

## **GODS' IMPACT 11**

### Chapter 11

Zach entered the yellow portal to exit the dungeon. However, as soon as he entered the portal, it turned black, and Zach ended up somewhere else.

"... where am I?" Zach wondered as he glanced around the green land. There were trees, grass, flowers, and plants everywhere. Butterflies were flying around, and Zach could hear a waterfall in the distance. The sweet scent was filling Zach's lungs and he couldn't help but keep taking deep breaths.

Upon walking further, Zach realized that he didn't exit the dungeon, but he was taken somewhere else.

"It is not a bonus floor or something, is it?" Zach muttered as he walked forward.

He followed the sound of the water, and after walking for a while, he eventually saw a beautiful waterfall with a rainbow passing in between. The water was so clean and transparent that Zach could clearly see the fishes swimming in the river.

Zach's gaze followed the river, and it stopped on something. Someone was standing at the bank of a river with their back facing Zach. Zach squinted his eyes to take a clear look and confirmed that it was a man.

'Is that another player? But that's impossible!' Zach thought to himself. 'I am in a solo dungeon, so no one should be with me.'

"Hey, you!" Zach had no other choice but to call out the man. He didn't want to go down and meet him face to face because who knew if the man tried to do something funny to Zach.

However, the man didn't react upon being called out by Zach.

"What should I do now?" Zach glanced around and muttered, "I don't see a way out either." Zach wondered with a puzzled and confused look on his face. He was exhausted, and he simply wanted to take a rest.

He also needed to refill his HP by whatever means this game worked.

Zach glanced around to find something to throw at the man, and his gaze fell on the broken branch of the tree. He picked it up and threw it at the man, but he made sure not to aim at the man and land it near the man. However, Zach miscalculated the judgment. He forgot that his strength had increased, so instead of landing near the man, the branch passed through the man's body.

"..!" Zach was surprised to see the man wasn't bleeding, nor was there any wound on his body.

After a few seconds, the man finally reacted and tilted his face back to look at Zach from the corner of his eyes.

"...no...way..." Zach's eyes widened after seeing the man. "Fa...ther...?"

Zach shook his head and uttered to himself: "No! Father is not here. He is... dead. This is an illusion!"

The man's figure disappeared... no, everything around Zach disappeared. The scenery changed, and Zach found himself in a rather unusual place.

There were no sun, moon, or stars in the sky. The floor was hard, and the cracks were filled with red lava.

Zach was standing at the center of something he couldn't describe. It was a strange circle on the floor with weird symbols carved on it. There were five big and long stones surrounding the circle.

Zach glanced at his left and saw there were several other dozens of pointy stones like that at a distance. When he looked to the right, he saw the same thing.

"I would have preferred the previous scenery, to be honest," Zach muttered as he looked up and saw another big, long, and pointy stone. However, it was different from the rest of them. It was dripping lava at the center of the circle, spreading it to the symbols on the ground and lighting it up.

(Here is the pic for reference)~~

"This place is like a purgatory, except there is no one here."

Zach was already confused about what was happening, but now, he couldn't comprehend the situation anymore.

Of course, Zach was calm and thinking of various plans on what to do, but first, he needed to understand his situation.

"Well, well, how did a mortal enter this place?" an ethereal female voice rang in the air.

Zach looked back to see a woman with pale skin, red eyes, and white hair sitting on a giant floating throne with a colossal slat on the back. Even though the expression on her face looked rather arrogant, she looked dead from inside, as though she was bored and fed up from everything.

She was sitting in a haughty manner with her legs crossed and her one hand on the hand rest of the throne, and the other hand was twirling her hairs. She was wearing black attire with purple and red colored edges and embroidery on it with a bit of pink shade on them.

"...!" Zach jumped back and moved his hand to the sword. 'She wasn't here before.'

Zach frowned his face and asked, "Who are you?"

"I should be the one asking that question," the woman uttered. "What are you doing in my sacred space, mortal?"

"I am not here by choice," Zach replied with a shrug and continued, "I was trying to exit the dungeon, and I ended up here,"

Zach tried to look at the woman's HUD, but there was no name or HP bar. He sighed in relief and uttered inwardly: 'At least she is not a monster.'

Zach had no stamina left to fight anyone. And even if he had, there was no way he would have fought with 1 HP.

"Ahaha!" The woman laughed loudly and started giggling. She looked at Zach with her crimson red eyes and uttered, "So it was true."

Zach didn't care why the woman was laughing, nor he wanted to know what she meant by that. He just wanted to get out of there as soon as possible.

"Can you send me back to the entry of the dungeon?" Zach asked sincerely. "I am kind of in a hurry."

The woman jumped from her throne and landed in front of Zach. Her clothes were dragging on the ground, and she was walking barefoot.

"...!" Zach wanted to tell the woman that she was going to step her foot on the lava, but it was too late.

The woman passed through the lava; however, nothing happened to her. But, her clothes caught fire.

Zach pointed his gaze at the fire and uttered, "You might want to look at that."

\*\*\*\*

Total players in the game 46215.

3 new players logged in.

0 players died.

Chapter 12

The woman looked back and saw her dress was on fire. She simply waved her hand in the air, and the fire was extinguished. She then looked at Zach and asked, "Where were we?"

"Uhh... I was asking you to send me back to the entry of the dungeon?" Zach was being as humble and calm as he could. He didn't know who the woman was, but he knew that she was strong. Her presence was domineering, and Zach didn't want to mess with her, especially when he only had 1 HP left.

"Right." The woman nodded and walked forward to Zach. "Tell me, mortal. How did you get in here?"

"As I said, I was trying to exit the dungeon, but somehow I ended up here," Zach replied and shrugged his shoulders. "If you can just send me back, I will be on my way."

"Hmm~" the woman hummed in amusement. "So it's really true that the petty gods trapped the mortals in this... game or whatever you call it."

"But then again, I was never fond of you mortals, so I don't really care," She sneered. "I was simply here to confirm it for myself, but I couldn't enter the game for some reason. So I had to create my own sacred dimension."

Zach pondered for a while after hearing what the woman said. He first assumed that the woman was an NPC designed to guide the players somewhere or simply a bonus floor. But after listening to the woman and the way she was talking, Zach was certain that she wasn't an NPC or a player.

"Who are you?" Zach couldn't help but ask the woman. He was curious why someone would want to enter a game that was basically a one-way ticket.

"Who am I? A mortal like you isn't allowed to know my name," the woman uttered in a haughty manner. She then placed her hand on Zach's shoulder and dropped him to his knees. "And how dare you look me in the eyes. I am Aria, the incarnation of death and destruction."

'I did not ask for your name,' Zach uttered inwardly. 'She is strong. Her hand was so heavy, and I don't think she is joking about being an incarnation of death and destruction.'

Zach was in a dire state, but that didn't stop him from being 'Zach'. He stood up straight against Aria's will and gazed her into the eyes. He did the very thing Aria warned him not to do.

"You..." Aria gritted her teeth and tried to crush Zach using her hand, but Zach jumped backward and made some distance between them. "You mortal!" she yelled.

"Don't you know it's not nice to touch people without their permission?" Zach remarked. He then looked into Aria's eyes again and said with a smirk on his face: "And my name is Zach, you... monster!"

Aria's face twitched as though it was about to explode in rage and anger. "What did you just call me? A monster? Do I look like a monster to you?!" she yelled.

"Well..." Zach shrugged his shoulders and replied, "You did introduce yourself as an incarnation of death and destruction, so yeah, you are a monster."

Aria pointed her finger at the long pointy rock behind Zach and said, "How could you call the cute and beautiful me, a monster?"

"And you are a narcissist too. Great," Zach commented.

"Enough!" The rock behind Zach shattered, and lava came out of the magma.

Zach ran to the other side but made sure not to stand near any of the rocks.

"Running won't help you, you little rat!" Aria kept pointing her gaze at the rocks and shattered them while Zach kept running and dodging.

"First, you came into my sacred space. Then you disrespected me. And now you called me a monster?!" Aria yelled as she controlled the lava on the floor. "You are so dead, you mortal."

"You are wrong. Everything you said is incorrect," Zach asserted as he jumped and dodged around. "I didn't come here on my wish. I never disrespected you. And as for calling you a monster..." Zach glanced around him and saw the destruction. "Yes, you are a monster."

"You even broke through my illusion. Who are you, mortal?"

Zach stopped moving and looked at Aria with a frowned face. He furrowed his brows and asked, "You showed me that illusion?"

"Anyone who dares to enter my sacred place gets lost in the illusion and eventually dies. But you..." Aria glared at Zach and uttered, "You somehow managed to break through that illusion. I could only see one hour of your memories during the time you were trapped in my illusion."

'She managed to read one hour of my memories within less than a minute?!' Zach exclaimed inwardly.

"You must have some kind of protection spell cast on you. Otherwise, it's impossible to..." Aria stopped and looked at Zach with a curious look on her face. "Who was that man in your illusion?"

"..." Zach didn't answer.

"A brother? Maybe a friend? Perhaps, a son. But..." Aria inspected Zach from head to toe and shook her head. "You don't look old enough to have a son that old, although I wouldn't be surprised if humankind has degraded that low."

After a brief pause, Aria muttered, "Father." She saw Zach reacting to the word father and said with a smirk on her face: "I see. He was your father. If you are reacting like this, then he should most probably be dead. That's how you mortals are. You don't care about what you have, but when you lose them, you realize their value."

She laughed out loud and continued, "You should be thankful to me. I showed you the illusion you wanted. I reunited you with your father, whom you are never going to see again. Now be a good—"

Aria was interrupted by a strong punch on her face. Zach punched her so hard that she bounced on the ground a couple of times and collided with the long rock that shattered on impact. However, her body was unscathed.

"Unbelievable! How could a mere mortal inflict pain on me?" She slowly stood up with a bewildered look on her face and glared at Zach with murderous intent. "I take back what I said."

Her eyes shined red crimson as the lava around Zach began aggravating. "I will reunite you with your father. But first, I will give you the most painful death possible."

\*\*\*\*

Total players in the game 46205.

0 new players logged in.

10 players died.

Chapter 13

Zach did not know when to stop.

Even though he had only one HP left, he started a battle with Aria. He knew that he would be K.O'ed in one hit, but he still couldn't hold himself back.

Earlier, Aria's face was twitching in anger and rage, but now, it was Zach.

"What's with that face?" Aria sneered. "How dare you glare at me like that." She dashed at Zach and tried to punch him, but Zach easily dodged her.



So far, Aria was using things to attack Zach, but now she was physically trying to hurt Zach. However, even after five minutes, she couldn't land a hit on Zach.

"Stop jumping like a monkey, and let me hit you!" Aria yelled and tried to punch Zach once again, but instead, she ended up punching the stone behind him, which shattered on impact. If it had hit Zach, he would be long dead.

"You did the very thing I hate the most in the world, so don't expect me to forgive you," Zach asserted and finally grabbed his sword.

"Hah?! Why would I want forgiveness of a mere mortal like you, who is going to die soon?" Aria scoffed with a puzzled look on her face. "Ara~ Ara~ What are you angry about? I simply showed you an illusion where you reunite with your father. And instead of thanking me, you punched me on my cute face?! What a barbaric mortal."

Zach landed on the center of the circle of the weird symbols and strategized his plan to attack Aria. He had to keep his 1 HP in his mind and not do anything ruthless or stupid. However, it was already too late.

Hot lava erupted from the circle and covered Zach. He managed to escape with a few burns on his body. He landed and fell on the ground with his back first.

Before Zach could stand up again or look at his HP, Aria jumped on top of him and conjured a red sword in her hand. She pointed it at Zach's neck and uttered, "I got you."

"..." Zach looked at the sword then looked at the burns on his body. 'Why am I not dead? My HP was only one, and surely, the injuries I have gotten should have dealt me the HP DMG of more than 100.'

Zach looked at his HP, only to find there was no HP bar. Not only the HP bar but there was also no HUD.

Even though Aria was pointing her sharp-edged red sword at Zach, Zach wasn't freaking out anymore. However, there was something he needed to confirm first before jumping to the conclusion.

"Tell me, mortal, how do you want me to kill you?" Aria asked with a vicious smile and fierce glare in her eyes.

'She is a true monster...'  
Zach uttered inwardly. He took a deep breath and looked into Aria's eyes with a curious look on his face. "Is this dimension also a part of the game?"

Aria knitted her brows in surprise and thought, 'Even though I am going to kill him soon, he is worried about the pathetic game created by the gods?'

She let out a deep sigh and answered, "This place is not part of the game, but it is connected to the game. So if you think you won't die in the real-life if I kill you here, then you are mistaken."

A smirk appeared on Zach's face as he heard Aria's answer. He had no need to worry about his one HP anymore.

"What are you smirking for?" Aria asked with a confused yet curious look on her face. "I am going to kill you in a most—"

Before Aria could finish what she was saying, Zach grabbed Aria's leg and slammed her to her throne a few meters away from him. The sword Aria was carrying fell to the ground and disappeared.

Aria regained her posture and glared at Zach as she gritted her teeth in anger. She was furious to the point that she didn't care about anything else.

"Not once, but twice...! You are dead meat, mortal."

"Oi! Oi! What are you angry about?" Zach scoffed with a puzzled look on his face and uttered, "I simply placed you back on your throne. And instead of thanking me, you want to kill me?" Zach imitated Aria by saying the same thing Aria said a while ago.

Aria stomped her leg on the throne and jumped in the air. She spread her wings and gazed down at Zach with a lifeless glare in her eyes.

Her wings were just like her attire. They were black with red and purple on edge and a bit of pink shade on them. However, instead of soft feathers, they looked hard as though they were crystals. They were sharp, shiny, and pointy. When she flapped her wings, Zach could hear the noise that could only be described as the sound of sharp blades hitting each other.

"Please tell me you are not going to do what I think you are going to do," Zach uttered and backed off some steps to prepare himself for the upcoming attack from Aria.

\*\*\*\*

Total players in the game 46205.

2 new players logged in.

2 players died.

## Chapter 14

Aria flapped her wings and shot feathers at Zach. Zach easily dodged them, but when he glanced back to look at the feather that hit the stone behind him, he was glad that he avoided them. Aria's feathers were so sharp that they were shattering objects on impact.

"You have nowhere to run, mortal!" Aria yelled. "Just give up and let me kill you."

"Not so fast, you crazy monster." Zach grabbed his sword and deflected Aria's feathers.

"Heh!" Aria scoffed and said, "If you are that confident that you can easily block and deflect my feathers, then here is my gift." Aria flew higher and flapped her wings repeatedly. Hundreds of feathers came out from her wings.

Zach swiftly dodged them, but Aria kept flapping her wings and launching feathers. Zach knew he had to do something, or sooner or later, the feathers would hit him. Aria was predicting Zach's movement and throwing feathers in advance ever before Zach could move on the spot.

Of course, Zach had already assumed Aria might do that, so he came up with his own plan, that was.... No plan at all. If he ran without any spot in his mind and trusted his instincts, he would be safe, or that's what he thought. However, Aria never stopped throwing feathers at Zach.

It was a matter of time before Zach got tired, and his speed slowed down. He was already exhausted from his fights from before in the dungeon, and running out like that was making him more fatigued.

Zach ran to the stone and used it to jump on the other stone. He jumped from one rock to another while dodging Aria's attack. He landed on Aria's throne and stopped to catch his breath.

"Get off my throne, you mongrel!" she yelled and threw dozens of feathers at him.

Zach took a deep breath and began to run vertically on the throne's colossal slat. He climbed on top of the slat and jumped in the air to punch Aria. But Aria, however, flew higher and launched a few more feathers at him.

"What an idiot!" Aria sneered. "You won't be able to dodge in the air. Your death is—! Huh? Where did he go?" Aria glanced around, but Zach was nowhere to be seen.

"Look up, you bitch!"

Aria looked up and got punched by Zach in the face. She lost her balance, and both Zach and Aria fell to the ground. However, Zach made sure to stay on top of Aria, so Aria took all the damage.

Zach raised his fist again, and he was about to punch her again but stopped when he noticed something sharp touching his neck.

They were Aria's wings, and she was pointing them at Zach. She could pierce them all into Zach's neck whenever she wanted.

"Before I kill you, answer me one thing. How did you get on top of me?"

Zach stared into Aria's eyes and replied, "I stepped on your wings and used them as a pedestal." he uttered nonchalantly.

"Even then, you shouldn't be able to do that. You even managed to knock me down three times. You are not an ordinary mortal, are you?"

Zach opened his fist and raised his hands in the air to surrender, or so it looked like, but Zach plucked one feather from Aria's wings and used it as a dagger.

Aria pushed Zach aside and pinned him down by getting on top of him. Then, she pointed both her wings at Zach and said, "You know, I might have forgiven you if you had just surrendered."

"But I wouldn't have," Zach asserted in a solemn voice. "I won't forgive you, ever."

Zach and Aria stared into each other's eyes and pointed their weapons at each other's necks. Aria was using her wings as a weapon, and Zach was using the feather as a dagger. Even though Zach was at a disadvantage here, the expression on his face didn't change.

Aria moved her wing and inserted the tip into Zach's neck. Zach started bleeding, but he didn't show any sign of pain. Zach also did the same with the feather and stabbed the tip in Aria's neck.

"Just so you know, I am not present here," Aria uttered. "This is just a tiny piece of my consciousness. So even if you had killed me somehow, I wouldn't have died, and this piece of consciousness would have come back to me."

"But as for you, if I kill you here, then you will die in the real world," she added and waited to see Zach's reaction, but much to her surprise, Zach was still making a solemn look on his face.

"Are you not afraid to die, mortal?" she asked with a hint of curiosity in her voice.

\*\*\*\*

Total players in the game 46204.

0 new players logged in.

1 player died.

## Chapter 15

"Are you not afraid to die?" she asked with a hint of curiosity in her voice.

"Everyone is afraid to die, but they die either way. Young or old, death is inevitable. Even if you are a god or an immortal, you can die when someone kills you. Even if you are rich or poor, you will die, and nothing else will matter. If everyone keeps worrying about dying, then they will stop living life. Everyone would be an emotionless puppet, and they would simply wait for that death. But that doesn't mean they shouldn't live a life; happy or sad, life is life, and to live is the true essence of existence."

"Famous last words," Aria scoffed and pierced the tip a little deeper into Zach's neck.

After staring at Zach for a while, Aria sighed and retracted her wings. "I hate you."

Zach raised his brows with a confused look on his face. Until a second ago, Aria wanted to kill Zach, but now, she forgave him.

"Why didn't you kill me?" Zach asked with a puzzled and curious look on his face.

"I liked what you said about life and death. It reminded me that I am alive," Aria answered with a distant smile and solemn look on her face.

"..."

"Who told you that?" Aria asked with a curious yet calm look on her face. "Your father?"

Zach instantly frowned his face upon hearing that.

"Don't you dare make that face in front of me. And I was simply guessing," Aria asserted with a sigh and shook her head in disbelief. "Why are you mortals so sentimental; always corny for their own selfishness?"

"Someone close to me once said that to me when I was a kid. At first, I couldn't understand what they meant. It had so many words, yet it explained nothing. But I guess only the people who have experienced such a thing and suffered from it can understand. As for me..." Zach shrugged with a short scoff and said, "I don't know. My entire life has been strange, so I am used to everything."

Aria stood up and looked at the sky with an emotionless expression on her face. Then, she clapped once, and a red moon appeared in the sky. After that, she jumped and sat on her throne in the same pose and position she was sitting when Zach saw her for the first time.

"Tell me, mortal. What makes you different from the other mortals?" She asked as her eyes shined crimson. Her body under the red moon made her beauty more imposing.

'Do I need to answer that? I just want to go back to the entry of the dungeon.' Zach thought to himself and stood up. He patted his clothes even though there was no dirt, and looked into Aria's eyes.

After a brief moment, Zach had no other choice but to answer: "I am not a mortal. I have the blood of gods, demons, and many celestial beings, but my body is human."

Aria raised her brows and uttered, "If any being has the blood of more than three supreme entities, they die. The tremendous powers in their body start to malfunction and end up killing them. And those who survive that end up like me... all alone for eternity. No place to go, nowhere to belong. No life, alive, but worse than death..." she asserted the last sentence in a low voice so Zach couldn't hear that.

"What was that? Why did your voice suddenly get lower?" Zach remarked.

"If you truly are what you claim you are, then you are a threat to the gods too. Why haven't they done anything to you?"

"I only have blood, which I inherited from my father. My body is still a human. It is my weakness. It doesn't allow me to do things. It is not allowing me to use my powers or cultivate on that matter."

"Hmm~" Aria hummed in wonder and raised her brows after hearing Zach's reply. "It has been eons since I heard the word 'cultivate' from a mortal. So you are a cultivator?"

"Not exactly. But I can cultivate MP in the game, which is not limited, so I guess that does make me the strongest player of the game, as of now."

Aria squinted her eyes and changed her pose. She leaned on the slat and folded her arms below her bosom. "Do you think you can be the strongest just because you have unlimited magic power?"

"I never said that. But..." Zach nodded and uttered, "I can manage to become one."

"Oh?"

"I managed to defeat you without using magic," he added in a low voice.

"Hah?! When did you defeat me?"

"I knocked you out three times, and you couldn't even touch me, even once," Zach replied with a smirk.

Aria frowned her face and said, "Do not make me regret my choice of not killing you. If I want to kill you, I can kill you just by thinking about it. But even I have heart. When I fight with someone, I fight with morals. I was simply matching my power with yours. I was holding back."

'You looked pretty serious to me, though.' Zach raised his hands in the air and asked, "So, why did you forgive me?"

"I told you already. Your words made me—"



Zach interrupted Aria and remarked, "That's bullshit. You don't look like a type of monst—Ahem! You don't look like a type of person who can be swayed by mundane words."

"How rude." Aria averted her gaze and uttered, "I thought maybe I could use you to defeat the petty gods."

"I am sorry, but I am expensive. So you can't just 'use' me unless you give me something in return."

Aria glanced at Zach from the corner of her eyes and asked, "Don't you want to get out of this game?"

"No one knows how to get out of this game. We are just told to survive, and that's it."

"What if I said I can take you out of this game?" Aria asked with an inexplicable expression on her face. Her white hair swayed with the wind and her crimson eyes shined as her pale skin glowed under the red moon; with a soft glare in her eyes and a curious smile on her face.

\*\*\*\*

Total players in the game 46210.

8 new players logged in.

2 players died.

Chapter 16

"What would you do if I said I could take you out of this game?"

Zach's interest piqued. He pondered for a while and asked, "How can you do that?"

"This game is created by the gods. It's their world, their rules. So we simply have to end the gods."

"You make it sound like it's an easy thing to do. We are talking about the gods here. You can't just defeat them."

"But I can. They were threatened by my and my sister's existence. So they exiled us from the higher realms and threw us into the world of mortals," Aria uttered with a hint of anger and frustration in her voice.

She looked into Zach's eyes and said, "I could use your help to end the era of gods."

"..." Zach didn't know what to do. He couldn't just trust a random girl he had just met, especially when she was after his life a few minutes ago.

"As I said previously, I was able to read one hour of your memories, and in that memory, I saw how you were on the brink of death," Aria uttered and continued. "Did you not find it strange how the first five floors were enough to level up by four and the reward to clear the first five-floor was 2500 EXP. Then it gave another quest to reach level 5. But reaching level five was hard. The sixth floor only had one monster, and it gave 50 EXP. The rest of the floors also had a few monsters, and the increase in EXP was gradual. However, it also gave the players the incentive to progress further; only to die a cruel death by the monsters."

Of course, Zach had already realized that, but he also knew that he was no match against the gods, not yet. He has yet to grow strong and become limitless.

Annoyed and frustrated, Aria jumped from her throne and walked to Zach. She reached her hand to Zach and uttered, "Join me, mortal. And I shall give you my wisdom. With my help, you can reach the apex, and with your help, I can get my revenge. Together, we both shall conquer everything we want."

Aria walked one step further, but Zach backed off some steps and kept his guard up.

"Don't worry. I have no intention of killing you. Why would I kill you when I can benefit from you?"

"I haven't agreed on anything yet. And keep your distance from me. I am not good with girls," Zach remarked.

"I will give you some time to think about it. But first, you need to grow strong. Your spiritual powers are close to none. However, let me warn you about the cost of powers," Aria asserted. "Since you said your body is mortal, you will first need to evolve your body. Otherwise, your mortal body won't be able to handle the immense soul powers or any powers, and you will be either crippled for a lifetime or die in the real world."

"Get strong in the game to make your body strong in the real world. You already have the knowledge, but you still lack the experience. You have never been on a battlefield, and you don't know how it feels to lose someone important to you in front of your eyes. Even when you are strong, there will be times where all your powers will be useless," she added.

"Get used to pain, despair, and..." Aria sighed and threw something at Zach.

Zach caught it with his hand and saw it was a coin made of rock with the same weird symbols like the circle carved on it.

"What is this?" Zach asked with a puzzled and curious look on his face.

"It's a token. It might give you some benefit in the game. But you can also use it to come and access my sacred dimension, to cultivate or to rest," Aria replied sincerely.

"I have no intention of coming here again, though," Zach muttered in a low voice.

"What did you say?"

"I said this place scares me."

Aria snapped her fingers, and the scenery changed to the green land with trees, flowers, and the water wall. It was the scenery Zach saw when he was trapped in the illusion.

"Is this good?" Aria asked.

"I am not fond of illusions," Zach answered.

"If you put it like that, then the game you are trapped in is also an illusion," Aria remarked. She then turned around and walked some steps before stopping. She tilted her head back and looked at Zach from the corner of her eyes. "You can summon me here whenever you want. Until then, I will go back to my slumber. See you later, Zach."

Aria then vanished into thin air. Zach glanced around and wondered, "So... how am I supposed to get out of here?"

Suddenly, a prompt appeared in front of Zach, and it said, [Congratulations! You have purchased land in the game! Please name it!]

"This shouldn't be part of the game, though." Zach noticed his HUD was back, and his HP was 1.

Zach pondered for a while and inserted the name 'Aria's Domain' as the name of the place.

He looked at the token and saw its use.

[Benefits- You can cultivate with 2x speed in Aria's domain.]

"I don't even know my regular speed," Zach murmured.

[You can cultivate 1MP in 10 Seconds.]

"Okay. Now that's creepy. Why is this game answering my questions?"

Zach looked at the token to see its benefits.

[Aria's blessing- 1)You can use it infinite times to switch your class any time you want. Active - As long as you want. Cooldown- 24 hours.]

"So I can change my classes any time, but I won't be able to change back in the next 24 hours," Zach muttered.

He was so lost that he hadn't realized that Aria called Zach by his name when she left.

"All this time, she was calling me mortal, but she called me by my name when she left.

Nevermind, he did realize it.

"What a weird girl. At first, she was trying to kill me, and now she is trying to help me. I can't understand girls," Zach uttered as he remembered his ex-girlfriend.

He then looked at his other hand that was holding Aria's feather.

[Name- Cursed Dagger.

Class grade- Mythical Rank.

Use-This dagger will inflict damage of 0.1% (per second) of the total HP of the enemy.]

After reading that, Zach placed his hand on the neck and sighed in relief.

"There is no wound." he looked at his body and muttered, "The burns are gone too."

"I should get out of here." Zach glanced around and uttered, "Open the portal."

Suddenly, a yellow portal appeared in front of Zach. He let out a weary sigh and walked into the portal to exit the dungeon.

\*\*\*\*

Total players in the game 46222.

25 new players logged in.

3 players died.

## Chapter 17

Zach finally got back to the entry of the dungeon where Shay and Kayden were waiting for him.

"Yo! What took you so long?" Kayden asked with a concerned look on his face.

'I can't tell them the truth. If I do, then I will have to explain everything, including my past and all,' Zach thought to himself.

Kayden wasn't aware of Zach's past because he met Zach after his father died.

"I was having a hard time," Zach replied. "What about you guys? How long did it take for you two to clear the first five floors?"

"It took me 48 minutes. And after seeing the next quests, I was interested in going further, but I didn't want to die, so I retreated," Kayden replied. Kayden still wasn't totally convinced that Gods' impact was real. However, he didn't want to risk dying to prove it.

"I cleared them just a few minutes ago," Shay replied in a disdainful tone.

"..." Zach was genuinely surprised by Shay's answer. 'I was hoping Shay would be the first one to clear since he is a gaming nerd.'

"My HP is also down to only 33," Shay added. "We should buy some HP potions from the shop on our way."

"Yeah, let's go."

All three of them headed to the town. However, they were awed by the scenery of the sunset.

"I have played all the VR games, but this one has the best graphics," Shay commented.

'It's created by gods. They created the real world, so what do you expect?' Zach uttered inwardly.

As they were walking, Zach realized something. He furrowed his brows and wondered, 'I have a bad feeling about the HP potions.'

They reached the town and went straight to the gear shop.

"Welcome~!" The NPC greeted them.

"Isn't this a different NPC than it was at noon?" Kayden wondered.

"How can I help you?" the NPC asked.

"We are here for HP potions," Shay ordered.

"Potions? I am sorry, but we don't sell potions here," the NPC replied.

"Okay." Shay nodded and asked, "So where can we buy them?"

The NPC stared at Shay for a while and said, "Dear player, you won't find potions anywhere in this world."

'I knew it!' Zach facepalmed himself. 'If this game truly follows the rules of real-world, then potions shouldn't exist.'

"What?!" Shay shouted. "Then how are we supposed to heal ourselves?!"

"You can either go to the church where there is an NPC healer available all the time, or you can find a player who is a healer to get yourself healed," the NPC replied without stuttering.

They then left the store and made their way to the tavern, where other players had gathered.

"Dammit! I hate this game!" Shay shouted in frustration.

"Come on. It's not that bad," Kayden uttered. "Right, Zach?"

'Don't involve me in this!' Zach sighed and said, "This game follows realistic logic, so I don't see a problem. As long as we can heal ourselves, I don't care."

Shay was furious to the point where he wanted to sue the game developer for virtual aggression with emotions and anxiousness. He was angry because his knowledge of VR games was losing its value. He was furious because things weren't going his way. He was mad because there were too many strict rules and limitations in this game.

"But 'healing' itself is an unrealistic logic. Magic, monsters, and gods don't exist in real life. So if this game truly wants to be realistic, then it should stop being a game," Shay commented with his voice full of annoyance.

'Oh, they do. Magic, monsters, and gods, they all exist. I am the proof of that,' Zach uttered to himself. He wanted to say that to Shay and Kayden, but they lived in a world where the people who believed in magic and such things were laughed at.



After reaching the tavern, they called out for a healer, but unfortunately, no healer was present.

Mage and Healer were secondary classes where the player needed to be level 10. Not many players had leveled up to 10 yet.

"Well, we will go to the church," Kayden suggested. "But let's eat something first. I am exhausted and starving."

They ordered some old-school fantasy food and began eating it. Kayden was eating normally with manners, but Shay was taking out his anger on the food. Zach, on the other hand, was worried about his 1 HP.

Unlike other VR games, there was no safe zone for the players. The players could easily attack anyone without warning. However, the game did have a colored name bar that showed the status of the player.

If the player's name was green, then they hadn't killed other players or NPC.

If the player's name was blue, then they had killed the NPC. The blue name bar had three variants. One was light blue, which meant the player had killed less than 10 NPC. The second was standard blue, which meant the player had killed less than 100 NPC. The third was dark blue, which meant the player had killed more than 100 NPC.

If the player's name was red, then they have killed other players. The red name bar also had three variants. One was brownish-red, which meant the player had killed less than 10 players. The second was crimson red, which meant the player had killed less than 100 players. The third was scarlet red, which meant the player had killed more than 100 players.

Zach was worried that accidental or on purpose, a single hit might kill him. He planned to go to the church once he had finished eating, whether Shay and Kayden came with him or not.

After a while, a girl wearing a black and white dress entered the tavern with a staff in her hand.

As of the first day of the Gods' impact, she was the one and only player with healer class in the game.

\*\*\*\*

Total players in the game 46469.

300 new players logged in.

53 players died.

## Chapter 18

A girl wearing a black and white dress entered the tavern with a staff in her hand. She had ivory-colored hair and green eyes. She looked to be in her late teens, but at the same time, she gave off a mature vibe.

She was the one and only player with healer class in the game.

"..."

Zach raised his brows and wondered, 'If she is a healer, then she has to be more than level 10. Which means she must have cleared more floors than me.'

Zach was a little surprised as he never thought he would meet people who could be more skilled than him. However, she could have cleared the floors with someone else's help. Who knows, maybe she was more than just a player?

The girl sat on the empty table in the corner and ordered her food. She ordered pineapple pie and strawberry milkshake.

"..." Zach shrugged his shoulders and thought, 'What's with that order? Is she a kid or what?' He scoffed.

Suddenly, Shay stood up and started walking towards the girl.

"Hey, Shay," Kayden called out to Shay and asked, "Where are you—"

"She is obviously a healer. So I am going to ask her to heal me." Shay answered and walked to the girl.

The girl was enjoying her food with a gentle smile on her face. She was dipping the slices of pineapple pie in the strawberry milkshake and eating it without any second thoughts.

Zach didn't want to judge the girl as he also had a weird habit of mixing up foods. He once ate chips after dipping them into lemon juice. However, seeing the girl eating like that reminded Zach of his little sister— Zoe.

Zach knew it wasn't her at first glance, as Zoe hated games more than he did. And even if there were a slight chance of that girl being Zoe, Zach would have recognized her instantly.

Gods' Impact didn't have many customization options, and all the players looked exactly the same as they looked in the real world.

Shay approached the girl and slammed his hand on her table with a loud bang. He looked at the girl with a frowned face and ordered, "I want you to heal me."

The girl was about to take a bite, but she stopped and looked at Shay from the corner of her eyes. "Can't you see I am busy eating here?"

"I don't care! If I ordered you to heal me, then you have to heal me," Shay asserted with a furious look on his face.

The girl squinted her eyes and waved her hand at Shay. "Get out of my sight. I don't want to heal you."

"What did you say?!" Shay shouted and grabbed the girl's hand.

So far in his life, Shay had gotten everything he wanted. He was born rich. Both his mother and father were busy with their work, so the servants took care of him. He had access to his parent's money, and he could use them however he wanted. Even a few millions were like cents to him and his parents. If he wished for something to happen, it would happen. No one has ever dared to go against his wish, but that wasn't the case now.

He was no longer in the real world, where he could use his parents' names to get away with everything. Nor his status or value mattered. However, he was still rich, so he thought he could get anything he wanted in Gods' Impact as well.

The girl grabbed the glass filled with strawberry milkshake and spilled it all over Shay's face. Then, she pulled her hand from Shay's grasp and uttered, "If you don't know how to request something from someone, then you better stop speaking."

"Zach! Zach!" Kayden whispered violently. "What should we do now? It would be bad if Shay ended up doing something to her."

Zach glanced at the girl and let out a short sigh. Then, he turned to Kayden and replied, "I think it's for the best. Shay needs to learn that not everything belongs to him. He can't be a spoiled brat forever."

The same thing had happened last month. When Zach, Kayden, and Shay were eating food in the restaurant, Shay touched a waitress' butt. The waitress got agitated and slapped Shay on the spot. Unfortunately for her, the restaurant was owned by Shay's family.

She got fired, and her husband also lost his job when his boss got to know about the incident. More than half of the city was under Shay's family control. If they wished for someone to disappear overnight, they would never be seen again.

Everyone feared Shay's family. They were like a mafia of the city, and their influence was spread all across the country. As for how Zach became friends with someone like him, that is the story for another time.

"Do you know who I am?! I am Shay—"

Before Shay could finish his introduction, the girl stood up and walked out of the tavern.

"I have to admit, she has got guts," Kayden remarked as he watched the girl leave.

"Or maybe she is just a Karen," Kayden added with a scoff.

'How...?' Zach thought to himself.

Zach and Kayden walked to Shay and asked him to go to church to get healed. Zach also had to get healed, so the three of them made their way to the church after paying their bill.

On their way, Zach remembered he had forgotten to take his change from the tavern. He wanted to get Shay out from there as soon as possible, and he was also in a hurry to get himself healed.

"Come on. It's just ten bucks. Let it slide," Kayden uttered.

"No, no. I am going back." Zach turned around and said, "You two, go ahead. I will meet you in the church."

However, everything was a lie. Zach wasn't the type of person who would forget anything related to money. He wanted to go back to the tavern to confirm something.

'I don't know what is bothering me, but I want to ask the girl some questions. How did she level up so fast? Even if she played in a mixed dungeon, reaching level 10 is...' Zach sighed and muttered, "It's not impossible since everyone trapped here are gamers who are used to playing games. They are familiar with everything, so it shouldn't be hard. While this is my first time, and I think I am doing pretty well for a newbie.'

"But if there is a better way to level up fast, then I would prefer that."

When Zach reached the store, he saw the girl sitting under the gazebo of the garden, eating cone crepe with a satisfied smile on her face.

\*\*\*\*

Total players in the game 46469.

1 new player logged in.

1 player died.

## Chapter 19

Zach saw the girl sitting under the gazebo of the garden, eating cone crepe with a satisfied smile on her face.

'I found her earlier than I thought,' Zach thought to himself. He entered the garden but turned around when he got cold feet.

'Come on, Zach. Why are you afraid of a girl?' Zach was bad with girls. He couldn't have a proper chat with them. The reason was he was honest and blunt. He had said many things one should never say to a girl, which got him into trouble many times.

Based on how the girl reacted in the restaurant, Zach knew it wouldn't end well.

"If you are here to hurt me, then you better find another prey," the girl commented.

"...!" Surprised, Zach thought, 'I didn't make any noise, nor should the girl be able to see me with her back facing my side.'

Zach sighed and walked to the gazebo. "How did you know there was someone around?"

The girl took a bite from her cone crepe and answered, "I am used to this."

"..." Zach raised his brows and uttered inwardly, 'Yup. This is not going to end well.'

"So..." The girl finally looked at Zach and asked, "Why are you here?"

"You are a healer, right?" Zach questioned. "How did you level up so fast?"

"What if I don't want to answer?"

Zach shrugged his shoulders and uttered, "Fine by me."

The girl was shocked after hearing that. She was expecting Zach to beg more, but Zach was no simp. He was used to dealing with people like her.

"What's wrong?" Zach asked with a smirk on his face.

"Nothing. If you are done, then get out of my sight. I can't see the stars."

Zach turned around and looked up at the sky to see the stars. "What's fun about watching stars?" he asked.

"I watch stars to calm myself. They help me feel better. And with our current condition when we are trapped in this game, they are the only—" She stopped and muttered, "Why am I telling him all this?"

"So you believe that we are trapped here for real?" Zach asked.

"Why shouldn't I? I was playing with my two maids— made friends, and the monsters killed them. I hoped they would respawn, but they didn't. Now that I think about it, they are dead..." she uttered with a sad look on her face.

'I won't ask her what she meant by 'made friends.' Zach took a deep breath and asserted, "I know this is not the right time, but can you heal me? I only have 50 HP right now."

Zach lied about having 50 HP since he didn't want the girl to backstab him for no reason. Maybe he would have lost 1 HP by tripping or falling over?

"Why don't you just go to church?"

'Because if I do, I wouldn't be able to get answers from you.' Zach thought of a reason for a while and said, "Because I wanted to get healed by a beautiful girl like you."

The girl choked on her crepe and glared at Zach with a mixed expression on her face.

'That was so soo cringe!' Zach held the urge to facepalm himself. He looked at the girl to see her reaction, but much to his surprise, the girl didn't show any reaction on her face at all.

'Now I feel so stupid,' Zach sighed.

"You should save the chivalry for some other girl. You won't get anything by hitting on me," the girl replied nonchalantly.

'No one was hitting on you! And you are not my type in the first place!' Zach nodded and replied, "So, can you heal me or not?"

The girl sighed and answered, "Let me finish my crepe first." She ate her crepe slowly, even though Zach was waiting for her to finish.

After five minutes, the girl turned to Zach and asserted, "I charge one coin for 1 HP."

"What?!" Zach exclaimed. "You charge for healing?"



"The NPC at the church also charges, and her charge is ten coins for one HP. So I think I am charging less," the girl stated and murmured, "Take it as a gratitude for keeping me company."

"Wow!" Zach let out a weary sigh and said, "I never thought I would have to pay for refilling my HP."

"You pay for the hospital bill in the real world, don't you? It's the same here," the girl chuckled.

"The doctors have to do stuff in the real world. We pay for their work. But I don't think healers need to do anything here."

"That's not true. Healers use their MP to regenerate players' HP. 1 MP refills 10 HP."

"Fine~" Zach groaned. "Heal me already."

"How much HP do you need me to refill?" the girl asked curiously.

"Full, of course."

The girl raised her staff and began to heal Zach.

'Wait, if 1 MP heals 10 HP. Then she would need 150 MP to heal my 1500 HP.'

The default MP for players after they reach level 5 was 100, but it could be increased after using accessible points. If she didn't have 150 MP, then her HP would be used instead.

'Should I tell her? I don't want her to go crazy afterward.' Zach cleared his throat and said, "My full HP is 1500, by the way."

"Too late," the girl replied with a furious look on her face. "I thought you were just another player, but I guess I underestimated you."

"Can I see your stats?" Zach asked hesitantly with a curious look on his face.

"Sure. I don't mind." The girl shrugged her shoulders and showed Zach her stats.

'Mission accomplished!'

Name- Aurora Edens.

Level- 13.

HP- 5500/5500

ATK- 290.

Physical Strength- 150.

Physical DEF- 320.

AGILITY- 180.

MP- 95/245

EXP- 17500/40000 (to level up.)

Physique- Mortal- 800/1000 (to evolve.)

Class- Warrior

Secondary class- Healer

Guild- Not joined.

Title- 1) Holy Maiden.

Skill- 1) Lyda Strike. 2) Super Healing

Zach could only utter one thing after seeing her stats: "You have got to be kidding me."

\*\*\*\*

Total players in the game 46469.

0 new players logged in.

0 players died.

Chapter 20

"You have got to be kidding me." Zach wasn't surprised by Aurora's stats; he was shocked by her name.

"Edens... that means you are a royal?" Zach asked with a surprised look on his face.

Aurora quietly nodded and closed her menu.

The real world was divided into countries and kingdoms. Even in the future, half of the world was ruled by kings, but in a modern way. Edens was one of the lineages of the kings, and it was the strongest kingdom in the world with an enormous army and strongest defense system.

"So that means you are a princess..." Zach muttered.

"No need to address me formally. I would like it if you call me Aurora," Aurora stated.

"And here I was thinking you were some kind of unfriendly," Zach commented without holding back.

"Wha—!" Aurora raised her brows and asked, "What part of me gave you that expression?"

"Uhh..." After thinking for a while, Zach replied, "Everything?"

"Be more specific." Aurora sighed. "I believe I am polite and kind enough than any other royals you would meet."

"Well, to be honest..." Zach said as though he wasn't honest before. "Your personality suddenly changed when you found out my HP was 1500. But I guess I was wrong."

"I didn't change anything. You asked me nicely, so I was nice to you. If you had replied to me honestly, I would have been nice to you from the start, you know?"

"That doesn't change anything." Zach opened his inventory to send coins to Aurora. "How much? Can you give me a discount?"

"1500 coins for healing 1500 HP," Aurora replied nonchalantly.

"You mean, 1499 coins."

Zach was about to send her money, but Aurora stopped him.

"How about we make a deal?" she asked.

"What deal?"

"Show me your stats," Aurora demanded.

"Not happening."

"Why? I showed you mine, right? Now it's your turn," she insisted.

Zach scoffed and said, "Why are you making it sound like we are exchanging nudes?"

Aurora's face flushed after hearing that. "Don't use such vulgar words in front of me!" she yelled. "Now show me your stats."

"I cannot do that. Even if you say 'please', I can't show you my stats," Zach stated.

"Fine." Aurora sighed and asked, "You are strong, right?"

"Define strong," Zach scoffed. "Your stats are higher than mine, though."

"So, how about you be my knight and protect me? And in return, I will give you money and heal you, for free."

"That doesn't sound like a good deal, princess. And isn't the 'be my knight' thingy like a proposal?" Zach glanced at Aurora and asked with a smirk on his face: "Are you proposing to me, princess?"

"I am not!" she shouted. "I have no one to protect me. If I die, then my kingdom will be doomed."

"But your stats are higher than mine. That must mean you are a good player," Zach asserted and casually sat beside Aurora.

"Ever since I was a kid, I have been trained in everything. Sword fighting, shooting and archery, melee and martial arts, so I am familiar with the game style." Aurora looked up at the sky and continued, "I have never talked with the opposite sex before... I mean, like how we are talking right now. One to one, alone. My father is rigorous, and he is afraid that I might fall in love with someone, so my parents never allowed me to talk to a boy."

"How old are you?" Zach asked curiously.

"17. I will turn 18 after three months, and that's when I will get married to a random man my father chose." Aurora shrugged her shoulders and uttered, "It can be a rich playboy. A 50-year-old king. A successful businessman. Or maybe one of my cousins."

Zach furrowed his brows and muttered, "If I remember correctly, you are the only heir, right?"

"Yes." Aurora nodded. "That's why my entire kingdom's responsibility is up to me. I have to sacrifice my happiness for the sake of the kingdom, for the sake of continuing my lineage."

Zach glanced at Aurora from the corner of his eyes and asked, "Why are you telling me this? I am not the type of person who will get his heart stolen by a beautiful damsel in distress."

Aurora scoffed and started laughing after hearing that. Zach was confused at first. He thought she had gone crazy, but then he remembered all the girls he had met in his life were crazy.

"I wasn't trying to do that. I was just... I rarely get a chance to open up like this." Aurora turned to Zach and said with a wry smile on her face: "One part of me wants to be trapped in this game forever, so I won't have to be a princess again. But another part of me wants to get out of here, so I can fulfill the duty I was born for."

Zach stood up and looked at the stars. He reached his hands to them and said, "What does it matter? I don't know you or your struggles. Why should I care? Why should anyone care about anyone?"

Aurora looked at the ground with a sad look on her face.

"That includes you too," Zach added.

"Huh?" Aurora looked at Zach with a puzzled look on her face. "What do you—"

"Figure it out yourself. You will have enough time to think about it. We will be stuck in this world for a long time, after all."

Aurora puckered her lips and muttered, "You have to be my knight." She took a deep breath and said, "You wanted to know how I leveled up so fast, right?"

Zach nodded in response.

"I played mixed dungeon with my two maids, but they died protecting me."

'I figured. Since she is a princess, she should be trained well.' Zach thought to himself.

"The players clear the dungeon to gain EXP and level up. While they clear the tower to gain rewards and treasure chests," Aurora asserted. "How about we two team up? I can heal you anytime."

"I am already in a team with my friends," Zach replied.

"That doesn't mean you can't team up with me. And no offense, but we both are skilled, so we are perfect for each other. I don't know about your friends, but if we both play together, we can be invincible."

'My top priority is to get out of this world.' Zach pondered for a while and answered, "I need time to think about it."

Zach added Aurora as a friend and said he would contact her tomorrow.

\*\*\*\*

Total players in the game 46472.

5 new players logged in.

2 players died.