

FeralHeart Chapter 16 - Chapter 4

Chapter 16: Chapter 4

Having been founded by a Hominum emperor, in the Regiis empire there was a custom fettering the occupation of its Hominum subjects. All Hominum were to be trained in the old language and take up the art of calligraphy in order to hold the post of a Tamer. Education and sustenance were guaranteed to them till they came of age and in return they were to serve as a notary official for all marriages in the empire.

As long as they were engaged in this craft, they were treated with great respect and privilege. But, if they wanted to exceed their station and hold an administrative post, then, the empire requested greatly strengthened individual battle efficiency.

As the heir to the position of clan Head, Mars too needed to undergo this evaluation since the post was simultaneously representative of the position of a Marquis of the empire.

He had to prove his strength and the members of his harem weren't allowed to help him in his battles.

He knew very well that if he lost the qualifications of the position of heir, his father too would be deposed by his uncle and their future days would be far from comfortable as the most dangerous and thankless of tasks would be theirs to perform.

He carried the pressure of his family's future happiness on his shoulders. Thus, his anxious pursuit of strength.

His extreme hope for the wind to listen to his command had proven counter-productive and blocked him from making a connection through their bond.

With her talks of freedom, Deimos wanted him to relax, laying bare her intentions to follow him in sickness or health. He didn't have to work so hard and bear so much pressure. She had already cut ties with her grandfather over his restriction of her freedom to love Phobos, she would do it again for him in a heartbeat.

If the clan fettered her she would snap her ties with them, if the empire fettered her, she would leave its borders. She was free, she was unfettered and she would follow him, come fair weather or foul.

He understood what she meant but he interpreted it differently. To him, the wind was the knife of time that whittled down the mountainous obstacles obstructing the path to his family's happiness. Why wallow in degeneration and let his family uproot themselves, even if they were willing?

While he had their support, nothing was beyond his reach.

Gasping for breath, the both of them came down from their high, sweaty and flushed red with exertion.

She wrinkled her brows in discomfort at the void feeling when he pulled out of her. Flushed with her recently successful breakthrough and still aroused from the aftershocks of her climax, she shot him an inviting look till something fell on her nose.

Startled, she wiped the offending substance off with her finger. It was mud.

The water and dirt sucked up by the hurricane was now coming down as a muddy drizzle.

Deimos leapt up from the log below her and rushed towards her clothes, snagging them from the ground before dashing out of the range of the rain.

Mars too took to his heels after her, holding up his pants with his functional left hand.

Rushing out of the range of the downpour, the both of them burst into a fit of laughter as their mirth bubbled over.

Throwing over her frock, sans her underwear, Deimos leapt into the bosom of Mars who had just finished fastening his trousers and nuzzled her face into the crook of his neck, purring with contentment.

"Masteeer... I broke through! I love you! I love you! I loove you!"

He hugged her tightly to his chest with his single arm and rested his chin on the top of her head.

He felt unprecedentedly tranquil as he watched the sky shed its dawning blush and reveal its cerulean hue. He wished that time could be framed in this moment forever.

Suddenly, Deimos jerked up with a startled yelp, slamming her head into his chin. Hissing at the pain, he clutched his jaw as she crouched down holding her head, whimpering.

"What!?" he hissed.

She looked up with teary eyes and pointed towards where they had been copulating.

"My fish." she said piteously.

The corners of Mars' eyes twitched.

He couldn't help but pinch her cheek in exasperation. "You damned glutton."

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Bruno pushed past the gate of his dwelling on his return from the training field, only to be greeted by a desolate silence. A situation that had become all too common after his father's failure to dethrone his brother.

It had been one defeat too many for the man and he had lost his enterprising spirit, growing sullen and more withdrawn.

His mother had tried her best to support him through his funk but it had taken a toll on their marriage, both of them having to resort to wearing gloves to conceal their fading markings.

Bruno laid down his Warhammer and other training equipment in his room and walked into his meditation room, sealing the door shut behind him.

Turning on the smokeless torch, he gave the room a once-over. His eyes were attracted to the jade box lying on the stone platform he usually meditated on.

His heart thumped as he guessed its contents. Forcefully repressing his excitement, he strode towards the box and picked it up. It seemed heavy in his hand with the weight of his anticipation.

Uncovering the ornate lid with shivering hands, he gazed upon its contents. A transparent crystal with streams of icy energy flowing through it.

As soon as it was exposed to the air, the crystal shone with a soft radiance and the temperature of the surroundings dropped fiercely.

Wrapping his hand in his icy mana, he picked the crystal up and studied it from all sides. Unlike the ice rocks used in refrigerators, glacial crystals were the very core of the mines both minerals were obtained from.

More accurately, crystals like glacial crystals, aeolian crystals or fluvial crystals were found in areas of high concentration of the elements. For example, fluvial crystals could be found in riverbeds while their mutated cousins, glacial crystals could be found in extremely cold, icebound areas.

Around such crystals, ordinary rocks often took on some of their properties. Case in point, ice rocks, which were commonly used refrigerants.

The crystals had the special property of being able to assist during breakthroughs from one Tier to the other and stabilize the realm. As such, they were highly sought after and due to their rarity, they were extremely expensive.

After a year of despondence, Bruno's father had recovered, shifting to the other extreme. He had turned into a workaholic, taking the toughest and most dangerous of missions to earn the most in the shortest time so he could afford the resources needed to accelerate Bruno's progress.

Growing tired of defending a spatial boudoir, his mother too had begun joining him on his missions and the life on a knife's edge had rekindled their passions and their marriage had recovered...

... at the cost of their time with their son.

Bruno clenched his teeth and his claws dug into the meat of his palm. His father had taken to avoiding him like the plague. He felt too ashamed to face his son upon whom he had placed his expectations after his defeat.

After all which father wanted to look incompetent in front of his son. Thus, whenever he worked himself to the bone to procure some resource for Bruno, he would leave it in his meditation room, instead of giving it to him face to face.

His icy blue eyes glinted with determination.

He had already bathed at the hot spring and eaten from the cafeteria so he simply sat down cross legged to contemplate his mindscape after uncovering the four troughs at the corners of the room.

The ice stones in them rapidly sucked in the heat of the room, causing the temperature to drop to below zero.

Bruno touched the glacial crystal to his forehead and wrapped it with his frigid mana. Slowly, the crystal turned ethereal and sank into his forehead, appearing in his mindscape.

His mindscape was a spherical world of ice and snow with bluish-white mana suffusing it completely, indicative of his being at the pinnacle of the first Tier.

The glacial crystal, which had appeared in the centre of the spherical world, morphed into a statue of himself sitting cross legged.

With every inspiration and expiration of the statue, the extant mana was purified and compressed until it reached a critical point as the statue slowly dissolved into the mana.

The boundary of the mindscape shattered with a sound like shattering glass and reformed, smaller, but sturdier than before while streams of Tier 2 mana with double the density of Tier 1 flowed in it.

Bruno's eyes shot open and a profound glow seemed to suffuse them. With rapid convulsions of his muscles, the layer of ice that had accumulated on him during his advancement shattered and he set out from his seat.

With a wave of his hand, a illusory blue light shone from him. Wherever it illuminated, the moisture in the air froze, coating the place in a layer of ice.

Tier 2 frost style magic: Ice Beam.

He clenched his fist and the magic ceased. A feral grin graced his face. He wouldn't let his parents down.