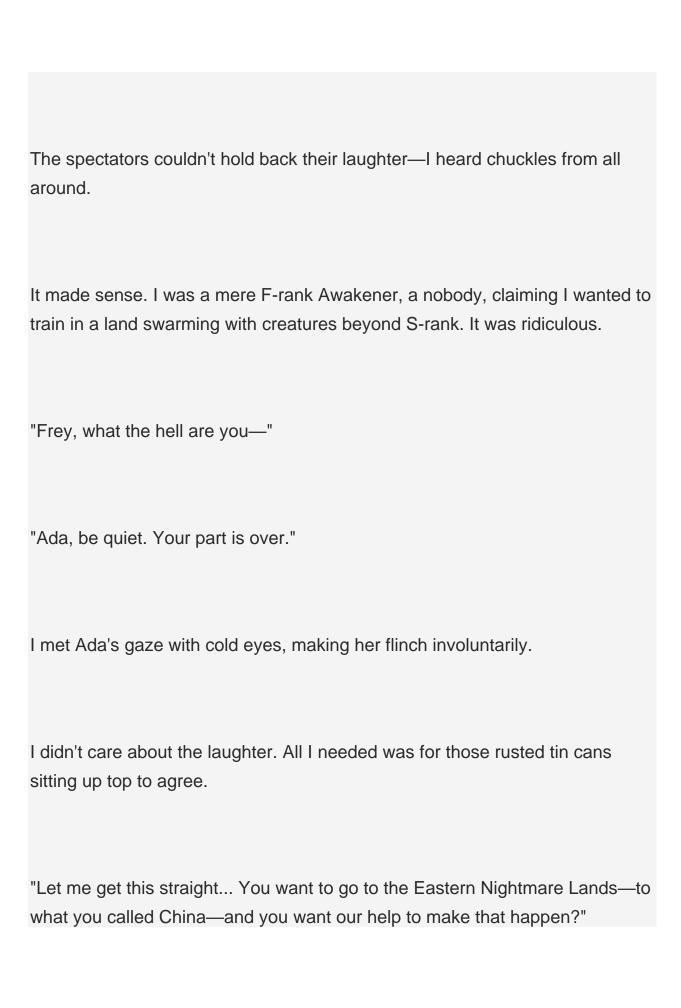
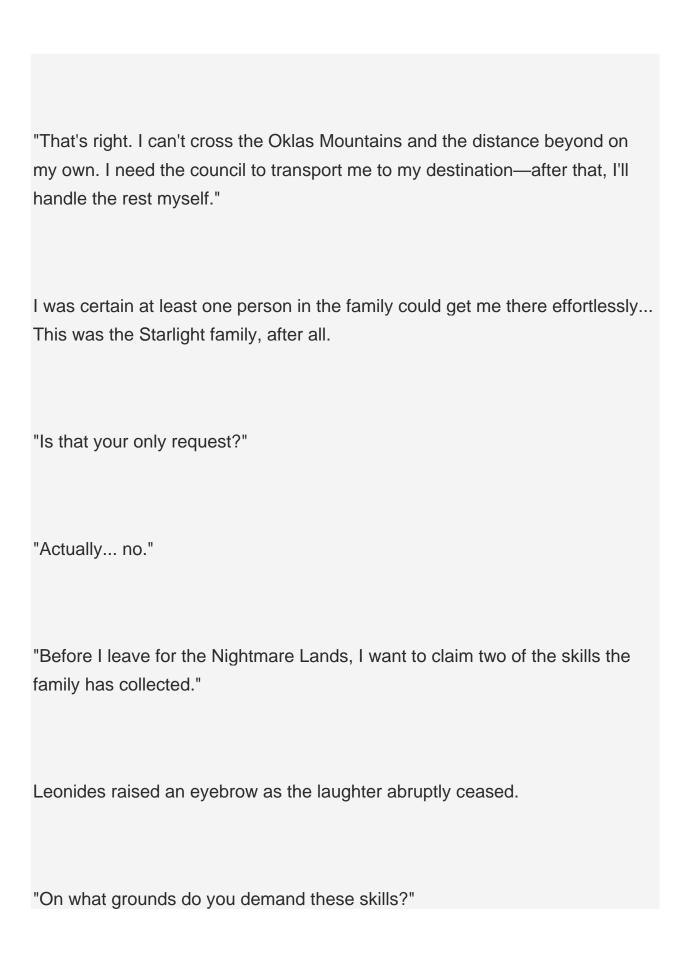
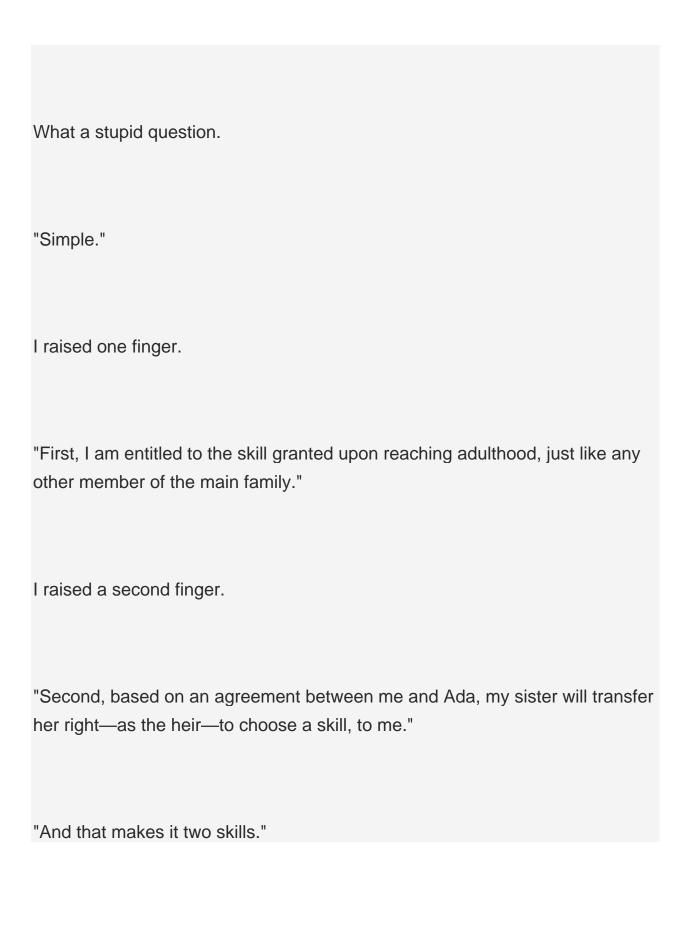
THE VILLAIN'S POV

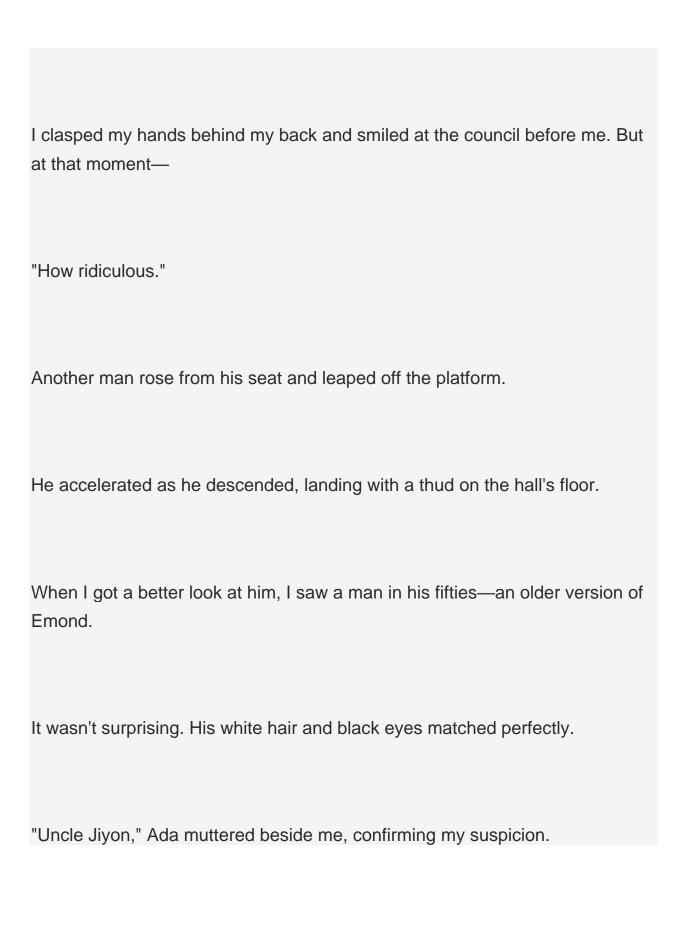
Chapter 12 12: The Senate Council (3)

"Frey Starlight, why do you want to go to the Eastern Nightmare Lands of all places? If it's training you seek, our family is more than capable. So why choose such a dangerous place?"
Tsk You old hypocrite.
Was he trying to act considerate? I knew he wanted me dead, so he might as well just admit it.
"The place I'm aiming for was once known as China. I've heard of powerful combat techniques there and the Nightmare Lands provide an ideal environment for training."
I was starting to hate myself for all the nonsense I was spouting. I probably looked like a fool right now.







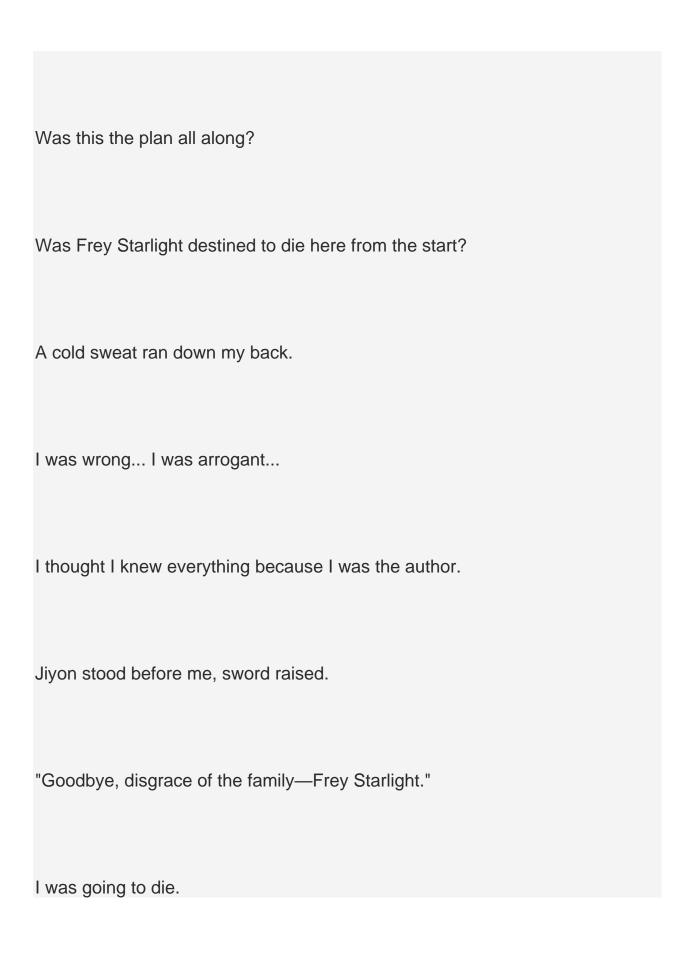


But the real question was—what did he want?
"Jiyon," Leonides called out.
But Jiion ignored him, taking a few steps toward me.
"Forgive me, Leonides, but I refuse to participate in this childish farce any longer."
A farce?
My mind raced—I hadn't expected this, nor did I know what this man wanted.
"Nephew."

"Did you know I've always been bothered by the fact that you're still alive?"
"And it seems you, too, have realized it. That's why you're here, spouting nonsense about going to the Nightmare Lands."
"Even I can't roam freely there despite being an S-rank. Yet here you are, an insignificant F-rank, declaring your desire to go. So, I see—you want to die."
Jiion unsheathed a long sword from his waist.
"Jiyon!"
"Don't stop me, Leonides !."
"I understand that you wish to die. But to take two of our family's valuable skills with you?"

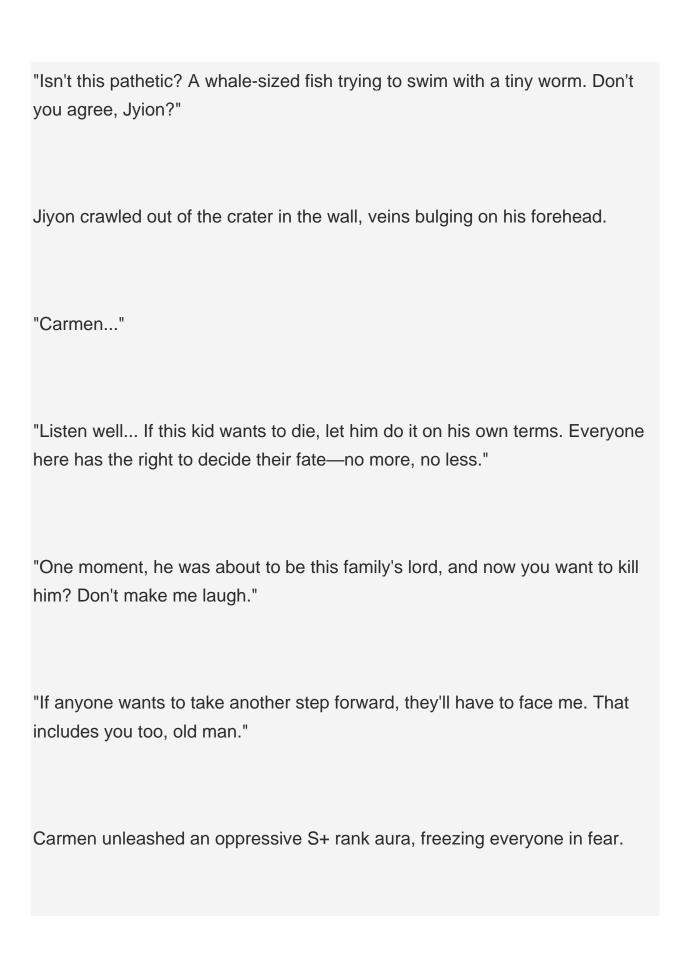
"Why waste time? Instead of letting some random monster kill you let me do it here and now."
"No!"
Ada tried to step in, but she was swiftly suppressed.
"Stay out of this."
I instinctively took a few steps back as well.
Where the hell did this bastard come from?
His strides didn't slow. I could see concentrated energy shimmering around his blade.

White flames, condensed into a salt-like substance—it was the Stardust technique.
If he unleashed that aura on me, I wouldn't just die; I'd be erased.
"Are you kidding me?"
I glanced up at the elders—Leonidas still stood there, hands clasped behind his back.
I turned toward the audience—everyone averted their eyes.
No one was going to step in.
He was really going to kill me.
Wait

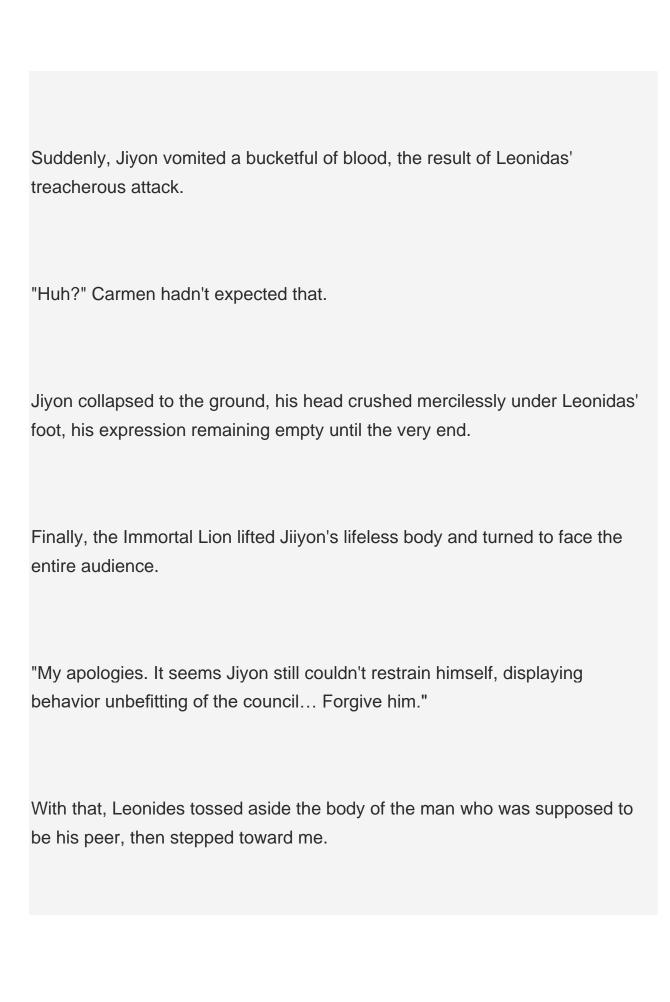


I hadn't even lasted a month inside my own story.
Pathetic.
Jiyon's attack was too fast for me to track. I could only wait for the moment my body was obliterated.
But nothing happened.
Or rather—something did happen.
I didn't know when, but in an instant, a woman appeared before me.
Everything occurred in a single moment.

The strike I couldn't even see was stopped—by Carmen, who caught the blade of Stardust with her bare hand.
Without hesitation, she twisted elegantly, delivering a devastating kick that sent Jiyon flying, burying him into the hall's wall.
It all happened so fast that I stood there, speechless.
Jiyon's sword remained in Carmen's grip. I saw the veins in her slender hand bulge as she clenched her fist, shattering the blade completely.
"Look at yourself, Leonides playing tricks on a mere weak child."
Carmen took two steps forward and stretched her body.
"You all know I don't care about this family's politics. I don't care who's on top or who's at the bottom, as long as I get a good fight."



Silver gauntlets materialized out of nowhere, covering her arms—she was ready for war.
Meanwhile, Jiyon stepped forward again, manifesting a sword of pure energy. His aura was strong, but far weaker than Carmen's.
But then—the balance shifted once again.
The Immortal Lion, Leonides, descended into the hall.
Jiyon smirked in satisfaction.
And for the first time—Carmen's expression darkened.
"Come forth."
"You got it, you old whore Bllaarghh!"



But Carmen quickly blocked his path.
"No need. He will get what he wants He can go to the Nightmare Lands, or any other land, and die as he pleases."
Carmen narrowed her eyes at the old man before her.
"I'll never understand what you're after, Leonides."
She sighed, then turned toward me—only to flinch the moment she met my gaze.
I stood there like a statue, my stare never wavering from Leonidas and the people around him.
'You bastards'

My nails dug deep into the flesh of my palm.
'You better pray Pray that I succeed and return to my world.'
'Because if I don't I'll be the one burying your damned asses.'
Carmen chuckled.
"Do those really look like the eyes of a man seeking death?"