

Hero King 381

[Son of the Hero King](#)

Chapter 381: INTERLUDE16:BLUE DRAGON

What was the first thing she heard?

“This is the first time I'm doing something like this. I wonder if I was able to do it well.”

What was the first thing she saw?

The sight of an ethereally beautiful woman, standing tall and proud with every bit of majesty existence had to offer.

Even though she did not understand everything, perhaps she wasn't able to understand anything, she already 'knew' one fact from the moment she came into existence. This being was her mother. Her creator.

For divine beasts, from the moment they were born, they were already bestowed a certain level of knowledge by their progenitors. Their predecessors. Their parents.

The name bestowed to her was... Kiyohime.

She did not know what this name meant or even if there was any importance to it. She just knew that the moment she was bestowed that name, she obtained the power to control the element of water.

The authority to rule over all the seas.

“You are old enough now. It should not take long for you to become a King.”

Her life was calm. It was complete.

She only lived with that woman, Tiamat, her mother. The only one she could look up to in all the realms.

During those years, she witnessed many sights and went through many experiences. All new, all wonderful.

She saw how a world with one large sun was slowly changed into one with many little small stars.

She observed how the world was divided into many layers and how floating islands and sea came to be.

She even helped in the creation and development of this world. For she felt like it was her duty, her destiny to be a helping hand to her progenitor.

“Listen to me Kiyohime, One day, this world shall be entirely for you to command.”

How happy she had been when she heard those words. She still remembered it vividly as though it had happened just yesterday.

The two of them would sleep together, wake up together, eat, and simply live happily with each other, or well, that's how she interpreted their interactions. Tiamat would teach her how to fight and how to use her powers and she would take care of Tiamat in return.

The sky was their roof and the ground and the immeasurable seas were their bed.

It was a simple life, a fulfilling life. A very simple life for sure, however, it was also perhaps the happiest time of her long long life.

That happiness, that serenity, their quiet and fulfilling time together... It didn't last for long, however.

“Now that our world is set. We need more people to inhabit the lands.”

Kiyohime looked blankly at her mother. Not understanding her reasonings. Nor did she know what to say to her creator.

Why did they have to populate this world?

Weren't the two of them more than enough? Why did they need to add anyone else?

Was she useless? Did she do anything wrong?

Kiyohime felt uneasy. But she did not voice her thoughts out loud due to fear. She feared and revered her Lord.

It was not her place to do so after all. Tiamat was her lord, her creator, and her empress. Perhaps those more than a mother she can ever be.

“I hear and obey.”

That was all she needed to say.

Like this, her younger brother was born.

His name was Fafnir.

Kiyohime did not like Fafnir from the get-go.

The precious time she could spend alone with her mother was interrupted by that unknown and loud young boy.

How could she be happy in that state?

So she asked, “Mother. He is so weak and useless. Why did you create him? Why do you take care of him?”

Tiamat looked at her with an unfathomable smile, “You were also born weak and useless, weren't you?”

It was like a shock had run through her body. Her brain had stopped all functions at her slight rebuttal.

Indeed. Even now she couldn't match the great power of her mother. Why then was she created? Why was she protected?

“Take care of your brother, like I have taken care of you.”

Kiyohime never forgot those words. Now awake she did the first thing she was taught by Tiamat.

She beat him up.

Simple and brutal trashing.

But she did not simply inflict gratuitous violence upon him.

She taught him. Took care of him. Helped him grow both as a warrior and a person.

The years passed and their numbers increased. From two they became four, and from four they became eight.

The first eight dragons.

Kiyohime had long since forgotten what her mother's embrace felt like.

But she did not mind. After all, Tiamat loved her the most out of them all.

She was the Eldest Dragon. She was the one with the most authority. She was the only one who had been personally taken care of for a long time by Tiamat herself.

Time continued to pass. War came and went. The number of pure and mixed dragons continued to grow and the reputation of the Dragon grew as well.

Lustful, greedy, prideful. This was how the dragons were seen. But there was one thing no one could ever go against.

They were strong. They were the strongest of them all.

But Kiyohime never changed.

She was the Dragon Queen. The second most influential among all the dragons. She had taken care of and raised nearly all the dragons.

This was her greatest pride.

But her pride was brutally shattered one day.

On that fateful and dark and grim day like no other...

“Marduk! Why are you doing this!?”

The fight was happening in a dying world. They had cornered the rebels under the order of Apsu.

Marduk was one of the cadres and also one of the dragons she enjoyed training the most. He was truly like a son to her or perhaps a younger brother of sorts.

This was why. She could not understand.

Why? Just why were they doing this? Why were dragons spilling the blood of others dragons? Why did they have to kill each other?

“Please! I beg you! Just stop. I will plead to mother. I am sure she will understand. You and the other can still be forgiven!”

She begged in tears even as her gigantic dragon form flew down and made sure to keep him down.

The fight opposing the two dragons was bringing the dead world to the brink of its destruction. Using her powers, Kiyohime alone had made sure that this world would never have water ever again, encapsulating and accelerating the already accelerated end of this world.

But she did not care. She could not have the leisure to hold back against Marduk when trying to restrain him.

Marduk laughed, "My queen...You know very well it is impossible. That heartless monster will never pardon us and I do not wish to be pardoned either."

His words were like knives that were plunged straight at her heart.

What should she do?

She knew what she had to do and this was all the more mortifying to her.

"Why...?"

"Because we had to. We are just weapons. That heartless monster does not care about our well-being. She only cares about reaching greater heights. Our life or death is just an afterthought. Why do we have to fight a war we care not about? What does it matter to us whether Chaos or Order wins?"

Kiyohime gritted her teeth, "Thus are her orders."

"Then you are nothing but a tool my dear queen."

Kiyohime closed her eyes, "I guess no further discussion is possible."

"Any possible form of discussion had been impossible for a long time, perhaps, there were no possibilities from the beginning..."

Kiyohime sobbed. But she did not look away.

The moment Kiyohime changed her objective from Restraint to Elimination... Marduk had no chance.

The fight was swiftly resolved and Marduk was executed.

Changing into her human form. Kiyohime slowly approached his dying body.

"Any last words?"

"Haha... Even at this moment, you are too kind."

Marduk laughed with difficulty before finally closing his eyes, "It's truly a shame. If you were the empress... This rebellion might have never happened."

Kiyohime expression was hollow. Wherever she looked, she could see the dead bodies of her compatriots. The people she raised and gave her love to.

"You finally killed him."

Kiyohime looked startled. She knew that she could not whimper about her fate. The one who should feel really sad was Tiamat. After all, she had to witness her children kill each other.

Surely she must be feeling crushed. Even more so than herself.

This was what Kiyohime naively thought.

But when she looked up, spinning her mind to find the words to console her surely heartbroken mother...

'Ah...'

Tiamat's expression was apathetic.

Even though her children were killing each other.

Even though she had to kill the one who might have become her mate.

The Empress showed no trace of sadness. Not even the slightest vestige of a falling tear.

"Destroy their bodies. Those pesky necromancers are becoming more numerous."

"Is it all you have to say!?"

Kiyohime screamed. For the first time in her whole life, she raised her voice against Tiamat.

"What might you mean? Should I be weeping because of mere traitors?"

"But... They are your children! Even if they took the traitors aside, what about those who fought for you!? Are they not even worthy of a word from you?"

"They died a worthy death as warriors."

"Hah.... Hahaha..."

Kiyohime felt something break inside of her at that moment and could only laugh dumbfoundedly.

"Truly... You are truly a heartless monster as Marduk said. He was right all along, huh?"

"Watch your words."

Kiyohime lowered her head in silence and Tiamat shrugged before walking away, "Kill all the last traitors. Marduk's daughter and put an end to this farce."

"I refuse."

Step

Tiamat stopped and gave a deep look at Kiyohime who looked back at her fiercely.

"Do not make me repeat myself. All traitors are to be killed."

"I refuse. She did not kill any dragons. Her crime is not worthy of death."

The standoff between the two dragons became tense. All the other dragons were flying and wondered what they should do if the Queen and the Empress were to fight.

In the end, a small smile flashed on Tiamat's face before she walked away,

“Do as you wish. You can also spare the other traitors with minor offenses if you so wish. But mark my words. One day, you will regret this decision.”

Kiyohime stayed silent as she watched the departing and somewhat lonely back of Tiamat, her mother.

This was her first victory against her mother.

But this victory did not have a sweet taste to it. Only a very bitter one filled with sadness, despair, and unceasing remorse.

A few thousand years later, as Kiyohime had to kill her brethren once again, she could only smile sadly.

Was her decision back then wrong? Was this second rebellion caused by her indecisiveness?

She did not know. But she had indeed learned her lesson.

Even so, she did not believe that Tiamat was right.

This was why, remembering Marduk's words, unbeknownst to everyone, Kiyohime took a very important decision in her heart.

One day, she would....

END OF VOL 10

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Chapter 382: VOL11/ CH 348: I AM BACK

It was a day like any other, at least in appearance.

The sun was shining brightly high above in the clear blue sky and the people, humans, were waking up with the illumination of the incandescent globe to work. The usual routine all humans followed every single day.

The air was slightly chillier, the proof that snow might fall at any time.

News of the growing hostility between Lustburg and Wratharis was concerning, to say the least. However, for normal humans, there was practically nothing they could do but pray. Pray for all of their worries and all the adversities to wash away.

If there was one thing that was making the people unsettled though, it was the absence of their prince.

Already, numerous rumors were set out that the prince just might have been part of the unlucky group who died unexpectedly during the exploration in the Astral Realm.

While such a thing had never happened before in the long history of Lustburg, there was always a first for everything.

The news was still only muttered in pubs and a few working places. But like any rumors, they were slowly growing and the more they did, the more unsettled the population in the capital became.

[Lustburg— Tower of Babel]

Sitting in her office, Milia listened quietly as agents of the fingers were giving her their daily reports. This one in particular detailed the growing rumors related to the prince's disappearance and untimely demise.

"Did you pick out the one spreading the rumors?"

"Yes, I have. They are mostly war slaves or descendants of the war slaves from Wratharis. We managed to get the names of most of them but we are awaiting further orders before acting out."

Milia nodded to the agents' piece. Lustburg, despite being predominantly a human country, still had a very mixed population. Beastmen in particular really took a vast majority of the place in this mixed-populated kingdom going as far as to come second in terms of population percentage. This was, of course, due to all the wars that transpired over the long years between the two rivaling countries.

As it was now, many beastmen were naturalized citizens of Lustburg and considered this to be their home.

But the news about another incoming war was creating tension among the populace and that included the beastmen who were having trouble in determining their roots due to this harrowing situation.

Milia had to be very careful about her next set of actions. She couldn't just order a strike to take them all down and have them beheaded for treason or slander against the crown.

If the Crown Prince were to be accused of racism or mistrust toward the beastmen who took this country as their home due to her actions, it would be hard to placate the general populace.

'This is absolutely definitely way above my pay grade.'

The one who should be taking the decisions in this scenario should have been Lilith. But she was currently taking her hand off of anything related to governance or any sort of work in general. Milia knew that her state was abysmal. Her body was deteriorating at breakneck speeds and she didn't know how long she could hold on...

Persephone and Medea were doing just about everything that they possibly could, giving their best to ensure her survival but her body was slowly but surely giving out all of its functions. In another ten days, probably even less, Lilith might just simply fall over and die like a mechanical doll deprived of all its energy to remain functioning.

"Your highness..."

Milia muttered, tired but still holding on to that ray of hope. She simply needed to keep fighting on. On and on until her lord, her lover appeared and set everything straight.

But it was then...

"Milia!"

The door of her office was busted open as a beautiful and busty elf entered the room, clearly short of breath as though she had just finished a marathon.

"Clara?"

Standing up, Milia threw a confused glance at the tired elf. They might have worked together for only a few days, but she had more or less managed to understand the personality of that elf coworker of hers.

She knew that she was a steady woman who liked to do everything in order and not show a flustered appearance in any situation.

And yet, she seemed to be panicking right now for who knows what. Her face looked pale and her hair was messed up. It must have been an ominous situation of peril for her to end up like she was.

"What happened? Did something happen to the queen?!"

The elf shook her head vigorously, looking around the room nervously.

"No, no, no. It's just... I'm sorry.."

She took a deep breath before giving a beaming smile that contrasted with her previous look, throwing Milia into a spiral of confusion before her words registered in her ears, "It's about his highness, we just received a piece of great news from the Church. He is coming back today."

The words echoed through the room and Milia opened her eyes wide into saucers before an ecstatic smile bloomed on her tired and haggard face.

"Today?! Now? Today of all days, he is returning?"

Clara nodded happily.

"Yes!"

Milia grabbed Clara by the shoulders and hugged her tightly,

"Oh, thank you so much!"

She kept repeating the same phrase until her voice failed to be conveyed.

After that, she quickly stood up and called for the guards in the room.

"I want you to inform everyone that His Highness is returning today. We cannot be sloppy. Send the message to all the nobles from the Counts and up. Also, call the maids so that we can start the preparation as soon as possible."

She then focused on Clara once more. "What about the church? What are they doing? Do we have an exact time as to when he will come?"

"They say that he is still going to need time. But it should be in approximately 12 hours from now on."

Milia nodded, satisfied by her response.

"Then let us hurry and prepare the castle."

Milia's smile was so wide people would fear she was going to get a cramp. She had been worried about the absence of Sol for so long. But now, she just needed to hold on for a few more hours and her beloved lord would be back in her embrace.

In the queen's chamber, Persephone was sitting by Lilith's bedside as she helped in feeding her life energy.

Even though Lilith was currently still able to move, it was clear that she was getting weaker by the day.

Medea and Freya were also there with her while Lilin and Setsuna were standing guard outside. It was very hard for Lilin to see her mother slowly getting weaker like this but all she could do was stand here and pray for her recovery. Pray for a miracle so that she could recover from all her ailments.

"So... You really are planning to go to Wratharis? Don't tell me you're going to try and kill that mutt."

"*Cough* *Cough* You should know how weak I have now become. Since I am going to die anyway, there is no need to respect the rules. I just need to kill that crazy dog and die with him. The other kingdoms will not fault Lustburg for the dying act of a lunatic. At most, we will have to pay a fine. I just need Freya to teleport me and we are all set."

Persephone shook her head, "You really believe that it's what he would want?"

They didn't need to say a name. Lilith knew very well that what she was planning on doing would make him very sad. But what else could she do?

"I... all my life has been dedicated to fighting."

Lilith was born and created for that one and only purpose. She was a sword. A sword meant to sever the head of all the enemies blocking the path of the one she served.

"I do not want to die like a helpless woman. Not even at my last moments, please..."

Lilith did not fear death. She even wished for it to come, to embrace her in its rotten embrace. Even now that feeling never faded for a single bit. For her, death was the sweet release she sought. But she refused to die a useless and pathetic death.

She wanted to die like a warrior. The warrior that she was and will always be. Clashing her sword against another one and raining death on the battlefield.

"I...want to die as a hero."

Indeed. A hero. Like 'him'.

Medea opened her mouth, wishing to explain the news she had received about Sol. But she was interrupted when Lilin, Setsuna, and a battle maid entered the room with great strides.

An excited expression was plastered on Lilin's face as she delivered the ecstatic news,

"Sol is coming back!!!"

Slowly the news of Sol's impending arrival filled the streets. Everywhere, soldiers, slaves, and volunteers could be seen, decorating buildings and other infrastructures.

Commoners could see nobles in their carriages running toward the church like their life depended on it. It made for a funny sight but readily confirmed the reality of the news.

The citizens were happy to see the return of the Son of the Hero King. They saw Blessed as gifts sent by the heavens above. Indeed, the goddesses had granted them a gift.

But for the nobles who had lived for hundreds of years, such trivial events were nothing but a nuisance. Their only concern was to make a show of appearance and not be singled out. The way all traitors were coldly executed back then was still fresh on their troubled minds.

"Hehe. This is just my luck..."

A certain noble laughed softly as he left the church. He was an old man. One could easily guess his age by looking at him. But he still smiled cheerfully.

"Well, I just have to pray before I leave. If I don't do that, the goddess will surely curse me."

He then returned to the church where he looked around. There was no sign of the Supreme Daughter or the Holy Daughter. But she was supposed to be in that cathedral, so there was no problem.

"Let's go."

With that said, he passed through the gate and headed down the main road. There was a huge crowd gathered outside the palace. And he was sure that all of them were waiting for 'Him'. Their future king.

[Church of Castitas— Hall of Purity]

"How do I look?"

Standing in front of a mirror, Aurore asked as the nuns were working on her ceremonial outfit. For once it was not as showy as her usual one and covered all of her beautiful curves. But the feeling of holiness coming from her did not change a single bit.

"You look lovely, simply... Divine."

"Heheh. I do, right?"

Aurore did not feel any shame or embarrassment as they praised her beauty while skirting blasphemy. She had already known that she was beautiful since she was a child. In fact, she felt no need to hear these kind words from others.

However, the truth was that she had never seen herself as beautiful. It was only recently that she came to realize just how useful it was to have a beautiful physical appearance.

"I am sure his Highness will be entranced once his eyes land on you."

"Is that so?"

She gave a mysterious smile as she stood up.

"Let's go."

And she left the room, leaving the nun behind. Aurore then went into the chapel and prayed to purify herself.

For her, this act was not a mere formality. It was something much more than that. She had become accustomed to praying. Every night she would kneel in prayer and ask the goddesses for protection in front of the other nuns.

"It's time to meet my prince charming."

She muttered calmly.

A few hours later, as Camelia, Aurore, and Lilith, the current highest ranked in Lustburg stood in front of the portal that connected to the Astral Realm.

Light slowly began to fill the room as an aura of power and oppression spread throughout. For a moment, even Lilith felt goosebumps and instinctively reached for the sword dangling at her hips.

But Camelia only showed a bright smile, after all, she would never mistake this aura for anyone else. Even if it changed even more. Grew further and further than the small candle it once was.

"Welcome back, your Highness."

She bowed lightly, and once her words registered in the mind of those presents, all the nobles, no matter how highly ranked they were, all put one knee on the ground and kneeled in wait.

Walking through the portal, showing a dashing smile full of confidence was a man they remembered.

Sol Dragona Luxuria.

Crown prince and the unequivocal heir to the throne of Lustburg.

"I am back home."

He was back, stronger than ever before.

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Chapter 383: CH 349:PRESSURE

The moment Sol appeared in the church's main hall, after passing through the door, all the nobles gathered took a deep breath out of pure astonishment.

Be it physically or in terms of the aura he naturally exuded, the prince they remembered was very different from the one that was now standing before their eyes.

The prince of old, while talented, lacked the experience only those who truly treaded on the thin line of life and death held. Furthermore, as talent did not translate into power, he lacked the raw almighty power to make the nobles truly fear and respect him with all their hearts.

For this very reason, many of them often joked that the only difference between Sol and the Puppet King, Neptune, was that Sol was lucky enough to have powerful women surrounding him.

But now?

The aura he was exuding... It was unmistakable as to what realm he was treading on right now. Sol was currently at the Duke rank and a powerful Duke at that. The natural pressure he exuded was a testament to that fact. This alone was enough to put him at the very top of the kingdom. If Lilith and Camelia were left out of the equation then Sol could quite possibly be the most powerful person on the side of Humanity, currently.

How long had it been since he had awakened? Not even a year had passed since that fateful day. Nay... From the perspective of the crowd gathered here, was it even three months in? And he had already become a full-pledged Duke?

Not even Mars Luxuria had managed to accomplish such a feat.

This knowledge, more than anything, managed to put dread in all of their hearts. Every single one of them, without exception, was forced to accept this reality.

Gulp

Many nobles on the weaker side of the spectrum had difficulty breathing due to how overpowering the natural pressure of his presence and mana were. His very existence had putten pressure on this realm that naturally weighed on the individuals residing in it.

Furthermore, Sol was in his hybrid dragon appearance right now, minus the wings. Therefore, that state alone amplified his already exemplary aura and pressure.

“Your highness...”

A gentle inflection of Camelia’s voice caught Sol’s attention and with just a look of her gentle blue eyes, she was able to convey her thoughts to him.

‘Ah...’

Looking at his surroundings, Sol was confused for a very short instant before realization finally dawned on him. He couldn’t help but leak a bitter chuckle at the sight.

The pressure he was emanating was not done intentionally on his part. Be it Tiamat, Anubis, or the dragons, in general, they were all so powerful that they would leak a certain pressure and aura that was impossible to withstand normally. Without emanating an equal pressure to offset the ones they leaked, one would simply be crushed to death by their presence alone.

Furthermore, the Dragon realm’s gravity was far higher than that of the mortal world, making it essential for him to offset it too. This was another reason why he had to always keep a certain output of his energy running to offset or in the early days endure the constant pressure and shackles that caged his body and soul.

At first, it was quite straining to pull off but as he got used to that place it became a subconscious act that he would do without even thinking.

But that subconscious act of his was enough to nearly knock out all the nobles present here to celebrate his arrival. This very scenario was an important reminder to him. The feeling that he once received after meeting Tiamat for the very first time. An oppressive pressure that crushed all those she deemed to not be worthy to be graced by her presence.

'So is this the feeling of coming back to the starting village after reaching a high level?'

"Everyone... Rise..."

Simple words, but they sounded like orders that could not be defied by anyone. Lest heavenly punishment may befall then and there.

Slowly standing up, all the nobles were gazing at him with a plethora of emotions brimming in their gazes.

The Crown Prince.

One who had stayed outside the prying eyes of the world for nearly fifteen years. Fifteen long years, enough for a dynasty to fall and a new one to take its place.

And now...

That boy obscured and veiled from the clutches of reality...

He was now standing in front of them in all his glory...

Sweeping the room with a glance, Sol could see the few acquaintances he had, in this realm, from the Duke's side.

He could also see his loved ones, all dispersed in the room in different places.

The corners of his mouth were pulled into a radiant smile at that sight, "I am surprised to see you all gathered here and now. But very well... Let it be known that I have come back successful after a perilous journey.

"I, Sol Dragona Luxuria, signed a contract with an S-ranked Divine Beast of the Phoenix race and was recognized by the goddess for my deeds. Let it be known by everyone..."

"That the Crown Prince... is now ready to become the new King."

Lightning boomed in the heavens as the cry of a bird, nay a beast of unparalleled power filled the sky... While the flame of judgment swiftly bloomed to cover the entirety of the skies, as though stretching beyond the very limits of the horizon itself.

It was a day like no other that all those present in the Capital would never forget.

It was the beginning of the era of their new King!!!

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After Sol spoke those words and chased out the nobles from the church, they were greeted with an unbelievable sight outside. Whenever they would gaze above at the sky, their hearts would be filled with terror as they looked at the large black phoenix standing on the peak of the cathedral and looking down at them with its ominous eyes.

Even though the look and color of that phoenix were slightly different from what they remembered, no one dared to even entertain the thought that this was a fake.

As all humans were blessed by Luxuria and Castitas, they could feel it in their very blood as what that beast represented. This was indeed a phoenix. A powerful and mighty phoenix and Sol, their new king, once again did the impossible by becoming the first human to have ever formed a contract with a Phoenix.

All the nobles could feel it. The sky that was once covered by Mars' shadow was slowly being dispersed by the light of a new Sun, as ironic as that may sound to one.

They did not know what this would mean for the future of Lustburg.

Not all Kings had been necessarily good for this kingdom, after all. But they knew that there was nothing they could do except comply and obey.

This was the Divine law of this world.

Likewise, Tyr Highland, alongside Ares and Athena were also gazing at the sky as they left the church...

"We should go back to the castle."

"Grandfather...Do you think she will be a problem?"

Tyr could only form a bitter smile at those words, "I do not know. Either way, now that the prince is back, I suppose the fight to decide his fiancée and concubines will be fiercer than ever."

He chuckled at last before gazing at his granddaughter, "You should prepare. Until you rise to take my place, you will work as his Knight."

"Understood."

Tyr shook his head as he walked away. Things were going to be rather interesting from here on.

He looked up as small snowflakes began to fall.

'Winter had finally arrived.'

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While the nobles were leaving and thinking about the future of the kingdom, a red-haired woman wearing what amounted to basically underwear, sat in a bar with a drink in hand as she slept lightly.

Even though she was extremely attractive and wore clothes so skimpy that even a whore would blush in shame, no one dared to approach, much less disturb her sleep.

As long as one wasn't dumb, it was easy to know that some people simply couldn't be messed with and this woman was like a red herring to that proverb.

Letting out a sigh, the woman looked up at the sky, "Damn. I thought I would have a few more days to play around in here. I seriously forgot the time difference between this place and there, after being here for so long."

She stood up and approached the bartender before leaving a few gold coins on the counter, "Take this."

The bartender's eyes bulged at this sight as those coins were old coins from a few generations ago. Their value was superior to current gold coins as they were very valuable for a certain type of people.

"Madam... You... You might have a mistake."

"Oh?" The woman tilted her head before understanding the situation, "I like honest men like you. You can keep them. Also, your wine is not bad but you can make it better."

She chuckled and wrote a recipe before handing it to him and leaving a very confused bartender with one of the finest wine recipes and a hefty sum of money.

"Hmmm!!"

Once outside, she stretched her body, showing her graceful form to the world before walking toward the tower of Babel.

She didn't want to stay in the mortal world for too long anyway. It was time to talk business.

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Chapter 384: CH 350:SWIFT REUNION

"This is quite the show you have put on just after coming back."

After all the nobles and nuns were made to leave the hall, the only people present were Sol, Camelia, Lilith, Lilin, Setsuna, and Milia.

The one speaking those words with a slight chuckle gracing her lips as she looked at Sol with a mischievous glint, was none other than Camelia herself. Her words, as she had accurately predicted, made Sol blush slightly in embarrassment as he coughed lightly to hide his embarrassment.

"I thought that coming on strong would give a more lasting impression. After all, I don't have enough feats to back up my authority for now."

Camelia smiled brightly as she approached him before taking him in a tight hug. She had really missed her beloved even in the short time he was away from them, and Sol could feel that in the way she hugged him. It was a hug full of love, passion, and the longing she felt for him., "Welcome back."

She had to look up as she hugged him. She didn't notice it at first but as she hugged him, she was startled to realize that Sol had become taller and more muscular than she remembered him to be.

Sol nodded to her words and hugged her back with tender affection. Soon, he shifted his gaze to all of his loved ones. As he stretched his gaze and encapsulated their forms in his vision, he couldn't help but say, "It's good to be home."

He was particularly happy to see that Lilith could stand and walk to come and see him. It meant that things hadn't deteriorated to the last stage yet.

"You have become strong, Sol."

This was all Lilith said when she felt his gaze on her but that was enough for his face to break into a broad grin full of pride and delight. Being recognized as strong by someone on her level was a

compliment beyond anything one could imagine. It was a testament to his strength and a reminder that his hard work had borne fruit.

"I still have a long way to go."

"You have the right mindset."

She nodded and chose to remain silent after that as she watched Lilin run and jump in his arms with a fervent expression on her face while Setsuna advanced toward him in a calm and stoic way. It was just like them to do something like this.

They were obviously both very happy to see him back. After all, while it has only been two weeks in the mortal realm since they regularly trained in Medea's world, their sense of time was quite distorted as well.

Sol ended greeting all of his loved ones by hugging Milia, who had stayed silent until now and was simply observing him from afar. Out of them all, she was perhaps the happiest and most relieved about seeing him back but she didn't want to show her weak self to the others, not even in such a situation where she wanted nothing more but to jump in Sol's embrace and spend the whole day there by his side.

Thankfully Sol would have none of that.

Milia had been one of the people he had really wanted to see. After all, he knew that she was one of the most unstable of his girls in the mortal world. Not unlike Nefertiti.

The warm reunion was interrupted as one young girl, approached them and gave a curtsy.

Sol was quite displeased at first but this changed into a look of surprise, as he took a careful look at the appearance of the one interrupting them,

'Blue eyes and Golden hair.'

"You are...?"

"Forgive me, your highness. I am Aurora Castitas, from the Highland family."

"So you are his granddaughter..."

Sol couldn't help but direct a complicated glance as he looked at the very reason why a father figure in his life decided to betray him. It was even more surprising to know that she was the goddess Castitas' Holy Daughter of this generation.

A Holy Daughter had been missing until now, but now that there was a new one... Sol frowned inwardly.

This seriously didn't bode well for Camelia. It seemed that this young girl's sole reason for existence was to create trouble for him. First with Gerald and now with Camelia.

"I am happy to meet you Aurora and I believe we will have more time to discuss later. But right now I am quite tired and would like to rest a little."

Aurora knew that Sol was asking her to leave with those subtle words of his but she showed no frustration nor anger on her face.

She was well in her right to say no to him. After all, the church was her territory and Sol's authority did not surpass her in this place. Even if he were to become the King of Lustbutg. But she did not try to fight back and simply nodded her head, acknowledging his request.

“Very well, I hope that in the next few days we will be able to have a good conversation between us. After all, it’s necessary for the Church and the Royal family to maintain a good relationship.”

She chuckled as she said those words, and a mysterious glance toward Sol, one whose meaning was even beyond him, he who could even manipulate Fate itself. Soon, she took a step back before walking away from this gathering.

Looking at her departing back, Setsuna growled softly, “I do not like that woman.”

“You aren’t the only one.”

Lilin showed the same reaction as Setsuna. Perhaps it was because Aurora was of the same generation as them. They were quite unhappy about the unbridled confidence she was showing before them and the way she talked to Sol just now was particularly displeasing.

“Why don’t we forget the unpleasant matter? We have so much to catch up on. Sol, you have so much you need to tell us. Also, why don’t you tell your friend to come down?”

Sol nodded but advanced toward Lilith and held her hand, “Isis is a little shy so forgive her for not coming down and greeting everyone, right now. She will come down as soon as she calms herself. We will have all the time in the world for me to tell you what happened to me during my adventure in the Astral Realm. But now, I believe we have a more important and pressing issue at hand.”

As he said so, he squeezed her hand lightly, “I believe we need to do something about your problem, dear aunt of mine.”

Sol was able to procrastinate when he was in the Astral Realm because of the difference in the flow of time between the two worlds. But now that he was back here in the mortal realm, it was time for him to accomplish one of the main reasons he even started that whole trip.

It was time to heal Lilith and if he wasn’t wrong, Hathor should already be in Lustburg right now.

With her help and his own powers, he refused to believe that they could not save her.

Meanwhile, after Aurora left the hall, the bright smile brimming on her face slowly vanished until it was replaced by a simple expressionless face. As if she was simply a doll having her strings pulled from someone high above.

She massaged her cheeks slightly, trying to put back her usual smile. She had been spending hours in front of the mirror, every day, as she trained her expressions, the way she spoke, walked, or stood by herself.

It was quite a boring routine but it was one she enjoyed. It helped her keep order in her life and maintain the idea of being a pure and smiling saint. There were so many things she was still lost about as the world had changed so much since the last time she was awake.

But today, her mask nearly fell. After all, the disregard Sol showed her was quite obvious. Aurora didn't want to be petty but for the life of her she could not understand why Sol basically ignored her like that, "Well, at least the first contact was established."

She was in no hurry. She would slowly build their relationship from there. As the holy daughter, she will always have one step on Sol's side. This was her duty as the overseer of the church's side of things.

'I wonder what will his face be like when I tell him the truth.'

She chuckled, awaiting that day with impatience. For now, though, they simply needed to become friends or whatever step there was that needed to be established for a gradual advance in their relationship. Then everything would go as she intended.

'I need to use my time well.'

With those thoughts, she completely left the place and went to her quarters. Patiently biding her time for the right moment to strike. After all, time was the last thing she needed to be worried about.

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Chapter 385: CH 351:HEALTHY RIVALRY?

Once Sol decided that they needed to accelerate, he called Isis so that she could at least get to know his family. After all, they were all family now. It was necessary to get everyone on the same page.

When Isis came down from the top of the church and took her human form, she had to admit that she was feeling a little scared.

The mortal realm felt so foreign and alien to her. Even though there was no difference in appearance, the difference in mana quantity and quality was so high that she felt like she was a fish outside of water.

It wasn't just a metaphor as divine beasts like her basically breathed mana into their everyday life.

As if it wasn't enough, the restrictions in space in this world were so tight that she was like a whale taken from the sea and forced to stay in a aquarium.

It went without saying that it was extremely uncomfortable. But this wasn't what really scared Isis. After all, she had already known how bad the environment would be.

What scared her was how her first meeting with her new family would be. She didn't have Nefertiti or the others so she was the only one from the Astral realm faction that was present so to speak.

Would the other girl shun and bully her? Would they simply ignore her? It was with those apprehensions that she went down and goddess, the gaze and scrutiny she felt suddenly on her made her break into cold sweat.

It wasn't hostile. It wasn't even something like distaste or such petty feeling. She could feel that she was being observed in everyway possible as if they were trying to understand her greatest secret.

She could feel some jealousy from the wolf girl and the young purple-haired woman. The gaze of the cow woman was completely devoid of any emotion.

The older purple-haired woman was gazing at her with clear wariness and as for the blonde one...

'She can look into souls?'

Isis was surprised but did nothing to hide her soul. After all, she had nothing to hide.

"Hello everyone, my name is Isis. Happy to meet you."

So she greeted them with a somewhat awkward and shy smile, not really knowing what she should say or do.

"Isis, can I ask you to stay here and get to know everyone? I plan to heal my esteemed aunt as fast as possible."

"Don't you need my help?"

Isis desperately wanted to leave now and she was sure her Nirvana could be of some help. But Sol smiled before leaving through the Warp gate of the church that connected the church to the Tower of Babel.

The woman named Lilith tried to protest but she could only stay silent as Sol pulled her without asking for her permission and left.

"Lilin, stay with them."

The younger purple hair, most likely a sister or daughter of the older version, gave an awkward smile and nodded.

Like this, Sol, Lilith, and Milia left the church.

Now alone, Isis gave a shy smile as she waved her hand, "Hey...?"

'This girl is...Quite nice?'

Camelia noticed inwardly, as she observed Isis.

'A little too nice.'

Camelia knew all the women who rejoined Sol's harem had something fundamentally broken about them. One way or another, they were all slightly mentally unstable, to say the least. They lacked something and that need was fulfilled by Sol. It was one of the reasons why they were all so devoted to him.

But this girl?

Her clothes were the only thing dark about her. Inwardly, she was shining so brightly that it was like looking at a lighthouse or like looking at a moon reflecting the light of the sun.

Camelia squinted.

'I wonder if she is suitable for Sol?'

Isis, who would have never guessed that Camelia was dissatisfied with her because she wasn't 'broken enough' was trying to make friends.

"You must be Setsuna. Sol talked about you many times. His most loyal knight."

Setsuna smiled a little but it was mostly a bitter smile. She wasn't feeling well.

'Just how much had he grown? What about that woman?'

In an ideal world, Setsuna would have been Sol's first contract. They would have shared a bond that not even death could take away.

In an ideal world, she would be Sol's strongest blade. Not only his most loyal knight but also his strongest.

But right now, did he even need a knight?

She had felt his power the moment he stepped in and like the others, she had been left breathless.

Not long ago, the two of them were tied after a fight and she even had the upper hand. But now? Now Sol didn't even need to transform to completely crush her.

The same went for that phoenix. Even now as she observed her, the girl was obviously not a warrior and was so full of openings it was funny but could she win?

The answer was once again no.

She didn't know why, but her instincts were screaming at her that winning was not even in the realm of mere possibility. The chances of it happening were so low that it might as well be non-existent.

'It's depressing.'

Setsuna sighed before giving a salute, "Hello Isis, I am happy to meet you."

Setsuna was sad. Sad because she was weak. Sad because she might become useless to Sol. She was also jealous and bitter. So many ugly feelings swirling in her heart that it was suffocating.

But...She would not act because of her own feeling of inferiority. Pettiness would not make her stronger.

"Let's have a duel." "Let's have a fight."

Setsuna was surprised as she turned and saw the same looks on Lilin's face. It seemed that the two of them had the same ideas at the same time.

"Haha..."

All Isis could do was laugh awkwardly. It seemed that Skuld was right. The girls here were even crazier.

'Sol save me!'

--

While Isis was facing the craziness of Sol's harem, Sol was walking looking at hallways of the tower of Babel in silence.

The nostalgia he felt was so intense that it was breathtaking.

Only six months went by for him, but it felt like an eternity.

Once he finally calmed down, he took a deep breath before releasing a large sigh. Like Isis, he could feel the weak mana in the air. But unlike her, this did not disturb him. Compared to the polluted air when he was in his old world, this was still paradise after all.

Indeed. He was back home. Already he could feel the gaze of Medea and the others, witches, on him.

Now that he had control over his dimension, he could easily block those gazes. But, why would he?

“I am back.”

He smiled in a serene way. All he wanted now was to rush and take Medea in his arms.

“Soon.”

He muttered before looking at Milia, “There are many things I want to tell you now. But it can wait. Soon there should be a woman with flaming red hair coming to the castle or trespassing. Tell the guards to not worry and if that person go through the front door, let her enter. She is an esteemed guest.”

“Vey well.”

Milia gave a proper salute before walking away. She was literally dripping wet right now. So she needed a change of clothes.

Sol smirked as he watched Milia walk away, aware of her arousal. But now really wasn't the time.

Focusing on Lilith, he asked, “At least you keep your promise and didn't try anything dangerous while I was gone.”

Lilith coughed a little.

Sol's eyebrow rose at her reaction, “I see...So you did, or nearly did. Should I say that I am not surprised?”

“You have become quite insolent.”

“I rather say I became more carefree.”

Sol laughed before walking toward her bedroom, “Let's go. I am waiting for a doctor.”

Lilith was curious. Even Persephone, the witch of life hadn't be able to save her.

“Who is she?”

“The best of the best.”

Hathor was the best doctor in the entire Astral realm and even if she failed, Sol had still enough divinity to use his power.

Once Lilith's case was solved, it would be one less weight on his shoulder and he would then ponder how to conquer the whole mortal realm.

The faster he could do so, the better it would be. He might have joked about conquering the world through his women but it would never be that easy.

'I would need some real Deus Ex to succeed in this endeavor.'

Sol smiled at his own joke. It sure felt good to be home.

Chapter 386: CH 352:HATHOR | Novel Pub

8-10 minutes

When Sol reached Lilith's bedroom, he was greeted by a green-haired woman clad in nurse clothes,

"Oh my, the wonder boy is back. Though should I call you wonder man? You certainly aren't a kid anymore."

Persephone stood up as she approached Sol before hugging him tightly. The relationship between the two of them was pretty casual to say the least. There was no deep drama, no fierce love or anything of the like.

They could be called friends with benefits in a certain way and clearly, Persephone was happy with the current state of their relationship.

After all, while she did like Sol, she was not really in love with him either.

"It has been a while. I am happy to see that you are well."

After they took a step back, Persephone admired Sol with a new eyes. His physical changes were already startling but the power she felt coming from him was astonishing.

"I have been well as you can see. I grew quite a bit and managed to reach a new power level."

"That I can see. By the way, no need to look around. Medea fled the moment you entered. Something about being ashamed to see you in her current attire or being too excited."

Persephone laughed, seeing Medea run around like a squirrel had been more delightful than she thought it would be possible.

"It isn't a problem; I will go find her later."

He nodded. He truly wanted to see Medea. Badly even. But all of this could wait. He didn't want to have to tell his stories many time. Once Lilith was healed, they could organize a great banquet with everyone present.

A more serious expression settled on his face then as he looked at Persephone,

"How is her current situation?"

"Hum...I am here you know? You could simply ask me."

"Any statement coming from you in this situation is unreliable."

Sol did not hesitate to shoot down Lilith before focusing on Persephone.

“She is still slowly losing power and now is barely hanging at maintaining her king rank. In a few days, her energy level would slip down to Duke then so on until she die.”

Persephone's voice was clear and calm. For her, Lilith's eventual demise would not particularly make her sad. Such was life. No one was truly immortal. Not even the goddesses.

Sol was not offended by Persephone's choice of words. He knew that the woman was the kind of person who could watch the world burn while sipping on some exotic wine without care. She was very carefree and her liberal view of life and death gave her a strong heart.

“Thank you. This wouldn't have been possible without you and Medea.”

Sol gave a bright smile as he hugged Persephone again, startling her a little bit.

“Still, even if we managed to keep the inevitable from happening, if you didn't find a solution it would all be for naught.”

After all, despite their best skill, all they could do delaying. Persephone had tried finding a more permanent solution, but all her efforts were for nothing.

“I...”

Knock *Knock*

“Your highness, your guest is waiting for you.”

“Perfect timing.” Sol didn't mind being interrupted by a maid as the message they just gave was what he had been waiting for all along.

“Please stay here and prepare Lilith. We will come shortly.”

Lilith could only look at all of this happening with a confused expression on her face. It seemed like her consent was useless now and Sol was making the decision without consulting her.

It was rather insulting in a way but at the same time, she could not really find in herself the need to fight back his words.

It seemed that Sol noticed her feeling as he stopped in front of her,

“Remember our promise. I found a way to save you. So until I do, your life is mine. After I heal you, you can do whatever the hell you want. I will not constraint you.”

Finished giving his thought, Sol walked away without paying more attention to what she had to say.

Now alone, Persephone chuckled,

“The boy really became a man. I must say, I like his new side.”

The Sol she remembered was always overly polite to a fault and was sometimes too gentle when speaking to his loved one.

There was nothing wrong with that. But now that he was an adult, it was necessary for him to step up more. Even more, since he would soon become the King of Lustburg.

The authority in their family would shift.

Lilith understood that his travel had really changed him. Truly only by going through a different kind of experience could one truly grow mentally.

“I don’t know whether I should be proud or offended.”

It was certainly a complicated feeling

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Sol was happy that he did not have to wait long for his guest to come. In fact, he didn’t wait at all.

This proved that Hathor was ready to honor the bet they made back then.

Sol grinned as he walked toward the main hall and as he thought about finally putting that matter behind him. Then he would have a big hot bath and then eat with his family.

He didn’t need much more than this for he appreciated the simple things of life. He could see a blazing red-haired woman wearing clothes that went way past what could be called decent who was sitting.

From the moment he entered the main hall, the sweet scent of wine could already be felt as it permeated the air.

Milia was standing a few steps away from the woman with a stoic expression. But could feel that she was twitching because of the lack of manner that woman was showing.

“Yahoo! Dear brother-in-law or nephew-in-law? It can be pretty confusing.”

Sol chortled, “Welcome Hathor. I am happy to see you here.”

Hathor one of the four King-ranked phoenixes as well as the greatest healer.

Hathor shrugged, “Well, what can I say, we had a bet about whether or not something would happen and man did something big happen.”

When Sol had asked Hathor for help, it had been on the ground that a big event would happen while in the Dragon realm. Hathor thought obviously that it was impossible. After all, it was the dragon realm! Who would have been bold and crazy enough to stir trouble there?

‘Well, I should have learned by now that there is always some crazy bastard.’

Not only did something happen but it was something super big. A small-scale war happened and even Peak level powerhouses like Surtr and Anubis were part of it.

She had been very surprised when she learned this. But since she was someone who respected the bet she made, she decided to descend into the mortal realm as promised.

“Well, my dear Sol, you definitely have to explain in more depth what happened. You wouldn’t believe how crazy mother was going. All the divine beasts plan to make convene. I don’t even remember the last time something like that happened.”

“Well, with how old you are, I guess it must be difficult going through your memory.”

As a Phoenix, Hathor was also one of the first being created in this universe by the goddesses and also one of the oldest. Sol had long since decided that caring about the age of those he was talking with was a fruitless endeavor.

Power and wisdom didn’t necessarily come with age. Mortals were the greatest proof.

“I am sure old, huh?”

Hathor shrugged the wine from her gourd before wiping her lips with the back of her hand. Looking at her acting like this, one would never think she was an esteemed and old phoenix. But Sol didn’t care.

There was only one thing he cared about.

“So, you had a patient you wanted me to meet?”

He grinned, “Indeed.”

“Led the way, my dear, let's see just how fucked up the situation is.”

A few minutes later, as Hathor inspected Lilith she sighed

“Well...Should I say that it’s even more fucked up than I thought it would be?”

Sol was sad to realize that he was not even surprised.

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Chapter 387: CH 353:STEPPINGIN UNKWNON TERRITORY

When Hathor entered the room alongside Sol, both Persephone and Lilith’s gazes immediately focused on her.

They had already felt her presence a few moments before but seeing her in her presence was completely different.

Even though she seemed sloppy and slovenly in appearance, her depth was like a calm and still sea stretching as far as the horizon could see.

The moment the three powerhouses gathered in the same room, the same thought went through their mind at the same time.

‘Can I beat her?’

Hathor shivered a little when she felt Lilith's gaze on her.

‘Just what is that?’

As phoenixes, the thing they feared the less was death. They could simply come back to life stronger and still fight.

It was nearly impossible to completely put an end to a phoenix even if the difference in power was wide.

But facing Lilith, all Hathor could do was grimace. Her instincts were screaming at her that this thing could kill her permanently if she underestimated her.

As for the green-haired woman, Hathor felt like their fight would be very tedious. If Hathor was like a deep sea, Persephone was like a tree whose roots could burrow even to the center of the earth if necessary.

It was crazy but in terms of pure life, Persephone was clearly stronger than even the children of Yggdrasil. She even briefly wondered if the woman had dryad or elf blood in her.

“Haha~Humans are really scary.”

Hathor gulped once again from her gourd as she whistled.

It was no joke.

“Then again I can’t really say that you are humans either.”

One was a witch and the other was...What was she?

Hathor fought her instinctive disgust as she observed Lilith. After all, from her perspective, Lilith’s existence was even worse than a necromancer. After all, while Necromancer was against the natural cycle. They were still part of it, albeit loosely. Undead could not be created without a soul and strong resentment.

But that thing...

It was something unnatural. Something that should not exist. An artificial existence created by a madman.

Her instincts were telling her to stop. To not participate in helping that thing stay alive any longer. It would be an insult to everything that was pure and holy.

“Hello, I am Hathor. I will be your doctor.”

To those instincts, Hathor only had three words.

‘Go fuck yourself.’

That thing...That person was someone she had accepted to save, so she would do it no matter what.

She was too strong to let something like ‘instincts’ control her thought process about who and who she should like or hate.

Either way, a patient was a patient. Her personal thoughts never mattered the moment she decided to save her.

“I am Lilith, the guardian, and Lustburg.”

Lilith did not introduce herself as queen. She had never liked that title and in her mind, the moment Sol came back, her duty was finished.

“Persephone. A witch.”

Persephone didn't bother saying that she was one of the four witches. She knew that her title would not matter to a divine beast.

As a faction, the witches were not weaker than any average Divine beast faction. In fact, she could argue that if they were compared, they would be in the upper strata. But for divine beasts, witches were nothing more than the servant of Asmodeus.

Both Lilith and Persephone's greetings were simple but the atmosphere became considerably warmer.

Persephone knew about the revulsion Divine Beasts would feel in Lilith's presence. This was why she had already warned Lilith. If a divine beast didn't outwardly scowl at her or outright attack her after the first meeting, then it was a person worth befriending.

Sol had stayed silent as he felt the three women gauge each other, now that it was done, it was time to go to more important matters.

“Can you inspect her body?”

“Sure thing. But, she would have to let me circulate my mana in her body.”

It went without saying how dangerous letting someone else pour mana into your body could be. It was like giving that person hold over your life and death.

But she had no choice. Hathor couldn't simply come and use nirvana and bam, everything would be good. It was a process far more complicated and even then she would need some time to come up with a proper plan.

As naturally suspicious as she was, there was no way Lilith would accept such a thing. At least that was so in normal circumstances.

Now though, she was already at death's door. This change of circumstances made her more daring.

“Well, you are a fast one.”

Looking as Lilith stretched her hand without care. Hathor grinned and approached Lilith before holding her hand.

“I am sorry if my expression doesn't look right. Just an advice, but never step foot in the Astral realm.”

Hathor didn't hide her psychological condition as she held Lilith's hand and even joked about it.

“Then again, if they know you are related to the Dragon Emperor, I am sure they won't dare to even think of attacking you.”

“Dragon Emperor?”

Sol coughed a little to hide his embarrassment, “I will explain everything later.”

Hathor laughed mischievously while she slowly began to infuse mana in Lilith's body.

Lilith had never felt so comfortable. Feeling a foreign mana in her body was a little weird at first but as it flew and circulated her body, she almost released a moan of relief.

She might have not shown it, but her body was in no way a stable state. The exterior was fine, but the interior was a complete wreck.

The laughter on Hathor's face slowly vanished as it was replaced with a frown and even complete astonishment.

A few minutes later, as Hathor inspected Lilith, she couldn't help but sigh...

"Well... Should I say that it's even more fucked up than I thought it would be?"

Sol was sad to realize that he was not even surprised after hearing that statement from her.

"How bad is it?"

"How bad? Hah..." Hathor released a harsh laugh, "Her being alive currently is a miracle. How the hell are you not dead?"

Hathor was indeed in complete disbelief. No matter which angle she looked at it, Lilith should be dead.

There were so many parts of her body that was not even functioning properly that it wasn't funny. Her body wasn't just a wreck, it was like a thousand or hundreds thousand piece puzzle with many broken and lost pieces.

She then gazed at Persephone, "I can feel the power of time on her body. I guess there is a second doctor? The three of us need to discuss this. This is really way more difficult than I thought."

"What is the problem exactly."

Hathor wasn't bothered by Sol's question, she needed to get her thought out herself in order to better organize the situation in her mind.

"Her body isn't just dying. It's devouring itself. But I guess you should already know that. So you have two options, "

She stopped addressing Sol and went back to Lilith, after all, the choice would be hers, "Right now, I can simply use nirvana on you. Your body will come back to your most optimal state. Basically your peak. But you would be doomed of being unable to fight for long. As the more you fight, the faster you will come back to your current situation."

She sighed, "Honestly I would advise you to take this option. You are a King rank. Despite your situation, if you don't use your power, you should be able to live for a few more decades or even a century. I believe it isn't bad for a mortal.

Who knows, you might even be able to become a demigod and completely change your situation."

Hathor truly believed that this was the safest option and the one that should be taken. The talk about becoming a demigod was of course just lip service.

The transcendence itself needed power. Even if by some mighty luck she obtained the occasion, she would kill herself by trying to become a demigod.

Still, nothing was impossible. Furthermore, she had Sol. Perhaps in the future, Sol could find a better way.

Lilith though was completely unfazed, "Since you gave me a safe option, I believe there is a more risky one."

Hathor sighed, "Sometimes I wonder why I even bother giving two options when it's clear they will always choose the risky path."

She began to drink heavily. The alcohol did nothing to her mind, but the placebo effect helped her calm down.

"Second option is to play the goddess like whoever created you. We use Nirvana, not to resurrect you, but to slowly rebuild and optimize your body."

The distaste as she said this was clear.

"This is a very risky option. For one, we would need a blueprint of how your body should look like. We would need a child or a sibling in the same situation as you but not...You know? Dying? Without someone like that, it would honestly take weeks to come up with a plan. But it isn't much of a problem as I can simply go to the Astral realm and prepare.

"Secondly, I would need to understand and study your biology more deeply as the slightest mistake would mean death. Most likely perpetual.

"There are also many small complications that might appear as we do. But the most problematic thing is. When we are done you would basically be a new creature. A new race. Not even speaking about what that might do to your mind, there is one little problem we can't really ignore."

She pointed towards the sky, "What would the big bosses above think about that? I don't know for you, but I don't wish to be smithed down by an angry goddess."

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Chapter 388: CH 354:FUCKING SUB QUEST

The expression of all those present in the room became grave as soon as they heard Hathor's foreboding words.

Neptune had been punished when he created Lilith and furthered his research into the evolution of species. But his punishment was minimal at best. It was thanks to him using the wish he was granted by Luxuria after sitting on the throne of Lustburg and becoming the king of the human race.

Still, this didn't mean that they could simply do as they pleased.

Sol also had the capacity of making the same kind of wish to the goddess of lust. Since they weren't really creating a new race but simply helping Lilith modify her existence, surely it would be possible to avoid punishment, right? That was the optimistic scenario he was gunning for...

“I have a question. Always been curious about it. The chimera queen created an entire fucki— * Sigh* , pardon me. As I was saying, she created a whole new race I believe, why wasn’t she punished?”

Sol asked a question that had been bothering him for a long long time and now that he had a divine beast as old as Hathor to respond to his queries, he wanted to get an answer from her. He was really on the verge of losing his temper as it felt like every time things were going easy for him, something was going to make the situation harder.

But he refused to throw his frustration at a person who had shown goodwill by coming to help him in this precarious situation.

“Who said that she wasn’t punished? The chimeras are abominations to the natural order. This is also one of the reasons why there has never been a Holy Daughter or Crown Prince or Princess in Gluttony Foss since its inception. Those abominations cannot be blessed by the goddesses.”

Hathor shrugged her shoulders as she spoke the next part of her speech, “As for her exact punishment, I don’t know for sure. She has the blessing of two goddesses, I think she didn’t suffer much of anything, to be honest.”

Sol sighed, “Very well. This isn’t the problem now anyway.”

He thought for a bit as he tried to weigh the pros and cons of this tiresome situation, “Lilith, are you sure you want to go through the risky method? I believe that it would only take me a few years to become a King and then a Demigod.”

Since Sol was a dimensional mage, the transition from King to the realm of a Demigod would be far easier for him. What would be an impossibility for others would only be a question of time for him due to his innate trait and heaven-defying talent.

If Lilith were to settle for the safe method, once he became a demigod and had greater control over his powers, he could help her in any way that was necessary. But that was for the future, not in the present. All she needed was to stay put for a few years and not use her powers. Just live her life like a normal human.

Was that really too much to ask? Perhaps... Especially since the person in question was none other than Lilith Luxuria...

“My opinion on this matter will not change. A sword that cannot cut is nothing but a useless tool that is better discarded. I would rather die than become a cripple unable to use my own powers. You know that already, Sol, don’t drag this matter anymore...”

As sad as it was, it was inevitable that she didn’t share his sentiments or his way of thinking. Lilith’s opinion was clear. She would rather be a shooting star flashing in the sky and blazing for a brief instant, even if that single instant was the time it could remain in existence, than force herself to become weak and utterly helpless.

All her life, she had trained, trained, and trained to reach the level she was at now. Her life’s very purpose had been to attain this power she now wielded. She was strong, unimaginably so. Even in the face of a divine beast, Lilith could confidently say that she was as strong as it was possible for a King to be. She had reached the very limits of the realm— the very zenith of a mortal...

The only reason she didn't try to reach the demigod level was simply that she did not have enough energy to do so.

"Do you not care about what would happen to Lilin? What about me? or Camelia? How do you think we will feel if you pass away like this?"

He was almost pleading now.

"Sol, do not force me on a path I refuse, nay, loathe to follow. I may be acting selfishly, but this is my life and I have the right to make my own choices."

Sol sighed, wondering if he should simply use his remaining divinity and manipulate Fate to get the desired result he so desperately wished for. But he eventually calmed down. Even without using divinity, it wasn't impossible to tilt the events to his advantage.

He was no doctor and he couldn't play around with her life. Even if he had the powers necessary to do so.

Biting his lips, he thought for a bit before speaking with tiredness permeating his tone, "Let's recapitulate our options. First, you need an example of what she should have been. Her perfect version, so to speak, and someone related to her if possible, right? That is fairly easy to do... She has a daughter, her name's Lilin, and she should be enough to fulfill all your criteria."

Hathor merely shrugged, "Can't say anything before seeing her but... Theoretically speaking, it should work, yeah. We shall see when we cross that bridge."

He nodded and turned toward Persephone, "I believe witches have the greatest knowledge in all the realms. There should be some witches who specialized in biology, right? I would need someone who has extensive knowledge about succubuses, humans, and the hybrids born between the two if possible."

Persephone mused after hearing him speak, "Indeed, there is someone. Her name is La Befana [1]. An old disciple of mine. I specialize in pure life energy but she went deeper into the domain. And if I recall correctly, she did study into Succubuses in order to find a way to get rid of our curse or at least the most tiresome of them all."

The results went without saying.

The basis of her disciple's research was pretty clear for anyone to see. After all, the draining curse Witches were afflicted with was extremely similar to the life drain succubus and vampires were innately able to make use of.

The papers she had produced were of the highest quality and she became one of the rare witches to use blood magic as well as water and ice magic too. She had a firm belief that water was the source of all life.

It was an interesting theory that Persephone would have encouraged to be further researched. If not for what had happened to the Darwin siblings.

The goddesses clearly did not appreciate any theories that were related to evolution.

"But there is a problem."

'Of course, there is a fucking problem. How could there be not? Every single time, dammit!'

Sol began to understand what that short plumber with a mustache in a certain cult classic game must have felt whenever he beat a boss and the bastards told him the iconic line— 'The princess is in another castle.' ...

He felt like he was playing an old-school RPG that would give hundreds of side quests just to complete one main quest.

"So, what might be the problem this time?"

He asked once again, as calmly as he was able to. He had faced literal goddesses and demigods, surely it shouldn't be a problem, right?

"The council of witches still hasn't decided whether or not we should open the gates of Salem once more."

'Ah, so this time the enemy is democracy, huh? Beautiful! Absofuckinglutely beautiful!'

What a world to live in this was!

He sighed. "So we have three problems. One, hope that Lilin will be enough for the biological blueprint. Two, get the witches out of Salem. Three, get the goddesses to not punish us if whatever we do ends up pissing them off."

Hathor chortled, clearly finding the situation interesting. "I must say...I didn't know what kind of shit I was putting myself into when I decided to accept your request."

She had lived thousands of years with nothing particularly interesting happening outside of her sister, Nent, going through a belated rebellion Phase.

But now, only a few days after leaving the Astral realm, she was already facing goddess level problems.

Sol smiled bitterly at her words, he remembered about Bastet and how she had been adamant about not following him. Now it was clear that she had quite the foresight, after all...

He was just a magnet for all sorts of trouble...

Sigh

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Chapter 389: CH355:GENIUS IDEA?

[Medea's World]

While Sol was lamenting about the inevitability of fate, Medea was walking around and fidgeting under the amused gaze of, Ambrosia and Freya.

Once she savored her tea and inwardly wondered if they should try a new brand, she asked the question that had been burning on her lips,

"So dear daughter of mine, what are you doing here instead of being with him?"

"I panicked, Okay?"

Freya chortled a little but waved her hand under the resentful gaze of her sister,

"Sorry, sorry, don't mind me. I do not exist."

The three witches were as colorful as always. Black, white, pink, different colors and personalities clashing.

"What else?"

Ambrosia knew that this couldn't be all.

Medea hesitated a little, "I...I think I am a little ashamed as well. I was so sure that when he came I would welcome him with good news. Now though, I don't know..."

"Is the council still stubborn?"

Freya asked. The four witches generally didn't interfere in each other sphere of influence. There were no particular rules about it. It was just a matter of respect and not wishing to be swamped with even more work.

The council was the most tiresome of the four since it was the only one where that didn't have absolute power and left a semblance of democracy. Since none of them wanted that job, they had to play rock-paper-scissors.

Medea won all three times by using her power but was then disqualified for cheating. Freya chortled once again when she remembered the face Medea made back then.

"Freya!"

"I said I am sorry. Pfft!"

She stood up and began walking away, knowing that she would not be able to stay serious longer than this.

Once Freya left, Medea sighed, before sitting down and banging her head against the table,

"I know I am being foolish. But ugh..."

"Well, you already did a good job convincing them to have an airing."

"But..."

"But Sol will be scrutinized."

Indeed, #1 asked that Sol should apologize publicly for what Lustburg had done as well as many little amendments and support that would heavily favor the witches.

Medea gritted her teeth. Asking Sol to apologize wasn't a problem per se. But she thought it was useless. Many of the current witches weren't even alive back then and neither was Sol.

But so be it. She knew that Sol wouldn't mind doing this. But the more they asked the more Medea began to bristle.

In a way, what they were trying to do was no different than trying to recreate the era of the puppet king. Only this time, rather than the nobles controlling the King, it would be the witches.

They took a few steps back when they learned that Sol was now called the “Dragon Emperor” but it didn’t change much.

The witches were no inferiors to any divine beasts and Ambrosia was one of the most powerful demigods. Even though she wasn’t a false god yet, she was no less dangerous. After all, she had the combined knowledge of thousands of witches, be they dead or alive.

She was not called the All-knowing for nothing.

Furthermore, the witches also had the support of Asmodeus. One of the first divine beasts.

No matter from what perspective you looked at it, the witches feared no one in the Astral realm. Not even Tiamat.

After all, Tiamat would not attack them for no reason and even if she did, they would not be helpless.

This was their pride.

But that pride was destroyed in the Mortal realm because there, someone reigned and they could do absolutely nothing about that person.

The ruler of Lustburg. The blessed of Luxuria. The being with the ultimate backing.

It didn’t matter how strong they were or how strong Asmodeus or Ambrosia were, they were absolutely helpless when facing the King or Queen.

“Do you blame them?”

Medea shook her head, “Once bitten twice shy. They were betrayed by Lustburg because of my stupidity. I understand why they want more initiative this time. But I cannot accept this.”

“And they do not care.”

This was the problem that Medea was facing. If Sol refused their demands, they simply had to ignore Lustburg like they already did for thousand years. Nothing would change for them.

“Ugh...Mother...”

“I will not order them. The choice is theirs. Try convincing them and succeed or fail.”

Ambrosia was entirely neutral on this matter. She refused to take a side again. After all, she simply did not know Sol enough.

Ideally, she would like to observe him for one or two hundred years, but she wondered if he would even survive that long.

Outside of a few exceptions, Blessed were not really known for their longevity.

“Still, if you are so worried about this. You should talk to him about it rather than worrying about it on your own.”

It was when they reached that part that the two of them stopped.

Even though they had been speaking, they were also observing the situation in Lilith's bedroom. Embarrassed she might be, but Medea had the duty to care for Lilith, there was no way she would not observe her continuously until she was healed or died.

They heard the discussion about how they would need the help of a witch as well as perhaps the entire library causing Medea to groan.

"Why...?"

Ambrosia also frowned, but for different reasons. She was very old and knew very well how Fate worked.

As long as a Blessed was in his Heyday, the world itself would bend backward to help them realize their dreams and aspiration.

Thousand years ago, when Jupiter wished to become King, by some 'chance' he found Medea. The one woman who had enough influence and power to help him become King but at the same time didn't have enough experience to feel his duplicity.

If Jupiter had not discarded stupidly discarded Medea, his end would have been very different.

In the far past, when Echidna wished to create the perfect life, by some 'chance' she became friends with both Her and Anubis, the only mortals in the entire world who specialized in exactly what Echidna lacked to complete her goal.

Now, like back then, All the pieces right now were fitting for Sol to reach out to the witches.

But this time, not only Medea, but all the four witches were one way or another related to him.

If before she had wanted to stay absolutely neutral and observe, now she was wondering if she should change her stance.

But then, what would be the right choice?

'I hate dealing with Blessed.'

Ambrosia swore under her breath, deciding that she might write a law about fleeing the very moment they meet a Blessed in order to not create more problems.

"Mother, what should we do?"

Medea asked. It wasn't impossible for witches to roam the mortal world if they wished, they could simply ask for La Befana to come out.

It might involve some compensation, but this was not a problem.

Ambrosia gave a bitter chuckle and looked up at the sky, "La Befana is the current #1 of the council."

"Fuck."

"Indeed."

Even Medea could not stop herself from cursing and Ambrosia did not stop her.

After all, they were indeed in one fucked up situation.

Freya, who had come back after calming down was startled when she heard her sister curse like this.

It was rare to see her use such a crude language. Much less their mothers not reprimanding her.

Curious about what happened, she asked and Medea did not argue as she explained. After all, Freya was as much concerned about this situation as all of them.

When Medea finished her explanation, Freya tilted her head,

“Where is the problem exactly?”

Medea tilted her head, “La Befana is one of the staunchest voices for isolationism or having Lusturb under our control. The chances that she accepts to help Sol are pretty low and even if she did accept, it would be with a price.”

“And this is why I said that there is no problem.”

Medea was becoming irritated but she did not lose her calm. Freya was generally the most rational out of the four of them. There had to be a reason for her to utter such words.

Once she was asked to explain, Freya shrugged,

“You two thoughts so much but you forget one simple solution. We opened the gate once because Medea got bewitched by Jupiter, right? So all we have to do is to have Sol bewitch La Befana.”

Ambrosia face palmed. She didn’t know what was the worse.

The fact that her daughter had such a stupid idea—or the fact that this stupid idea had a very high chance of succeeding.

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Chapter 390: CH 356:FEAST (1)

Silence continued for a short while as Freya showed a proud look at the solution that she had given. After all, with Sol's track record, she was sure that seduction was basically one of his chore skills by now.

“Ouch! Mom!?”

Said silence was broken by a loud smack to the back of her head by none other than Ambrosia.

She seemed to be too tired to even wish to argue further and added another smack for the road, “I always said there was no stupid idea, but yours take the cake.”

“Is it really that terrible of an idea?”

“Technically not.” Ambrosia felt a growing headache, “In fact, I believe your idea would have a great chance of working if implemented. But you should stop trying to see everything by using absolute logic.”

Freya was truly confused. It wasn't as if she couldn't feel emotions. She could laugh, joke around and have fun like anyone. But when a choice was given, she believed that it was necessary to use the most efficient path.

Here, the most efficient thing would be for their mother to stop playing neutrality and give a clear order. But since that wasn't possible. The second best option was for Sol to use his charm.

She tried to explain as such but was stopped by Medea, "Stop, I also believe it would work. But then Sol would be no different than Jupiter."

Freya argued that this was not the most pressing problem. After all, there was a life on the line. How people perceived Sol had no bearing on the problem at hand.

There was no dispute between the two. Each of them were simply giving their opinions.

Looking at them like this, Ambrosia sighed. All her daughters had a few screws loose. It was something necessary in a way to pursue knowledge to such a high level. But the way it affected them was different.

If Medea was someone who followed her feeling and lived through her passion, then Freya was someone who believed that pure logic and reasoning was paramount. Even the act of giving birth and becoming a mother was more of an experiment she wanted to try than something she really wished for.

Meanwhile, Persephone was someone who loved being a bystander and observing everything from the back while Kali was a girl who loved having eyes on her and would never reject a fight.

"Let's stop here. This discussion is pointless as we do not have Sol's opinion. Let's see first what he chooses to do. Alright?"

Ambrosia mused said so as she wondered what Sol's answer would be. The time they had spent knowing each other was simply too short. So she needed to better understand his characters before putting Salem in danger once again.

"By the way, what do we do about that vampire?"

Ambrosia shook her head, "She most likely entered forced hibernation. All we can do now is either let her here for them to deal with or use her as a lab rat. I am sure many wish to work on a true vampire as they also absorb life force. Albeit through blood."

—

Back to Sol, after he made peace with the situation at hand, he asked someone to call Isis and the others.

Isis was of course also asked to inspect Lilith. Not because he did not believe Hathor but because it was necessary to double-check. Thankfully—or sadly? The results were much the same. Except with a slight twist as Isis proposed another idea that wouldn't require them to beg Salem or face the goddesses.

From her words, what she would do would be the equivalent of a soul surgery. It was possible to basically separate Lilith's soul from her body and put it in a new body after erasing the soul inside that body.

As the power of Zone and Avatar were more soul related than physical one, it would only take a few weeks for Lilith to get back to her previous level.

Sadly or rather obviously, there were a few problems and limits to this already risky operation. Firstly being the great risk of incompatibility between the bodies.

Because of this, it would be impossible for the one receiving that surgery to keep his full strength. A part of their soul power would constantly be used to keep the equilibrium.

Secondly, they would obviously need bodies. Ideally, fresh ones that had just died with their bodies mostly intact.

It was a pretty gruesome way of doing things and one with obvious disadvantages, but Sol still keep this idea on the side.

Capital punishment was still a thing in Lustburg and Sol wouldn't mind using the body of a criminal who was about to be executed as a replacement for Lilith.

There was also the possibility of changing into a natural undead like a lich or a banshee.

Sol chuckled, not even entertaining this idea. Lilith would simply never accept living such a wretched existence.

In the first place, natural undead could only be born when someone with a strong soul and an incredible stubbornness and desire for life died.

The power of their grudge, their hatred, or the desire to complete one last task. All those were the kind of feeling necessary for a natural undead to be born.

But Lilith didn't mind dying in the first place. She just wanted her death to be worth something.

Sol sometimes wondered if what he was doing was even worth it. All Lilith wished for was death. So who was he to stop her? What right did he really have?

Lilith wasn't a kid. She could make her own decisions.

Living when all you wanted to die could be a form of torture.

These kinds of thoughts would whisper in his mind.

Why did he have to stress so much for someone who wanted to die? Why did he have to fight so hard for someone who already decided her destiny?

Intrusive thoughts that asked him to give up. Just forget her and focus on those who actually wanted to live and let those who wanted to die do as they wish.

It was definitely a sweet temptation. But one Sol never entertained for long.

He knew he had no right to force her to do anything. He knew that he was simply pushing his own selfish goal and was perhaps keeping her from her happiness.

He was acting like a knew it when he knew nothing.

Some people might say that suicide was the easy way out. But those people could not understand that all humans had very strong survival instincts and fear of pain.

For someone to actually have those instincts and fear and decide to put an end to their lives reflected the depth of the despair they were in.

Those people had nothing left to live for. Living itself was suffering and all they wished for was the sweet release of death.

So was he right?

He didn't know.

All he knew was that he did not want Lilith to die.

Not for her own good. Not even for Lilin or anyone else's own good.

But for his own.

He wanted her to live so that she could stay by him.

It was an ugly, selfish desire that disregarded everything Lilith wished for in order to satisfy his own desire.

Would Lilith really be thankful after all this?

Would she smile at him and say thanks for saving her?

Would she magically get back the desire to live?

Perhaps yes, perhaps not. Though most likely not.

Either way, he wasn't able to see the future like Skuld. At least not yet.

The future was always in constant flux and it was the action they took now that mattered.

Rather than regretting not doing everything he could and seeing her die because of his lack of action, he wished to do everything in his power to keep her alive.

If despite all this she chooses death then...At least he could keep a clear consciousness and admit to himself that he did everything he could.

At least this was how Sol tried to rationalize his feeling.

As for how true that was, perhaps Sol could not give the answer.

After all, the heart had its reason that reason itself ignored.

—

"Okay, I cross-checked. This place is really a treasure trove. I didn't expect you to have so many rare plants."

Hathor had to take some time as she compared the different plants but it was enough for her to give some interesting prescriptions to keep Lilith a little healthier.

The result would of course be tested before being given to Lilith but it wasn't a problem for now.

Watching Persephone and Hathor discuss this topic was pretty interesting.

He had honestly thought that Hathor was considered the best healer simply because of her natural power. But it was clear that she didn't just solely rest on her talents.

"Okay. Good job everyone. I am sure you are all tired."

Indeed they were and Sol wanted to rest a little. But he was interrupted by Milia,

"Your highness, we organized a small gathering for your coming back. I hope you will attend. Most invitees should be present by now."

She had chosen the perfect moment to intervene and send her message. Sol, of course, could simply refuse. But why would he?

When Sol entered the main dining room and saw all the women reunited, he gulped a little and now found one reason why a massive dinner should be a nono in the future.

This might become a very explosive dinner. Too many people with headstrong personalities and a tendency toward violence were gathered in one place.

But his worry did not last long as a bubbly voice he had nearly forgotten sounded as a green light detached itself from Isis.

"Yahoo! I am back! Ready to throw hands with goddesses at any moment! Hehehe~!"

Sol's eyes widened before a genuine smile formed on his face. He was happy because a good friend he was worried about had finally woken up.

He was also happy because a mini-cheat code had just landed on his hand.

He couldn't help but think. What would happen if he used his power in conjunction with hers?