

Zompiewolf 101

Chapter 101 - Oh Shoot! (2)

"Oi! What the hell is going on here?"

"If it was a draw, we should at least get our money back!"

"Nah, fck this. They must have staged all of this. There's no way that Vince guy would have jumped out of bounds on his own accord."

Following the momentary silence, the crowd went berserk. No announcement had been made regarding the bets everyone had placed, and yet the people were going berserk thinking they lost their money for good. Seeing as the crowd was about to get out of control, the event overseer or the manager as he was referred to, called for backup.

The moment the crowd saw the mercenaries making their way inside, all of them immediately calmed down. They were still upset about their money, But fck their money, their lives were far more important.

Moreover, none of them wanted to get on the wrong side of the market owners either. As that would leave them getting banned from ever placing bets again. At least in person.

Once everyone had calmed down, the announcer got on the stage along with Ashton and Baiter. Since there was no clear winner, they should have declared the match as a draw. At least that would have happened a decade ago when the last draw match was registered in the database.

But now, they had increased their budget and thus had already placed high motion cameras, alongside the arena. The market owners had been wanting to expand their business for a while and since they had the funds, they were about to start a streaming service and open settings globally. But for now, everything was in a sort of beta-testing phase.

Still, it was the perfect opportunity for them to test whether the cameras and other pieces of equipment were of any use or not.

"What an exciting match it was! Hehe...he..." The announcer wanted to cheer the crowd up, but with the mercenaries being there, it was a difficult thing to do, "Ahem, so moving on, I think all of us are excited to know who was the winner of such a thrilling match, right?"

"..."

There was no response this time either.

"Without any further ado, let's check the footage... you boring mofos."

The announcer snapped his finger, and the next moment, multiple screens dropped down from the ceiling for everyone to watch the result with their eyes. In slow motion.

'Well, looks like they really spend a lot of money here.' Ashton thought to himself, 'Damn, if I had known this would happen, I wouldn't;t have jumped out in the first place.'

Before jumping out of the arena, Ashton thought if they'll end up with a draw, they'll either get their money back or will have to start the match again. He would have been happy with either result. But he had not expected them to decide a victor like this.

'Although I jumped after this Master Baiter did, I'm not sure if I hit the ground first or not.'

By now Ashton was a bit worried. While he could afford to lose the money, he really didn't want to. Well, because money was money after all!

One could never have enough of it. Those who said otherwise were plain liars. On top of that, he did not want to miss out on the chance to get a new weapon for 'Vince'.

As the recording started playing out, it became clear who had won the match. Because of the leg Baiter was holding on to, one of Ashton's feet touched the ground before Baiter's did. But his second foot touched the ground only after Baiter's entire body had touched the ground.

This could have led to another controversy, but the announcer immediately used his brain cells to remind everyone of the rules of elimination. The person whose both feet touches the ground first was eliminated, which meant, Baiter had lost the match.

There were some whispers about whether the decision was right or not, but ultimately there was nothing they could have done with the mercenaries present there.

"Congratulations to the guy with the lame name Vince for winning such an exciting match! Sarcasm most definitely intended. Do not forget to claim your winnings before leaving." The announcer announced and once again scurried away.

With that, the match came to an end and although Ashton did not earn as much exp as he would have wanted to, there was something more important than victory which he could still gain.

As Ashton headed to the counter to claim his prize, he realised the troubled look on Baiter's face. That look was exactly what Ashton had been waiting for. It was time for him to make his move. He walked up to the man who was checking his broken and dented armour.

"What do you want now? Came here to rub your victory in my face?" Baiter said in a downed voice. The loss was affecting him more than Ashton thought.

Ashton didn't say a word and transferred Baiter 20,000 blue units, about half of what he had won. Baiter was surprised and jumped up as soon as he got the notification. But his reaction soon faded away and he stared deep into Ashton's eyes.

"I don't need anyone's charity." He mumbled and even though he needed the money, he was about to transfer them back when Ashton stopped him.

"I don't care what they say, I know it was a draw." Ashton smirked, "As far as I am concerned, I'm just giving you what should have been yours either way. On top of that, I already have a reward I can claim so... I got what I wanted in the first place."

Baiter was stunned. He had been fighting here for weeks, ever since getting his first class, but this was the first time he had come across such a fighter. It wasn't surprising that this was his first experience though.

Most of the fighters who fought here had their circumstances. While the rest just fought for fun. There were a lot of things going on in Baiter's mind. But the thing that came out of his mouth was...

"Thank... you, you have no idea how much I needed this money."

"I knew you needed money for something." Ashton smiled before patting the man on his shoulders, "Otherwise you would have invested more money on your armour and get proper materials for it. I can sense you have some extraordinary talent and it would be a waste to see it not get utilised properly. So, I'm glad I could help you out just a bit."

"You are quite observant young fella, aren't you." Baiter wiped away his tears, "I'll remember this generosity of yours. Whenever you need me, just call me and I'll be at your service!"

"Don't worry about it. I'll rather have you as a friend than be your benefactor. But I'll take you up on your offer." Ashton replied and left after exchanging contact info with Baiter, 'Looks like mission 'Bait the Baiter' was a success.'

When Ashton said he knew about Baiter's talent and potential, he wasn't kidding. Having a creationist as an ally was worth much more than the 20k blue units he just spent. Thanks to Baiter, Ashton now had a dependable source to get his weapons and armours from, in future. That is, as long as he could provide Baiter with enough materials.

"Soon even that won't be a problem. But for now, everything was right on track. The slaves are under control and I got an 'ally' as well.. Things have started to look up for me."

Well, maybe things were not looking as good as Ashton was thinking. A moment later he was shrouded in troubles once again. This time, the trouble came in the form of a... human. As Ashton was on his way back to the Academy, a guy bumped into him.

Although he was disguised as a werewolf, Ashton knew the man was no werewolf but a human. After all, werewolves did not require dentures. At least, as far as Ashton was aware of. He used [Detection] and sure enough, the man was definitely a human.

"The hell-" Ashton was shocked to see a human running on a street filled with werewolves.

However, before he could do ask or do anything about the situation, he was immediately cornered by half a dozen people. All of them were wearing the same uniform the two people Ashton had seen before in the academy.

He was confused and didn't know what was going on until one of the men surrounding them yelled at the top of his lungs.

"Don't move, you terrorists! It's better to surrender yourselves!"

It was only then Ashton realised the people had their weapons drawn and were ready to kill him along with the black-haired human. Soon, a crowd gathered around them as well, and it didn't look like they had any good intentions either.

"I knew it! These bastards could not have gotten inside Contingent without any inside help." The man with massive goggles covering his face said, "See this werewolf, helping the bastard human out."

The others remained silent, Ashton couldn't believe how rotten his luck could get within moments. Just a second ago he was feeling as if nothing could have stopped him. But now, well, he had landed in a fcked up situation.

"Look, I don't know what you're trying to imply, but I don't know this man." Ashton raised both of his hands above his head, "I was just walking out of there and this man just ran into me-"

"Shut it!"

Suddenly a squeaky voice came from behind, Ashton turned around to see who this new troublesome person was. It was the same man and the girl whom Ashton had seen talking with the Director a few hours ago.

The girl still vividly stared a hole in him, but this time Ashton did not feel uncomfortable, unlike before. Instead, her gaze was unusually cold. At that moment, Ashton realised he had not reverted his facial features back to normal after leaving the market. Maybe that's why they could not recognise him.

"So these people have their hands within the academy as well, huh..." Cap mumbled before taking out a couple of his knives, "No wonder that beast was able to get inside and out of the arena without any troubles."

"Tsk, these kids these days... it's so easy to bribe them. I'm sure the resistance would have offered the kid a few skill pages and he started working for them." Someone else commented.

"Why are you wasting time like this?" The woman with red hair and an eye patch asked the Cap, "Let's just kill the bastard and get it over with. We can take the kid in for interrogation instead."

"Oi, oi, oi! I'm telling you, you are mistaken! I don't-" Ashton tried his best to explain the situation to the officers around him, but once again he was interrupted.

However, this time he was interrupted by the human, who sprang back to his feet and put a syringe right next to Ashton's neck.

"Let me go, or this fcker dies right now!" The human roared at the top of his lungs.

"Yeah, nice move dumbass." The man who appeared to be just as short as Professor Kakaroff scoffed, "You think if you put the syringe on your comrade's neck, we will let you go?"

"Hold it." The one everyone was referring to as Cap told everyone, "Lower your weapons."

"But Captain-" The redhead tried to argue but was immediately shut down.

"Scarlett, do as I told." The cap barked at his soldiers, "Can't you morons see, the syringe contains the 'venom'. If exposed, even being in its vicinity would kill us all. Also, there's no way, these human bastards would take one of their comrades as a hostage. Even to save their own skin. The kid seems to be innocent..."

Upon hearing that the syringe contained the 'Venom', the crowd around them immediately dispersed. Ashton did not know that this Venom was, but judging from everyone's reaction, it wasn't something that should have been so close to him.

Initially, Ashton was planning on disassociating himself from the surrounding, clearing the suspicions that were on him and making a clean break from this mess. But it didn't seem like that was an option anymore.

On top of that, Ashton was a bit intrigued about what this 'Venom' thingy was, after all, he had never seen such a thing before. Also, if the thing could scare so many werewolves away from itself, then it was definitely something Ashton would like to get his hands on.

'Well, that's it. I have had enough of this crap.' Ashton gritted his teeth in frustration based on the situation.

The more he wanted to help the humans, the more they kept testing his limits. First the slaves and now this man. He was being kind after knowing there was a human there. But that was until Ashton got to know that the man was indulging in some not so nice things.

Hell, the more he got to know about how the humans actually were, the more he seem to understand why the heck were they being treated like a plague on the planet. Also, as much as he did not want to put his hands on the human, he needed to clear his name right then and there, or else god knows what the mistress would do to him this time.

"Oi, didn't you see where I was coming from?" Ashton mumbled sternly.

"Shut the fck up kid!" The man was panicking as his grip around Ashton's neck got tighter and tighter, "Just get me out of here and then I-I'll let you go."

"And I thought I am the only moron here..." Ashton mumbled to himself... before grabbing onto the man's hand and planting the back of his head right on his nose.

No one there had expected Ashton to pull off something like that. The man was staggered and forced to take a couple of steps back. As soon as the terrorist was away from Ashton, the rest of the crew jumped the man, forcing the syringe out of his hand before tying him up using metal cuffs and chains.

Ashton thought it was the best moment for him to make an exit. However, there was one set of eyes, still on him.

"Hold it. You are not going anywhere just yet.." the girls with pink bow and arrows stopped Ashton before he could slip out of there, "Not until the Cap says otherwise."

Chapter 103 - Would You Like To Join Us?

In the minutes that followed, Ashton had no idea what was going on there. But from what he saw, he could infer that things were not going to end on good terms for the man. As for what the Venom was, Ashton had no idea.

The special officers, as they referred to themselves, had already confiscated the syringe before he even got a chance to use Detection in the syringe. However, after seeing how everyone around them reacted upon learning that the syringe had venom in it, it was probably a well-known substance.

Thus Rose should be able to tell him what it was. But at the moment, Ashton had some other things he had to worry about. The duration for his [Alteration] skill was rapidly running out.

In five or so minutes, his face would automatically turn back to its original form. If he did not get out of there before that, there was no way these officers would believe anything he had to say.

After all, who would believe someone who could change their faces with a snap of their fingers? If anything, these special officers would be more suspicious of him and would probably even take him into custody. That was something Ashton could not allow to happen.

But there was little he could have done. The bow-carrying girl named Miya had already told him he was not getting out of there before talking to their captain, the man with the knives.

"Not that I mind hanging out with you people, but don't you think cuffing me up just for a meeting is going a little overboard?" Ashton mumbled rattling the chains in his hands, "You do know detaining an innocent civilian is a punishable offence, right? You can go to jail for this. Or at least get fined."

"You are not considered to be 'detained' until and unless you are inside a police station," Miya replied and began blowing up the bubblegum in her mouth, "don't you, dumbass?"

"..."

Ashton shook his head and resigned his fate in the hands of time. What else could he have possibly done? After all, all of them were level 30 or above. He could barely fight a level 15 or maybe a level 20 guy. How was he supposed to take on all of them on his own? Just thinking about it was suicidal.

Thankfully, his stars appeared to be shining a bit brighter. The next moment, the so-called captain of their squad, finally headed in their direction after putting the man to sleep.

"Why is he cuffed up?" The captain asked Miya as soon as he saw the cuffs on Ashton's hand.

"I was worried he would run away. Not that I would have minded watching his ugly-ass trying to do so." Miya replied with a snark in her voice.

"If you were worried about him running away, you should have chained his legs together... not the hands." Captained sighed heavily while shaking his head, "Get the chains off of him. I already know he is innocent."

"How do you know that?" Ashton couldn't help but ask.

But he wasn't curious about it or anything. He just wanted to know whether the man had some sort of lie detection skill. Because if he did then the boy he was fcked.

"When you work in this line for long enough, you know when someone is lying or not. For example, that terrorist guy over there was trying his best to get you caught up in this mess. And I have never seen a human do that before."

The Captain continued, "In fact, they usually do the opposite. Also, I can see the slave bands around your wrist. The humans would never work with someone who had human slaves. So, it's just a simple deduction."

'Damn, he is quite observant. If I did not have the slave bands... I would have been fcked for real.'
Ashton smiled in relief.

He had done all that on impulse, but at the end of the day, his impulsive actions had saved him. As weird as it sounded, Ashton was so thankful to Duncan and Daniella for signing the slave contract, that he would actually let them have some food tonight.

"So can I leave?" Ashton asked the Captain while rubbing his wrists to ease the blood flow there.

"You can, but before that, I have something I'd like to talk to you about."

"Um sure... How can I help?"

"I would like you to join us."

"Wha-?"

To say that Cap's suggestion left him quite baffled would have been an understatement. This man wanted someone he barely knew on his team? For real? It seemed like he wasn't the only one who had been baffled either way. Miya had a similar reaction as he did.

"What are you talking about?" She almost screamed at the captain, "We barely know this guy for Lycaon's sake!"

"Shut it, Miya." Cap pointed a finger at her and she immediately obeyed, "I didn't know you either when I recruited you, did I? So what's it gonna be, Mr?"

"Vince. Just Vince." Ashton hurriedly replied, "I would be glad to help you out, but as you can see, I'm just a student. What can I possibly do to help you?"

"Let's just say, there are some places where even we, as the special terrorist response force can't enter. Places like the academy. I assume you are aware of the death of three students during the ranking examination?"

Ashton nodded his head.

"Yeah, as it was the doing of the resistance, we would like to investigate the academy. But there's a slight problem in it-"

"We can not enter the academy without the permission of the Director, and for some reason, she is not allowing us to do so." Miya chimed in, "That along with her past involvement with the humans, makes us suspicious that she might have something to do with the attack."

"And that's why I would like to have someone on our side investigating the place. Someone who does not need permission to enter the academy." Cap finished explaining his reasoning, "So, would you like to help us out?"

Ashton was lost in his thoughts. On one hand, it was a perfect opportunity to misguide the investigation while being on the team. Also, if he played his hands right, he could also get an upper hand on the Director. After all, he would be able to frame her for it.

All in all, it was too good of an opportunity to pass up. But if he immediately agreed to it, it might seem suspicious as well.

"Um... that's a lot to take in. Would you mind if I take some time to make the decision?" Ashton finally replied after a couple of minutes.

"Sure, take as much time as you want. Here, you can contact me on this number to let us know about your decision." The captain handed him his contact information, "You can leave now, and try not to get in some other mess. The other captains might not be as lenient as I am."

"I'll keep that in mind." Ashton smiled and ran away from there.. The duration of [Alteration] skill was almost up.

Chapter 104 - Venom (1)

As soon as Ashton got inside the Academy, he immediately went to his room. Thanks to the potion Ashton spent on Duncan, the slave was already back on his feet and helping Daniella around with her

part of chores. They seemed to be enjoying their time together, but when they noticed Ashton was back, they immediately jumped back.

It would seem Ashton had left quite a mental mark on them after what he did to them. Which wasn't surprising, to be honest. However, Ashton did not acknowledge their presence and rushed into the shower.

He was covered in sweat and dirt which he would like to get rid of as soon as he could. Also, he had a lot of things he needed to do and think about.

First, he had to have Rose take a good look at the relic he got as a reward for winning the battle. Since, unlike the last time, Ashton was not a part of the main event of underground battles, he was not allowed to freely choose a reward.

Instead, he was given a rusty black dagger as a fixed reward. However, when he tried using [Detection] on the dagger, the only thing that popped up in front of him was the name of the dagger and nothing else. But the name itself was intriguing enough. Especially after his encounter with Venom, since the dagger was named, "The Dagger of Venom".

Ashton did not know whether the venom in both the cases was related to each other or not, but after getting a proper appraisal, he should be able to know more about the weapon. Still, he had quite high expectations from the weapon because it was the first time disclosing a weapon's details has failed him.

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Item: The Dagger of Venom

Type: Weapon

> Damage: Unknown (Appraisal needed)

Stats bonus: Unknown (Appraisal needed)

Rarity: Unknown (Appraisal needed)

Description: The Level of [Detection] skill is too low to view this information. Please get this artefact appraised by a master Appraiser/Creationist to view this information.

Effect(s): Unknown (Appraisal needed)

—

"It was weird for the prompt to say to get the weapon appraised by an appraiser or creationist." Ashton mumbled as the water drenched his body, "Also, I don't know how to level up my [Detection] skill so that I can get rid of this stupid thing from happening again. Whatever, I think Rose can help with this, which brings me to the next thing."

The second thing he wanted to know about was Venom itself. He wanted to know what it was and just why the heck was everyone scared shitless just by its mention. If it was some kind of superweapon or shit, then Ashton needed to have it.

Not to misuse it or anything, but if he had some of it with him, his plans to eliminate the mistress and get his revenge on everyone else would be pushed forward by ginormous steps. However, he had a feeling something like that was too good to happen. Still, it wouldn't harm him to try and get his hands on some of it.

And last but not the least, he had to make a decision regarding the proposal of joining the special force or not. At a glance, the opportunity definitely seemed to be worth it. If he made his moves correctly, he could even get rid of the Mistress or at least make their lives hell.

On top of that, the authority he would gain by becoming a part of them would make his life in the academy a bit easier. After all, he could always misuse his powers to frame those noble bastards.

But Ashton was sure the authority would come to him with strings attached, and he hated these kinds of powers. Thankfully, he had a lot of time to think about it.

Ashton turned off the shower and walked outside. Duncan and Daniella were still busy cleaning up the mess Ashton had made earlier so he did not bother them and got dressed into his spare uniform, before heading out once again.

Although he wanted to meet Rose as soon as possible and get his doubts cleared up, she was busy teaching a class. After all, just because Ashton was given a day off, didn't mean everyone was free to meet him.

So he headed to the place that could have the answers to his questions. The central library. Although the students had been given a tour of the facilities available to them, it was the first time Ashton had gone inside the library by himself.

From the outside, the library appeared to be the oldest building within the academy and had some weird markings etched into the walls. Also, the building was entirely made up of white marble, which was certainly not the easiest material to work with.

On the inside, however, the building was just like the other buildings. There was enough space for over a thousand students to study there in peace. Also, with more than ten thousand books stored there, it was impossible to run out of things to read. Hell, Ashton was wondering if there was anyone who could have read all of those books within their three-year course.

After gawking at the magnificence of the interior, Ashton headed towards the counter. After all, with so many books there, he needed to know which section he had to look in to find something about venom. Otherwise, he would keep roaming mindlessly around the numerous corridors and sections looking for the right books.

"What do you want?" The old lady sitting behind the counter rudely asked him as soon as he approached her.

"I'm looking for a book-"

"Oh wow. I thought you were here looking for a weapon. I'm so glad it's a book though..." The librarian sighed, "What's the name of the book?"

"You see, I'm not aware-"

"Genre?"

"Potions or poison, I guess..."

"Potion books are in section 5, second floor." The librarian gave him the directions and immediately got back to her work... whatever it was, "If you don't find whatever you are looking for there, then leave. Do not go into the restricted area. That is if you don't mind getting expelled because of it."

"Damn... who shat in her morning coffee?" Ashton ignored her remarks and headed towards the second floor.

An hour later...

"Nope, nope and nope... none of these books is of any use to me." Ashton sighed and accepted his defeat.

In the last hour, he had turned the entire potion section upside down in hopes of finding something related to Venom. But there was not a single mention of such a substance anywhere. Ashton didn't know what else he was expecting when he walked inside the academy, but this was certainly not on the list.

"At least I got to know a bit more about poisons... so my time wasn't a complete waste." He shrugged his shoulders and retraced his path.

While he was walking down the stairs, the thought of entering the restricted section entered his mind. After all, if venom was a lethal substance, then it would have made more sense to that information regarding that would be stored in a somewhat secured area. Out of the reach of the first-year students.

However, the risk was too big for Ashton to take at the moment. Even though he could use the potion given to him by Kakaroff to get past the security undetected, he doubted he would be able to locate and read the book in a short span of 30 seconds.

Also, if he ended up getting caught, that would be it for his time in the academy. That was something he could not gamble on.

"Looks like Rose is the only hope for me." Ashton shrugged as he walked out of the library, "But it would take a couple more hours before she is free. What should I do in the meantime?"

He wanted to spar again, but he was sure Duncan would not be up for the challenge, especially after what conspired between them in the afternoon. With nothing else to do, Ashton decided to take a walk around the campus as the sun went down while thinking about his next moves.

However, nothing came to his mind other than continuing his classes and fighting in the underground arena. The loot he was getting that way was surely more than enough for him at the moment. as for the future supply of better weapons, he had already secured a way in the form of Baiter.

Ashton had no doubts about his skills when it came to creation. After all, an armour made of scraps gave him so much trouble during their match-up, he could only wonder what Baiter could have done if he had proper materials to complete his armour.

"I should let him focus on whatever he has to do for now. But I should contact him before heading into the dungeon." Ashton took a deep breath while stretching his arms over his head, "Everything might seem calm now, but there's no telling when someone will try to stab me from behind. So, I better be prepared just in case."

A moment later Ashton saw a horde of students coming out of various buildings. The classes were over for the day. Which meant it was time to head back. He didn't want any of the students to see him just yet as most of them were believing he would have been suspended.

After all, the Gruntas had called their parents in for just that purpose.. Also, with the teachers supporting them, no one would have thought he would be the one to escape unscathed from the charges pressed against him.

Chapter 105 - Venom (2)

At the same time, The Conundrum's orders had arrived at Donovan's new place within the capital city, Deja. However, it did not look like he was pleased with the orders given to him. Considering that he torn the letter into a hundred pieces before throwing them in the fireplace to burn.

"Wait, wait, WAIT! How long am I supposed to wait!?" He yelled in frustration before punching a hole through the wall.

At this point, Disha came rushing into the living area of the mansion allotted to them by the king. The first thing she noticed was Donovan's hand which was still stuck between the wall. She immediately went over and helped him out, only to be smacked on the face by him.

"Argh!"

This wasn't the first time Donovan had raised his hands on her. In fact, ever since they decided to abandon the mistress, Donovan had been getting physical with her every day. Still, her love for him had blinded her. She could not see that to him she was just a tool with which he sometimes had moments of pleasure.

Other than that, Disha did not mean jackshit to him. Especially since he didn't have any use for her. Any use that a street whore could not have fulfilled.

Disha slowly got back to her feet but this time before she could even take a step in his direction, Donovan looked at her with bloodlust. Within a fraction of a second, Disha knew that something had pissed Donovan beyond any limit.

She just stood frozen at her feet as Donovan began walking towards her. Fear had shrouded her unlike ever before. However, she was pretty sure the feelings she was sensing were not real but a fabrication. After all, she would never be scared of Donovan. She loved him too much for that.

"At least their skill is still working," He mumbled before slumping down on the chair, releasing Disha from the clutches of his newly learned skill, "But the skill might be the only thing working within this damned syndicate!"

The skill Donovan had been given was one of the five rarest skills ever. "The mark of fear" was a skill, even the most skilled fighters and magicians had a hard time countering.

After all, it was a skill that slowly crept up to the opponent and by the time they realised what was going on, they were already too deep within the skill's effects. And all it took for the skill to activate was a moment of physical contact. It could be a handshake, a slap or even a sexual contact.

As long as the skins come in contact with each other, fear would dominate the mind of the other being. Donovan had been depending on this skill when he said he would tame the mistress. Once she was in his clutches, she would have never been able to escape from him ever.

But his plans had failed miserably. Donovan had hoped that the nobles would be able to kill Ashton during the examination and make it seem like an accident. With Ashton out of the picture, the Mistress's heart would belong to him. However, the tables were turned on them harder than he had ever seen before.

Not only did those fools were not able to kill him, but they also ended up dying themselves. Since their top-class plan failed, Donovan issued a bounty over that bastard's head, but so far, even that did not seem to be working for him.

He waited and waited, but since nothing came out of the bounty despite several attempts, Donovan decided to end Ashton's life himself. However, the Conundrum immediately put a halt to his plans. Afterwards, he was told to wait, while they figured something out.

The wait was excruciating and he was worried too. Despite telling them everything about Ashton, they were still viewing him as a kid. That was their worst mistake. Donovan knew, regardless of what the Conundrum thought about time being on their side, it was actually on Ashton's side.

After all, the growth Ashton had shown had never been seen before. The more time they gave him, the stronger he would become. However, the Conundrum seemed to have either forgotten his warning or they just simply didn't care about his plans.

The Conundrum had only one agenda at this point, to eliminate any threat to the throne. Since, Donovan had made it clear he was not going to kill the Mistress and tame her instead, their use for Donovan was rapidly fading away. Hence he was repetitively being told to stay silent.

While on the other hand, it wasn't like they had forgotten about the mistress either. With Donovan no longer by her side, she should have been an easier target to assassinate. After all, Donovan was both her sword and her shield. Without him, she was at her most vulnerable, just like a wounded might creature.

However, a night creature was also most dangerous when they were injured. Thus the Conundrum was not taking any hasty steps to get rid of her. They had to come up with a proper plan first. For this purpose, all of the members were testing the limits of their intelligence.

Still, no matter what type of plan they came up with, their plans ended up getting rejected by the head of the table. By this time, even the members were getting frustrated. However, the Head had made it clear that they wanted a perfect plan.

If the head could find errors in their plans, then the mistress would be able to as well. And just in case she survived, she would not hesitate before launching an attack on the capital by herself. This would also give the other nations a wonderful opportunity to invade their kingdom and claim their prizes from themselves.

Thus, the plan to eliminate the mistress had to be perfect. Which, much to the head's dismay, none of them was able to offer till now. Also, there were people within the Conundrum who still did not trust Donovan. So he was not included in this process of planning.

Even so, the time to take some action against the mistress was drawing closer. Within the next year, the mistress would be killed and the threat to the throne would be no more. It wouldn't matter whether the king would like it or not.

At the same time, within the academy...

"Venom? Where the heck did you heard that term?" Rose playfully asked Ashton, "I assume you're not planning to make some, are you?"

"Quit playing. If you want money in exchange for information, just tell me how much." Ashton muttered in annoyance.

"Oh, boya... you hurt my feelings. Do you think I will only trouble you for money? Is that how lowly you think I am? I'm no whore for money." Rose mumbled in an exaggerated dramatic tone while clutching her chest.

"Yeah... you should have joined a drama class." Ashton shook his head, "Will you tell me or not?"

All of a sudden Rose got silent. At least she appeared she had when in secret she was talking with Lucifer. She just wanted to make sure that Ashton was ready to listen to what she was about to tell him. Only once she got the green signal from him, did she proceed to answer Ashton's query.

"Tell me boya, how much to know about how our world and we, werewolves, Vampires and undead, came into existence?"

Ashton opened his mouth to answer her, but then quickly shut it back. In his sixteen years of existence, not once he had heard anyone talk about what actually happened on earth. All he knew was some sort of virus appeared on the planet and turned more than half of the global population into the creatures that now reside on the planet.

However, he had no idea where the hell such a virus came into the world in the first place. He turned his clueless gaze over to Rose, who was slipping blood as usual.

"No idea, huh? Let me give you a clue." Rose smirked and pointed towards the ceiling.

"The ceiling?" Ashton mumbled in his confusion.

"Sometimes you really make me question my sanity... think beyond!"

"Wait... the space?"

"Uh-huh." Rose nodded before gulping down the rest of the blood, "More like a space rock, a meteorite. Now you might want to question, how did the virus survive in space or more importantly, why did it not get burned away while entering the planet's atmosphere. Right?"

To be honest, none of that even entered Ashton's mind. Still, he nodded along.

"The answer is pretty simple. It wasn't a natural phenomenon. Or in other words, someone intentionally designed that meteor as a means to spread the virus the moment it entered the atmosphere of the planet."

"Wait what?"

"Aliens, do exist boya." Rose said with a smile on her face, "Aliens who got bored as humanity achieved some semblance of equilibrium. So they decided to stir things up and threw a rock at them. But they did not want humanity to get wiped out completely, so they gave them a weapon to get rid of the virus and the creature that evolved, thanks to the virus."

She continued, "That weapon was called the Venom. It isn't a poison, but a chemical weapon that if used correctly, could have wiped the creatures who evolved due to the virus. Sadly for them, before they could get to the substance needed to turn venom to the most lethal weapon, the mutants, as they used to call us, overwhelmed them completely."

"And they decided to flee rather than stay and fight." Ashton completed the sentence, "But how do you know all this?"

"How else? One of the aliens told me."

"You know an alien?"

"You do too..."

"What?" Ashton was baffled, he had never known an alien but then it clicked him, "Lucifer...."

Chapter 106 - Ignorance Is A Bliss (1)

Lucifer. Of course, he was an alien, the kinds which Professor Merlin said they referred to as gods. Above all that, He was an admin and seemingly knew everything about what happened on earth. The more Ashton thought about it the more sense it made.

However, with this revelation, Ashton's view of Lucifer changed. It wasn't anything drastic, but he couldn't help but wonder, was he just another pawn for a citizen of this seemingly higher civilisation? Not that he minded being one as long as he could get his revenge.

Still, he could simply not stomach the fact that the humans were treated like a bunch of toys to cure their boredom. Was this higher civilisation not responsible for what happened to him and his parents in a way? After all, if they did not have the sudden urge to cure their boredom at the expense of humans, wouldn't things still be normal?

"No, they wouldn't be." Rose read Ashton's mind and answered the question for him, "Humanity had been on a path of self-destruction for a while. Countless centuries to be exact. Even if those god-like

extraterrestrial beings had not intervened, the planet would have ended up being destroyed along with the humans."

"But you said-"

"I know what I said and I stand by that. But these aliens simply didn't react to an urge to cure their boredom. They wanted to give the planet another chance to evolve, save itself from the curse of humanity and to become part of something much bigger."

Rose knew it very well that even if she told Ashton everything, he would be able to grasp it all by himself. Thus, she was spoon-feeding him things bit by bit so he doesn't end up exhausting the few brain cells he has remaining.

However, she could tell she had already told him a bit too much. The boy was already lost thinking too many things at once. But she also knew she had to tell him that much to answer his question about what venom actually was. As it was a substance that can even kill him should he try to misuse it?

"Ok... I get it. But are you the only one who knew about all this? I mean, what's the guarantee that Lucifer is not trying to fool us?" Ashton asked Rose a simple question.

It was the same thing she had thought after Lucifer told her these things. Obviously, there was no proof of whether what Lucifer had told her was true or not. As he was the only source of their information regarding all this, it wasn't like Rose could have contacted some other admin to cross-check his claims.

As a result, she did not have a choice but to accept what Lucifer had told her with a grain of salt. Even though it meant she could have been lied to. As for Ashton's question, well she did not have any answer for him.

"Of course, there is no guarantee. Lucifer is free to twist the tale as much as he pleases. However, why would someone of higher existence would lie to us?" Rose replied after thinking about it for a minute or two, "Even if he has a reason to lie to us, do you think we can do anything about it when we don't even know who these aliens are and where they live in the first place?"

"..." It was Ashton's turn to stay silent now.

The back and forth of questions kept them engaged for the better part of the evening. By the time Ashton left her chambers, he was still confused about a lot of things. But he knew he now knew a bit more about this world than he did before as his knowledge had spiked a bit.

[You have learned something new and of importance. Knowledge had been boosted by 5 points.]

[Knowledge: 17 ---> 22]

As he walked out of the administrative building, he realised the campus was not as quiet as it previously was. Especially after most of the students had dined in the multiple diners spread across the campus.

While the S rankers were allowed to have their food prepared by their servants, everyone else had to depend on the diners. Still, just like the distinction between the A to D ranks, the diners were also separated on the basis of ranks. One could say that S rankers got facilities similar to a seven-star hotel, while it gradually decreased as one went down the ranks.

Ashton wanted to ask someone about what was going on, but he didn't know anyone. Well, something like this was going to happen sooner or later, as he did not interact with anyone during the class.

Also, he was usually ignored by the low rankers as they did not want the high rankers and seniors to trouble them for talking to him. He had been turned into a social outcast among his peers. This was the only way the ever-righteous nobles could have punished him for standing up to them and causing trouble for them.

As petty as doing something like this was, it wasn't like the nobles could have done anything else to make Ashton's life a bit hard. They could not get physical with him, not after seeing him demolish a second-year student along with the Gruntas.

"Tsk, whatever..." Ashton mumbled to himself and headed back towards his room.

It wasn't like he was attending the academy to mingle with the students either. He had been a loner for the better part of his life, whether it was in the enclosure or in the academy, being friends with someone didn't matter to him much, if at all. But if he could use someone, then that was a different story altogether.

However, it seemed like a certain someone had other plans. Just as Ashton was about to enter the hostel, he heard someone call out his name.

"I wouldn't go inside if I were you." Anna stopped him, "I knew others will not tell you why, so I waited nearby, just in case you got back."

'Now ain't this interesting?'

Chapter 107 - Ignorance Is A Bliss (2)

"What do you mean?" Ashton asked Bella who was already in her sleepwear.

"Looks like someone was playing around with a bunch of potion ingredients and burned their entire room," Anna replied nonchalantly, "As a result, all of the students and servants were forced to evacuate. But the professors should have it all under control by now."

Ashton turned back and stared inside. If there was a fire, no matter how much the fire had been 'controlled', there should be smoke and soot coming out. However, Ashton could not see anything of that sort coming out of the building.

"It wasn't an ordinary fire, in case you were wondering." Anna replied as if she too had telepathic abilities, "The flames were blue, the purest any flame can be, this there's no smoke as flames only turn blue when sufficient oxygen is provided."

"Oh, I see. Any idea who did this?"

Anna shook her head, while her ponytail swung around like a whip, "The professors pulled a student out of the fire and headed towards the infirmary. Maybe it was that student?"

"Could be... oh wait, where-"

"Your servants are fine. They helped us a lot while evacuating... I think they are... there! They are standing with Professor Amaira."

"Thanks for the help," Ashton mumbled before hurrying off towards the slaves and the professor.

There could be only one reason why a purist like Amaira who considered humans as untouchables, would be talking to them. To find a way of causing more trouble for Ashton. At least that was the only reason Ashton could come up with.

'If I just walk in like this, they'll stop talking abruptly. I gotta sneak up on them.'

Thankfully, sneaking up on them was not as difficult as he had expected. More than a hundred people were in the vicinity and acted as the perfect cover for him to blend in while also listening to what those fckers were talking about.

"Hm... he is indeed an interesting fella. Not gonna lie about that." Amaira said, followed by the fakest laugh Ashton had ever heard in his life, "Can you tell me something more about him?"

"I'm afraid that's all we know about the master. After all, we have only been under the same roof for a couple of weeks at most." Duncan replied, his eyes were fixated on the ground and it seemed they have been for a long time.

Daniella was following whatever Duncan was doing. They might have been the mistress's servants, still, they were slaves who could not look any high levelled werewolf in the eyes. After all, they have been beaten up countless times for doing something much less before the mistress rescued them.

That fear, on top of what Ashton did to them, had scarred them enough to fear the werewolves for the rest of their lives.

"Are you sure you don't know anything more? Like his-"

"I think you already heard what they had to say, professor." Ashton saw the opportunity to start them and seized it, "Also, I can't help but wonder, what kind of information would you like to get from them. You're a professor, if you wanted, you could simply check the academy records for any info you might want about me."

Ashton could see his sharp tongue had left Amaira quite baffled. For starters, she had probably not expected him to jump in front of them so suddenly. Let alone throw a slew of questions at her.

"Professor? Are you okay?" Ashton smirked, he knew he had her cornered.

Whatever a professor would have wanted to know about a student was already listed in the records and all the professors had the authority to view that information. But since Amaira was so deadset about knowing something else about him, it was only natural for Ashton to be intrigued about it.

"O-Oh, it's nothing." Amaira hastily replied before waving her hand in front of her face, "Going into that fire must have done something... I think I should probably get some rest."

"G'night Professor!" Ashton exclaimed at the top of his lungs as Amaira hurriedly ran back to the administrative building, "Now you two-"

"I swear we did not tell her anything about you that she didn't already know-" Fearing Ashton's anger, Daniella immediately started blabbering and almost got to her knees to beg him for whatever reason.

"I heard you helped in evacuation."

"We'll never do it aga-"

"Good job. Both of you. You did the right thing." Ashton said with a warm smile spread across his face.

"Please forgive us, we'll- what?"

It took a moment for both of them to register what Ashton had just said. He had... praised them? Why would he do something like that? Was he high on something? Judging from his reaction to the whole ordeal, it seemed like it.

"What are you acting all surprised about?" Ashton scoffed, before slowly pulling Daniella back to her feet, "It might not seem like it, but I still have a heart that can praise and respect those who do me right. I'm not a cruel piece of shit unless you don't do something and force me into becoming one."

Both of them were stunned. They couldn't figure out whether Ashton was being serious or was it another one of his tricks. But Ashton had a way to convince them, now that they were under his slave contract.

'I guess, it's a good time to use that skill...'

[You are using the skill: Influence on your slaves.]

[Due to the low intelligence of the targets, the skill was successful.]

[The targets feel an enigmatic warmth towards you.]

[Your relationship has improved! Hostility towards you has been decreased.]

[Current relationship points: 2/100]

[Classification has changed: Foe ---> Neutral]

'Relationships? Why have I never heard of this before?' Ashton thought to himself as numerous prompts popped up in front of him, 'So, this means that using the [Influence] skill, I can also improve my relationship with others? This skill might turn out to be handier than I initially thought!'

Chapter 108 - Ignorance Is A Bliss (3)

As the day came to an end, Ashton had solved most of his problems. As far as the question of joining the special force was, he had already made his mind up. He was going to join them. After all, it was too good of an opportunity to gain some kind of influence for him to pass up.

Also, he never knew what kind of adventures and resources he might end up gaining after joining them. He would call the captain in the morning and discuss the details later. For now, he was tired and fell asleep as soon as his head hit the pillow.

However, while he slept, the members of the special force were working tirelessly to figure out just how deep the resistance had sunk their jaws within Contingent. To them, it seemed as if the city had been turned into some sort of operational base for the humans as they were continuously capturing them one after another.

However, after hunting down vampires for most of their service, hunting humans for a change was more than welcomed by them. It wasn't as dangerous as hunting high ranking vampires, at the same time, it was adventurous enough for them to not drop their defences completely. All in all, a proper trade from them as most of them were looking to retire now.

"Another one down." Scarlett, the vice-captain reported, "I think we are done for the day, what do you think, Cap? Wanna hunt some more?"

"Nah, it's fine. It's not like they are going to pay us more even if we capture a few more humans." Cap shook his head before lighting a cigar, "Why waste our resources if it's not worth it? We'll continue tomorrow after collecting the paycheck. Good work everyone. The drinks are on me tonight."

"Woohoo!" Most of them exclaimed and began packing up their equipment while Scarlett headed towards Cap.

"Something bothering you, James?" She asked.

Captain, or James as he was called, just nodded and took another drag and hold it within before letting out all of the smoke. In his life, only three things could make him be sane, hunting, tattoos, and cigars. Everything else in his life was optional, including values such as loyalty, kindness and pity.

Well, he was loyal to one thing. The most important thing that was needed to have the three most important things in his life, money. As long as he was paid enough, he and his crew would do whatever their employer would want, even assassination of werewolves, their own kind.

Since most of the crew were saved or rescued by him at one point or another, they simply followed James' lead. Although he wasn't loyal to anyone in the group, he wanted them to be loyal to him. At least on the surface level. Call him a hypocrite, but he didn't care.

"Do you think that brat will accept the deal?" He asked Scarlett back, "I feel like we should have tried to convince him a bit more."

"You already did enough. The drama you orchestrated with help of a prisoner should be enough to convince a teenager. If anything, we are his heroes."

James nodded and continued to smoke. His plan of infiltrating the academy on the Conundrum's behalf was going good so far. That being said, he had not seen a single member of the mysterious organisation yet.

It seemed like while they trusted him enough to let him do the job, they were most certainly aware of what kind of a man he was. Thus, the Conundrum was keeping their distance from him. All he had were the letters in which their orders were passed down to him and the money that regularly got deposited in his account weekly.

"Living this dual life is a bit taxing," he mumbled to himself.

Although James was working for the Conundrum at the moment, he was also earning money on the side by turning in bounties. Bounties that he got by hunting humans.

"It'll come to an end soon. Now that we have found a way inside the academy." Scarlett chimed in.

She was the only one in on the Conundrum's plan and was willingly helping the captain to fulfil the contract he had signed with them. A contract to find dirt on the director as well as to eliminate her if such an opportunity presents itself in front of them. That too within a year or else... it'll be someone else's turn to hunt them instead.

Why did the Conundrum want to find dirt on the director? The captain didn't know, nor did he care enough. As for the question of the assassination of the director was concerned, they were not going to do it. Mainly because it was too risky for them to do something like that.

The director's reputation was legendary. So much so, that she had connections with all five stars of the werewolf empire. Going against someone like her was not the best decision they could have made. Gathering dirt on someone was a different thing, but trying to assassinate them... nope, they were not going to do that.

However, for that purpose, they needed someone within the academy to work with them in secret. As they had realised, the director would not let outsiders roam around the campus without supervision. That's why they staged a scenario with a human prisoner to surround the first student they saw out of the academy.

It was their plan to let the human bump into the student, followed by them framing the kid as a traitor. That way, the kid would subconsciously go to any lengths to prove his innocence to them. Even if it meant betraying his fellow students, professor and even the director.

They wanted to get the student worried and nervous so that the cap could influence him into working with them. Mentioning the venom was also a part of this trickery. After all, the Venom was something even kings have a tough time getting their hands on. How the fck would a simple human be able to get some by himself?

However, what they had not expected was for the young lad to actually attack the human himself.

But that only made the captain solidify his decision even more. He could probably easily influence that Vince kid to do their bidding. That is if he agreed to their request.

"He will agree... the opportunity is too good to pass on." Cap once again mumbled to himself and threw away the cigar, "Let's go. We have a big day tomorrow."

The sun rose as usual, but with it came some good news for Ashton. The punishment imposed on him had been lifted. He was now allowed to attend physical training and sparring classes as per his schedule. However, he was warned to take care of others' well-being during the spars, or else he might face some other form of punishment every time he permanently injured someone.

With this notice came another one. Well, it wasn't a notice but a request, from the director herself. A request to meet her after his classes were over. With all of this sudden and new development, Ashton completely forgot about contacting the captain to accept his proposal.

He immediately freshened up and threw on his uniform, before rushing towards the arena. He knew for a fact that if he did not get there early, that witch Amaira would not allow him within the class, even though he had the notice with him.

"Run, run, run!!!" Ashton storm through the campus repeating those words inside his head.

Sure enough, he reached the arena around fifteen minutes before the class was scheduled to start. However, almost all of the students were already there. But there was something strange going on. The first-years weren't the only ones there... the second-years were there as well.

Everyone was awfully quiet in front of the seniors. Even the S-rankers. However, when Ashton showed up there, all of the attention was immediately diverted on him. It took a moment before even the second years started pointing fingers at him while whispering in each other's ears.

'Hm... looks like I'm gotten famous even among the second-years. Not sure if that's a good thing or not.'

A few of the second-years made took a few steps in his direction when the doors to the arena were thrown open. A familiar face they all dreaded could be seen through the doors. Amaira was there but unlike her usual buffed self, she looked quite frail. This form of her was something all of the first-years had seen for the first time. Hell, some of them could not even recognise her at first.

"The hell are you, idiots, looking at? Get inside I have something special planned for you-" She was in mid-sentence when she saw Ashton and stopped, "The heck are you doing here?"

"My punishment has been lifted." Ashton confidently replied before handing Amaira the notice.

Everyone around them was stunned, for it was the first time the director had revoked a ruling given by the disciplinary council, that too when the princess herself had given the punishment. Honestly, none of them had ever expected something like this to happen, but it did... as a result, the students couldn't help but feel if Ashton and the Director were close or something.

Amaira crushed the notice into a ball and threw it in the trash can before walking inside all huffing and puffing. While she did all that, Ashton had the biggest smile on his face.. He knew Amaira was pissed beyond her limits and he was more than happy to be the reason for her dismay.

Chapter 109 - The King Has Spoken

The capital city of Deja, within the king's courtroom...

The kingdom of Lycania was turning prosperous day after day. However, there were a lot of issues that did not let the king have the peace he so desired. Even now his courtroom was amidst the chaos, even though he understood why everyone was freaking out, all the noise they were making... brought him a bit of displeasure.

Upon realising that the chattering of his ministers was not going to cease on its own, he slammed his fist on the golden throne he was occupying. The loud reverberation generated from the impact made all of them go silent immediately.

For a moment, the ministers had forgotten about their king's sensitivity to sound. Especially to voices. In fact, at that moment, they knew they had messed up so bad that they were fearing for their life. After all, the king was someone who had killed off far more important people for doing something much less.

"How many times do I need to tell you morons to keep your voices down!" The King yelled and started massaging his head, "All that noise you made, made me not listen to what any of you had to say... so please, start over but this time in a civil manner."

The ministers let out a sigh of relief as the King did not seem to be in the mood to kill them. For now, however, there was no guarantee he wouldn't kill them after the disappointing news they were about to deliver to him.

It was no secret that the kingdom of Lycania was running out of habitable space to live in. On top of that, none of the other kingdoms was willing to give them a hand or a part of their land. The way everything was going on, they would have to forcefully turn the swamp into some kind of habitable place.

They needed the space for a lot of things, or so did everyone thought. But that was only a cover for what the king's true ambitions were. They did not want to convert the swamp for any noble use, but to finally forge a path for them to dominate the entire continent.

The King wanted to until the five stars... but under his iron fist. He no longer wished to be called a king, but an emperor. The emperor of all the kingdoms on the continent. However, they first needed to deal with the swamp and the night creatures dwelling in it.

That's what his entire focus was on for now. It was for that reason he was no longer considered with what one of his illegitimate daughters was planning to do to him. In his eyes, Mera was far too insignificant for him to even spare a thought over her. But the other might not agree with him, so he left them alone to do as they pleased.

If they wanted to kill his daughter, they could. In front of his larger goal, he would not even bat an eye even if his legitimate children were killed. After all, he had more than 50 offsprings with around 13 women he had ever gotten close to. What loss would it bring to him if a dozen or so of his children were to die?

"Why are you silent now?" The king repeated his words for the ministers to make sure they heard him this time, "What were you talking about?"

Saying so, the king got to his feet, and all of the ministers could not help but feel insignificant in front of him. Standing at 7' feet tall, Jonathan Bismark the second, or the king as everyone called him, was a mountain of a man.

It wasn't that he was only tall, but he had considerable muscle mass on him as well, and that was while he was still in his human form. Had he turned into his werewolf form, he would turn into a titan, taller

and stronger than any werewolf ever had been. Maybe even Lycaon, their primordial lord, would think twice before confronting him head-on.

Jonathan's ambitions might seem too ahead of him, but considering the physique and skills that he possessed, his ambition of ruling over the continent no longer seemed unconquerable. Also, his platinum blond hair and different coloured eyes in his werewolf form made him much more intimidating than he usually was.

"Your highness... the thing is..."

"Stop blabbering Raymond, and speak confidently."

"The conquest failed, your highness. The night creatures eradicated the 17th squad."

"Hm... I see." Jonathan walked up to the minister of internal affairs, Raymond and placed his hands on his shoulder, "If I remember correctly, your younger son was a member of that squad, correct?"

"Yes, your highness. I'm sure he fought till his final breath to take a step in achieving your dreams." A teary-eyed Raymond mumbled.

Jonathan nodded and turned back. However, the next second he turned back and kicked Raymond's head cleanly off his shoulders. With a single kick... the minister's head went flying out of the courtroom while everyone else cowered away from the king in fear.

Calm? Jonathan never believed such a state of mind could ever exist for him. He was born to be a conqueror and yet his courtroom was filled with fools and morons who couldn't do anything but weep after the failure of a simple task!

He didn't want these morons to capture the entire swamp in one day. He didn't even care if they were only able to proceed one step in a day as long as they were going forward. However, allowing the night creatures to reclaim a piece of the swamp for themselves, was inexcusable in his eyes.

"Anyone else wants to cry?" Jonathan asked his ministers, unbothered by the fact that Raymond's blood had drenched his clothes.

The ministers immediately shook their heads while boring a hole in the floor through their eyes.

"Then go and reclaim what was lost or die trying." The king spat in disgust, "I don't care if you have to go and fight the night creatures yourself. Do not show your faces to me before that or else, you know better than anyone what I will do to you."

After being given another chance to correct their mistake, the ministers hurriedly left Jonathan inside the courtroom all alone. They knew no matter what, they had to make up for the loss or else, not only them but their families would be in grave danger. Not even infants would be left alive.

A moment later, dozen or so cleaners showed up in the courtroom to clean up the mess. It only took them a couple of minutes to make the room spotless as it had been before. Once they left, Jonathan's youngest and most loved daughter showed up there to meet with him.

"Oh my lovely Michelle, how good it is to see you again my child." The moment Jonathan saw Michelle he forgot everything about his problems.

Ever since she started attending the academy again, the frequency of her visits had decreased a lot. Thus, her unannounced visits were something he looked forward to more than anything. However, Jonathan could not help but feel that something was off with her.

"I, the 27th princess of Lycania, greet the king."

Michelle gracefully bowed before her father... which was certainly not common. In fact, Michelle was the last person Jonathan would imagine performing proper etiquettes and such. Unless she was there to make some kind of official request.

"Yes, my child. What can I do for you?"

"Can you send a few of your elites with me to the academy? Disguised as my servants, of course." She said while looking her father straight in the eyes.

"I most certainly could. But I would like to know for what purpose?"

"To kill that wench of a director!" Michelle dropped her calm and collected demeanour and yelled in rage.

She was finally back to being herself, just like Jonathan remembered. As for her request, it was quite an absurd one. He was certainly not going to allow Michelle to do something like that. Not yet either way. However, he wanted to know what had happened between the two of them for Michelle to ask for something so... inappropriate.

"First calm your nerves and tell me what happened."

Mischelle then proceeded to tell him what had conspired in the academy and how the punishment she had given to the kid serving Mera was revoked by the director. However, at that moment, Jonathan was more interested in the so-called kid than the problem Michelle had with the director.

"So you say, this first-year was selected by Mera and could already perform partial transformation?" He asked her with an emotionless face, "Not only that, he beat the Grunta twins?"

"Yes, father but-"

Michelle was immediately cut off as Jonathan started laughing hysterically. Michelle couldn't fathom a reason for her father to start laughing like a mad man. However, the next moment, he had an order for her.

"I don't know what you have to do, but I want you to bring that boy over someday."

Chapter 110 - Training Session (1)

"But father!"

"No buts Michelle. You have to do this." Jonathan's smile did not fade away as he continued, "I may not acknowledge Mera, but I can not ignore her skills when it comes to recruiting people. Something must be special about this kid for her to choose him and I want to know what."

"..."

Michelle gritted her teeth but that was all she could do. Just like her, her father could be stubborn sometimes as well. After all, they were two peas in a pod. Still, her father's instructions did not help her from getting angrier.

She came here hoping her father would put the director in place, instead she was being given an impossible task to accomplish. After all, why would someone whom she tried to screw over entertain her request? Also, it wasn't like that she could force that brat to do as she pleased.

"He didn't look anything special to me-"

"Then you are saying the director went against you for a nobody?" Jonathan gave Michelle an understanding look before carrying on, "You know how ridiculous it is, right? Why would the director risk angering royalty for someone insignificant?"

Michelle nodded. It finally made sense to her. She had been so angry at the director, she forgot to address the obvious. Just who was the kid for whom even the director was willing to risk her position by going against them.

"As you wish, father." She bowed once again before turning around to leave, before being promptly stopped by Jonathan.

"Stay for lunch. You can leave for the academy afterwards."

"I'll pass on that offer, father. If I have to bring that kid here, I need to start working for it immediately. After all, the mess I made isn't something that can be cleaned up so easily."

Back at the academy...

"I know you all must be wondering why the second-years are here today?" Amaira mumbled in her weak state, "As you can see, I'm not in the greatest state. Thus I asked your seniors to help you out with your combat session today."

The first-years exchanged looks amongst themselves. The second-years were known to be a rowdy bunch. Some of them had even been suspended for causing violence on the campus. There were rumours about some of them coming from families having relations with vampires who taught them forbidden magic.

Thus even the thought of training with them had the first-years a bit worried. But since Amaira had already made the decision, there was nothing they could have done to protest against her idea. Doing so would only paint a target on their back and to be honest, none of them had the guts to do so.

None of them but a few. Especially, someone who already had a huge target painted on his back. Ashton could sense some hostility coming from the second years, and although he knew it wasn't possible, he couldn't help but think whether Amaira orchestrated all this so the second years could get their hands on him.

'Man, these people sure have the most fragile egos I have ever seen.' Ashton sighed.

Why couldn't they just leave him alone? He beat a second year, so what? It wasn't like he was the one seeking trouble in the first place. Obviously, if someone would attack him, he would have to respond in kind. In his eyes, fighting was nothing more than a form of transaction.

But these people always made a bigger issue out of something that was insignificant. Still, he was happy, happy that for once he would get to fight some people who knew what they were doing. Unlike the first-years who can only throw punches randomly while heavily depending on the abilities they had.

"Since your first dungeon trip will be in a few months, I think this would be a golden opportunity for you inexperienced brat to learn a thing or two from a bit more experienced brats." Amaira kept blabbering on and on, "Now that the goal of this joint session has been cleared, we'll now divide both the freshers and seniors into groups of three."

"Since in a dungeon, the participants have to work as a team, thus fighting as a team would help you to recognise what you need to work on. Whether it is teamwork, battle tactics or self-improvement. Any questions?"

While everyone shook their heads, Ashton's hand shot up in the air.

"Yes?"

"Could you please make the rules of engagement clear this time around? I would hate if something like the last time happened again." Ashton iterated with a sincere look on his face.

At least that's how it appeared to everyone else. But Ashton's intentions were something else entirely. He was warning the professor, that if anything like the last time was to happen, he would not hold back. It didn't matter if he was going against seniors.

"Don't worry, Mr Bismark. This time there is only one rule. You have to knock your opponents out cold. You are free to use your abilities, but you can not do any permanent damage to your opponents and this goes for everyone."

She continued, "If you end up breaking this rule, then I'll make sure this day would be your last in the academy. Even if I have to put my job on the line. Is that clear? Good. Now form your teams."

As Amaira said that, Ashton realised he was in trouble. Everyone in his year hated him... he would not be able to form a team! He was hoping Amaira would make teams on her own, but boy was he wrong to think so.

However, he wasn't as lonely as he thought he was. The following moment, Anna appeared in front of him, followed by another girl. The girl was a bit on the shorter side about 5'2", had curly brown hair just like her skin along with blue eyes. As for her demeanour, she appeared to be quite shy, judging by the way she was constantly fidgeting.

"Wanna form a team with us?" Anna asked with her usual emotionless face, "We need one more member."

"Why not? I'll be in your care then." Ashton replied with a short but curt nod, "Let's win this thing!"