

Zompiewolf 21

Chapter 21 - Hunter Hunted (2)

'Where the hell did this kid drop here from?' Mera mumbled as soon as she overcame her shocked state, 'More importantly, why couldn't I sense his attack coming?'

Jacob helped her back to her feet, but not once did his eyes wandered away from the kid. Just by giving him the first look, he realised that the kid was no ordinary being. But more importantly... his dead red eyes were implicating things they shouldn't have.

'What is such a young vampire doing here? Wait a minute... his skin... it doesn't make any sense.' Jacob thought to himself, 'Why does his skin look so pale? Even full-fledged vampires don't have such pale skin... but the undead does. And those feet, they definitely belong to a werewolf.'

The more he looked at the kid, the more surprised he got. He knew his observations were correct but this couldn't have been possible. How can someone have traits of all three dominant species of the world? Such a thing was completely unheard of.

"The fck are you spacing out for you motherfcker!" Mera yelled at Jacob which brought him back to his senses, "I know what you are thinking, but now is not the time for that... just imagine what kind of powers and skills this kid might give us once we consume his blood-"

"We need to report this anomaly instead." Jacob cut her off, "Something like the boy should not exist in the first place-"

"You will do no such thing!" Mera snapped at him, "This could be our chance to defeat the Countess and take the leadership away from her. Just think about it... we will no longer be mere Bloodsuckers anymore. Don't you want that? Or do you think it is better for us to just stay here and be bloodsuckers for the rest of our time?"

Jacob got silent after that. It was true that he wanted to evolve into something more powerful than the Bloodsucker, but then there was the truth that they will probably never be able to evolve. Evolution was a gift not bestowed on everybody.

Probably only 5% of the world's population was evolvable. That most of them wouldn't know that until an 'Oracle' was kind enough to look into their stats and inform them of it. But even seeing the oracle had its price. A price so high that low-ranking vampires like him can't even imagine possessing.

That was also the reason why creatures often just went with the flow and keep hunting. If they were able to evolve through that, then it was their luck, if not... well, then they could only get power through obtaining new and powerful skills.

That being said, werewolf blood was known to be a stimulant that could make the vampires aware of the fact that whether they could evolve or not. This was the reason, why the two of them desperately wanted to taste some werewolf blood.

They were happy when they found a lone werewolf kid roaming around the streets but now, that kid was nowhere to be seen and instead of him they had some new kid who was standing in front of them with his face covered with what looked like his shirt.

'I don't know what this thing is,' Jacob thought as he assumed battle stance, 'But our plan would work as long as he has some werewolf genes in that blood of his. However, if he is an undead like I suspect then that would complicate the matter.'

Just like a werewolf's blood was a precious potion for them, the blood of the Undead was poison. The vampires could only feed on the blood of the living, like humans, beasts, and werewolves. However, they could not feed on the blood of the undead because their rotten blood could make their powers degrade and in some cases, it could even kill them.

That was the reason why the vampires always avoid the undead. In fact, it felt like nature's plan to perfectly balance everything. The Vampires were usually strong against the werewolves. It was said that a werewolf had to have twice the number of levels as a vampire to even think about fighting them on equal footing.

While the werewolves could easily take care of the undead who were less than twice their level. But for an undead to kill a vampire... they only had to be about half of their level. Of course, this was only a rough estimation and there had been cases in the past that have proven these estimations wrong.

But just to be on the safer side, they usually followed this estimation. However, when Jacob tried to know the level of the weird kid in front of him, he couldn't see a thing. As a result, he was hesitant to fight him, even though he was a kid and there were two of them.

Nevertheless, Mera's stubbornness was giving him no choice. They were blooded and bonded together, which meant if one of them dies, the other one dies too. Since Mera was going to fight the kid, the only sensible thing to do was to aid her.

'Let's fight then....'

Chapter 22 - Hunter Hunted (3)

It was the first time Ashton had activated all of the genes in his body. Well, technically, it was the second time, but this was the first time he had intentionally activated them. Simultaneously activating the Vampire and the undead genes was a lot more painful than he thought.

Even the Pain Tolerance couldn't do much against it. But Ashton powered through it. As he knew, if he had any chance of making it alive out of there, he needed everything he had in his arsenal.

He looked the Mera in her eyes, and the only thing he could see was hostility. An urge to kill him was all she had. Completely void of any other emotion. Ashton was a bit... scared at that point. Especially since he had intended to take her out first.

He might have been successful if it wasn't for the other guy's interference. However, Mera's hostility proved to be a blessing in disguise. He had forgotten about it, but it didn't look like his system did. As the following moment, there was a notification in front of him.

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You have fulfilled the condition for a skill to level up. A skill has levelled up! You have unlocked an additional perk.

>> Perception: A prime ability found in bloodsuckers. It is the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses. You can now sense the intention of mid-levelled beings through this skill.

Additional Perk:

[Reflex]: The longer you fight a target, the easier it is for you to get used to their moves.

Grade: Mid

Condition to upgrade the skill: Kill a target you have gained maximum hostility with or use 5 skill points to level this skill up.

Current Vampiric skill points: 0

—

He must have blinked countless times to see if what he was reading was real. The moment he realised it was, he couldn't help but smile. He didn't know whether it was coincidental or not, but the [Reflex] perk was something that felt as if it was the second part of his [Battle Tactics] skill.

The [Battle Tactics] skill could slow down the enemies attacks, making it easier for him to dodge the attacks, while [Reflex] would also do something similar but by making Ashton get used to the attacks of the enemies rather than making them slow.

Either way, now that he knew his enemies were out for his blood, he had no choice but to retaliate in kind as well. Even though he had no idea how capable his opponents were. Still, as long as he kept dodging their attacks, an opening will eventually open for him to act on.

[Battle Tactics Activated.]

[Reflex is in effect.]

Mera lunged at him first, while Jacob stayed in his spot. They were going for a two-front attack. While Mera tried to indulge him in close combat, Jacob would probably use the crossbow to get him.

It was a perfect plan and the proof of their years of experience as hunters. They were professionals, at least when compared to Ashton. They knew what they were doing.

Ashton, on the other hand, had no idea about what these people were capable of. All he knew was the names of the skills they had without a hint of what those skills actually did. That was also the reason why he did not want to get touched by them. Who knew what kind of crap they might pull?

"Stop running away you coward!" Mera yelled in frustration as Ashton dodged yet another one of her attacks.

"Two adults are fighting a child, yet I'm the coward?" Ashton replied in a muffled voice while keeping off of Jacob's target range, "I didn't know vampires were hypocrites as well."

"You..."

Mera lashed out again. Her claws kept getting closer and closer to him with each swing. Even though he was using both [Battle Tactics] and [Reflex], it was proving to be quite a taxing task to dodge her.

Deep down, Ashton knew it was only a matter of time before she will eventually get him. He wanted to wait for an opening before attacking the woman. But whether he saw an opening to attack her, Jacob was there to prevent him from doing so.

Waiting for an opening to show up, was no longer feasible to him. As the longer he waited, the slimmer his chances of survival got. This was to be expected, because the [Reflex] perk he was depending on, wasn't exclusive to him.

[Perception] was a skill found in all of the vampires, thus it was no surprise that Mera had it too. Which meant, she also had the [Reflex] perk. So, while Ashton was trying to get used to her movement, Mera was getting used to his movements as well. That was the reason why with each attack, she was getting closer to him bit by bit.

'If I can't find an opening, then I shall make one for myself!' Ashton thought to himself and rushed towards Jacob.. If he could take him out, even temporarily, then he just might be able to get of Mera.

Chapter 23 - Hunter Hunted (4)

'Cat is in the bag now.' Mera thought to herself as she saw Ashton running towards Jacob.

The amateurs always fell for this trick. They always assumed that the one who stayed behind to attack them from a distance would be weaker than the one who was engaging them in close combat.

Mera could not even recall how many humans, vampires, werewolves, undead and even the night creatures had fallen for this trick of theirs. And it looked like this kid was going to be one of them.

Ashton, completely unaware of their plans, kept charging towards Jacob like a mad titan. However, as soon as he reached within Jacob's attack range, he pulled an unexpected manoeuvre. Ashton dropped to his knees, his momentum made him slide on the floor and dived past him while digging his vampirish claws in Jacob's thigh.

'Argh!!!'

Jacob's thighs felt like they were made of steel. But it was thanks to Ashton's claws it was easier to damage Jacob than bending steel. On top of that, the difference between Ashton's and Jacob's height worked in favour of the former. Ashton was like a quick little fox in front of the goliath-sized vampire.

Frozen black blood erupted out of Jacob's wound like a fountain, socking the man's clothing within seconds. Jacob's leg gave out and he fell backwards. Mera's eyes were wide open in shock. Never in her wildest dreams had she thought that a kid like that would be able to even graze a vampire's skin. Let alone make them 'bleed'.

"Jacob!"

"Stay back. His ass is mine now." Jacob growled in anger, "I was thinking about going easy on you. But playtime's over now kid."

Soon the blood stopped flowing out of the man's wounds and he got back to his feet. He threw his crossbow aside and took out the short swords attached to his back. Using ranged weapons wasn't his strong suit. His real weapons were his swords that have taken countless lives over the decades since he was transformed into a Bloodsucker.

The shiny blue swords were unlike anything Ashton had seen before. Both the swords had a long, narrow, smooth blade with a grip made up of some black leather which probably belonged to some night creature.

The blades visibly only had one sharp edge, which made it perfect for slicing and dicing their target without any difficulty. However, the crossguard was the thing that caught Ashton's attention. One would think that since a vampire was using a weapon, it would have markings of a vampire on it.

But strangely enough, the cross-guard has an elaborate silver wolf head on each side. Ashton was no expert in weapons but even he realised a vampire would not usually walk around with a weapon that had a symbol of werewolves on it.

Judging by the detailing on the blade and the crossguard, Ashton felt like that sword must have belonged to a noble werewolf first. Maybe this vampire duo hunted them down and took what was theirs.

Either way, the situation just got a bit grim for Ashton. Fighting two of them was already too much for him and now that Jacob was going to use his swords, he was completely fcked.

'Damn it... what do I do?' Aston thought as a single drop of sweat traced the edge of his face, 'Should I try to run? No. It won't do me any good. They will eventually catch me off guard and that'll be it.'

[The system has deemed the user to be in a life-threatening situation and can provide assistance to the user. Would you accept it?]

[Note: Exp and Rewards given will get affected in the event you accept the assistance.]

A system notification flashed in front of Ashton's eyes. It had never happened before but then again, he had never been in this kind of danger before either.

'Yes!'

As much as Ashton would like to take care of these vampires by himself, he knew he was too weak to do that. For now, it was better to listen to what the system had to offer as his ultimate goal was to survive and destroy the ones who did him wrong. It was too soon for him to die after finally getting a means to take his revenge.

[Recommended action: Turn off your werewolf genes and use your undead genes for offence while your Vampire genes for defence.]

'What? I don't have any experience in fighting using either of those things!' Ashton was now hesitating to follow through with the system's plans, 'Moreover, if I deactivate the werewolf genes then I won't be able to use the skills associated with the wolves!?'

[Note: The User doesn't need to defeat them on your own. The User only needs to survive for 22 minutes.]

'What would happen after that? No, more importantly, how the fck am I supposed to survive for so long? Can't you see the person standing in front of me?'

[After 21 minutes. The User is suggested to turn the vampire genes off.]

'Answer me first!?'

[That concludes the system's suggestion.]

'Oi, oi, oi!!! Damn it!' Ashton cursed under his breath, 'Looks like I have no other choice but to follow through.'

Chapter 24 - Hunter Hunted (5)

Seeing no other way but to put his faith in the system's non-existent hands, Ashton turned off the werewolf genes as he was told to. This was the first time since his awakening that he had turned the genes off, thus he felt a bit uncomfortable.

After all, how the heck was he supposed to fight two level 10 Bloodsuckers with the help of two level zero genes? No matter how he thought about it, the system's plan was flawed. At least that's how it seemed to his pea brain.

'Desperate times indeed call for desperate measures... but this is too much.'

Ashton did not know what the system was trying to accomplish by putting him in more danger. With the werewolf feet gone, his speed was reduced drastically. There was no way he would be able to dodge their attacks if they went all-out now.

In the meantime, the Bloodsuckers could also see the physical changes in their opponents' anatomy. Vampires were known to be great at shifting shapes, but they could never change their form into a different species. They only had three states they could transform into, Humanoid form, True form and their bestial form which was often a large bat.

'I need to put an end to whatever this miserable creature is... If I don't then I have a feeling it will get too strong for anyone to control.' Jacob communicated with Mera using their bond link.

'Don't even think about it, Jacob! We have come so close and I'm not going to give up this opportunity for your false sense of loyalty towards the countess!'

'It is not about the countess anymore! Can't you see for yourself? If we let this kid live, he might as well end up killing everything in his path. It's better to nip him while he is a bud than to let him grow into a monstrous fly trap!'

Thanks to their arguing, it gave Ashton enough time to witness the wonder the system was trying to pull off.

'The hell is this...!' Ashton's mouth fell open when he read the blinking information in front of him.

[Genes in use: Undead & Vampire.]

[Unique Gene Combination acquired! The combination has been registered in the system. You can not access this form quicker and painlessly.]

[Type: Undead Rhapsody: Automatically activates when genes of only undead creatures are present inside a host's body. Provides bonus boosts to the host and increases their performance during battle.]

[Drawback: This state should not be maintained for long durations of time. If done so, the body of the host might suffer through burnout. If the state is forcefully maintained after a certain period of time, then the body might end up receiving permanent damage as well.]

All of a sudden, Ashton could feel weird coldness wrap his body up. He had gotten used to living with the warm body of a werewolf thus the sudden coldness in his skin took him by surprise. However, the coldness did not make him uncomfortable in any way, in fact, he felt relaxed like he had never before. His eyes also turned into the deepest shade of crimson that was possible.

[Your stats have been boosted as an effect achieving a new gene combination never seen before.]

[You are recommended to assume this form for 2 minutes only. Any more than that and your body will start suffering through burnout.]

By this time Jacob and Mera were done arguing amongst each other. They would have gained more power if they could feed on a living target, but at this point, it was clear to them that won't be happening. The best bet was to kill the kid and consume his blood instantly.

Because, unlike werewolves and humans, the undead creatures like Vampires did not rot from outside. They start rotting from the inside which meant their blood vessels were the first things to rot before anything else and this process was instantaneous.

The moment a killing blow was delivered to a vampire, the body starts destroying itself. It was an evolutionary trait and it was thanks to this trait that none of the other species was able to know much about them. This trait was called 'The Coffin' amongst their kind.

However, it had its downside as well. Countless vampires had lost their lives when they could have been saved using a proper care and attention. However, the thing that truly made the coffin a double-edged sword was that its trigger was not dependent on physical injuries only.

For example, while fighting their archnemesis, the Zombies, they had to be extremely careful. If zombies' fluids somehow entered the body of the low-grade vampires, their last defence mechanism would get triggered and they would die in a matter of seconds.

The fluids could be anything, the saliva from a bite or blood from a scratch. However, generally, vampires having a grade lower than C, and levels below 25 were susceptible to this false activation of the 'Coffin'.

Vampires having higher grades than stated above, did not have the Coffin activate upon coming in contact with the bodily fluids of zombies. But even they might suffer through hellish pain which sometimes made death a better choice.

'I will kill the kid and let Mera consume the blood if she wants. I have no interest in doing that.' Jacob thought to himself and charged straight towards Ashton, ready to slash his head off his shoulders, 'Die now!'

Jacob swung his swords with all his might, however, the blades did not touch Ashton even though Jacob had completed his swing.

He looked in front of him but the kid wasn't there. The following moment he heard a scream he did not think he would hear ever again.. It was his own scream as a hole was punched through his stomach.

Chapter 25 - What Blood Tastes Like (1)

Ashton was surprised he actually landed a hit on the Bloodsucker. But the happiness was short-lived. He had put his all into that punch and it seemed like the new gene combination helped him a lot.

All that considered, Ashton committed the biggest mistake. He was going in to punch through Jacob's chest and rip his heart out, which was supposedly the only way apart from decapitation and fire to kill a vampire.

"If you are outnumbered and outmatched always go for a vampire's heart first." Ashton recalled the Mistress telling him, "That should kill the Vampire if the attack would be strong enough to burst its heart open. If not well, then you would have revealed your only card and now they will be more careful around you. Making your chances been less than they already were."

She continued, "In other words... you'll be doomed. Also, this trick would not work on high ranking vampires because they have the ability to alter their bodies according to the need and most of them always place their hearts in weird places within their bodies. I once fought one who had kept his heart in his ass... talk about being weird."

'Looks like I'm doomed now...' Ashton thought to himself as he realised where he had hit the punch.

The stomach was definitely not the part he was aiming for. But in his haste, he completely messed it up. Jacob was still in horrible pain though Ashton wasn't sure why. After all, the vampires were known to be a species that feel very less... pain.

One could even rip their hands off and they would laugh it off, at least that's what the mistress told him. But Jacob had been behaving oddly. It was the same case when Ashton scratched his thigh. Back then Ashton had gotten lucky, but now he knew there was no such thing as luck.

His attacks were clearly doing something to Jacob that he didn't even know. However, not wanting to put himself in unnecessary danger, Ashton took his fist covered in black blood out of Jacob's stomach and jumped back to safety.

In the meantime, Jacob fell down to his knees. His short swords lying on the floor, while he had wrapped his hands around his open stomach. Mera rushed over to him, trying to comfort and heal him, but it was all in vain.

"Damn it! Damn it! Damn it!" Mera cursed under her breath as she kept trying to help Jacob, but couldn't.

Soon Jacob's black blood started coming out of facial openings, his eyes, his mouth, his nose., everywhere. By this time, both the bloodsuckers were aware of what was happening... much to their dismay, the 'Coffin' had been triggered. Making it impossible for Jacob to get healed no matter what Mera tried.

"... why are you... unaffected...?" Jacob mumbled, "We are bonded... then why..."

Mera was stunned into silence. She was so distressed about Jacob, that she completely forgot about what would happen if one of them dies... the other would have suffered the same fate, But Jacob was dying and Mera, well, she was unaffected by it. At least physically.

"I... I'm sorry, Jacob..."

Mera was wracked up with shame. So much so, that she couldn't even look at the man who had dedicated his life fighting alongside her. The one man who had loved her more than anyone else... was the one she had cheated on from the beginning.

She had never bonded with him. She was only using the poor man for her own selfish desires. She wanted a pet who would gladly sacrifice himself in the face of danger and when he was dead she would look for another prey to fool.

After all, she had been doing this for ages. However, she did not realise when or how, but she actually started caring about Jacob as time passed. He was slowly becoming the one she had been looking for, for ages.

She had even planned on really making him his mate after this hunt, but things took a turn for the worse and now... it was all over. Vampires couldn't cry... well, they could cry but no tears ever came out of their eyes. If they could, then Mera's face would have been drenched in tears.

"What a way... to go out... don't you think?" Surprisingly Jacob did not show any signs of anger or rage after being betrayed in such a horrifying way, "Next time... bond with someone... before fooling them into thinking... that you have..."

"No, you're the only mate I ever wanted-"

However, Jacob was no longer listening to her, instead, he told her something she needed to hear more.

"That kid... is not an ordinary being..." He mumbled with his last breaths, "His fists have the blood of the undead within them... when he punched me... my skin broke his, allowing the blood to enter... my body which triggered... the coffin..."

While the two of them were busy sorting their mess out in Jacob's last moments, Ashton decided to capitalise on the moment. He slowly crept up to them and took Jacob's short swords for himself.

Before any of them could realise what Ashton was doing, the latter rushed behind Mera and stabbed her in the heart with the short swords. This time he had killed them for sure... because the system told him so.. Finally, the hunt had come to an end and it was time to reap the rewards.

Chapter 26 - What Blood Tastes Like (2)

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You have killed two <level 10> Bloodsuckers.

Please proceed to drink their blood to gain Vampire Exp and skill points.

Please proceed to feast on their flesh to gain Undead Exp and skill points.

Since werewolf genes were not active during the defeat of the creatures, no exp will be awarded to level up your Werewolf Exp.

You have slain creatures much stronger than you. You have gained a new title!

[Defiant]: When fighting creatures who are more than 5 levels higher than your highest levelled genes, you will gain 10% bonus strength and defence. Killing the above-said creatures would also give you additional exp.

"I thought killing them would give me something, but I would have never thought it would give me a title... whatever that thing is," Ashton mumbled to himself while looking at the swords in his hands, "I guess I won't need to be worried about finding a weapon anymore."

Item: Short Swords of Soaring Winds

Type: Weapon

Damage: 150-183 HP per strike

Stats bonus:

>> Strength: +40 while equipped for use.

>> Deals 1.5x damage against Night Creatures.

>> Deals 2x damage against Werewolves.

Rarity: Rare

Description:

These short swords were crafted from the remains of a grade B creature. Its enormous azure teeth were used to make the blade of the swords while its hide was used to craft a suitable grip for the hilt. As for the hilt and the crossguard, both of those were made using the strongest bones found inside the creature.

A pair of swords that once belonged to the early Lycan nobility. The swords have been since assumed to be lost. Only to be found by you, however, the swords have forgotten their true purpose of slaying Vampires and the Night creatures.

Instead, it has tasted the blood of so many werewolves that its true potential can only be unlocked while fighting against werewolves.

Effect(s):

Attacking enemies using this weapon exposes them to Haemorrhage, making them lose 2% of their HP for the next 5 seconds. This ability has a cooldown period of 10 seconds (Ineffective on Elite beasts).

Grants the user the passive skill: <Locked>. (Kill 10 A grade beasts to unlock this skill.)

Grants the user the active skill: <Locked>. (Kill 100 A grade beasts to unlock this skill.)

—

"Huh... at least I can do additional damage to the werewolves and night creatures."

Saying so, he wiped Mera's blood off the short swords and placed them in his inventory. As much as he was excited about using the weapon as his go-to weapon, only a fool would do something like that.

Sooner or later, everyone will find out that someone had killed the bloodsuckers which would probably prompt an investigation. If in that case, he went around brandishing the azure short swords, he would be taken into custody and probably executed before he could even activate his genes.

Thus he decided it was better for now to keep the swords hidden inside his inventory and only use them while hunting creatures to level up his Undead and Vampire genes. With that being taken care of, Ashton finally decided to claim his real rewards.

Initially, he thought that just the idea of drinking blood and consuming raw flesh would make him puke, But now that he was about to do that, for some reason it looked surprisingly appetizing to him.

'Maybe it's because of the active genes...!' Ashton reassured himself as he bent down on one knee and bit Mera's neck.

As soon as the rotten blood entered his mouth, Ashton could not stop biting more into her flesh. Nothing he had ever had tasted half as good as the blood he was drinking now. The blood felt as sweet as honey and a bit spicy at the same time.

As Ashton kept extracting the blood out of Mera, her body became frail and shrivelled up like a raisin. By the time he was done, a notification appeared in front of his eyes.

—

You have successfully consumed the blood of a <Level 10> Bloodsucker.

You gained 4 levels due to the large difference between your levels.

Current vampire Level: 4

You have levelled up! Exp limit has been reset. All wounds have been healed.

Current vampire skill points: 4

Current Exp: 0%

You have been awarded a new Vampire skill! You can access your information tab to know more about [skill absorption].

—

Ashton did not pay any attention to the text flashing in front of him. He was too lost in ecstasy to do so. However, he eventually snapped out of it and realised he still had a task to do. So, he dug into Jacob's flesh and the same cycle repeated once again. He gained a couple of levels for the undead genes but did not gain another skill.

After he was done, he quickly wiped the blood off of him and made his way out of there. He did not want to linger around there in case someone saw anything. Once he was far enough, he reactivated his werewolf genes while deactivating the rest. So that no one could trace him back.

'Let's go back to the mansion before the sun rises.'

Chapter 27 - Anomaly (1)

Ashton quickly made his way back to the mansion. Thankfully, his journey back inside was fairly uneventful. Everyone was still asleep or hiding, and the sun was still down. This helped Ashton to get back to his room without any worries.

As for his smell, he had already taken care of that as well. The mistress was sure to teach him about everything related to werewolves and one of the most important things she taught him was to erase his presence.

For all intent and purposes, the werewolves were like wolves. Thus they had a weird stench around them. There were two ways to get rid of their smell, either blend themselves with the surroundings or make the surroundings blend in with you.

This necessarily meant to either blend your smell into your surroundings or mark everything to smell like oneself. Since doing the latter would not have helped him in any way, Ashton decided to do it the other way.

He rubbed the scent of everything on him, thus even the sharpest of noses would not have been able to trace the killings back to him. At least he hoped so and started waiting for the hell break loose when the sun came up.

With sunlight came chaos in the city of Maddencreek. The citizens had followed the scent of the dead and found the dead bloodsuckers in the abandoned barn. All of them were aware of who these two bloodsuckers were.

They were two of their national guests who had been helping his majesty the king with taking care of the night creatures in the wastelands. They also knew that the two of them were hunting last night in their city.

However, with them being dead, most of them were happy as they had spent last night in worry of what would happen. The mistress, on the other hand, could not help but get worried. The national guests were killed in her city, and it wasn't exactly a secret that she hated her sperm donor more than anyone else on the planet.

If someone wanted they could easily turn this incident into a way for the mistress to show her rebellion against the empire. Even though she was strong, she was nowhere near strong enough to take on the empire by herself. If she did, she would have already overthrown her so-called father and become the monarch of the kingdom.

Everyone in the city was rounded up and their whereabouts of the last night was being asked. But it wasn't like she had a way to rebuke them.

'If only the surveillance were allowed to keep on we would have already caught on to the culprit!' The mistress cursed her father in a way she never had, 'That prickly bastard king might have plotted this all from the beginning. After all, it gave that bastard a chance to get rid of me.'

They had surveillance all over the city, but under the Bloodsucker's and his majesty's order, all of it was switched off. The bloodsuckers did not want anyone to know what they did or how they did it. Which was a clean tactic to be honest.

But now that the Mistress thought about it, it could have also been the king's or one of his advisor's plans to mark her as a traitor and get rid of her. She failed to realise this and now she might have to pay for the foolishness.

Little did she know that the stars were still shining above her. The corpses of the bloodsuckers had been sent for autopsy and the results that came back were... fascinating, to say the least.

"Vampire and Undead?" Mistress asked Donovan who presented the report to her, "Since when did those species start getting along enough to hunt together?"

"That's what confusing me as well." Donovan shrugged his shoulders, "But the report clearly states that one of them died from either her life being sucked out or because of the gaping wound in his chest and as for the male, he died after blood of some undead entered his body."

"If the bloodsucker died by the blood of the undead, then it has to be fresh blood..." Mistress handed the report back to Donovan, "It doesn't matter if a vampire and an undead are working together. With this autopsy report, at least the king or his men would not be able to blame this incident upon us."

Donovan silently nodded along, he had had the same thoughts when he read the report first. If the king and his council had really planned to get rid of his mistress then they would no longer be able to do that. But there was another thing...

"The king might be anything, but not a fool." Donovan mumbled curtly, "If they were truly trying to frame you, then they would not have had a Vampire and an Undead take care of the bloodsuckers."

The Mistress immediately understood what Donovan was trying to say and he was correct. The king probably did not know about this. Which made things complicated as well.

Because in that case, the Vampire and the Undead responsible for killing the bloodsuckers could as well be a threat to them. Thus they needed to swiftly take care of the issue right away.

"First the ghoul in the training tower, then this... I have a feeling these two incidents might be linked together." Donovan continued with what he wanted to say, "I will organise a team and hunt down everyone who is responsible for this."

"Do as you please." The Mistress mumbled and walked towards the exit of the room, "Just take care of this. I already have enough things on my plate that I need to take care of.. I do not need any more issues."

Chapter 28 - Anomaly (2)

'Hm... looks like they already found them.' Ashton thought on his way to the training tower, 'Welp, it's not like I tried to hide the bodies either. In hindsight, I should have dragged their bodies outside so when the sun rose they would be incinerated.'

Ashton shook his head the next moment. There was no guarantee that the sun would incinerate them. Not all kinds of vampires were susceptible to sunlight and all of them reacted to sunlight in their own way.

There was a rumour that the high ranking ones suffered next to no symptoms of being in natural sunlight. Thus, it was better that he did not interfere with the dead bloodsuckers unnecessarily. Who knew what would have happened?

"You seem awfully quiet today." The mistress asked him, "You don't have the flu or something, do you?"

"I'm fine."

Ashton replied in his usual stern, uncaring tone which prompted a kick from one of her bodyguards. However, Ashton quickly dodged the attack and kicked the other leg of the guard in question, making him fall over instead.

"Keep your legs to yourself." Ashton gave that man a warning and kept walking behind the mistress.

The mistress looked at him, and Ashton thought he saw a smile on her face, but the next moment she turned around after telling off her guard. This was the first time she had scolded one of her guards from someone like Ashton. At least, in front of him.

As much as Ashton loved to see that, he knew it was all an act and nothing more. She was trying to act like a good person to win him over and he knew that very well. How did he know that for sure? Because of his perception skill.

Ever since his other genes had levelled up, he was feeling different from the inside. As if his skills were bursting to evolve and make him stronger. But something was keeping him down from doing so.

He didn't know what and the blessing he had, did not have any answers for him. As things were, his only hope was to somehow have Lucifer contact him and have him answer his questions. But it wasn't something Ashton could have done on his own.

Lucifer had already told him, he was the only one who could contact Ashton, not the other way around. Thus, with nothing else in his mind, Ashton decided to devote himself to training. That way, he would be able to get strong and hopefully, breakthrough whatever was trying to stop him from getting much stronger.

"You have grown stronger." The Mistress praised him as they entered the familiar tower, "Let me view your stats for a moment."

Ashton did not utter a word and simply opened his profile for her to see his stats.

The mistress was an expert in disguising her thoughts and emotions. However, with Ashton's evolved perception skill, he was at least able to get a whiff of what was going on inside her head.

'Surprised and shocked huh... Well, even I would have been surprised if I were in her shoes.'

It wasn't every day that a mere level 4 werewolf could dodge and strike back a level 11 werewolf. That too with such ease.

"Hm... your agility and strength are looking good. But your defence should be equally good. Especially considering what happened last night." The mistress mumbled as Ashton closed his information tab.

"Last night? Did something happen?" Ashton asked in the best innocent voice he could.

"Hmm... a couple of national guests were killed last night in an abandoned warehouse. You wouldn't happen to know anything about it, would you?"

"How can I? You didn't have any mercy on me in last night's training session, I fell asleep as soon as I hit my bed."

"Hm... enough chatting. Let's not waste anymore of our time."

'Looks like she doesn't trust my words after all.'

The mistress did not say anything else, but her vibe made Ashton think that he should be more careful around her. She wasn't level 25+ for nothing, and that coupled with his intuition, made her a dangerous opponent.

After all, how many people in their right minds would try to make an enemy of the king. The way Ashton saw it, the mistress could possibly be more dangerous than the king of the empire himself.

Although he had never met him, the fact that the mistress could openly rebuke seemed to prove that either the king didn't care about what she did or that there was very little he could do about her.

In either case, it should show how politically powerful she was. Then there was the fact that she could charm anyone with her sweet words. That was her most dangerous weapon. She could turn blood brothers against one another and get rid of both of them without getting her hands dirty.

Her powers both as a werewolf and as a person left Ashton wondering why did she even need him in the first place?

Chapter 29 - A Final Duel (1)

From struggling against one ghoul to slaying five in a blink of an eye, Ashton had grown a lot. It had been a month since the bloodsuckers were found dead and a lot of things had happened since then.

The king sent some of his most capable men to find the culprit behind this attack, but they were too late. It took them a week to get there because of the differences between the ideologies of Vampires and Werewolves.

The Vampires wanted to investigate this incident on their own, but for some reason, the king was adamant about not allowing that to happen. Maybe he was worried that they might get killed as well.

But in the end, he allowed a few vampires to accompany the werewolves to investigate the scene. However, since a week had already passed, by the time they reached there, no evidence was left behind. Just a week's time was enough for nature to cover Ashton's tracks.

The investigators had to leave empty-handed. However, a hunt was organised to find and kill the culprits of the attacks. But they never found anyone. After another week of constant vigilance, the team left.

As soon as they left, the attacks started once again. However, last week they stopped as abruptly as they had started. All the werewolves knew was that sometimes it was the undead that attacked the werewolves and sometimes it was the suspected vampire.

Except that nothing was known about them. Even the surveillance systems weren't good enough to catch them as it seemed they knew every single blind spot of the cameras and patrolling company and effortlessly took advantage of it.

The mistress thought someone from her council was aiding these bastards and interrogated them all. She had suspicions on a few of them and ordered for them to be kept on house arrest. Surprisingly, the attacks stopped the very same day.

Thus she knew there was a traitor amongst them. When in reality, Ashton stopped attacking the werewolves because the date of his departure to the academy was drawing close. If the attacks stopped abruptly after his departure, everyone would know it was him all along and that scenario would not have been pretty.

As for his levels, well, he was doing pretty good. His werewolf genes were on level 9, vampire ones were on level 7 and finally, the undead ones were on level 5. He had also gotten more proficient in using two different skills from different genes at the same time. Making his existing skills evolve into something new.

As for Lucifer, Ashton had never heard from him ever since the day he awoke as a Zompiewolf. He had wanted to ask Lucifer a lot of questions regarding his potential as a new species and his powers.

However, it seemed he had to do it all on his own. The system helped him very now and then, but only in life-threatening situations or when he was about to do something incredibly stupid.

As for the relationship between the Mistress and him, well, nothing had changed much, if anything at all. Ashton still hated her more than anything and his goal remained the same. He wanted to kill her in the most gruesome way possible.

But Mistress did not seem to share the views she had for him anymore. Ashton was precious to her, but not as a pawn. She had seen him grow at a speed she had never witnessed before and thus had formed a soft corner in her heart for him.

As for Donovan, the closer Ashton and the mistress got to each other, the more frustrated he became. To him, it seemed as if Ashton was trying to replace him as the Mistress's prime mate. In this mindset, he kept giving Ashton combat training that was much worse than anyone on Ashton's level could have handled.

However, the Zompiewolf aced all of those tests which in turn made the Mistress acknowledge him even more. The two of them were soon spending more and more time together in the Mistress's chambers and Donovan thought they were doing what the Mistress and he did whenever they were alone in her chamber.

But it was far from the truth. The mistress was only teaching him about some important stuff that Ashton should have known before entering the academy. However, it wasn't like the mistress had not tried to pull moves on the boy.

In fact, she tried it almost every single night for the last month. But Ashton did not entertain her in the slightest. For starters, it wasn't his age to get busy with such things and secondly he knew what would have happened if he ended up doing the deed with the mistress.

Just like Vampires, the werewolves too had mates. While in vampires, most of them could only have one mate for the entirety of their lives, it wasn't true for the werewolves. The werewolves could have as many mates as they pleased.

There was another way in which the vampire mates and werewolf mates differed from each other. While in vampires, if one of the mates died, the other would die as well, it wasn't the same for the werewolves.

Instead, in the case of the werewolves, the mates would not be able to hide their emotions from one another. Thus exposing them to one another's feelings and secrets. This bond was the reason why Donovan seemed agitated to leave the Mistress alone with Ashton as he could feel what the mistress felt for him.

Either way, Ashton's teachings finished when he was a couple of days away from leaving Maddencreek and heading for the 'knowledge capital' of the kingdom where the academy was located in.

The mistress wanted him to rest properly, but it was not going to happen anytime soon. As Donovan stopped him right out of the mistress room.

Everyone around them could feel the tension between the two of them. Ashton hated Donovan for the way he had treated him and for the fact that he was a close ally of the mistress. While Donovan hated Ashton because of his jealousy issues.

"I am here to challenge you-" Donovan began speaking but was cut short by Ashton.

"Not interested," Ashton replied and kept walking away.

This infuriated Donovan to no end and he lashed out at Ashton. As he was about to plunge his rapier deep within Ashton's back, but he ducked down and firmly planted his foot on Donovan's chin, knocking him back.

The most bad-ass thing, however, was that Ashton did all that with his hands deep within his pockets and without a weapon.

Ashton slowly turned around to face the werewolf who he wanted to kill just as much as the mistress. But now was not the time to do that. He needed to gain more strength. That was the entire reason why he agreed to attend the academy in the first place.

"You dare touch me with your feet!?" Donovan yelled out in rage as a drop of blood trickled down from the side of his mouth.

"I apologise. I thought you liked staying under someone's feet at all times.." Ashton replied with a smile on his face before getting into his battle stance.

Chapter 30 - A Final Duel (2)

However, before either of them could do anything, the doors leading to Mistress's chambers were flung open and from within came an insinuating scream.

"Enough!"

The mistress was standing in between Ashton and Donovan and she did not appear to be pleased by the situation she was witnessing in front of her. Donovan had his rapier drawn against Ashton who had transformed his hands into werewolf claws.

Had she been late even for a moment, the two of them could have pulled each other's throats out. She used her command over the werewolves to make both of them kneel before her. It was one of the most important abilities for a werewolf to control their underlings.

Only those who possessed the strength of being the alpha could use this skill and in turn, they could use it to keep those below them, in check. But even with this ability, the alpha can't force someone to do something that was completely against their will.

It was partially the reason the mistress didn't use the ability to force Ashton to sleep with her. As she gave out the command, Donovan had no choice but to obey his mistress's wishes. She wanted them to stand down, thus he had to do that. At that moment, fighting Ashton wasn't worth offending her.

As for Ashton, well, he didn't need to abide it as he wasn't a simple werewolf the mistress could control. He had the genes of a vampire and a zombie to resist the urge to give in to her commands. However, the system did send him a notification to inform him about what the mistress wanted him to do.

'It wouldn't be wise to ignore her command right now...!' Ashton thought to himself and begrudgingly got to his knees.

He had to maintain a low profile. He was getting closer to his goals and thus did not want to mess it all up now. Either way, once he was out of Maddencreek he wasn't going to meet with most of them. Not all of them at least.

However, even though the two of them were on their knees, they were still engaged in a battle. Donovan's eyes were filled with rage as he wiped away the blood trickling out of his mouth.

The kick Ashton delivered to his chin wasn't strong enough to make him bleed. But since he was in the middle of talking when Ashton kicked him, his tongue was in between his jaws. Thus when Ashton kicked him, Donovan ended up biting his own tongue. As a result, the blood rushed out of his mouth.

But to everyone else, it appeared as if Ashton's kick was strong enough to make the second strongest werewolf in Maddencreek bleed.

In the meantime, the Mistress walked over to Donovan to check on him. As she did that, Ashton saw a smug look on Donovan's face as if he had won a prize or something. Ashton just shook his head in disappointment.

'He is supposed to be the strongest male here, but look at him behave like a lost puppy as soon as mistress touched him. *sigh* Just looking at them makes me want to vomit.'

However, Donovan wasn't the only one to receive the mistress's attention. As soon as she was done checking up on him, she walked towards Ashton and squatted down to his level. She was about to take his face in her palms when Ashton turned his face sideways.

He was least interested in what the mistress wanted to do with him. He wasn't hurt, so there was nothing the mistress needed to check up on. But it seemed like Ashton's actions had angered the mistress because the next moment, much to Donovan's surprise, the mistress slapped Ashton hard across the face.

It wasn't the first time the mistress had punished him. But it wasn't as worse as the things Ashton had been forced to suffer through. Donovan was dying to see the expression on Ashton's face after that.

However, he was not expecting to see him... smiling. It wasn't a normal smile either, but one that only psychopaths could have. The expression only lasted for a second on Ashton's face and the next moment his face turned expressionless. No one other than Donovan had seen Ashton make the face.

Ashton kept his face down in the position it was left after getting slapped as the Mistress got up. In his mind, there was a counter going on... A counter that kept track of everything these bastards had done to him.

He needed to remember it all, otherwise how the hell would he be able to punish them accordingly? For each time any werewolf hurt him, the counter went up by one, every single kick, punch and whip... everything was accounted for and would be generously given back to them when the time was right.

"If the two of you want to duel it out. You have to do it properly." The mistress criticised both of them, 'We are not a bunch of hooligans who would do things in the heat of the moment. If you want a duel, you got it. Tomorrow morning, 8'o clock. Both of you will have a duel. Till then keep your differences to yourselves. Is that understood?'

Both Ashton and Donovan nodded their heads and the mistress headed back inside her room leaving them alone.