

# **Her Graceful War Song**

## **#Chapter 1641 - Read Her Graceful War Song Chapter 1641**

At once, the family summoned all the generals to hold council, and scouts were sent out again to gather firmer intelligence. Additionally, a fast rider was dispatched back to the capital to request reinforcements.

Cindy took care to see Carissa settled properly, and the two sat together for a long while, speaking in low voices.

Cindy did her best to comfort her niece, urging her not to dwell in sorrow and to look ahead instead. Yet even as she spoke kindly, she turned her head away more than once to quietly wipe away her tears.

Carissa leaned against her aunt, thinking how fortunate she was to have a second chance. This time, so much might still be saved.

The following morning, Dominic issued new orders. All soldiers were to return to their posts immediately, and training was resumed in full. The walls were to be reinforced, and traps were to be laid within the outer fortress.

Carissa took this chance to speak to her grandfather. She requested permission for both herself and Travis to join the drills.

Dominic refused her outright: "Before you arrived, your mother's letter reached us first. She was most insistent that you are not to set foot on the battlefield."

"I won't. I only wish to train with the others," Carissa replied quickly.

When she saw her grandfather's stern expression, she smiled and tugged lightly at his sleeve. "Grandpa, you know I've studied martial arts. But I've only ever trained in the mountains, never in real combat or with others. Let me learn a little more. It's only training, after all."

Dominic had visited Meadow Ridge during his last trip to the capital. Back then, Adrian had praised Carissa's skill, saying she trained well enough. But whether that was truly so or only said out of kindness, Dominic didn't know. Still, since she had chosen to take this path, she ought to learn all she could.

If all went well, she would never need to use those skills. But life was long and full of trials. And after all, she was now the only daughter of the Marquis of Northwatch's family. The household was filled with widowed women and grieving mothers. If Carissa could become stronger, more capable, more assured in herself, that would not be a bad thing.

And so, Dominic relented. He agreed to let his granddaughter disguise herself as a young man and train alongside Travis in the army camp. Of course, she had to begin as an ordinary foot soldier, and her identity was not to be revealed. Once training ended, she and Travis were to leave immediately.

Their first day of training was led by a general named Otis Lynch. The soldiers gathered that day had only just returned from farming. In times of peace, the men stationed at Victory Pass often worked the land. It was these people who were now recalled for duty. As for the garrison already stationed at the mountain gate, they had never left their posts.

To withstand Westhaven's army of 200,000, every soldier would be needed. Yet even then, the difference in strength between the two sides remained painfully clear.

Movel.ne

Dominic was deeply troubled. He knew well that it was not merely a matter of numbers, though their forces were far fewer than Westhaven's. The differences ran deeper. It was the supplies, O weapons, reinforcements every aspect of their readiness fell short.

Westhaven faced no other war at present, while Starhaven had long been worn thin with the war at the Southern Frontier. It was a crucial moment for them now.

If Victory Pass were to fall, it might very well spell disaster for the Southern Frontier as well.

Three days later, the scouts returned with news. As Carissa had warned, Westhaven had indeed begun to move. Reinforcements were on the way, but the number was not nearly as high as 200,000. They reported, at most, only 2,000 soldiers.

Dominic ordered them to keep watching. He didn't believe Westhaven's numbers to be so few.

If the two kingdoms were merely in a state of unrest and there were no signs of war breaking out, then why would Westhaven send more troops to the border? It

made little sense, unless they truly meant to launch a full attack.

And if so, then 2,000 troops would never be enough. It must be, as Carissa had said, that Leroy was quietly shifting troops in secret. Most likely, the inner strife among Westhaven's noble houses had slowed their movements. They were still planning and gathering strength, so not all their forces had arrived.

Now, they needed solid proof. Without it, the court wouldn't send reinforcements to Victory Pass in time.

In his heart, Dominic held a quiet bitterness toward Salvador. However, it wasn't something he would ever dare speak aloud.

Had Salvador sent the Hell Monarch and his army to the Southern Frontier earlier, when the war first turned grim, Hector and his sons might still be alive. Perhaps the Southern Frontier would already be won.

But as a veteran soldier, Dominic understood Salvador's fears all too well. When the king first took the throne, his position was not yet secure. He feared that should any prince win great glory in battle, it might threaten his own power.

And so, even as Sandoria made their last desperate strike, Salvador hesitated. He refused to send the Hell Monarch Army, which led to the Southern Frontier suffering defeat after defeat.

Still, no matter his grief or blame, Dominic had lived his life as a loyal subject. Loyalty to the sovereign and love of the kingdom-those words were etched in his heart. He would never voice his resentment. He buried it deep, where no one could see.

But now that his young granddaughter had come to Victory Pass, and thinking about how she would be without her father and brothers in the future...

How could that bitterness not rise again?

## **Her Graceful War Song #Chapter 1642 - Read Her Graceful War Song Chapter 1642**

Carissa and Travis had been training with the soldiers for several days now. Travis was quite taken with it, especially the offensive battle formations, which he thought were clever and oddly fun.

But for Carissa, these maneuvers were second nature. They were things so deeply ingrained that they felt like part of her bones. She could see the weaknesses in the drills and even offered suggestions.

Otis was the only one who knew her true identity, and he was initially suspicious when she approached him with her ideas. He thought she was simply trying to stand out, perhaps making trouble for the sake of attention.

He listened to her, albeit with impatience, as she explained a few improvements to the formation. But as she spoke, his eyes lit up.

By the end of it, he raised his thumb in admiration and exclaimed, "Truly, like father, like daughter! You are indeed worthy of being General Hector's child."

When she first heard those words, Carissa felt a little dazed.

It had been years since anyone had said such a thing to her. Back in her previous life, when she returned victorious from the Southern Frontier, people would say it often. When she led the Mystic Army as their commander, many had said it then too.

In those years, most people knew her as the daughter of the great General Hector.

Later, even after she became the regent's princess consort, many still called her Lady Sinclair, out of habit and respect. Long into her old age, when she had stepped away from court life entirely, there were still those who addressed her that way. Meanwhile, some still referred to her as Lady Carissa or Her Grace. She had carried each title and role with pride.

She had lived so long as Lady Sinclair and the regent's princess consort. To hear someone refer to her as Hector's daughter once more... it brought a strange ache to her chest. A pang of sorrow, but also pride.

After implementing her suggestions, Otis found that the changes made a real difference. Pleased with the results, he went straight to Dominic and offered high praise for Carissa.

Not long after, Dominic made a rare visit to the training barracks. He pulled his granddaughter aside and privately asked, "How did you come to know so much about battlefield formations?"

"I used to hear my father speak of such things. And my mentor taught me a little too. I remembered what I could," Carissa answered smoothly, without hesitation.

Dominic studied her face for a long while before sighing softly. "When most young ladies hear talk of war and strategy, they forget about it easily. But you remembered. You even dared to offer improvements. That tells me you have a true interest in these matters, right?"

Carissa hesitated. "I... I wouldn't say I'm interested, exactly..."

Dominic smiled gently. "There is no harm in having an interest. There have been women who served in the military before. I've heard of one in particular, General Aurora Yates. She distinguished herself by putting down bandits some years ago. Even the queen dowager spoke highly of her."

Hearing her grandfather speak so openly of women in the military, Carissa saw an opportunity and quickly asked, "Grandpa, if you believe women can serve, does that mean I might also—"

She hadn't even finished her sentence before Dominic's face darkened.

He cut her off sharply, "Absolutely not!"

Carissa's expression fell at once. All the eagerness that had risen in her chest faded away, hidden as she lowered her eyes. She had been tricked. As the saying went, all was fair in war.

Dominic's voice remained stern as he continued, "You're the only child your mother has left. If something were to happen to you, how do you expect her to go on? The border won't fall because you're not on the battlefield, and it certainly won't be saved just because you're there.

"Yes, you've trained in martial arts, but the battlefield is not about skill alone. It is a test of strength and endurance. You can wave a sword and throw a punch, but tell me, when it comes to killing, could you do it?

"And even if you could take a life, what then? When blades and arrows come flying at you from all sides, do you think you can dodge every one? Once, perhaps. Twice, maybe. But three times? Four?"

Having scolded her thoroughly, Dominic pressed further: "Enough of this. You're coming back with me today. I won't have you entertaining foolish thoughts and worrying your mother day and night. Her health is fragile, you must think of her." Carissa nodded meekly. "You're right, Grandpa. I mustn't cause Mom distress."

Then, she added, "But... Travis is very strong and skilled. I only meant to accompany him while he trains. Once the drills are done, I'll return home. Would that be agreeable?"

Dominic had already heard praise

for Travis from Otis. The latter spoke of Travis raw strength, sound

technique, and fearless nature, met

such strength could be properly directed, he might even be able to operate the ballistae on his own. He was worth training.

"Very well," said Dominic at last. "You may stay with him for now. But when the time comes and I say you must go, you will obey without protest."

"Yes, sir!" Carissa straightened at once, her tone steady and respectful, which put Dominic much at ease.

## **Her Graceful War Song #Chapter 1643 - Read Her Graceful War Song Chapter 1643**

If war broke out, Carissa was determined to fight. However, her grandfather had forbidden it, so she needed an alternative plan.

First, she had to join the army as a soldier. Though she was already training as a recruit, Otis had his eye on her and made it clear she would be sent away once training ended. As she wasn't officially enlisted, she wasn't considered a real soldier and couldn't set foot on the battlefield.

She and Travis discussed it quietly. They agreed that he should remain at the army camp for now, while she would leave and find a way back in under a different identity. Once she succeeded, they would meet again.

After staying at the army camp for a few days, Carissa announced she would return to the capital. Though the Sullivan family hated to part with her, the coming war made it too dangerous for her to stay.

Dominic had Wade escort her and Lulu out of Victory Pass. Meanwhile, Travis said he wished to stay and make a career in the army, which Dominic readily approved of.

Their farewell was a long and heartfelt one. Emotions ran high, and no one wanted to say goodbye. But not long after they left Sullivan Estate, Carissa claimed she was hungry and asked Wade to stop at a roadside inn.

She had no intention of returning to the capital.

If she wanted to rejoin the army, she couldn't go through the usual recruitment process, which required proper household records. Faking such papers would be a serious crime, so she needed another way. And for that, she had to convince her seventh uncle to help her get back into the army camp.

Once seated at the inn, Wade gave her a sidelong glance. "Go on, then. What are you really up to?"

They had only just eaten before leaving, so he knew she wasn't truly hungry. This niece of his always had schemes up her sleeve.

Carissa grinned. "Uncle Wade, you know me too well. I do have a favor to ask. Promise me you'll help?"

"Tell me what it is first," Wade said lazily. "If it's anything outrageous, best keep it to yourself. I'd rather not be beaten to death by your grandfather."

Carissa's smile faded as she spoke seriously: "It's nothing outrageous. I just want to stay in the army. If war comes, I want to fight."

Wade stared at her. "And that's not outrageous? If I help you and your grandfather finds out, he'll break my legs."

His tone grew sharp as he continued, "War is serious business. Do you think it's the same as sparring with your friends at the Pathfinders Guild? When you lose there, you simply admit defeat and walk away. But in war, losing means death. This is not a game. Stop trying to stir up trouble here. Hurry back to the capital and stop causing your mother grief."

"I'm not trying to cause any trouble, Uncle Wade, Carissa said calmly. "I understand how dangerous the battlefield can be, and I promise I can take care of myself. I have my reasons for wanting to stay, but I can't share them just yet. However, I need to remain in the army as a legitimate soldier."

"What reasons?" Wade asked, narrowing his eyes.

"I can't explain everything now. Even if I did, you might not believe me. All I can say is that it was my mentor's command. And you know as well as I do that Sage Adrian never acts without reason. He wouldn't send me into danger without a proper plan in place," Carissa replied earnestly.

By now, she was quite good at lying without batting an eye. She knew that Wade held Adrian in great respect, which was why she chose to use the latter as her shield.

Sure enough, Wade's expression began to relax. He turned to look at Lulu, who had been sitting quietly by.

"Is what she says true?" he asked.

Lulu nodded. "It's true. It was all Sage Adrian's orders."

Lulu had no idea what was really going on. However, she had always stood by her mistress, no matter the circumstance. If Carissa said it was Adrian's orders, then it must be so.

"What kind of orders did Sage Adrian give?" Wade asked.

Lulu thought for a moment before replying, "It's probably some old grudge between guilds? After all, even Ms. Preston has been on the move, and others from Meadow Ridge have come too. They've already joined the army through the normal recruitment process."

Carissa didn't need to worry about what Lulu said. The latter could figure things out based on what she already knew. She was aware that Violet and the others had arrived days ago and joined the army through regular recruitment. They were currently undergoing fast-track training with the new recruits.

Hearing that Meadow Ridge had sent others, Wade began to believe Carissa somewhat.

Carissa saw her chance and pressed

on: "All I need is a proper identity, Uncle Wade. I promise not to do anything that would endanger the army or myself. I just need to remain here long enough to complete Sage Adrian's task. Once it's done, we'll leave. I don't mind joining the new recruits in basic military training either."

After all, new recruits were rarely sent to the front lines, unless the very worst came to pass.

At last, Wade gave in with a sigh. He agreed to help and arranged for her to enlist

in the army under the false name Jo Sinclair. She was placed in the new recruit camp. As for Lulu, she was settled into a nearby inn to wait.

## **Her Graceful War Song #Chapter 1644 - Read Her Graceful War Song Chapter 1644**

Carissa finally reunited with Violet, Cynthia, and Bun. Seeing their young faces again made her feel strangely distant, as if lifetimes had passed since they were last together.

They had all entered the new recruit camp and were now going through basic military training. For most new soldiers, the drills were grueling. But for them, it was a little more than light exercise.

While the rest of the recruits collapsed onto their shared bunks at the end of the day, gasping for breath, Carissa and her friends still had the strength to go for a run. Afterward, they would lie on the sand, gazing at the stars above and speaking quietly of their plans.

Bun lay on his back with a stalk of grass between his teeth and his hands behind his head. Still puzzled, he asked, "Cari, I just don't see how we can trust a dream. We've come all this way and joined the army, but we haven't truly seen battle. Do we have to go this far, all for a dream?"

"We have to," said Violet and Cynthia at once.

Cynthia nudged him with her elbow. "Why shouldn't we go this far? It was a dream sent by a deity, Bun. If not for that, how come you and I only ever dream of petty little things like sneaking around or stealing food? We've never dreamed of anything grand like the fate of a kingdom."

"Even if nothing else comes of it, we'll still gain something from the experience. It's good to see more of the world," Violet added.

They all nodded at that, acknowledging it as true. They had spent most of their lives at Meadow Ridge and rarely ventured far from it. What did they really know of the world? Joining the army, even just to see how vast and complex things could be, was already worthwhile.

"So, the plan is to wait for Rod to earn some merit, right? But he's only in training now. How's he supposed to earn merit or become a commander or general?" Bun asked.

"No need to rush. The two kingdoms have already begun to test each other. Skirmishes have started, and before long, real fighting will break out again. When that happens, Rod's unit will go to the front. With his skill, he'll distinguish himself. Once he's promoted, he'll be able to select soldiers from the new recruit camp. That's when we'll follow him," Carissa replied calmly.



"Strange, isn't it? Out of all of us, Rod was always the worst at fighting, and now we're meant to follow him," Bun muttered.

"You sound jealous. Rod may not be the strongest, but he works harder than anyone else. If Cari chose him for this, there's a good reason. Stop doubting," Violet said.

Bun shrugged. "Fine, you're right. We'll do as Cari says."

And sure enough, within a few days, the armies of the two kingdoms clashed at Hollow Ridge. That location lay within Starhaven's borders, so for a battle to break out there meant Westhaven had seriously violated the border agreement.

No one in the new recruit camp knew the exact cause. News traveled slowly where they were, and most of what they discussed came from scraps of hearsay and their own guessing.

Still, things played out just as they had expected, with Travis and the others being sent to the front.

So, it had truly begun.

The memories Carissa carried were too faint now. She couldn't recall the exact date when the war fully broke out, or when Westhaven launched its siege. She only remembered that it was likely sometime in the coming months.

All she could do was stay alert. She didn't know whether Dominic had discovered how many soldiers Westhaven had stationed, nor whether the letter she left for

Vel

Victoria had been of any use. Had the court decided to send troops to Victory Pass early?

The battle at Hollow Ridge lasted for three days. In the end, the Victory Pass troops claimed a sweeping victory, driving the enemy out entirely.

The soldiers and townsfolk alike were overjoyed. From markets to alleyways, everyone was talking about the battle and laughing over how the proud Westhaven troops had been chased away with their tails between their legs.

The excitement even reached the new recruit camp where Carissa was. There, the new soldiers were thrilled to hear that some men had earned rewards and promotions for their bravery. It made them believe that gaining merit on the battlefield would be easy.

But that kind of thinking was dangerous.

The troops at Victory Pass had fought many battles with the Westhaven army. By right, this small win shouldn't have stirred such pride and excitement. It had not been a major battle, after all.

Someone was deliberately fanning the flames. They were trying to turn this minor victory into something greater, perhaps to make the army and the people lower their guard.

But pride in victory often led to defeat.

Thankfully, within a few days, those voices vanished. A few men were even arrested for spreading such talk-it turned out they were spies.

Carissa couldn't help but admire her grandfather again. After all these years spent guarding Victory Pass, not even the smallest shift escaped his notice.

## **Her Graceful War Song #Chapter 1645 - Read Her Graceful War Song Chapter 1645**

Travis had distinguished himself during the battle at Hollow Ridge and was promoted to centurion, giving him command over one hundred men.

He made a request to be allowed to choose soldiers from the fresh recruits and train them himself. At first, Otis refused, noting that the brave and bold Travis was an ideal man to lead elite soldiers at the front lines.

But Travis insisted that, as a man of the martial arts world, he had his own way of training troops. He claimed his methods would best suit the new recruits, and promised he could turn them into fine soldiers, even offering to sign a formal pledge.

Otis waved it off, having no real intention of forcing such a promise. Rare as such talent was, he intended to keep Travis close and train him well. If Travis wished to take on the new recruits, so be it. If it proved too much, he could always return.

Travis happily left for the new recruit camp and began selecting his soldiers. Carissa, Bun, Violet, and Cynthia were chosen right away. Others followed-those with courage, those with clever minds, and those with sharp hands and quick feet. With a full hundred at his back, Travis marched them to the garrison. Should war break out, they would see the battlefield.

At the garrison, news came faster. Travis learned from Otis that reinforcements had already been dispatched to Victory Pass. Leading the reinforcements was Tyler, with his loyal officer, Barrett, riding beside him.

Travis leaned in with a grin. "I've heard there's a lady general among them. She's made quite a name for herself by rooting out bandits. The queen dowager herself has praised her."

Violet and Cynthia were immediately intrigued and pressed him for details.

"I don't know the full story, only that her name is Aurora Yates," Travis admitted. She began training in martial arts at a young age. Her father once served under General Sinclair, that is, until he lost a leg in battle and was sent home with a pension.

"Later, he recommended his daughter for the army. Folks didn't think much of her at first, but it turns out that she's as fierce as a thunderstorm. During the bandit raids, she charged straight into their den and cut off the leader's head with her own hands. Marched back to the capital in glory."

At the mention of Hector, all eyes turned to Carissa.

Her gaze darkened. "She's the lady general from my dream."

A hush fell over the group.

"She's the one who slaughtered the village?" Bun asked, his voice tight with disbelief.

"Don't shout about it," Carissa said firmly. "It was only a dream. Regardless, there's no harm in being cautious around her."

She had told them of the dream, but left out certain parts. She didn't speak of marrying Barrett, nor of how he had later turned away from her and gone to Aurora instead. Those things she kept to herself.

What she chose to share was the most troubling parts-about the great battle at Victory Pass, how Aurora destroyed a few villages and humiliated Westhaven's crown prince, and how these events not only led to the destruction of the Sinclair family, but also plunged the two kingdoms into a bitter deadlock.

"This concerns the whole kingdom. It's only wise to be watchful." Violet added gravely.

Everyone agreed at once.

Over the course of the month,

Westhaven had crossed the border several times, making small, probing incursions. Such tactics were

nothing new. They would continue

the border and slowly edge forward, waiting to see how far they could go.

Each time, Starhaven's troops drove them back. But no major battle had broken out.

Not yet.

However, Carissa knew these moves meant that Liam and Leroy had begun to quarrel. She suspected these incursions were Leroy's doing. And because they were minor enough, Liam tolerated them for now.

But if it happened again and again, Liam would grow careless. When Arthur appeared at the border, Leroy could seize the chance to launch a proper attack.

Having sensed this too, Dominic

sent an envoy to speak with Liam, hoping for a diplomatic resolution. But the envoy was turned away. He wasn't allowed near the camp, not even close enough to deliver a proper message. All he received was a curt reply that there was nothing to discuss.

Dominic suspected then that Liam was no longer in command at the camp. Something must have happened. And if that was the case, Leroy might act at any moment.

Leroy needed a grand victory to win the people's hearts. If he could take Victory Pass and force Starhaven to redraw the border, it would mark him as a hero of the realm.

Dominic issued orders at once—the army was to be ready for battle at any hour.

## **Her Graceful War Song #Chapter 1646 - Read Her Graceful War Song Chapter 1646**

As the army prepared for war, they also ordered the townsfolk near Victory Pass to move further inland, so they might be kept safe from the fighting.

There were several villages beyond the gates that were still part of Starhaven. These people had lived there for generations. In times past, Dominic had urged them to move further inland, but they had always refused.

To them, Victory Pass had clashed with Westhaven many times before. Yet, the conflict had never touched their homes. They believed that leaving now would be the same as abandoning their land, and would rather die than do so.

But this time, Dominic went in person. He promised that if war broke out and their villages were destroyed, his soldiers would help rebuild their homes. Dominic was well-respected and deeply loved by the people. When he spoke, they listened. He spent nearly a whole day talking to them before they finally agreed.

Soldiers were sent to help with the move, with Carissa's unit among those assigned to assist. In just a few days, the resettlement was complete.

Carissa remembered that when full war broke out, the two kingdoms had agreed not to harm civilians. But once the fighting began, looting and forced evictions were bound to happen, and people were sure to get hurt. So, relocating the villagers was the only way to truly keep them safe.

Soon after the move was completed, the reinforcements led by Tyler arrived at Victory Pass. Carissa didn't see Barrett or Aurora, as they were stationed in different divisions.

In the past, war had already begun before the court sent help. But now, the reinforcements had arrived before Westhaven launched its assault, which meant that something had changed. Events were now moving faster than before.

The very next day after the reinforcements came, Westhaven launched its attack on Victory Pass. On the city walls, the defenders raised their ballistae, aiming them at the sea of black-clad soldiers advancing outside the gates.

Victory Pass was a walled stronghold with a double gate system. The outer wall was thick and solid, and the gate was nearly impenetrable. Even if the Westhaven troops managed to force their way past the first gate, they would still be met with another high and unyielding wall that stood ready to stop them.

To break through Victory Pass, Westhaven would need at least twice the number of troops. And clearly, they had them. What was more, their spirits burned high. They came with the fierce resolve of men who would not rest until the city fell.

Victory Pass sent nearly all its forces to defend the gates, including

line

Carissa and her friends. They were but new recruits, and by rights should have remained in the rear for support. However, because of Travis' past valor, Otis had taken a liking to him and granted his request to fight at the front, so his entire unit was allowed to join the vanguard.

Tyler's reinforcements had only just arrived. After a long and hurried march, the men were weary and had not yet rested before being flung into the fray. It was plain that many among them were already spent.

Westhaven's soldiers came on strong, with numbers that far surpassed those of Victory Pass. By the second day of battle, the outer gate had been broken.

Once inside the first wall, the enemy met a deadly volley from the

ballistae. But Westhaven's troops e. But

put up ladders to scale the inner

walls, and their soldiers et

climbed one

after another. The black mass of their helmets and heads surged like a swarm of hornets. No matter how many were killed, they kept coming and never backed down.

Soon, the ballistae broke down from overuse and could not be repaired in

time. Archers rotated in and out,

volley after volley, but there were too many casualties. Too many had fallen, and too many were wounded. And still, Westhaven pressed on relentlessly, hurling rocks from their catapults in continuous waves.

Leroy was desperate to claim Victory Pass. It was his chance to prove himself to the people of Westhaven, to secure his standing and challenge his brother. He couldn't afford to stop; he needed a swift and decisive victory.

By the second day, Victory Pass had sent out all its soldiers. The cost in lives and weapons was heavy. By the third day, most of the ballistae and catapults were broken. If things carried on like this, it was only a matter of time before the city fell.

Sure enough, by the fourth day, the sound of the battering ram pounding on the gate shook the whole city. The gate was starting to give way. If the troops of Victory Pass couldn't hold the walls, then they must take the fight outside.

Dominic resolved to lead the charge himself. He would move the line of battle beyond the city and meet the enemy on open ground. They couldn't let Westhaven through the gate, and definitely not into the streets or the heart of the city. If the fighting reached the alleys and houses, all control would be lost.

## **Her Graceful War Song #Chapter 1647 - Read Her Graceful War Song Chapter 1647**

The army stood at full attention as Dominic addressed them to lift the spirits of every soldier present.

When he finished speaking, he raised his sword high and called out, "All soldiers of Starhaven! Fear no danger, fear no death! We swear to defend every inch of Starhaven's land and protect every soul beneath her skies!"

The men erupted with thunderous cries, their arms raised in unison as they echoed, "Fear no danger! Fear no death! We swear to defend every inch of Starhaven's land and protect every soul beneath her skies!"

Carissa stood among them, her voice raised with the rest. She was positioned further back in the ranks and couldn't clearly see her grandfather's face. However, she saw the way his cloak whipped in the wind, his posture proud and upright.

Dominic looked every inch the commanding general.

Carissa remembered the stories of the battle at Victory Pass well. While defending the city, her grandfather had been struck by an arrow and barely survived. Meanwhile, her seventh uncle died in that same war, and her third uncle lost an arm saving Barrett.

Carissa might not have the power to change all that was to come, but she would give everything she had to try.

The sound of drums and horns rang out, shaking all of Victory Pass. As the gates on either side of the main wall opened wide, soldiers surged forward with weapons in hand.

Carissa carried a long spear and had a small blade hidden in her sleeve. Travis and the others were likewise armed, their eyes steady as they rushed forth with the vanguard.

Travis had seen battle before, and Carissa carried memories of a lifetime of war. However, Violet and the rest had never known such scenes. Still, courage held fast in their hearts, leaving them with nothing to fear.

Soon, the clash of weapons rang in the air, along with the cries of men locked in combat.

Carissa spun her spear and struck true, driving it straight into the chest of an enemy soldier. Then, she shoved forward and knocked several more off their feet. Without pausing, she leapt into the air, planted her foot on the head of another man, and in the same motion, yanked the spear loose and swept it forward in a wide arc. The blade sliced clean across a soldier's throat, sending blood spraying into the air.

To others, it might have seemed as though she took lives with ease. But they didn't know that killing enemies had become muscle memory for her, resulting in her actions being faster than her thoughts.

Truthfully, Carissa had not seen many battles. After years of peace across the realm, it was only when Sandoria had once again threatened the Southern Frontier that she returned to the battlefield and fought for a few short months.

And yet, there were some things that carved themselves into the soul. Once there, they never faded.

Though the battle raged on and every soldier fought with all their might, Carissa's bravery stood out plainly amidst the chaos. Even in such a frenzied field, there were eyes that noticed her.

Wade was one of them. He watched her for quite a while, squinting through dust and blood before he finally recognized his niece.

Fearing for her safety, he rushed toward her with his blade drawn, only for an enemy sword to suddenly strike out at him. He quickly raised his own weapon to parry, but Carissa's spear had already found the enemy's chest before he could counter.

Seeing how swift and skilled she was, Wade sighed in relief and quickly said, "Be careful. Staying alive is what matters most."

"I got it," Carissa replied.

There was no time for more talking, as the enemy pressed in too fiercely. They had no choice but to charge forward with their weapons.

As she fought, Carissa steadily

made her way toward Wyatt. Before the battle began, she had already told Travis and the others to keep a close watch on Dominic and Wade. If either of them were to fall here, there would be no making it right.

Meanwhile, Carissa was making her way toward Wyatt because she didn't want him to lose an arm protecting Barrett again.

She wore the plain garb of a

common soldier, her face streaked

with dust and ash. Wyatt didn't

recognize her, but he saw her cutting through enemy ranks with ease. Her spear struck true, and her

footing was light and sure. She slipped past heavy swords like she was dancing, then turned and struck her foes down without pause.

He couldn't help but feel a deep appreciation for her skill. But the fighting was too fierce and dangerous for him to spare another glance, so he stayed focused on the battle.



Carissa didn't see Barrett or Aurora around. They were probably further back, nowhere near Wyatt. Still, the enemy was unusually fierce, and she ended up saving her uncle several times.

At one point, she ran her spear through two men. Just then, another enemy spotted her unarmed. With a savage grin, he raised his blade high and rushed at her.

Wyatt had already fought his way a distance ahead. When he turned and saw the glinting blade swinging down at Carissa, his heart clenched. He wanted to help, but knew he wouldn't make it in time.

Wyatt braced for the worst, but it wasn't Carissa who fell.

She braced her spear with one hand and drove a short blade straight into the enemy's chest with the other.

"Good!" Wyatt couldn't help but shout in praise.

## **Her Graceful War Song #Chapter 1648 - Read Her Graceful War Song Chapter 1648**

The battle raged on all day, leaving the soldiers drenched in blood and sweat. As the sky darkened, the Westhaven army finally withdrew from the inner city. However, the city's walls and gates had been badly damaged. They no longer stood strong enough to keep the enemy out.

Though they had retreated for the night, the Westhaven soldiers would surely return at dawn. It was only the cover of darkness that forced their retreat. As they left, they didn't take the bodies of their fallen soldiers. Instead, they poured oil over the corpses and set them aflame.

It wasn't just the dead Westhaven soldiers that burned in the fire, some fallen Victory Pass soldiers were caught in the blaze too. Dominic hurried to save as many as he could, unwilling to let his comrades turn to ash alongside the enemy.

But the flames spread quickly, fed by the oil, so he only managed to rescue a few bodies. Most were burnt beyond recognition, their faces and features lost to the fire. It was impossible to tell who was friend and who was foe. They had no choice but to bury them all together.

After the battle, Wyatt wanted to find that brave young soldier he had seen fighting so well. When he couldn't find that person, he guessed the soldier must have been sent to help bury the dead.

Indeed, Carissa and others were tasked with that grim duty. She was no stranger to burying soldiers, but for many of the others, it was their first experience. Their hearts struggled to accept the horror of it all.

Not even Barrett, who had not been on a battlefield for some time, could escape the heavy weight upon his spirits. Together, they dug a large pit for the fallen. Carissa saw Barrett and Aurora nearby, but the man didn't recognize her.

The flickering firelight revealed charred bodies piled high. Their faces were unrecognizable and their clothes had fused with the burnt flesh, filling the air with a harsh smell of smoke and blood. When the pit was ready, they began lowering the bodies in. Some desperately tried to identify their own, hoping to separate Victory Pass soldiers from the rest.

Carissa watched quietly, then heard Aurora say, "Stop looking. Let's finish this quickly so we may rest."

Carissa looked up and saw Barrett searching through the pile. Aurora was following behind him, holding his arm.

"We left the capital together. Now that they have fallen, I want to see if I can find anyone I know," Barrett said, his voice heavy with sorrow.

"What good is it to recognize them? They will be buried here all the same. It's a waste of time and accomplishes nothing. Identifying them won't bring us any honor; it only slows us down. We must work quickly. Tomorrow will likely bring another fierce battle," Aurora replied.

"If we find them, we can dig a new grave and separate them from the rest. Your cousin was lost too. Don't you want to find him?" Barrett asked.

"Once on the battlefield, we must all be prepared to die," Aurora answered. "Barrett, it is good to care for others, but there is a time and place for such feelings. Right now, what we need most is rest. And truly, it is unreasonable. We've come all this way as reinforcements, and then we are given these petty tasks? We are not common soldiers."

.n

Though she spoke with authority, hint of complaint lingered in her voice. After all, she had been praised by the queen dowager. To be treated as a mere soldier seemed beneath her.

Some who heard her words grew annoyed.

"Whether we find them or not is one thing. But the effort itself is what matters," one man retorted sharply.

"Getting emotional is useless. If you have time for that, you should spend it preparing for tomorrow's battle," Aurora answered coolly.

"What? Useless?!"

The man stepped forward angrily, ready to argue. But Aurora flipped him clean over her shoulder and tossed him straight into the pit.

Standing at the edge, she looked down at him and coldly said, "Now tell me, are you useless or not?"

Violet saw this and moved to stop her, but Carissa held her back firmly. "Let it be. Finishing the task is what matters."

When Barrett heard Carissa's voice, he turned to look at her. The sweat had washed away the dirt and ash from her face, revealing a pale, clean complexion.

Barrett blinked in surprise and blurted out, "Lady Sinclair?"

Violet, Cynthia, and Carissa all wore men's clothing to hide their identities. Hearing Barrett call her friend by that title, Violet's face.

darkened. "Who are you calling net

lady? Be gone and mind your own business."

Aurora glanced at Carissa and Violet before turning back to Barrett with a slight smile. "What lady? Your eyes must be deceiving you. Now, let's finish the work quickly."

## **Her Graceful War Song #Chapter 1649 - Read Her Graceful War Song Chapter 1649**

Carissa hadn't expected Barrett to recognize her at a glance. Still, it didn't trouble her much. As long as her grandfather and uncles were not here, her identity was safe.

She took Violet and the others to a different area, hastening the task of tending to the fallen soldiers' bodies.

By midnight, seven large pits were filled. Once they were covered, the soldiers gathered silently to pay their respects. Some wept quietly, while others bore heavy sorrow in their hearts, and some were filled with fierce anger.

Otis ordered everyone to rest, while he stayed behind to count the troops and record the fallen in the official death register. The men left one after another, speaking very little.

Carissa walked ahead of Barrett and Aurora, but could hear their low conversation behind her.

"That's the lady you asked to marry? Are you sure? Why would a lady of such noble birth be on the battlefield?"

"No mistake. That's her."

Aurora sneered. "And why are you looking so gloomy? She refused your proposal and clearly doesn't think much of you. Yet here you are, looking all heartbroken."

"It's not like that," Barrett replied, his voice tinged with anger. "So many of our comrades have fallen. How can I not be sad?"

Listening to them, Carissa felt that something was off. As far as she remembered, Barrett and Aurora were supposed to have fallen for each other at Victory Pass. By now, he should have been completely drawn to her bold and unconventional nature.

But no matter their story, Carissa's own mission was to prevent the tragedy at Fawnrun City.

Barrett and Aurora were still talking behind her, and the latter was clearly displeased.

"Both you and I are officers of rank, yet here we are burying the dead. Such tasks should fall to the logistic soldiers," Aurora complained.

"Where do you think the logistic soldiers are? Weren't they all sent to the front lines too?" Barrett whispered. "Please just stop talking, okay?"

"Victory Pass doesn't have enough troops, and we're clearly outmatched. How are we supposed to win this? The court should've sent more reinforcements," said Aurora.

Violet nudged Carissa. "You really know them? How?"

"Just by chance. Not well enough to say I truly know them. Let's not mind them. Come on, let's go," Carissa answered.

They quickened their pace back to the barracks. Once inside, they collapsed onto the wooden bunks, exhaustion crashing over them like a tidal wave. Each tried to clear their mind of all thoughts, focusing only on getting a good rest.

Tomorrow's battle would demand everything of them.

At Stormwatch Keep, Wyatt spoke excitedly to his brothers about the young soldier he had seen that day.

"Though he's a bit small in stature, his skills are exceptional and his courage unmatched. He took down countless enemies and even saved me a few times. I don't know whose command he's under, but I'm definitely bringing him into my vanguard if I see him tomorrow," he said, assuming the person was a man.

Upon hearing of the small stature and great skill, Wade guessed who the soldier likely was. He glanced toward the door, relieved their father was not present. If Dominic learned that Carissa

had joined the army and that Wade had helped her register under a false name, the older man might be furious enough to strike him down.

"War is no place for reckless courage. On the battlefield, being too skilled can be dangerous. It makes you a target for attacks. You can't just show off blindly," Wade said sternly.

"You didn't see him in action," Wyatt

said with a wave of his hand,

dismissing the claim. "He's highly skilled but also cautious and quick to sense danger. He can even predict which direction the enemy's blade will come from. He slayed many without getting so much as a scratch on himself. He's a natural warrior! If we train him well, he could really achieve great things."

Wallace, who was listening eagerly, chimed in: "Is he really such a prodigy? Then, we must definitely train him well."

"If you knew who she truly was, you'd never let her fight," Wade muttered under his breath, then turned and strode toward the door.

"Where are you going? I haven't finished. Also, what were you mumbling about?" Wyatt called after him.

"I'm going to see Dad," Wade replied as he left briskly.

Before dawn the next day, the soldiers were given their daily rations. They ate quickly, strapped on their armor, and took up their weapons.

They weren't going to wait for the Westhaven army to attack. This time, they were taking the initiative to strike first.

## **Her Graceful War Song #Chapter 1650 - Read Her Graceful War Song Chapter 1650**

The drums of war thundered as the battle raged fiercely. The Westhaven soldiers were even more desperate than they had been the day before. They charged forward recklessly, as if their lives depended on it.

Leroy didn't join the fight himself but stayed behind to command the troops. Carissa wanted to capture the leader to end the war, but it was impossible with him hiding away.

With their forces so uneven, only Dominic leading the charge at the front could inspire the troops' courage. Carissa worried greatly for him, as she was afraid he might be struck by an arrow. Even if it risked revealing her identity, she pressed through the crowd to stay close by his side.

The sons of the Sullivan family guarded Dominic as well, their spirits lifted by his presence. Together, they charged into battle. Meanwhile, Carissa focused entirely on her foes, one after another falling to her spear.

Dominic noticed her but didn't recognize her at first. When an arrow suddenly flew toward him, she leapt up and spun her spear to deflect it. As she glanced back, Dominic finally saw who she was and started in surprise.

The battle was too fierce for more words, but he called out to her: "Be careful."

Carissa knew she had been found out, but calmly responded, "Got it."

As night fell, the fighting came to an end for the day again, leaving tired horses and weary soldiers counting the wounded and the dead. Smoke hung thick over Victory Pass.

Carissa was brought back to Stormwatch Keep and sharply scolded by Dominic. Even so, she stubbornly refused to leave for the capital. Her clothes and face were bloodstained. Though the blood was the enemy's, it still made Dominic uneasy. Yet, no matter how he urged her, she wouldn't relent.

"You're reckless and willful. If your mother knew, how worried she would be! Have you no thought for her?" he snapped, growing frustrated.

"My only reason for being here is this battle." Carissa lifted her head. "Grandpa, General Leroy is eager to take Victory Pass. He fears General Liam's return.

"I know your plan is to hold out until General Liam comes back, but no one knows

if he might have fallen into a trap, or something worse. We cannot hold on long. For now, the best course is to march to Fawncity and burn their supplies. Without food, they won't dare attack again."

Sitting nearby, Wyatt was stunned by her words. "How do you know I mentioned that to Wallace?"

The night before, they had gathered the generals to discuss that very plan. Could Otis have leaked it?

Carissa said nothing about how she knew the plan. Instead, she bowed slightly and declared, "I'm willing to lead the troops to Fawnrn City to burn their supply stores."

Dominic's eyes widened in disbelief. "Lead the troops? You're just a new recruit. You have no right to command soldiers."

"If I cannot lead, then I shall go with them," Carissa replied firmly.

"You're not allowed to go," Dominic said at once.

Carissa said no more. She turned on her heel and hurried outside to fetch Travis and the others. Together, they came to request permission. Carissa also suggested inviting a few generals to attend, so that she and her friends might have the opportunity to showcase their talents and prove their worth.

At first, Dominic refused, but Wyatt suggested they at least hear them out.

Reluctantly, Dominic agreed and called the generals inside.

Though Violet was not one to show off before others, she heeded Carissa's words and performed a set of sword techniques. Her

movements were graceful, yet el. nee

every

stroke carried the hidden edge of

deadly intent.

When she finished, Carissa wiped the sweat from her brow and humbly said, "We have all trained in martial arts since childhood. Though not the very best, we're skilled enough to be counted among the finest. Sneaking into Fawnrn City is dangerous, but we have the skill to see it done. We don't need more troops. The more people sent, the greater the risk."

Dominic and his sons said nothing, while the other generals looked stunned. None had expected such skill from these young ones. The moves they had just shown were but a glimpse of their true ability.

The idea to send a small group into Fawnrn City had been discussed the day before by Wyatt and Wallace, but they had feared the odds were too low. They didn't know how many troops it would take to succeed.

After all, Fawnrn City was part of Westhaven's territory. If those sent were discovered, no help could come, and they would be lost.

