

## **LOA Nobody 271**

### Chapter 271 Want Me To Teach You How To Fight?

"Why'd you get into a fight again?" Kajal said, looking at Shiva who was lying in the infirmary with one of his hands wrapped in bandages.

"Don't blame me, it was his fault. He's the one who started it." Shiva said, pointing at another guy lying on the next bed, with a black eye and swollen nose.

"Still arguing, huh." Kajal said and tapped on his swollen wrist with her hands.

Shiva just pulled his hand back and raised it in surrender while flinching in pain.

"By the way, your sister called. She was asking if you're coming home next month or not." Kajal said.

"She called you. When did you become besties with her?" Shiva said to Kajal and started chatting with Ria on the phone.

[Nashi - Hey buddy, you fine? Heard you got into another fight. Want me to handle it?]

Shiva shook his head seeing the message and replied back. "Do your own stuff. Stop butting in my problems."

Nashi was someone he met a few months back on some empty mountain side behind a temple.

No, Shiva is still an atheist. He just goes there since the scenery there is peaceful and there isn't much crowd or noise there.

He liked talking with Nashi, since the guy always gave him the feeling that he knew exactly what he wanted to say. And then there was the way he spoke, the man always knew the right answers to all his questions, like some wise sage.

They've met a couple of times more since then and are acquaintances now. Though Kajal thinks Nashi is just some rich guy messing around, so she's against him roaming with Nashi.

She's afraid that he might get some bad habits from him.

Which Shiva still doubted how she came up with knowing his lax personality.

His life back then was much simpler then it was in his later years. He was just another student from a normal background. With parents who wanted him to study hard and find a stable job. Earn some money and be self sufficient.

That was all they wanted, and all he dreamed of. No fancy goals, no target for being the richest man alive or most famous person on the internet - nothing.

He was simply just breezing through life without caring for anything.

Going to school, skipping lectures, sleeping in lectures, getting into some little trouble every now and then, and then coming back to hostel, either reading s and watching movies or sleeping.

And that was it.

That was just basically his whole day routine.

He never liked crowds or getting mixed with 'friends' or anything else that one might call enjoyable. His silent personality wasn't really suitable for a social life, after all.

But then came Kajal, his classmate. She was the type of girl who loved life and everything in it. Seeing the beauty with a shade that only shows the goodness in everything. She had this friendly aura and easy going personality all around her.

Till date he never really understood how she became his only friend in school.

Maybe it was after she overheard him having an argument with his father one day.

She was an orphan, so maybe she couldn't understand why he who had a family, would fight with them.

Then there was just her being curious and trying to teach him to be a better person and wada nada.

Though simple minded like that, she was persistent enough to not leave him or give up on him for weeks when he tried his best to avoid her, so there was that.

Though sometimes annoying and little nosy or whimsical, over time he started to enjoy her company. Even look forward to meeting her on the next day in school.

By the time Shweta came into his life, they had known each other for around an year and a half. At that time there were only a select few whose company he didn't hate, or with whom he didn't feel lonely. Or in a hurry to end their conversations. lights

There was Ria, his sister. He never hated her. Fuck hate, he didn't even have the guts to get angry at that overdramatic little fool.

Then Kajal and one more was Nashi.

The day Shweta came into his life was the day everything changed.

After the first day ended Shweta ended up being Kajal's room mate in the girl's hostel somehow.

He smiled as he remembered how much Kajal complained about it to him over the next few days. Even though she always wanted a partner.

Though he ignored whatever his heart was feeling when Shweta was around. Suppressing it and calling it harmones. He did still feel curious about her.

Who wouldn't? She came mid year, which shouldn't be allowed, and had all the staff dancing over her fingers in fear or respect.

But that wasn't what interested him.

He just wanted to know why she was acting. Why she was silent alone and trying so hard to mix in with everyone around her.

He knew that was an act, cause he had done the same most of his childhood.

Being someone who always gets lost in his head and thoughts, isn't exactly a way to be friendly.

"You don't have to try so hard?" Shiva said as he sat on his table and found Shweta already present there.

Shweta looked at him, showing expression like 'what do you mean' without saying anything.

"I don't know why you're acting too nice, but if you keep up that act, everyone would just try and take advantage of it. And that would just end up hurting you more. So stop doing that, or at least tone it down a bit." Shiva said.

"Speaking from experience?" Shweta asked with a smile.

"Does it matter." He replied and stopped saying anything else.

"Aren't you feeling curious about my identity?" Shweta asked.

"I am. But your past doesn't really matter to me, so why bother?"

"Kajal said you were different?"

"I'm just lazy, that's all."

"How's your hand now?"

"It was just light swelling for my thumb dislocated. It's fine now."

"I watched your fight." Shweta said and then smiled "You're a terrible fighter."

"Ohh, you're saying like you know how to fight. You're not one of those black belt kung fu girl, are you?" Shiva asked with a chuckle "Or better, a gangster girl."

"Nope, I \_ just know some self defense. That's all." Shweta hesitated a little and answered. "Want me to teach you a few things?"

"Nope. I'm too lazy to try. And too scared of pain to get into fights." Shiva resolutely replied.

"Then what happened that day?" Shweta asked, as she just entered the canteen when he was already in the middle of pulling and throwing stuff on the other guy.

"Nothing. My hands were just itchy I guess." Shiva said as he looked at Kajal entering the class and smiled.

Chapter 272 Proposal

A few days later

Shiva entered the class with black circles around his eyes. His face was looking a little thin and his expression was lost in thought.

Currently he had just mustered up his courage and stopped Shweta before she entered the class. Though he tried to act confident, his feet still couldn't stay in place and even his hands were a little bit shaky.

"You don't look fine. Are you feeling unwell?" Shweta asked as she looked at him acting strange. "Should I call Kajal?"

Shweta said and turned around to shout at Kajal, who was walking a little far ahead of her. But Shiva grabbed her hand in a hurry and said in a panicked tone. "No"

Shweta looked at him for some time and pulled her hand back, "Okay.. .Then do you want me to \_"

"I love you."

...

..

Shiva said directly, interrupting her mid sentence. His eyes were closed and breathing hurried. He could even hear his own heart thumping loudly against his chest like a drumbeat.

After some time when he didn't feel any slaps or hear any shouts he opened one of his eyes to look at Shweta, who was staring at him with wide eyes and a surprised expression.

'No slaps is a good sign right.'

Shiva said in his heart and calmed himself down. Just in time to hear Shweta's shout "What?"

"Ungh" Shiva thought she didn't hear him clearly last time, so he took a long breath and said again in a clear voice this time. "I love you."

Shweta, who heard his proposal again shook her head in disbelief and said "No, I heard you the first time too. But how, why, when? We just met a month ago at best. And you're \_"

"It doesn't matter, I love you. I've loved you since the moment I saw you." Shiva said and after mentioning it a few times he even gained confidence, and now there was even a smile on his face when talking to her. "At first I thought it was some attraction or curiosity or just hormones, and I'd be fine and forget you soon. But I was wrong."

"Ever since I saw you, you've been haunting me nonstop. I can't sleep, I can't eat, I can't even read my favorite s without thinking about you. It's even worse than what those movies show.

It's hateful and I don't like it. But I love it.

I'm smiling all the time, when I don't even like laughing that much.

It's so confusing, everything is. I don't even know what I'm saying anymore, I just (breathes heavily) \_love you. That's all."

Shiva finished his hurried proposal in one breath without stopping, and at the end instead of nervousness that she might agree or not, there was a genuine smile on his face, like he just finished the worst job ever.

He even felt his mood was much better now than it had been in these past few days. His whole body felt light and mind clear. 'Finally'

He didn't lie to her, he had been sleepless for the past 2-3 days. He thought he'd control his 'love' emotions and ignore it. But the more time he spend around her, the more he saw her, talked to her, the harder it got. And he finally couldn't take it anymore and decided to get it over with.

If Shweta refused him, then maybe he can move on, instead of thinking all day about her, ;

"So\_?" Shiva questioned as he saw Shweta just standing there with the look of disbelief on her face. Though her cheeks were flushed a little, but Shiva was more focused on her answer at this moment than admiring her beauty.

Finally after the longest ten seconds of his life, she replied.

"If Kajal didn't say you were half crazy, I'd think you're completely out of your mind." Shweta said in a joking tone.lights

Shiva's face turned ashen hearing her response. Though he didn't have much hope, getting rejected on your first proposal still hurts, right.

"Is that a no?" He asked.

"I don't hate you enough to say no."

"Then it's a yes, you like \_"

"And I don't know you well enough to say yes."

Shiva was speaking excitedly, when Shweta interrupted him and finished her sentence. Giving her reply, which was better than nothing.

"So neither accepted nor rejected , huh." Shiva said in a dejected look, but then smiled again "But still no slaps, shouts or ignorance, that's a good sign. This'll do for now." Shiva said with a happy smile.

"By the way aren't you gonna ask if it's real or just me proposing the new girl before anyone else gets a chance." Shiva asked, changing the topic and talking like usual.

"Nope, your face doesn't look like lying." Shweta replied.

"You must get cheated a lot if that's your criteria for judging people." Shiva made a joke, but seeing Shweta glaring at him, he just coughed and walked away. Running to catch up with Kajal.

"Idiot," Shweta said as she looked at him and smiled.

'I love you.' She remembered what happened earlier and her smile brightened even more. Even though she kept her cool in front of him, her heart was nearly jumping in joy inside of her. Even her face felt a little hot in a slight blush, but she ignored it.

'Is this love?' She asked herself thinking about what she's been feeling these days. She had been having nightmares before she came here, haunted by the things she did in the past and what they led to. But every time he was there, all those thoughts of self blame and guilt would ease up and she could just forget them all.

'Maybe \_ ' Shweta was thinking happily when a message interrupted her thoughts.

Ding ding

[Nashi - Heard you're here too. Father told me what happened. I'd say it's not your fault, but that's not what you wanna hear I guess.

I'll send you an address , let's meet.]

Shweta read the message and instantly her happy mood turned sour. She tried sending a reply a few times before deleting it next second. and then she just switched off her phone.

"Hey, you coming." Shiva's voice brought her out.

"Yeah, right behind you." Shweta said and pushed aside all the memories from the things she left behind for a new beginning.

Nashi on the other hand, who waited for a while with his phone in hand, didn't get a really and threw it on the sofa nearby.

"So you think it's that easy to quit huh. Wishful thinking." Nashi scoffed and stood up from his seat. "Contact Rangaa, tell him, the one he's been looking for is here. And also send someone to keep an eye on her."

His words finished and the man in black standing nearby nodded his head and stepped out of the office respectfully.

'You can't run from your past just cause you turned around, love. This is where you belong, and this is where you'll end up eventually.'

Nashi sat back on his chair and poured himself a drink, as he looked at the photo of three on the table. Where He, his father and Shweta were standing outside the villa called 'Nirvaan Nivaas (Nirvaan House)'. ..

Chapter 273 Their First Conversation Or Maybe A Date

In a cafe

"What's wrong with you?" Kajal asked as she looked at Shiva daydreaming while chuckling like an idiot from time to time.

Umm

"What?" Shiva replied without looking at her.

Kajal looked at him and slapped him on the shoulder, "I'm asking what's going on with you? You've been like a dead person this morning and now you're practically beaming with life."

"Nothing." Shiva said and then thought of something and asked "Did I really look that bad earlier?"

"Ohhh(surprised) and when did you start paying attention to your appearance? You basically just come here every day with just washing your face." Kajal said in an amusing tone.

"Shut up." Shiva said, and asked again. "I'm serious. Was I really that bad?"

Kajal stared at his face, which was a little anxious and nervous, and furrowed her brows. "I was just joking. No need to be so down about it."

"Now tell me, what's going on in that weird brain of yours? Did you fight with your brother again?"

"No, nothing like that." Shiva shook his head hearing her question and replied. "I proposed her." Shiva said.

"Whattttt...?"

Kajal, who was drinking some juice, sprayed it out on the table when she heard his reply.

"Yuck, and you were calling me for manners." Shiva said, while handing her the tissues.

Kajal threw the tissues aside and pulled his hand. "What did you say? Maybe I didn't hear it clearly."

Shiva handed her the tissues again and said "I proposed her."

"Who?" kajal asked, as she looked at his serious face and noticed he wasn't joking.

"Her."

Kajal followed Shiva's gaze and saw Shweta standing in the line at the server's table.

"Shweta? You proposed HER." She asked again in doubt, as she couldn't believe this introverted fool, who never even took the initiative to talk to anyone upfront, actually went forward and proposed to someone.

That too, to a girl he barely met a few weeks ago.

She did notice him staring at Shweta, or when they were together, him always being absent minded, but this. This, she could never imagine.

"How? When? Why?" Kajal muttered under her breath as she pulled him closer, seeing the nearby students were looking at their table curiously.

"This morning. When we were coming to the class." Shiva told her everything as it was.

"But why? You don't even know her. Was it a dare or something like that? I'll kill you, if you started this as a joke \_" kajal asked.

"No, nothing like that. I'm serious." Shiva said, shaking his head seeing her exaggerated reaction. "I love her."

"You know how I've been these past few days. She's been roaming in my head all day long ever since I saw her. You know the moment I saw her first, my heart nearly went haywire. And then when she talked or touched or sat near us, I don't even know what's wrong with me.

So I decided to just propose to her, and now I finally feel like myself again." Shiva said with a serious expression.

Kajal looked at him for a while and didn't know what to say.

'Did he finally lose it?' she thought.

But stuffing that thought away she started speaking again. "So you proposed. What did she say? Did she slap you or block you?"

"Wow, what a great friend you are." Shiva shook his head heating her stupid accusations.

"Shut up and tell me. What did she say?" Kajal said and added something "If you're telling me all this to ask if I can hook you up or be a mediator, then I'm going to refuse this instant."

"She said, she doesn't know me enough to say yes. Or hate me enough to say no." Shiva replied as he slapped her forehead for always refusing.

"So she didn't agree huh." Kajal said and breathed a sigh of relief.

"Well, she didn't slap me or block me, so that's a good sign right?" Shiva said, visibly relieved that those situations didn't occur. Or he might really have to look for a handful of water and drown himself.

His deadbeat personality might not be able to take all the judgmental or mocking eyes. And die of embarrassment.

'Phew I don't even know why I proposed her when there's so much crowd around. I really am an idiot.'

"I'm leaving." Kajal said as she stood up and left, ignoring Shiva calling her behind.

'At least tell me some advice and give me some tips or something. Don't you know I'm a total newb at it.' Shiva complained as he looked at her speeding back. 'She didn't even pay the bill or throw her plate.'lights

"Can I sit here?"

Shiva heard someone's voice while he was complaining and he just nodded his head without looking.

"Thanks." Shweta said and sat down beside him.

"You\_ " Shiva heard her voice again and looked at her in surprise.

"What, I just saw Kajal leaving, so I came here. Plus there aren't many empty seats left." Shweta replied and started eating her food.

"Ahh okay." Shiva said and hung his head down, while sneaking glances at her from time to time.

"What were you guys talking about? Kajal seemed mad." Shweta asked.

"About you. I told her about the proposal."

"You did?" Shweta raised her eyebrows.

"Of course. I thought she'd give me some advice or something, but she just stood up and left."

"You didn't ask her to help you, did you?"

"What, no. Why would I do that? She'll kill me if I do that."

"Hmm" Shweta nodded her head and didn't say anything else. She was eating, when shiva's next words stunned her again.

"You're beautiful."

-cough cough

She drank a glass of water and glared at him with angry eyes. As her cheeks burned bright in a blush.

"Now even more so." Shiva looked at her face and couldn't help but mutter again.

"Idiot" Shweta said to him.

"Tell me about yourself. After all, we don't even know each other and you proposed me out of nowhere today. I don't even know your full name yet."

Shweta said changing the topic. And Shiva started talking about himself, his family or friends.

They were getting to know each other, comparing their habits and hobbies, likes or dislikes. Talking about their past or childhood. About what they were and what they wanted to be.

Nothing serious, just some random gossip that jumped topics from here and there every few lines.

The whole canteen and the crowd had disappeared for the two of them as they kept chatting with each other.

Minutes turned into hours, and hours turned into evening and then to night.

Even they themselves didn't notice the flow of time or probably didn't care about it - as their talks led one thing to another.

"Sir, it's time to close the place. You can come back again tomorrow." A waiter came and informed them.

Only then did they both stopped and looked around them at the empty and cleaned cafe.

"We should go." Shweta said as she paid the bill and picked up her things.

"So how was it?" Shiva asked as they both walked out together.

"What?"

"Our conversation. I'll tell you that I've never talked that long in one sitting with anyone in my life yet. You're the first." Shiva said with a smile.

Not believing in his heart himself about how his introverted self could feel so free around her.

"Your first huh. It felt nice then." Shweta said as her lips curled up in a subtle smile.

"I'll meet you here tomorrow then. Enough about my past, we'll talk about you tomorrow."

Shiva said nonchalantly, but hearing his words' color drained from Shweta's face. And her smile disappeared in a frown instead.

"Can we not \_"

Shweta was saying something, when Shiva bumped into someone and stopped his steps.

"Sorry, my bad." Shiva said raising his hands subconsciously.

But the man ignored him completely and turn to look at Shweta. "Miss Nirvaan, long time no see."

Chapter 274 Nirvaan's

"Miss Nirvaan, long time no see." The middle aged man said as he looked at Shweta and smiled.

"Rangaa." Shweta muttered slowly and looked at the cars behind Rangaa, where she could see shadows of 4-5 men sitting leisurely.

Though Shiva didn't know anything about Shweta's past, just looking at her paled face and the group of people walking out of their cars, he felt worried.

If it was the him years later from before he died, seeing this kind of scene he would smile and walk forward to pick a fight first for no apparent reason.

But at that time he was just a simple student with no experience or no skills. Hell, he even felt scared just looking at all those vicious looking men.

But still suppressing his shock, he moved closer to Shweta and asked "You know him?"

Shweta glanced at him worriedly for a second and then thought of something and smiled. "He's \_ he's a family friend." Although she tried to lie and maintain her expressions, but it was clear she was surprised by this sudden intrusion.

"But didn't you say you were an orphan?" Shiva asked, remembering her previous statement during their conversation.

"That \_ my adoptive family. He's a business partner." Shweta said with a stutter, cursing herself for speaking too much earlier.

Shiva looked at her but didn't know what to ask.

"Business partner huh, well I guess she's right about that." Rangaa, who heard them talking, interrupted them and started speaking in a calm tone. "After all, the deal I agreed with her father is because of her proposal."

"Tell me, where is he nowadays? I heard his health is declining day by day now." Rangaa asked shweta.

"I have nothing to do with him now. You should know that I've left them and their business behind." Shweta replied.

"Did you?" Rangaa asked surprisingly, but there was no hint of surprise on his face. "Then why did I meet a few of our old colleagues following you around?"

Shweta, who heard his words glanced at Rangaa's hands and noticed the small stains of blood near his wrists and broken glass on the road nearby. "I don't know what you're talking about? But whatever you want, it has nothing to do with me anymore."

"You know what I want little princess. You've always known." Rangaa said sounding a little impatient.

Shweta took a step forward and said slowly "I have nothing to do with that family anymore. You can do whatever you want."

"It's late today, so I'll take my leave" Shweta said and turned around to look at Shiva and then signaled him to follow her.

But she had only taken two steps when Rangaa's voice sounded behind her and two men dressed in ruffian clothes and tattooed skin blocked their path.

"What's the rush, Miss Nirvaan? We haven't met for so many months now. There's so much to catch up on." He said and walked towards shweta with slow steps "I spent so much time and efforts looking for you, and now that we finally meet, you're leaving like this. That's not fair right?"

"What \_ do you want?" Shweta sighed and asked directly.

"Nothing much, just tell me where he's hiding now." Rangaa asked, and this time his tone turned cold as his face showed expressions of anger and hatred.

"I told you I moved on. I don't know anything you want." Shweta replied.

"I heard his son is here in this city too. If you left them, you won't mind if I pay Him a visit, do you?" Rangaa said with a smile.

Shweta clenched her fists as she tried to control her anger, but then she looked at Shiva, who was staring at her and Rangaa not understanding anything they were talking about, and took a deep breath.

"Do whatever you want." she said and started walking away.

Rangaa looked at her and then at Shiva, and his lips curled up in a mysterious smile. "Won't you introduce him to me."lights

"He's a nobody. Just someone I met a few days back." Shweta said and inadvertently her steps moved forward a little to block Shiva behind her.

'A nobody huh.' Shiva muttered feeling a little hurt in his heart but then shook his head.

He didn't know what was happening but looking at their expressions he could guess this men had no good intentions towards her, so he didn't mind what she said to him.

"But I saw you chatting quite happily with him inside. He's not your secret boyfriend is he?" Rangaa said and walked forward towards Shiva. "It's gonna break his heart, you know."

"Rangaa \_ don't." Shweta shouted as she raised her hand and stopped him. "Leave him alone." She spat coldly.

"Tsk, acting so tough even now." Rangaa clicked his tongue but stepped back and raised his hands.

He looked at Shiva's confused face, staring at him and then at Shweta continuously, and smiled even more brightly once he remembered what he said just now.

"You didn't tell him about who you are, did you?" Rangaa said and chuckled as he saw shweta gritting her teeth in anger.

"Don't do it." She mouthed her words slowly as she glared at him in anger, but still held herself back, as she noticed the men nearby putting his hand on his back. And then noticed similar movements all around her.

"Boy, tell me, how much do you know about your new girlfriend?"

Shiva, who was standing aside confused, came back to his senses as he heard someone talking to him. But he didn't care what Rangaa said or questioned, but asked back instead "Who are you?"

"Her full name is Shweta Nirvaan. You should've heard of that surname at least right?" Rangaa didn't answer him and kept saying.

'Nirvaan' Shiva thought in his mind but then shook his head.

He's always busy in his sleep or s, he had no interest in general knowledge or any news outside his room. So even though the name sounded familiar, he had no special impression of it.

"Her father is one of the richest person in this country, and you haven't heard of him." Rangaa felt amused and laughed out loud.

"He's also one of the most cruel and cold bastard you'll ever see. And she, is his best \_ "

Rangaa was saying something when sounds of sirens rang around them, interrupting him. And then the headlights of police cars could be seen coming their way soon.

Rangaa looked at the incoming vehicles and then at Shweta who was also surprisedly looking around.

"We'll meet again, little princess. Very soon." Rangaa said and then sat back in his car. His men followed him too and drove away instantly.

Shiva stared at the leaving taillights and thought about what Rangaa said some time ago. While Rangaa too stared at him in the rearview mirror and tapped his fingers on the armrest.

"Send someone to keep an eye on that boy. And I want all his information before dawn on my desk." He said and glanced at the newspaper placed forward.

[Abhinav Nirvaan to meet with the chief minister of Delhi for their next project.]

'I'll wipe that smile off your face along with your entire empire Nirvaan. Just wait.' Rangaa thought in his heart, as he closed his eyes to hide his cold anger.

On the other hand, after Rangaa and his men left, Shiva turned to look at Shweta hoping to get some sort of explanation or answer, when a car stopped near them and a handsome man, dressed in stylish suit, walked out of it.

Shiva furrowed his brows as he recognised the man, and was about to say something, when Shweta cut him off and spoke first.

"Nashi"

Chapter 275 Girlfriend

"Nashi" Shweta said as she looked at the familiar figure walking towards her.

"I lost contact with the guards so I called you, but your phone was off." Nashi said before Shweta could ask any questions. "Then Dad called and said that Rangaa came to find you so I hurried here directly."

"And the police?" Shweta asked.

"I was at a meeting and it was gonna take a while. So I called them first to buy time or bring backup." Nashi said and placed his hands on her shoulders. "You should be careful Shweta." Nashi said and hugged her and took a deep breath. Seemingly relieved that she was fine and he wasn't late.

"How did he know where I am?" Shweta asked as she broke the hug, and looked at him doubtfully.

"I don't know. It's Rangaa, we're talking about. Maybe he still has some loyalists around Dad. You know that guy is like a cockroach." Nashi said.

"But \_"

Ring ring

Shweta was about to ask something, as Nashi's phone rang and he handed it to Shweta without picking it up.

"Please talk to him, or he'll pester me all night." Nashi said in a helpless tone, seeing Shweta hesitating to take the phone from his hands.

"Hello," Shweta answered and immediately an old but majestic voice came from the other end of the phone.

"I told you, that running around like a mad child will only cause you more trouble. I've sent Veera to pick you. It's time you \_"

"I'm not coming back." Shweta immediately rejected the offer in a stern tone.

"I've told you before, girl. That family, had nothing to do with you. It was an accident."

"It wasn't. I kill\_" Shweta was about to say something, but she noticed Shiva staring at her and she swallowed her words and moved a few steps away from him. So he wouldn't listen to her conversation.

Shiva just looked at her back, not sure what to think or make sense of this situation he had witnessed today. He was scared, worried, nervous and just stuck, about not knowing anything.

'Who are you?' He wondered as the words of Rangaa echoed in his ears again.

'Shweta Nirvaan, are you \_'

His thoughts were moving non stop when someone tapped on his shoulders.

"Shiva,"

Nashi asked as he looked away from Shweta and noticed him nearby. Shiva too, remembered about this guy, whom he met a couple of times before and now he appeared for Shweta too.

'Do they know each other?'

"Hey, I'm asking what you're doing here?" Nashi asked again as he saw him losing focus again. He shook his head as he thought about how this new friend of his always starts getting lost in his brain every now and then.

"Umm I was \_ I was with her." Shiva replied.

"With Shweta?" Nashi said doubtfully and then glanced back at the nearby closed cafe and frowned.

"Yes, do you know her?" Shiva asked.

"Yeah, she's \_uh family." Nashi said with a little thought and looked at him. "What about you, how did you two meet?"

"She's my batchmate at the college." Shiva replied.

Nashi raised his eyebrows at his answer but before he could ask anything else, he saw Shweta coming back, so he stopped. But Shiva didn't see her and continued asking.

"You didn't mention you had a sister." Shiva said to him, thinking this guy was Shweta's brother.

"She's not \_" Nashi answered, when Shweta interrupted him.

"You guys know each other?" Shweta asked as she saw both of them chatting.

"Yeah, we met a few times before."

"He's a friend."

Nashi and Shiva both replied to her question together and smiled.

"It's late. You should go back." Shweta said and threw the phone at Nashi, who glanced at the broken screen and sighed.

"I can drop you to your dorms. It's quite late. So \_" Nashi offered to help but Shweta cut him off. lights

"It's just one block away. You don't have to."

"Fine, just take care of yourself. And if you need anything, call me." Nashi said to her and turned back to leave.

"Good night, buddy." Nashi waved his hands at Shiva and then drove his car away. As his guards had already dealt with the police and sent them back.

Once shweta saw Nashi's car turning around the corner, she looked at Shiva and said. "I'm sorry."

"About what?"

"I ruined the whole mood, didn't I?" Shweta said, looking a little down.

After months of struggle and sadness, she finally smiled today. And even that was ruined because of her past.

Seeing that she was blaming herself, Shiva smiled and said "Well, if you feel guilty. This cafe is open tomorrow too. So \_"

"My treat." Shweta replied almost instantly.

"But not here. Let's go somewhere else." She added as she remembered about Rangaa and Nashi and everything.

"Fine by me." Shiva said.

They were both walking slowly towards their dorms, looking at the silent roads and enjoying the scenery in silence, when shweta coughed and broke the truce.

"Aren't you curious?" Shweta asked suddenly.

"About you," Shiva said.

"Yeah"

"Well to be fair, I've been curious about you from day one. So nothing new." Shiva shrugged his shoulders and said.

His words bringing a little smile to her downcast face.

"Beautiful" Shiva muttered subconsciously, as he looked at her perfectly crafted face, which seemed to glow under the moonlight.

"What?"

"You, you look prettier when you smile." Shiva replied to her question, and her face brimmed in another smile.

"Were you scared?" Shweta asked.

"Obviously. Did you see those guys? None of them looked like a normal person. when they blocked us, for a second I thought they were gonna beat the crap out of me" Shiva said honestly, instead of boasting.

His heart really was shaking nonstop. This was the first time he came across something like this. Class fights and hostel struggles are just kids pulling clothes and grabbing heads, which he can do easily too. But in front of those guys who looked like they won't hesitate to break his bones and cut him in pieces, of course he was scared.

"Thank god, I was just thinking too much." Shiva said and breathed a sigh of relief.

"Don't worry. I'll keep you safe." Shweta said under her breath slowly, but Shiva who was walking just by her side still heard her.

"Then I'll rely on you." Shiva said and smiled as he remembered that Shweta once boasted to him about being a better fighter than him. Maybe she really is.

"Hiding behind your girlfriend huh. Not a nice thing to do." Shweta smiled and teased. Not realizing the effects her words had on him.

"Are you\_ my girlfriend?" Shiva asked, stopping his racing heart and mind, which echoed her words again and again.

"Good night, Shiva." Shweta realizing her blunder, just smiled and walked hurriedly into her dorm building, leaving him behind staring at her awaiting her reply.

"Girlfriend huh, sounds nice enough." Shiva muttered and smiled as he turned back to leave.

On the other hand, Nashi, who was driving back home, had a frown on his face all the way. He knew Shweta was with someone but he didn't know it would turn out to be him.

"Why does it have to be you, Shiv." Nashi tapped his hands on the window frame, "Let's just hope for both our sake that she can wake up from her dreams faster, buddy. Otherwise I can only hurt you for it."

[Send his name to Veera, and tell him to keep an eye out for him.] He said to his driver and shook his head in disappointment.

'You're ruining everything shweta. And you don't even know it.'

But if you can't wake up from your peaceful paradise, how can my father's dreams be achieved.

Chapter 276 Some Memories Are Worse Than The Nightmares

"Rio"

"Rio"

"Wake up"

Katharine said when Rio didn't reply or opened his eyes after she called him a few times.

The speech from the professor was over and everyone was told to move towards the teleportation circle to leave this world, but he was still left asleep in a corner.

"Wake up" She said again, as she contemplated if she should just leave him here and go, just like his sister and that princess friend.

But looking at the now empty hall, she decided to give it a final try.

"It's not too late, wake up." She said and shouted at the end of her sentence as she shook his shoulders with her hands.

Yet her simple sentence triggered another piece of memory which appeared in Rio's mind at this time.

It was like someone tapped the fast forward button and stopped a movie right before the climax..

Kajal stood in front of him, tears flowing down her eyes as she grabbed his shoulders and begged him to stop.

"It's not too late, shiva. Please stop it. Wake up from this madness." Her words choked as she tried to speak. Her hands were shaking as she looked at the familiar face with teary eyes.

The room they were in was well decorated and spoke of its richness, but at this moment its walls were painted with blood, and bodies of several men were thrown here and there lifeless. The pungent smell of blood and heavy taste of iron was wafting her senses with every breath, making her nauseous.

Shiva hesitated for a moment as he met her crying gaze, but then his eyes landed on the large photo of a smiling young man behind her, and his heart turned cold again.

He looked at Kajal with cold eyes and then glanced at his bloodied hands holding a sharp dagger tightly.

"This isn't you, shiva. You can let go \_ " Kajal tried to speak but he stopped her midway.

"It is too late for this one, Kaj. Maybe in the next life." Shiva said as he raised his hands and moved forward.

[Wake up.]

Rio finally got out of his dreams, as the system's voice echoed in his mind. Sending a wave of pain like a electric shock passed through all his nerves.

He opened his eyes to see Katherine struggling to break free from his hand which grabbed her neck and pinned her to a wall, while his other hand had a sword drawn near her neck. Just about to stab it through.

He took a deep breath to calm himself, and pulled his hands back. The dark sword in his hand turned to smoke and disappeared.

Katherine supported herself through the wall as she coughed and massaged her neck. While looking at him if he was finally sane or still out of it.

"Sorry" Rio said as he opened his eyes again after channeling his mana to control the pain from the migraine he started to get.

Katherine wanted to say something, but didn't know what. She was never good at small talk and not very social either. So her communication skills were pretty weak to ask cause or comfort from him.

"What happened?" Yet she still asked worriedly, as she felt something wrong .

"Nothing,(deep breaths) I'm fine." Rio said taking a deep breath once the feeling of his head bursting apart finally calmed down a little.

He massaged his head and furrowed his brows in pain, but since he couldn't use the blessings to heal himself, he could only try and channel the technique that numbed all his senses.

"Do you want me to call \_"

"I'm fine." Rio said sternly as Katherine touched his shoulder and asked to call for help seeing him breathing heavily.

"Was it a nightmare?" She asked after seeing he calmed down a little and looked somewhat better.

Rio looked at her and thought about the girl he saw just now in his memories, their faces were so similar. Though not the eyes maybe. He just shook his head and replied back. "Something like that."lights

After saying it, he turned around to stop looking at her face and started walking towards the teleportation circle.

(The no blessing & empty hall were clear sign he was in VR, so he just followed the same path to exit.)

The images of kajal still lingered in his head and seeing the familiar yet unfamiliar face on Katherine, it only made it harder for him to calm down.

[Host, I wanted to \_]

'Not a word.' Rio cursed his system and muted it.

Katherine too followed behind him closely, but kept a little distance. She could sense him speeding away but she just thought he was still not over his nightmare and needed some space.

[No one comes back after facing death and remains the same, mortal. I told you, that boy was a lost cause. If you want your revenge you can only rely on me.] A cold voice sounded in her ears but she just acted like she didn't hear it and ignored it.

Her goddess too scoffed seeing it and turned her attention away from her and then at the chosen of Nyx, whose figure looked shrouded in her darkness and smiled mysteriously. (How long can you hide him, Nyx. He's gonna break out of your cocoon very soon. And when he does \_ hehehe) The goddess laughed and left as she felt a murderous gaze staring back at her.

Unaware of the intentions and games of gods he inadvertently became a part of, Rio just kept moving forward.

When he reached the teleportation circle most of his class was already teleported out, and only two or three groups were left.

One such group, which contained Saisha in it.

Rio looked at her for some time and then turned away and stood on the stage.

When he appeared outside again, it was the same academy and same environment. He wasn't in the mood to do anything, so he directly used his mana and entered the spatial portal that appeared in front of him.

"See, that guy left without even looking for us." Rebecca said as she looked at that disappearing figure. They've been waiting here for a while but he just ran away.

"Maybe he's angry that you two left him there sleeping and came out alone." Ayla said with a teasing tone.

"She was the one who dragged me. It's all your fault." Amelia said pointing at Rebecca and then blamed her.

Rebecca looked at this shady teampartner who was quite happy imagining the scene where Rio would wake an hour or two later and get scolded or something, but now blamed her for everything. "Let's go to the canteen, I'm hungry after all this time."

"Yeah, but you're paying." Amelia said with a smile and followed her. While Rebecca just shook her head seeing this stingy foodie.

On the other hand, Rio appeared inside a garden. (Same place where he last met with Lisa.)

"What's your excuse this time?" He coldly said.

[Host, I can't control your mind.] System spoke patiently, trying to calm this raging host. [They're your memories, I can't do anything if you remember them in your dreams.]

"What about her?" Rio said, mentioning Kajal "I had forgotten her. I didn't remember her. Then why? What happened?"

[As I told you before host, the memories about that girl were something you locked yourself and tried to forget subconsciously. Maybe something triggered it today or maybe your mind just thinks you're ready to handle them now.]

"But \_ "

[It's just like a kid forgetting the pain of his fall down the stairs for weeks after his accident, and then remembering it years later and just smiling about it. It's natural host. And there's no potion or pill that can fix it.] System explained its understanding and tried to reason but Rio just kept silent hearing it.

'Useless as ever then..' He cursed in his heart and closed the system panel.

System too knew he didn't mean it and there wasn't any point in arguing with him for pride, as he'd himself calm down with some time and say sorry for his outburst. So it let this insult go.

'Kajal huh, my friend.' Rio muttered in his heart as scenes of him and kajal at the school and college life appeared in his mind again and he just sighed.

"Some memories really are worse than my nightmares." Rio said as the scenes of his happy life with Shweta at the beginning played in his mind, which ended up with the image of Nashi laughing at him.

Chapter 277 Angel and Erza

?277 Angel and Erza

After sorting out his thoughts and memories, Rio didn't try to remember anything else about Kajal or try to guess about her future or reasons for not being there with him, he didn't want to think of the possibility which his heart was telling him.

So he just buried all those thoughts for now. Until he remembered what exactly happened eventually.

He just took a long shower and went to sleep afterwards.

Not in the mood to attend another boring lecture, he took a day off and asked permission from Miss Freya for a leave.

Hearing his lousy excuse of being sick and in need of rest, which Miss Freya was too lazy to argue about, she agreed and approved it.

Leaving the academy after getting the permission, Rio first went to meet with Esme and check the progress for his company, Angel.

The higher staff working there was all selected by Artemis herself and some who were pulled by Rio according to the knowledge of plot, so he didn't need to worry about their competency. He just went there to see if some stupid moles or villains appeared there.

After spending weeks trying his luck on the lottery machine and spending thousands of points uselessly, Rio had finally gotten something useful a couple of times. And one such item was called 'Heart scale'.

An artifact in the form of sunglasses which could show people's hearts to him. Simply put, with those glasses on, he could see what others felt about him in terms of color.

Red meant that person hates him and wished for his death.

Black meant that person is jealous of him and wished for his downfall.

Grey meant normal. Signaling he doesn't feel anything for the host or is simply a normal stranger.

White meant that person admires him or respects him.

While yellow meant they're his loyalists and would willingly follow his orders.

Depending on the intensity of the color above that person's head, Rio could check the range of emotions anyone had for him.

[Scale = Red - Black - Grey - White - Yellow]

And looking at Esme who had a headful of golden light, Rio nodded his head and looked away.

The scale had many shortcomings and loopholes too, but this was the best item he had for now, without wasting another 50000 points to update these glasses.

Currently in the meeting with the core members and researchers working at Angel, Rio noticed 3 people with black scale, 5 in gray, and 1 with amber light above their heads.

Reading their names and positions, he sent a voice message to Esme telepathically and told her to deal with all of them after some time. He had no intention to keep useless people and those who could turn against him near his business.

And giving this task to Esme, Rio didn't need to think about their endings. He was sure that in a week or two, the media of floating islands was gonna report a dozen of accidental deaths or missing person reports, all belonging to his company.

Giving them a few instructions about the prices and profits earned from several potions, as well as the few low or medium grade potion recipes he got from his lotteries Rio left them for their own work and research.

"What's the progress about the things I asked you to find?" Rio asked Esme once everyone left the room and they were left alone.

"The herbs you mentioned are all in this storage ring, as for the people, a few of them have been found but some are still hard to locate." Esme said as she handed him a storage ring and a file containing pictures and news about several figures Rio asked her to look for.

"Increase the reward and the manpower for it, and once you find all of them, send their details to Myra and ask her to free some shadows to keep a close eye on them."

"Also for the names I highlighted, send some people to infiltrate their daily life, their families, their businesses or anything useful around them. Nothing about them should be hidden from our eyes."

"Yes master." Esme nodded her head and silently urged herself to finish her tasks efficiently next time.

"How's the process for the other businesses? Have you bought them?"

"Not many, but we did manage to buy rights for a few little industries in our name." Esme said while handing him another speck of documents. "Since you asked to avoid anyone who's affiliated with other noble or elite houses, the progress is slow."

"What about\_ "

"The list about all the dungeons and other lands you mentioned is on the backside. But without proper coordinations or data, it's hard to find them."

Esme replied without Rio's question, and Rio just stayed silent and kept reading everything with peace of mind.

Everything he asked or ordered had some significance in the plot or his future plans. Those people and places all played some role in the , and he wanted to get everything under control.

His time in the dungeon had put a full stop on his various plans, thus he didn't want to take any chances again.

If nothing else, Rio needed to buy and acquire as much of these floating islands before those gods descended and ruined everything. The land on these islands was gonna turn into the safe haven for every unawakened and unaffiliated person after phase 2 of emergence, and he wanted to hold control over all their lives and survival.

"We've managed to locate the traces of a book about the records of stones history you mentioned, but currently it's in the hands of someone related to the Artisan guild." Esme replied, showing him a portrait and pictures of a dwarf drinking and boasting in a bar.

Rio took a recording crystal from her hands and played the video captured in it.

His hands froze as he paused the video in a frame, as his eyes landed on a bookshelf behind the noisy dwarf. Zooming in the projection, Rio glanced at a certain book whose cover had the image of an asteroid falling down from the sky and a man kneeling and praying to it with open arms.

"What role does this dwarf have?" Rio

"He's called Yngwie Craggenson." Esme didn't tell him the specific role but reported his name. And hearing the word Craggenson, Rio guessed his identity. That surname had a certain reputation in the Artisan association.

"Ignore him for now and look for the other books." Rio said as he shook his head in disappointment. "But keep some people around him to make sure to follow that book. He's not allowed to sell it or give it to anyone else."

"Yes master." Esme replied and nodded without any questions. She's long been used to Rio's seemingly weird or nonsensical orders and didn't doubt him for anything.

"When can your sister and Tanya come here?" Rio asked after looking at everything and storing them into his system storage.

"Tanya can come here by next month once she finishes her training. As for Erza, I'm not sure. She's still on her test missions, so I haven't had contact with her." Esme replied after some thought.

In Blake family, once any shadow finished their respective training, they were given a bunch of missions which they needed to complete. If they passed and finished all their jobs without any hiccups, they'd be hired and given a permanent position. But if they failed any one of their jobs or left any clues about Blake family's involvement, they'd be silenced directly.

Seeing how Erza possessed limited talent, yet was supposed to be Amelia's shadow, Rio could only guess how harsh Artemis might've been on her. After all, she doted on her only daughter a little too much.

"Mother didn't arrange something outrageous for her, did she?" Rio asked, feeling a little bit worried about Erza, thinking if she failed and died, then fate could get Esme's hatred plot back on track in a different way.

"She should be fine. Last I talked she was going to clear the Zorkswish lands." Esme said, but hearing her Rio nearly spat out the mouthful of coffee he just drank..

-cough cough-

Placing the cup down and signaling Esme that he was fine, Rio turned to his system for confirmation 'Did she just say \_'

[Yes host.]

'RIP Erza'..

Chapter 278 Mansion of Madness - Eclipse

?278 Mansion of Madness - Eclipse

After dealing with everything in Angel, Rio sent Esme away and moved on the highest floor of the building, which was his own private floor. Where no one but him was allowed entry.

As he stepped out of the lift, the doors and security measures locked the entire floor. His appearance started changing into that of Shiva and once done his figure disappeared into a spatial portal.

Appearing in his next office of Eclipse.

Eclipse didn't have a fixed headquarters, nor a fixed location from which they operated. The base Rio had gotten for Eclipse was actually a tower artifact, called 'Mahal of Madness'. (Mansion of Madness)

A residential artifact which was similar to a moving mansion, something that would always rotate around the center of the tower it was founded inside. It could change its size, shape, space and color according to the owner's wishes. It had its own offense and defense systems. Even the speed it rotated around the tower could be controlled by its master.

And once this artifact recognized its owner, it would be bound to that person, just like other soul bound artifacts.

In the , this artifact appeared after phase 2 of Emergence started and was the base of another villain group. And the ruler of this base was a villainess called Cersei Macbeth.

But in reality this base artifact was bound to the soul of her stepdaughter, who was too afraid to go against her mommy's wishes.

But as anyone who ever read some cliché can guess, that girl is a pitiful vase heroine, who's just waiting to be saved by the hero. A hero, who decides to help her get freedom. Later this pitiful girl gets courage to stand against her evil stepmother listening to hero's heroic speech and together they kill the villainess.

The heroine feeling gratitude wants to give this treasure to hero, but the righteous hero refuses and says he didn't do it for the treasure, but for her

Then heroine falls head over heels, a hug and a kiss, then bed that led to sex.

Happy ending.

(Ohh forgot to mention, later on hero gets both the pussy and the palace.)

Rio had no interest in this type of vase heroine with no useful quality. The villainess stepmother on the other hand, now she was something interesting.

"You're back." Cersei said as she felt the familiar breath of magic appearing in the mansion and directly appeared in front of him.

Shiva nodded his head as he turned to look at the mature woman dressed in a red chongsan with a cigar in her mouth and a sword on her waist.

The smell of peony flowers filled the room as she started walking like an enchantress. Her each move was filled with seductive charm, as her tight dress highlighted her proud curves and hot figure.

Yet instead of being charmed or staring at her body like a hungry beast, Shiva just shook his head seeing her usual tricks, which was also the reason he kept her around and alive.

"Gather everyone." He said and started walking, as the floor and walls around him gave way to him and he appeared inside a large hall, which was originally quite a distance away from his office.

Ignoring the supernatural phenomenon, Shiva just walked on the steps as he reached his throne and sat upon it.

(It wasn't his doing, this damn artifact intended on giving this treatment for its new master.)

Looking at the gloomy environment of this large hall, with floor filled with cold smoke and walls painted in black and blood. Shiva shook his head.

'How long till it's completely refined?' Rio asked hearing the ghostly whispers sounding through the empty walls.

[Another 3 months.]

"Just fucking great." Shiva said and waved his hands to disperse everything and clearing up all the gloominess and haunting scenery.

Just this one thing dropped his mana by nearly 80%.

'System' Rio said and next moment felt pure mana flowing his veins and gathering in his body.

[Happy to help.] System said as it deducted his point in return for mana.

Endless supply of mana was just at his fingertips all with the number of points he had, after all.

As the hall cleared, sounds of footsteps started appearing from all sides and soon in front of him stood 7 people. 5 male and 2 females.

Core members of his Eclipse.

Riley and Ryan - his shadows.

Cersei, Nirdayi, Jellal, Killian, and Desoltor - his minions.

Aside from Riley and Ryan who were team protagonist in the , all the other 5 members were villains - some minor, some average.

"Welcome back, master." ×7

Everyone said as they bowed their heads and stayed like this until he didn't signal them otherwise.

"A bunch of trash." Shiva said as he looked at all of them and cursed them after seeing their progress in his disappearance. The pressure of a mountain weighed on their heads, as the gravity where they were standing suddenly increased many times, depending on their strength and endurance.

Formations and runes appeared all around them, sealing their mana and restraining their aura.

Their backs lumped and knees touched the floor with a bang, as the pressure on them kept increasing. Yet there was no sound of any damage to the floor below their feet.

"2 years." Shiva shouted as he crossed his legs "2 years of time and this is all you managed to do. Forget the outside world, half the floating islands doesn't recognize your name."

"Master, that\_ we \_."

"We avoided the officials, other guilds and the families to maintain cover." Cersei said with gritted teeth.

"Yes master, we've already controlled more than a dozen of businesses. " Killian said as he clenched the paint brush in his hands, to stop the feeling of it breaking out of his control and attacking Shiva in self defense. "Everything is going perfect."

"Perfect" Rio sneered and waved his hand, as the floor space between Killian and the pillar behind him disappeared and in his horrified eyes. The wooden pillar made an extra long spear forming out of itself which stabbed him in the stomach and nailed him to the air.

Urgh- Killian spurted a mouthful of blood and grunted in pain. When the next moment everything returned to normal, and the pillar disappeared and he fell down to the floor with a loud thud. Returning back to his original place nearby other members.

"A shitty club owner dares to refuse our payment and tries to fight back - is that what you call perfect." Shiva coldly spat at them and Killian trembled in fear and stayed silent with his head down.

"That fault lies with me, master. I should've handled it myself." Ryan crawled forward and said to him.

"The fault is all of yours, you all had some skills and that's why I gathered you and spared your lives. But what did you do, 2 years time, and you lot just wasted it sitting around, playing house."

"No more mercy." Shiva said as the pressure on everyone got cancelled and everything turned to normal.

"Riley will issue a couple of tasks to all of you soon, and within 3 months time I need all of them finished. If any of you failed, he'll be joining the ghosts trapped in the walls of this mansion."

Shiva's words had just finished as the black fog covered the floor again, as strange faces formed on the bloodied walls and wailing sounds filled with horror and pain echoed in the chamber.

Sweat formed over Killian's forehead as he seemed to see his own face in one such corner. And a voice calling out to him.

"Get out." Shiva said and all of them disappeared from the hall and appeared in their own rooms.

[Don't take out your anger on these guys, host.] System spoke once Shiva was alone and started smoking. [They're still useful, after all.]

'You aren't here or you'll be joining them too.' Shiva said as he puffed out the smoke and stood up from his throne.

[...] (Silence)

Chapter 279 Dante and Demons

?279 Dante and Demons

Walking down the stairs of his throne, the scenery around him changed with each step, and soon the spacious hall was nowhere to be seen and Shiva was standing on the gates of a prison cell.

He could directly teleport anywhere inside this 3 story pagoda(tower), but he liked the feeling of enjoying this reformation magic.

'The more I see it, the more happy I feel.' Shiva said as he looked at the moving bricks and walls. It reminded him of a marvel movie of magicians, except here he didn't even have to move his hands to cast a spell to do this. Which only made it even more cool to look at.

Shiva pushed open the door and snapped his fingers, as the torches around every corner of this place lit up and light shone in the dark cell.

The sudden light covered the room, and acted the same as chili powder or salt on the injuries of the man hung from the iron chains in mid air.

The middle aged bearded man grumbled and shrieked in pain as he struggled valiantly but in vain.

"Hello Dante." Shiva said as he looked at the men covered in various injuries and torture marks. His refined appearance was nowhere to be seen as he was just marked with blood and cuts from head to toe.

"Remember me?"

Dante looked at Shiva and seemed to see some hope of life, he started squirming and screaming, begging for forgiveness and another chance.

He hated this guy from ruining his business and making him a prisoner at the beginning, but after suffering hell for so long, he had let go of that stupid idea for now. Now he just remembered the words which said 'The only one who can spare your life and save you from me, is my master.'

"I\_I'll do everything. Just please, let me go." And so he begged.

His past arrogance was all gone, as even his biggest reliance, his contracted God was laughing at his misery, and enjoying the live torture scene he could witness from high above.

It had been more than three weeks and in all this time he had only eaten twice and drunk water five times. That's all these damn Eclipse bastards had given him.

Not to mention the mental and physical torture they forced him to go through.

At the beginning his God would often threaten others and try to help him stay strong, supplying some blessing or healing powers, but over this period, that damn demon completely gave up on him.

Hell, now he even sends suggestions to the torturing awakeners to punish Dante even more for ruining his reputation in Den of Devils.

[Ythranor praises your cruelty and control. Saying you should follow him and learn the way of demons.]

Shiva read the notifications from Dante's god and couldn't help but smile. This guy pestered him for a week once he caught Dante, saying he'll find me, kill me etc etc. And now this same guy proposed to teach him.

'Gods really are duplicitous in Arcadia.'

[Maybe they are everywhere.] System replied too.

"Please, I'll do whatever you want. I'll take your brand, a soul control, a slave mark anything, just stop torturing me." Dante sobbed and sniffled as he screamed for mercy, yet Shiva just looked at him without batting an eye and kept thinking about what to do with him.

[Just do what he says. He's no good dead.] His system said, agreeing to let him be a slave.

'He'll give me points.'

[Which you don't lack.] System replied feeling down over this host's actions of ruining every storyline years or months before it starts.

[You've seen the situation of Eclipse yourself. They need more manpower, elite manpower. And this guy can be one of them, if you give him another chance.]

[You can kill him whenever you want, but you can't make him a useful minion once he's dead. So it's better to \_]

'Fine, I got it already. stop pestering me.' Shiva said and swiped the system away.

He waved his hands and the pillars Dante was tied to came together, almost scaring the villain to death thinking he was about to get crushed between them. But they stopped just over the distance where Dante felt comfortable and didn't feel like he was getting stretched apart.

Next the floor below him also raised and turned into a chair where he could sit down.

"Th \_ thank you." Dante murmured as he started munching on the food that appeared in front of him.

"You'll work for me from now on." Shiva said directly, his words made Dante surprised and he nearly choked on his food. But gaining his composure he hurriedly nodded his head like a bird pecking on rice.

"Yes, yes. I'll do everything. I'll \_"

"If you betray me, or ever even think about double crossing me, you'll miss these walls as a wedding compared to what I would do to you then." Shiva said clearly aware of this guy's nature from the .  
"Better be careful Dante."

Shiva said and turned around to leave. As for the matters of marking his soul, or signing a slave contract those things were left for his other minions. There was no need for him to take any risks where those demon gods can identify him as Rio.

Dante, who was chomping down mouthful of food every second, looked at Shiva's back with some resentment and anger, and then looked away before anyone noticed it.

'Sooner or later, this will all be mine.' Dante said as he looked at this magical mansion and the pretty girl walking inside his prison. 'I'll have you under my crotch soon enough, just you wait bitch, just you wait.'

Dante cursed Shiva and then Cersei who happily came near him.

"Staring at me with such unkind eyes. Looks like your training is quite slow, Nir (Nirdayi)." Cersei said in disappointment as she turned to look at the shadow behind her. She turned back at Dante and spoke "Boss said you'll join us from tomorrow, so we only have today for ourselves. Let's enjoy this time together okay."

Cersei smiled and said with a twisted grin. Her expression grew more exaggerated as she saw Dante shivering in fear and begging for mercy.

"This is for your own good, Dante. You should be glad it's us two, and not the boss himself. Otherwise you might not last till 3 weeks to speak surrender." Nirdayi said as he walked inside the room and licked his lips as he tasted the smell of fear in the air.

Half his body was covered in burn marks, including his face and exposed arms. Courtesy of a bigger maniac controlling hellfire.

Shiva walked slowly towards his room as walls closed in behind him, shutting off the sounds of painful screams.

[Ythranor smiles and gives you a nod of approval.]

[Den of devils blesses you with the knowledge of 13 deadly torture methods of a broken world.]

[Train it well and show us some more bloodbaths.]

Shiva, who was walking back to his room, stopped and smiled as he received a gift notification from those demons.

[Blessings given by gods can be their skills, techniques, knowledge or a certain legacy - depending on their own wishes.]

Clicking 'yes' on the option where world system asked him if he wanted to receive this gift of knowledge - Rio felt a surge of memories appearing in his mind directly, like a book was printed in his head and all kinds of theory and diagrams of various methods of torture and painful techniques appeared in his mind. Each method crueler than the last one.

'Demons, they really are twisted to the extreme.' Shiva said as he asked Nyx and system to cover him, while he changed his appearance and turned back into Rio and teleported back to Angel.

Chapter 280 Auction event and ring grandpa

?280 Auction event and ring grandpa

Once Rio was done dealing with Dante, he called for Riley and gave her all the instructions for what he wanted from those members of Eclipse.

Since he wanted to develop Eclipse to a level similar to his guild or even stronger than it. They needed a reputation so impeccable that even the name of Eclipse would send shivers down the spines of everyone.

And all of that needed to be started with the floating islands, just under the nose of world association.

Hard, extremely so - but if he wanted to kill Leon and survive the second phase, and all the other calamities that followed it, floating islands needed to be secured under his control.

That's why he's been thinking, making plans for both Angel and Eclipse, buying lands, people, properties, dungeons and anything that could give him a say against the world leaders when the world really turns to shit.

Being strong enough to face off against the whole world was something a protagonist could do relying on his luck, but Rio didn't have that habit.

Lighting up another cigarette Rio came to the balcony and looked at the evening sky and sighed to himself.

"What's the news from our informants at Warzy? Any movement?"

"Nothing big. Most of their bases that we had eyes on have shifted their locations or changed leaders after seeing the constant pressure from everywhere." Riley said as she stood beside him.

"There've been no news from many of the minions we've bought or captured. They're probably all dead by now."

"What about from the list I gave you?" Rio asked and didn't care about their deaths.

"One of them had some movement a few days ago. From what we intercepted they're planning an attack soon. But any other details are not clear."

"Hmm, keep an eye on it. Also place some people inside the temples of Kali and archive of magic."

"Wouldn't it be risky, Gods have \_"

"Don't worry about the gods, they won't care as long as you don't meddle with their faith or believers." Rio said and threw away the cigarette, watching as it floated and fell down the heights of the building.

"The spies don't have to be in higher positions, or raise any storms. They just need to pass some normal information now and then, that would suffice."

"Fine, if you say so." Riley said and nodded her head.

"The auction is tomorrow. We got the tickets, and there'll be around 8-10 people from our side. You just need to tell us the items they need to bid or raise price, they'll do it anonymously." Riley said as she showed him the advertisement pamphlet of the auction.

"Did you find out what items they're auctioning?" Rio asked as he read the address and details of organizers of this auction.

Golden Para temple and World association were mostly responsible for the items auctioned, while Nishkal family held the venue and auction house in their name.

Any of the guests can also sell their items, so Rio wasn't sure if the things he was looking for were listed already or submitted last moment.

"No. We're trying but the security there is no joke." Riley said in some disappointment.

Rio had informed them about this auction merely days after he came back from that dungeon. So they had more than two months of time, but the results weren't as good as she promised him earlier.

"Don't try too hard, if anyone found anything suspicious, the losses would outweigh the gains." Rio said and turned around to leave the tower.

Other than Riley and Ryan, all of Eclipse knew him as Shiva, so he didn't mind not having the mask of deception on his face around them. As for their gods, Nyx made sure they remains tight-lipped about his secrets.

"I'm going back. Keep an eye on Dante for the time being. If you need him to do something, team him up with Cersei or Nir. They'll handle his rebellious thoughts until he learns his lessons." Rio gave some final instructions and started the car, going back to his academy.

He closed his eyes as his thoughts drafted onto the event of the auction written in the . And the opportunity that awaited dear protagonist there.

This auction wasn't particularly big and was mainly hosted for the new arrivals of the academy and some rising talents or businesses from the islands. Though famous for its variety of items sold, their range and uses were limited at best to B grade awakeners.

Anything higher than that wasn't sold in this auction but at the mid year tournament auction or year end auction.

If Leon's skill journey at the beginning was ranked based on opportunities - then after Apollo's guidance and the technique he found in Eisjer domain, this auction had the best power up moment stored for him.

Apollo was unavoidable, and looting the skill of the Eisjer domain would have to wait until he could leave the academy. So this opportunity was something Rio couldn't let Leon get his hands on.

Since this one could very well fix his only fault in strength and make him shine. Leon has high rank now and lots of mana too, but what he lacks are skills or techniques to utilize that untapped power.

Unlike his family which had library filled with stronger arts to choose from, Leon's family wasn't as rich or resourceful. So he lacked them.

And who can teach the protagonist out of the world skills and techniques, as well as act as his bodyguard for free.

A grandpa in the ring.

A stronger figure belonging to very high ranks, but now in weak and sealed soul form. Just in need for a drop of blood to awaken and be bound to that person for life.

"It would be fun once I rip out another chunk of your luck, little Leon." Rio said to himself and smiled heartily.

(Rip ring grandpa. I'd say may your soul rest in peace. But knowing him, you'll be in pieces, so just enjoy your last peaceful sleep tonight.) System said in its heart and prayed for the pitiful soul.

Yet the next moment it sent a shameless message to Rio.

[Ring grandpa = 50000 system points. Limited exchange offer. Valid for next 24 hours.]

[Hela smiles and says it's time to fulfill your promise.]

[Loki smiles in anticipation as he can't wait to see the gift you prepared for him.]

[Hela and Loki argue over who's gonna be the first to see this gift.]

'The village hasn't settled but the beggars have already arrived.' [Gaanv basa nahi ki bhakari pahle hi aa gaye]

Rio said and swiped all the messages from all these shameless people away from his eyes.

'How can they think of a life in such meaningless ways?' Rio shunned everyone and thought 'At Least let him be of little use to me first.'