

Master 971

Chapter 971 (2) Dimensional Step Alabastor

"Yes yes, I promised to tell you more about dimensional step Alabastor. I won't lie to you. Just sit and listen." There were two children yet again hounding their father for more stories. They had not stopped asking about the person since they had heard the first story.

The words focused the children on him and the man swore that he could feel the intensity of their excitement growing but the second.

"How about we talk about the time he saved his entire merchant caravan? He was very well known as the best guard for any merchant caravan to have by this time. He had shown off his prowess in defeating countless monsters and even some small bandit groups. His ability to step through space and defeat a dangerous attacker before they could swing a sword was outstanding."

The children leaned in with now plastered on their faces. "The merchant that had employed him had been able to expand their activist and now ran multiple merchant caravans. The largest was said to set off for a far away city being built. It was an opportunity to make a base that no other merchant had yet. Naturally, Alabastor did not turn down the job. He had been working diligently to become more powerful and sharpen his skills. He was well known as a silent assassin that protected people without them even knowing they had been in danger."

"The journey was said to be through a perilous dirt road with forest on each side. It had been cut by an unknown monster and was used for years at that point. The problem was that there were always monsters waiting to ambush those that traveled it. The forest on either side made it perfect for ambushing the merchants and making snacks of them." The man tapped his fingers on the armchair he sat in. He gave the children an evil grin to try and spooked them slightly for dramatic effect.

Many other guards had been enlisted to join them and nothing strange was said to have happened while they traveled from their current town. The merchants that went with them were experienced and knew well that the guards would protect them with their lives. But one merchant was younger and was slower at driving their carriage. That was the biggest mistake that had been made and is currently recorded in the merchant's rules of the road. Never let yourself fall behind."

"The forest had been darker even in the bright sun. The trees bent over the road and the carriage that fell behind was completely unnoticed by the main group. However, it was picked out by a slithering

monster that no longer exists in our world. It was watched by a green horned viper. They grew to the side of three carriages and could swallow one whole without so much as flinching. Their scales could grind the bark off trees and their venom was feared to be unsurvivable."

The deeper tone of voice made the two children push themselves back slightly. A terrifying monster was one not able to be defeated by anyone. Or so they thought. "The carriage was being driven by the young merchant and he noticed he was alone. He tried to push his horses to move ahead faster to no avail. When he noticed the green tail ahead he fearfully tried to stop before he hit it. But he ever so slightly touched it causing the green horned viper to turn and attack."

"The fear of death consumed the young merchant and it was said that he had aged ten years in that very moment. His soul couldn't handle the pressure of the attack. But the attack he had felt coming never did. He was silently sitting with his eyes closed before he slowly opened them. The sight he found was one he did not expect to see in his entire life." The two children nearly jumped up to make their father tell them what happened after. The suspense was killing them.

"The very green horned viper that had been about to take the young merchants' life was on the ground. The head cleanly separated from its body and a single man standing over it contemplating what to do. Of course, it was Alabastor. Having a merchant fall behind was nothing that he worried over. They were still within his protection. He had also noticed the green horned viper watching them. Therefore, the moment it had let its' guard down and attacked, he had made his move."

"The slaying of that single green horned viper was the very thing that allowed alchemists to derive the very first antivenom to purify the green horned vipers' position. The scales had gone to make shields for many guards. The bones were used to forge bows for many budding archers. Alabastor had put so many things in to motion with this one act. He had changed the flow of time and established a solid base for the merchant group he was guarding. It became known as one of his crowning achievements at the time. No other could have made such an impact so quickly."

The two children were amazed to hear that so much had come from the simple act of guarding a merchant. There was an entire industry founded from this simple protection. "He was also known as a man powerful enough to defeat a monster that could swallow him whole like nothing. It was a decisive battle that showed off his use of spatial skills. The spatial slash he had used to sever the green horned serpents head was recorded as an unbeatable skill. Bards took up his songs and praises in an instant."

There was so much more than the man could tell his children. He had found a great many volumes of Alabastors' adventures. But for now, he would be sending them to bed to dream of adventure.

Chapter 972 Ritual

"I didn't think you would come to watch me stumble through learning a new skill. To be fair, I was trying to learn the scale step or better. But here I ended up adding natural mana and combining the other movement skills I had. They all came together in pieces to show me the way to the dance of seasons." Feeling that Current was not here to throw around the values and strength of royal dragons, Walker also relaxed slightly.

"I see what my elder means. You are not conventional in the least. You were able to charm one of my elders so much that she personally came to tell me of your visit. I was surprised to see the letter she sent then suddenly show up. Normally I would have been full of fury to see her leave the village without permission. But after she explained I wanted to meet you myself. But stiff meetings do not mix well. I am a pure ancient water dragon. I can flow in anyways. Remaining stiff and frozen is not my way." Current felt that sharing a slight bit of himself with Walker would help their relationship. Knowing that he was willing to bend slightly made Walker feel closer to him in a way.

"I do not mean to be rude, this is Alice. Alice, this is Current. He is a royal dragon. He came here to get a feeling for the city and decide on his stance when it comes to joining us here one day." Knowing that Walker was casually speaking to an ancient dragons was too much for Alice's mind. She was completely shocked by his attitude. She had grown up knowing that ancient dragons were brutal and powerful. Having one so calm and cool was rare and against what she had thought.

"You are much too young to have a wife. I do not understand humans any longer. The last time I came down from my mountain to see them was when there were only small villages around. How things have changed while I train myself." There was a shallow sigh from Current while he lamented his newly found lack of knowledge. Walker and Alice were in turn embarrassed by this but did their best not to show it.

"Ehm, well. Things are different between cultures. I know I have broken many ideals of yours by existing in the way I do. But I hope that it can bond dragons and other races. I feel that together there can be stronger futures than apart." This was in no way a lie. Walker truly felt this to the very core of his being and Current was able to sense it.

"Hmm, very different indeed. So much so that sending my dragonkin followers here may cause a shock. They had never broken the traditions and bending in such a way may cause strife. I would like to send a younger generation. The young dragonkin are not bound by oath to us royals until they come of age. If I send some young here you may be able to help them in a way I can not." This was an additional surprise.

"I feel like you are willing to do so because you have benefit in doing this?" Walker couldn't shake the feeling that Current was doing this for a reason.

"Of course. Royals act with reason in everything we do. I am interested in what potential someone like you who breaks our values can do. If you did so out of evil then I would have erased you. But you do so with a purity that matches every pure elemental ancient dragon. I also remember the nature dragon before they passed on. I wish to see that again one day." The lamenting tone brought Walker right in to a new understanding of Current. He was more than just trying to see something he missed. He was searching for a feeling he had long lost.

"But that is not what I wished to speak with you about. I wanted some time away from the other rulers you invited here before we left to defeat that scourge. I know you have seen that my champion lacks a guardian. That was a grave mistake long ago. But I can ensure that another champion does not have such a future." The conversation became much more serious and Alice wanted to flinch away. But she felt Walker's hand envelope hers and she was able to relax.

Current saw that Walker was prepared to hear what he said and began, "Your champion and guardian have yet to bind their blood properly. The guardian is able to share some power with their champion. They are there to defend them after all. Normally the dragonkin guardian would take a single drop of blood from their champion once a year to bring them from a simple dragonkin to a higher being. It is slow and wondrous to see them grow in such a way. It makes them closer and allows them to develop skills similar to their champion"

This ritual is watched over by the royal they serve and is more than just a simple binding. It is something that connects them all at a deeper level. If this is not done then the guardian will find they are unable to grow and protect their champion and even more their royal. Do not allow this ritual to be forgotten. If you do, you will find that your champion is without a guardian.

The weight of this warning was heavier than Walker had expected. But this was very vital information that obviously came from experience. There was nothing but good intention from Current. He was there not just to warn Walker but to protect a champion from the pain he had witnessed. "Can you tell me more about this ritual?" Walker leaned in wanting to know everything possible. Alice felt a little out of place but stood tall next to Walker.

Chapter 973 One Drop

"One drop of blood. That's all that is needed every single year. I would recommend doing this at night when the silence is the greatest. The royal is required to watch over and be there in case there is a rejection. You are not a born dragon. That is clear. But your champion is. There may be a rejection at first. But from what I can see with my eyes...well, I will keep that to myself." Current had taken a long

pause before divulging any information. It appeared that he was looking at Walker with a similar way of thinking as a grandparent to a child. This wasn't far off since an ancient dragon was many times older than a human.

"Your champion needs to willingly offer a single drop of blood which is consumed by the guardian. This will strengthen a bond and cause the changes needed in the guardian. For a dragonkin, they will grow larger wings and their elemental affinity might change or become stringer. For a human, it's unknown. The only other species we have seen a guardian from is a serpent race, a starlight serpent to be specific."

Walker took interest in the idea that there was a monster called the starlight serpent. But this was something to worry about later. He was totally focused on the ritual that he was being told about.

"The process is full of pain but that is because the body will adapt. Mana will rush toward the guardian and both the guardian and the champion will have a moment where their minds are aligned perfectly. This is the development of a sixth sense where each can tell whether the other is in danger. That is how a guardian and a champion are able to battle and protect their royal so well. That is the end goal of a guardian. To become a lesser champion that protects their royal."

All of this was news to Walker. He had read and been taught a lot while in the water dragon village. But hearing more detailed information from a real royal dragon who had experienced was even better.

"Lesser champion does not sound familiar." This was all Walker needed to say before the light in Currents' eyes focused on him.

"Lesser champion is a guardian that gains the draconic guardian skill, dragon transformation. It takes many years and an extremely strong bond. They are able to transform for a set time in to the same champion they protected through the years. It is the highest that the guardian can rise. Depending on the champion, they can be extremely powerful warriors." The look of sadness returned to Current meaning that this had been something the guardian to Ciel had never achieved.

"During the ritual, the guardian will have to swear to protect the champion until they had reached their strongest state then swear to stand beside them. But this is just what my ancestors did. The pledge is different for everyone. I heard that your oath with your champion was different and even formed a more powerful bond. To think that a human could live to become an ancient like me." Walker had not told Alice that he would be living longer than the average human. Much longer. Her face dropped in to one of wonder and awe while looking at him.

After they are sure to collapse and slumber for a full day. The dragonkin guardian normally has tougher scales and experiences the gaining of skills or other things from their champion. One such guardian has even received a unique skill that only champions normally have. Just be careful. The champion will be ravenous afterward. This ritual consumes a great deal of their mana. Now, I have done what I promised after evaluating you and your city. I will leave to prepare. Unlike other royals, I happen to have battle prowess that can beat that disgusting scourge in the waters."

Seeing Current flap his wings in to the air made Walker wonder if this was all a strange hallucination. But he knew that it was not. Walker would have to do something to show his gratitude. He had not known these things to this amount of details and it could have hurt his friends. "I will need to get Su and Midnight tonight to do this." Walker began to fall in to his own thoughts.

"You will be ancient?" Alice finally asked what the meaning was behind what she had heard.

'Well, when Midnight and I preformed our oath to each other and I became equal to a royal...Well, I kind of gained the chance to live the same as a dragon to a degree. I might live for a long time. Same with Su and Onyx." There was a sadness in Alices' eyes. She had worried that Walker would leave her behind but in actuality, she might be the one leaving him behind.

"I will live forever too." Alice made this promise without thinking. She had no way to do this and no knowledge of just how crazy this sounded. But she gripped Walker's hand and promised it three times while looking in his eyes.

There were no words to respond to such a pledge. Walker just pulled Alice a little closer and made sure to interlace their pinky fingers, "It's a promise then. We will live forever." The two giggled slightly as they shared their moment together.

Some time later, Walker and Alice had already made it inside and had cleaned themselves up for dinner. They had stopped by the separate bedrooms to remove some dirt and such from clothing after training. Alice had been able to improve and show off her skills which made her feel that she was better prepared. However, Walker had also learned a new skill which made him a lot more comfortable having to protect Alice on the journey.

The only thing that was worrying him now, was that her level was much lower than everyone else coming with them.

Chapter 974 Midnight

"Walker. I would have preferred that you brought myself and Midnight with you to meet with another royal dragon." Su was understandably unhappy with Walker when he and Alice had found her and told her about what had happened. Midnight was also huffing in agreement with Su.

"It was not something planned. But it was a lot of new information that I did not know. I felt like we were back at the branch village. I think the water dragons are more open and flexible to the things we are doing here and were more than willing to help us because of that." This was obvious but Walker wanted to say it so that they would repay this kindness one day.

Su released another long sigh before she took a deep breath, "And you made Alice stay with you the entire time you were speaking with a royal dragon?" Su had not said anything when it was mentioned that Walker and Alice were training. She had already expected Alice to come with them since Alice had been training and making it clear she wanted to adventure.

"I didn't make her. It was unexpected. She stood pretty strong if I could say so myself." Walker was sure that Alice would have left if she didn't want to be there. But she had gotten more and more confident as she stood there.

"I'm stronger than I look." Alice had used a very forceful tone which drew all of their attention. Midnight huffed a few times and nodded her head. She was proud that she was seeing Alice show her teeth.

"I apologize. I know that the water dragons are more caring. I still worry though. Current is just like Adair. It makes sense that they are both impressive dragons with pure water elemental affinity. This ritual, do you believe we should risk it before we leave?" This was the crux of the matter. If they did the ritual and Su was weak or Midnight was weak, then it was risky.

"It could give us a secret boost in power that we did not expect. For the first span of travel from here to the swamp lands that we are crossing through, we will have carriages. They will be left near the swamp lands. That means there will be some time to recover. Alice and I can also help heal along with the battle healers that the high priest is sending with us." The reassurance that Su and Midnight would be at fighting capacity or better was the real draw for her to accept things. "What do you think Midnight. This is a big deal for you as well."

"Sister says that she is always getting stronger and that she will help Su become stronger too. They are a team." Onyx slithered in to the room looking slightly shinier than usual. "Yes, I had brother Gil help me shine my scales today. We need to prepare to leave and I want to be able to absorb the most light

elemental mana possible before we get to the swamps where it will be dark." Onyx hadn't even needed to hear them ask. He had known that they would wonder why he had polished his scales.

"Then we will get stronger. Midnight, should we perform this ritual at midnight with our own twist on the oath?" Su and Midnight both appeared to have something in mind that not even Onyx could fathom. They still had a more unique bond that not everyone could understand.

"I felt you training today. I believe you will need to improve your level while we travel. I will protect you." The room was silenced by Onyx making this promise to Alice. Walker had been waiting to make this point but now was left with it out in the open.

"Walker, we still have one half of an experience boosting potion left. You should give it to Alice when we get on the road. Use your lure orb and we will help her as much as possible." There was not a question or an ask in this. It was a complete order from Su to Walker.

"I haven't known who to give it to since we are all leveling up at a different speed than the normal people around. I was thinking of giving it to Onyx but he has a better ability to hide away from danger so I held off. You are right. Alice, this is the last of an experience boosting potion we found when we moved in to this mansion. It is yours." Walker had held on to this for a very long time and not used it since it would have put one person well ahead of the others. But they also didn't need only experience points any longer.

Seeing the gold in the vial of potion made Alice shocked again for the day. She had only heard of the nobles that could afford to procure these potions due to their rarity and price. The church would never buy one with the hard earned gold that could go to healing more people. She wanted to argue but knew that the entire party would be more at ease if she became stronger before she got to the harbor towns. If she did not strengthen herself then she would be risking her and their lives. Not to mention anyone else fighting with them.

"Thank you." The words were soft as a mouse. She was having trouble keeping her eyes from tearing up. This was something that showed how much they cared for her safety. It was hitting her all at once that she would be able to stand beside the person she cared for and the people she had begun to idolize. She was no longer someone incapable of adventuring to witness greatness. She would stand beside them and ensure they were safe herself. She would protect people. She would be more than she was and continue to grow as an example of what a healer should be to the world.

Chapter 975 Scratches

Dinner was done in a flash while Gil and Remey never made it back to the mansion. Remey had become immersed in potions while Gil had recruited the enforcers that would be coming with him to make more arrows. They were trying to work on arrows that would more easily speed through the water and maintain their damage. It would be a surprise when they came up with something.

Most of the family had been too busy with the building of the city and their new interests. Gil's mother had not left the garden since they had come to the larger portion of land. She had somehow managed to befriend multiple elemental spirits without the ability to speak to them. Walker could only wonder how she had managed it. But the effects had shown themselves in the portions of carved out earth which would become a winding path for the garden.

It had been good to see Lisa taking a break at the dinner table but even when Walker had attempted to pry in to her work she had shut him down. She was even keeping secrets from Alice and Su which made everyone incredibly curious.

"Walker, Midnight and I are just about ready." Su had taken things a lot more personally lately. She had referred to Walker less and less by the term leader and more by his name. It was something that truly spoke to how close the bond they had now. It also showed that she had finally begun to see that true strength everyone had and focus on her own goals.

Midnight and Su had cleaned themselves as well as possible. They had the feeling that they needed to be as perfectly clean as possible for the best results. Walker had decided to clear a place in the training field for them to do this ritual in. He was going to wait for the waning moon to be directly overhead before they began.

The air was still and cold as if the world itself had been waiting for this to happen. Su was toughing the cold air out with her resistance skills to cold and Midnight just shook off any chill she felt. They were both clearly nervous but as they looked at Walker standing confidently with them they were able to brush the feeling away.

"Midnight, I know it might hurt a little. But we need a drop of your blood for this." Midnight had prepared for it and knew exactly what this meant. She could already feel the connection between her and Su growing. But as she used one single claw to draw a drop of blood her very being was vibrating. It was like someone had started to shake her very soul and it was crying out for attention.

Su had thought hard about how this would go and what she would say. She was not going to breeze through this as if it was nothing. Thai was more proof of her commitment to her family and who she

would protect. She never imagined she would be standing here in this way, but it felt right. It was exactly the place she belonged and that feeling would never fade.

Walker wanted to hear the things that they would say to each other, but what surprised him most was that they did not speak. Instead, there was a wave of mana from each of them. They were making their own pledge in a way that only a draconic guardian and a champion would do. Words were not needed to prove that they would be there to protect the other. Words were a worthless thing to a real dragon. Words could be dropped at a breath. But the core of somethings' being could be shown and shared. The desire and pledge based on ones' soul could be shown bare.

The single drop of Midnight's blood fell and melted in to Su. Her eyes seemed to glow with mana showcasing the skill she received when she first became a draconic guardian and realized the bond she had created with Midnight. Su had taken it on herself to rest with Midnight when they had received their hero titles. She had been there when Midnight could have been taken from this world of the living. The bond was small but had a foundation that nothing could shake. For any other draconic guardian and dragon champion, this would take decades.

The mana around them instantly retired causing Walker to feel as if he was in a place lacking all mana. The feelings he had before were gone. Now he could tell that Midnight and Su were much closer. But even more, he could feel an increase in the mana that Su and Midnight had within their bodies. Midnight began to collapse in front of Su who tried her best to catch her.

Su did her best to slowly let Midnight down as he lost her strength as well. The smallest piece of scales scraped Su's face and she started to bleed slightly. Before Walker could cast a light heal spell it fell on to Midnight and seemed to melt in to her scales.

The two were more than done for the day and just as Current said, they looked exhausted while they slumbered.

"Zephyr said she felt that the mana around here was acting strange. I came as fast as I could but it looks like everything is safe. Let me help you get them inside." Gil had been waiting patiently trying his best not to interrupt. With the help of Onyx, the two managed to get both Su and Midnight inside to their beds. Walker could feel that there was a change occurring between them and opted to keep them close by in the same room. But he couldn't just walk away. He chose to meditate on the natural mana around him while he waited for them to wake up again, even if it took the full day like he had been told.

Chapter 976 Fever

Walker had made it through a significant amount of time since Midnight. He was sure that Su and Midnight were resting peacefully in front of him. But the sudden change in the mana alerted him to the changes occurring in Su's body.

Su had broken out in to a cold sweat and there was an odd flow to her mana. She was starting to toss and turn but not wake at all. Walker did the only thing he knew how to do which was use his healing skills and grab water to put a cool cloth on her forehead. He was sure that this was the result of the ritual that she and Midnight had performed.

The pain that she was experiencing while unconscious was from Midnight's blood changing her in some way. But Walker had no idea what way this was. However, he had a very strong sensitivity to mana now. He could feel the natural mana within Su reacting and spreading through her body. Since this was the case, Walker tried to pull the ambient natural mana and found that Su's body pulled that in as well.

Time passed in this way slower than Walker had ever felt before. He remained calm while he burned his own mana to control natural mana. What he didn't realize was that Midnight was also absorbing some natural mana to replace what she was using in her won body.

Both of them were using their own mana and the natural mana that they would not be able to sense that dwelled within them at all times. For anyone else, this would be the same as approaching the unspeakable act of burning ones' soul. Walker could sense that this was because the gap was very far between dragon and human. Su's body was being forced to change in an unnatural way and the natural mana was working to make it possible.

By the time Su returned to a peaceful resting state, Walker had used nearly all of his mana and was looking in worse shape than Su. Midnight had also begun to stir slightly. Neither of the three had any idea how much time had passed.

The next thing that caught Walker's attention was a noise outside. He looked down and out the window to the training field where he saw that Remey, Alice, and Onyx were training together. Alice was using her songs to make shields around her and defend from Remey's punches which were being held back. She had switched to a fire and a light elemental knuckle which produces a blinding white flame.

Onyx was acting as the buffer between these two and absorbed as much light elemental mana he could. But what was shocking to Walker was when Onyx would interrupt them with a shadow spike or a light spike. He had been improving his own skills to the point that he could perfectly aim with them now. It

was a wonder how Onyx had figured out that he could use his own shadow to make a shadow spike and send it at an enemy. Walker felt he had been missing some important facts of darkness elemental .

The soft growl that echoed through the room came before a louder yawn. Walker spun around to see Midnight trying to lift herself up with a slight struggle. She was slow but with Walker's help, she was able to stand and perfectly show him the same look she always had when she was very hungry. Walker broke in an instant and pulled snacks from his storage. Midnight gleefully began to eat and regain her normal lively attribute. But for some reason, Walker knew she was different. Her eyes had lost a bit of their wildness and been replaced with a more human like look.

While Midnight ate, Su began to stir a bit well. The difference though, was that she looked as if she was sick. Her eyes fluttered open and she grasped her head then her throat. Walker rushed to give her water which was greedily gulped down.

"Thank you. I felt like my lungs and throat were on fire. All I could dream about was being exposed to everything all at once. One moment I was frozen. Then I was on fire. Then I was in a sea of darkness before being blinded by light. One point I was underground buried alive, then falling forever. It was... not as scary as it should be. It was... enlightening." Su had realized that she felt a lot more than normal.

The elemental mana around her felt friendly. It was as if she could feel it moving. Walker saw the way she was processing these things and was able to catch on to this. "Your affinities must have mirrored Midnight's' you probably have some affinity for all elemental mana now. I bet you are also more resistant to them." This was a good thing.

Once Walker had said it a look of understanding grew in Su's eyes. But what also showed were slightly sharper teeth that weren't quite human anymore but still very similar. Su investigated her system and felt her skin to find that nothing had changed much. However, when she got to her throat she found something had changed that she did not understand until she found her system also different.

"Walker...have you ever heard of a human that can breathe fire?" Walker's jaw nearly hit the floor as Su said these unsteady words. She was feeling the parts of her throat right below her jaw. At the same point, he had read that a dragon had special organs that assisted in them being able to breathe fire and other elemental breath attacks.

Midnight jumped up having finished her snack and moved right next to Su. She stood in front of her and held a proud stance. The two stared in to each other's eyes for a moment and Su looked at Walker.

"Midnight wants to teach me to breath fire." Su started laughing until she looked at Midnight again. She was the one whose jaw dropped this time.

Chapter 977 Get Out!

"You need to leave the room now!"

"Why? I need to make sure you are both alright." Walker was stunned that Su would force him to leave right away.

"Just do it and I promise I will shock you in revenge for all the times you have made us freeze up." The fact that Su said she could breathe fire and even understand Midnight's thoughts now was too much already. Walker had no idea how she would be able to shock him so much more now. "Go!"

Walker was abiding by what Su wanted and left the room. The shuffling sounds that followed made him worried but he didn't dare to burst in. He knew that if he did not follow what Su wanted then she was more than capable of teaching him a lesson.

The sounds of shuffling became off. There was the sound of Midnight's scales grinding and a slight growl that turned in to a high pitched sound. None of these sounds seemed normal but in a few minutes, things were silent. All that could be heard was the slight sounds of Su whispering in obvious amazement.

The next sound that Walker could make out was tearing fabric. It made him wonder just what was going on and also just how bad they would get yelled at if anyone found a bunch of torn bed sheets and clothing around. There would need to be a very good explanation for all of it just to avoid Lisa's wrath. She took great pride in the clothing she had been amassing for everyone to wear around the mansion and out on adventures.

Another silent pause seemed to torment Walker, "Come back in!" Su knew too well that Walker had not gone far.

Walker opened the door full of curiosity and enough worry to last him the day. But in no way could he have been prepared for what he saw. "That's- but-but...How? She needs to be an ancient dragon to be able to do that. Even Adair said... Midnight?"

Walker stuttered through his shock. He was looking at a young dragonkin with skeletal wings. Black skin stretched between them to match the black and white streaked scales that covered her body. There were two smaller bone colored horns that curved off of her head. Her eyes were the same as the eyes Walker had looked in to almost every single day. It was Midnight and there were no questions. Her growing smile while watching Walker think his way through his shock was too telltale.

"I know. I had a feeling that she was closer to me and then I realized that she had the dragonkin transformation skill after the ritual. I can only imagine it has something to do with how we bonded. But she is well ahead of any other dragons." Su was right. Midnight had a dragonkin form that was a little more human than any of the other dragons they had seen transform. But what really made it stand out was that she wasn't totally covered in scales. Midnight had some patches of flawless skin matching Su's.

Before Walker could regain his composure Midnight rushed over to him and tackled him to the ground. She rubbed her face in his chest while she hugged him. She was nearly purring while trying to move her mouth the same way she had seen them all doing so many times before. The tearing fabric that he had heard was the larger shirt that Su had ripped to let Midnight's wings through. Midnight's tail was still very much there and had a similar form as it had before.

"We will help you speak. I promise. Just stop trying to squish me to death. Lisa will want to make you all the clothes she possibly can. I don't think she will be ready for this." He couldn't help but chuckle to himself imagining how shocked the others would be.

"That's how I felt. I knew you would be stunned by the sight." Su felt that this was a wonderful surprise. She could feel her own mana in Midnight somehow and knew that the ritual had been different in some way. It was the same way that she just knew what Midnight was thinking even though it wasn't a direct conversation.

"Let's get everyone else up here. I don't know where Gil is but I know where Onyx, Alice, and Remey are." Walker opened the window and took a deep breath. "Get upstairs to Su's room now! Hurry up!" The shock on their faces from the interruption caused them to rush inside. They believed something was wrong and they were not going to be slow about it.

Su rushed to cover up with a blanket since she was still in simple clothing and wasn't used to just going around in it. She felt her armor was much more comfortable. The symphony of footsteps reaching the door was momentary before Remey burst in. "What's wro- that's can't be..."

Midnight gave up on tackling Walker and jumped for Remey. "Midnight! You change and the first thing you do is try and take me down in a wrestling match! I can take you in training why not here!" The two started to roll about the room while Onyx and Alice watched in amazement. They weren't sure what was going on.

"What's wrong!? I was in the dining room when I heard- what!?" Walker had not known that Gil was home and eating. The small pieces of scrambled eggs on his lip showed that he had been interrupted. But that didn't matter. All that did was the fact that Remey was now standing equal with Midnight showing off her dragonkin form.

"So, we did a binding ritual last night between Su and Midnight. It's normal for a draconic guardian and a dragon champion. But somehow Midnight can take a dragonkin form."

"And I have multiple elemental affinities and can breathe fire. Or at least my skills say fire breath now."

Chapter 978 Girls Only!

"Walker, I expect this from you. I was glad to help get them inside with you after. But you didn't tell me that this could happen. Su, you are the new Walker now." Gil had named Su this since it was a bigger shock to hear that she could breathe fire and had such a major change in herself after binding with Midnight and her blood. Midnight on the other hand targeted Gil and ran to hug him next.

Once Midnight had managed to tackle Gil to the ground too she managed to catch Onyx who was slithering for a closer look. "Sister, don't let them teach you to talk. I will do that for you!" Just as any little brother, Onyx feared he would be unable to help his sister out any longer. But in return for his words, Midnight just hugged him tighter and they had a private conversation. "I can accept that. But when you can fly you will take me first." The agreement was made.

Lastly, Midnight stood up and gave Alice a soft hug. She knew that this was more important since Alice was lower leveled than all of them and she could hurt her. But even more, it showed the difference in their relationship. The party was family already but Alice was a calm and sweet person slowly becoming family. But this was not a deterrent at all. Alice smiled warmly and patted Midnight's head the same way Walker would. For Midnight, this meant the world. Alice was the first person outside of the family that had accepted her surprise dragonkin transformation.

It was clear that Midnight was just as excited as the rest of them were. She was walking around on two legs and standing next to everyone. Due to her still being young, she was the shortest, but this just hid her might. Without a doubt, Midnight could be the most dangerous of the entire party when she was focused. Let alone when she managed to surprise attack someone.

"First on the agenda! We need to get Midnight some real clothing. But I will say it now. She will be the cutest in the entire party so Gil needs to accept that." Remey threw a teasing insult at Gil who was about to jump to his own defense when Midnight decided that this was a great idea. She had her skeletal armor skill but hated that she couldn't wear the vibrant colors that the party did. She had adored the harvest festival costume and now she could wear things like that all the time.

"And boys are not allowed. As long as Remey can help me walk there I am fine to go." Su was still visibly tired and there was nothing that anyone could do. Walker could cast as many healing skills as he wanted and Remey could feed her pitons until she popped, but Su needed the time to recover. Meaning she would be down for the count on the last day before they were leaving the city.

"Yes. But you need better clothing too. I think your muscles got bigger." Remey was too excited to see that Midnight and Su had both gotten tougher and stronger. As far as she was concerned, they were both siblings anyways. "Alice, you are coming too, right?" Alice had not expected Remey to reach out to her but with an apologetic look, she nodded and left Walker alone.

"I think we just got ditched..."

"We did. But that's fine. Alice hasn't really spent time with Remey and I think she wanted to because she was interested in Remey's potions. She just never admitted it out loud." Walker was sure of this.

"I wonder how everyone will adapt to Midnight being able to change forms now. Do you think it's because Su is human?" It was only natural that Gil would be curious as to why Midnight gained a skill that Walker had been clear was very rare and took years to reach for a dragon.

"Well, I had to heal Su when she fell after catching Midnight. I'm not sure if you saw it but her cheek got cut by Midnight's sharper scales. Midnight is usually very careful not to rub her sharper scales on us. But I think that made her share blood both ways. It's just a theory though. But this will be a good thing. It makes her look more impressive as a dragon champion. Exactly what she will need when we get to the royal dragon court."

The point was valid and it made them both much more confident. "Sister will need to learn to speak properly now. She had been jealous that everyone could speak whenever they wanted. There was one day that she ignored me the entire time just because she wanted to learn my skills. But she didn't want

to lose the chance to learn something better with the educationist title skill." Onyx felt sad that he wouldn't be translating and lamented it. Yet he was also proud to see how happy his older sister was.

"Since the rest of us are alone, should we go and get some food?" Walker decided that since the girls were off bonding then it was time for the guys to do so. They had not done so in some time and it would be good to just relax. "By the way, how's Alma?" Gil tried to be defensive and hid it away but before they even made it to the dining room he was spilling everything to Walker.

Idly floating in the sky while flapping his wings and absorbing the water elemental mana, Current watched the entire ritual and now saw Su and Midnight walking out of the mansion over a day later. His eyes bulged and he realized that changing the dragon culture was more than just a maybe. It was going to happen for the first time in generations. He memorized the very image of what he saw and closed his eyes to focus on his mana absorption. He needed to separate himself before he dedicated himself to such a cause.

Chapter 979 On The Job

"Lisa! We have a surprise for you!" Remey had banged on the door with a heavy fist to get no response at all. Su shouted next and still, there was nothing. Seeing this, Alice attempted to open the door and it pushed open with minimal effort.

They all were walking in first to keep Midnight hidden behind them. Su had calmed her down before they walked in. But that didn't mean the group was at all calm. They barely managed to hold themselves back as they walked through the front showroom.

"Lisa will make you new clothes. If you like something out here just make sure to point it out. You know she will be more than excited to make something." Lisa was just like Walker. She was a sucker for the pleading look that Midnight had mastered. But now that Midnight had a dragonkin form, she would be even more dangerous. It was also clear that she had been granted a charisma stat in this form whereas she did not have one in her dragon form because she was technically a monster and not an ancient dragon.

"Let her be excited to look. Don't you remember when you had the first chance to pick out your own clothes? I will never forget when one of my older sisters left to become an archivist in the noble library. She had been given robes to wear and passed down her clothes. I was the fastest so I managed to get her best shirts." Su couldn't argue with this. She also remembered when her mother had offered clothing she didn't wear anymore. It was a very special moment.

"My favorite choir robe was a gift from my father." Alice was smiling softly. The high priest had found a robe when Alice was still very young and bought it for her as a surprise using his own personal funds. He had saved up for it and Alice had long outgrown it, but she had it nonetheless. It was the best and most favorite gift she had ever received.

"Ha, I found her. And it looks like she had made a bed out of wool yarn again." Remey had found Lisa like this before. She had once come to ask Lisa for help patching some clothes and even making new clothes for her siblings in the mansion. But when she went to the work room in the mansion she had found Lisa asleep just like she was now. "The last time I found her this worked perfectly."

Remey started to softly poke Lisa in the side causing a slight squirming until Lisa burst out laughing and jumped up from her nap. She knew it was Remey immediately and pretended to throw some wool yarn balls at her. But Remey easily dodged them and tried to chase Lisa a little.

"Why are you here? Did you come to wake me up or just because you managed to tear your clothes again?" Since Lisa was sleeping happily she had decided to throw some insults of her own at Remey in revenge.

"No, we all came to ask you to make your little sister clothes." Remey shrugged and so did Su and Alice. However, when Lisa was starting to look confused she noticed Midnight.

"But who is this..." There were moments of confusion that grew with the silence. Lisa was having no help whatsoever from the other girls until Midnight jumped forward the same way she would normally do when she saw Lisa. "Midnight!!!"

There was a flurry of wonder from Lisa. She insisted on evaluating every single angle to take in the change. "She gained a dragonkin transformation skill. It was a lot of stress for both of us but now that she has it we thought it best that we bring her to Genesis city's famous seamstress. I hear she is sister to one of the heroes, older sister to a dragon hero, and even best friends with the other heroes. Some pretty high and mighty rumors there." It was fun for everyone to see Su relaxing so much. They had been worried she had lost her energy but it was clear that her body was tired and her eyes were full of life.

Lisa suddenly pulled away from hugging and measuring Midnight. She slowed her breath, "I can make so many cute clothes for you now." It was a simple whisper but Lisa said it and was already moving. "What are all of you doing? Get colored fabric and check to see what fits her best! I need someone to help me

get my threads measured." The work room was a mess but they all began to move. The only one that stood still was Midnight who watched from her new perspective in awe.

Before Lisa could run past her again, Midnight grabbed her arm and pulled her softly toward the show room. "What do you want? Did you see something you liked?" The clothing display that Lisa was pulled toward featured some basic clothes. But the one that Midnight tugged on when they neared it was something that would fit her perfectly. It was also one of the first of the darkness elemental runes she had sewn on to clothes.

"Did Midnight see something she likes? Oh! That would be perfect for her. Especially if she decided to battle in her dragonkin form. It's not really elegant but it is very practical." Su had followed and was sitting in the desk chair watching while examining the clothing Midnight was showing she wanted.

"I would pick that one too if I could use the shadow wrapping skill. That is pretty cool." The choice was exactly what Remey imagined Midnight to want to wear.

"Actually, Alice! This is kind of the opposite of what I made your clothing. You two can be light and dark twins!" Lisa had her inspiration and began to cut and sew, She was going to demonstrate her skills for everyone today.

Chapter 980 Timid Gil

"I swear. She is literally the next queen of the forest elves. How can I compete with that? I was just a hunter from the farms!" Walker and Gil had gotten in to it on their futures. Gil had suddenly come to the realization that he had been getting very close to Alma. yet, the thought of their different statuses hit him all at once.

"So is being a hero title holder worth nothing? You are also an arcane marksman. Not even an arcane archer, but a step above, an arcane marksman!" Walker tried to drive this point home. These were two things that spoke to Gil's status already. "Not to mention how many different kingdoms recognize us by the pins and plaques we wear. And the adventurer tier we have. Oh, and founding members of the Genesis alliance, city of Genesis, and for you, the archer academy."

"I know all that. But I still can't make sure it would work out. I have no idea what is normal for elves. But she did write me back every letter. She even sent me home with blue ivy seeds so that I could grow them too and add the poison to my arrows. I just don't know. What if she can't because of the whole future queen thing?" Walker had not expected that Gil was actually feeling this way. Out of all of them, Gil had held back and hidden this sort of thing.

"When we are leaving to battle the kraken, I am sure that Alma will come. You will have an entire journey to figure it out. Just be honest with her and yourself." This was the best advice that Walker had to give, he didn't want to be the reason things went poorly so he had to air on the side of caution.

"I know she will go on the journey to help the merfolk. She wouldn't allow everything to fall apart as soon as it started. The alliance needs to defeat that thing. That's the problem. She could get hur-"

"You will be there then. Just like brother will be there for Alice. You will be there and no one will get hurt." Onyx had made the interruption just in time to keep Gil from getting back in his head.

"You know how she can control some plants as part of her skills right? Why don't you ask Remey for some underwater plants that grow fast? Maybe they can be of use to Alma in defense?" Gil grey wide eyed and nearly jumped up to hug Walker. He thought this was the perfect idea for him to do. It would ensure that she was safer and perfectly express his feeling.

"I'm going to find something. I know the master alchemists are in the alchemy guild right now. Remey would make fun of me anyways. Well, I would make fun of her too so that's fair though." Gil lept up after cleaning his plate of the rest of his eggs. "I will see you later. I will grab my arrows and find a decent plant." Walker could only sit with Onyx and watch as Gil left in a hurry.

"So, Onyx, I saw you training with Remey and Alice. You have gotten really good at using light and dark spikes. I didn't know you could use your own shadow as fuel for a dark spike. It's a good idea." The change in topic was mostly to avoid awkwardness. But it was also so Walker and Onyx could bond a little since the last time they had spoken one on one was when Onyx had decided to make his species a recognized intelligent race.

"It has been tough. I learned that shadows may all be connected in a way that I have yet to grasp. But just scratching the surface made me able to use them more efficiently. I started to wonder why my body could hide partially in the shadows and out. I feel that I am somewhat balanced because I can consume and control light elemental mana as well. It is peaceful in a way." This was true, the balance between normally opposing elemental manas was peaceful and could birth new understanding.

"Well, since I have the time I might as well meditate on that thought for a little while then sleep. I'm sure today will be busy and Midnight will have a lot of energy even though she's tired." The feeling of grogginess coming from Midnight was not something Walker could just turn off. He knew she was

feeling this way and also extreme excitement. In no time he was certain that she would be returning to sleep herself. He also didn't know if she would want to remain in dragonkin form for so long.

"I will find a spot in the sun too." Onyx and Walker headed off together to find their place to rest themselves. While they did this, Gil had already just about made it to the alchemy guild.

As he opened the door he found crate upon crate stacked up and blocking the way to walk. "Just put the next ones wherever. I don't have room anywhere else." The old master alchemist shouted from the back and Gil was glad he could find him so fast. "I swear. Those elves brought enough herbs to fill the guild themselves. How will we bring anything else over? I sai- ah, Gil. I was just organizing some things." The was a tinge of red embarrassment after the old master alchemist had been caught mumbling to himself.

"I can see you have your work cut out for you today. I hope you have a minute for me to bother you?"

"Of course, you can bother us. We have time. These crates have some runes on them to protect the herbs." Trish walked from behind a stack of crates more curious than ever as to why Gil was looking for them.