

Full-Moon 951

Chapter 951 A Battle of their Own

Flunra kept gazing at Evelyn silently from the side with evident excitement.

As the guardian of the Dark Prince in the past, he had to deal with more than the physical threat of someone trying to kill the Dark Prince. He was also tasked to smoothen the Prince's life and take out obstacles that hindered the Prince's growth.

More so than not, the Luna is usually a problem and makes the Prince's growth stagnant.

Some seized the Prince's attention too much and made him weak. Some are overbearing to the point of overshadowing the Dark Prince himself. While some are taking advantage of the Dark Prince to further her own selfish agenda.

It's very hard to find a suitable Luna that would not cause trouble.

A lot of them only wanted to fulfill their heavily selfish desires, slaving the Dark Prince in lust.

Once in a while, the Luna is a good one.

The Luna position for the Dark Prince's pack has been constantly changing all the time, it was not specific to himself, but a normal occurrence to other packs, and it could be caused by a variety of reasons. But the most regular one was the fact that the enemy forces killed the Luna in order to deal a huge blow.

Nevertheless, there were Lunas who reigned for a long time.

Flunra had observed the good Lunas and analyzed their actions so that in the future if something did happen to them, he could be better at finding a replacement. One of her traits was being mature and having a very keen intuition in rooting out threats from enemy forces all the way to threats for her position.

Unlike what the legend has depicted, the Luna position in a pack is not permanent.

It was given to those who could trigger the Alpha's energy, causing a mutation to the moonlight energy inside her body which eventually turned into Luna energy. There are a lot of factors that could cause that, but if other females could overwhelm the Alpha more, then the Luna position would be replaced naturally.

A good Luna should be capable of sensing a threat to her position.

Moreover, she needs to be able to deal with the threat swiftly before the mutation begins.

Due to that, good Luna has always been extremely keen.

Even though in this specific instance, Calidora couldn't naturally replace the Luna position as she's not a Werewolf but a Vampire, she's still a threat to Evelyn's position. It was made clear since she could even steal Evelyn's Luna energy which should be impossible.

Anticipating her loss against Calidora, Flunra has only thought of a replacement.

He even thought of persuading Rex to turn Calidora.

But it seemed Evelyn was starting to wake up, her gaze had been altered with a plan in mind.

Evelyn, on the other hand, was oblivious to what Flunra was thinking. She unconsciously dodged a lethal bullet while dwelling inside her mind. Flunra then bowed slightly and said, "Now I will excuse myself, Lady Adhara, Lady Evelyn, as I need to do something for Lord Rex. Please refrain from going out or doing anything risky while I'm away"

"When will you be back?" Evelyn asked, casting a curious glance.

Flunra shook his head in response, "I don't know, but it won't take too long. A day or two"

"Okay, take some of the Rastrikan Demon Cores and give it to Sir Daniel and Madam Lauren. Be careful, we couldn't afford to lose you too" Adhara nodded and replied, instructing him to deliver the goods to the crucial members of the city.

Upon hearing this, Flunra nodded before he eventually left.

Now that Flunra was gone, Adhara turned to look at Evelyn again. "Explain what you meant"

"Before that, I need to tell you that Calidora stole a portion of my Luna energy already, and she openly told me that she was the cause of Rex going berserk before he departed to you through her manipulations. I underestimated her back then, and now I'm not going to" Evelyn replied, a deep frown on her face.

Adhara was surprised at the news, she couldn't fathom how Calidora could do that.

It's hard to believe that she was able to do that.

Knowing that Rex was completely oblivious to her scheme, saying that his berserk was nothing more than an accident, not fabricated, means that Calidora somehow managed to flawlessly bypass Rex's keen radar.

Tilting her head, Adhara asked, "Why didn't you tell Rex about this?"

"I wanted to win against her without Rex's help. Telling him is admitting defeat to Calidora, and what made us worthy to be by his side if we couldn't win? No matter what, this is our fight. Rex has a battle of his own, and so do we" Evelyn replied resolutely.

Giving the news to Rex would only distract him from the Executor.

Just like he said earlier, he has a higher chance of dying against the Executor if he doesn't do the thing he needs to do with Calidora. There's a chance that telling this to him would make him uncomfortable going to Calidora, and dissuade him from going there altogether.

Evelyn doesn't want that, so this fight against Calidora will be kept a secret.

After relaying that to Adhara, she nodded and continued with her plan. "I thought something was wrong before, but now I know that Calidora is deliberately playing nice, and thus we would look worse in Rex's eyes if we were forceful. So we'll also have to play nice too"

"If we do that, then she will have more chances to get close to Rex" Adhara rebutted.

Upon hearing this, Evelyn shook her head.

Not that she believed what Adhara said was false, she's right, but time heavily favors them.

"Yes, Calidora will have more opportunities to grow closer to Rex. However, time isn't on her side. Their current bond is tethered to the battle against the Executor. Once that chapter concludes, Rex will have no motive to remain by her side. Calidora understands this and relies on us to expedite the development of her relationship with Rex" Evelyn explained, her eyes as lucid as crystal.

Adhara raised one of her brows at this, "Relying on us? How?"

"I told you before, Calidora is openly taunting me knowing that Rex will come to her, hoping that me and you would be against him going anywhere near her even more. But like I said earlier since Calidora is playing overly nice..."

"We would look bad in Rex's eyes!"

Upon finding that Adhara was catching up, a mischievous grin crossed Evelyn's face.

Even though Evelyn was caught off guard and was manipulated by Calidora, it doesn't mean that she couldn't revel in a battle of wits. It was her daily breakfast back when she was still a part of the Luc Family.

Realizing her scheme, Adhara gasped in realization.

All of this was calculated by Calidora alone. Her desire to have Rex is truly terrifying.

"Okay, if we do that, then Calidora will run out of time. We already openly showed our dislike for Calidora to him, so it would take more time for him to open up. It's a good plan" Adhara nodded, confident that the answer to this problem was to stop and wait.

However, that was not the end of Evelyn's plan, "It's not enough, I want to finish Calidora off"

"Hmm...? You want to kill her?" Adhara asked in puzzlement.

Doing so would only cause more trouble for them, it's not ideal to kill a figure like Calidora.

"After Rex finishes the Executor off, that's when we will deliver the finishing blow-" Evelyn shook her head as her eyes glistened with horrifying malice, she then approached Adhara and leaned over to her ear to whisper something.

Adhara frowned and listened attentively to what Evelyn was saying.

Gradually, her expression softened and by the end of it, her face turned rosy completely.

"Wh- What...? A- Are you being serious?" Adhara asked in utter disbelief.

Evelyn leaned back, her movements nonchalant as she spoke, "It's about time already, and it's the only way to secure our place next to Rex and put an end to the Calidora situation. Naturally, if you're not interested, you can let me take care of it as I'm the Luna, and that's perfectly fine"

"And let you be the closest to Rex? No way! Don't count me out!" Adhara denied.

Despite feeling embarrassed, she will not back out from this.

Upon hearing this resolute choice, Evelyn smiled, "Good, then it's settled then..."

Now that the matter is settled and Adhara is on the same page, Evelyn darted her eyes to the far distance, anticipating the day when she would repay Calidora for the humiliation she endured a couple of nights ago.

'If it's a fight you want then I'll give it to you...' Evelyn pondered, accepting the challenge.

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Meanwhile, somewhere dozens of miles away from the Dwarven Kingdom.

Located in the middle of an untamed wilderness is a once-robust citadel, an ancient ruin that has most of its walls crumbled and destroyed. Time-worn ancient stones were veiled in lush gatherings of vibrant mutated moss, ivy, and wildflowers, nature's reclamation of this forsaken stronghold.

Sunlight filtered through the canopy overhead, casting a dappled play of shadows.

Vines climbed the cracked cobblestones, some are mutated and wait for prey to pass, making a traverse into this citadel a dangerous endeavor. However, at this current moment, the entire citadel was shaking a couple of times with loud, crashing sounds echoing throughout its maze-like insides.

A few grunts of a person could be heard, followed by a beastly, thunderous roar.

It seemed a battle had taken place.

Soon enough, the hours-long battle eventually ended and the citadel regained its serenity.

At the center of the citadel is a spacious chamber that is the size of a football stadium, and lying in the middle is a huge bear-like creature with a skull head adorned with dark purple eyeless snakes that already lie in its pool of purple blood.

Most of its body retained dissolving wounds, burned by a lethal poison that caused its death.

Beside this Demon's carcass were two figures.

Rex would instantly recognize the two as none other than Prof. K and Giana.

Upon receiving the perilous Kingdom Quest to eliminate the Minor Chaos Inbred near the treacherous Demon Territory, Rex entrusted this quest to the two of them, fully aware of the elevated risks involved.

Since both are quite strong already, they could definitely handle this quest.

True enough, the two managed to defeat the Minor Chaos Inbred, suffering minimal injuries.

"Who would've thought that there's a mutated animal hiding here? If not for my element being able to seep into the cracks, we wouldn't be able to locate it and would most likely be ambushed by it. Also, we got very lucky, had it finished its last move, we wouldn't have come out unscathed" Prof. K muttered, taking a seat on the ground as he panted heavily.

It was a ridiculously strong mutated animal.

Even when he turned into his gas form, the mutated animals' attack still reached him.

Giana who was also exhausted nodded in agreement, "Any later and we'll most likely lose"

Not even saying anything, the two agreed to take a breather and recover their stamina again as they would need to bring the Minor Chaos Inbred's carcass back to the city as per Rex's instruction.

But while resting, Giana looked at the dark sky with a peculiar look.

Looking directly at the moon that was slightly dyed in amber color, "This sensation... I'll never get used to this" She muttered silently, feeling that the moon was rejuvenating her body and helping her heal even faster. She also remembered the sensation she felt not long ago.

It was a burning fury that came out of nowhere.

However, she suspected that it had something to do with Rex back in the city.

"Being a Werewolf is not that bad, but we are really connected emotionally" She mused.

Upon hearing this, Prof. K chuckled as everything also felt surreal to him, "Well, Werewolves are pack-based, so it made sense. Also, the rune Rex engraved on you, I think it's the cause that made you feel more emotional"

"Huh, is that so...?" Giana replied, looking at the glowing rune.

Soon, the two recovered enough and headed back, bringing the carcass with them.

Chapter 952 Vampire's Preparation and Acting

Meanwhile, the abandoned Vampire Kingdom.

Since the emergence of the Executor, the entire populace of the Vampire Kingdom has been evacuated into a temporary safe haven, turning the capital city into a military stronghold crawling with battle-hardened Vampires.

None of them are civilians, none of them made an oath to the Origin for no bloodshed.

On this night, the capital city seemed to be bustling.

A couple of thousand Vampires adorned in reinforced red armor could be seen going around preparing weapons and equipment in preparation for war, they were distributing black rings that would protect them from sunlight, and blood supplies.

Most of them are mainly Vampires from the older generation.

Furthermore, the average power of these Vampires is around the fifth-rank realm.

Due to the suppression of the First Breath, these fifth-rank realm Vampires were rendered incapable of using their blood energy, essentially, very weak. It was hard to believe that they were going to war, but there didn't seem to be fear in their eyes.

As the power of the First Breath bore down upon them, these fifth-rank realm Vampires were rendered incapable of using their blood energy. All of them are significantly weakened. It was hard to believe that they were going to war in their current state.

Oddly, despite their diminished strength, there was no trace of fear in their gazes.

In fact, most of them looked like homunculus. Mindless dolls.

Looking down at them from the high balcony of the castle was Elder Nolacula, his gleaming red eyes seemed to bore thoughts as he watched his people preparing for the upcoming war against the Executor as planned.

"Elder, I've done what you asked" A figure behind him, Solomon said solemnly.

Upon hearing this, Elder Nolacula asked without turning back, "What's the settled ratio?"

"3 out of 10 of them are a Blood Homunculus, the Enchanter settled that this ratio is the best without making it too obvious. If you think it's not enough, should I tell him to lower the ratio?" Solomon shot back another question, wanting to know whether this is enough or not.

If Elder Nolacula found this ratio too risky, then he would lessen the number of Homunculus.

However, that would mean more casualties for them.

Pausing for a moment, Elder Nolacula observed the Vampires below with his probing eyes.

"No, it's fine, the Executor wouldn't notice" Eventually, he shook his head, finding that he would miss that the legion contains Homunculuses if he was not attentive. "What about the Demon, have you heard from them about the preparation?"

"Yes, the Demons is ready to depart. We'll meet up along the way" Solomon replied.

Elder Nolacula exhaled roughly when he heard this, there was a hint of hesitance in his eyes but he knew that it was too late to pull back now. Since it has come to this, he would need to follow through with this until finished.

'I don't think it would be convincing with only us and the Demons' He pondered silently.

Recently, he tried to contact the others to no avail.

During this time, the Storm Prince is probably busy copulating with his pack members in anticipation of the Hare Moon. On the other hand, the Undead and the Shapeshifters haven't gotten back to the message he sent to them.

Obviously, the three don't want to be involved and rather prepare themselves.

Pausing for a second, Elder Nolacula turned to look at Solomon and asked, "What did you tell them the war is about? Have you fed them a fitting agenda? It's important for old Vampires like them to have purpose more than anything"

In preparing for a big war like this, the morale of the soldiers couldn't be neglected.

Morale is just as important if not more than weapons and rations.

If the cause and objective of the war were not clear, the soldiers wouldn't fight as rigorously.

Solomon nodded in response, "I told them that the fight is about the future of all of us"

"I told them that the war is about giving hope to our people and encouraging the Werewolves, Undead, and Shapeshifters who were fearful of the Executor to fight" As he said this, Solomon stepped towards the edge of the balcony, also gazing down at his people. "We and the Demon race would be doing the entire Supernaturals a favor, and our sacrifices would be remembered for generations"

"Hmm... No wonder most of them are fired up" Elder Nolacula nodded with a smile.

But then, Solomon couldn't help but ask, "Elder, are you sure about this?"

"Do you mean about using more of the older generations instead of the new generation?" Elder Nolacula asked back, followed by a self-assured chuckle. "The majority of them have likely hit their peak and can't grow any stronger. Weeding out the weaker ones is hardly an issue. After all, they've lived for thousands of years, and their potential is likely depleted by now"

"It's good for them to sacrifice their lives for our future" He added, seemingly nonchalant.

Out of nowhere, their attention was pulled away.

Both of them saw two figures stepping out of the castle with steady steps.

A pair of figures walked into the forecourt before making their way to the gate and exited.

Leading the way at the very front is a figure draped in a regal ensemble, a striking amalgam of black and red that elegantly covers her chest down to her feet. A ribbon of the same inky shade graces her midnight-black hair, adding a touch of youth to her visage.

Alongside her is another figure, exuding a more mature and dignified aura with pinkish hair.

One glance is all it takes to recognize the two. Nezera and Calidora.

"Solomon, what are the two of them doing?" Elder Nolacula asked with a deepening frown.

Upon hearing this, Solomon shook his head, "I don't know..."

It was surprising to see Calidora leaving her bed chamber, the place she cramped herself in ever since she came back from Origin knows where. However, it was obvious that she had something to do based on her expression.

Keeping a watchful gaze from above, the two saw Calidora head to the legion compound.

"To my knowledge, she has never adored her noble position and established herself as the Vampire Princess of this new era. She had no presence amongst the people, so what could possibly motivate her to go there?" Elder Nolacula uttered, voicing his curiosity.

Despite it felt bitter to hear about that, Solomon knew that Elder Nolacula was right.

Calidora has never embraced her royal position.

Most of the time, she complained about the fact that she couldn't go out of the castle.

Although she started to change, and it was evident since the obsession passed down by the Eyes of Terror, she still remains the same in wanting to do anything she wants. So seeing her heading to the people like this, especially since most are from the older generations, is surely a surprising sight.

It didn't take long for Calidora and Nezera to reach the legion compound.

Upon seeing their arrival, the generals and captains turned to look at them in confusion.

All of the Vampires that were busy preparing the logistics of the war also stopped for a second, gazing at the two in silence. Even though some don't recognize Calidora, they recognize Nezera standing behind her.

Calidora scanned their eyes before she bowed her torso politely.

"I don't mean to interrupt the war preparation" Calidora started, her voice dulcet and soothing to the ears. "I know most of you don't know me, so I'll introduce myself first. I am Calidora Blodirra from the Blodirra Family"

"I don't intend to interrupt the war preparation," Calidora began, her voice dulcet and melodious, soothing to the ears. "I realize that most of you are unfamiliar with me, so allow me to introduce myself. I am Calidora Blodirra from the Blodirra Family. But I'm here not as myself, but as a representation of the new generation"

"Please, accept this gift of gratitude for what you all are doing" She added.

Handing out the basket in her hands, the Vampires around looked at it and saw a couple of roses, filled with blood energy inside. "I awakened the Eyes of Terror and wanted to help, even a little. I can't make a lot, but I hope this will help"

Upon hearing this, the Vampires in the main hut looked at each other in surprise.

One of them then stood up and approached her.

It was the general, General Kurt from the Morelli Family who was tasked to lead this army.

"We really appreciate your gesture, young Calidora. I, Kurt Morelli, on behalf of the others, accept this generous gift" General Kurt takes the basket filled with roses and pats Calidora on the head.

"Thank you, this will certainly help"

Obviously, the general was touched by this gesture.

Knowing Calidora from the rumor, he was surprised that she was not as the rumor said.

Just as he received the gift on behalf of everyone, the general noticed Calidora's teary eyes and saw her sobbing. Nezera, ever supportive, gently rubbed her back to offer comfort, while General Kurt was completely taken aback by this sudden emotional shift.

Similarly, the others were also experiencing the same.

Watching her, who most of them thought to be a brat was not and is not crying softened them.

"Young Calidora, what's wrong?" General Kurt asked in concern.

Upon hearing this, Calidora attempted to wipe away her tears, but they were swiftly replaced by fresh ones. "I... I'm sorry, I wasn't going to cry, but it's hard. I'm such a baby, I'm sorry" She put on a sad smile and continued. "Remembering what the Executor had done in the past, I'm scared..."

"I'm scared that the Executor will rule the world again" She added before her cry intensified.

Nezera quickly held her, intending to bring her away, "I'm sorry, I'll take her back"

Despite the suddenity of the situation, it doesn't resolve the effect it brought as General Kurt and the other Vampires feel a pang in their hearts as they watch Calidora's back going further away. It also brought their minds back to the time when the Executor enslaved them.

A time that none of them wanted to happen ever again.

Unconsciously, the Vampires including General Kurt have their fists clenched tightly.

"Young Calidora!"

Hearing her name called, Calidora turned and realized that it was General Kurt.

Compared to earlier, when his eyes had been quite indifferent and slightly exhausted, they now blazed with a rekindled fire of resoluteness. General Kurt clenched his hands tighter and kept his gaze fixed on Calidora before eventually saying, "Don't be scared, you have nothing to fear. We will do everything we can... We will make sure that never happens, and that's a promise"

Following that, the other Vampires there also nodded in affirmation.

Upon seeing this, Calidora's face brightened up as she gave them a smile and left the place.

A moment later, Calidora and Nezero are now in the balcony.

"Since when are you so good at acting, daughter? Is that a new skill you picked from playing too much with Queen Shanaela?" Solomon asked, eyeing his own daughter warily as he was surprised by her feat earlier.

With one move, she increased the morale of the soldiers very high.

It was also specifically tailored to the agenda he told the people about, making it effective.

Calidora's visit gave them the purpose of securing the future.

Keeping silent while making eye contact with her own father, Calidora ignored his remarks and turned to look at Elder Nolacula who was also eyeing her with interest. "How is it, Elder? Do you think what I did increase their morale, even for a bit?"

"Yes, indeed. I suppose your act is quite effective" Elder Nolacula grinned excitedly.

He was not expecting Calidora to be this manipulative.

Moreover, he was aware that she had an ulterior motive behind her actions. It seemed improbable that she was doing this solely to assist them. "So," he inquired, "what do you want in return? Is it the freedom to go wherever you please, with no interference from your parents?"

Upon hearing this proposition, Solomon frowned.

If Elder Nolacula gave her permission, then he couldn't do anything to rebut it.

Surprisingly, Calidora shook her head, wearing a mysterious smile, and turned with the intention of getting back inside. However, she maintained eye contact with Elder Nolacula as she spoke, "No, actually. I want a castle of my own for solitude, anywhere will suffice. Is that a possible request, Elder?"

"Now why do you want that?" Elder Nolacula asked, trying to peer through Calidora's mind.

However, in response, Calidora's smile stretched wider eerily.

Chapter 953 Royal Guards' Banter

Elder Nolacula recognized that Calidora didn't want to be bound to her parents.

At least, that's what her action depicted.

It was even more so due to the strain between her and Solomon had intensified, driven by his lingering bitterness over Calidora's persistent refusal to heed his counsel, and the added challenge of Nezera consistently siding with her, pampering her.

Such a situation only served to further escalate the tension between them.

But the eerie smile on Calidora's face which she quickly concealed again grew doubts.

Elder Nolacula was quite confident that he could read Calidora's inner desire, but the act she showed earlier made him doubt his own assumption. If she's capable of putting on an act and making the people believe she is a soft-hearted princess, then what's stopping her from also doing something along the way to him?

He now believed that there was more than meets the eye.

However, he couldn't pinpoint exactly what Calidora wanted, she concealed it flawlessly.

For a brief second, his mind went back to the past.

Calidora reminded him of a Vampire he respected, 'It's like facing Elizabeth, unpredictable'

"I've neglected my Eyes of Terror, now the thirst is back again, so I need to address it again. But I wouldn't stay there for too long, it's not like the castle is going to be my permanent residence" Calidora announced clearly. She then glanced at Solomon who was evidently furious about this, "I already consulted this with Mother, and she doesn't mind. Now, I only need your permission"

Upon hearing this, Solomon gritted his teeth, a light bony sound could be heard.

Not gaining the respect he deserved made him furious.

Instead of asking him for permission who was her father, Calidora asked Elder Nolacula's permission, and that is enough to make any man angry. "Hmm... I also see no problem in this, so I'll grant you what you want"

"But Elder..." Solomon tried to intervene.

However, his voice was cut short with a raise of Elder Nolacula's hand, "It's been decided"

Solomon could only remain silent in return, veins bulging in his neck.

"I'm sincerely grateful, Elder. I have no doubt that under your guidance, our Kingdom will thrive in this era. I won't impose on you any longer. Farewell" Calidora gracefully bowed and took her leave, not forgetting to cast a triumphant smile in Solomon's direction.

On the appearance, it seemed to be like a family quarrel.

However, the truth was not as it appears to be, Calidora aimed at her father for a reason.

During her time in the Elven Kingdom before meeting with Rex, she uncovered a couple of spies dispatched by Solomon to monitor her activities. Fortunately, these spies hailed from humble backgrounds within the Elven Kingdom, and their efforts yielded no significant information of value.

Calidora tried ignoring it at first until last night.

A couple of Vampires were keeping tabs on her move inside her bed chamber.

It was unclear the reason why Solomon was doing this, sending people to watch her, but one guess is that he suspected that Calidora was hiding something and thus decided to do this. She had nothing to hide except for secretly going to Rex and helping him.

For the rebellion group, it would be bad for Solomon to know, but frankly, she doesn't care.

But what she does care about is the fact that she was being tailed.

Given her future aspirations and strategic plans, she couldn't tolerate being under watch.

Solomon had the potential to get in the way of her goals, and that was a risk she wasn't willing to take, especially with how much effort she had been putting in. Consequently, she chose to eliminate him from the equation, at least temporarily.

Now, Solomon has pressure from Elder Nolacula.

If he's not careful or being too blatant, Calidora could just report him to Elder Nolacula.

Descending the staircase with a triumphant smile, her heels echoed against the cold stone as she headed back to her bed chamber. 'Everything is proceeding just as I intended, seems like getting rid of Father is not as hard as I thought. Now, Father wouldn't be able to keep me under his surveillance, at least for a while.'

Had he known what Calidora was about to do, he would definitely be against it.

Not even her Mother would back her up.

Thus, she would make absolutely sure that none of them knew until it was finished.

"When would he come to me...? I thought he would be here by now" Calidora slowed down her steps and stopped, gazing at the glazed window beside her. "Did something happen? If nothing happened, then there's no reason for him to be this long. Maybe the Executor did something, ah... I missed him already"

Just then, her eyes were fixed on the night, broken sky, and onto the adjacent moon.

Calidora's eyes then turned purple, her Eyes of Terror activated.

Sighing to herself, she continued her journey, navigating the empty hallway in silence. As she approached a junction, her bed chamber to the left, she overheard a couple of Royal Guards engaging in light banter to while away the time.

Not minding them, she wanted to quickly reach her bed-chamber, until she abruptly stopped.

Her attention was piqued by the Royal Guards' banter.

"You know, the Hare Moon is almost upon us"

"Ah, yes. It's that time of the year again. During that, it'll be a good day for the Werewolves"

"Absolutely. But you know, it doesn't only have to be the Werewolves to have some fun. We could also have fun, we could also be with our wives. The moonlight, the night's embrace, it's all quite... intimate, don't you think?"

"Hmm, you're right. While the Werewolves are howling, we'll be... well, you know."

Just the thought of spending the night with their wives brought delighted grins to the faces of the two Royal Guards, their minds lost in fantasies, determined to not lose out to the Werewolves in having a great time, and though they didn't experience the same effects as the Werewolves, they could still feel the intimacy the Hare Moon brings.

As the two were dwelling in their fantasy, Calidora approached them with hurried steps.

One of the Royal Guards realized this and quickly nudged the other.

In response, the two stood upright with weapons in hand, staying motionless like a statue.

Both feel their hearts thumping faster seeing that Calidora is heading towards them with a dark expression and hurried steps, it made them think that somehow, their banter earlier offended her.

Suddenly, Calidora grabbed one of the Royal Guards' collars and pulled him.

"P- Princess, h-have I done something wrong?" the Royal Guard asked, sweating profusely.

Calidora's eyes gleamed bright purple as she peered into the Royal Guard's eyes sharply, she answered the question with another question. "I overheard your conversation. Tell me, are you sure what you're saying is right?"

"I- I don't understand. What do you mean pr-"

"Is it right?! Is the next full moon, the Hare Moon?!"

Not even giving the chance to let the Royal Guard finish his sentence, Calidora intervened.

Her eyes are burning with fiery distress.

Eventually, the Royal Guard quickly nodded his head, "Y- Yes, princess. It's the Hare Moon"

Upon hearing this, Calidora's heart skipped a beat.

Accidentally, the Royal Guards' banter made her realize that the upcoming full moon was going to be troublesome. Following that, she lets go of his collar and pushes him away, stumbling to the wall behind him.

Seeing this, his comrade quickly helped him up and glanced at Calidora in disapproval.

However, his disapproval quickly vanished.

Calidora's expression contorted into a hideous one that sent a chill running down her spine, her body twitched weirdly on the brink of exploding in anger, and it looked like she was about to eat someone alive as the wrath on her face was palpable.

'I forgot about the Hare Moon! Rex would be with Evelyn if it's the Hare Moon'

Just the thought of that made her body burn.

Despite the dire to hit something or ransack the entire place to vent her anger was overwhelming, she decided to take a deep breath and compose herself. 'No, it's good that I know about this now. I could do something to prevent them from being together'

'But how? It's not like I can go there right now' She pondered with a deepening frown.

Since her spouse is a Werewolf, she made sure to know the effects of all Full Moons.

It was easy to get her hands on that information as her Mother basically knew everything about the Werewolves, and the effect of the Full Moon on the Werewolves is not some grand secret, so she learned about this way back.

However, she forgot to take this into consideration and thus became angry like this.

She was angry at herself for forgetting.

Calidora was evidently fretting about this matter, standing motionless in thought. But then, she came to a realization that she doesn't need to be worried, 'Wait, there's no need to worry. Rex is afraid of losing everything, so he wouldn't have the guts to do that. Yes... I should be fine, my plan should be fine. Just this once, be predictable, Rex. Don't their words sway you because you're destined and will always be mine!'

~

Meanwhile, back to the present.

Upon finishing assigning the others to maintain the city, Rex went out to meet Edward again.

It was time for him to leave as he had no choice.

Rex already bought some precautions beforehand, an item to evacuate him and Ryze back to the city if something did go wrong, and also double-checked that he still had 1 Invincible item that he could use in case of emergency.

He's going to meet with the Executor for the first time after their first fight.

Back then, the Executor wanted to kill him.

The Executor made it clear last time they met of his intention to find and eliminate Rex when the opportunity arose. Naturally, this deeply concerned Rex about this meeting, but he concealed the truth from the others to prevent unnecessary worry.

One way or another, he would meet with the Executor.

Although now is not a great time, it's also not the worst time as he could fend for himself.

More so because the System stated that his stats would gradually be increased starting from this night all the way to the day of the Hare Moon. Of course, the effect the Hare Moon brought would also be more intense starting this night.

Even then, this gave confidence that he would be able to defend himself properly.

With swelling stats, he would definitely be fine.

Aside from checking on Gistella, this would also determine whether the Executor would take the bait, and I can initiate the finalization of the plan. I have so many things to do, and so many things to prepare. I could only hope that this went well.

Nodding his head, Rex strode over to Edward who was already waiting.

"I should ask you to keep up with me because we don't have that much time" Edward said.

Upon hearing this, Rex looked at him in scorn.

Obviously, Edward is really underestimating if he really thought that he was faster.

"Do not squander words to joke if we don't have much time. We're enemies, not comrades, so spare me the facade of camaraderie, ignoring the huge tension between us. If not for the situation, you'll be dead by now" Rex retorted with a frigid demeanor, his countenance devoid of any trace of delight at Edward's presence.

Edward cackled when he heard this, "Not that I expect anything, but alright then"

Just like that, under the watchful gaze of the onlookers, the three vanished from their spots.

Despite lacking behind, Ryze was not that far off behind from the two.

All of them moved faster than the onlookers' eyes.

Initially, the three of them could be seen at the edge of the Humming Damned Forest. But within a fraction of a second, their presence was gone with no sign of where they went, showing just how fast they were compared to the normal standards.

Chapter 954 Are you still the same?

Edward's visit and Rex's departure changed Dargena City's routine almost instantly.

Under the guidance of Adhara who was in charge of the defense, and with the help of Gelmar, some citizens who were either a worker or a farmer with considerable strength was taken and turned into guards to bolster the guards' number and reinforce the city.

A system has also been placed by Adhara's decree.

For better protection from potential attacks, the more experienced were told to be scouts.

Some of the citizens were quickly strengthened through the Servant of the Lunar Formation and surprisingly able to use their racial abilities again despite the First Breath's suppression, meaning that they had reached the sixth-rank realm threshold.

Of course, unlike the Ruler's Blessing formation, this lasted a limited amount of time.

But it would suffice for scouting.

When the effect ran out, the scouts could come back and use the formation again.

Since the formation hasn't been used at all, it accumulated a lot of moonlight energy throughout the night and could be used several times. Adhara judged that it would be enough for quite some time.

It was done mainly because Adhara deduced that the current scouts were not enough.

The Dark Elves were still putting up their end of the deal, becoming the eyes in the Humming Damned Forest for potential attackers. However, their quota was reduced greatly due to the potential trouble coming to the Dark Elf Kingdom.

Due to that reason, Edward came through without any notice from them.

Obviously, there were blindspots in the forest.

In addition, Evelyn also issued a project to find more inhabitants for the city.

Despite it seeming like the reasoning is forefront, when Adhara asked, Evelyn said that the Supernaturals' citizens feel suppressed and uncomfortable with the new, thousands of human citizens brought by Lady Lauren and Sir Daniel.

None of the Humans were hostile, but it's natural for the minority to be uneasy.

It's going to save them from internal trouble in the long run if they handle it right now.

Thus, Evelyn wanted to change that, and Adhara agreed.

Dindora had been assigned to oversee this big project, and he was responsible for leading several groups to scour the outskirts near the Great Barricade. Many of the Supernaturals who had managed to escape the human territory before the emergence of Intra Technology might be residing in that vicinity.

As a result, it had become their primary target area for the initial search.

Out of the three future generals of the city, Dindora was surprisingly the fastest to reach the mid-seventh rank realm. She outgrew the other, but then again, the environment is perfect for a Dryad like her so it's not that surprising.

So because of that, she was the one leading the groups.

Just a mere visit from Edward caused an immense transformation in the city as its location is now exposed, posing a significant threat to the citizens. As a result, the city erupted into a flurry of activity, with its people fervently preparing to defend their newfound home.

Even the outer appearance change of the city didn't garner much attention.

It shows how focused the citizens were.

Meanwhile, after settling the matters, Adhara went to the Cluster Domains to cultivate.

Having time at her disposal, she refused to squander it on idleness when she could venture to the Cluster Domain to further her strength. On the other hand, Evelyn made her way to Kyran's room so that she could find and inform Naela about the situation.

Opening the door, she saw Naela seemed to be telling Kyran a story on the bed.

Since her last visit to check on Kyran, she noted a significant improvement in his appearance, he had become better. His pallor had receded, and it appeared that the influence of the Ice and Snow Full Moon was gradually waning.

It was hurtful to think that this was Calidora's doing, but she couldn't say anything.

Although she wanted Calidora to have nothing to do with them, she would be deemed selfish as that would mean Kyran staying in his state for years. She couldn't jeopardize this, so she chose to endure the pain.

Evelyn knocked on the opened door, trying to pull Naela's attention to her.

Upon hearing the knocks, Naela turned and saw Evelyn standing by the door in wait.

"Naela, can I talk to you outside?" Evelyn asked.

Having no reason to refuse, Naela nodded her head and came out of the room. It was then Evelyn told her that she shouldn't neglect her training as the environment was perfect for her, and she should've taken this opportunity better.

Of course, this surprised Naela as this wasn't a problem before.

Some might say that Evelyn is taking a step too far by telling her this, but there was no point in Naela babysitting Kyran when he would not wake up any time soon. It would be better for her to get stronger so that she could provide help for the city.

Because when the time comes, the city will need every strength it has.

"I don't want to sound rude or force you to do something when you're not ready, but the situation has changed, the city might be attacked in the near days. You have already been given enough time, so I hope you understand" Evelyn explained herself in the most, polite way she to not offend Naela.

Contrary to what Evelyn expected, Naela accepted this way better.

She nodded in understanding, it's a difficult time, so this doesn't come as a surprise.

"But can I check on Kyran once or twice a day?" She eventually asked.

Upon hearing this, Evelyn nodded without a second thought, "Of course you could, it's not like I told you to not do that. As long as you can keep your focus on training and get stronger, then it's not a problem"

With that, Evelyn excused herself and went out of the castle again.

Now, she quickly headed back to her bed chamber and changed into her royal red robe once again as she would need to call Lady Lauren and Sir Daniel back to the city, and this would mean that she also would need to explain the reason for retrieving them back to the Dark Elf and the Tigerman race.

It's going to be hard to explain, but she believed she could do it.

Especially since by now, the Rastrikan Demons' defeat by Rex has probably reached them.

'Diplomatic relations should be my job as the Luna, I can do it. Father had trained me for something like this throughout my life, so this is nothing' Evelyn pondered and quickly headed out, heading to the teleportation formation.

Going there is easy now that the allied kingdoms are connected.

One use of teleportation formation would send him straight to their kingdoms.

~

Meanwhile, back to Rex.

Along the way, the three of them weren't saying anything to each other.

Rex initially thought that Edward came here via some kind of teleportation or transportation, but it seems like he wasn't he came here by foot instead. Then again, he might be probing the area in search of Dargena City.

It's still a secluded place, the Humming Damned Forest provides that perfect cover.

But that didn't stop him from not finding the city.

Furthermore, because of this, the three only reached a considerable distance from Dargena City in a little bit under three hours. A slowpoke compared to going with transportation such as a mutated beast or something because of the First Breath.

Additionally, Rex couldn't lie, but he was very much exhausted right now.

Battling for a couple of days straight shouldn't be a problem for him, but the problem was the fact that in the last couple of days, he was exerting everything he had. I was doing too much, I was too excited and now I'm exhausted'

Rex's frown deepens as he tries to keep his body functioning and his energy stable.

Fighting Demon Lord Ranath and Olgaroz, especially, is very taxing.

He wanted to vent his frustration because of the incident he had done, so he went overboard and caused his energy and stamina to run low. Had Demon Lord Kirgil was not weakened, then he would definitely not be able to stand.

If Demon Lord Kirgil could still cast his Hell Ruination, things would not go this way.

Due to that, his body is suffering from exhaustion right now.

Maybe earlier, the vigor from seeing Edward might've suppressed this immense exhaustion.

But it slowly came back to him, causing him to slow down immensely.

Since Rex and Edward are matching Ryze's speed, they were thankfully not going as fast, or else Edward would've noticed him getting slower by now. "Rex, I have a question," Ryze whispered. "I heard about the First Breath, so how come the Executor seeks a fight with the Supernaturals now"

Fighting the Supernaturals right now is quite foolish.

Compared to Awakened which relies on elemental energy which was suppressed by the First Breath, most of the Supernaturals have superior strength, the Werewolves and the Demons for instance are the strongest in this current moment.

Surely, the Executor knows about this, and thus Ryze found this confusing.

Upon hearing this, Rex paused and cast a glance at Edward, leading them to the very front.

He then signaled to Ryze to slow down, creating some distance between them and Edward before he manifested his elemental energy to envelop them, ensuring their conversation remained private. "I can't say for sure why," he began, "but I'm planning to rescue Gistella when the opportunity arises"

Ryze frowned when he heard this.

No matter how much he pondered, he couldn't think of a reason why Gistella got there.

"How did she get there in the first place?" Ryze asked.

Rex shook his head in return, "It's a long story, and you haven't had the chance to meet with the troublemaker. But in short, me, Adhara, and Evelyn fought, and she was trying to fix the problem by going to the Executor"

Listening to this attentively, Ryze nodded repeatedly in response.

On the other hand, Rex is observing his expressions, looking at him with a peculiar look.

Of course, I lied. I knew why the Executor wanted to fight the Supernaturals. He wanted to reach the Symposium as soon as possible, impatient if I had to say. But you don't have to know that, Ryze... I haven't cleared you from suspicion yet.

Adhara's assumption was spot on.

Despite accepting Ryze back, Rex doesn't trust him fully like he used to.

Rex even deliberately told him that he was going to try to rescue Gistella, which he had no intention of doing if the situation for her was not that bad. He said this so that he could test whether Ryze was an intel of the enemy or not.

Even throughout the way, he has been paying close attention to Edward's expression.

He was surprised to see Ryze earlier, but that was about it.

But by telling this lie to Ryze, Rex could easily verify whether he was a spy or not if the information somehow spread. This situation provided the perfect opportunity to assess whether he could trust Ryze or not, which was precisely why he had brought Ryze along.

In another couple of hours, Rex decided to break the silence with Edward.

"So, tell me, how does it feel to be corrupted? Are you still the same?" He asked.

Upon hearing this, Edward glanced over his shoulder to look at him. Rex didn't give a chance for him to say anything and continued, "Was your soul taken by him?? Did your memories become hazy? Or perhaps, are you nothing but a shell of another being?"

"Oh, so we're talking now?" He mused teasingly. "Nothing much, really"

"Just like you who turns out to be a Werewolf, I feel nothing much changed except for me becoming stronger. And as for your curiosity, my soul is intact, my memories are fine, and I'm pretty much the same person as the one you knew" He added with a peculiar tone.

Catching this tone, Rex's eyes squinted, "Hmm, Is that so? Good for you, good for you..."

Chapter 955 Unavoidable Path

It took a huge amount of willpower to ask this question to Edward.

Even though Rex seemed to be okay in appearance with meeting him after venting earlier, there was an undeniable other, prominent side of him that felt disgusted to talk or be anywhere near Edward.

His betrayal, siding with the humans knowing what they did still looms in his heart.

But even then, he couldn't let his emotions take control.

Out of the people who were under the Executor's circle, it's an unrefutable fact that Edward is the most accessible. Now that he knew Edward was not fundamentally corrupted, he had to make use of this opportunity to extract information about the Executor.

Regardless of his feelings, he had to do this.

"So you're now another copy of the Executor? Or are you an Ancient Human?" Rex asked.

Edward only replied with a smile, "Enough with this, let's pick up our pace"

Knowing exactly what Rex was trying to do, he cut the conversation short and picked up his pace to reach their destination further. Rex gazed at Edward's back for a second before he also picked up his pace, followed by Ryze behind him.

In a bit, the three finally took their first break in an abandoned village.

Judging from how rough the appearance of the village was, it has been abandoned for years.

"Be back in a minute, I need to take a leak" Rex excused himself.

He exited an intact house at the edge under Edward's and Ryze's gazes who were resting to recover their stamina. Traveling long distances on foot was a problem in the First Breath, their stamina was not unlimited.

Upon reaching a considerable distance, Rex chanted silently, "Damned Spectre..."

Immediately after he recited those incantations, a duplicate of himself emerged from within the cursed realm, crawling out of his body and standing next to him. This unique ability was the one he used to defeat Elder Noskear before.

This duplicate's attack could cross through realms and hit others.

Even though the damage it would cause was weakened, it's still a strong and useful skill.

With a command of thought, Rex controlled the cursed duplicate to head back into the house where Ryze and Edward resided, keeping a vigilant watch over them. Now, I'll see if you're truly on my side, Ryze. I hope you pass this test because I don't want to hurt you.

Shaking his head, Rex then headed onward, into another house and covered his presence.

Inside the living room, he nodded and determined that this would do.

Rex bought the Demon Suppression Barrier and engraved them around the house. He scanned his eyes around, and he laid his hand on the dusted sofa before using his mana to disperse the dust instantly and sit on it.

Just as he was about to do something, he paused for a second.

This shabby house... It somehow reminded me of when Gistella reached perfect human form.

Due to the humble furniture and theme of the interior of the house, as this is a secluded village, he was reminded of that time. He still vividly remembers at that time, Gistella's beauty stunned him as she was previously an Undead.

However, he didn't idle in his thoughts for long and took out one Rastrikan Demon Core.

He had given Adhara half, while the other half was still with him.

<Rastrikan Demon Core>

It's an eighth-rank realm to a ninth-rank realm equivalent item depending on the quality of the Demon Core, and it's also the source of power for the Rastrikan Demons themselves. It contains demonic power and can be used as an enhancement item to strengthen the constitution of a person and also develop the runes of the Seven Deadly Sins.

Upon reading this, it seems there was not much difference compared to the normal ones.

Rex only found that the Rastrikan Demon Core is significantly bigger.

Then again, these demon cores are at least around the seventh-rank realm, so it's expected.

Since the Executor would be going to war against the Demons and Vampires, King John should be there too, right? I need to meet with him. The Witch already consulted with me, and the System found that it's possible. But he would need to be stronger physically or else it won't work on the Executor.

A plan was devised to involve King John in the mix not too long ago.

To further that plan, he would need to meet with King John and make him a bit stronger.

Fortunately for him, the Demon Cores from the Rastrikan Demons supplied the materials he would need to make King John physically stronger. It appeared that the stars were aligned in favor of him, and he couldn't help but appreciate how fortunate he had been.

If everything went smoothly like this, the Executor would suffer defeat without knowing it.

"But first, I also need to make myself stronger" Rex mused and nodded.

Extracting more Rastrikan Demon Cores from the inventory, about a hundred of them, he was now surrounded by big purple glowing cores the size of a basketball. Each of them radiated a potent demonic energy that filled every corner of the house with a thick, smoky hazy.

But the barrier he sets up blocks them from getting out of the house.

Given that the Rastrikan Demon Cores were fundamentally similar to regular demon cores, the process of absorption remained unchanged. He would first have to dilute the demon cores in water, then immerse himself in the demonic mixture.

Finding water now is probably impossible, but it's not a problem for Rex.

Rex controlled one of his weakest elements, the Earth element, and created a jacuzzi-like bath made of wood of considerable size in the middle of the living room. He then filled it with water using his water element before dumping the Rastrikan Demon Cores inside.

Slowly, he saw the demon cores crumble and mixed with water.

Visibly, the water turned from crystal blue to red, dark red, and then eventually, black.

With the preparation done, he took off his black combat armor and got into the water. He then meditated with the water reaching his neck, and soon enough, the veins across his body bulged, indicating the pain had started and it was not a pretty one.

Compared to last time, his expression didn't break from focus.

It was true that when compared to the regular demon cores, the Rastrikan Demon Cores caused even greater pain as the change to his body was more profound. A feeling as though his entire body was seething from within, penetrating the tissue of his blood veins before his regeneration ability retaliated, creating a perpetual, excruciating torture.

Not even people with high pain tolerance could suffer this without a reaction.

Rex, however, is a different breed.

<Useable Demonic Energy is detected!>

<Initiating the absorption process...>

Slowly, the water content started to visibly lessen, his body was absorbing it.

Knowing that he didn't have much time to spare as the others would be looking for him, Rex's forehead creased as he took a deep breath and forced his body to absorb the demonic water quicker than ever.

His body's suction was so powerful that the water started to rotate into a whirlpool.

But this managed to force a groan out of his mouth.

Since he forced his body to absorb faster, then naturally, the pain reached another zenith.

It went on for about two minutes before the water content was completely drained, and Rex stayed in meditation trying to control the enhancements that were caused by the Rastrikan Demon Cores under his control.

<Absorption process finished!>

<Calculating result...>

<Obtained 1,200 Strength Stat!>

<Obtained 750 Endurance Stat!>

<Obtained 300 Agility Stat!>

Rex was pleased by the result, one session equals 2,000 stat points, which is a lot.

Even for him, this amount is nothing to scoff at.

One session already gave me this much, and I still have thousands more in the inventory. But the only problem is where is the limit? Then again, this is all free stats, and I should be happy with this result.

Just then, he remembered that the others should also gain this amount of stats.

A mere notion brought a devilish smile to his face, for his forces would undoubtedly surge and swell in strength after absorbing the Rastrikan Demon Cores. Gaining 2,000 stat points was akin to acquiring the total stats of a sixth-rank realm Awakened. If they underwent multiple sessions, many among them would effortlessly ascend to the seventh-rank realm.

It's safe to say that most would have their own physiques beating their innate powers.

Due to that, Rex was extremely pleased.

He even thought that letting some Rastrikan Demons live was a bad choice on his part.

Oh, yea... I still have the stat points from the Minor Oustification.

Remembering that he still had stat points that hadn't been allocated, he checked his stats and was surprised that the stat points were already reaching a considerable amount while he was not paying attention.

<Minor Oustification>

Accumulated Points: 1,120

Divine Power: 0.1

Upon seeing the Minour Oustification tab, Rex saw the second row and was confused.

System, what does the Divine Power section dictate?

<Divine Power dictates the user's divinity, the higher the value becomes, the closer the user would reach Divinity and ascend to Godhood. The threshold of Divine Power to reach Godhood is incalculable, it's advised to be even stronger to know the fixed rate. But this is a path the user would need to take>

Not expecting this answer, Rex's eyes flared open and his body froze for a moment.

It should be obvious, but being confronted by it was another thing.

G- Godhood...? Essentially, I will not die forever?

For the first time, the prospect of becoming stronger didn't incite him again. Rex found it hard to explain what he was feeling right now, but he felt different when his path was destined to reach the realm of Gods.

Some part of him wanted to embrace it, while the others wanted to deny it.

Just as he was in a momentary trance, the System seemed to sense the emotional turmoil inside of him and followed with another notification. But this time, there were some changes to the color of the words in the notification.

<INVINCIBILITY means quite literally, and the System will assist the user in reaching it>

<NO MATTER WHAT, the user will reach absolute INVINCIBILITY>

Rex was not a dumb man, he knew exactly what the System meant by saying this.

Essentially, despite him not having any ambition to become a God and live forever, he would still ultimately walk down this path. There was no other choice, and it was not like he could stop now with so much at stake.

Any other path would only end in him hurting the others, and couldn't do that.

I- I need time. I'll focus on the present problem, yes, I could deal when the time comes.

Feeling a bit dizzy from the thoughts that assaulted his mind, Rex decided to manipulate himself into not thinking about this matter. He would need to focus, there are other pressing things, and he would put his mind and soul to the present matters first.

Shaking his head, he quickly wore his armor again.

Despite wanting to continue, he couldn't, the others were waiting for him.

...

Meanwhile, inside the other house.

"I'm sorry for suddenly leaving you" Edward suddenly apologized out of the blue.

Even though he wanted to prove himself to Rex that he could do better and help, deep down, Ryze was not comfortable being with Edward. It was due to the fact that he didn't say anything and left.

Additionally, because of Edward, he was blinded and forgot about Rex for a moment.

Ryze regretted choosing Edward over Rex back then.

Upon hearing this, Ryze remained silent his eyes still averting away. He then eventually replied with a whispering tone, "Why did you have to leave me alone? No... more importantly, why didn't you say anything to me before leaving?"

"There are things I could not say. I just want to apologize to you" Edward sighed lightly.

But this only sparks an acute smile from Ryze.

Just as the place became awkwardly silent again, Edward frowned before he turned his head to the window on his right. There was nothing there, but he could oddly sense something was watching him.

'This... This is the same feeling I had at the castle, what is it, really?'

Chapter 956 Hostile Grounds

Compared to Ryze who was hurt by the conversation, Edward has his mind elsewhere.

At first, he hadn't paid that much attention, but now he sensed a familiar presence, much like the one he had sensed inside the Executor's castle before discovering the mark on the Executor's bed chamber door handle that he found odd.

It was as if something invisible, something beyond the naked eye, was watching him.

Glancing to the door, he pondered in thought.

'Rex is still outside, still hasn't come back yet. So I'm right, this has to do with him'

Edward's suspicion grew stronger because of this, and he couldn't shake the feeling that this strange presence had something to do with Rex. If it were a spell, there would be traces of mana, but the presence he felt was entirely different.

For all he knows, Rex has the capability to do this.

Soon enough, the presence suddenly disappears and vanishes into thin air.

Clack!

Right after the presence disappeared, the door was opened and Rex walked inside.

He made eye contact with Edward for a brief second before walking to the side and taking a rest in the dining room, deciding to recuperate before continuing their journey again. But that brief eye contact tells Edward everything, and he now is sure that Rex is planning something.

On the other hand, Rex decided to get some shut-eye to accelerate his recovery.

Nothing out of the ordinary happened.

Using the Damned Specter skill to discreetly monitor the two while he was not here, testing whether Ryze would reveal anything to Edward, Rex found that neither of them was engaged in anything suspicious.

Both were even in a brief argument earlier, and it appeared that Ryze's anger was genuine.

Although this was the case, it's still the beginning.

Rex would keep monitoring Ryze's movement and actions until he was absolutely sure.

However, he decided to sleep now because he has a new weighing burden inside his mind that he accidentally found. Burying his face to his arms on the table with a sigh, he looked at the wall absent-mindedly.

A God, huh...? Will there be a way for me to die, then?

...

Dawn.

When the birds started chirping whilst the sky was still dark, the three finally arrived.

Upon crossing a couple of miles of open and continuous flat areas of grass, the three of them saw a military compound in the far distance with heavy armored vehicles and aircraft could be seen soaring in the sky in wait for the upcoming war.

Hundreds of military men were on patrol, marching in a fixed jog, ready with their weapons.

A scenery like this is pretty nostalgic for Rex.

Barely that long ago, he had been an integral part of the military forces, tasked as a bulwark against the Supernaturals, fighting and making sacrifices to ensure the continued strength and survival of the entire human race.

In addition to that, there were also Awakened, Black Hands, and the Elpida Alliance involved.

Seems like the news about the Executor has spread to the other major cities.

Now, the Elpida Alliance had been involved in this fight, and their personal Awakened army, the Cessation Knights who were wearing futuristic white and blue mana-powered armor were the elite part of the entire military column.

Each of them was a veteran of war, an expert in battle.

"Did this bring back some memory?" Edward asked, stealing a glance at Rex.

His sudden question snapped Rex out of his trance before he continued, "I don't know about you, but this sight definitely brings back old memories to me. From that, I understand clearly that I don't want humanity to crumble, I want us to survive. I may be a traitor to you, but I am a loyalist to humanity's side"

Upon hearing this, Rex scoffed in scorn.

If anything, the leader of humanity is the one to blame for this more than anyone.

Rex also puts humanity first in his priority list before anything, but all of that changed when the tragedy struck him. Had he been given the respect, and was accepted as another who wanted humanity to strive, then he wouldn't have turned out like this.

"Lead the way, I'll meet the Executor" Rex replied, ignoring Edward's remark.

Closing into the military compound, the three of them were stopped and surrounded.

All of them raised their upgraded rifles and pointed at Rex.

Edward reassured the group and guided them across the borderline and into the compound to meet with the Executor at the center. Along the way, Rex couldn't help but notice that some of the military personnel, Awakened, and Black Hands regarded him with an unfriendly and disapproving expression.

Seems like they were also whispering about him.

I thought the UWO blamed King Baralt for Ratmawati City's tragedy.

Knowing that the name Rex Silverstar carried significant weight in Ratmawati City as the rising star of humanity, the symbol of future hope, revealing that he was responsible for the tragedy would carry severe repercussions among the citizens.

An effect humanity couldn't afford right now.

But it seems, the rumor about him has already spread, causing this kind of reaction.

Coursing through along the path, indifferent to the curious onlookers, Rex surveyed the evolving compound with keen interest. What was once a collection of tents had transformed into octagonal temporary war camps, protected by sophisticated formations.

Signs of technology could be seen as these octagons made a light, humming sound.

Many things changed from the last time I was in the military.

After examining the alterations to the military compound, Rex fixed his gaze onward again to see where Edward was leading him. Suddenly, he caught wind of a commotion from his unattended side. He paid no heed to it but could discern their conversation distinctly.

"Look at him! Not a hint of guilt after killing so many innocent people!"

"Calm down! He's a friendly force. We're soldiers, not vigilantes, we have to follow orders!"

"I can't just let him walk away! He killed my family!"

"We get it, but if you do this, you're putting all of us at risk. Do you understand?!"

To the side, a couple of military personnel struggled to restrain a man who was desperately reaching for his firearm, his eyes filled with bloodlust and teetering on the precipice of madness as he directed his hateful glare at Rex.

It was obvious, the source of the man's hatred for Rex that is.

During his violent rampage in Ratmawati City, when he had unleashed his grief over losing his parents, he had sought to wreak havoc without restraint, inadvertently claiming the lives of innocent bystanders through his destructive aura and energies.

One belongs to this man's family, causing him to be filled with rage at the sight of Rex.

Rex didn't react, but inside, he sighed inwardly.

He knew that killing innocent lives was not the optimal way of doing things, but he couldn't do anything about it. Even if he was pulled back in time to do that day all over again, he would still go berserk and lose in his rampage.

Seeing his parents' lifeless bodies was not something able to be endured.

Frankly speaking, nobody is going to be ready for that.

No matter how many chances he was given to relive that day and make it right, he knew it would be futile. His anger will always surge, triggering the feline wrath within him as his Werewolf form reacts.

Due to that, he could only sigh and think of that as his unrefutable mistake.

But then suddenly, the man who had been struggling to break free managed to liberate himself and bolted, drawing the pistol from his belt. With fluid movement, he aimed the firearm at Rex and fired a single shot, aiming for the head.

A banging sound resounded as the bullet pierced the air.

It was a reckless attempt that caught even Edward off guard as he didn't actually think that the man would be able to break free from the restraints of so many people, and also pull the trigger knowing Rex's background.

However, at this point, the man was only driven by his raging emotions.

Surprisingly, before the bullet could even reach its mark, Ryze moved in and parried it swiftly.

Encasing his arm with scales, the bullet ricochets away.

Not even a dent was left on Ryze's scales as the bullet, even though it had been significantly upgraded with mutated animals' components to increase its penetration power, would only amount to harm a sixth-rank realm entity.

Ryze, who far surpassed that realm has no problem dealing with it.

Instantly, the entire place became chokingly silent as the banging sound echoed and waned.

Only the rough breaths of the man, fuming in anger, in the background.

Additionally, his comrade who was holding him back earlier held their breaths when they realized that the man actually shot at Rex, someone who was powerful enough to be called here by the Executor to help in the upcoming war.

Just the thought of what Rex could do to them made them gulp harshly.

However, all of them tried to pull the man back, but he still retaliated and stood his ground.

Upon parrying the bullet, Ryze straightened his back and towered over the man imposingly.

His reptilian eyes, sharp and glowing stared directly at the man's eyes.

Frowning deeply, Ryze then asked whisperingly, "What do you want me to do to him, Rex?"

"No need to fret over him, the bullet wouldn't hurt me anyway," Rex replied nonchalantly, catching Ryze off guard as he had expected some form of retribution for the man's actions of wanting to kill Rex due to his own vendetta.

Especially, seeing what Rex did to the Demon Lords, it's the very likely case.

As Ryze stood down and walked to the side again, Rex's gaze fixed on the man who stood there with a clenched jaw as the bullet did absolutely nothing. "Here's a piece of advice when you plan to do something like this. Consider the size of your enemy, attacking someone much larger than you will only make you appear pitiful and reckless"

Listening to this, the man could only clench his fists hard, pure hatred in his eyes.

Giving no more thought, Rex signaled for Edward to continue and they resumed.

It was then that the man's action ignited a series of events, the people who were also hostile gained confidence and started throwing things at Rex. Some were throwing the rations in their hands, a bullet, or even spitting at him.

None of them reached Rex, protected by the Red Force, but this keeps on going.

Ryze was greatly troubled by this, but Rex was not.

Despite the disrespect that he was forced into, he kept a calm composure and walked onward, following Edward closely behind as the three of them headed to the center octagonal structure that's the heart of command, the Executor's place.

I know you're happy watching this, Executor. But it's fine, your reign will not last anyway.

Arriving at the Executor's place, the three of them walked inside.

Rex and Ryze could feel that they were passing some kind of forcefield, not created by mana, but technology instead which turned out to be muffling the sounds from inside and also providing cover so that no one could look inside.

In an instant, Rex stepped against the plush ground, sucking his own feet.

A cover was placed, separating the entrance and the inside.

Some guards who were stationed there checked him and Ryze for weapons or anything that could be used for lethal activities and found nothing. Only then that the two were let inside, going through the soft cover.

Upon reaching inside, Rex scanned his eyes around and saw that everyone was present.

King John, Brigitta, and the Executor, sitting on his pompous throne.

Ignoring the others, Rex made eye contact with the only entity who could pose a threat to him, the Executor who was grinning. He was the same as the last time Rex had met him, dripping with arrogance and unfathomable power.

An urge was present, beckoning Rex to check the Executor's stats.

But the pressing energy made him think twice.

I want to scan him right now, but I don't think it's the right time. He's still very strong.

Dissuading from that thought, Rex took brave steps forward and approached the Executor's throne steps. He keeps his guard up, knowing that there's a chance that the Executor will do something outrageous.

"Quite brave of you, Royal Black Prince. To think you dare to come here" the Executor opened.

Crossing his legs and settling into a more comfortable position, he leaned forward and continued, "You don't appear to be a reckless person. So venturing into the heart of your enemy's territory with only a single company, a reckless action, it's almost as if you have a remarkably powerful backer..."

Upon hearing this, Rex frowned in contemplation.

What does he mean by that? He seemed to be hinting at something.

Chapter 957 Playing Games

Rex heard this and couldn't help but think that the Executor was insinuating something.

It was the way he said it that made Rex think so.

A remarkably powerful backer? Could he be referring to the Hare Full Moon? In a way, the Lunirich Gods could be considered backers. But he knew that I only had two King Marks. Is he suspecting that I possess another King Mark? Could be.

Pondering calmly, that's the most plausible explanation.

Maybe the rumor of his rapid advancement to reach this strong made the Executor think so.

"Don't spout nonsense, I want Gistella back" Rex replied sternly.

Upon hearing this, the Executor's grin turned devilish as he stood up with his arms spread open to the side. "Well, there's no need to rush. How about we have a small welcoming celebration for you accepting my humble request?" He said with an eerily pleasant tone.

A shameless offer, acting as if he was a friend when they were clearly two opposing sides.

"A drink is what you need for your long journey" the Executor added.

Obviously, Rex wouldn't trust anything the Executor offered him, especially a drink that could be poison for all he knows, "I'm here for the war you have against your enemies, and I think there's a need for a briefing, no? I don't think it's the right time for a drink"

Slowly descending from the dais of his throne, he chuckled in hubris.

"Oh, I insist... I also want to show you something interesting, my new pet!" He replied.

Instantly, Rex felt a foreboding feeling from this.

Just as the Executor said that the tension inside the tent instantly reached its zenith.

Rex's presence instantly becomes unsteady, depicting a caged tiger that is about to break out in a simple touch. At the sight of this, King John, Brigitta, and Edward instantly had their minds attuned to intercept if a fight would break out inside this camp.

Even Ryze, standing a couple of steps behind went alert, fearing the worst.

'No, the Executor wouldn't be that barbaric...' Ryze pondered, gulping uneasily at this.

Sensing that the tension climbed, the Executor gestured with his hand, signaling to the guards on the side with a wide smile on his face, "Bring in the best drinks served by my best pet, we have to accommodate our special guest here, and not disappoint, right?"

Upon hearing this, the two guards headed to another cover on the right side of the place.

It seemed to be a cover that led to another room.

Nodding, the two guards reached for the edge of the cover, intending to open it.

During that fleeting moment, time slowed down immensely in his vision. Rex stared at the cover with a widened gaze as his heart began to thump rapidly, the complete worst haunting his mind, eating his sanity like maggots to a corpse.

<Warning! The user's berserk stat is increasing rapidly!>

<Warning! The user's sanity stat is decreasing rapidly!>

A warning notice from the System appeared, but Rex couldn't focus on that.

Calm down. I must regain control. I've lost control once not too long ago, I can't afford to let it happen again, especially here. And if I went berserk here, the Executor would not sit still and seize the opportunity caused by my negligence.

Despite trying his best, his anger didn't wane and kept on increasing.

But if it's really Gistella, if he really did something to her, then I can't... I can't contain this.

In addition to his anger, Rex could also feel that the Sin of Wrath he engraved on himself earlier, located on his left peck was starting to react as his anger boiled within. His breathing became heavy, and adrenaline started being pumped into his bloodstream.

With one swift motion, the cover was opened by the guards.

A silhouette was shown behind the cover.

Rex and Ryze's hearts skipped a beat, and both unconsciously held their breaths.

Since it was dimly lit in the other room, the figure's face remained hidden in the shadows until she entered, carefully carrying a tray of drinks. With agonizing slowness, she moved into the light, revealing her identity.

Upon seeing the woman, Rex could finally breathe a sigh of relief.

It was not Gistella, the pet was not her.

Coming in from the other room is a Demoness based on her appearance, a Succubus, or at least a branch of Demon similar to it. She wore a seductive, form-fitting corset in deep obsidian with red lace trim that enhanced her hourglass figure. Barely-there leather thong panties and thigh-high stockings with garter belts adorned her long legs.

Aside from that, there was an evident collar on her neck, leashing her like a dog.

Despite having most of her skin exposed for everyone to see, she kept her gaze down and her spine straight. The Succubus approached the Executor and held the tray of drinks to him, but her fear was evident as the tray slightly trembled.

With a nasty smile, the Executor looked at her with a condescending gaze.

"Isn't she great? Her reaction that is," He remarked, taking two chalices from the tray and handing Rex one. "Supernaturals, they're nothing more than slaves, that's their sole purpose. But naturally, you and your pack members are above them, strength has always been the ultimate measure from the dawn of time, regardless of the origins"

Upon hearing this, Rex scoffed inwardly.

It was obvious that the Executor was playing games with him.

Back when he met with the Executor for the first time, he clearly stated that Rex's presence was more insulting than the Supernaturals' presence due to the fact that he mixed the human race with the Werewolf race.

An obvious embarrassment for the entire human race from the Executor's point of view.

However, now, he said the opposite thing.

Grabbing one of the chalices without a second of doubt, he looked at its contents before he drank it in one go after checking with the System to find out whether the drink was poisoned or would bring harm to him or not.

Finishing the drink, it tasted sweet, very sweet to be exact.

Rex mused, putting the chalice down, "Let's get down to business, I have no time to waste"

"Of course, you are busy after all, I would too if I were you" the Executor replied sarcastically, he laughed and walked away, gulping down the drink. "My trusted aid, Brigitta and Edward will tell you about the situation"

Although he wanted the Executor to be the one to tell him, he couldn't demand too much.

He was in the backhand at this moment.

With Gistella as the Executor's hostage, he couldn't afford to do anything reckless.

From the Executor's point of view, Rex wouldn't be able to do anything with Gistella within his hands, and if he did then that would mean sentencing her to death. Thus, he acted leisurely and confidently to have the upper hand, and he was right.

Glancing to the side, Edward already gestured to follow him.

Nodding his head, Rex signaled to Ryze to follow suit before they headed to the other room.

Reaching the entrance to the other room on the left, he stopped and turned to look at the Executor who was already sitting on his throne once again, "I meant to ask, just to be sure, can I assume that we are under a temporary cease-fire until this battle is over?"

"What do you think?" the Executor asked back meaningfully.

Rex didn't budge and rebutted, "I want to hear it from your own mouth, as a guarantee"

"Yes," the Executor replied after pausing for a second. "Until the battle is over, we will put aside our conflict. No harm will come to you, at least not a physical one" He added, his eyes glistening mysteriously, hiding a plan that was unknown to anyone.

Keeping his gaze on the Executor for five seconds, Rex then nodded and walked away.

Only when he disappeared that the Executor shift his gaze.

He then whispered under his breath, smiling excitedly, "This is going to be interesting"

Meanwhile, in the other room.

Rex and Ryze stood around the table with a map of the surrounding area spread on it.

Scribble of lines could be seen drawn across the map, a testament of the strategic discussion that held place in this room recently. Obviously, this was the strategy room in preparation for the battle.

Edward stood across and started conveying the situation.

As he fills in Rex with the knowledge they have gathered, it feels surreal for him and Rex.

Discussing a strategy with Rex or being close to him was not something he thought possible after the tragedy, yet here they were. On the other hand, this is also present in Rex's mind, especially the fact that he is now forced to help the Executor.

Rex was not willing, but he had to go through with it for now.

Based on the detection devices and scouts that were sent ahead, they found that the Demons and Vampires were preparing a massive army to intercept the advance of the Executor's army, intending to stop them from moving forward.

Currently, they were about fifteen miles into the Supernaturals' territory.

In front of them lies the Shifting Realm where the Demons and Vampires' army resides.

The Shifting Realm is a magical terrain that compliments the Supernaturals a lot, and the preparation done by the Demons and Vampires made this a hard line to penetrate despite their rigorous attempt.

A couple of skirmishes were sent to test the water, and the result was bad for the humans.

On top of that, the stronger Demons and Vampires couldn't be located.

Most of the important commanders from the human army showed objection to letting the Executor move forward when the stronger Supernaturals couldn't be located or identified, fearing that there might be an ambush around.

The Executor also doesn't want to come out first for the time being.

Even though it was uncharacteristic of the Executor, it was obvious that when the facts were unrefutable, he was able to tone down his arrogance and accept his situation. During the First Breath, no matter how prideful he is, he knows that he could be killed.

He anticipates an ambush as the other high-rank Supernaturals are still not around.

But this made Rex feel safer.

The Executor wouldn't try anything overbearing to me. With the nearing Hare Moon, if he tries to attack me, then there's a chance he might be injured from our fight, and that would provide a perfect chance for the Supernaturals to strike him

Also, even though Edward avoided stating the objective outright, Rex already knew.

From the Shifting Realm, it's about twenty miles away from the Symposium which is the destination, and going through the army of Demons and Vampires would help the Executor get ultimately closer to the Symposium.

Elder Tilrith and Nolacula did their part, but I still need to cultivate my cursed source.

Knowing that when he finished helping the Executor, he would be closer to the Symposium, Rex is aware that time is running out for him. If he failed to reach the appropriate curse epiphany set by the Witch, then his plan would fail.

Just as Edward finished his explanation, Rex remained silent and pondered.

I know that the Executor would eventually request me but now doesn't seem to be right.

Based on Edward's explanation, it doesn't seem that the Executor really needed his help, so he was confused as to why the Executor asked for him right now. If there are more than three Elders, then it would make sense, but there are mostly two here.

The Executor is definitely capable of taking on two Elders by himself.

Am I not seeing the situation clearly? In my eyes, the Executor could handle this himself.

Snapping Rex out of his trance, Edward rolled the map as the strategy would be luring the stronger Supernaturals first and locating them. "Okay, we'll be moving in half an hour while the sun is still up. You and I would be leading the charge"

Upon hearing this, Rex nodded before Edward and Brigitta left the room.

Chapter 958 Clumsy But Misleading Pet

Just when the two of them left, Ryze quickly voiced out his concern.

"I don't like being in this place. Did you hear what the Executor said, almost casually, just after you left? He's up to something, and being here will only make him happy" He said, visible concern etched across his face.

Rex nodded, he also heard what the Executor uttered under his breath earlier.

He also hinted that his plan must involve causing mental harm.

Obviously, the Executor was spicing up the game by giving Rex hints that he would do something. Maybe it was for the sake of his own amusement or pure arrogance that he decided to play mind games.

Feeling uneasy in this place is inevitable, this is the heart of the enemy's territory.

Pausing for a second, he placed both of his hands on the table and made eye contact with Ryze who was vividly panicking, his legs were trembling. "I know that you are still a kid, and the situation might be too much for you. But to be with me, this is what you will be dealing with daily, and don't

forget that you are now a Heavenly Dragonman. We have our misunderstanding. Not too long ago, we were close, and now... I want you closer"

"You need to grow up fast. But if you can't handle it, then say it, and I'll send you back"

Upon hearing this, Ryze's body halted for a brief moment.

Ryze peered into Rex's eyes and found that he wasn't joking about what he said.

Due to the pressure of being near so many powerful individuals, Ryze was dazed and afraid, but he now remembered that he wanted to prove himself to Rex. So he quickly shook his head, gripping his fists tightly, "No... I'm sorry, I can handle this"

"Good. Your past is not easy, take pride in it, and be better" Rex advised, nodding firmly.

Soon enough, a figure stepped inside.

It was the Demoness from earlier, and she brought in a couple of outfits for the two of them.

"Sir Edward told me to give this to you, this will be your outfits for the battle," She said softly, putting them gently on the table. "Also, is there a need for weapons? If so, I will go and bring it to you right away"

Rex pondered for a second, he doesn't have a weapon right now.

The Amuerus Katana was still in pieces from the fight against the Executor, and the Silver Eye remained stuck at Demon Lord Kirgil. Even if he were to acquire it, the Silver Eye would likely be significantly weakened from banishing multiple Demon Lords.

It's not a stretch to say that it would shatter from another swing.

"Give me a sword of any kind" Rex requested before he turned to look at Ryze.

Not even thinking much, Ryze also quickly added, "A two-handed axe for me, I'd like that"

"Please wait for me to come back, I'll bring them right away" Instantly, the Demoness nodded before she left to bring the weapons both of them requested in a hurry. It shouldn't take long for her to get what they wanted.

Meanwhile, Rex raised an eyebrow, "A two-handed battle axe? What makes you pick that?"

"During the fight with the Rastrikan Demons, I figured an axe compliments me" He replied.

Listening to this, Rex remembered the sight of Ryze fighting briefly.

Given the destructive power of Zaddress' fire dwelling inside of him, the most suitable weapons for Ryze would be those wielded with two hands. A war hammer or an axe would be ideal, but the axe offers a more concentrated force due to its sharp edge.

So it made sense that Ryze would choose an axe to increase his penetration power.

A moment later.

"I'm going to stretch, Jasira told me to always do that before a fight" Ryze suddenly said.

On the side, Rex was struggling to wear the chainmail and chainmail leggings. He waved his hand, gesturing to Ryze that he could go as Jasira was probably his mentor or something when he was still in Ratmawati City.

Not long after Ryze left, the Demoness came back and halted instantly.

She dropped the sword and rushed over to Rex.

"Here, let me help. I apologize for the late introduction, but I am your personal assistant while you are here, so leave this to me" the Demoness said as she reached out her hand to help Rex wear the chainmail.

Rex quickly stepped to the side, "Don't, I got this"

Upon hearing this, the Demoness still stubbornly persisted, "Please, let me help you"

"No, I said I got this. Didn't you hear what I said?" Rex rebutted with a stern tone, looking at the Demoness warningly. However, following that, the Demoness quickly prostrate herself to the ground, her body visibly shaking.

This left Rex at a loss for words, he didn't expect her to be like this.

Evidently sobbing while still prostrating on the ground, the Demoness pleaded, "Please, you are a special guest here. I am bound to assist you. If you keep on rejecting me, then I'm going to be in trouble. So, please... have mercy"

At the sight of this, Rex could only sigh and shake his head.

I'll just let her help me, she's the Executor's pet, so she must be forced to do this.

"Fine, quickly help me. It's about time the army will depart" Rex said and faced the other way.

Her expression beams with delight, mirroring the glee of a child who's just been given candy. She quickly stood up with evident enthusiasm, wiping her tears away in order to help Rex wear the chainmail.

But due to her excitement, she tripped and fell, landing face-first.

Brak!

Rex's face turned, surprised to find the Demoness was on the ground again, "Are you okay?"

"I- I'm alright" the Demoness raised her face with a wry smile, she was embarrassed that she showed the clumsy side of herself in front of Rex. Even her forehead was red from slamming against the hard ground.

After wearing the outfit, Rex stood in front of the body-sized mirror.

He is now draped in form-fitting black reinforced armor with a purple shade of inner linings from top to bottom, with pauldrons that were shaped like a skull. The Demoness said that this armor is equivalent to a peak seventh-rank, and is used only by the higher-rank members.

Of course, Rex already knew this because he checked it through the System.

Anything that the Executor gives needs to pass the System first.

If there's even the slightest chance that this could pose a threat, he'll have the System thoroughly inspect it. Fortunately, the armor proved to be safe upon examination, as it was indeed just a piece of protective gear.

From the side, the Demoness handed the sword, about two meters in length and very sharp.

One swing is all it takes to determine the sharpness of the sword.

Nodding his head, Rex gave the sword back to the Demoness as she sheathed it again. He then decides to leave the place and search for Edward as the campaign should start in a bit, so he holds out his hand, asking for the sword from the Demoness.

Surprisingly, the Demoness clutches it in her embrace with no intention of handing it over.

"Give me the sword" Rex demanded.

But the Demoness shook her head and replied, "I'll hold on to it until you need it"

Assuming that this might've been a safety precaution lest Rex went on a rampage here, he refrained from taking the sword and instead headed to the exit. He soon reached the main room again and found that the Executor was nowhere to be seen and so did the others.

Heading to the exit, he glanced back to the Demoness, following him from behind.

"Now, why are you following me?" Rex asked in confusion.

Upon hearing this, the Demoness gave him a light smile while still clutching the sword in her embrace, "I am your assistant, so of course I'm going to follow you. Anything you need, you can ask me and I'll give it to you"

Rex could only sigh feeling skeptical about the Demoness.

However, she doesn't seem to bore any malicious intent towards him, just doing her job.

"Are you going to follow me to battle too?" Rex asked sarcastically.

But the smile on the Demoness' face stretched as she nodded her head, surprising Rex greatly. It was unexpected because her aura was almost non-existent, leaving Rex in astonishment as she should be unfit to join the war.

Initially, Rex even thought that she was as harmless as a Supernatural civilian.

Out of curiosity, he decided to scan the Demoness.

...

<Mavenna Elyn Devore (Suppressed)>

Race: Rosadonna Succubus

Power: Rank Seventh (Mid) - Phases of Charm (2)

Mental: 8,175

Strength: 3,100

Agility: 8,510

Endurance: 4,800

Intelligence: 5,500

...

Rex inspected the Demoness, Mavenna's stats and found that she was quite strong.

If not for the First Breath, she should be in the eighth-rank realm which was quite strong for the current era. Even her mental stat is near Rex which is surprising. Hadn't she been captured by the Executor, then she would've been a respectable member of the Demon Race.

System, what is the Rosadonna Succubus known for?

He was completely unfamiliar with the Rosadonna Succubus, this was the first time.

Obviously, it's a unique sub-race of the Succubus.

<Do you want to buy the information for 15,000 Gold?>

<Yes or No>

15,000? Quite expensive for only inquiring about a race, but okay, I need to know.

Finding that there's a chance that Mavenna is a part of the Executor's plan, he should know more about her so that he can react appropriately. Nobody in this place could be trusted. He doesn't even trust Ryze, much less a random Demoness.

<Rosadonna Succubus>

It's a sub-race of the alluring Succubus lineage and possesses a distinct ability known as the Rosadonna Charm. This innate power cloaks their energy, rendering it undetectable to the opposite sex. It also compliments the Rosadonna Succubus as their true strength lies in their mastery of ranged demonic spells.

Reading the description, Rex found that her minuscule aura was connected to her race.

Due to that, he was tricked, thinking that she's nothing much.

Having no problem whatsoever with her coming along with him to battle, seeing that she could handle herself quite well, Rex put this matter to the back of his mind and headed to where the army had already gathered.

Compared to the full army, the one gathered numbered around ten thousand people.

All of them were ready in their battle gears.

More than half of this army consisted of military men who were mounting their war machines, while the rest of it was a mix of Black Hands, Awakened, and the Cessation Knights which were placed at the backline of the formation.

Only the Cessation Knights were stationed at the frontline before the military personnel.

It was due to their expertise of being an unbreakable wall.

Upon approaching Edward and Brigitta who were at the very front, the ones tasked to lead the charge, Rex and Ryze could feel the unfriendly gaze from the army but both of them dealt with it rather perfectly.

Instead of doing something, the two of them ignored their gazes and continued onward.

Soon, the two reunited with Edward and Brigitta.

Both of them are wearing a similar outfit to them, as matching uniforms are a must in war.

"Okay, here's the plan. We are going to split into two battalions. One battalion would be led by me and Rex, and we are going to confront the Vampires. While the other would be led by Ryze and Brigitta, attacking the Demons"

"Our objective is to search for the stronger Supernaturals. Is there any objection?"

Edward explained the final plan to the others.

Of course, Rex wanted to be paired with Ryze instead so that he could have a somewhat trustable companion. But he had no say in this, so he followed the others and shook his head, gesturing that he had no problem.

Nodding firmly, Edward then turned his body to the side, exposing a couple of figures.

Like any battle, communication is key.

So before they embark on their fight, Edward is going to introduce the generals.

Chapter 959 The Shifting Realm (1)

Since communication is key in war, the generals must be introduced first.

Gesturing with her eyes, silently instructing them to split up, Brigitta pulled Ryze to the other end of the army where the generals under their command waited. Meanwhile, Edward and Rex stayed, facing five figures arrayed in dignified commander uniforms, a striking blend of black and regal purple.

Amongst the five, three of them were from the military.

Each led different specialized troops, from ground troops to air fighters, and vehicles.

On the other hand, the remaining two generals is an Awakened from the 25 Golden Crest Families and the Red Messenger from the SCO. Despite their different backgrounds, all of them have one thing in common.

All of them show signs of hostility towards Rex.

Had that hostility turned into killing intent, things could get ugly really quickly.

Just as this thought crossed his mind, he recalled the military man he had encountered earlier who evidently bore killing intent towards him, yet the System had not prompted a customary killing intent quest to take the man down like usual.

Rex assumed that this was because the man was too weak to be considered a threat.

But to be sure, he asked the System.

<Killing Intent Quest would only be triggered if the bearer has the capability to hurt the user or the other pack members. On that note, the man from earlier couldn't harm the user or the pack members due to his lack of power and social standing which made him simply harmless despite bearing killing intent>

Upon reading this, Rex nodded as it was as he had expected.

A threshold was present as a measurement tool by the System to gauge threat level.

Only those who meet the requirement to at least hurt him or the others would be considered a threat, while those who aren't capable of doing that would be ignored. Since the man has no substantial way to hurt him and the others, there was no killing intent quest issued.

Rex sighed as this explained many anomalies he had found.

Earlier, he learned that a rumor stating he was the one that caused the tragedy circulated.

Seems like the UWO decided to disclose the fact that it was he who went on a rampage during the tragedy that took countless lives in Ratmawati City, not King Baralt who took the blame for the initial moment.

If the entire human race blamed him, then many would definitely bore killing intent.

However, there was no killing intent quest prompted.

Rex found this odd initially, but now with the System's explanation, everything made sense.

Hopefully, none of them would trigger the Killing Intent Quest.

Contrary to not wanting to kill them, which he would if he needed to, Rex was more worried about the fact that his attention would be split if a killing intent quest was issued. He doesn't want that to happen as he needs to keep his guard up all the time against the Executor.

Now that he suspects the Executor is planning something, this becomes the priority.

Edward introduced the five generals briefly.

It went on blandly as the five generals were clearly unwilling to be commanded by Rex, but there was no other choice as this was the direct instruction from the Executor. Nothing good will come out of expressing their unwillingness to the Executor.

Since it was quite obvious, Edward also noticed this and looked at Rex meaningfully.

"Do you have something to say to them, Rex?" He asked.

Upon hearing this, Rex nodded his head and stepped forward. It would be better to make these generals willingly comply to avoid bad situations later, "I'll keep this short. I know all of you don't like being led by me, and that's understandable, but know that I have no intention of putting us in a bad situation that might result in lives being unnecessarily lost"

"Hmph! As if lives haven't already been lost by you" One of the generals intervened in scorn.

Rex gazed at the general with an icy look and paused.

Not feeling intimidated at all despite being gazed at silently by Rex, the general then added with a mocking smirk, "What? Are you pissed? Are you going to go berserk again, and kill all of us? Come and try if you dare"

Even though he was being taunted, Rex kept his stoic expression.

He kept silent for a solid half a minute which intensifies the tension in the air between them.

"Don't tempt me, general..." Rex retorted, a sinister smile gracing his lips. "If you're so eager for a confrontation, there will be ample opportunity in the future where I'll gladly take your offer.

However, doing it right now? As I'm about to lead both you and your army? I doubt a wise general, concerned for his men would opt for such a course"

Instead of going with the general's flow, Rex decided to break it.

High company generals, albeit not seen by their appearance, develop a deep emotional connection with the men below them. So it would be way easier to calm the general down using this tactic instead of force.

As expected, the general clenched his jaw and didn't retaliate back.

Nodding his head, Rex then continued sternly, "Listen to me and Edward's instructions. We'll try our best to keep you alive and finish this mission. After the mission, we could go on our separate ways and do anything we want"

Upon hearing this, Rex turned to Edward, telling him that he was done.

Just as he did that, a notification from the System appeared.

<Sudden Quest!>

Due to the user's plan to take down the Executor, the user would need to comply with the Executor's demands and embark on a mission to fight the opposing Supernaturals. Finish the mission without spiking the Executor's suspicion. The System acknowledges the Executor as a rival of absolute invincibility, thus the rewards have been adjusted.

Penalty: -1 Million Gold, -1 level, and Hare Moon effect amplification.

<Only the System acknowledges the Executor as a rival of absolute invincibility>

<Penalty has been reduced by 50%>

Rex was at a loss for words at the sudden quest, it rewarded him with a penalty instead.

I'm only doing this for my plan, so why am I being punished?

<Being in a lower standing against a rival of absolute invincibility is not allowed, and thus would be given a penalty. It's advised that the user would avoid creating a plan that would force the user to be less than equal against the rival of absolute invincibility>

Although he was not expecting this, the cake was already baked, and he couldn't stop now.

Fine, I'll be careful next time.

With that, the army departed for their mission.

Coursing through the open flatland filled with grass, the two armies stopped in a union.

Previously, Rex and Edward had agreed to dispatch about five reinforced choppers for an advanced reconnaissance mission to secure the armies' path. Also, both of them hoped that the choppers could pinpoint the enemy's location exactly.

However, as the choppered ventured deeper, there was no sign of the enemy forces.

Now, the armies stood at the border of the flatland.

Beyond the border is the beginning of the Shifting Realm, and the diversity of the terrain could instantly be seen as the land before them was split into a scorching desert and a snowfield, separated by invisible yet clear boundaries.

Additionally, a flux of energy could be seen swirling within the Shifting Realm.

Obviously, the Vampires and Demons have come prepared.

Harnessing his Awakened eyes to see the energies that swirled in the air of the Shifting Realm, Rex saw that blood and demonic energies were intertwined like a hurricane wind, fueling the entire place with the natural advantage for the enemy forces.

Taking a few steps forward, Rex knelt down and touched the Shifting Realm with his hand.

In an instant, the System scanned the place entirely.

<Shifting Realm is a land of astounding diversity where every terrain imaginable can be found within its ever-changing borders. Its geography undergoes constant transformations, making navigation a formidable challenge and dangerous. Unpredictable shifts occur without warning, all governed by some enigmatic force of nature>

Upon reading this, Rex glanced back at the army with a frown.

Going in as one solid group would not be ideal in this place, we need to split our forces.

While listening to the pilots' report earlier, Rex discovered that the Shifting Realm's geography is in constant flux, as the System has stated. Mountains could shift places, and the desert ground could suddenly split, morphing into something entirely different in a moment.

Additionally, natural disasters are the norm.

It's not a surprise that the enemy forces could be hidden very well in this kind of place.

But first things first, the army should be split into smaller groups.

Having a single united army going through the Shifting Realm is asking to be destroyed. If the ground cracked under them, then many of them would be swallowed without the others being able to help.

Due to that, it's best to split up.

Not only would they be more safe, but they could also cover more ground like this.

Edward knew what Rex was thinking from a glance and instantly ordered the army to be split into smaller groups, and they did it fairly quickly and in an orderly manner. "We'll be going to the scorching desert, while you go on the other side"

"Right, the Demons should be in the snowfield" Brigitta nodded and did exactly as told.

It was clearly evident that the Vampires were located in the scorching desert due to the more concentrated blood energy emanating from that region, while the snowfield was filled with demonic energy. Consequently, distinguishing between the two was a straightforward task.

Just like that, Rex and Edward's army moved into the scorching desert.

Under the guidance of the choppers above as an eye in the sky, the army advanced slowly.

Albeit the choppers provided invaluable assistance, helping them steer clear of major natural disasters like sandstorms or vast quicksand pools, the army was still vulnerable to sudden events that struck like a speeding truck.

Boom!

Splash!

Rex darted his eyes to the side and found dozens of military men sent flying.

His attention then went back to the sand and quickly moved in to check, yet he found that it was not the Vampires as he initially thought, but some mutated animals that were still going strong despite the First Breath's suppression.

Discerning them was hard as they moved inside the sand like an eel in murky water.

It was difficult to catch a glimpse of them.

More sand explosions could assaulted the army and they were still adjusting to the situation.

Several of the Awakened swiftly conjured a platform beneath the army's feet, elevating them off the ground, trying their very best to get away from the bad position they were in as the mutated animals attacked them from below.

On the other hand, Edward moved and slammed his hands into the ground.

His skin-tight, obsidian substance that acted as his armor instantly melded with the ground as he concentrated on drawing the mutated animals out of the sand. From below, the substance extended like pointy roots before slithering akin to serpents, pursuing the marauding creatures that were wreaking havoc on the army.

Rex who saw Edward doing something instantly glued his eyes in observation.

It was one of his plans to gain anything from this visit.

Since the Executor wouldn't be fighting for now and would probably do that later, he would focus on Edward's power as it would help immensely in their final showdown. Rex decided to not scan Edward as he was not sure whether that would be the best play.

At least, that is what he told himself.

In reality, despite the detachment between them, he doesn't want to see Edward's stats.

Had he seen that Edward had turned into an Ancient Human through his stats, then he wasn't sure how he'd react, so he chose to refrain from doing that unless absolutely necessary. At this point, he preferred to simply observe and draw conclusions from what he was witnessing.

Splash!

Out of nowhere, a burnt line gleamed from inside and created an ancient formation.

Following that, the ground exploded powerfully.

Boom!

Contrary to what Rex had expected, he saw countless purple spikes that were coated with black fire protruding out in a radius, able to bend like snakes, and bringing a chilling yet burning heat with them. In addition, the mutated animals inside the sand were forced out.

Rex who was in the air, dodging Edward's spell was surprised to see what he was seeing.

He thought the mutated animals were lizards, but it was not.

Bursting from the ground, exploding the sand on their exit points were the mutated animals with massive bodies, at least five to six meters in length with razor-sharp teeth and gills, the kind that doesn't belong to the desert.

It doesn't only surprise Rex but also the others, not expecting to see these mutated animals.

"Mutated sharks...? How did they get here?" Rex exclaimed in surprise.

Chapter 960 The Shifting Realm (2)

Emerging from the depths of the scorching desert, eight formidable beings burst forth, their massive bodies gracefully swaying to evade the jutting purple spikes. Each of them bore a striking resemblance to actual sharks, anatomy-wise.

But compared to their normal cousin, these ones were way bigger and had slimy skin.

In addition, their leap was quite high.

Most of them crashed into the platform created by the Awakened to lift the army upwards due to how high their leap was. Even though they were quite agile and slippery, the purple spikes managed to pierce one of them right in its body.

Almost instantly, the mutated shark's body tensed when it was stabbed.

Soon, the purple spike started to take effect.

Amid the watchful eyes of onlookers, the mutated shark began to deteriorate visibly, its skin shifting to a sickly purple hue as the purple spike hastened the disintegration of its corporeal form. Gradually, the majestic creature was reduced to mere skin before finally dissipating entirely.

However, there was one mutated shark that managed to pierce through the platform.

Out of the other mutated sharks, this one is the biggest.

Roar!

<Desert Slimy Shark (Suppressed)>

Race: Mutated Lamindae

Power: Rank Seventh (Mid) - Sand Tyrant (1)

Mental: 4,150

Strength: 6,850 (+1,500)

Agility: 9,300 (+4,000)

Endurance: 2,000

Intelligence: 5,500

Rex scrutinized the lone Desert Slimy Shark, the one that is stronger than the others.

He deduced it to be a seventh-rank mutated animal, among the most formidable mutated animals he had ever encountered. It should've been on the cusp of the eighth-rank realm or potentially even verging on the early stages of the ninth-rank realm before the First Breath happened.

What's with the bonus stats? Where did it come from?

<The Shifting Realm blessed one mutated animal per terrain that it possesses>

Initially, Rex was confused as to how a shark could end up in this scorching desert, but he then remembered that the Shifting Realm has all terrains, and that includes an ocean which might be the way that these sharks ended up here.

But now is not the time to think, Rex would need to do something.

Prepared, he gripped his sword, flexed his knees and as if stepping in the air, he launched himself forward, leaving streaks of black lightning behind. His target was the largest Desert Slimy Shark, wreaking havoc within the ranks of the army.

Blitz!

A fraction of a second is all it takes for Rex to reach it, aiming a swing at its gills.

Focusing his black lightning elements to course in the sword, he uses the Sharp Lightning spell, expecting that this will be enough to slice the Desert Slimy Shark into two before he can move on to secure the others.

However, Rex raised an eyebrow when he hardly felt that his sword hit anything.

Turns out, the sword was deflected fully.

Due to the malleability of the Desert Slimy Shark's body, his attack was ineffective, leaving only a small, hardly visible cut on its surface. Rotating for another stronger swing, he decided to electrocute the Desert Slimy Shark to no avail.

Before his attack connects, sand elements encompass its body and nullify the lightning.

Not allowing any more chances, it went back into the sand once again.

Rex landed on the ground and scanned the battlefield and found that it was a free-for-all, the mutated sharks were everywhere, and there were more coming in as he saw at least a dozen dorsal fins heading towards them.

Most of the people were already in safety on the platform.

However, those who were still on the ground was the one having trouble the most.

Unlike a march of a legion of foot soldiers, there were people inside military vehicles and mobile artilleries, and it would be too heavy for the Awakened to lift all of them at once and thus they were left behind on the ground.

If this keeps going, more of them will die.

Although it wasn't his intention to be here, Rex will not let these brave people die in vain.

Even though if not for the special circumstances, these people were his enemies, it doesn't change the fact that he was leading them right now. Letting them be slaughtered like this is not something pleasant to see, he needs to do something.

"Okay, that is enough, I'll blast all of them at once. Devo!"

Heeding Rex's call, Devo appeared and started marking the mutated sharks around them.

Rumble!

On the other hand, Rex spreads his arms to the side and channels his black lightning element again, his eyes start blizzing violently with ebony electric streaks, summoning a cloudy thunderstorm to block the entire sky with his might.

Soon, he sensed numerous targets around the area, marked by Devo himself.

"Sky Rupture Assortment!"

Crack!

A barrage of black lightning bolts streaked from the heavens, zeroing in on the targeted Desert Slimy Sharks swimming within the sand. None of them would be able to sustain such a formidable spell, Rex was sure of it.

However, something unexpected happened.

Gazing skywards with his stormy eyes, Rex saw that his spell was blocked by something.

"What blocked my spell? It mustn't be the sharks" He wondered in confusion.

Just then, a convergence of energy, fueled by the blocked black lightning strikes amassed together in the sky. In the blink of an eye, it changed from black to brown, before transforming into a thick, brown lightning bolt that shot towards Rex.

Caught off guard, he wasn't able to react properly and got hit by it.

Splash!

Rex got sent bouncing across the desert before eventually stopping a hundred meters away.

Slowly getting back to his feet, he uttered amidst his breath, "What the heck was that?"

<The Shifting Realm is an anomaly of nature, able to have multiple terrains at the same time, and it could sense an attack resembling a natural disaster. Any attack that resembled a natural disaster would absorb and blast it back to the caster>

Upon reading this, Rex clicked his tongue as he wasn't aware of this.

His legs which had been hit by the brown lightning strike were now numb and convulsing.

But the Shifting Realm provides no rest for anyone trapped in its danger.

Almost instantly after Rex was hurtled away, the ground trembled, and two colossal rock formations in the distance surged toward the center with incredible speed. Its movement disorientates everyone due to the intense quaking, making it nearly impossible for them to regain their footing.

It was supposed to be fine, as the Desert Slimy Sharks were also affected.

However, Rex's eyes rested on one particular rock formation.

"Oh, no... it's going to cross us. It's going to crash into the army!" He frowned.

Meanwhile, a man inside a heavily armored tank peered through the periscopes and found that their formation was in shambles, courtesy of the pesky Desert Slimy Sharks that attacked them from below suddenly before vanishing back into the sand.

He was the man who tried to kill Rex before and is still bitter even now at Rex's response.

Luck seems to not be on his side as he was forced to follow Rex's lead.

Swoosh!

"Arrghh!"

Just as the tank was about to move to safety, a Desert Slimy Shark lunged from right below them and flipped the tank over. The man and his crew were cursing out loud as their bodies got slammed into the steel interior.

"Activate the barrier, and initiate the flipping system!" the captain of the crew instructed.

Unlike other tanks, this one is the newest and most advanced one.

Consistently adapting to the new challenges posed by the Supernaturals, the latest tank now boasts a feature that allows it to flip itself over using a magnetic system. Since the Supernaturals learned that tanks have heavy firepower, they often aimed at these tanks and overturned them, rendering them immobile.

Due to that, this system was introduced.

But while the tank is slowly being flipped over, the man's eyes widen suddenly.

It was the fact that from the periphery of the tank, a towering column of rock formations could be seen heading straight towards them. A few seconds before impact, nothing could be done at this point.

Just as the man decided to brace for impact, the tank suddenly got hauled off the ground.

Looking through the periscopes, he realized that the tank was tossed away.

Not wanting to leave his eyes from the periscopes, the man positioned to the other side and found that it was a figure that stomped at the sand and sent his tank, and a few other tanks in the vicinity flying away from the incoming rock formations.

A second is all it takes for the man to realize that it was Mavenna who did this.

Furthermore, she was not alone.

"Good work, Mavenna. Keep steering them clear from its path!" Rex praised with a nod.

Moments ago, he had spotted a colossal rock formation hurtling towards a group of military personnel, threatening to flatten them on impact. He intended to quickly reach there first, but Mavenna, it seemed, realized his purpose and arrived there ahead of him.

She bought enough time for Rex to arrive and slammed his body into the rock formations.

Kaboom!

Despite his immense strength, Rex wasn't able to stop the rock formations.

It surprises him because he wasn't expecting this at all.

Rex's feet which were planted into the sand were pushed back, his stature was akin to a mouse in front of a giant if compared to the colossal rock formation. He couldn't gather enough force to stop it completely, but enough to slow its movement.

On the other hand, Mavenna moved quickly and steered clear of the path from the others.

When there were no others on the path, she also dashed away.

Just when Mavenna was about to inform Rex that it was okay now to let go of the rock formations, he slammed into another smaller rock formation that was in the path before he was forcefully expelled, sent sprawling away again.

He pushed himself up from the ground before coughing a mouthful of blood.

"I know that I told Elder Tilrith to make it believable to the Executor, but this is way too much"

Rex whispered as he felt his body was in pain all over.

Gazing back at the direction where the camp was located, he frowned in concern.

If this fight made the army suffer too many casualties, the attack would be delayed. Although it would give me more time to train, there's a chance that the Executor would step back and realize that something was wrong, and I couldn't take that risk.

Shifting his eyes back to the fight, he and Edward made eye contact.

Nodding his head, Rex's energy riled up once again as he let out an overbearing howl.

Aoooouuu!!

Swoosh!

It caught the attention of the Desert Slimy Shark and all of them instantly have their bodies tensed up and their movements slowed, affected by the Alpha Bearing skill from glancing in Rex's direction, attracted by the howl.

Following that, Edward made his move.

Moving like a shadowy entity, he summoned his lance and went to work.

Now that the Desert Slimy Sharks were slower compared to earlier, their rough locations could be pinpointed. Edward then leaped into the air before he pulled his lance back and did multiple strikes, fueled with purplish energy, the chaos element.

Like a needle, the lance stabbed the ground a hundred times in a couple of seconds.

Although Edward couldn't see all of the Desert Slimy Sharks, he didn't need to and could stab randomly in the rough location where he thought those creatures gathered. And thanks to their slower movement due to Rex's Alpha Bearing skill, they were incapable of being elusive enough to dodge Edward's attack.

Under that attack, more than a dozen of them died, and the rest fled away.

It seemed their first obstacle was now finished, but the army wasn't given any time to recover as a loud trumpeting sound suddenly could be heard from afar, attracting their attention to the north direction.

On the edge of the horizon, five Vampires could be seen blowing a war trumpet.

Rex who was still gasping from being hit by the rock formations earlier, hardened thanks to the First Breath, saw this scenery before he frowned in exhaustion. I specifically told them to show their forces gradually along the way, but this...? This is not what we agreed on.