sensed Esme, Rey took his eyes and full attention away from her and focused on the place where she pointed at.

That was when he saw it for the first time—the blight that scourged the land.

A far distance from where both Rey and Esme floated, stretching out for miles upon miles, was a barren wasteland.

The ground was darkened and completely bare. From where they stood, it looked like an ugly scar upon the beautiful lands that existed before the tainted lands came into view.

Everything about it seemed rotten and ugly, and it was a mystery that such a place could exist in the same paradise that was the Land of the Elves.

Rey had his widened eyes take all of this in, completely silent.

"What in the world... happened here?"

## **Chapter 648 The Tainted Lands**

"Isn't that...?!"

While still observing the darkened lands, Rey cast his gaze closer to the beautiful area and noticed something peculiar.

Existing at the great divide that separated the fertile, lush lands of the Elves from the rotten and darkened land of blight was a camp. The camp was surrounded by walls, which were further reinforced with Magic, protecting them from enemy attacks and perhaps the corruption that encroached upon the land. 'Their barrier isn't good enough, though. Parts of the walls are already darkening. It's only a matter of time before the cap becomes infested as well.'



The plants around the compound were already withering off, and their dead leaves were fading away at a slow rate. Rey estimated it would take only a few more days before the entire area was covered.

Several tents—in their thousands—existed within the compound, and it was clear what kind of place this was.

"I think you just stumbled on the stronghold of the Elves. This must be their battle camp." Rey spoke up, his eyes narrowed as he observed the details of the place.

Everything added up.

"I know. I've been staring at it for a while now..." Esme murmured as she keenly watched the camp.

There were a few patrol Elves walking here and there, but for the most part, the grounds seemed abandoned. From the way it appeared, most of the people in the camp were indoors; a rather odd phenomenon.

"You'd have expected it to be a lot livelier, especially since it's still daytime."

Rey's observation received a nod from Esme, and while the both of them said nothing specific, the two could already see the problem that plagued the area.

After turning to look at each other for a second, they both opened their lips to confirm their thoughts.

"Miasma..."

"Yeah. It's Miasma..."

One would never expect to find perverted Mana in a land as pure as this, but from the sheer magnitude of the corrupted lands, and the scale at which it was spreading, there appeared to be no other explanation.

With the problem already identified, the next question remained.

—Now what?

"Do you want to check it out? The camp... and all that?" Rey asked Esme calmly.

He already knew her answer, even if she tried to hide it. The mere fact that she was looking at the camp for so long, while showing an expression of concern, proved that she wanted to do something about the situation.

'I'm not sure she'll be willing to admit it, though.' If he hadn't asked her anything, she would have probably tried to wave it all off.

But now...

"I am curious about it." Esme answered. "Want to check it out together?"

Rey smiled as she said this.

'I'd rather just return to the Shrine and meet The Oracle. But, I can tell that this is somewhat important to her, so...'

"Yeah. Let's go."



Rey took her hand and they both descended to the camp.

\*\*\*\*\*

"Guark! Kack! Arrck!"

Several strained voices filled the interior of the massive tent, creating a dreary atmosphere within the room.

Elves were lined up on moss-coated beds, all of them looking pale and incredibly skinny. The beautiful hair of the Elves were falling off, and their beauty could hardly be seen as a result of their sickness-stricken features.

The eyes of the Elves looked like they were about to fall from their sockets, and every breath they made was strained to the limit.

They all looked and felt downright miserable, and those who attended to them could see that.

"O' Nature... have mercy on these ones. Lend out your mighty gracious hand and cure them; with your breath provide them relief... and with your grace cure them."

Those were the prayers that Tatiana Lin Kimera rendered as she prayed for her fellow sisters who constantly suffered and writhed in pain.

She was the one in charge of the infirmary—this accursed place that now reeked of death.

Her subordinates were all running around, trying their hardest to aid as many patients as possible, but Tatiana knew the ugly truth.

'Unless Nature intervenes... unless The Oracle hears our pleas... there is no hope for these ones.'

They were all doomed to die.

Only very few people ever came out of this tent alive, and for those... they were weakened to the point where they had to be placed out of commission for battle. The survival rate of this corruption was less than one percent, which meant that most Elves in this batch wouldn't live.

In fact, it was possible that none of them would.

Once their corruption reached a certain threshold, they would have to be transferred to another tent where Elves were—sadly—left to die.

At the very least, a few people among these hundreds still had hope.

"AAAAAANNNNNGGGG!" Very loud moans echoed from outside the tent as Tatiana was engaged in deep thoughts.

It caused her to instantly cease her worries and raise her head. The other attendants that were running around also stopped as soon as they heard the voices.

Something about the way the sounds echoed suggested very perverted and unnatural thoughts, and the Elves all stared at each other in confusion.

"G-get back to work, you all! I will go and investigate!"

The younger workers instantly shrieked and nodded, scurrying off into action, while she marched towards the Tent's exit.



'What was that sound? Are some of the patrol officers messing around during such a precarious moment?' Tatiana doubted it.

The Camp was in such a dreary state that no one was in the mood for any activity except survival. They could only hold off for a week at most without some kind of backup from the Community, and even then...

'We'll practically be calling them to their graveyard.'

Tatiana bit her lip as she exited the tent and readied herself for whatever she would encounter.

But, much to her shock... her eyes witnessed something absolutely absurd.

"H-huh...?"

All the Patrol Elves were prostrating to a certain man—a human—who had a hooded fellow standing beside him.

Their bodies trembled as more moans escaped their lips, further puzzling Tatiana who took everything in sheer surprise.

Then, the man glanced at her.

"You there..." He said with a smile written on his face.

"... You will do."

## **Chapter 649 The Elven Camp [Pt 1]**

"H-huh...?"

Before Tatiana could croak out a single word, she found herself suddenly right in front of the man who stared right at her.

His presence was so intimidating that, despite him being human, she didn't think of that fact at all. Instead, she trembled in his presence—even when he placed his hand on her shoulder.

"You have a high enough position here, so you'll be the one to tell me of your current situation."

The man didn't make any requests.

He gave commands.

Tatiana found herself slowly nodding, despite her aversion and pride. She wasn't one to have a pliable mind, but perhaps all of the stress had gotten to her.

Maybe, after seeing her sisters sprawling on the ground, at his feet, she already knew that fighting him was impossible. She, as well as her sisters, were completely at this man's mercy.

"Are you... a Dragon?" Tatiana muttered as she looked at him.

She didn't expect a response from him, and even if he did respond, there was no way to tell if he was speaking the truth.

Still, her curiosity managed to leak out of her lips... hence the question.

"No. My turn for questions..." The man took one step forward as he gazed into her eyes.

Tatiana shivered even more, her ears quivering as she squeaked under his overwhelming gaze.



"What in the world happened here? Tell me everything!"

\*\*\*\*\*

'I see. I see now...'

Rey was walking right behind Tatiana, who was leading them to the infirmary, per his own instructions.

His hand was on his chin as he thought deeply about what Tatiana told him.

'She doesn't know too much about the battlefield, since she's a non-combatant, but it seems the situation with the Elves is quite deadly.'

As soon as he opened the door of the tent, he was able to catch a glimpse of how severe the predicament of the Elves was.

'Goodness...' His exposed eye nearly widened, though he controlled himself.

Glancing slightly at the hooded Esme, he wondered what her reaction would be. Unsurprisingly, she appeared distraught at the sight of hundreds of Elves in sheer agony.

The Miasma spreading through their bodies couldn't be stopped by any Elven Magic, and for those who were lucky enough to develop a resistance to Miasma and even recover, their Mana Pool would be so drained that they wouldn't be able to fight for a while.

No matter how one looked at it, this was a terrible situation for the Elves.

"There's another center for the terminally ill, who are condemned to death, but... there is still hope for at least some of these ones." Tatiana whispered, slowly turning to look at Rey, who kept a stoic gaze as he looked around.

He was checking the Status Window of all the Elves, and sure enough, he could see all of them experiencing Miasma Poisoning—a severe case of one, especially.

'I give them a few days tops... they'll die.' He narrowed his gaze on Tatiana and noticed some remnant Miasma staining her Mana.

'She has also been affected without realizing it. If I leave this thing be... the results will be catastrophic.'

According to Tatiana, there used to be tens of thousands of Elves in the Camp, but now there were no more than a few thousand.

So many had perished due to the Dragons and their newfound power, and for those who survived their onslaught, they were inevitably done in the Miasma Poisoning.

There was no escape for any of the Elves in this tragedy.

"Do you want to help them?" Rey whispered words into Esme's ears, causing her body to nearly jump as a result.

She had her entire body covered in a hooded cloak, so most of her features were hidden. However, since Rey could see through her attire, he could tell how flustered she was once he posed the question.

Esme tried her best to hide it, though.



"S-sure..." Her best attempt at a casual answer further proved his point, and he chuckled, almost guffawing.

"Okay then."

Rey took a step forward, instantly engulfing the entire tent in his [Perfect Domain Of The Divine]. Not only was he connected to everything and everyone in the room, but he knew every single detail about them.

Thanks to his elevated consciousness and incredible speed, he could process everything even faster than a normal person could process small information.

Then—

~VWUUUUSH~

A sudden surge of energy rose from his body as he sent it rushing throughout the entire area.

'I can freely manipulate my Mana now, thanks to my current Skill-set. Using my Domain, I can add precision to my Mana's application to the surrounding.'

Removing his eyepatch, he could see everything with utmost clarity—the darkened and perverse energy of the Miasma, and the vestiges of Mana that were being snuffed out.

He already knew of his mission at that point.

"I'll cure all of them at once."

This was the first time he would be doing something like this, but he knew enough about Miasma Poisoning after observing its theories. He also knew precisely what was wrong with the Elves and where.

As such, he directed his Mana to those areas to flush out the corrupted Mana—almost like a cleanser that rinsed off all unwanted particles from a surface.

'It's usually dangerous to do something like this with one's Mana, but since I can see the flow of Mana, and I can address all of them on an individual level, I can multitask and attend to all of them with utmost care at the same time.'

And with that, Rey covered the entire tent in bright light, easily overriding the darkness that had taken over the dreary tent.

Within mere minutes... he was done.

"Huu..." Leaking out a steamy breath, he looked at the hundreds of Elves that were stunned by their complete recovery.

Their eyes were wide open, and tears rolled out of their eyes as they stared at themselves and one another—absolutely amazed and relieved that they no longer had to suffer the way they did mere moments ago.

Then, they all turned to the one who made all of this possible.

—The man called Rey Skylar.



## Chapter 650 The Elven Camp [Pt 2]

"W-who... who are—?"

Tatiana didn't even know where to begin as she looked at Rey. Both hands were above her lips as she gasped and gushed.

She looked at Rey with both respect and caution. Deference and fear filled her eyes, and the same could be said about the others who were slowly sitting up on their beds.

"I am not an enemy." Rey softly responded, almost dismissively. He looked around him for any further traces of Miasma, just in case, but confirmed it was all gone.

"T-then are you... sent from The Oracle?"

Rey wondered how to respond to the question. He knew full well the religious views of the Elves. If he went under the canopy of The Oracle, then he and Esme would be treated with overall less suspicion.

He could even help them out more conveniently.

'But is that really what's beneficial in the long run? I mean, those in the Community see me as their leader—an entity similar to The Oracle, but not quite.

He wanted to determine if he should just continue down that path.

Ultimately, however...

"Yes. We are from The Oracle."

... Rey decided to go with the much safer option. Right now, they had all the cards. Besides, he could always take his words back if it came down to it.

"R-really?!"

"The Oracle answered our prayers!"

"I knew I wouldn't be forsaken by Nature's blessing!"

Rey nearly rolled his eyes as the Elves began to celebrate all about their salvation—almost easily forgetting about the deaths of thousands of their comrades.

Just because they were spared, they began to say stuff like, "The Oracle is merciful!" or "Nature truly favors the pious!"

This statement subtly connoted that the many who died weren't pious enough, or weren't deserving of such mercy and kindness.

He found that to be absolutely nonsensical.

'Still, it's none of my business...' His thoughts trailed, and his heart remained still despite all that was playing out in front of him.

"Take me to the rest of your ill. The moment of salvation has come"

As soon as Rey said this, Tatiana's face brightened up, and all of the Elves began to jump around in excitement. At that point, they all looked like little children.



"Once we're done with all of those, though, I'll need to have a word with your leader." The instant Rey heard this, he could see the faces of the Elves grow sullen.

Still, they could not refuse his authority, so they all nodded.

"Understood!"

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Rey went on to a few more tents—the first one being the place where patients who had reached the final point of Miasma Poisoning were kept.

There was usually no hope designated to them, but he healed them.

The shock on everyone's faces after seeing this miracle was priceless. Elves were a very hopeful race, but even they knew that their comrades in the Tent were going to die; and very soon at that.

But, The Oracle's Messenger worked his wonders incredibly well.

He also went to the Tent where the early and less severe cases of Miasma Poisoning were being addressed. Once again, he healed them all.

After all of these benevolent acts done by him, with Tatiana leading the way through most of them, it was finally time for what he asked for.

—An audience with the leader.

The Elves, led by Tatiana and a few high-ranking officials in the army, took Rey to a particularly secluded tent amidst the livelier Camp.

The tent was elaborate, but there was a dreary feeling around it—like the stench of death.

It only grew worse once one entered inside.

The interior was dark, almost as if shrouded in thick fog. There was a large parlor area, which seemed to be used for battle strategies and general meetings among the higher-ups. However, behind that was a corridor that led to another room.

That was where Rey walked into, led by Tatiana.

On his way there, though, he saw a few Enchanted Items that were made by the KariBlanc Group hanging on the walls, or on a shelf.

Somehow, that brought a smile to his face—not that he showed it, of course.

"Here she is..." In a hushed tone, Tatiana whispered after reaching the end of the passageway, gesturing her hand in the direction of a large bed.

Atop the bed was an individual who was laying there still—almost like a corpse.

No, she could practically be described as a corpse.

All her hair had fallen off, and her pale skin was incredibly dry and malnourished. She was skinny to the bone, and while her eyes were wide open and unblinking, they seemed completely lifeless.

'And yet... she's still alive.' Rey's eye widened slightly as he entered the room, his steps measured but constant.



It was amazing just how tenacious the Elf was—almost to the point where Rey felt an incredible sense of respect for her.

'She must be going through unimaginable pain right now, and yet... she doesn't want to die.' A smile formed on his face as he approached even more.

"W-wait, if you get too close—!"

Rey ignored the warnings, and as soon as he crossed a particular threshold, a burst of Miasma rushed towards him with such thick intensity.

'I see. So the Miasma is so dense here that it'll attack anyone and poison them.' Unfortunately for such, however, Rey was immune to all Negative Status Conditions.

Miasma Poisoning was no exception.

The dreary room's lights constantly flickered as Rey took another step, almost like a scene cut out of a horror film.

He stared at the emaciated woman's face and smiled.

"I'm going to make sure you live."

[STATUS WINDOW]

- Name: Feralia Kai Sereth
- Race: Elf
- Class: Esteemed Grand Mage (S-Tier)
- Level: 250 (90.9% EXP)
- Life Force: 5 /1,500 (Dropping)
- Mana Level: 10/4,000 (Dropping)
- Combat Ability: 3,900 (Sealed)
- Stat Points: 0
- Skills (Exclusive): [Absolute Runic Mastery]. [Farsight]. [Time Stop]
- Skills (Non-Exclusive): [Grand Magic Application]. [Greater Spell Casting]. [Grand Rune Layout]. [Elevated Magic Sense]. [Life Force Recovery]. [Grand Mana Recovery]. [Absolute Elemental Magic].
- Alignment: Lawful Good

[Additional Information]

An Esteemed Elder among the Elves, in charge of fighting the war against the Dragons. A hero for the Elves, as well as the one recognized as the most powerful among them.

Negative Status Condition: Miasma Poisoning (Severe)

[End Of Information]