

# The Duke 131

## Chapter 131 - Big Sister Not Auntie

"My uncle."

My face scrunched up upon this little child's response. I didn't want to judge this uncle of his, but it was hard not to at this point.

"He he. Is that so?" I awkwardly responded, finding it hard to articulate my pure thoughts.

Who wouldn't? This child believed people went to hell instead of heaven. And his wording too. His mother died while his father was tortured to death.

A sigh slipped past my lips. Wasn't that too cruel? But that's reality for us.

Being tortured, stoned, or burnt to death were just a few methods of execution. I wonder what grave sin his parents committed to receive such judgment.

"Auntie, you look pale."

"Am I?" I smiled subtly before my entire face suddenly stiffened.

Auntie?? Did I look that old to him? Not that I mind, but the way he said it somehow made it sound like an insult.

"Is it because of your age? You shouldn't walk around in a crowded place, Auntie. You might faint." The little boy advised in a rather cold, yet innocent tone.

I could tell he was concerned. However, shouldn't he worry he got separated from his uncle?

"Hah..." I sported a forced smile on my face. "This big sister is alright. I am more worried that a little boy got separated from his uncle."

"Big sister?" He tilted his head to the side. "Auntie doesn't look like a big sister."

A vein immediately popped out from my temple. For reasons unknown, I felt this child was purposely pressing my nerves.

Normally, I wouldn't mind whatever people call me. Living as a peasant was akin to being a sibling with the dirt.

However, I was strangely annoyed at this title. Did I get somehow sensitive after being treated like a noble lady?

Humble yourself, Lilou! Don't forget your origins and parentage!

I reminded myself internally, slapping my soul to wake up. This shouldn't bother me.

"Auntie, are you alright?" I snapped back to the current lapse upon hearing the child.

"Ah. Yes!" I offered an awkward smile. "We will look for your uncle, alright?"

"Uncle said he'll be back." With his same adorably indifferent tone, he frowned and looked down.

"Huh?" My brows furrowed. "You mean..."

"My uncle said I should wait for him here."

Momentarily, my mind buzzed with puzzlement. Did that mean he didn't get lost? Did his uncle purposely leave him here? How cruel!

How could a man leave a child all alone?

"That uncle of yours..." I trailed off as I ground my teeth. 'I'll teach him a lesson.'

The rest of my words drifted through my mind. How could a person be so irresponsible? This child could be in harm if left alone for too long.

"Did he say where he is going?" I gritted my teeth as I calmed my nerves down.

"No. He left yesterday."

"Ye — yesterday?!" I gasped upon hearing this information. "Have you been waiting for him since yesterday?"

My gaze fell down on his clothes. Although I could tell that his clothes were made out of the finest silk, dirt had clung on to him.

I then shifted my eyes towards the concrete ground. Did he sleep in here last night?

My heart ached for this unfortunate child to have such an irresponsible uncle. Did he abandon his nephew?

"You..." I pursed my lips as my voice cracked. "... do you want to come with Auntie?"

"No. My uncle will worry if he comes back and I'm not here." He shook his head, sounding utterly sincere.

I sighed. This child... he would just wait for his uncle without knowing he abandoned him.

Such precious innocence and trust. Even when his words were cold and sometimes cruel, he was still a child, after all.

"Why don't we wait in another place? I will have people waiting here if ever your uncle comes. Waiting here alone with so many people around can be dangerous for a child." Still, I didn't want to tell him he got abandoned.

If I let him alone in here, he'd just wait for nothing. It would be better to take him in and ask Cameron to look after him.

It was a little shameless request of me. But I couldn't just abandon this child. He's too young. I may be a lowborn species, but if this little power of being Sam's future wife could make me do this much, I'd gladly use it in this type of situation.

The child pursed his lips, hesitant. I understood him since I was a stranger.

"If you don't want, then..."

"Alright." Before I could finish what I wanted to say, he agreed.

That was quite easy. I thought he would try to reason out with me. Even so, I'm pleased he trusted me.

"I only agreed because it is Auntie. I don't think Auntie will hurt me." He explained, his cheek tinting with a light shade of red.

He's too adorable. My heart softened as a subtle smile plastered on my lips.

"Auntie will look after you for now, alright?" I smiled, ignoring how he addressed me.

I offered my hand for his little hand to clasp. "Have you eaten anything? It's about time for lunch."

The little boy darted his adorable cerulean eyes from me to my hand.

"Aren't you hungry? I will buy you food since I'm also a little hungry."

Honestly, I'm not that hungry. Sam made me a heavy breakfast this morning. But I didn't want this child to feel uncomfortable. And so I beamed at him with a harmless smile.

"Alright..." Slowly, he reached out to me and held my hands with his little hand.

I flinched a little as soon as grasp his hand. My heart ached for how cold they were to the touch.

He had spent all night waiting here in the open. That uncle of his... I won't forgive him.

"Your hands are cold." I said, rubbing his hands with my hands and blowing it gently.

Suddenly, his hand stiffened as I felt an icy chill ran down my spine. Just by his aura alone, I immediately figured who it was.

Sam.

"I remember this day is supposed to be Lilove and Sam's day. Did I remember it wrong?"

Chapter 132 - Big Sister Not Auntie II

"I remembered this day is supposed to be Lilove and Sam's day. Did I remember it wrong?"

The corner of my lips stretched, hiding my gritted teeth beneath. Sam, this wasn't the right time to unleash your jealousy.

Slowly, I turned my head around and sported a smile. "Sam?"

Sam's face was devoid of emotion. His gaze was colder than ever, darting it from me to my hands that were holding the boy.

"Get away from that thing." Sam ordered, making me frown.

I knew Sam wasn't the most considerate and warmest to others. However, how could he say such a cruel thing?

"Sam?" Still, I tried to keep my reasons and understanding in check. "I asked him to come with us. He is waiting for his uncle."

This time, all the lingering emotions in Sam's eyes vanished. Goodness. How could he be so selfish? I still couldn't believe he was a lord who had a land to take care of.

I let out a deep exhaled as I slowly stood up. Facing him, raising my chin up.

Sam arched his brow upon seeing my determination. But instead of telling the boy's predicament, I decided to tell it in secret.

When I took a step forward, a light tug stopped me. I gazed down, and the boy clung on to my skirt.

"Auntie, he scares me." He muttered, glancing at Sam and averting his gaze almost immediately.

Oh, such a cute boy! I could not help but smile as I reached for his hand.

"It's alright. My husband might look intimidating but he is very kind." I reassured with a smile, nodding as I patted his hand gently.

As if understanding my gesture, he reluctantly let go. I chuckled when I saw him pout.

"I'll talk to him first, alright?" I said before rushing to Sam, who was just a few steps away.

At this point, Sam had turned into a living ice. I could tell how displeased he was seeing how affectionate I was towards the boy.

It was cute as well. However, he had to understand that a boy got abandoned by his uncle.

"Sam," I whispered, clutching on his sleeve.

Sam only glanced at me coldly. "Why would I let that little crumb ruin our date?"

"Sam." I widened my eyes, raising my brows as a warning. I then tiptoed to explain the situation through whispering in his ear.

"You see, this poor child got abandoned by his uncle. He had been waiting for him since yesterday. So, if we leave him here, he will have to continue on waiting." After I explained the situation to him, I drew back.

Staring at his unfazed reaction. A sigh slipped past my lips.

Even though Sam hadn't said a word yet, I could tell what he was thinking. His crimson eyes were literally telling me he didn't care, and it was none of his business, so he wouldn't bother.

"Please?" My eyelids fluttered sweetly. "Pretty, please? Just this once?"

Sam stared at me for a long time before he sighed. "I never win against you."

Upon hearing his reply, a bright grin crept out on my lips. I witnessed how Sam sighed once again as he reached his hand to me.

Without saying a word, his fingers twirled my hair. His eyes gentle as he stared at his hand playing with my hair.

This subtle gesture made my heart fluttered the most.

"Is that what you really want?" He asked, raising his gaze, and immediately caught mine.

"Yes." I nodded, biting my lip to suppress my grin from stretching wider.

"You really like kids, huh?" Sam sighed as he offered a faint, helpless smile. "We'll take him, then."

"Thank you!" Elated, I leapt towards him, slipping my hands in between his arms as I embraced him. It was an act out of instinct and glee.

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Samael was a little taken aback by her enthusiasm. His lips tilted up as he raised his hand and rested on her back.

'This kingdom really doesn't deserve such a precious existence.' He whispered internally, raising his gaze to the child.

As soon as Samael's gaze locked with the little boy's gaze, his eyes sharpened. He didn't know why, but this boy was giving him a strange feeling.

Just moments ago, he was trembling. But now that Lilou wasn't looking, he held Samael's gaze calmly.

'I'm sure he didn't fake his fright earlier. But this...!' Samael's thought trailed off momentarily as he stared at the little boy.

'His calmness is not a fake bravado either.'

Samael squinted his eyes as he studied the little boy. When the latter blinked, it was as if something snapped from deep within him.

The little boy furrowed his brow and raised his gaze again. This time, he trembled seeing the piercing red eyes staring down at him.

'Uh... that's even more strange.'

Just then, Lilou slowly break away from his embrace. He smiled at Samael before facing the little child.

"See? I told you my husband is kind." Unaware of Sam's thoughts, Lilou bent down, resting her palms on her knees, smiling.

She offered her hand. "Let's go?"

The child hesitated as he glanced at Sam and then at Lilou. In his eyes, the comparison of the two was very distinct, and yet they were together.

Slowly, the child reached out to the kind hand that was reaching out to him. A relieved smile turned up on his lips as soon as Lilou curled her fingers around his.

'So warm.' The little boy blushed as he smiled at Lilou. 'Her blood is warm. How can she be so warm?'

As Lilou straightened her back, she turned to Sam, bearing the same smile. "Isn't he adorable?"

Samael glanced at the child and then raised his gaze to Lilou. Saying nothing, he raised his hand to her.

"Hold mine too." He muttered.

Lilou giggled, biting her lower lip at her adorable lover. Right now, she didn't know who was more adorable.

"Of course, I will." Lilou smiled, holding Samael's hand. She then gazed down at the child.

Pleased, the three of them walked together like a family of three. Little did she know, the two were glaring daggers at each other behind her.

Chapter 133 - Give Auntie Lilove To Me

"Eat well." I said, patting the little boy's head gently. He smiled back and nodded.

It was quite a surprise at how quick he trusted me. Moments ago, he couldn't even smile. But now, he was blushing as he ate.

I watched him in delight. Cupping my cheek as I placed bits and pieces of everything in his plate. He was eating too well. It made me want to feed him.

When he gazed up at me, he blushed. Ahh... he was too adorable~

"You look so happy." Sam uttered tonelessly.

Slowly, I moved my gaze at him. Sam was sitting across us, resting his jaw by the bottom of his palm.

His displeasure was written all over his face. I could not help but giggle at the sight of him.

"Aren't you hungry?" I asked, placing a piece of meat on his plate. "You didn't eat plenty this morning."

It was true. Although Sam wasn't a glutton, just like me, he still ate less today. Even if he was a vampire, he shouldn't neglect his health.

Health...

Unknowingly, a bitter smile resurfaced on my lips. I've been treating Sam like a human, despite knowing he was not. I wondered if eating these had been doing something for his health.

Even though I've been with him for months, I never asked him about his preferences. Deep down, I didn't have the gall to ask if his claims in the past — eating human flesh — were all real.

Knowing him, he'd surely be transparent with me. And that scared me. What if he actually preferred raw meat? A shiver immediately ran down my spine at the thought.

"You smile when you're serving that little thing over there." Sam pointed at the little boy, snapping me back from my thoughts. "And then smile bitterly at me. I don't like that thing even more."

"Sam." I sighed, casting him a sharp look. "He is not a thing."

I corrected with a frown before turning to the boy. It seemed he didn't mind as he continued on eating.

Now that I thought about it, I didn't know his name. I wanted to ask him, but he was eating too well. There's not much time for him to speak as he kept stuffing food in his mouth.

"You." While I waited for the little boy to swallow down his food, Sam snapped his finger.

The little boy slowly raised his head. He blinked adorably. His plumped cheeks doubled with all the food he was currently chewing.

"What's your name?" Sam asked indifferently.

Unlike Sam's indifference, I waited for the boy's response. I needed to know his name as well, so I could call him properly.

The boy didn't answer immediately. He devoted his time to chewing the food down, staring at Sam without shying away.

'He seems he is not afraid of Sam anymore.' I thought, recalling how afraid he appeared previously.

Well, I was like that as well when I first met Sam. He scared me out of my wits, which made me look like a fool. (I was already one, though.) But the more you got to know Sam, he was more than just an evil vampire.

Sam was actually kind... unintentionally kind. His actions were a mix of destruction and reparation.

The longer the boy chews while staring at Sam, the less emotion Sam had on his face. Still, none of them broke their gaze.

"Swallow the food down." Sam coldly ordered.

Instinctively, I shifted my eyes towards the little boy. He stopped chewing as the side of his lips curved down.

"Sam." I called out as a warning. The boy seemed he would burst out of crying by Sam's cold treatment.

"Can you please act a little more gentle? He's just a child." I scolded in a low tone. Sam clicked his tongue in annoyance as he leaned back.

A sigh escaped my lips as I patted the boy's back. "It's alright. Chew it carefully and then swallow it, alright?"

The boy looked up at me. His doe eyes a bit teary. My heart broke in half for him.

I offered a gentle smile, nodding my head encouragingly. His fragile heart would break once he realized his uncle abandoned him.

Finally, the boy swallowed the food down. After doing so, he clasped my hand.

"Auntie Lilove, why are you with that bad mister?"

I froze upon hearing his innocent query. I knew he was merely curious, but Sam would take it as an offense.

Carefully, I glanced at Sam. To my surprise, Sam only arched his brow as he tilted his head to the side.

'Fortunately, Sam listened to me and is not being petty.' I heaved a sigh of relief as I smiled at the boy.

Just as I did, Sam finally spoke. "Did you say Lilove?"

So he was just registering how the child addressed me? My face twitched.

"Auntie Lilove..." Upon Sam's inquiry, the boy clung on to me tightly, as if wanting to hide from Sam.

"Listen, you." Sam leaned in, resting his arms on the edge of the table, raising his other hand and finger up.

"You can't call her Lilove because that is exclusive for me. Just like how she calls me Sam, she's the only person who is allowed to call me that."

Sam explained in a knowing tone. He was calmer than I expected. I expected him to threaten the child again.

Also, now that Sam mentioned it, everyone called him Hell; if not his title. I'm the only one who called him Sam, and this thought somehow made me smile.

"But I want to marry Auntie Lilove."

As soon as I heard the little boy's claim, I nearly choked on my own saliva. Although it was sweet of him and I would normally take it as a compliment, he shouldn't be saying that in front of my groom!

"You want to snatch my bride away?" Sam smirked dangerously. "How cute."

"Ha, ha ha." I awkwardly chuckled as I leaned closer to the boy. "You, you shouldn't..."

Before I could lecture the boy not to keep on pressing Sam's nerves, he spoke once again. This time, my mind momentarily buzzed.

"Give Auntie Lilove to me."

'Good lord...!' I nearly wept.

Chapter 134 - Claude

Thick, suffocating air dawned upon our table. Sam and the little boy barely blinked.

I wanted to speak and break this suffocating air around us. However, I couldn't bring myself to do so. Words were stuck in my throat. All I could do was dart my eyes from Sam to the boy.

Sam narrowed his eyes, studying the boy. Although the latter remained adorable, he didn't flinch under such intimidating gaze.

'How could he...!' I shrugged my thoughts away.

I didn't want to doubt this boy right now. After all, since he was young, his fear could easily turn into trust. He might not know how dangerous Sam could be.

Although I believed Sam wouldn't hurt a child, I didn't want them to dislike each other. Something within me wanted them to get closer.

"How about dessert?" I gathered a lifetime of courage to force these words out of my mouth.

"Dessert?" The boy snapped as he turned to me, tilting his head a little.

"Yes! Sweets!" I clapped my hand, pretending not to feel Sam's intimidating aura. Even though there wasn't fire, I could hear the crackling sound of the invisible flames around Sam.

"Sweets..." the boy muttered under his breath, blinking in puzzlement.

"You'll like them." I grinned and patted his head gently.



He blushed and smiled brightly. He acted as a child in front of me, but how could he have a staring competition with Sam, as if nothing? I nearly thought this boy was challenging Sam.

But I ignored it. It was probably my imagination; I thought.

"Alright. I'll get them." I nodded at him before I turned to Sam.

Sam was frowning. His arms crossed, his eyes bore disinterest. Seeing his expression tugged my heart. I felt guilty for him, as this was supposed to be our day together.

However, I couldn't turn a blind eye to an abandoned child. A sigh slipped out from my lips.

Slowly, I extended my arm across the table. "We'll help him look for his uncle, and then we do as planned, hmm?"

I wriggled my fingers, hinting him to hold my hand. Sam looked away grumpily. Yet he reached for my hand and held it.

"What else can I do? You'll just do whatever you want, anyway." He complained in a low tone.

I could not help but giggle. Sam was surely displeased, but I could feel that he didn't love me less. I appreciate his consideration and unconditional understanding.

"Sam... I --"

"Auntie, sweets." Suddenly, the boy grabbed my other hand and tugged it lightly.

His action caught my attention as I gazed at him. I smiled, but just as I did, Sam squeezed my hand lightly. I turned my head to Sam again.

"I think you're trying to say something?" Sam smiled as he fluttered his eyelashes ever so slowly.

"Ah... I —"

"Auntie Lilove..." Again, the little boy tugged my hand and then Sam squeeze my other hand lightly.

"..." It rendered me speechless. Just when I thought they came to a truce, but they're still at it.

"Auntie Lilove?"

"My Lilove?"

I gritted my teeth, feeling my temple throbbed. When they called me once again, I pulled both my hands slowly from their grip. Sporting a forced smile as I darted my eyes from the boy to Sam.

"You two." I took a deep breath. "I will get some sweets, alright? Can you behave? Sam? Please?"

"Why are you just telling me that? That thing over there is the one who started it." Sam clicked his tongue as he frowned.

\*sigh\* "He has a name, Sam." I turned to the boy. Raising my brows. "You're...?"

"Claude." The boy frowned as he let out a sigh. What a pretty name.

"Claude, Uncle Sam is not a bad person. He just treasures Auntie so much. So, can you please listen to Uncle?" I smiled, talking to him gentler since I didn't want to hurt him emotionally.

"I'm sorry, Auntie Lilove." Claude pursed his lips as his doe eyes welled up.

"It's alright." My heart melted as I helplessly sighed. "Auntie and Uncle will help you find your uncle, alright? For now, behave."

"Yes, Auntie Lilove. Please don't be mad at me."

"Oh no. I'm not." I patted his head lovingly.

"You're not?" Claude perked up, his eyes brimming with hope. I smiled at how adorable and innocent he was.

"I'm not. But don't anger Uncle, alright? I will get mad if you disrespect him." I uttered firmly.

"Alright." He reluctantly nodded as he glanced at Sam. When he did, his expression slightly changed.

I turned to Sam to see why Claude's expression changed. But Sam was just smiling. I probably saw it wrong, I thought.

Little did I know, Sam was sticking his tongue out when Claude looked at him.

"Anyway, I'll get some sweets. You two behave, alright?"

For the last time, I darted my determined eyes from Sam to Claude. Both nodded their heads reluctantly.

"Let me help you." Sam offered, prompting to stand up. However, I stopped him by raising my hand and shaking my head.

"Look after Claude. It won't take long."

"But —"

"It's alright." I abruptly cut Sam off before he could argue. Sam frowned as he grumpily plopped down.

I sighed. I would ask Sam to help me, but I didn't want to leave Claude alone. His uncle abandoned him. I didn't want him to feel anxious waiting for me and Sam.

I could have asked Sam to do it. But I wanted to give them time alone, hoping they would get along with my brief absence.

"Really, Sam's only exception is me. Although, he'd been more considerate considering he's been holding back." I murmured under my breath.

Knowing Sam, he wouldn't even agree to take Claude with us. I should make it up to him after taking Claude to the authorities of Cunningham.

Obviously, Claude would only get more tired if he went with us longer. It was better to ask the authorities while Claude waits for news. If he was truly abandoned, I'll tell Cameron to look after him.

"That's the plan." I whispered as I approach the sweet section of the restaurant.

Come here.

Suddenly, I heard a voice in my head, which made me pause.

Come.

Slowly, I turned my head in the voice's direction. My eyes instantly fell on a hooded man clad with a cloak exiting the premises.

He glanced back at me. Because of his hood, I couldn't see his face, only his smirk.

Before I knew it, my feet moved on their own and followed him. I knew I shouldn't go on my own. However, I couldn't stop myself as I followed the man's tracks.

"Wait..." I whispered, jogging as I tried to catch up desperately.

'No, Lilou. You shouldn't!' When I turned into an alley, I finally stopped upon hearing a woman's voice in my head.

"Lara?" I whispered. I blinked my eyes, gazing at the empty and dark alley despite the peak of the day.

"Why am I doing...?" I muttered before I froze. Behind me, there's a powerful presence.

I gritted my teeth as I balled my hands into a tight fist. My instinct told me to fight and escape. However, even before I could, I felt something hit my nape and then darkness.

Chapter 135 - Bearer Of Auron

Meanwhile...

Samael watched Lilou, not planning to get his eyes off of her. Although Cunningham was a neutral place to stay for now, something had been bothering him ever since last night.

"Uncle." Suddenly, Claude called him out. Yet Samael didn't respond as he stared at Lilou's back.

"Uncle."

"Don't call me Uncle." Sam muttered indifferently. "I don't know what's your intentions, but it doesn't matter. I'm merely sitting here with you because Lilove is fond of you."

"I'm also fond of Auntie Lilove. That's why I'm sitting here with you..." Claude shrugged as he played with the food with his fork.

"... Uncle Hell, you're putting her in danger."

This time, Claude caught Samael's attention. Slowly, Samael shifted his gaze from Lilou to Claude from across him.

"Oh?" He arched his brow as the side of his lips curled into a sneer. "Now, that's interesting."

Samael leaned in, tilting his head to the side as he gazed at Claude.

"I know you're different. But, I'm not sure how different. Now, I'm intrigued, little crumb."

"Lucia and Dyrroth." Claude only mentioned those two names. But Samael's reaction gradually changed to a slight surprise.

"Dyrroth..." Samael muttered under his breath.

"They are my parents." Claude added in the same unaffectionate tone.

"Hah..." Upon Claude's confession, Samael scoffed in disbelief. "Impossible."

"They're dead, Uncle. Hunted down by father, the king, Lucia died and they tortured Dyrroth to death." Claude continued on playing with the food with his plate, gradually slowing down as he spoke.

"It's your fault, Uncle."

Claude added as he slowly raised his head. "It's all your fault."

Samael clenched his hand until they trembled. Lucia and Dyrroth were his brother and sister. The eldest daughter of the La Crox Family while the latter was the original crown prince.

The two had eloped to live a peaceful life; away from this hell. But now, this kid was telling him they're dead?

"If only you accepted the crown, they wouldn't..." Claude paused as he dropped the fork.

His doe cerulean eyes glinted as they grew crimson. It was as if he was staring at the person he loathed the most.

Even though Claude was young, he was older than mortals — ten times older than Lilou. Hence, he knew it wasn't entirely Samael's fault.

However, he couldn't think otherwise. Samael had all the right and capabilities to sit on the throne; some already considered him as their king.

Yet, here he was. Enjoying life with a mortal.

Samael let out a faint scoff as he shook his head, chuckling. "It's my fault because Dyrroth is hopelessly weak?"

"Hopelessly weak...?" All the lingering emotions plastered on Claude's adorable face instantly faded.

Seeing this, Samael glanced at his surrounding. Everyone froze, as if time stopped itself.

"This ability is dangerous, little crumb." Samael advised. "Even Lucia inflicted repercussions whenever she used this ability. You will die young."

Despite the situation he was under, Samael remained calm. This ability was his sister Lucia's, no doubt about it.

Samael snapped his finger and time resumed as the people started moving once again. Every vampire had a special ability, but the more powerful they were, the more dangerous the effect on its caster.

Claude was young. If this ability was used frequently, he would die. They didn't have a good start, but Claude was still Samael's nephew from his beloved brother and sister.

"Really, Uncle." Claude scoffed bitterly. "You only need to snap a finger to dispel it. You received the power to lead, the ability to stand above all, but you deny it. Instead, you turn your back on your people to suffer in the hands of a tyrant."

"Turn my back on my people?" Samael sneered as he shook his head. "So what if I did? Did you come here to kill me?"

He raised a brow, lifting his chin up. The smirk on Samael's lips grew wider, while his crimson eyes glinted.

"Dyrroth is a bearer of the divine order. Did you inherit it?" Samael asked in interest. "Auron?"

Claude remained silent as he shoved his hand inside his pocket. Slowly, he fished out a chain bracelet. Seeing it on Claude's small palm made Samael chuckle briefly.

"Heh. I wonder why you didn't use it while I had my guards down." Samael cupped his jaw as he slowly raised his gaze at the adorable Claude.

"Lilove will be shocked out of her wits if she knew this adorable one wants to kill me."

Claude glanced at Samael before he put the bracelet on. "I told you, Uncle. I like Auntie Lilove. I would've used Auron the second I laid my eyes on you, but I don't want to hurt her."

"Huh? You can't hurt her or me, little crumb. You'll lose not just your arm even before you can think about it. Don't talk big." Samael's face scrunched up as he spoke in a knowing tone.

"Yesterday, Auron sensed Lakresha's presence. I thought you died since the scent of your blood waft across Cunningham last night. Is Marquess Cameron the new wielder of lakresha?" Claude inquired, ignoring Sam's previous remarks.

"Why would I tell a little crumb like you?" Samael teased.

"Because I can sense a faint presence of Lakresha in Auntie Lilove." Claude answered solemnly. "I have to know."

Seeing Claude's sudden shift of mood made Samael squint his eyes. "And why would you have to know?"

Silence dawned on the two of them. Despite the chattering and clattering noises in the background, the two didn't bulge.

"My father, the king, had been gathering the bearers of the divine order — he had six bearers, excluding me, on his side right now. He could've killed me and take Auron, but since I inherited mother's ability, he adopted me instead."

Claude stared Samael straight in the eye.

"It's impossible for a mortal to wield any divine weapon. However, I can't ignore the fact that I can sense lakresha in Auntie Lilove." Claude's hand clenched.

"The king had been preparing for your return, Uncle. And recently, he had been very interested in the mortal you'd been with. It'll be more dangerous for Auntie Lilove if she could wield lakresha. I'm telling you this because I didn't want to owe you for this meal."

Samael listened in silence, tapping his finger against the table lightly. He had been in his slumber for hundreds of years. Hence, he didn't know the private details in the Capital.

"Ahh..." Samael muttered. "... so this is the reason, Lara?"

"What?"

Samael raised his glinting eyes. The corner of his lips twisted into a smirk. "You don't owe me. You owe Lilove because I could've killed you. She's your savior. However, I appreciate this information. So..."

Suddenly, Samael trailed off as he shifted his eyes to the direction Lilou was supposed to be. However, she's nowhere to be found.

"Lilove." Samael sprung up from his seat as he looked around, but to no avail.

As realization dawned on him, Samael shot his eyes towards Claude. His eyes glinted with killing intent, thinking Claude purposely distracted him for another reason.

"You...!"

"What..." When Claude saw Sam's fiery eyes, he looked around. Before he could think, he stopped time once again on a much larger scale.

"Uncle, I can't use this ability for a long time! Kill me later when you find Auntie Lilove. She shouldn't have gone too far!"

Samael ground his teeth, wanting to kill Claude first. However, his priority was Lilou. Also, Claude seemed he knew nothing.

With that thought in mind, Samael rushed outside to find Lilou. Meanwhile, Claude clasped his chest. His nose bled as he stopped the time in the entire Knotley.

'Did Father use us...?'

Chapter 136 - What's So Good About Humans?

Meanwhile, back in the Crawford's Castle.

"I will kill that damn Fabian..." Klaus gritted his teeth, dusting off the soil clinging all over him. "... how dare he bury me alive?!"

He had crawled his way up from the grave. He nearly died if Fabian kept watch on the grave pit. Klaus shot glaring daggers at the hole he crawled out from, grinding his teeth in frustration.

"Damn him!" His frustration made him recall what happened yesterday.

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"I see your fangs had grown back, your highness." The smile on Fabian's face slowly faded away. "Shall I extract them again for you?"

"Ah — mister Fabian, your Highness..." Cameron panicked as he darted his eyes from Fabian to Klaus.

"Extract?" Klaus sneered. "Do you think I'll fall for your cheap tricks again?"

"Cheap tricks... I see. Then, shall we test it, your highness?"

The air between them instantly thickened even more. However, Sam intervened, suspending the heartwarming reunion of the two.

"That's enough, Fabian. You may go." Samael waved, shaking his head. Klaus hadn't forgotten how Fabian used him in his sick experiments in the past.

"Yes, my lord." Fabian immediately gazed at Samael and beckoned a bow. When his gaze landed on Klaus once again, a deadly glint flickered across his eyes.

"A mere mortal standing beside Hell. Have some shame." Klaus muttered as he trudged towards the settee across from Samael.

'For someone as dirty as him to have a private conversation with my lord... I'll bury him alive.' Fabian thought as he left the meeting room.

Samael watched as the door closed. When it did, he turned his attention to Klaus, while Cameron took another vacant seat.

"Brother, the king asked me to escort you back to the Capital."

"I know, that's obvious. However, I'd been intrigued by how you got your fangs back." Samael didn't beat around the bush as he stared at Klaus straight in the eye.

Klaus remained silent for a moment. "Stefan fed me with his blood. But that's not important, brother. I have to tell you..."

"Let's test it." Before Klaus could go into details, Samael rolled his sleeves up. "I don't care about the unnecessary details. Even if Stefan gave you all his blood, you can't grow your fangs back unless it my blood."

"Brother..." Klaus called out under his breath, shifting his gaze to Samael's arms. He gulped down, gritting his teeth to stop his urges.

"Back in Grimsbanne, the numbers of abnormals had increased. Rufus had done a good job in minimizing the casualties while I was in my slumber. Same case in Cunningham." Samael glanced at Cameron, who had raised this problem to him.

"Cunningham had been being attacked by abnormals. Although our clan had subdued most of them, they kept coming annually. It's safe now since we caught most of them — some just died after reaching their limits." Cameron chimed in, explaining the strange occurrence that befell Cunningham for years.

"Although it is not something to be alarmed as abnormals were normal problems, there's strange about it. The blessing of Ashen protects Cunningham. Hence, we will know when an abnormal comes from outside Cunningham. But we can't detect it until someone falls victim to it. What's even more strange is that, it is not an internal force as well. We've investigated, but the identities of the abnormals aren't townsfolk."

Cameron explained in one go. He had said snippets of this problem to Samael. However, Samael was not interested. It was only today that he mentioned it. Thus, Cameron took this chance to explain everything.

"Do you know anything about this, Klaus?" Samael inquired without a second hesitation.

Cameron perked up, waiting for Klaus' answer. Alas, the latter shook his head and sighed.

"Unfortunately, I'm unaware of this. "

"I see..." Samael nodded in understanding.

"Bother, if you're suspicious about me. You can drink my blood to see the truth!" Afraid Samael could misunderstand him, Klaus suggested, eagerly.

"No need. I just tried, but I know you won't know these things since Stefan sent you to me." Samael waved his hand nonchalantly.

"Now, let's test your fangs."

Klaus stayed quiet as he balled his hand into a fist. It tempted him to sink his fangs into Sam's arms. However, that's not what he came here for.

"Brother... I mean, my king, don't you plan on reclaiming the throne? I'm still on your side. A lot of us are waiting for your return and we all planned to support you with our lives." Klaus sighed as he raised his gaze towards Samael.

Cameron furrowed his brows as he glanced at Samael's side profile. He knew what Klaus was talking about — the Crawford was one of those who would support him. Yet Samael's expression didn't even change.

"You gave us your word that you'd change this kingdom once you woke up." Klaus gritted his teeth, trying to repress his heightened emotions.

"Just what kind of deal did you have with Stefan before your slumber? To think you'd take a mortal as your wife... I would snap her neck."

"Careful with your words, Klaus." Samael's tone was low, stern, and intimidating. "Never mention Lilou from those wicked lips of yours."

Upon hearing the threat, Klaus scoffed in ridicule. To him, Samael was like a god. A powerful being who could restore or destroy their kingdom.

And yet, Lilou, a mere human, indulged herself in the arms of Samael. Even though Klaus was a pure-blooded vampire, he couldn't even come close to Samael. Hence the inexplicable jealousy in his heart.

"What's so good about humans, brother?" Klaus scorned in disdain. "First, that Rufus and damn bastard Fabian. Now, this? They don't even know the extent and importance of your blood."

"Hah..." Samael chuckled briefly. "What's so good about them?"

Slowly, Samael raised his forefinger and glanced at Cameron. "Marquess, if I were you, lock yourself up tonight or help Rufus."

"What..." Cameron furrowed his brows. When he realized what was Samael wanted to do, he nodded in understanding.

"I will, your highness."

As soon as Cameron said those words, he immediately departed from the meeting room. Instead of walking casually, Cameron sprinted away.

Once they were left alone, Samael pressed the tip of his nail against his wrist, then across his forearm.

"Drink." He uttered as blood dripped from his arm.



"Broth —" Klaus panted. His fangs grew longer, while his eyes turned bloodshot. For someone to offer them food, he had gladly accepted this kindness.

Rough and unrestrained, Klaus' fangs sank deep in Samael's arms. As if a starving beast who finally had something to eat.

Samael gazed down coldly, watching how pathetic his brother was.

"What's so good about humans?" Samael muttered. "They don't crave for my blood nor they lust for it. I'm disgusted by the lust of those poisonous fangs it's tempting me to sever my arm off."

Yet Samael's words drifted along with the sound of Klaus' gulping.

"Pathetic." Despite that, Samael let him drink just because they were brothers.

Klaus might arrogant, but he had been devoted to Samael ever since. His loyalty towards Sam was what made him foolish, leading him to this pathetic state.

Samael leaned back as he tilted his head back, staring at the ceiling. His calmness was as if his arm wasn't being devoured currently.

"What was Stefan thinking about giving his brother an artificial fang from witchcraft? What is he plotting?"

He wondered. Samael could feel the strange sting from Klaus' fangs. Making him wonder even more.

Meanwhile, Klaus had never felt this relief within him. It was as if the constant poison in his mouth was being washed away by the purity of Samael's blood.

"That's enough." Samael ordered, but Klaus didn't stop.

Thus, Samael grabbed his back and pulled him up. Klaus' fangs tore across Samael's flesh. Klaus only snapped to his senses when he landed on the floor with a bang.

"Ah... goodness." Samael ruffled his hair as he collapsed on the couch.

"My — king! I — I didn't mean—"

"Shh. Don't talk or breath, I need to think." Samael waved nonchalantly as he pondered about Stefan, the king's, plans.

As ordered, Klaus didn't make a noise as Samael remained silent for a long time. He stayed on his knees, trembling, for not suppressing his urges earlier.

"What does he want?" Samael asked himself under his breath.

In the end, Samael couldn't think of a clear intention. Killing Samael was an obvious conclusion. But there's something that puzzling him.

Why did it feel that Stefan didn't want Samael dead? But he wanted something else instead?

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Chapter 137 - Skull Ring

[PRESENT TIME]

"Damn it..." Klaus cursed under his breath after recalling what happened last night.

Once Samael left him, Klaus' felt weak, as if he was withdrawing toxins from his fangs. The only thing he could remember was Fabian dragging him by the foot.

His memories were vague. But he could clearly remember Fabian's wicked smile while burying him.

'I know my fangs are not as strong as before. Also, there's always a tang of bitterness in my tongue.' Klaus muttered inwardly.

He touched his side tooth, pressing his thumb against it. It wasn't as sensitive as before, too.

"You should thank her ladyship for saving you from your impending doom." Suddenly, Klaus snapped to his senses upon hearing Rufus's voice from behind him.

He slowly dropped his hand. Slowly, Klaus turned to Rufus. His expression instantly sported a look of disdain.

"Non sense! Why would I be grateful to that insignificant human?!"

"Please watch your words, your highness." Displeased at Klaus' snide remark, Rufus's eyes glinted with murderous intent.

"I know his highness is aware that the duke is very fond of his bride. Insulting her also means insulting the duke."

"Tch." Annoyed, Klaus clicked his tongue. "Where is Hell? He should come with me to the Capital."

"The duke went out with her ladyship today. He said he'll set off to the capital in three days." Rufus explained calmly.

"What?!"

"The Duke will set off —"

"No, not that. Did you say they went out? Where?"

Rufus furrowed his brows, squinting his eyes. Klaus had always been the aggressive and pathetic prince. However, Klaus seemed a little alarmed by this information.

"The duke didn't give his destination since he didn't want anyone to interrupt his time with the future duchess." Still, Rufus didn't give the answer Klaus had sought.

Klaus could go off on his own, after all. Rufus wouldn't want that because it was rare for Lilou and Samael to have time for themselves.

"Future duchess..." Klaus snorted, finding the title ridiculous. He walked towards Rufus, stopping to his side.

"You and I and that damn brother of yours know well it won't be just a duchess."

Klaus added, placing his hand on Rufus' shoulder. A smirk appeared on his lips while Rufus kept his expression in check.

"That woman doesn't deserve to stand beside nor behind my king. She should grovel on his feet." Klaus squeezed Rufus' shoulder lightly before tapping it as he trudged away.

Rufus stayed in his position motionlessly. His eyes glinting as his jaw tightened.

Slowly, Rufus closed his eyes as he took a deep breath. He had been avoiding a confrontation against a royal family member. Rufus even let the nobles go for the goodness of Grimsbanne.

However, the situation before and now had changed. Samael had awoken from his slumber. A confrontation like this was inevitable.

"Your Highness." Rufus reached for his sword as his eyes opened with determination.

Without a second hesitation, Rufus drew his sword. Turning around, leaping towards Klaus. Alas, Klaus was able to grab the blade with his claw-like nails.

"Attacking from behind is very unlike you, Sir Knight." Klaus sneered.

The blade trembled in his grip, moving forth ever so slowly. Before the blade could cut through his fingers, Klaus let it go and leapt a few steps back.

"You Barrett brothers are so annoying." Klaus clicked his tongue.

He knew Rufus held back in his first attempt. It was a warning attack for insulting Lilou. That fact annoyed Klaus even more.

"That is a warning, your highness." Rufus eased his shoulders as he withdrew his sword. "I won't ask you to like her ladyship, knowing your prejudice against mortals. However, I advise you to refrain from openly insulting her."

Rufus stared at Klaus adamantly. Even though he was a knight, Rufus only respected people who were worthy of respect.

In other words, there were only a few people he respected and wouldn't wield his sword at. Samael, Fabian, and Lilou. The royal family wasn't on his list.

"She really got you all wrapped around her fingers, huh?" Klaus scoffed in mockery. "That wench."

Klaus ground his teeth. His fangs grew longer, raising his hand. His fingers curled, cracking sound resonated from it as he stretched his neck in a circular motion.

"It makes my blood boil."

Upon stating so, Klaus disappeared from his spot. In a blink of an eye, he appeared above Rufus.

Thanks to Rufus' fast reflexes, he blocked his attack. He gritted his teeth, swinging his sword, which made Klaus leap back.

"So, this is your answer." Rufus smirked. "I don't mind reducing my lord's enemies."

Rufus didn't waste a second as he thrust his sword towards Klaus. One after another, he attacked Klaus without restraint. Each blow grew more powerful.

But Klaus blocked all of them. Throwing his own attacks in between.

"You and I knew I'm on Hell's side." Klaus yelled through his gritted teeth upon stopping Rufus' blade.

Rufus hopped back. "But I don't think you share the same ideals."

"Hah..." Klaus chuckled in ridicule. "I may not. Because if I do, I would've told him who came with me in here."

Rufus furrowed his brows as he studied Klaus' sneer.

"Did you think I came alone? I left my nephew in Knotley. He's a bearer of a divine weapon, Auron. If by chance he encountered Hell, do you think that woman would leave unscathed? Hell is always soft to mortals. But he had changed completely. So, it's my duty to make him realize fragile things are best to keep as playthings."

"Who is trying to play with me?" He ground his teeth, looking from left to right.

The vein in his eyes grew red as his fangs let themselves known. As he cocked his head sideways, cracking noise clapped in his ears.

"Ha... ha, haha!" His low chuckles gradually sounded evil.

"Lilou." He muttered, spreading his arms wide. Gazing up, Samael slowly closed his eyes.

"I really can't take my eyes off of you, huh?"

Samael added under his breath. He tried to sense all moving creatures around the entire Knotley.

Slowly and carefully listened to everyone's breathing and movements. When he opened his eyes, Samael smirked wickedly.

"Found you." He whispered, raising his hand before him. Using his sharp thumb nail to prick the tip of his forefinger.

As little blood dripped down from his forefinger, Samael let it hit the ground.

"Give her back..." Samael whispered dangerously as red mist arose from the ground, surrounding him that soon engulfed not just Knotley, but the entire Cunningham.

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Minutes before that...

Two unbelievably fast shadows headed towards Knotley. Faster than a galloping war horse, Knotley soon came to their sight.

"Fabian." Rufus glanced back at Fabian. The latter caught up to them much faster.

Instinctively, Rufus glanced at Fabian's hand. His brow twitched briefly upon noticing Fabian's skull ring.

"Damn you, Fabian!" Klaus cursed, grinding his teeth. However, he didn't decrease his speed. "I will kill you later."

"Master will kill everyone in Cunningham." Unfazed by Klaus' threat, Fabian glanced at Rufus calmly.

"This guy said he didn't come alone. He brought the bearer of Auron." Rufus filled Fabian with only irrelevant details.

"This guy?!" Irked, Klaus yelled as he ground his teeth.

"Do you think Master is cornered?" Rufus inquired, ignoring Klaus' complaints.

Normally, Fabian would play his part as a normal butler. Only during emergencies he would talk at Rufus on the same level.

"Cornered?" Fabian's eyes glinted. "I don't think someone, even the bearer of Auron, can push him to the edge. I'm more worried about the future duchess."

Upon stating so, Fabian surpassed Rufus and Klaus. The two also sped up and soon arrived at the heart of Knotley.

As soon as their feet landed on the ground, red mist mixed in the air.

"Was he trying to annihilate everyone in Knotley?" Klaus' eyes glimmered, covering his nose with his arm.

Rufus looked around. "We have to stop him."

"What? Why?" Klaus' face scrunched up. "I only came here because I want to see Hell's incredible strength! Why would I stop him?"

"Didn't you say you brought the bearer of Auron with you?" Rufus shot him a glaring dagger.

"Ahh... my nephew. I don't care if he dies, honestly. He's such a bother." Klaus shrugged nonchalantly.

Rufus took a deep breath and out. "If you want him to sit on the throne, you better help us now. You know more than everyone the repercussions of bloodfield."

"What do you mean? This is just a normal..." Klaus trailed off as Rufus cut him off.

"I can't believe you're a royalty. This is not your ordinary bloodfield." Rufus shook his head, raising his hand as he gazed at it. "It's darker than ever."

Rufus added, clenching his hand. He then glanced at Klaus and ordered;

"Search for her and bring her back alive if you want a king who can change this kingdom... and not just a heartless monster."

"Damn it!" Klaus exclaimed in frustration.

Rufus left his spot in a snap of a finger, ignoring Klaus' frustrated grunts. He knew Fabian would directly go to Samael. Hence, he had to find Lilou.

This ominous feeling crawling under his skin. It felt very familiar. No. It was almost familiar, but it was far worse than hundreds of years ago.

'My lady... please be safe.' Rufus ground his teeth as he followed the faint presence of Lilou.

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"My lord." Fabian greeted, his palm across his chest. He landed several meters across from Samael.

Samael slowly raised his pair of crimson eyes and set it on him. Not surprised to see Fabian's appearance.

"Please, my lord. Calm down." Fabian bowed calmly, attempting to calm Samael down by words.

Alas, both of them knew words weren't enough. Fabian could instantly discern Samael was at the brink of losing his reasons.

Without responding, Samael closed his eyes. Right now, there were six people who could move around in Knotley: Fabian, Rufus, Klaus, Claude, and Cameron.

Samael could detect them by their presence. The sixth person, however, was someone he didn't know. It was neither Alistair, the sixth prince, nor Stefan, the current king.

It was a presence Samael couldn't recognize. But he could feel this very dark, unsettling aura exuding from it.

"Stop." Samael whispered.

Those who were conscious felt the heavy pressure upon them, halting all their movements.

Fabian's jaw tightened as he could feel this invisible gigantic rock weighing him down. The surface where he stood even cracked before shattering.

"Rufus and Klaus will look for them, my lord. You will harm her ladyship if you don't stop." Fabian muttered, but his voice drifted along the red thick mist.

"My lord. Please think of your bride." He knew Samael wasn't, or rather, couldn't think straight.

"Fabian, I give you permission to break the seal." Under his breath, Samael ordered.

"Yes, my lord." Fabian bowed as he heard chains breaking within him. Slowly, Fabian raised his hand despite the gravity weighing him down.

A dark spear gradually appeared under Fabian's hand. It was a little different from lakresha, with dark flames and the scream of souls from it.

"Maleficent." Fabian smirked as he slowly grasp the dark spear.

"Die." Samael murmured.

The mist stopped midair as some of them hardened to red needles. Within a fraction of seconds, red needles quickly moved in a certain direction. Towards the sixth moving person in Knotley.

Fabian also disappeared and followed the direction of the red needles. The only reason he came to Samael first so he could unlock the seal.

Once Samael moved, everything he would pass through would wither. Hence, Fabian had to reach Lilou's abductor before Samael would completely lose his mind.

"My lady, please be safe." Fabian's eyes sharpened.

Chapter 139 - How Nice To Be Back

Was there any way to get out of this mess? Samael wondered.

Just one problem concerning Lilou. He couldn't control himself. Deep down, he knew what he had unleashed was dangerous.

Yet, out of desperation, he did it anyway. Why? Because he was afraid.

In this time, standing in the middle of the heart of Knotley, Samael couldn't even move. It would take him a while to stop this anger building up within him.

All he could do was to trust Fabian to get her back. Why... why now?

"How pathetic..." Samael whispered under his breath, blaming himself.

If he didn't take his eyes off of her, he could have prevented this from happening. But he let himself get distracted. Now Lilou was being taken away from him; and to think this had happened under his watch.

No. That was not the case.

Samael. He already knew the moment he fell for her, she'd be in danger. After all, everyone wanted him dead or alive to use for their own benefits.

To inherit the purest form of blood, his life was never his own. No matter how he tried his hardest to get away from his fate — rebel, get banished, do what he pleased, travel the world — he would always end up back in this hell.

Back to where people urge him to lead. While the rest wanting him dead for good. There was no way out.

What was the point of receiving immeasurable strength? If he couldn't protect the only being who had loved him, accepted him, showed him what there's more to life. The sole reason he remained sane after waking up and the only life he treasured.

Samael's breathing grew heavier every passing second. Every breath he took suffocated his lungs.

"Lilou..." He whispered her name helplessly. "... what should I do?"

Suddenly, Lilou's bright smile flashed before his eyes. He gazed at the illusion of Lilou standing before him. She walked towards him, cupping his cheek, smiling.

Her earnest gaze warmed him up. And her affectionate touch calmed his jumbled thoughts.

Lilou was his salvation. Her presence, smile, her love, touches, and just her existence alone was his sanctuary. She's the only person in this world who could make his chaotic thoughts into a standstill.

The thick red mist covering Cunningham gradually receded. Lilou's illusion faded.

Initially, Samael's first course of action was to annihilate everyone. Lilou might die in the process... but he could just revive her back as a vampire.

It was a crazy and selfish impulse decision. However, now that he could think straight, Samael didn't want that.

Killing her with his own hands was something he shouldn't and would never do. Because if he did, Samael knew this genuine emotions wouldn't be just love, but an obsession.

Lilou wouldn't want that. Her idea of love and romance differed from his.

"They're driving me crazy, Lilove." Samael ran his hands through his argent hair in distress. Grinding his teeth in frustration.

"Ahh... really."

The corner of his lips curled up into a ridiculing smirk. His fangs grew back into small canine, but his claws remained.

He took a deep breath and closed his eyes.

'Fabian,' Samael called out telepathically, which reached Fabian.

'My lord?' Fabian's voice rang in his head.

'Rufus, Klaus, Claude, Cameron.' Samael called them one by one, and all those names mentioned heard his voice inside his head.

'I'll be gone for a while. Protect Lilou with all your lives.'



'My lord, what are you...' Rufus' voice didn't go through as Samael shut him off.

"Hell is what they want. Then hell it is." Samael muttered before shutting off his emotions.

When Samael opened his eyes, his eyes exuded with nothing but evilness. His aura, the way his eyes drooped, and how the side of his lips hooked up were different.

It was as if he turned into an entirely different person in a blink of an eye. His ridiculing smirk grew broader as he licked his lips.

Samael cracked his neck sideways, hissing in satisfaction.

"How nice to be back." He sneered before disappearing from his spot.

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'I'll be gone for a while...' Fabian blinked ever so slowly as he landed in front of the hooded man, carrying someone covered in a cloak on his shoulder.

He gazed at the blood on the concrete ground. His brow arched. Getting the hint that this man fended most of the red needles.

"Impressive." Fabian mused. "But please, return my lady."

The hooded man cocked his head to the side. His smirk revealed.

Fabian nodded slightly. Within a fraction of a millisecond, Fabian suddenly appeared behind him. The tip of his dark, flaming spear hooked the hood back as it slowly draped down to his neck.

If the man wasn't carrying someone on his shoulder, he would've pierced his neck. However, Fabian needed to be careful.

As the hood fell down, Fabian squinted his eyes. Bald, revealing a deep scar behind the back of the man's head.

Instead of turning around, the man cocked his head back, breaking his spine and neck like a jelly. Black sclera, ash colored iris, and slit black pupils.

"Undead."

Fabian's expression grew more solemn seeing his appearance. He shifted his eyes briefly at the person on his shoulders.

And what he was most afraid of crawled under Fabian's skin. The person on the shoulder trembled as it peeked from the hood.

It was not Lilou.

"Maleficent, they're all yours." Fabian whispered as he figured these were decoys. Samael and Fabian fell for it.

Fabian swung his dark spear towards them. Upon doing so, the two separated as they stood on either side of him.

In a heartbeat, Fabian exchanged blows with them. Two against one. But Fabian handled them well. As Fabian grazed them, dark blood with a pungent scent of rotting flesh wafted his nose.

His grip on the dark spear stung. The dark spear felt excited at the demonic aura in their blood.

"This country had stooped this low...?" Fabian ground his teeth, first time showing his disappointment and anger. Without thinking twice, Fabian struck one of them mercilessly.

Cleanly cutting his head off of his body. Dark fumes arose in the air. Fabian held his breath instinctively.

"Ahhh!!" Just then, his other enemy yelled while attacking Fabian from behind.

Before Fabian could block the attack, it stopped and collapsed; dead. Fabian caught a small pebble covered with dark blood on the ground; the same pebble that went through the other undead's head.

Slowly, Fabian raised his gaze. As soon as he did, he caught Samael's figure standing on the tip of the towering church in Knotley. He was throwing and catching another pebble in midair, staring in his direction.

"My lord..." Fabian whispered upon seeing Samael's nonchalance and demeanor.

Samael smirked. Fabian's grip on Maleficent tightened until his fist trembled.

"Is this what you really mean when you said you'd be gone for a while?" He gulped.

Because right now, Fabian recognized that that wasn't Samael from the past months. That aura that even from a distant made his dark spear trembled in excitement.

That person... it was not Sam. It was the wicked third prince of the royal family.

The real Hell.

Chapter 140 - My Sister-in-law

Meanwhile...

"You!" Cameron yelled, seeing the child who had stopped the time in Cunningham.

Cameron didn't waste time upon sensing this significant power in Knotley. He came to see and to resolve everything in his might. But, he didn't expect to see a child on a brink of death.

He rushed to Claude. The latter was coughing blood, clinging on the table tightly.

"Stop this at once!" Cameron ordered at the top of his lungs. He held Claude's shoulders, shaking him.

Claude could barely keep his eyes opened. He didn't know the reason for putting his life at risk, but the thought of Lilou forced him to do so.

"Bearer of Auron!" Cameron ground his teeth and shook him by the shoulder. "Stop this at once! Didn't you hear his highness?!"

Claude weakly raised his gaze to Cameron. He had seen the Marquess a few times from a distance before.

Obviously, both of them had heard Samael and his orders. The more reason Claude couldn't resume time yet. Lilou was yet to be found.

However, the longer he used this ability of his, the harder it was to maintain it. Lilou was the first person who had shown him kindness, expecting nothing in return.

Claude meant it when he said he liked Lilou. Thus, he didn't wish for her to be in danger.

"Auntie... Lilove..." He whispered before he gave in to the darkness.

"Auron!" Cameron caught his small frame and gritted his teeth.

As soon as Claude lost consciousness, time moved once again. The chatterings and noises in the establishment resonated once again, as if nothing happened.

However, someone soon noticed Cameron and a bleeding child in his arms.

"Marquess!" a woman exclaimed in shock, covering her gaping mouth with her palms.

When they heard the woman, everyone in the establishment turned their attention towards Cameron. The noises gradually subsided as shock resurfaced on everyone's faces.

Yet Cameron didn't move a muscle as he held Claude. For a child to unleash such a large scale power... and Samael vague message, this brought concern for Cameron.

He didn't pay attention to everyone as he walked out, carrying Claude in his arms with their gazes on him. But when he was by the door, Cameron halted and turned around.

"Everyone, someone abducted our goddess in this very land. Search every nook and cranny, find anything that can trace her." Cameron gritted his teeth, wincing in pain as he relayed the message to everyone's subconscious mind in Cunningham.

That instant, his complexion grew paler as he panted for air. His knees wobbled as coldness seeped deep in his bones.

The expression of everyone froze. It was unlike how they received the name of their new god to worship. This time, it was not just a name, but an image.

"Now." Cameron breathed heavily. Upon giving that order, everyone in Cunningham, men and women, searched for Lilou.

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Rufus leapt from roof to roof to find Lilou. Upon Samael's last message, he already guessed what he meant by that.

It only meant they must protect Lilou... even from Samael.

"My lady... where the hell did they take you?" Rufus grumbled through his gritted teeth.

It wasn't long since Lilou got abducted. Hence, it was impossible that they had already left Cunningham.

Even though Samael's bloodfield was a little unstable, he must've detected Lilou or her abductor. After all, the more powerful a person was, the more distinct their presence was.

With the bloodfield and the ability Rufus assumed from the bearer of Auron, it was easy to find them.

Suddenly Rufus halted on top of a house roof.

"Fabian must have found them." He mumbled, thinking of every possibility, how things had turned out.

He was certain he sensed Maleficent's aura. If so, Fabian must have detected someone and had confronted them. Yet Samael still gave his orders.

"Why would he...?" Rufus trailed off. His eyes slowly widened as realization struck him.

Since Samael was the caster of bloodfield, he must've felt that Lilou had left or they couldn't find her for now.

With this realization, Rufus balled his hand into a fist as he resumed in searching for her. If Lilou had left Cunningham, he would follow their tracks.

Just as Rufus was rushing in a certain direction, he suddenly reduced his speed. He gazed down, furrowing his brows at the glinting material on the ground. It was unlike him to notice it, but his instinct told him he should check it.

Without thinking twice, Rufus jumped down from the roof to an alley. As soon as he landed, he bent down to pick up a piece of earring.

"This..." It was hard to assume it was Lilou's. However, it was the same color she wore this morning.

Rufus then noticed the small drops of blood on the ground. His eyes followed the trailed of blood as if someone purposely left it as a hint.

"My lady!" Rufus sprinted, following the trail of blood.

It was just instinct, as he had been with Lilou almost the entire day for the past three months. Thus, he naturally assumed it was Lilou's.

Unfortunately, the trail of blood soon faded. Still, Rufus gazed towards where they could have headed.

"The Capital." Rufus muttered under his breath, as this direction only lead to two more towns and then the Capital.

Since those towns were close to the Capital and governed by the members of the La Crox family, the assumption of Lilou's destination was not far-fetched.

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I felt like I've been trapped in this darkness for a long time. The silence had become louder and deafening. It was quite dreading to be conscious in mind, asking myself whether I'm asleep or just dead.

No. I didn't want to die — I can't. Not so abrupt, not like this.

I chanted those words repeatedly. The last time I felt trapped in this same darkness, I had met Lara. Perhaps something happened again?

If so, I really had to wake up. Sam would throw a huge fit if I didn't.

'Lara... helped me.' I subconsciously called out, but to no avail. 'Lara... lakresha.'

Upon whispering lakresha internally, I felt a slight sting. After that, my eyes slowly and weakly opened.

Upon my first breath, I got a whiff of the pleasant scent of flowers.

'Where am I?' I wondered, getting a hold of my vision.

Once my vision went clear, my brows furrowed. The ceiling was too high and too unfamiliar despite the faint light.

Did I fall asleep in Cameron's chapel? But that was very unlikely.

Amidst my confusion, something brush the back of my hand. I flinched slightly, moving my gaze to the man standing next to where I lied.

Shining ebony hair, bright crimson eyes, long narrow nose, lean cheek, and distinct jawline. His side features were all attractive, giving me a slight resemblance to Sam.

Sam... I snapped as I jolted, barely. My body felt heavy as I realized this bed was rather... cramped. I turned my head from left to right, surprised at the tons of flowers. And then, I realized it was not a bed. I was inside a coffin...?

"What a lively corpse." I froze upon hearing the man's emotionless voice.

What... what did he say? A corpse?

I slowly shifted my gaze to him. He was staring down at me, placing a flower over me.

"Is your funeral to your liking?" The side of his lips slowly curled into a smirk. "Sweetheart?"

Instinctively, I held my breath as his voice sounded so familiar.

"Is this creative enough as a welcome to the Capital?" He cocked his head to the side; his twisted smirk remained.

"My dear sister-in-law?"

- END OF VOLUME 2 -

