

# Strongest Mage with the Lust system

## Chapter 681: They Are Here

"Nnnngghhhh~ Young master~"

Feeling his hot seed filling her, Lily felt jolts of pleasure course through her body, which caused her to jerk and convulse. Her toes curled up, her legs stiffened, and her thighs clenched before she orgasmed once again with a loud moan, her eyes rolling up in her skull.

"Oh yeah~ You are amazing, baby~" Max moaned, shooting the last few ropes of his thick liquid inside her.

However, even after having such a strong orgasm, the third one in a row at that, he was still hard.

He wanted to flip her over and fuck her in doggy style, but then he noticed she was no longer in a condition to continue. Her body was still twitching, and she had a dazed look on her face, her gaze unfocused.

'What a pity! I wanted to do it more with her.' He sighed in pity before reluctantly taking his cock out of her.

Then, he turned to Sera, who was lying on her back, heaving deep breaths. Her thighs were clenched tight, the bedsheet below her wet with her juices, and her hand was on her flower, slowly rubbing her clit while the other hand was kneading her breast.

Seeing her in this state, he grinned. After gently kissing Lily's forehead and telling her to cultivate to digest the Nascent Energy he left in her body, he rushed over to Sera.

Before she could react, he had flipped her over. Then, grabbing her waist with a hand, he lifted her up so her ass was parallel with his cock.

"Ah, my lord~" While Sera yelped at the suddenness, he put his cock on her wet entrance, grabbed her round buttocks, his fingers digging into her soft flesh, and thrust his back forwards, plunging his entire length inside her.

"Ahhnnngggg~"

As his cock stretched her tight pussy and filled her up, Sera's eyes widened, and her breath hitched before she let out a loud moan filled with a little pain mixed in with a lot of

pleasure. "Damn girl! You are tight." Max growled. After savoring her taste for a few moments and letting her adjust, he started moving his hips back and forth, slowly at first before picking up speed.

'Both are delicious but taste completely different. How wonderful!' He exclaimed in his heart as he fucked her, his blue pupils flickering with pink energy, but in their depths, one could also see faint and subdued flickers of Gold and Violet.

...

While he was busy with Sera, Emily was sitting beside Pauline and Martha, talking to them. However, the distracted look on her face as she kept glancing toward the tent told everyone she wasn't paying much attention to them.

Pauline and Martha had obviously noticed this, but they didn't say anything.

After a while, Pauline could control herself no longer and threw her arms around Emily's shoulder as she said, "Tell you what, if you are bothered so much, you should tell him about your feelings."

"Huh?" Emily didn't register her words immediately, but when she did, her cold face gained a subtle blush that made her look so beautiful that the males who were looking over at them couldn't help but become mesmerized.

However, unfortunately for them, it lasted only for a split second before she regained her composure and frowned, "What nonsense are you talking about?"

"Tsk! Who are you trying to fool?" Pauline clicked her tongue. "All of us can see you have feelings for him but don't dare to reveal them to him."

Saying this, she looked at the tent and muttered, "I don't know how you can like someone like him."

As soon as she said this, she flinched and prepared to defend herself but relaxed when she saw Emily didn't get angry.

'Phew! I should be careful with my words, even though I say nothing but the truth.' She muttered in her heart.

Emily's brows furrowed when she heard her and turned to look at Martha with a questioning look.

She didn't like Martha since she was from the royal family that had attacked her Garfield family and wanted to capture Max, but seeing how helpful she had been and apparently no longer held any ill feelings towards him, she had pushed her dislike toward her away. She didn't like the royal family, though, and thought of them as enemies.

Martha smiled and nodded.

Seeing this, Emily panicked, thinking if Max had also noticed this.

As if reading her mind, Pauline said, "I don't think he has noticed yet."

"Are you sure?" Emily instinctively asked before realizing she had practically admitted she had feelings for him.

Fortunately for her, Pauline didn't try to tease her about it. In reality, Pauline wanted to do it, but she feared her getting angry at her.

'Tch! I have to be careful around a Three Star mage too? How pitiful of me!' She thought in displeasure. The reason she didn't want to anger her wasn't because she was afraid of Emily herself, but because of Max.

'That bastard. How dare he threaten a lady? Hmph!'

After scolding Max, she glanced at Emily and shrugged, "I can't be sure. But I can tell he hasn't noticed. If he had, his behavior around you would be a little different."

Emily pondered over it before nodding. But the possibility that he may have noticed her feelings for him unsettled her.

Not only because she was his elder sister, though half-blood, but mainly because... If he had noticed it, why hadn't he said anything about it?

Various thoughts had started appearing in her mind, causing her brows to furrow and her aura and mana to fluctuate chaotically.

When Pauline noticed it, her eyes widened in worry, but before she could say anything, a powerful aura pressed down on Emily, causing her to spit out a mouthful of blood.

Emily's temper flared, and she glared at Martha, "How dare you—"

"Hey, hey. Calm down. You should thank the princess instead of getting all angry at her." Pauline interrupted her. "She just prevented you from having a mana backlash."

Emily raised her brows before closing her eyes for a moment. When she sensed the state of her mana, she realized what had happened and nodded at Martha.

"Thank you for the help, and my apologies for reacting like that without thinking."

Martha shook her head. "It's alright."

After a moment, she asked, "If you don't mind, can you tell me why you dislike my Williams family? I noticed Max also doesn't seem to have a good impression of us. It's not only because my family wanted him back in the capital, right?"

Before Emily could respond, a shout echoed throughout the battlefield.

"THEY ARE HERE! GET READY!"

## Chapter 682: Divine Sense?

"Hm?"

Inside the tent, Max slowed his thrusts and raised his brows in frustration. 'Couldn't they have waited a little more, maybe an hour or two?' He thought.

Haan~

Sera inhaled a full breath, something she wasn't able to do from the moment he started making love to her.

While she took this opportunity to calm down a little and manage the overwhelming pleasure coursing through her body, Max did something he had been thinking about ever since he unlocked his bloodline sense.

Concentrating his divine sense on Martha, he spoke in his mind, [Can you buy me some time while making sure Emily and the Fullers are safe?]

'Huh? It worked.' Max was pleasantly surprised by the fact that he succeeded on his first try.

Not wanting to show her the state of the tent, he had placed a sort of beacon outside the tent that she could use to communicate with him without being able to sneak a peek at them.

A moment later, he heard Martha's surprised voice. [You are Max? How can you use divine sense?! You are just—]

[Let's not waste time here asking pointless questions, shall we?] Max replied, cutting her off.

A split second later, he once again heard Martha's voice: [I'm sure if I can buy you time or keep them safe since I don't know how strong they are. But I'll try my best.]

Hearing this, Max's frown deepened. Then, he glanced at the beauty on all fours, moaning in front of him, and said.

[Thanks. Inform me first thing if you think you can't manage.]

[Okay.]

Max knew he was taking a risk here, but he wasn't willing to stop in the middle even a single bit. Besides, the Nascent Energy he would get from Sera might prove invaluable in the fights ahead. After all, the War Temple would need more time to set up.

'I wonder how long they will take to complete setting it up, and also, where is it? Underground?'

Since he couldn't see it when he spread out his divine sense, nor did he notice anyone paying attention to any particular direction, it meant no one was able to see the Temple being established.

Since no one could see it but the emperors, who had left the capital earlier, had most definitely started working on it before they arrived, it was either underground or covered by some isolation formation.

But he felt the former was most likely true.

Shaking the useless thoughts out of his mind, he focused on his lady in front of him.

...

Outside, Martha was looking at the tent with a look of disbelief in her flickering green eyes.

Everyone near her—Emily, Pauline, Armand, and others—noticed her expression. Seeing she was staring at the tent, Emily furrowed her brows and asked, "What is it?"

"What could it be other than the fact your lover hasn't come out even after the battle call?" Pauline snorted.

Emily narrowed her eyes at her, making her cower, before turning her gaze to Martha, who took a breath, her expression returning to normal as she said, "It seems he needs a little more time before he can fight."

Saying this, she turned to her group of four, "We are going to make sure no demon gets past us and to the tent. Also..."

She turned to Emily and Pauline, "...You guys stay close to us."

Rumble!

It was at that moment the ground started rumbling.

Everyone was alert, their weapons and spells ready as they looked in the western direction, seeing a cloud of dust rushing toward them.

Gulp!

Everyone had good enough eyesight to see tens of thousands of demons, both from the scarlet demon tribe and the horned demon tribe, in the cloud of dust, which was the result of them running at a very fast speed.

Although the humans here numbered more than twenty thousand in total, the sheer number of demons made them gulp.

"They easily have twice the number." Armand muttered, her expression turning incomparably grim.

It was at this moment everyone who came with Alton and Wyomin understood why they were told they might not come back alive.

Martha also had the same expression as she sent a message to Max.

[The demon army is twice as strong in numbers. Not only that, the number of Five Star demons they have surpasses ours. So, I don't think I can buy you any time.]

A few seconds after she sent the message, the demons entered the human's territory and launched several long range spells at them.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

Boom! Bang! Bang!

The human mages reacted and cast their own long range spells, destroying many of the demons' spells, but several found their target and landed, killing many Three and Four Star mages while injuring the others.

Heena, the middle-aged lady who had commented on Emily and others placing the tent, looked at the demon army, a deep frown on her face as she muttered, "Why the fuck are they being this aggressive? Why are they attacking with such overwhelming numbers?"

The rough-looking man near her scoffed, "You have really lost your mind, woman. What other reason could it be other than the establishment of the War Temple? The emperors must be close to setting it up."

While many of whom heard him felt relieved, thinking if the emperors could finish setting up the War Temple soon, they would survive, but others' faces turned even grimmer. They knew if his words were true and the establishment of the War Temple was about to complete, their chances of survival were even lower because king-rank demons would also join this battle.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

BOOM!!

"Kill these insects!"

Right when this realization hit them, over twenty figures shot up in the air and launched attacks toward the human army.

The humans, even the Five Star mages who were targeted, couldn't resist their attacks because these figures were King Rank Demons.

Swoosh!

An attack resembling a large meteor headed in Martha and others' direction. Its speed was so fast that apart from Martha and her group of four, no one could hope to dodge it.

"Dodge, princess!" Armand and the other female shouted as they activated their movement spells and rushed away.

Martha's gaze flickered with hesitation as she glanced at Emily, Pauline, and the rest of the Fullers who were going to die.

If she went all out, she could save Emily and Pauline, but she would most likely be caught up in the shockwaves and would get injured.

However, she couldn't afford that as she had a long battle to fight in front of her.

However...

'With so many King rank demons attacking us, we aren't going to survive anyway.' She thought, her gaze becoming determined.

She knew several of her family's king mages and other hidden king mages were going to join the battle, but their number was nowhere near enough to resist them.

However, right when she was about to move to save Emily and Pauline, she sensed something, and her head snapped in the tent's direction.

Swoosh!

The tent exploded in pieces, and a foot-long, grayish-pink finger materialized in the air before shooting toward the incoming meteor.

## Chapter 683: Stay As Far As Possible

Swoosh!

The finger whistled through the air and struck the black meteor. BOOM!

Under Martha and others' shocked gaze, the meteor and the finger exploded upon collision, sending fierce shockwaves in the surroundings, but since the explosion happened in the sky, they didn't cause as much damage as they could. Still, a few Three Star mages lost their lives.

In the distance, the king demons noticed this. When they traced the origin of the finger, their pupils constricted, and surprise and killing intent flickered in their eyes.

Just when they wanted to target Max...

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

...Several figures radiating king rank aura flew over from the distance and rushed toward them.

Martha heaved a sigh of relief when she saw them. If they had been even a few seconds late, she knew Max would've died in the hands of demon kings.

While she and other Five Star mages in her group knew Max had just avoided sure death, others sighed in relief and looked over at Max—who was staring at the demon kings in the sky with a grave look on his face—with gratitude in their eyes. If it hadn't been for him, they would've died just now.

Seeing the human kings would keep them busy for a while, he turned around and glanced at Lily and Sera. While Lily looked normal, Sera had a dazed look in her eyes, and her body was jerking, her legs trembling.

Seeing her state, he sighed, 'Maybe I should've stopped.'

Walking over to Sera, he gently cupped her face, and looking into her eyes, he asked, "Can you handle yourself, or do you need a little rest?"

Sera closed her eyes and took a deep breath. Then, she controlled her water elemental mana and circulated it throughout her body. Though she didn't have a rejuvenation spell, the inherent nature of water mana helped her recover.

A few moments later, she stopped trembling, and a fresh look appeared on her face as she opened her eyes and firmly nodded, "I can fight. Don't worry about me, my lord."

Max stared at her for a moment before nodding. "Okay."

Swoosh! Swoosh!

Emily, Pauline, Martha, and others came over.

"What are we going to do now?" Pauline nervously asked.

"What can we do other than trying our best to survive and hoping the emperors finish setting up the War Temple before we die?"

Even though they were aware of the severity of their situation, his words heightened their tension. The weaker Fullers and Williams almost fell into the abyss of despair.

However, his next words rekindled a ray of hope in their hearts.

"However, there is something you can do to improve your chances of survival."

"What is it?" Pauline hurriedly asked.

Max grinned at her, "Stay as far away from me as you can."

"..."

Pauline blanked when she heard this, while Martha sighed and Emily, Lily, and Sera furrowed their brows in concern.

Martha hesitated for a moment before saying, "Since the demon kings have also joined the battle, I can't guarantee it, but I'll try my best to keep your companions safe... If you want me to, of course."

"Thank you, but you don't need to worry about us." Before Max had a chance to respond, Emily looked directly at him and said, "I am not leaving your side, and I'm sure they will not either."

Though her strong stance warmed his heart, it also made him worry. Then, as he glanced at Lily and Sera, he noticed that they both had the same determined looks in their eyes.

He rubbed his temple in frustration before sternly saying, "This is not the time to be stubborn about it. If you stay with me, all of us would most certainly die. But if you stay away from me, not only will you be safe since the stronger demons won't target you, but I also will have a higher chance of survival as I won't need to worry about you."

Max knew his words were harsh and must have hurt them, but he had no choice but to tell them that at the moment.

Swoosh!

Martha abruptly vanished and materialized in front of a mid-stage Five Star demon, who was conjuring a spell from a distance to attack them.

With a thrust of her spear, she skewered its head, killing him.

However, she could see more and more demons were coming in their direction. So, she shouted, "I hate to say this, but he is right. If you stay with him, all of you will certainly die."

Saying this, she shouted, "Come, we are moving elsewhere. Those who want to fight alongside me, the princess of the Green Leaf, follow me."

Immediately, all the people from the Williams family and others in the vicinity followed after her as they moved away.

Heena and the rough-looking man glanced at Max's group, shook their heads with pity before following Martha.

They were among the ones who Max had saved by destroying that demon king's attack, so they were grateful to him. So, knowing he would most likely die in this battle, they couldn't help but feel bad for him.

The human beings were indeed strange. At times, they would be selfish and apathetic beyond measure, but at different times, they would be completely different. Just like now, given the fact that Heena didn't have an arm and the rough-looking man was also supporting internal injuries, which basically guaranteed their deaths, they still had the heart to feel bad for Max.

On the demons' side, Ashroth was staring at the ongoing fight with a heavy frown on his face.

Just when he had planned to sneak out of the demon city to meet Max, the demon emperors gathered every demon, including the demon kings, to launch an all-out attack on the humans.

Even so, he had thought to find a chance to meet him in confusion, but Max went ahead and attracted everyone's attention with his flashy show.

'This guy, he is really tired of living.' He gritted his teeth.

If Max hadn't become so strong, he wouldn't have minded it much because he wouldn't have been of much use to his tribe. But with his current strength and potential, he had become an important person to his tribe.

'Maybe I should stop being so cautious and go meet him.' Just when he thought this, his pupils constricted as he looked in Max's direction.

"Fuck!"

## **Chapter 684: Facing A Demon King**

Seeing everyone moving away, Lily took a deep breath and nodded, "We'll go, but please be careful, young master."

Even as she said this, tears had appeared in her eyes, falling down her long eyelashes and on her cheeks.

Max sighed and pulled her into his embrace, gently stroking her back. "I'll be safe, so don't worry, okay? You know I'm strong, right?"

"Mm." Lily sniffled in response, pulled away from him, and wiped her tears.

She then glanced at Sera and Emily, "Let's go."

While Sera hugged him and got ready to leave his side, Emily stared at him, her jaws and fists clenched tight. She clearly was very reluctant to leave his side.

Seeing this, Max smiled, took a step toward her, and hugged her. "Listen to me this time, alright?"

Emily wanted to say no, but before she knew it, her mouth opened, and she found herself nodding, "Okay. I'll listen to you."

Just when Max wanted to say something, his bloodline sense tingled, and he immediately pushed Emily toward Lily and shouted, "LEAVE!"

Lily didn't hesitate. She immediately grabbed dazed Emily and Sera before rushing in Martha's direction, followed by Pauline and the rest of the Fullers.

Swoosh!

After shouting, Max had immediately turned on his heels and rushed in a different direction, an incomparably serious look on his face.

As he ran, he rapidly circulated his mana and bloodline energy and got ready to use the Death and Nascent Energy at a moment's notice.

Suddenly, his hair stood on end, and he activated Phoenix Wings, increasing his speed several folds and dashing to the side.

Shoo!

BOOM!

It was only after he had dodged to the side that he heard the sharp sound of something piercing the air, which was immediately followed by a loud explosion, the shockwaves of which sent him tumbling away.

Cold sweat running down his back, he stabilized his footing while inwardly feeling lucky for possessing both his bloodline sense and bloodline energy.

If he didn't have his bloodline sense, he wouldn't have detected the danger, and if he didn't have the bloodline energy, which shortened the time needed to cast magic spells significantly, he might have gotten severely injured even if he didn't die.

"Keke, they didn't lie. You are indeed a troublesome insect that needs to be put down as soon as possible." A sinister chuckle sounded before a scarlet demon appeared before him, hovering in the sky.

Max looked up at the female demon king and tried to sense her cultivation with his bloodline sense. To his surprise and relief, he managed to do it. She was just an early-stage demon king, though the just he subconsciously used made the corner of his lips twitch.

'I might still die to her if I'm not careful.' He thought, again stimulating his sense of danger that had significantly cooled down after noticing her cultivation.

The demon king seemed to have noticed him becoming relaxed, which enraged her.

"You arrogant little shit! Die!" She waved her hand, sending a wave of her demonic energy toward him that turned into a sharp sickle and slashed toward his neck.

'Fuck!' Max cursed, realizing he had made a mistake in his judgment. He had thought Oliver shouldn't be too much weaker than an early-stage king mage even if he wasn't their equal. However, seeing this casual attack of the demon king in front of him, he realized the difference between the Five Star realm and the King realm was more significant than he imagined.

Though he had no doubt she was stronger than an ordinary early-stage king mage, he could also tell that the power behind this sickle attack was only around seventy percent

of her maximum, but the threat it posed to him was slightly stronger than Oliver's strongest attack.

'I should stop judging people of higher realms without having a good idea about their strength.' He thought as his fire elemental mana mixed with his bloodline energy and flowed through his mana veins, where some of the Death Energy mixed into it.

Shua!

The Thunder Sword appeared in the right hand. Almost simultaneously, the mixture of his three types of energies flowed out of his palm and covered it.

Then, under the demon king's narrowed gaze, he slashed at the demonic sickle and cut through it.

However...

Puff!

Even though he managed to cut it into two pieces and change its trajectory, the cut pieces didn't disperse and continued moving forward. Before he could react, they slashed into his shoulders and left more than an inch-deep gashes.

Max winced in pain, but ignoring it, he flashed a few meters back to get ready to face her next attacks. Fortunately for him, though, the demon king didn't follow up and instead stared at the Thunder Sword and the mixture of lingering energies on it, her eyes flashing with a hint of greed.

She glanced around, hoping no one had noticed it, but her face fell when she saw a few of the demon kings were trying to ditch the human king mages and rush over.

A sense of urgency filling her, she chose to ignore the orders that directed them to capture him if they could and quickly kill him. She knew she wouldn't be able to keep his body or the sword as her superiors wanted them; she would be able to absorb a significant portion of his bloodline and store some of his strange energy, which she was sure would benefit her greatly.

A ruthless and almost manic glint flashed in Max's eyes when he felt her intention to kill him skyrocket.

While trying his best to protect his mana veins with the Nascent Energy, he channeled his mana, bloodline energy, and the Death Energy into the activation of his bloodline ability—the Finger—for the second time today.

Shua! Shua! Shua!

Immediately, the mana in the surroundings turned violent as the finger started materializing above his head.

The demon king felt her heart shudder when she felt the aura radiating off the rapidly materialized finger.

'Shit!' She cursed and immediately released her demonic energy, creating several layers of shields in front of her before sending several blades of demonic energy toward him, wanting to stop or at least delay the completion of the finger even though she had realized she wouldn't succeed.

## **Chapter 685: Traceless Shadow [Bonus]**

Just as she expected, before her blade reached Max, the finger had taken the shape.

Max almost staggered due to the feeling of emptiness inside him. Most of his mana, bloodline energy, and the Death Energy he got from the accidental killing of a few human mages a while ago when he destroyed the meteor attack had been used up in this activation.

If he failed to kill the demon in front of him, which he wasn't sure if he could, he would be done for.

Rumble!

The space around the finger seemed to be twisting and turning under the pressure it radiated. Last time he used it, he wasn't able to sense how terrifying this attack was, especially with Death Energy's inclusion, but right now, he could tell it was horrifying to say the least. Still, for some reason, he couldn't tell just how powerful it was, which was the reason why he wasn't confident if it could finish the demon king.

'Since the previous attack that only had the little Death Energy present in my mana veins managed to destroy that meteor spell, it should be enough, right?' He thought but then realized in the last activation, he had instinctively used the Nascent Energy too, which he hadn't this time.

All these thoughts flashed in his mind in a split second after the finger was fully formed. Then, without hesitation, he willed it to move toward the demon king.

The moment he did...

Swoosh!

**BANG! BANG! BANG!**

The finger disappeared, and layers of shields in front of the demoness exploded into pieces, which made her heart skip a beat.

"Ahhhhh!"

With a loud shout, she activated her bloodline ability and released her bloodline energy together with demonic energy, which then enveloped her in a thick cocoon.

The moment she had felt the activation of his finger, she was prepared to use this move. The only reason she deployed those shields was to buy her some time, which they did.

BOOM!

Immediately after she turned herself into the cocoon, the finger destroyed the last shield and struck her, causing a loud explosion that sent shockwaves so powerful rippling outwards that the ground beneath the demoness' sunk by a few meters, and everyone within two hundred meters of the explosion who hadn't managed to escape in time was pulverized, most of whom were peak Three Star and early to mid-stage Four Star mages and demons.

Max, himself, was sent flying back, his newly donned robes disintegrating, leaving him stark naked.

Looking down at himself in shock, he thought, 'Fortunately I have Nascent Energy to counter the Death Energy; otherwise I might've disintegrated too.'

His heart palpitated at the thought, realizing just how destructive the Death Energy was.

'Unless I'm about to die, I can't use it if I don't have the Nascent Energy.' He thought before looking at where the demoness was supposed to be, hoping he would see nothing.

However... As the smog, dust, and lingering energies cleared up, the demoness appeared in front of him, though she was badly battered.

Looking at her, Max didn't know whether he should feel relaxed or tense up.

She had lost her right arm and both of her legs. The rest of her body supported ghastly wounds. In some places, her innards were visible, and she was breathing very weakly.

Anyone could tell she had lost most of her fighting ability, but the fact he couldn't kill her with his strongest attack—well, not strongest since he didn't use the Nascent Energy—slapped him with the harsh reality that no matter how powerful his energies were, if his cultivation was lacking compared to his opponents, the chances were he wouldn't always be able to win in confrontation.

Many people were paying attention to their fight. When they saw the state of the demon king, they couldn't help but become shocked for a moment.

Then, save for a few in the human camp and Ashroth on the demons' side, everyone's eyes narrowed with dense murderous intent. "I'll... kill... you." The demoness muttered before suddenly shrieking, "I WILL KILL YOU!"

BOOM!

A large amount of demonic energy and her bloodline energy gushed out of her as she started to cast her spell, ready to kill him.

"Damn! You've gone mad. You should go and treat your injuries instead of trying to kill me." Max said, cold sweat running down his back.

Having exhausted most of his energies, save the Nascent Energy, he knew he wouldn't be able to defend against her berserk attacks.

Still, he had no choice but to try. So, tightly gripping the Thunder Sword, he pulled on his energies, but just then...

Swoosh!

Chi!

A figure appeared behind the demon king like a ghost and sliced her neck.

The demon king had a shocked and confused look on her face as her head rolled off her shoulders.

The spell activation was disrupted, and the demonic and bloodline energy slowly dispersed as her head and body fell to the ground.

Thud! Thud!

Max stared wide-eyed at the person who had killed her because...

"Aren't you that boy from the Martell family?" He asked,

"Indeed, I am." The boy introduced himself, "People like to call me Traceless Shadow, but my name is Kriss. I would be happy if Mr. Max called me that."

Max looked at him with interest.

Kriss looked no older than eighteen or nineteen, and he was pretty sure it was his true age. But despite that, he was already a mid-stage Five Star mage, which told him just how extraordinarily talented he was.

However, the thing he was most curious about was...

"Doesn't your Martell family also want to capture me? Why did you help me?"

Kriss opened his mouth to answer, but right then, Max noticed with his bloodline sense that the demoness hadn't completely died yet.

Swoosh!

Puchi!

Immediately, he flashed over and stabbed the thunder sword in her head, killing it.

Kriss had raised his guard up when he noticed Max move but relaxed when he saw what he did, but he also became confused and asked, "She was going to die in a few seconds anyway, Mr. Max. Why did you bother?"

Max sighed in relief and excitement when his vision turned black and white and a large glob of death energy rushed into his body.

Then he looked at Kriss and asked with a smile, "So, you were telling me why you helped me?"

Kriss gave him a dissatisfied look seeing how he ignored his question. But after shaking his head, he said, "It's true my family also wants you, Sir Max, but can you blame them? I mean, who wouldn't want you after seeing how extraordinary your bloodline is?"

"In fact, you are lucky you didn't reveal that strange energy of yours in the capital; otherwise, those old geezers would've come after you. If that happened, let alone the Fuller family, even the Williams family wouldn't have been able to save you without a fight that would've left the capital city in ruins."

"Anyway, coming back to the topic, the reason I helped you is simple... I want to befriend you. I believe your friendship would be far more beneficial to me and even the Martell family in the long run."

Kriss said this while looking in Max's eyes.

{Castle Bonus--> Thank you Andthomas4 for the gift! (1/3)}

## Chapter 686: Capture [Bonus]

Max stared back at him, expressionlessly.

Kriss kept silent, patiently waiting for him to speak.

The way they were ignoring everything around them, it would seem they weren't on a battlefield but inside the security of a home, discussing important things.

After a few moments, the corner of Max's lips curled up, and he extended his hand. "I'll give you the chance to earn my friendship."

Kriss sighed in relief, and grabbing his hand, he nodded, "Thank you, Mr. Max."

Then, he took out his communication crystal and said, "Let me first tell my family to stop entertaining thoughts about you."

"Oh? They would listen to you? The elders?" Max asked, a little surprised seeing how confident he seemed about it.

"Of course, they would." Kriss smiled and sent the message to the family leader, his mother.

...

In the capital... inside the Martell family estate...

A middle-aged lady in an elegant green dress was sitting on the family head's chair in the meeting hall that was currently empty, deep in thought.

Suddenly, she sensed something and took out her communication crystal.

"It's little Kriss." A smile blossomed on her motherly face. After she heard the complete message, she was silent for a few moments, taking out another communication crystal and saying.

"Invite all the elders and grand elders for a meeting. I have something to announce."

Saying this, she muttered, a somewhat desolate smile on her face, "You are starting to act just like your father. If he saw this, he would be proud."

...

When Max and Kriss shook hands, the people from the Martell family started moving in the Fuller family's direction.

Max noticed this, and he couldn't help but admire Kriss's charisma. None of his people, even those stronger than him, objected and moved on their own to help the Fullers.

He also noticed how the expressions of those from the Seidel and Arasia families turned ugly, making him smile.

Suddenly, his expression changed. Grabbing Kriss's shoulder, he hurriedly rushed to the side.

BOOM!

Immediately after, the place they were standing on exploded, and a horned demon appeared there.

He glanced at the corpse of the demon king before turning his head to look at Max; he grinned with a malevolent expression on his face, "I will make sure you die this time."

Max's heart felt heavy, his expression grim, but his eyes blazed with a furious killing intent.

Even though it was his first time seeing this demon, he knew it was the same demon emperor who had attacked him during the day, almost killing him.

"A demon emperor?" Kriss muttered in a daze, feeling the aura of the demon king. He then noticed Max's expression and asked, "Is he the same guy who attacked you earlier?"

Max nodded before asking, "Regretting wanting to be my friend now?"

"Nah. I'm not one to regret my decisions—"

Swoosh!

Just as he said this, Alijah appeared in front of them and grinned at Kriss, "Oh, you will regret it in a while."

Kriss, however, met his gaze and grinned back, "I don't think so."

Right as he said this, Alijah's expression changed drastically, and he cried in his heart, 'How can he be here?!'

Immediately after, he tried to activate his concealment spell hide and escape, but he suddenly froze.

"You are really audacious, huh? Not happy you managed to escape with your life one time?"

Swoosh!

Alton's figure materialized behind him, and he casually grabbed the back of his neck.

Alijah's body went slack, a horrified look appearing on his face.

Alton then glanced at Max and Kriss, "Try to survive for a few more minutes."

Swoosh!

Saying this, he disappeared from the place along with Alijah.

The king-ranked demons that had ditched the human mages after seeing their comrade die in Kriss and Max's hands froze in place after seeing their demon emperor being captured so easily.

"That human emperor... Just how strong was he to take down Lord Alijah so easily?" A scarlet demon king asked in shock.

The horned demon kings' expressions were ugly as one of them gnashed his teeth in hatred and said, "The bastard was a Rothchild."

His words enlightened the scarlet demon kings. "Ah, then no wonder."

The horned demon kings shot the one who spoke furious looks, forcing him to clamp his mouth shut.

In the sky above the battlefield, inside an isolation barrier, Vigil, Yshoy, and four other demon emperors, two from each tribe, were facing Lady Verana, Tristen, and three other human emperors.

Even though human emperors numbered less than the demons, it was the demon emperors who wore grave expressions as they warily stared at Lady Verana.

Just before both armies clashed down below, they had a short fight and realized Lady Verana was able to fight both Vigil and Yshoy without losing in the slightest. And Tristen and the other three suppressed the remaining demon emperors.

Despite that, they weren't able to kill them, which led to a stalemate. So, since they weren't fighting, they started watching the battles.

When Alijah, who hadn't joined them earlier because he wanted to kill Max, appeared on the battlefield, both Vigil and Yshoy's expressions turned grim.

Since they had already clashed, they weren't worried about him breaking the rules.

So, why did they wear such heavy expressions?

Well, it was because they knew the Rothchild emperor Alijah had told them about wasn't one of the five human emperors facing them. This meant no one was keeping him in check, and he would most probably take action.

They tried to warn Alijah, but their divine senses couldn't penetrate the isolation barrier. The next moment, just as they feared, they saw Alton appear and immediately capture Alijah.

Boom!

Yshoy's expression darkened and his murderous intent flared.

"I'm going to rip that bastard into pieces!"

Tristen smirked, "Yeah, I'm sure you will."

He then glanced at Vigil and said in the same mocking tone, "Why do you look so grim? You should be happy since both your tribes now have an equal number of emperors."

Vigil's blood-red pupils constricted, an intense killing intent flashing within them. However, a moment later, his expression became calm as he held his hands behind his back and said, "It's still too early to celebrate, human."

{Castle Bonus---> Thank you Andthomas4 for the gift! (2/3)}

## **Chapter 687: Kacha [Bonus]**

"Oh? I don't think so. You are still going to be defeated like always." Tristen scoffed, but his expression wasn't as mocking or nonchalant as before.

Vigil gave him a meaningful look. "This time won't be the same."

Saying this, he glanced at Lady Verana, "You've either killed or captured the ones who broke the rules, and I have no objection to it. Now, just make sure none of you break any rule."

Lady Verana stared at him in silence for a moment before she nodded and said, "You don't need to worry about that."

Vigil stared at her for a few moments before gesturing to the isolation barrier.

Lady Verana glanced at Tristen and said, "Remove it."

Tristen didn't hesitate and took out a disk shaped artifact and tapped the center of it. Immediately, the barrier flickered and vanished.

...

The demon kings were frozen in shock for a few moments before they became enraged, especially the horned demon kings, and started massacring every human they saw.

Seeing five demon kings rapidly flying in his direction, Max immediately activated the Phoenix Wings, grabbed Kriss, and rushed in the opposite direction.

Midway, Kriss asked him to put him down, which made him frown, but realizing if he could sneak up on a demon king and behead her, even if she had gone berserk and wasn't as aware of her surroundings, he must have a way to escape them too. So, he dropped him into the crowd, and as he watched him through his bloodline sense disappear amidst people, his eyes flickered.

'I need a technique like that. It's just too useful, especially to someone like me.'

In the distance, while fighting the demons attacking them, Lily, Emily, and Sera watched him trying to escape the demon kings with anxious looks on their faces.

As she watched him, Emily's body was turning hotter, and the dim golden flicker in the depths of her eyes was becoming brighter. She didn't feel her changes, but the demons and humans around her did because she was emitting a lofty and supreme aura that was suppressing them, not letting them use their full power.

Due to this, her speed of killing the demons was increasing. But since humans were also affected, they were also dying rapidly. Many tried calling out to her, but with her current state of mind, she only saw demons she was killing and Max.

...

Since Max's top speed wasn't anything impressive when compared to a demon king's normal flight speed, he only managed to flee for half a minute before they caught up to him.

Then, thanks to his bloodline sense, bloodline, and Death Energy, he managed to avoid getting injured for another ten seconds, but then his bloodline energy depleted, and he was surrounded by the demon kings.

In the next few seconds, he gained many severe injuries despite using the Death Energy to defend.

Bang!

Crack!

A punch landed on his chest and broke several of his ribs. He spat out a mouthful of blood, wincing in pain.

Swoosh!

The force had sent him flying back, but he suddenly felt a threat of death and forcefully changed the direction of his body. Immediately, a blade formed of demonic energy flashed by his neck, leaving a small cut. If he hadn't twisted his body, his neck would've been lopped off.

This was one of many sure kill attacks he had managed to evade thanks to his bloodline sense, but he knew he wouldn't be able to survive for long if this continued. 'Damn, am I going to die now?' He thought. Since the human mages were already being overwhelmed, he knew none of them could help him even if they wanted to. His companions weren't strong enough to face any of the five demon kings attacking him, so they wouldn't be able to save him either.

Wyomin wouldn't break the rules to help him, and Alton had already told him to survive for a few minutes. All in all, he was on his own, but without his bloodline energy and mana running out, he was only left with Nascent Energy and small bits of Death Energy his bloodline was refining for him. However, all of it was being used to ensure his survival for a moment more.

'Fuck!' He suddenly cursed in his mind because he wasn't able to dodge a blade, and it pierced his stomach.

'I'm done for, aren't I?' He thought, feeling lightheaded due to losing too much blood.

Just then, however, the change he was waiting for happened.

Rumble!

The ground shook and the sky rumbled, throwing everyone off balance.

Just like everyone, he looked in the ear direction and saw a gigantic, golden-colored building rising out of the ground—The War Temple.

The demon kings' grimaced when they saw this, knowing they, or rather, their emperors, had failed to stop the human emperors from establishing it.

The next moment, the five of them simultaneously turned toward Max, ready to finish him off.

Gulp!

Max gulped down the mixture of his blood and saliva noticing this, and nervously chuckled, "Hey, this fight's over. You guys should—

Before he could finish, one of the demon kings attacked.

Shua!

A large, sharp claw made of demonic energy grabbed toward him, aimed to shred him into pieces.

Given the speed of the claw and Max's current state, he wasn't able to dodge it even if he saw it coming.

The next instant, the claw was upon him, just a few inches away from killing him.

'Let's see how strong Nascent Energy is in battle.' He mused and was about to release all of the Nascent Energy. He knew that even if he managed to survive after revealing it, the danger he would face would increase even further, but he couldn't simply die either.

However, right then, a grim shout reverberated through the area, "Retreat!"

The demon king's eyes flashed, but he didn't stop. How could he stop when he was only a moment away from killing him?

So, the claw slashed at him.

Kacha!

## **Chapter 688: Overwhelming Pain**

Just when Max thought he was done for and the demon king revealed a victorious smile, a water barrier enveloped him. When the demonic claw clashed against it, it shattered into pieces with a crisp 'Kacha' sound.

Phew!

Max exhaled in relief and muttered, "Thank you. I'll be sure to repay you for this."

After saying this, he swept his blurry gaze over the five demon kings before falling to his knees, unconscious.

Though he had physically completely recovered from all his injuries he suffered due to Alijah's attack a few hours ago, he mentally had not.

Then, the exhaustion of his intense workout with Lily and Sera piled up. Immediately after that he started fighting.

The fight with the first demon king had already exhausted him enough that his body and mind had started begging him to rest.

After that, he fought with the five demon kings, thoroughly draining himself, both mentally and physically. For the last couple of minutes, he had been relying on his sheer will power and adrenaline to remain awake.

So, the moment he realized he was out of danger, his mind shut down.

The demon kings, not knowing who had helped him, frowned and prepared to attack him when Wyomin's figure materialized in front of Max.

"Scram!" She shouted.

The demon kings' eyes widened in shock when they felt her aura and immediately turned on their heels and rushed away.

Since the demon leaders' had already ordered a retreat, the battle was over. So, her saving Max just now wasn't breaking the rules. If it was, the demon emperors would've already descended.

In the sky, Vigil cast a last glance at Max, a hint of disappointment in his eyes, and left with the other demon emperors.

Lady Verana watched them leave. When they had disappeared, she said, "Tell Wyomin to put that kid in the Temple's grade seven Recovery Room. She can use my authorization for that."

Once she was finished speaking, her figure soundlessly disappeared.

Tristen and the four emperors beside him had surprised looks on their faces.

"That kid, he is very lucky to get the attention of Lady Verana." One of the four emperors muttered, a hint of envy in his voice.

Tristen glanced at him and scoffed, "If you were as... incredible as him or had the same potential he has shown when you were in the Four Star realm, you would've received her favor too. Not only hers; even alliance grand elders would've paid special attention to you."

"Hey, I was just casually saying. No need to mock me." The emperor smiled wryly.

Tristen chuckled and conveyed Lady Verana's message to Wyomin before heading toward the War Temple.

Swoosh!

The emperors followed him.

...

A surprised look appeared on Wyomin's face when she heard Tristen's message. But a moment later, she frowned before sighing.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Just as she was about to pick Max up, Emily, Lily, Sera, and Pauline came over, followed by Martha, Williams, and Fullers.

Wyomin raised her brows when she felt Emily's aura, but the moment Emily arrived near Max and crouched beside him, it disappeared, making her think if what she had sensed was right. But being an emperor mage, she knew it was, and this gave her another surprise.

'Just what is going on? Are they really from this small kingdom?' She thought, glancing at Max, Emily, Lily, Sera, and Martha before looking at Kriss, who was coming over with the Martell family's group.

Seeing Emily, Lily, and Sera becoming emotional, she spoke up, "He is alright. There is no need to worry."

"Then why is he unconscious?" Pauline asked,

"He just lost quite a bit of his blood and was just too exhausted." Wyomin said before saying, "Now, if you would let me, I can place him in the War Temple's special recovery room, where he will be back to his perfect health in... less than an hour."

"Okay." Lily and Sera nodded, but Emily acted as though she didn't hear anything and continued staring at Max in a daze.

Lily sighed and placed a hand on her shoulder before gently saying, "Sister Emily, please let Lady Wyomin help him. He'll return to us soon."

"Huh? Yeah. Sure." Emily snapped out of her daze; after nodding to Wyomin in thanks, she rushed away without saying anything.

Lily frowned in worry. Glancing at Sera, she said, "I'll go after her."

Saying this, she rushed after Emily, but just a minute later, she returned.

Noticing her, Sera asked, "Where is she?"

Lily shook her head. "I lost track of her after just a few hundred meters. I tried looking around, but couldn't find her."

"How is that possible? I know she is fast, but her speed shouldn't be a problem for you." Pauline interjected.

Lily didn't respond to that. Instead, she asked, "Lady Wyomin took the young master?"

"Yes." Sera nodded. "Good. We'll just rest and wait here. Sister Emily should return before the young master." Lily said,

Pauline frowned, "I think we should go find Emily. She seemed emotionally unstable. We should be there with her at this time."

19:07

Lily shook her head and sighed. "No. There is no need to. Sister Emily just needs some time alone with her thoughts."

Pauline narrowed her eyes.

...

While they were talking, Emily had left the battlefield and found a secluded spot. Taking out an isolation and a defensive formation disk, she activated them. Then... she raised her head and let out a loud, anguished howl.

"AHHHHHHHHH!!!"

She then started tearing her clothes apart, revealing her flawless, moon-white skin, which was rapidly turning red, her veins pulsating with the rhythm of her heart that was beating rapidly now, seemingly wanting to break out of her chest.

She tried sitting down in meditation to calm her heart rate and blood flow, but it was of no use.

"It's too painful!" She gnashed her teeth so hard that her teeth creaked and her gums started bleeding while her neck muscles became so taut that it seemed they would snap.

After a few minutes, her blood started boiling, literally, in her veins, which made her nauseous and caused her to vomit out blood.

'Am I going to die?'

## **Chapter 689: Born to be an Emperor**

Ninam City, Garfield Mansion.

Ashton was sitting cross-legged in his cultivation room, his eyes closed and his breathing even as he absorbed the mana from the mana stones floating around him.

Suddenly, his eyes snapped open, and he turned his head in the north direction, muttering, "Someone awakened our royal bloodline? Is it Emily or Max?"

A moment later, he shook his head in disappointment, "It would have been better if they had awakened the Imperial Bloodline just like me. Awakening just the initial tier of the royal variant is useless."

Just then, he felt a presence outside the room and raised his brows in dissatisfaction.

"They don't like to listen, do they?"

Standing up, he walked over and opened the door.

Amelia was standing there, anxiously biting her nails. Just like previous days, she had come here to talk to him and see if he had returned to normal but was hesitant to knock on the door, fearing he would get angry and become even colder.

But to her surprise, just then the door opened and he appeared in front of her.

After seeing him for the first time in days, she couldn't control her emotions and jumped toward him, wanting to hug him, but...

Thud!!

...She suddenly felt an enormous pressure pressing down on her, freezing her midair and causing her to fall to her knees with a resounding thud.

Amelia went into a daze, an incredulous look on her face. She couldn't believe what had just happened.

She didn't want to believe it was Ashton, her loving husband's doing, but when she raised her head with difficulty and saw his apathetic face and noticed the gaze he

looked at her with as if she was some lowly person instead of his wife, it broke her heart, and tears uncontrollably started flowing down her eyes.

"Ashton, husband, please tell me you didn't intend to do it. Please tell me it happened by mistake." She said in a pleading tone.

Ashton frowned and coldly asked, "What are you crying about? I told you all to stay away from me, but someone keeps coming over to disturb me. Can't you follow simple instructions?"

His words stunned her yet again as she gazed into his golden pupils, waiting to see if he seriously meant what he said but saw no hesitation or guilt. It seemed what he was doing, how he was treating her, seemed perfectly normal to him.

"I... We are your family, Ashton. We are worried about you. You haven't been yourself since you awakened your blood— Amelia started saying, but Ashton interrupted her with an annoyed, "Quiet!"

Looking down into her eyes, he said, "I know you all have been thinking that my bloodline awakening has changed me, and you are right about it. It has indeed changed me. It changed my way of looking at the world, and I realized how stupidly I have been acting all my life. Instead of focusing on what's important, I have been wasting my time on you all and on that worthless Viscount role."

While Amelia stared at him, stunned, he paused before saying, "Maybe I should address you all and save time. Go, and gather everyone in the mail hall."

Saying this, he walked away with silent but strong steps, his posture ramrod.

After he left, his aura was no longer pressing down upon Amelia, but she didn't stand up and continued staring in front of her with a vacant look in her eyes.

...

Arriving in the main hall, Ashton stared at the head seat. "These elves, they really don't respect us, do they? Making us stay in such a shabby place."

He then walked over and sat down. He then stared ahead, his gaze flickering in thought. After a moment, he sighed and closed his eyes, waiting for everyone to gather.

He knew his change in behavior must have hurt his family, but he couldn't bring himself to behave like before.

Initially, when he started turning indifferent, he was worried about his change because he didn't like it. However, as his bloodline awakening gradually concluded over the course of a few days, he started having visions of a prosperous place where he was the

supreme, lording over all with no one able to disobey him; his perception started changing.

He knew, just like his ancestors told in stories, his Garfield family's bloodline was way too powerful and domineering, and everyone who awakened it was either destined to rise to the sky and follow in their first ancestor's footsteps to become the supreme figure and rule over everything and everyone or die trying.

Realizing how powerful he could become, his long forgotten dreams and aspirations rekindled. He no longer wanted to be the man he was, who could do nothing but waste his time on useless things, who was powerless to take revenge on the people who killed his wife, and who had lost his will to improve himself and become stronger.

He was born to be a king, an emperor, and that was what he was going to become. After no one came for a few minutes, he furrowed his brows in displeasure.

'I have spoiled them a little too much.' He thought, feeling disgusted with his past self even more. Not only did he manage to effeminate himself, but he also failed at educating his family.

He blatantly ignored the fact that his eldest son, Mark, wanted to replace him and become the lord of the Garfield family and had started playing underhanded tactics, even going to the lengths of colluding with enemies.

He also didn't do much to educate Noah and William, letting them strut around, using his name to take advantage of the town's people.

He also acted oblivious when Max... His eyes flickered.

His train of thoughts broke when he sensed someone enter the hall. He, however, didn't open his eyes.

After a while, everyone had gathered in the hall and was looking at him.

While Mark, Noah, and William and their wives weren't too concerned, Esther, Mina, Anna, and even butler George had concerned looks on their faces, especially because Amelia seemed like she had lost her soul after talking to him.

## **Chapter 690: Ruthless**

A few seconds after they gathered, Ashton opened his eyes and swept his gaze across everyone before stopping on butler George, Gene, and old granny.

"You three can leave. I need to talk to my family."

"Hmm?" Gene raised her brows, not liking his commanding tone but found herself turning around before she knew it. The same happened with butler George. Only the old granny was unaffected, but one could see the shock in her eyes.

Then, without saying anything, she left with Gene. Butler George had already walked out after giving Ashton a bow.

Outside, Gene looked at her grandma and asked in shock and confusion, "What happened to me, Grandma? Did Uncle Ashton cast some spell on me?"

"No. He did not." She shook her head before saying, "Remember family head? Whenever he ordered us to do something, we would find ourselves agreeing to it even if we didn't want to. The same happened just now."

Gene scoffed, "How can he be compared to the family lord?"

Old Granny didn't say anything in response, but her elderly eyes were flickering in thought.

Unlike them, Butler George didn't focus on it as he would've obeyed him anyways. Instead, he was worried about him.

'I hope he quickly returns to his normal self.'

...

After the trio left, Ashton glanced at Esther, Mina, Amelia, and Anna and started speaking.

"I know you are used to me acting all gentle and caring, so my changed attitude must be bothering you, but there is nothing you or I can do about it because I'll continue to be the same as it's for the better."

"I'm telling you all this so you don't entertain the notion I'll return to my previous pathetic self. Now that I have gained the means to do the things that were impossible before, I'm going to pursue them, and you guys should be happy about it because our Garfield family will rise."

Saying this, he didn't wait for the ladies to respond and turned his gaze to Mark and Noah, who immediately broke out in cold sweat and fell to their knees.

He then addressed Mark. "You are my eldest son. If you had the ability, after me, you would've inherited my useless Viscount title and family head's position, but you, due to your greed, decided to betray me and collude with Wiley. That's an unforgivable crime."

While Mark's face turned pale in horror and Esther's eyes narrowed, Ashton's gaze turned to Noah, "Instead of correcting him or reporting to me, you chose to join him to betray me and the family. That, too, is an unforgivable crime."

Noah had already started trembling due to fear when he heard him say Mark had betrayed him. So, when he heard this, his heart skipped a beat.

Amelia's vacant gaze focused on her son. When she looked at Ashton looking at them with a cold gaze, her heart shuddered.

However, just as she was about to open her mouth, Ashton's aura froze her and Esther.

"Do you accept your crimes?" He asked, his tone glacial.

"Please forgive me, Father. My greed had blinded me. I would— Mark started pleading but froze mid sentence as Ashton's eyes narrowed at him.

'He... he killed Mark.' He didn't know why, but he could tell Mark hadn't simply frozen but had died.

Fear of death overwhelming his mind, he hurriedly banged his forehead on the ground and said, "Lord Father, I did not want that, but Mark coerced me. He knew a secret of mine and threatened to tell you if I didn't do as he ordered. Please forgive me, lord father."

Ashton frowned at his words before asking, "And what secret was that?"

"I... I had killed Merchant Willmart's daughter and wife because they... refused to give in to my—" "Enough!" Ashton uttered before he could finish speaking, not wanting to hear him anymore.

Noah shuddered, thinking he was going to die too.

He knew how much trouble Merchant Willmart had caused Ashton after his wife and daughter died. When Ashton couldn't find the culprit, he went and complained to Count Wiley, who took the opportunity to punish him by cutting his income for several months.

However, to his surprise and relief, the death didn't come. Instead he heard Ashton say, "I shall not kill you, but you still committed the crime of treason. For that, I'll cripple you for life."

Puff!

Before Noah could react, his mana veins exploded, and all the mana in his dantian was ignited, causing him to spit out a mouthful of blood before he lost consciousness.

Amelia's heart pained when she saw the state of her son.

Her eyes reddening, she shouted, "He was your son. How can you be so cruel as to cripple him for something he did years ago? You could've found some other way to punish—"

Esther, still unaware of Mark's death, nodded in agreement along with Mina and Anna, who tried to rush over to Noah but couldn't under the pressure of his aura.

Although she didn't like him, he was still her blood brother, so she felt pain seeing him become a cripple. At the same time, she was astonished to see how powerful his aura had become even though he was still a peak Three Star mage.

Ashton glanced at Amelia and emotionlessly said, "Perhaps you didn't hear me clearly. I didn't punish him for his crime against that merchant as it had happened long ago, but for his betrayal. Moreover, I have already shown enough mercy by not killing him."

After a pause, he added, "Now, unless it's an emergency, don't disturb me again. Just focus on your cultivation. You all are too weak."

Saying this, he stood up and walked toward the exit, but Esther, who upon realizing what he meant by already shown enough mercy by not killing him, rushed toward him, stopping him in his tracks.

"You have something to say?" Ashton asked,

"You... killed Mark?" She asked, her fists clenched tight and her tone ice cold, devoid of any emotion.

## **Chapter 691: Withered Wood [Bonus]**

"Yes, I did. I should've done it when I found out about his betrayal, but I was too soft." Ashton nodded, meeting her gaze.

Esther didn't say anything and stared into his eyes as though looking for something familiar but didn't see anything.

Her gaze made him uncomfortable, something he found strange because he had thought nothing could faze him now.

"What? You think I was too cruel?" He asked. When Esther didn't say anything, he continued, "You should know the reason Wiley and those two attacked us was because he had told Wiley that we indeed had the Thunder Sword. You realize if I hadn't had that

drop of Devil Blood and Hannah's aunt hadn't come on time, those three would've killed you all or, worse, they would've turned you into their slaves."

"I understand." Esther finally nodded before walking toward Mark's cold corpse, beside which his wives, Lacey and Layla, were sobbing quietly.

Amelia walked over to Noah while Mina and Anna stared at him.

Ashton sighed and shook his head and started walking out of the hall. However, just then, Anna's words made him pause.

"I can no longer recognize you, father."

He glanced at her and said, "The world is too cruel, Anna. The emotional and kind ones die even before the weak."

...

Shua! Shua!

Max was floating in a white room. Streams of green and golden energies were swirling around him and occasionally flowing into his body.

It had been over forty minutes since Wyomin deposited him in this grade seven recovery room that unusually only emperor mages used because the cost for lower realmed mages, including the King mages, was too steep. However, thanks to Lady Verana footing the bill for him, he was able to enjoy it.

The room showed its effectiveness, and in just forty minutes, Max had completely recovered, with no trace of any injury left on his body. Even his depleted mana was fully restored.

For the last few minutes, he had been using the purified mana in the room to recover his bloodline energy.

'Thankfully, the devil blood didn't try to take advantage; otherwise, it might have succeeded.' He thought, scanning his body.

Ten minutes later, he was finished recovering his bloodline energy and reluctantly opened his eyes.

Thud!

As soon as he did, the energies swirling around him disappeared and he fell to the ground.

Phew!

"Fortunately, I didn't open my eyes immediately after regaining consciousness or use my bloodline sense; otherwise, I wouldn't have been able to recover my mana and bloodline energy so swiftly." He muttered, exhaling in relief.

The moment he had regained consciousness, he had realized he was in a special environment that was rapidly healing him.

He wanted to use his bloodline energy to scan it, but his instincts told him not to do it. Choosing to believe in them, he stayed put and started utilizing the purified and condensed mana that was on par with the mana from the mana crystal, or maybe a level purer, to recover his depleted energies.

Rumble!

He had just stood up when the thick stone door opened and in walked Wyomin.

She looked him up and down before saying, "Come. Someone wants to meet you."

"Wait." Max hurriedly called out to her, stopping her in her tracks.

"Before we go somewhere else, I want to talk to you for a bit." He said.

Wyomin looked at him for a moment before nodding, "Alright. Follow me."

Walking out of the recovery room, Max glanced around the pristine structure he was in and asked, "We are inside the War Temple."

"Hmm."

"Where are my companions? Are they safe?" He asked, "They are resting outside. And they are safe." Wyomin answered.

Soon, after leaving the recovery section, they arrived in a secluded area. While Max was looking around, Wyomin took out a metal medallion similar to the Merit Plate and placed it on a wall.

Zoom!

Immediately, an opening fit for two people to walk side by side appeared, and she walked in. Max followed.

Max looked around the expansive chamber in fascination and asked, "Is this your room? Isn't it too big for you alone?"

"..."

Wyomin gave him a blank look, making him cough awkwardly.

"Sit." She said, gesturing for him to take a seat on the sofa near them before sitting down on one herself.

"So what do you want to talk about?"

"First of all, I want to thank you for saving me and placing me in that room." Max earnestly thanked her. Wyomin nodded, accepting his gratitude before saying, "You have someone else to thank for the recovery room."

"Oh? Is it the same person who you were taking me to meet?"

"Yes."

Max nodded. Then his expression turned solemn as he asked, "I want to ask you what you want to do with the information about the energy you used to heal my mana veins."

Wyomin wasn't surprised since she already knew he wanted to talk about it. After thinking for a moment, she said, "You need not worry about me telling anyone about it, nor will I do anything to harm you because of it. However... I have a request."

Max inwardly nodded. It was just as he thought.

"Please do tell. If it's something I can do for you, I'll do my best to help you."

Wyomin hesitated for a bit before taking out a two-inch-long, gray piece of withered wood.

She gently handed it to him and said, "See if you can pour that vitality filled energy of yours into it."

Max took the piece of wood and curiously looked at it. It didn't seem different from any ordinary wood, but since Wyomin was keeping it and handling it as though it was something very precious, he knew it was all but ordinary.

Taking a deep breath, he pulled a strand of his Nascent Energy and directed it into the piece of wood.

Wyomin stopped breathing as her gaze focused on the wood.

For a moment, the strand of Nascent Energy was unable to enter it, which made him frown while Wyomin let out a disappointed sigh.

However...

Zoom!

The next instant, the strand disappeared into it.

Wyomin's eyes shone, "I was right."

{Castle Bonus---> Thank you The\_Big\_Dog\_915 for the gift! (1/3)}

## **Chapter 692: Cocoon [Bonus]**

A few minutes later, Max and Wyomin left her chambers and headed to another part of the War Temple, where he was going to meet Lady Verana.

As he followed after her, he had a curious look on his face.

After realizing he was able to inject Nascent Energy into the withered piece of wood, Wyomin had asked him to come to the War Temple whenever possible and inject some of it into the wood.

Apparently, this piece of wood was from some special tree, now extinct, and she wanted to revive it; however, it rejected all types of energies. When she saw his Nascent Energy could heal even the mana veins, she felt that the chances of her piece of wood accepting it were high given how strong its nurturing power was.

Max tried asking her what was special about the tree the wood belonged to, but she didn't tell him anything about it, which made him curious.

Still, as he watched her hips sway as she walked, he soon forgot about the wood. Wyomin was beautiful but not to the point that her beauty alone could mesmerize him. But she had that mature charm, and her identity as an emperor mage compensated for that.

However, just as lustful desire for her started developing in his heart, a chilling aura enveloped him, making him shudder.

"Behave!" Wyomin's cold voice rumbled in his mind, dizzying him a moment.

Immediately, he dispelled all thoughts and moved his gaze away from her swaying back.

'Just you wait for me to become as strong as—' He suddenly shivered again.

'Damn it. Can she read my mind too?' He smiled wryly.

Walking in front, Wyomin's eyes were cold, but a fading blush could be seen on her cheeks. This was the first time someone openly showed their lustful desire for her to her.

Of course, it didn't mean others didn't hold such thoughts towards her, but they, mostly king mages and stronger, knew how to hide it.

'That Pauline girl is right. He is a pervert.' She thought.

...

After a while, they arrived in front of Lady Verana's chambers. After informing her of Max's arrival, Wyomin left.

He didn't have to wait for long, as in the next moment, an entrance appeared in front of him.

Verana's chamber was similar to Wyomin's, so he wasn't mesmerized by it, allowing him to focus on the woman sitting on a wooden chair.

Max didn't dare stare at her because he could tell she was way stronger than Wyomin.

Lightly bowing toward her, he said, "Thank you, Emperor Verana, for allowing me to use the recovery room."

Lady Verana nodded before saying, "I watched you fight. You are fearless and strong."

Max smiled, feeling a little proud upon being recognized by such a strong person. However, the next moment, his smile stiffened when he heard.

"However, you are reckless, too overconfident, and don't have enough battle experience. If you don't improve quickly, you will die."

"War Temple's resource exchange will begin in an hour. Use your war merits wisely. With demons targeting you, you have very little time to improve."

Before he could say anything, she waved her hand, and he found himself standing outside the War Temple.

For a few seconds, he stood still, absorbing her words. Then, he respectfully bowed toward the War Temple and took a deep breath before moving in the direction he sensed Lily and Sera's presence.

...

Swoosh!

Even though Martha was the strongest of the bunch, it was Lily and Sera who noticed him first thanks to their unique bond.

Seeing he had completely recovered, they sighed in relief before moving over to him.

"The War Temple is as incredible as rumored, huh? It managed to help you recover in less than an hour." Pauline commented, looking him up and down before glancing at her people, who were supporting various injuries.

After nodding at Martha and Kriss, he frowned and asked Lily, "Where is Emily?"

Lily told him what happened after he lost consciousness.

"She vanished, huh?" He muttered in worry.

Just then, Kriss spoke up, "I know where she is."

"You do?" Pauline suspiciously asked.

Kriss nodded, "Yes. When she rushed away, I followed her. You know, to ensure her safety."

"Thank you." Max was thankful. He then said, "Take me to her."

"Hey, are you believing him so easily?" Pauline questioned.

Kriss glanced at Max, but he waved his hand and gestured to him to show him the way.

"You two wait here." Kriss gave Pauline a provocative smirk before he turned into a dark apparition and rushed away with Max closely following him.

...

He would be lying if he said he didn't have a little doubt in his mind that Kriss was taking him away to ambush him, especially after seeing him rush away from the battlefield.

However, for Emily, he chose to take the risk.

Soon, Kriss stopped and pointed at an empty patch of area, "She is there."

Hearing this, he raised his brows before sweeping the area with his bloodline sense. Immediately he noticed the isolation formation. With a thought, his bloodline sense penetrated the formation, and he saw Emily wrapped up in a golden cocoon.

He immediately realized what was going on with her. Turning to Kriss, he thanked him and said, "You can return if you want to stay here."

He didn't wait for his response, and with a step, he appeared in front of the formation. Then, with the mixture of his fire elemental mana and bloodline energy, he covered the area with an isolation barrier before destroying the formations Emily had placed.

Seeing blood-drenched ground, he realized her bloodline awakening must have been too torturous.

'If I had been with her, I could've used Nascent Energy to help her.' He clenched his fists. Feeling pain in his heart.

Then, he glanced at the golden cocoon, placed his hand on it, and started injecting the Nascent Energy into it.

He wasn't sure if it could speed up the process, but it was worth a try.

{Castle Bonus---> Thank you The\_Big\_Dog\_915 for the gift! (2/3)}

## **Chapter 693: We Meet Again [Bonus]**

As the nascent energy entered the cocoon, the cocoon started turning a deep gold.

Pfff!

Max ignored it for a few moments, but when he noticed blood flow out of Emily's orifices with his bloodline sense, he immediately pulled his hand back, his expression turning grave.

After thinking for a moment, he realized that since the cocoon, which was the manifestation of her bloodline, absorbed his nascent energy, it became stronger, which would've been a good thing if Emily's physique was strong enough to endure it, but it was not.

"I need to bypass the cocoon and inject the nascent energy into her and reinforce her body." He muttered and fell into thought.

After a while, he sighed. He couldn't think of any way to inject nascent energy into her without damaging the cocoon, which he absolutely couldn't risk doing because he was sure it would harm Emily more.

Taking a deep breath, he placed his hand on the cocoon, right above Emily's chest, and started injecting nascent energy into it.

At a glance, what he was doing was no different than before, but it was because this time he was doing his best to control the nascent energy to stop it from spreading into the cocoon and was directing it further down.

Though the cocoon would still absorb some of it and become stronger, it would be a success as long as a major part of the energy reached Emily.

Fortunately for Max, even though he hadn't made any conscious effort to comprehend and attain a deeper affinity with the Nascent Energy, because it was created from his pure yang and bloodline energy, his natural affinity for it was strong enough for this task.

His tightly furrowed brows relaxed when he noticed over two-thirds of the nascent energy he was injecting into the cocoon was entering Emily's body.

Ten minutes later, the entire cocoon had turned a deeper shade of gold, and it seemed more robust than before. And thanks to the nascent energy continuously reinforcing Emily's body, mainly her mana veins, blood veins, and heart, it wasn't affecting her adversely.

Another ten minutes later, the cocoon started shrinking slowly.

Phew!

Half an hour later, Max exhaled in relief as he took his hand back and wiped sweat off his forehead.

"I again ran out of nascent energy." He chuckled dryly.

The cocoon had shrunk by over ninety percent into an inch-thick golden layer that was as hard as refined steel.

However, what surprised Max was the fact that, unlike before, his bloodline sense wasn't able to penetrate this layer no matter how hard he tried. Which also meant he wasn't able to see Emily's condition.

Though this worried him, there was nothing he could do about it.

"But... What kind of bloodline is she awakening? Is it from Amelia's family?" He muttered in confusion. Unlike Emily, Anna, and his other half-siblings, Ashton hadn't told him the legends of their bloodline. Hence his confusion.

...

After a few minutes, Max covered the cocoon with his bloodline energy, picked it up, and walked out of the isolation barrier that flickered and vanished.

"Oh, you are out?"

Hearing this voice, he looked ahead and saw Kriss sitting there, carving the ground with a black dagger. Several headless demon corpses were lying beside him, neatly stacked in a pile.

"It's a good thing I didn't leave, right?" He grinned at Max, his gaze briefly sweeping over the crimson pink figurine on his shoulder before returning to his face.

Max nodded, "Yeah. Thank you for staying."

"Did they come looking for me or accidentally stumble here?" He asked the important question and sighed in relief when Kriss said it was probably the latter.

"Good, this means the demons didn't see me leave the battlefield." He said before adding with a chuckle, "Now let's go, or your friends from the Seidel and Arasia family might come."

However, when he saw Kriss' expression, he stopped laughing and asked, "What is it?"

"You don't know that a few of the human king mages that fought with the demon kings were from the four noble families, do you?" Kriss said, and as he watched, Max's expression turned grim, his lips curled up in a smile.

"As they say, never underestimate anyone, especially families like ours that have been at the top of the kingdom for hundreds of years."

Max nodded.

Though when Kriss left the battlefield, he had considered the possibility of an ambush but was unafraid because he believed they wouldn't dare to target him after seeing his strength, but the possibility that noble families could have king mages had completely slipped his mind.

This place, although very close, was still outside the battlefield. This meant if they indeed attacked him here, emperors most likely wouldn't take action.

Suddenly, he remembered something and gave Kriss an ugly look.

If king mages of the Seidel and Arasia family came here, those from the Fuller and Martell would most likely stop them since he was their ally. This meant Kriss, taking advantage of his distracted mindset, was teasing him.

Kriss, seeing Max had realized what he was doing, laughed sheepishly and said, "Don't worry, Sir Max. I had already informed my grand elders to work together with the Fullers and stop those from the Seidel and Arasia families if they try to leave the battlefield."

"You want to get beaten, don't you?" Max glared at him.

"No, I don't." Kriss shook his head with a serious look on his face, making Max's lips twitch.

"Alright. Let's not waste time here. War Temple's resource exchange should start anytime now." He said, activating Phoenix Wings to rush back to the battlefield.

Kriss nodded.

However, just as they were about to leave, Max paused and looked to the side where a few figures had suddenly appeared.

Kriss tightened his grip on his dagger, and Max's expression turned grim. But when he took a closer look, he raised his brows in surprise.

"Keke, brother-in-law, we finally meet again."

{Castle Bonus---> Thank you The\_Big\_Dog\_915 for the gift! (3/3)}

## **Chapter 694: Fully Functional**

"Brother-in-law?" Kriss gave Max a strange look.

Max glanced at him and sighed. "It's a long story. But you don't need to worry about me being a traitor to the human race."

Kriss looked at him in silence for a moment before nodding, "Yeah, you don't look like one."

Max's lips twitched, and he wanted to ask how traitors looked but shook the thought away, thinking, 'He is just a kid.' And turned to Ashroth.

"What are you trying to do?" He asked, his eyes narrowing. If anyone saw him meeting the demons, they would definitely think he was colluding with them... Which wasn't wrong since he had made a deal with Amara's father. But still, no one knew about it, so it was all good.

Ashroth stopped when he was over ten meters away from Max and looked him up and down. "The human emperors treat you well, huh. Do you have a high status or something?"

Max didn't answer and kept staring at him. Last time they met, he had to be careful around him lest he killed him. But now, he was unafraid of him, and from what he could see, it was Ashroth who seemed a little nervous and fearful.

Ashroth raised his brows seeing him not respond to his question. Then he sighed and was about to speak when a hint of shock flashed in his eyes. Nodding subtly, he began speaking in the demon language, "I had no choice but to come to talk to you. Firstly, because I need to establish a form of communication, and secondly, to tell you to show off a little less. But I think there is no use saying it now since both tribes have already taken note of you."

Max could only shrug with a helpless look on his face.

After glancing at Kriss and seeing he had a frown on his face, not able to understand demon language, he took out a communication crystal and threw it toward him, "Here. Only message me when you have something important to tell me."

Saying this, he prepared to leave when Ashroth asked, "How is little Amara? Are you treating her well?"

"She is good and in a safe place. So, don't worry about her. She is my woman now, and I'll keep her safe."

After saying this, he flapped his wings and rushed away. Kriss, after giving Ashroth a curious look, followed after him.

Watching them leave, Ashroth sighed. "Strength really changes one's attitude, huh."

"Alright, let's return."

...

Everyone looked at him curiously when Max returned, carrying a crimson pink statue.

Lily and Sera's expressions, however, turned pale while Pauline also seemed worried and sad.

"Young master, is that sister—"

Just as Lily started speaking, Max interrupted her, "Yes, she is Emily, and don't worry, she is fine."

Lily sighed in relief and nodded. She didn't want anything bad to happen to Emily. Sera was also relieved, and even though she was curious why she seemed to have turned into a statue and why he was carrying her like that, she didn't ask, seeing they weren't alone.

However, unlike her, Pauline, who apparently was worried about Emily despite their not-so-good relationship, didn't care and asked, "What happened to her? Why is she like that?"

"Nothing you should know about." Max said before turning his gaze toward the War Temple.

Pauline furrowed her brows in displeasure. But before she could say anything, Alton's voice resounded throughout the battlefield.

"War Temple is fully functional. You can enter it now."

The battlefield had fallen silent for a moment before everyone burst into cheers and rushed toward the temple.

After the battles, almost everyone had demonic energy in their bodies that was stopping them from recovering their injuries, and worse, it was exacerbating their conditions. So, even from exchanging their hard-earned war merits for the resources, they wanted to use the temple to expel the demonic energy.

While everyone rushed toward the temple, Max, Sera, Lily, and Fullers didn't move, which made Martha raise her brows in surprise.

"Why aren't you all going?" She asked, looking at Pauline and the rest of the Fullers.

Pauline and Fullers didn't answer, but their gaze moved over to Max, who glanced at Martha and said, "I can remove the demonic energy from their bodies."

Even as he said this, he placed his hand on Lily, letting the devil blood suck all of the demonic energy out of her.

After removing Sera and Pauline's, he glanced at the Fullers, who, understanding what he wanted, started coming to him one by one.

Martha, Kriss, and others in their group looked at Max in surprise.

After he was finished with the Fullers, he glanced at them and smiled, "I can help you all if you want."

Kriss didn't hesitate and waved his hand, ordering his people to approach Max. As for him, he didn't have any demonic energy since no demon was able to injure him.

Martha was a little hesitant, but seeing they would not be able to enter the war temple anytime soon since everyone wanted in and since Max didn't seem to have any problem removing the energy, she also ordered her people to get in line.

...

By the time Max finished absorbing the last person's demonic energy, a few people had started coming out of the war temple, looking excited.

"Hm? It seems the temple really has some good resources." Pauline muttered, her eyes sparkling.

She was barely able to stop herself from rushing into the crowd trying to enter the temple.

Crack!

Suddenly, Max heard a faint cracking sound, and his eyes lit up.

Immediately, he waved his hand and conjured an isolation barrier around Lily, Sera, and himself. Then he took out a bed and placed the statue on it before removing his bloodline energy barrier from around it, revealing Emily's cocooned form to Lily and Sera.

The pair's expressions hardened seeing it, and Lily was about to ask why she looked like that when...

Crack!

Another cracking noise resounded.

"Her shell is breaking." Sera pointed out, noticing the cracking on the thick golden layer.

## **Chapter 695: Lips meet**

Note: Just here to remind you all that Max isn't the original Maxwell Garfield even though he is occupying his body. Also, the world they are in is a magical world where the rules and limitations of our world don't apply.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

As they watched, more and more cracks started appearing in the hard shell, each crack wider and longer than the one before.

A few minutes later, the entire shell was covered in cracks. Then all of a sudden...

Boom!

The shell exploded, sending countless sharp shards flying in all directions.

Just as Max was about to cast a defensive barrier, they all froze midair before flying back toward Emily.

Max raised his eyebrows in concern but didn't try to stop them because he could tell it was the part of her bloodline awakening.

However...

Puff! Puff! Puff!

When they cut into her body, causing blood to erupt out, he doubted his judgment while Lily and Sera gathered their mana to stop the remaining shards. But just then, they noticed a moment after steel-hard shards came into contact with her blood, they melted and got absorbed into her body. Even more surprising, the blood that had flowed out of her wounds acted as if it was conscious and rushed back into her wounds that rapidly healed. In an instant, not even a scratch was visible on her soft skin.

Then more shards slashed into her, causing more wounds, but the same thing happened as before.

"This seems too painful." Sera cringed at the sight and felt relieved that Emily was unconscious. Lily and Max also had the same thoughts. But unbeknownst to them, the moment the golden shell had exploded, she had regained her senses. So, she felt every bit of the pain, but not wanting to make them pity her or feel sad for her, she silently endured it all.

A while later, the last piece of the shell was absorbed into her body.

As they waited, Emily's eyes snapped open, and she jumped to her feet.

Sweeping her gaze across the trio, she focused on Max, her expression turning colder when she saw him staring at her up and down without any shame.

"Done looking?" She asked,

Max reflexively shook his head, "No..." Then realizing what he had said, he hurriedly corrected himself, "I mean yes, no wait. I mean sorry. I didn't mean to."

Lily and Sera stared at him before Sera pinched his waist hard and muttered, "My lord, you are still looking."

"Oh, yeah. Sorry. You get dressed. I will go out." Max coughed awkwardly and finally peeled his gaze away from her body.

Just as he was about to turn around, Emily said, "There is no need."

She then took out a green dress and unhurriedly wore it while Lily and Sera exchanged a look between them.

"You can turn around. I'm dressed." She said,

A disappointed gleam flashed in his eyes hearing her, but he was quick to restrain his thoughts as he turned around and looked at her.

She seemed a little different than before. Her aura was different. It wasn't as cold and seemed more dominant and imperious. Her black pupils had turned vibrant gold just like the tips of her black hair.

She was a beautiful and very appealing woman before too, even with her usually cold and indifferent attitude. But these changes had made her even more charming.

As he stared into her beautiful eyes, he found himself becoming dazed. Then, before he knew it, he took a few steps forward, grabbed her shoulders, and pulled her in his embrace.

"W-What are you doing?!" Emily trembled, and her cold expression that she had barely been able to keep on her face after he saw her naked crumbled.

Max came to his senses and frowned. For a moment, he thought his bloodline had influenced him again but quickly realized this wasn't the case. It was all him.

Immediately, he got a flashback of his first day in this magical world. He remembered the sweet feeling he had when she gave him that golden vitality spirit fruit.

Then he remembered the day she took him to the forest to overcome his fear. He remembered feeling attracted to her when he watched her gracefully slay those magic beasts and scold the knights that dared slight him.

'I fell in love with her from the first day...' He thought, finally realizing it. Heck, now that he thought about it, even the original Max seemed to have deeply hidden feelings for her.

He tightened his hold around her, pulling her deeper into his embrace, and whispered in her ear, "Em, you like me as a man, right?"

Emily went stiff, her heart beating wildly against his chest. She had become so nervous that she wanted to push him away and rush away.

However, she suppressed her nerves knowing she would never be able to confess her feelings to him if she lost this chance and grunted a soft, "En."

Max took a deep breath, his heart also racing, and slowly pulled his upper body away from her. Then, as she looked at him nervously, he leaned in and gently placed his lips on hers, making her eyes go wide.

Behind him, Sera watched them with a small smile. Just like everyone, she had seen how much Emily liked him, and since Max also cared for her a lot and seemed to have feelings for her that he himself didn't seem to know, she was happy to see them confess to each other.

Unlike her, however, Lily, who knew they were siblings, albeit half-siblings, had a complex look on her face.

'Will Lord Ashton and others allow their union?' She thought. Unlike half a year before, she had a wider view of the world, and knew relationships with family members weren't uncommon. Almost all the families that had some decent grade bloodlines preferred to marry their immediate family members to keep their bloodlines pure.

Emily's mind went blank, and an electrifying sensation filled her body when she felt his lips pressed against hers. When she regained her senses, tears of happiness appeared in her eyes, and she hugged him back before leaning into the kiss.

## **Chapter 696: Because of you**

Feeling him gently and lovingly kiss her lips, Emily's heart was fluttering, and her breathing had become deep and hot while her legs went limp.

Thankfully, Max was holding her by her waist, not allowing her to fall down.

This wonderful sensation, she was feeling for the first time in her life, and she realized it was an even better feeling than the feeling she got when cultivated.

'No wonder they aren't as much interested in spending their time in cultivation.' She thought.

After a few moments, Max broke the kiss and pulled his head back, looking in her glazed eyes and at her blushed face.

"God, you are beautiful."

His words put a beautiful smile on her face while her heart felt all sweet and tingly.

"Thank you." She whispered before burying her face in his chest.

Max, however, pulled her back and made her look at him as he slowly but firmly said, "I love you, Em, and I want you to be mine, now and forever. Would you like to become my woman?"

Emily shook at his words. Then, taking a breath as if to gather her courage, she nodded, "Y-Yes, I would like that." The moment she said this, Max's lips curled into a satisfied and relieved smile before he leaned in again and gave her another kiss.

Emily responded the best she could, and just when she thought he would pull back, she felt his warm and moist tongue slither inside her mouth.

She stiffened and didn't know what to do for a moment. 'D-Don't tell me this is also a part of kissing?' She thought before relaxing her body and letting him do whatever he wanted.

Just as she loosened up, Max's tongue captured hers, and the kiss turned passionate.

Ha~

When Max finally pulled away, she was left breathless, her chest heaving and her sweet pink lips slightly swollen.

Max's breathing had also turned hot, and he had become excited, his little brother down below already at half mast.

Looking at her face and her slightly puffy lips that seemed to be inviting him for another kiss, he couldn't stop himself and again leaned in, but right then...

"Ahem, my lord. Can you please let Sister Emily breathe a little?" Sera spoke up, her voice sounding a little bittersweet.

Max paused while Emily, realizing they had been kissing in front of Lily and Sera, blushed furiously. She had the urge to flee to hide her embarrassment, but thinking she had to maintain her image, especially in front of them, she hurriedly suppressed her emotion, her usual indifferent expression appearing on her face.

Max sighed in disappointment, smacking his lips. He then remembered something and turned to look at the duo before sending them a mental transmission through his bloodline sense.

[Um, I know as agreed, I should have told you before taking her as my woman, but as you saw, I didn't plan this to happen. So... you don't mind, right?]

"..."

Both ladies looked at him, speechless. Then they looked at each other, and their lips curled up in a smile.

Both felt happy that although late, he still asked about their opinions. They then shook their heads at him, indicating he didn't have to worry.

Emily, unaware of their silent communication, frowned when she saw Max staring at them with an expression that seemed to her a mix of apology and plea.

Her gaze flickering, she slowly walked over and stopped when there was only a meter between her and the duo.

Looking into their eyes, she asked in an even tone, "You have an objection to me becoming his woman?"

Gulp!

Lily and Sera both felt an invisible pressure and unconsciously gulped before hurriedly shaking their heads, "N-No, of course not, Sister Emily. We are happy to see you together."

Emily's expression softened a little, and she nodded, "Thank you. Let's get along well in the future, alright?"

"Yes." The pair responded, almost too formally.

Max's gaze flickered, his brows slightly raised in intrigue, 'Her presence has indeed become stronger. Without even trying, she is able to put pressure on them. Her bloodline... It doesn't seem ordinary.'

Lily and Sera also realized why they were acting so... differentially toward her, and unlike Max, they became concerned because she was able to dominate them so easily; they wouldn't be able to fight her when she started taking up all Max's time.

'This is no good.' Both thought before simultaneously saying, "Sister Emily, can you please not use your bloodline suppression on us?"

Emily looked at them in surprise before saying, "I didn't use—" Mid-speech, she paused and closed her eyes. When a moment later, she opened them, her irises were no longer golden, having returned to her original dark brown color.

Immediately, the duo felt the difference. Although the feeling of deference didn't vanish completely, it wasn't as significant as it was a moment before.

"Em, what's this bloodline you awakened? Is it from Aunt Esther's side of the family?" Max asked.

Emily turned around and looked at him in surprise for a moment before realizing he hadn't heard of the stories passed down in the Garfield family and hence didn't know about the bloodline.

"No. Mother is from a small family; they didn't have any bloodline inheritance." She shook her head and then started telling him about the legends of their Garfield bloodline.

"In our family, our ancestors have passed down some stories about how we supposedly had an incredible bloodline inheritance..."

As the trio heard her, they became fascinated. After she was finished speaking, Max asked, "So you are saying you are the first person to awaken this bloodline in hundreds of years?"

"Yes," Emily nodded, "And it's because of you." She added, causing Max to raise his brows in confusion. "Because of me?"

"Yes. When you injected your bloodline energy into my body to expel that guy, Oliver's icy mana, some of it seemed to have been absorbed by my blood, strengthening my heavily diluted bloodline." Emily explained. She had realized this only after awakening her bloodline.

Max wasn't surprised to hear this as he already knew his bloodline energy could help awaken others' dormant bloodlines, just like the Nascent Energy, however...

"That small bit of my bloodline energy shouldn't be enough to awaken it?"

Emily's expression froze when she heard his question. She then turned around and coldly said, "Stop asking so many questions."

Lily and Sera, who could see her expression, stared at her in confusion seeing the embarrassed look on her face.