

Hero King 491

[Son of the Hero King](#)

Chapter 491: CH 452: LONG LIVE THE QUEEN

[Zone: Eternal Memories]

[A Step into the Present : - : Fimbulvetr [1]

The world was silent.

FuhhhSteam bellowed as it escaped Setsuna's body, from all parts of her body, as if it was ready to burn the world down but the space around her in more than a few hundreds meters was completely frozen solid, be it in time or space.

"So this is the zone."

Even as the storm wolf walked the earth with a gait worthy of a supreme being, steam continued to escape and her body continued to burn hotly, contrasting deeply with the surrounding temperature.

She was absorbing the natural heat of the world in her own body, allowing her to create a world where everything was being frozen to nearly absolute Zero.

This was [Fimbulvetr.] a power that fused the concept of Frost and Time and a sub-skill of her [Eternal Memories] zone.

'The world seems so different now.'

Not only did she finally step in the Rank of Duke and unlocked a powerful Zone, but she felt like she had also evolved greatly as a species.

Setsuna's appearance had greatly changed, her hair became longer, reaching until her legs, her arms and legs were covered in night blue fur and her nails were now full claws.

The energy 'Horns', above her head became thicker and she felt like she could control a far larger amount of energy than ever before.

The feeling of euphoria would have lasted far longer if not for the progressively growing heat in her body. All her clothes were already completely torn apart, but this was the least of her worry.

As she watched the surroundings, she could only exclaim about everything was encased in ice, even the tornado that had attacked her was completely frozen.

Taking a few steps forward, she finally reached Neun.

A complicated expression formed on Setsuna's face for an instant. But she knew that she could not keep this moment forever.

As ironic as it was.

'Release.'

BOOM!An explosion followed as the frost clashed with direct opposite heat, creating burning steam like never before.

From Neun's perspective, everything seemed to have happened in an instant. One moment she was simply observing the situation of Setsuna and the next she was blasted away by a powerful explosion.

â€¦! Cough*

This was so sudden that she was barely able to protect her body with mana and had to receive the attack at point black.

Her skin burn slightly and the shock of the explosion impacted her internal organ causing her to cough blood before landing roughly on the ground.

Using her years of experience, she tumbled and rolled on the ground to disperse as much energy from the fall as possible before finally standing up.

'What happened?'

Standing up, her gaze moved as she tried to make sense of the sudden strike but all the bewilderment vanished when her eyes landed on Setsuna.

"Princess..."

A hearty smile appeared on Neun's face.

'How beautiful. How Vaillant.'

There was nothing but admiration and joy in her eyes. She was so happy to see that Setsuna had surpassed her limit that she could barely keep a stoic expression.

'Ah...'

She blocked her mouth and coughed even more blood. But she knew that this was not because of the previous hit.

'Seems like I do not have much longer.'

She smiled, "Princess, I congratulate you on your awakening. But this is still not enough. You still need to become much stronger if you wish to take revenge."

Setsuna stayed silent before snapping her finger.

Instantly, all the wounds that previously covered her body began to close as if they had never existed in the first place. It was like her body had returned to a previous more pristine state.

"I am still learning the ropes. So let's see."

Setsuna took one more step and lightning covered her body before she rushed at full speed.

After all, becoming a duke did not mean her previous skills vanished.

If this was all, Neun would have simply been amazed at the increase in physical ability. But...

The moment she took out her sword and was about to counter, her eyes widened as two Setsuna appeared before coming at her from a different side.

'Illusion? Kuh!'

The weight she felt as she blocked the strike from one of them told her all she needed to know.

Those were not illusions.

'How...?'

A Step into time : -: Temporal Clones [1]

The fight became one-sided pretty fast. Neun had already lost her giant wolf form and keeping up with one Setsuna was more than difficult.

Dealing with three was impossible.

"I know you are curious. But they are indeed not illusions. Rather, they are clones from the past. Manifestations of my memories and time."

'This...'

"Incredible. Haha. Truly, I lost."

A blade rested on her neck but Neun looked up with relief.

"You seem happy."

"How could I be unhappy at the sight of such a beautiful growth? With such a Zone as the base, the princess will grow to become the strongest King our race has ever witnessed. I can only feel the utmost joy at this news."

Setsuna tightened her grip on the blade she was holding.

She could not feel like her anger had nowhere to go. If at least Neun was acting in a way to harm her she could feel better.

"Why...?"

Her words came more like a plea than a question.

"You already know my answer."

She smiled brightly.

Crack

Fissure appeared on her skin as if she was about to break.

"Ayame!"

Setsuna threw her blade aside and cradled Neun, or rather, Ayame in her arms, "What is happening!?"

She didn't understand. Even though the fight had been harsh, she had never dealt any life-threatening blow to her.

"I am sorry, Princess. It seems like my time has come."

"What do you mean!?"

Looking at the crying Setsuna, Ayame gave a feeble smile and tried to bring her hand to caress Setsuna's face.

Sadly, she could do nothing as her hand broke into pieces and started to scatter like the wind.

"This body is finally coming to its limit. After all, I failed the contract."

"Contract? Wait, forget it! How can we stop this?"

"This is useless. After all, this body of mine is nothing but a shell."

On that day, ten years ago. She had not really survived. She was already on the verge of death when they found her.

She signed a contract and only the feeling of wrath and the desire of vengeance in her heart could sustain her false life and give her even more power.

In a way, she was just an undead.

"Princess... Please listen to me."

Setsuna sniffed. She wanted to shake her head but she knew that those may very well be the last words she would hear.

"Thank you for being alive. Thank you for growing up to become such an upright and beautiful woman. Fighting against you has been a delight."

She muttered, her voice becoming weaker and weaker.

"Also, please be careful of Ein. He is very dangerous."

'Ah...'

She could feel her body breaking even further and her lips sealing themselves shut. As per the contract, trying to tell anything about the truth would result in an even swifter death.

She looked to the side as someone approached them... The prince of Lustburg.

"Sol..."

Sol silently looked at her before shaking his head. "There is nothing I can do for her at the moment."

If he still had some divinity left he could have tried something. But as she was, it was impossible for him to do anything. The threads of fate entangling her were all at the minimum at the demigod level.

"King of Humanity. Please hear my will."

Sol silently looked at her and took a knee on the ground. Ayame showed surprise on her face, but then a happy smile graced her face.

This was perhaps the highest form of respect she had ever received in all her life.

"I am speaking of the last true family of the princess. Please... Take care of her."

"I will."

"Then... May your life be filled with happiness until the end of time."

She did not need to ask for more. All she wanted was to pray for the happiness of her princess.

She believed in no goddess. But she wished that at least this plea of hers was listened to by anyone who could make her wish come true.

The tears of Setsuna on her face made her heart heavy. But she knew that it was time to say goodbye.

She had not done much good in her life. She also did many wicked things. But she only had one regret.

That Setsuna would never...

'Ah...'

Her eyes widened.

Right in front of her eyes, Setsuna was covered in a flamboyant golden light.

Her blue hair and fur changed color under this light until they were completely golden.

"Hahaha..."

A weak laugh escaped her lips.

Fate was truly an incredible thing.

"The usurper will die. Long live the new Queen."

Neun's body was completely scattered in the air, reduced to nothing but dust.

But she died happily. Knowing that the throne would go back to its most rightful owner.

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Chapter 492: CH 453: REACTION

[Nihil's Dimension]

It was a world filled with a scarlet light coming from the scarlet moon hanging high in the sky. As always, there was not the slightest trace of life in this world except for the few people who inhabited it. In the center of this dimension, a scarlet translucent cocoon could be seen floating quietly. In it, it was possible to see the silhouette of a naked figure with angel wings and a missing arm.

"How is she?"

A tall woman with a rather strong-looking body and two horns on her head walked boldly up to the cocoon. Zwei, once known as Ibuki-Doji, was observing the situation of her leader with a small laughter in her mouth.

"To think that even you would be done like this. I might have missed a truly good fight."

"If you went, we would have lost another member, so I guess it's good."

Zwei's smile stopped spreading, and she turned in the direction of the other person in the surrounding area. It was a young man with black hair and a rather handsome face, wearing what looked to be a black trench coat, a top hat, and a crystal monocle over his right eye. This was definitely a rather outlandish attire in this place, but Zwei was already used to it.

"Eins..."

He was the second in command of this group. A man that was rather elusive and generally did not show himself if it was not necessary. As crazy as she was, Zwei had, of course, asked him for a fight once, in order to discover just how powerful he was. The result had been rather disastrous.

"What are you doing here? You usually only appear when you want to give instructions."

Eins adjusted his monocle slightly, and a clock reflected in the glass flashed slightly before he sighed.

"Neun is dead. Same for Acht."

"Oh..."

Zwei answered with a short surprise, but beyond that, she was not particularly moved.

"So let's see. We lost the undead, the lion, the dwarf, the wolf, and the Vampire."

She whistled playfully, "Five out of Eleven members are either dead or imprisoned. I must say, this is pretty funny."

"You do not seem shocked."

"Shocked? Why should I be? I already made it clear that I did not believe in all the crap Nihil was spouting. I simply joined because it seemed fun and I could fight strong people. Though now, it seems like the fun is about to end."

"Oh, you are pretty wrong about this."

Eins smiled quietly before shaking his head and approaching the cocoon housing the sleeping form of Nihil. He had tried to heal her, but it had been impossible. The only way to do so was to expel the foreign power that was gnawing at her body.

"Haha. I never thought I would see that power again. This makes things tricky."

He touched the cocoon, an expression of nostalgia appearing on his face before he shook his head.

"We already have the Divine weapons of the Humans, Dwarves, angels, and Chimera."

"So what? I doubt we can get all of them, and even if we do free Ymir once we gather, it isn't like victory will be assured."

Eins stayed silent for a while before walking away.

"I made the others start to move. To gather the ones we are lacking. You can do as you like, but simply remember this... The fun you are seeking has not even started. Soon, we will open the gate to a new era."

He moved his cloak and immediately vanished from the premises.

"Why do those bastards always have to talk with a half-riddle?"

Zwei scratched her head, deep in thought. She was already at the peak of what was possible as a King and only needed a push to go through the limit.

'There is a war happening soon, right?'

The last time she had the best fun was during the war between Lustburg and Gluttony foss. It seemed like Lustburg was about to help her once again fight the boredom.

[Wratharis, Imperial Capital]

While Zwei was thinking about what to do, back in Wratharis, two people were having very varied reactions after they felt a certain energy.

"This is impossible!"

Standing up, with his eyes seemingly glaring lightning, Lupus roared as fury nearly overwhelmed him. It had been only for an instant. But he had felt it. It was as clear as if someone had placed a searing hot blade on his skin.

"Why!?"

He screamed his rage at the sky, his temper and aura causing the very weather to change as black clouds gathered and thunder grounded. But no matter how much he screamed, nothing changed, and he received no answer.

Meanwhile, on the side of the temple, Kiku's eyes widened for an instant before a chuckle escaped her. Soon, she found herself rolling on the ground and laughing out loud like a complete madman, to the complete bewilderment of Shuten-Doji. She was about to ask what was happening when she felt the reverberation of Lupus's power and rage.

"What in the name of the goddess is happening?"

The fact that Kuki's full laugh coincided with Lupus's rage made her think of something, but she dared not have much hope for this. It couldn't be so easy, after all, right?

The answer by Kuki made Shuten smile brightly as she realized that, yes, it could be that easy.

"A new Blessed under Ira was chosen."

This was perhaps the best news she had heard in a very long time.

"Do we know who it is?"

"No. But... It is pretty easy to guess who."

She looked in the direction of Lustburg, remembering the small move she had made back then to assure the survival of the princess. Who would have thought that this small act of kindness would be repaid in such an unexpected way? Fate was truly wonderful sometimes.

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Chapter 493: CH 454: I WANT TO BECOME A GOD

A few hours later after the fight between Setsuna and Ayame, the sun had already vanished in the horizon to give place to the beautiful moon and its silver light.

The crackling sound of fire filled the air as Sol and Lilin watched over it. On the side, Setsuna was breathing quietly, asleep.

Sitting quietly with her back against a tree, Lilin looked at Sol with questions in her eyes. After killing the dwarf and avenging her past loss, she had made sure to cut the head of the corpse just in case they needed it. She then decided to go observe Setsuna fight as the feeling of power coming from there had been rather strong.

When she finally reached the place, it was just in time to see that blue Wolf scatter under the wind and Setsuna transform into a golden Wolf. 'Is it a Blessing?' Lilin was not really surprised. There were only two Blue Wolves left to take care of the royal family. It was rare for goddesses to switch royal families as long as one member was even alive.

"You don't really seem happy," Sol said, breaking the silence. He had been keeping quiet until now, and Lilin was bothered by it. She wondered if she had done something wrong or what was putting him in such a bad mood.

"Well, becoming Blessed isn't bad," Sol began. He knew this more than anyone. Becoming a Blessed was nothing short of a cheat key for life. All the power and influence of a kingdom aside, one would be loved by Fate for a long time. "Also, this will make our war effort and propaganda much easier."

Even if they spread the news that there was a new Blessed, the wolf King would not be able to stop this information. After all, it would be no different from insulting a goddess herself. With Setsuna as a Blessed, they had all the legitimate reasons possible in the book to take control over society. In fact, if Setsuna was a King, the war would have immediately ended as Setsuna would just have to challenge Lupus to a succession duel.

One could say that while everything wasn't perfect, everything had taken a turn for the better. Sol could even already imagine the best play ever. The story of a Princess who, after leaving her kingdom while being chased like a dog by her greedy uncle, came back with even more strength and finally took back the throne that was rightfully hers. A story filled with tears, joy, happiness, and some little naughtiness.

What Sol didn't like was the fact that someone had meddled in his screenplay, and that someone was a goddess. 'Ira... What does she want?' Sol pondered. He did not think he had any beef with the goddess of Wrath, but neither did he have any connection. 'Should I take it as a sign of friendship? Or an attempt to manipulate me?'

Now that Setsuna was a Blessed, Fate would favor her for a long time. But this also meant that once she had a child, her death might happen at any moment in the most convoluted way possible.

'Initially, I wanted to help Setsuna become a full divine beast, but now I am having second thoughts,' Sol thought. Things became tricky. He needed to have a way to have a discussion with Ira and make clear what she was thinking. Thankfully, he knew very well when he would be able to do so. 'When I sign a contract with Setsuna.'

"Sol?" Lilin interrupted his thoughts, concerned by his distant expression.

"Sorry, I was thinking out loud," Sol apologized.

"You think too much sometimes," Lilin stated.

Sol smiled and approached Lilin, stretching her cheeks to give her a funny expression. "You are right. I think too much sometimes."

But what else could he do? There was so much to think about every day. It didn't help that Ayame, before dying, had left some bullshit foreshadowing that would certainly come back to bite them in the ass later.

'So is Eins the super big mastermind behind everything?' Sol wondered. What race was he even? Sol felt a growing headache, but this time Lilin was the one to take his face in her hands before finally headbutting him.

"Ouch!" Sol exclaimed.

Unfortunately, when Lilin opened her eyes after the headbutt, she winced due to the pain. "What is your forehead made of?"

"Pure awesomeness mixed with math badassery. But more seriously, what was that?" Sol asked, rubbing his forehead.

Lilin coughed embarrassedly. "I read it in some hot-blooded story. Sometimes a headbutt is used to make another character snap back to their senses."

She had forgotten how strong Sol's body was. "Sol... You know, I think I need to make you understand something."

"...So we are going to ignore how red your forehead is now? In fact, aren't you about to bleed?" Sol pointed out, noticing Lilin's blushing forehead.

Lilin blushed but ignored the shameful reality. "Ahem Like I was saying, you have a serious problem, you know?"

Sol stopped teasing her and listened attentively. "And what might that be?"

"You want to shoulder everything alone," Lilin began. "Then again, I think this is a problem all of us have. But it became worse for you since you came back from the Astral realm."

Lilin sighed, realizing that she wasn't the best at giving speeches or voicing her thoughts. 'I guess I should talk to the others about this.'

"Ever since you came back, and even before, you have been acting like the weight of the world is resting on your shoulders. As if you have to take care of all our pain and act as the shield that will protect us from anything and everything."

"I love it. I love you, and I love how earnest you are. Having you in my life is without a doubt one of the best things that ever happened, but Sol... Stop trying to shoulder everything alone. You are not a god. You are not omnipotent, and you cannot be perfect. So why not rely on us more?"

Sol smiled warmly at her words. "I am sorry for worrying you all so much. I really believe in all of you, Ilaha."

Lilin looked at Sol, worried. She had never been the best at giving speeches or voicing her thoughts. 'I guess I should talk to the others about this.'

Meanwhile, the thoughts swimming in Sol's mind became much simpler. Since he was not a god, there were many things limiting him. But what if he became one? What if he became fully omnipotent and omnipresent? Wouldn't all the worries he had vanish like smoke or melt like ice under the sun? All his worries would become meaningless once he reached that far.

His eyes started to shine with determination. A desire to become even stronger and climb to an even greater height. To break the unbreakable limit and do the impossible. 'I think... I can really do it.'

He would become a god. He would reach the level of the 14 goddesses. Nay, he would surpass them. Surpass even Ymir. And perhaps... Just perhaps... Surpass even the Chaos and Order. Something in his heart told him that he could do so and much more.

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Chapter 494: CH 455: SWEARING UNDER THE MOONLIGHT

When Setsuna woke up, she was greeted with the scene of Sol with Lilin sitting between his legs, her back against him, and Sol braiding her hair carefully.

"Are you awake? How do you feel?" Sol looked at her with a gentle smile and beckoned her toward him. Standing up, Setsuna realized that all her clothes had been reduced to rags during her fight and that she was currently in her birthday suit. Sol had woven something with mana to cover her while she was asleep, but it seemed like he had not judged it useful to make clothes for her.

Setsuna snorted, not feeling particularly bothered. She had run naked and bloody in the forest, and currently, she was in front of Lilin and Sol-there was nothing to feel ashamed of. "I am alright, I guess?"

She sighed and approached Sol, her tail swinging lazily behind her. "I just feel like my body isn't my own currently."

"It's alright. Your evolution to Duke rank caused transformations within your soul and also affected your bloodline. In a way, I believe you evolved greatly and are on the verge of becoming an S-rank." Sol explained.

S-rank, or in other words, a divine beast. Setsuna still couldn't believe that this was happening. She had been so distraught at the thought of being unable to reach this rank, but now, not only did she obtain one of the most powerful zones possible, she also managed to evolve. "Kali will be happy."

"Yeah. She really did a good job on this case. Perhaps I should give her some vacation," Sol pondered.

The two continued to speak while Lilin looked at them with a deadpan expression. In the end, she simply shook her head and looked at Setsuna.

"When Sol asked how you feel... he wasn't just talking about your new power."

"I am alright."

"If you are going to spout a lie, at least you should make the effort of making it more believable, you know?" Lilin replied.

"...Then, what do you want me to say? That I feel awful? That I am confused about how I am suddenly blessed? That I dreamed of Ayame and even now can see images of her body breaking down? That I feel angry and helpless?" Setsuna's voice grew a little hoarse toward the end, and her eyes reddened a little. Both Lilin and Sol came to her side and took her in their arms, causing Setsuna to be sandwiched in their hugs.

"Yes. I want you to tell us everything you feel. There shouldn't be any secrets between us. Secrets fester and cause pain. Having someone to share your burden with is a good thing." Lilin's words held a hidden meaning, directed not only at Setsuna but also at Sol.

Sol understood the message behind Lilin's words. It seemed like his recent actions had made them worried. This was not his intention, but now wasn't the time to discuss it.

"Sol... Could you accompany me in burying her?" Setsuna asked, her voice filled with a mix of sadness and determination.

Sol nodded. "I knew you would want to do it."

He walked to the tree and retrieved the sword that Ayame had used. At the same time, he moved his hand, and what looked like a closed vase appeared.

"Her ashes are in it," he said, handing the vase to Setsuna, who bowed gracefully. Her eyes were reddening a little.

A cloak of mana appeared and covered her body as she began to walk toward the clearing where she fought Ayame. The devastation of the battle was still evident, but they paid no attention to it.

Reaching the place where Ayame's remains scattered in the wind, Lilin took Ayame's sword and placed it softly on the ground before kneeling in dogeza with her forehead touching the ground.

"Ayame, the two of us may have walked different roads, but we had the same objectives," Lilin spoke softly.

Setsuna closed her eyes, not knowing where Ayame's soul was. Most likely, it was at the end of the Goddess of Destruction or perhaps reduced to nothingness like her body. It was hard to say, but it was alright.

"Thank you for everything you did for me," Setsuna whispered, her voice filled with gratitude. Ayame had been a woman who fought to her death with the sole goal of keeping Setsuna alive. She had once

been her teacher, her friend, and her sister all at the same time. Even in her final moments, she sold her soul not out of greed for life, but out of a desire to avenge her father.

Rising to her feet, Setsuna took the sword back and slowly unsheathed it. The blade reflected the light of the moon.

"I make you three promises," Setsuna declared.

A beautiful sound flowed as she swung the sword, and her own blood began to flow.

"One, I will without a doubt use this sword to draw the blood of the usurper," Setsuna proclaimed, her determination evident.

Her blood flowed, red with a hint of gold.

"Two, I will bury your ashes in the royal cemetery of our country," Setsuna continued, her voice unwavering.

Her blood continued to flow.

"And lastly, I will soon sit on the throne that is rightfully mine. This, I solemnly swear," Setsuna vowed under the moonlight.

And so, a wolf swore to honor Ayame's memory.

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Chapter 495: CH 456: NEW ORDER

After a heartfelt prayer and the blood vow she made in the name of Atame, Setsuna stood up and walked with the sword of her loved one in her hand.

"Do you plan to use the two swords at the same time?"

Setsuna looked at her own sword with wonder before holding it in her right hand while holding Ayame's sword in her left. After swinging once then twice, and then she frowned slightly as she felt her skills in dual wielding to be inadequate.

"I w'ould need a few days to get used to it but moving my two arms at the same time isn't that hard. Even more so now since I have ascended to the Duke rank."

Sol grinned as he heard those words. That was indeed the case here. The Nito-ryu or simply dual sword style was a rather unorthodox style in his past world.

It wasn't impossible to enact it per se. But using two weapons of the same length needed a great degree of coordination and extensive training for it to show its full might. But in the end, the results the sword style brought forth were not something particularly impressive. At least, not by the standards of his old world.

This was why the best way of dual wielding involved a sword and a shield or a long sword and a short sword.

...Well, this was how it was in his old world.

Thanks to the absurd mental capacity the higher realm of being bestowed to an individual of this world, dual wielding was far easier and came more naturally to them. Furthermore, there was no problem in terms of strength either.

'I wonder if I should give her a third sword to form the Santoryu sword art. Or perhaps one giant sword for her wolf form.'

Sol could feel the chunni in him screaming but he pushed it down for later. Now wasn't the time to delve into these ridiculous desires.

"So. Tell me, what does it feel to have become a Blessed now?"

"I... I really don't know."

Setsuna looked down at her body and her golden fur that shone under the gentle light of the moon. She felt like it was not her own body anymore. The changes the transformation had brought forth were so drastic that it was hard to get used to it in a short amount of time.

"But, ever since I woke up, I felt like all my past worries were just laughable and that nothing is impossible for me anymore."

It was like she was floating in the high skies above and was finally seeing the world for what it truly was. It was a weird feeling that she could hardly explain in words.

"Interesting. We will have to ask Camelia about that later on. She also became a Blessed way later in her life, so she should be able to give you a better insight into the changes you are currently feeling and how to properly sync with your new abilities."

Sol mused while looking at Setsuna with his 'Eyes of Akasha.' He had never noticed this with Camelia or Aurora since they were already Blessed by the time he obtained these eyes of his, but when comparing the threads of Fate surrounding Setsuna before and after her transformation, it was easy to see that the threads had increased by an explosive degree.

The fact that her connection to Ira grew stronger aside, he felt like there were thousands of possibilities opening themselves to Setsuna now. Almost as if her potential was simply limitless.

'Interesting.'

Sol knew that he had the bad habit of getting hyper-focused on certain things, causing him problems in the long run. There were so many things he wanted to give a try and test or get answers about.

This was giving him a headache already.

"Well, we first need to go back to the camp then go back home."

"What about the dungeon?"

"I placed a barrier, no one will be able to find it, and if anyone does, I will be alerted immediately."

Only a Demigod on the level of Ambrosia would be able to put down that barrier without him noticing, and even then it wasn't a certainty.

The dungeon crawling had clearly been very rewarding for them, and once Theresa analyzed all the materials inside and took them in, along with the blueprints, then their harvest here would be fully complete.

Sol did not want to pay any more attention to this place for now.

"Let's go."

This time, the three of them moved at full speed rather than the leisurely pace they had used on the way here.

Back at the camp, Lilith was coming back from the last execution that had been scheduled to be enacted today. She didn't even have to participate. She was happy to see that the knights of her kingdom had become skilled enough to handle everything on their own.

The bandits were a little tricky but nothing major, and this ended with no wounds on their sides, much less casualties.

The knights had been a little surprised to learn that they would be observed by the queen and might have been fighting with a little more fervor than usual. If Lilin was the new rising star that they had recently become fans of, then Lilith was the Legend they admired and respected with all of their beings.

When the prince finally came back with the princess and someone entirely covered by a black cloak, they couldn't help but gulp in nervousness.

Standing on the podium were the Queen Regent, the future King, and the Princess of the Empire. This was an honor of the likes they never thought would be possible.

The prince was the one at the forefront as he started his speech,

"Not long ago, I was worried..."

Sol's voice was low but everyone could hear it clearly. They couldn't help but marvel at this perfect use of his mana.

"The war is approaching and I couldn't help but wonder, the Beastkins are a race of proud and powerful warriors. Could we truly win against them?"

The few Beastkin in the knight order couldn't help but straighten their backs at the mention of those words. They were born and raised in Lustburg, but this did not change their origin. This was why they were sometimes angry about the heavy and insulting words some people would use against them.

Sadly, they could say nothing back. They were happy to see that the prince did not think as such of them.

In fact, there was one thing Sol did not know. The beastkins born and raised in Lustburg knew that Setsuna, someone like them, was the bodyguard of the future King.

This, in a way, gave them hope and confidence about their future. Setsuna was like the target of admiration for all of them, showing that discrimination did not completely block their road to success.

This also made Sol very popular. After all, he was only partially human. Since a great part of the Lustburg's population was hybrid humans, because of all the interracial breeding, they had an easier time cheering for a hybrid like them.

"But now, I am worried no more."

Sol smiled, and a golden aura started to emanate from his body and covered the surroundings. It looked like the sun was literally rising on the horizon from the aura he was giving off.

"You, my knights, showed me that Lustburg is in no way helpless against the powerful Beastkins."

He clenched his fists, "The Beastkins are strong. But we are even stronger, and this is all thanks to your dedication.

"Princess Lilin..."

"Yes!"

Lilin answered and approached Sol before putting one knee down in front of him with her fist over her chest.

"Are you listening?"

"I am."

"Beautiful."

A gentle smile appeared on his face, "Captain Lilin Luxuria."

"Yes."

"Will you do honor to our kingdom?"

"I will."

"Will you hoist our flag high in the sky as you tear down the enemy rank and destroy everything in your path?"

"I will."

"Will you bring us victory?"

"I will."

"Then... With the world and the goddesses as my witnesses... Henceforth, I announce the creation of a new Knight Order... The Scarlet Knights, and I name you the captain of that new order. Do you accept this responsibility?"

"I would be honored to do so."

This scene, which was something completely out of a fairy tale, was something the Black Knights... or rather, the Scarlet Knights, would never forget in their lives.

Son of the Hero King

Chapter 496: CH 457: TIME FOR CONTRACT?

The rest of the procession went by pretty normally.

Sol made a few of the scarlet knights stay close to the place where the dungeon was located and ordered them to set up a perimeter surrounding the area. Even though he had already placed a solid defense against most, if not all, types of dangers... there was always that small percentage of luck playing a role and fucking up everything for him.

On the way back to the capital of Lustburg, inside the royal carriage, Lilin couldn't help but hum or simply giggle to herself. Having her own official knight order made her feel giddy with immense happiness.

This made her feel like she was walking in the same steps as her mother and while this would have bothered her slightly in the not so distant past, now she could not help but feel a sense of pride swelling up within her at that thought.

Of course, having her own knight order also meant that Sol believed in her and would let her take care of a battlefield in the war against the Wratharis kingdom.

"Don't be so happy about this. In terms of experience, you only fought some measly bandits together. I will either have Tyr or Athena accompany you and be your superior and guide while you get familiar with the know-how on how to lead a battalion of your own."

War wasn't a game and for all his ambitions, Sol was indeed not a god. He could not cover the entire battlefield and could not protect Lilin 100% of the time.

Lilin pouted slightly at his words but in the end, nothing could take away the happiness she was feeling right now. This caused Sol to leak out a tired sigh.

Of course, while he was acting strictly, in reality, there was no way in hell he would let the safety of his women be left to fate if he could do anything against that.

He planned to have Isis place her King-ranked undeads in the shadow of both Setsuna and Lilin.

Because of all the conventions, using undead was clearly forbidden in a war and would cause worldwide outrage. He would not use them to win the war of course...

But if his loved ones were to be in any form of danger, then the war convention could burn in the ninth level of Tartarus for all he cared.

He was only willing to accept those rules as long as they posed no danger to him and his loved ones. It was as plain and simple as that.

While Sol was dampening Lilin's mood with cold and hard facts, Lilith was simply looking at Setsuna in silence.

Now that there was no onlooker to see through her changes, Setsuna had taken off her cloak and Lilith was able to see the great changes that had happened to the vulpine girl.

Crossing her legs and leaning back slightly on her seat, she asked her the question that had been nagging at her mind and most likely everyone in this place.

"Now that you are a Blessed... How will your relationship with Sol... change?"

Setsuna was currently both the slave and Knight of Sol and fully belonged to him. But now that she had become a Blessed and would eventually become the Queen of Wratharis, this obviously could not continue.

"Nothing much has changed. She is still mine. Only the label will change."

Sol answered quietly while gazing into Setsuna's eyes, "Of course, if you do not wish to follow our previous status quo, then it's also fine by me. It's up to you."

For Sol, Setsuna had never been a slave and he never treated her as one either. Even her functioning as a Knight did not see much use since he rarely got out of the castle in the past.

For him, Setsuna was, and would always be, a friend and a lover. The fact that she had become a Blessed changed nothing about that fact, of course, as long as her feelings for him didn't change, that is...

"You already know my answer. Furthermore, I can now fight for the position of the official wife."

Setsuna grinned while looking at Lilin who glared back at her with fury in her eyes.

In the past, Setsuna always felt ashamed, even if a little, because of her position as a slave and a princess without a Kingdom. She never tried to fight for the main seat because she knew how impressive all the women surrounding Sol were.

But now... Now that she had become a Blessed and would surely step on the throne of her Kingdom, she had all the rights and reasons to fight for the main seat.

"If Sol is married to the Queen of Wratharis, this should make the conquest easier, right?"

This was indeed so, and this was also one of the reasons why Sol had used less than savory means to make Pandora his ally.

Now, he already had Envilya and Wratharis in his pocket. Southern Pride would depend on what Nefertiti could cook up in the meantime, but he had unconditional belief in her.

'I guess this leaves Gluttony, Greed, and Slothein.'

He felt like he was progressively crossing things from a grocery list, and this was rather funny in its own twisted way.

As for the talk about marriage, Sol would obviously not have only one of his women have the official position of wife and leave the others as his concubines.

He was the first to admit that he did not love all his women equally. But though he did not love them all in the same way or at the same level, he would absolutely never treat one worse than the other.

They were all more than worthy of becoming his queen, and he was happy to have them on his side.

'Well, I won't say this now though.'

He laughed inwardly. He wanted a better occasion to announce this decision of his. His crowning would be the perfect moment for that.

Meanwhile, Lilith simply smiled quietly while observing Lilin and Setsuna bicker about the position of the main wife. She couldn't help but feel a little emotional at this scene.

She remembered how, not so long ago, she had called Sol, who at that time had not even gone through his awakening, to talk about his incoming marriage.

It had only been a few months until that time, but so much had changed between then and now.

She was just an insomniac with suicidal tendencies and a dying body. Sol was a young prince with no power and a mind full of naivety. Her relationship with Camelia and Lilin was as bad as it could be, and there was a rebellion brewing in the background.

Fast forward to now and everything was so different that it felt like a whole new timeline. They were all stronger, be it mentally or physically. They all went through a rough path, but a clear sky was opening up for them to receive them.

'I wonder what you two would feel if you could see this.'

For the first time in her life, Lilith was able to think of Mars and Blaze without feeling bitterness or pain in her heart and mind.

This was another small step forward for her.

"So now, will you two form a contract?"

Setsuna and Lilin fell silent while the vulpine girl's gaze landed on Sol.

This was perhaps the one thing she had been waiting for all along.

"We will. Though it depends on Setsuna now."

Setsuna smiled a little before taking Lilin's hand with a mischievous smile on her face. "Well... I have one little request."

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Chapter 497: CH 458: CHILDHOOD FRIENDS UNITED

For the return of the soldiers to the capital grounds, Sol had made sure to organize an entire Parade in their name. It was a very 'impromptu' parade, made by a few 'civilians' or citizens who, happy about the work the knight had done in making the kingdom safer for them, decided to align themselves on either side of the main street and welcome the knights with applause, gratitude, and a shower of flowers.

While Sol did not like using derogatory terms, there was a simple cause for the masses. When many people did something together, there were high chances that many more would soon follow and do the same thing even without knowing why they were doing so.

In a way, it was no different than acting like a sheep but this mentality was very useful for rulers like him.

By making sure to have many agents of his secret order disguised as actual citizens, Sol was able to make this event even more grandiose and beautiful than what the impromptu preparations could ever hope to achieve.

Citizens who knew nothing about this plan of his would see the sudden gathering of the people and be happy, knowing that the knights did their job and kept them safe. Some of them would also grow envious and wish to join the military and thus secure a new batch of recruits for the militia.

At the same time, the military would feel a greater sense of pride and feeling of recognition from the country and its people. Thus this would result in them having even more desire to lay down their lives for the protection of the Kingdom and mankind.

The final advantage was of course promoting Lilith in a more open manner to the populace of the Kingdom which would advertise his presence in one go.

People would know he was indeed here just that he did not show up. This would prove that he was not someone using his power to steal the achievements of his subordinates, leaving an even better and deep impression on everyone involved.

It would be very useful for him in the long term.

Lilith only gave a smile full of mirth at everything that was happening here. She was happy to see that Sol was stepping more and more into his role as king of this country. And manipulating the entire populace to advance his popularity and credibility among the masses was indeed a good first step in the right direction.

If it was her in his shoes, then she would have just ordered the knights to not change their armor so that they would look worn out and wounded or bleeding from their wounds in some cases. It was far easier to attract attention and goodwill when you were on the side of the weak. The underdog always garnered the most attention and adoration of the masses after all.

Furthermore, no matter how many tales you made, without the correct look... life would not go easy on you and it would be harder to sell things out to the crowd when everything looked picture perfect. The small bits of imperfection were generally what changed a great work into a complete masterpiece.

While the Parade was short, it was undoubtedly a great success in Sol's eyes and he was sure that if it were to be a Kingdom building game he would be seeing the love and respect of his citizens climb through the roof in real time.

"How insidious."

"I call this technique and strategy marketing."

"Heh..."

Like this, under the cheers full of joy and appreciation of the populace, they have finally reached the Tower of Babel- their home.

The Citizens were happy...

The Knights were happy...

Sol was happy...

Everything was good in the best two worlds and everything was swimming well.

While Setsuna was showing signs of slight unhappiness in her brows, she was able to cast that feeling aside pretty fast. She still had deep feelings for Ayame but she knew that her once close confidant and caretaker had died happy and with only a single regret in her life. A regret that she was about to turn over so that her soul would find peace, wherever it may be.

For the entire day after her return to the Tower, Setsuna stayed inside her room, letting no one in as she proceeded to mourn for the dead on her lonesome and settle the grief in her heart.

At this moment, she simply wished to think for herself for some time with no one to interrupt her. She also needed to get used to the new feeling of her body and adjust herself to her newfound powers to fully utilize them in the future.

Initially, the first thing she wished to do was to call Kali and tell her the good news about her awakening and her ascension, but it seemed like the Witch of Destruction had vanished alongside all the other witches somewhere goddesses only knew.

However, after thinking for a bit, the only conclusion that she could come to was that they were now in Salem- the City of Witches. Probably, they were discussing the future of the witches there and were busy sorting through their ideas about it.

Sitting in a seiza position, with her knee gathered under her butt while her two swords lay on either side of her body, a faint flicker of mana covered her whole being as she closed her eyes and deeply meditated with utmost concentration.

There were many things she needed to think about, but an important point was what kind of contract she would end up binding herself with Sol.

In a way, what Ayame did was close to a Wrath-type contract. Setsuna knew that her wrath and anger would one day end once her family was avenged, but what would happen after that?

As such, she realized that there was only one possible contract that she could do with the love of her life.

A contract she knew that she would never regret no matter how much time went by or whatever happened in the future.

How long did she stay in that state? Thinking so endlessly? She did not exactly know. But when she opened her eyes, the moon was shining high in the skies above.

It was time for them to sign the contract.

But before that, she had to find someone to help her in the act.

Sol was sitting alone in his bedroom when they knocked on the door.

He had obviously heard their footsteps long before they even reached the door of his bedroom, so he showed no surprise outwardly at the mesmerizing sight of the two beautiful young women standing in front of him.

Still, his facade did not mislead them. After all, their senses were powerful enough to clearly hear the loud and powerful beating of his heart, signifying the excitement he was feeling right now.

They entered the room simultaneously before turning to look at him in perfect synch. Setsuna couldn't help but question him with a mischievous smile on her face,

"So, what do you think of my little surprise?"

Sol had to fight himself to not gulp down as a response. He certainly had a great variety of experiences throughout his sex life. But there was no way he would not get excited by what he was seeing and by the thought of what was about to happen very soon.

"I think I am perhaps one the luckiest bastards in this fucked up world."

After all, now inside his bedroom, stood two young and gorgeous women clad in only see-through negligees that stopped just a little above their round and sumptuous butts. Underneath that thin clothing, all they had on them was a pair of panties each. One blue like the summer sky and the second purple like the ethereal eyes of its wielder.

They were his two childhood friends. Lilin and Setsuna.

Setsuna grinned at those words and did a small twirl of showmanship to show off herself in front of her lover. Her tail that was moving up and down and her twitching ears added to her exotic charm and conveyed the emotions of anticipation and excitement that were coursing throughout his body.

At the same time, Lilin was not in her human form either. Her eyes were of a deeper shade of purple than usual with a black slit in between, and she had a thin long tail with a heart-shaped protrusion forming at the end that had come out of her tailbone, as well as two curved horns which were jutting out of her silky purple hair.

Her form seemed to have taken a small boost as it looked like the negligee could barely cover her entire body.

"I initially wanted a new dress. But I wouldn't have guessed my fur would change color."

"As for me, I didn't think about how my proportions would change when transforming."

Sol grinned, feeling his heart burn with a fire hotter than the flames of a phoenix. His form slowly changed and his body grew a few centimeters as he went from his human form to his hybrid one.

A dragon, a succubus, and a wolf entered inside of a room.

This seemed like the start of an interesting joke.

Obviously... It would be one with very lewd and hedonistic undertones.