

GODS' IMPACT 401

Chapter 401 Berserker

A while later, Shay and Natasha entered the next floor. Their HP decreased, and they got tired from one floor after another, but Shay wanted to reach the 75th floor to bid the last farewell to his first love.

He had MP potions, so he was only worried about his HP. And fortunately, Natasha had changed her primary class from swordsman to healer.

[Congratulations! You have cleared the 74th floor! Please step through the portal to enter the 75th floor or retreat!]

"Finally... I am here..."

Without wasting any time, Shay and Natasha entered the 75th floor, but they never expected to run into another player.

The player was wearing black armor and everything black. His nametag was also black, written as 'Overload', and he was facing his back to the portal, looking at the monsters he had just killed.

"Oh. A player has already cleared this floor," Shay said.

"Now it will take ten minutes to reset," Natasha sighed.

"Guess we will wait."

"No, you will not wait... or rest!" The Overlord turned around. He conjured his sword in his hand and uttered, "But you will rest in pieces!"

Shay stepped back and covered Natasha with one hand while moving his other hand at the Overload.

"Hey man..." Shay chuckled nervously. "This is not funny."

"Oh, I know. This isn't supposed to be funny anyway," the Overlord replied.

Shay took out his weapon while stepping back while the Overlord walked towards them.

"What are you trying to do?" Shay asked anxiously.

"To kill you, of course."

'Calm down, Shay. There is no need to be afraid. Just because he has some fancy intimidating armor doesn't necessarily mean that he is strong. I am level 60, and Natasha is level 58. We both can easily defeat even a level 70 player,' Shay uttered inwardly and reassured himself.

However, none of that mattered when the Overlord reached close enough to them to see his level.

[Level- 99999999999999999999.]

".....how... what are you?"

"Hmm~ What am I? To be honest, I myself have no idea what I am anymore. But if I have to say it, you can call me a Berserker or Overlord or God of death and destruction or God slayer or child of atrocity or a sign of impurity or Forbidden existence or a killer, just a psycho who is out to kill the potential enemies," the Overlord chuckled wryly.

"Listen, if this is some kind of prank or you are just some wannabe player killers, then we won't hold back!"

"Oh, sure. I can't wait to see how strong you are!"

Meanwhile, Zach was scolding Urluk for trying to kill Zendeya. And after a few minutes, when he tried to contact Shay, his name wasn't visible on his friend list.

Panicked, he ran out of the room and rang the bells loudly on the flying castle. He stopped caring for the guild members to find out about Elliott's death.

That bell was to summon a meeting between the guild members, so when Zach rang that bell, all the guild members came running, leaving all their work behind.

There were only a few people in the guild who were allowed to ring the bell, but after Victoria left the guild, it was only Elliott.

All the guild members thought Elliott had rung the bell. They didn't want to get kicked out of the guild for being late, as the guild was their house. If they got kicked out, they would have no place for shelter and food.

Moreover, the players were forced to cash out all their money to the guild, so even if the players had become strong and gained a fortune by completing quests and stuff, they would still have nothing left in their pockets. They were deeply dependent on the guild.

Once the guild members had gathered, Zach searched through all of them, hoping he would find Shay among them. He was still thinking that Shay had unfriended him.

Of course, not all the guild members were present there, as some of them left for missions, some for completing quests and tasks, and the rest for guild purposes.

However, the current guild member recognized Zach in the first place. Everyone knew who he was at first glance as he was a favorite topic of the guild.

Some of them were his followers, some were the ones who had been with him in the dungeon expedition, some had seen his feat during the demon invasion, and the rest had seen him fighting against Elliott's warriors and nearly killing Elliott.

"Is Shay friends with any of you here? Like, is he on your friend list?" Zach asked.

"No."

"Even if we sent him a friend request, it's up to him to accept it."

"Yeah, why would he add us as his friends?"

"So useless..." Zach sighed and asked, "Do any of you have any idea where Shay is?"

"We don't know."

"Why do you think he would tell us if he is going somewhere?"

"Why are you asking us?"

"And why did you ring the bell like that?"

"Why are you even here?!"

"Cerberus!" Zach shouted and shit everyone up.

Cerberus came out of Zach's shadow in his mighty form, and all of them dropped to their knees. No, it wasn't due to respect, it was due to sheer fear. Their legs had begun to tremble, and they could no longer stand.

That was Zach's intimidation.

[Give your word, My liege. And I will crush and burn every one of them!] Cerberus yelled in anger.

"We are not doing that." Zach jumped on top of Cerberus and said, "Take me to Kayden and Misha's house."

Urluk returned to Zach's shadow, and Cerberus flew away with Zach.

A while later, they landed in front of their house, and Zach immediately dashed in, breaking the doors by force.

"Kayden! Misha!" he yelled.

Misha was out on the farm while Kayden was sleeping in his room, but Zach's yell woke him up.

"Kayden! Misha!"

Kayden got out of bed and left the room to see Zach standing in the living room. At the same time, Misha also heard Zach's yell and came running from the farm.

"What's going on?" Kayden asked with a puzzled look on his face.

Chapter 402 Locating Shay

"What's the wrong man? Why are you so panicked? Is everything okay?" Kayden asked calmly.

"Shay! Is he on your friend list?"

"Obviously... we added each other together, remember?"

"Check it!"

"Okay. Stop shouting, bro."

Kayden opened his friends and scrolled down, but a few seconds later, his face turned pale. He looked at Zach with the exact panicked face Zach was making earlier.

"He is not..."

Zach turned to Misha and asked, "What about you, Misha?"

"I have never added him as a friend." Misha shook her head as her hair moved left and right. "We were never even together. When he joined the guild, I had left, remember?"

"Yeah, but..."

"What's going on, though? Why are you both panicking? Did something happen to him?"

"He is not on our friend list."

"Maybe he just unfriended you both?" Misha shrugged. "It doesn't notify you when someone does that."

"Shay would never do that," Kayden said.

"Well, if you are that worried about him, why don't you just go to the flying guild and meet him there? But if I remember correctly, they already ascended."

"He is not there!"

"Oh. Then..." Misha pondered for a while and muttered, "Then... wait..."

She gulped down anxiously and asked, "You... are not saying that he....?"

"That's what we are worried about!"

"Zach! Zach!" Kayden tapped on Zach's shoulder and said, "Elliott! That guild leader. Why don't you ask him? He should know it!"

"That's not possible," Zach shook his head while sighing.

"But at least try it!"

"I killed that motherfucking Elliott!"

"What the—"

"Now is seriously not the time to talk about it." Zach opened his menu and messaged Victoria to ask her if she had Shay as a friend or anyone who was close to Shay.

"Hey..." Kayden slowly walked to the couch and sat on it with a petrified look on his face. He grabbed his head in his hand and muttered, "Zach..."

"..."

"If his name is not on the list anymore... doesn't that mean it's already too late?" Kayden asked in a low voice.

"...."

Watching Zach and Kayden panic, Misha wanted to reassure them, but she herself wasn't sure of anything.

DING!

Zach received a message from Victoria. He immediately opened it and read, "No, but I know someone who might have Shay as a friend. She is my friend called Natasha. Let me ask her."

'Where have I heard that name before?' Zach asked herself.

DING!

[Zach... something is wrong!] Victoria messaged.

[What happened?]

[Natasha is not on my friend list. Do you think she unfriended me?]

[No. We will talk about this later. I have something important to do.]

Zach turned to Misha and asked, "Do you know the girl Shay loved? She died in the tragedy on the 75th floor."

Misha shook her head.

"I think her name was something like Diana... or Daina."

"I do remember a girl with that name in the guild." Misha thought for a while and said, "But she was a pretty simple and plain-looking girl. I don't think someone like Shay would fall in love with her."

"Now is not the time to talk about all this...." Kayden muttered. "He is not stupid to commit something like suicide."

"Apparently, Victoria's friend named Natasha also has the same case," Zach informed. "Could it be that they both... wait..."

Zach recalled how Shay wanted to know more about the 75th floor.

"Don't tell me that... he went to that dungeon?!"

"Even so, he was strong. He had skills and enough brains. And that tragedy was because of a god's plan, right? It was only a one-time thing. The regular 75th was normal. Two high-level players could easily take on the boss on the 75th floor," Zach then added.

"Where else could he have gone?" Kayden wondered. "What if he went to fight the real boss or something?"

"We don't have time to sit here and think about the possibilities! Kayden, you do what you can do. I will go to the dungeon and make sure my assumption isn't true. Let's just hope that he is alright and he simply unfriended us.

I wouldn't mind if he doesn't want to stay friends with us anymore, but he definitely shouldn't be dead. He can't die in a stupid game like this! He is a professional gamer, for fucks sake! He would never die in a game!"

Zach ran out of the house and jumped on Cerberus.

"Take me to the dungeon, and go as fast as you can!"

[As you command, my liege.]

Cerberus flapped his wings and soared through the sky.

"Faster!"

[...]

Cerberus changed his form from three heads to only one head and turned the shadow matter into a pair of new wings. Now, he had four wings that he used to fly much faster than before.

Within a minute, they had reached the dungeon of the second realm. And even before Cerberus could land properly, Zach jumped off and dashed into the dungeon.

[My liege! Wait, you shouldn't approach so carelessly. There might be a monster even stronger than the soul eater!] Cerberus warned Zach as she chased after him.

"I don't have time to worry about this. This is a situation when one needs to act careless! Go into my shadow, Cerberus! And you remember your training, right?"

[Of course, my liege.] Cerberus went into Zach's shadow and uttered, [I will be ready for your signal to surprise attack any enemy and monster.]

Zach's undead army was strong, but Zach wanted to use them efficiently as the undead also used up Zach's MP whenever they were outside his body. So he had trained a few of the undead, such as Cerberus, Urluk, and many others, in his free time and taught them various battle sequences.

That way, Zach's MP would be saved, and the undead would be able to attack the opponent from the shadow.

Zach immediately dashed into the portal and selected the 75th floor. He could go into any floor he wanted as he had already cleared the entire dungeon before.

DING!

[Warning! Warning! Danger! Do not proceed further! Warning! Warning!]

Chapter 403 75th Floor

[Warning! Warning!]

"What's this notification?"

[A high-level monster has breached through the system! Warning! Do not proceed further!]

"What? And why is the system giving me a warning about something like this? If anything, this all should be planned by those petty gods!"

It took a few seconds for the portal to take Zach to the 75th floor, and when he reached there, he instantly dashed forward, only to see a bizarre scene he wished he had never seen. And that scene was going to haunt his nightmares for eternity.

The Overlord was standing in front of Zach, right outside the portal, as though he knew Zach would arrive there.

"Welcome, Zach... or should I say... son of Deus, Zagreus Astaroth?" the Overlord scoffed out loud arrogantly.

Zach ignored the Overlord and looked past his shoulder to see the severed body pieces of Shay and Natasha.

"I was planning to give them a painless death, but they tried to fight back. I thought they would be able to defend themselves, but they were just a bunch of weaknesses pretending to be strong," the Overlord scoffed. "But don't worry, I don't think it hurt them. I was very swift when I chopped them into small pieces, and all that happened in less than a second.

You know, I have always been curious about how the players died in the game and in the real world. If they die in the real world due to some unknown circumstances, they will die here too, but how would they die?

Would they simply disappear into nothing, or their body-slash-soul corpse remains in the game?

If they die in the game, they will die in the real world, but how would that happen? Would they just... die? Like poof, and they are gone. Or would they die the same way as they did in the game?

I wish I could confirm this, but I guess I will never get a chance again. Aren't you curious too, Zach?

Hmm? Wait, why do you look so angry and sad and disappointed? Shouldn't you be happy that I killed them? Wait a minute, what date is it? Was I early this time?"

He opened his menu and said, "Oh, Yeah, I am one month early, actually. But that's actually better since nothing will happen now. Anyway, I got to go. See you—"

Zach punched the Overlord in the face so hard that his helmet cracked. Overlord was sent flying to the other side of the floor while Zach stood lifeless in the middle of the floor.

Overlord stood up the next second and scratched his helmet in confusion.

"I don't understand. Why would you do that?"

"I will fucking kill you!"

"Oh... I see. So you are the ignorant one," he sighed

The Overlord moved his hand at Zach and said, "Still, I can't have you die here, nor can I kill you. I can beat the shit out of you and leave your near death's door where it would take you months to recover. However, I will give you a chance to turn around and return to your girls."

Zach conjured a gun in his hand and fired several shots at the Overlord, but instead of hitting him, the Overlord absorbed all the magic attacks.

"Oh, come on! I even gave you a second chance. Why are you so thick-headed? But if you want to fight me that badly, then sure. Be my guest," he shrugged.

Zach's human form was slowly changing into his demon form as his emotions were raging inside him.

He conjured a machine gun and fired continuously at the Overlord, but nothing happened to him.

Suddenly, Cerberus jumped out of Zach's shadow and dashed at the Overlord.

"Seriously? That was your plan? Did you think it would work? I could feel the murderous glare from him, even from the shadows."

The Overlord conjured a golden-black colored rod in his hand and threw it at Cerberus. It was so fast that Cerberus couldn't even see it coming, and it hit him. However, the Overlord didn't stop there.

He threw a dozen more golden-black rods and trapped Cerberus in the shadow to prevent him from coming out. Then, he looked at Zach and said, "Be careful there, you might not want to let your demon side take over you. I don't have any more curse-dispelling elixir to shoot at you. And in case you didn't get it, yes, it was me who threw that spear at you on the day of the summit."

"Why did you kill them?!"

"What do you mean? Is that even a question? I killed them to help you, what else? I have been taking care of the bad guys, so you don't have to go through the same suffering as I did. Why do you think everything has been so easy for you so far?"

This is a death game, not a harem simulator, to make yourself a harem and have fun with them. Did you seriously think you were just so lucky and everything fell on your lap? Or were you perhaps in a misconception that you had worked hard to earn everything you currently have?

Well, you might have, but be grateful that you didn't have to go through the same thing I and many others did. I just wanted to help you, but it's not the help you are thinking of.

I am doing this for myself, and I don't care what happens to you. Even if your friends or lovers die, it's none of my concern. I will still continue doing what I have been doing all this time, whether you like it or not.

However, take this as a last warning. If you interfere in my work, I will mess up your life. You do what you must do, and I will do what I must do."

The only thing in Zach's mind was rage. His best friend was killed by a psycho player killer, and he was talking about how he did the right thing. Of course, Zach was planning to let the Overlord continue his boring speech and just stand there, doing nothing.

After all, he wasn't the type of guy to make rational decisions, especially in critical times when he shouldn't be reckless, but he always was.

Chapter 404 Devourer

"Who the fuck are you?! Why is your name tag black? And how could a player be at such a high level?" Zach dashed at the Overlord as his gloves were bright red.

"Are you a cheater?! Or are you a god abusing his powers to kill the mortals?!" Zach jumped in the air and shot a few blind magic attacks to distract the Overlord.

Then, threw a few conjured weapons at him even though he knew the Overlord would just absorb them somehow. But it was all part of his plans.

His undead and Urluk came out of Zach's shadow, which was right beneath the Overlord. They grabbed the Overlord's legs and body while Urluk slashed his neck.

Zach landed in front of the Overlord, grabbed his helmet with one hand, and punched him with the other.

The helmet cracked even more, but Zach didn't stop there. He then pounded his fists on the helmet until he could see visible skin.

The Overlord couldn't even move his finger as the undeads had involved him with their bodies.

Once the lower side of the helmet cracked, Zach touched the Overlord's chin and uttered:

"Die!"

Zach could feel his MP getting sucked as his DT began doing its work. However, he soon realized that it wasn't his DT using up his MP to kill the Overlord. It was the Overlord devouring Zach's MP and HP at a rapid rate.

"That was indeed a nice strategy, I will give you that. But it would never work on me. After all, you and I are the same!"

The Overlord shrugged his hand and freed himself from the undeads' grasp. Then, he grabbed Rudy's hand that was touching his chin and said, "You still don't know how to use this ability efficiently, huh? Let me teach you."

The Overlord sucked up all of Zach's MP that he had cultivated by dual cultivating with the girls and devoured his HP.

"...!" Zach used his other hand to conjure a spear and stabbed the Overlord in the chest, but he also absorbed it.

"You still don't understand, do you? Magic attacks won't work on me. No matter how powerful they are, I will devour them all. I am the devourer. And as for the physical attacks... heh, you can't hit metal with air.

I am invincible. You can't defeat me. No one can defeat me... even your old man or the petty gods. There is only one person in this entire universe who can beat me, and that is me, myself!"

The Overlord stopped devouring Zach's HP when it reached 1. Then, he threw him to the ground and said, "If you move, even a little, or try to fight back, I will kill you! You don't have HP to exchange it for HP. You don't have any potions on you. So if you don't want to die, just stay there!"

"..." Zach clenched his fists in frustration and yelled, "Answer my question! Who are you?! Why did you kill Shay?! And what do you want from me?! Why do you have the same abilities as me, and how do you know everything about me?!"

"..." The Overlord crouched down in front of Zach and said, "Answer me, son of Deus. Are you living a happy life?"

"If by happy you mean this shit hole, then no."

"I expected that answer," he sighed. "You are still taking everything for granted. You don't realize the value of the life you have. I could live to live your life... but alas, that doesn't matter. "

"..."

Zach's eyes widened in bewilderment as the Overlord's helmet eventually cracked because of the heavy damage caused by Zach. The face under the mask was the same as Zach's, but it was a lot different at the same time.

He had scars, and his hair and eye color were different. His facial features had also changed with fangs and horns. His skin had turned rough with cracks all over his face leading down to his neck and further below.

Even though his eyes had colors, they had no life in them.

There were sigil symbols and marks all over his face, and the flesh behind his skin was non-existent.

"What...?" It was natural for Zach to be baffled after seeing the Overlord's face.

"I told you, didn't I? We are the same. You know nothing about me, but I know everything about you. I have been watching you. Smiling.... crying... living... you sure are lucky. I did everything for you and took care of all the hurdles in your path while you were having fun with your harem.

Say, how does it feel to be loved? To be wanted by someone? I have long forgotten that feeling. I don't even remember how it feels to embrace someone. Why? Why did it have to be me? Why did I have to go through all this crap? It could be you... but we are the same.

I can take your place in no time, but it doesn't matter even if I do that. This world, the human world, and the entire universe will be destroyed in three months. No matter how strong one becomes, they cannot

stop it. The humans who moved to mars, the aliens living on the other planets, as well as on the stars and the other galaxies in this universe.

It will be the 'Genesis,' and everything will once again restart. Call it a big bang although that is the lamest thing we have ever heard... don't you think?

The real enemy is not the gods, it's the universe itself. And do you know who will bring that so-called genesis?

We!

We are the key to annihilation! We will destroy everything! You must be wondering what the heck? Why would we do that? Well, it's not under our control.

When you insert a key inside a lock, the lock has no choice but to open. It's as simple as that. So... me, let me take care of everything while I deal with the rest of our enemies; you can defeat the gods in the meantime."

Chapter 405 Reasoned Excuses

"If we are the same, why did you kill Shay? Wasn't he our friend?" Zach asked with a frustrated and gloomy look on his face.

"Argh! You are still hung up on that?"

"..."

"I killed him because he would have become our... well, yours, actually; he would have become your enemy," the Overlord shrugged his shoulders and said, "If not, he would have died in the near future anyway. So what does it matter? We were never close to Shay anyway."

Zach clenched his fists and mumbled, "You are lying. I don't know what the fuck you are on about, but I considered Shay my best friend. He and Kayden were always there for me. They were the only ones who had put their trust in me.

He is the reason we agreed to play a VR game and got stuck here. He is the reason we met Aurora and the girls. He is the reason I am what I am today. Without him, nothing would have happened. We would be living the same old boring life.

Aurora and Victoria would have died alone in this game. Aria would still be suffering, Ninia would still be lost, and Aquarius and Ruli would have been living their fated lives. We would have never reunited with Master Xie Lua.

What about all that, huh?

In the human world, we couldn't use magic, we couldn't cultivate, we couldn't do anything. Coming into this game allowed us to become what we were destined to be. How else would we have found out what truly happened to father?

I don't know what happened to you or how much you have suffered, but if you were me, you would have never forgotten all that."

"Oh. I get it." The Overlord let out a weary sigh and groaned, "You are an idiot. A dumbass. A naive kid. Why does all that matter? Why do you care about all that, huh? It's your life, and you should care about yourself. Let all of them die, who cares?"

"I would never say those words. You are not me. Even if you claim to be me, you are not me!"

"And here we are. Why do I even try, to suffer?" the Overlord covered a black matter in his hand and said, "No pun intended."

"You are not me! I will never become like you!"

"Oh, we are very much alike, Zach. You just don't realize it. No, you do realize it, but you refuse to admit it. There is little to no difference between us, except I am smarter and stronger than you, while you are a dumbass.

Your entire life is a play, Zach. And you have been doing nothing but acting, pretending to be someone you are not. Ever since you were born, you have been fooling everyone.

First, you wanted to become a proud son for your father, but you failed. You are nothing but a pathetic loser. When you made your first friend of your age, you only became friends with him because you thought you could use him in the future. You only pretended to be Kayden's friend. In fact, you never considered him as one."

"You are lying!" Zach glared at the Overlord as his eyes began changing color. "You don't know anything about me!"

"Your anger makes everything clear. Next, your first love— Misha, Kayden's step-sister. You loved her and wanted to marry her, and that's the only reason why you got close to their family."

"..."

"But then you discovered Kayden loves Misha too, so you began maintaining a distance with Misha. What was that for? Why would you do something like that for no reason? Did you think Kayden would hate you if you stole his sister from you?"

No, the only reason you could do that was to still keep being friends with him. Everything you have done in your life was for your own selfish gain, and once you were done using them, you threw them away.

Victoria, for example. Did you think you dated her because you loved her? No. You wanted to date her because you lusted after her. The most beautiful girl in the school had a crush on you because you saved her life and proved her innocence.

You had this sense of superiority over everyone. You thought you were better than every boy in the school, and that's why Victoria chose you. But soon, you realized that wasn't the case.

You noticed that you actually fell in love with her but weren't sure. You didn't want to change the reason for dating her, and that's precisely why you didn't mind having a fling with Siesta. If you wanted, you could have easily gotten rid of the evidence from her. You had plenty of chances, but you didn't. Why?"

Because you wanted to keep your little affair last longer. Sure, you began dating Victoria after that, but that doesn't change the fact that you were enjoying cheating on her. You didn't love Siesta, but you loved Victoria.

Whatever happened between you and Siesta was just a fling, but that doesn't matter, as you still continued that even when you were going out with Victoria. And then you had sex with her.

You could have reconciled with her if you wanted to, but you didn't. You wanted her to dump you so you could get on with—."

"That's a lie! She didn't come to—"

"She didn't come to school the next day, yes." The Overlord interjected Zach and continued, "I knew exactly what you were going to say."

"..."

"So what if she didn't come to school? You could have gone to her house, but you didn't. Your half-assed feelings and actions led to what happened next.

Hear me, Zach. You are pretending everything. Even now, you think you have changed, but you have not. You say we are not the same, but we are. Do you want to know why and how?"

Chapter 406 Demon's Heart

The Overlord raised Zach's head by his hair and said, "What will you do if I kill you girls in front of you, huh? Will you let out the monster inside you? Will you become like me? And will you still say we are not the same, huh?"

Listen, Zach, let me give you a piece of advice as a mature adult... everything we do... we do for ourselves. And by we, I mean everyone in this world. You want to save your harem, why? Because 'you' don't want to lose them. If you do, 'you' will be sad.

See that, hah? All our actions are nothing but an act of selfishness over others to make us feel good and happy. Why are we like this? I don't even know why I am doing this? Who am I doing this for? For you or for me? But we both are the same, so why?

I don't understand. Why did all this have to happen to me? And why must I go through the same thing again and again? That's right... I am here to make things right. To take revenge. To... to... what? To... do... to have... the..."

The Overlord glanced aimlessly as though he had suddenly forgotten everything.

"Well, whatever. I have said enough." The Overlord stood and opened a portal out of nowhere.

"..."

"Oh! One more thing, our old man is still alive. The reason you didn't get his blessings was because I stole them from you. It wasn't our father who showed you that memory, it was my doing. Father had only blessed us at that time.

So... while I do all that, find a way to save him. There are a few enemies you should take care of, but they will be easy for you to deal with. Whatever you do, don't come in my path, or I will kill your lovers.

Only then will you realize how it feels to lose something you don't know the value of. This is not a request or a warning, or a threat. This is my statement. I am you, so you should know better that we always fulfill our commitments.

Your lovers or harem or friends don't matter to me. Even if they die, I don't care. The only thing that matters is you. I can't let you die. If you die, everything will fail.

And yeah..." He pointed his finger at Zach and said, "Remember the card you got after clearing the 100th floor of this dungeon?"

'The Lord awaits you.' Zach recalled.

"That was me. If you figure out what it is and how to use it, you will be able to find me." The Overlord faced the portal and showed his back to Zach as he said, "You can do whatever you want then. You can kill me and take revenge for killing Shay. But remember, you can only use it once. So only use it when you are confident enough to defeat me. Otherwise, you will end up dead."

After saying that, the Overlord passed through the portal and disappeared.

"..."

Zach lay on the ground and stared at nothingness for a few seconds. He was still baffled by everything, and the only goal in his mind was to hunt down the Overlord and give him a painful death.

[My Liege! Are you okay?!] Cerberus asked in a panic. [I cannot sense or listen to anything. But there is only one shadow in the area.]

Zach slowly crawled to the spot where the Overlord had trapped Cerberus in the shadow. He used the rod as a support to stand up and then pulled them all out, freeing Cerberus.

Cerberus instantly came out, covered Zach with his body, and wrapped him under his tail.

[Don't worry, my liege! I will save your— huh? Where did he go?]

"..."

[Oh! My deepest apologies. You must have killed him!]

"No... Cerberus. As they say, you can never get rid of your shadow under the light... I could not defeat my shadow. The only way to get rid of the shadow is to be the shadow... and thus... I will do what he kept saying..."

Zach opened his menu and changed his nickname— using a token— from 'Overlord' to 'Shadow Lord', but he soon changed his mind and deleted that.

He then wrote 'Zagreus' as his nickname.

"Let the world know me... Let the gods know me... Let me... know me."

Zach couldn't bear to look at Shay's chopped body, so he asked Cerberus to dig a hole and bury them.

Once Cerberus was done, Zach stood before his grave and said, "I don't know what to say and how all this happened. But... I am sorry. I will avenge your and Natasha's death. I will kill that bastard and get your revenge."

Cerberus stood beside Zach and said, [What are we going to do now. my liege?]

"Something I should have done a long time ago."

[And that is?]

"Accept who I am. It's time to embrace my demon side and become one," Zach responded in a solemn voice.

[How will you do that? The Demon King's blessings are still unstable, and you can't control it.]

"I am not talking about the blessings, Cerberus. I am talking about my existence. When I was born, I only had a heart, which was a demon's heart. I was born a demon."

He walked towards the portal while saying, "I am going to leave my human self behind and become a demon. That is... the only way to control the Demon King's blessings."

Cerberus went in Zach's shadow as he passed through the portal and got out of the dungeon.

"I need to call everyone at the church and inform them about Shay's death. And what will I do about the Risen Warrior's guild? They now have no one to run the guild, and I don't know anyone who can manage that."

Zach had messaged them to come to the church, and everyone had arrived by the time he reached the church, although there were only two people— Misha and Kayden. The girls were already there.

He told them everything but didn't say that the Overlord was some version of him. Zach himself had no idea who or what exactly the Overlord was and how he came to be.

Chapter 407 Major Developments

"I still can't believe Shay and Natasha are dead..." Victoria muttered, sitting at the pew beside Misha, who was the only female friend she knew in the real world.

"Yeah..."

"Shay was a douchebag, and Natasha was a kind girl. She was the one who helped me get together with Zach after we... I... broke up with him. Regardless, neither of them deserves to die like that."

Misha bit her lips and looked at the altar before saying, "There are dozens of players dying every day, even more, when the game was just new. Now, everyone has gotten used to it and is playing with caution. And most players in the game now are skilled enough to survive."

"That was not what I was trying to say..." Misha sighed and lowered her gaze. "Many players die every day, but it hits hard when someone you know dies. I can't imagine how it would feel if someone close to us... dies."

"Zach would have felt the same when he saw Aurora after the demon invasion," Victoria stated.

"Yeah, but it's different with Zach. He doesn't show emotions to anyone and keeps hiding them. He will endure and endure, but never share his pain with anyone." Misha chuckled wryly and muttered, "He has always been like that ever since we were kids."

"You know him better than anyone here, don't you?" Victoria asked.

"If you put it that way, then yes," Misha nodded. "But we are not that close, though."

"You know about Zach's harem, don't you?" Victoria asked Misha with a judging look on her face.

"Hmm? Harem? What does that mean?" Misha played dumb.

"Has anyone ever told you that you suck at lying?"

"Oh, shut up."

"So? For how long have you known?"

"I have no idea what you are talking about."

"Are you still going to pretend that you don't know anything? Come on, any girl would find it suspicious if multiple girls are fawning over the same guy and living together with him," Victoria remarked while staring at Misha.

"Argh! Fine. I knew about it."

"Umm..." Victoria gulped down nervously and hesitantly asked, "What... what do you think about it?"

"Hmm?"

"Like... what are your thoughts on the harem? Do you find it repulsive or disgusting or whatever?"

"I don't really think much of it." Misha shrugged and said, "Why should I judge someone's relationship? That makes no sense."

"I guess... but do you think others would find it disgusting?"

Misha furrowed her brows and flicked her finger on Victoria's forehead.

FLICK!

"Ow! What was that for?"

"Why do you care about what others would think of your relationship? Since when did you become like this?"

"No... it's just... anyone would hate being judged, right? What if they don't accept you? I don't care about me, but what would they think of Zach?"

SIGH!

"Believe me, that thought has never crossed Zach's mind.

While Victoria and Misha were having a chat, Aurora and Ninia were busy making food for everyone.

Kayden had taken Elina and Noah for the dungeon expedition to clear his mind from Shay's death. He wanted a distraction from everything and wanted to take out his pent-up frustration on the monsters.

Meanwhile, Zach was alone in his chamber with Aria. He wanted to discuss something important, and Aria was the only one capable of helping him on that matter.

A few minutes later, Zach and Aria came out of the room, but none of the girls asked what they were discussing alone in the room.

Zach talked with Victoria and Misha like normal and even helped Aurora and Ninia in the kitchen as though nothing had ever happened.

Once the food was ready, they all ate together like always.

After dinner, Zach gathered the girls as he wanted to make an announcement on something important.

"I have decided that we are not going to ascend for a while," he stated.

"But why? Is there a problem with the... you know, the bypass trick?" Victoria asked with a curious and confused look on her face.

"No. I am going somewhere else," Zach responded.

"Somewhere else? Are you planning to go alone?" Aurora asked.

"Yes."

"May I ask where you are going, my Lord?" Ninia quipped.

After an eerie silence, Zach opened his mouth and said, "To Hell."

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Meanwhile, in the real world.

More and more deaths were reported, and everyone was distraught. They had no idea what to do and how to save their loved ones.

Erza had gotten her hands on a VR headset with the help of Leona, who was Erza's archangel.

She had decided to enter Gods' Impact and save Zach all by herself, but she was denied entrance when she tried to use it.

Gods' Impact transformed the souls of the humans, but Erza was a God, and she had no soul.

Aria was able to enter because she used her special skill to clone her body using her powers, and she had entered the Gods' Impact using a backdoor by connecting her domain with the game when it was just launched.

Erza had lost all her powers, so she couldn't do any of that. She was frustrated, so she decided to take a long bath, leaving the VR headset unguarded.

Zoe knew everything, and she was dying to meet Zach, so she used it and entered the Gods' Impact. When Erza returned from her bath and found Zoe's body on the ground with a headset on top of her, she realized what she had done.

That day, she cried and cried. She begged Deus for help, but nothing could be done.

A few hours later, Shay's death had become a headline on the internet and in every media. Since Shay was the son of the wealthiest man in the country and his family held power, Shay's death was the nail in the coffin for the major power holders in the world.

Siesta— Shay's sister, who saw the news, decided to use the VR headset to meet the love of her life— Zach.

She had also entered the Gods' Impact. Two people, who Zach cared about, had entered the death game to meet him.

Chapter 408 Departing To Hell

A day later.

"Are you sure about this, Zach?" Aurora asked with a concerned look on her face.

"Yeah. Sooner or later, I had to do this. And now I am in a situation where it's 'the sooner, the better'. I truly should have done this a long time ago."

"But... is there no other way?" Victoria asked this time.

"No. How can there be another way? I want to go to hell, unless, of course, there are other hells... well, there actually are, but I only have one way to enter hell, which is the crack that Aria is trying her best to open for a few seconds," Zach asserted.

"My Lord..." Ninia hugged Zach's arm and said, "I don't want you to go there."

"Ninia, we already talked about it, didn't we?" Zach gently patted Ninia on the head and said, "I have to do this. Don't worry, nothing will happen to me. I promise."

"I will pray for your safety..." she muttered.

Rudy turned to Misha, who was staring at him for a while and asked, "Uhh... well, I would appreciate good luck from you. You have always been my lucky charm."

He said with a smile.

"..." Aurora and Victoria raised their brows and looked at Zach with a judging look on their faces.

"I didn't mean it in a weird way. I swear. It's just Misha that wishes have always helped me. Her words are like blessings for me." He chuckled softly and said, "It's almost as though she is some sort of angel."

Misha's face turned pale after hearing that, but she kept her calm and smiled it off Zach.

"Yeah, I wish you luck, Zach. And I hope you get what you are seeking," Misha prayed.

"Uhh... should I say 'Amen' in my own church?" he scoffed softly.

Aurora and Victoria glanced at each other and nodded in agreement.

"Ahem." Victoria nudged Zach and said, "Can I talk to you for a second?"

"Sure."

Victoria and Aurora grabbed Zach's arm and took him to the corner.

"What's all this?" Zach asked with a confused look on his face.

"You do know that Misha is your best friend's wife, right?" Victoria asked with a knowing look on her face.

"Obviously. I went to their wedding with Aurora and Aria."

"So why were you flirting with her just now?" Aurora remarked.

"What the—! How was that flirting? Come on, that was just a regular chat between two childhood friends. And besides, I think of Misha as my sister. There is no way I would ever—"

Zach stopped on his words as he recalled what the Overlord said and how he had exposed Zach's every hidden secret.

'Dammit! It's true that Misha was my first love, but that was just a childhood crush. It was never serious! And she is Kayden's wife now. I need to stop thinking about it before I become overly conscious of it,' Zach uttered inwardly and prepared his mind to forget about Misha.

He had only given up on Misha because Kayden loved her. He didn't want to ruin their relationship. Hence he distanced himself from Misha and kept doing it, but God's Impact brought them close again.

However, Kayden and Misha had gotten married, so Zach couldn't do anything, even if his feelings for Misha resurfaced. Unbeknownst to Zach that Kayden and Misha had already talked things out, and they had already divorced.

Moreover, Misha was with the girls because she wanted to join Zach's party and accompany him, as Kayden had suggested. However, she discovered that Zach had changed his plan and wasn't going to ascend before finishing the unfinished business in hell.

So now she no longer had to rush everything and wait until Zach returned from hell.

"Hmm?" Victoria and Aurora ganged up on Zach and asked, "What's with that sudden pause, huh? Don't tell me you actually have a thing for Misha!"

"No... come on..." Zach released a weary sigh and uttered, "I understand why Aurora is acting like this since she has always been a weirdo. But you too, Victoria?"

"It's not my fault if you act so suspicious, you know?"

Zach glanced at Aria, who was watching everything from the side, and used his telepathy to connect to her.

'Help your husband out!'

'Why should I? After all, I am also curious to know your answer,' Aria responded with telepathy.

'Oh great, so now it's three verses one. I need someone on my side.'

"You two, stop troubling him!" Ninia rushed to help Zach. "He has a lot in his mind."

Zach rushed to Ninia and stood beside her with a smirk on his face. Then, he glanced at Aria, Aurora, and Victoria and said, "Thank you, Ninia. You are the best."

"It's my duty to help you, my Lord."

The trio and Ninia exchanged a few remarks while Zach smiled at them wryly. He might be acting normally, but he was still devastated about Shay's death and nervous about entering hell.

Aria looked at her nails and said, "I think I am ready. I conjured as many soul powers as I could. But it's thanks to your energy-binding technique, Zach. You made me a soul power potion from my domain, which I can use outside my domain to manifest my goddess form for a few seconds."

"Don't thank me. I got the idea from Victoria."

"Yes, I know. But still, you did the work and made it possible."

"Let's go now."

Aria, Aurora, Victoria, Ninia, Misha, and Zach went outside the church and gazed up at the sky.

"Are you sure it's safe?" Victoria asked curiously. "What if Aria opens the crack and demons invade again?"

"That won't happen because I will be standing right in front of the crack." Zach summoned Cerberus and climbed on top of him. Then, he turned to the girls and said, "I will be leaving all my shadow army here to protect you girls and this realm."

Urluk has already told me everything about the demon king of that hell. I know the shortcuts and all. He even drew me a map, so invading hell would be easy. But he doesn't know anything about the inner hell, so I will have to find my way there."

'Finally, I am going to take revenge for the demon invasion. And perhaps... meet mother too... if possible.'

Chapter 409 Hallway Of Hell

"I know I have already asked you this many times, but are you really sure about this, Zach?" Aria asked.

"Yes, for the last time. Yes, I am. Please, open the crack so I can go to hell."

"..."

"..."

The girls stood there in silence without saying anything.

SIGH!

"Look, I know you all are worried about me, but you just have to believe I will be alright. I am not trying to brag, but I am strong. And know that hell is not part of the game.

In other words, there are no restrictions on my power there. I can go all out, and I can't wait for that moment," he said while cracking his fingers.

"Can't we come with you?" Victoria asked.

"Honestly, I want to take you, girls, with me, but it's super dangerous. Last time, only a mere 2,500,000 demons invaded this world and caused mayhem. And hell is full of demons.

There will be low-rank demons to higher-rank demons. And then the demon king, whose head I am going to crush with my bare hands. Aurora and Aria will be the strongest player in this game after I leave for hell.

So don't forget to take care of yourself rather than worrying about me," he chuckled softly.

"Wait... if the hell is not part of the game, doesn't that mean you are going to lose your game and system elements? How will you take things out of your inventory? And most importantly, how will we message each other?" Victoria asked with a baffled look on her face.

"Well... there is nothing we can do about that. But I will try to return as soon as possible."

"And how soon is soon?" Ninia asked this time.

"Time passes differently in hell, so I cannot tell the exact time. Even I don't know what the ratio of the time in hell is. But I won't be gone for long."

"I am ready now!" Aria stated as she finally conjured enough power to get a hold of the crack.

Zach kissed Ninia, Aurora, and Victoria on the lips. Then he turned to Misha and smiled nervously at her as he didn't know how to bid her farewell.

Misha decided to take things in her hands and hugged Zach tightly before saying, "Good luck!"

For once in a decade, Zach hugged Misha back and said, "Thanks."

Zach stepped closer to hell while facing Aria and smiled at her.

"Thank you.

"I love you."

"That's... not what I was expecting, but..." He kissed Aria on the lips and said, "I love you too."

He glanced at the girls and said, "I love you all."

When his gaze fell on Misha, he smiled and chuckled nervously, then added, "Except, Misha... of course."

Then, Zach jumped into the crack as it closed immediately.

Cerberus safely landed on the ground and said, [I will be living in the shadows. If there is anything you ladies need me for, just call my name.]

After saying that, he disappeared into the shadows.

The girls glanced at each other as though they didn't know what to do next.

Ninia hurried back into the church while saying, "I will start praying for my Lord's safety."

"I will... go into my room..." Victoria left.

"I will take a bath." Aurora also left.

Now, only Aria and Misha were standing next to each other.

Misha couldn't handle Aria, so she decided to leave for her house as soon as possible. She walked past Aria while glaring at her from the corners of her eyes.

"Poor Zach, he is surrounded by traitors," Aria commented.

"..." Misha stopped on her track and turned to Aria. "What did you say?"

"I am just stating the truth. You have been deceiving Zach this whole time."

"What do you mean? I have been nothing but honest with him. I have always supported him for everything he has done."

"Oh?" Aria furrowed her brows and asked, "Then does he know that you are an angel sent to spy on him?"

"...!" Misha's face turned pale after hearing that.

"I will take that reaction as a no."

"How do you know that I am—!" She stopped and glanced around before lowering her voice. "How do you know that I am an angel?"

"Well, I have always had my suspicions on you." Aria shrugged her shoulders and continued, "Your presence concealing technique is well mastered. But unfortunately for you, your face is a solid resemblance to your mother."

"You know my mother too?!"

"Oh, come on, I am Aria, the Goddess of Death and Destruction. Erza and I ruled the world together. We used to sit beside each other on one throne in heaven. How often do you think I have seen her archangels come and leave to report everything?" Aria scoffed with a sigh as though she wanted to reveal it in a better way, but she realized she had failed.

"...so... what? Are you threatening me that you will tell everything to Zach?" Misha asked curiously.

"Oh, I am not. Because you will be the one to tell him that when he returns from hell."

"...!"

"Don't be so surprised. I am giving you a chance to prove your innocence. I am sure, and I understand that you must have had your reasons that you kept everything a secret from him, but the time is up.

I cannot stand and watch Zach getting devastated after learning the truth about your real identity from somewhere else. It's better if you tell him yourself and explain everything to him. And I am sure he will understand," Aria stated calmly.

"Why... would you do that for me? Don't you hate me?" Misha asked hesitantly.

"Oh, I do. But I will never involve Zach in between my hatred for you. I am sure you don't want to hurt Zach either, right?"

Misha nodded and said, "I will tell him everything once he returns from hell."

"Good."

Meanwhile, Zach was talking in the long hallway of the outer area of the first hell, seemingly heading towards the middle area so he could meet a few demons who could welcome him by dying with his hands.

When he finally saw a demon in his sight, he smirked and said, "Is there where I should say 'I am home'?"

Chapter 410 Bandit Demons

When Zach reached the gates of the middle area of the hell, he saw a few guards guarding the entrance.

"Finally, I saw someone after walking for minutes!" Zach rushed to them and yelled, "Yo! Working hard, huh?"

The guards to Zach while stomping their spears on the ground.

"Who are you?" one guard asked.

There were five guards, and all of them were twice Zach's height.

"I just want to pass through the gates. You can open it nicely, or I will have to break it, and you will have to repair it later," Zach responded nonchalantly.

"Heh!" the second guard glanced at the third guard and snickered. "He says he wants to pass through the gates!"

"Yeah!"

"..."

"Should we tell him where he is?" the fourth guard uttered.

"No need. A lost soul must have ended up in this part of hell somehow. We will feed on it now!" the fifth guard declared.

"And here I thought you guys would have brains, but it seems demons' stupidity is on a whole other level."

Zach showed his demonic eyes to the demons, and they instantly fell to their knees.

"See? It wasn't that hard."

Demonic eyes were like a status symbol for power in hell. It was a rare occurrence for someone to have demonic eyes, and those who didn't were bound to be scared of the ones above them.

Only a few royal and noble demons had demonic eyes, which they acquired after years of practice.

"We apologize for our actions. If you had told us that you possess demonic eyes, we wouldn't have ever even looked at you!"

"Please forgive us! We will do anything to get your forgiveness."

"I don't have time to waste for the likes of you. Just open the gate and let me pass."

"Yes, of course!"

The guards opened the gate and immediately kneeled down afterward.

"Please be careful. You are entering middle hell. While you may be strong, the demons living inside are barbaric. They will stop at nothing until their target has been eaten by their hounds."

"Oh? Thanks for the information. I was actually going to kill you all, but now I have decided to spare your worthless lives since you gave me a heads up."

Zach casually passed through the gate and entered middle hell.

"I heard about it, but it actually looks completely different from outer hell."

There were seven hells that were in an entirely different locations away from each other. But they were connected through a portal that could only be accessed by the most powerful ones.

Therefore, the ruler of the first hell couldn't enter the second hell, and the ruler of the second hell couldn't enter the third hell. However, the ruler of the higher hell could quickly enter the lower hell whenever they wanted.

And the ruler of the said lower hell had no other choice but to bow down before the strong ones.

Each hell was divided into three parts. Outer hell, middle hell, and inner hell.

Outer hell was for the weak demons, but it was empty when Zach passed through it because all of the citizens of the outer hell had died in the demon invasion.

The middle hell had strong demons, but not strong enough to be called the high demons. While the innermost hell was where the strongest demons resided.

The archdemons and high demons protected the demon king in the inner hell, and that's where Zach wanted to go.

He had already been planning to go to hell for a while after the demon invasion, but he didn't have a reason to make that his priority as the crack to hell had already been closed. However, after meeting the Overlord, everything changed.

Undoubtedly, the Overlord was more potent than Zach, and there was no way Zach could defeat him even if he used his blessings right. After all, the Overlord was Zach's future self, who was more experienced than him in everything.

He knew how to use his blessings properly, and he had much more fighting experience and knowledge than Zach. However, the Overlord was worried about one thing— which he kept mentioning to Zach again and again— and that was his demonic powers.

'The way he mentioned it, it seemed as though he didn't know how to use the demonic powers— no, he knew how to use them. Otherwise, he would have the anti-demon elixir or whatever he used on me that day.

Could it be that he knows about the blessings but can't use them for some reason? He kept calling me a monster and all that, so now I will give him what he wants. I will learn to be more like a demon."

"And what could be a better place than hell?"

Zach walked through the hallway to the middle hell after passing through the gates. After walking for a while, Zach finally encountered the middle-rank demons who had ambushed him from all the sides, or they were trying to.

The atmosphere of the middle hell reminded Rudy of the secret boss dungeon, where Rudy met Cerberus after passing through the river of lava and a bridge. Surprisingly, at that time, too, he was a target of assassinations.

CLAP! CLAP!

Rudy clapped his hands to let the demons know that he was aware of their presence.

"You call that an ambush?!" Zach sneered and said, "You should work better on it because it didn't work. If it was me in your stead, I would have died from embarrassment. You all are a failure!"

Dozens of demons jumped in front of Zach and surrounded him from all sides.

"I am about to reach the main middle hell, but I ran into you bandit demons." Zach stretched his hands in the air and said, "I am confused. Should I call you all brave because you tried to ambush me, or should I call you stupid because you tried to ambush me?"

Nevertheless, is everyone in the middle hell like you, or are you just some outcast?" he scoffed.

Zach beckoned them and asserted, "I hope you give me a good fight. Don't disappoint me, demons!"