

## Void 85

### Chapter 85 - Memories [1]

Earth, 2055

It had been 10 years since earth had awakened to mana and civilization had changed to the point where it would be unrecognizable by those of the previous era.

Mana had led to the advent of many new technologies and products that both advanced everyday living and the race as a whole. The first 5 or so years were spent acclimating to the new world, but the latter 5 were filled with development.

Humanity was a race that was always quick to learn and develop once they had gotten a grasp on their situation. Their biggest strength was to adapt. And adapt they did.

Many futuristic things one would only imagine to be in sci-fi movies were normalized in the past 5 years. Even flying cars had been invented, though they were only available for purchase to the highest echelon of society, being difficult to produce.

Besides technology, society had also made massive developments, though whether these were good or bad were unknown. Earth had become one with its imagination. When 2nd class started to become more common, many organizations popped up with various purposes.

But order needed to be maintained. Going with a concept they already knew, humanity split into a world filled with heroes and villains.

3 years ago, a mysterious phenomenon occurred. A bright light enveloped the entire planet, momentarily blinding its people. The source of this light and its implications were unknown at the time, but many strange individuals began appearing out of the woodworks.

Although their numbers were only in the tens, these individuals possessed strength that surpassed those of anyone on the planet. These were the people who now ran the organizations in charge of heroes and villains.

Their true purpose was unknown, but it was clear that there were two sides among these people. The ones who led the heroes had a righteous air, seemingly disdaining any lowly action, while the ones who led the villains always carried greed in their eyes, succumbing to their desires.

The diametrically opposed individuals began gathering forces and humanity was split between them. It was unknown who they were or where they came from, but people didn't care.

The common populace wanted order, which the hero association, titled Asgard, was providing them. Meanwhile, those who desired chaos or desired sin drifted towards the villain society, Niflheim.

Heroes and villains were at constant war with each other, but on the surface, the world remained peaceful. Gates continued to generate and heroes took care of them, earning the worship of the people.

Meanwhile, villains either acted as petty criminals or attempted to make grand schemes. Power was obtained easily through massacre, and it got to people's heads. They proclaimed themselves gods and did as they pleased, at least until they were caught.

But as mentioned before, leveling required death. There was no righteous message about how killing was bad or how villains should be captured. That would be pure idiocy.

Any villain that was caught would be killed where they stood, and any hero unfortunate enough to meet someone more powerful than them would die a meaningless death.

Even the previously standing Guild Association had been swallowed in this conflict, becoming one with Asgard. Those that didn't agree with Asgard's ruling either quit entirely or joined Niflheim.

It was currently August. The winds ushered in the fall season and leaves began to brown. A certain blue-haired girl walked through a park and admired the scenery.

Elena had been spending most of her time in gates for the last 4 years, only seeing the changes of society when she took breaks like she was doing now.

She had no idea how things progressed this way so suddenly, but she knew it was suspicious. However, she was no hero, nor was she a villain. She simply gained strength in secret while living an average life in public.

If she ever saw someone acting up or killing civilians, she wouldn't stand by and do nothing, but she didn't make an active effort to save people.

It had been 4 years since Damien was thrown into the dungeon and it had been 2 and a half since Elena had destroyed Jin's legacy. Ever since that day, he had left her alone.

Rather, it was rare to see him enter the public eye for a few months. After that, Jin went and became a hero. He took a hero name, calling himself NightChaser, and fought villains and gates, gaining the love of the public.

He was one of what people called the “pillars of humanity”, some of the strongest people alive. These were the people who both did the most for the fight against villains and the closing of gates.

Still, Elena didn't bother with him. As long as he didn't chase her, she didn't care what he did. She had already sentenced him to death. And that was because even after all these years, she still held hope that Damien would return.

She had felt the existence of that faint ethereal thread, that feeling that connected them. It had been ever-present through the years and stood tall as her beacon of hope. Even she called herself irrational for thinking this way, but she couldn't help herself.

She tried to forget, she tried to kill her emotions, she tried to move on, but as long as that ethereal string existed in her consciousness, she couldn't. She believed that he was on the other end of that string.

So, she had spent the last 4 years taking care of his mother, unceasingly moving with the goal of staying on his level when he returned. This was also the reason she didn't bother with Jin. When Damien returned, wasn't Jin dated to die?

And like that, she had reached level 90, infinitely close to becoming 3rd class.

Elena sat on a park bench as all these thoughts came back to her. While she did occasionally think about everything, there was a specific reason this time.

It had been 7 years since high school had ended, and a reunion had been planned for those in her grade. It was an awkward number for a reunion, but since it was 10 years since the World Awakening, they decided to hold it anyway.

She was only 21 this year, meaning she graduated high school at 14, but this was relatively normal. The standard of education had been raised worldwide in the 2030s and a steeper learning curve was implemented.

Most people graduated high school at 15, but she and Damien were at the younger end of the spectrum, leading to them turning 15 only after graduation.

Thinking about high school, Elena sighed. Those days were good memories for her, but at the same time, they were painful. Her first meeting with Damien was in high school, but she had to sit and watch him get bullied without the ability to help.

Even if she tried to help, he would always reject, saying he didn't want to owe any favors. This was always his attitude, and it only became more pronounced after he awakened as someone weak. Even though the bullying became worse, he simply took it silently and continued his life.

Elena admired this quality of him more than he could imagine. His will to survive through everything without batting an eye was something she wished she had, but at the same time, she thought it was a flaw he needed to fix.

Not the fact that he could survive, rather the part where he tried to do it all alone.

It was this quality that slowly started turning her platonic feelings into something more. She watched him power through everything and decided to do whatever she could to help. So, she did her best to make every moment they spent together a happy memory.

And in this quest, she slowly fell for him. For his determination, for the kindness he had towards those who earned it, and for the dominant self that he showed only around her.

Elena shook her head. She was supposed to be deciding whether to attend the high school reunion, but she ended up daydreaming about Damien again. She couldn't help it, since she associated her happy high school life with memories of his face.

Thinking about the reunion, Elena couldn't help but sigh again. It would be filled with people who used to bully Damien and try to peer pressure her into dropping him as her friend.

It was filled with vile girls who used to spread rumors behind people's backs to ruin their lives and annoying boys who would always look at her lustfully and openly brag about trying to hook up with her.

And the worst part was that with the advent of the new society, most of these people developed her complexes. They thought of themselves as defenders of justice and would probably use that standing to elevate their egos.

But, she still decided to go in the end. She felt it was a moral obligation she had. Not to mention, there was a single person she wanted to see.

It was a teacher that she had back in her sophomore year of high school named Alison Clark. She was the only person who had stood up for her during those days.

Elena had confided in her about what was happening with Damien, and it was this teacher who gave her the idea to make every moment she could into a happy memory.

From that point, she began talking to Alison almost on a daily basis and treated her more like an older sister than a teacher. Sadly, they drifted apart after graduation since Elena joined the guild and was constantly busy doing work for them.

For the sake of meeting the sole person other than Damien that she enjoyed talking to during high school, she would go to the reunion.

And so, Elena stood up from the park bench where she sat and made her way over to the school.