

Grand Ancestral Bloodlines

#Chapter 31: Blades - Read Grand Ancestral Bloodlines Chapter 31: Blades

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Elena's words alluded to a story Ryu knew little about. This incubator of the Holy Wing Clan had long been known to his Tatsuya Clan. Years ago, during Titus' first stay at the Shrine Library and directly after his meridian awakening ceremony failed, his Grandma Kunan had put aside her pride and hatred to ask if it was possible to trade for this treasure.

One had to understand that although this Origin Grade incubator was a heavenly treasure few could match, its use was still highly limited. In fact, the only way to make full use of it was to give it a single master. But, obviously, something like this was less useful for such a large clan. A defensive or offensive Origin Grade treasure was simply far more valuable.

However, Old Mistress Holy Wing would never miss an opportunity to scorn her old rival. Even knowing that this involved the life and death of a child, even knowing that accepting this Origin Grade treasure trade would greatly benefit her Clan, she rejected the offer after humiliating Ryu's grandmother.

Now, she was forced to exchange this treasure for nothing, simply to save her own life. It could be said that justice had been meted out.

"I see..." Ryu said softly. Elena didn't need to say anything more. With Ryu's intelligence, he immediately understood what must have happened. Although he didn't have the exact details, the scenario he built in his mind wasn't far from the truth.

"Here." Elena's spatial ring warped once more, revealing what looked like a beautiful globe with a world hidden within. Even with his mortal vision Ryu could see endless flowing rivers and grassed lands. But, there were no trees or spiritual plants to speak of. Even the water was normal, without any special properties.

Elena shook her head. "It's only to be expected. The Holy Wing Clan definitely took everything valuable out before handing it over. It should be fine though, with your abilities, you'll be able to fill it with even rarer spiritual plants. Be a little selfish for me, okay? Don't always hand your achievements off to those old Council fogies. Keep some for yourself..."

A rare air of seriousness took control of Elena's tone. She didn't know why she suddenly felt so uncomfortable, as though a weight was slowly increasing on her chest, but she always believed in her instincts, it was part of why she always felt so free.

"Be a little selfish, huh..." Ryu muttered to himself as he took the globe in his hand.

The heavenly pupil inner world was quite bland. It seemed to be an odd grey box that increased in size along with your cultivation. Yet, even as a mortal, Ryu's space was about ten meters in every direction. Aside from the cloak that now sat neatly folded in a corner, there wasn't much else to see. All that remained was the Fire Dragon Emblem of the Tatsuya Clan, the Phoenix Emblems of the Ice and Fire Phoenix Clans, and the Lightning Qilin Emblem of the Kunan Clan.

These Emblems were Mystical Grade treasures that allowed access to the various Clan Holy Lands, but other than that, they had no other function.

"I believe you should be able to replace your heavenly pupil inner world with this one. At least in theory." Elena explained lightly.

As Elena expected, the process was seamless. The globe entered Ryu's forehead, slowly changing his inner world. Now, it world could accommodate living beings. Unfortunately, though, his cultivation was non-existence, making it impossible for him to withstand the burden of warping in large objects.

Nodding in satisfaction, Elena smiled. "The last treasure is probably one you'll have some push back against, but do remember that it's a Unique Grade treasure."

"Some push back?" Ryu's mind immediately went to the worst possible place. This fiancée of his didn't get him some kinky toy, did she?

Elena giggled as though reading Ryu's mind. "Don't worry, it's nothing like that. Instead, they're weapons. Twin daggers, actually."

Ryu frowned, not knowing whether to laugh or cry. What the hell would he do with weapons? Right now, Ryu had no fighting experience whatsoever other than basics his father taught him when he was a toddler. What use would he have for daggers?

"I know, I know. But I've thought about this seriously. The black cloak has a passive ability to conceal, but it's very weak. Without cultivation, the only way you can evoke its true abilities is to use your Spiritual Qi and enter the Breath of Earth realm. However, that only lasts for a few seconds. Do you think that your enemy would disappear in that time? You need to take action!" Elena said seriously.

Ryu sighed. "Your words make sense. But, in a case where I assume something has happened to Nuri and I'm forced into such a corner, even if I have an Origin Grade dagger, I'm afraid that such an enemy would only laugh at my attack."

"This is why these daggers are special. They're capable of accommodating all forms of energy, including Spiritual Qi. Their weight also changes in accordance with the energy type and amount you use."

"You mean?" Ryu raised an eyebrow.

"Mhm. You can attack an opponent's Mental Realm directly. This won't guarantee a kill considering even someone like Nuri couldn't instantly end Gale's life, but it's the most effective attack you have. It's better than nothing."

Listening to this point, Ryu couldn't disagree. This was indeed the most effective form of attack he had. If these daggers really could accept Spiritual Qi, then they could protect Ryu's mind while he attacked others. Simple put, they were better than having nothing at all, so, for the sake of his fiancée's peace of mind, he accepted the daggers.

Ryu watched as Elena handed him two beautifully finished daggers. Each had a black spine, but edges that shone a crystalline and translucent blue. These edges were serrated into three portions, making the daggers look like a slanted set of triplet canine teeth. Their handles were long and slender, curving near the end into spherical bulbs.

The entire length of each blade was only about a foot and a half, hilt included. But, they gave off a menacing light.

Chapter 32: Scenes of the Past

The night of that very same day, Ryu sat under the cool dark air, his black robes fluttering along with the thin drapes that whipped in the wind behind him. He was currently on a balcony extending from his and Elena's room. While she slept soundly once more, he couldn't bring himself to.

Scenes of his life kept replaying in his mind like a record, memories he hadn't thought of in centuries were suddenly becoming crystal clear whether he wanted them to or not.

He could remember how excited his father was after his birth. A man with the weight of an entire Plane on his shoulders ignored it all to spend time with his son. Ryu remembered the early morning hikes to Shrine Mountain, he remembered how diligently his father taught him the Tatsuya Clan Martial Forms, he remembered the bright smile of pride on his face when he became convinced that his son would shake the Shrine Plane even fiercer than he had.

But, with those memories of good, came memories of anguish. He could remember his father's despair when his meridian awakening ceremony failed. He remembered feeling pain because he knew that his father wasn't hurt by having a crippled son, but hurt by the prospect of what it meant for Ryu himself. The love in his father's eyes never faded, it just became balanced with a pain that Ryu couldn't ignore, a pain that Ryu, a young

boy who was so used to seeing a single side of his father, couldn't help but run away from.

Ryu also remembered his mother. He remembered laying in her arms and clinging to her breast's milk desperately. Imagine that, a woman of her stature personally feeding her own child... This was the love his mother had for him. Suffering through the pains and aches of an overly eager, oversized baby boy with a loving twinkle in her eye.

She never lost that desire, that desire to provide and protect. Not once had she ever.

His grandparents were another light of his life. His Grandma Kunan was always the soothing voice in his ear, it was she who chased away his father and grandfathers when their training became too harsh back in those days. His Grandma Tatsuya was a far more reserved and stoic lady, but her smile had long since been reserved for her baby boy. It was her who gifted Ryu his best toys even though a toddler had no business playing around with Heaven Grade treasures.

His Grandpa Tatsuya was a man of very few words. In fact, Ryu could likely count the number of times he'd spoken to this grandfather of his to an accurate estimate. However, it was because he was so silent that he conveyed his love through his actions. It was he who had found the most herbs and spiritual treasures capable of extending Ryu's life, even spending decades and sometimes centuries away in pursuit of them.

Grandpa Kunan was likely the polar opposite of Grandpa Tatsuya. He was rambunctious and loud, but his heart was just as big as his personality was. It was he who found Ryu first after his meridian awakening ceremony failed, slapping him on his small shoulders and hugging him tightly. At that time, he told Ryu that a man never gives up, that a man finds a way to succeed no matter what cards he was dealt. If it wasn't for Grandpa Kunan, Ryu didn't know if he would have recovered enough to set a new path for himself by entering Shrine Library.

Then there was Nuri. Ryu had always seen her as his big sister, a woman always there to protect him. The truth was that Nuri was a little girl his parents had adopted before his birth. At the time, they had been trying for several millennia to birth a child to no avail. It was then that Nuri fell like a heavenly treasure from the skies. They fell in love with the little baby girl immediately, taking her in as one of their own.

When Nuri grew and Ryu was finally born, she wanted to repay this debt of gratitude. Having never known her own parents, to her, the Tatsuya Clan was the only family she'd ever recognize. She didn't even blink an eye when she swore a Tribulation Oath to protect Ryu for life.

Ryu remembered patting his little chest as a boy no more than three or four years old, swearing that when he grew up, he would take Nuri as his wife, then it would be his turn

to protect her. Nuri had smiled brightly, that beautiful smile of hers... She rubbed his small head and nodded with happiness.

And Elena... She had a place in Ryu's heart that was unshakeable. When she came into his life, he hadn't thought that he would ever open up that side of himself to anyone until his death took him from this world. Was it even fair of him to do so? How could he promise love to a woman he wouldn't be able to sustain? It was then that Elena had said those ill-fated words to him... Be selfish.

What a funny idea. Words with such a negative connotation used to light a path to happiness in a man who had all but given up on everything.

Ryu's face shifted up, allowing him to catch a glance at the three moons in the sky. The two smaller shone a beautiful red and blue, but the largest was seemingly reminiscent of Ryu's Fate Star, blazing with a grey-white color. Ryu had heard that Shrine Plane had three suns as well, but the largest was so bright that the smaller two were impossible to see.

A slight breeze passed, causing Ryu to frown. He lifted his hand to his cheek, only to be shocked to find that it was wet.

"Ha..." Ryu's voice croaked. He couldn't remember the last time he felt so weak. Could it be that he hadn't felt this way since that day nine hundred ninety-three years ago? The very day his ceremony failed and his remaining prospects became bleak?

Ryu knew what he had to do. He had known since the moment the Embryonic Origin Flame fused and enlightened him with the will of the universe. Formerly confusing lines of fate and karma became clear and obvious. Ambiguous and abstruse paths forward fused into a single heavenly lane...

Things couldn't continue as they were. It wasn't a simple matter of Ryu's happiness, it about the life and death of the four Clans that mattered most to him along with countless others.

But he was scared. He was scared to the point of trembling – of tears falling down his face... Even to the point of wanting to vomit both in disgust toward his own cowardice and anguish at the prospect of what lay ahead.

Ryu closed his eyes, his jaw clenching. Moments later, he stood and walked back into the room he shared with Elena. With a heavy weight laying on his heart, he kneeled beside her sleeping body to gently stroke her soft cheek.

The instant Elena moaned awake, he lowered his lips to hers.

Chapter 33: Two People - One Soul

"Hubby?" Elena awoke fully to a set of cold lips on hers. Yet, she felt a sense of warmth and comfort when she saw that set of silver eyes looking down at her.

Ryu's eyes were slightly red, still lingering with remnants of his stored emotions. Still, they had an outpouring of tenderness and love that was rare for him. How long had Elena waited to see this very gaze? How many nights had she dreamt of being awoken by this very kiss that still tingled along her lips? So why did she feel her eyes watering? Why was her chest aching with this disgusting bitter-sweet feeling?

"Elena.." Ryu's voice was barely a whisper as though he feared a louder volume would betray its trembling. "Will you allow me to be selfish?"

The fluttering of Elena's heart quickened. She cupped her fiancé's cheeks, sinking her warmth into their cold.

Without a word, she pulled Ryu down to her, almost melding their bodies into one.

Elena pretended not to notice the moistness that now coated her palms, nor did she hold back her own. She simply immersed herself in the feeling of Ryu's body, delicately removing his robes to reveal his broad but frail chest.

Ryu tried to reciprocate, but his attempts at a gentle, caressing touches were thwarted by his shaking hands. Voices of doubt and discontent rang in his ears. Is this really how you want to do it? She deserves better than this. Can you even call yourself a man?

Maybe it was due to these voices, or maybe it was because he so wanted to forget his own thoughts, but the trembling slowly disappeared. Elena's soft body fell into his embrace, not an ounce of which was lost on him.

Her gown was pulled over her head, revealing skin so soft Ryu almost felt as though he was sinking into a warm cloud. His lips dotted her curvature as he breathed in her intoxicating fragrance.

Elena squirmed under his touch, eagerly lifting her hips to rid herself of the final layer that separated them.

No matter how cool-headed Ryu was, it was impossible for him to remain unaffected. To those residing in the Mortal Plane, such a sight was impossible to see. In their eyes, the cultivators who resided here were their Gods and Goddesses. If Elena appeared, she would be no less than an immortal fairy in their eyes because this was how even Ryu saw her!

This wasn't the first time Ryu had seen his fiancée naked. In fact, it wasn't even the hundredth or thousandth. But, something about the sheen of fragrant sweat on her

delicate skin, the faint blush on her healthy cheeks and the almost pleading expression in her eyes lit a fire within Ryu.

He caressed her cheek, tender affection clear in his eyes. "I want you to know that I'll never leave you. No matter what happens, can you promise me that you'll remember this?"

Elena's pink, crystalline eyes reflected the moonlight as she looked at her fiancé. Unable to trust her words, she nodded.

A sudden nervousness overtook Ryu. Not only was he completely inexperienced, seemingly inconsequential thoughts suddenly felt that now was the time to make their presence known.

Would he hurt her? How fast should he go? He was just a mortal, what if he couldn't satisfy his immortal fiancée? Did Elena care about such things? Should he assume that she wanted to have a child now, or should he take precautions? Dammit, he hadn't prepared, what precautions could he possibly take now?

It wasn't until a light giggle sounded in Ryu's ears that he realized his cold, handsome features had given way to panic. He couldn't help but blush slightly. Still, those feelings were washed away the moment he felt a soft hand grab onto him from below, guiding him toward a wonderful place filled with moist warmth, love and desire.

"I'm willing to allow you to be selfish, but I need one thing from you first." Elena said softly. Her voice was a bit haggard, suffused with a raspy breath that rose and fell along with her ample chest. Even though her hair had also become an absolute mess, it only made her all the more alluring as it clung to her sweat matted forehead.

Ryu didn't let her finish. He knew her next words and she accepted them wholeheartedly.

In the martial world, marriage more than just a simple ceremony. What distinguished wives from concubines was a tradition that dated back several Eras even to the start of the first human civilizations.

A husband and wife weren't just a man and woman, they were two sides of the same coin. It was a union that was wholly sacred, one that bound that fates of two people together for a lifetime and lifetimes.

For the first time in his life, Ryu fully opened his soul to another. Although Elena trembled at the sight she saw, she too reciprocated. In the next moment, their thoughts became one. Nothing of Ryu's was hidden to Elena, nor was anything of Elena's hidden to Ryu. They had come to have a perfect understanding of each other the moment a dull pain pierced Elena's senses.

"You, Elena Tatsuya, will forever be my, Ryu Tatsuya's wife. In life and in death, we walk together. In sadness and happiness, we feel together. In this reincarnation and the next, our souls will always be one."

A swirling of turbid Primordial Yin and Yang filled the room. Moans of passion and fervent desire ricocheted across the walls. Ryu's nervousness had fled as a sense of freedom pervaded his mind. Elena's wants and needs were no longer a mystery to him...

In the end, Elena fell into his embrace and a satisfied sleep, once more clinging to her fiancé's arm as though she was afraid he would disappear.

Maybe ironically, this fear that Elena had irrationally held for so long became reality the next morning.

Nuri's shrill cry of sorrow and pain shook Tatsuya Palace. Elena didn't even need to open her eyes to know that her husband was no longer by her side. An empty void the likes of which seemed to encompass the whole of existence was all that was left behind.

She knew exactly what had happened. She had felt his fear and hesitation, his tears and resolution. And finally, she had felt his death.

Chapter 34: Contorted

[The Legacy of a Sky God is not so easily attained. The next few chapters will be just as difficult to read. Whether or not you have the fortitude to make it through and watch Ryu rise... well maybe only you have the answer to that]

The matters of the Shrine Plane became a blip in history. However, this wasn't because Ryu was too insignificant, but was simply due to the fact that the occurrences after his death were simply far too tragic. An event the likes of which hadn't been seen since the Great Ancient Beast War ravaged the Shrine Plane...

In the face of such a reality, the death of a mortal man who had only lived to his thousandth birthday was inconsequential. While his death was absolutely devastating to a minority, in the grand scheme, he became yet another forgotten hero.

These matters would remain unchanged for nine cycles of one hundred million years.

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The wail of a woman shook a grandly decorated Imperial Harem. One couldn't help but be shocked at the power hidden in her lungs. Who would have thought that a woman without much cultivation to speak of could make such a sound?

Three middle-aged doulas sprinted as fast as their chubby and short legs could carry them, rushing to and from the woman's bed side. One carried buckets of water, another brought fresh and replaced worn towels, while the last massaged the protruding belly of the wailing woman, her palms glowing as she muttered under her breath.

It was clear by the expressions of the three doulas that they had never dealt with such a severe labor period. It had already been three days since First Concubine Leilani had been appropriately dilated to begin actively pushing. Yet, in all this time, there had been no real progress.

This was supposed to be a happy occasion. The King's favorite concubine was finally giving birth after more than a decade of failure. If they were on duty and became responsible for the King's loss of a son, execution would be the least of their worries.

Who didn't know how much the King treasured his heirs? There was a long stretch of time, decades, in fact, where the King only had two daughters to speak of. Although this had changed in just the last four or so years, the King still retained some of that latent anxiety.

They couldn't afford to fail!

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In the largest courtyard of the Imperial Harem grounds, a beautiful young woman leisurely reclined as though the wails of First Concubine Leilani were nothing but music to her ears. It was at that moment that a shadow flashed into the room, appearing behind the woman silently.

"Why have you come?" The young woman's eyes flashed coldly.

"There's been a problem."

"A problem?" Her eyes narrowed, clearly unhappy with these words.

"Although Imperial Doula Miriam is an insignificant creature, her skill in childbirth and rearing is unmatched in our Tor Kingdom. With her pride, if the child had died, even if it meant her death, she would have announced as much."

"Are you trying to tell me that a mere unborn child could survive such a poison?" The young woman sneered. It was obvious what she was implying. There was not a chance in hell such a thing was possible. If there was a failure, it was human. Meaning whoever administered the poison was the one responsible. And the one who was tasked with this was none other than the shadow that stood to her back.

The shadow didn't know how to respond. His life and death rested on a mere word from this Queen. If she truly decided to blame him, there wasn't a place in the entire Plane he could hide.

Wiping away his cold sweat, the shadow immediately explained himself. "Queen Tor, please understand. I am certain that I've done my job appropriately. If the child has survived the Meridian Severing Poison as an unborn, this simply means that he is, or rather, was, an astounding talent. Whether he is born or not, he will no longer be a threat."

The young woman remained quiet for a long time. To the shadow, it felt like an eternity, but in truth, it was no more than a handful of minutes.

"Return to the Clan and give yourself ten lashes of the punishment rod. I'll forgive this matter for now... Indeed, watching her crumble due to having birthed a useless son will be far more gratifying..." The young woman laughed to herself as the shadow bowed and disappeared. No one noticed that fact a man who wasn't a eunuch had entered where he shouldn't have.

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First Concubine Leilani pushed with what remaining strength she had. In all honesty, she had long since wanted to give up. Why was she of all people given the trial of such a difficult labor? She had been pampered her whole life, nothing had ever been difficult, but suddenly an impossible to scale mountain had landed directly before her.

She wanted to sleep and rest. She wanted to take a bath and wipe this crusted sweat from her body. But, this old hag kept applying pressure on her womb. Why wouldn't she just stop? Let me just lie here! She screamed in her mind.

It was then that the cry of a child sounded throughout the Imperial Harem. It seemed that this child inherited his vocal cords from his mother.

His loud bellowing was followed by the abrupt opening of the courtyard's doors. A man of imposing aura and will rushed into the room, ignoring all ceremony to reach the bedside of the now collapsed First Concubine Leilani.

"Your Majesty, it isn't the right time for you to enter. The poor boy still needs to be cleaned and prepped." Imperial Doula Miriam tried to explain. This wasn't the first time the King had had a child. He should know these things by now!

Usually, King Tor would have awkwardly scratched his head at the berating of this older, middle-aged woman. Yet, at the moment, his face had contorted at the sight of his son.

Imperial Doula Miriam panicked, looking at the baby in her arms to see if he had any obvious defects, but her only conclusion was confusion. Why did such a healthy baby evoke such a reaction?

Chapter 35: Imperial Censors

It should have been a happy occasion.

These were words many aware of the situation likely thought. The birth of the fourth Prince of the mighty Tor Kingdom! The King who had spent so long without an heir suddenly had four of them! He should have been ecstatic. However, there was a looming dark cloud over Tor Palace.

It had to be said that even Imperial Doula Miriam was confused by this turn of events. She was well aware of her own abilities, as was everyone else. She had helped hundreds of noble women give birth over her lifetime. In fact, she had even waited on the previous Queen in giving birth to the current King Tor. To say that she was experienced was a severe understatement.

When she received the young baby in her arms, she found not a single defect. In fact, after a few days passed and the young boy's skin cleared and stretched, she was certain that he would grow to be even more handsome than his father.

After some thought, she decided to do a deeper inspection. After all, the King's cultivation was far more profound than her own. The only martial techniques she knew were related to healing, while her cultivation was still at the Pulse Opening Realm. However... The seasoned Miriam was still very much confused. Even though the King's cultivation was deeper than hers, her sensory abilities, especially in relation to babies and their mothers should have been unmatched...

As she expected, after doing a deeper examination of the child, she found him to be the picture of health. His bones were strong, his blood was pure, and his meridians were actually a great surprise. Usually, the meridians of newborns were very frail, this was why the Meridian Awakening Ceremony didn't take place until seven years old. However, this young boy here seemed as though he could take his Ceremony right this moment and come out perfectly fine!

Of course, there were other restrictions as well, such as one's Spiritual Foundation. It was a combination of meridian maturity and this that made it general consensus to wait until the age of seven.

"The mother will survive... The boy is not only healthy, he's even far more talented than his elder brothers and sisters... Even though I'm just a weak old lady, I'm certain that if the Heavenly Body Sect knew of this boy, they would come snatch him up immediately... So why did the King react in that way?..." Imperial Doula Miriam muttered to herself.

Shaking her head, she decided that matters of the royal family were no business of her own.

"Call Lilliana in here, the boy is hungry!" She suddenly called out, walking with the little boy in her arms with a dotting expression. She didn't know why, but she was very fond of this baby boy. Because she felt this way, how could she not choose the wet nurse with the perkier breasts for her little treasure?

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"Forgive me for my candour, your majesty, but we must take drastic measures! I understand that he is your son, but the heavens have blessed you with three other heirs..." A Minister of the Imperial Palace spoke slowly, standing within the Imperial Court.

While the others of the Palace had no idea why such a happy occasion had turned so foul, the upper echelons definitely understood. In fact, they had begun taking the utmost precautions in dealing with the matter. Although they hadn't said it, their eyes displayed their emotions clearly: kill the boy!

A baleful aura erupted from the King. Had these fools never fathered children of their own?! What kind of nonsense was this?! I have three others so it's fine to kill the fourth?!

"Censor Digby. Censor Orson. Censor Briggs. What are your thoughts on the matter?" The King's expression was grave and his eyes were sharp. In just the last few days, his healthy black beard had become rife with strings of grey and white. It was clear to everyone how much this situation weighed on his mind.

He was a handsome young man in his own right. Although he was already fifty or so years old today, his cultivation was deep enough to maintain his looks. He wouldn't have to worry about the end of his life for another one hundred fifty years. Yet, he had gained the heart of an old man in what amounted to less than a week.

In reality, this meeting should have taken place immediately, but he had put it off...

Censor Digby stepped forward first. He was an old, wizened man with a beard as long as his lengthy head of white hair. In truth, he was only ten or so years older than the King, but he had no cultivation to speak of, so this was his appearance.

"Your Majesty," Censor Digby bowed deeply, "You have known for a long time that the role of Imperial Censors is to uphold the moral code and culture of our wonderful Kingdom. On the one hand, this old servant believes that it is morally reprehensible to kill a newborn child no matter the reason. On the other, there needs to be measures taken. The Fourth Prince cannot live a normal life, the cards he's been dealt are too cruel to ignore."

Censor Orson was the newest of the Imperial Censors, having only recently been promoted from a certain Minister rank. As such, he was relatively young, being only forty or so years old. However, he suffered from the same lack of cultivation and frail body Censor Digby did.

"Your Majesty," Censor Orson bowed, "I am young and rash, I hope that my words do not offend you. However, it must be said that the world is cruel and the time is nigh. Although the boy was born with this cruel Fate, Imperial Doula Miriam has reported that he's a heavenly talent the likes of which few have ever seen. If he is allowed to grow, I fear that Tor Kingdom will suffer from internal strife..."

The King's finger twitched. If he didn't know the fallout it would cause, he would have immediately killed this man for daring to speak such words before him. But, in the end, he simply allowed the morbidly obese Censor Briggs to step forward.

"Your Majesty," Despite his size, Censor Briggs too made the effort to bow, "This lowly servant will speak his opinion now.

"Although the matter is as dangerous as Censor Orson describes and is as sensitive as Censor Digby portrays, we must also not forget that a father killing his son will also stain the morale of the Kingdom. In fact, even if this information never spreads and the Fourth Prince comes to be known as a stillborn, it will still have ill affects. This lowly servant suggests that we use more... roundabout methods."