

SPELLBOUND 421

Chapter 421 - Someone

Azrael could not quite believe what Gideon had just done. Why must he do that? Gideon had never willingly revealed that form of his to anyone so lightly as how he had done earlier with Vera. Not even Kione nor himself were privileged to see it so casually like that!

Gideon's been Azrael's close friend since their childhood days, and he was more than aware on just how hard Gideon had tried to hide his form for so many years. He and Kione were witnesses to his struggle. He had even begged them once many years ago, to cover for him when Queen Beatrice had almost found out about his secret.

Yet now... he so nonchalantly revealed himself to a stranger – and to top it off, a human female – just like that? For what? Just so he could scare the poor girl away? Ridiculous!

Shaking his head in disbelief, Azrael tried to reason out Gideon's action. He stared at the poor human girl again. She was still rooted to the same spot, apparently paralyzed with shock.

However, when Azrael searched her face, he was surprised at what he saw reflected on her face. Contrary to what he had thought, the poor girl was not actually frozen due to fear of what she had seen. Instead, her countenance looked as though everything is now over for her. It was as if her whole world was set to be crumbling down to pieces very soon.

Her beautiful blue eyes had now turned completely lifeless and was revealing a dull sheen – as if those eyes no longer belonged to living creature anymore, but one of a wax doll.

The little glint of hope that was still shining in her eyes a while ago had now evaporated into nothingness. Azrael sighed. Now he understood why this helpless human did not even hesitate to offer herself to become a bed warmer. He did not expect this kind of deprecating statement to come out of her mouth. But now, there was no need to wonder on what kind of monstrosities that had occurred all through her life for her to be this willing to promise such things which were so demeaning to herself as a woman and an individual.

It was obvious to him that she must have been living a life of hell. Gideon's appearance to her, must have been considered as the very last ray of hope that she could bet on to escape this hell she was going through.

With a heavy sigh, Azrael slowly approached her, trying not to make sudden or loud movements that might startle her. He was amazed that this girl did not get scared of Gideon's appearance but from the fact that Gideon left, had made him realize that his hope that Gideon would be swayed by her was not possible. What a shame because he was truly hoping she could make Gideon take her along. But even if her begging did not work, what else could work? He could take this girl along, but the risk of disobeying Gideon by allowing her to tag along with him was not worth it. He could only make such risky decision if only he is able to make sure that this girl could become special to Gideon even for a little. But again, it is too bad because Gideon had already left and that was an obvious indication to Azrael that this girl too, did not and will not mean a thing to him.

Looking at the dead body, Azrael let out another sigh.

"Do you want me to get rid of this body? Sorry but that's all I can do for you." He said and she looked at him with those beautiful baby blues, but disturbingly dead eyes of hers.

Then she shook her head. "Thank you but you don't need to do that anymore. They knew I was the last person with him. If his body goes missing, the blame will naturally be put to no one else but on me." Her voice was weak, hopeless. "But I really..." she forced a smile, "I really appreciate your thoughtfulness. Also... Please... tell him that I... I'm thankful for what he did for me." Her voice filled with gratefulness. "Please tell him I will never forget..." she trailed off and bit her bleeding lower lip.

And she bowed her head low to him before she turned, picking the sword up from the ground before cutting the edges of her skirt and tearing them to rip them up to her knees. Then she walked forward but not towards where she had come from but to the opposite direction, dragging the sword in her hand weakly.

Watching her, Azrael's gaze fell to her feet and pity struck him again at the sight of her bleeding bare feet against the rocky ground. He shook his head in disbelief. To think that she had been running with those wounds and was not even flinching... this girl... was she immune to pain? There was no way that could be, right? Humans do not have magic to make them impervious to pain. Then how was she walking like nothing was wrong?!

Azrael ran his hand through his thick raven black hair and sighed hard. "Goodness, now you're making me remember someone who..." he suddenly trailed off and his eyes widened. His gaze flew to her and for a moment he looked like he saw a ghost of someone he knew. No... could it be... did Gideon interfere a while ago and acted like that because... because this human also reminded him of Leah?

Once again, Azrael scrutinized the human girl who was now moving slowly like wounded little prey who barely escaped her death and was now wandering aimlessly, not knowing where to go. She has fiery red hair and fair skin, things that were so unlike Leah, his beloved adopted little sister and Gideon's lover who had died many years ago. But her eyes... now that he thought about it, Leah's eyes were just like hers – large, round, and a beautiful pastel pale blue colour. He could see that she was also of the same height and frame as her. Leah had a very peculiar ability of not being able to feel any pain. Everyone had thought back then that her ability was amazing, but he, including Gideon and Kione knew that her ability was actually deadly. To think that this girl has so many similarities with her...

Suddenly, something gleamed in Azrael's eyes and as if he had already made up his mind, he shouted after her.

Chapter 422 - You Have

"Wait!" Azrael called out and she halted.

She was a bit farther off from him now, so he disappeared and reappeared before her again, not bothering to hide his magical abilities.

"May I know your name?" he asked politely, and she blinked at him but eventually, she replied.

"Vera." Simple and straight. Just one word.

"Vera..." Azrael echoed.

"Azrael." He introduced himself in return, surprising her. "Alright, Vera. May I know how old you are now?"

"Eighteen." Her gaze now questioning as she looked at him. Why did he want to know her age? However, Vera did not bother to conceal it and just surrendered the information without hesitation. She did not care anymore.

"So young..." he muttered, then looked at her with a serious but friendly gaze. "You're not scared of me... of us?"

Vera shook her head. "What are you? Are you and him... the angels of darkness?"

Azrael smiled crookedly. "Angel of darkness..." he echoed, amused. But he shook his head. "No, no. We are dark faes and we live in a place called Under Land."

"Dark faes... you guys are not scary. Humans are way scarier." She said with a matter-of-fact tone and Azrael could not help but look at her with an admiring gaze. To think that such a helpless little creature was not scared of him, of Gideon of all creatures, when even the dark faes trembled before them.

"Alright then... is your offer still good to go? Because I'm going to bring you along with me." He told her and she stood very still for a moment, as if she could not believe what she had just heard. "But not as a bed warmer. You are too young for me to bed..." A quick frown crossed Azrael's face before disappearing.

Vera creased her brows. "I am old enough. I've been doing that task for a few years now, since I was way younger." She replied rather nonchalantly as she shrugged her thin shoulders and Azrael's face darkened a little. What? She had been doing such things ever since she was young? Were humans this... and she even called it a task?

Azrael could not help but feel angry. How could these human make a little girl become a bed warmer and allow her to think it was just a task?! These damned humans! They are worse than animals!

He had to take a deep breath to calm himself down before being able to speak. He did not even realise that he was already acting like some angry family member of hers.

"You've been a bed warmer for just one man, right?" he asked grimly but he pinched the skin between his brows just to hide his anger and displeasure, worried that she might think he was being angry at her.

"No. I'm a bed warmer for my mother."

Her answer made him blink twice.

"What? Your... mother?!"

"Since my father died, my mother suddenly became strange. She did not just begin to hate me, but she hated cold beds too. She made me warm her bed every night so that when she goes to sleep, the bed's already warm for her."

Lost for words, silencing him for a while as all that hot air and anger whooshed out of him, deflating him like a balloon having its air let out. He felt a little embarrassed from mentally cursing them to be worse than animals.

Azrael cleared his throat.

"So... you had meant that literally? Good Lord! Don't tell me you don't know what the other meaning of those words are?" Azrael could already expect the answer even when he was asking this question.

When the girl creased her brows, not understanding his meaning, he laughed shortly, shaking his head. Was it because only the dark faes actually have a different meaning of those words? That must be it!

Pinching the skin between his brows again, he sighed out in exasperation.

"You know... for the dark faes, a bed warmer means a sex partner." He informed her with much concern and Vera was shocked for a moment, her mouth dropping open.

"I... I didn't mean that." She immediately explained herself. "I know he... a man like him wouldn't want to bed someone like me. I could tell he's probably like royalty to us humans and... I am sure he has many women... that's why I could only offer to warm his bed. I heard there were people who hire others to do that, not just my mother, so I can only offer that since he also didn't need a servant. That wasn't my..." Vera was blabbering at the end, not even sure if her words were making sense.

"Alright, I understand now..." Azrael's large hand patted her head, causing Vera to look at him with wide eyes. "I believe you. That you don't mean it that way... now I'm going to ask you again, are you certain you want to come with us?"

She stared at him, dumbfounded and was not able to speak for a few seconds.

"You... you're willing to take me along?" she uttered in disbelief.

"Yes. He will probably kill me for this... but I believe you'll be able to stop him from doing that, won't you?" Azrael grinned widely at her.

Confusion filled her eyes before she bit down on her bleeding lip again. "I don't think... I don't think I could even if I try to... I don't have the power to –"

"Oh, you have... trust me," he smiled at her reassuringly.

"H-how? How would I..."

"Just hug him... oh, it would be better if you could kiss him to shut him up." He winked at her next and Vera's mouth hung open again. "You can do that for me, right? I'm risking my life for you here."

"I don't want you to risk your life for m –" Vera started to protest.

"Now, now. Don't tell me you're going to give up now. You can do these simple things, right?"

She stared hard at him and then a glimmer appeared in her lifeless eyes again. "Al-alright, I will do it." she declared in a tone full of determination, her voice now louder and Azrael patted her head again – this time with more fondness than previously.

"Good girl. Now let's go chase after him before its too late." he stretched his hand to her.

Vera swallowed hard as she stared at the man's large hand. But she trustingly reached out and clasped her small ones in his. As soon as she held his, they both disappeared in the darkness.

Azrael chased after Gideon with Vera in tow, as fast as he could, afraid that the man would have run off quicker than he could catch up to him. But to his surprise, he managed to catch up to him much earlier than expected. Azrael was expecting that the man would have already gone off quite far! Especially with the way he had taken off initially and at the speed he was moving at too. However, with this, Azrael smirked to himself as he realised his plans might go on smoother than expected.

A pleased chuckle escaped Azrael's lips as he finally overtook Gideon and materialized before him along with Vera. As expected, Gideon's face darkened when his eyes fell upon the small figure that was partially hidden in Azrael's hold. But Azrael's confidence had already skyrocketed at the fact that all Gideon did was to scowl at them and did not actually rush to leave and was still here.

With a serious face, Azrael immediately spoke. "I can't bear to leave her. If we leave her alone, someone else would find her and rape her and kill her. Leaving her means letting her die and be ravaged brutally. And you know I'm not someone who can just stand aside and allow something like that to happen to a helpless creature. More so since you have already helped preserve her life once just earlier. However, we are clearly running out of time now. So, why don't you just send me to the vampire land? All I have to do is give Gavrael a clue about his wife's whereabouts, right? I definitely can get such a simple task done. And this poor little pet right here..." he gently pushed Vera towards the man who was now scowling at Azrael, looking as though if there was just one more word that comes from Azrael's mouth, he would literally blow up. However, before he could get in a word edgewise, Vera had been skilfully navigated into his arms.

It was all due to the magic Azrael had used when he had taken the opportunity to push Vera at the right moment, causing her to crash quickly against Gideon and Vera – the poor human that did not know how it happened, but had suddenly been reduced to a sandbag – could only cling to Gideon helplessly as her only pillar of support.

Azrael's hawklike eyes were fully trained on both the couple's reactions when he had literally thrown Vera into Gideon's arms, not wanting to miss a single response. And when he saw that Gideon got distracted by Vera's closeness, Azrael secretly smiled and continued on with this plan shamelessly and without hesitation. "She needs to get treated, especially with all the injuries she has on her. We can't be dragging her along to the vampire's land in her condition. You know how they are so sensitive to the scent of blood. So, one of us must go back with her and obviously, that person must be you –" Azrael happily rattled off his plans to Gideon, purposefully ignoring how the man's face was getting darker and his scowl was getting more severe.

"Azrael!" Gideon barked out in a low voice as he held Vera's frail shoulders, fully intending to push her off him when all of a sudden, she tiptoed and moved to attack him with a kiss. Her lips landed right at the corner of his own and he immediately stilled like a statue.

"I am worried that the Light Fae Queen might be wreaking havoc in Yryzia now. Now then, I'm leaving Vera to you." Azrael said and without waiting for Gideon's response, he disappeared with a wide grin on his face. He was cheering internally on how his bet had paid off and Gideon really seemed to have a soft spot for that little red headed girl. As he sped back to the Under Lands, he crossed his fingers and prayed that things will proceed as how he hoped it would.

When Gideon finally snapped out of his shock, the sly big man was gone.

He then returned his gaze to the girl with the flaming red hair and at that moment, her large pale blue eyes seemed to loom right before him. It took him a while before he could finally squeeze a word out of his mouth.

"Where is your home? I'll return you to where you belong. You can't come along with us." He stated in a flat tone.

The pair of beautiful eyes widened again. Shock and then denial filled them as she shook her head vehemently.

"No..." she whispered as she immediately let go of him and stepped back away from him. Though she seemed like a timid little rabbit, she was showing a stubbornness that did not go along with the soft fluffy bunny look.

"Please. I'll die if... if you send me back." She tried to plead with him.

His jaws worked as he stared at her, his eyes glimmered dangerously.

"And you think the place you are wanting to go to won't kill you? My current place is a haven of outlaws and rebels and exiles. Some of them are no different from that man I just killed." He informed her ruthlessly. His gaze then fell to her wounded bare feet and his fists clenched.

"You think someone like you can survive in my world? You won't last even for..." he trailed off at the sight of her tears falling silently from those cobalt eyes of hers. But not even a single sound of crying came out from her.

Gideon clenched his fists. His jaws worked as he closed his eyes and drew in a deep breath.

When he opened his eyes again, she had taken a few more steps back from him and he could not help but stare at her bare feet again.

"I'll... I'll wait for him..." she said hoarsely, her tears still flowing silently as she looked at him. "Azrael... he said he'll take me. I will go with him..."

Suddenly, something blazed within his eyes and before she knew it, her body had become paralyzed.

Chapter 424 - Thoughts

Vera blinked and thought that maybe she was just shocked into freezing up or something. She then looked at the man before her. She could tell that he was unhappy with what she had said, but she did not know why. As she tried to take another step backward, her body did not respond as she expected. She was truly frozen! Was it this man – she had heard Azrael call him Gideon earlier – that was responsible for causing this? Her heartbeat suddenly picked up, worrying if she had just inadvertently gotten herself out of one sticky situation and into another one. It was not long that she was being chased after by the disgusting viscount and then finally managing to be rid of him, courtesy of Gideon, of course.

However, her situation now somehow seemed to be jumping out of the pan and into the fire. The very same person who had 'saved' her from being victimised by the viscount has now put her under some spell that kept her bound and not being able to move. Seeing his cold and unyielding eyes only made her shudder internally, wondering if he was sick of her denials and pleas of trying to go along with them. Though at the end, she only said that she would wait there for Azrael to return and

not cling unto him, he did not seem to be glad about it. He did not seem to like the idea of her wanting to wait for his companion, Azrael to come back for her. Could it be that he hated her so much that even if she was not following him, but his companion, it was still so unbearable for him?

She looked at him with pleading eyes. As she could not move, she also could not talk. Vera desperately wanted to shout out to him, telling him to leave her here alone. It was fine for her to wait here until Azrael comes back to get her. She used her eyes and tried her best to convey the message to him. 'I will wait here. Don't bother about me. I'll wait for Azrael. You go do your thing.' Vera looked at him meaningfully, using her eyes to will the message across with her whole heart and body and soul, hoping that those words she had thought with all her strength would get through to him.

All the while, Gideon was standing there, looking at Vera. He had been caught up in a whirr of jumbled emotions after hearing the girl say that she would wait there for Azrael. Those baby blues of hers looking at him so warily and her voice so trusting as she mentioned his companion, only fuelled those confusing thoughts running amok in his mind. He was so caught up in his thoughts that after casting the immobility spell on her, he had blanked out for a while.

When he came to, he saw her looking at him with those blue eyes, widened so large as she stared at him without blinking, that he knew she was wanting to say something. Looking at her expressive eyes and how she was straining against his spell, he guessed that she was telling him something along the lines of leaving her there and she waiting for Azrael. Nodding to himself, he decided on some things that he had thought on.

As Vera saw Gideon nodding, she thought that her message had gotten across. However, she did not know why there was a sudden pang of pain when she thought he would be leaving her alone here. But she told herself that it was alright, she is used to this. People kept walking out of her life, and she was okay with it. Letting out a breath, she stared at Gideon, waiting for him to walk off. After waiting for some time, thinking that he would leave soon, however, he somehow did not.

Instead, he used his magic to suspend her in the air as he walked toward a particular direction he had decided on.

'Wait! Where are you going? Why are you bringing me along?!' Vera was shouting all this out in her head. She was shocked. Was he not going to leave her there on her own? Does this mean that he was indirectly telling her she was allowed to tag along and follow him?

Vera could not help but feel a sudden surge of exhilaration and delight welling up in her heart, threatening to overflow and send her into a giddy spiral. She did not know why such a simple and unspoken gesture could make her fall into such a cheerful tizzy. Her saviour is willingly bringing her along with him! She prayed that these were not mere dreams that were happening to her. It would be such a devastating blow if she woke up and found that what she is going through now was not a reality.

However, as minutes passed, Vera was still here. It was not a dream! She was still suspended and immobile as she was pulled along behind Gideon as he walked before her. She had no idea where he was headed to but at the moment, she did not mind the least. She could only stare steadily at his back.

After moving for some time, Vera noticed that they had approached something that looked like a round section in the air that had a view different from their surroundings. The air surrounding the circular opening seemed to be slightly distorted.

'Oh my god! What is this?' Vera shouted out in her mind. This was the only thing she could think of when looking at that fantastical view. She was brimming over with questions and wanted to get answers from Gideon. Sadly, she was still under the spell, and he did not volunteer any information.

They then crossed the portal. Still not speaking, Gideon then spread out his large wings and flew. Vera naturally followed behind him like a floating doll.

As they travelled through the skies, Vera was shocked at the different scenes that passed before her eyes. They seemed to have gone to a whole different world. She could not recognise this as anything familiar from the human kingdom. She prayed that this is not a dream again, nor was she going crazy.

As she looked around, she realised that they had landed. And before them there was a body of water. Vera wondered if they were stopping here for a break. Gideon seemed to be heading to the river. When they reached the riverbank, he then proceeded to unceremoniously drop her into the gleaming waters of the crystal-clear river.

Landing into the shockingly cool waters and having it splashed into her face, Vera was shocked. That was so uncouth of him! She did not think he would literally dump her into the river without any warning. In her annoyance, with eyes sparking blue flames, she turned to him with the intention of giving him a piece of her mind. It was then that she realised she could move!

She turned around to look for him to find that he was sitting on top of a stone, looking down at her. She realised that he was still somewhat in control of her as she was able to be held afloat in the waters and was not sinking.

She opened her mouth to speak but found that she could not do so. Flashing him an annoyed look, she pursed her lips and pouted. She had wanted to ask him why he had dropped her into the river. Was he washing her because he felt that she was filthy?

With a flick of his hand, he lifted her out of the water and stared at her feet. He then dipped her into the water again. Vera was confused at his actions that seemed to be spurred out of nothing. What was he doing with her? He lifted her again after leaving her soaking in the cool waters for a little longer. Vera noticed him focussing again on her feet and saw his displeased look on his face.

Gideon frowned at the realisation that she was not healing. This was the river which had magical properties of healing that could work on every living thing in the Under Lands. However, this magic cannot be used to cure humans?

He silently stood and Vera realised that there was now a large swath of dark smoke that was wrapping around her. It felt as though she was being encased in a protective pouch. Looking over at the ever-silent man, she saw him extending his powerful and magnificent wings again.

Spreading his wings with an impressive wingspan, he flew into the skies again, taking Vera along. Where is he taking her to, now?

Few hours earlier in Gideon's Castle.

"You're saying that I am totally wrong, that Gideon's aim is not to kill his brother but the other way around?" Evie narrowed her eyes at the good looking dark fae lord.

Kione nodded, his gaze steady and seemingly so genuine that after looking at him for a long while and considering things, Evie could not help but believe his words no matter how she tried to tell herself he must be bluffing. She sighed internally, wondering if she was just one who was too kind hearted and a sucker for sob stories.

"Yes. Also... Gideon isn't after the throne. When Gavrael was still young, Gideon had deliberately made himself to be the weaker one between them both, just to make sure that the dark faes turned their attention to his younger brother."

"Made himself out to be the weak one?" Evie echoed, her gaze questioning.

"Gideon was already very strong even back then when we were still kids. But he had hid his abilities and portrayed himself to be weaker than his younger brother."

"Why? Why would he do that? Why would he not want a throne that was meant for him? He is, after all, the first born son of King Belial. No matter who was stronger between the two, no one can change the fact that he's the eldest legitimate son." Evie reasoned it out, not just to Kione but also to herself. Kione then looked out of a large window that was overlooking the city.

He seemed to be contemplating once more to decide for the last time whether to tell her the full truth or not. Evie noticed that Kione seemed to have allowed his mind to wander off from their conversation. She realised that he must be mulling over something important as there was a deep frown that was not there before. Evie did not disturb nor distract him but held herself still and waited there patiently and respectfully for him to finish his considerations. After some time, a soft and deep sigh escaped his lips before he turned to face her again.

"If you don't mind, please allow me cast a soundproof barrier around us first, Queen." He said respectfully, informing Evie of his intentions in case she took his actions the wrong way and misunderstood him. And before Evie could respond, a thick wall of smoke encircled them, effectively cutting them off from everyone else on the outside of it. The dark fae lord even made certain that his barrier was thick enough. And from all this, Evie could only brace herself, knowing that what he was going to say next must be of extreme importance where secrecy had to be maintained to this extent.

Kione then stared wordlessly at her for a few moments before opening his mouth. "Because Gideon is... not King Belial's son." He revealed the shocking truth and Evie's eyes slowly widened. She took a while to respond and had that statement register in her mind.

"You... you mean... Queen Beatrice had a –" Evie stammered out, not sure if she should complete the sentence.

"No, Queen. Gideon does not belong to queen Beatrice either. He is not her son." Kione corrected steadily and Evie could only look at him as another wave of shock rocked her.

"Gideon is actually the son of the previous King who was King Belial's brother. King Belial secretly adopted Gideon as his own and no one knew about it for a long time, until Gideon found out about the truth himself." Kione continued his explanations and then he turned to look out the window

again. A small nostalgic smile then curved on his face. "You might not believe me but when we were children, Gavrael had been a part of our small group. Gideon adored Gavrael so much back then he had always brought Gavrael along with him whenever he come over to play with us. Gavrael was still just an adorable but naughty little five year old kid back then. Gavrael also adored Gideon in return, and he would always find ways and means to follow after Gideon wherever he goes. He once even tagged along with us all the way to the training camp, where Azrael and I had ended up helping our friend to babysit him. He's such a devil sprout though. Azrael and I had always told Gideon not to take him along when we were going somewhere but he couldn't just make himself leave his little brother behind no matter how much we reminded, encouraged, or even threatened him to. Well, the devil sprout... err, Gavrael, also refused to be left behind. So, we couldn't do anything but just let him tag along as our little tail. His presence always frustrates me and Azrael though, but Gideon loved spoiling him so much." Kione shook his head as he was caught in remembering the past while recalling it for Evie's benefit. "I think Gideon was the one to be blamed on why Gavrael grew up to be such a troublemaker brat." He grumbled as he looked at Evie, causing her to lift her lips in a smile.

As Kione recounted those matters of their younger days, Evie could not help it but feel her heart swell in happiness, with bittersweet feelings as well because though she was glad to hear of his childhood memories, she also felt bad that it was being told to her by a third party and not Gav himself. Gav only told her about that awful childhood of his... she had never heard him tell her anything pleasant about his childhood. And that was why this was making her feel as though she was in such a blissful state. She was happy to know that he had at least experienced such a happy childhood and he had spent it with a beloved brother.

"We were like that for quite a while and Gideon had been growing more and more powerful. But then..." Kione's expression changed, and Evie realised the bad news were about to come.

"Everything suddenly changed. During our final training mission, Gideon disappeared for quite a long time in the Abyss of Darkness."

"Abyss of Darkness?" Evie wondered what kind of a place that was to have such a name tagged onto it.

"It's the abyss where monsters originate from. This place is located in the deepest part of the Under Lands. There is a well-like hole in its centre and we believe that the well-like thing is actually a portal that leads to a place or even a separate dimension where monsters reside. Sometimes, the portal seemed to open randomly and monsters that came out of it would invade and wreak havoc in the the Under Lands." Kione explained, making Evie crease her brows at the information she was hearing.

"Nobody comes out alive once fallen into that well-like hole. Everyone who had previously fallen in there will disappear forever and never come back. But Gideon somehow managed to make his way back, and he was alive. However, he was not the same person anymore. He had done his best to act like he was still the same... but Azrael and I knew he had changed. Then one day, Gideon told us about this, that King Belial and Queen Beatrice are not his real parents. He told us that he is a son of a monster, King Sarion. King Sarion was the infamous mad king who nearly destroyed the Under Lands. And if it were not for King Belial's help, this place would not have existed anymore. King Sarion had gone mad and had let his dark magic take over him. As a result, he killed countless of dark faes, including his whole family. It's only King Belial and the newborn Gideon, who was

able to survive that calamity. Gideon told us his mother had conceived him when the king was already mad and consumed by the darkness. He believed that he is not actually the son of King Sarion, but of the darkness itself."

Evie was so speechless by Kione's words that she could not say a thing for a while but only stare at him.

"Why... why would he believe such thing?" Evie asked cautiously after long moments had passed.

"He said that it's the only logical reason why he had the strange dark magic that was supposed to only be possessed by a dark fae who had gone mad and was swallowed by dark magic... and... Azrael and I saw him once, suddenly growing horns and turning into a monster when we were still young." Kione paused for a while as his face became extremely severe. And Evie knew that the man seemed to still be seeing the scene that must have been burned into his mind and it still seemed to be quite a horrific memory to him. "He was still turning into one until now. But thankfully, unlike those mad kings in the past, Gideon has the power to control himself. Of course, there are times when he does have a hard time to control himself. But those times are a rare occurrence. It only happens when someone he cares for is harmed or... killed... And it is then that he'd go completely uncontrollable."

Chapter 426 - Truth

It took Evie quite a while to process through the load of information that Kione was feeding her. She was speechless at the shocking things she was learning about Gideon. However, more and more questions kept popping up the more information he revealed to her.

"So, you're saying Gideon is actually not a villain... then why? Why did he kidnap me and all the other vampires and the light faes too? Why is he wanting to lure my husband here when he is supposed to adore Gav so much? What exactly is his hidden intention in doing all these things?" Evie bombarded Kione with questions. But then, before Kione could start to answer her questions, she widened her eyes as a thought suddenly popped into her mind. "Wait... could it be that his darkness... his darkness is dictating him to do those things? Or is he being controlled by his own powers now?"

Evie's large eyes remained wide as she looked at Kione. She remembered the things that had happened to Gav and most especially to that dark fae, Galleous, and Thundrann and she could only suspect that the same thing was happening now to Gideon. Even though Kione said Gideon could control himself, Evie was well aware of how dangerous that immense wealth of dark magic can be. No matter how strong the host is, once the dark magic starts overtaking the host, it would only be a matter of time when it is a losing battle.

However, Kione shook his head at her, the look in his eyes telling Evie that her theory was wrong again.

"No Queen, I can assure you there is no chance for Gideon's dark magic to consume him like what had happened to the previous kings." He said and Evie narrowed her eyes. She had thought that her suspicions would have been spot on. But she was getting even more curious when Kione mentioned that Gideon is not susceptible to the effects of the growing powers of his own dark magic. How was that even possible?

"You can't be certain of that." She questioned Kione's statement, wondering if he might not be that in tune with Gideon's matters as he thought he was. "It might look like he is controlling it very well now but what if he has been hiding all his struggles the whole time?" Evie threw out her thoughts, thinking that it made sense.

Still, Kione remained firm with his belief. "Gideon is different from all those kings and even from Gavrael, Queen. Gavrael and all the previous mad kings acquired their immense darkness themselves by crossing the limit of the dark magic their bodies can endure. But for Gideon... his darkness is not something he acquired slowly over time. That abundance of power had already been there within him since he was born."

His words silenced Evie and Kione continued. "He is not even struggling in controlling his darkness at all. His darkness listens to him like a little pet and without any force needed to keep it at bay. However, there are times when he appeared as though he was uncontrollable... that only happens during extreme situations. But it cannot be compared to something similar to those mad kings who end up losing their minds. For Gideon, he'd only go berserk due to utter rage and agony like what a normal man does when driven to the very edge or losing someone they love. The only problem with him is that because he is too powerful, a simple berserking rampage from him could easily destroy an entire city without him even knowing he had done so."

"Without him even knowing? Isn't that the same as his darkness acting on its own will and against his?" Evie asked, wondering what the difference in the wording was.

"It's different..." Kione slowly shook his head again. Then his expression became sullen as if remembering a tragic memory. "Many years ago, Gideon had lost his lover. Her death made Gideon go berserk and he rushed into the Monsters' forest and just rampaged in there for days on end. Despite his pain, his darkness didn't make him lose his mind. He was still rational enough to bring himself into the Monsters' forest just so he could avoid killing innocent dark faes in his wrath. However, unbeknownst to him, while he was rampaging in the forest, the portal that connected to a different place somehow opened just at that same time he was rampaging in the area and monsters came out of the Abyss, sparking an immediate war. The sudden attack of monsters destroyed one whole city and unfortunately killed many innocent dark faes."

There was short, silent pause as Kione looked out the window with eyes glazed over, as though looking at scenes that had happened long ago in the past. Then he shook his head and the glazed look disappeared before turning back to look over at Evie and continued talking. "Azrael and I, including Gideon himself realized later on that the monsters appeared whenever Gideon is raging in agony. We had tested it a few times ourselves and our theory seemed to be true. It's like... to the monsters, his cries and rage are some kind of summoning for them, and they just come forth looking for him but end up destroying everything in their paths as they moved... this is why... Gideon considers himself as a monster. Because he's the only one the monsters don't dare to touch. In fact, they all bow down to him as if... as if he's their king or something."

Kione shook his head as if he himself was still in disbelief, even though it was him who was telling Evie all this.

"I know it sounds so unbelievable and as though I am telling tall tales, but this is the truth. I swear!" Kione's gaze at Evie became a little helpless. "And the three of us are the only ones who knows about all these until now. You are the fourth person."

Hearing that last statement Kione made, Evie finally spoke. "Not even the king?"

Chapter 427 - His Aim

Kione nodded and Evie was shocked again. If even King Belial knew nothing about this, then why is he telling her all these? She had a funny feeling that as though there was something Kione wants by revealing so much of it to her. Were they expecting her to do something about it? Or was it that Gav who might be implicated in their plans later on? However, Evie kept herself calm and listened intently to what Kione was telling her next. She needed to remember everything properly and not miss out on any important information.

"Since he was young," Kione started again, "Gideon had always tried to hide everything related to this matter, most especially to his parents and Gavrael. He had never wanted to make them worry about him, with the queen being the top on his list. He always tells us he hated making his mother worry. He was very close to Queen Beatrice as the queen loves him as much as she loves Gavrael. But since Gideon found out about his peculiar abilities, he began to feel that he was dangerous to those he held dear. He was afraid that he'd one day slaughter them, his very own family, like how King Sarion did. So, he began distancing himself from them, deliberately making his relationship with them turn strained and cold. He avoided going back to the Great City as much as possible, just to avoid seeing them, even ignoring the queen's call for him. And after so many years of isolating himself... he became the man that he is now." Kione sighed with emotions as he stopped talking for a few seconds.

"He doesn't even bother to listen to Azrael and me anymore. He is drifting farther and farther away, so much so, that he's even quite unreachable to us now. And now that he had gone on ahead and done this silly thing of kidnapping you..." he trailed off as he met Evie's gaze. "And unfortunately, he never even let us in on all of his plans and on why he had to kidnap you –"

"W-what? You don't know as well?!" Evie's mouth gaped, unable to believe it.

Kione grinned apologetically, flashing those perfect white teeth. "I'm sorry but yes, Gideon had long stopped talking to us about his thoughts, much less his plans. Especially when they involve things that he regards to be more important. Like I told you, he had been drifting away from us since that day Leah died."

"Leah... Is that the name of his lover you were mentioning about earlier?" Evie's voice was small and soft, feeling sympathy for Gideon's loss and pain.

"Yes." Came Kione's simple reply.

Evie pressed her fingertips to her temples as she massaged them with little circular motions. "So, this means, you don't actually have an answer as well..." Evie bit her lower lip, still frustrated that even this man did not know what Gideon was aiming or planning for. "Then why did you take all the time and trouble to tell me all these secrets about him? You didn't even tell all of these details to King Belial. So, why tell me? What is it that you are expecting me to do?"

"Because I believe that you are the only one who can help us... you're the one who can help Gideon, your brother-in-law..." Kione replied without any hesitation, causing Evie to blink twice then swallowed. Why was it that Kione had so much confidence in her abilities when she herself did not know what she could even do?!

"Wait... I don't understand... no, how? How can I even help if I don't know what exactly he is aiming for?" Evie questioned, a deep frown on her face now.

"Even though Gideon had never told us, I already deduced his aim... Gideon wanted Gavrael to come back because he believes that Gavrael is the one destined to destroy him." Kione's tone was low and serious.

"W-what?!" Evie was taken aback and did not know if she had heard Kione correctly.

"I know this sounds quite unbelievable, but Gideon has another peculiar ability and that is nothing can seem to destroy or kill him. Well, since no monster touches him even when he attacks them, Gideon does not actually have any opponent strong enough to rival him. So, I'm still unsure if he's truly invincible. There's king Belial but Gideon knows for sure that there would be no way King Belial would ever go against his son seriously. Well, he might... but only if Gideon ends up doing something crazy enough that will endanger the whole Under Lands. But the king would never make himself destroy his son –"

"And that's why he's going after my husband..." Evie understood it now.

"Yes. It is very sad to say it, but I believe Gideon had groomed Gavrael since he was young just for this moment."

"What do you mean?" Evie narrowed her eyes, not liking how that statement sounded.

"Back then, when Gideon first discovered what he is and the things he could do, he did not only begin to avoid his family, but he also began to make Gavrael, the brother he had originally adored so much to hate him instead. When Gavrael was being bullied and treated as an outcast due to him being a half-vampire, Gideon never came to his aid. He made Gavrael believe that he didn't care about him anymore and as years went by, Gavrael began to naturally hate this older brother of his for just standing aside and watching mutely when everyone treated him like he doesn't exist, when he was the weakest and couldn't use even a basic magic spell and even grow wings. And now... he had moved to kidnap Gavrael's beloved wife. He knew how much Gavrael loves you. He was aware about all the things he had done for you, that he had given up literally everything just to be with you. He knew you are his bottom line and reverse scale, and would no doubt come running after him with everything he had. And this is why I strongly believe that's what Gideon is aiming for. This is why I need your help, queen... your husband must know the truth before he reaches this place."

Chapter 428 - Not Right

After staring hard at Kione's unyielding and hopeful gaze, Evie looked away and stared out the window, overlooking the hauntingly beautiful city.

She was completely mind-blown from all the things that had been revealed from her talk with Kione. But what made her head ache the most was Kione's last statement. Gideon wants Gav to be the one who destroys him? What was with that intention?

Even though she strangely did not feel any doubt or uncertainty about the reality of all the things Kione had told her, Evie made sure to remember that this thing about Gideon's aim was still just Kione's speculation as Gideon himself had never spoken about it nor confirmed with his own words that that was what he wanted to do. Though it was the most logical explanation, Evie told herself not to think of it as a fact. Because as of right now, it was still not.

However, if Kione ends up being right in his speculations, she thought that Gav must know about this. No... even if Kione's theory about Gideon's aim ends up completely wrong, Evie still felt that she must let Gav know about this before it was too late for Gideon. But how? And... wait...

Evie's eyes widened as if a very important thought came to her. Her gaze flew towards Kione and she opened her mouth to speak but she stopped herself immediately, just as the words were about to tumble out of her lips. Was it safe for her to tell him about this?

Thinking hard for a moment, Evie then faced him after making her decision. Since this man had honestly revealed to her all those shocking information, Evie decided to return the favour to give him the same treatment and just tell him as well. This was not because she now trusted this man, but because she felt that telling him about Gav was the right move at this point.

"May I ask you a question?" Evie asked. "What made Gideon think that my husband will be the one to destroy him one day? Gideon knew my husband is not like him. And from what you have been telling me, Gideon is not like anyone else. Even I could tell his power is definitely unrivalled. Gav... my husband is certainly powerful too. But like you said, his dark magic is just like those other dark fae kings. It is something acquired, and it grows over time. There's certainly a huge gap if we were to look at just the scope of raw power alone, not to mention the abilities that Gideon wields." Evie was logical and rationally listed out the pertinent points.

"Well, though it is true that Gavrael's abilities certainly isn't one of a kind like Gideon's, that guy had always been a devil sprout." He grinned a little. "He's that sprout that now grew up into a large, powerful tree and you know what is so interesting about Gavrael? He does not stop growing. It is as if he has no limit as to how much he can continue growing at all. He just keeps growing and growing. Becoming more and more powerful by the day. He wasn't born powerful, mind you. In fact, he was born with zero magic at his disposal... But look at him now, from what we saw during his last fight against that ancient mad king Galleous –"

"Wait!" Evie cut him off. "You guys knew about that, too? I mean, you guys had been watching even then?" she was shocked at this revelation.

Kione nodded. "Yes. Gideon had sensed an immense dark magic pulsating from the surface. So he used his magic to see what was happening up there. I don't know how he did it, but he was able to look at what was happening through the eyes of Galleous himself. Gideon told us he could see through every dark faes' eyes whenever they are using a high levelled dark magic without them even knowing their eyes were being used in place for others' viewfinders. That is, except for Gavrael. Watching his fight at that time was what I believe, the main motivating factor that pushed Gideon to go ahead on his long time plan. I believe he thought that it is now the right time."

"But..." Evie hesitated for a moment. "Did he not notice anything else while watching? I mean... did he watch until the end of the battle?" Evie somehow felt her heart skipped a few beats as she asked, anticipation increasing as the minutes pass.

"You mean when Galleous died? The battle stopped there, right? Gideon could no longer see a thing after Galleous died." Kione's words seemed to have put out the anticipation in her heart.

For a moment, Evie fell silent, thinking again. But eventually, she lifted her head and steadied her gaze at him.

"Is... Gideon aware about my husband losing his memories and dark magic?" she asked carefully, holding her breath as she waited for his answer.

"Oh, about that. Yes, we are aware of it. He forgot everything and even seemingly lost his dark magic because of him using a forbidden magic and leaving the Underland." He answered as if it was not something serious. "We always knew he would definitely re-awaken his dark magic again one day though."

Evie shook her head, her eyes suddenly saddened at the thought of that moment Gav had cried in her arms. "He lost his dark magic again or I think I'd call it his dark fae side and I think it might be for good this time. He... Gavrael... he had said goodbye to me, telling me he need to disappear for Gavriel to come back to me. Now my husband is back to his normal vampire self, and he does not remember anything about his earlier life as Gavrael nor does he possess any dark magic." Evie had hoped that perhaps Kione or Gideon would have some way to resolve this matter.

But it was now Kione's turn to fall into a speechless shock.

"After Gav devoured Galleous darkness, I don't know how he did it. But he seemed to have transferred the dark magic he devoured into my black dragon." Evie continued in a soft voice. "Now I am still looking for my dragon. He too, suddenly disappeared right after that battle. It has been so long since then, but I still can't reach out to him no matter how hard I try nor how much power I pour into our mind link. That's why..." she paused again, trying to forget about that heartbreaking scene and focused her attention on Kione and their current problem. "That's why I think my husband won't be able to stand a chance against someone like Gideon as he no longer possesses any of his dark magic –"

"Wait... Queen... something's not right here –" As Kione's expression became a bit severe after hearing those words from Evie, their attention was immediately pulled towards the door.

A very strong presence they both knew that only belonged to no one else, but Gideon was somehow present nearby.

Right before the great door swung open, Kione dissolved his barrier around them and acted as though nothing out of the ordinary had happened.

Evie did the same as they both turned to face the door with relaxed postures, as though they were just sitting around chatting with each other on nonsensical and mundane, everyday things.

But the moment the door opened, Kione and Evie blinked at the sight that welcomed them. They were expecting a brooding man with cold eyes to appear and question them but... what was wrong with this scene? Who is that red headed girl coming in with him?

Kione blinked more than twice, seeing that it was another fair skinned lady and... not even a light fae?!

Gideon paused by the door, his gaze fell immediately towards Evie, while Evie had her amber eyes wide opened as she was still taken aback in shock.

"Human!" Evie exclaimed and Kione looked shocked as well. "You...!! You even went as far as to kidnap a human this time!"

Evie angrily walked towards him, fearless in the face of standing up for the innocent poor girl. After all the things she had found out about Gideon, it was strange, but Evie had stopped feeling the

overwhelming sense of danger from him anymore. He still exudes danger, but Evie seemed to feel quite confident that he would not harm her. To her, he was all bark but no bite, at least for now.

Gideon did not respond to Evie's accusations. His gaze however, fell towards Kione.

"What the hell are you up to? Kidnapping a poor human as well –"

"This one is a willing participant. No... I should say that she was the one who had begged to be taken here." he replied dryly, and Evie was speechless as she stopped in her rush over to them. It was then that her gaze flew towards the girl and immediately realized that she was under a binding spell.

"I don't believe you." Evie narrowed her eyes at Gideon. If that were true, then why was the girl being held with a binding spell? "Let her go and allow her to freely speak."

Gideon moved her close to her but still did not immediately move to put her down.

"Put her down," Evie told him crisply.

"She's hurt." Was all he responded, surprising Evie. Her gaze scanned over the human girl from her head, all the way downwards until her eyes fell to the girl's feet and she winced at the sight of her torn up feet. By the looks of it, that must really be hurting so bad. "I tried dipping her in the magical river. But it seems as though it doesn't work on her."

"The magical water doesn't work on humans." Evie looked at Gideon again.

"I had figured that must have been the case." He then removed his restriction spell over her, and the girl was finally able to move her hands and opened her mouth. She lifted her hands to brush her wavy red hair that had been messily blown all over and ended up covering her face.

And the moment the girl's face was uncovered, Evie gasped. "V-vera?!" she exclaimed in utter shock.

Chapter 429 - Friend

"Vera!" Evie exclaimed, shocked at the realization that the girl Gideon was holding captive was no other than a friend she had met when she visited the Eastern empire years ago. Evie and her family were guests in the Ansley's Castle, one of the biggest and most luxurious castles in the Eastern empire. So, Evie and Vera had spent quite a while together in the duration that she was there. They had immediately formed quite a close friendship in the short time and Vera even promised to come to the south to visit Evie again.

But she had never followed up on her promise and came to visit Evie. Vera had also stopped responding her letters and until Evie left home after her marriage to Gavriel, she had received no news nor letters from Vera. She had thought that perhaps Vera just got tired of her and had said all those things as a matter of being courteous while she was still in Ansley Castle.

However, now they were meeting each other again and Evie could not believe they were having their meet up reunion this way. And for Vera to be in such a situation was beyond comprehension. What had happened to her? How did a human even get so deeply entangled with creatures such as the dark faes?

"Vera..." Evie called again as she approached her. "... what are you even doing here?"

"E-evie?" Vera uttered, shock etched on her face. Why was Evie here? She still remembered that Gideon brought them through a portal. Was this a place where normal people could just walk in so casually?

"What are you... what happened to you?!" Evie's eyes flew to glare at Gideon, full of censure and anger. "Is he the one who –"

"No...No!" Frantically, Vera shook her head. She quickly cleared the misunderstanding before it grew even larger. She could not allow her saviour to shoulder this blame. "He's actually the one who came to my rescue." Vera looked at Evie, as she said simply. "He saved me."

Hearing her words, Evie breathed out in relief and calmed down. However, she worriedly scanned her again after remembering the state Vera was in. "You're full of wounds... and still bleeding. My god Vera, what had happened to you? Look at you, you're so pale!" Evie exclaimed with so much worry. Her hands had already clasped Vera's and she felt the clamminess of her skin.

"I'm fine," Vera said but Evie shook her head. The temperature of her skin alone told Evie that Vera was far from being fine.

"No. You're not." Evie said firmly before looking at Gideon. "We need to treat her as soon as possible. She must have lost so much blood already if she is in this state. Bed... let's put her in bed."

It did not take long for Evie's request to be fulfilled and Vera was finally lying on a bed inside a large room that was being warmed with comforting heat coming from the large fireplace.

"She cannot be treated with magic, so we need to treat her wounds the human way." Evie said as she faced Gideon and Kione. Evie was still feeling worried for Vera as she saw the girl's complexion being too waxy and pale.

"Human way?" Kione asked, not quite understanding what Evie meant.

Evie knew she needed to be clearer as she knew these dark faes do not come in contact with humans much, if at all. "I need clean water, bandages and a few particular herbs."

"Herbs...?"

Evie remembered that this is the Under Lands and the herbs that she needed might not be easily acquired here. Worse case was, there might be no herbs growing here at all!

"Alright, for now... we need clean water and bandages." She compromised on her requirements for now and Kione immediately disappeared upon Gideon's nod.

When Evie turned around, Vera had already dozed off without changing her position from earlier. Evie could only hope it was not because of excessive blood loss. She quickly approached the bed and pity filled her eyes as she looked at her frail and battered body. Never in her dreams would she have thought that she would be seeing this person like this of all people.

There was little to no resemblance to the old Vera that she knew and remembered in her mind. When Evie first met her, Evie thought she was such a graceful and feisty young lady. Being born as one of the wealthiest young noble lady within the human lands, and one of the most beautiful as well – if not the most beautiful human lady in Evie's opinion – Vera was the kind of lady human men called the ultimate trophy.

As her mind wandered back to their first meeting, Evie remembered how she had gotten lost in Ansley's castle's garden one night and ended up in the woods. She encountered intruders but thankfully, Vera appeared just on time, looking for her, riding her black horse along with her guards and went after the intruders fully looking the part of a brave young lady warrior to the frightened Evie.

Evie had always admired her since then. She had thought Vera was such a cool lady because she truly was. She even had the thought back then that Vera would be fitting to be one feisty and brave queen one day. So, looking at how she was right now just breaks her heart. This was not the situation she imagined Vera to end up being in.

Evie saw the haunted and defeated look lingering in her eyes a while ago. It was not the eyes of that fiery and spunky lady she used to know. Even the way she spoke was so different now. Back then, Evie was the one who was lacking the confidence when she spoke, and Vera was always the confident one. It seemed that they had changed their roles upon meeting again now.

"What happened to her?" Evie asked Gideon and the man thankfully answered her, shocking Evie again.

"She had been sold off?!" She hissed out in anger. "How could lady Ansley do that to her only daughter?" Evie was appalled at how Vera had been treated.

Now Evie had a clearer picture on how Vera ended up like this. She was a lady who grew up with literally everything any lady could dream of, lacking nothing. But sadly, she had lost it all and no one had been there to aid her to survive the fall. Her mother who was supposed to be the one who stood by her side was even the one who single-handedly pushed her into the current hell that was her life. She knew very well how going through pain and suffering would change someone into an entirely different person. Looking down again at a sleeping Vera, her heart just broke all over again, thinking on how Vera had to go through this.

"Thank you for saving her," Evie looked at Gideon, smiling with genuine gratitude. "She is a friend of mine and she's dear to me –" her voice softened as she spoke of Vera.

"I didn't save her." Gideon cut her off. His face was a little dark. But Evie did not pay much attention to his expression anymore. To Evie, no matter how much this man tries to make himself appear to be the villain, she would not be able to buy it as easily anymore. She somehow is more certain that he was the type whose bark was worse than his bite.. Therefore, she only smiled knowingly and did not push the issue any further.

Chapter 430 - Good Grief

Kione then appeared and Evie was about to begin cleaning Vera's wounds while talking to Kione about the Under Land's medicinal herbs, hoping that they would be able to find one that could work on a human, when she sensed something. Someone was using light magic nearby. Who? Could it be... Zanya? She looked at Gideon then to Kione, but the duo did not seem to notice anything out of the ordinary.

Suddenly, Evie stood and gave the wet clean clothes to Gideon. Both men looked at her sudden movement, taken aback on why she just suddenly jumped up.

"I just remembered something. Give me a moment. I'll return immediately," she told them and just like that, she left, causing Gideon's face to darken again. This light fae queen was really taking things too lightly.

"Kione." His dark voice echoed, and Kione looked at him.

"My lord." He responded mildly, blinking innocently as though he had done nothing wrong.

"She's not afraid of me one bit anymore..." Gideon glared at Kione and Kione shrugged coolly, easily ignoring the glare that was levelled at him.

"Well, your sister-in-law had forced me to talk or else she said she'd destroy the castle. There was no way I could allow her to do that, right? So, I could only try to waste time by telling her more about her husband's childhood." Kione told his half-truths so blithely and without a shred of guilt.

Gideon narrowed his eyes darkly, knowing that his bosom friend was fibbing so flippantly.

"Alright, I'll go follow the queen now while you deal with your girl. You can do that right, Your Highness? Or if you're fine with me touching her with my so-called lecherous hands then I'll..." he paused and stopped talking when he looked at Gideon who was just one thread from exploding where he stood. "... alright, alright. Stop with the death glares! I'm going."

Kione disappeared with a disbelieving smirk lingering on his face. He was still unable to believe the 'fuck off' look that was literally shooting out from Gideon's eyes. Due to his bad reputation, being the so-called lord of all rakes, Kione knew that it only meant one thing when a man refused to leave a girl alone in a room with him. And that one thing was because the girl was someone important to him.

Somehow, this was making Kione worry. Though Gideon might never admit it, the fact that he brought the girl here was proof enough for Kione. And... those pale blue eyes of hers... it bothered Kione that she had the exact same eye colour as the late Leah. He frowned as he rushed after light fae queen.

Catching up with Evie, Kione stopped her by the large door.

"Wait, Queen. Where are you going?" he asked. Kione thought Evie was just going to go check on the vampires to get something to cure the human girl with.

But before Evie could respond, Kione narrowed his eyes, and he opened the door in haste.

A commotion welcomed them. A light fae was fighting against the dark fae soldiers while a vampire was... fighting against a dark fae lord, Azrael.

Azrael was laughing with his head thrown back, his eyes gleaming with enjoyment. "Amazing. This is my first time fighting against a vampire. I must say your pure strength is truly something!" Azrael said as he continued fighting with Leon without using his dark magic.

And without his dark magic, Leon was obviously stronger and much faster than the dark fae lord.

"Damn. What raw power! Vampires are more exciting than I thought." He continued, still grinning crazily, as he was slammed on the ground by Leon's attack. However, he did not seem to mind much being thrown around by Leon.

Azrael rose and was about to attack again when Kione shot his hand out and grabbed the back of his collar from behind with his magic.

"Stop that, you idiot! You're supposed to come to me and report as soon as you returned, Lord Azrael!" Kione hissed, calling out Azrael's title and the man turned around a little sheepishly.

"Give me a moment Kione. Let me have fun a bit –" Azrael pleaded pitifully, trying his best to put on a fake pleading look. Kione rolled his eyes and sighed, thinking, 'Oh, Lord...save me from this buffoon!'

"Zanya! Leon!" Evie's voice echoed out in surprise, silencing everyone. Then Evie looked at Kione with fierce eyes. "Have the soldiers back off from my subjects or else ..." her voice was sharp and commanding. Everyone there who heard her speak felt the shivers running across their skin at the power in her voice.

Her body began to glow as well as she said that and Kione pinched the skin between his brows before he sighed and signalled the confused dark faes to back off. They obeyed and fell back, while Leon and Zanya immediately approached Evie and bowed before her.

While Evie's attention was focused on Zanya and Leon, Kione went and grabbed onto Azrael.

"What the hell took you so long?" Kione asked and Azrael just shrugged.

"Well, the vampires' were truly a sight to behold –" his excuse had Kione floored.

"What of Gavrael?"

"I'm not sure, he's just crowned as the King of vampires so don't worry, he might not come yet. Just as you instructed, I disobeyed Gideon and didn't leave Gavrael clues about the light fae queen's whereabouts. I did my job, so relax for now, I don't think he'll find this place yet." Azrael said as his eyes drifted over to Leon again. "By the way, where is Gideon and the human girl?" Kione who was still internally fuming at how his friend was being so careless with his assignment suddenly shot up at attention with the mention of the human.

"You knew that Gideon took a human girl?"

"Well, I was the one who helped out so Gideon could bring her back here." Azrael grinned proudly at his accomplishments, but Kione's jaw dropped.

"You helped..." he echoed, shaking his head. He wanted to kick Azrael and send him rolling back to the surface! This idiot!

"Of course. I believe that girl will be Gideon's saving grace. Don't you think that she reminds you a lot of Leah? I believe Gideon will fall for –" Azrael continued rambling happily, thinking he had done something worthwhile.

"Good grief, Azrael!" Kione pinched the skin between his brows again and this time he looked exasperated and even a bit angry, causing Azrael's expression to suddenly become serious.

"You think I made a very bad move." Azrael questioned grimly.

"Yes!" Kione hissed, "you think she'd be his saving grace, you idiot? Well, I think it's the other way around." Kione was lamenting on how this big fellow was good with his hands but not with his brain.

Azrael frowned.

"Did you forget what Leah's death did to him? And here you are, helping him find and bring another... and to think she's a human, a powerless human who couldn't even be healed and cured by magic. If he falls for a fragile creature like that... no, I think he already cares about her, damn... if she dies too, can you imagine what will happen to him?" Kione raged at Azrael.

Shaking his head, Azrael sighed. "You're worrying too much, Kione. If he loves her, he will do everything to save and protect her. And with the power he has, nothing is impossible for –"

"He had failed to save and protect Leah, and that's why he hated himself. He still hates himself up till today! The worse is... he even thinks that he's the one who killed her!"

A heavy silence reigned between them as they glared at each other. But Azrael gave in first.

"Well, you are right. I have forgotten about that. All I am thinking is to find something to stop him from pursuing his aim. I haven't fully thought out the implication for the future." Azrael rubbed the back of his neck as he realized what Kione was trying to tell him. It might be true that Vera will stop Gideon's plan. But if one day that unfortunate incident happens again due to him losing someone he holds dear, the risk was just not worth it. Especially since he was well aware on how much Gideon had tried to cut everyone off from his life just so that incident will not happen again – ever.

Kione sighed like a problematic old man when Evie approached them, distracting them a little from their own dilemmas.

"I need to speak with you," Evie told Kione, "I have a plan."