

## **The Sun 221**

### Chapter 221 – Where's My Money?

"And then, she suddenly starts puking!" a guy shouted in disgust.

"That's disgusting!" a guy shouted back through laughs.

"Yeah, the fucking bitch went limp, and the wire choked her out. Whore only needed to make me cum before she choked! Fucking bitch couldn't even do that!"

"Yeah," another guy said with a laugh. "She even had the entire dying thing going on. Isn't that your thing?"

"Yes, fucking shit!" the first guy shouted in anger. "Imagine dying with my dick in your vagina and not even managing to make me cum like that! How pathetic do you have to be?"

"Like, that's so fucking sad that I would even kill myself out of shame if that happened."

"Because of that, I took the wire off. Killing her off would be doing her a favor!" the guy shouted with annoyance.

"Pfft, you're just scared of the guards," another guy said.

"Shut the fuck up, David!"

BANG!

At that moment, Nick heard the sound of a metallic object hitting the wall.

Right now, Nick was below the Riker Striker's headquarters as a cloud of fog.

Nick couldn't look into the room above him since the holes in the floor were so small, but he could hear everything.

What he had heard so far made even him shocked and disgusted.

"I killed that stupid fucking brat that kept bugging me for food!" the first guy shouted with rage. "I managed to fucking kill her, and the city never got my ass! Why would I be scared of killing some useless bitch that can't even choke a dick to save her life?!"

"You wanna fuck with me, rot dick?!" the other guy shouted back in anger.

"So what if I do?!" the first guy said.

Bomp. Bomp.

Nick heard the sounds of bodies getting shoved back and forth.

BANG!

And the sound of a punch.

"Shut the fuck up!"

BANG!

BANG!

"I'll fuck your shit up!"

BANG!

CRASH!

"SHUUUT UUUUUP!"

Suddenly, the room above Nick quieted down as the shrill but aggressive shout of a woman thundered throughout it.

"What?" one of the earlier men asked with a bit of annoyance but also apprehension.

He sounded like he was intimidated by whoever had just entered the room.

"Go fight with your cocks outside!" the woman shouted aggressively. "There are people here that need a good day's rest after actually getting the money that you live off of!"

"Shut up, Monica! I earn my own money!" a guy shouted.

"Oh, what was that?!" Nick heard the woman shout.

Then, he heard several steps.

Slap!

The sound of a slap.

"What did you say?! Huh?!"

"I-"

Slap!

"Shut up!"

Slap!

"Okay, okay, okay!" the guy from earlier shouted, all the rage in his voice gone and replaced by submission.

"Where's my fucking money?!" the woman shouted with anger.

"I already paid you three days-"

"Do I look like I give a shit?! Where's my money, bitch?!" the woman shouted.

"That's not fair!"

Slap!

Dunk!

Bang!

Then, Nick heard the sounds of severe coughing.

"Okay."

The voice that had just said these words sounded like it had barely managed to choke that single word out before collapsing.

"So, where is it?!" the woman asked aggressively.

The sound of some shuffling.

"What am I supposed to do with 37 fucking credits?!" the woman shouted in outrage.

"I'm sorry! I'll get more!" one of the guys shouted.

Over the next ten minutes, Nick listened to the woman humiliating and berating one of the two guys.

"And you! You were just as loud as this guy!" the woman said, obviously talking to the other man in the room.

"I want a hundred credits within the next five days!"

"Of course," the other guy said with a polite tone.

"Good! And now, shut up and be quiet!"

BANG!

The door slammed shut loudly.

A couple of seconds passed.

"She's so fucking lucky that she has an ability!" one of the two whispered in aggression. "I would give my left nut just to choke her to death with my dick!"

"Fuck, I feel like she just fucking broke my arm!"

That was the last thing that Nick heard while he was floating along the ceiling of the sewers.

When that woman entered the room and asked about money, Nick knew that he had finally found a lead for why he was there.

Nick was there because he wanted to find out where all the money went.

While the Riker Strikers focused on causing terror, they also made a lot of money, and that money seemed to vanish.

'She asked for a lot of money, and by the looks of things, that isn't the first time she asked for it.'

'If she demands money from all the main members, she is most likely the one that makes all the money vanish.'

Nick kept following the sounds of footsteps.

Eventually, the woman entered a room at the end of the long hallway.

Sadly, Nick had to stay below the floor in the hallway.

The room that the woman had entered had no holes in the ground.

This meant everything below the floor was pitch black.

Entering the darkness was always extremely dangerous, and it would be even more dangerous while Nick was in his fog-state.

'This should be Riker's room,' Nick thought. 'Sadly, I can't hear anything.'

For now, Nick decided to wait in front of the room until the woman came back out.

Sure enough, about ten minutes later, the door opened again, and the woman walked out of the room.

'Did she deliver the money to Riker?' Nick thought.

Sadly, credits were made of paper and didn't exactly make a lot of noise.

Because of that, Nick couldn't tell whether or not the woman had delivered the credits to Riker or not.

'However, I'm sure that she's the key. If I keep following her, I will most likely find out what's happening to the money.'

'If I want to take down Riker, I have to be sure that no Manufacturer is involved in this!'

'And if they are...'

'I'll make sure that the governor finds out!'

Chapter 222 – Room

'She's with Riker again,' Nick thought.

This was Nick's fifth day of observing the Riker Striker's headquarters and, more specifically, the woman.

Or Monica.

By now, Nick had learned quite a bit about Monica.

First, she was the only female main member of the Riker Strikers.

Second, she was physically quite a lot stronger than the average member of the Riker Strikers.

According to the members, Monica was so strong because she had an attuned Zephyx Synchronizer.

She essentially handled the men of the Riker Strikers like children.

While this wasn't suspicious to the Riker Strikers, it was very suspicious to Nick.

After all, there were almost no abilities that just flatly increased an Extractor's physical power.

The only one Nick had heard of was his own, and that increase in strength also only appeared when certain conditions were fulfilled.

Based on what he had seen and heard, Monica was at least three times as strong as an adult man at any given moment in time.

Nick had also seen her a couple of times, and Monica definitely didn't look as physically imposing as Manela or anything like that.

She looked rather beautiful and wasn't even that big or muscular.

Yet, she handled men like they were toys.

'Either she has an ability vastly superior to mine in every way, or she's not a normal human with an ability,' Nick thought.

'She's most likely an ex-Zephyx Extractor.'



'Alternatively, she may have been around Riker so much that her body absorbed Zephyx he was giving off, which turned her into a Peak Newbie after a couple of months or years.'

Either way, Monica was the most dangerous person inside the gang, except for Riker himself.

She was also Riker's personal bodyguard.

Whenever anyone made problems, Monica would take care of them.

Naturally, when someone created a volatile pot of violence, such as the Riker Strikers, they would find themselves on the receiving end of violence at some point.

What stopped the insane people of the Riker Strikers from just banding together and killing Riker?

Monica.

She was what stopped them.

From what Nick had heard, Monica had also killed more than one member of the Riker Strikers before, and none of the corpses had ever been found.

Nick presumed that she had just thrown them into the sewers, and the Parasite ate them.

Naturally, none of the Riker Strikers would dare to go to the city guards.

Lest the city guards also investigate them.

After following Monica for a couple of days, Nick was certain that she was the person who made all the money vanish.

In these five days, Monica had confiscated over 2,500 credits from all the members of the Riker Strikers.

She hadn't left the headquarters during that time.

She had not used the money in any way.

Nick had also searched through her room while she was gone, and he hadn't found any credits anywhere.

He was also quite sure that Monica didn't just casually carry thousands of credits with her all the time.

This meant that the credits could only be in one place.

Riker's room.

Nick hadn't seen Riker's room yet since he wanted to be sure that Riker wouldn't notice him.

He would only try to enter after Riker left his room.

From time to time, Riker left his room, but Nick hadn't found a good opportunity yet.

Additionally, he had been busy following Monica.

But now, Nick would turn his attention to Riker's room.

Monica had just entered Riker's room, and Nick was quite sure that Riker would leave soon.

He hadn't left his room in two days, which was unusual for him.

He had to come out and show his face to his people.

"Well, let's hope they're not causing too few issues," a charismatic, smooth, but dangerous voice said.

Naturally, this was Riker's voice.

A moment later, Nick heard Monica and Riker walking away from his room, and Nick started to become active.

'There's no opening in the floor,' Nick thought. 'The door in the hallway is also locked and without any holes. They would definitely notice that I have been in there if I break the door open.'

Nick went to the neighboring rooms but noticed that the walls between them and Riker's room were extremely thick and without any holes.

'Can't go from below. Can't go from the front. Can't go from the sides,' Nick thought.

Nick "left" the headquarters and floated towards the space behind the headquarters.

Riker's room faced outward at the back, and Nick searched for an opening there.

'Nothing. Just a solid wall.'

'That means there has to be a way to get in from above. Monica is a human, and she needs light. There has to be a light source inside Riker's room,' Nick thought.

Nick left the sewers and stealthily made his way back to the Dregs.

The building the Riker Strikers were in was quite big, and the headquarters had several floors.

Nick turned into fog and slowly floated through a window on the second floor.

Luckily, Nick had already looked around this floor earlier, and he knew about a room that was almost always empty since the occupant was constantly outside with his friends.

A couple of minutes later, Nick stood in front of the door leading to the room above Riker's room.

The door was extremely solid, and there were no openings.

Nick also noticed that there was a ton of dust on the door, which meant that it hadn't been used in a long while.

But instead of breaking in, Nick decided to go to the third floor.

Sure enough, the room on top of that room was open, and Nick entered.

There was a big bed in the room, and Nick squeezed himself halfway below the bed.

It was a bit dark here, but not so dark that the Nightmare could use all of its powers.

At most, Nick was hearing a couple of voices that weren't there.

Then, Nick used the blade of his fist weapon to make a small cut in the ground.

After that, he looked through the cut into the room above Riker's room.

And what he saw shocked him.

Chapter 223 – Risk

It was dark!

The room was completely dark!

Except for the one cut that Nick had just created, the room had no openings through which light could enter.

At that moment, the plan for the headquarters shot through Nick's mind.

No light could enter into Riker's room through the bottom, front, left, right, or back.

All of these sides were completely blocked off and solid.

Additionally, since the room above Riker's room was completely dark, no light could come into Riker's room through that as well.

Artificial light that could keep the Nightmare at bay cost a ridiculous amount of money, and the money Monica was confiscating wouldn't even come close to paying for that.

On top of that, Nick was quite certain that there were also no reflective shafts of light.

These shafts were lined with mirrors, and mirrors were insanely expensive.

Just the materials would cost tens of thousands of credits, and then it would also need specialized personnel to create the shaft.

Installing something this pricy in a shitty house in the Dregs would raise a couple of eyebrows.

Why not just make a hole in the wall?

They weren't keeping Specters here.

There was no reason to spend that much money on something that could be solved with a drill and five minutes of work.

Nick was 99% sure that Riker's room was dark.

That wouldn't seem surprising since Riker was a Specter.

However...

Monica was also in the room frequently and for several minutes.

Either she was getting tortured to death over and over again several times per day or...

She was also a Specter.

This hadn't even occurred to Nick until now.

He had expected Riker's room to have light for the same reason why everyone else had expected it.

Because why wouldn't there be light?

There was no reason to have no light.

Having a room with no light was already very suspicious in and of itself.

Having a room with no light that someone occasionally went to was a risk.

Because what if someone found out?

What if one of the Riker Strikers decided to sneak into the room when Riker was away to steal something?

Then, the member would find out that the room was completely dark.

And they would very quickly suspect Riker of being a Specter.

At that point, it wouldn't even be a question of what happened.

The person would immediately run to an Investigator working for a Zephyx Manufacturer.

Clues that led to the capture of a Specter gave someone so much money that they could leave the Dregs and live in the Outer City.

Even more, every human was scared shitless of Specters.

While these men were fine with fighting with others and raping children, they did not want to come into contact with any kind of Specter.

Specters were the natural predators of humanity, and there was nothing that humans feared more.

Even without the reward, the person would be so paranoid that Riker would find out that they had been in his room that they would run to the closest Manufacturer.

Just having this lightless room was already dangerous for Riker.

So, then, why did he have it?

'There's only one thing I can think of,' Nick thought.

'A place that can't possibly be overheard by others.'

'There is something going on in that room that he can't allow anyone to find out!'

'Being overheard through one of the light holes has to be much worse than being suspected of being a Specter!'

Nick's mind was going wild.

'What could possibly be worse?!'

'What could be worse than the danger of being locked up for the remainder of your existence?'

'Why would he take such a huge risk?'

Nick narrowed his eyes.

He had no idea.

'I have to find out what's going on, but I need to be careful.'

'If there is something in the room, I have to make sure that I can find out what it is without being noticed.'

'It's already been several minutes since Riker left his room. I'm not sure when he will return, and I can't possibly enter when he's in there.'

Nick's heart rate increased as he thought about what this might mean.



Something that was even more important to a Specter than their own future.

This had to be something special.

'Or they just don't want to be overheard while talking,' Nick thought. 'That would be a bit anticlimactic.'

'Anyway, I should leave for now.'

Nick grabbed something and put it over the cut that he had created in the floor to hide it.

Then, he left the Riker Striker's headquarters and went back to Dark Dream.

The next day, Nick went to Wyntor's office.

"Got any news?" Wyntor asked.

Nick nodded with a serious expression.

"I'm not sure, but there is something very strange going on with Riker," Nick said.

After that, Nick told Wyntor what he had found out.

When Wyntor heard that there was most likely a second Specter, he became very interested and excited.

Most likely, Monica was also an Adolescent.

That would make two Adolescents that Dark Dream could potentially capture.

And then, Nick told Wyntor about the dark room and what his thoughts were.

Wyntor started to frown and kept thinking.

"And you are sure that there is no light source?" Wyntor asked.

"I'm 99% sure," Nick said.

"No window?"

"No."

"No holes?"

"No."

"No artificial lights?"

"Too expensive."

"No light shaft?"

"That is the only possibility, but I am almost certain that it's impossible," Nick said.

Wyntor just kept looking at his desk with furrowed brows.

"Maybe they just didn't want to be overheard. After all, they are both Specters," Wyntor said.

"They could talk anywhere," Nick said. "They could just create a trapdoor in the room and go to a dark part of the sewers to talk."

Wyntor remained silent for a while and looked forward.

Nick looked at Wyntor with interest.

"Do you know why they would take such a risk?" Nick asked.

Wyntor shook his head.

"I have no idea."

Chapter 224 – Entering

"You don't know?" Nick asked in surprise.

Wyntor just shook his head.

Nick just kept looking at Wyntor in shock.

After a while, Wyntor looked at Nick, and his eyebrows furrowed in annoyance. "What's with that expression?" he asked.

"I'm just surprised," Nick said. "You always have an answer. Whenever I ask you something, you have an answer."

"It's just weird seeing you not have one for once."

Wyntor snorted. "I'm not all-knowing, Nick. I know more things than normal people due to my background and my familiarity with Kugelblitz, but I still don't know everything."

"I've never heard of anything that a Specter would value more than their own life."

"Getting captured by a Manufacturer is essentially dying to a Specter. I have no idea what a Specter would value above that."

At that point, Wyntor moved backward and scratched his chin.

"But I wouldn't rule that possibility out either," he added.

"So, how do you want to proceed?" Nick asked.

Wyntor remained silent for a while.

"I want to talk to dad first," Wyntor said.

Nick nodded.

"I will talk to him during the evening, and I will tell you what to do tomorrow," Wyntor said. "Just keep observing the Riker Strikers. Also, I want you to make sure that there is truly no opening for light to enter the room. I don't want to worry this much about something just to find out that you overlooked a hole in the wall."

"Of course," Nick said.

The two nodded, and Nick left Wyntor's office.

Nick went back to the Riker Strikers and made sure that he hadn't overlooked anything.

He even climbed all over the house to make sure that there were no openings for some kind of hidden light shaft.

After over an hour of searching through everything, Nick was certain that there was no way for any kind of light to enter the room.

Eventually, Nick went back to Dark Dream and worked normally for the remainder of the day.

The next day, Nick met Wyntor in his office again.

"So, what's up?" Nick asked, sitting down in one of the chairs in Wyntor's office.

Wyntor looked a bit annoyed.

"Dad kept deflecting," Wyntor said.

"Deflecting?" Nick asked.

Wyntor nodded.

"When I asked him if there is anything that a Specter would value over their entire existence, he looked at me with this expression that means he thinks I found something out that I shouldn't have," Wyntor said.

"He kept asking questions, but I refused to tell him any details. After all, this is about my company. If this is something that's worth a lot of money, I'm certainly not going to hand it to Kugelblitz."

"He kept assuring me that he isn't trying to steal my Specter and that he only wants me to stay safe, but I'm not buying that," Wyntor said.

"So? Is there something that a Specter values more than their life?" Nick asked.

"Dad didn't deny that there was," Wyntor said.

A moment later, Wyntor took something out and put it on the table.

It was some kind of red stick that was barely 30 centimeters long.

"He gave me this," Wyntor said.

"What's that?" Nick asked.

"It's an emergency signal for city guards," Wyntor explained. "Infuse it with your own Zephyx and break it. The signal is used for when a powerful Specter has been found outside a Containment Unit."

"The misuse of the signal is punishable by death, and dad made very sure to tell me that several times."

Nick took the red stick and looked at it in wonder.

"I should take that with me?" Nick asked.

Wyntor nodded.

"Dad said that if you are unsure of whether you should use it or not, you should not use it."

"If you need to use it, you will be absolutely sure that you will need to use it. That's how he phrased it," Wyntor said.

Nick took a deep breath, but in the end, he pocketed the thing.

The words that Wyntor had spoken made Nick very worried.

"And now?" Nick asked.

"Now, you are going to break into that room and find out what's in there," Wyntor said.

Nick took another deep breath and nodded.

The two of them ironed out the details of how they were going to proceed, and then it was time for Nick to leave.

"Nick, don't die," Wyntor said.

"I'll do my best not to," Nick answered with a nod.

Eventually, Nick went to the headquarters of the Riker Strikers again.

By now, the headquarters felt much darker and more dangerous to Nick.

The closer he got to actually entering the room, the more nervous he felt.

The way Vernon had talked to Wyntor made it seem like Nick was getting involved in something that was vastly beyond his level.

Nick kept watch over the entrance to Riker's room for several hours.

Eventually, Riker left the room again with Monica.

Nick took a deep breath and quickly entered the room on the third floor.

Quickly, Nick created several holes in the floor below the bed.

He had to make sure that enough light fell into the room below this one.

After all, Nick didn't want to come into contact with the Nightmare right now.

Then, Nick turned into fog again and slowly moved through the cuts he had made.

He turned back into his corporeal form and readied his blade.

Nick's heart rate reached incredible speeds.

This was it!

Nick rammed his blade into the corner of the room and made a long cut.

Nick's eyes narrowed when he saw nothing through the cut.

This confirmed it.

The room was completely dark!

Additionally, Nick felt that his ability was still active, which meant that nobody had noticed him.

'There's no way back now!'

Nick created several more cuts in the floor to make sure that Riker's room had enough light for Nick.

And then, Nick turned into fog and floated into the room.



Now, Nick could finally see the room.

It was empty.

No desks, beds, chairs, or whatever.

It was completely empty.

Except for one thing.

In the middle of the room was some kind of... stone circle.

There were four big stones in the middle, which were surrounded by seven stones in a circle.

Outside the stone circle was another stone, but this one was quite bigger than the others.

It was almost perfectly round and nearly 20 centimeters high.

Nick did not like what he was seeing.

It felt insanely creepy.

Eventually, Nick turned back into his human form and landed in the room.

'Is this what Vernon talked about?' Nick thought.

Nick wasn't completely sure.

He thought this would be what Vernon meant.

'Vernon said that I would know without a doubt if I had to use the signal, and right now, I'm not sure.'

Nick looked around the room.

Eventually, Nick gritted his teeth.

He had to confirm it.

Nick took out the signal he had received from Wyntor.

And then, he moved his hand towards the stone circle.

CRRRRK!

The hairs on the back of Nick's neck stood up as he saw the big stone in the room changing shape.

A moment later, the shape of the stone had changed into the shape of a starving child sitting on the ground.

The statue of the child looked so real!

It was almost like Nick was looking at a real starving child!

And then...

The statue's eyes opened.

And Nick's ability deactivated!

The statue looked at Nick, its eyes completely black.

Nick felt like he had been flung into eternal darkness.

"You have the power of the Eternal."

The child's voice echoed throughout the room.

"I will take that power from you!"

"Your power is mine!"

Chapter 225 – Starving Child

Terror.

Pure terror.

In his entire life, Nick had never been this scared before!

Something deep inside of him told him that there was no way he could survive.

Something told him that he couldn't possibly resist the power of this child.

There was only death waiting for him.

The entire room seemed to warp.

It seemingly spun and distorted until there was only a contorted hallway remaining, with Nick and the child at opposite ends.

And then, Nick felt like the darkness inside the hallway was pulling the light out of him.

He felt like the core of his being was getting pulled toward the starving child.

He was vanishing!

He was disappearing!

He was dying!

Crack.

Nick's right hand strengthened a bit, and a moment later, the sound of something cracking reverberated throughout the hallway.

WHOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

It was like a gigantic explosion suddenly appeared in the room!

Red!

The entire room was filled with a fiery red!

Nick saw the storm of fiery red shooting past him at insane speeds, and he felt like he had fallen through a mountain made of fire.

And yet, while Nick could see the red mass, he couldn't feel it.

It was almost like it wasn't real.

Nevertheless, it had to be real.

After all, Nick felt the room turn to normal, and he no longer felt like he was being consumed by the darkness.

The starving child kept looking at Nick.

"Your power will be mine," the child repeated.

"I will consume the power of the Eternal."

"I will kill you."

"The haven you call Crimson Fungus City will cease to exist."

"You will be mine!"

At that moment, the expression of the starving child turned into a mad grin, and Nick felt like something had taken hold of his heart.

The darkness in the child's eyes seemed to extend towards Nick, and a moment later, he felt like the darkness was surrounding him.

"You are mine!" the voice of the child thundered.

And then, Nick felt like something that he couldn't afford to lose was leaving his mouth and eyes.

A moment later, he saw a gentle white mist coming out of his body.

Nick recognized the mass.

It was Zephyx!

'No!' Nick thought. 'You're not taking it!'

But it didn't matter.

Nick felt the essence of his being getting pulled out and extending towards the child.

He was dying!

At that moment, the door to the room exploded, and two people ran in.

Although, people was the wrong word.

Nick saw a man with black hair and dark eyes on one side and a young woman with blonde hair on the other.

Riker and Monica.

"Master!" Monica shouted with urgency.

"You failed me," the starving child said.

"Your existence is no longer required."

The two of them looked at the starving child.

If they were human, they would probably be terrified.

But they weren't.

They were Specters, and Specters couldn't feel fear.

When someone was standing in front of someone who wanted to kill them, there were only three things they could do.

Fight.

Flight.

Surrender.

Since surrendering didn't work, there were only two options left for Riker and Monica.

Monica ran forward and stopped behind Nick, who couldn't move at that moment.

And then, Nick suddenly felt some kind of force pulling him backward.

The next moment, Nick saw the white mist in front of him halt.

It was no longer moving towards the starving child.

That was when Nick noticed that the sucking force had come from Monica's hand.

It was like Monica's hand was consuming all the Zephyx in the surroundings.

"Shouldn't have told us that you were going to kill us," Riker's charming, cold, and calm voice came from beside Nick.

WHOOOM!

Suddenly, a black wind, filled with tormented faces, left Riker's hand and shot towards the starving child.

However, as soon as the black wind reached the starving child, it flowed around it.

It was like the starving child was a solid and massive rock in the middle of a small river.

Obviously, the black wind didn't do anything to the starving child, but it did accomplish something else.

The darkness that was pulling the Zephyx out of Nick was weakening, and Nick even saw the white mist flowing back into his body.

"Meaningless resistance," the starving child said.

"It doesn't matter when I get what I want."

"It only matters that I get it."

WHOOOOM!

Suddenly, the darkness inside the child exploded outward, and the black wind leaving Riker was annihilated.

Then, the darkness shot forward.



But then, it suddenly stopped.

That was because Riker and Monica had hidden behind Nick.

They knew that their master would have long since killed Nick under normal circumstances.

The fact that he was trying to consume Nick's power meant that he was extremely interested in Nick's power.

If Nick died, his power would disperse, which made it impossible for their master to absorb it.

So, they had bet on the fact that their master wouldn't dare to kill Nick.

And they had bet correctly.

The power the starving child had released this time was very different from the one he had used to absorb Nick's power.

This was something that could kill Nick in an instant.

Right now, Nick felt like some kind of force was in front of him that could extinguish him as easily as an ant.

He couldn't possibly resist it.

For just a moment, everything inside the room paused.

"Just wait," the child said calmly.

"I'll soon be there."

Then, the darkness started to slowly move towards the starving child.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

Nick felt like time had stopped.

What the fuck had just happened?!

What had he just seen?!

A moment ago, the starving child had still been there, but now...

He was in the middle of the Dregs!

Yet, he hadn't left the room.

In fact, his half of the room was still there...

But the other half had vanished.

Just like everything else in a 20-meter radius!

Chapter 226 – Arrested

There was just a crater in front of Nick!

Right now, Nick could see the sewers through the gigantic hole in front of him, and he could also see gigantic waves crashing against each other in the sewers.

Then, Nick noticed that half the building in front of him vanished.

It was like a 40-meter-wide conical laser had shot through the building, leaving behind a trail of destruction.

Nick was bathed in sunlight, and he felt the wind of the outside brush against his skin.

A moment later, Nick realized what had happened.

By following the pathway of the destruction, Nick's gaze was directed towards the megastructure that was the Inner City.

80% up the structure, on a balcony, Nick could see the distant silhouette of a person.

Nick wasn't sure, but he thought that the person held a huge rifle in front of them.

The only things Nick could properly see were their red hair and their uniform, which signified that they belonged to the city.

"We want to enter Kugelblitz."

Nick turned around and looked at Riker and Monica.

Both of them looked extremely calm.

It was almost like nothing out of the ordinary had happened.

When Nick saw their demeanors, he was reminded of the Dreamer.

The Dreamer acted the same way as them all the time.

BANG!

Nick's gaze turned forward again as he suddenly saw someone landing in front of him.

It was a young man with red hair, and he was wearing the uniform of a Zephyx Extractor working for the city.

However, Nick noticed two things that shocked him to his core.

First of all, the emblem of the guard!

There was one huge fungus on it, two medium-sized ones, and two small ones.

This was a level five Extractor!

A Specialist!

The other thing that Nick noticed was the rifle in the man's hand!

It looked exactly like the one that Nick had seen in the hands of the man on the balcony of the Inner City.

Nick quickly looked to the balcony.

The man was gone!

Did this man move from over halfway up the megastructure towards the Dregs in less than five seconds?!

That was a distance of over 4 kilometers!

The man looked at Nick and the two people behind him.

The next moment, the man's barrier projected several diagrams and figures in front of the man's eyes.

"We are willing to join Kugelblitz," Riker spoke calmly.

The man furrowed his brows.

Then, he turned to Nick.

"You fired the signal?" he asked calmly.

Nick remembered the red storm that had consumed him.

That should have been the signal.

"Yes," Nick said weakly.

His feelings finally came to terms with the fact that he wasn't going to die, and he suddenly lost all his power.

Nick almost fell over.

"You and the two Specters behind you will be taken into custody," the man said.

SHING! SHING! SHING!

The next moment, five more people arrived, which surrounded Nick and the two Specters.

Nick could see that all five of these people were Experts.

Nick took a deep breath.

The only thing he felt was relief.

He had survived!

Two of the Experts put Zephyx Suppressors around the Specters, and one of them lifted Nick over his shoulder.

The next moment, Nick felt like his body was being torn apart as he accelerated to speeds he could have never imagined.

Nick could only tell that the Expert, who was carrying him, jumped and entered the Inner City through some kind of exit partway up the megastructure.

Then, Nick saw the blurry images of tracks flying by him.

He guessed that the Expert was rapidly jumping from platform to platform on the middle layer of the Inner City.

In less than a minute, Nick found himself standing in front of a huge column on the middle layer of the Inner City.

The gigantic column looked just like any of the other columns, except for the fact that it was hollowed out.

Nick could see several windows on the column, and he could also see a couple of people standing in front of a set of doors.

That was when Nick noticed a huge sign.

City Guard Headquarters.

However, Nick couldn't admire the building for long since he was pushed through the door almost immediately.

The Expert had already put Nick down, and now, he shoved Nick forward.

About a minute later, Nick entered one of the rooms, and he quickly recognized where he was.

A Containment Unit.

"The captain will be with you shortly," the Expert said before he exited the Containment Unit.

The next moment, Nick heard the Containment Unit power up.

By the sounds of it, this Containment Unit was not cheap.

It could probably even contain a Force Specter.

There was definitely no way for Nick to escape.

Nick took a deep breath and looked around.

The entire room was stark white, and the only furniture was a table with four chairs in the middle of the room.

Nick slowly walked over to one of the chairs and sat down.

Silence.

Only silence surrounded Nick.

At that moment, Nick realized how tense he had actually been.

It was like his chest had finally relaxed.

And yet, Nick couldn't fully relax.

There was something deep inside of him that told him that he would soon die.

The image of the starving child entered Nick's mind again.

It had proclaimed that it would consume Nick.

It had said that it would destroy Crimson Fungus City.

And worst of all, it had said that it would soon come.

This meant that it hadn't truly been there.

Had it used some kind of way to manifest its power over a great distance?

If so, how powerful was this thing?!



How far away was it?!

'It even recognized my power! It said I have the power of an Eternal!' Nick thought.

How powerful was this thing?!

Was Crimson Fungus City safe?!

Could he even escape?!

Nick's mind was going wild.

He hadn't even noticed that over 20 minutes had passed.

Chapter 227 – The Captain

The door of the Containment Unit suddenly opened, and Nick's entire body twitched as he was startled.

Nick looked over at the person who had entered and saw a middle-aged man with black hair.

He was wearing the uniform of a member of the city, and, according to his emblem, he was an Expert.

The man calmly walked over to the table and sat down in one of the chairs.

"Nick Nick, Chief Zephyx Extractor of Dark Dream," the man said calmly. "Is that correct?"

"Yes," Nick said nervously.

"Marder Sansen, Captain of the city guards," the man said.

Nick nodded. "H-hello," he said absentmindedly.

"From where did you obtain the signal?" the man asked immediately.

"Wyntor gave it to me after getting it from his father," Nick said.

"With Wyntor, you mean Wyntor Melfion?" the man asked.

"C-correct," Nick said.

"Why would he hand you the signal?"

"Because his father told him to," Nick answered.

"Why would Vernon Melfion tell his son to hand you the signal?" the man asked.

"He didn't tell Wyntor a lot," Nick said. "He was very vague. He said that the misuse of the signal is punishable by death."

"He also said that if I am unsure whether to use it or not, I should not use it. He said I will be certain that I have to use it if I need to use it."

The man furrowed his brows.

"Why were there two Specters with you?" the man asked.

"That's a long story," Nick said.

"I have the entire day," the man said, leaning back on his chair.

"Okay, well, a bit over two years ago, I hired a new employee. Her name is Jenny, and..."

Nick started at the very beginning and told the captain about the Riker Strikers.

The captain didn't even ask why Nick hadn't told the guards about the Specter.

It was normal for a Manufacturer to keep the identities of Specters hidden.

After all, they didn't want anyone else to benefit from their work.

"The record says that the two Specters stood behind you and that there was no sign of aggression," the captain interrupted Nick. "That doesn't conform with what you were telling me."

"I'm getting to that," Nick said, his voice still shaky and nervous.

Nick arrived at the moment when he told Wyntor about the dark room, and the captain seemed to become much more interested.

"There is no way that there is a way for light to enter?" the captain asked.

"No, and speculation isn't important anymore," Nick said. "I have already been in the room, and it was dark."

The captain furrowed his brows.

"What did you think made Riker decide to take such a risk?" the captain asked.

"I had no idea," Nick said. "I couldn't imagine anything worse than essentially dying. I just went to Wyntor since he always knows what to do."

"But not even he had any idea what this was about."

"So, he went to his father and asked him."

Then, Nick told the captain what Wyntor had told him what his father had told him.

At that point, the captain started to ask many questions.

Did Vernon say anything more?

Did Vernon hint at anything?

Why did Vernon not do this or that?

Nick gave quick answers, which mostly boiled down to him saying that he didn't know.

After a while, the captain wrote something on a sheet of paper, but Nick couldn't see what the captain had written down.

"Tell me what happened earlier today," the man said.

Nick nodded and told the man about when he had entered the room above Riker's room.

When Nick reached the part in which he had entered Riker's room, the captain looked deeply into his eyes.

As Nick retold what he had seen, the image of the starving child entered his mind again.

Nick's heart rate shot up, and his breathing quickened.

He felt deep terror inside of his chest whenever he thought of the starving child.

He almost felt like the starving child inside his mind was moving of its own volition.

It was like the starving child had power over Nick's mind and was trying to kill him.

The darkness in its eyes stretched out until it clouded all of Nick's senses.

The darkness was everywhere!

It was consuming him!

BANG!

Nick almost shot out of his chair as a hand slammed on the table in front of him.

"I need to know what happened!" the captain demanded as he looked deeply into Nick's eyes.

Nick took a deep breath.

The starving child wasn't there.

It couldn't hurt him right now.

'Calm down, Nick,' he thought. 'It's not here. Calm down. The quicker the city knows about this, the safer I am.'

Nick took another deep breath.

"I saw four big stones that were surrounded by a circle made of seven stones," Nick said.

At that moment, the captain took a deep breath as well.

Nick looked at the captain, and he could see that the captain had started to sweat.

Naturally, the captain was doing his best to seem calm, but Nick could see that the captain was anything but calm right now.

Of course, this made Nick's fear return.

"There was a big spherical stone in front of the circle of stones," Nick continued. "There was nothing else in the room, and when I saw the stone, I felt like I had stumbled upon something very bad."

The captain remained silent.

"I was thinking about activating the signal, but I wasn't sure if I needed to use it or not, and since Vernon said that I should only use it when I was sure, I didn't," Nick continued.

"So, I moved my hand forward, and the spherical stone suddenly started to transform."

"Stop!" the captain suddenly said.

Nick was taken aback and looked at the captain.

Why had the captain interrupted him?

"Are you telling the truth?" the man asked.

Nick just wordlessly nodded.

"Are you willing to bet your life on that?"

Nick blinked a couple of times.

"Yes, I mean, I'm telling the truth. I'm more concerned with why you are asking all of a sudden," Nick said.

The captain looked into Nick's eyes for several seconds.

"Our interview ends here," the captain suddenly said.

Nick's eyebrows rose in surprise.

The next moment, the captain stood up and walked towards the door.

"Somebody else will be talking to you soon. Until then, don't say anything about what you have seen. Not even in here."

This made Nick even more nervous.

"Why? Why are you leaving?" Nick asked.

The captain opened the door with a solemn expression.

"I'm not sure if I am allowed to know these things."

Then, the door closed, and Nick was left alone in the Containment Unit.

## Chapter 228 – Envy

The next couple of minutes were horrible for Nick.

His mind was going wild with fear and nervousness.

What had he witnessed?!

How powerful was the starving child that even an Expert working for the city left voluntarily?!

The possibilities of what could happen to Nick shot through his mind.

Who was this starving child?!

How powerful was it?!

Was Nick safe?!

Could Crimson Fungus City protect him?!

Should he run?!

Would he soon die?!

Nick's sense of time became distorted, and he had no idea if he had been inside the Containment Unit for only a minute or for an hour.

The unending whiteness of the walls made Nick feel like he was being compressed.

He wanted to run away but couldn't!



There was no way he could get out of this room!

Nick's legs began to shake as the urge to run overtook them.

He had to leave!

Now!

And then, the door opened.

Nick looked over in panic, and he saw a familiar face.

However, he wasn't sure if seeing that face in this scenario was a good or a bad thing.

It was the governor.

Markus Julius.

Nick had seen the governor about two months ago in the yearly meeting.

And now, he was meeting him again.

But the governor wasn't the only person.

There was a second person entering the room behind him, and Nick also recognized that person.

It was Aria Light, the Chief Zephyx Extractor of Kugelblitz!

Two Heroes!

Two level six Extractors were meeting Nick because of what he had seen today!

Who the fuck was this starving child?!

The governor and Aria sat down on the other end of the table.

Both of their expressions were the epitome of seriousness.

"Tell me exactly what you have seen in that room," the governor ordered as soon as he sat down.

He didn't even greet Nick.

Nick took a deep breath.

The two of them just looked at Nick with solemn expressions.

"Four stones surrounded by a stone circle comprised of seven stones," Nick said.

"Was there something else?" the governor immediately asked.

"A round stone in front of the stone circle," Nick said.

"How big was the round stone?"

"About 30 centimeters. Maybe a bit less," Nick said.

"What did you do?" the governor asked.

"I wasn't sure if I should activate the signal," Nick said. "So, I moved my hand towards the stone circle."

The atmosphere in the room intensified as Nick continued speaking.

"The stone started to transform," Nick said, his voice becoming shaky as the image of the starving child appeared inside his mind.

"What did it transform into?" the governor asked, his voice cold, serious, and urgent.

Nick took a deep breath.

"It transformed into a starving child," Nick said.

Nick felt like the room had turned to ice.

The expressions of the governor and Aria couldn't get any more solemn.

"Did he say anything?!" the governor said, his voice having a deep feeling of urgency to it.

The governor didn't even ask Nick what happened next, and he immediately referred to the starving child as he.

Nick took a deep breath.

"I need to know what he said!" the governor spoke loudly, almost shouting.

Nick's insides shook.

"He said my power will be his," Nick said, avoiding the part in which the starving child had said that Nick had the power of an Eternal.

"Did he say anything about the city?!" the governor asked, speaking rapidly.

"Yes, but only later-"

"What did he say?!" the governor said, standing up from his chair as he glared into Nick's eyes.

Nick's body shook.

"He, he, he sa-said that the haven I call Crimson Fungus City will cease to exist, and and that he will soon be here," Nick said.

"Get all the details out of him!" the governor shouted towards Aria before he ran out of the Containment Unit.

At this moment, Nick's heart started to shake, and fear took hold of him.

What the fuck was going on?!

Who was this starving child?!

What was this starving child?!

"Nick."

Nick's head shot towards Aria, his face pale, and his eyes opened wide.

"I need to know what happened," Aria said with a soothing tone.

However, Nick could hear something else.

There was a certain feeling of insecurity in Aria's voice.

The governor's actions and Aria's tone...

The starving child was so dangerous that he could even evoke fear in the two strongest humans in Crimson Fungus City?!

Nick just kept looking into Aria's eyes.

His mind was all over the place at this moment.

"Nick!" Aria said with a serious tone. "Get it together!"

Nick shook his head.

"He-he said that he wants my power," Nick said.

"He said that my power will be his."

"He said that he is coming for me!"

"Nick, you have to calm down!" Aria said. "He said those things to cause terror in you. That's what Specters do. They cause fear and terror in people."

"Someone like him wouldn't be interested in the power of a level two Extractor," Aria said.

Nick didn't know if he should tell Aria.

If he told her about his power, something bad might happen.

Right now, Aria thought that Nick's power couldn't possibly interest the starving child.

But if they realized that Nick's power was most likely the very thing that drew the starving child over, they might decide to kill Nick.

The starving child was extremely powerful, based on how the governor and Aria were acting.

If they could stop it from coming by killing one level two Extractor...

Nick wouldn't tell them.

He didn't want to die.

"Who is he?" Nick asked.

Aria furrowed her brows.

"He told me he was going to kill me, and I was the one that found him!" Nick said with a louder voice.

"He told me I am his target!"

"I want to know who he is!"

Aria seemed a bit uncertain.

She remained silent for a couple of seconds.

"What I am going to tell you must never enter the ears of anyone below the level of a Specialist. Only Specialists and stronger are allowed to know about these things," she said solemnly.

"Even if an Expert working for the city demands that you tell them, you are not allowed to tell them!"

"Do you understand?" she asked solemnly.

Nick nodded.

Aria took another deep breath.

"The starving child that you have seen is the manifestation of a Fallen."

Nick felt like his heart froze.

A Fallen.

A level seven Specter.

"Its name is Envy, and it is the servant of an Adversary."

An Adversary!

A level eight Specter!

Nick remembered what Envy had told him.

It was going to take his power!

Nick had become the target of a level seven Specter!

Chapter 229 – Conflict

Nick looked at the table with a crestfallen expression.

A Fallen.

An Adversary.

Level seven and level eight Specters were the biggest enemies of humanity.

One would think that the Eternals would be the true enemies, but it wasn't as simple as that.

While the Eternals did whatever they wanted, many of the Adversaries actually tried to eradicate all of humanity.

This difference in mindset and action could be compared to how an aggressive animal would treat its territory.

If something of a similar size or slightly smaller size entered its territory, the animal would aggressively defend its territory and kill the invader.

21:26

However, if something vastly smaller and weaker than it entered its territory, it would mostly just ignore it.

After all, that thing was no danger whatsoever.



Rats would kill other rats, but they wouldn't care about a tiny fruit fly. In the same way, the Adversaries were far more aggressive towards humanity than the Eternals.

The Eternals just did their thing and terrorized humanity like it was a small hobby or a daily chore.

Meanwhile, the Adversaries actually wanted to attack and destroy humanity since the seven level eight Extractors in the world could fight and kill them.

Even more, if the level eight Extractors managed to capture an Adversary, they could attempt to use the Adversary to become level nine Extractors.

Because of that, Adversaries were more of a direct threat to humanity, while the Eternals just represented an inevitable rule of nature.

And now, a servant of one of these Adversaries had set Nick as its target.

Envy.

A Fallen.

A level seven Specter.

It was stronger than any Specter in the city.

It was stronger than any human in the city.

If it were to appear at this instant, all of Crimson Fungus City would be doomed.

The only possibility of survival would be the Heroes uniting and fighting Envy in a group.

However, there was still a huge gap between them, most likely.

Nick wasn't sure, but he assumed that Envy wasn't an Initial Fallen but stronger.

"Nick," Aria said, taking Nick out of his thoughts. "Envy isn't interested in you. You're only a level two Extractor. We're all in this together."

Nick looked at Aria.

He knew that Envy was after him. After all, Envy had stated that Nick had the power of an Eternal and that it was very interested in Nick's power.

But he couldn't tell her!

He had seen how the leaders of the Manufacturers acted.

Vernon casually doomed thousands of people to a worse life by increasing their taxes, and he didn't even care about that.

Why would someone like him care about a single weak Extractor?!

If they killed Nick and if they managed to somehow fend off Envy for a bit, it was sure to leave since the thing it wanted no longer existed inside the city, making it not worth the effort.

However, if Nick survived, Envy would keep attacking and persisting.

While Aria tried to calm him down, Nick just kept looking at the table.

'A Fallen is coming!'

'It's coming for me!'

'It said it will raze Crimson Fungus City to the ground!'

'All because of me!'

At that moment, a certain thought entered Nick's mind.

'All because of me,' he thought with a cold and sudden calm.

'I am the cause of this.'

'If I were to die...'

Nick imagined a terrifyingly powerful cloud of darkness falling over the city and everyone suffering.

Elderly, adults, children, and everyone else were dying.

Crimson Fungus City would transform into ruins.

Eventually, it would collapse and join the ruins in the sewers.

The place where Nick had spent his entire life had vanished, and only silence remained.

All because of him.

He would cause the death of all these people.

Nick looked at the table in front of him with unmoving eyes.

Aria kept trying to get his attention, but Nick just kept looking at the table.

'It's because of me.'

'Because of me, thousands of people will die.'

'Wasn't my goal to improve the lives of everyone in the Dregs?'

'And now, I will be the cause of all their deaths!'

Nick's mind was going wild.

'I need to die.'

'If I don't die, I will doom the entire city.'

'But if I choose to die, I will save thousands of lives.'

'But what if I don't?!' Nick suddenly thought with more urgency.

'What if Envy will still destroy Crimson Fungus City, even though I am dead?!'

'All of my scenarios are built on the assumption that Crimson Fungus City can defend itself against Envy!'

'What if it actually can't?!'

'Shut up, Nick!' Nick thought with gritted teeth.

'You're just trying to avoid responsibility!'

'Who the fuck cares whether or not Crimson Fungus City manages to defend itself?! If you don't kill yourself, there will be no hope!'

'But it's only a chance!'

'It's only a chance!'

'So what?! A chance is better than no chance!'

BANG!

Nick felt something knock on his head, and his eyes shot towards Aria, who had just knocked on his head.

It hadn't been painful, but it had gotten Nick's attention.

"Nick! Pull yourself together!" Aria shouted. "If you want to keep wallowing in irrational fear, be my guest, but I still need to know what happened when you talked to Envy!"

Nick looked at the table.

Aria's eyes narrowed.

"What will happen now?" Nick asked.

"I need to know what happened, Nick! We don't have time for that!" Aria shouted with urgency.

Nick closed his eyes with a pained expression.

'I'm so selfish.'

Then, he took a deep breath.

"Sure," he said.

Nick started to narrate his conversation with Envy and what happened but avoided talking about his power.

'I don't need to make a decision right now,' Nick thought, his mind having calmed down quite significantly.

'Making this decision can wait until the city actually manages to defend.'

'If it actually manages to defend against Envy, I can still go through with it.'

'And then, I will know whether survival is just a chance or a certainty.'

Chapter 230 – Aegis

Nick told Aria basically everything about what had happened inside the room.

Aria didn't seem surprised when she heard how Riker and Monica reacted after Envy told them that they had become useless.

Since Specters couldn't feel fear and since appeasing Envy wouldn't help in this case, the two Specters just fought back to enter the city's good graces.

They wanted to get put in a Containment Unit instead of killed.

This was the same reason why they didn't run away as soon as they had noticed what happened.

As Envy's servants, Riker and Monica knew what the signal that Nick had activated meant.

Nick hadn't noticed it, but when the red storm of the signal washed over him, it had actually coated the surrounding 200 meters in brightly shining red Zephyx.

Every Veteran and stronger within the city, except those in a Containment Unit at that moment, felt the massive amount of Zephyx getting dumped into the surroundings in the Dregs.

These signals were extremely expensive and caused huge disturbances as soon as they were activated, which was why only the strongest and most influential people had them.

When Monica and Riker felt the dense red Zephyx around them, they knew that they wouldn't be able to escape.

Within seconds, Veterans, Experts, and Specialists would look at the Dregs, and the two of them knew that they couldn't possibly flee from any of them.

And if they tried, they might just get shot, which would end their existence.

It was better to just go to their master and ask what to do.

After a while, Nick was done with narrating the events inside Riker's room.

This time, it was Aria who looked at the table with furrowed brows.

"What will happen now?" Nick asked.

Aria kept looking at the table for a couple more seconds.

Then, she sighed.

"I don't know," she said with a helpless tone. "Matters regarding Fallen are too big for even me."

"In front of Envy, I am just as helpless as you, Nick," she added.

Nick looked at Aria with discomfort.

"Will we die?" he asked.

Surprisingly, Aria shook her head.

"If we are going to die, it very likely won't be today," she said.

"How come?" Nick asked.

Aria looked like she wasn't sure whether or not she wanted to tell Nick something.

But then she realized that she had already told Nick a lot of confidential information.

Telling him more made no difference anymore.

"Someone as powerful as Envy can cross several kilometers per second," Aria said. "The time between your conversation with him and the start of your conversation with us was a bit over 40 minutes."

"Within 40 minutes, he could have reached us from basically anywhere."

Nick felt his heart pump in his chest.



If Envy had immediately started traveling toward Crimson Fungus City, the city would have already turned to ash.

A complicated mix of emotions appeared inside Nick's chest.

Relief and terror.

"And now, Envy probably doesn't have the chance to attack us directly anymore," Aria said.

Nick's eyes widened in surprise.

"If Envy can move that quickly, our Protectors can also move that quickly," Aria said.

"When Markus left about 20 minutes ago, he contacted the Aegis."

At that moment, Aria saw Nick's confused expression.

"The Aegis is humanity's united front against the Specters, and it is being led by the seven Shields of humanity," she explained.

"Most likely, a Protector has already arrived."

Nick took a deep breath.

A Protector.

A level seven Extractor was here!

Crimson Fungus City could actually survive and fight back!

Naturally, the Aegis and the Adversaries had been bitter rivals for a really, really long time.

This fight was so brutal and long that everyone basically already knew everyone else on the other side.

Aegis knew who Envy was and how it operated.

But on the flip side, Envy knew how Aegis operated.

While Envy's attention represented a great calamity to Crimson Fungus City, in the grand scheme of things, it was only switching battlefields.

Instead of fighting in some other city, Envy would fight Aegis here.

This meant that all of this had no impact on the greater whole.

And yet, for Crimson Fungus City, it was probably the most significant event since its foundation.

"Are you sure a Protector is already here?" Nick asked.

"95%," Aria said. "Aegis doesn't have any resources to waste since they are fighting an uphill battle, but going after Envy is most definitely not considered a waste of resources."

"I don't know the specifics since I am not part of Aegis, but I know that Envy is considered extremely important amongst all the Fallen in the world."

"How so?" Nick asked.

"Because of its superior, which is actively trying to destroy humanity," Aria explained. "There are many Fallen, and most of them just do what they need to do to become more powerful."

"While that includes a lot of suffering for many people, it generally doesn't include a threat to humanity as a whole."

"Normal Fallen steal some of your food. The dangerous Fallen want to sew your mouth shut."

"One's bad and annoying. The other one is terrifying and lethal."

"That's the difference between most Fallen and a Fallen like Envy," Aria explained.

Nick nodded.

'This means that I am safe for now.'

A feeling of relief washed over Nick.

Yet, the feeling was quickly drowned out by an overwhelming feeling of disgust.

'I... I just thought that I was safe.'

'I didn't even think about the city.'

'I only thought about myself.'

Nick looked at the table again with discomfort and annoyance.

'This means there is a chance, actually.'

'With a Protector, Crimson Fungus City will most likely be able to survive.'

'If I kill myself now, I will probably end up saving thousands of lives.'

Nick looked to the side.

'Isn't that what I wanted to achieve?'

'Save thousands of lives to redeem myself for what I have done to Horua.'

Then, Nick looked at Aria, who seemed quite distracted.

'I only need to tell her about my power.'