

SPELLBOUND 341

Chapter 341 - Angels

The view that welcomed Evie and her people as soon as they reached the empire of the vampires was something worse than she could have ever imagined. Almost all of the cities they had passed by were either already in ruins or they were on their way to becoming ruins. It was as if a legion of monsters had rampaged through the land and massacred everyone and destroyed everything that were in their path.

One glance and Evie could already tell that this was not the doing of Gav's army. Vampire armies would never do something so cruel like this! This was more likely to be the doings of mindless creatures who knew nothing else other than to kill.

Everything that she saw since they reached Kirzan had made Evie's heart shiver with worry. Scared to death that she might already be too late, she picked up her pace. She needed to hurry and get to their destination the soonest that they can.

'Hurry please, Silver.' She urged her dragon within her mind. 'Hurry. Gav... men... please hold on... I'm coming..' Evie prayed and hoped in her heart that she would still be on time.

The closer they get to the capital, the bloodier the scene became, making her worries and fear grow stronger and the unsettling premonition to almost overwhelm her. But she steeled herself and urged her dragon to go as fast as it could. Until at last, she finally saw the city up ahead and immediately rejoiced that their destination is almost here. However, upon looking closer, Evie's joy was short-lived, and her countenance fell.

She could see smoke coming from the city. It was obvious the once so regal and proud place had now turned into a battlefield with no beauty nor allure to it any longer.

Her heartbeats turned erratic as Silver spiralled downwards at her command. She could see the beasts all over the city now. The nasty orcs and those savage ones. She had already expected this since she saw the massacre in the previous cities. She had finally understood why the beasts had somehow disappeared from the Middle Lands. How? Who was behind all this?

Evie did not know why but she had a feeling that something was very wrong. Thundrann was only a half-dark fae. How could he be so strong as to even be able command all these beasts? How did all of this happen?

As the dragon spiralled down, Evie saw something that made her eyes widen. She could see a section of land where there were many beasts that gathered around and even though she had yet to be close enough to even recognize anyone from the sky, the mere sight of a circle of individuals in the midst of countless of beasts was enough for her heart to shudder.

Her heart thundered in her ears, and she pointed toward that spot. 'There!' she yelled out in her mind, and Silver roared in response. The beasts looked upwards at hearing the thunderous roars of the silver dragon.

'Burn them!' Evie commanded grimly and she saw the beasts started to scatter but it was too late for them.

The men on the ground were all paralyzed as their eyes were all fixed on the dragon which was now burning the beasts before them.

"P-princess..." they stammered, still unable to believe the scenario that was unfolding before their very eyes.

"She... she's here!" Reed exclaimed in nearly an inaudible voice. He was truly at the end of his rope.

As the dragon continued breathing out flames, roasting the beasts into charcoal, Silver paid the most attention to the intelligent orcs that had spread out and hid themselves in the castles and houses.

Seeing this, Evie lifted her hands and her voice echoed out like it was a voice from the heavens. "Kill them!" she said and the light faes descended like avenging angels that were dropping from the heavens itself.

At the sight of her men all tired, wounded, and pushed beyond what they could bear, Evie ordered Silver to keep chasing and burning all the beasts before she flew from his back and landed on the ground. Her touchdown was graceful and majestic, inspiring awe in her men like none other ever had. They would even go to the extent of saying that even their own prince himself – Prince Gavriel – had never instilled such aura of majesty and worship in their hearts before. Their princess was so awesome! Her powers were dazzling, even more than the brightest star.

The men's eyes were all fixed onto that pair of massive and beautiful wings that were extended behind her since the moment she had landed. When had the princess gotten those wings? Were they part of her powers or was a new skill she had learnt after they had left her back in Crescia? It was then that the men wondered if the princess had increased in powers yet again. She was already so powerful before that. If she had indeed improved and raised her power levels again, they could not imagine just how much more powerful she was right now. They were completely captivated by her, and their eyes almost bugged out of their sockets looking at the princess as she walked towards them. Her movements were so fluid and graceful it almost seemed as though she were floating to them rather than walking on the ground.

Hurriedly, Evie approached the men who were still frozen in awe and shock. Her gaze immediately looked at everyone and her brows creased in worry for them.

"Where are the others?" she asked immediately, and the men finally snapped out of their reverie. Evie noticed that Leon, Levy and Elias were not with the rest of the men.

Before the men could make a sound, Elias' voice echoed out as he stumbled weakly towards them.

"Princess!!!" he shouted, his voice sounding so very desperate and carrying even a hint of fear. Evie and the men all picked up on that and they wasted no time in rushing towards him.

Evie held him as Elias spoke. "Levy... Levy is..." the man was stammering and the look on his face alone made everyone feel their hearts were already breaking at the obvious news he was about to say.

"Bring me to him." Evie demanded firmly, refusing to allow her heart to give in and waver, telling herself the man was going to be alright.

Chapter 342 - Damned Onions

A little while back.

As soon as Leon heard the roars of the dragon, he had quickly left the rest of the men and rushed towards the roof where he had left his mother and Levy. He had never moved that fast in his life and strained his body to its limit to get himself back there in the fastest time possible.

Arriving on the roof within a handful of seconds, he saw that Levy's chest was still moving up and down and was still breathing. Seeing that comforting view, his legs suddenly turned wobbly like jelly, and he sank to his knees and held onto Levy's hand wordlessly. It was a miracle that he was still alive, though barely. However, it was obvious to Leon that it was impossible to save him now. The glaive had pierced right through his heart and even Levy himself knew he was going to die soon. Though a vampire is strong, such a wound was fatal, nonetheless.

"Hang in there." Leon finally spoke when Levy started to close his eyes, feeling his lids were as heavy as lead. "The beauties are finally here.. Weren't you waiting to see them? Hang on for a bit and they will be here." Leon tried to lighten the atmosphere by joking about Levy's favourite topic.

The corner of Levy's lips curved up into a slight smile. "Really?" However, Leon could see that his smile did not quite reach his eyes and his smile was so tires and his complexion wan.

"Yes. So, open your eyes and look clearly now."

A weak sigh left Levy's blood-stained mouth. "Don't let them see me like this, Leon. I'm sure I look like shit right now." He tried to chuckle, but it only came out as little bloody bubbles that popped and filled the air with a fresh tinge of iron.

Leon was speechless. Unable to believe what he was even saying at a time like this. "I can't believe you still can worry about such a thing at this point."

"Of course, I'd worry. I should die handsome at least, don't you think so?"

"Good grief..." Leon mumbled at Levy's chill attitude. He did not know how to react. If Levy was not in this state, Leon would have smacked him by now.

"Are you going to cry for me, Leon?" Levy asked suddenly. "If you are, you better cry now. I at least want to see the face of the most annoying man I know crying before I go." He still could manage to smirk at him. "It should be an interesting image since I somehow can't imagine this damned deadpan face crying. Now cry." Levy commanded with this wavering voice.

"You know what? You're too talkative for someone who's supposed to be dying. Use that energy to heal yourself instead, will you?" Leon snapped irritably at Levy, torn between worry and exasperation for this annoying person.

"You know I'm hopeless. I don't know why I'm still alive though. Haha."

"The fact that you're still alive means you still have hope."

"I didn't know you could be quite talkative too, Leon." He taunted and then he coughed up more blood, causing Leon to panic again.

"Hold on." He said grabbing onto his hand.

At that moment, Evie's voice echoed behind them.

"Levy!" she said as she rushed over and bent over his side. The sight of his wound made Evie froze up in fear for a moment. The still gaping wound on his chest was so huge it was truly a miracle he was still alive and breathing.

"P-princess..." Levy grinned but his eyes started gleaming with unshed tears. "I'm sorry... I don't think I can..." He choked and could not continue speaking.

"No. Please don't. You can't... you've promised me!" Evie frantically said and with trembling hands, her warm magic began to gather in her palms as she hovered them over his wound. "Don't give up please. Stay with us."

Her voice as she coaxed Levy was so gentle and warm like a soothing lullaby that the men who had surrounded them and looked down at Levy felt such heaviness in their chests. They all had experienced losing comrades before but... Levy was not just a comrade to them. He is their brother. The most annoying one, but their brother, nonetheless. Seeing him on the verge of death made them all feel an indescribable pain in them that they could not even say a word but just look on silently at him.

Levy then lifted his eyes and meet their gazes one after another.

"You guys... stop looking like a bunch of widows there." He looked like he wanted to laugh but he could not muster up enough strength to do so.

"Shut up and heal already!" They all shouted in unison though their eyes were screaming with their wish and hope that he would survive. All of them knew that a wound as large as that was beyond saving for a vampire. But with their princess here, the light of hope that they have, they refused to give him up.

"Her Highness is doing her best to save you... so hang in there. We're not going to give up on you. So don't you dare give up on yourself." Zolan said and Levy's smile slowly faded. Fat tears escaped from the corner of his eyes.

"Geez... someone must be cutting onions. Go find them and get rid of him, Leon." Levy ordered like some spoiled brat. The men around stared at him incredulously, not knowing whether to laugh or cry. This brat really causes them so much worry.

"Don't mind the goddamned onions and just focus on healing." Leon said and everyone could not help but smile.

However, Levy coughed again, and he winced in pain before his eyes fluttered as though they were extremely heavy and then his lids slowly closed.

Everyone's smiles instantly faded as they saw that look of pain cross Levy's face. Their hearts were thudding nervously now. They hoped that the princess would be able to create a miracle here. "Open your eyes, Levy." Evie ordered but Levy did not seem to be able to hear her.

Chapter 343 - Frozen

"Levy!" Evie called out louder. Her face became utterly pale as her magic glowed even brighter over his wound. She poured a larger amount of magic energy into Levy, converting it into healing magic and hoped that it would help close his gaping wound faster than he was fading away.

The men were holding their breaths. Reed and Elias even looked away now, unable to watch anymore. Elias was already tearing up as he hid his face. Everyone was tense and no one was speaking. Evie herself was super focussed on what she was doing that she had long blocked out any sounds and distractions.

At that moment, Zanya had only just arrived at the scene and saw what was happening. The men immediately made way for her and as soon as the light fae assessed the situation, she spoke in hushed tones to Evie in haste. "My queen, please trap him inside a crystal. Quickly! As that would be able to keep him with us for now." She urged and Evie immediately did as Zanya said..

In the next instant, Levy was trapped inside a dark crystal that was similar to the ones all the light faes had been trapped in previously.

"Will he be alright if he's inside the crystal?" Evie asked now, her expression calm but fear and worry was brimming behind her willful eyes. "After all, he is not a light fae. There would not be any side effects on him, right?"

"You had magic placed on him before they left Crescia, right, my queen?" Zanya reminded her.

Evie nodded. She had actually forgotten about doing that totally. She indeed had put protection magic on them all.

"That protection magic you put in him was actually what's keeping him alive. Or else, with a wound like this, there is no way he is still alive..." Zanya explained, and everyone's eyes widened.

Everyone then realised why Levy was still able to hang on to life even though he was so severely injured like this. Unlike Zanya who had been quite experienced in healing wounded beings, this was the first time Evie is attempting to heal a vampire. And not to mention that it is one whose wounds were beyond severe. Just one look at the wound and Zanya could tell that there was no way Levy could survive if not for the protection magic that the queen had placed on him. "If not for the magic you had put on him, he'd never survive no matter how powerful the healer is."

"You mean... he's going to survive?" Zolan asked, hopeful anticipation colouring his voice. The rest of the men looked up with eyes shining with hope as well.

Zanya looked at them and then back to Evie. "The queen had already casted more spells to help but he needs the time for the magic to do its work. If the queen did not trap him in that dark crystal, he would have died before the magic could carry out its job and heal him. So, trapping him inside the crystal is the only way to give him more time as it will stop time for him. On top of that, the dark crystal has the ability to reflect and multiply the magic which is held within it. Thus, the healing magic the queen has cast would only be more effective with him being encased within it."

"So, being trapped inside the crystal is the same as being frozen in time?" The men's voice sounded stunned.

"Yes. Everything that is trapped inside the crystal will be frozen, even one's consciousness. However, the magic that is already inside him will not be frozen. It will continue on and do its job and heal him."

With Zanya's explanation, the men including Evie finally released the breath they were holding in. They had thought there was no more hope for Levy and had tried preparing their hearts to accept the worst to happen.

"How long will he need to stay inside the crystal? Before he can be fully healed, I mean." Evie asked.

"His injury is too severe. So, based on my previous experiences, I guess he'll probably take several hours before you can let him out, my queen." Zanya replied respectfully.

Evie nodded and she let out another deep breath. She then looked at her men and seeing them all dishevelled and bloodied, it only made her heart squeeze a little with sympathy for them. It was obvious to her they had been fighting all by themselves for a long while, and non-stop from the looks of it. She could not explain how relieved she was that they were all safe now. Though a little worse for wear, but none were missing any limbs or body parts.

"Thank you for waiting for me," she said with such heartfelt emotions that the men were touched and bowed deeply to her. "I'm sorry that I'm late." Evie felt really bad that due to her tardiness, they had to be pushed to such a point. Even to the point where Levy had gotten so badly injured. She was truly thankful that her magic could preserve his life and heal him. If he was not able to be saved, she did not know how she would have taken it.

"You're not late, princess." Samuel said kindly, understanding what the princess herself had to go through to get out of the barrier the prince had put up. It must not be an easy feat for her to break that and rush here this quickly. Then a proud small smile curved slowly across his face. "It's amazing how you always arrive just right at the moment when we needed you the most. It was exactly the same when we were besieged by those savage orcs. We had thought that we were truly done for at that time as well."

Finally cracking a smile, Evie approached them one by one and started healing them by herself instead of asking the other light faes to do the task. She wanted to show them her appreciation and what better way to do it than to heal them personally by giving them the queen's personalised healing session. While healing the men, she chatted with them and caught up on the happenings of the few days that they were not together.

Chapter 344 - Another

She then called Silver and stopped him from breathing more fire as she had found out there might still be civilians who were hiding or even trapped inside the houses and castles.

While the light faes continued destroying the beasts, Evie and her men landed on the roof of the highest castle in the middle of the city. Their eyes all focused to the direction of the imperial palace.

"When Elias and I sneaked into the midst of the imperial army, we did reach quite far in." Zolan started when Evie questioned them in detail about what had happened. "While His Highness is fighting against the possessed fake royals and the half vampires, I managed to get close enough to the palace. But I couldn't get any further from there onwards because there seemed to be some kind of thick and dark magic which appear to be guarding the palace."

"Dark magic?" Evie creased her brows.

"Yes, princess. I know it's dark magic because it's the same type of magic I'm sensing from His Highness. The problem is that I don't think the source of that dark magic is from His Highness. In fact, it should not be from him since there is no way that His Highness would protect the castle that he is intending to destroy."

"So, you are implying that the dark magic you sensed is coming from Thundrann?" Evie tried guessing what Zolan was hinting at.

"I don't think so. I haven't seen Thundrann as of yet, but I already felt the kind of magic he possessed and it's definitely not even similar to it. After all, Thundrann is not even a half dark fae isn't it? That dark magic somehow feels exactly the same as His Highness'."

"Are you implying that another dark fae, a full one at that, is in the palace right now?" Samuel piped in with his serious voice.

"That's the only explanation I could think of right now." Zolan answered and everyone fell silent.

Evie was not even surprised anymore because she knew that if it was only Thundrann they were going up against right now, with how powerful her husband had become, he should have had easily defeated him by now. Aside from that, there was also the mystery of how these beasts were all summoned and brought to rampage here in the imperial capital. Evie just could not believe that Thundrann himself was capable of commanding all the beasts from the Middle Land like this. He was not supposed to be this powerful!

Fixing her gaze towards the massive palace far ahead of them, Evie took a step forward. With her back facing her men, she squared her shoulders and then looked at them over her shoulder.

"We will move out now." Evie declared and the men straightened. After receiving the gentle care and healing given personally by their very own princess, they were now more than prepared to go and fight again. It was incredible how they felt far more revitalized now that the princess is here with them and that they were going to fight alongside her again.

"My queen," Zirrus stepped forward and Evie turned and faced him, knowing that the noble light fae wanted to say something. "I believe it's not wise for you to go there without us knowing what's in there. It's obvious whoever is in there isn't just Thundrann. I know that Thundrann should have gotten way stronger since the last time, but... I can't believe this magic I am sensing right now belongs to him. It is too strong..."

Evie understood where Zirrus was coming. Even she could already smell something so ominous, an abnormal dark magic even at this distance. Her body could even recognize the dangers surrounding her before she could acknowledge it. However, that was exactly the reason she wanted to go. She knew Gav was strong but... she must be there. She needed to be there. She would fight alongside him no matter what happens, no matter who they were up against at.

"I know Zirrus. But I'm not going to delay any longer. I am going not only because my husband is there, but because our enemy is there as well. I will end him. Zanya and two other light faes are enough to accompany me there. I will need you to take over the command here. Don't come to the palace until all of these beasts are eradicated." She commanded him and Zirrus was unable to oppose, and he simply bowed and could only accept the command of his queen.

Not wasting anymore time, Evie called for more of her dragons to aid them. She had the feeling that this war was going to be beyond what she or anybody else was expecting. Thus, she wanted to prepare herself as much as she could.

She called on Vermillion and Fir and it did not take too long for the dragons to answer her call and arrive before her.

The vampires rode on Silver while Evie chose to ride on Vermillion.

And then the three dragons finally set off and headed towards the palace. The closer they got to it the more erratic Evie's heartbeat became. Back when she was in Crescia, all she could think of was to beat her husband up good the moment she sees him again. But right now, all she wanted was to be able to see him and run to him and be in his arms. All she wanted was to know that he is alright.

The ominous darkness was getting thicker and by the time the dragons were right above the massive palace, it was then that they saw the extent of damage. The once regal palace, easily the most luxurious and most lavishly elegant place in the entire land of Lirea, was now an unrecognizable heap of stones. The battle that happened there was definitely on a scale that they could not even imagine.

What had happened here? Where was Gav?

The nervousness was getting to her. But she managed to keep her face straight and tamped down on her panic as she looked back at her comrades.

When all of them nodded, indicating that they were ready, Evie made an order and the dragons spiralled down towards the palace. 'Gav, I'm here now. Where are you?' she uttered inside her as her gaze was fixed below, looking for any signs of him.

Chapter 345 - Unfazed

The dragons landed on the ruins, and everyone jumped off from their respective dragons to the ground. Aside from the thick and dark magic that they could feel lingering heavily in the air and crawling over the ground like a thick black mist, they could not feel any other movement at all. It was strangely quiet, very similar to the stillness which occurs right after a deadly earthquake.

Evie had her dragons all on standby and waiting outside the ruins before the group of them entered. She knew that Gav was still here. She could sense his presence here, just that she could not pinpoint his exact location. And of course, the enemy is still here as well. Therefore, it is imperative that they find Gav as soon as possible and aid him.

"We need to follow the source of this dark magic. I am certain it will lead us to Gav." Evie said and everyone nodded in agreement.

As they walked further in, they start to encounter dead bodies.. One of the dead bodies that they saw was of Lorcan and his general named Alcan. Both their bodies, upon closer inspection, showed that their skin were covered in darkened patches. It was as if they had been beaten up until they turned black and blue. A dark miasma was still oozing from their bodies. They also found Caius' body next, not far away from where Lorcan and Alcan had fallen. Along with Caius, there were a pile of dead half vampires' bodies around him.

Looking at the bodies and the damage done to the surrounding area, it was quite apparent to them that all of these people were killed by the prince.

Now the only body left that they have yet to find – as in the one left who was of any significance to them – was Thundrann's. As they moved on, following the traces of the battle, they ended up moving towards the dungeons.

The group stopped at the entrance of the dungeon. The dark magic they were following had thickened so much that the darkness beyond the entrance now looked like a portal to hell.

"My queen, how about we stay right here rather than entering the dungeons? We could set up and prepare to launch an ambush right here when those who are inside finally comes out." Zanya suggested. It was honestly a wise and logical suggestion. Because anyone who ends up ever standing in front of the entrance to this place would definitely think twice before going in. Anyone half-hearted would already be running away for their lives at the sight of something as creepy and terrifying like this. Much less attempt to actually enter into it.

Even for them, who were regarded as the most valiant among the vampires could actually feel intense fear as their instincts screamed at them to flee and avoid this darkness, this kind of danger was something far beyond their abilities to defend, much less fight against.

"Zanya's idea isn't bad at all, princess." Zolan agreed. He is already having a bad feeling about this. He had been inside this dungeon once before a long time back, and it was a massive underground structure, almost like an endless abyss that there was no way to know which way was where if you were an outsider. And now that he had remembered it, he had always thought that there was something being hidden in the deepest parts of this dungeon.

He had always been curious about what was hidden in the depths of this underground place, and he had actually already put the uncovering of this dungeon in his to do list once the prince has taken over the throne as the vampire emperor. However, when he heard lately that Thundrann's body was being hidden inside this dungeon, he thought that this was probably it – that secret that was so closely guarded for so long. But now, he had that uncanny feeling that there was an even bigger mystery hidden deeper within and it might not have anything to do with Thundrann at all. And this was what that has been giving him the weird feeling which has been prodding at him.

Zolan thought that what if, whatever was inside this dungeon was actually the reason the prince had tried to keep the princess locked up and safe behind his barriers in Crescia? If that was truly the case, then having the princess here would not go well. He really hoped that his hunches were wrong for once.

"No." Evie's reply was unexpected unfazed. "I will go. My husband is fighting all by himself in there. I'm certain that he needs me, even if he would not admit it." There was not even a single hint of doubt in her voice. Causing Zanya and Zolan to quietly sigh in surrender. It was obvious they could not stop her. The princess is determined on going into that dangerous place for her husband. They were not surprised though. As the princess could even find a way to break the barriers that had been placed to keep her within Crescia, what would stop her from entering once she was already at the gates of the dungeons?

Somehow, this reminded them about that time when their princess had also insisted on entering the dungeon when their prince had gone berserk. It was impossible to stop her. Therefore, they did not raise anymore objections to her entering this place. They could see the same determination in her face now, if not more than previously.

"Let's go in then." She then faced the entrance bravely.

Samuel, Leon and Zanya entered first, and Evie and the rest followed a few steps behind them.

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In the deepest parts of the imperial palace's dungeon, Gavrael was standing there. His body was littered with wounds, both big and small, his clothes had already been completely drenched with

blood, mostly from his enemy's blood. However, with such intense fights, there was no way around him getting injured as well. His dark magic was oozing like a cloud of miasma around him, undulating in waves as though it were a living thing. Anyone who laid eyes on it would be terrified at the sight. His eyes were now a combination of burning scarlet red and a bright sapphire blue.

Chapter 346 - Your Lover

"So, this is the source of your dark magic, huh," he scoffed as he looked at the massive dark crystal which seemed to have been cemented right into the ancient rocks itself. Just as Gavrael had expected, it was a dark fae that was crystalised within it, a real and full blooded one at that.

"Well," Thundrann who was in the same state as Gavrael, if not worse, shrugged his bloodied shoulders. The half dark fae was already back in his original form. Gavrael had found out from their intense fight hours ago that Thundrann had killed Evie's father, the dragon guardian, in order for him to gain release of his own physical body. "You don't look quite that surprised, half dark fae." He taunted.

"It was obvious to me. There is no way a little someone like you could be so powerful." Gavrael responded in a sneer and Thundrann laughed. That laugh however, Gavrael noticed no longer belonged to Thundrann. The creature inside the crystal was now in full possession of Thundrann. "Who are you?" Gavrael hissed out, his eyes blazing with alertness and fury..

"I am... let's say... one of your great ancestors." The voice had also been altered. It sounded deeper with a raspy quality to it. The way it answered Gavrael had a hint of mockery in it.

"Don't tell me you were one of the dark fae kings who had been corrupted." It was not hard for Gavrael to deduce and come to such a conclusion. This power was obviously the same as his. The kind of dark magic that was too strong, too dark, something forbidden.

"You are right." the dark fae admitted, causing Gavrael to narrow his eyes. "However, if you think I am here because I was defeated by my predecessor, then you're wrong. I left the Under Lands on my own. I was not forced. It is out of my own free will that I am here."

Gavrael was not quite certain why this dark fae was even trying to talk to him, but he could only follow along for now while he was trying to figure out his next move.

"I wonder... how did you end up being trapped inside that crystal. I believe that the crystal trapping your real body is not the same as the one which had trapped Thundrann's. Am I right?" Gavrael asked mockingly.

"Correct. It's not the same type. Because I was trapped here... far longer than this Halfling had been. And yes, the light fae queen who trapped me was much... much more powerful than the queen who trapped this Halfling." The dark fae answered, his voice dark and menacing. Gavrael could hear the clear murderous intent as he spoke. However, there was also a hint of ruefulness mixed in it.

"So... another ancient queen trapped you."

"She was my lover..." he said suddenly and Gavrael almost believed the intense emotion that danced across his eyes as he said those words. "I sought and gained the absolute dark magic and left the Under Lands all for her sake... just so I could be with her. But guess what? She betrayed me in the end. And then she trapped me inside this damned crystal." Anger and darkness blazed in his

eyes. The crystal behind him was pulsating with so much darkness that he felt it as a wave of power flowing out.

Looking at the amount of power it was exuding, Gavrael could tell this would exactly be how powerful he would become once he let his darkness consume him fully and completely. He had been fighting it very hard against it taking over him since he had embarked on this war. But it was all thanks to his vampiric side that Evie had awakened by forcing him to drink her blood, that he now was actually able to withstand the power of his darkness overtaking him until now. It seems that there were little miracles in accidents.

"Are you certain that she actually betrayed you? Don't you think she must have been forced to trap you inside the crystal because she found out that you have been corrupted? That you've lost your mind and your darkness had taken over you?" Gavrael probed more and a strange look flashed over the dark fae's eyes.

But then, he laughed out loud and long. A sardonic laugh which echoed and bounced about somewhat eerily inside the dungeon.

"I heard that your lover is a light fae queen, dear fellow dark fae." He suddenly changed the topic. And he did not know why but what the dark fae said made Gavrael's blood boil.

"So what?" Gavrael asked aggressively and defensively. "I don't see how it is any of your business."

"I can see that you're about to be corrupted by your own dark magic too. Do you know the future I'm seeing in you? You will also end up like me. Your darkness will consume you very soon... and once that happens, she, your queen will be forced to trap you in a dark crystal as well." He told Gavrael, laughing with much satisfaction. Gavrael thought to himself that this was truly the meaning of 'misery loving company'.

"That absolutely will not happen. I will defeat your vessel without me succumbing to my darkness." Gavrael hissed. "I'm not going to end up like you! I will not allow myself to!"

The dark fae laughed again. "How na?ve. You are overestimating yourself, little one. You think you can defeat me without letting your darkness take over?!"

All of the sudden, the crystal pulsed with a very strong magic, and it flew towards Gavrael without warning. Gavrael was late in creating a barrier, so he lifted his arms over his face to block the oncoming attack instead.

To his surprise, the attack did not touch him. His eyes widened at the sight of a strong barrier – a barrier created not by dark magic but by a light one. The attack was dispersed into little bright sparks after hitting on the barrier created by light magic.

He immediately turned to look behind him and what he saw made his heart freeze up in his chest.

Chapter 347 - Unpalatable

Gavrael felt like the world came screeching to a full-on halt at the sight of Evie standing there, glowing so bright, like a sun suddenly appearing in the middle of the darkest night. She was like a vision of love for Gavrael which was beyond that of any dream that he could ever conjure. But his heart was in turmoil. It seemed to be feeling emotions that were on both ends of the spectrum. His heart rejoices each time he sees her. But...

Evie!! Why, love? Why are you here? What are you doing here? How... how did you...

Instead of feeling relieved at the blinding light that had shone brilliantly and lit up this abyss of darkness, Gavrael's expression looked as though he was seeing his worst nightmare becoming a reality right before his very eyes. He shook himself out of his shock in seeing her there.

"Leave!" he shouted as he rushed towards Evie in a flash and blocked her from the view of his enemies. "Leave, Evie. NOW!!!" His voice thundered out as she had never heard him speak before. The anger and fear mixing within his eyes were too intense as his body blazed with so much darkness. The jumble of emotions that Evie saw flash through his eyes took her aback and caused a spine-chilling fear to creep into her mind.

Evie could not help but waver a little, right there and then, despite all her resolve she had declared to her companions earlier. That was the first time she ever heard him yell at her with so much anger and urgency. However, she gritted her teeth and steeled her resolve.

"No!" Evie held her ground as she yelled back at Gavrael stubbornly. "I'm not going to leave you!"

Before Gavrael could speak again, the dark fae that possessed Thundrann let out a chilling and eerie laugh.

"It's too late, Gavrael," he called out in a sing-song voice, "she cannot leave anymore and so do you. I've already trapped you both inside the most powerful prison barrier ever created in history." He cackled loudly, sounding for all the world to be totally out of his mind. Evie thought that the voice seemed to sound more like a deranged witch.

Gavrael slowly calmed down from the trembling triggered by his anger and sheer panic when he realised that Evie was suddenly here in this place. The ancient dark fae was right, it was too late now for either of them to escape. And he knew that he could never break this barrier that was created by someone far more powerful than he was. He was only left with one choice now. And that was for him to kill his vessel, Thundrann, before... before...

"So, you are the new queen of the light faes, eh?" The ancient dark fae shifted his attention away from Gav and to Evie this time. "I didn't think you'd actually come over on your own. I was trying to drive Gavrael to give in to his darkness, because once that happens, it will be easier for me to make him into my new vessel." He was suddenly and surprisingly so willing and forthcoming with his explanations as he leisurely walked back and forth before the massive dark crystal that was oozing with dark magic. "And when he finally becomes my new vessel, I will have him go and bring you to me. But... he had been quite stubborn and actually managed to fight and get all the way in here without losing himself –" He then tutted to himself as though showing displeasure to a little kid who had ran off from completing his chores. It seemed to Evie that this dark fae is more wonky than she had thought.

"Gav is not going to lose to anyone, not even to his own dark magic!" Evie bravely cut him off and the dark fae laughed with much mirth.

"How confident. Too bad, little queen... because your confidence in him will all dissolve into thin air very soon –"

"That's not going to happen." Her gaze on him was so fierce and laser sharp as she cut him off for the second time around while he was still in the midst of speaking. This time, he found that he was starting to get irritated at her unwavering and absolute trust in her man.

"How adorably stubborn. But you are right. It might not happen anymore since I don't need him to give in to his darkness anymore. You know why? Because you are here now, my little queen. Thus, I don't need him anymore." He smiled evilly as he trained those creepy eyes of his on Evie.

Evie's eyes widened. Though she trusted in Gav, she could not help but feel absolutely disgusted at the way he eyed her – as though she was a piece of delicious and juicy steak, ready to be devoured. She wanted to turn to the side and look at Gav, but she dared not take her eyes off their enemy. However, she could see from the corner of her eyes that her husband had remained still. In fact, he did not even seem like he was breathing now. However, she could feel his powers continue building up and becoming heavier and thicker than ever before, as though there were something that kept prompting him to keep going.

"What do you want from me?" she asked, realizing that he always had the intention to strike, but it was not to kill her. It was only done to take Gav away from her.

"First of all, I guess I need to introduce myself first. The queen who will be sacrificed to free me deserves to know that much at least." He said in a somewhat gentlemanly manner – though pretentious – and Evie felt Gav's dark magic made a weak pulse-like movement that rippled his heavy calm. "I am Galleous, an ancient king of the dark faes."

"Galleous..." Evie uttered his name with a flat and disgusted tone. Evie even found that his name sounded so unpalatable!

Chapter 348 - You Cannot Stop Me

"You seem to be so full of yourself. Whoever the queen was that had successfully imprisoned you inside this dark crystal deserved to be complimented. I'd even give her an award!" Evie gently mocked that so called ancient king.

Galleous snorted. "Are you certain about that, queen? Because she wasn't strong enough to kill me. That was why she had chosen to trap me like this. And I'm certain you know what happens to the magic of every creature that had been trapped inside these dark crystals. And don't you forget, little queen... I've been here for many millennia, and I am sure you can tell how strong I am right now."

"That is true, however, no matter how strong you are, you can never free yourself." Evie smirked at him.

"That's why you are needed here, queen. I've been waiting for thousands of years until the queen of the light faes is finally born.. And now that you're right here before my face, do you think I will ever let you slip through my hands?" The earth shook as his voice thundered loudly. The crystal was pulsating with such thick magic that it was being sucked by his vessel's body. "I will finally be freed! Hahaha."

As the sardonic laugh echoed, something totally unexpected happened.

Gavrael suddenly disappeared before Evie. He had taken the opportunity while Galleous was distracted and attacked his vessel and he was slammed right against the walls of the ancient dungeon.

The earth shook due to the impact again. Evie could see that Gav had seemed to have suddenly become even stronger if that was even possible.

But she did not have much time to even go help him out as orcs suddenly emerged from behind the barrier. Evie could see that they were also under the control of the dark fae inside this crystal.

They all came and attacked Evie, obviously trying to catch her alive. But there was no way she would ever let them touch even a single strand of her hair.

She fought them using her magic. Not letting them get near her. They were strong. Stronger than the normal variety of orcs. But come hell or high water, there was no way she was going to lose to an orc. Never!

As Evie fought off the orcs, Gavrael was hellbent on killing Galleous' vessel – which was Thundrann. This was the only way to foil his plan. But as he had expected, it was not going to be easy. It was nearly impossible as Thundrann was like an undead being, always rising back up no matter how many times Gavrael struck him down. He kept receiving an endless and tremendous stream of magic which came from the crystal as its source. He must find a way to stop the flow of the strong magic sustaining Thundrann endlessly if he wanted to kill him. But how?

"I told you, Gavrael. You are weak." Galleous taunted, in a seemingly blithe manner.

"Shut up." Gavrael growled in frustration before his fists slammed down and right into Thundrann's nose, breaking his facial bones. But that hardly made the man fall back. 'Does the guy not feel any pain?!' Gavrael muttered to himself.

"You're gonna die here, Gavrael. I was planning to keep you alive to be my audience when your lover's life and blood will free me. But I have changed my mind. I'm going to kill you now!" Thundrann shouted and a strong wave of magic swiftly attacked Gavrael again.

As Gavrael dodged the attacks, the wave of magic seemed to have stopped. Something bright suddenly blasted out and Gavrael saw that Evie had now launched her own attacks on Thundrann while he was being occupied with him.

Thundrann was thrown like a ragdoll and hit the walls and then rolled down on the ground due to receiving a direct hit from Evie's strong magic.

Gavrael took that opportunity and jumped on Thundrann, preparing to slaughter him with his sword. But Galleous was just that little bit faster and he managed to surround Thundrann's body with a protection barrier just before Gavrael could deliver the final blow.

A curse escaped from Gavrael's mouth, and he pushed back, knowing that it would be futile for him to try to break the barrier.

"He's giving him time to recuperate!" Evie immediately approached Gav. And she lifted her hand over his chest. "You need to take this opportunity to heal as well!"

Gavrael was stunned at her quick response. Her healing magic was already spread out in a thick blanket all over him. Looking down, he could see his wounds literally closing and healing before his very eyes.

"I can heal myself, Evie." He told Evie gently, but she just glared unhappily at him, telling him to shut up and just accept her help. She was still upset that he had decided to put up the barrier and forcefully kept her back in Crescia on his own without even discussing it with her.

"Your magic can heal but can't protect. Mine can."

He grabbed her shoulders tightly and bent over. His eyes so incredibly fierce and intense. "Listen to me, Evie. I think I have no choice now but to succumb to my darkness. It's the only way for me to defeat him."

Evie's stubborn act immediately vapourised and her eyes circled with shock. "No... you can't... that's... didn't he say he will turn you into his vessel once that happens?"

"That's only if I end up being inferior to him. And that's something I'll never let happen. I will definitely be stronger than him."

Evie shook her head. "No. Don't. We can defeat him. Both of us. Let's work together. I'm not going to let you lose yourself! I came here to fight alongside you, you dummy. Not to watch you succumb yourself to darkness."

When Gavrael lifted his face and looked at the still recuperating Thundrann, Evie caught his face to make him look at her.

"Are you listening to me? Gav!" Evie pleaded and insisted.

"No, Evie!" he hissed, his eyes bleeding red with anger now. "You shouldn't be here in the first place!!! Why must you come over to –"

Suddenly, a slap landed across Gavrael's face. The sharp sting caused him to pause and look at her in shock.

"I know you've imprisoned me there to protect me but I'm still angry regardless of your intentions. I'm angry that you don't have enough trust in me. I'm no longer the damsel in distress that you always like to hide away like a little helpless child when trouble comes. I am a queen now! I am no longer a powerless little lady! I will fight when I want. You cannot stop me from wanting to fight with you. For fighting for the ones I love! I refuse to run away and hide, while my loved ones are fighting to their deaths!" She screamed and ranted at him.

Chapter 349 - Teamwork

Meanwhile, outside the barrier, another intense fight was happening. Savage orcs who were under the control of a dark magic were rampaging within the dungeons. They did not know when did the orcs even got there. As from what they knew, many of the orcs had been wiped out by the princess' light fae forces when they had come to rescue the men. The savage orcs shouldn't have reached the palace before them! So where did these orcs come from? But they did not have the luxury to question anymore due to the brutal fight. And besides, there was really no reason for them to even dig in too much on how it really happened as dark magic was involved in this war.

This war was not something the vampires could deal with using their time-tried battle strategies and intelligence anymore. They could only rely on their physical strength right now and yes, teamwork, since they do not have the magic to counter it. They knew that these orcs were trying to break through and get inside the barrier that had trapped their princess inside. And knowing that the princess and the prince were dealing with the main enemies within, the men swore to themselves that they had to deal with these orcs and never allow them to cross the barrier. This was their job now!

With the help of the light faes, the vampires found it easier to kill the savage orcs now. The light faes cast a strong magic on their swords, making it possible for them to cut through the orc's skin

with so much ease compared to when there was no magic involved. It was amazing how their magic worked.. Their blades literally sliced through those thick hides as how a hot knife slides through cold butter. The combination of both the vampire's speed and strength and the light faes' magic together were such a force to be reckoned with.

It was amazing how fast they all learned to combine their strengths and fight together. Their teamwork only smoothened out the longer they fought together on the same side. Every strike, parry, casting of spells and throwing that magic out were done in tandem, so fluid and perfectly timed that it all seemed like a well-oiled machinery running flawlessly.

Zanya's left hand was releasing magic onto Samuel's sword and the right one onto Zolan's. The other light fae with them named Kariza was aiding Luc and Reed while Leon was guarding the light faes from being knocked out as their magic suppliers.

Every time an orc attacked the girls, Leon was there to block the attack.

The synchronization between the vampires and light faes were such a sight to behold and it appeared to be quite effective. However, the enemies seemed to keep rising in numbers as well. They were obviously dead but as long as their hands and feet were intact, they still rose like undead creatures. The dark magic sustaining them was too strong. The source of the orc's magic was like the sun, and it seemed to have no limit to it.

Zolan was worried because he knew the light faes' magic, though effective and powerful, was just like their strength where it was not an infinite thing. It would only be a matter of time before they start running out of mana and that only meant no more magic. They would have to rest to replenish the strength and energy they have spent from the fights.

"Zanya! Kariza!" Zolan shouted at the girls. "Don't use your magic unless the situation is absolutely necessary. Unless it is going to be fatal, hold back. Try to conserve your magic! We don't know how long this fight will take so make sure to take it easy and pace yourselves. You guys too. Don't go all out for now! We are in this for the long haul."

Everyone nodded and they tried to slow down and pace themselves, all the while making sure that the orcs do not make it past them.

"I will go call for reinforcements." Zanya panted out to Leon who was guarding their backs.

Leon quickly glanced at her sideways before returning his focus before him and knocking off another blow that was aimed at Zanya. "That's a bad idea. Some orcs might be rampaging all along the exit right now." Leon replied.

"Don't worry. I'm not going there physically. I'll be leaving my body here as that's the safest way. Here... take this." She threw her sword to Leon before he could even utter a single word.

The silver white blade was light in Leon's hand as he had caught it by reflex. And despite it not being in Zanya's hand anymore, the blade amazingly kept its shimmery silver glow.

"This is..." Leon trailed off as he saw Zanya's body already losing its glow and only seemed like a waxed figure that was lifelike. Her eyes were now closed as she stood there like a statue and Leon knew her spirit had already left her body.

"Be careful and comeback immediately!" He could only shout out his warning in the general direction that he assumed she would be going despite not knowing if Zanya was still there as an orc rushed to attack him.

Leon leapt and slashed at the orc using Zanya's lightweight blade. To his amazement, the blade cut through the orc's skin so easily and neatly. He could not quite believe how sharp this magical sword was!

But all of a sudden, as though the orcs had found an opening when the vampires slowed down from their attacks, they now increased in ferocity and attacked them all out. With the absence of Zanya, Samuel and Zolan now were lacking in magical aid. Therefore, Leon had to go over to their side to aid them and stop the orcs from entering the barrier.

Leon had successfully brought the orc down using Zanya's magical sword. But unfortunately, he had to leave his post in the process. When he turned back to check on the situation of his own post, his eyes widened at the sight of an orc who was about to strike Zanya's body.

Chapter 350 - Dagger

In that critical moment, Leon's heart stopped. He knew that Zanya's body would be torn to pieces if the orc was allowed to reach her. No. He could not allow that happen!

Something pulsed in his eyes, and they turned from red to a bewitching mix of purple scarlet. Then he threw the sword in his hand like a javelin. It flew fast, straight, and true, piercing right through the orc's hand as it was just an inch away from slamming down on Zanya's body.

Leon flashed over there like a shadow and grabbed Zanya's body to remove it from the orc's grasp.

"Go grab that blade!" he yelled at Samuel as he held Zanya's body close as he leapt away, and Samuel nodded at him. As Samuel was fighting the orc, trying to retrieve the sword that had pierced its hand, Reed guarded Kariza.

"Do you have a weapon? I believe it will be more effective for me to use it to protect you." Reed said. He had seen the sword Leon was using and he knew that sword was Zanya's. He thought that having Kariza's weapon would help as she could not use it anyway since she was fully focused on chanting and casting out magic.

"My weapon wouldn't be useful in this situation." Kariza replied softly. "I'm an archer."

"Oh, I see..."

"But I do have a dagger here with me. I believe you can use that." Kariza offered.

"Of course, that may have to do. It would be better than an arrow." Reed immediately replied.

"It's on my thigh. Please take it." Kariza responded as she was moving her fingers which was part of the casting of her next spell.

Reed blinked at her, his system seemed to screech to a halt at what she had just said.

"Hurry! Take it!" Kariza urged as she kept her eyes towards the men she was aiding. Her focus was all on them as Zanya's body was there and she needed to help them protect her too.

Not knowing what to do, Reed looked down and when he saw her part her legs slightly wider, Reed was suddenly flustered. He had never panicked like this during any fights. However, he was now incredibly thrown off by this task she had given him.

"Hurry! Take it before the orcs get to us!" Kariza urged Reed.

Reed was forced to bend forward. Her long pure white silken skirt have cuts from her inner legs down to the edge below, so he thankfully did not need to lift the skirt to get to the front of her thighs. However, it did not make the job any easier for Reed. He had never done something like this before. And especially not during such a life-threatening situation like what they were in right now.

"Goodness! What's taking you so long?" she expressed her urgency and Reed quickly shut his eyes before reaching out and his hand went under her skirt. His fingers touched her silky-smooth skin and his heart almost shut down. Thankfully, he found the dagger in the next second and quickly took it and pulled his hand back.

By the time Reed was standing, his face was already flaming so red it seemed as though blood would seep out of his skin. That was one of the toughest missions he had ever experienced!!

An orc reached him at that exact moment and Reed reacted immediately and swept his hand out in an arc, using that newly acquired dagger to attack. With his speed and the effectiveness of the magical weapon, the orc was quickly filled with sharp and deep cuts the dagger had caused. It would have been ten times the effort needed to inflict this kind of injury if the weapon he had used was his own sword!

Then he slammed the dagger into the orc's eyes, before pulling it out swiftly and crashing it into its skull until it toppled over to the ground.

Panting, Reed looked back at where Kariza was but what welcomed him was Zolan, smirking with a knowing gleam in his eyes as he stood there. He had been guarding Kariza the moment Reed confronted the orc.

One look and Reed knew that the long-haired blond had seen what he did a while ago. His face said it all especially that annoying and meaningful smirk.

'I'm happy for you kid, that was a golden opportunity.' Zolan's voice was heavy with meaning as he communicated through their telepathy and Reed blushed.

'What the hell are you talking about?' Reed complained, making as though he did not understand a word Zolan was saying. He then turned and immediately went to aid Samuel next.

Grinning widely as he snickered discreetly, Zolan looked at Leon who was laying Zanya's body at a safe spot where he could guard her body easily as well as counterattack when any orc attacks.

When Leon looked up and happened to meet his eyes, Zolan immediately spoke to him through their telepathy. 'We need more weapons from the light faes, Leon. Since Kariza has one dagger, I believe Zanya has as one well. Get it now. You need a weapon!' Zolan told him. "It should be strapped on to her inner thigh!"

Leon paused for a moment. And then his gaze fell on Zanya's lower body. Her garments were made of silk and pure white in colour like Kariza's. As his gaze travelled along her body, he felt his face flame up. Her upper body was covered in an armour that left the upper portion of her chest bare. However, he did not doubt that though it looked light and flowy, the armour would be able to

withstand the hits of arrows and blades alike. Remembering how Zolan mentioned that there should be a dagger strapped on her inner thighs, Leon's gaze drifted downwards. There was a white skirt belted down with a tie that was seemingly made of the same material as her upper armour. The long billowy skirt was slit at the hem right up to where her legs meet, giving Leon a very clear view of her long, slim, and shapely legs that were encased in a knee-high boot made of the same material as her upper armour. He quickly averted his eyes to maintain his respect for her body, but not before catching a glimpse of an inch wide strap of material – he assumed it was the same as her armour – that might be holding the dagger that Zolan had mentioned about. However, he was not sure which leg it was on as he had diverted his eyes very quickly. His face that was already red flushed even more until he could feel the tips of his ears so hot that it might be releasing steam.

He looked over at Zolan again and the man frantically encouraged him with exaggerated hand movements to just get it. Leon also saw that an orc was slowly rising next to him and since the sword Zanya gave him was now in Samuel's hand and his own sword was now nowhere to be found, Leon was currently left without any weapon at his disposal.

Damn! He cursed in his mind and at the sight of the orc now already on its feet, Leon could only reach out, heart hammering and thundering so loudly that he was almost deaf from it. His hand slipped under her skirt. He could not find the dagger! Could it be on the other side?

He moved his hand again when...

"What the hell are you doing?" Zanya's voice sounded out and Leon froze.