

Once Human 321

Chapter 321

After doing some hotfixes to this gloomy place such as laying down various torture tools, cleaning up some of the mess and turning it into a more appropriate torture room, he left the place with Lucy .

The sun had already fallen and darkness cloaked the sky . Once he returned, Mary and Sonia left with Miya, who was going to show them around the city . Taliya was nowhere to be seen, which only left Saly, who was currently playing with Astrith in the living room .

Once she noticed her parents' return, she gave one final hug to the big wolf and darted toward Arthur with an eager look and expecting eyes .

The father didn't let her down as he patted her head and nodded his head, indicating that he'll take her dragon-hunting in just a moment . With nothing important to do, the trio left the place and with the help of Arthur's Space Magic, appeared in what seemed to be a high-level dungeon .

It took him a few seconds to find an appropriate place where there's a living dragon, which is not too weak nor too overpowered for his daughter . With both Lucy and Arthur with her, Astrith decided to take a small nap, as for the invisible Raduin, he was also missing too .

From what Arthur heard, the lizard followed Taliya to take care of some business, as to what that is, he was in the dark but it's not like he cared much about what they'll do, that is, unless they do something that is too attention-grabbing .

Saly excitedly surveyed the surroundings, the temperature was unusually high and there were lava pits scattered all over the place . Obviously, Arthur teleported them directly to the boss room as it's a hassle to climb it the normal way .

He knew Saly wouldn't want to do that too and yearned for a good fight without having to waste a lot of time taking care of small fries .

This dungeon was situated in the middle of Algeria's desert, North of Africa . There were no signs of humans in the lower floors, moreover, it was infested with high-leveled monsters which only means that it's still an undiscovered dungeon .

It was hidden underground and so it's rather unlikely for the monsters to be able to escape and attack the humans on the surface, however, Arthur sensed worm-like creatures that are able to drill through the hard earth and arrive at the surface but since their Level is too low, he didn't pay them much attention .

Now that he thought about it, these worms were a bit similar to the ones that exist on the Western Continent of Astria, though they were weaker . It reminded him of the first time Jakob, who was incredibly weak back then .

Arthur and Lucy stood at the back and carefully watched Saly, who equipped two yellow gauntlets that were flashing with an orange light .

The little girl's eyes shone as they stared at the big figure laying at the center of the room . It has a big body, red scales covering it and two wings that had a length of 15m .

This was a mature Fire Dragon, it looked incredibly threatening and any unexperienced Hero would escape the moment he/she sees this monstrosity .

However, the beastmen kid did not do such a thing, she buffed herself using her skills then leaped at the sleeping dragon, who didn't seem to notice their presence .

The Fire Dragon was Lv661 but their Race should not be judged by their Lv . It wouldn't be a surprise if it can match a person at the Spirit Realm, nonetheless, Arthur had confidence in his daughter's strength .

Despite not reaching the Spirit Realm, she had an arsenal of powerful skills and she was proficient in Earth Magic, which made her defenses almost impenetrable by people and with two powerhouses protecting her, there is no way she'll suffer fatal injuries .

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The fight lasted forty-minutes and in more than one occasion, Lucy was about to intervene only to be stopped by Arthur, who kept telling her that Saly needs to get used to dangerous situations if she ever wants to get stronger . Being always protected will not allow her to unleash her full potential .

Although he kept getting deathly glares from Lucy, she still listened to his words and backed off . He could see that she was barely containing herself when she saw the cut and burn marks appearing all over Saly's body but it's for their daughter's sake so they had to hold themselves back .

Such injuries could be healed in a few minutes with the help of his potions so there was no need to worry, moreover, the dragon was in a much worse as his tail was broken and half of his scales were smashed into pieces .

Saly stood with a triumphant pose on the corpse of the dragon, she happily jumped as she giggled and pointed at the deceased dragon while puffing her chest in front of her parents .

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Although it was called The Death Region, it was the smallest out of the eighteen Regions . It was practically deserted and no one dares to trespass for fear of being killed .

This Region is devoid of living beings and is really one huge graveyard with a few Dark Knights guarding it . Even though they are mere Death Knights, their strength is out of the norm, even the Tall Empress, who finally managed to obtain the chance to come here, was cautious around them .

She can take care of them individually but if they gang up on her then it'll her end within two minutes at most . The place was littered with graves, some had a normal size while others spanned for tens of miles, it wasn't a sight you'll see every day .

No matter how long she walked, the Water Empress didn't arrive at her destination, it's as if she was stuck in some kind of loop despite the ever-change environment .

As she had a special pass, the Death Knights didn't bother her and kept guarding specific graves . Only after a whole week did she stumble upon a new kind of 'enemies' .

It was a floating Jack O Lantern with a torch in its illusory hands . The woman wanted to avoid it but the floating creepy face floated toward her with a very slow pace yet managing to reach her within a split second .

Dumbfounded, the Empress remained standing there, unable to do anything unusual like attacking it as it will only cause the nearby Dark Knights to attack her too .

"Kakakakakakak, a lost traveler!"

She maintained her silence and stared at this thing with wariness . Honestly, she wanted to bypass but didn't have the courage to do so . It's strange for an Empress like her, who rules over a whole region and is worshipped and feared by countless people, to act like this, however, in this foreign territory where every living being or dead one she stumbles upon has a power that almost matches her cultivation .

No wonder this place isn't frequently visited by the common people .

"Kakkakakaka, what are you seeking in this lost land? K-kakakaka"

The woman hesitated for a few seconds before replying

"I'm searching for clues . "

Although the dark-haired youth told her to come here, he didn't specify where exactly in the Death Region . So, even without having a clear destination, she still decided to come here and search every corner until she finds something worthwhile .

"Kakakaka this isn't a place for sightseeing kakakakaka"

"I'm not sightseeing, this is an important matter . "

The eyes of the Jack O Lantern shone with two green flames as it laughed in a very weird manner

"Kakakakaka It's the same thing . This is the resting place for the dead kakakakaka, it's forbidden for living beings to come here . Kakakakak you're only allowed in this place thanks to your special pass you have on you . "

From the looks of it, this Jack O Lantern wasn't going to let her roam this place forever . She couldn't find the right words to convince it and from the way it speaks, it didn't seem to view her in a positive way, probably because she's a living person, or so she thought .

A long silence prevailed the place until the floating Jack O Lantern spoke again

"Kakakaka I'm a guide so you tell me where you want to go and I will take you there . Kakakakak, you must hurry, the special pass won't last forever . "

"Where can you take me?"

"Kakakakak three choices . The Grand Tomb, the Lost Palace, and out of the Death Region . Kakakaka, think carefully as I will only guide you one time for free, the second one will be costly . "

The Empress inwardly clicked her tongue . From the time she spent here, she knew that there must be some mechanism or illusion formation to disorientate unwelcome visitors, which is why this Jack O Lantern offered to guide her out of this place .

This can only mean that leaving isn't as easy as entering . She pondered for a few seconds before resolutely answering

"Take me to the Lost Palace!"

The green flames inside its eyesockets shone brighter, it turned around and said

"Kakakaka follow me . "

The Jack O Lantern flew away and the Water Empress followed right after while doing her best to match the guide's speed . Due to the type of this place and the heavy Death Energy, flying is harder than outside . Moreover, when she tried flying a week ago, when she just entered this graveyard, the Dark Knight seemed to be on the verge of attacking her, especially if she flew above the tombs they are guarding .

Chapter 322

By the time the three of them got back home, it was almost midnight . Arthur took Saly to a few more dungeons where she demonstrated her full power and managed to gain some levels and experiences at the same time .

The night was supposed to end but Arthur had one final errand before it was time for sleep . He left Saly with Lucy for some time as he opened a portal and traveled to Astria, more precisely, to Rey's room .

Previously, he left without receiving an answer from the sly kid and that's to leave him some time to think about it . Obviously, he wasn't going to let him ponder over such a matter forever, a day is more than enough to sort out his thoughts and make a decision, that could potentially change his future, if it's grasped, that is .

In the dark room, where there's nothing but a few decorations, a simple yet comfortable bed, and a normal desk, there was a lone and short figure standing at the center .

The boy was absent-minded as he dazedly stared at the wall facing him with a blank expression . Unlike past occasions, Rey wasn't scared or startled by the sudden appearance of the grey-haired man, who under the moonlight, his pupil pulsed with a mysterious silver light .

"I have come to hear your decision, Rey . "

Arthur cut through the case and demanded an answer . Lucy and Saly are waiting for him back home, moreover, it's meaningless to waste time with pleasantries and such with this kid .

"Sure . "

The boy only said one word but his tone confirmed his resoluteness .

"I will do it but only on one condition . "

"Which is?"

"I don't want Robin to ever know about this . "

He looked at Arthur straight in the eyes and faced him while showing a deadpan expression, trying to hide his emotions but his voice betrayed him as it clearly showed worry and restlessness .

"I already stated that this is a secret between us . Apart from my Lucy, my wife, no one else will know, you have my word . "

Arthur stretched his hand while saying these words, he didn't treat Rey as a kid but as an equal . With all that this little man experienced, he had long since matured, he just doesn't show it in front of Robin .

The two shook hands and after that, Arthur created a Spatial Tunnel, taking Rey with him to Earth .

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Upon arriving on the apartment, they found it unusually empty . There was only Lucy, who was patiently waiting for Arthur . Once she sensed their arrival, she lightly nodded to Rey as a form of greeting then walked up to Arthur and said

"We will be changing homes . This place is too small for us to live in, the preparations are complete and the rest have already moved there, the only ones left are you and me . "

Arthur knew that they'll be moving but he didn't think it'll be that fast . Lucy told Arthur the exact location of their home and with a swift use of Space Magic, the couple accompanied by Rey, who was unusually silent, appeared at the entrance of a grand villa with a large garden and a wide path for cars and such .

Such a place would cost a fortune but money was never a problem for Lucy, who has more than a sufficient amount of Gold to make all the wealthy people on Earth ashamed .

This place was remote and didn't have all the inconveniences of living in the center of a capital . The air is refreshing and Astrith would definitely find it more comfortable living in this large villa .

It had more than enough rooms to house all of them while still having some left and the garden is perfect for Lucy, who loves flowers in general . In fact, she already had a beautiful collection in the apartment, unfortunately, since the place was small, she couldn't infinitely grow them .

As they entered their new home, Arthur noticed that the place was clean, no specks of dust whatsoever . The furniture was luxurious and well designed as well as well-placed so to not make moving around uncomfortable .

The trio headed for a big room which had a very long table that had countless delicacies on it . All the members were present and although it was past the time for dinner, they still waited for Arthur and co .

Taliya was laying the dishes with Miya helping her . Saly was gulping saliva as she sat on her chair and stared at the food with big eyes . She barely could contain herself as her wail was wagging nonstop .

Even Delia, who secluded herself since the second he handed her Rozak's book, was present . She appeared more composed as she laid back on the chair and read a book .

Lolitta's head faced a TV that was hanging on the wall, she was engrossed in what was being shown without a care in the world about what's happening around her . However, her hands were still fiddling with the capsule though it didn't seem she's inspecting it .

Astrith and the undead lizard were missing, Gutcha still hasn't returned too but knowing him, he surely managed to blend in with the humans .

After caressing Saly's soft head and praising her for what she did earlier thus making the latter giggle, they all got seated around the table with Arthur taking the head position and Lucy standing on his left while Saly on his right .

All food was served, everybody was properly introduced to each other so all that was left is to enjoy this magnificent feast, which didn't betray one's eyes and was delicious .

They didn't talk about anything serious, laughter resounded in this habited villa as they enjoyed their peaceful knight, with wine served and happiness shared, it was, truly, a joyous sight to behold .

For Arthur, this was a sight that he surely would not forget . A night of joy, one without sorrow or sadness, anger or rage .

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Inside the ARK, sitting on a simple table while sipping some tea, the copy stared at this sight through Arthur's eyes and let out a deep and emotional sigh

'Oh Arthur . . . If you want to see the sunshine, you have to weather the storm . What awaits you is a mystery for me but . . . Fate never forgives and although it is harsh, it is also fair . A bit sweetness isn't enough to drive away the bitterness of the past . . . '

Chapter 323

Morning of the next day, after urging little Saly to go to school to gain some basic education, Arthur and Lucy left the new villa along with Rey .

The kid wasn't rebellious when Lucy was present, he met her not long ago and was intimidated by her presence . She seemed like the indifferent and cold type and from what he heard from Robin and the others, she is a fierce a woman, one that shouldn't be provoked if necessary, which is why he kept a polite and silent attitude .

They brought the kid to the chamber Arthur prepared . It was in the middle of nowhere, all the torture equipment was prepared and the everything was ready, the only thing that was lacking inside this room is a proper expert to use such notorious materials .

"This is the place where you'll operate from now on . I brought here because you're an expert in this field, if you do it half-heartedly or quit mid-way then don't expect a reward but a punishment . Remember, this isn't a game . "

"Such a thing will never happen, I will carry my job as promised . "

Rey uttered those words then went over to the corner of the room to check the work materials with a bit of excitement . There were many things he never saw on Astria, he inspected them one by one then thought about the type of pain and damage they can do .

"Is it the torturer's turn?"

Lucy asked the silent Arthur, who spread his sense and spent some time finding his next target . He nodded his head and answered

"Yes, but today is a very busy day for us, it won't be just the torturer, there will be two others as well . "

"En! Want me to go fetch the others while you take care of the torturer . "

Arthur agreed and told her the details of the two other individuals, their appearance, location, and names . In terms of importance, they were above the torturer, however, the reason he focused on the latter is due to what that mad man had done to him . What he suffered, he'll pay it back a thousand times over;

. . . .

Arthur arrived in an abandoned factory situated in New York . The place was eerie and cold, it reeked of the smell of piss and blood, which made it nauseating . As he smelt this stench, Arthur smiled and thought to himself

'He still likes working in such disgusting places, isn't that wonderful?'

He walked up to what seemed to be a locked door leading underground and broke it then calmly proceeded downwards . After walking for a few minutes, he started hearing loud screams that were unpleasant to the ears, to say the least .

There was a mix of painful wailing and evil laughter in those loud cries, which would bring goosebumps to whoever hears them .

Arthur only stopped walking when he faced a thick metal door that was blocking his way . The cries he was hearing became clearer and the smell became worse .

Unhesitantly, Arthur tapped the door with his finger while applying more strength than necessary . The metal door bent in a weird way and broke thus alerting the two people inside the room .

The first one to react was a tall African man who was wearing a weird grey robe and holding a large pair of silver scissors that were dyed with blood .

Sitting right in front of the African man was a middle-aged man who was groaning and in a half-conscious state, he had a dead look in his eyes and was missing a whole arm .

Since Arthur transformed into his appearance into the old one, the African man seemed to have recognized him almost immediately . It took him some time before he snapped out of it, however, he didn't utter anything and stood there, flabbergasted as he stared at the man standing at the entrance of this room .

His body flinched once he glanced at the broken metal door which no longer resembled a door but a cluster of metal .

"Long time no see . "

Arthur casually said those words as a large dark hand that was even bigger than the African man, appeared out of nowhere and grasped its victim, immobilizing him and crushing several of his bones in one-go .

The African man, who was looked a bit older than the past, yelled loudly as he tried struggling but to no avail, the dark hand that was binding him wasn't something he could resist .

Arthur didn't waste time as he teleported from that place after giving a single glance to the poor victim, who seemed to be on the brink of death . From the state of the victim, it was obvious that he was tortured for a long time and his condition was severe . The reason he was still alive was because the torturer used Healing Potion to prolonge his victim's life .

Now that the System appeared on Earth, torturing became way better as it became easier to cause fatal damage yet still heal them thanks to the potion .

After Arthur and the torturer left, the poor middle-aged man, who was groaning from agony, stopped breathing and his eyes became lifeless, this time, he died for sure .

. . . .

In the room Arthur prepared, there laid the African man who was holding his broken arm and trembling on the ground . He stared at Arthur then at the boy standing closer to him, unlike the fearful look he had when looking at Arthur, he didn't seem to be afraid of Rey .

Using basic telepathy, Arthur described to him what needs to be done . Of course, if Rey had more creative ways of torture then he's more than welcome to try them . He also passed the boy a small storage ring that was filled with High-Tier Health Potions . They were superior to the ones the African man used but he warned Rey to only use them when the victim is really going to die .

After finishing the preparation was ready, Arthur retrieved a comfortable chair from sat on it as he faced the African man who was already sitting on the metal chair with tight binds holding down all his limbs .

"D-don't expect me to apologize . It was my job and I did what I was ordered to do, and I enjoyed it too .
"

Although he was feeling extreme pain and couldn't comprehend how Arthur was alive or what was exactly going on now, the African man remained unfazed and glared at the man before him while speaking .

As he listened to his captive, Arthur laughed and said

"Yes yes, and I'm going to fully enjoy torturing you too . So much that I'll not be able to sleep tonight hahahahaha"

He signaled for Rey to proceed as he leaned back on the chair and watched with a grin on his face .

The boy wore two clean gloves and a sky-blue blouse then picked a medium-sized hammer before he walked up to his victim with an expressionless face .

"What's your name?"

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With a soft voice, Rey asked the African man who was looking at him with a mocking expression

"Seriously? You brought a kid to torture m-"

'SMASH'

Without any hesitation, Rey smashed the hammer on the pinky of the victim's left hand, who was positioned perfectly on a steel plate .

"AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH you little b-"

"That's not what I asked . "

Rey replied calmly and smashed the other pinky of the African man . The two pinkies disappeared, not only the bones were shattered, the whole pinky became meat paste, it was truly a gory sight .

The boy wasn't the least bit fazed by this sight, he looked coldly at his victim and repeated

"What is your name?"

Unfortunately, no response was heard, the African man was yelling loudly . He wasn't used to pain, a sadist only wanted to inflict pain and see others suffer, that was only the source of pleasure for such twisted people .

Rey waited ten more seconds before he raised the hammer, ready to smash it again

"W-wwwwait I'll tel-"

The victim was interrupted again, the hammer was smashed at his face, causing several teeth to fly out and a fountain of blood t splatter on the metal chair and even on the floor .

"Your name . "

Ten more seconds passed but the African man still didn't reply as he was busy spitting blood and adjusting to the high amount of pain he was experiencing .

Sadly for him, Rey wasn't the patient or merciful type, with the hammer on his hand, he squatted down and smashed one of the foot's fingers, leaving nothing but blood in its place .

The loud wailing became hoarse as the African man could no longer shout loudly, in fact, he seemed to be on the verge of falling unconscious .

Noticing this, Rey used his empty hand to tap his index finger on the forehead of the African man, leading the latter's eyes to fully open as if he woke up from a nightmare . His body trembled uncontrollably as he looked at Rey as if he was some kind of devil .

Rey made use of his Blood Magic to force his victim to remain awake while traumatizing him .

"Not so tough now, huh? But this is just the beginning, so please hold on . "

Arthur 'encouraged' the African man as he laid back and enjoyed what's happening . To see his torturer suffer such a fate, it only brought joy to him .

Deep inside his consciousness, the chains that were tightly wrapped around his soul were slowly but surely loosening . It was barely noticeable and the only one who discovered this occurrence is the trapped Earth Spirit living in his consciousness .

Chapter 324

"What is your name?"

The poor African man couldn't even talk anymore yet Rey kept asking as if he's expecting an answer . He literally pulled out his victim's teeth one by one and even burned part of his tongue at least five times . In just an hour, the African man became a mess of blood and gore .

If it continues like this then he will not resemble a human being anymore . Lucy already captured the two other guys and did as Arthur told her . They weren't going to be tortured in the normal way, he wanted to force them to go through a special 'experience', a traumatizing one .

Lucy joined them in the room and even came up with a few torture methods that were tried on the poor victim, who couldn't voice out his opinion and only suffer through this hell .

"We'll be leaving for a bit, you can continue . "

Arthur got up and left the room after he gave one final look to the African man, who had his head dropped, unable to lift it, much less talk or groan from the never-ending agony .

Their next destination was a cave that Arthur dug up casually early in the morning . Apart from chains that were tied to the walls, there was nothing else . The ground was cold and even a bit wet and the place lacked any kind of light .

Currently, tied to thick chains coming from the walls, there were two individuals that were facing each other . They got used to the darkness and seemed to be conversing with a bit of a shaky tone .

They didn't understand how the hell they ended up here, one second they were working or at home and the next, they found themselves bound to these chains .

Lucy didn't even show herself, for her, it was a piece of cake to capture these two people and chain them here . As long as it helps Arthur and allows him to finish his revenge then she'll do anything .

The two men, who were barely able to see each other's figures and were mumbling in a low voice, were startled when they ears footsteps coming from the only entrance in this gloomy cave .

"Who's here?"

One of the two spoke with an aged voice . He didn't seem scared anymore and his tone was very calm . The room, which was covered with darkness, became a bit illuminated as several green fires in the form of a torch appeared all over the cave and allowed the two prisoners to be able to see clearly .

The one who spoke was a very old man with no hair and a white beard . He was also wearing a white blouse which indicated that he's either a doctor or some kind of a scientist .

The other was actually a youth who appeared to be on his eighteen or nineteen years old . He was wearing an expensive tuxedo that was dirtied due to the current environment, he had handsome facial features which were distorted due to the anxiousness he was feeling right now .

"Fuck! Release us you bastards . . . o-or you'll regret it!"

Unlike the old man, this kid was more shaken and didn't seem relaxed, it was apparent that it's the first time this happened to him . Well, Lucy told Arthur that this youth had three high-leveled guards protecting him, unfortunately, they weren't that useful against her .

"Welcome to your new home, I hope you find it to your liking . "

With a sweet smile plastered on his face, he spread his hands in a welcoming manner as he faced the two bound prisoners . Unlike the past targets, he didn't change to his past appearance .

They looked at this grey-haired man with a scar on his face, the youth furrowed his brows and started looking at Arthur head and toe .

The old man, however, kept a calm attitude and a tranquil expression as if he wasn't perturbed by the appearance of his kidnapper .

"Sir, who might you be?"

The old man spoke respectfully as he moved his hands, trying to do perform a formal greeting but was unable to as the chains were too short and thick to the point that even his skin reddened .

"Me? No one of importance . What about you? Who are you?"

Arthur feigned ignorance as he asked the old man with a curious gaze . The elderly obviously didn't Arthur, if he didn't know who he was then why would he kidnap him .

"I am Doctor Albert Richard . "

His tone was a bit proud as he declared his identity . He was a well-known doctor that cured many illnesses, especially after the appearance of the System . It will come as a surprise for anyone to discover that this gentle and kind looking old man had anything to do with Arthur's kidnapping but the reality was always hard to swallow .

This old man not only made Arthur suffer, he also experimented on him . Although all of his experiments were failures back then, the pain that he caused Arthur was, more or less, worse than what the torturer did .

Although he didn't do it for pleasure but to achieve results, that didn't mean his sins would be forgiven . Arthur wasn't the only human he experimented on, in fact, many homeless people and such were tricked into a secret laboratory then used as lab rats only to perish miserably .

As for the young man, he didn't directly do anything to Arthur, however, he was actually Claudia's illegitimate son . She kept him well-hidden and well-fed . Thanks to Lucy's organization, he came to know that this teenage was raised to become a rotten human just like his mother .

There have been several occasions where he sexually assaulted maids or workers, he also had many sexual fetishes that he forces many girls to do against their will, and this is only the tip of the iceberg .

Arthur glanced at the young man, expecting an answer but the young man only spat at the ground and said

"You're dead meat now! I know your face!"

"Oh really? You'll have to get out of here alive first . Do you think you're capable of doing that? Because when I see those chains . . . I really doubt your words . "

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Arthur said those words and left the room, leaving an angry and scared youth and a confused old man . Their hell didn't begin yet, after a few days of starvation, the effect would be much better .

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Back on Astria, precisely in the territory of the MoonStar Sect, a fast meteor appeared out of nowhere and came crashing down on a deserted hill . It caused a huge disturbance and a loud explosive sound, it even alerted Anastassia and co, who were busy preparing for the upcoming wedding .

Anastassia, Jakob, Sonia, and Mary rushed to where the meteor landed only to find a large crater in place of the small hill . Right at the center of the crater, inside the dust cloud that was formed due to the meteor, there was a silhouette that was dusting off his clothes while stretching his muscles .

When the dust cloud cleared a bit, they could see a tall man wearing a white custom, he had a tattoo of five dark stars under his left eyes and a long dark red hair .

"Ah man! Who would've thought those bitches were weaker than chickens! Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhh and why would he meddle in our fight and send me here! Fuck! I couldn't even see his attack, fucking monster!"

The man noticed the four figures standing at the corner of the crater . He lifted his head and scanned them one by one then fixed his gaze on Anastassia while smiling playfully

"A strong one appears, perfect timing!"

Chapter 325

"Won't she notice your absence since you're always by her side?"

Arthur asked Lucy as they relaxed in the living room of their new villa . The rest of the people were busy doing their job which left alone in this big place .

"No, with the disappearance of her son, she would have more important matters than me . . but I think she'll call me soon when she feels desperate . "

The two were talking about Claudia, who was currently panicking as she received a message from her son's guards that they got attacked and the young man disappeared .

"Incompetent dogs! They can't even do one job!"

Claudia banged the table as he gnashed her teeth and anger . After hanging up on the guard, she made several calls and tried to hire experts to find her son .

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Unfortunately, the kidnapper didn't send her a message asking for a ransom or try to blackmail her . Although she had many enemies, almost all of them aren't brave enough to do such a bold thing . Moreover, she kept the matter of her son private and hidden, only a few people know about such a matter

As she was tapping the table with her fingers nervously and trying to come up with a solution, her office's door was opened wide and a tall figure entered without knocking or showing any kind of respect .

This man was Zalon, the famous swordmaster and the leader of the IHO . He was one of the strongest humans on Earth and his authority is undeniable .

Although Claudia is one of the core members of the IHO, she was still his subordinate, which is why he behaved like that

"We have got an emergency, gather your team immediately! We are departing in half an hour!"

Without leaving her the time respond, he left in a hurry . The woman's face distorted as she banged the table even harder, she wanted to retort and tell him she had important matters to attend do and after a bit of insistence, she'll convince him but that didn't seem it would work as he left after uttering two short sentences .

Claudia's team was actually composed of Lucy, Usui, and Rebecca, the short girl that was present at the conference a few days ago . She was a famous mage that wields Darkness Magic and is proficient at casting powerful curses . There existed another member a few years ago but he was killed by Lucy due to his foolishness . Although it caused a lot of controversies, she didn't care about it as he got what he deserved .

Claudia called Usui, who agreed to come soon, however, she wasn't able to get hold of Lucy . This only added to her irritation, which led to her inwardly cursing Lucy .

After twenty minutes, Claudia went to the meeting location and surprisingly found the masked Lucy present along with Rebecca and Usui .

There were a lot of high-leveled Heroes present but in terms of fighting prowess, her team was at the top, which made her feel incredibly proud . The sad thing is, Claudia never fights and merely sits at the back and orders them to do this and that every now and then .

She was only Lv89 and that was only by leeching others for experience . In terms of combat ability, any average Hero can defeat her if he has a strong enough mental resistance .

Furthermore, her special skill only works on Humans, so using it on other Races is useless and would only lead to her death .

"I called you multiple times, why didn't you answer?"

With an irritated tone, Claudia glared at Arthur and said . And, like every other time, Lucy raised her head and stared back at her from behind her mask while replying with an absolutely calm and indifferent voice

"I was busy . "

Although she was the leader of the team, Claudia couldn't control them . Lucy was a bit easier to order around as the others were too prideful to accept being told what to do, which is why she always kept Lucy close to her and monitored her movements .

Even after years passed, she still doesn't know how strong Lucy really is, but she speculated that she's a bit stronger than Usui and Zalon combined, which makes her around Lv300 or so .

She never saw her struggle in a fight or get injured, her magic is extremely fearful too . More than one time, Claudia was on the verge of planning to kill her but ended up giving up on such an idea as it would bring more harm than benefits .

The team of four boarded a private jet and traveled to their destination . Zalon accompanied them and spend the time of the trip to explain what's going on .

Apparently, a dungeon filled with undead appeared in the middle of Africa . The problem was that the dungeon was overflown with monsters until they escaped it and attacked nearby cities and villages .

The headcount is over ten thousand and still increasing . This legion of undead has astronomical numbers and there are even sightings of strong undead creatures such as wraiths, death knights and even bone demons .

"Twenty Heroes had already perished and only seven escaped the undead legion . Their exact number is unknown but it's definitely above twenty thousand undead and they are marching together to the North . "

Zalon explained the situation with a bitter tone and a serious expression . Claudia didn't seem fazed, she harrumphed and retorted

"Hmpf! What's the matter if they are marching North, Africa is already a desolate continent since the second the System appeared . It's the place with the most dungeons and most of them are high-leveled . Even if they march North, they can't cross the sea so why don't we just leave them be?"

This time, it was Zalon who snapped and banged the table, breaking it in two and startling Claudia .

"What nonsense are you spouting?! More than a million people are still living there, you want us just to abandon them and leave them at the mercy of the undead? You think the public to such a decision?!"

Hearing this, the silent Usui chuckled and retorted

"In the end, you care about the public's opinion and the million lives trapped in there . "

Zalon glared at Usui but didn't disagree, after all, what he said was the truth . Although he was called a humanitarian, he only cared about his reputation and his organization . No matter how kind he is, he won't sacrifice his life and the life of all heroes just to save all the people in Africa .

They will try to fight the undead for a while then retreat while telling the public that the undead was more than they could handle . Of course, they'll save a good number of people to show how 'kind' and 'courageous' they are .

.....

A few hours later, the jet landed on a deserted yet flat land that was appropriately fixed so planes could land on it . This place was literally a desert, the weather was incredibly hot and there's nothing but mountains of sands as far as the eye could see . Zalon gave a long speech before he dispersed the teams and sent them on individual missions .

Claudia's team was tasked to go to a nearby village and remain there for a while . If the undead strikes that place, they will defend and if they are massively outnumbered, they are to quickly retreat and value their lives before anything else, or so said Zalon .

Chapter 326

Their destination after traveling in a car for three hours . The short trip was boring and filled with silence, only Claudia kept clicking her tongue and complaining about the weather, the uncomfortable chair and so on .

Rebecca minded her business and so did Usui, who, surprisingly, didn't annoy Lucy or even talk to her . He would just glance at her from time to time but he didn't begin a conversation for fear of being totally ignored .

Accompanying the team of four was a soldier that was driving, no other reinforcement was sent with them as they would be useless in a battle against an army of undead . Unless someone had a destructive power that could defeat large groups of enemies in one sweep, they wouldn't be able to contribute much in the upcoming fight, if the undead really strikes that town, that is .

When they finally arrived, they found themselves standing in an almost deserted town . Several corpses could be seen rotten on the hot ground while others were coughing in a shadowy corner .

All the people here lacked nutrition and are a few days away from their imminent death . They can't leave the town as the closest habitable area is hours upon hours if they went on foot . Moreover, neither the military of the country, which existed no more due to the undead, or the IHO cared enough to help them leave or provide some food .

'After all, this isn't so much different from Astria, if not worse . . . '

A voice rang inside Lucy's head . It was none other than Arthur, who made use of his Racial ability to enter her body and lay dormant while simply watching what's happening outside from her point of view .

'I don't understand how they have the face to call themselves Heroes when they only care about money and power . '

Lucy spoke with Arthur as her team surveyed the area and camped at the only non-destroyed building in this run-down town . There were around ten or so survivors that managed to hide there after procuring a bit of water and food, though they all were skinny and fragile bodies . There were even two kids amongst those people .

Unhappy with their presence, Claudia shouted at them and threatened them until they reluctantly leave, they knew that Heroes are coming and although they want help to survive, they knew pleading would do them no good as this was not the first team of Heroes that came here .

Despite this fact, there was a father-daughter duo that slowly walked up to Claudia and her team and knelt before them with tears in their faces .

"P-please give us a bit of food . . . please . "

With a disgusted expression, Claudia walked up to the guy and haughtily said

"We didn't come here to distribute food but to resist the undead attacks . Consider yourselves lucky that a team of Heroes came to this desolate village . "

The man didn't give up yet, he banged his head near Claudia's high heels and repeatedly begged

"Please! My daughter hasn't eaten for more than three days . . I,I beg of you!"

As he saw that his begging had no effect on Claudia, he shifted his pleading to the others . The soldier that acted as a driver had a complicated look on his face, seeing that no one of the present Heroes showed a reaction to this poor duo . He hesitated for a second then took out some rations and handed them to the father, who accepted them and thanked the soldier non-stop .

'You're feeling too, right?'

Lucy asked Arthur as she stared at the teary-eyed father . The only response she got was a cold snort from Arthur, a pitiful sight like that would make anyone sympathetic with the father-daughter duo but Lucy remained unfazed and showed an indifferent attitude .

Their mission was to protect this village in case of an undead invasion, so they literally have nothing to do but wait for a few days in this harsh environment and wait for Zalon to call them back .

From how fast the undead are marching, it won't take them long to conquer this whole area so they are leaving, either way, the question is when?

Quite honestly, Claudia preferred to leave without having to fight, or rather, without her team fighting as there is always the chance of suffering unexpected damage . She was a bit relieved that Lucy is present, however, even without her, Rebecca and Usui can handle themselves .

One was praised as the Flame Emperor and the other was master at Darkness magic and can cast deadly curses . Compared to the old mages of Astria, people like Usui are incredibly weak . If a dragon were to show up right now, a dragon like Yamak, for example, they would suffer an instant lose .

The only reason Saly triumphed over the dragon was because of her sky-high stats and the powerful skills she has in her arsenal . Moreover, she's a beastmen, a Race known for their superior physical abilities .

.....

"S-shit, what exactly is happening?"

Inside Arthur's consciousness, the Earth Spirit was shrinking in fear as the chains around the soul and the ones trapping it are twisting in a weird manner and releasing a harmful and very ominous dark fog that gave it the creeps . Even an existence as old and powerful as this spirit was feeling actual fear from this unknown fog and especially the chains, which are the source of all .

The thick chains kept slowly expanding and retracting, their jet black color deepened and the clacking sound made from the chains rubbing against each other made the spirit more and more uneasy .

The Earth Spirit felt safer inside its cell than outside, it cautiously shrunk its body and laid motionless, unwanting to resist the binding chains while avoiding the black fog as much as possible .

Even Curtis, whose soul merged with Arthur, temporarily separated himself from the main soul and distanced himself from all the fog and chains while muttering

"This is getting dangerous, I fear the worst has yet to come "

What's more surprising is that the ARK, which had the form of a half grey half white cube, was heavily influenced by the dark fog and started turning black, its monotonous rotation became drastically faster .

Inside the ARK, the place was no longer an endless white space but a mix of white and black . The ground was still white but the 'sky' became jet black as the encroaching darkness dominated the whole place .

"And I was wondering why he was so slow at cultivating no way!"

The copy stared at the darkness while constantly cursing out loud

"The Dark Anguish Technique fed off his hidden emotions and multiplied their intensity "

Unbeknownst to Arthur, a deep and scary growl resounded inside his consciousness, it made all the chains shake intensely and forced both the ARK and the Orb of the Fallen Overgods to stop rotating .

"What a terrifying thing "

The copy stood up from the chair and grabbed the cube next to him while saying

"Freeze all motor functions . Disable the connection, enter sustained safe mode . Also, get the fuck away from those chains . "

Chapter 327

On the dawn of the second day, while the team was sleeping and unaware of their surroundings, footsteps sounds could be heard from far away, there was even a huge dust cloud that was forming behind the army of the Undead which was heading their way .

The only person who noticed them since the moment they stepped on this town is Lucy . It wasn't difficult to locate the army using her sense, however, she didn't alert the others and maintained her silence .

Once the sound of the army became clearer, what was left of the survivors started panicking, screaming, and running toward the opposite direction

The disturbance woke up all three members, Rebecca and Usui immediately readied themselves for battle and only Claudia took her time to slowly wake up .

"I have an idea . "

Arthur muttered inside Lucy's ears, as he sensed the approaching army, he was struck with a brilliant idea that would cause Claudia to feel a bit of fear for the first time in a long time .

He explained to Lucy how things will go down and after confirming their next actions, she turned to Claudia and indifferently said

"I'm going . "

Claudia acted as if she heard the wrong words, she snapped and walked up to Lucy, wanting to grab her shoulder but only managed to grab air .

She angrily stopped on the ground and shouted for Lucy to come back but was only met with silence, which further irritated her . Usui followed right after, leaving only the short Rebecca to protect Claudia inside this run-down building .

The army of Undead truly had a mind-numbing number . The one attacking this village is merely a small portion of the main force, however, neither Lucy nor Arthur was worried about this matter .

Arthur was a fully-fledged Necromancer, with a flick of his finger, he can annihilate this army or even make it his if he were to summon a higher Undead entity to act as a temporary leader .

His goal right now wasn't to resist this army or destroy it, in fact, he was going to join it for a short while and act like one of them . Lucy hid in a small spatial dimension created by Arthur and watched as her husband left her body and possessed a tall Death Knight .

The Death Knight wore a full set of jet black armor and had a two-handed axe, that was even bigger than its body, hanging on its back .

"Should I get rid of the undead?"

Lucy asked Arthur, who was grinning evilly as he was thinking about what's going to happen to Claudia .

"No, that isn't our concern . Come with me and watch from the sidelines, it's going to be fun . "

The silver-haired woman nodded her head and followed after Arthur while still hidden inside his Spatial Dimension . As she silently followed the Death Knight, which was making its way to where Claudia and co were, Lucy felt a strange sensation as if something was tightening around her whole consciousness .

She closed her eyes and entered her consciousness only to see her God Spirit, which was a breathtaking sky-blue Lotus, was acting in a strange way . It was emitting an intense white light that covered her whole consciousness and seemed to be protecting it from something .

A fourth of the Lotus was already dyed with a strange jet black color that was emitting a dark fog and making her feel uncomfortable, fortunately, the white light emanating from the God Spirit was slowly but surely getting rid of the fog and the ominous color .

'This feeling . . . it's Arthur's Dark Magic . '

Lucy spent a few more seconds as she thoroughly watched this process but still wasn't able to fully understand the situation . Upon a closer look to her soul, which was shining brightly with a light full of vigor and energy, she saw a thin, almost unnoticeable, dark thread that was stretching from its center .

The thin thread was extremely long as it stretched to the boundary of her consciousness and even went outside . This was the first time Lucy saw it but she speculated that it must be due to the Soul Bind effect between her and Arthur .

Normally, Dark Magic doesn't damage her or affect her thanks to the Soul Bind, however, this time's case was different . The Dark Magic present in the thin thread and the dark fog was malicious, to say the least, and if not for her strong cultivation and special physique, she would have been harmed .

'I must talk with him once this matter is done . '

Honestly, Lucy wanted to tell him right now, however, she knew that he was in a hurry to carry out his revenge and it's really important for him so she restrained herself and decided to schedule it for later .

.....

"Kakakakaka, this is the Lost Palace . "

The floating Jack O Lantern guide finally lead the Water Empress to her destination .

"Kakakakak, the rest is up to you kakakaka remember, stare at the dark too long and you will eventually see what isn't there . "

With those last words, the guide swiftly left the place, leaving only the tall woman alone in front of a gigantic ghostly palace . It was built using grey stones and the gates were jet black, giving the whole palace a rather creepy impression, suitable for a palace inside the Death Region .

After collecting her thoughts for some time, the Empress finally entered the Lost Palace with a wary expression and a cautious attitude . The guide didn't specify whether it's a dangerous place to trod into or not, however, it's safe to assume it's a dangerous place .

Once she passed the main gates, which opened themselves to her as if welcoming her visit . The Empress found herself in the main garden, which was devoid of any plant or life . The only kind of plant that could be seen were black roses that were hidden in shadowy corners .

The woman inspected the garden and once she ascertained that no one was there, she headed for the entrance of the main building . Unlike the first gates, these tall and black doors didn't open when she stepped before them . She even tried showing the special pass or forcefully breaking in, nothing worked .

She remembered the guide's last words and guessed that this some kind of a riddle or a puzzle .

'stare at the dark too long and you will eventually see what isn't there what did it me-ah!'

As if she realized something, the Water Empress turned her head to the jet black doors and stared at them . She kept staring for a long time until a pleasant result occurred . The doors blocking her entrance finally opened and showed her the interior of the palace, which was drastically different from the exterior .

A red and clean carpet could be seen covering the whole floor, even the wide stairs leading upwards . Dark Gold statues hanging on walls or in noticeable corners and even ancient paintings that would make anyone stare at them for a few seconds due to the high-level of art they have and the image inside of them, which were extremely realistic .

As she cautiously entered the Lost Palace, the woman inspected each statue but wasn't able to recognize their meaning or the identity of the sculpted individual .

However, it was a bit different with the paintings as they seemed to depict matters of the past, unfortunately, most of them were new to the Empress, who was only able to recognize two of the thirteen paintings .

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'These all happened before the Hour of Creation and the Great War '

With an expression of disbelief, the Empress did her best to imprint the paintings in her mind but wasn't able to . Whenever she takes her eyes off a painting, she would forget about it .

The first painting she recognized was of a man flying in the sky, his lone figure faced four huge Divine Beasts . The Sun was rising behind them and despite it this sight only coming from a painting, the woman felt as if she was experiencing the pressure of the Divine Beasts herself .

The second painting had the same man as the first one but the aura around it was totally different . It had a very deadly and malicious aura . With the man at the front, there was a whole legion of undead marching behind him . Their eye sockets flashed with green flames as they marched in an organized manner .

Three great Lich Kings, Greater Wraiths and Ghost Specters ruled the sky while Death Knights, Skeleton Kings, and Zombie Lords dominated the corrupted land .

Against this unstoppable force, no one had the power nor the courage to face them, so, with heavy-sounding footsteps and loud ghostly cries, the biggest legion of Undead ever recorded in history, headed to war .

Even someone as powerful as this woman wasn't able to stare at this army for too long as she got the creeps and cold chills ran down her spines .

She remembered reading about this huge event that occurred before the Hour of Creation . It even broke the balance between the powers . . .

Chapter 328

[Darkness Eyes]!

Rebecca cast a skill that allowed her to sense nearby enemies and determine their exact number . She wasn't strong enough to spread the range of the skill to a wide area but for the current situation, it was enough to detect the enemies and resist any ambush that may occur .

Screams and battling sounds resounded in this desolate town as the undead attacked everything in their way, from people to buildings . Usui left the area and tried to follow Lucy only to be left alone, facing a large group of undead that was marching toward him .

The blonde youth gritted his teeth and started throwing fireballs and powerful Fire-related skills, decimating the weak skeletons in just a few seconds, however, no matter how much he killed, even more, would appear .

There were some exception which didn't go down after the fire wave if attack . Special skeletons and zombies that wore jet black armors and wielded deadly weapons . Usui had a hard time dealing with them and was forced to use high-leveled skills that cost more Mana .

"Tsk! I didn't expect them to be this strong . . . it's like they sent their main force . "

Amongst the many zombies and skeletons that were either being burned to death or walking on their comrades' corpses to attack the lone enemy, there was a tall figure that could be easily spotted from afar .

It had a height of over two meters and was wearing a full set of jet black armor, a two-handed axe that was longer than its holder and a presence that made all the weakling in front of it to make way for it as to not anger it .

Usui guessed that this must be their leader, however, before he could unleash his powerful skill, the figure of the Death Knight suddenly disappeared and by the next second, he could only feel a cold gust of wind brush past him, leaving him in disbelief for two seconds . It was only when the army got closer to him did he finally snap out of it and retreat hastily to warn the others .

'O-only Lucy could deal with that undead but she's missing . . . I have to warn the others . This is not a normal undead army . . . '

Unfortunately, the place Usui was fighting was a few minutes away from their temporary camp .

The Death Knight arrived at the safe building, where Claudia was, in just a few seconds . The place was protected by a small barrier that Rebecca cast just in case, however, it was shattered by the sheer brute force of the charging Death Knight .

The short girl was visibly shaken by the sudden appearance of the Death Knight and the destruction of her barrier . She, Claudia stared at the tall undead with wide-open eyes . They had the System and, normally, they are able to see the Lv of their enemy above their head, however, this time was vastly different .

Death Knight : ?????

"W-what is this?"

Rebecca spoke with a shaky tone as they slowly backed away unconsciously when they faced the motionless Death Knight, which was staring back at them with its two green and flaming eyes .

"R,Rebecca . . . DO SOMETHING!"

Claudia shouted at the loli next to her, she pushed the mage to the front and repeatedly urged her to act . This place only had one entrance and the undead was blocking it, which made the matters worse .

Even Dragons, the mightiest Race that inhabits the current Earth, didn't show details like with this undead . Furthermore, these two women had a vast knowledge about monsters and the System after being Heroes for a few years, which is why they immediately understood that this enemy before them is no ordinary one .

It didn't take a genius to explain to them that this was an opponent they cannot defeat . The only hope for them was Lucy, who was absent, or so thought Claudia .

As Claudia wasn't a fighter, Rebecca had to think of something to buy time for them to escape . When she came to this small town, she never thought that a calamity would befall on them, usually, it would be a simple job devoid of any real danger but with the appearance of this scary-looking knight, it didn't appear to be that easy anymore .

Sooner than later, she started regretting ever coming here and was even thinking of saving her skin and abandoning Claudia, who's practically useless in such a dire situation .

[Ball Of Darkness]

An ominous ball the size of a fist appeared between the two parties, it started absorbing the light in the room and diminishing the vision of everyone inside the room except the caster .

Although only a few seconds passed since the appearance of the Death Knight, thousands of thoughts rampaged inside Rebecca's head and at last, she decided to save her skin first .

To begin with, Claudia was never a good person so why should she try to save her life? That's the excuse Rebecca came up with before using all her speed to ran at the entrance while darkness was covering the place .

Unfortunately, this didn't go as expected, the black orb lasted for two seconds before it strangely vanished into thin air thus allowing light to illuminate the place once again .

This wasn't the end, Rebecca, who was busy running toward the entrance while keeping a safe distance away from the Death Knight, was suddenly frozen in mid-air .

Something was tightly binding her . Although she was a mage, her other stats weren't that low, however, no matter how much she struggled, she couldn't break free from whatever was immobilizing her .

She tried casting spells but wasn't able to do so

You have been cursed!

You are unable to cast spells

You have been cursed

Your stats decrease by 25%

Your movement speed decreases by 70%

. . . .

A series of notifications popped in front of her, making her feel even more desperate . As she read the messages and understood that she can't break free, Rebecca realized that this may be her final day, her eyes turned hollow and her heart started beating fast the instinctive fear of death .

Arthur paid no more attention to the short mage and shifted his attention to Claudia, who backed away until her back was touching the wall . Her body was shaking and her face was extremely pale .

She knew that begging would do her no good as she wasn't facing a Human she could seduce but an Undead entity, something that couldn't comprehend her language or show any emotions .

With no one to rely on, she started retrieving different kinds of one-use items that are extremely expensive but not highly effective against powerful monsters .

These items were her last hope in surviving this disaster so she started throwing them at Arthur, who was completely unaffected by these colorful items which wouldn't harm even Saly .

Slowly but surely, the Death Knight started approaching the scared woman, who would loudly shout with an angry tone each time she threw an offensive item at it .

After using more than twenty items, she started noticing that not a single scratch appeared on the Undead . It was steadily making its way toward her and whatever she threw at the enemy didn't seem to be the least bit effective .

When only a distance of two steps was separating the two parties, the Death Knight looked down at the pale-faced woman, who lost her charm and was fiercely shaking in front of him, barely able to stand up, much less ran away .

Arthur's goal wasn't to kill her, he just wanted to show her what real fear is and make her experience unimaginable pain so she doesn't forget about him .

This bitch was the vengeful type, if one were to seriously harm her pride or body, she would hold an eternal grudge and would not calm down until she successfully complete her vengeance . So, he was going to make her traumatized so that later, she wouldn't forget about this beautiful moment .

As he faced this weak woman, the undead raised his hand and seemingly slashed the air which confused Claudia, who thought that the undead was trying to communicate with her .

Unfortunately, that wasn't the case, by the next second, a fountain of blood splattered on her face, the wall, and the ground . Her whole left arm, from the shoulder all the way down, was cleanly cut using pure Sword Energy .

The pain was so agonizing that Claudia started screeching loudly as she held her shoulder and started rolling the ground . To see such a prideful and arrogant woman in such a situation, it was truly an exhilarating experience for Arthur .

"GAAAAAAAAAAAAAH AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH YO- AAAAAAAAAAAAAH"

She couldn't speak as the pain almost made her fall unconscious but she managed to stay awake by biting her tongue and glaring angrily at the Death Knight .

Her eyes still held fear but the anger surpassed the former, she lost a whole arm and the disgrace she felt overwhelmed the feeling of fear . She cared about her body and image more than anything which is why such an attack caused her to become hysterical .

"AAAAAAAAAAH YOU FUC-"

She wailed and was about to curse only to be kicked by the Death Knight, who sent her body flying to the other side of the room . A few of her bones were broken due to that kick but what was more humiliating was the fact that the undead walked up there and pressed its foot on her head, forcing her to eat the dirt .

With red eyes and eyes full of rage, the woman tried to resist and struggle away from his grasp only to be pressed even deeper into the ground .

On the corner of the room, Rebecca fainted after seeing the gushing blood and the gore . She was haemophilic so such a sight was too much for her .

Chapter 329

From the sudden disappearance of her son to being tasked with such a boring mission then being this severely injured by a powerful enemy that popped out of nowhere . This day couldn't become worse for Claudia, who was busy eating the filthy .

The undead was about to finish the half-dead woman only for a white figure to appear out of nowhere and send the monster flying away until it hit the wall and ceased moving once and for all .

As she struggled to sit up and see what happened, Claudia noticed the bent body of the undead and Lucy, who had her back facing her .

She didn't believe the sight in front of her and only snapped out of it when Lucy walked up to Rebecca and tapped her forehead, resulting in the short girl to wake up .

After confirming the situation from Lucy's mouth, the mage ran up to Claudia and fed her an expensive Healing Potion . Although it wouldn't regrow her limb, it would still alleviate some of the pain and give her a bit of energy to move .

The loli almost fainted again when she saw all the blood on the ground but she forcefully resisted the urge to vomit and tensed to the scared and infuriated Claudia .

The venomous woman didn't angrily shout at Lucy for being or whatsoever, she was just thankful she was saved at the last second and expressed her sincere gratefulness once she was helped up by Rebecca .

Lucy merely nodded her head and motioned for the duo to hurry up and leave this building as the undead army had already infested every corner of this deserted town .

.....

Back at the temporary camp set up by Zalon, the soldiers and heroes were resting after a brief confrontation with the undead a few miles from there . The undead army that attacked them paled in comparison to the one that obliterated the town Claudia's team was tasked to protect .

Zalon, who had a large build and usually wielded a large two-handed sword, was panting heavily as he checked the injuries Heroes and gave orders left and right .

Although the undead weren't particularly powerful, their number was mind-numbing and after fighting them for more than a day, he started feeling exhausted .

As he gazed at the stretched plains of sand mountains, he noticed three figures running with a speed that exceeded common sense . The one leading was a masked silver-woman who was too eye-catching for Zalon to not guess her identity almost immediately .

Not even a minute later, the four arrived before Zalon while panting heavily, except for Lucy, of course .

"The situation is dire, the undead that attacked us are large in numbers and there was even a leader amongst them!"

Rebecca narrated what she witnessing while pointing at the pale-faced Claudia, who had difficulties breathing . She couldn't run all the way here by herself so Lucy used some Magic to make her body floated while automatically following them .

"Calm down first!"

Zalon raised his tone as he couldn't comprehend a single word from all the gibberish Rebecca was uttering . It was apparent that she was scared shitless from what she saw .

Seeing that hearing the explanation from her wouldn't help him, he turned his head to Usui, who was calmer than the rest .

"The army was unusually powerful and there was even some kind of a commander that was leagues ahead of the rest in terms of strength . Honestly, I couldn't even see it move "

Usui then told Zalon how the Death Knight attacked Rebecca and Claudia, how the latter lost an arm and had several of her bones broken and if not for Lucy's intervention, the two women would have been killed quite easily .

"I understand . Rest for now, we're departing in an hour . We don't have the resources or the manpower to face such an army and if there are more than one commander, it'll be our doom if we stay here . "

.....

Back at the town where Claudia and co where, Arthur stood on the roof of the tallest building and silently gazed at the marching undead army, which stretched as far as the eye can see . Their number is way over ten thousand and amongst them, there were powerful Death Knights and even Lichs .

'It reminds me of the Lich King's army though this one is way weaker . '

Currently, his sense was locked into a solitary and destroyed building at the Southwest of this small town . His eyes, which could see through walls and earth, were staring at two weak looking humans . They were none other than the father-daughter duo from before, the ones who were begging for food a few days ago .

From the moment Arthur laid eyes on them, he instinctively knew they weren't normal, he didn't need [Appraisal] or his Sixth Sense to confirm such strong intuitions . Even the ever-so silent Makaze, which never reacted since it lost its other half, started emitting signals to its partner .

Arthur tried asking his copy but he received no response no matter how much he tried so he tried to figure out this matter alone . The sudden appearance of the undead and these two 'humans', it's definitely related, or so thought Arthur .

The duo was now shaking in fear as the undead passed one after another when finally, a transparent specter managed to discover them which led to monster into screeching loudly thus causing the rest of the undead to come and check this place to kill whoever is still alive .

The girl was shaking with fear while the father placed here in a more hidden corner while he grasped a rusty bronze sword and prepared himself to fight the incoming enemies, however, his chances of survival are slim .

With a shaking body, the father prepared himself and ran straight at the undead, which brandished its weapon, ready to slice him apart . Just when the black spear of a skeleton soldier was about to pierce the man's throat, the time seemed to stop .

Literally, the time stopped, the undead stopped moving and even the whistling air and the rising dust froze . This sudden even startled Arthur but he still kept his calm and tried to assess the situation

"Heeeeeey, you are strong so why didn't we save us?"

From behind him, a sweet voice rang in his ears, however, Arthur didn't just turn around to see who it is or have a chat with the source of the voice, he vanished from his place and appeared in front of the weak-looking girl who was floating in the air . His eyes were cold as several dark hands appeared from his back and lunged themselves at the girl, ready to rip her apart .

This wasn't the end as he unleashed a large wave of dark red flames that covered the whole area, engulfing himself and the girl in it .

Unfortunately, both his attacks were useless as they passed through the girl without dealing any damage to her . The face of the girl showed a surprised expression as she looked at the dark red flames and the big dark hands that vanished from sight once they missed their target

"Well well, aren't you very powerful? Then why didn't you save us?"

Arthur didn't reply and instead, squatted his body a bit down then violently banged both of his hands on the air, shattering it and causing the whole area to shake .

This astonished the girl even further but she didn't seem to be worried about her safety . Her astonishment only grew further when countless small mouths appeared around Arthur and started eating away the cracked space until the spell cast by her was deactivated and time finally resumed .

Arthur still didn't stop, he grasped the moment of shock the little girl was feeling to appear in front of her and stretched his hand to her neck . Before he managed to do so, his body was cut in two by an invisible thing, though that didn't cause him to suffer any injuries since the body that was attacked was only the Dark Cloud, which briefly assumed his appearance and strength to fool the enemy .

Like a creeping phantom, another Arthur appeared behind the little girl and was about to ruthlessly kick her but wasn't able to do as he was frozen in mid-air, just like what happened to the undead a second ago .

Yet again, the bound Arthur vanished into a black smoke as it too, was a shadow clone used to feign an attack . The girl was confused and turned her head left and right in panic but wasn't able to sense his location .

The situation worsened for her as a series of white thunderbolts descended from above and were about to hit her only for them to miss by a hair-width as the girl would vanish and appear a few meters away .

Unfortunately, when she dodged the last thunderbolts, which scared the shit out of her as they couldn't be frozen with time like everything else, the girl was about to breathe a sigh of relief only to feel a thick and chilling killing intent lock into her .

Before she could react, she found herself immobilized as countless golden threads were wrapping around her body and a hand was grasping her neck, choking her .

"What are you? Speak or die . "

Chapter 330

"COUGH COUGH L-LET ME G- COUGH"

The girl's face turned red as she choked due to Arthur's firm and strong grip, which was slowly killing her .

With a cold look on his face, Arthur stared at this seemingly harmless girl while his hand, which was making contact with the other party's skin was releasing a large amount of Dark Magic which invaded her body and started weakening her and consuming her vitality . He wasn't satisfied with just that as he released three Detonators a third of their normal size, the creepy looking fireballs entered the girl's chest which made her panic even more .

Her screaming was futile so she started calling for help, instead

"Help meeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee"

As she requested help, a fast shadow flew straight at Arthur, however, before it could collide with him, it was sent flying far away from the village .

The force behind the attack the shadow just received was truly monstrous as it disappeared from the little girl's view and flew for a couple of miles before this individual somehow managed to stabilize his body once it crashed on the ground .

"What the hell? I didn't even see who attacked me . "

The man, who was supposed to be the girl's father, touched his head then looked at his bloodied hand with a stupefied expression .

As he was focused on Arthur, who surprisingly is stronger than their expectation, he wasn't even able to sense or notice the one who attacked him .

"It surely wasn't"

As he lifted his head to stare at the direction of the village, his instincts alerted him of the incoming danger . Unfortunately, his reactions were just too slow as Lucy appeared before him with a very chilling and cold aura surrounding her .

By the time he reacted, the thin and soft white saber of Lucy had already created three holes in his body . Just like the girl, he manipulated time and attempted to freeze it so he could retreat or counter-attack but the results were beyond his expectation .

The rising dust which was supposed to freeze in mid-air due to the temporary time-stop was only frozen for half a beat before an explosive amount of Yin Energy was released from Lucy .

The pure Yin Energy literally froze everything in its way, the time-stop was canceled and the whole area was turned into a snowy field . The ground was turned into ice and countless snowflakes filled the sky .

The 'father' couldn't escape from this as ice covered his abdomen all the way to his legs and no matter how much he tried to break it, he couldn't, especially when the enemy was standing before him with her saber only an inch away from his throat .

"If I sense any reaction from you then consider yourself dead . "

'Isn't this supposed to be some backwater planet . . . '

The man inwardly cursed whoever led him to this place . At first, when he assessed Lucy, he discovered that she's decently strong but at most, she's a little Sovereign .

As for Arthur, he was also a strange existence but due to his special Race, the man couldn't see through the parasite and speculated that his power was on par with the silver-haired woman .

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Back to Arthur and the little girl, who became more uneasy and afraid when she saw the man sent flying far away and not coming back even after a minute has passed .

"Don't expect your 'daddy' to come to help you, he's in a position even worse than yours . "

The more she stared back at this grey-haired man, the more fearful she became . His pupil which was flashing with a grey light made her feel as if it was sucking her soul out of her body .

Moreover, the ominous magic that invaded her body rendered unable to use her Time manipulating abilities .

As Arthur weakened his grip a bit, the little girl was able to talk properly at last . However, her face was extremely pale and her body was shaking nonstop due to the Dark magic that weakened her body and the Natural Lightning which was tightly wrapped around her heart, ready to burst it at a moment's notice .

Arthur put three precautions, the first being the detonators which will turn her into a meat paste, the second is the Dark Magic which will consume her slowly but surely . Last but not least is the vibrating Natural Lightning, currently, it's stronger than ever and usually, it's barely noticed by his opponents .

"W-what do you want?"

"What do I want? Aren't you the one who cockily provoked me?"

When she heard his response, she became flabbergasted and retorted

"What!? I never provoked you! I only asked you a simple question?"

Arthur sighed and said one final thing before he waved his hand, teleporting himself and his captive to where Lucy is .

"I hate being looked down onto . What I hate even more is haughty people who think they are some hot shit but end up being worse than trash . "

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The man tried talking to Lucy a few times but was flatly ignored as the woman coldly stared at him and didn't even drop her guard albeit already immobilizing him and injuring him a few times .

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Shortly after, Arthur appeared next to Lucy with a little girl floating behind him . The frail figure was knocked unconscious as Arthur couldn't handle her high-pitched voice and the annoying attitude .

He wasn't worried that Lucy would be overpowered, in fact, against the middle-aged man, she didn't even need to go all out to be able to capture him alive .

As he saw Arthur, the one he was supposed to hit a while ago, appear before him, the man started becoming restless, especially after seeing the little girl in such a helpless state .

He was only slightly stronger than her so if she was subdued like that and in such a short amount of time then Arthur's power is on par with this mysterious woman, if not stronger .

"What did you to her?"

The man tried to keep a composed expression and calmly asked Arthur, however, his voice betrayed his intentions as it was a bit shaky from the fear and anxiousness he was feeling .

When he came to this planet, never did he expect to stumble upon two monsters like these two . In fact, his only goal for coming here is to lead the undead away from his home, his meeting with Arthur was purely coincidental .

"I'm the one asking questions here, not the other way around . "

Arthur didn't wait for the man to retort before adding

"Are you the cause of the sky-rocketing number of the undead?"

The man merely stared at Arthur without giving a reply . Unfortunately, neither Lucy nor Arthur were the merciful type .

Arthur walked up to the girl and pressed his hand on her forehead and started pouring large amounts Dark Magic in her head . This caused the girl to forcefully wake up and start screaming loudly while trying to break free from Arthur's hand .

After hearing the girl scream for ten seconds or so, the man was forced to intervene and answer Arthur's question

"Fine fine! I'll answer so will you stop that? Can't you see she's just a little girl?"

Lucy snorted and Arthur grinned and shifted his attention back to the captive . His grey pupil was giving the chills to the man, who took a deep breath and said

"We are the ones who brought the undead and the group that already came is but a small portion of the whole legion . "

Arthur remained silent for a while before he coldly said

"No matter your purpose, I want you to leave this planet sooner or later . For the undead that already came here, let them be . . as for the rest, don't bring them here . I don't know how you got here but you'll destroy the portal leading here and never come here or talk about what happened here . "

As he listened to Arthur, the man actually grinned and said

"What makes you think that we'll not bring more people if you were to release us?"

Arthur had too much shit to take care of and he can't afford to deal with an extra problem which will probably lead to many complications . With his revenge, 'X's monitoring and finding the materials necessary to repair Makaze . There was also the matter with Lucy's origin, which is a thing he must uncover as it seemed to trouble her a lot .

An orange fireball with a very creepy face appeared before the bound man . He stared at this detonator, which was triple his size, with a confused expression before that confusion turned into absolute dread and astonishment .

That same detonator flew away from the four people until it disappeared from their view and with a signal from Arthur, who snapped his fingers . An ear-deafening explosion occurred far away but the damage caused by it still reached them . It created a humongous crater where sand kept filling it only to be burned by the remnant flames .

The crater had a radius of a kilometer and the blackened ground and the dark red flames brought intense fear and chills to the man, who had his jaw wide open and his eyes filled with disbelief .

"Just to be sure, I'm going to put five of them in you . Were you to try anything, trust me, they'll explode on the spot . "

Arthur made sure that the five detonators that will enter the man will explode the moment anything tries to pull them out or try to destroy them . They'll also detonate if the man or the little girl returns to Earth a second time .

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With an ugly expression displaying on his face, the man took the unconscious little girl and left the area after promising not to return . Though they caused a huge mess by bringing this many undead, Arthur wanted to keep them to pressure the IHO and show the humans residing peacefully in their expensive homes what fear really is .

Of course, he isn't going to actively attack them, the undead is more than enough to do the job and he'll only intervene if it's really necessary .

With nothing more to do in this place, Lucy and Arthur returned to Korea with one swift teleportation .