

## **The God of Jesters**

Chapter 36: 2.08.1 The Battlefield.

The worst was the humidity.

"Come and sit there." Maxim pointed at the giant magical circle in the middle of the room, where Adam can see two different places of sitting.

"As I have said before, your job is to act as my eyes," Maxim said while sitting in the middle of the bigger circle while pointing toward the smaller one and gesturing to him to sit down. As he said. "But not in reading, it's while dreaming."

In this world, there are many things that remain unknown even after all of the lands have already been explored.

The secret realms are hidden between the dimensions away from the influence of the main material plane, the world hidden in the oceans ruled by merfolks, the lands hidden in the land below, home to monsters of unknown origin.

And then there was the land of dreams, a world created by the collective consciousness of humanity.

It was the world to which I belong. And the world which was considered the most bizarre and unknown among others.

It was the land where dreams come true and the might of a person is not affected by their physical strength, but by the might and strength of their soul.

The dreams of the individuals are also the reason why the land of dreams keeps changing all the time and things never remain constant. It was why before the enlightenment era, the land of dreams was also called The Land of Chaos.

Some even say that the main material plane is the dream of a greater being and when that being wakes up, this dream will end.

Many have felt a greater consciousness permeating the dream world.

Which according to Lakys, was complete horseshit.

To him, this huge consciousness was nothing more than the collective consciousness of all the living beings that exist in this world. And the dream world is the focal point of it all. Making many mages mistake it for one, instead of many.

But it's not their fault, for they think that one only dreams while sleeping and the small dream worlds that are born out of it are just like bubbles that pop when the individual wakes up.

Though one shouldn't blame them for their ignorance. They can't match the understanding of dreams as much as Lakys did while being the Prime Daemon of Nightmares.

In Lakys's notes, he had divided the dream into two parts.

The active one, which many considered to be all and end all for all dreaming. And then, there is the passive dreaming that one does while being awake.

It was the passive dreaming that is responsible for that greater consciousness. It's what dictates the fate of this world and drives the countless coincidences that one experiences in their life.

So if Lakys words have to be believed, then one's strong will can truly change reality. But it only works on theory, because to me, all of this is bullshit.

There might be a greater consciousness that exists in the dream world, I know it because I have lived in that place for a long time.

But I am also aware that the greater will has no actual will of its own, it's just an existence without any rhyme or purpose.

"But how... how can I do that?" The young enchantment apprentice asked, his eyes clouded with worry for his own life.

The engrams and runes drawn extensively on the floor tiles were somewhat familiar. But the most he could understand were the most basic ones among them. The rest were too advanced and the longer he looked at them the more he felt sleepy. It was as if even looking at these runes was forbidden.

"Focus, close your eyes, and sit in your designated place. After which, you don't have much to do."

Hearing those words, Adam hurried to his place and then sat on the ground while keeping his eyes closed.

He feared the danger this magic circle posed to him, but he dreaded a magistar like Maxim even more.

So with that fear in his mind, Adam didn't even notice when he fell to sleep. Much to Maxim's chargin.

This showed that the child might have a stronger soul, but his will was not strong. Which would make this small experiment of Maxim pretty dangerous for him.

If possible, Maxim didn't wish to include a child as young as this in this experiment. But time was limited, he could feel that with each passing night, something was closing in on him.

Otherwise, nothing else would explain why Maxim was always in a hurry, even ignoring the safety of his own companion for this.

"Now to see what this dream has to offer." Looking at the sleeping figure of Adam, Maxim tapped his cane on the rune two times, activating it while he too sat down on the floor.

And then, before long, he too succumbed to my dream.

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Opening his eyes again, Maxim found himself surrounded by the mist. A mist with some yellow hue to it.

But he was not surprised by the situation, he knew that he had finally entered the place.

"Success on the first try?" He wondered while looking at his young and soft hands. The body he currently possessed was that of Adam, it was this reason that he was able to see after a long time.

But there was no joy on his face. Instead, it remained constrained as he wondered just where he was.

'Those that can recall the dream said something about forest... but I see none of it here.'

As Maxim used Adam's soul as a proxy to see into this dream, so did I do the same for Maxim's own thoughts.

It was for this reason, that after so long. I can hear the thoughts of this man at last.

And from this small comment of his, I was also made aware that the homework Maxim did before coming here might be a lot more extensive than I have previously expected it to be.

Then, if that was the case. Let's give him what he wishes.

Though changing and manipulating the natural progression would drain some of my energy, I still chose to do it as I didn't wish for my protagonist to be stuck in this quagmire for longer than it needed to be.

The other reason was my desire for this man to witness what I have witnessed.

So with the twist of my finger, which sadly burned off under this manipulation. The mist around Maxim who was in Adam's body started to drift apart, exposing a small forest.

And in that forest, there were lots of corpses strewn all over the place. Corpses of all ages and sizes.

There were young, there were old and there were some even inhuman. But the only thing that made them all equal was the state of their body and the color of their uniform.

All of them died a horrible death, none of their body was intact. Maxim can even see the tears that still haven't dried up on a boy that barely looked 14.

This looked to be a war site. But what happened here might not have been the result of an equal war.

It was a one-sided massacre.

'There was no mention of this in any report.' he wondered while finding this scene a bit familiar.

'The Daela Tree, it only blossoms during the 2nd month of summer and is only found in Jaegral forest which lies between Wortham and Yethel.' Ignoring the smell of rotten flesh that assaulted his nostrils, Maxim went forward and started to assess the area and started to think about where he was.

Which was made easier with the broken bits of uniform he found during all this massacre.

"Yethel."

The army of Yethel was properly established just two decades ago and as it was for most young countries, their army is not as strong or properly trained.

This would explain why this ragtag group of soldiers was so diverse in their age.

"This is Jaegral war... the war in which Yethel was defeated one-sidedly by the Wortham forces."

"So this is how it looked?"

Dreams can be false and most of the time, they are. But considering how special this dream was. Maxim was sure that what he was witnessing had actually happened.

'No wonder there is no peace between Yethel and Wortham.'

Any leader would be angry when its soldiers have been treated brutally by an enemy nation. The hate of this kind can't be forgotten or forgiven. Unless the offender chooses to compensate the other side appropriately, there is no way for this war to end.

But this was not time to fall into the past.

He needs to understand why he was witnessing this scene in this dream.

'Wait... didn't the dream also appear a few years after the Jaegral war?'

Maxim had fallen into his thoughts when suddenly, he felt something move past his feet.

Chapter 37: 2.08 He saw it.

Looking down, he found nothing. But nothing ever is fine actually and ignoring those small sensations would be foolish of Maxim.

It was for this reason, that Maxim walked among the tortured bodies of the dead. He can see the pain on their face and the agony they must have suffered before death.

He can even feel the dread of these men, as they were forced to meet an early end to their life. And sad to say, he can even relate to them.

These images, these scenes from the past awakened memories of the past he had forgotten. Memories in which he still had his eyes and was a bright young man still unaware of the horrors he would face in the future.

"No, these are not my memories."

But Maxim was smart enough, he was not stupid to fall into such petty tricks, the memory infusion in his mind failed and he woke up in the same spot he was five minutes before. But now a hand was holding onto his feet.

A hand of a dead young man, who looked at him with tears in his eyes.

"Please... let me live on in you..." Cried the dead soul, its pain gushing into Maxim's body bit by bit.

This dead soul just wished to be remembered. He wished for someone to carry on his will. The thought of possessing never occurred to him.

To this dead soul, all he cared about was the people that waited for him to come back.

"It's already been too long. Just sleep, it will soon be over." And Maxim, unlike others, didn't treat the will of the young man as rubbish. Instead, he gave him some hope and coaxed the dead soul, as he slowly hunched down and pulled the hand of the man off his feet.

A gratifying scene, which just showed how different he was when compared to other visitors of this great creation of mine.

Though, this young man was not alone.

"Please... send money to my child..." Another older voice pleaded to him as it slowly dragged its broken body with organs spilling out toward Maxim.

Followed by other broken men. Most of them weren't even able to irk out a word besides groaning.

With all of their requests being the same.

Every single one of them wished for a better life, not just for themselves but for their own people as well. It was why they fought this nonsensical war.

A war that was caused by the disagreements between a young nation and an older principality. Due to this, these men were punished and forgotten.

Now they live in this dream of my creation, looking for someone that would carry on their will. Ignorant of the fact that those dreams would never be fulfilled. Nor can they ever be fulfilled.

But Maxim was different, in his eyes, the horrific undead seemed pitiful to him. He neither harmed them nor caused them further misery.

"I will help you, I will end this dream," Maxim said, remorse filling his heart. "But for now, sleep O' heroes of the old." With a small incision on his wrist, Maxim extracted the blood from his body and then using it as ink, drew a hex in the air.

Which caused the moving and crying bodies to slowly fall silent, acting as if they were never alive, to begin with. "I will end your suffering soon." He said moving away from the so-called tragic heroes.

The same heroes died out of cowardice and incompetence, causing further damage to the people they were meant to protect and ruining a great war, making it boring.

These were no heroes.

These were bastards that didn't deserve a peaceful end so soon.

Let Maxim promise what he wishes for, but whether he will succeed is another matter. So until then...

"You will suffer for as long as I exist on this plane," I warned, causing these sleeping souls to shake in fear. But this is what they get for their erroneous act toward their own.

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With that test pass, Maxim soon found himself in a different place and different time.

Though this time, the place was oddly familiar.

"Durum?" Looking at the familiar streets and the crowd of men that walk past the area, Maxim felt like a phantom out of time.

None of the people here noticed him, nor was Maxim interested in them.

As they were not real people, to begin with. They were nothing more than echoes of memories, images that someone's mind barely remembers.

It was for this reason that none of the people here had any face.

"Where am I?" Maxim asked, confused at the current scenario. At least on the last one, he was sure what he had to do. But not this time.

He couldn't even move from this place.

Though, as the injury on his hand still existed, he used some of the blood once again, intending to cast a hex once again.

But that would be too foolish of him, Maxim was a bit too much in hurry.

"Don't abandon this opportunity." A faceless young child that was walking on the streets said to Maxim, causing him to pause his actions.

But before he can look up, the child has long walked past him. And with his inability to move, he can't even turn around and follow him up.



'What sort of opportunity?' He was curious about the identity of the child, or the being that used the phantom of the child as its mouthpiece. But his work was more important at the moment.

With a body that was losing blood at a fast rate, he maintained his calm and followed up on the suggestion the child gave him before.

At least now he had a direction and understood what to do.

Which made me happy, losing my palm to send this message was not a bad decision.

Because this dream might be made by me, but its existence was far greater than mine, I was just a parasite leeching it off to survive while fertilizing it with the dreams of Durums citizens.

And besides, there was someone far stronger than me residing in this dream.

'Don't abandon this opportunity?... But what sort of opportunity?' Wondered Maxim. In his mind, he wished for this opportunity to come soon. Because the injury in his hand was one thing. The injury to the mind of Adam was way worse. He understood that he can't push the body of this young man too much.

Otherwise, his vessel might just become part of this dream forever.

And when he was considering resuming his act of leaving this dream, something odd happened.

A face that was clear as the day slowly walked out from a corner, a woman with beauty, unlike anything he had ever seen.

And the moment Maxim looked at that face, his body burned.

"Wake up." He shouted, knowing that he had seen something he shouldn't have. Maxim closed his eyes and used his spirit to cover the soul of the young man.

It was also when he was thrown out of the dream and back to the real world, that the burning smell of flesh entered his nose.

His flesh was on fire.

'I shouldn't have waited.' He might not be able to look at his current state, but from the burning pain in his left hand, he knew that he had lost it forever.

But at least sacrificing that hand saved the mind of not only him but the child named Adam as well.

"What... What happened?" Adam woke up a second later, still ignorant of the danger his body just faced before. He rubbed his face and felt something wet on it.

"Blood?" Looking at his hand, he was horrified for a second, closing one eye first and then the other, to confirm if his sight was still working. Which was odd and pretty swift for someone his age. But it went to show that he was not a wallflower that grew up without any experience.

"Adam, help me." The voice of Maxim woke Adam from his worried stupor. He turned his head and looked at Maxim.

"Fire?"

It was already too late to save the hand, but Adam still dragged his body across the magic circle and asked in worry.

"Are you ok Mister Maxim?" he asked, his orifices were still bleeding heavily, which goes to show that Maxim's protection might not have been as extensive as he had expected.

Or, the entity that he saw was just that strong.

"I am ok, just click that button," he said, requesting the injured boy's help. Then pointing toward the wall where he thought the button might be.

Maxim can be considered lucky, because the boy's adrenaline was at an all-time high, hence becoming incapable of feeling his own weakness or fatigue. Which fooled the boy into thinking he was capable of getting up.

And this started a game of struggling to get up from the magic circle and then falling down like a puppet without strings.

It was fun.

But with this, these two might die today.

And I don't care much about this Adam kid. But I can't have Maxim fall so early. He still needs to live.

"This is the last time." A voice echoed into Maxim's voice, as the button was pressed on its own and the alarm was sent out.

Chapter 38: 2.09.1 Interrogation.

"I am not blaming you for his death. I just wish to know if you noticed anything bizarre around him before he left the academy." Remira asked, her voice holding a bit of force as she questioned the young girl that sat frightened in front of her.

Unaware of the things that Maxim went through, Remira was in the Lucian academy doing the job that she was ordered to. Asking questions and finding the source of how and when Farhad got influenced.

And from what Remira understood, with the security of the academy, it was almost impossible for this to happen. Unless the one who did this was an insider.

Of course, this girl won't know that the insider was the academy's headmaster, to begin with. But my play was flawless and it would be harder for her to find anything in this academy.

It was why I was happy seeing her question the students with zero enthusiasm.

"I.. I didn't even know his father was a hero... If I knew, I would have ever bothered him." Said a female student who was still reeling in from the show of learning who the father of Farhad actually was.

She knew her life was over. The moment the word of it gets out, even her family might not come out unharmed. It was why she was regretting her past actions. Harming a small weak child and not leaving him alone for being weak.

"Focus Thalia, this is not the time. Answer my question or I would just inform Marshall of this myself." Knowing that her words were not going through, Remira warned, her voice holding some authority as she made Thalia look at her once again.

"No... no. I didn't notice anything weird. He never said much and always kept to himself." The more Thalia spoke, the more she started to wonder what drove her to harm Farhad.

He was just living his life peacefully and never bothered her. But for some reason, she always found him a nuisance, and as she said in the past.

She didn't like his guts.

And if I have to say anything, I didn't like this girl's guts as well. But to err is to human and this girl is still young, so I will ignore her for now. Who knows, she might become a better person after this ordeal is over.

But Remira didn't seem to share the same thoughts. "Nothing weird? I have asked some others before you and many of them said he was taking early leave coming to the end of the semester. I wonder if you have anything to say about that?" Thalia was not the first student she asked questions from and neither will she be last.

Hearing this question, Thalia said. "I... I don't know anything about that." She tried to lie, but her little twitching and inability to meet Remira's eyes were plain giveaways. And besides, it was hard to lie from the start anyways.

Because every single student that comes here is forced to drink a truth potion. But as these were still kids, only a highly diluted version of the potion was given to them. This might not stop them from lying, but it would also make their lies a bit more noticeable.

"You do know about it, Thalia. Now if you tell me the truth, we can go our own ways." Remira explains, coaxing Thalia to speak more. "And if you don't, you already know to whom I intend to give this report."

"And whether your name remains on the report will depend on you." Remira lied, there was no way she could hide Thalia's name in her report. Everything needs to be mentioned and no detail can be taken lightly.

But lying to Thalia at the moment seemed to be the perfect method to extract information out of her. One can see firsthand how much fear she holds for the Marshall, so there was nothing wrong with exploiting that fear.

"Please, please don't do that." Thalia pleaded before looking around the empty room, checking if there were anyone else listening in on her. Which made Remira a bit curious.

What did she see that made her act like this?

"... It., it was me and my friends that called him over... for errands."

It was the story Remira had expected. The reason for Farhad's lowered frequency of attending the class was due to Thalia. She used to often give him different tasks that he needed to complete in the allotted time or suffer her wrath.

"But... but this one time, something happened." Thalia seemed almost fearful of something as she started to look around once again.

"Don't worry, I am here. Nothing will happen to you." Worrying that something might actually be wrong with Thalia, Remira roused her blood and heightened her intuition. Looking forward to Thalia's words.

"He said he liked books, so I gave him the task of bringing a book from the banned library."

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Glancing over the shivering body of Thalia, Remira knew that the side effects of the meds were starting to act up. Meaning it was time to end this small interrogation of hers.

Besides, she got what she wanted.

"A book about the moon?" She wondered, recalling the last words that Farhad said before his death.

It was why she stood in front of the banned bookshelf. Looking at the books that smelled of age and decay.

One can see from their state that not many have visited this place in ages nor has it seen any cleaning. Just like its name, it would seem abandoned and if not for the enchantment on the bookshelves, these books might have turned into dust long ago.

It was why the words mentioned by Thalia were a bit odd. Walking closer, REMira approached the keeper of this library, a gargoyle that stands at the entrance.

"Halt." It said as he opened his stone eyes and looked toward Remira "Turn around, this is a forbidden place." It warned.

Which made Remira even more curious. So without delay, she showed him the ID that was given to her by the headmaster, causing the Gargoyle to bow its head toward the badge.

"I apologize for my misconduct... Please, you may proceed." There was a complete 180 in its treatment of Remira. But she didn't move and kept staring at the Gargoyle.

"No need for apologies." There was something that started to irk Remira after seeing this gatekeeper. "But I wonder if there was ever a child that came to this library before me?" She asked, wondering how could a student like Farhad could enter the library that was being protected by a gargoyle.

One shouldn't look down on these small stone monsters. In truth, they were demons under the contract that lived inside these stone statues for protection. And it was highly unlikely for a first-semester student to hide away from the eyes of a demon of this caliber and enter the library.

Which is what was odd with this situation.

"A child?" The gargoyle started to think, before saying. "Of course there was, it was around 16 years ago, he tasted great." The Gargoyle exclaimed, rejoicing at the memories, at the flesh of the unlucky student that was devoured by him.

Though this revelation was not horrifying for Remira, this is what was in the nature of demons.

"I am talking about something recent, in the last two months." She asked once again, just as confirmation.

From Gargoyle's earlier words, she understood that there hadn't been anyone stupid enough to approach this library, but she still wished to confirm.

"No, if there was. I wouldn't have been so hungry these years." The demons sighed.

"Then I pray that you won't be hungry for long." She smiled, before entering the library.

She didn't need to wonder whether the words of a demon were true. If it was a free demon, that might have been the case, but not for one bound by a contract. This demon was a slave and incapable of lying. So she knew that this demon knew nothing about Farhad.

Which made her question whether Thalia was lying to her. Though there was also the fact that Thalia mentioned the book with moons and these same moons were coming up in the visions of Farhad.

'Should he have read a forbidden text relating to a moon deity?' She wondered as this was a common occurrence that happened a lot in this world.

"Moon." She started to look at the books in this small library. Most of the content was just outdated information that would be considered wrong these days and hence they held no value. There were even some books that even attracted Remira's attention. Books that held the true history that people don't want to reach the hands of youngsters, or books that detail the life and works of scholars that went on to become not-so-savory individuals.

And among those scholars, there was a book that made Remira's eyes roll.

"Curse of the silver night - Book by Yethel Ikuras."

Chapter 39: 2.09.1 Game is set.

Looking at that familiar book written by a good old friend of mine, I felt relieved.

The third piece of the puzzle was in place. The fool has bit the bait and foolishly held the book that was the start of everything. A book that I helped that friend of mine...

"\*cough."

Seems like this is no time to narrate the story. The damage to my spirit manipulating the dream has been extensive.

That woman who stole the control of the dream from me didn't like the fact that I had done something inconsiderate towards her, helping Maxim and making him see a glimpse of her.

And her punishment was heavy as well.

Barely 40% of my body remains intact and I can still feel that if I remained in the world of the living any longer, my spiritual body would deteriorate faster. And before long I would be weak enough to not even possess any thoughts of my own.

Guess, this is the price to meddle in the affairs of a false god. She found out I was doing things out of the boundations of the contract.

"Who?"

Heh, even Remira, without the rousing of her blood, can notice me in this state. How pitiful, this is the limit of I who proudly calls himself the Rat King.

Though knowing one's limit is half the battle and knowing when to back down is the other half. So before Remira turns suspicious of me. I left her alone.

The confused and worried face of her that intended to go toward the gargoyle for more questions told me enough about what was going on in her mind.

As for what she was going to ask? I was unaware of it and even weaker. I can't stay in this place. I need to find an escape route from here.

So without delay, I started to look around. Looking for people sleeping at this hour of the day.

But considering this was a place filled with scholars, there was barely anyone sleeping. Most were busy with their thesis or school work. Others practice spells.

Though after looking for a while, I found my escape route, a girl that I saw not so long ago. A vile girl that tormented a boy to death and now she slept peacefully. She was probably tired after the heavy-handed interrogation and the worry of being found out by the Marshall should have made her even more tired.



This may also be the only peaceful sleep she would ever get after this interrogation, as the fear of the Marshall will keep her awake all night. Waiting for the time when a father takes revenge for his fallen son.

So sleep little Thalia, and become my gate to the world of dreaming, and in turn, feed me for a bit as well.

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With the absence of Jester, for the first time since coming to this city, Remira felt light for some reason, as if a weight on her shoulder was taken off and she can breathe better now.

Why did this happen? She didn't know. But what she knew was the cause might be the book in her hand. Because the moment she held this book in her hand, whatever entity that was watching her gave away its position and soon ran away.

'Something is really keeping a watch on us... something that can bypass the defensive circle of Lucien Academy.'

Either that or the defensive circle was willfully acting ignorant of this existence and choosing to ignore it.

What was the truth? Remira didn't know. But she was well aware of an individual that was incapable of lying.

"Keeper of the library, I wonder if you felt someone else besides me?" She asked, curious if the gargoyle was able to pick up on it as well as she did or not. But to her dejection, the Gargoyle just shook its head. "I only see the young lady and no one besides the young lady." It said as if to coax Remira. But She was not someone that gets won over with such simple words.

"Don't lie demon." She warned, as her finger started to burn with a white flame, that she used to warn the Gargoyle. "Answer correctly, your master has given me full reign to do what I wish for the demonic constructs, exorcizing one of them won't be a big deal."

The threat in Remira's voice was real, she knew that the demon was trying to fool her. Because in no way did what she felt false. There was something and she had felt it.

"Beautiful lady, I cannot lie. I only see you." the demon said, fearing the white flame. It was only now that I learned who this woman was.

'A descendant of that monster.' The demon recalled the past in which there was a man who enslaved all the curses and created a unique bloodline by sacrificing them together. Blood that was borne out of neither a god nor a demon. Blood capable of purging all that was deemed filthy by its wielder. A blood with no limit of its own.

A blood that became the sworn enemy of demons.

The blood of Radiance.

"Yes, you only see me. But I asked if you felt someone else here besides me, not whether you saw someone else." She asked, bringing that fire closer to the stone gargoyle and touching its shoulder with it.

Causing the Gargoyle to cry in pain, and cried out loud, which caused the candles to start to flicker in and out, due to the spiritual disturbance in the area.

"Please... mercy... Mercyy!!" It cried. The farce of an honorable gatekeeper started to shed before it said.

"I... I can't. it would curse me with a bad dream..." The Gargoyle explained and this was the most it could say of this entity.

"Curse with bad dreams?" With Gargoyle's words, Remira was sure that what she felt was not an illusion and that something truly was following her all this time.

And this being capable of giving out bad dreams to people.

"Why would a demon care about dreams?" She asked, taking her finger off the Gargoyle's shoulder. Which broke into pieces soon after, showing the damage the small flame has done to its body.

But the demon was not worried about its loss. It just felt relieved that the pain was gone and in reply to Remira's question, it just said. "Even demons dream of heaven."

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"You say locomotion? I heard they are trying something similar in Pulgasiri, who knows they might bring it here as well."

A man that was once just a small-time librarian had now become a big man among the magi circle. His own name was spread far and wide and his open attitude when he shared his knowledge with others, caused many young and inexperienced magi to flock to him.

And after those that followed him long ago grew up, they were strong enough to rule a country, with this librarian at the center of it all.

Many people considered him a hero, a man that will change the world of Magi with his liberal views of teaching and the spread of knowledge.

But only a few knew that this Archmage reached such a level, not on his own alone, there was a being always on his side.

Its form was ever-changing, but most of the time, this being lived inside a puppet that wore the clothes of a Jester.

A very special being that chose to enslave itself to the young Librarian long ago.

"They might, or they might not. Depending on the goodwill of others would be a stupid thing to do." The puppet, although unable to move, still opened its mouth. "I thought you should have learned this after coming this far."

This was the Jester, he was a lot calmer and more reasonable than how he is in the current day.

He met this librarian long ago in a small town and befriended him in an attempt to steal the knowledge from the books. But the language barrier stopped him from achieving anything. And with the constant hunt by the people with shining blood, Jester was forced to sign a contract with this man.

He would provide this man with knowledge and suggestion, while this man would fill in Jester's lack of understanding of this new world.

And this contract has gone on for a long, they both have even fought off the men from Radiance multiple times, achieving their current level where a country was soon to be born out of their hard work.

"Stop nagging me like I am a child, I am old enough to have grandkids at this point." Even though this librarian still looked like a young man in his twenties, he was long past sixty years of age. A common thing that happens to most transenders.

"Then act like an adult, start building railway tracks, I have seen how advantageous they can be during wartime." The Jester explained, recalling the Great war from his own world.

"If we did that, then our neighbors would take off their masks and then you know what will happen."

"Cynark is not happy with a small nation being born on their border, all they need is an excuse." Ikuras Yethel sighed, worried about the future of the nation he founded.

There were too many things to consider before he could take any drastic steps of that nature and his life as a mage has taught him to always be careful.

Which was a bit boring to Jester, it was why he desired Yethel to take drastic actions which might add flavor to this boring life of his. So it started to push Yethel, in an attempt to change his mind. "An excuse they would find any... hmm!"

The world came to a halt, Yethel stopped moving and the puppet that was incapable of standing up, stood up from its place while looking around the scene with nostalgia.

"So foolish of me, it's been long since I lost into a dream of my own."

It would seem that the state of my spiritual body was a bit worse than I had presumed. It was weak enough to fall into a dream of my own, showing you gods a boring side of my life.

But don't worry, it won't happen again. It was an accident borne out of my earlier mistake.

And besides.

"The pieces are in place already." With those words said, the dream surrounding Jester burst apart and collapsed on its own.

## Chapter 40: 2.10 The entertainment district.

While Jester had fallen into a deep sleep of his own. Maxim was waking up on his own. His body was tightly bandaged with what he can determine to be a talisman of suppression while there was a tube going through his nose that provided him with fresh oxygen.

'Hah, how far have I fallen.'

What happened in that dream, he recalls clearly. The moon-like visage that tried to hide, the being inside that did its best to help him see it, and then his eventual downfall.

The gods in this world of the occult were unlike the ones from Mundane. They were not based on ignorance or the mortal's desire to understand the dark world.

The gods in this world were all real, though benevolent, they were not. What they thought of humans, Maxim didn't know. Whether they even cared for humans, Maxim was completely ignorant of it.

But what he did know was to never try to learn more about gods than what is publicly known. It's how one can maintain their sanity and it's the reason no one knows the true names of any gods in this world.

To most, all they know are descriptions.

And among those descriptions, there was one that oddly came close to the thing he witnessed.

"Daemon of Incarnation. Her signage, the moon. And her desire, the night." The more Maxim spoke, the more the talisman sticking to his body started to burn. He knows what he was doing was stupid. But calling this out was important as well.

For forbidden knowledge is never eternal and it would burn away from his soul after it is weakened enough.

So Maxim chose to remember it by heart.

"Imprint." Though his hands shook while making the hex in the air under his labored breathing, he knew that this small dream might be forgotten soon enough if he didn't do something fast.

It was why he used the hex to imprint all of the words he spoke into his skin.

"Ah....!" The moment the spell activated, Maxim's right hand started to contort before his skin started to bubble, causing Maxim immense pain.

But it didn't stop there, the spell had just started and soon, his skin burst apart with fire escaping out of it.

And soon this fiery text took over his right hand completely. Leaving him drained and weak.

He understood that his right hand can't be used for a few days. No, with the words he had written, he won't be able to use them forever.

But it was all worth it.

He was a broken man already with nothing more to lose. If he can help the people in this city before he dies, it would be for the best.

"Magistar, you are awake?" Pierta came running down after hearing Maxim's cries. Her first reaction was to look at Maxim's right hand. But Maxim was a step ahead of her and dropped his hand down and said. "Don't look,... it's forbidden." His voice was labored and there didn't seem much energy in his body.

One can even say that his life would soon come to end with the state he was in currently.

"Why did you do it on your hand?" She can smell the burning smell of flesh and the hex spell that was recently used in this place. She can even understand why he did it.

But using one's own skin as parchment, she can't fathom this stupidity. This would be putting strain on one's body more than the mind and the part on which those words were written would soon turn useless.

Though Maxim didn't care about it. Had no time to look for a parchment when the memory of the dream was disappearing from his mind.

This was the least he could do.

And besides, the last time he saw Pierta, she was in bed recovering from the attack of an entity that parasitized her soul.

"Just... Just bring me something to hide it." Maxim said, as he dragged his body to the front of the bed and sat up straight. "I made some progress." Happy with the result, Maxim informed Pierta.

"I am happy that you succeeded on the first try, but you should have informed me before entering the giant dream. If not for the young man pressing the alarm, I wouldn't have noticed you two guys here."

"Ah... so he succeeded." Maxim laughed, as he covered his right hand with a blanket. "How is that young man? I presume nothing serious happened to him?"

"Nothing wrong with his spirit, but his eyes are a bit damaged. I have used some panacea on it along with a healing talisman from Nature's Fall. He would be as good as new in a day."

Talismans were pieces of paper on which can hold off a spiritual spell and were very hard to come by. And those from Natures Fall, the church of hunt, and the hunted were very expensive to get their hands on.

But considering the nature of the entity they were facing, the talisman from Nature's fall was perfect for the job.

Because a hunter never sleeps during the hunt. Same as Maxim, who can't afford to sleep at the moment.

He needs to keep moving forward.

"Then good, we would need his help soon enough once again... Whether he likes it or not." Before Alfin can care about the will of his "eyes", but after learning the truth, he can't do the same anymore.

Because he had found who the enemy was and what needed to be done.

"I will see to it that he doesn't try to escape." Pierta also knew that this was no time to be weak of heart. Sometimes sacrifices were necessary. "Also, Remira is back, she has been waiting in the library, reading."

There was a surprise in Pierta's voice as she explained.

As someone that has known Remira since she was a child. Seeing her read the book was the first.

"She found something in the library, I don't know if it's anything special."

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The book that she currently read was written by a well-known Magi by the name of Ikuras Yethel. The founder of Yethel Conglomerate and so too the Republic.

A man that has been dead for the last twenty years. Assassinated by unknown assailants that were mostly believed to be from the Parent kingdom of Wortham Principality, the Cynark Kingdom.

Though, it's just a conspiracy and not something even the current leaders of the Yethel Republic agree with. But for the common men, this conspiracy was taken as reality.

One can even see it from how the books written by Yethel have been banned in the Cynark Kingdom since the assassination.

No, it was banned before the assassination happened.

"Rarer than Werewolves, the Wraith were more fascinating creatures. Born out of vengeance toward the living. They are mad with hunger and uncontrollable."

The words and knowledge in this book were basic. It mostly told about the curses and cursed monsters that usually held a connection with the silver moon.

There were phantoms that tormented the living, curses that aged the living, and even gods that stole the life of the living.

"Remira, Sir Maxim has called for you."

Remira's reading was interrupted by Pierta's callout. This was to be expected since she heard the cries of Maxim not so long ago. So without further delay, she got up along with the book and started to walk to her Leader's room.



But not once did she forget about the words in the book and the fact that there was someone watching her and that being might have been doing for longer than she might expect.

Though, while going downstairs, Remira paused. Turning to look at Pierta. "You should take some rest, that act is not fooling me," Remira said, a bit worried for the health of the only family she had left.

"I would, but not now... for the first time ever there has been good progress. I can't hold you guys back due to my own health."

"And besides, Sir Maxim's state is way worse than my own," Pierta explained, feeling elated at the small success they finally had.

"But he is not my family, so I will still care for you more. Please, just be safe and if you feel woozy, just go and rest."

"Ok little girl, I will see to it."

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It was night time and there were barely any people walking along the roads.

But in the entertainment district, no one ever slept as the patrons of the night would always say.

The night is still young.

And the night was truly young when a woman entered an alleyway, got closer to a gutter, and then hunched down.

Her voice was as low as a mouse as she called out.

"FiFi." A simple name, a code word of sorts. But sadly, the expected response never came.

"FiFi!" So she tried again, expecting a different outcome. But as it was, nothing changed and nothing came out of her attempt.

"Is he away?" She wondered, readying herself to leave this place when she felt a vortex of fire form next to her body, and before she can react, a hand extended out of it and grabbed her by the neck.

"Finally found the true body." Maisel laughed, tightening his grip on the neck of the woman, causing.

His palm is as hot as a furnace.

But it only left a red spot on the woman's skin. Which proved to Maisel that he had finally got his hands on the real thing.

"Now, time for some questions."