

# Son of the Hero King

## Chapter 11: CH 11: THE CURSE

'So basically my father was the stereotypical archetype of the main character in Japanese Isekai Novels.'

He knew for a fact that the story couldn't be that simple, also there were still many little things, crucial secrets, he wasn't told or made aware of but frankly, it didn't matter to him. His father's past wasn't an issue he wanted to muse on for the time being. He had other more pressing things to handle.

"Master, what do you think I should do?"

Yes, this was the crux of the matter. When you don't understand, simply ask someone knowledgeable, seek and request solutions, or a path you could tread. Discussions always lead to the answers you seek — it's been that way since time immemorial.

It was a rule — a rule Sol lived by throughout the entirety of his life. Be it in this world or in the previous one, that was his motto.

Edea, hearing his question simply smiled, a heartwarming smile, knowing that she was someone Sol could lean on to when debilitating on a matter. Hence, she presented him with her take...

"Sol, I was observing your conversation with little Lilith and she was right about some things. Your life is destined to be one full of immense pressure and burdens, things placed on you by others — the burden of sky-high expectations.

"You will most likely never be praised for your success since it will be expected from you and your failure will only make you a laughingstock even if it isn't a great failure. This is your reality. This is your truth. But...So what?"

Instinctively, Sol could feel the deep feeling of utter disdain contained within each of her words, as she spitted them out to him.

"Sol, you aren't Jupiter nor are you Mars. You are you. You are Sol. So what does it matter if the masses never praise you? As long as your loved ones do so, it will be enough. So what does it matter if the world shuns you at the slightest failure? As long as you get up and continue to fight you will be alright.

"You will be destined for greatness, of that I have no doubt. Do not let common sense bind you. Being the king? Saving the world? That is indeed good. Extremely good even. But what does it matter in the end? Riches and honor are nothing more than ephemeral clouds in front of the power of time. What really matters is how happy you are. And how can you obtain more happiness?"

"By striving to become a little better every day."

"Umu, that's my little boy. Do not compare yourself to anyone. Your goal shouldn't be to become better than someone. That kind of goal is just too sad. A power that can only be said to be strong when compared to someone else is meaningless. What you ought to strive for should be self-improvement. Do everything in your power so that the you of today is better than the you of yesterday."

Finishing her monologue, she waved her hand and a decrepit book appeared in front of her. Like the door, the cover of the book was also illustrated by the motif of a snake eating its own tail.

"This book is as old as me, as you know already. It was gifted by my teacher a long time ago when my sisters and I went under her apprenticeship. We, along with mother dearest, began to be called the five directions as we were the first five witches. The witches of the Beginning"

She informed, a bit weakly at the end, a sad almost melancholic smile hanging on her lips

"Time, Space, Life, and Destruction. West, East, North, and South."

Four witches, four cardinal directions. Dominion over the four cardinal forces making up reality.

However, Sol couldn't help but frown. What about the fifth?

"Origin."

Seemingly, already aware of his silent queries, she answered a beat later, revealing the fifth and prime element of the witches. The strongest of them all.

"From whence it all began, to whence it all shall end..."

She chanted, goosebumps filled Sol's body, his mind reeling, hearing the odd chant. But before he could voice his astonishment, his teacher continued, not minding his state.

"Origin. My teacher, my mother, the central direction — where all originates and inevitably returns to. This is her power. Simply put — she is the one who developed the initial form of all the magic we knew. That isn't all. All witches of all times have a grimoire bound to them where their spells are automatically noted. All those grimoires are also bound to the grimoire of origin that my teacher possess."

"That-!!"

"Yes. My master's power knows no limits. As long as the witches continue to grow stronger she will be the same. Sol, my master is a true monster, a being who defies all logic...not unlike your father. You may wonder why I spoke about all that. It's simple, really. Your father isn't the sole monster to have existed. Before him, monsters defying all logic existed and even after him those beings will still exist."

A teasing smile formed on her face as she uttered her following words.

"Sol. Are you interested in becoming a monster like them?"

Sol simply smiled thinly as a response. Some words once said were only cheapened. Sometimes, the silence was the best answer to a question. A man of great aspirations, he didn't wish to live under the shadow of his family all his life. He wanted to be his own person and create his own future — a future uninfluenced by others.

"Fufufu~! Now that the pep talk is finished let's go back to more pressing matters... Your awakening. Sol, give me a summary of what you know about the awakening."

Sol slowly stirred his tea with his spoon as he mulled over his thoughts, organizing the information in his head in the most concise way possible, before finally answering.

"Humans are the sole race on this world unable to use mana from birth and also the sole race unable to use magic naturally. This situation can only be redeemed once they reach their fifteenth birthday and go through a ritual which is collectively called as the Awakening. From that moment on, they can use mana. But only mana. Not magic."

"What is the difference between mana and magic?"

"If I had to make a simple analogy, mana is a source of energy and magic is one of the results of the manipulation and transformation of said source. Once humans awaken, they can only use mana in its rawest purest form. Manaless as they were, before the awakening, their body didn't adapt in a way to let them manipulate the mana coursing through them into the shapes of magic, hence they could never use magic the traditional way, post-awakening, of course."

"But...?"

"But, there's a way to circumvent this situation. The contract. Also called the pledge. Once humans awaken, their talent is calculated based on two measurements. Firstly the amount of mana they hold, and secondly their capacity."

"Be more precise."

"The Capacity is simply a measuring stick for how many contracts one can make. The higher the capacity the better it is for the wielder. Humans can make a pledge with any beings outside of their race and gain some of the abilities of the individual they pledge with. If they are lucky, they can even get the ability to use the element of the one they contracted with."

Edea nodded with a smile. It was the basis of the world for humans. Contract. The only way for humans to gain true power. Of course, it wasn't impossible to become absurdly strong without a contract but it was without a doubt much much harder. So much so that.

"How do you know how much capacity is needed for one contract?" she asked idly.

"Quality. If humans are judged by their mana and capacity. Then the other races, magical beings as we call them, are judged by their mana and their quality. The quality ranges from E to S with the capacity required increasing greatly with each increase in class. One needs only a capacity of 10 to contract with an E class magical being but they need a capacity of 100 to contract with an S class individual."

"What is the probability for one to be born with 10 points in capacity?"

"10%"

"What about being born with 100 points?"

"...0.0001%"

Even as he breathed out those words he couldn't help but shudder at their implications. Even the worst of the worst capacity could only be obtained by 1 out of 10 people. As for S class? Only 1 out of 1000000 could hope to be born with such capacity.

"Exactly. Sol, you must understand. This world is unfair. One's hard work is without a doubt important. But the blessings one receives at birth are even more so. Take me for example. I was born with a capacity of 5. Barely enough to make a contract with an E-class being. Then, why am I so powerful?"

"Because you are a witch."

"Good... What is a witch, then?"

"The witches are niche beings, amongst the humans, also known as the wives of Asmodeus — The divine beast of Luxuria. Divine beasts and goddesses can make contracts irrelevant to their capacity. But among all the fifteen divine beasts, only Asmodeus was given the right to contract with a large number of humans."

"Continue"

"A contract with Asmodeus allows humans to use magic but they have to pay certain prices. The first being the curse of eternal youth. Even until their death. A normal witch will never look older than a prepubescent girl. The second being the curse of love. All their relationships are doomed to fail one way or another. The third one... "

Reaching here, he fidgeted, as was the case each time he had to talk about the witches. The third class was just... special, in its cruel aspects. He knew that the first curse wasn't really a curse as it didn't bother most witches. The second one was a little harsh, but then again it was an acceptable price but the third one...

"Do not hesitate. Go on."

"The third curse is the curse of infertility. A witch's body is cursed to never be able to give birth."

"Yes." A melancholic smile, sadder and more painful than any of the ones she showcased before appeared on her beautiful face — a face full of loneliness, of unending times — as she painfully acknowledged his words.

"Asmodeus is really a wicked being. Each of those curses when taken alone isn't a big deal. But when taken together? It's like saying, 'Since you wish for power. I will give it to you. But in exchange, I curse you to live an eternal miserable life full of absolute solitude. You will never be able to love and you will never be loved in return.'"

Truly, it was a life not many could muster the will to take...