

SPELLCRAFT 661

SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar

Chapter 661: Kido's Offer

"Why aren't you doing anything?"

Kuzon was at his peak, and his body was oozing with great power, yet the opposite could be said about Kido. Unlike the young Midas, the older man simply floated while watching in amusement.

"I simply wanted to judge for myself how much you've grown." He shrugged.

Even as everything around him burned and melted in response to Kuzon's transformation, Kido still seemed perfectly fine. He simply waited for whatever Kuzon would do next.

'Damnit... that Arcana of his is troublesome...' Kuzon found himself thinking as he glared at his uncle.

[The Empress] was an Arcana that served as the counter of [The Emperor], but that wasn't all it was useful for. There was a reason why the Midas Empire had been considered the strongest nation due to their possession of both Arcanas.

"As you are well aware, [The Empress] prevents any act of control over me—whether from your Arcana or any other factor."

There were many uncontrollable things in life, and [The Emperor] could tame them. Controlling the weather, commanding gravity, dominating wills—they all fell under the purview of [The Emperor].

As for its counterpart, the effect was the opposite.

"I can never be affected by anything. Concepts like harm, gravity, mind control, or this 'heat' effect you have going for yourself. Nothing you do will affect me in the slightest."

It was a broken ability that ensured Kido remained undefeated, especially with Kuzon as his opponent. Laws couldn't work on him, and the effects of other Arcanas cancelled themselves out when they were used against it.

However...

"Why are you acting as if you're completely invincible?"

... This all seemed too good to be true.

"I know the weakness of your Arcana. I know if you overload it with too many things to protect you from, it'll have to take a cooldown period of one hour per day." Kuzon began gathering his energy, preparing to strike.

"Right you are, and how certain are you that I haven't already experienced the burnout phase?"

Kido smiled casually, almost as if he wasn't bothered by Kuzon's knowledge. No—it was more like he was expecting it.

"I have absolute resistance against everything. Plus, I'm actually more powerful than you are. Mage Mode? Original Magic? Fusion Form? I learned those ages ago. Also, even though you're equipped with

three of the most treasured items of the Midas Royal Family, I have so many treasures at my disposal thanks to the fall of the kingdom."

Kuzon couldn't hide his rage or his disgust for the man in front of him. His eyes were bloodshot, as he gritted his teeth in frustration. Still, even with the swirling emotions of hate and anger he was currently experiencing, Kuzon knew better than to mindlessly charge in.

'Kido is very intelligent!'

A man who had been able to plot the downfall of the Midas Empire couldn't be underestimated. Besides, Kido outclassed him in every way possible. The only reason Kuzon had taken his current form was so he would be able to keep up with Kido's speed and attacks.

And, to his surprise, his uncle wasn't budging. Rather, he was assuming his talkative nature and throwing words around.

"In short, I'm stronger than you are. Plus, I have the perfect ability to nullify literally anything you can throw at me. The only one I know who surpasses me in that department is that Succubus, Karlia. The bottom line is... you can't beat me, Kuzon."

"So what? You expect me to forget the past and move on?" Kuzon was nearing his limit, at this point.

The limit of his patience, that is.

"Nah! That would be too dull and anticlimactic. I'm saying you should join me. I remember how we used to have fun in the past. You and I have always had a deep, indescribable bond, you know?"

Kido's teeth sparkled as his golden hair swerved back and forth. His golden earrings, his necklaces, his bracelets, his hair accessories, all of them glittered as he made his unexpected offer.

"So, what do you say?" Kido stretched out his hand—one in which there was at least one ring on each finger.

Silence followed Kido's offer, and Kuzon simply stared hard at the older Midas for a moment.

Suddenly, his anger seemed to dissipate. The veins that appeared on Kuzon's face slowly vanished, and he stopped gritting his teeth.

Slowly, a smile took over. Kuzon donned his usual smile, and he took deep breaths to help him achieve that.

After pausing for seconds, simply inhaling and exhaling, Kuzon finally gave his response.

"You are insane."

"Ah...?" Kido's face, which previously had an excited smile, fell in disappointment.

"I thought hard and long about why you would go about destroying our entire Empire, but I've finally figured out the reason... you're insane."

Kido sighed at this point, shrugging off Kuzon's statement. He was utterly displeased, no doubt. However, there was another thing hidden behind his disappointment.

Something unexpected.

"I thought you of all people would understand. But I guess that isn't the case. It really is a shame."

"There's no point in reasoning with a lunatic."

In a flash, golden embers of light surrounded Kido, and several swords that were made by condensing Aether manifested.

"Oh?" Kido looked around him in surprise.

>WHOOOOSSSSHHHH<

The blades, which were controlled by Kuzon, zoomed towards Kido. However, just as explained earlier, the attack was nullified.

But it wasn't due to his Arcana's aid.

"Even without my Arcana, I have many defensive items with me. You'll have to do better than that... or so I'd like to say, but I'll be ending things now."

Kuzon felt a chill envelope his body the moment Kido spoke. His opponent was still smiling, as usual, but something about him had changed.

It seemed he was completely serious... and that frightened Kuzon!

"Original Magic..."

'What should I do? Beruel never mentioned what his Original Magic is. I should keep my distance and—!'

>FWUUUSH<

In a flash, Kido appeared right in front of Kuzon.

"U-uh—!"

Before the boy could think of retreating or moving out of the way, the older Midas whispered words into his ears.

"Sorry, kid... but this is the end of the line."

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Chapter 662: Realm Of The King

"U-uh...?"

Kuzon felt very disoriented as he opened his eyes. His whole body felt strange, as though he had been stripped of so much power.

Everything around him felt surreal, but it wasn't until after he opened his eyes and took in his environment that everything started to make sense to him.

Or, at the very least, it cleared him of a certain confusion. Although, it gave him a new one in the process.

"Where is this place? Where am I?"

Kuzon stood—or rather, he was floating—in a completely blank void.

It was a simple white plane, with nothing around for miles and miles.

This place defied what Kuzon already knew about the world. It was just... empty.

"Welcome to the Realm Of The King. This is my Original Magic." A voice appeared from behind Kuzon, causing the boy to swiftly retreat from his position.

"No need to run." Once again, the voice came so close to Kuzon that the boy felt Kido was right behind him.

>FWOOOOOSSSHHHH<

Thankfully, he was still in his transformed state. Kuzon picked up his pace and tried to remain moving. However—

"It's pointless, really."

—no matter what he did, Kido's voice still seemed to cling to him.

'What is going on?'

"I am omnipresent and omnipotent in this world. It's literally my world."

Kuzon heard a snap of fingers, and suddenly, he felt heavier than normal.

'W-wha—?!'

The new weight of this world forced him to fall uncontrollably. He couldn't fight the crushing weight on him, and he kept descending even deeper into the pure white space.

"I can do and undo."

Suddenly, a vast grassy land appeared amid the white space.

"Wha—?!" With the speed at which he was falling and the new land that suddenly appeared beneath him, Kuzon knew he was on a direct collision course.

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMM<

A huge crater formed on the ground, and within it was the young Midas, looking dazed and confused—but unscathed.

"Tch!" Now bursting with more golden power, Kuzon struggled to ascend despite the overwhelming weight of gravity pressing down on him.

And then, he finally succeeded.

>WHOOOOOSSSHHHH<

Rising from the cloud of smoke and debris, Kuzon looked around him for signs of Kido, but couldn't find any sign that would help his search.

'There's so much Aether here... I can literally see the particles.'

Amazed by this world he currently occupied, the young Midas kept his guard up, trying his best to calmly analyze his situation.

'I can maintain this form for quite a while, but the problem is how to beat Kido.' Kuzon knew his options were limited.

His Arcana didn't work on Kido.

His Original Magic paled in comparison to Kido's.

His Magic prowess was flimsy compared to his opponent's.

In physical ability, Kido far outclassed him.

'He hasn't even used his Familiar yet, and he's not using Mage Mode or anything like that. This is simply how powerful Kido is...'

However, something about that bothered Kuzon. If his opponent was so powerful, why hadn't he killed him yet?

He has had multiple chances to do so already. What is he waiting for? I don't understand...

"Don't worry your pretty little head. Why don't I give you something to do?" Kido's voice echoed all around the strange new world.

In a flash, several swords began manifesting from thin air. They numbered hundreds of thousands, at the very least. Each sword contained a good amount of Aether, and Kuzon was certain that their potential of harm was greater.

'Shit. I can't use [The Emperor].'

That meant he had to rely on his battle prowess.

'At least, until...!' Kuzon observed his surroundings and realized that he was surrounded.

The boy knew he was in trouble at this point.

Choosing to use [Marionette] to create counters for these weapons was a valid tactic, but he had to produce as many as the ones that surrounded him.

'I can't make so many if I want to have the same quality they have.'

That meant he had to utilize them strictly for defence.

'I'll create a strong protective layer. But what about offence?'

He had multiple spells at his disposal, but none were so large-scale that they could handle so many threats.

At this point, Kuzon decided to resort to the most optimal solution.

'Xenia, I'll need you to bail me out of this one. We'll need one of your special abilities.' He sighed.

~I thought you'd never ask. Flames Of Erasure, I'm guessing.~

'That's right. I'll handle defence, so just burn through everything.'

~You know, if you just let me loose, I could do more.~

'No... I want to kill him myself. I can't just call it quits before I even try everything within my disposal or because things have gotten tough.'

If Kuzon was being honest with himself, he had a couple of options, but those either required time or couldn't be used for too long.

>WHOOOOOOOOOSSSHHHH<

The blades descended, and Kuzon swiftly used his Marionette ability to shroud himself in the densest layer of thread he had ever created.

The sphere of protection glowed golden, preventing the incoming harm that would cause him great harm.

>CLANG!<

>CLANG!<

>CLANG!<

He felt blade after blade trying to pierce his haven, all to no avail. Like metal scraping metal, the sharp edges chipped at the walls of his thread sanctuary.

"Now, Xenia."

~Yeah, yeah!~

Kuzon's flaming wings suddenly spread outside the ball of protection, shrouding it in golden fire.

And then—

>VWUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUSSSSSSSHHHHHHHH<

—It quickly swept through the massive realm, consuming every blade it spread to.

The Flames Of Erasure acted as their names described. They disintegrated the numerous blades that would have caused more harm and trouble.

In a flash of golden flames, the legion of swords combusted and became vaporized.

~The job is done. But, using you as a medium would have exhausted you a great deal. Are you sure you can keep going?~

At this point, Kuzon was seating within his cot of threads. His eyes seemed tired, but he was still stubbornly resolute.

'I need to spot the location of Kido's real body. Lend me your eyes, Xenia.'

~Will your body be alright? You just used Flames Of Erasure.~

'I should be fine. After all, I plan on ending this soon.'

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Chapter 663: Kuzon's Resolve

'I plan on ending this soon.'

~Don't tell me... you're going to use it again? Kuzon, your body! This is really dangerous. If this is what you want to do, then I won't assist you anymore. I won't allow you to risk your life.~

The young Midas gave a knowing smile and sighed.

'I have a plan, but I can't do this without you. Will you really abandon me at this crucial stage? This is the moment I've been waiting for my whole life. This is what I've always trained and worked hard for!'

Drops of tears were falling from Kuzon's eyes at this point, and they became vaporized the instant they came into contact with the air.

'I will kill Kido right here and now, and I don't care if I die while doing it. Do not forget the basis of our arrangement.'

~W-wait, Kuzon... I...~

'You provide me with power when I want to kill Kido, and in exchange... I'll set you free to see the world beyond this one. Well, you're in luck...'

The Familiar was silent, at this point. Kuzon had spoken the truth, after all. The underlying basis of their contract couldn't be refuted.

"... After today, you'll be free."

~I can see the future, Kuzon. I can see everything. You'll die if you do this.~

A smile formed on Kuzon's face and he nodded slowly. His sweat slowly started to dry up, and the tears in his eyes ceased.

~Are you okay with that?~

'Will I win?' The Midas boy swiftly responded.

That was all that mattered.

That was all he wanted.

~You will. You'll win, but—~

'Then I don't care. I'll join my family in the afterlife, and the Midas Race will completely vanish from this plane of existence.' Kuzon's smile was sad.

No one wanted to die, and he was no exception.

However, his resolve to do anything to win far surpassed his fear of mortality.

~What of your friends? You'd really die and abandon them in this world? Do you not consider how they'll feel? What of that girl you like? Ana, right?~

Kuzon's smile faded, and his face darkened. He had tried his best, but he couldn't hold it anymore.

"S-stop it already, Xenia..." At this point, a stream of tears flowed from the boy's gleaming eyes.

He thought of the two people he cherished most in the world. He thought of the girl he had grown so attached to, and the boy who kept surprising him beyond expectations.

Their relationship was flimsy and unconventional, and he didn't have many memories with them, but... Kuzon had never felt close to others, other than his family.

They were his friends.

"... Don't make this any more difficult than it has to be."

The young Midas was stunned by how his heart ached and how the tears wouldn't stop. He had been able to pull off so many bizarrely calm facades during the most critical moments of his life, however, his composure was failing him here.

"I don't want to die here... I don't want to die, but..."

He was only a teenager, wasn't he? He wasn't even an adult yet. Even with his power, the young heart he possessed wouldn't let him have his way.

"... But if I don't kill him now, I won't be able to live with myself. This is my purpose. It's the reason I've done everything till now."

At this point, Xenia realized she couldn't stop the young boy from his mission. It was tragic to see her host die, but...

~Very well. I will grant you my eyes.~

Kuzon nodded with a smile, drying his tears as he made his final preparations.

"Right here and now... I'll erase the Midas Race from this world!"

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[The Base]

>VWOOOOOOSSSHHHHHHHH<

Space warped, and a blue burst of energy appeared. In a vast plain, which had nothing around except for a single building, the wormhole grew larger.

In a flash, the denizens of the only structure present in the vicinity lunged out of their abode. Each of them had prepared expressions on their faces, and they were ready for whatever would emerge from the spatial warp.

And then—

"Is that...?" The voice of the blond boy at the centre rang out as his eyes widened with relief.

Even though he had sensed the signature in the portal to be similar to the ones he generated from his Spell Card, he had still been sceptical considering there was another energy mixed in.

Fortunately, the ones who emerged from the warped blue portal weren't worthy of apprehension—well, only one of them was.

'What's he doing here?' The blond boy thought as the two fully made their appearance and the portal closed.

"Haaa... haaa..." The blond girl who now knelt on the ground was panting heavily, her face full of worry.

"W-where are we?" The one beside her spoke in confusion.

His small frame moved around as he scoured the area to get a fair idea of their surroundings, before finally noticing the group that silently watched him and his female partner in surprise. Recognizing the blond boy from an earlier clash they'd had, the winged man knew he had to quickly clarify his position.

"A-ah, we come in pea—"

"Ana? Beruel? What's going on here?"

Yes, this awkward reunion was between Jared alongside his allies, and Ana along with Beruel. With the two suddenly popping out of nowhere, it raised a lot of questions and confusion. For one—

"Where's Kuzon? Why is the Fairy King with you? Isn't he a member of the Nether Cult?"

Jared appeared more confused than anyone else, considering he had many thoughts concerning the particular issues at hand—especially his belief of Ana being with Kuzon and Beruel being the enemy.

His entire logic seemed to be crumbling.

"N-now isn't the time for that. I'll explain everything later, but right now... right now we need to go back!" Ana's tone was panicked, and her voice rang of desperation.

It surprised Jared.

"What's going on? Why do you need to return?"

"It's the young Midas... he's in trouble," Beruel spoke up, having a more collected tone than his female partner.

However, his grim tone made the situation even more dreary.

"We need to help him."

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Chapter 664: Emperor's Requiem [Pt 1]

'Hmmm...' Kido thought to himself as he observed the golden orb that shrouded Kuzon.

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'I can see him...' Kuzon's thoughts trailed.

The sight of his Familiar exceeded his expectations. Not only could he clearly see the strangely structured Aether that pervaded this world, but he also saw the influence of [The Empress] on each and every particle.

The world seemed to stretch infinitely, but Kuzon was able to see its borders. If perhaps he could get there, he would be able to escape, but the boy would do anything but that. He had already made his resolve, and his currently transcended state proved that.

"What will you do now, Kuzon?" He heard Kido's voice echo throughout the world, but he was able to trace his location—not like that did him any good.

'We're inside him... his Core.'

Kido's Original Magic was the ability to transform the Core within his body into an indefinitely expanding domain that was completely under his control. He was able to manifest this domain as a seemingly physical world, trapping Kuzon's physical self within it.

In short, Kuzon was within Kido.

'He really is omnipresent. As for omnipotent, that checks out too.'

Kido could do and undo in this world. The only thing Kido couldn't control was Kuzon himself.

"I now understand why you didn't kill me even when you had the chance to. I know why you brought me here. You want to absorb my power, don't you?" Kuzon whispered.

"Spot on!"

Not only was Kido's reply instant, but it also didn't contain any hesitation. His confidence showed how impossible it was for Kuzon to escape.

A smile formed on the young boy's face, regardless. A hint of mischief, and even far greater confidence settled within him.

'Who said anything about escaping...?'

"Your tools have a mechanism of automatically reacting if an unregistered person attempts to collect them. To prevent the hassle of bypassing the mechanism—assuming I'm even able to—I decided to bring you here and directly absorb you once you're susceptible."

Kuzon remained stationary, listening to his uncle's rant. He still hadn't changed his perspective of the man. Kido still seemed like the epitome of insanity.

"We have all day, you know? Time is basically nonexistent here. We'll be long done before any of your allies even think of rescuing you. Moreover, I don't think I'll have to wait very long to get what I want. It seems... the side effect of using that power has already begun to have its impact."

Kuzon's eyes twitched a little. Kido was incredibly observant—as expected of the man who brought down the Midas Race.

"Your body is slowly getting petrified, isn't it? If you remain in that form, it'll cause irreparable damage and you'll slowly turn into a golden statue. You'll die if you keep this up, though I understand why you'll want to remain in it."

Kido was overwhelmingly powerful. The only way Kuzon could handle both offence and defence was for him to be practically indestructible and invincible. That was what this form offered him.

"As long as you remain like this, nothing can harm you. You also have access to as much Aether as you want without expiring. The perfect form for unleashing power. That's why I'm so confused. Why aren't you doing anything?"

Kuzon's grin grew much broader once he heard his uncle's amused, yet confused statement. He remembered how he had asked the same question a few moments earlier.

At this point, they were both at a stalemate. Kuzon and Kido were indestructible. They also possessed nigh-infinite power. The only determinant was TIME.

"You'll expire long before I even break a sweat, Kuzon. If you want to turn this into a battle of attrition, you'll be losing big time."

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Will Kuzon die?

Will Kido lose?

Will the team arrive on time?

The answer will be revealed in the as this confrontation reaches its closing phase.

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Chapter 665: Emperor's Requiem [Pt 2]

Kuzon was completely still, shining with a golden splendour in his new form.

Every second that passed meant more time was expiring for him, yet he made no move. Kido, who watched this began to get curious.

'Why won't he do anything? Is there something he's trying to do? Something I left out?' He observed carefully.

Kuzon's entire field was covered in his energy, and the Aether that filled Kido's world couldn't get to him, so all the latter could do was make guesses based on observation.

However, so far everything seemed to add up.

'Nothing has really changed, yet...'

"Maybe I'll try this."

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>VWOOOOOOOSSSSSHHHH<

In an instant, Kido manifested in the Realm Of The King.

He stood a distance from Kuzon, grinning widely. His many Magic Items jiggled as he faced the young man.

"You were looking for me, right? Here I am."

"I don't care."

"Come on, don't be like tha—"

>WHOOOOOSSSSSHHHH<

In an instant—no, much faster than that—Kuzon closed in on Kido and effortlessly pressed down on his shoulder.

"I said... I don't care."

Instantly, Kido's body transformed into gold—completely petrified by Kuzon's single touch. Of course, this was simply a manifestation and not the real one.

"You know that's pointless, right?" Another Kido appeared behind Kuzon, smiling as gleefully as the earlier one.

"Of course you know."

"I bet you do."

"What's the deal, Kuzon."

"What's the matter, Kuzon?"

"What's your plan?"

Several more Kido avatars popped up in the strange new world, and they all surrounded Kuzon.

"Each avatar of mine possesses all the abilities I have in real life. Needless to say, they'll be good punching bags for you." This time, the voice came from all over the vast realm.

>WHOOOOOSSSSHHHH<

The hundreds of Kidos flew in Kuzon's direction, all travelling faster than the boy would have been able to evade. However, this time, he could see everything.

Not only because of his newly heightened state, but because of the eyes he possessed. Everything they were going to do, the line of action, their capabilities.

He saw them all.

However, nothing mattered at this point.

>SSHHHHHHHHWUUUUSHHH<

A few of the several golden glass-like shards around Kuzon swiftly moved, turning into smaller pieces.

Before Kido could get to his target, each particle of glass—now nothing more than a sparkle—swiftly moved towards each of the hundreds of different Kidos and made contact.

>BOOKKKKKKOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
OOOOOMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM!!!!!!<

They all exploded in a golden blast, completely obliterated as Kuzon floated at the centre, totally unbothered.

"It's time." He whispered.

"Oh? Time for what? Finally taking action? What are you going to do?"

Kido's echoing voice of excitement and curiosity gave the young Midas a sense of satisfaction. He was grateful that his uncle hadn't noticed all that he was doing during his times of inaction and the little combat he'd experienced.

'Now, let's execute it...'

"[The Emperor]"

A card manifested in front of Kuzon, displaying a golden brightness and an illustration depicting a powerful ruler. It was an Arcana—Kuzon's Arcana.

"The Emperor? It doesn't work here, remember? [The Empress] cancels it out."

Kuzon merely smiled at Kido's statement. His uncle was right, but also wrong.

"You're omnipotent, right? So riddle me this..." [The Emperor] shone brighter as Kuzon spoke.

Suddenly, his area of influence began to expand. The glow started to slowly take over more of his vicinity.

"... What happens when an unstoppable spear meets an immovable shield?"

The question was a paradox, and the closest answer to the correct one would be that they cancelled themselves out.

Both elements were deemed invincible, but when they clashed with each other, they would become finite, and as such, would end up destroying each other.

Kido knew this already, but why was Kuzon asking him?

'Don't tell me—!!!' The omnipotent being widened his eyes in realization.

"The answer has been quite simple all along. [The Emperor] exerts dominance, and [The Empress] retains it, rejecting interference. The clash between the two often results in nullification..."

"WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!" Kido's voice echoed throughout the vast world, and several versions of himself manifested in the Realm Of The King.

He was visibly upset, and he had a disapproving look when he stared at Kuzon.

"... But what happens when there are two unstoppable spears and one immovable shield?"

Usually, there would be no difference in the variance of infinity, but reality was a different ball game entirely. If one against one cancelled the other, what would happen if an equally stronger power entered the equation?

"The answer is, of course, that the spear would win. I am the spear."

>VWUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUSSSSSSSHHHHHHH<

The several avatars of Kido suddenly had their bodies impaled by golden spears made from mid-air. Blades made from the very fabric of the Realm Of The King.

"W-what??!"

"I've taken over a sufficient portion of this realm. Every second I spend here will give me even more control. Once I obtain full dominance over everything, it's game over... for you."

Kido was still stunned by how Kuzon had managed to pull something like this off. Something not even he had anticipated.

It all boiled down to one thing.

"One of those artifacts of yours... they have a hidden function, don't they? Something I don't know about?"

Kuzon smiled and shrugged.

"You aren't revered as a genius for nothing."

In essence, while he wasn't going to tell his secrets, Kuzon already implied that he was correct. This made the absolute confidence that the older Midas had slowly come crumbling down.

His lackadaisical attitude soon vanished, and what replaced his eyes was fierce determination.

"I'm not allowing this."

>VWUUUUUUUUUMMMMMMM<

Suddenly, a huge shockwave manifested within the Realm Of The King, a distance from Kuzon's area of influence.

The distortion—or rather its cause—caught the young Midas' attention, and he noticed it fast approaching.

"So, you decided to seriously try to eliminate me."

>FWOOOOOSSSHHHH<

Like a blur, the moving distortion instantly closed its distance with Kuzon.

It had the likeness of a man—with flowing golden hair, and a gold and black armour with several runic engravings on them.

With large wings that flapped with his great meteor-like approach, and a glowing body that seemed doused in a fiery furnace, this being charged at Kuzon.

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Chapter 666: Emperor's Requiem [Pt 3]

As the Heir of the Midas Empire, and the only living heritage of their past civilization, Kuzon possessed the greatest treasures that served as heirlooms of their fallen nation.

Of course, Kido had managed to get away with most of the Empire's spoils, but the young Midas still possessed their greatest treasures.

The Ring Of Power—which had the function of storing and absorbing a constant stream of energy that could be released or assimilated at any point in time.

The Bracelet Of Transfiguration—which granted upon the user a transcendent state that gave one infinite durability, but at a steep cost of golden petrification.

The Necklace Of Knowledge— which possessed the knowledge and information of the Midas Race. The glory of their civilization, as well as the crux of their research.

And...

The Emperor—The Arcana that controlled anything within the holder's vicinity as long as dominance could be proved.

[The Empress] would have been a part of the collection, but Kido took it before they could be properly passed down to him.

However, even with the theft and destruction, Kuzon was left in possession of these great gifts—the last source of connection he had with his people.

"And they are the reason I'll win."

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[Moments Earlier]

~Okay, Kuzon. Tell me your plan.~

Even though his Familiar had agreed to help him, she still wanted the full details.

'Can't you see the future or something?' Kuzon asked her with a raised eyebrow.

He was fortunate that he had Xenia on his side, but the young boy didn't quite appreciate how much of a fuss she always made during critical moments.

~Of course, I can. But that's only a somewhat defined stream. It happens like a vision. Like shots of a scene. I don't know everything, you know?~

'Is that so?' Kuzon nearly rolled his eyes.

There really wasn't any time for stories.

~Yes. So spill! Besides, telling it to me will prove just how effective you think it'll be.~

'Haa... fine.'

Arguing would only prolong the matter. Even after making such an emotional pitch to her, Xenia still wanted to know everything.

'You Phoenixes are too fickle...'

~We are the rarest, most powerful Familiars in existence, so...~

The boy rolled his eyes this time.

He couldn't argue with Xenia because she spoke the truth, but Kuzon figured he could at least show some degree of disapproval.

~Tell. Now.~

The fact that they were speaking to each other by resonating their Souls showed there was no chance of their information being leaked.

Besides, the protective layer around them prevented any form of interference—at least that was what Xenia had promised.

'I plan on taking control of Kido's world and destroying him in the process.'

~How?~

'He's omnipotent and omnipresent here. That means he's somehow fused with this place. That's how he can appear anywhere and can do anything. If I take control of this place and usurp control from him, I'll be able to get him in no time.'

Besides, even if Kido isolated himself from the Realm Of The King, Kuzon would use the eyes Xenia gave him to detect his position and finish him off.

~I meant how will you take control of his world? [The Empress] is the natural enemy of your Arcana.~

Kuzon's smile broadened.

'I plan on overpowering it. [The Empress] has its limits. Kido can't constantly use it for a full day. An hour interval is required for its cooldown. Imagine what would happen if it was protecting something on the scale of a world?'

~Is that your plan? I don't think it's wise to count on that. Besides, Kido could find out and simply resort to something else once you're becoming a nuisance.~

'No, he won't. He won't be able to kick me out with my Transfigured state. That's the point. He can't interfere with me. Besides, I don't simply plan on waiting for his time to run out. I don't even think I can last that long.' Kuzon sighed, but his confident smile remained.

Xenia was satisfied that her host understood his limitations—enough to make her pause in expectation of the alternative he had in mind.

'I'll use the Midas Ring of Power to amplify [The Emperor] itself.'

~The Ring? Do you mean you'll be using two Midas Treasures at the same time?~

'The Transfiguration effect will nullify the side effects of the Ring Of Power.'

~Yeah? Well, it'll only make your petrification faster than normal. You're pretty exhausted already, so—~

'We've talked about this already. I'm up for the task. The question is... are you?'

After their little back and forth, silence prevailed for a moment. Kuzon's heavy breath echoed around him, and a feeling of discomfort crept upon him.

That is, until his Familiar spoke.

~What will you have me do?~

'The Ring of Power will amplify [The Emperor], but that means I need to be on a certain level to be able to use it. I'll need you to flood me with your power.'

~What? You'll die!~

'Not if its a gradual impartation. Give it to me in morsels so my body has time to acclimate.'

Xenia couldn't believe this host of hers. His strategy for defeating his invincible uncle was by becoming even more invincible himself.

Sure, the plan sounded probable in theory, but that presupposed the idea of Kuzon being capable of handling so much power.

'I'll use [Marionette] to keep myself moving at all cost. With your eyes, I should be able to see all of Kido's Aether, so controlling them won't be too difficult. I've been stockpiling so much power into the Ring for years now—including a great deal of [The Emperor]'s energy signature.'

~During the time I grant you morsels of my power, take in the Aether around you too. It should allow [The Emperor to key into the frequency of this world and help give you control.~

'Thank you. I'll do that.' Kuzon was a little surprised by Xenia's suggestion, but it only made him happier.

Despite her attitude and several troublesome traits, she had been his partner for such a long time. He was going to miss her the most.

'You really are the best.'

~Damn straight. Now let's do this, Golden Boy!~

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Chapter 667: Kido's Struggle

Kido desperately lunged at Kuzon, with his body shrouded in dense energy—almost the same kind as that latter.

>WHOOOOOSSSHHHH<

His trail left distortions in its wake as he swiftly made to end the single anomaly in his world.

The younger Midas, in contrast to his speeding opponent, was stationary.

In a flash, Kido had closed their distance, determined to kill him in one hit. However—

"I don't think so."

Kuzon easily evaded his sharp attempt to cut off his head. Then—

>FWUUUSHHH<

The several shards around Kuzon instantly flew in his direction, sending destructive blasts radiating around.

However, judging from the golden sparks and the blur that signalled the disappearance of Kido from the area, it was safe to surmise that he had escaped.

Kuzon grinned.

"Using Mage Mode and your other tools already? Haha... why don't you resort to your trump card in this situation? Use your Familiar!"

The young boy's taunt echoed throughout the world, but there was no response.

'Well, if you won't come to me...'

Kuzon's eyes glowed as he searched the entire world for his prey's signature. He didn't need to search very long.

'Found you!'

As quickly as teleporting, the golden boy immediately manifested in his determined location, stretching his hand to grab an incorporeal existence—Kido.

"Gurgh!" The choking Kido manifested, obviously struggling against Kuzon's superior strength.

"Why does this avatar feel so—?"

"You fell for it!"

As soon as he made this statement, the avatar's body glowed brightly, and just like a brilliant detonation, it blew up the area.

However—

"You must be grasping at straws here... I'm not going to take any damage." Kuzon sighed, appearing out of the huge explosion like it was nothing.

At this point, he was practically untouchable.

"Yeah? Well, the more you use that power of yours, the faster the side effect will happen!"

Several more Kido avatars lunged at Kuzon, all glowing like they were about to explode.

In a battle of attrition, it was clear who would win. In order to gain the upper hand, Kido simply had to shorten the span of his annoying nephew's life.

That was the surest way to ensure victory!

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'Why won't you help me now? Of all times, did it have to be now?!'

Kuzon was currently occupied with several of Kido's duplicates, but there was someone talking to his familiar in a harsh, nearly desperate tone.

It was Kido.

~You know our agreement, Kido. I won't attack another of my kind.~

'They're attacking us! They're attacking your home!'

Familiars lived in Mana Cores. That meant whatever Kido's familiar was, it was currently in this space. Yet... it was doing nothing!

It wasn't attacking Kuzon, even though the likelihood of stopping the young Midas with its power was high.

'Listen to me. You're my Bond Soul. Mine! We had an agreement, but if I suffer any more damage, it'll affect you too!' He gritted his teeth, impatient and flustered

The confident and prideful Kido had long vanished. He hadn't broken character in years, but this time the situation made him a little anxious.

Anxious enough to resort to pleading with his Familiar.

~Then so be it. However, at this current pace, it's more probable to say that you'll lose to—~

'I never lose! I always get what I want!' Kido sharply cut his Familiar off, his glare showing deep animosity.

~Really? Then you don't need my help... not that I was going to give it to you anyway.~

If a Host died, their Bond Soul would also die if they chose to remain inside. Most times, Bond Souls ditched their hosts right before death, trying their hardest to find another home.

In certain cases, Familiars chose to die with their Hosts in situations whereby their bond was strong.

"If I die, you die. You know that, right?" Kido growled, now getting more aggressive in his approach.

Bond Souls always had the choice to leave whenever they wanted... unless they were bound to a Midas using the 'Golden Rule' method.

Just like Kuzon's Familiar, Xenia, Kido's couldn't leave even if it wanted to. The Host had to release them.

Thus... the older Midas was practically holding the life of his Bond Soul ransom.

~What happened to not being able to lose? Just how much has been corroded? From my estimate, I'd say over seventy percent, right? That's fast. If you don't do something fast... he'll win. That would be such a shame...~

Kido could sense the sarcasm dripping from the tone of his Familiar, and it infuriated him.

'I've come too far to lose now. I waited till he was ripe enough to harvest. We're so close to the recovery of every Arcana. Everything is perfect right now. I just have to deal with this pest.'

He hadn't counted on his Familiar being uncooperative, or Kuzon possessing this much power.

If he could, Kido would throw the golden boy out of his realm, but even that was impossible.

The only thing he could do... was to quicken his petrification.

'Just how long does he have left?'

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"Guark!" Kuzon coughed violently, spitting out golden blood.

His whole body was stiff, and he knew he had reached the limit of his life.

Still, he had many avatars of Kido to deal with, as well as almost twenty percent of the territory to cover.

~The damage is irreparable. Even if you stop now, almost ninety percent of your body has been petrified. You'll die anyway...~

Perhaps it would have been better if Ana was here to transfer his Soul somewhere else, but it was just him and Kido.

After petrification, he would die—his soul would also probably leave his body long before help arrived.

'Do you think we can make it? Can we reach everything?'

~Not at this rate. You'll have to use everything at once. No more morsels or leakages.~

Kuzon understood things perfectly. He nodded in response to Xenia's statement and closed his eyes.

He wasn't looking for a trickle, but a single masterful stroke that would end everything. What he sought was...

"... Full Burst."

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Chapter 668: The Midas City

>VWWWUUUUUUUUUUUMMMMMM<

Warbling energy radiated from Kuzon, and his domain swiftly expanded faster than its usual pace, consuming everything within seconds.

"N-noo!" Kido yelled, lunging hard and fast at Kuzon.

However, as this was now mostly the young boy's domain, he was practically untouchable.

"Fall."

Gravity took over, and its heaviness sent the last of Kido's avatars crashing into a vast ground that suddenly appeared.

>BOOOOOOOOOUMMMMMM<

His crater created a huge impact, but Kuzon ignored them and focused on concluding his mission.

"S-stop this, Kuzon... sC&###@@"

At this point, Kido's voice became incoherent and completely unintelligible.

Kuzon's golden influence spread through the Special Grade Mana Core—or rather, the Realm Of The King.

And then... finally....

"Haa...."

... He was done.

"The King... has been... dethroned."

Kuzon had always believed this, and his position never changed. Even now, as his body was being consumed by the side effects of his own power, he didn't waver from that belief.

"Nothing beats the Emperor."

Using [Marionette], he brought the final vestiges of Kido to himself since it was virtually impossible for him to take another step.

Struggling under the control of Kuzon's invisible threads, the older Midas was grunting and groaning.

His confidence had been destroyed, and his powerful appearance had vanished. Kido's hair was pretty dishevelled, and any semblance of authority seemed non-existent.

"How does it feel, Kido?" Kuzon smiled at his powerless uncle.

"You..."

"How does it feel to have lost?"

"You're going to die too, you know? So what if you've taken over my world? That changes nothing. You won't—"

"Silence."

Even [The Empress] wouldn't defend Kido from Kuzon's command—or rather, it couldn't.

It was now in its cooldown phase, so the young Midas didn't have to exert any effort in uttering his command.

Kido could do nothing but silently wait for Kuzon's next course of action. Surprisingly, the boy wasn't even looking at him.

"Look..." He whispered.

Suddenly, the entire landscape changed.

Skies appeared in the empty plane, and a huge city arose from the barren grounds.

The sky had an orange glow to it, and the golden sun hung clearly in the firmament. The clouds looked puffy and soft

"Like cotton candy." Kuzon smiled with nostalgia, glancing everywhere

The city that rose from the earth looked even more amazing than the Fairy Sanctuary.

Unlike the land of the winged folks, the buildings were all built on the ground—with the exception of a floating castle.

The royal palace and its premises looked beautiful with their black and gold structure, and the entire city looked glorious.

It was, quite literally, a land of golden beauty.

The streets were clean and paved with golden tiles. Precious materials were utilized as household designs.

Rubies, Emeralds, Sapphires... they were all treated like simple decorative tools. The true jewelleryes were the Magic Items, and they were worn by practically anyone in the city.

Yes, this city... this city seemed otherworldly.

"You remember this place? Ah, and look at the Overwatch. Everyone dreamed of working there, you know? The ultimate goal of the Midas Race was to uncover the mysteries of the world."

The Floating Castle hummed as it floated in the air. Kuzon's eyes sparkled anytime he saw it.

His mother had been the head of the research institution, after all. She was the one who possessed [The Empress] Arcana, and the reason Kido had it now was because he had been her deputy.

"She took me to that place often. I thought to myself that I wanted to be a part of it one day... well, we all know how that ended up."

The Midas methods were complicated and would sound strange to most people, but their entire civilization was woven around Magic—more specifically, the study of Aether.

"You caused the Whites to infiltrate the Midas homes and copy their signatures, while using your Original Magic on the more powerful ones, right? To think you would have used my father's gift to you—your Familiar—to achieve your ends and easily kill off your enemies."

Kuzon's eyes contained hate once more, but he didn't act on it. He kept his breathing steady. It was the best way to prolong his life.

With his mission accomplished, and the entire world under his control, Kuzon could have deactivated his Transfiguration, halting the petrification process, but he wouldn't dare.

It was the only reason he was still breathing, after all. The moment he undid it, the young Midas knew he would die.

"But I'm betting your Familiar wasn't very keen on attacking me or my Familiar when you tried to get it to do so." Kuzon's gaze remained on the amazing city in view.

"You wanna know why?"

His question was met with silence, but Kuzon didn't seem to mind. The tranquillity of the place, as well as the glorious view of his city, gave him enough satisfaction.

"The Midas Empire has been the haven and breeding ground of the Phoenixes. It's one of the reasons why we stay separated from the outside world. It was because of our treaty with their race, as well as to prevent our research from falling into the wrong hands."

The world outside always warred, but the Midas Race had no interest in that foolishness.

That was probably why they were the first to discover Aether.

"Yet, you destroyed the Empire. You achieved what you desired, but I'm guessing your Familiar wasn't too happy with you. I'm sure you hardly ever use her, or even talk to her. I'm also very sure you plan on dying with her."

Suddenly, the landscape changed once more. It became all blank—completely white all over.

In this white space, only Kuzon and Kido existed. The young Midas stood in front of the older one. Now face to face, inches away from each other, silent conversation ensued between them.

Kuzon smiled and his rage melted away. For the first time since he witnessed the death of his Empire, he felt the weight on his heart vanish.

He felt free.

"We're both going to die here, Kido. You're going to release your Familiar, just as I am going to release mine. They're going to be free, and we'll both die."

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Chapter 669: End Of The Emperor

The words of the Emperor were absolute, so Kuzon had enough confidence in his declaration.

His confidence was however in contrast with the look on his interlocutor's face.

Kido's eyes bulged, but he couldn't say anything. His face twisted with anger, but then turned into something else. Something akin to a plea to speak.

"I won't ask for your final words. Why? I frankly don't care."

Kuzon was out of time, and he knew it. Besides, why would he ruin this beautiful moment of transient peace by allowing his madman of an uncle to speak?

"I guess I'll be seeing you on the other side..." Kuzon touched Kido's head, feeling his rough hair while taking in every sensation.

Having his victory being achieved and the object of his hate at his mercy like this... there was no better feeling.

"... Goodbye, sperm donor."

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Kido's eyes widened in shock, but it was only met by Kuzon's knowing smile.

It seemed the boy knew everything!

He had wanted to use it as his final trump card—his plea for his nephew to see reason—but he never imagined that Kuzon knew everything.

'When? How? Since when?!' Kido was in a state of confusion.

How could Kuzon have discovered that he was his biological son?

'A-ah...!' It really was no use.

Even though he wanted so badly to escape, there really was no other alternative.

Kuzon knew about their ties, yet he didn't even hesitate or waver in his mission to kill him. That depicted just how determined the Midas boy was.

'Shit... why did I hesitate too?'

>VWUUUUUUUUUMMMMMMM<

Kido felt his consciousness fade away as his body became overwhelmed by Kuzon's golden touch.

It really was the end.

In his last moments, Kido wondered what all his years had been for.

He had wanted the throne, so he decided to switch his own child in place of his brother's offspring, and every other incubated child in the Integration Room.

With only his child surviving as the Emperor's own, Kido knew he now had a stake in the Midas Empire's future.

He destroyed everything and collected the Arcanas in order to recreate the Midas Empire with him as the loved Emperor and his sister-in-law as his wife.

To satisfy his lust for power and goals, he committed many atrocities.

All that, and the pursuit of his pure desire to have whatever he wished for... they were all rendered null and void at this moment.

Right. He was dead, after all.

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~Congratulations, Kuzon. You won.~ Xenia's voice greeted him as she emerged from within him.

Her fiery form, coupled with the blue and golden hue that danced around her body, made her look as celestial as ever.

"Thanks, Xenia. Kido's Familiar should be free now, so both of you should leave this place. I'm about to destroy everything."

~Destroy...?~

"Well, more like petrify. If I activate a function of the Bracelet Of Transfiguration, it'll spiral out of control and petrify everything around it. I plan on using it to destroy this body completely."

That way, not only will it be impossible to revive Kido through his Soul—which is already extinguished—but his body will also be inaccessible.

~Why did you lie, though? You obviously destroyed Kido's Soul, so why did you say you would see him later on?~

"Sounds about fair since he also lied about his identity as my uncle to everyone. My parents weren't stupid. They knew everything. It's unfortunate they didn't see him for the man he was."

~So, if both of us leave... you'll also die here? Inside Kido's body?~

"Yeah. I have to be the one to activate the sequence. That also means I have to be overwhelmed by the petrification. It's a suicide move."

~Ah, I see...~

Kuzon nodded gently, smiling at his pretty Phoenix Familiar. Her form was beautiful, and she had supported him all his life—ever since he lost everyone else.

"This is goodbye, Xenia."

She moved closer to him, and they embraced. It lasted for a moment, but Kuzon could feel their hearts connecting.

Once more, tears welled up in his eyes. The golden tears dropped into the blank space, and they were lost in oblivion.

~I'll miss you, Kuzon.~

"Of course. I would have said the same, but... haha!"

Tears fell from Xenia's eyes as she looked at the young boy with compassion.

~You did a good job, Kuzon. You did as you wanted, and you lived your life according to your principles. I'm sure your parents would be proud.~

"Proud I'm dying before I turn sixteen?"

~Proud you lived YOUR life.~

Xenia knew Kuzon could have had a lot more out of life.

He made friends, but he could have made much more.

He had a girl he liked, but they could have gotten together.

He had reached a transcendental peak of power, but he had so much more potential left.

STILL...!!!

"Thank you, Kuzon, for showing me the most amazing time." She finally opened her mouth to speak, giving Kuzon a peck on the cheek.

Her loving smile and gentle nod melted the boy's heart, and he felt a burst of joy emerge from him.

"You too, Xenia. Farewell!"

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Kuzon utilized his authority to eject Xenia and Kido's familiar out of the Realm Of The King, which had become his domain.

Once he did that, the young Midas was left all alone.

He was practically gasping for air at this point. With his entire body frozen solid—covered in gold—the only thing keeping him conscious was his will.

'Ana... I'm sorry, but this is the end.' His almost solid face smiled.

He thought about how it felt to lift her up into the air. How she would screech and bellow in disagreement. He would have laughed if he could, considering how cute she had been.

Plus, her intelligence was incredible! He truly wished he could see how far she could go.

'Jared, it looks like I'll never get to see you surprise me again.'

That blond human that defied magic by using logic—Kuzon admired him a great deal. Even though he never came around to really saying it, he felt he and Jared shared a connection that made them good friends.

'Neron... I would have really liked to see the depths of your power.'

The man in question was one who would have been qualified to use Aether, yet Kuzon had never seen him utilize it.

'Everyone... this is the end for me.'

He had played his part. Defeating the 2nd Seat wasn't an easy feat, after all.

At this point, Kuzon could hardly even think anymore, but he had one prevalent idea that kept echoing in his mind.

'I had fun, you guys.'

And then... with this last thought of his marking the end of his life, the Bracelet Of Transfiguration enveloped everything in gold.

It was indeed a fitting burial for an Emperor—one of Kuzon's caliber.

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 670: Dilemma

"We need to help Kuzon!"

As I heard the voices of both Ana and Beruel echoing in my ears, I was filled with confusion.

'Help... Kuzon...?'

Kuzon was one of the most powerful people I knew. If he needed help, then what kind of threat was he facing?

"It's the Second Seat. His uncle, Kido." Beruel was yelling at this point, thus answering my question.

"We need to act fast!"

Ah, according to their expressions, it was an urgent task, one that didn't require much of my analysis.

'Could it be a trap?' I asked myself, watching Ana and Beruel cautiously.

They both seemed like themselves, and they both seemed fine, but how certain was I that this wasn't due to our enemy's use of Original Magic?

We currently had the upper hand with all the Arcanas in our possession.

Could I really count it as a mere coincidence that Beruel was suddenly a good guy and accompanied Ana to tell us about a friend that was in danger?

'If this is a trap, then what would be the most effective solution?'

"JARED! KUZON NEEDS OUR HELP!" Ana's scream pierced my ears, and I honestly felt a sting within me.

But pragmatism was my strongest suit. I had to think ahead in times like this.

'If I don't want to lose against Legris... or the Cult.'

"What are you thinking about, Jared? That it could be a trap?" As expected, one of my allies understood my line of thought.

I cast my glance towards Neron and nodded, hoping to get an inkling of what to do from him. He was incredibly resourceful—especially in moments like this.

It hadn't been very long since he and Serah returned from their mission, and just as I had expected, they brought back an Arcana. No, two of them!

I would have liked it if they had captured the Cult Member that Serah killed, alive, but it would have probably ended up like the case with Vaizer.

In that case, they did well by eliminating the enemy and gaining the one Arcana that I wouldn't want to be in the enemy's hands at the moment.

'The Fool...!' I smiled at Neron, casting a side gaze at Serah, who was kind of comforting Ana and calming her down along with Lemi.

Edward stood awkwardly, not knowing what to do, but Ivan, Jerry, and Ciara decided to keep a close watch on Beruel. He was still an enemy in my mind, after all.

Nothing had been explained yet.

"I can use [Timeless World] to check. That way, I'll confirm everything."

Ah, what a simple solution!

"You're a genius, Neron! Please do. And if the opponent really is overpowering Kuzon, then help him."

If Neron didn't show up after a specified time, we would simply assume that he was engaging the enemy, and we'd be right behind him.

"Alright. Spell Card, please."

While I summoned a Spell Card to transport Neron, I felt a gaze from behind me. It belonged to Ana.

"Y-you... don't even believe me? You're not hurrying?" Her voice quivered as she stared at me in disbelief.

Ana's glare conveyed a lot of deep emotions, and it seemed highly unlikely that she would fabricate this story.

'But Magic can be very tricky. She could have been shown an illusion for all I know.'

"This isn't about trust... but about safety." I told her, giving Neron the Spell Card that would allow him to teleport to the exact coordinates Ana was returning from.

"Guess I'll see you all soon."

I smiled and nodded. For us, it would be nothing but mere moments—probably not even up to a second.

>VWUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUSSSSSSSHHHHHHH<

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>VWUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUSSSSSSSHHHHHHH<

"I'm back."

Neron's voice and his return happened almost as soon as he left, causing me to get a little disoriented.

The concept of time was a little difficult to understand.

But, I did know something upon Neron's arrival.

"Kuzon isn't in danger, is he?" I smiled, now switching my gaze to Ana.

Neron's gaze was calm, and his expression was practically the same as always—stoic. The fact that he wasn't hurrying us into action meant my theory must have been correct!

'This is why you have to be cautious about stuff. It's probably be a trap.'

Our enemies were brilliant strategists—Legris especially.

If we wanted to win, we couldn't act impulsively, or on emotion. We had to think very hard about things.

"So, Neron, tell u—"

"It's better you see for yourselves." He sighed, seeming too tired.

Something about Neron's distracted and now hesitant gaze gave me an odd feeling, but... I decided to shelf that.

'Could they have gotten Neron too? Nah, not possible!'

Was I being hypocritical by trusting Neron's vague testimony more than Ana's? No, not really.

Neron fulfilled the conditions of our arrangement, and he did so in [Timeless World]. The data we had at the moment suggested that he was practically invincible in this state.

Sure, he couldn't interfere with anyone or anything without bringing them into the Timeless State with him, but that also meant that his arrival exactly as soon as he left meant he'd no interaction with an enemy.

'It checks out. Besides, there are many factors that make Ana's story less believable.'

One was Beruel... but I decided to shelf that curious line of thought for another time. At this point, we had to act on the situation.

'I don't want to be seen like more of a jerk than I already appear to be.'

Lemi and Ana were side by side, and it seemed she was doing a good job comforting the girl. I could see Edward's awkward stature behind Ana, as he gave her a light tap on her shoulder, a way of showing his support.

'Let's go check this out, shall we?'