

## The Witch 541

### Chapter 541: The Embarrassed High Priest

As Vaan made his way to the Great Hall, he thought a lot about his wood spirit, Emerald, who was the most pitiful among his contracted spirits.

Although he made a suitable living space for her in the Heaven-Swallowing Space, it wasn't the same as the earth and fire spirit spaces in which Topaz and Ruby resided. Without a wood spirit space for Emerald, she wouldn't be able to grow like Topaz and Ruby.

Furthermore, she would never be in peak shape.

As such, he added it to his list of priorities to achieve the Wood Spirit Body on his trip to the Great Ratholos Empire. It was said that all kinds of exotic and rare medicines could be found there. Perhaps he could find some magical plants and herbs with wood affinity-increasing properties.

Of course, another option was to dual-practice with Aeliana.

However, the benefits wouldn't be as great as the first-time experience. It would consume more time and effort the higher he raised his wood affinity through dual practice with her.

The ideal choice would be to take her along on his trip and dual practice together. Unfortunately, she had important work to carry out between the Black Rose Kingdom and the Holy Knight Empire.

That said, Vaan decided he would at least pay her a visit once before he left for the Great Ratholos Empire.

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After Vaan arrived in the Great Hall, he immediately spotted a white-robed old man waiting with his back toward him. The three-sun mark on the old man's back signified the person was a High Priest of the Sun God Temple.

Without a doubt, it was the High Priest Setheiman who wanted to see him.

"You wanted to see me, High Priest Setheiman?" Vaan calmly asked, striding into the Great Hall with a majestic and imposing aura that was ruined by the two innocent spirits parked on his head and left shoulder.

In that instant, High Priest Setheiman turned around. He squinted his eyes, scrutinizing Vaan's appearance like a short-sighted person, and immediately revealed his surprise and puzzlement regarding the two spirits.

But after a moment of hesitation, he accepted their existence—or rather, he simply put them aside to carry out his task.

"I have seen the light, Your Divinity," High Priest Setheiman greeted Vaan subserviently, bowing his head with one hand over his chest.

"Oh? Would you like to see it again?" Vaan casually asked.

"P-Pardon...?" High Priest Setheiman stuttered, taken aback by the completely unexpected question, which also disrupted the speech he had prepared in his mind.

"Oh, don't worry about it," Vaan nonchalantly dropped the topic with a casual wave of his hand before asking, "So, what did you want to see me for?"

Although it seemed like Vaan was only making a light joke, he had disrupted High Priest Setheimans' rhythm and controlled the tempo of their conversation.

High Priest Setheiman also realized that and felt rising anger in his heart.

However, he suppressed his emotions to retain a humble and cordial attitude. He wanted to maintain a good impression in front of the self-proclaimed Sun God. It would make it easier to convince the person to visit the Sun God Temple.

"About that... I was wondering if Your Divinity ever considered visiting the main temple and gracing your humble followers with your divine presence?" High Priest Setheiman humbly mentioned before adding, "We have been eagerly waiting for your visit, but we aren't sure if you will ever come, Your Divinity."

High Priest Setheiman did well to hide his true emotions. But unfortunately, his heartbeat failed him.

Vaan had already noticed the change in High Priest Setheiman's heartbeat and understood where the person stood in regard to his status.

Everything became clear as day to him.

If High Priest Setheiman truly welcomed him as the Sun God, he would have laughed at his light joke even if he didn't find it funny.

On the other hand, if High Priest Setheiman held ill feelings regarding Vaan's self-proclaimed status, he would be triggered once Vaan mocked their religious ethics.

And as it turned out, High Priest Setheiman was angered enough that he couldn't even fake laughter.

"Is that right?" Vaan calmly smiled and said, "I apologize for making the main temple feel neglected. I have been too busy dealing with miscellaneous matters."

"However, I'm a bit free now. So if you want, I can visit the temple right now," Vaan stated straightforwardly.

"This..." High Priest Setheiman was stunned.

He had prepared multiple enticements to convince the false Sun God to visit the main temple. He didn't expect the person to agree so readily.

Did the person have zero guard toward the Sun God Temple?

Although High Priest Setheiman was happy to hear Vaan was so willing to visit the main temple, he couldn't help but feel something was wrong.

However, Vaan gave him no time to think.

"What's wrong? You don't want me to visit the temple anymore?" Vaan asked, urging High Priest Setheiman to answer.

"Well, that's not it, Your Divinity... I am happy you are finally willing to visit our temple and all... It's just that I thought—"

"What are we waiting for then? Let us head over now," Vaan urged, taking the lead to exit the Great Hall before glancing back. "What? Not going? Do you need me to hold your hand or something, High Priest Setheiman?"

Ahem!

High Priest Setheiman immediately coughed with embarrassment, not expecting such words to come out of Vaan's mouth.

Fortunately, they were in a private area and not out in public.

Otherwise, the false Sun God's shamelessness would have embarrassed him to death. After all, he was already so old.

How could he still be treated like a kid?

"I-I'm coming, Your Divinity," High Priest Setheiman coughed before glancing down at Vaan's outstretched hand with hesitation. "There's no need to hold hands..."

"Alright then," Vaan calmly retracted his hand and continued to leave the Great Hall as if nothing had happened.

As Vaan and High Priest Setheiman left the imperial palace and headed to the Sun God Temple, Topaz buried herself in Vaan's hair and spied on the old man with a pouty, wary look.

"Kyu, kyuu," Topaz warned Vaan, saying the old man was not a good person.

"I know," Vaan smiled.

Chapter 542: It's Easy to Invite a God, But Hard to Send One Away

Spirits were like the children of Pangea; they were born pure and innocent before external factors shaped their characters. As such, they were quite sensitive to the malice of others.

Although Topaz sensed High Priest Setheiman's hidden malice, she also felt confused and unconfident due to the old man's humble, kind look.

Nevertheless, Vaan had received her goodwill, even though he already knew the truth.

He caressed Topaz's head with a single finger, showing his affection, which Topaz really enjoyed. As a result, she couldn't help but reveal a big, hearty smile.

"Kyuuu~!" Topaz cried with joy.

"Fyuu, fyuu, fyuu..." Ruby mumbled with a slight drooling expression, saying the old man didn't seem to be much of a threat, but there did seem to be a few good things on his body.

"Is food the only thing you think about? You only know how to eat," Vaan poked Ruby's chubby cheeks with a light laughter.

Nevertheless, he understood what Ruby was hinting at.

High Priest Setheiman was a Peak-level Two-Circle Wizard that purely cultivated the light-attribute mana produced from the Sun God Temple's light-attribute mana refineries.

However, the fusion of their light-attribute mana source was imperfect. It wasn't purely light-attribute mana, as it still carried traces of the fire element.

The sun's fire element was what Ruby found appetizing.

"Fyuu, fyuu..!" Ruby puffed her cheeks and crossed her wings in dissatisfaction, saying it wasn't true that she only knew how to eat.

However, it wasn't convincing since she failed to cross her wings.

"Hahaha..." Vaan softly chuckled.

Meanwhile, High Priest Setheiman quietly observed the interaction between the trio from the corners of his eyes, secretly gathering information on the false Sun God's character.

The person was completely relaxed and didn't seem to have any awareness of danger at all. The person also seemed very friendly, open, and approachable.

Perhaps he was thinking too much? – High Priest Setheiman thought.

He thought the task would be difficult, but it turned out to be very easy. He decided not to think too much and just carried out his task as required.

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Sometime later, High Priest Setheiman and Vaan arrived at the main temple's entrance, which was filled with countless people entering and exiting. Their numbers easily reached the thousands.

However, there was an even greater number of people trailing not too far behind them. They followed Vaan after discovering he was heading to the main temple.

"Your Divinity, I don't know what I should do with my life! Please show me the light!"

"Please grant us your divine blessing, Your Divinity! My child is sick, but I have no money for medicine or the temple's blessings!"

"Your Divinity, please..."

...

Vaan was constantly flooded with requests as the number of believers gathered around him, but he continued advancing toward the temple.

"Your answers will all be answered in the temple today. Follow me inside." – When High Priest Setheiman heard Vaan calmly say this, he had no complaints and only felt joy.

After all, there was no better way to increase the Sun God Temple's influence than to have the Sun God advertise it himself.

"The Sun God is entering the temple. Please make way!" High Priest Setheiman loudly announced with excitement.

In a short instance, the path ahead was cleared.

As such, Vaan had no problem entering the main temple. Even so, he couldn't help but frown when he noticed other people needed to pay a high fee to enter the temple.

The entrance fee wasn't fixed and was called donations; the amount donated depended on the believer's faith. The more they donated to the temple, the bigger the proof of their faith.

Thanks to Vaan's presence, some people donated all their gold coins, jewelry, and mana stones.

High Priest Setheiman became even more excited after he noticed this. He thought it was the Sun God Temple's great loss for not inviting the false Sun God to their main temple sooner.

Meanwhile, Vaan could only frown.

The Sun God's believers didn't visit the temple daily because they wanted to donate and prove their faith; they visited to pray for blessings that could turn their suffering life around for the better.

However, such unhealthy donations today would only land them in direr states.

"We have seen the light! Welcome to the temple, Your Divinity!" rows of temple priests greeted Vaan as he made his way deeper inside.

He was speechless when he discovered several support pillars were stacked to the brim with gold coins hidden inside.

The Sun God Temple had amassed so much wealth and was a parasite sucking away at the people's livelihood.

"Your Divinity, please come this—" High Priest Setheiman took the lead to escort Vaan when his eyes bulged at Vaan's following action.

Boom!

Vaan smashed a gold pillar of reinforced stone into pieces with a single kick, causing millions of gold coins to pour out.

"T-T-This...!"

Many higher-ranking priests witnessed the scene from the higher floors and almost fainted on the spot, while some actually did.

High Priest Setheiman's joy for bringing Vaan to the temple was short-lived. He already started to regret bringing the false Sun God over.

He should have known the false Sun God was unpredictable due to his behavior.

Nevertheless, Vaan was only getting started.

Boom!

Vaan's kicks smashed another supporting gold pillar that wouldn't affect the temple's structural integrity even if it was gone!

Several more millions of gold coins poured out at once!

"The Sun God Temple will no longer take donations at the entrance. All donations will be returned to the people! You may grab as many gold coins as you can hold!" Vaan said to the believers behind him.



"Long live the Sun God!!"

"Stop them!" High Priest Setheiman barked furiously.

Hundreds of temple priests quickly rushed forward to form a human wall and block the incoming stampede of frenzied believers.

The people had never seen so many gold coins in their life.

"Stop them all! Don't let them through! Bring more people over here!"

High Priest Setheiman barked out more orders when the corners of his eyes caught a glimpse of Vaan walking to another gold pillar.

His eyes immediately bulged with blood veins, turning them red.

"No! Stop him!" High Priest Setheiman cried.

Boom!

Another reinforced stone pillar holding gold coins got smashed to bits, causing many more millions of gold coins to fill the ground floor.

Several dozens of priests surrounded Vaan with their arms outstretched to block his path toward another gold pillar.

The look in their eyes showed they were both determined and afraid.

"Your Divinity, please leave! We don't welcome you anymore!" A Grand Priest from the fourth floor bellowed with boiling rage as he gripped the handrail with bloodshot eyes.

"What? Did the Sun God Temple think it could tell me to come and leave as it pleases? Sorry to disappoint, but I will only leave when I want to," Vaan firmly stated before taking large strides toward the gold pillar ahead.

The priests blocking his path couldn't stop him at all with their meager physical strength. They were forcefully pushed along.

"Don't you dare! Don't you fucking dare, you hear me—?!" the Grand Priest pointed his trembling finger at Vaan and cursed furiously.

Boom!

Another reinforced stone pillar of gold coins shattered along with the Grand Priest's heart. Blood shot up to the Grand Priest's head as he gripped his heart and fainted backward.

"Your Eminence!" Several ordinary temple priests cried.

Chapter 543: It's Easy to Invite a God, But Hard to Send One Away (2)

"Grand Priest Pascal has fainted! Quickly escort His Eminence to the Room of Healing!" a High Priest directed the nearby regular priests on the fourth floor.

"Yes, Your Excellency!" the regular priests complied.

Meanwhile, hundreds of regular priests conjured a light magic barrier to block the frenzied commoners from flooding the temple with their incited greed.

However, even they found it difficult to hold the line for long. There were simply too many people trying to rush into the main temple. Their light-attribute mana wouldn't hold out against the hundreds of thousands who wanted to break in when they were only in the hundreds.

"We need more people over here! Call more people over, please, Your Excellency!" a regular priest pleaded for reinforcement.

However, High Priest Setheiman was seething with too much anger to notice. He didn't expect the false Sun God would turn the main temple into such a huge mess.

Even so, he wasn't the only High Priest in the Sun God Temple.

"Clear the main hall! The templars are here!" another High Priest declared, leading the temple knights over to reinforce the entrance.

"This is great! High Priest Zenas has brought the templars over!" many priests immediately rejoiced.

The temple knights were the main fighting force of the Sun God Temple. Even though they held lower positions and authority than official priests, their strengths were not inferior to the empire's holy knights.

As such, when the temple knights reached the entrance and drew their swords, the frenzied commoners quickly backed away in fear.

The mountain of gold coins excited them but didn't completely blind their rationality. They didn't want to die for some gold coins. They still understood the word fear.

Very quickly, some order was restored to the temple's entrance.

However, the main hall was still full of chaos. The people outside couldn't come in, but the people already inside were practically swimming in the mountains of gold coins that formed around the shattered pillars.

Some forgot to leave after grabbing as many gold coins as possible; they just lay in the mountains of gold coins and spread their arms and feet like they were trying to mark all the gold coins with their bodies.

The sight and feel of gold coins filled them with happiness.

However, such happiness wouldn't last.

"Round them up and kick them out! But do not hurt them excessively!" High Priest Zenas barked to another group of temple knights, revealing a disgusted expression when he glanced at the commoners playing in the temple's gold coins.

It was like the cleanliness of the temple's possessions was being smeared with filth.

"W-what do you all want? Leave me alone! These are my gold coins! The Sun God said I could have them—Nooo!"

Countless cries resounded in the main hall as the temple knights forcefully grabbed the joyful commoners and removed them from the temple one by one.

Meanwhile, Vaan continued moving to his next gold pillar to smash, hellbent on destroying them all.

What was the point of hoarding so many gold coins if it wasn't used to develop the temple, people, or even the empire?

Such an unhealthy amount of hoarding would only slow down the empire's growth and cause the people to suffer.

However, that seemed to be exactly what the Sun God Temple wanted!

They wanted the people to suffer, forcing them to turn to the Sun God Temple for hope in their miracles and divine blessings!

Vaan was appalled.

Such backward thinking disgusted him. Many people could still benefit if the Sun God Temple had at least used their wealth to expand their temple and improve their light-attribute mana refineries.

However, the fact that they did not do that only proved that the Sun God Temple's upper echelons were incompetent, lacking in talented people, and extremely selfish.

If they could not improve, no one else could improve either – that was what Vaan understood of the Sun God Temple.

Boom!

With another powerful kick, another reinforced stone pillar of gold crumbled apart and unloaded the mountain's worth of gold coins hidden within.

Each golden stone pillar was reinforced with magic and special materials. Their defensive strength was at least Peak-level Rank Four. As such, they were never meant to break and expose the Sun God Temple's secret stash of gold coins.

However, what the Sun God Temple regarded as sturdy pillars were as fragile as glass in front of Vaan's kicks.

"Your Divinity, please stop! Don't force our hand!" a Senior Priest cried, preparing to retaliate with an attack spell. "I don't want to attack—!"

Pak!

The Senior Priest was suddenly slapped ruthlessly by another Senior Priest beside him.

"Senior Rufus, are you out of your mind?! That's the Sun God you are talking to! Please watch your words and attitude!" the Senior Priest snapped furiously at the foolish Senior Rufus, who dared to raise a hand against the Sun God.

At that moment, Vaan had neither attacked the temple's priests directly nor been attacked by them. He had only shoved them aside to reach the stone pillars, and the injured ones were those who got caught in the falling debris.

Nevertheless, many priests wanted to use more forceful means to stop Vaan from destroying the temple.

However, they had more awareness and less foolishness than Senior Priest Rufus.

Vaan was currently the empire's publicly acknowledged Sun God. If the Sun God Temple attacked him, it would not only prove that they didn't acknowledge him; they would also be against him.

Once word got out, the Sun God Temple would immediately lose many of their visiting believers. That also meant even less donation.

In other words, the Sun God Temple's profits would plummet.

They had to find a way to appease the false Sun God and stop him from causing any more damage to the temple that was supposedly built in his name.

"Your Divinity, please stay your hand! This is your temple!" another Grand Priest pleaded haggardly with dismay, rushing over at his quickest speed.

"Okay, I'll stay my hand."

Vaan's straightforward promise was like music to the Grand Priest's ears. The Grand Priest heaved a sigh of relief.

However, his expression immediately froze in the next moment.

Boom!

Another enhanced stone pillar was smashed by Vaan's kick, prompting the Grand Priest to look up in disbelief, which later twisted into rage.

Chapter 544: Don't Be Mistaken

"F\*\*k your m\*ther! You s\*n of a b\*tch! Why don't you f\*ck \*ff and d\*\* in a ditch somewhere, f\*cking c\*\*t—!"

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The Grand Priest's face contorted in anger as he rained a string of curses at Vaan. He also pulled his long sleeves, revealing his wrinkly, skinny muscles like he wanted to get physically violent with him. All kinds of profanity one could think of was spilled out of his mouth.

His actions were completely unbecoming of his position as a Grand Priest and more like that of a street thug.

"Someone, take Grand Priest Ignatius away to cool his head. I will take it from here," another Grand Priest commanded with a deep, solemn look.

"As you command, Grand Priest Cornelius," a High Priest answered.

Shortly after, the High Priest called over more regular priests as backup to help him drag the furious Grand Priest Ignatius away.

"F\*cking let go of me, you stinking brats! I'm not done here! I don't care who he is! I'm going to teach him the word respect today!" Grand Priest Ignatius roared while being held back by three young priests on each side.

"You're not thinking straight, Your Eminence! Let us take you somewhere to calm down!" a priest advised the elderly man with a strong, forceful, and frustrated tone.

"Watch how you speak to me, young man! I have lived thrice your lifetime!"

"..."

"Sleep."

Grand Priest Cornelius frowned before casting a sleeping spell on Grand Priest Ignatius. The person didn't put up any defense and, thus, quickly fell asleep.

Shortly after, Grand Priest Ignatius was finally taken away.

With the loud hindrance gone, Grand Priest Cornelius fixed his gaze on the false Sun God. His eyes immediately twitched when he noticed the main temple had lost another two gold pillars.

His breathing became agitated at once, but he forcefully controlled himself to remain calm.

"Your Divinity, the Sun God Temple was founded in honor and worship of you! It isn't wrong to say that everything here belongs to you! Please cease this meaningless destruction!" Grand Priest Cornelius pleaded before stating, "You are destroying your property, Your Divinity!"

"Since everything is mine, no one should mind what I do to it! Whether I tear this place down or give away all its wealth, that's my problem! Not yours! Unless, of course, you are lying to me!"  
Vaan cast Grand Priest Cornelius a sharp glance.

Grand Priest Cornelius immediately felt a cold shiver run down his spine.

The false Sun God was too powerful for anyone to contend with directly, and he couldn't be reasoned with either.

The best Grand Priest Cornelius could do was stall the person with words until they had a more definitive solution to stopping the false Sun God's madness.

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Meanwhile, Vaan took his time provoking the Sun God Temple's people while studying everything. He didn't understand where their confidence or stubbornness came from in opposing him.

Did they truly have a Sun God? Or did they have a secret means to deal with him?

From what he could see, the Sun God Temple's priests were not much different from the Wizard Tower's wizard; they all practiced the art of castration for power.

The only difference was their heavy focus on light-attribute mana, and their statuses weren't fully related to their cultivations.

For example, the Sun God Temple's hierarchy, from lowest to the highest position, was Acolyte, Priest, Senior Priest, High Priest, Grand Priest, and finally Archpriest.

Acolytes were newly inducted priests, while Priests were the regulars that have completed forming one mana ring. They were One-Circle Wizards.

Senior Priests were wizards with two mana rings.

However, among the High Priests and Grand Priests he had seen, they were all Peak-level Two-Circle Wizards.



That said, judging by the influence of the Sun God Temple, he didn't doubt at least some Grand Priests and the Archpriests were Three-Circle Wizards.

Still, it was shocking to find so many men willing to make such a great sacrifice for power. No wonder it was also called the Sun God Temple instead of the Sun God Church.

What was the difference between the priests and ascetic monks?

"Your Divinity, why are you doing this? What have we done wrong to deserve this?!" a Senior Priest asked with distress.

"Happiness will never come to those who fail to appreciate what they have... The root of suffering is attachment," Vaan calmly preached like a typical ascetic monk with a one-hand praying gesture. "Thou shall not get married. Thou shall not have children. Thou shall not have... manhood."

"Are you mocking us, Your Divinity?! If you are truly the divine Sun God, you should understand everything we have done for you!" a Senior Priest roared emotionally, pained by Vaan's words rubbing his old wounds.

"Wrong. Everything you have done was for yourself," Vaan coolly stated before saying, "The Sun God is the giver of life and knowledge. But what aspect of abandoning one's manhood is life-giving? This is merely a sacrifice made from your desire and pursuit of power."

"You say this temple was founded in honor and worship of me? I see nothing of that sort here, only endless greed and self-interest. You don't even practice what you preach, and you call yourselves believers of the Sun God?"

"How laudable," Vaan uttered with contempt.

With a wave of his hand, he blasted a fiery hole straight through the temple's walls. With another wave, he swept all the gold coins in soft flames and threw them outside through the newly opened hole.

"Your Excellency, do you really think yourself a god?! What right do you have to criticize us?!" another Grand Priest bellowed furiously upon his arrival.

Vaan cast the newcomer an indifferent glance before he continued to speak.

"I know many of you don't acknowledge me as the Sun God. However, don't be mistaken. It is not you who does acknowledge me as the Sun God; it is I who does not recognize you as my believers!" Vaan firmly stated, shaking the hearts of many priests.

Vaan's words resonated with a fraction of the priests, who always felt something was wrong with how things were conducted at the Sun God Temple's main temple.

However, they never dared to confront the temple's upper echelons regarding the matter due to their lower status... until now.

"Your Divinity, I have been misled by the temple and sinned. Please grant your humble believer a chance to repent and prove his faith to you!" a regular Priest pleaded as he prostrated on the ground resolutely.

Chapter 545: If You Want to Kill My People, I'll Be Your Problem

While the chaos continued on the ground floor, High Priest Setheiman quickly made his way down to the main temple's inner sanctum to look for the Archpriest. Many priests had the same idea. Thus, he wasn't the first to reach the fifth underground floor.

When he arrived, there were already six dozen other High Priests and two dozen Grand Priests surrounding Archpriest Thurman.

At the same time, High Priest Setheiman's arrival caused everyone to shift their attention to him briefly.

"Your Holiness, I have brought the false Sun God as you have required of... But I have greatly underestimated the false Sun God's nature and allowed him to make a mess in our holy temple," High Priest Setheiman knelt and pleaded, "Please punish me, Your Holiness!"

"I am already aware of the situation above. The fault is not yours but mine to bear. You may arise, High Priest Setheiman," Archpriest Thurman calmly gestured the High Priest to stand before shifting his attention to the Grand Priests gathered. "Gentlemen, it seems we will have to push forward our plans."

"We've only completed and charged the core function of the spell, Your Holiness. Unless we finish the entrapment array to immobilize the target, we have a high chance of missing the shot and wasting all our efforts," a Grand Priest quickly voiced his concern.

However, Archpriest Thurman's expression remained calm.

"I am aware of that, Grand Priest Sixtus," Archpriest Thurman acknowledged with a nod before saying, "However, it's not like we are without options. We don't need the full entrapment array; we just need to hold the target for a few seconds."

"Do we have a way to lure the false Sun God close to the central pillar?" Archpriest Thurman inquired shortly after.

"This..." a Grand Priest hesitated before seeking confirmation of his doubt, "You want to use the mana refinery's power to immobilize the false Sun God, Your Holiness?"

"That's right, Grand Priest Eustace," Archpriest Thurman affirmed.

"But that's our largest mana refinery in the entire empire. Its light-attribute mana production is on a different level compared to our other mana refineries," Grand Priest Eustace mentioned.

"It doesn't matter if we exhaust all its power to trap the false Sun God as it would only delay us for a few days... But if there's any chance it gets damaged or even destroyed, it'll be a terrible loss and set us back substantially."

"I don't know if we can risk this kind of loss," Grand Priest Eustace added.

"There's no need to weigh the pros and cons. Our target is possibly a being beyond Transcendent. We can't afford to hold back. If we want to make this person one of ours, we must utilize everything we have!" Archpriest Thurman asserted.

They had to give it their all. There could not be any mistakes.

"In that case, there's no need to figure out how to lure the target to our central mana refinery pillar. That person will definitely pass it, Your Holiness," High Priest Setheiman assured.

Since the false Sun God was going after all the gold coins hidden in their pillars, the person would at least pass the central mana refinery pillar twice.

Nevertheless, some Grand Priests couldn't accept waiting for that to happen.

"So, we are just going to let him smash our filter pillars while we wait? How many gold coins must we lose before we stop him?" another Grand Priest asked with a frown.

"No matter how many gold coins we lose, we will get them all back once we've gained control of our target, Your Eminence," a High Priest stated, clenching his fist with a hopeful expression.

"You think I care about the loss of wealth? Are you stupid? Or you don't know at all?" The Grand Priest glanced at the High Priest contemptuously and said, "This isn't about that at all. Those gold coins are crucial for absorbing the sunlight and filtering out the harmful effects."

"If it wasn't because gold had such a property, why would we even need to stuff our gold coins there? Where do you think the higher quality light-attribute mana in the inner sanctum comes from? Surely, you didn't think it all came from the central mana refinery pillar alone?"

"If we lose too many gold coins in the pillar filters, the light-attribute mana produced by the central mana refinery pillar will become too dangerous to absorb," the Grand Priest stated seriously.

"Do you want to grow six arms and three eyes? Do you want a bubbly flesh or a dick sticking out of your head? No? What about—"

"That's enough, Grand Priest Benno," Archpriest Thurman showed a hint of displeasure, immediately silencing Grand Priest Benno.

"My apologies, Your Holiness. I have spoken out of line," Grand Priest Benno apologized.

"There's no need to try and scare everyone. The thing you said would only happen if the priests absorbed too much over an extended period. We will fix their filter pillars before that can happen to anyone," Archpriest Thurman calmly said.

"More importantly, have we confirmed if the false Sun God possessed any holy aura yet?" Archpriest Thurman asked shortly after in a much serious tone.

"Yes, Your Holiness," High Priest Setheiman answered.

"While escorting the false Sun God to the temple, I have indeed detected a faint trace of holy aura on the false Sun God's body. He had most definitely practiced the Holy Aura Scripture to acquire it."

"Good! Then, it's time to put an end to this false Sun God's reign and restore our Sun God Temple's influence and authority!" Archpriest Thurman firmly stated before commanding everyone, "Follow me!"

"Yes, Your Holiness!"

...

Meanwhile, half the main temple's priests had deflected to Vaan's side on the ground floor. Vaan's words enlightened them and gave them the courage to stand true to their beliefs.

As such, they no longer mindlessly followed the orders of their superiors.

"How dare you all revolt against the hands that raised you! Since you dare to betray the Sun God Temple, you can all die! Templars, kill these heretics, who have decided to follow the false—!"

Before a High Priest could finish his words, something struck him so quickly that his body seemingly exploded on the spot, stunning everyone.

From the start of the mess caused by Vaan, the High Priest had been the first person he killed. As such, everyone was greatly surprised by the sudden change.

"If you want to kill my people, I'll be your biggest problem!" Vaan asserted his dominance with a stomp, cracking the ground.

At the same time, his fierce aura exploded outward, pushing everyone back.

## Chapter 546: Unveiled Intentions

Under the pressure of Vaan's tyrannical and oppressive dragon aura, many opposing templars and priests immediately wavered.

They all subconsciously took a step or two back away from Vaan as their hearts trembled with fear. They dared not look at Vaan directly lest their eyes met.

"Go. Throw out the gold coins to the people. No one will stop you," Vaan instructed his believers after seeing the opposing side was frozen like stones.

Perhaps influenced by the faint trace of the holy aura he cultivated, the priests on his side revealed fanatic joy and excitement.

"Yes, Your Divinity!" They answered feverishly.

They have been given their very first command from the Sun God himself! What an honor it was! The Sun God had acknowledged them and was willing to forgive their sins!

Boom!

Vaan smashed another reinforced pillar containing millions of gold coins, unobstructed by anyone or anything.

Without any orders from the higher-ups, the templars and lower-ranking priests from the opposing side did not know what to do.

Most of the uppermost-ranking priests had seemingly disappeared, and those left behind on the ground lacked the influence and authority to command everyone.

"What are we supposed to do? Where are the Grand Priests and His Holiness? They won't blame us for doing nothing, right? At this rate, I fear the whole temple will come crumbling down on us," a templar whispered to his buddy with concern.

"Fret not, comrade. I'm sure His Holiness and the Grand Priests have a plan to turn things around. We'll just have to wait and see!" the templar buddy assured with a hopeful expression hidden under his white helmet.

Boom! Boom!

More reinforced stone pillars were smashed apart with zero resistance from the Sun God Temple's side.

Everyone already knew just how sturdy the reinforced stone pillars were. And yet, they were shattered so easily under the false Sun God's kicks.

As such, they knew no one was the false Sun God's match. Even if they band together, they still wouldn't stand a chance.

A Transcendent was already in a league of their own, let alone someone possibly beyond Transcendent.

Several opposing templars contemplated whether it was too late to switch sides and express their loyalty to the false Sun God, even if they didn't truly believe the person was the true god of their faith.

To some of them, their lives were more important than their faith. The so-called faith was just a means to an end. As long as it was beneficial, they would make use of it.

As such, they had no mental barriers stopping them from switching sides.

If you can't beat them, join them – the templars thought.

On the other hand, many priests didn't entertain the thought at all. They couldn't accept that the self-proclaimed Sun God might be right. It would invalidate their sacrifice.

It wasn't farfetched to say they were already balls-deep on the Sun God Temple's side.

"That's enough, false god! You will cause trouble no further here!" Arch Priest Thurman's voice resounded from the inner sanctum once Vaan entered the vicinity of the central mana refinery pillar.

At the same time, the bright light from the central mana refinery pillar intensified in a concentrated form, creating a wall of light.

The wall of light suddenly expanded rapidly and covered Vaan in its domain.

In that instance, a powerful, searing pressure bore down on Vaan's body, seemingly wanting to force him to kneel.

It was as if gravity had increased by tens of folds.

Under such tremendous pressure, most Rank 4 beings would have groveled on the ground immediately. Even Rank 5 beings would have a hard time standing upright.

However, Vaan's physical attributes, enhanced with aura, had already entered the ranks of Demigods. He wasn't fazed at all.

At the same time, the destruction of the filter pillars had increased the content of fire elements in the central mana refinery pillar.

"He's immobilized! Quickly shoot the spell, Your Holiness!" multiple Grand Priest exclaimed excitedly as everyone from the inner sanctum rushed out like moving shadows and surrounded Vaan.

At the same time, Archpriest Thurman hurled a floating cube of golden-white light from his right hand with all his strength.

Vaan glanced at the incoming cube of golden-white light before his lips slowly curved into a smile.

It was only a split second before the cube of golden-white light struck him and disappeared through his forehead. But it only made Archpriest Thurman feel endless unease.



On the other hand, the rest of the Grand Priests and High Priests rejoiced at the successful landing of the One-Mind Unity Spell.

"Hahahaha, the spell landed! It's over!"

"So what if he was very powerful? He still fell for our trap! Now, he can only be our pup—!"

Pak!

"Shut up!" a Grand Priest slapped the overjoyed High Priest, who was about to spill their Sun God Temple's great secret.

The One-Mind Unity Spell was a magic spell created to supplement the Holy Aura Scripture.

Everyone who practiced the Holy Aura Scripture would become easily influenced by others who also cultivated the holy aura to a higher degree of purity once the One-Mind Unity connected them to the collective group that had already joined.

Ding!

<You have been struck by an enormous amount of impure light mana>

<You have purified the fire elements in the impure light mana due to your high comprehension of the Fire Law>

<You have absorbed an enormous amount of light-attribute mana>

...

<You have fallen under the influence of the One-Mind Unity Spell>

...

A string of notifications rang in Vaan's mind as the Sun God Temple's upper echelons rejoiced at their victory, excluding Archpriest Thurman. The person still felt something wasn't right but couldn't figure out what was wrong.

They could sense the false Sun God's consciousness, which implied the One-Mind Unity Spell had successfully added him to the group of collective consciousnesses.

That also proved he had cultivated the Holy Aura Scripture to some degree.

"Get your ass over here and lick my feet!"

"Y-You!"

Some Grand Priests were immediately angered by Grand Priest Ignatius's blatant order of the Sun God. They still needed to keep up an image, but it was too late to reprimand the person.

They also wanted to see if the spell was effective.

Just as Grand Priest Ignatius wanted, Vaan walked over to him, causing many Grand Priests to smile with relief.

However, their expressions quickly froze when Vaan raised a hand, which differed from Grand Priest Ignatius's order.

Pak!

Vaan smacked the smug bastard to death with a single slap.

Everyone became dumbfounded.

Chapter 547: Absolute Authority

Grand Priest Ignatius's weak, elderly body was a fragile balloon half filled with water. It couldn't withstand the brunt of Vaan's powerful slap whatsoever. But at the same time, Vaan's slap was not like a regular slap. It was more like swatting a mosquito with a giant sledgehammer.

As such, Grand Priest Ignatius's body exploded on the spot, spraying blood everywhere.

Several drops splashed onto the faces and white robes of nearby priests, causing their bodies to jolt in response.

However, their minds remained blank, unable to process the situation.

Archpriest Thurman slowly glanced down at the splattered bloody mess that remained of Grand Priest Ignatius on the ground. It was found inside a palm imprint that was at least a hundredfold the size of Vaan's palm.

"H-How can this be? That fool Ignatius... He must have made a mistake during his practice... Yes, that must have been it!" said a Grand Priest after returning to his senses. But instead of accepting the truth of the situation, he denied it, thinking of other possibilities.

"Your Divinity, please clean up the bloody mess you made on the ground," a Grand Priest carefully requested rather than ordered.

Vaan casually waved his hand, reducing the bloody mess into black ashes with fiery blue flames.

"Hahaha..."

After witnessing Vaan following the instruction, several Grand Priests laughed forcefully to relieve their tension and nervousness.

Some quickly became convinced there was nothing wrong with the One-Mind Unity Spell. It was Grand Priest who messed up his practice of holy aura.

"I have some blood on me. Please clean it for me," another Grand Priest ordered with a growing grin, preparing to use Vaan like a slave.

"Sure," Vaan gave a flat answer without emotions.

Shortly after he snapped his fingers, the grinning Grand Priest's body lit on fire. The person's grin quickly contorted into pain and horror.

"Arghhh—!!!" the Grand Priest wailed painfully, flailing his arms and head everywhere to put out the fire, but to no avail.

He couldn't think straight and didn't think about using spells.

"Help him!"

"Yes, Your Holiness!"

At Archpriest Thurman's command, multiple Grand Priests and High Priests snapped out of their shock and jumped into action.

Water spells were unloaded onto the burning Grand Priest's body but failed to kill the violent blue flames, no matter how many were used.

The undying blue flames couldn't be extinguished.

Eventually, the burning Grand Priest's body fell to the ground and ceased his painful struggles. He was fried to death.

Everyone fell into silence with heavy moods; their hearts palpitated with trepidation.

"Your Divinity, our words do not influence you, do they?" Archpriest Thurman carefully asked.

"What do you think?" Vaan replied with an amusing half-smile.

Although Vaan didn't give a direct answer, it was the same as admitting the Grand Priests' words didn't influence him.

Even Archpriest Thurman had no sway over him.

As such, everyone's growing suspicion had been confirmed. It was unthinkable, but it was the truth; the false Sun God's holy aura was superior to theirs.

In other words, they didn't invite a lamb into their house of wolves; they invited a wolf into their house of lambs.

Although they didn't know how the false Sun God did it, they had practically offered him the Sun God Temple's ultimate authority. They would have no choice but to follow his orders. Even his casual words could influence them and change their views and beliefs.

That was the brainwashing power of the person with the purest holy aura – the power of the religion's leader.

Archpriest Thurman wasn't the most senior member of the Sun God Temple. But he indeed held the highest position due to his higher mastery of the Holy Aura Scripture.

Thanks to that, he gained access to all of the Sun God Temple's resources to help him raise his cultivation to its present heights.

And now, someone greater had replaced him.

That said, Archpriest Thurman could figure out how Vaan could possess a purer holy aura when he was given a flawed version of the Holy Aura Scripture.

Perhaps he was really the...

"This humble servant has committed a grave mistake against the Sun God! Please give this humble servant a chance to repent, Your Divinity!" Archpriest Thurman decisively knelt on the ground with a heavy after coming to a certain conclusion.

When he felt kneeling wasn't sincere enough, he quickly kowtowed and banged his head on the ground without shame.

"This..."

The rest of the opposing priests were stunned by the Archpriest's actions but soon recognized the situation.

"We have seen the light! Please give this humble servant a chance to repent, Your Divinity!" They all kowtowed on the ground, not daring to lift their heads unless granted permission.

They were in a position where if the Sun God told them to kill themselves, they would have no choice but to do it.

At the same time, the templars, devoted priests, and believers further away also kowtowed on the ground. Contrary to the opposing priests, they prostrated to pay their respects to the Sun God, not to plead for mercy.

Although everyone had countless doubts, it wasn't the time to ask.

...

When Vaan restored the flawed version of the Holy Aura Scripture, he couldn't have possibly known the exact contents of the original version in the Sun God Temple's possession.

As such, the flawed version of the Holy Aura Scripture was restored according to his understanding. Ultimately, he ended up with a more flawless and refined copy than the Sun God Temple's version.

He wasn't the Venerable Sage of Aura Cultivation for nothing.

"Get up. There will be no further deaths today," Vaan calmly pardoned the surrendered high-ranking priests before saying, "But perhaps a fate worse than death awaits all of you."

"You will act true to the Sun God Temple's official teachings and serve the people, help those who cannot walk stand, and spread the faith. And each time you hold rebellious thoughts against me, you must double your efforts on the task."

"Have you understood?" Vaan asked, intending to work them to the bone.

Nevertheless, he was starting to grow tired of playing god.

Chapter 548: Gaining Insight

Vaan might have achieved god-like power from a mortal's perspective. However, a Peak Demigod was nothing in his chaosverse, let alone the entire domain of Chaos.

Even the respectable True Divinities Empyrean Scarletsea spoke of did not seem like much, just more powerful beings.

They still weren't close to the true gods that Vaan imagined.

As far as he could see, whether it was Empyrean Scarletsea's Divine Realm or Pangea, the word 'god' was thrown around lightly because of human's desire to become such a being.

However, the truth was that the true state of god was far more out of reach than anyone could imagine.

Perhaps the unknown invaders that attacked Empyrean Scarletsea's Divine Realm were closer to the true state of a god.

A real god should be able to create his own chaosverse or destroy one – Vaan thought.

...

After bringing the Sun God Temple under his complete control, Vaan made various arrangements to reorganize and expand the religion. He also abolished the castration process for inducting new priests into the faith.

Furthermore, he also made plans to allow priests to recover their manhood if they wished.

It might be impossible for others to regrow organs with healing magic since they haven't completely understood human anatomy down to the cellular level.

However, it shouldn't be a problem for him since he possessed the knowledge; he only lacked the healing magic.

Fortunately, that could be resolved through the Soul Link Spell.

Once a base was built on the moon, he could send priests and other men to cultivate in Chaos. His only concern was the threat posed by the pure earth elemental worm.

...

Nevertheless, while ordering the higher-ranking priests around, Vaan marveled at the influential power his words held over them.

Whether it was the Archpriest, the Grand Priests, or the High Priests connected to the One-Mind Unity Spell, they all carried out his post-cleanup orders without exception.

Furthermore, after speaking to them briefly, their ill will had been completely erased from their hearts. They had completely turned into his devoted believers like the rest—No, they were even more devoted than ordinary believers.

They fully believed he was one true sun god.

In essence, the brainwashing power of the Holy Aura Scripture, coupled with the One-Mind Unity Spell, was no joke.

More importantly, the Holy Aura Scripture helped Vaan gain insights into developing an aura cultivation method above the peak rank, which would let him cultivate beyond the Aura King rank.

Aura was a production of mana and blood energy, and it could be controlled to a certain extent through specific breathing techniques, muscle control, and bodily movements.

Unfortunately, aura users could never freely control aura like how witches manipulated mana.

That's why the Holy Knight Empire developed its aura cultivation methods in the direction of adding elemental attributes to the aura to increase its power.

However, Vaan started to believe that it was possible for aura users to manipulate aura like witches with mana at higher ranks of aura cultivation.

The key was hidden in the aura user's mind—or, more specifically, their spirit.



Aura was part of the body, except it couldn't be moved like one's limbs. But if aura users could fuse their spirits into their aura, it could become a possibility.

Divine aura...

Before Vaan could achieve it, he had already given a new name to aura that could be freely manipulated at will.

The secret of producing divine aura was most likely found in the uncharted territory of the brain's complex system of blood vessels.

Holy Aura Scripture had already shown its possibility, even if only a glimpse.

Vaan had to figure out the right channel to infuse his spirit into his aura. Without a doubt, channeling aura to the brain region was an extremely dangerous choice. This was especially so, considering the potent power of his dragon aura.

The blood vessels in his brain region would undoubtedly burst at the slightest mistake if he followed through with it.

Nevertheless, danger and opportunity always come hand in hand.

Nuclear power could destroy his previous world, but that also never stopped humans from using it due to its endless potential.

Of course, Vaan wasn't one to gamble with his life unless he had some insurance or confidence.

There was a way to guarantee his brain region's blood vessels wouldn't burst under his tyrannical dragon aura, which was to temper them.

As long as the blood vessels were strengthened, there wouldn't be an issue with channeling his dragon aura through his brain region.

It just so happened that he figured out a special way to temper his major meridians and minor blood vessels not long ago – it was fire tempering.

Given his absolute control, there wouldn't be an accident in tempering his meridians and blood vessels with his flames. He also had his High-rank Fire Spirit Body and Ruby as insurance.

...

In the main temple's innermost sanctum, Vaan listened to Archpriest Thurman's account of his experiences and knowledge in the Sun God Temple.

Since the person had become a completely devoted believer, Vaan didn't even need to rely on dragon magic to extract information from the person.

Whatever he asked, Archpriest Thurman would answer wholeheartedly.

As a result, Vaan learned about the past two hundred years of Archpriest Thurman's experience in the Sun God Temple and some of its history. When he matched it with the Elderwatch family's story, which he heard from Astoria, he found startling similarities.

Just as he suspected, the Sun God Temple's faith was created by a member of the Blessed Golden Dragon Tribe.

The so-called Sun God was, in fact, referring to the Golden Dragon Pangea.

The origin of the Sun God recorded in the Sun God Temple's sacred texts was a modified version based on the Elderwatch family's version of Pangea's history.

Most likely, the Sun God Temple was founded in remembrance of the Golden Dragon Pangea while fooling the enemies of Pangea.

Vaan had always found it strange that the Elderwatch family controlled the Imperial Legion. Yet, the Braveheart imperial family's private force was nonexistent.

After acquiring the relevant information, Vaan finally made the connection.

The Braveheart family founded the Sun God Temple. The head of each generation secretly controlled the Sun God Temple while ruling the country. But after Astoria's father, Siegfried Braveheart, died an untimely death, the connection was lost.

Ultimately, the Sun God Temple became an independent, uncontrolled, tumorous force that ate away at the country over the years.

#### Chapter 549: Astoria's Enlightenment

##### Holy Capital, Imperial Palace

Back in Astoria's bedchamber, she did not prepare to attend any of her day activities after Vaan left. Instead, she informed a palace servant to postpone all her meetings to the evening.

Once the room's cleanliness and pleasant scent were restored, Astoria sat on her bed in a loose white gown and meditated, performing self-introspection with her consciousness.

She did not feel the slightest fatigue from the passionate overnight activities. Rather, she was overflowing with energy. Her body was still burning, giving her cheeks and fair skin a smooth, rosy hue.

Dual-practicing with Vaan had repeatedly stimulated her Golden Dragon Bloodline.

Although she had suppressed most of it to enjoy her moment with Vaan, she could no longer hold it back, nor did she need to.

Her Golden Dragon Bloodline appeared to be proud and arrogant; it refused to mix with Vaan's mixed dragon essence. The Golden Dragon Bloodline, despite its scarcity, completely denied being tainted by Vaan's mixed dragon essence.

After all, it was a noble dragon bloodline; it looked down on all inferior dragon bloodlines.

As such, a fierce battle was waged inside of her body. The Golden Dragon Bloodline was roused awake by the presence of Vaan's dragon essence and sought to rid it from her body.

At the same time, Vaan's dragon essence was tenacious and wouldn't go down without a fight.

Each time Astoria awakened her Golden Dragon Bloodline, her body would experience tremendous benefits due to the nature of the superior, noble bloodline. Although now wasn't one of those moments, the constant stimulation still brought her closer to her next bloodline awakening.

More importantly, the stimulated Golden Dragon Bloodline greedily absorbed her light-attribute mana and the surrounding light elements to fuel its fight.

There was no better time for her to comprehend the Law of Light than now.

Astoria recalled her previous meditation experience and retraced the steps to reach her moment of enlightenment.

Previously, the light particles could be found everywhere in the darkness when she closed her eyes. But this time, she found the light particles converging, forming a single point of brightness, like a lone star in the depths of the dark void.

Astoria spent her time in silence and tranquility, studying the converging light particles.

...

Everyone knew what light was, where it came from, and what it could do, but these were all superficial understandings of the sun's light.

Very few, if any, knew what it was made of and how it was produced.

It was most commonly believed that the sun was a big ball of fire. However, that was not the case. The sun would have died out long ago if it was simply made of fire. In truth, it was a large body of gas heated to terrifying temperatures through a process she had yet to comprehend.

What she just understood, however, was that the sun's light was a form of energy made up of tiny particles that were too small to be seen by the human eye. It didn't have a color, but it could also be any color.

It also existed in a fourth state of matter, which seemed only reachable through extremely high temperatures.

'If light can only be made by heating gas to extremely high temperatures... then light should also be extremely hot... However, direct sunlight only feels warm at best...' Astoria mused.

Is it because the distance between Pangea and the sun was too great? Or is it because the power of light was too spread?

Both were the answers.

The closer to the sun, the more concentrated the power of light, and hence, the hotter it is – Astoria thought.

But then, she also thought about her specialized magic, Light Solidification, which could turn light into solid objects.

The power of light was definitely concentrated for it to be firm, but its temperature was far from burning, let alone scorching hot like the sun. It was only a little hotter than normal sunlight at best.

So where did all of the heat power go? Was it because she didn't understand the Light Law then? Or was it because her light power didn't reach an adequate concentration level?

After several hours of meditation, Astoria's eyes suddenly snapped open with a golden glint. She had finally grasped an initial understanding of the Light Law.

She didn't hesitate to confirm her comprehension immediately.

Astoria lifted her index finger and concentrated a large amount of light power to a single point at its tip. At first, the point of light was only lukewarm and glowing. But as more light power was concentrated, it became hotter and brighter.

By squeezing the particles of light power together tightly, they become very active, as if they were scrambling to escape from each other.

The stronger their activity, the greater the heat produced!

Within moments, Astoria's bedchamber became especially bright due to the single point of light focused on her fingertip.

Its temperatures were so frighteningly high that it actually melted her fingertip!

The accompanying pain was also agonizing!

However, Astoria couldn't just release such a concentrated power of light. Thus, she immediately thought of a solution and wrapped concentrated light power with her Light Solidification.

She used the firm shell of her Light Solidification to contain the concentrated power of light before releasing her control to heal her melted fingertip.

Shockingly, the concentrated light power was more difficult to contain than she thought. She was forced to focus more magic power on increasing the shell's firmness.

Even so, it was still stretched and turned into a short light beam.

Nevertheless, Astoria immediately noticed the synergy between her Light Solidification and the Light Law. Before she could gain a deeper comprehension of the Light Law and control it properly, she could use her Light Solidification to support her control.

Voom... Voom...

Astoria waved the light beam around and studied its viability as a weapon. She quickly confirmed its cutting and penetrative power when she easily sliced through the reinforced wall of her room.

'It's too light. No, it's completely weightless. This is very different from my usual choice of weapon...' Astoria analyzed.

She wasn't used to wielding light weapons, but the light beam's offensive power was hard to ignore.

Chapter 550: The Late King's Study

By concentrating her Light Solidification in the right areas, Astoria could wield the light beam without burning herself and losing the light beam's destructive power at the same time.

'Unfortunately, my comprehension of the Light Law is still too shallow. It takes too much time to draw this much light power... My opponents wouldn't give me the chance to charge such an attack,' Astoria mused.

Nevertheless, as long as she increased her comprehension of the Light Law, she could gather light power at greater speeds and quantity.

By then, she won't even need to wield the Light Law as a lightsaber weapon; she should be able to fire it like an artillery.

Even so, Astoria felt this was still a very primitive application of the Light Law. The Light Law's potential shouldn't be limited to this. Thus, she had to research it further. Only then could she understand the extent of her ability at her level of comprehension.

'I should continue to meditate on the Light Law,' Astoria decided.

Unfortunately, she soon noticed nighttime had already arrived, causing her to be surprised. She didn't expect the whole day to pass by so quickly.

She had been too immersed in her comprehension to have sensed the slow passage of time.

Shortly after putting on a fresh blue dress, she fixed her hair and then left the room. Immediately, she noticed a male palace servant waiting for her outside.

At the same time, the male palace servant was dazzled by Astoria's appearance. He felt like the imperial princess's beauty had become more refined and majestic since he last saw her.

She was like the definition of royalty.

"What is it?" Astoria asked with a frown, slightly displeased with the male palace servant's bold staring.

Fortunately, his gaze only had honest appreciation and respect and not a hint of obscenity. Otherwise, she would have punished him severely on the spot.

"Ah!" the male palace servant quickly recovered from his dazzlement in shock before lowering his head fearfully, "My deepest apologies, Your Imperial Highness."

"His Divinity wished to see you, Your Imperial Highness. His Divinity is currently waiting in his private study," he informed shortly after.

"Oh? Alright, I got it," Astoria acknowledged with a nod before dismissing the male palace servant and heading right over to Vaan's location.

The door to Vaan's private study was left open. Thus, the two immediately saw each other despite Vaan noticing her approach much earlier.

"It seems last night has benefited you greatly," Vaan stood up with a smile, striding over to greet her.

Before Astoria could respond, Vaan grabbed her waist and spun her around for a sudden kiss, taking her by surprise.

Nevertheless, her heart leaped with excitement.

Perhaps because Vaan's touch reminded her of their passion last night, her knees immediately lost their strength. Her bodily temperatures rose with her increasing heartbeat, leading to irregular breathing. She panted softly with a look of desire.

Vaan didn't do much, but Astoria was already in the mood to continue last night's activities.

However, Vaan quickly recalled her extremely high resilience and tenacity, so he released her from his embrace before patting her on the butt with a smile.

"Come with me. I have a surprise for you," Vaan stated wryly.



The so-called Battle Maiden of Holy Light wasn't just ever victorious on the battlefield; she also seemed ever victorious in bed wars.

It was best that he didn't tempt her, lest she could really squeeze him dry this day.

Vaan didn't think it was necessary since the situation had never occurred to him in the past, but perhaps his balls also needed tempering.

Meanwhile, Astoria blinked in confusion before rubbing the spot where Vaan smacked with a look of wonder.

It made her heart skip just now; she wanted him to do it again.

However, she was also curious about the surprise Vaan mentioned. Thus, she simply nodded obediently and blindly followed him out of the private study like a little duckling.

Suddenly, Astoria sensed a pair of eyes on her, prompting her to look up and notice Topaz hidden in Vaan's hair with her arms crossed, giving her a dirty look.

Woman in heat, what were you thinking about doing with my master while I am here? – Topaz's eyes seemed to have silently conveyed.

Ahem!

"Oh hey, Tia, It's been some time since we last met, haven't we? I didn't see you there," Astoria said after coughing with mild embarrassment. "Do you still remember me?"

"Kyu, kyu, kyu!" Topaz replied unhappily with puffed cheeks, telling Astoria not to try and butter her up in order to steal her master from her. It wasn't going to work on her.

Although Astoria didn't exactly understand what Topaz was saying, she could kind of guess the gist of it.

As such, she didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

Vaan's earth spirit fairy had mistakenly thought she wanted to steal him away from her when she was looking at him with desire, wanting to eat him up.

Astoria was a bit tongue-tied for words.

She couldn't really explain adult matters to the innocent and cute little earth spirit fairy. It would corrupt her.

"Don't worry. No one is trying to steal Vaan from you, Tia," Astoria assured with a smile, caressing Topaz's head with a single finger.

At the same time, Topaz grimaced grumpily as she tried shrugging off Astoria's finger with her arms crossed.

"Kyu, kyuu!" Topaz spouted stubbornly, saying she didn't believe her.

Astoria fell into a dilemma regarding how to go about placating Tia. Her heart was willing, but she didn't know what to say or do.

As such, she turned to Vaan for help.

However, she soon noticed he had stopped in front of her father's old study room, which had been kept clean and properly maintained in the past three hundred years.

"What are we doing here?" Astoria couldn't help but ask, feeling a little sentimental due to her memories of the location. It was the same as she remembered it.

"To look for something," Vaan vaguely answered.

Astoria furrowed her brows with doubt.

What did looking for something in her father's old study room have anything to do with his surprise for her? – she wondered.