

# Extras 731

## Chapter 731 Crossroads

"I know you're not a bad person, Rey."

As Rey heard this, he prepared himself for what was about to come. It wasn't very difficult to steel his heart and consider the very worst when it came to the current situation with Esme.

In all honesty, he was very tired.

Emotionally speaking, he had exhausted a lot of his energy, and he was practically running on fumes. His expression remained lull, and this carried on throughout his conversation with Esme—or more accurately, Esme's conversation with him.

"You're an amazing person. I've looked up to you for the longest time too. You saved me more times than I can think of, both directly and indirectly, and I owe a lot to you..."

Rey still had his heart steeled despite how soft her words were.

"My... my feelings for you have not changed as well, even though I really wish they would. I don't... hate you or anything, but..." As she went through the right words to say, Rey's thoughts were at a standstill.

He didn't want to think anything, or feel anything.

He just listened.

"... There's just so much going on with me right now. I... I can't even look you in the eye right now. I'm angry, and sad, and disappointed, and a bunch of other things... and most of this confusion is because of you." At this point, she stared at Rey, seeing his unassuming expression and calm reaction towards all she was saying.

Whether it was for the better or worse, his facade prompted her to continue with her train of thought; hence, finishing what she started.

"I need some space, Rey."

"Space...?"

"Yes. Space away from you..." She sighed, rubbing her forehead as she uttered those words. "I don't think I'll be returning to the Western Continent with you and Kara." Rey listened to this in silence, not leaking out a sound for even a second. He watched Esme's unease as she uttered those words, but he could also see her resolute eyes and determined expression.

He was certain she was very serious in her position, and there was very little he could do to convince her to leave with him.

It wouldn't even be unfair for her.

"I understand..." Was all he had to say after all she told him.

Before she could get another word in, and before he would be tempted to say any more, Rey got up from where he sat and began to walk away.

He could feel her eyes on him, and he could also see her even when he turned it was his back that faced her. Still, he didn't stop until he reached the door and touched the knob.

"Rest well... Esme."

He left afterwards, shutting the door lightly.

It could have been his imagination, but Rey heard silent sobs right as he was about to close the door. He shut his eyes, dulled his senses, and completely shut off the room from his mind. For Esme's sake... and for his sake... this was for the best.

'I...' As soon as he closed the door and took a few steps in the hallway, Rey clutched his chest and felt his racing heart. He had been unable to properly think and feel thanks to his suppression of those aspects of himself, but there was only so much he could do.

His longing was not quenched by the System, and his thoughts were slowly getting unbridled by his mind, allowing them to flow.

'I... also have feelings for you, Esme.' His cheeks were red, and his hand dug deeper into his chest in an attempt to stop its reaction.

Nothing about it stopped though.

He felt a surge of excitement, as well as a pang of pain anytime the image of the Half Elf came to his mind. It was a frustrating experience for Rey—one he wouldn't wish for even his worst enemies.

In all honesty, he was very tempted to run back into the room and embrace her.

He wanted to apologize once again and tell her to give him another chance. He wanted to hug her, and maybe, just maybe...

'No. No, I can't.' He told himself. 'It's a bit too late for that.'

When she revealed her feelings for him, why didn't he tell her he felt the same? Why didn't he hug her or kiss her back? Rey knew the reason well, and Esme was sure to understand it just as certainly.

He still had feelings for Alicia. That was yet to change a single bit.

Never before had he liked two girls this fiercely, feeling conflicted about which side to pick and which to abandon. It seemed Esme did her best to make the decision easy for him.

'My weakness led to this outcome. I feel so useless at this point, it's sickening...' His thoughts flowed as he inhaled and exhaled deeply.

Despite winning the battle for the Elves, even getting everything he came to the Land of the Elves for, Rey didn't feel like a winner.

No, not one bit.

He felt he had lost too many valuable things, and the truth about H'Trae weighed heavily on his heart. All of the things he had faced and experienced stripped off the last aspect of his innocence, forcing him to grow up and confront issues he never wanted to.

The Rey that currently walked down the hallway was different from the one that first arrived.

So much... so much had changed.

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[A Few Days Later]

"It's finally time."

Ater's smile broadened widely as he floated above the Capital of the United Human Alliance.

His crimson eyes reflected the City in all its majesty, and his hair danced around with the wind as the rest of his body remained still. Still donning his usual dark suit, he appeared majestic, and while watching the exquisite city from above, he inhaled and exhaled deeply.

"Once I am done, I am sure Master will be very pleased." He cast his gaze on all the players he set on his playground.

There was no need to hold back any longer.

### **Chapter 732 Crisis In The City**

Chaos.

That was the state that was bestowed upon the Capital that fateful day.

The City was in flames and echoes of anguish echoed from within it. The residents fled for their dear lives as destruction spread throughout—rapidly consuming everything in its path.

As buildings crumbled, lives were snuffed out in an instant. Men, women, children; the devastation everywhere did not discriminate. It took the lives and future of all of them without making any exception.

Monsters emerged from nothingness—as if appearing from thin air—to attack the City in an overwhelming horde. They broke down all that stood in their way, not intelligent enough to organize any sort of direction.

Their only purpose was chaos, and they performed it well.

If it had only been Monsters that attacked, perhaps there could be some semblance of hope for these people—these helpless people of the Capital.

But... there was more.

Dragons—two of them—hovered above the great city, partaking in the banquet of chaos that was being held. A single breath of theirs was able to destroy buildings, and their control over the aerial landscape made them invincible. Nothing could stop them... and so they continued.

On and on.

Amidst all of this chaos, a certain group of five watched from a rather tall building. They took in the tragedy that they were privy to—the fall of the precious haven for humanity in the harsh world of H'Trae. But these people couldn't care less. After all, they were strangers.

"The damage is a lot more than I expected. This is... damn..." One of the deserters whispered as he stared at the burning buildings that were closest to his position.

He could hear wailings and tons of cries from beneath him, and it only grew worse.

The sickening effect of the City's destruction was the cry of so many innocents. Their death was towards a good cause, and not all of them would perish, but still... it was very hard to watch and listen to their screams.

"When are we going to assist them? I think we should go no—"

"Wait a few moments more..." Felicia muttered, her eyes fixed on the magnificent sight of devastation that was spread out before her.

It wasn't that she enjoyed the destruction of lives and properties so much, but her plan was simply a pragmatic one.

'We need to make them desperate enough. A few more seconds, and we'll swoop in...'

She and her allies would be the heroes, and by the time they were done dispatching all of the creatures, they would all be recognized by the people of the City.

It was perfect in every sense of the word.

'Justin, Clark, Trisha, and Belle agreed to be on our side, so they are also on standby. We're the ones who get to shine during this period, but they'll serve as help to rescue and mitigate the damage done.'

Everything had been planned already, and Felicia was glad to see everything going exactly according to her masterplan.

"Okay, everyone..." She turned to all of her allies.

Like the obedient dogs that they were, all of them waited for their orders, their faith completely placed in her. It made Felicia happier than ever.

"... Let's go!"

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The plan was simple, and it was executed that way as well.

Felicia and her team would be scattered to various parts of the City, aiding people and defeating powerful Monsters in order to be recognized by the people as the Heroes who stopped such a great tragedy.

They would be heroes in all senses of the word.

And so, as Felicia raced throughout the City, she spotted people who required help, and also the Monsters who desired to do them harm.

Smiling to herself, she dashed forward and prepared her twin stilettos—her preferred choice of weapons.

She was also donning light armor—all of them provided for by the Reaper Group.

Right now, she was overflowing with so much power that it felt too unreal. Still, she wondered how she would fare against a Monster.

Her opponents were a pair of Orcs—massive, brutish, tough, and immensely strong.

Felicia wondered how the Reaper Group got their hands on so many Monsters and transported them to the Capital without notice, but chose not to think too deeply about the matter.

Anything was possible through Magic, after all.

~SWUUSH!~

In quick movements, she was able to dispatch such hulking entities with relative ease. 'Ah... that easy?'

It wasn't that they were weak... she was just strong.

She was getting a lot of assistance from her equipment, but her physical abilities weren't particularly lacking either.

'At this rate, we should be done faster than I calculated. That's good...' Scouring for her next destination, Felicia looked around while her thoughts were still mulling over the possibility of such an organized tragedy like this.

She already knew there was a Black Market and Criminal Underbelly in this world. Yes, it was taken down, but there was always a good chance that they weren't fully gone. If she had to guess, the Reaper Group was the one running it now.

'If that's the case, they could use some unknown transportation network, forbidden Magic, or any other means, to achieve this grand scheme of theirs.'

According to the Reaper Group's supposed leader—Rebal—this plan had been in the works for a very long time, so it only made sense that the Monsters and all the other resources necessary for such a large scale attack had been gathered over the years.

'Even the Dragons...' Felicia looked up and saw the two creatures circling the City, creating artificial destruction to further increase the fear of the people.

'I can't kill even one of those things, but... thankfully we don't have to fight them.'

The Dragons were slaves of the Reaper Group. All they had to do was pretend as if they used some Skill or Spell on them so they fought themselves and vanished in one huge explosion.

That way, they would still be recognized as the heroes of the Capital.

'Yes, this whole thing does seem a little excessive. A lot of people will die, but at the very least, they're already being evacuated.' Felicia thought to herself, trying to sate whatever was left of her conscience.

In her eyes, the Reaper Group was the real villain here. She and her allies were simply the heroes doing their best to mitigate losses and to ensure as many people as possible survived.

'And once we're done... we'll be recognized as the Heroes!'

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[Meanwhile...]

"Look at those fools... hahaha!" "Indeed! Such fools!"

Kat'erin and Shai'ya stood and watched from the outskirts of the Capital, witnessing as the great city was now in flames thanks to the excessiveness of the humans who had their own nefarious intentions in mind.

It was very easy to manipulate gullible humans—especially those that showed conceit.

"Ah, it seems it's about time for the evacuation..." Kat'erin said with a wide grin, glancing at Shai'ya, who seemed overly excited for what would come next.

The two then proceeded to glance at Reta, who was standing behind them, smiling lovingly at the two of them.

She was completely under their control.

"Now, then..." Kat'erin grinned devilishly. "... Shall we begin our task?"

### **Chapter 733 The Pleasure Of Dragons [Pt 1]**

The plan was simple, according to the Dragons.

Kat'erin and Shai'ya were positioned close one of the few evacuation gates that the Capital had for situations like this. Their comrades—the backup Dragon Generals sent by the other Dragon Lords that were in support of their Master's plan—were stationed in the other areas as well.

With this network of Dragons, they were going to ensure no one was left alive among those who escaped the incinerated city.

"I never would have thought humans could be so vile, though. They're laying their own city to waste by using Monsters... all for their own selfish ambitions..." Kat'erin muttered, though she showed nothing like remorse or pity as she spoke.

Simply pure amusement.

"They are probably thinking that, since many of the denizens will be evacuated, their plan will still succeed. They have no idea at all, do they, Shai'ya?"

Shai'ya nodded and giggled like a child having fun. "Anyone who escapes will die by our hands! No one is going to escape! They will all be destroyed!"

The two Dragon ladies nodded in conjunction.

"Indeed!"

Everyone was going to perish at their hands.

Right as they thought this, the humans began to pour out like maggots—all of them shrieking and crying as they fled for their dear lives.

The suffering they must have endured to be among those who made it out was evident on their faces, but none of that mattered to Shai'ya and Kat'erin. They simply watched as the humans ran forward, towards the bridge that would lead to the safe woods.

They were both waiting in front of the bridge.

"W-what are you two doing?! Where did you come from?!" The man at the forefront yelled at the Dragons.

He was dressed as a Knight, and he was responsible for leading the people out of the city.

Due to the situation, he was rather impatient—and rightfully so. He had a deep frown, and his evident glare only made his face appear worse. Since the girls did not respond to him on time, he yelled once again.

"Get out of the way! We don't have much time!"

At this point, the people behind him began to push, since more denizens were trying to leave the confines of the burning city. They were being held up by the clogged front.

"What the hell?!"

"Move it! Hurry up already!"

"I don't want to die! What's holding them up over there?!"

"Let us go! Please let us go!"

"We're all going to die, aren't we? Please... please nooo!"

More words erupted, and with more pushing in tow, the Knight decided he had to shove the ladies out of the way, stepping forward to do so.

The reason for his initial hesitation was due to the appearance of the two girls. Their skins were flawless, and their hair magnificent. The robes they donned were of only the highest quality, which made him suspect they were Nobles or people of high standing.

Since the rest of his comrades were still busy fighting, it was clear he was on his own here. He couldn't identify what kind of Nobles they were, and since he was already pressed for time, he had to shove them aside somehow.

"If you won't, then I'll move y—"

"Explode."

~SPLOOOOSH!~

The Knight's instantly erupted into a blast of meat and blood—spraying over the horrified people who watched this happen. All their eyes widened in horror as they witnessed this sight.

The gory remains of the night—the pinkish flesh and numerous innards—stuck to the bodies of those it landed on, but the blood was different.

It gathered above Shai'ya, who watched the whole thing with glee.

Kat'erin smiled at her comrade, amused by how she started the rather fun round of killing humans.

"I guess it's my turn..." Raising her hand and pointing it towards the humans, she called forth the name of her Skill.

"[Angel Of Death]"

In an instant, an entity manifested right in front of her.

The being floated in the air and was coated in white. It was translucent, almost incorporeal, as its oversized robe danced about it.

In all senses of the word... it resembled an angel.

This manifestation stood still as Kat'erin broadened her smile and caused her eyes to glow with sheer wickedness.

The confused, scared, and utterly stunned expression of the helpless humans did not stop her from giving the damning order to the entity she just brought forth.

"Kill them all." ~WHOOOSH!~

In a flash—much faster than the blink of an eye—the entity rushed past the humans, having a scythe in its hand.

In one wide swing, hundreds of heads flew into the air.

~SPLOOOOSH!~

The blood gathered right above Shai'ya, making the orb of blood even larger than ever. And so, as the Summoned catastrophe easily mowed down the humans that tried to escape, their bodies were drained of the blood they had—down to the last ounce.

The slaughter caused pandemonium, as everyone began to run back—even preferring the destruction that the city offered to the execution that the Dragons were granting them.

Unfortunately for the runaways, none of them were fated to survive this encounter.

"Rain of Blood."

In an instant, the sphere vanished from Shai'ya's position and created a massive cloud above all the humans beneath.

Then, in a single second of sheer silence...

~TIT~

~TAT~

~TIT~ ~TAT~

... It released raindrops—BLOODY RAINDROPS.

They were like bullets, and a single one piercing the body of the humans caused them to explode due to the pressure they generated.

Each bloody raindrop had a corrosive element, making them capable of eating and piercing through anything. Adding the immense power they packed, it was overkill for the humans to receive even two of the raindrops, talkless of a shower of it..

"You went and killed them all, Shai'ya. No fair..." Kat'erin watched the whole mutilation, observing as the blood of all the fallen went into her sphere.

Truly, [Absolute Blood Control] was one of the most powerful Skills to possess, and it made Shai'ya an incredibly dangerous person—even by Dragon standards.

"All I gave them was a mild drizzle, though..." She muttered, looking at the devastated landscape with innocent eyes.

One would never believe she was a mass murderer with the cute face she made.



"Guess I went too far."

## **Chapter 734 The Pleasure Of Dragons [Pt 2]**

"Hahahahaha!!!"

The Dragons all laughed as the City before them was burning up—completely laid to waste.

The corpses of the innocents who attempted to evacuate also littered the ground a good distance from them, from all evacuation points no less.

There were four gates that led outside the Capital, and with two Dragons assigned to two each, the results ended the same for everyone who attempted to flee. They all died, and the exits were sealed so the rest would suffer within the stifling world of the Capital.

No one had any doubt about it—the humans were ruined.

"Thank you for your hard work, comrades!" Kat'erin smiled at the Dragons who stood before her and her comrade.

There were a total of six of them—two contributed from each Lord allied with the White Dragon Lord. They had rendezvoused a little beyond the outskirts of the Capital, though they could see all that went on in the ruined city from where they were.

It was all so fulfilling, and from the looks of all the Dragons involved, it was clear they felt the same thing.

"We do not deserve such high praise, Lady Kat'erin. You and Lady Shai'ya are our seniors." The most mature of the Dragons said with a smile, bowing slightly to her.

Despite them being men, they acted so humbly among two women. This was because, unlike certain societies and cultures that incorporated sexism in their practices, the Dragons did not care for sex or gender differences.

What mattered most was ability and rank.

"We are all Generals here, so there's no need to fuss over seniority." Kat'erin said with a dismissive wave, though she was satisfied to know that the people before her knew how to deliver proper respects.

"Still... you are a part of the 7 Squads. It is my dream to one day join a Squad, so I'll work very hard to prove myself worthy to the Empire."

"Me too!"

"I'll do my best as well!"

All of the Dragon Generals expressed immense readiness to serve, and that pleased Kat'erin very much. It reminded her of her time in the Academy, and she figured the Generals before her only finished their Course only recently.

"When did you pass from the Academy?" She went on to ask.

It was a somewhat strange question to ask, since they were only related by professional strands. Still, since a General belonging to one of the special Squads of the Empire was asking, the General did not hesitate to answer.

"A-about seven years ago! I was dispatched for three years in the Southern Continent, and I spent the rest in the Western Battlefield—mainly performing training and management roles to my juniors."

Kat'erin smiled and nodded at the stiff, awkward, but well-meaning words of the Dragon before her.

"Not bad... you've racked quite a bit of achievement already. I suppose you were quite exceptional in the South."

"Hahaha! You render me too much praise."

'I haven't gone to the South yet, but that's more due to politics than personal abilities. In any case, he's had some good experiences since I hear that's where the war is most intense.' Kat'erin was sure this General didn't really fight in the front lines, but it was still a good experience he had to put in his portfolio.

'The intensity of the battlefield was probably too much for him, so he requested to be transferred to the West. Since he is still fresh, I can't blame him. Usually, the exceptional ones are the kind that thrive in the South.' All of these were random thoughts that she had about her junior, but they were nothing serious. The only reason she had such a long train of thought was out of consideration for him joining one of the Squads of the Empire.

'It'll take some time for him to accomplish that, but... I suppose it's possible.'

As long as he wasn't too ambitious, he would be able to join one of the lower-ranked Squads.

'There's no real need to tell him all of that, though.' Kat'erin thought to herself with a light shrug, so she simply let the General off with a few words of encouragement.

"Just keep working hard. I hope I meet you one day in a Squad Evaluation event."

"I-I'll try my best, Ma'am!"

The moment he said this in a stiff salute, the other Generals also did the same, all raising their voices with pure energy.

"We will do our best as well!"

It seemed they all had the same ambition as the first guy, but none of that surprised her. Dragons were naturally attuned to warfare, and nothing motivated them more than rank and merit. They all desired to bring glory to the Empire through their actions.

She was no different—though her real allegiance belonged to her Master, the White Dragon Lord.

She was only loyal to the Emperor because her Lord served him.

'I'd never say such a thing to anyone, but... that is truly how I feel.' She smiled to herself, even blushing slightly.

She simply adored her Master that much.

~BZZZTZZZ!~

She felt a buzz on the communication device with her, instantly recognizing who was trying to reach her.

'M-Master!' Her eyes widened in glee as she brought out the device and showed Shai'ya, who was instantly brimmed with joy the moment she saw it as well.

Kat'erin signaled the Generals before her that she would be excusing herself, and in the blink of an eye, the two subordinates of the White Demon Lord created considerable distance between themselves and the other Generals.

Part of the reason they did this was so the Generals wouldn't be able to listen to whatever information their Master wanted to give them—just in case it was confidential. It was best to respond to such calls in private, and Kat'erin was sure the other Generals would have done the same if it was their respective Lords calling.

However, there was another reason they preferred taking the call of their Master in private.

"Heheheheeee!"

"Can't wait! Can't wait!"

They picked up the call and awaited the kind words of their Master as they greeted her with the most excited tone one could have.

"Master, did you see how—?"

"Master how have you—?"

Before any of their greetings could land, though, the loud voice of the White Dragon Lord pierced the air in an unsettling manner.

"You fools! Do you have any idea what you've done?!" "E-eh...?" Kat'erin and Shai'ya both had stunned looks on their faces as they heard the voices of their Master.

They thought, for sure, that Lord Frey'ja would congratulate them for their exploits. Sure, killing a bunch of humans wasn't that big a deal, but still... she was always fond of praising them for every little thing.

This was one of the reasons they were so attached to her.

The mere fact that she was using such a harsh tone proved that they had done something extremely wrong.

Shai'ya's distracted gaze moved to the other Dragon Generals, perhaps out of fear that they had heard the words of their Master despite the anti-sound field that was in place. However, she was shocked to see that each duo was also on their respective calls.

It seemed their Lords were also speaking to them.

Their reactions also contained distress.

At this point, the two Dragon Generals realized that something was wrong somewhere.

They had made a fatal mistake... but they did not know what it was.

## **Chapter 735 Curtains Rise**

"You imbeciles! Why haven't you been picking your calls despite how many times I tried to reach you!"

This next question shocked them just as much as the first.

"C-Calls...?" They both looked at each other with stunned expressions on their faces.

The moment they felt a vibrating feeling, they picked the device immediately. Neither of them would even dream of ignoring the call of their Master, which was what made them too stunned to even speak.

They were beyond confused.

"Master... we did as you instructed us."

"We also picked your call as soon as we—"

"SAVE YOUR EXCUSES!" The rage-filled voice of the Lord frightened the two girls, almost to the point of tears.

They were silently sobbing and trembling without even realizing what they did wrong.

"You've ruined everything! Even after I trusted you... after I told you the importance of the plan... even after I raised you to be obedient and perfect, you still messed this up! Why? Why did you do this? Why now? Why me...?"

This was the very first time they had heard their master being this pathetic. Yes, she was incredibly furious, and she didn't hide that fact, but... there was something else. She was frightened, horrified, and downright anxious.

She seemed just as scared as they were.

"W-what did we do, Master? Why are you speaking like this?" Shai'ya cried out loud, her tears flowing now.

Kat'erin still tried to maintain her composure, but the more immature girl was already sobbing very loudly in her confused state.

"Are you crazy? Playing dumb at a period like this... what ungrateful and idiotic bitches you are! I regret ever taking you in! You've ruined me... ahh... you've destroyed me!"

Those words stung them to their core.

The two Generals felt like shattering to pieces the moment they heard their everything hurl such hurtful words at them. However, before they could even properly process what was said, and perhaps give a response to their Master, they received another shock.

"You broke the Emperor's rules! I WARNED you! I TOLD you! Yet... Yet... YOU FOOLS!"

Kat'erin and Shai'ya exchanged puzzled glances once again. Their confusion reached another height since they never did any such thing.

They followed the instructions they received to the letter, so this made no sense.

... No sense at all.

"You've ruined me! Curse you both! Curse y—!"

~ZZZTZZZZ!~

All of a sudden, the line got disconnected. It didn't seem like either side ended the call, but the effect was most likely due to some kind of interference. However, how possible was that?

The device they used was a very secure and sophisticated one. The only ones who could probably interfere with such an Item would be fellow Lords, or perhaps...

"MASTER!" Fear gripped the heart of the two girls as soon as they heard the line get disconnected. Despite the mean words they received from her, their feelings towards her hadn't changed one bit.

In fact, they blamed themselves and hated themselves for her sake. Their Master couldn't be wrong, which meant they had messed up somewhere. But... what exactly did they do wrong?

"W-why did Master say those—?" Right as Shai'ya was breaking the dreadful silence between the two of them, they heard a round of applause from a single a single person.

The claps rang loudly, but something about them was hollow.

The two girls instantly turned in the direction of the applause, right behind them, and found a man standing there, both palms smashing against each other to generate the sound.

He had beautiful red hair that matched his eyes. His ebony skin glowed immaculately, blending perfectly with his black suit. With a charming face, and a somewhat unsettling smile, he rested his gaze on the girls who watched him with complicated emotions.

"W-who is he...?"

"I-I don't... I don't know..."

They didn't know what was worse—the fact that they didn't sense him until he clapped, or the sense of affinity they had towards him despite resembling a human.

None of it made any sense, but before they could express their confusion, they noticed the pile of corpses that lay at his feet.

All six of them... dead Dragon Generals.

He had killed them all within such a short span of time, and without even drawing their attention. Even at that, he didn't look fazed or scathed.

He wasn't even out of breath.

His eyes were calm, and his smile was perfectly genuine.

The blood of their comrades still clung to his hands, making it evident that he was the one responsible for their demise. After he got their attention, though, he brought a handkerchief from his pocket and slowly cleaned the crimson blood from his palm.

All while maintaining eye contact with the girls.

For a moment, they were all silent. No one spoke, either due to some unspoken tension or confusion, but right as Kat'erin was about to open her lips, Ater raised a finger to his lips and commanded silence.

Before she could even offer any resistance, the world around her became distorted and reality came crashing down on her.

The environment that she stood on was completely altered, and it reflected something that nearly drove her and her partner mad.

"We... are still in the Capital...?"

"N-no way..."

It was impossible, yet they could see the walls and buildings, and everything around them—all reminiscent of the city that they had just recently seen from afar.

Was this teleportation? An illusion? No... it was neither of those things.

"A-ahh..." Kat'erin's eyes were wide as she spotted the bodies of several people that littered the ground a small distance from them. They resemble the ones she and Shai'ya killed—the ones who were trying to escape from the burning city.

What were doing inside the Capital? Why? What was happening?!

"You appear quite confused, and that is only natural." Ater smiled, finally done with wiping his hand clean of the blood.

He disposed of the handkerchief, and it instantly faded into the wind almost as if it never existed, to begin with.

"It's about time for you to learn the truth."

### **Chapter 736 A Devil's Game [Pt 1]**

Ater felt pleased.

Seeing the look of confusion, uncertainty, and a tinge of fear, on the faces of the two Dragons amused him, to the point where he couldn't stop smiling at them.

Moments like these were what he lived for.

'Ahh... the bliss...' He beamed with slight arousal, enjoying the havoc he had wreaked.

But, this was not enough. He had hardly plunged them to the very depths of despondency. This was simply the surface—a husk incomparable to the main dish.

He already knew what would make this moment perfect.

'Truth... that always makes everything blend the best.' And so, as he stood before he stupefied Dragons, unveiling the curtain that had blinded them all this time, he was able to get another glimpse of satisfaction. Surely, their limited minds were already beginning to grasp the current reality.

The fact that they had been fooled into thinking they left the Capital.

But no.

Merely doing this could leave the answer open-ended.

It was possible that they would believe he teleported them to this place, or that this was indeed the illusion, and reality was what they previously perceived. 'No, that won't do.' He thought to himself, resolute in fully immersing them in the bitter vat of truth that he had prepared.

"What better way to do that than to tell them myself?" "You killed humans in the Capital. You broke the rules of your Emperor as a result, ruining your benefactor and their grand plan." Ater declared to them, refusing to delve into the full details, which made the girls exhibit even more shock.

"N-no... no way..."

"Y-you're lying! We were definitely at the borders of—"

"You were under my illusion, fools." He gloated, chuckling at their stupidity. "For the most superior Race in this world, you lot are quite stupid."

Even now, after being confronted by evidence—which included the panicked words of their Master—they still clung to the false reality they previously perceived.

'It's a waste of time to relate with them much further...' He sighed to himself. It seemed he would have to be satisfied with this measure of despair from the Dragons and savor the rest of his meal from the Deserters.

'Those are even bigger fools. Still, the results of their actions, in conjunction with the strings I pulled with this duo, ended up making for quite an interesting narrative.'

The humans that were sacrificed in this entire endeavor were corrupt Nobles and Criminals that were procured by his Shadow Slaves, hence no innocents were harmed.

'Master would give me an earful if I went too far, so I had to compensate...' Still, the results were pretty satisfactory.

Even with his limited resources, he achieved his goals.

"Since you broke the rules of your Emperor, your fates have already been sealed. Still... I suppose the ones who will suffer most for your actions are the Lords who conspired to ruin this City." Ater's words caused the two Dragons to tremble.

Their eyes widened as they recalled the words of their Master, Lady Frey'ja, and immediately realized just why she had sounded so intense.

The actions of a subordinate—whether good or bad—would reflect on the Master.

That meant—

"I can only imagine how much they will suffer for your error..." Ater grinned devilishly, both hands in his pockets as he inhaled deeply.

All of this was merely child's play for him. It was petty... but fun.

"Y-you... you caused this, didn't you? M-Master... Master is...!"

"We need to go! Now!" Kat'erin quickly grabbed the mumbling Shai'ya, her own tears also slowly rolling down her cheeks.

They now realized just how much they had sinned, and the consequences of their actions. Still, more than anything... they wanted to help their Master.

Even if it was at the cost of their lives, they wanted to save her—just as she saved them.

'If we hurry, we can confess to all of this and say we performed all of this without her knowledge. We must absolve her at all cost!' That was Kat'erin's rationale.

The moment she grabbed Shai'ya, she swiftly turned around to get the last person on her list but didn't find anyone of the sort. Suddenly, she broke into a cold sweat.

A gnawing feeling began to swell within her, and her vision blurred while her heart raced the moment she considered what exactly could have happened. Before her imagination took over, or her suspicions were fully realized, she heard a voice that completely caused her heart to shatter.

"Looking for someone?" The voice belonged to Reta—the same person that Kat'erin had been searching for.

Slowly turning her head to the direction where Ater previously stood, she found Reta standing there, hands in her pocket as she smiled at the two despairing girls.

"Y-you were... n-no way..."

Kat'erin now understood why she felt some sort of affinity when she met Ater despite having zero attraction towards men.

This man... he was Reta all along?!

"Now do you understand? You were playing my game right from the start." As soon as Reta said this, she morphed back into Ater—very seamlessly too.

The man before them oozed such sheer malice, but the amusement he displayed made the immensely tense situation feel like nothing but a pastime activity.

He wasn't even being serious.

"Y-you... YOU....!!!" Shai'ya yelled out, hot tears streaming down her eyes as Kat'erin took the route of silence.

The rage and sorrow that filled the voice of the roaring Dragon shook the entire area.

The air began to tremble violently, and hot energy slowly rose from everywhere around her. It seemed she had finally pushed past her despair and was driven purely by instinctive rage.

"You did this! You caused this! I... I... I WILL KILL YOU!"

These words only made Ater's grin widen even more as he waited patiently for her assault.

"[Absolute Blood Control]..."

Before Kat'erin could say a word, or join her in the fight, Shai'ya unleashed her two S-Tier Skills, completely resolved to destroying the man before her.

"... [Absolute Overdrive]."

### **Chapter 737 A Devil's Game [Pt 2]**

Most people that knew the White Duo considered Shai'ya to be the weakest.

However, that was far from the case.

She had two S-Tier Skills that were mainly for destruction and absolute annihilation, making her perfectly adept in combat. Yes, Kat'erin's abilities were much rarer, and was also a lot more versatile—especially [Dragon Voice]—but even she knew that when it came to a fight, there were very few Generals that could stand up to her, and she wasn't among them.



Her two Skills were too powerful to be properly countered—especially if they were used simultaneously.

[Absolute Blood Control] allowed Shai'ya to freely control the blood of her target, even at very long distances, and to also manipulate blood freely. She could even manipulate her own blood, applying it to several uses; including the improvement of her already high physical abilities.

The true importance of this Skill was the 'Blood Bank' aspect it had, which allowed Shai'ya to save up the blood of her victims for temporary or permanent storage.

That meant, as long as she kept storing the crimson nectar of her victims... she would never run out of blood to control.

Then... there was [Absolute Overdrive]. This was, to put it simply, a Buff Skill.

It improved all the abilities that Shai'ya had—both her Stats and her Skills—making the activation much faster and their effects much stronger.

Applying these two Skills at once made it so that Shai'ya could use her incredibly powerful and corrosive blood at incredibly fast speeds, with even greater power than normal.

Most Dragons wouldn't stand a chance—even if they had defensive Skills to back them up.

And so, it was clear what Ater's fate would be.

"TLL FUCKING RUIN YOU!"

Shai'ya didn't want to waste any time, or even hold back, when it came to this opponent.

She simply released all the blood she had saved up, creating an incredibly large sphere above her—enough to cast a shadow over the land around them for a few kilometers.

She didn't want to just drop such a large supply of blood, though.

"ARMOR!" She yelled.

Instantly, all of the blood condensed to form a metallic-looking substance that descended on her in swift fashion.

In the blink of an eye, the blood that was large enough to cast a shadow for kilometers was now donned by Shai'ya as a full-body armor. The entire armor was crimson, but it had a silvery glow to it, making it seem like authentic armor.

The earth around her shattered the moment she put it on—most definitely due to the weight.

However, none of that bothered her since she could fly.

On her hand was a sword, also made from the concentrated blood. In fact, half of all the blood was used to create it, making it incredibly powerful.

Her armor served as a power boost—thanks to its corrosive effect and the powerful pressure it packed—but also a tough defensive shell which would protect her from any form of harm.

Then, there was the effect of the second Skill—[Absolute Overdrive]—which made her even more powerful.

The space around her was already beginning to warp, contorting violently thanks to the sheer magnitude of her strength.

In this form... she was invincible.

"DIEEEEEEE!!!" ~BOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!~

The moment she darted forward—aiming right for Ater—a massive sonic boom echoed across the area, sending vibrations to the surrounding lands. She was much faster than the eyes could process, and for every distance she covered, even more power was applied to her already incredible pressure. Bursts of flaming energy danced around her as she charged forward.

In no time at all, she had closed the distance between her and Ater, about to pierce him right in the heart.

Then—

~SQUELCH!~

Shai'ya crashed to the ground in a massive explosion, creating an even more destructive explosion around her. However, this wasn't because she caught her prey.

Instead... ~DRIP~

~DRIP~

~DRIP~

"... E-eh...?" Her eyes widened as soon as she regained her bearing, feeling hot liquid drip from her dominant right arm—or, to put it more accurately, the gaping hole that was left there.

Her right arm was completely gone.

Right as she realized this, she heard a light thud in front of her.

It was her arm.

Her arm had been flung towards her by the man whose heart was still beating. He looked at her with a relaxed smile, his devilish grin burning deep into her mind.

Right there and then, she witnessed Kat'erin taking advantage of his distraction to attack him, but a swift backhand jab on her face sent her flying away from him.

It seemed nearly effortless on his part.

"Do you understand now? This is no illusion or trickery..." His voice oozed disgustingly in her ears as he confidently walked towards her. "I'm just much stronger than you are."

All of this was a mere farce to him—child's play to while away time until he could really have genuine and interesting conflict.

"G-GRRRRRR...." Shai'ya could not accept that!

"SHUT UP!" She yelled, grabbing her blade from the arm on the floor, attempting to stab him with it.

Once again, though—

~SQUELCH!~

Her left arm was sliced off, and she witnessed how he used his hand as a blade to do the job.

As her blood splashed in the air, she witnessed his wild grin.

"DIEEEEE!!!" All her blood—from both her right and left arm—were commanded and sent towards him in the form of several needles.

However, right before they reached him, they stopped completely.

"Blood manipulation of this level is useless against me." He said with a dismissive tone, almost as if he couldn't be bothered.

Shai'ya broke into a cold sweat at this point.

She could not use her trump card against him, and even when she tried controlling his blood, nothing responded to her. It was at this point that she realized it.

'H-he's not a living being! He can't be!'

Whatever this existence was... he couldn't exist in this world.

He couldn't be allowed to!

### **Chapter 738 A Devil's Game [Pt 3]**

'W-what... what is he?!'

Shai'ya found herself kneeling before the man she stared widely at, limbless and powerless.

Her armor had proven useless in his presence, and even her enhanced strength seemed nonexistent when compared to his overwhelming might.

She didn't seem strong at all.

'H-how did he... how can I...?'

A far corner from her was Kat'erin, who was still on the ground, groaning from the casual hit that Ater had given her not too long ago.

This man was toying with them. He had been toying with them for so long when he had the ability to just finish them off quickly.

'I'll make you regret it... I'll make you regret underestimating me! Underestimating us!'

Dragons had special ways of learning Magic—different from how humans and other races perceived it. They had Mana Circuits in their bodies that regulated the flow of Mana and allowed them to control even more Mana than the other creatures could possibly achieve. Usually, these Circuits couldn't be tampered with, but since Shai'ya could control her blood—and with [Absolute Overdrive] active, she had even more control over this Skill, she could artificially control the Circuit.

'I'll probably die from this, but... I don't care!' She thought to herself with greeted teeth and bloodshot eyes.

'As long as I can kill this bastard!'

Using her technique, she caused her Mana Circuits to explode within her, sending her into a world of pain, but also granting her an explosive amount of Mana that circulated around her body in no time.

~WHUUUUUUUUUUUUUUSSHHHHH!!!~

The energy caused unstoppable tremors that destabilized the earth itself.

"HAAAAAAAAA!!!"

Shai'ya's body acted on pure instinct, and she used her mouth to pick up her blade in an attempt to slash him with it.

Her body radiated burning energy, and that power extended to the blade she now wielded.

She didn't know why her arms weren't healing, but that didn't matter.

Because... she was going to win!

But—

~SQUELCH!~

This time, her own heart was pierced by the blade, almost as soon as she moved forward to cut him up.

It was instantaneous... inevitable.

'H-huh...?'

She couldn't even see his movements this time. She didn't realize it when he took the blade from her and pierced her body with it.

All it had been a blur.

"Looks like you're already finished." She heard the cold words of the man before her, seeing as her mercilessly stared down at her.

In his eyes, she was nothing.

She suddenly began to feel her body being raised up, still feeling the pain of her heart being pierced and her circuits being destroyed.

'Ahh... arghhh...!'

Almost like she was nothing more than a lump of meat, she was flipped into the air, rolling right above Ater, who then aimed a finger upward to shoot.

'... Is this... how I... die...?'

Her body was paralyzed, and excruciating pain kept ravaging her body. Pain and sorry were the only things she felt at that point.

Ah... and fear.

'I don't want to die! Master... Lady Frey'ja... save me! S-save m—!'

"Explode."

Ater's voice was the last thing she heard before her entire body inflated and burst into several portions of entrails and gooey blood.

~SPLOOOOSH!~

The rain of blood fell all over the area, especially on Ater, who stood at the center with an amused smile on his ebony face.

"Shai'yaaaaa!!!" Kat'erin yelled out, but it seemed like all of it fell on deaf ears.

Ater raised a finger to his lips and gestured her to hush.

He wanted to savor the moment—the chaos, the death, the destruction. All of it was inhaled by him, feeling the perverse reckoning of the enemy.

Anyone who had the misfortune to lay eyes on this scene would consider Ater the villain and the poor girls in white as the damsel in distress.

But, there was no hero to rescue these girls.

No hope at all...

"Y-YOU... YOU MONSTER! I CAN'T BELIEVE... I CAN'T BELIEVE I EVER LOVED YOU!"

Kat'erin yelled out in tears, but the moment she finished her words of pain and rage, Ater appeared right in front of her.

His intimidating presence caused her heart to nearly stop. She could hardly feel anything but the loud pounding in her head, almost forgetting to even breathe.

"Tough." Ater replied.

And then, Kat'erin found her vision being upturned as her head was lopped off her body.

In one merciless stroke, Ater had sliced it off, and the last thing she witnessed was her body crumbling to the ground while he stood in front of it, whispering words that was lost to her knowledge.

Right before her vision shut permanently, her failing mind translated those two words.

"Hollow Technique..."

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[Moments Later]

Ater stood amidst the wreckage of the city, a satisfied grin on his face.

He appeared completely unfazed by the devastation his brief interaction with the two Dragons caused, despite it being in the Capital.

'I might have to trouble Master to use his time abilities to sort it out, but I'm sure he wouldn't mind once I show him the results I have.' His thoughts flowed seamlessly as he stared into the sky above his head.

'I wonder...' A wry smile formed on his face and he shook his head gently. 'No. It's not yet time.'

To distract himself from the thought he was about to make, Ater thought about the Deserters. They were the final piece of the puzzle, and their elimination was vital for wrapping up the entire scenario.

'Should I interfere? No... I think I'll just leave them be.' According to the scenario he established, they would all meet a pretty natural conclusion anyway.

If he was interested, he would have preferred to witness their despair personally, but he was currently too bored to care.

'I will just let them suffer in their delusion. Already having knowledge of how they will die is more than enough satisfaction for me.' Upon finally concluding on his decision, shadows manifested around him, and he let the darkness swallow him whole, vanishing from his position in an instant.

### **Chapter 739 Felicia's Downfall**

"Haa... haa..."

Felicia and her goons were breathing heavily as they approached the Royal Estate, all covered in dirt and grime. Their armors clinked loudly and their hurried footsteps echoed with impatience as they swiftly closed in on the gates.

They had killed hordes of Monsters, finally exterminating them all, and now... it was time to retrieve their prize.

'Endgame is in sight!' Felicia licked her lips as she kept her sights forward.

Several thoughts were already running through her mind, but she controlled herself and chose to postpone all the grand thoughts until after the day was over.

"Hehehe... did you see Justin? I can't wait to see him after this is all over!" Lyvia was especially giddy, causing eyes to roll again.

This infatuation of hers had only grown stronger after Felicia controlled Justin and made him a part of their team. She also promised that she would make Justin fall in love with Lyvia, which further made the girl crazy over him.

Of course, Felicia didn't mind proceeding with the deal since it would make Lyvia happy and more indebted to her. The others—Lyvia, Byron, Devin, and Cayden—also had desires, and she was sure to grant them all once she got what she wanted.

Once they arrived at the gate, they found no one at the entrance.

That made sense, considering every single soldier was dispatched to handle the Monsters plaguing the city. So, they simply opened the gates and barged into the compound; their target being the Royal Council.

However—

"H-huh...?"

—The moment they all stepped in, they saw an army of both Warriors and Mages standing opposite them, with the two members of the Royal Council standing in front of them.

'Why are those two here?' Felicia thought to herself as she saw the Conrad and Vida But, that was only the tip of the iceberg.

'Why are there so many soldiers? Shouldn't they be out quelling the conflict? And why are they staring at us like this...?'

The gaze of everyone was that of disgust, rage, and slight hints of fear. It almost felt like... they were being viewed as the opposite of heroes.

"What in the world is happe—?"

"Halt! All of you!" Brutus emerged from behind the group of soldiers, and so did Lucielle. The two of them had stern frowns on their faces, and they were even outfitted with Enchanted Items that brimmed with incredible power. They stood right in front of the Royal Councilors, almost as if they recognized what Felicia planned to do with them.

"You are hereby under arrest for the murder of all the recognized Nobles of the United Human Alliance, as well as treason against the Royal Council."

'What the hell are they talking about?!' Felicia was bamboozled by the information that she didn't even know what to say or how to respond.

The allies she had behind her also seemed as shell-shocked as her, and she could see from their expressions that they were scared.

They had all been assured that their plans would flow seamlessly, yet what was with this obstruction right as they were about to get to their goals?

It was absurd! It was unfair! 'This... this shouldn't be happening!' It wasn't in the plan, and Felicia knew it. 'Maybe we should—'

"Don't try to escape and fight back. We won't let you." Lucielle added, almost as if she could read her mind.

"Escape? Fight back? W-what are you talking about?!"

Cayden was the one who spoke up, completely taking over the conversation on their end since Felicia was dead silent.

"We just killed so many Monsters and even helped civilians escape, yet you're branding us as traitors? What the hell?!"

"Yeah! That's right!" Lyvia yelled out too. "We got ourselves all dirty and exhausted for your sake, yet—!"

"Screw this! We should be rewarded instead!" Byron protested.

"What the hell is wrong with you people? What is going on here? Felicia, Felicia, what is happening?" Devin turned to Felicia, who was still silent.

Her heart was racing, and even when she was already hearing the murmurs of her allies, she didn't have the courage to speak.

After all... in her hand—right where the blade that she tightly held was supposed to be—was the severed head of the Noble that she directly served. She held the thing by its hair, but she could see the head... she could smell its stench.

And then... turning back to look at her comrades, she could see them holding heads of various Nobles as well. She could see the entrails and blood of humans decorating their armor—all of it proving their guilt.

Felicia wondered if she was the only one among her allies who could see this.

Everyone seemed to be complaining, unable to recognize why the Royal Council was hounding them for treason, but she could see what they were seeing.

It was pretty bad.

'We've been set up by the Reaper Group. There's no point trying to continue the mission or argue our case...'

It was over.

The best thing they could do now was escape, and even with Lucielle and Brutus trying to prevent their escape, Felicia believed they had the higher numbers.

'We're Otherworlders, with equipment from the Reaper Group. We should still be able to—'

Right as she was about to complete her thoughts, the gate behind them opened up, and the Otherworlders of the Alliance emerged from beyond it.

Belle and Clark.

Trisha and Justin were absent, but the mere fact that the two of them were present only meant one thing for Felicia and her group.

'We have backup!' Her eyes widened with glee.

She was previously worried about how many of her allies she would have to sacrifice to escape the clutches of Lucielle and Brutus, but with two more Otherworlders entering the scene, she was certain they could all make it out alive.

In fact... it was even possible that they could complete the mission.

"You three, come over here and atta—!"

"Silence! On your knees and let go of those heads!" Clark yelled, his face expression nothing but utter disgust and righteous indignation.

That response was not at all what Felicia was expecting.

'E-eh...?'

## **Chapter 740 Demise Of Deserters [Pt 1]**

"The five of you are under arrest, so you better not make a scene!"

Clark's loud voice caused even Felicia to shudder. He seemed genuinely mad at her—at all of them—for what they did.

'S-something's wrong...' She instantly thought to herself with wide-open eyes.

Clark and Belle were supposed to be under her control. They were supposed to be on her side at all times, yet what was going on here?



'Did they somehow break out of my Skill? But how? When?'

"I-I don't understand... where is Justin? He will say something to help us!" Lyvia muttered as she began to cry. "Justin, please come and—"

"Silence!"

"Eeeeeeeek!" Lyvia squeaked in response to Brutus' harsh command, now realizing just how terrible the current situation was.

They were surrounded on all sides, and even though only Clark and Belle were guarding the gate, it was clear that they were leagues above Felicia and her group in terms of power and experience.

This was truly the end of the line.

"W-we surrender..." Felicia had to blurt out, falling to her knees without a second of hesitation.

She wasn't stupid enough to further escalate the issue, especially since she didn't have sufficient information. There were still so many things that confused her, and without understanding them, it would be foolish to act.

'We are still Otherworlders, and we have classmates on their side. As long as that's the case, they won't kill us or put us through much harm...' She figured it was safer to enter into custody, obtain all the necessary information, and figure out where to go from there.

One after the other, her allies began to kneel—once again following her lead.

'I'm sorry, everyone.' She thought bitterly to herself. 'Even though you trusted me, I let you down.'

She thought she had everything under perfect control, but who would have thought that the Reaper Group would play us like this?

'But why? This is too early for them to play their cards like this. Unless... this wasn't their real goal from the start.' Felicia took in a deep breath and decided not to think too much about abstracts.

Firstly, she would have to understand the facts.

'I just need to be patient, and—'

"NO! NO, I CAN'T GO TO PRISON! T-THIS WASN'T WHAT YOU PROMISED, FELICIA!"

The loud cry of Lyvia pierced the air, causing everyone to shift all their attention to the girl who was still on her feet despite all her allies already kneeling.

She had her hand raised in the air, displaying a ring worn on her finger. The crimson jewel affixed on it began to glow brightly, creating sparks of black and red around her.

~VWUUUSH!~

As the energy swelled, a small tempest began to surround her.

"I won't be caught like this! I'll find Justin! We will have our happy ending! We will—!"

"Apprehend her!" She heard Brutus' voice echo in the air.

It was too late, though.

In a flash of powerful energy, she vanished from her position, completely abandoning her stupefied allies.

"The hell...?" Lucielle whispered, watching the whole thing with slight shock on her face.

Even though she had tried to interfere with the Magic, something interfered with her interference, which prevented it from taking effect.

That meant one of two things.

'Either that girl is much more skilled at Magic than I am... or the one who designed that ring is.' Lucielle highly doubted the former, which meant there was only one feasible option here.

'Who could have constructed that thing?'

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~BWUSH!~

Lyvia appeared in a storm of black and red energy, finding herself in a dense forest before realizing that she had vanished from the Royal Estate.

"H-haa... haaa? I did it! I escaped!"

It was a good thing she was able to use the ring that Justin gave her before the start of the mission. He promised that it would bring her directly to him whenever she wanted.

The gift was their little secret, so not even Felicia was aware of it.

And now—

"You..." Lyvia heard a voice emerge from behind her, and it caused her heart to skip nearly instantly. Her cheeks became bright red as she turned to witness the magnificent boy that stood a short distance from her. He had perfect dark brown hair, with a tall stature, and the perfect lean muscular body that would make any girl salivate.

He was perfect!

"JUSTIIIN!!!" She cried out loud as she rushed towards him, her arms wide open.

Tears floated away from her eyes as she finally reached and hugged him with as much ferocity as she could muster. Sobs escaped her lips as she found solace in his warmth.

"D-don't go... just stay right there... just like that..." She whimpered, hugging him tighter and tighter.

Now that she had him, there seemed to be nowhere safer in the world.

'We can run somewhere far away. Just me and you... away from all of this! We can start a new life together!' As soon as she thought this, she smiled and lifted her head to gaze upon his amazing face.

"Right, Justi—?"

~SQUELCH!~

A sharp dagger pierced Lyvia from her lower jaw, rising to the top of her head, in one swift strike—an easy kill.

Confusion dulled the pain she felt as she felt her consciousness fade.

'H-huh...? J-Justin...?' Her blurry vision picked up the indifferent expression he had as he muttered words that he clearly didn't mean.

"I'm sorry."

Lyvia's body fell lifelessly on the ground, blood spurting out of the open ends of the fatal wound she suffered, while Justin simply stood there and watched in silence.

He said nothing as he watched her bleed out and die.

"My first human life... and yet... I feel nothing..." Justin mumbled to himself, staring at his trembling hands.

He could clearly understand the wrongness of his actions, but his body was perfectly numb to it, creating a severe case of cognitive dissonance.

"Still, it had to be done."

Justin inhaled deeply and began to walk away from the corpse, not sparing it another look.

"This way, I've proven my loyalty to Sir Ater."