

THE RISE OF A FROZEN STAR

Chapter 5: The Gods' Plan

[POV ???]

In a corner of the cosmos where neither time nor light existed, a vast darkness stretched on without beginning or end.

The air—if it could be called that—was dense, motionless, as if space itself were holding its breath for what was about to happen.

There, among the eternal shadows, a hooded man walked with firm steps. His black robe whispered softly as it trailed, as if the darkness itself parted to let him through. His name was Layos, and in his chest beat a mixture of pride, devotion... and sinister satisfaction.

In front of him, a door white as marble suddenly appeared, violently breaking the uniformity of the surroundings. It was so radiant that for a moment it seemed an aberration in that land of darkness.

Layos stopped, bowed his head, and spoke with restrained emotion:

“Goddess, I fulfilled the task you gave me.”

The door responded with a melodic voice, soft as an angel’s song... and yet, every word dripped with resentment.

“Well done, Layos. With that, my plans return to the path they should have followed from the beginning.”

The voice came from the Goddess of Destruction: Liliath.

“You may enter, Layos. Tell me the details.”

“Yes, my goddess,” he replied with reverence and crossed the threshold without hesitation.

Beyond the door was her domain: a temple suspended between fragments of stellar void, with floating columns and a black sky dotted with dead stars. And in the center, seated on a throne made of living obsidian, was she.

Liliath. The goddess of destruction.

Her figure was of inhuman beauty: hair long as the night, eyes dark as despair, and black wings elegantly folded behind her back. Her presence was overwhelming. Majestic. Dangerous.

[POV Liliath]

“So, just as you commanded,” said Layos, kneeling, “I set fire to his home and destroyed the surrounding area to ensure he wouldn’t survive. The fire spread quickly. No one expected it. It was perfect.”

“Well...” I murmured, not taking my eyes off the fallen stars swirling above my hall. My voice was soft, but my thoughts were sharp. “Edward... that man is more important than anyone realizes. Even to me.”

If not for my foolish sister and her foolish heroes, I wouldn't have had to adjust the board.

"My goddess?" Layos asked cautiously. "What was special about that young man? Why move the game just for him?"

I smiled with a touch of melancholy. Sometimes I forgot that my pieces, loyal as they were, barely understood the rules.

"That man possesses an amount of mana... unimaginable. Greater than any hero, greater than those chosen by fate. He could even rival the demon king."

Layos' eyes widened in astonishment, but I said no more. Not yet. Because Edward wasn't just a magical battery. He was the hinge of a possible future. But just as I was about to explain why, a roar interrupted my thoughts.

BANG!

The great door to my domain swung wide open, the echo resounding through the entire hall. I turned slowly, already knowing who it was.

“Sister!” bellowed a voice as bright as day. “What the hell did you do? What are you planning now?”

There she was, like a sun that refused to set: Gaia, Goddess of Creation. My sister.

She wore a robe as white as snow, and her golden hair cascaded over her shoulders. Behind her, radiant wings pulsed with pure energy. She was furious. As always.

“Oh?” I said with feigned innocence. “I just adjusted the board level, dear Gaia.”

“*Adjusted*? You killed people in a world outside the game field! That boy wasn’t even an active piece!”

“And you?” I countered. “Didn’t you invite people from that very same world to fill your team of heroes?”

Gaia glared at me. Her silence spoke louder than a thousand screams.

“So what if I did,” she finally admitted. “I’ll return them to their world at the same age, alter their memories. No one will suspect a thing.”

“Liar.” I smiled, still composed. “You gave them a privileged place. You gave them time. You even created a space where time flows faster so they could train!”

My sister pursed her lips.

“That’s not cheating!” she said with an indignant pout.

“Of course it is,” I replied mockingly. “But it doesn’t matter. We’ll see who wins when your heroes face my demon king.”

“I hope so. You know the winner picks the next game,” murmured Gaia, turning around. Just before she left, she looked back with a radiant smile. “Even though we fight so much, you know I love you.”

I watched her vanish into the light. I stayed silent for a moment, gazing at where she had been. And yes... despite everything, I loved her too. She was all I had left.

But the games had begun.

The mana battery I had prepared for my demon king... that girl named Liselotte, had just turned ten.

Now the pieces would finally begin to move.