

SPELLBOUND 331

Chapter 331 - King Of The Dark Faes (Part I)

Before Evie could even react, Zirrus had already appeared before her at lightning speed, standing in as her shield to protect her from that unknown person. Zanya and the others immediately followed after Zirrus' example as well and moved to form a living barrier in front of their queen. The light faes all started glowing as they stood there, ready in their fighting stance.

The atmosphere became extremely rigid, heavy, and intense. Everything seemed to have turned into standstill. It was a moment where all it would take was a single movement to spark a deadly and intense clash.

"Easy there, light faes." Came a deep and dark voice that surely only belonged to no one else but the blue-eyed man.. His tone was surprisingly calm and not threatening at all but there was just something else that could be detected in that hauntingly beautiful voice that made the tiny hairs on everyone's spines rise, except for Evie.

This aura, this sound... those devil-blue eyes... they were all too familiar to her to rouse any chills from her. However, as she looked on, she did not know whether to smile in welcome or frown. Therefore, she opted to keep silent and stared on with a neutral expression plastered across her face.

"I'm not your enemy, little ones." His voice echoed again, making all the light faes become even more extremely tense. "I am only here to have a little chat with your queen." The man said as he gestured with a nod towards Evie.

Upon hearing those words, Evie did not hesitate any longer and stretched her hand forward to tap lightly on Zirrus' shoulder. Zirrus only turned back and looked at his queen with questioning eyes. "Let me through, Zirrus. It's alright." She said and Zirrus looked at her with wide eyes.

"But my queen, this creature is..." Zirrus trailed off at the sight of their queen looking very calm and not at all like she was facing an enemy.

It shocked Zanya how Evie did not seem to feel even a little fear when all of them were already on edge. The man in black cloak made their fighting and survival instincts kick in instantly, even forcefully planting fear into their hearts just by standing there and looking at them! He was dangerous. Extremely dangerous! They could feel it clearly! Anyone, even the strongest light fae would not be able to help themselves but shiver in trepidation before him. But how was it that their queen managed to look unfazed? Did she not feel the overwhelming dark pressure that is literally flowing from him? Seeing her so composed and calm gave them all a feeling of pride as their queen is so steadfast in facing such a formidable person!

"It's fine. Let me through." Evie repeated to Zirrus, this time more firmly that he and the rest of the light faes could only move away with great difficulty. Deep in their hearts, they still thought that going forward so easily was not the right thing for their queen to do no matter how strong she is. Does she not need to be wary too? Thus, they still stood very close to her, never letting down their guard at all as they let her step forward and face the creature in the dark cloak.

The man lifted his hand and the light faes directed all their weapons at him. But Evie lifted up one elegant arm to signal her people and stop them from attacking.

A short and amused chuckle that again sounded so haunting and beautiful came from him and then he pulled the hood of his dark cloak that was rimmed with exquisite golden lines. That strong masculine hand and long tapering but strong fingers that gave the impression of great power drew everyone's attention.

The moment his face came into view, everyone – even Evie – was awed at the sight of his face. Just like his voice, the man had the look that could only be described as something hauntingly beautiful.

If the light faes had the ethereal look and beauty that was forged in heaven, his was something that seemed to be forged in the deepest of darkness. The light faes had never seen such kind of beauty before – dark, sombre, and evoking feelings of melancholy that draws people's attention to it.

But Evie was different. She had seen it before. On her very own beloved husband. However, Gav was not as dark as this man. But she had always thought that Gav's appearance should not be described as heavenly but one that haunts and kills anyone looking on senseless.

And looking at this dark creature right now, Evie did not even need to ask anymore because to her, the connection between this man and her husband was already undeniable. There was a very clear blood relation that could be seen between her husband and this man – that was how strong genes can be.

"Good to see you again young queen." He said amiably, smiling at her.

"Again...?" Evie echoed, her eyes narrowing in curiosity. She caught onto the slight inflection the man had in his tone when he uttered the word. His smile only widened as he saw her pick up the important hint that he was giving her.

"I've seen you before, but the same cannot be said for you." He explained mildly as if he had seen the questions popping in her head.

"Who are you?" she then asked. She already had an idea on who he was, but she must ask, not only to confirm it for herself. But also, for the sake of the light faes, her people, who were still obviously unable to even breathe normally at all.

"I am Belial, king of the dark faes." He introduced and the light faes were all shocked, terror immediately shone within their eyes. "Ah, don't get the wrong idea. I meant king of the real dark faes. I do not refer to the Halflings that you are probably more familiar with."

Chapter 332 - King Of The Dark Faes (Part II)

"Why are you here?" Evie asked again, pulling his attention back to her.

"I am here to lend you a hand, young queen." He replied. "It seems that my son is giving you one hell of a tough time."

Hearing him say the word 'son' made Evie suddenly feel a little emotional. She had heard from Claudius that because of the punishments from using such forbidden spells, Gav would never be able to see his parents ever again.

But she tried her best to stay calm. "Yes. He's such a big bad asshole. Imprisoning me against my will and creating all these damned barriers to anger me." She said in a firm, frustrated voice.

Belial suddenly laughed. "Right. He indeed is an asshole from what I am seeing now. I can't believe my son dared to lock you up and anger his wife to this extent." He looked so amused but when his

smile faded, his gaze on Evie became so gentle and Evie remembered the way her father looked at her whenever he felt proud of her. King Belial's gentle and soft look somehow gave her the same kind of feeling and it warmed her heart without knowing why.

"It's really amazing that you actually managed to break the barrier on your own, young queen. It's very impressive I must say." Belial praised her. "It seems my instinct to delay from rescuing you was right all along."

Evie creased her brows. "What do you mean? Delay?"

"Claudius told me about what had happened," Belial began. "And since it's my son who created the barrier, I know that I would be the only one who could break it and no one else. However..." He chuckled mirthfully before continuing. "Turns out that I might be wrong after all. It seems you're an exception to the rules of dark magic since you actually managed to break it."

"Actually, technically speaking, it was not exactly me who broke the barrier. My dragon was the one who managed to break it because he's outside of the barrier. If Onyx was inside the barrier with me, maybe all of us would still be inside right now."

"Hmm... so is this why you decided to leave without awakening the tree of life?"

"Yes. I feel that it would be pointless since no one is inside the barrier of the tree. He used a protection barrier on it so it's only possible to break it if someone could break the spell from the inside, isn't it?" Evie reasoned out.

"Yes, you are right." Belial nodded. "So young queen, you're planning to just go to war even if you know your people will end up losing their magic?" The question he posed was sharp and to the point.

Evie fell silent for a while and just stared at him. She considered whether to play it dumb and not say anything or to reveal more of her plans to him.

"I don't really have a choice but do that. However, I do have an alternative plan."

"And that plan is... you ride your dragon and find my son while the light faes march onwards to the capital? You will find your husband and then proceed to beat him up to make him release the barrier on the tree of life. Then you'll fly back again once that happens, and you successfully awaken the tree."

Evie could only look at him with wide opened eyes. Was he a mind reader?! Do the dark faes have in their possession a spell that could be cast to read minds?

Belial chuckled again, looking impressed. "I am really awed. My wife would surely love to meet to you." he commented, and Evie felt another surge of emotions welling up within her at the mention of Gav's mother. She felt as though she wanted to meet with his mother too.

"However," Belial's face became serious. "I must say that your plan is dangerous. I commend you for that and I can't blame you for formulating such a plan because I know there is no other choice available for you at that time."

"At that time?" Evie's voice grew hopeful as she looked on at King Belial.

"Yes... because, now you have another choice to choose from. Right here." And he pointed at himself and grinned, flashing that same devilishly handsome smirk that Gavriel loved to wear when he was being mischievous.

"You will break that barrier!" Evie exclaimed and the dark fae king nodded.

"Didn't I say I'll lend my daughter in law a hand? This way, it would be less dangerous for you. And I wouldn't have let you travel by yourself, even if you were accompanied by all your dragons. Anyway, it is something that I can do." King Belial even gave a minute but elegant shrug of his shoulders as though what he offered to do for Evie was not a big deal.

A wave of relief so poignant washed over Evie immediately. Of course, she had already weighed all the risks involved with her original plan. She knew it was perilous, not only for her but for her people as well. Leaving them marching without magic being replenished is a huge risk. Moreover, if something unexpected happened and she had to spend more time trying to find Gav or persuading him to release the barrier... anything could happen. But King Belial was right, there was no other choice for her before he came.

That was why she is feeling incredibly relieved now.

"Thank you, Your Majesty." Evie expressed and nodded in gratitude and Belias smiled, walking closer to her.

"My pleasure, young queen. I'll do anything to help. Because if I don't, my wife will get upset and she might ignore me for a long time." He said in playful tone, winking at her. "Now shall we make a move? I believe you're in quite a bit of a rush, my dear daughter in law."

Chapter 333 - Lucky

"Now shall we make a move? I believe you're in quite a bit of a rush, my dear daughter in law." Evie blushed as she remembered how King Belial had teased her. Although she had married Gavriel, and thus, making King Belial her father in law, the term still caused her to feel a little shy.

However, she shook her head and focussed on the present and at the task at hand. Turning to the rest of the light faes who were waiting a few steps behind her, she announced that they will be accepting King Belial's help to break the barrier that was surrounding the tree of light.

"My queen, are you very certain about this?" Zirrus came close and asked Evie with a lowered voice. The light fae looked very torn and hesitant and Evie understood his concerns.

The light faes were intimidated by Belial. They found such a dark and strong creature a threat and she would not blame them. She was not expecting them to simply trust strangers when these light faes had experienced the betrayal of someone from thousands of years ago.

"I am thankful for the concern, Zirrus.. Do not worry, I am not asking anyone of you to trust him. However," her gaze became firm and kind of severe as she swept her gazes to all the light faes near her, "I am asking everyone to trust me."

There was silence and then everyone nodded, making Evie smile.

King Belial who had seen this nodded in approval. His piercing fiery blue eyes brimming with pride as he looked at her authoritative aura presiding over her people.

In no time, everyone was back in the castle. Evie led Belial to the veranda overlooking the tree of light.

As they stood there and looked at the tree, Belial suddenly removed his cloak, and he grew wings. Large wings akin to the wings of the male light faes sprouted from his back. The only difference is that Belial's were smoke dark and visibly larger.

He spread it and he flew close to the barrier. Evie watched him touch the barrier and then his own dark and strong magic overlapped it. The darkness became so thick in the air and then, the dark magic seemed to waver shakily and started to dissolve the barrier. He did not break it like how Onyx did. It seemed like he absorbed the magic from the barrier until there was nothing left.

Impressed, Evie gaped in awe until Belial returned to her side, his wings disappearing behind his back after landing to stand next to her. That was fast!

"I can't express how thankful I am with your help, King Belial." Evie said, her eyes brimming over with gratitude. Then she looked down. "Even though I am the queen of the light faes, I am still not strong enough." A wry smile curved on her lips.

She was surprised she had actually said that aloud. Maybe because no light faes were with them right now and that was why she was expressing her disappointment towards herself.

To her surprise, a large warm hand landed on the crown of her head. She looked up and King Belial was patting her head gently as he looked down at her with fondness.

"You are wrong, dear child," he said in a serious tone. "You are strong enough. Believe that. My son is very strong, he might even have surpassed the likes of me now. You might not believe me but only I can break this barrier he created. Otherwise, why would I, the king, must be the one to leave the Under Land just to go and break a barrier? And yet, you broke the prison barrier yourself. You say that it was the dragon's doing. But I don't think so. Without you, the dragon will not do anything about it, much less break it. In short, it was you who did that. So, lift your head up, young queen. You are powerful. Very powerful."

Evie could not help but smile. And then, she had the sudden urge to hug him.

"Thank you." she said, "May I hug you?" she asked a little shyly.

Belial did not answer but hugged her tight in response. "My wife will be jealous of me once I tell her about this." He said cheekily as if bragging about this 'privilege'. Then he patted Evie's head again before letting go. "I always thought my son is such a poor and unfortunate child. Fate loved to make him suffer, but now I have changed my mind. He's not that totally unfortunate because he has someone like you. He's lucky to have met and gained you, and I think that's all that matters." Belial said. Somehow, meeting this young queen made him feel a lot better. He had sometimes thought that his son suffered too much just because of a girl. But now he realized that she was worth his son's sufferings. She is totally worth it. And the thought gave him such a great relief. Because if Gavrael had been and is still suffering for a woman that was nothing like this one, he might get angry.

"Thank you." was all she said, looking quite emotional and yet trying her best to remain calm and collected. He remembered his wife and he could not help but smile indulgently, thinking that this one was perfect for his stubborn and wilful son.

"Also, you'll become even more powerful from now on, young queen." He said and Evie smiled as she looked towards the direction where tree of life was.

"I hope so. This tree of light might make me stronger as well."

Belial shook his head. "No child. Well, the tree of life will certainly help but..." he looked at her as Evie faced him with questioning eyes. "The reason why I came here isn't just to help you out with the barrier alone. I came to remove the restriction that I had previously put on you."

Evie: "?!"

Before Evie could process all that he just said, Belial stretched out his hand and put his palm over her chest. Then suddenly, a delicate and ashen smoke-like dark magic began to curl and twist out of her body.

Chapter 334 - Like Father Like Son

As the ash-colored smoke-like magic swirl and curl out of her body, it picked up speed after a few moments, looking all to be like an ominous delicate whirlwind around her. Evie's eyes were wide as she wondered what it was with the magic that was surrounding her and looked at her father-in-law for answers.

"That day I restricted your awakening," Belial saw the questions spilling from her expressive eyes and started explaining as he continued pulling out the dark magic from inside of her, "... it was meant to simply delay your awakening. But I found out that the magic inside of you was just too powerful. It's a very quiet magic, almost unnoticeable, but it was something a weak magic could never block. I knew then that if I don't use a very powerful spell, I wouldn't be able to stop your magic from coming out. And I was right. Because even with the powerful spell I had put on you, you still managed to awaken almost half of your magic." King Belial smiled at Evie with a helpless and affectionate expression on his face.

"H-half of my magic?" Evie stammered, having a hard time believing what she was hearing. She had thought her magic was already so great and was very satisfied with her progress despite the troubles she was facing. But... to think that it was only less than half of what she truly has? Does that mean her powers were more than what she is wielding right now? Her head spun with the implication of what was told to her.

Belial smiled proudly. "Yes. Believe it or not, you're not some average light fae queen. I believe you could surpass all your predecessors." His verification only left her slightly short of breath due to the unexpected twist that had hit her so suddenly.

Evie could not speak and just stared at the dark magic leaving her body for a long while.

"Why? Why did you restrict my magic?" She then asked and an apologetic look flashed over Belial's aristocratic face. After much thinking, this was the one thing that stood out. Why was there the need for him to seal her magic powers? It seemed that he was so desperate to seal her magic powers to the extent that he even put such a strong spell on her.

Belial sighed a little forlornly. "I did it in trying to change my son's fate. I thought that stopping you from meeting him could somehow change something in the chain of events that would unfold. Unfortunately, I was wrong despite all my efforts. You two are fated to meet and no matter what anyone tries, what's meant to happen will happen. Of course, I know it's wrong of me to meddle and

interfere, but I hope you can forgive me for doing it for the sake of my son." Evie could see the apology and slight regret displayed on the king's face.

"You really are a sly one your majesty," Evie gave him half a smile, helpless at the hopeful expression that shone from his eyes. "You helped me first before you confessed your wrongdoing and then asked for forgiveness." She huffed as she realised where the son had inherited this particular trait that irritated her many times from. Apparently, 'like father, like son' could be seen even in behaviours as well and not just in physical looks.

"Well, isn't that the right way to do it, young queen? Otherwise, you might have slammed me away before I could even help you." He smiled mischievously even as his eyes twinkled at her. "This way, you'll think twice before telling me that you would not consider forgiving me at all. At the very least, you would consider my request, right?" His voice was hopeful.

Evie's smile widened as she shook her head. "You're really my husband's father. Now I understand why he's the way he is. Though I still think that your majesty is worse in this department. In asking for forgiveness, I mean." She could not hold back the comment and just had to say it out, taking the chance to tease her husband's father.

"Oh my," Belial tilted his head slightly, "that's one harsh judgement, my dear daughter in law." He grinned, as if he was prouder instead of being offended by her 'harsh judgement'. Belial now thought that daughters are much better than sons. "To think you actually have the guts to say that this almighty king of the Under Lands is worse than his son right before his face."

A small but joyful chuckle came burbling out of Evie. Somehow, she felt like her whole being was lifted from all the tenseness and stresses she had experienced for the past couple of days. She did not know if it was because of the dark magic leaving her body or simply due to the companionship of this remarkable man. He should not be an approachable man in general – just judging by the title and position he held and the sheer amount of power that is within his command. He was the type to intimidate with just his aura and gaze alone. However, once you talked to him, he was incredibly charming. It would be very hard for anyone not to forgive such a man!

"What if I tell you I can't forgive you?" Evie teased with a serious gaze, realising that it will still take a little more time for him to fully pull out all the dark magic inside her. She had, in fact already forgiven him even before he had asked her for forgiveness. What he did was wrong, but she understood his reasoning. Like most of the parents, he just wanted to help, and if possible, to protect his son and do anything and everything he could. Perhaps, he was left without a choice and could only resort to doing that. And besides, she met Gav despite it all, so there was no reason for her not to forgive him.

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Chapter 335 - Light

"Hmm..." Belial feigned being thoughtful. "If you can't forgive me, then I can't do anything about it. My sin is already done and if saying sorry is not enough then I don't think bribes or gifts, or any atonement will work as well. I don't beg and chase people for forgiveness except for my wife."

Evie raised a brow. "This means, you've done something wrong to my mother-in-law and you had begged and chased after her for forgiveness before, am I right?" She said in a taunting tone, really

enjoying their light and relaxed bantering. It even shocked her at how seemingly natural it was for her to say those words 'mother-in-law'.

"Beatrice," he said suddenly. "I don't know if my damned son told you but that is my wife's name." He smiled, his gaze twinkled at the mention of the name.

"It's a beautiful name."

"It is. She's the most beautiful in my eyes. And yes, you're right... I did something bad to her." He could not quite hide that sheepish look when he said that.

"I bet she forgave you eventually, right? Of course, not before you had to beg and chase after her for a long time, I assume?" Evie snickered behind her hand.

Belial faked throwing her a dirty look before laughing good naturedly. "She's a gutsy little tiger. She really did give me quite the hard time. One hell of a time, in fact. I was actually afraid I'd spent a lifetime pursuing her without her accepting me."

There was only one thought in Evie's mind as she listened to him. And that was how amazing Beatrice was to make such a man like this beg, chase, and pursue her for what seemed for quite a long while. She could already see in this man's eyes the extent of his love for her.

"I wish I could meet with her one day." Evie said, smiling. But Belial's expression suddenly changed a little. He was just so much like Gav. He could hide his emotions very well. However, there were times when their emotions appeared in a flash before they disappeared like they did not exist in the first place.

"I'd love for her to meet you too, my dear. But I don't want to mislead or give you any false hopes. She cannot come up to the surface here anymore." He said and Evie felt a little sad.

"I see..." Evie felt a pang of disappointment after hearing that.

"Don't worry, I'll definitely tell her about you. She'd be thrilled to hear anything about her daughter in law."

Just as Belial said that, the magic in his hand seemed to pulse and he nodded at her, signalling her to prepare herself.

He lifted his other hand and his magic swirled around them both, getting stronger and more concentrated.

And then it burst out. The dark magic got pulled back into his palms and once Belial clenched his fists, Evie started to glow.

She felt that her body becoming ever so light, so different from before. She looked at herself and the light magic seemed to be overflowing from her very pores. It was as if her body could not contain it within her physical vessel and now, it was leaking out profusely.

And as natural it was for her to breathe, without her doing anything, or even thinking about it, she felt something growing on her back. Until white wings with silvery strands unfurled and stretched out so large and majestic behind her.

Her eyes could only circle wide as she looked over her shoulders and saw her massive wings.

"Why don't you try to fly?" Belial asked and Evie swallowed nervously at first. But after seeing the confidence and approval in the man's eyes she squared her shoulders and she imagined in her mind, the way Zanya and the other light faes fly.

Picturing herself doing exactly what the light faes had done, Evie tried flapping her newly acquired wings nervously.

She managed to fly but she wobbled in mid-air and started to drift downwards.

Zirrus was about to rush over to her rescue, but Belial stopped him before he could launch himself into the air. "Let her be for now. She'll figure it out herself." The king said and Zirrus just stood there, frozen, unable to defy him despite him wanting to.

To their surprise, they saw the queen quickly stabilise herself and propelled herself further up to fly higher again and Belial smirked. "See?" He lifted his brow at the light faes. "Don't treat her like a child because she's not. She's a queen. Your queen." He told them.

Once Evie landed on the ground, where the dead tree was situated, she looked back and smiled at Belial. Then she ordered Zanya to immediately start the ritual.

Belial stood there on the veranda, watching the light faes perform their ritual, until he saw Evie make a quick slash below her wrist with a dagger.

As soon as her blood dripped onto the tree's roots, the tree began to respond. It started with a light shudder where those nearby could hear the slight creaking of the bark of the tree. Everyone's eyes were glued expectantly onto the tree of light as they waited for more to happen. Thin cracks ran quickly from the roots and slowly spread up the sturdy trunk which then swept into each withered branch. Light then began to appear from within those cracks that had formed earlier.

The tree was reviving itself with the help of Evie's blood that had acted as the carrier of her powers to kickstart its recovery. The tree of life is finally coming back to life! All the branches were now lit up so brightly that it was almost blinding for anyone to look straight at it without shielding their eyes.

And with another drop of Evie's blood, light blasted out and everyone looking had to look away or cover their eyes completely to avoid the intense blinding light.

The light spread out in a warm wave, like the sun rising from the horizon. And the moment the light hit the dark castle; its colour miraculously changed.

And then, the sky which was covered with heavy clouds began to open.

The dragons scattered around in the barren land of Crescia rose and looked up as the clouds that had been there for thousands of years began to disperse and the clear sky was able to be seen from the ground level of the land of Crescia again. Undulating cheers rang out and could be heard from the once silent lands of the light faes, bringing warmth to whoever who listened to it.

Chapter 336 - Till Next Time

The rain had finally stopped falling for the first time in thousands of years and the stars could finally be seen again. The bright light coming from the castle spread out all over Crescia and then all throughout the Middle Lands. It was as if a white sun had risen in the middle of the night.

It was a breath taking and magnificent sight.

When the blast of light finally settled down, the light faes felt the power surge even stronger within them. The great castle that used to look as black as coal was now coloured a heavenly silvery white. Even in the darkness, the shimmer and shine of the castle's beauty and grandeur could be clearly seen.

"How are you feeling, my dear?" Belial asked Evie.

The light faes who had performed the ritual together with Evie were now back at the spacious veranda as they could not bear the power which was literally gushing forth like a waterfall from the tree of life if they were to get too close to it.

Evie looked at the dark fae king and she smiled. "I feel incredible." Her eyes shone like diamonds and a new found strength and determination were apparent in her amber eyes which were now temporarily rimmed with a ring of silver. That was perhaps due to the sudden surge of powers that had flowed out from her as well as the positive feedback of the power that was given out from the tree of life too.

She looked down at her hands before looking up at him again. "With this... I can finally fight alongside my husband with confidence." She said. "I will never let him fight all by himself again."

Belial was touched at what she said.

"I wish I could go with you. To see that troublesome son of mine and watch the both of you fight together." He said, looking proud. "But my time here is about to end. I must return before my time is up or else, I'll be making my wife worry." He smiled indulgently as he said that last line.

Evie finally realized that it was almost dawn. Knowing that a dark fae could only stay on the surface during the night, she felt the urgency to drive him away to leave quickly lest he missed the correct timing. She was saddened at how time seemed to fly so fast, but she was worried about the implications on this man if he were late to return. Though he seemed to only be worrying about his wife, Evie was worried about him.

"Alright, your majesty. It truly is a pleasure to finally meet and know you and I can't express how thankful I am for your help. I really, truly appreciate that you came to my rescue tonight." Evie said in haste, making the dark fae king smile.

"Easy, my dear. I still have a little time left. There is no need to rush me off." Belial winked at her, still having the ease to tease her.

"I think you must go now, the sun's about to shine. Do send my warmest regard to queen Beatrice." Evie's eyes softened considerably as she mentioned her mother in law.

King Belial chuckled. "Worrying about the king of the Under Lands should be the last thing you should be doing, dear child. But I don't mind. It shows what a caring daughter-in-law you are."

Evie could not help but smile back even though she was trying to not to initiate any more conversation so he would finally leave.

"I will make sure to watch over Gav. I'll make sure to stand by his side." She then promised him, and Belial's face became serious. He then looked at her with approval.

"I believe in you. And I believe you will be able to do what you put your mind to." he replied. "I will be leaving my son in your capable hands, Queen Evielyn." He then gave Evie a deep nod of his head, signifying his respect and thanks to her.

"Yes. I will do everything I can for him."

After hearing that, Belial smiled. "Well then, my dearest daughter-in-law. Till we meet next time."

"Till next time." Evie nodded back reverentially to the king and her father-in-law.

Belial finally stepped back and was about to disappear when Evie quickly spoke up. "By the way, you're forgiven, Your Majesty."

A wicked smirk flashed across his face. "I already know that I am, young queen." He said and then he finally disappeared from her sight. Evie looked to the spot that he was previously standing at and there was not a single hint that showed he was there in the first place.

Evie just looked again at where he had stood earlier with a warm smile on her face. And then she took a deep heavy breath.

In the few minutes that passed, the sun finally rose over the horizon, stretching its rosy golden hues across the cool and dark land, turning everything sparkly and bright – a promising start of a new day. Evie felt energised as she took all these in and stored this memory carefully in her heart.

Evie and the light faes had set out of the castle as the sun had risen. She flew with them this time until they reached the gates.

Seeing Onyx still waiting faithfully at his spot, Evie approached him and touched his tusk gently. "I'm leaving Crescia to you for a while Onyx," she said. "Yes, it is going to be a big war. But I can't take you there for now. So, if there is ever a time when I would need you with me, you must answer my call, okay?"

Onyx made a low grumble as if he was making a complaint where he did not like where she was leaving him behind. However, it also looked like he fully understood why he must stay.

"Good boy," Evie said as she patted his scale and then she went astride on Silver's back as soon as they were out of the tunnel.

"Let's go!" she commanded in a loud voice and then Silver flew up, the light faes followed along behind her and they finally left the Middle Lands.

As she looked ahead, Evie's grip on Silver's spike tightened as her amber eyes became incredibly intense.

"I'm coming Gav! I'll be there very soon!" she uttered with an unwavering determination.

Chapter 337 - Nightmare

In the capital of the great vampire's empire, a scenario never seen before was unfolding and making its way into the annals of history. The once majestic and massive city of luxury and elegance was now a battlefield.

Smaller houses were reduced and ruined to rubbles and many castles were on fire. The once proud city was now looking like it was about to fall into total ruins.

The streets that were once filled with nothing else but lovely things and luxuries were decorated with blood, flames, and weapons. Dead bodies decorating the streets now instead of laughter, sparkling lights, and gallivanting bodies. Screams and the ominous sound of the battle were still reverberating around in the air. Children being led by vampire women were seen escaping from the city. And there were no signs of the war ending any time soon.

That day the elite men reached the capital, what welcomed them was a huge shock. The prince had already made it to the capital city. And the fierce battle had already started..

The elite men immediately went to aid the prince's army. And with the elite men's leadership, taking up the roles of the generals as soon as they arrived, they started to push the imperial army back quite quickly and efficiently while their prince was fighting against Caius and... Lorcan.

One glance at the battle between the prince and those two fake royals and they could already tell that something strange was going on over there. Lorcan and Caius did not seem to be themselves. It was strange to see how powerful they have grown, and it was obvious that they were not fighting like vampires at all. In fact, they were fighting just like their prince, using magic... dark magic.

But the elite men did not even have the luxury to know what was going on and they could not find the opportunity to even go near their prince as the fierce battle was impossibly too dangerous. They could only feel a little at ease since their prince was still obviously more powerful. He was slowly pushing forward, despite the numbers of what seemed like possessed vampires like Lorcan and Caius and the other half-human warriors were getting in his way. He was unstoppable and they were confident that the prince would soon reach the imperial palace where Thundrann must be hiding out at.

The men could only stay on faithfully at their posts and focus their efforts and attention on destroying the imperial army as they knew it was unwise for them to go to the prince's aid when his enemies were wielding dark magic. Zolan had wanted so badly to go and find out what was actually going on. How on earth were these vampires even using dark magic? Where the hell did they get these powers? How was it that there were such numbers among them who seemed to be possessed and were even displaying traits that were very strong? Despite Samuel's disapproval, Zolan insisted to secretly sneak in to investigate further. His excuse was that they needed to have more intel on what was going on in the enemy camp in order to prepare a better counter measure to their next attacks. He took Elias with him as they disguised themselves to mingle and slip within the imperial army.

It was last night when the prince's army led by the elite men finally got the upper hand and won the battle. But by the time they entered the city and was rushing over to the imperial palace where the prince was, something terribly unexpected had already happened.

The beasts from the Middle Lands suddenly came stampeding behind them as if there were someone who had induced them into going into a rampage and to head their way. Wild beasts, orcs, dark wolves, and even the savage orcs attacked them from behind. And it was then that everything fell into utter chaos.

The arrival of the beasts shocked not only Prince Gav's army but even the imperial armies and all the citizens who were still in the city and had yet to flee. The vampires did not know what was going on anymore and so was the case for the elite men as well. They were taken by surprise and confused at the sudden turn of events.

This was such an unexpected happening that all vampires – friend or foe – found themselves fighting back-to-back and shoulder to shoulder for their lives against these wild and savage beasts that poured out from the Middle Lands.

It was as if they all suddenly found themselves inside a nightmare. The vampires were nowhere near ready to fight beasts such as these.

As the beasts came in rampaging, tearing everyone who got in their way into pieces, eating them or throwing them aside as they advanced into the city, Samuel had told the citizens especially the children to escape from the city instead. They were reminded to not try and fight back but turn around and just run for their lives.

The elites knew that the vampires can never stand against the numbers of beasts coming at them all at once – not with the wild beasts of the Middle Lands. At this rate, these beasts will annihilate everyone, especially the common citizens who were the weakest of all.

Thankfully, due to fear, the vampires listened to Samuel. Women started to help their children escape while the others – especially the men – fought to their deaths to give their family that little extra time to escape to safety.

And now that the sun had finally risen, everyone was on the verge of collapse. There were just too many beasts for them to contend with. They had found themselves having to play hide and seek with the beasts just to gain that extra time to plan how to eliminate one more or to catch a few minutes of breathing time.

The soldiers were scattered everywhere – both parties were not exempted from this fate. Even the elite men themselves could not keep track and trace the location of where their comrades were now as they too had to lend a hand in helping the other vampires – the citizens – escape than wasting their energy fighting the beasts to death.

Chapter 338 - Heroic

"Damn it! Damn it all!!! I can't hold this ugly monster back anymore! RUN!!! Damn it!!!" Levy shouted at the three children whom he had found hiding in their abandoned home. There were no signs of their parents anywhere nearby. They were either dead or had run off on their own. A savage orc found them and was about to step on them to death when Levy spotted them and rushed over to their rescue.

He launched himself at the savage orc, slashing his blade across its thick and ugly throat, hoping that the injury would slow it down a little and grant the children some time to escape. He then shouted at the children to quickly run.

The terrified children scrambled away as fast as they could as Levy tried his best to stall this orc until the children managed to make a clean escape. He knew he would not be able to kill it off with the strength that he had left.

Like everyone else, he had been fighting nonstop for two days straight. The fight with the beast horde this time had depleted his strength to its last drop.

"F*ck!" he cursed as the orc managed to land a deadly hit on him..

Levy landed hard on the ground, spitting out blood. "Damn! I refuse to die here, damn it! I still need to see those beauties again!" he muttered as he forced himself to stand. His body was trembling, and

he knew he had no more strength left to fight on. "F*ck! This is so lame! This is what you get for trying to be so heroic, damn it!" he scolded himself, knowing that the orc was approaching again, and he knew he could not go against it anymore. He sighed ruefully to himself.

"Oh well, I think I had killed ten orcs, one savage orc and countless dark wolves the entire night all by myself. Oh, and I think I managed to save about a hundred citizens and helped them escape successfully. That's quite a good number there, now that I think about it. No wonder I'm at my very last strength." He continued mumbling as he finally managed to stand and face the large orc before him. "Tch, can't I at least see a beauty first before I die? I don't want to die in the hands of this ugly shit! I want to die in the arms of a beauty at least! I want the last view that my eyes see to be a beauty!!" he complained and wailed loudly as he watched the orc finally launch itself at him.

He sighed and closed his eyes. "I'm sorry Your Highnesses and my brothers... I think my time is up." He muttered as he waited for his demise.

But to his surprise, even after waiting for quite a few seconds, nothing happened. His demise did not come as he expected. He heard a sound of sword instead and when he opened his eyes, he saw the orc falling back and dropped on the ground like a massive ugly and fat caterpillar.

"Who the hell said your time is up? It's not yet time, you idiot." Leon's voice echoed from somewhere in front of him as he looked at Levy over his shoulder. Though his tone was scolding, on his face was a slight grin, telling Levy how glad he was in seeing him.

Levy gaped at him and then he fell forward on his knees.

"Leon, my hero..." he cried comically as he let himself fall to the ground with so much exhaustion.

Leon approached him and crouched down to check on Levy's wounds.

"I was hoping for a beauty to appear and come to my rescue though," Levy grumbled loud enough for anyone nearby to hear him as Leon quickly cut through his clothes with his sword to see a large wound that was gored through his upper abdomen. When a vampire was too weak, his body would not be able to heal at all and it would eventually lead to his death.

"Sorry, to disappoint you, but there will be no beauty coming." Leon replied with a weak smile as he quickly grabbed his medicine, his attempt at humour failing badly as his worry for Levy's wound increased. Looking into his medicine pouch, he frowned as there was only a little left.

"Hey, are you sure you'd want to use that on me? You'll need it sooner or later." Levy tried to lighten the grim atmosphere that was around Leon. He knew that his wounds were quite severe if it could not be left alone to heal on its own.

"Shut up."

"Haha. Are you trying to make me fall in love with you – ahh!!!"

Leon had purposely pressed on his wound, making man scream in pain. "I told you to shut up."

"Damn you! Are you trying to save me or kill me! Ugh!" Tears leaked out of the corners of Levy's eyes as he breathed through the pain, narrowing his eyes at Leon in warning, daring him to try that again. Leon only gave a small smirk before continuing his work on Levy.

After wrapping Levy's wound, Leon looked around.

"Where's everyone? I hope they're not in as bad shape as I am." Levy then asked.

"I don't know. I saw Samuel... but that was hours ago. But I'm guessing that he'll be fine. He asked me to look for you alone, so I think he should already be in contact with the others."

"Oh, I see. Did anyone finally found out what in the fucking hell is going on?"

"I'm not sure. We need to be reunited with them –"

Leon's words were cut off at the sound of a scream. A child's scream to be exact.

"Shit! The children! They failed to escape?!" Levy exclaimed as he tried to sit up, but Leon pinned him down with just one hand and gave him a serious glare.

"Stay still or you'll waste the medicine I just applied on you. Let the wound absorb it first. I'll go check." Leon rose and then abruptly disappeared.

He saw the three children in one corner of a wall, where a young boy was blocking two young girls behind him as a large dark wolf was about to launch itself at them. As the dark wolf leapt forward and was halfway to the children, Leon struck the wolf in the head with one strike and it slammed into the ground, totally unmoving.

The children looked up at him, shock and awe shining in the depths of their eyes.

"Follow me," Leon instructed them, and the young boy immediately grabbed the girls' trembling hands and pulled them along with him as they followed after Leon.

Chapter 339 - Nasty Creature

When Leon returned to where Levy was lying with the three children in tow, Leon's special medicine was already working its magical wonders on the wound.

"Your medicine is truly out of this world." Levy commented as he realised the numbness in his body began to fade and he felt better. Somehow, he did not feel as though he was on the brink of death anymore.

"We need to get out of here, pronto." Leon said, ignoring Levy's comment. Then he looked at the children. "Stay with him, I'll go look for a safer route to get you guys out of this place."

Before the children could respond, Leon had already disappeared. He landed at the top of the highest building near them as he could not risk leaving Levy and the children too long on their own in their helpless state.

Looking around, Levy's sight fell straight towards the closest commotion and when he focused his vampiric gaze there, he saw Luc fighting against another savage orc. He was about to rush over to help but from the corner of his eyes, he picked up some movements. Turning that way, he then saw wolves heading towards where Levy and the children were.

He cursed under his breath and quickly returned to them. Seeing that the wound had already stopped bleeding, Leon quickly wrapped it with strips of cloths torn from Levy's shirt and he helped him up. He was thankful that the children with them were vampires and could keep up with their fast pace. He had helped some humans last night and it was a lot of effort on his part as they cannot move fast nor leap.

They landed at the top of a castle's roof, careful not to be seen by any of the beasts. Or else the beasts would enter the castle and chase after them until they reached the roof.

"By the way, Leon." Levy started as Leon helped him down on the roof. "Did you find your mother?"

Leon paused for a moment and that was enough as an answer for Levy. He had yet to find her.

"Stay here and keep watch. I saw Luc. I think he needs help." Leon acted as though he did not hear Levy's question and Levy smiled at him.

"Way to go superhero." He grinned and winked at Leon.

"Don't do anything stupid. You need to stay still and focus on healing." Leon reminded Levy as though he was a little kid who would get into mischief the moment that he was free from supervision.

"Yes, boss!" Levy replied playfully and then he watched Leon leave. Being on one of the highest spots in the city, Levy could see the damage that had befallen their city. It looked totally unrecognizable now.

It was still hard to believe that all these happened within a mere night. This city was now no longer occupied by vampires but by beasts and they were hunting the unfortunate ones who had failed to escape.

Levy was worried about Leon's mother. Last night, Leon had been trying to look for her while fighting and helping others to escape. It was only normal for him to worry about her because his mother was human. Most of the casualties they had seen were humans as it was due to their physical inability to escape faster.

While Levy was hoping that she was not dead, his sharp eyes saw a woman on one of the roofs. She is a human. The longer he looked, the more he felt that she seemed to resemble Leon. Wait... could it be that this woman is Leon's mother?

Levy narrowed his eyes, and focussed harder, trying to pick up on characteristics on her that Leon has, to help him recognize her. She was wounded. He saw her brought out a bottle and poured it on her legs and with one glance, Levy recognized that medicine bottle.

"Shi-!" Levy paused, realizing that there were children here and they were looking at him. "It's definitely her!" he barely held himself back from cursing.

Looking around, Levy tried to search for Leon but what he saw next made his eyes widen. The commotion in that part where Leon headed to became even fiercer. It was obvious that the fight there was something Leon could not afford to run off and leave behind until it was finished especially when their comrades were also there.

Levy looked back at the woman again and he saw an orc trying to get to her. He cursed inside his head again. He was about to stand and rush over there when the young boy held his hand, stopping him. "What are you doing? That big brother said you must stay still to heal."

"I know, but I need to save someone. And it's urgent."

"Who?"

"Right there." Levy pointed to the direction of the woman.

The boy narrowed his eyes at the direction Levy was pointing at before looking back at him. "But that's a human." His tone somehow indicated that why would Levy bother and put his health at risk for a human.

Raising a brow, Levy ruffled the boy's head and he finally rose. He could not blame the boy on the reason why he thought that way, because he was well aware on how the vampires educate their children about the humans. "Yes, she's a human. But she's a living being just like us. And she's the woman who created the medicine that healed me. I'd be such an ungrateful basta... ungrateful man if I don't help her out. Also, she's the mother of the man who saved you three as well."

The children fell silent after hearing Levy say all that.

"Stay here and don't move, understand? I'll just go and grab her and return here." He informed them and the children nodded.

However, before he could leap off, he saw a blurry shadow already heading towards her. "What? He saw her?" Levy was impressed that Leon actually saw her from that distance and while still in the midst of that fight.

The orc had already reached her and had grabbed the woman's leg, so Leon had to slash at the orc's hand. Levy was about to sigh in relief when he saw a savage orc coming at the pair of mother and son from below. That nasty creature was holding a glaive, and it spat at the edge of the blade and Levy knew that the intelligent beast was aware their saliva could be used as a fatal poison against other races.

"Shit! Leon!" Levy cursed knowing what the savage orc was about to do next, not caring anymore that the children could hear him curse.

Chapter 340 - Levy

Seeing that Leon had to deal with another orc, Levy did not think any further and he just leapt towards them at the same moment the savage orc released the glaive that was aimed at Leon. And Levy could tell that Leon did not sense the danger. It seemed he was not the only one who was on his last legs because Leon was definitely the type to feel danger even without seeing it. Levy had even teased him before saying he actually have secret eyes behind his back. Yet now, Leon failed to feel the danger coming.

Just as Leon beheaded the orc before him, Levy finally reached them.

The entire moment was like a slow motion to Levy even if he was actually moving as fast as lightning. Everything seemed so clear to him. He planned to block the glaive with his sword, but he knew it was too late for that. The only choice that was left was to push Leon away. And that was what he did.

Leon crashed on the roof while Levy was thrown away..

Leon's eyes were wide with horror as he lifted his gaze and saw Levy pinned to wall by a glaive not far from them.

"L-Levy..." Leon's voice shook at the sight of him. He stumbled a little as he approached him. His eyes wide in disbelief, not knowing what to do next.

The glaive had gone right through his upper body and had completely impaled him.

Levy smiled as blood bubbled from his lips. "I wasn't trying to be heroic. Haha. I was meant to just..." he paused as his gaze fell behind Leon. "Pull this thing off me and use it to go deal with that thing down there. It's going to come for you again." Levy's speech was full of gurgling as he coughed out more blood when he spoke.

When Leon stood there, unmoving, Levy snapped. "Just do what I say damn it! You don't have the luxury of time to just stand there, you idiot!" he managed to throw that all out before he coughed out more blood.

Leon reached out for the glaive and his hands trembled as he looked into Levy's eyes. "It's fine. Just do it quickly." Levy smiled and Leon closed his eyes before pulling the glaive from his body in one smooth move.

He caught Levy and then pressed down on his wound to stop the bleeding despite knowing that it was useless. The glaive had pierced through Levy's heart.

"Go, Leon." Levy's voice was weak now. "Don't waste your time anymore." He began to push him away. "You know you can't do anything for me now. But go and kill that damn savage orc. Now!"

Without a word, Leon finally gripped the bloody glaive and after looking into Levy's eyes one last time and Levy flashed him a smile, Leon turned.

He saw the savage orc below who was aiming to throw the glaive and his red eyes pulsed in utter anger. It became bloody purple. A loud roar escaped from Leon's mouth and the next moment, he was right in the orc's face. His glaive had pierced right through the savage orc's mouth and the glaive that the orc threw fell into two parts on the ground.

More orcs and beasts came forth and Leon went on a rampage. His anger had made him go berserk. The fight went on and on and Leon was unstoppable. He had moved further and further away from where his mother and Levy was, knowing that more and more beasts and orcs will come for him. They will always flock to the place where the largest commotion was going on.

But Leon was too angry to care. All he wanted then was to kill all these beasts, especially the damned orcs. He was no longer being careful anymore. His berserk mode did not give him the luxury to be careful. He just needed to kill.

Seeing that Leon had been surrounded, Samuel and the others who were still fighting had to rush over to his side. They saw how reckless he was being. It would only take one mistake and he would die!

With Samuel's signal, everyone jumped in to join the battle. Luc, Reed, Samuel and Zolan joined in and in no time, all of them were surrounded with so many beasts, it was impossible for them to escape. They could only fight now and see how long they would last.

In the middle of the ruined city, it all looked as though they were the only people left in the city of beasts.

They had formed a circle, watching each other's back. Reed and Zolan were so weak now they could barely stand.

"Damn. I think that some of us should at least try to make an escape." Zolan suggested. "I don't think I have the strength anymore. So, I'll be the one to stay."

"Me too." Reed said. "I don't think I can hold on any longer. The three of you should –"

"Shut up." Samuel, Leon, and Luc said in unison. "No one's going to escape. And no one's going to be left behind."

"How stubborn. We'll all die at this rate." Zolan sighed.

But the three men acted as though they did not hear a thing. Their incredible fighting spirit blazed even with the last drops of their strengths. Despite how hopeless their situation now, they neither gave up nor retreated. And Zolan realized the men were aware of the situation. But they still chose to fight until the end. And he was certain there was no way he could change their minds.

He sighed again and threw his head back. The sky is a beautiful clear blue. 'We're sorry to disappoint you, princess. It seems we're going to have to break our promise to you.' He muttered within him.

"Get ready, they're coming." Samuel's voice echoed and as they watched the beasts thunder towards them, a piercing sound echoed loudly in the sky.

The beasts all halted and as they looked up, they saw a huge ball of fire coming down at them.