

SPELLBOUND 251

Chapter 251 - Gavrael (Part VIII)

Now that he had grown so strong, they now see him as a threat – dangerous monster. Then he found out that the officials had already begun to make plans to ensure that he will have no chance in becoming the next king. Gavrael could only laugh villainously. He had already started to hate the dark faes from before, but now he loathes them with his very being and that was the primary reason why he wanted to leave the Under Land.

Now here he was, finally out of that realm of the dark. And for the first time since a very long time, he had finally found something he was interested in that was not related to him becoming stronger. But she was looking at him with so much wariness and fear. And he could not help but be reminded of how the dark faes look at him, like he was some sort of a monster everyone must be wary about.

A bitter smile bloomed on his face then his eyes narrowed and became dangerous. "Fine, since you already fear me so much like this, I might as well do something to deserve that fear of yours." He hissed and the next second they disappeared from the room, leaving no trace of the young lady nor her abductor.

They materialized in the very same forest that he had first caught sight of her. The girl's eyes were wide as saucers as she looked around, seeing that they were already in the forest.

She began to struggle as soon as she snapped out of the shock that had temporarily rendered her mute. "Let me go!" she cried and shouted at the top of her lungs, "Help me! Anyone!"

"Quit the yelling, no one will hear you, Little Butterfly." Gavrael said with an evil looking smile.

"What are you doing! Please let me go –"

"What am I doing? Hmm... I am abducting you. Didn't I tell you previously when we met that you're mine now that I have caught you?"

She was absolutely speechless for a moment but after a while, horror filled her eyes. She thrashed in his arms again, screaming. And then in a fit of pique, she bit down on his shoulder, hard, desperate to get away from him.

Gavrael paused and he pressed his lips tight as he finally put her down. As expected, the girl ran away frantically, like a prey escaping from her predator, running for her dear life.

Watching her back, Gavrael clenched his fists tight. It seems that no matter what he does, everyone just seems to hate him and fear him. And it was not just the dark faes who hates him. Apparently, he's a fearsome monster in her eyes as well. He felt like a spear had just stabbed through his chest. And he did not know why it was harder for him to accept it this time. He thought he had grown numb and was already used to it. Was it because it was her who had given him that look?

He lifted his hand and tugged irritably on his dark hair. He did not know what he was doing anymore. Maybe he was truly a monster... and that was why everyone hated and feared him. That must be it, right? Otherwise, he would not have done that to her. Instead of trying to make her stop fearing him, he made it worse.

A hysterical laughter echoed in the dark and then he dropped his head and stared contemplatively at the ground. "You're the worst, Gavrael. No wonder everyone hates you." He talked to no one,

smirking villainously. "It seems they're right all along, you're a monster. No one will ever accept someone like you."

Suddenly, he heard her scream coming from somewhere further off. Before he knew it, he disappeared. He materialized to where she was and the instant he saw the girl kneeling on the ground in terror as a beast was about to pounce on her, his darkness flared.

He slashed at the beast in one strike. But more of them appeared the moment that one fell to his claws. Gavrael unleashed his magic and without any reservation, he fought the beasts like mad, protecting the girl and not letting any of the beasts approach any closer to her. He did not actually need to unleash his magic. He could easily defeat these lower beasts even without using magic, but he was angry and needed a way to vent out his frustrations. The rage inside him made his blood boil that he could no longer control himself.

With the deadly power given a free reign to destroy and damage, the dozens of beasts that attacked were slaughtered in no time at all. The severed body parts of the beasts were scattered all around them as he stood there heaving, as he caught his breath not because of the fight but because of the release of his anger.

He looked down at her after calming his breathing down and found that she was looking at him in utter shock. Now he had gone and did it. He had shown her how he was more monstrous than any of the beasts that had attacked her. He could not help but let out a heavy sigh as he rolled his eyes.

Without a word, he approached her and then he grabbed her arm and help her stand, ensuring she was still quiet before scooping her up into his arms.

They appeared in her room the next moment as they were not that far from the citadel yet. Slowly, he let go of her as he put her down to stand on her own next to the window of her room. He looked at her closely and he realized that she was still paralyzed from the fright.

"I'm sorry..." he said, his voice almost inaudible. "I'm not going to bother you again." He flashed her a pained smile. "Just think of me as a nightmare. That's right, a monster in your nightmare..." his smile faded as his eyes fixed on her face, trying to burn her image into his mind as if he was memorizing every contour and inflection of her face for the last time. "This monster won't be appearing in your dreams again."

Chapter 252 - Gavrael (Part IX)

[Here's the bonus chaps]

He reluctantly took a step back, but still unable to wrench his gaze off her. The struggle to step away from her at that moment was driving him crazy. What had this creature done to him? Why was he behaving this way? She seemed to be evoking some sort of deep seated emotions he never known existed within himself. And all this was making him a little confused as well.

No, this was just him being the monster that he was, right? He had already wanted her so badly the very first time he saw her, and he was that monster who did not care about anything else just to get what he wanted. He was just having a hard time accepting that he cannot have her, and that he was giving up on something he wanted so very desperately. This was just the same as when he had chosen to give up on his desire to be acknowledged by those dark faes. The thought that this girl was the same as those dark faes had made his heart grow even darker. It seemed that no matter what he does, she would always fear him and see him as nothing more than a fearsome monster.

Sinister thoughts emerged from within him again. His rebellious mind wanting to play with her for his own amusement, wanting to carry out his role as the monster in her life until he got bored of it. He badly wanted to do that but every time he looked at those large clear eyes and her small delicate frame, he could not bring himself to. It was as though there was a noose looped around him that seemed to pull him back when he wanted to go wild and torment that young lady standing before him.

He thought that perhaps he felt that this creature was too breakable. The way she trembled in fear was enough to make him reject his very own wicked plans for her. Someone like her would definitely not be able to survive in the hands of a monster like him.

Finally, with much difficulty he turned away from her and took a step before halting momentarily by the window. "Also, I don't know why you are wandering all alone in the forest last time around, but this monster shall warn you..." he looked at her over his shoulder. "If you don't want to encounter monsters like me again, don't ever go there again."

He was about to leap through the window when he heard her weak voice.

"W-wait..."

Immediately, he turned, surprise etched on his face, never expecting her to call out for him to stop. In fact, he had expected that she would rush to chase him off if he had stayed on any longer.

With a puzzled look, he furrowed his brows as he waited for her to speak.

"You're... wounded..." her voice was so weak, but he saw the fear in her eyes were not as severe as before anymore. And she was now approaching him with small careful steps.

He blinked in confusion. He could see she was still wary, so why was she approaching when it was clearly hard for her? Gavrael was so confused now as he watched her get closer to him slowly.

"I... think we must stop the bleeding..." she added quietly, and he realized that there was worry in her eyes and voice when she looked at him, and that shocked him again. She is now worried for him?

Gavrael nearly laughed out loud. Was she not dying from fear of him just a while ago? Why was it that she is worried now? Just because he had been wounded from the fight earlier? What was with this little creature?

He watched her scramble beneath her bed as she grabbed onto something from under there. Wriggling out from under there, he saw her holding a white cloth, before she approached him again. Then slowly, she reached out as if to wipe the blood from his forehead. But Gavrael caught her wrist before the cloth could touch him.

"You know what? You are bloody confusing me, butterfly girl." He tilted his head as he narrowed his eyes at her. He felt her flinch at his touch, but this time, surprisingly she did not jerk her hand off. "You're still clearly scared of me yet at the same time, you're worried as well?"

She swallowed and then she nodded. He weakly leaned the back of his head against the wall, as if he had suddenly lost all of his energy. "You are driving me insane, little butterfly." He chuckled in disbelief, shaking his head. "When I'm chasing, you desperately run away, now that I'm retreating, you're voluntarily coming at me..." he huffed as he squinted at her. "What are you trying to do?"

"You saved me..." she said and he furrowed his brows.

"I was the one who put you in danger." He contradicted her statement.

"Still, you got hurt because you saved me. I... it would trouble my conscience if you... if..."

"Don't tell me you're worried that I'll die over something so trivial like this." Gavrael smirked as he looked over at her.

When she nodded, a pleasant and quick laugh echoed in the room. The young lady gave a start at his laughter. She did not expect him to laugh at her statement.

"Good Lord, I don't know what to do with you anymore." He uttered, exasperated, but at the same time, the darkness in him seemed to have immediately dissipated. He could not help but laugh again helplessly, realising that this young lady seems to be able to affect his emotions so easily.

At that moment, the girl was also stunned. His laugh surprised her, and she was shocked because his laughter, though having hints of darkness, still sounded happy and pleasing and genuine, as if something amazing had just happened. And suddenly, her fear of him receded. She felt herself growing a bit more relaxed. Maybe because this person's suffocating darkness seemed to have disappeared slowly since she started to approach him.

Chapter 253 - Gavrael (Part X)

"J-just let me help you stop the bleeding. After that, you can go." She offered firmly, having no thoughts of allowing him to reject her offer. He had saved her life just now in the forest. Though it was due to him that she had ended up there in the first place, she was clear that she still needed to thank him for fighting off those beasts. Heaven knows what would have happened if he had been unhappy at her rejection and unwilling to come to her rescue! Although he was still terrifying to her, but her fear seemed to have been pushed aside when he laughed. She did not know why but the look in his eyes when he laughed seemed to calm and brighten up the dark atmosphere a little. She also did not know why but despite what he had done and what she saw, she could not ignore him. She reasoned to herself that this was definitely due to him coming to her aid and also because he was wounded now.

She remembered that she was like this too when she found a wounded wolf years ago. Even though she was scared, knowing that the animal was dangerous, she still could not bear to leave it alone. She realised that she was behaving the same way towards this person too. She sighed internally and told herself that this might come back to bite her in the ass one day. However, she knew that this was a trait within herself that could never be 'cured'.

"Please let go of my hand so I can check on your wound. Don't worry, I am quite good at this." She added and he smiled. Looking at his smile, she was feeling dazed as it was incredibly breath taking. How could a male have such a beautiful and attractive smile? That in itself was sinful beyond belief! But then, his smile suddenly faded and his gaze on her turned serious. She was taken aback at the abrupt change in his mood and wondered what might have triggered it.

"If you insist to do this, I might take back what I said a while ago that I'm not going to bother you anymore." His eyes gleamed. "If you don't want me to take back my words, don't do anything and just let me leave right now. You can make your choice."

The intensity in his voice made her gulp. She could feel that he was not joking around. If she did not want this dangerous stranger back, she must do as he had said and send him away now.

She stared at his devil-blue eyes and then her gaze fell to the blood that was still flowing from his wounded forehead. She told herself, this stranger was not someone weak. In fact, he could even be as dangerous as the devil himself! She had seen it with her own two eyes. This wound might not kill him. He was not a helpless little animal. He would not die from such a small wound.

"Time's up." His voice echoed, a smile now playing on his face, causing her to crease her brows. "The time I've given you to decide is up. Since you're unable to answer on time, I'm taking that as your answer to permit me in coming back here to see you again." He declared triumphantly. His eyes gleamed with amusement as he observed her bewildered face, and there was no more trace of the fearsome and raging stranger from a while ago.

He let go of her hand and lowered himself to the chair that was next to him while she was looking at him, speechless and still in the midst of processing what he said. "Alright, you can now treat my wound, Little Butterfly. I might die if you delay any longer ... you don't want anyone finding a dead body in your room later, do you?" He smiled, pleased as punch and she did not know what to even say for a while.

Before she knew it, her body had moved on its own and started treating his wound. Did he just trick her into doing what he wanted with that question and choice earlier?

She silently swallowed nervously. Wondering if she had made a grave mistake.

He lifted his gaze. "You're scared again?" he asked, and she saw that his smile had faded.

"I'm... just nervous..."

"Why?" His voice came out a little rough.

"I don't want to go through that again."

"That..."

"W-what you did... you suddenly appearing in my room and then abducting me like that. It scared me to death." She complained to him as she was using a long strip of cloth to wrap around his wound now. Somehow, she was surprised to be exchanging words with him so naturally.

He fell silent for a while.

"If I stop doing any of those things again, will you stop fearing me?" he asked and she halted, looking at him seriously. But before she could respond he looked away, his expression darkening again, making her nervous. "Of course not, right? You don't fear me just because of what I did. You just fear me because of what I am." He muttered bitterly. However, she heard him clearly as she was close enough to him.

His words made her crease her brows, puzzled. "What... you are?"

"You fear me because I look like a monster to you as well..." his blue eyes gleamed in the dark, as if he was certain that he was right. "Isn't that right?"

"You... I don't know what you are... but I don't believe that you look like a monster. Honestly, you look nothing like one!" She candidly told him, and he stilled, frozen as he looked at her, as if he

could not believe what he had just heard. "I am scared of you because you kept scaring me. The things you did since the moment I first met you in the forest was what made me scared of you."

He fell silent and then suddenly, he winced in pain.

"God dammit!" he cursed clutching his chest.

Seeing that he was in excruciating pain, she panicked. "What's wrong? Are you alright? Did I do something wrong?" She thought perhaps she had accidentally treated his wound wrongly.

He stood and touched her face. A pained smile curved on his lips. "I'm sorry... but I have to go now. See you tomorrow –" his face paled even as he quickly spoke, as though rushing to get somewhere quickly.

And then he disappeared – seemingly into thin air – leaving her standing there, stunned. The leftover strip of the cloth still hanging from her fingers.

Chapter 254 - Gavrael (Part XI)

"Good god, son! What in the underlands had happened to you?!" the queen exclaimed in shock as soon as she saw her son with a white cloth bandage wrapped around his head.

The panic and shock on her face made Gavrael realized that he had never allowed his mother to see him in less than a perfect state – ever. Even during those times when he underwent the harshest training, when he had gone through points where his entire body bled and were covered with wounds – he had always made sure to heal himself first before letting her see him. Now that he thought about it, this would be the first time she has ever seen him with a bandage somewhere on his person.

The dark faes are able to heal their wounds using their dark magic and Gavrael had already learned to heal himself long ago. However, there were some types of wounds no dark magic could heal like the wounds inflicted by a certain tiny yet dangerous beast roaming in the Forest of Crystals located in the deepest valley of the Under Land. The only way to heal the wounds inflicted on a person by those tiny beasts was through using a certain plant. However, by gaining that plant, only a few could be saved using that method.

This was why seeing someone wounded was a serious matter in the Under Land. Seeing his mother's pale and panicky face as she approached him, Gavrael was quick to explain, knowing that he was already making the queen worry about him to death. As much as he did not like his mother treating him as though he was still a child and worrying about his wounds, he could not deny her when she gets concerned over him. Though he does not show it, he loves her dearly.

"Calm down, mother. Don't worry, this is not a serious wound. I didn't get this wound here in the Under Land. I got this while journeying on the surface due to being a little careless and it's just a small scratch. It's nothing to worry about." He explained.

"Then why are you not healing yourself?!" The queen's voice was shrill with worry.

"This is just... well, I just didn't want to heal myself." He half-smiled as he touched the bandage on his forehead.

"What?! Why won't you want to heal yourself?" The queen then wondered if her son had lost his powers somehow.

Gavrael cocked his head to one side, knowing what his mother would be thinking. "Don't worry. It is not as you have feared. It is only because I want her to continue treating my wound until it heals naturally." He grinned happily and the queen gaped at him. Then a surprise flicker flashed in her beautiful brown eyes. This was the first time she is seeing her son behaving in such a manner. Though it was never seen on his face, however the queen recognised this look. She then took a closer look at her son, observing his attitude and behaviour carefully.

"Her..." she repeated and then her eyes narrowed at her son. "Gavrael, don't tell me... you have already found a girl you like on the surface?"

"A girl I like? Hmm..." he looked at his mother and then he corrected, "I am not sure if she is who I like... but she is definitely a girl I want."

The queen gasped. Oh goddess, her son is already in love? And only with once or twice having visited to the surface. Her heart swelled with happiness more so as she saw the marked changes in her son's eyes. At long last, she was now seeing some spark in his usually dull and bored eyes. But she cleared her throat and held back from showing her excitement too obviously.

"Alright, I think it's time for me to warn you now, son." She said, lifting her face and putting on a frown, as though to act a little stricter. "Don't even think about abducting the girl or anything of the sort... such a thing is a very bad move. Do you understand?"

Gavrael froze and the queen gaped at the expression she saw in her sons' eyes.

"You... don't tell me you have already..." she trailed off when Gavrael looked away. "Good god..." the queen pressed her temples before sighing heavily. She knows her own son and his looks and body language. And his body language now told her that he had done what she had just said not to do. "Listen, son. You must never do that again. Do you understand?" Her voice was severe.

"But just what I did doesn't seem to be a mistake in the end." Gavrael reasoned, then he pointed at the bandage wrapped around his head. "If I didn't abduct her, this wouldn't have happened. I did scare her and made her angry, but I guess it isn't that bad a move."

While the queen was so speechless that she took quite some time to form a response, a dark and deep voice echoed from behind the mother and son. "I must agree with your mother. Abducting your girl sometimes ends up being the right choice despite it being wrong. However, no matter the result, it didn't change the fact that it's very wrong. So son, next time, you must do it the right way." The king said and Gavrael looked at his father with interest.

"The right way? You're telling me there's a right way of abducting a girl..." Even Gavrael that was the one with intentions of abducting the girl was sceptical. This was the first time he had ever heard there was a 'correct' way to abduct a person! What a hoot!

"Listen son –"

"King Belial..." The queen cut the king off. Her voice sweet as she called his name but there was warning in them that it made the king immediately shut his mouth. "Stop giving your son bad ideas."

"I just said he'll do it the right way, didn't I? My beloved queen?" King Belial moved to his wife to coax her.

Chapter 255 - Gavrael (Part XII)

"There is no such thing as the right way. Abducting in itself is something sinful. And something wrong will still be wrong no matter how there is a 'correct way' to do it." The queen insisted.

"But didn't I abduct you many times, the right way, before?" he said in a low silken murmur, emphasizing the words 'the right way'. "I was certain you loved the way I abducted you and that was why you didn't bother resist, isn't that right? Queen Beatrice?" he then added, even as his warm breath touched the sensitive skin at the back of her neck.

The queen shivered and she quickly pulled away, remembering that their son was... wait... where's Gavrael? The queen's eyes widened as she turned around in a full circle, checking that Gavrael was really gone from the place. She then turned and glared angrily at her husband, the king.

"He's long gone my queen." King Belial chuckled as he confirmed on his errant son's escape from his mother.

"What? I'm not done talking to him yet!" The queen pouted slightly, feeling as though she was cheated out of her interrogation on that girl her son had taken a fancy to.

"I think our son realized it's late and it's time for you to rest, dear wife."

"You just helped him escape from me, didn't you? You, naughty king?!" she slapped his chest lightly as she sighed helplessly.

It had been many decades since she married this man and she had always thought since then how lucky she was to be loved by a man like this. Even after so many years, the way he looked at her, the way he loved and obsess over her never changed or waned. Until now, he still touched and look at her with the same love and intensity as before and she would never trade his love for anything else.

"Don't worry about our son, I'm sure he knows what he's doing."

"He just abducted a girl!" The queen exclaimed, a little exasperated with her husband that was intent of brushing it off as something minor.

"But at least, he didn't bring her back here." The king pointed out. "Don't worry, he's our son. He's a devil spawn sometimes but I'm quite sure he didn't hurt the girl."

"But I'm certain he scared the poor girl."

"He'd definitely learned his lesson now, I'm sure he would try his best not to do other things that scares her again. Didn't you see the look on his face when he was back?"

The queen smiled and she relaxed back against her husband's broad and taut chest.

"You are right. I could finally see some spark back in his eyes. I am always worrying about him. I know he's not happy here." She said weakly as she looked pitifully up at her husband and the king only silently caressed her head, kissing her forehead gently and lovingly. He had scooped her into his arms and had materialized them both back into their chambers now.

"Don't worry, wife. I believe his life's about to change."

"But will he be alright out there?"

"He will. He's strong and very capable. I'm certain he would still continue to grow even stronger as he faces more challenges in the future. The more trials he faces, the greater his growth will be, my love."

"I believe you, my king." She said and then she hugged him, burying her face into his chest.

"How about you? Is everything alright with you, my queen?"

She pulled her head away and looked at him. A smile now playing on her face. "As long as I'm with you, everything's more than fine."

His strong fingers brushed against her sensitive skin as he looked at her intensely. "I always dread the day when you start missing the surface and want to leave my dark world." He said quietly and the queen's smile faded. The next moment, she tiptoed and kissed his mouth, the mouth she had always thought was designed for sin and pleasure.

"Sometimes, I do miss the surface. But I never want to leave this place anymore. Not if it's without you." She said and placed her palm over his chest. "This dark world of yours is where I belong now. Because this is where you are. If there is no you on the surface, then I don't want to be there anymore."

Strong emotions filled his blue eyes and the next second he seized her mouth. "You really know how to make me fall head over heels with you over and over every single time, my queen." He whispered in a ragged breath as his clever and masculine hands freed her from her dress with a deft tug. "Now I want to debauch you for the nth time, my queen. I hope you're prepared."

The queen could only respond in a bright peal of laughter as she accepted his challenge.

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Up on the surface, back in the citadel, the girl was preparing herself for bed now as night had come once again. There was no moon this night as well, so the maids were leaving her room early. Whenever the moon is out and not being covered by the clouds, the maids will always stay in her room until her return.

"Good night, young lady." They said and as soon as the door was closed, the girl turned to stare outside the window. She could not get the thoughts of that stranger out of her head. She had thought about him all day and she knew that despite her denials, she was expecting him to appear in her room tonight again. And she was surprised that there seemed to be hints of excitement as well.

She shook her head and reached out for the lamp to blow out the flame, but she halted. She then rose from her bed and headed towards the window. As soon as she opened it, the person she was waiting for materialized before her, flashing her that wicked but somehow enticing smile.

"I'm back, my little butterfly." That low and sexy voice drawled out, causing goosebumps to prickle over her skin.

Chapter 256 - Gavrael (Part XIII)

"I'm back, my little butterfly." He said, a slow smile flashing across his face. "Did you miss me?"

Her eyes wide, obviously shocked at his sudden appearance. She was speechless at seeing how he had casually appeared right outside her window. Does he not have the decency to at least come in from the door and knock on it as a normal person? She thought that he is such a rascal.

"Aren't you going to welcome me in? I came back to look for you because of this," he added, pointing at the bandage that was still wrapped around his head. Her gaze immediately fell on the red spot on the white bandage, and she looked a little alarmed now. Was he bleeding still? Should it not have stopped already?

She opened the window wider, and he bit down on the inside of his lips to stop his grin. Immediately, he jumped inside. Though she had not said it, her actions showed that she was inviting him into her room. And it pleased him terribly. He was also glad that there was no more fear in those clear large eyes now.

"You... you really came back here just to have me treat your wound? Don't you have anyone back home who can help you with this?" she asked innocently, still slightly frowning and staring at his bandaged head. He could see that she was still wary and careful of him as she was still keeping her distance. But the fact that she was no longer trembling in his presence was more than enough to put a smile on his face.

"Are you saying you don't want to treat my wound anymore, Little Butterfly?" Gavrael asked in a fake sad tone, testing the waters with his question.

"O-of course not! Since I've said it, I would definitely do it. It's just that... I can't believe you actually returned here just because of that." The girl spluttered as she explained.

He flashed a slow smile. "What's so unbelievable about it?"

"Well... I..." She hemmed and hawed and could not finish her sentence.

When she could not seem to find words to say, he reached out and caught the ends of her hair. He felt her turned rigid at his actions but the fact that she did not step back in recoil and did not knock his hand off her was enough to please Gavrael. His smile was so delighted it was as though he was the cat that ate the canary.

"What's your name, Little Butterfly?" he asked.

The girl blinked and just stared at him for a while.

"Or would you prefer that I keep calling you 'Little Butterfly'? I don't really mind either way." Gavrael chuckled at her blinking at him. She looked adorable even when she looked confused. He wondered if he would see more adorable sides of this girl.

"Evie." She then answered after pouting slightly at his teasing.

"Evie..." he repeated. "Evie... I like the sound of it..." he uttered as he looked into her eyes and her cheeks slightly reddened. "Such a pretty name for a beautiful butterfly..."

"H-how about you? What's your name?" she asked him as well. "I can't always be referring to you as 'you'."

"Gavrael."

"Gav... rael." She tried saying out his name. It gave him a warm thrill hearing her say it aloud. She looked like she liked his name too. "Who are you? Are you..." She hesitated a little before continuing. "Where do you live?" She changed her question as she reached out and started carefully unravelling the bandage. He could tell she was still nervous. And it made him decide not to tell her the truth. At least not yet. Not right now when she was startled by every little thing he did. The little

butterfly was finally landing on him willingly. He would not want to give her any reason to fly away again.

"I live in that forest where you first saw me."

"Really?!" she looked surprised. "I was told that no one lived there but beasts and..." she trailed off.

"Well, I live there. But deep inside the forest. That's why I was there in the first place." Gavrael could only tell a half-truth for now.

Suddenly, she looked thrilled. "That means you would know almost everything about that place, right?" Her eyes were sparkling like diamonds.

He cocked his head to one side, not expecting the sudden interest she showed. "Yes... I guess?"

"Then could you tell me something about that place?" she pressed her hands together as she looked at him enthusiastically, as if she had found something very valuable.

"Why do you want know so much about that place?" he asked curiosity eating at him.

"I... because no one else knows anything about the Middle Lands. All I heard about that place are legends and stories. And I am not even sure what part of it is true, based on truth that had been distorted or even pure hogwash for that matter."

"Don't tell me you were going there in the hopes of finding out some information about that place?"

Evie blinked and then she looked outside the window. She had been told to never speak about her secret to anyone, not even to the maids who were here all these times. She had promised her mother to never talk to anyone about it and she had stayed true to her promise ever since then.

But now, there was a burning need she felt that made her want to speak about it and to this person she had just met thrice. She even found out about his name only today! She did not know why but she felt like it would be alright, if it was him that she told her secret to. And besides, he had already seen her in that strange state. She had also seen him fight when he was protecting her, and she already knew he was not a normal human. Just like her, he was different. And he seemed to somehow be of a worse off case compared to her.

Perhaps, he has the answers she was looking for? Maybe, he would be the key for her to understand everything, to these strange things that was happening to her.

Chapter 257 - Gavrael (Part XIV)

"Y-you're right. I was there every time the moon is full and visible because I want to know what is it that is happening to me." She said and he furrowed his brows.

"What is happening to you? You mean you glowing and growing wings every time the moon is out?" he questioned and Evie nodded.

"Yes. Actually, it only started out recently, after that day of my coming-of-age ceremony a few months ago. I started to glow, and wings began to grow out of my back. My mother hid what was happening to me for a month but when it was getting harder for her to hide me, she decided to bring me here. This place is the most secluded place within the entire human empire as it is the nearest to the Forbidden Lands. I also agreed to come over here because of the stories I have heard about the faeries living in the forbidden land long time ago. I was hoping I could find something if I visit the forbidden land. But it's already been a few months and yet, I have found nothing." Evie's voice

dropped off a little as she got lost in her own thoughts for a bit. "I kept running into all sorts of wild beasts, and that scared me to continue on any further. Even though I want to, I don't think my ability to fly and outrunning them is enough to save me from all those ferocious beasts living there." She narrated sullenly.

"So, you don't know what's going on with you, huh?" He uttered, more than pleased that she is more relaxed now. It was amazing how wonderful he felt just by her talking to him and telling him more about herself. "But did you believe that you might be a faery yourself?"

Her eyes widened and then they blinked. "I... I don't know. My parents are humans. None of them ever grow wings like me. I am... I am the only one in my family going through something like this."

Seeing the anxious look in her eyes, Gavrael stood and loomed over her. "Do you want me to help you? I can help you roam around the Forbidden Land all you want. And I will protect you while doing so." He said and she gaped at him. "You've seen it yourself, how I fight. I can easily defeat those beasts." He smiled proudly and Evie could not help but be tempted by his offer.

She truly wanted to go further into the land. Since she started growing wings, she always felt that something was always calling for her to go into the forbidden land. And whenever she was there, something was telling her to go even further. To go deeper within. Her intuition told her that her answers would be found there.

But her fear and uncertainty were stopping her. She also knew the obvious dangers that she needed to face. The forbidden land was the land of ferocious beasts. Beasts that had nearly scared her half to death the first time she saw them. If she did not have the advantage of her wings, she would never have escaped those beasts alive and in one piece.

Looking at him, she already felt like saying yes, right there and then. But she held back this time. This person was dangerous. She should not be trusting him so easily and blindly especially since this was the same person who had abducted her once.

"I... I will think about it." she answered hesitantly. Since she needed to wait for the moon to be full and visible again before her transformation happens again, she thought that she could afford the wait.

"Alright, I don't mind waiting." He said with a shrug, and she sighed out in relief. She was extremely glad that he was not going to force her.

"Okay. I'm done fixing your bandages." She then finished clearing up the soiled bandage from earlier. Looking at him, Evie was surprised at the realization that she had already told him so much about herself.

He looked pleased as he stood and looked at his reflection in the mirror. It amazed her how he moved around her like he was already so familiar with her. It was as if they did not just meet each other a few days ago but were long time friends. Was it his personality that was so carefree or was it just him that was plain shameless?

"So, you really don't plan to go out?" he asked as he leaned leisurely against the table, looking at her. He looked as though he was enjoying himself.

"I... it's getting late. I need to sleep now." she answered slowly, hoping that he would get the hint and get out of her room.

"Oh, right... go on, don't mind me. Go get ready and sleep." Gavrael responded in a laidback manner.

She blinked. "I... I already treated your wound. I think, maybe you... can come back tomorrow?" she said, and his face slowly lost its playfulness.

"You already got tired of my presence?" he asked glumly, and Evie suddenly felt bad, even though she knew she should not be. He is a boy. He should not be in her room at this hour.

"No... but... look, if my maids find you here, I'd be in trouble. How about you return in the morning?" she negotiated. She did not know why but she did not want to reject him or to hurt him. "If you come over in the morning, I think it'd be fine even if you stay on for as long as you like."

"Morning... you mean, when the sky brightens?"

Evie creased her brows at his strange question, but she still nodded.

"I can't..." his voice became a little cold, as if he hated the fact that he could not do so but he had no choice. "I can only come here when its dark."

"Why?" she questioned. Curiosity now was rising inside her.

"I'll tell you if you let me stay."

Oh no, he is a sly one.

Chapter 258 - Gavrael (Part XV)

Evie pressed her lips tight. "You know... I... even if I let you stay on, I will still need to go to sleep. So, there's really nothing you can entertain yourself with in here." she explained carefully, keeping her tone gentle and light.

"Oh, you don't have to worry about that. I'll find something to keep me occupied while you're asleep." He said confidently and Evie's brows creased.

"S-something interesting? Like... what?" She quickly looked around her room, scanning to see if there was anything that she had missed which could keep him interested. After looking, she turned back to him and frowned as she could not think what was it in her room that could be interesting enough.

Seeing her frown, Gavrael chuckled out loud. "Hmm... watching your sleeping face is plenty enough interesting for me," he smiled, and Evie blinked. Disbelief filled her large clear eyes even as a slight hint of confusion sparked within those depths. How could watching her sleep could be interesting? If ever, that would be the most boring thing that she could think of!

"You're kidding. That's definitely not something interesting –" Evie started to object.

"Oh, but it is, Little Butterfly, very interesting!" He cut her off and he said those words so confidently without any doubts. It was as if he was more than sure of it and Evie could only look at him, speechless. "Maybe because I like watching your sleeping face?" He added and before she could react, she was suddenly lifted from the ground.

She gasped in surprise as she found herself in his arms. Dread was about to bloom inside her again, thinking that he might abduct her for the second time, but the next second, she felt her back landing on something soft – her own bed.

Her eyes were wide as she looked at him. "W-what are you doing!" she exclaimed, her heart beating ferociously now.

"Putting you to bed, Little Butterfly." He answered and the fright in her heart settled immediately, maybe because she could not see neither mischief nor malevolence in his eyes.

The next thing he did made her fright completely dissolve as he grabbed the blanket which was folded at the foot of the bed and flicked it open, only to cover her up all the way till her neck. Then he pulled a chair right next to her bed and sat there, his eyes never lifting off of her.

"Now close your eyes, you said you need to sleep now, didn't you?" He said in a low voice.

Evie just looked at him mutely. She was at a total loss and had no idea on how to deal with this person at all. Everything he does just frighten her or render her completely speechless.

"Quit staring and sleep, or could it be that..." he narrowed his eyes slightly, "could it be that you're just like me? You can't sleep because you're unable to take your eyes off me too, right?" a mischievous smile played on his lips as he said that Evie blushed beet red.

"O..of course not! H-how could you expect someone to sleep if she's being watched like this?" she huffed. "The nerve of him! Could he get anymore conceited?" Evie thought silently.

"Oh... I thought you'd feel the same thing I do." He fell silent for a long while. Then a sigh escaped his lips. "Fine," He finally said, and Evie thought he had relented and would finally stand up and leave her to sleep in peace.

But to her shocked surprised, he suddenly jumped into her bed and laid next to her, facing her.

Her eyes nearly bulged out. "W-w-what are y—y-you doing?!" She stammered out in fright.

"Since you don't want me watching you sleep, then, let's sleep together." He said smiling and Evie felt her patience snapped. She was about to rise to push him off her bed but because he was lying over her blanket, Evie could only struggle, pushing at him as hard as she could.

"No! Absolutely not. You can't just casually lie on a girl's bed like that –"

There was a thud that echoed inside the room after much struggling and Evie found herself on top of him, while he was on the floor.

Evie was frozen as she looked down at him, their faces so close that it caused his fiery blue eyes to suddenly look so intense. It felt like there were icy flames in them, mesmerizing her.

"If it's wrong for me to lie on your bed then I wouldn't mind the floor." His pleasing voice echoed as a heart stopping smile curve across his lips. "I definitely wouldn't mind this sleeping arrangement as well," he added as his hand moved to the back of her head and gently pulled her head down to have it resting on his chest.

Evie was unable to move. She heard his loud heartbeats thumping away and she felt her own skipped a beat too. He was... he was warm as well... wait, no. This is...

Suddenly, she pulled away and frantically climbed off him.

"F-fine... you can stay. But no sleeping on my bed or touching me. If you don't agree with my conditions, then you may leave." She told him and Gavrael slowly sat up, leaning his back against the bed, as his piercing gaze fell on her.

For a moment, Evie became utterly nervous at the look he levelled at her but almost immediately, he smiled. He threw his head back and laughed out freely without inhibition. Evie was startled at his actions.

"Alright, your wish is my command, my little butterfly." He said, making her speechless once again.

Time passed but Evie still could not seem to fall asleep. She had her eyes closed since a long while ago, but his presence was just too strong. There was truly no way she could sleep with him there. Was he still staring at her?

Slowly, Evie opened her eyes and saw him resting his head over his arm that was on the side of her bed. And she was right, he was watching her.

Chapter 259 - Gavrael (Part XVI)

Evie pulled her blanket and covered her face. She could not believe what was going on. It was incomprehensible that a boy, and a strange one at that, was in her room at night and behaving so oddly like this. Is this not something that should terrify her? But strangely, she did not feel much fear towards him anymore since that night he saved her. Still, with the way he was acting right now, she should be fearful, right?

Another long moment passed and still, Evie could not sleep. She was nowhere near feeling sleepy! And it has been a while, but she had not felt him move at all. Did he turn into a statue?

Curious, Evie slowly peeked at him and what she saw surprised her. His eyes were closed. Did he fall asleep?

Evie did not turn the lamp off so she could still see his face. As she stared at him, she noticed he had long dark and thick beautiful lashes. His features were simply perfect that she could not find a single flaw even as she examined his face closely. She was certain she had never seen a male as beautiful as him her entire life. Looking at him now, with him staying so still and with his eyes peacefully closed, she could not help but wonder if he was even a real person or an extremely perfect carving made of marble.

Before she realized it, her hand had stretched out on its own, her fingers brushing against his cheek. She abruptly retracted her hand, as if scalded. But he opened his eyes and lazily looked at her.

"You're not being fair, Little Butterfly. You forbade me to touch you but here you are, touching me when I'm not looking." He said, flashing a slow, deadly smile.

She swallowed and blushed hard. And before she could form any reply, he grabbed her wrist and placed her palm on his cheek, then he closed his eyes again. "But I don't mind. You can touch me all you want, 'cause I like your touch too."

Evie could not breathe for a short while. Her heart was beating wildly. The feel of his skin under her palm was welcoming and smooth like warm jade, his hand over hers too. And now, she felt her face and the entire atmosphere in the room getting hot too.

After battling for calm for a long while, Evie decided to retract her hand. At this rate, she would not be getting any sleep at all. Dawn might even be coming soon. However, when she looked at him again, she could not bring herself to remove her hand.

She pressed her lips tight, not knowing what to do now.

Gavrael could hear her heartbeat loud and clear. He knew she was unable to sleep, and he felt a little bad. However, his selfishness had won by a big margin. He did not want to leave even though he knew she was uncomfortable with his presence and that was causing her to be unable to sleep. And now that he was touching her hand like this, all reasoning had already left him, and he could not bring himself to care about anything else.

Then he heard her yawn. He waited for her to fall asleep for another long while, but she did not, and he was starting to feel really bad. Still, he did not want to go.

Silently, Gavrael began to use his magic. He did not want to use it on her, but he had no choice now. He really did not want her to keep fighting her sleep because of him.

Eventually, due to his magic, Evie finally fell asleep.

Without letting go of her hand, Gavrael lifted his face and looked at her now sleeping face. He stared at her for an immeasurable amount of time. Half of his mind simply admiring her face and half wondering and trying to figure out why could he not get enough of her no matter how long he stared at her like this. He thought he was going to eventually get his fill and stop so he could now go back but it did not seem as though that would happen. He could not make himself leave her voluntarily. He sat there staring like a besotted fool until his time ran out.

When his time was up, he cursed within himself as he hesitantly let go of her hand and again, disappeared from her room as how he did the previous time.

When he returned to the Under Land, all Gavrael could think about was the surface and his Little Butterfly. Time in the Under Land seemed to somehow move goddamned slow suddenly and every second he spent stuck here was driving him mad. He could not help but wonder why time on the surface seemed to fly by so fast in comparison. The entire darkness time that he spent on the surface felt like a mere couple of hours to him.

Gavrael wandered about aimlessly in the city to distract himself and hopefully get rid of some of his boredom. After roaming about, he ended up in the old shop he used to visit when he was young. That was back when he was still the weakest creature in the Under Land.

There was an old fae in there who did nothing else but write and read books. He was supposed to be selling potions and magical weapons as was indicated by the name of his shop. However, when one walked into this shop, all you would see on the shelves were piles of books everywhere.

"Good to see you back here, my prince." The old fae greeted him happily, "What can I do for you this fine day?"

Gavrael looked around. He did not know why he ended up walking back to this place as well. "Is there any magical instrument or weapons or... books that's about the magic of manipulating time?" he asked, surprising even himself at his own question.

Chapter 260 - Gavrael (Part XVII)

The ancient dark fae paused as he tilted his head to one side, considering the young prince's question. His brow lifted at the strangeness of his question. Unbeknownst to Gavrael, this ancient fae had been watching over him ever since he was young. This dark fae, called Claudius, was a legendary teacher of the previous kings who reigned in the Under Land, including the current king. He had ashen long hair and a long beard.

Claudius had retired from service since King Belial took over the throne and had requested to leave the imperial palace, as the ancient one had thought that King Belial was one of the greatest rulers the Under Land had ever had. He had thought there was no need of him to be there in the imperial palace anymore. Thus, he had left, despite the king's disapproval.

Years later, he was surprised when a boy came wandering into his shop. He was so weak and was obviously bullied. He knew the boy was coming to his shop to hide from his peers. Often, the boy came to his shop wounded, bloodied, and battered and he hid there, healing himself before he leaves.

The ancient one knew from the first time he laid eyes on the boy that he was the King's son. And that this boy was obviously a half-vampire, and half-dark fae. But that was what made the boy look so interesting to Claudius. He did not do anything and just watched him until eventually, the weak and bullied prince grew into a fearsome young man. That was something not surprising at all to Claudius. He had known all along that the boy would grow up to be strong and one day, he felt that the young prince might even surpass the great King Belial, his father.

However, the question he asked him the first time after going missing for years surprised the ancient fae. He would have never expected this prince to ask about time manipulation. Who had given such an idea to this prince? This topic was a taboo for millennia because the dark magic of time manipulation was long forbidden.

"Prince, where did you get the idea that there is something like that?" Claudius asked, curiosity shining from his ancient eyes.

The prince fell silent. But after a while, he looked at Claudius with confidence. "I was taught that there are no such things that are impossible with magic. As long as one is powerful enough, with the help of magic, one could do anything... everything. Isn't that statement written in the book of magic?" he replied, cleverly. "I believe it." He continued. "So, I believe manipulating time isn't something that is impossible as well. Maybe, it sounded impossible right now because no one ever dare try it. Or perhaps they just did not have the right combination of spells and conditions."

Claudius put the book in his hand down onto the counter. And Gavrael knew what exactly he would do next. He did exactly the same thing as what his father did when he began speaking about the Light Faes.

He leaned forward towards Gavrael when the dark circle completely covered them.

"Listen carefully young prince, I don't know what motivated you to even think about this, but I must warn you, time manipulation is forbidden. I'm sure you've heard about the magic of reviving the dead and you know the price one has to pay for it. Time manipulation falls into that same category. And I want to tell you the stakes involved in this is much higher."

Gavrael did not even looked discouraged at what the ancient fae had warned him about. "So I was right. There's indeed a secret magic to manipulate time."

"My prince! Did you not listen to what I just said?" Claudius exclaimed.

"I did. But I caught wind of someone who managed to revive someone and despite the severity of the consequences, I heard that the fae was able to survive. And the reason was because he was purely strong enough."

Claudius sighed. He should have known. This young prince was no different from King Belial. A hard-headed man who was never afraid of the forbidden.

"I know where you are coming from, my prince. But I want you to understand that the consequences of time manipulation are worse and far reaching. Because it's not only one or two who will suffer the consequences. Everything and everyone will be affected, not just the user. If something goes wrong, you could change an entire course of events, whether it's in the past, present or future. And I want to remind you that power alone won't be enough to overcome this." The ancient fae explained firmly and seriously. "Time manipulation was one of the highest-level magic ever existed and it's not something anyone should learn on a whim. It's the most dangerous magic ever existed, so please my prince, I am advising you to forget about that idea. Throw it out of your mind completely and tell yourself there is no such thing. The consequences are not something you alone will be able to bear. Heed my warnings, my prince."

Silence reigned between the two for a long while before Gavrael spoke again.

"I do understand why such magic is dangerous, but I don't agree with your argument stating that it is not something anyone should learn about. I believe any magic is dangerous if used dangerously. On the other hand, any magic is good as long as one doesn't use it to carry out evil deeds." Gavrael sounded so certain and firm about his opinions and the ancient fae could not help but feel amazed.

"So you're saying that the reason why you wanted to learn about the magic of time manipulation is so you could use it to do something good?"

"Yes." He answered with conviction.

"I wonder what this 'something good' you are talking about, my prince. I do see the point that you are making, but that in itself is not enough to convince me. I still think you should drop this idea and learn about something else. There are so many other magic spells that are beneficial and more suitable that you can learn if you truly want to bring good to others." Claudius tried to sound the prince out to see if he would say what he intended to use that time manipulation spell for.