

Hero King 471

[Son of the Hero King](#)

Chapter 471: CH 432: CLUE

Sol moved fast covering hundreds of meters in an instant despite wearing a supposedly heavy armor.

While he might be interested in playing around, he would never do so at the expense of someone else's life who wasn't an enemy.

It didn't take long for him to reach the place where the scream came from.

Once there he could finally hear the source of the previous scream.

It was a woman, a beast woman to be exact, wearing a brown robe and a pair of glasses. She had two rather cute raccoon ears and equally brown hair.

Currently, she was sitting on her ass and making herself as small as possible while four adventurers were facing what looked like a group of orcs.

The fight seemed to be going against them as the orcs were to his surprise, wearing something akin to armor and had weapons that, at first glance seemed quite well crafted.

'Hum...Did I see those guys somewhere?'

He tilted his head in confusion at the sensation of deja vu but decided that now it was time to focus on the rescue.

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The four adventurers were facing the current horde of enemies with difficulty.

"Fuck. It will be a simple mission you said. We can just relax a little, you said. So why the fuck are facing a group of armored orcs!?"

"Young lass, if you have the time to scream then you have time to kill. Stabs those bastards."

The dwarf shouted as he smashed one of the orcs with his hammer. But he could only frown at the sensation. It felt like all the strength he had gathered was being countered by their shields and armor.

The small amount of damage they received was immediately healed thanks to their natural regeneration.

'Just from where the fuck do those bastards come?'

Orcs in general were a pain to deal with exactly because of their superior healing ability and their higher strength. They were one of the few monster races that were deemed to kill on sight because of how destructive they could be.

But this went beyond everything he knew. Those armors even had a few runes etched on them.

The mission should have been a simple one. Escort, a merchant was bringing supplies to knights that were eliminating the bandits and then coming back. Nothing more, nothing less.

Sadly, hazardous situations like this were things that happened sometime.

“Guys, prepare for the retreat.”

He judged that the situation could not be helped anymore. They had no way of winning this without making a sacrifice and he would be damned if he let his companion die like this.

The bunny girl gritted her teeth but immediately nodded. She knew that she couldn't be stubborn in such a situation.

Now it was important for them to walk away.

But....Just as they were about to retreat.

Whoosh!

The atmosphere changed.

Be it the four adventurers, the screaming woman, or even all the orcs who were clamoring in victory, everyone fell silent.

BOOM!

The wind stirred as the sound of something breaking the sound wall finally reached them and they watched in surprise and disbelief as someone wearing an ominous black armor appeared like a ghost in front of them.

Silence fell.

Even though he was completely alone. Even though he did not even show his mana.

All the people present immediately knew. That this thing was not something they could face.

The orcs, that were well in the dozens, took a step back in unison, realizing that they were facing an apex predator they should have no chance of winning against.

But, they remembered that their home had already been destroyed not long ago. They had no other place to go. This realization gave them the courage they lacked.

Surely, the armor they wore should be able to help them.

It was with such a thought that one of them rushed at the Black-armored man, their rawr echoing both as a way to instill fear in their enemy and courage in themselves.

Sadly for them...No amount of courage could change the reality that they were about to face.

Bang!

The bunny woman grabbed her ears and crouched down at the sharpness of the sound. It was like a cannonball had actually gone off and when she looked at the result, she could see that a huge hole had been formed in the upper body of the orc. The armor protecting it could do nothing to stop the punch.

Blood and gore splashed all around as the orc slowly looked down at its hollowed body before crumbling down.

Orcs had high regeneration capacity. This didn't mean they were immortal.

"Tch! I didn't want to kill it."

She swore she must have misheard the words that came from the armor but she was not given the time to process what was happening.

What followed was not a fight.

It was not even a struggle.

It was nothing more than a pure and absolute massacre in its purest form.

Wherever he punched, something exploded. Sometimes it was their heads or their torsos. Once he even evaporated the entire upper body of the Orc.

Fleeing was impossible. Be it the orcs or even the adventurer, they were all frozen in fear as an aura of absolute domination spread from the Black Knight.

Finally, the last orc's head crushed between the fingers of the figure and its body fell heavily to the ground.

The massacre was finished, and one black knight with shining red eyes covered in blood from head to toe slowly advanced toward them.

The adventurer clenched their weapon. But they trembled so much they were barely able to even form words. They knew very well that if they were to fight, they would be obliterated even faster than the orcs.

They stood still as the man went past them and stopped in front of the raccoon girl, who was their employer.

"Worry no more. For I have taken care of all that may hurt you."

He brought his hand toward her, seemingly in a gesture of goodwill. But all that happened was that the girl let out a horrible shriek before her eyes rolled back and she fainted.

A faint odor spread as a yellow puddle formed beneath her robe.

A cold wind swept past them as a silence of a very different nature befell in the room.

Looking down at the fainted girl who had pissed herself in fright at his sight, Sol gave a small depreciated chuckle.

He realized what he must have looked like to her now. He had become so used to people not even flinching while looking at thousands of corpses and enough blood to fill a river that he had forgotten that for normal people — This was in no way normal.

'Let's forget it.'

Sol closed his eyes and nodded to himself. He had been hoping to live through a simple and normal adventure. But he realized that such a thing was too removed from his existence.

“Well. At least it was fun while it lasted.”

He put his hand on his helmet and took it off before finally facing the four adventurers who were already kneeling on the ground.

“Your Highness.”

“Oh? You know me?”

He tilted his head and looked at them once again. The feeling of déjà vu is ever stronger. Then looking more attentively at the bunny girl, something clicked in his mind.

“Ah. I remember now. You were the guys I fought in the arena.”

The dwarf and the other three did not even get mad at the fact that Sol had clearly forgotten their existence.

If they had any doubts in the past, the previous fight had clearly shown them that they were simply unable to even understand how powerful the prince currently was.

“What are the four of you doing here? Are you adventurers?”

“We were tasked with escorting the lady to the campground of the black knights. She is a merchant affiliated with the Traver Family.”

“I see. Very well. Apologize to her later on. I must go.”

Sol turned around. Since he had lost all interest in playing, he had no more interest in them.

“Your Highness please in an instant. May I have a little bit of your time?”

“Hum?”

Sol turned around and gave a curious look at the dwarf that had gathered the courage to stop him.

“No need to tremble. I am not a tyrant that will punish my subject just for speaking up. Now talk. What may be the matter.”

“Your Highness. Forgive my impudence but...I believe those orcs had a problem.”

“Oh?”

“As you may have noticed, their armors were different from normal ones. They were more finely crafted and have the ability to absorb a vast majority of the power from physical attack.”

“Oh? I felt nothing of the sort.”

Sol looked at the corpses curiously as he said so which caused the dwarf to cough a little in embarrassment.

“Forgive me. I believe your might simply highly exceeded the maximum threshold. Which is why it did not impede you. But such armors are rare even for high-ranked knights nowadays.”

Sol's gaze became sharp. He knew very well that such armor was meaningless against people of his power level. But for weaker people, in a war, for example, this kind of armor could change the flow of the battle.

"Now that I am able to think and rest. I can say with assurance that those runes are old dwarf runes from before the creation of Greed Dike. Such runes should have vanished."

Sol's eyes twinkled. It seemed like this adventure fiasco would not end in disappointment after all.

[Son of the Hero King](#)

Chapter 472: CH 433: STORY OF ALEXANDER

When Sol heard about those ores wearing long-lost armor created by dwarves, he immediately realized the kind of opportunity he had chanced upon.

Dwarves were crazy and dastardly midgets who saw money as their only source of life. To them, life and money were deeply intertwined and it was almost indistinguishable. In the past, they had been the most oppressed race in a sense because of their talents and inability to protect themselves but now it was the exact opposite.

The dwarves were masters of crafting and inventions. Even angels respected them as their technological superiority was mostly based on the unlimited time they had for themselves rather than the unimaginable amount of unadulterated talent that the dwarves possessed.

For this very reason, they had a near absolute monopoly on the markets and knew how to leverage it to play to their advantage. Playing the death merchant every time there was a war. 'Theresa started working on some behind the scenes deals with the dwarves but it will take some time to get through.'

Just imagining his entire army clad in dwarven armor and runes made Sol almost salivate and his eyes blazed with even more greed than an old dwarf who was watching a mine of gold in front of him.

"You. What is your name?"

The dwarf straightened at the sudden call from Sol. He immediately realized that this was an opportunity that he could not afford to lose.

"I am Luteam Grimbreaker, Your Highness."

"Very well. Why don't you tell me more about this legend of yours? I am quite a bit intrigued, you see..."

Luteam nodded and spoke carefully, "As Your Highness may already know, we dwarves were enslaved by many races for our talents in handling metals before the Kingdom era. We still do, but that is a story for another time. This trend was the most prevalent in the era before the seven kingdoms were truly established. One of the Dwarven kings, a Blessed named Alexander The Great, also known as the Stormbreaker led us during our Exodus."

He momentarily stopped as four ominous women appeared one after another behind Sol before he was even able to sense them. Goosebumps arose throughout his body when he sensed the eerie aura emanating from the women, causing him to sweat profusely.

"Don't worry about them. They're with me."

Sol gave a nod to his companions. They were surprised to see that he was not hiding his face anymore but simply listened without making a noise.

"One of the dwarf encampments was somewhere inside the current territory of Lustburg. As we fled from the Elves, King Alexander and the dwarves created a powerful stronghold that served as a bastion. The fight lasted for days on end but the elves were not able to beat us. Ultimately, the Queen fought against our King as he assured our retreat."

His eyes became slightly bloodshot at the mention of the events after.

"The king was no match for the powerful Queen. But out of respect, for his outstanding courage, she allowed our escape from these lands."

Luteam coughed slightly to calm down his strained nerves and continued, "The exact description of the fortress is blurry in my memories, and it is a fact that it was destroyed during the fight between the two rulers. Many of our most powerful runes and blueprints were lost during this era."

Sol closed his eyes after hearing it all; deep in thought as he reviewed the information given to him by the dwarf named Luteam. He was not even surprised that the Dwarven King then had the name of some historical figure from his world. He was used to such a thing by now.

What interested him was the armor and the runes that Luteam mentioned of being lost in the annals of time in this very region, "Milia. Why are there no reports about such ores?"

Milia immediately put a knee on the ground and reported to him in a solemn tone, "I beg your forgiveness for this oversight, Your Highness. No such ore incident had ever appeared before. All the Ores subjugated to this date were mostly weaponless or used crude makeshift weapons."

'Hum....'

"You always overreact. I did not ask you to kneel in front of me."

He sighed and focused on the matter at hand. Even without opening his Eye of Akasha, he could draw a clear picture.

Some ores had found the so-called fortress and lived there. Someone or something had disturbed them, causing them to leave that place.

His eyes opened and the world changed around him as multiple threads connected him to the entire world and the illusory threads of fate that bound reality became visible to his eyes. He ignored the threat of Invidia, the goddess was inconsequential to his current situation. He started to search for a path, an answer to the current situation.

He was startled to realize that both Setsuna and... Lilin? Seemed to be tied down to this circumstance.

'What is going on?'

He focused on the feelings, the small instincts, and the answer the world was giving him through his powers. This was an occasion for growth. For both of his young lovers.

For the most idealized path, the most idealized outcome, the two of them needed to be included in this adventure.

His eyes shone. He could see a fight ahead. Something somewhat troublesome but at the same time of no threat to him.

"Your Highness?"

"I have decided our course of action. Enough with the playing around. It's time to explore a dungeon."

He smiled and gazed at Luteam, "Luteam. I will give you a mission now."

"I am at your command, Your Highness."

"Take your group and go back to Lustburg."

He condensed a ball of energy and gave it to him, "Show it to the Travers and ask for a meeting with someone named Theresa. They will understand once they see this ball of energy. I want you to show those armors to her and to prepare a plan. She will understand what to do next. Will you be able to do it?"

Luteam hesitated slightly as he looked at the fainted merchant girl, "Your Highness..."

Sol smiled at this. He liked seeing professionalism. How many people would hesitate in front of such a chance?

"You can leave one of your comrades to continue guiding her and go by yourself. We will also ensure her safety."

"Thank you."

He immediately bowed and stood to speak to his companion.

"Everyone, this is the chance of a lifetime. We need to seize it. Candy, you stay here. The two of you come with me."

"Hey!"

"Candy, stop. We don't have time. The client is a woman and you are the only one who can take care of her without causing her any embarrassment."

There was also the fact that the full party of the prince was composed of women. Luteam did not say this but he was obviously no fool. No matter how kind and approachable the prince seemed, he didn't think one should try their chances and cause problems here. Hot-headed as men were, he was not willing to leave anything to chance.

Candy, the bunny girl, grumbled but nodded in defeat. There was nothing she could say against such an argument. She was also as keen as Luteam and noticed the composition of the prince's party.

In adventure terms, such a party was not rare, because of the gender disparity in the population of Lustburg. But they were absolutely the worst party to work with. As they were full of infighting between the different female members.

She had even heard of a case where one of the women in such a group poisoned the full team while preparing the meal and kidnapped the man of the group. Those two had long since vanished, never to be seen again.

She shivered at the thought and decided not to eat anything that was given to her.

Once Luteam made sure that everything was okay, he went back to Sol to inform him of his decision.

"Very well. Also..."

He placed a finger on the head of the dwarf, "With this, no beasts will approach you. Now go."

The three men left, leaving Sol alone with his group, a fainted woman and a bunny girl looking at them as if they were monsters.

"There is a stream not far from here. You should take care of her."

Sol ordered impassively. He didn't know what that woman was thinking, but she was making a film in her head if she thought he was particularly interested in her.

There was no way he would ask Milia to clean some unknown woman who had nothing to do with them.

The only one she could clean was him.

Furthermore, he had no interest in the bunny girl herself. Most of his maids were of all different races and he obviously had seen a few bunny girls and they were obviously much more beautiful than her.

'Later I should go home and have fun with them.'

Since the life of an adventurer was now officially proven to be obviously not for him, it was better to live the life of a debauched prince.

This was also pretty chill. No blood, no gore, and only endless sex, love, and money.

He moved his hands and put the cargo in his dimension. This would make sure they would not spoil.

"Okay, guys. After the lady wakes up, we will go to Lilin. She will most likely arrive around the same time as we do and we will move towards the final location."

As always, plans did not match up against reality. But it was fun while it lasted.

Now he had to take his responsibility seriously and make sure they obtained those sweet, oh-so-sweet weapons that would drastically diminish the losses that his army may receive. "Persephone, did you know that Alexander?"

"Only by name."

"It's good enough. Tell me everything you know about him while we prepare."

He needed to end this fast.

[Son of the Hero King](#)

Chapter 473: CH 434: MOTHER AND DAUGHTER TALK

The story of Stormbreaker, Alexander, was surprisingly rather common for his era. He was born as a slave to unknown parents and lived his life as a slave. But in his heart burned the fire of freedom.

Unlike many Blessed who obtained the status from birth or late in their adulthood, Alexander became Blessed far later in his age. Making him wiser and stronger than most other Blessed.

"Do you think those blueprints are worth something?"

This wasn't some sort of dystopian world coming out of a great destruction that ruined their civilization which made it so people in the past were better in both lifestyle and technological advancement. The simple reason for that was because many of the people from the so-called 'past' were still alive to this day.

It was logically impossible that after more than one thousand years of progress, the Dwarves of back then were somehow more advanced than those of today.

"In terms of talent, I believe he wasn't inferior to Theresa. Of course, I am talking about them as blacksmiths."

Sol stopped his train of thought and listened to Persephone with interest.

"He was an epoch changing genius tinkerer and inventor. It's hard to say if the thing he made back then were of superior quality or not. But losing the blueprints he created with his own hands made the dwarves lose an entire branch of their history and technology. Furthermore, it was said that he had created weapons that were infinitely close to the Divine grand."

This time, Sol's interest was completely taken by those words. His Divine Weapon may not be of the attack type, but it allowed him to completely observe the threads of Fate as if he were the god of this universe.

He couldn't even imagine what the other divine weapons would be like but even something close to it would be insane.

'If Theresa can get her hands on them then...'

He chuckled, the simple thought of having a bunch of semi-divine weapons for himself was insane, to say the least.

'With this, conquering the world and even fighting the angels wouldn't be much of a problem... I think.'

Sol sighed, he had an insight into most countries except the angels. They were the most complex among all the kingdoms in the Mortal Realm.

While demons seemed to have devolved and diversified after losing their divine status, it seemed like things were different for angels.

Even their personal power aside, the arsenal they had at their disposal and their air superiority made it so that entering a war with them would cause innumerable losses to the invading side.

"Persephone, Medea... I have a sudden question. If Salem went against Slothein, who would win?"

Persephone shared a glance with Medea before shaking her head, "You can consider the core strength of angels as not inferior to the true divine beasts and that without adding their weapons of mass destruction."

Medea nodded her head in acknowledgment, "The good thing is, angels are basically the guardians of this world. They will not use any weapons that will endanger the integrity and stability of this realm. So honestly, it can go either way."

"I see."

He nodded. He had been playing around till now but things were not as easy as he had thought them to be. 'I need to become a King fast. But the problem is... What should be my name.'

Sol was facing a problem only a reincarnator like him could face. Unlike the people of this world who simply followed their ways and were bestowed a name that matched them by the world in recognition of their achievements, Sol was actually very well versed in terms of mythology.

This means that... He had the road wide to train in the best way to obtain the name he wished.

'The best name for me would perhaps be Hyperion or any name related to a sun god?'

He scratched his head in frustration. Sol had long since realized that he was surrounded by people related to the myth of the sun gods. Hell, even his name was already that of such a god.

He could feel it at his fingertips. Like how he could have chosen to create his Domain by following the Slaughter Intent after his training in Tartarus, Sol was sure that he could obtain his True Name if he so wished at any moment, thereby starting the transition to the King rank like Isis and Nefertiti.

But...

'I don't like it.'

The name was supposed to be an upgrade of the Zone, the completion of a path walked for a very long time, the embodiment of all the skills learned.

This was so for Lilith or all the witches as well as the Dragon Kings he had met in the Dragon territory of the Astral Realm. It was a truth for everyone who walked on the path toward godhood.

In Sol's case, Hyperion suited his divine weapon more than it suited him. [!] Hyperion could see the world. But he could not manipulate it.

Sol felt like if he took this path, all this would ultimately result in just stunting the growth of his own Dimension and Zone.

'I should talk to Kali about this later.'

Standing aside, Milia and the other three stayed silent as they observed Sol enter into deep thought. They knew very well that this was a habit of his when he was dwelling on important matters and they did not wish to affect his train of thoughts no matter what.

They stayed still, basking in the silence for a while, each thinking about their own set of circumstances. Their silent streak was finally broken when the bunny girl came back with the raccoon girl in tow. Her

face was red and she had changed her clothes to something more suitable to be presented before the Prince of their kingdom.

"I beg your forgiveness."

"It matters not."

Sol knew that if he had been a normal person, he would have also fainted at the display he had put up before the poor girl. This simply proved further how different his life was currently from the normalcy of the world.

"Since you are ready, we will directly go to the encampment. Lilith should have reached there by then too."

Persephone nodded her head and approached the horses, patting them on the head. As she was able to control life and nature, it was not complicated for her to simply empower animals for a short while without endangering their life.

"Let's go full throttle toward the destination."

The chariot moved like a race car. Something incomprehensible but still possible for the Prince's group.

While Sol was approaching the encampment, the atmosphere at that place was rather strained.

The knights all gave a salute of respect upon the arrival of Camelia and Lilith in the encampment. Their backs were ramrod straight and sweat gathered at the corner of their temples from the nerves they were feeling right now. They even gave it their all to not even breathe too loudly. Lest it may disrupt two of the highest-ranking woman in the hierarchy of their Kingdom.

It didn't matter to them how much younger Lilith had become right now. There was simply no way to not recognize this sharp sword energy that the greatest sword wielder in existence naturally emanated just from her existence.

Even though Lilin and Lilith were standing side by side, facing each other, the mother and daughter pair were so alike in appearance that the tension was at an all-time high.

They felt like they would be immediately cut down if they made even the slightest mistake right now. So, all they could do was pray that they made no such mistake.

"What bring you here, your majesty?"

Watching Lilin put one knee down in front of Lilith, all the knights wished they could be anywhere but here.

They could certainly feel the start of a storm brewing past the horizon. A storm that may devastate the whole encampment at its roots.

May the goddesses save them all from this cacophony of doom.

[Son of the Hero King](#)

Chapter 474: CH 435: EVERYONE IS REUNITED

"What brings you here, Your Majesty?"

Looking at Lilin going down on one of her knees and giving her a proper salute as she looked at her with a steady and unmoving gaze, Lilith felt like she was hit by a sucker punch deep into her guts. Her reaction was overwhelming and shattered any hopes she had while coming here.

To be honest, she didn't know exactly what she had expected when she took this road and decided to have a new discussion with her daughter. She didn't know what she should have expected when she tried to mend their relationship like this.

She had been so much afraid. Afraid of being rejected, insulted, or even mocked by her own flesh and blood. One of the few people left in this world who was more precious to her than anything else. That was the main reason why she kidnapped Camelia.

A cowardly way to protect her heart from the sense of loss and pain that she knew she would feel while facing her daughter.

'Maybe I shouldn't have come here, after all.'

She thought as such and nearly took a step back but she could feel Camelia's fiery aura flare up behind her and heard her soft whisper enter her ear.

[You made me come all the way here against my will. I swear in the name of all the goddesses that I will strike you down if you falter at this moment.]

There were no sweet words of encouragement but surprisingly, those words were enough for her to calm herself down and get her bearings straight.

They were in an official setting and in front of the soldiers of the Kingdom.

Wasn't it normal for Lilin to show proper respect and keep decorum in such a setting?

Thinking in such a coping way to calm her aching heart, she calmly nodded at the greetings and looked at all the Knights gathered in this place.

"It had come to my attention that the subjugation of the bandits as well as the training of the Black Knight are going rather splendidly. So, I just came here to observe the accuracy of those words. It seems that they were indeed accurate."

All the knights puffed out their chests and straightened their backs in pride in lieu of the words Lilith conveyed to them.

They had slowly started to become more loyal to Lilin, but this didn't mean that their respect for the royal family simply vanished all of a sudden.

As a true legend, Lilith was a source of inspiration for all of them and they were happy to be praised by their idol.

Lilith nodded her head as she looked at the scene. Even though she had not really paid attention to the current political situation of the Kingdom, she knew that war was approaching Lustburg at a ruthless pace and she liked what she was seeing currently.

Those knights already had a bloody aura worthy of true soldiers surrounding their very beings. They just lacked the experience of a large-scale war.

Experience that they would soon sadly obtain.

She cleared her throat and looked at the knights that seemed to have stars in their eyes as they gazed at her visage, waiting for her next words with rapt attention.

"Very well, you all are hereby dismissed. I need to talk alone with-"

"Your Majesty, if I may, we were just about to capture one of the last bases of the bandits. I believe any discussion can be done after I bring victory for our cause."

Another heavy silence fell and the knights were lost about what they should do in this situation.

Lilith was the supreme commander of the army. But Lilin was the direct commander of their infantry.

It was for those reasons that it was said that a boat could not have two captains.

Thankfully, the standoff between them did not last for long.

Just as it seemed like the tension would explode, both Lilith and Lilin looked in the same direction.

At first, the soldiers were confused at the sudden shift of their attention, but soon they were also able to hear the galloping sounds of the horses pulling a caravan in the distance.

"Who is trespassing!? Introduce yourself!"

One of the knights taking the role of the guard bellowed at the incoming caravan, causing it to stop briefly in its tracks.

One man clad in black armor jumped out of the caravan and came their way with steady steps.

Anyone else would have been intimidated by the presence that the man wielded with his existence alone, but, while the aura Sol passively emanated was dangerous, they had been training for years and had been baptized in blood recently.

As long as Sol didn't explicitly try to crush them with his aura. Everything was good.

Taking off his helmet, Sol grinned at the man who stopped him,

"I am Sol Dragona Luxuria."

"Forgive me for my conduct."

The man paled and he immediately went down to his knees in salutation of his lord to which Sol simply waved his hand.

"You did your job. Why should I be angry?"

A guard had to act like a guard. It was Sol's fault for having his helmet on and being unrecognizable.

He patted him on the back. "Now at ease."

"Yes, Your Highness!"

The knights couldn't believe what they were seeing.

The entire royal family gathered in one place.

This was one of the greatest Taboo in terms of organization for any powerful family.

After all, if something happened here, there was a high chance that the entire royal family could be lost.

The only reason they weren't outright freaking out was that they knew very well that none of the three were people who would care about petty dangers.

If someone could seriously threaten the three at the same time, it seemed more like the soldiers were the ones that would need protection for a while in this whole mess.

"Why do you think the three of them are here?"

One squire asked in quiet whispers, only to be smacked across the back of his head.

"If you have time to speculate then move."

The knights moved and left the premise as they prepared themselves for the sortie that was to come.

In the end, now alone, the three groups gazed at each other.

"Well, I am happy to see you guys are well."

Sol smiled. He knew that this was going to be a pain. But he needed to act his part.

"Well, shall we have a little heart-to-heart?"

He looked at Medea who established a large barrier around them.

Sol had already given the raccoon girl and the bunny girl as well as the supplies to the knights.

He didn't really care about what would happen. If they were really in need of rations he could simply fly at full speed and recuperate what was needed.

So now, he had to see if his help was needed for healing the wounded hearts of the two poor young women.

I wonder if I should take classes in psychology?'

The topics might be less developed than on Earth, but they could still help him in such cases.

Adjusting himself, he looked at the mother and daughter pair that were nearly identical in appearance but so different in personality.

He knew the grievance between them and they had never been truly able to work on it, till now.

But now it was the occasion to start healing the festering wounds of long past and bring an end to the misery that scarred them throughout their lives.

[Son of the Hero King](#)

Chapter 475: CH 436: DEATH AND DESTRUCTION

While Sol and the others were facing a rather uncomfortable situation, Isis and Sheherazade were having the time of their lives as they walked through the populated streets of the capital of Lustburg.

"Ohhh. This is so tasty! Are those cakes really made by mortals?"

Sheherazade seemed to be in complete awe of everything as she looked ready to jump into the cake she was eating and just bathe in it if it was necessary for her to savor more of the cake's flavor.

Next to her, Isis chuckled as she also savored the vanilla cake she had received from the shop clerk.

It wasn't as if she had never eaten sweets in the Underworld or the Phoenix Realm before. But she had to admit that food was better when it was made by people who actually needed to eat to survive rather than the ones who just baked it to have a taste and then discard the thought of eating that item for a few centuries.

The cake seemed to just melt in her mouth, giving her a feeling of supreme bliss and joy down to each and every cell of her body.

"You two look like little kids."

Even though Isis' position had yet to be officially announced, all the people in the tower already knew that she was Sol's contract partner and in a way was his second in command.

The only one who would dare to speak to her in such a way was someone who actually had no care for her social position and power.

"Oh... Kali?"

Kali the Witch of Destruction, one of the most feared witches in existence and technically the most destructive witch just after Ambrosia, the central direction herself, was walking toward them while holding some kind of list and wearing maid clothes.

No matter how many times she saw her being like this, Isis could only chuckle in disbelief at the absurdity of the situation. After all, the witches had quite the presence even in the Astral Realm and since Kali was the one who generally hunted down stray witches or the enemies of Salem, many people knew about her and respected her strength.

That feared existence was acting like a maid for her lover and she did not seem to particularly mind it a single bit.

"What brought you here?"

Kali waved the list at her hands, "I was sent to buy some supplies for the food and make a surprise inspection as well."

All and every supply sent to the castle had to be thoroughly examined in order to make sure that they were fresh, worthy of being eaten by the royal family, and more importantly, free of any and all poison that may be infused into the food to harm the royalty.

"Well, this is honestly a waste of time. I think only that pesky Dragon King can create a poison that would bring those three monsters down and even that seems doubtful at most."

Isis could only give a strained laugh at the words Kali muttered. What could she do, she had no words to refute that claim of hers. Lilith's current constitution was so foreign that she doubted any known poison even in the Astral Realm could actually hurt her. Sol could literally invert any such effects that may be inflicted on him so there was no way any kind of debuffs may work on her.

The only one actually in danger of being poisoned was Lilin. But even that would not be the case once she became a king rank.

The discussion between the two died off a little. Not really knowing what to say anymore.

They were not really friends. They were barely even acquaintances.

Kali had no particular interest in most of Sol's harem members outside of her own sisters and Isis was not the type to be very proactive when dealing with people.

More than this, there was another small difference between the two of them. Isis knew that Kali was supposed to go down the path of becoming the Witch of Death but she had failed to reach that goal.

As the very embodiment of what she failed to attain, Isis feared that her presence would make the crimson witch feel bad and worsen the situation between them so she couldn't help but remain silent right now.

Looking at the black-haired girl fidgeting in her seat and not knowing what to do, Kali chuckled under her breath and looked at her with amusement in her eyes.

She was not a mind reader but she had enough understanding of people to know why this black phoenix of death and decay was feeling so uncomfortable in front of her.

"Hey. What do you say, I'mma ditch the task for today and we go and have fun?"

"Ah?"

"Don't look so surprised."

Kali shrugged her shoulders and slightly ruffled her hair, "Look. I made some mistakes not long ago. I was so blinded by my goals that I truly fucked up and put Sol in danger."

She became a little uncomfortable even as she uttered those words, as she disliked putting herself in a position of inferiority. But this time it was something that had been entirely her fault and no matter what excuse she used, the reality was what it was. Joining the Wing of Freedom and participating in the manipulation of Gerald had not been the proudest moment of her life.

If Medea and Freya had not intervened, she would have brought even more chaos to the city and while she had been careful to avoid lulling anyone, participating in a terrorist attack made all death her fault as well even if she did not bring the killing blow.

"Sol had honestly every right to hate the hell out of me. But he gave me a second chance, a small way to redeem myself and I am very grateful to him for that."

More than anything... Sol had realized the dearest wish of all the witches in existence.

"He is both a friend and a benefactor for me as well as the entire witch faction. Is it really that weird for me to wish to help his wife integrate a little more with the human kingdom?"

"Kali..."

"Also don't look at me like you owe something. Being unable to become the Witch of Death was quite a blow to me but now I don't mind it the least bit."

She grinned as a small light bloomed between her finger. "I may not have become a necromancer but a DPS type mage is just as good, don't you think so?"

"DPS? What is that?"

"...Sigh. Forget it."

Isis nodded, not trying to dig deeper into her words. She knew that Kali, like her father and Sol were people who were reincarnated individuals coming from a different world from who knows where. In the same way as all the reincarnators, her scarlet fiery soul was truly beautiful to observe.

But she also knew that most of these reincarnators were individuals who did not like talking about their past life. She didn't really understand why they had to act and hide this kind of secret from the others but she chose to respect their sense of privacy.

She could understand that it wasn't something easy to accept for the ones who didn't have an intricate understanding of life and death like her.

'Speaking of that... If I have a child with Sol...'

She blushed slightly at the thought of siring children with the love of her life but then suddenly paled at the thought of raising someone who already had all their memories from another life.

'Would that child even consider me as his or her mother?'

Now that she thought about it, neither Sol nor her father seemed particularly attached to their respective parents.

The thought of her own children not even caring about her was quite disheartening.

"Then Kali... May I ask you a question?"

"Hmm. Go on."

"What are reincarnators in your opinion?"

Isis had to admit that the face Kali made at her sudden question was truly entertaining.

[Son of the Hero King](#)

Chapter 476: CH 437: NEVER LIE AGAIN

While Isis and Kali were well on their way to deepening their friendship and building a much deeper relationship between them, Sol and Camelia slowly walked in the vicinity of the woods, sometimes waving at the knights who stood guard as they inspected the surroundings.

They knew that there were really few chances of anyone attacking them, and with the queen present, any assailants would only be seeking death. But it was their duty, and they needed to do a good job. More than anything, they couldn't just slack off in front of the entire royal family now, could they?

The silence was starting to weigh on her. So she decided to start with some small talk.

"Are you sure it's alright to leave them alone like that?"

"What do you think? It isn't like they will start trying to kill each other, right?"

Sol shrugged at Camelia's obvious worry and took a deep breath of the fresh air surrounding them, enjoying the slightly chilly feeling lingering in the air. It was the undeniable proof that winter was already looming above their heads.

Soon it would be time for Christmas, and at the same time, they would go out on an all-out war with Wratharis- the Kingdom of the Beastmen. The timing was truly awkward and harrowing, bringing forth blood and death to the world, but there was no way around that outcome.

Camelia fidgeted on her feet, constantly looking toward Sol while she feigned looking at the surrounding scenery. Now that she was standing next to him like this, she realized once again that he had become far taller than her over the course of his adventures.

He had become more muscular than she had once remembered him to be, and he definitely looked more mature and confident than before. The definite aura of power and authority that constantly emanated from his existence alone allowed her once again to realize that the small Sol she used to take care of was now no more.

"This isn't like you. Usually, don't you always try to take care of the problem before it can fester?"

Sol smiled under his breath at Camelia's words. "This isn't a problem that I can just intervene in. All I can do is give my utmost support to the two and make sure that everything is alright. I can only hope that they sort it out between them."

Sol knew that he couldn't have the answer to everything, and a mother and daughter relationship as awkward as the one Lilith and Lilin had was something he definitely had no say in. In this situation, all he could do was keep his mouth tightly sealed and act as support for them rather than meddle unnecessarily and cause even more problems to arise between them. He was sure that anything he would do in this situation would just further widen the rift that had formed between the mother and daughter pair.

"Lilin has many deeply rooted issues about her identity, and learning that she was some kind of experiment forced on her mother didn't really make things any better for her. So, it is quite understandable why she is behaving as she is. It is childish but, in the end, justified..."

"As for Lilith, she is, even now, dealing with the weight of 18 years of neglect and let's say technically bad parenting on her side, and she doesn't know how to amend for her sins."

Lilith had indeed done her duty as a mother. She had given her daughter the weapons she needed to become strong and survive through this cruel and unfair world. She had given Lilin food, shelter, and

never physically abused her in any sense, outside of training, of course. Any and all abuse she may have put her through was actually for her growth.

All her life, Lilin had never been wanting, never had to suffer hunger, and was respected by everyone for her position as the Queen's only daughter. Her position gave her influence, money, and all the means necessary for her to lead a successful life. This was already more than what many parents could ever hope to provide to their children in their entire lifetimes.

But parenting was never about just responding to the basic physical needs of your children, and Lilith failed on that regard royally. Was Lilith a bad parent? Was Lilin a spoiled child who should learn to be happy for the small blessings she received in having a parent that didn't mistreat her? Questions without any definite answers. They were never meant to be Yes or No answers in the first place. The world didn't work that way.

The situation they were facing was severely complicated, never one that was fully white or fully black. The world was dyed in shades of gray, and this issue between the mother and daughter pair was one such gray hue amongst countless others.

"Rather than speaking about them, I think it's time that we talk about ourselves. What do you say?"

Camelia took a deep breath and closed her eyes when she felt Sol's hand tuck one strand of her hair behind her ear, after which he gently cupped her face with said hand.

"How is your health, my dear Camelia?"

Before Sol left for the Astral Realm, Camelia's health had been negatively affected because of all the rituals she had done and the fact that Nihil had broken down her shield.

Camelia hesitated before shrugging and responding to his question, "I am getting better. The biggest problem was the backlash that I received from Nihil's attack, but my body is healing and returning to its optimal condition."

"Good."

He smiled and kissed her forehead, causing Camelia's cheeks to be dyed in a slight shade of rosy pink.

"What gives?"

Sol's brows rose at that question, "Do I need a reason to give you a kiss?"

She shook her head hurriedly, like a child caught doing something bad and denying the blame, "Of course not. I just thought you were still mad at me."

"I was. Even though it was for my own good, you lied to me many times, and this seriously affected my confidence in you and your words."

The words "It was for you" sound beautiful and all, but what this ultimately boils down to is "I know better than you do, so shut up and listen to what I say." This is nothing more than putting yourself in a position of superiority and deeming the one you were trying to protect as too immature and weak that they needed your absolute protection.

"The reason I never really totally got angry was because I understood that I indeed didn't have the experience nor power necessary for you to not think about that option. I am simply not worthy to be angry with you for what you did."

Before awakening, Sol had honestly taken his life to be an easygoing ride. It wasn't as if he didn't train or study. But he never truly grasped what his situation in the world was. Never once did he really pay attention to all the potential dangers surrounding him.

He was like an eagle raised in a golden cage by very caring owners, who wished all the best in the world for him. But the place of an eagle was in the sky as a predator, not a pet.

"Camelia, I love you, and I know you would give your soul for me. This is why I am willing to give you as many chances as you need."

He smiled, but the smile didn't really reach his eyes fully, "But while my love for you is eternal, my trust is unfortunately limited. As such... Never lie to me, ever again."

There was an edge to his smile, and Camelia could understand the reason behind it. No matter how much Sol loved her, if there was no more trust, she would feel like she was being killed by their relationship-quite literally too, in fact. This was a reality she refused to live in.

"So, no more secrets?"

Her voice held a certain meaning, and Sol understood that she was talking about his soul and the reason why all the souls of the previous kings were so different.

Sol closed his eyes. Truth be told, there was no reason to hide his identity at this point. Ambrosia knew. Kali knew. Even Isis knew. The same went for Tiamat and all the Divine Beasts. This also included Nent and Nefertiti, as well as Kiyohime. In short, only the mortal women in his harem were unaware of his true identity.

This was pretty unjust and a circumstance he needed to work on in order to truly be in a relationship where there were no more lies between all of them. No more veil that shrouded all of them, only endless love and devotion that connected them to him, and in turn to each other as well.

In the end, he just nodded his head in acknowledgement of what he truly wanted to do now.

"When we go back home, I will call everyone and tell them my tale."

It would be time for him to give his deepest and, at the same time, most worthless secret away to everyone he held dear to his heart.

[Son of the Hero King](#)

Chapter 477: CH 438: TALK (1)

Alone inside the tent, the situation between the mother and daughter pair - Lilith and Lilin - was quite tense, to say the least. If not for Lilith's younger appearance, this situation wasn't really out of the norm for the mother-and-daughter duo. Their relationship was the very definition of being on edge.

At the moment, Lilith was not the supreme warrior she usually presented herself to be to the outside world. She was not acting like the bubbly new persona she had adopted for herself either. Right now, all she was, was a worried mother who did not know what to speak to her one and only child.

The last conversation the two of them had in the past had not ended on a good note and she recognized how selfish she had been toward her. Now that she thought about it, was there ever a time that the conversation between them had ended on a good note? She could not find any, which showed her failure as a parent. Deeply focused on the ghost of the past as she had been, she had not even taken a moment out of her time to properly think how her actions would make her daughter feel. And she was extremely regretful for that behavior of hers.

"Lilin..."

»Lilin sighed after hearing her mother speak her name in such a weak voice. She was most definitely feeling as uncomfortable as her mother did right now. Her goal had never been to make her mother lower herself so much in front of her. She took no pleasure in this situation and only had a greater feeling of alienation mixed with self-reproach for her current actions. Things could not go on like this.

If one were to ask her to be reasonable when answering if she had an unhappy childhood, the answer she could give was neither yes nor no. There were simply too many contradictory elements mixed into her upbringing that she could not give a simple and straightforward answer to that question. She had everything one could ever hope to have but without Sol in her life, her mentality would have been much darker and more destructive and toxic due to the lack of affection and recognition she had been subjected to by her mother.

"How are you feeling, Mom?"

Lilith was very much surprised at the sudden show of care she perceived in her tone as she uttered the word 'Mom.' She could not help but leap at the bone that had been thrown toward her like a starving dog, hungry for food for days.

"I am alright. More than alright even..."

As a demigod, her lifespan was now almost infinite. At the very least, there was yet to be a demigod who died from age in her knowledge. This was very different from her declining lifespan.

"I need to adjust a little and soon I will have to sleep for some time to create my territory. But this is now just a question of time before I complete my ascension. What about you?"

"I am doing alright, I guess..."

Lilin stopped speaking after that, at least for some time she did not speak any other word. But then she realized that her words could not really lead to a discussion between them, something that she had planned to accomplish here, so she sighed and tried to speak further...

"We basically finished dealing with all the bandits in the area. The ones who had committed unforgivable crimes were immediately executed on the spot. The vast majority were just farmers who resorted to thievery in order to feed themselves at least the bare minimum to survive. When it came to them, we just locked them up in the prison of a county not far from here. What we do with them will ultimately depend on Sol."

Lilin was clear about her position in Lustburg. She was just a princess. And just being a princess granted no tangible authority to her. To be granted authority, she needed to prove herself, and this incident was her occasion to finally show her prowess and receive an official position in the army and the government. Because of that, she had been very careful about her actions and made sure that while everything wasn't perfect, it was still up to a certain standard that could be deemed perfect nonetheless. The fact that she was starting to build her own faction was just the icing on the cake.

"I know that compared to you I still lack talent but..."

She simply sighed and shook her head to banish that negative trail of thoughts from her mind, "It doesn't matter. Not anymore..."

If Sol had to live all his life with the stigma of being called 'The son of the Hero King,' then she had to live her life with the stigma of being 'The daughter of the Sword Saint.' Both of them had similar fates and the burden of endless expectations lodged on their shoulders since their birth. But unlike Sol, who was able to cast off the shadow of his father, or should she say their father(?), she was unable to walk away from the shadow of her mother. And that haunted her endlessly, even to this day.

Lilith awakened at 15, walked on the battlefield by the age of 16, became renowned at 17, and became a King ranked being when she was around 19 or 20 years old. This was a road of power that few people could ever hope to walk. Even the almighty Hero King only became a King ranked at the end of his 18th year in this world, just as he was about to turn 19. Compared to that... She was only a Duke at 18 years of age. Sol was already close in power level to a King-ranked being and he was 3 years younger than her. It seemed that in this family, she was the one who had been bestowed with the worst talent in these few generations.

Lilin knew that she was perhaps exaggerating. Objectively speaking, her talents and power were higher than 99% of all humans. She was in the top 1% of all of humanity and even in the Mortal Realm as a whole, her position was at the top of the food chain. But this was never enough for her. Why would someone who saw the stars care about the pebbles on the ground? Being in the top 1% was not enough. She wished to be in the top 0.1%. The realm of true monsters that would shake the world with their mere name alone.

"Lilin. You should not be in so much of a hurry. I believe you have great potential in you and when you master your succubi powers, you will become even more dangerous. I believe in your talent, my child."

Lilin could do nothing but give a bitter smile at that remark, "I think I would have been far happier if you told me this kind of thing 3 or so years ago."

Lilith's smile slowly slipped off and the pair of mother and daughter gazed at each other silently. There was much in the gaze of her daughter, so much that Lilith could say nothing to her. If at least there had also been anger, Lilith could have tried to argue and plead her case. At least say something other than being silent. But she found nothing, no emotions in her gaze for her, and this... made things all the more difficult for her.

The easiest thing now should be to just give up. As she always did. She had no need to fight so much, after all. She could just close her eyes and walk her own way and lead her own life. But Lilith refused to

take the easy path. She had already chosen the easy way for the past 18 years. Now it was time to walk the hard road of redemption.

Son of the Hero King

Chapter 478: CH 439: TALK (2)

After taking a deep breath, Lilith exhaled the air out of her lungs. Her eyes gained a new resolve as she finally came to a decision.

"I am sorry."

"Mom...!"

Lilith ignored the expression of surprise etched on her daughter's face, "I have already apologized many times during our last discussion on the tower after I told you the truth of your origin."

Lilith closed her eyes and leaked a rueful sigh, "All I ever wanted was your good. All I ever wished was for you to grow strong and survive in this world alone, without needing anyone's help. I wanted to prepare you for the time I would not be there to protect you anymore.

"When I realized that I didn't have much time left to live, I was happy to know that you hated and despised me. I thought that my death would be less heavy for you if you were to hate and despise me like that. Rather than pain, you would only feel relief by my disappearance from this world. I couldn't hope for a better outcome for my child."

She leaked another sigh, "I am sorry. I was stupid. I was blinded by my nihilistic emotions and only thought about things from my perspective. I said that I was making things easier for you, but in reality, I was the one taking the easy path out because I did not think I could be a good and loving mother to you, my child."

"Mom..."

"I am sorry. When Neptune gave me the opportunity to have a child, I jumped at it with little to no hesitation whatsoever. You were... are my responsibility. You never asked to be born in this cruel world, and since I wished for you to come into this world, it was my duty to raise and bring you up with as much love as possible."

Tears fell from her eyes again, but Lilith wiped those tears away roughly, without letting them fall from her face, "The last time I made the discussion between us all about me, even though it should have been about you. I am happy and proud of the woman you have become, even though I was not the best in guiding you.

"You are not a monster. You were not unwanted, and you are definitely anything but untalented."

Her hair fluttered slightly as she spoke those words to her, and her voice was a little bit hoarse. If possible, she wanted to even kneel and beg her for forgiveness. But she knew that such a display would only be an insidious way of pressuring her daughter to accept her whims.

"I am sorry for all the pain I caused. I regret it so much, and I wish I could change everything. But... I cannot, and hundreds of thousands of apologies would not change the pain I have inflicted on you, my child."

This was the simple reality of their current situation. Talking was cheap. A perpetrator could easily apologize, but whether the apology would be accepted or not depended on the victim.

"The mistakes I committed are things that will haunt the two of us for a long time. I do not ask you to forgive me now. I would even accept it if you never forgave me. This is your right, after all. But please... I beg you... Just give me a second chance."

This time she could only lower her head to the ground, not being able to face her daughter anymore. Her frazzled hair covered her face entirely, and her fists were tightly clenched as they nestled on her lap.

"I... If you really decide that you are much better without me, I swear to never bother you ever again."

She would only stay away and take care of her from far away. Protecting her was the only thing she could not let go of.

"If you decide to forgive me, to give me a second chance, I swear to give my all in not making you regret that decision. I would do anything for you to forgive me."

"Anything?"

Lilith looked at her daughter at those words, but Lilin simply looked away, not daring to look at her mother's messy visage, "When you say anything. Would you give up on your life?"

"I cannot. This life does not belong to me alone anymore."

Lilith gave a sad smile, "Be it you, Sol, Isis, and all the witches. This life was brought about by taking too many gambles. I can never give up on it, ever again. Doing so would be an insult to each and every one of you."

Even though her eyes were still red, and she even sniffled slightly every now and then, the strength and conviction in her eyes as she delivered those words were unmistakable.

Lilith did not fear death. Never did and never will. She once sought death and even accepted it with open arms.

But now... She could not die. If she thought before that her life was worthless, the life she had now was the result of the effort of too many people.

Lilin nodded her head and spoke, "Of course, asking you to die would be too much for me. If it's so... Then what about your sword? Would you give up on your sword?"

This time silence fell in the room.

Lilith looked once again at her daughter, and all she could see was dead seriousness.

She opened her mouth before biting down her words. She felt like thorns were tearing apart her throat, making her unable to speak.

The sword... In a way, this could be said to be even more important for Lilith than her own life. The path of the sword was one of the first things that truly belonged to her in this world. Her love for the sword was simply indescribable. It transcended mere emotions and had become a part of her existence already.

Could she give up on it? Could she really swear to never hold onto it?

Lilith closed her eyes painfully, but in the end, simply released a sigh, "I will."

She loved the sword. This was her path, the one thing that had illuminated her life for a long time.

But... Lilith remembered the moment when the true light of her life entered her life. She remembered the feeling of joy and fullness she felt as she gave birth to the beautiful girl in front of her.

Lilin may not technically be her daughter. She was more a clone of her than anything else. But how did it even matter to her?

She had her in her stomach and gave birth to her after many struggles. She brought her up and watched her grow all the way to her current state.

She was far from a perfect mother. She made many mistakes. Some were worse than others. While some were so horrible that she was not even able to reminisce about them without feeling suffocated in her heart.

Lilith was her daughter. This was a simple and absolute fact she would never budge on.

She loved the sword... But she loved her daughter even more. She was the reason for her existence, in a way...

A gentle smile graced her lips, and the tension in her shoulders seemed to have vanished completely once she came to that realization.

"I will."

The same exact two words had been delivered as a few moments ago, but the feeling behind those words was completely different than before.

There was no reluctance in her eyes. No longing, and Lilin could see this clearer than anyone else.

Lilin just bowed her head, never having felt so ashamed when she realized the significance of what she had asked from her mother. And the shame she felt only intensified when she realized that Lilith was ready to give up one of the most precious things in her life... only for her...

"I need to get some air."

She stood up, ready to flee again as overwhelmed as she was by the emotion,

But she soon stopped after taking a few steps.

Her back was now facing Lilith, who remained still and unmoving in her seat.

Lilin thought about the future. If she fled at this very moment, things would be no different from how they unfolded during their last discussion at the tower.

Whether she accepted to have a better relationship with Lilith or not. She had to make things clear as procrastination would only bring more sadness to both of their lives. She had to make a decision right now...

"I really don't know what I think about you, Mom..."

This was why she decided to speak. She was feeling confused about what to feel for her mother...

For Lilin, her mother was both an object of immense respect and worship and also an object of unequivocal fear and hatred.

"I am sorry for asking you to give up on your sword like that. I shouldn't have done that..."

She had gone too far and acted completely entitled by asking her mother to do such a thing. She did not wish to make Lilith feel even more miserable than what she was feeling right now. She took no pleasure in seeing her mother suffer, no matter how much hate she felt for her.

"Do you..." She hesitated slightly before muttering in a soft tone, "Do you really think the two of us can have a normal relationship?"

Was it even possible for the two of them to go back to being normal mother and daughter? After more than 18 years of negligence and misunderstandings?

Lilith felt her heart skip a beat at her question. She knew that this was a chance for her. Maybe, the final chance for her to resolve their relationship. She hurriedly stood up and talked to Lilin's back.

"I don't know. I really don't know. Perhaps even if I try being a caring mother, I will fail miserably. But... I will still do my best. I will put in every bit of effort I can muster to make things work between us..."

"I see..."

Lilin nodded and started leaving the tent, causing Lilith to look down dejectedly.

"Tomorrow... Could you please teach me your new sword style then?"

Lilith looked up; her eyes widening in surprise and almost shouted her next words, but she was able to keep it in somehow, "Yes!"

Lilin had already left, but Lilith knew that her words had been heard.

Her heart swelled with happiness as she sat back, almost not being able to believe that this was the undeniable reality.

In the end, all she could do was bow down and tear up slightly as both relief and happiness filled her heart.

[Son of the Hero King](#)

Chapter 479: CH 440: FRIENDS

Setsuna/Lilin

After leaving her tent, Lilin felt like her head was boiling. Ideas and thoughts conflicted in her mind as she walked ahead, filling as she could barely see her surroundings.

She could hear people saluting her but she had no time to salute back and could only grind her teeth.

Lilin was angry.

Angry at the childish and hurtful words she had said to her mother. For all Lilith had not been the perfect mother. She had never intentionally abused her emotionally or physically.

She was also angry at the fact that she had not been able to tell what she really wanted to say.

Rather than threatening and provoking her mothers, she would have hoped to have a warm welcome.

But...All her life, she had never been taught how to show affection effectively to Lilith. The small moments others took for granted were things she had no knowledge of.

'Argil. What the hell.'

She felt like crouching down and crying. But at the very least she had been able to take one small step toward mending their relationship.

She stopped when she reached a lake.

"Who?"

She immediately put a hand at her hip, only to realize her sword was not there. She had been in so much hurry to leave that she had forgotten it.

"You got sloppy."

Lilin 's hair frizzled as an electric charge went through her spine.

She yelped and moved away only to see a thinly smiling Setsuna with sparks of electricity between her fingers.

"Firstly. This hurt and secondly. I have no reason to not be sloppy. If anyone can infiltrate this place with all those kings rank present then having a sword wouldn't be different."

"Oh? You seem quite prickly, princess?"

Setsuna chuckled as she patted Lilin on the back and walked up to a rock and took place on it.

Lilin looked at the back of her friend and rival and jumped as well.

The two sat quietly, gazing at the pristine blue lake. Each of them was thinking deeply about their situation. But they took solace in being next to each other.

"So, even if you were deep in thought, you should have felt my presence. What made you so upset?"

The first one to break the silence was Setsuna. Lilin closed her mouth for a moment. She took a small rock and threw it on the lake, watching it skip a few times before finally plunging.

"I had a discussion with my mother."

"Ah..."

"Indeed. Ah."

Lilin shrugged and started explaining what had happened and how she acted. When she ended, she sighed and stretched a little before lying down. Looking at the blue sky devoid of clouds and the few birds flying around brought a certain peace in her disturbed heart.

Sitting next to her, Setsuna mused a little before also taking a rock and throwing it. Making sure that it had more skip than the one Lilin threw.

"I envy you."

"What..."

Setsuna did not look at Lilin and simply gazed at the lake with empty eyes, "Your family is graced with loyal people. Your mother gave you the best teaching, you are the only princess of Lustburg and Sol is your family."

"More than anything...They are very much alive."

Her voice became low as she took another rock, "I remember my father. He was a kind but strong man. The perfect Alpha for the pack. He passed many important laws that helped in making my country a better one. My mother was a kind woman. She was quite withdrawn but she was respected by many. I loved them and saw them as the sky. They were everything to me-"

"-Then they were murdered by my uncle."

Her grip tightened and she reduced the rock in her hand into powder.

"My parents were killed by my uncles before I was even ten. My retainers died one after another as they fought to give me a chance to escape. In one night, I went from being the princess of the nation to being nothing but a famished kid fearing for her life."

"You know the rest of life after I came to Lustburg."

Setsuna dusted her hand and sighed, "Look, I am not telling this to say your pain is worthless or that you are spoiled. What I want you to understand is that in this world, nothing is eternal. The thing you take for granted can vanish in an instant when you least expect it."

A gentle smile formed on her face and she turned to look at Lilin,

"Let me tell you this as someone who lost everything - Cherish all you have. Because you never know when you will lose it. Be happy that you have a mother you can fight with because many don't. Finally...if you really wish to forgive her, then don't hesitate. Because if you do...You might regret it forever."

A sad smile formed on her lips. How many times had she woken up, wishing that it was all nothing but a nightmare?

How many times she thought...I wish I could have said I loved them more often. I wish I had been a better daughter.

Her parents sometimes scolded her in the past. But it was only after growing up that she realized how blissful it was to have someone who cared enough about you to take the time to scold you.

"Then again, your relationship with the Queen is filled with many secrets and pain and lie. It's normal to find it hard to connect with her. Normal to want to lash out. Why do you need to act mature? Your parents and lover are the only ones you can afford to act immaturely with."

She stood up and patted her butt, "Lilin, don't hesitate. Don't make it so you will end up thinking I wish I could have done this. Do it. You are lucky enough that Lilith is willing to recognize her error and try to mend your relationship. But this works both way."

Lilin looked silently at Setsuna and asked quietly,

"Do you miss them?"

"Every day of my life."

Lilin nodded and stood up and stretched her hand to Setsuna, "Then you need to become stronger. Won't it feel great if you can give a punch to that Uncle of yours?"

"Oh trust me, I am thinking of giving him way worse than just a punch."

The two friends gazed silently at each other. There was no need for more words between them.

Lilin's anger faded and she could feel her mind become clearer. Indeed, rather than dwelling on the mistakes of the past, it was better to focus on the future.

She did not know whether or not she would either be able to mend the fence with Lilith completely.

But just training with a sword wasn't enough. She wanted that, at the very end of this, whether this ended in failure or success, she could say proudly that she had done her best.

"Also, you know you sounded like Sol, earlier?"

Setsuna chortled, "I guess his preachy way rubbed off me a little."

The two smiled at each other and started walking back.

Lilin wasn't the only one who had managed to make her mind clearer, after this small discussion.

Setsuna had been walking a fog between decision and indecision. But now, she finally remembered one of the goals that had led her through her life and the reason she had wanted to become stronger.

The sword?

Focusing on elements?

She had no attachment to either of those. She had never pursued power for the sake of power. Nor for the beauty of it. She was not one to focus on aesthetics. She wanted power for the sake of two simple goals.

Protecting Sol.

Avenging her parents.

Setsuna could not feel it, but in the depth of her Mindscape, a gate started to form. What it would look like at the end was left to be seen.

Son of the Hero King

Chapter 480: CH 441: CHASING TREASURE

Later into the afternoon of that day, in the main tent, that was initially designed to accommodate Lilin as she was the commander of this battalion of Black Knights, the full group reunited for the first time.

Sol was surprised to see that the atmosphere, unlike the one in the morning, was far more light-hearted and easygoing than before. It seemed that, like how he was able to deal with some of the shadows and stains that had marred the relationship between him and Camelia, the mother-and-daughter pair had also been able to manage to begin the process of mending their broken and tattered relationship.

He realized that he had really taken the right choice in not intervening in this case. For all he liked to portray himself as strong and dependable, Sol knew that he was no sage nor a miracle worker who was able to instantly do anything he wished. He knew for a fact that he did not have the answers to all the questions that the others may have and he was even more certain that he did not have the best solution to mend some cases. Cases like the one that plagued Lilin and Lilit.

Rather than rashly butting in between them, it was better for him to watch from afar and make sure to take care of the broken pieces with all he could if things were to go south.

"Lilin, we didn't really have much time to speak til now. How is the subjugation process going?"

"Very well, I would say. I think after this, there will be no advent of any bandits or bandit groups in the immediate surroundings for a long time."

"That's perfect. With this done, one of our goals of bringing better security to the capital and the revitalization of the commerce industry will finally be accomplished. Things are bound to get extremely complicated during the war so it's better for us to take care of this problem right now."

"Yes. Though we were only able to manage in mending the areas around the capital and a few villages in the surroundings but nothing more than that. I am sure that the borders are infested with these hooligans and criminals."

He shrugged his shoulders in response to the last part of her statement, "The royal family doesn't have to take care of everything. Since those nobles have power over those zones, they will just have to clean those places up by themselves... Milia?"

"Yes, Your Highness?"

"Note this statement and prepare an edict. I want a few of your shadows to follow the messengers we will select. Camelia, ideally speaking, I also want to take a few of your nuns and paladins for this mission. They will have to move through all of Lustburg so it won't be an easy task and so I need dedicated personnel."

Thankfully, they had a few teleportation gate masters who were able to transport them to key locations but those people were always priority targets in times of war.

Sol did not wish to lose such rare talents so they had no choice but to slow down their activities during this period of time.

Thankfully, the war should not last too long but it was always better to be ready for any variables. Milia nodded silently to his words. The Crown's Shadow had grown quite a bit thanks to the influx of new recruits and better training resources that Sol had delegated to them.

Some of the new recruits were sadly still a bit too inexperienced so this was the perfect situation to train them and build up some crucial experience for themselves.

"Of course, you can deploy the paladins as much as you wish. I will give you full authority in that case and even order the White Knight to listen to you." Camelia spoke without hesitation at Sol's demand. She was all too eager to please him in as many ways as possible; especially so due to the friction that had been going on in their relationship in these times. Even though they had mended the holes in their relationship, she still wanted to do more for him so that he will be pleased with her.

She was always eager for his affection.

The White Knight was the most powerful knight inside the church and a crucial force of the Holy faction. He was a paladin who was very talented for a human and even had a rare ice elemental spirit as his contract. Though, it seemed like that spirit was quite a bit prickly and even had the form of a penguin for some odd reason.

Either way, having them under his command would still be incredible for his current plans. Despite all his power, Sol was still unable to cover the entirety of all the battlefronts at the same time. He wasn't able to move his most powerful pieces- the King rank beings and above either but that wasn't really much of a problem in this case.

"Setsuna... Lilin... Will the two of you follow me to the front?"

He looked at his two companions and after sharing a subtle conversation with each other through their eyes, both of them nodded their heads and readily agreed to follow him. However, there was still something that he needed to make clear to them and this was a good time as any.

"Setsuna, I wish for you and Lilin to take care of a battlefront each. However, I have to regretfully inform you that you both are still too weak for that task. With your current strengths, you won't be able to smoothly fulfill my wishes..."

Setsuna was a Storm Wolf and a very powerful fighter to boot. Even a human at the Duke level would have a very hard time dealing with her and would even get defeated by her if they were to be careless.

However, the problem here was that they were not really fighting humans here. They were now fighting against beasts, demihumans like her. If Setsuna went on and tried to control the battlefield with her current level of strength, then the only outcome that would be waiting for her was a surefire road to death. There was no other way around it as she was one of the prime targets in this war. She was the only wolf alive that had the right to fight against the king's legitimacy to the throne.

"We decided to have a fight in a few days, right? I will be completely honest with you here... If after this fight you are unable to become a Duke, I will directly sign the contract with you. The boost that you would receive from signing the contract with me should be enough to directly elevate you to the Duke level."

His voice was calm and serene, without a hint of fluctuation, as he relayed the reality of her current situation to the Storm Wolf. "The only reason I am stopping myself from signing the contract now is because I know it might break your pride if you reach the Duke level thanks to me."

All the women around him, from the weakest to the strongest, had a certain mixture of dependency on him when it came to their emotional well-being.

But when it came to their respective powers and might, they were extremely independent. They were all proud of the power they had and wished in no way for him to coddle them or protect them like damsels in distress or some sheltered princesses. This was another part about them that he found extremely charming.

From the Duke level to the higher levels, the mindset played a role far more important than even bloodlines and other broken supplements that each individual had with them.

Sol knew very well that if Setsuna became a Duke thanks to him when Lilin had managed to do so on her own, it would forever break the self-esteem of his beautiful wolf knight of his and she might be forever unable to advance further in her journey of power.

This ultimatum was, in the end, just a way to spur her on but from the fire in her eyes, he knew that he didn't need to worry much about her. She was already finding her own way to reaching her goals. All she needed was a small nudge in the right direction. Something that would help her in breaking the shackles tying her down and he knew exactly where he could find that nudge.

"I will summarize the current situation and new goals for us. Lilith, later, we will have a conversation about why kidnapping the Supreme daughter is not a good idea, but for now, I want you to take back control of the army for the last onslaught against the bandits. Milia, I want you to go back home with Camelia and prepare for the war. Also, visit Theresa and make sure those adventurers gave her the message. If they did, reward them appropriately. We might even hire that dwarf as a blacksmith if he has the talent for it."

He slowly tapped his finger on the table, "Medea and Persephone, please go talk to Ambrosia. Persephone has tested the ring already, and we have proven its authenticity. It's time for me to talk to that witch council of yours and forge a new relationship between Salem and Lustburg."

Persephone smiled. The verification had been a very enjoyable process for her. "Mother has been even more impatient than you. What do you think? You will be the first man to ever step inside Salem. How are you feeling about that?"

She chuckled, "Imagine an entire country full of only women who are extremely thankful to you for giving them the ability to be with the people they love. I wonder how they will reward you for that?"

If Sol's brain was a computer, it would have shown a short circuit and an Error.ex message right about now after hearing her words.

Just imagining an entire country full of very beautiful and very, very thirsty women jumping at him made him gulp. This might perhaps be the highest orgy ever recorded in the history of orgies.

'Begone evil thoughts.'

He shook his head and glared at the slyly smiling woman with clear irritation in his eyes.

"Stop teasing Sol. This might very well happen at this rate."

Medea had nothing against sharing him, but still, sharing her lover with the entirety of the witches was a little too much even for her.

She sighed and nodded her head, "We will prepare. Honestly, the council will be even more excited than you think they will."

"Wonderful." Once he was done giving them the instructions, Sol finally focused on Lilith and Setsuna.

"As for you two..."

He paused and gave them a smile, "Are you interested in treasure hunting?"

He didn't know what would happen, but something was telling him that at the end of this adventure, both Setsuna and Lilin will come out as completely different beings. It was a gut feeling.

He couldn't help but wait to see their transformations.