

Zompiewolf 241

Chapter 241 The Key (2)

Somewhere in the Orion arm of the milky way galaxy, Section chief Aamon found himself in deep trouble. Mere moments ago he had stopped for a scheduled refuelling of his ship, the final one before he would have arrived on earth.

However, it was at the space station, that all hell broke loose. Space pirates attacked the station, as a result, Aamon had to fulfil his duty and fight against the pirates before they took over a Xyran space station.

But the forces stationed on Cygnus space station weren't nearly as equipped to take on such an enemy. It was mainly because it was a rare event for a spaceship to cross the Orion arm of the galaxy as it was primarily a Desolant zone, an area that had no advanced intelligent form of life.

As a result, the Orion arm did not serve as a trade route, which was the place these pirates usually attacked in hopes of finding good loot, important hostages or slaves. Since the Cygnus station did not have any of these things, they were never attacked by the pirates, not even to salvage fuel.

Nevertheless, they were attacking now and there could be only one reason for that. They were after him. They could have mistaken Aamon for being a high-ranking official among the Xyrans, since only they would possibly have a reason to visit the space station so far from their main colonies.

"Shit! If only I wasn't being a stingy bastard, I would have never ended up in this mess." Aamon cursed his frugal life.

The fuel prices were skyrocketing, that's why Aamon chose to buy only as much fuel as he would need to arrive at Cygnus. Since spaceships rarely ever crossed that area, the personnel stationed there would have readily provided him with more than enough fuel at a bargainable price.

He wanted to save a few thousand Yenos, only to put his priceless life in danger. Nothing was going correctly in his life ever since he took up the mission to investigate earth. That cursed planet was cursing his luck too.

"Damnit, fill my tank to the brim first!"

In his frustration, Aamon kicked a low ranking worker. Aamon knew no matter what he did to the workers stationed at Cygnus space station as the workers weren't Xyrans.

They belonged to a variety of races that served the Xyrans, just like how the mutants on earth would serve them. At least that would have been the case if those mutants were any good.

However, no matter how fast the workers provided fuel to him, Aamon wouldn't have been able to escape from the space station. After all, the pirates had already surrounded the space station completely.

In other words, as soon as they would see a ship leaving, the pirates would nuke it, destroying and killing anyone that was on board. Still, this wasn't the worst thing. There was something much worse going on inside Aamon's head.

Usually, when a Xyran was under such a threat, they would have called for backup and tried to hold their ground till the backup arrived. However, since he was on a 'personal' trip and not an official one, he couldn't do so.

Even if he did and got saved, there would be an investigation in the matter and Aamon was fairly sure not even Beelzebub would support him. In the end, he would be the one to get punished for wasting crucial militaristic resources all for a 'personal' trip to a long-forgotten planet.

"Oi, ugly-ass, You don't have any weapons at all? No orbital turrets or Hellbringers?" Aamon asked the only Cynthila warrior present there.

Cynthila were weird creatures, who preferred to live a minimalistic life. Their choice of lifestyle went quite along with their bizarre appearance. They had four arms, two legs and a thin tail that they often used in close quarters to penetrate through the enemy's armour.

On top of that, their six expansive eyes gave them an unfair advantage when it came to fighting as their sharp vision could detect the slightest of changes around them in mere moments. They did not have a tinge of hair on their brown course skin.

However, they rarely if ever used the so-called superior weapons, manufactured by the Xyrans. Instead, they depended on fighting using their physical abilities.

This Cynthila warrior wasn't any different, as despite wearing a battle suit made by the Xyrans, the warrior did not carry any weapon on himself.

"We would have if you Xyrans thought this place deserved it." The warrior voice his frustrations in his coarse voice, "But they didn't and how you have brought trouble straight to my doorstep."

"You ugly-ass bastard better hope I do not make it out of here alive, or I'll have you skinned for talking to a superior species like this."

"I don't know about the rest of your species, but even my butt is much more superior to you. Also, I have a fucking name, Joilla!" The warrior had had enough of this man's bullshit, "You have weapons on you, go and fight them yourself."

However, it seemed Aamon didn't need to go anywhere as the following moment the wall next to them, was ripped apart and through it walked a gang of mixed creatures. All of whom were wearing a plain black masks. As soon as Aamon saw the masks he cursed his luck even more.

He was well aware of the identity of these pirates. They called themselves the 'Testament of Illicit Thermoluminescence' or T. I. T. for short. They had a grudge against the Xyrans for as long as Aamon could remember.

"Attention everyone. We do not have any enmity towards you people." The humanoid standing in front of the TITs spoke, "Surrender the Xyran to us and we will leave you peacefully. However, in the event that you don't, we will have to destroy this entire place to make sure that Xyran is taken care of. You have five minutes to decide."

Chapter 242 The Key (3)

Joilla turned towards Aamon with one intention... sell him out. When it came to protecting his entire crew, the life of one Xyran wasn't too much to give away. However, Aamon had different plans.

The way Joilla looked at him was enough for him to know what was going inside the bastard's head. He was planning to give him up to the pirates so that they would leave the rest of them alone.

Little did he know, these pirates never fulfilled their word. They had no value to honour the promises they made. In fact, Aamon was sure the moment the pirates got their hands on him, they would destroy the station to erase any witnesses.

But there was no point in arguing with Joilla. He wouldn't understand him and think Aamon was saying those things to save his butt. That's why, as soon as the pirates had backed off a bit, Aamon made a break towards his ship.

It was a risky move considering if the pirates got a whiff of the situation, they would blow up the space station in its entirety. But that was also the reason why he had to move quickly.

"Out of the way!" He roared at the top of his lungs while waving his plasma gun around.

He had no doubt the workers present in the station would try everything in their power to stop him from leaving, that's why he too was prepared to do anything necessary to leave. Even if it meant he would have to kill everyone on board the space station.

"Forget about the peace treaties within our races, if you so much as aim that gun at any of my workers, I'll personally rip your limbs apart!" Joilla yelled back at Aamon while rushing towards him.

"As if I'll let a barbaric bastard like you stop me!"

Aamon might have been a part of the higher civilisation, but he really wasn't all that strong and was merely at grade C. A grade which wasn't enough to face a Cynthillan like Joilla in combat as he was at least at Grade B.

The Xyran was pretty sure Joilla would do exactly what he had just said if he offended him anymore. Instead, he focused on getting away from there.

As long as he left the space station he could do a 'slip-jump' to another some other Xyran-controlled space station or planet and then think about taking care of Joilla and his crew.

Threatening a Xyran was a crime in itself, that's why Joilla would probably receive a harsh punishment if the word reached the higher-ups. It was probably another reason why he was so deadset on catching Aamon.

Despite what Aamon was planning to do, it didn't seem like lady luck was on his side this time to help him out.

"That damned bastard! Does he dare to sell me out to the pirates? I have to hide and contact lord Beelzebub before it's too late." Aamon cursed loudly to make sure everyone heard Beelzebub's name.

In a desperate attempt, Aamon was doing anything that could possibly save his life and Beelzebub's name was the strongest weapon he had in his arsenal. After all, he was called the gluttonous king for a reason.

In reality, even if Beelzebub got to know what Joilla did to his lackey, it was unlikely he would go out of his way to punish him and his crew. But Joilla and the rest of them didn't have to know this.

"This fucking insect bastard, I swear if I get out of here alive, I'll bathe in his blood!"

Aamon cursed Joilla under his breath but kept on running as multiple explosions could be seen on the outside... right where he had parked his spaceship. The hangar was completely obliterated, but the rest of the station was left relatively untouched, for now.

But with the hangar destroyed, all hopes of Aamon escaping from the space station were destroyed as well. Whatever little vehicles were still in somewhat okay condition, were unfit for long space travel.

Meaning Aamon was stuck there. He turned around to see Joilla was just as shocked as he was... meaning he wasn't the one to tell them the location of the hangar.

"Those fuckers dare attack my space station?" Joilla cursed through his gritted teeth, "I'm going to kill all of them, even if it's the last thing I do."

Saying so, he grabbed the radio attached to his belt and began spitting orders to various teams of workers stationed onboard. His plan was simple, if they were going to die, they would take the pirates along with them.

"This is your captain speaking. We are under attack by T.I.T. Pirates," He said, "I don't know why they are so hellbent on attacking us, but we will fight back! Load as much fuel as you can in whatever space vehicles we have. We'll launch a suicide attack on their ship. May Orion's energy be with you!"

"These people are maniacs..." Aamon mumbled.

Even if they attacked the pirate ship using fuel-filled vehicles, how the hell were they planning to get through the energy shield of the pirate's ship?

Their captain had literally told them to go and die in vain and yet these fools were roaring with enthusiasm? What the hell had the captain been feeding them to be so stupidly courageous?

"As for you," Joilla turned his attention towards Aamon, "I don't care who you are or which faction you belong to, you will not leave this station, if you do, forget about the pirates, I'll kill you myself."

But before he could get a chance to act on his words, the following moment Joilla's head fell off of his shoulders. His neck turned into a broken faucet, spewing his blood all over the place, including Aamon. But his death wasn't in vain... as even in his death, Joilla had helped Aamon a bit.

The camouflaged assassins were no longer camouflaged but had been marked with Joilla's blood. Aamon quickly went into action and before the plasma blades could touch him, he jumped away from the two assailants, ready to shoot them down at any moment.

"Look at this mad lad, pointing a gun at us." A man laughed before revealing himself, "What is that? A type 22 Plasma bolt-action revolver? You think you can even hurt us with a weapon like that?"

"Who are you?" Aamon didn't lower the gun down and asked them, "You look like a human."

"Oh please, we're far from human beings." the man dressed in black and red replied before pulling his mask aside, to reveal his ashen face.

"As much as I hate agreeing with him, Dracula is correct." The second man removed his helmet as well, "We're no longer humans."

Standing at 7'2", the latter guy looked as if he had been living inside a cave for most of his life. His elbow-length black hair resembled a bush, just like his beard. His oval face was accompanied by a variety of scars and burn marks, Making his appearance even more grotesque.

As for the former, he too was a fairly tall person but unlike his partner, had been taking good care of his clean-shaven face. His skin was also pearl white unlike the brownish skin of his partner. All in all, he was one of the most handsome creatures any being could set their eyes on.

Little did the spectators know, staring the Dracula in his crimson eyes would only result in their death.

"For fuck's sake Lycaon, I hate that name!" Dracula shook his head in dismay, "Call me Drake! Drake!"

"Shut up you whiny mosquito." Lycaon gave him an annoyed look before making his way toward Aamon.

Aamon was there, ready to take the shot, but then... he dropped his gun and shook Lycaon's hand?

"You people put up quite a performance out there, using explosives and all," Aamon smirked before turning his gaze towards the pirate ship as it slowly began destroying the rest of the space station.

"Don't blame us. You wanted it to seem real so we did whatever we had to." Lycaon replied, deactivating his plasma sword, "Hm... It would have been a better option to take in this Cynthillan. He would have made quite a great soldier."

"As if he would ever agree to help us with our mission." Aamon shrugged his shoulders before breaking a smile.

Meanwhile, Dracula was busy imitating Lycaon but stopped the moment the got progenitor of werewolves turned around.

"Grow up you fucking annoying bastard!"

"Pardon? What did I ever do to you?"

"Oh quit bickering like a married couple you two." Aamon jumped between them, "Let's just get rid of this space station and get back to your ship."

He said and walked away, leaving Lycaon and Dracula behind.

"Who made him the boss?" Dracula asked.

"Probably because he is our administrator? Let's get going, we have a lot to discuss. Especially regarding that 'Key' we planted on earth."

"You mean the brat I bit a like a year ago on earth?"

"How many keys are you aware of fucking moron." Lycaon shook his head in frustration before walking away.

"Tch, for a progenitor you sure have a foul tongue. Even Frank is better than you." Dracula complained, "Wait for me!"

Chapter 243 The Key (4)

"Is it done?" Aamon asked Lycaon.

"Yup, Cygnus station is no more and neither are you. Congratulations on being officially dead." Lycaon replied uninterested, "So what's next?"

Aamon turned his gaze towards the freshly destroyed space station as its debris floated aimlessly in space. He wasn't one to feel remorse for the innocents that died on board the station, as far as he was concerned, they were mere pawns who could be replaced at any time by the Xyran high command.

The only thing he felt sorry for was the loss of his brand new ship, but if he was to fake his death, his space glider had to be destroyed as well. Considering everyone knew how much he loved his vehicles.

"Where's Dracula and Frank?" Aamon asked before finally taking his gaze off of the space station.

"Dracula is in the canteen, probably chugging down some Horikotan blood." Lycaon mumbled and sat beside the Xyran, "As for Frank, the last I know he was off to deal with some problems in his kingdom on earth."

"He never listens, does he?" Aamon shook his head and got up, "Let's talk while heading towards the canteen. There's something I wanna tell both of you."

Lycaon nodded and both of them headed towards the canteen. Although Aamon had said he was going to talk, he didn't utter a word, and since Lycaon wasn't one to talk much, the duo were silent throughout the way.

The door connecting the hallway to the canteen opened up with a loud bang, alerting everyone inside of their arrival. All of the people inside looked at them with admiration in their eyes.

Lycaon and Dracula shouldn't be considered pirates, because they usually devoured the so-called pirates. As for their crew, they were the ones Dracula, Lycaon and Frank had rescued from various places in an attempt to build up an army.

They had a bunch of secondary ships as well and had almost a hundred thousand subordinates spread throughout the galaxy. However, it was nothing compared to the hundred million-strong army the Xyrans commanded.

That's why rather than starting an all-out war, they had decided to wage a series of skirmishes against the Xyrans. While also being the ones who had been protecting the earth from far away, stopping anyone or anything that headed towards the solar system the earth was a part of.

It was one of the reasons why no one frequented the Orion arm of the galaxy. As most of the people were aware of what would happen to those who dared to do so.

However, it wasn't like everyone hated them. The number of followers they had gained over the years was proof of that. Aliens of various colours, shapes and forms could be seen walking around and enjoying the food and drinks served on board.

Their ship was more of a nightclub than a pirate ship. But it was to be expected as they spent 99% of their time hovering in space looting and at times serving as mercenaries for hire.

"Where is he?" Aamon scanned the room but couldn't find Dracula anywhere.

"You're looking in the wrong direction." Lycaon tapped on his shoulder and pointed above, "He's a vampire after all."

Dracula was hung upside down, enjoying his tetra packed blood while maintaining his distance from everyone else. The blood belonged to an unintelligent alien species called the Horikotan. These mammals were more of livestock than a full-fledged spacefaring species.

Their blood was used in cooking but Dracula liked to drink it raw as it was the only thing that barely came close to what human blood tasted like.

"Stop drinking and get down. I have important info to discuss." Lycaon shouted at him.

Dracula made an annoyed face but did as he was told. The way Lycaon behaved with him, one would think Lycaon was stronger than the progenitor of vampires, but it wasn't true. Dracula was much superior to Lycaon when it came to combat.

But Lycaon had his own qualities, after all, he was a creationist and his gadgets could give him an edge over any being who was in the same grade as him.

Dracula jumped down and landed straight on his feet. As he did so, everyone around him began clapping and cheering him up, except Lycaon and Aamon.

"Thank you, thank you- ouch!"

"Focus here." Lycaon slapped Dracula in the back of his head.

"Right, what did you wanna talk about? The Key?" Dracula asked while rubbing his head.

Aamon nodded as Lycaon led them to the private room, at the back of the bar.

"What about him?" Dracula continued.

"I'm afraid Lucifer spilt the beans to Beelzebub about Astaroth and effectively our key." Aamon sighed, "I don't think Lucifer told him everything, because if he did then an entire fleet of ships would have headed towards earth as we speak."

"My guess is, Beelzebub only knows that Astaroth is alive. He doesn't know how or in what capacity." Aamon continued, "That's why he asked me to go and investigate, but unfortunately, the pirates found and 'killed' me before I could do anything."

"That means it should be enough to stop him from doing anything else for a couple of years, right?" Lycaon chimed in, "I mean, the news of your death itself would take like a couple of months before it reaches his ears."

Aamon nodded while Dracula kept gulping down the blood, looking uninterested in the conversation, when the conversation was the only thing he had all his attention on.

"That, however, is inconsequential." Aamon said, "The fact that Beelzebub is aware of Astaroth's existence, puts our plan in rush. We have to get the boy and make him strong enough to fight against Beelzebub and his clan of masters. Turn him into an S-grade for fuck's sake."

"Do you have any information on the kid's levels or anything?" Dracula chimed in, "It wouldn't require much effort if he has evolved twice. If not then... good luck to us."

"That's... the problem." Aamon had a worried look on his face, "Lucifer no longer has the admin rights over the boy. He gave it up to Astaroth when he realised Beelzebub was too corrupted to come to our side. And the last time he checked... the boy was still due his first evolution choice."

Aamon's words fell on the duo like a supernova bomb. The boy's progress was much slower than they had expected, especially with Lucifer guiding him. But if what Aamon had told them was true, then they needed someone stronger than anyone on earth to guide him as soon as possible.

Preferably, they would have liked it if the boy could board their ship so that they would be able to train him personally. But now that they had destroyed a Xyran space station, going anywhere near earth would only arouse Beelzebub's suspicion even more.

"So... we're fucked?" Dracula shook his head, "We had to go through all that trouble only to give all that potential to a moron?"

"Don't be so quick to dismiss him." Aamon tried calming everyone down, "You said Frank is on earth right? Contact him and tell him to figure out the boy's current strength. There's a high possibility of Lucifer's information being outdated. As for us, we'll figure out what to do after Frank gets the information for us."

Chapter 244 Back To The Enclosure

Ashton and a handful of others were on their way to the enclosure. The same one where Ashton had grown up in. Why? Because technically it was his enclosure now and he needed more people to rebuild Livan.

That being said, Jonathan hadn't officially given it to him, but it wasn't like Ashton needed his permission, in the first place.

After all, he was now much stronger than Jonathan was. Although Jonathan still had an edge over Ashton in terms of his army, he didn't want to sour his relationship with him anymore as it was already on the rocks.

Also, the fact that Jonathan needed Ashton in order to take over the swamps forced him to make sure Ashton was not offended in any way, no matter how much he wanted to.

He could only bid his time and hope for an opportunity to come up where they could talk and solve their problems without hostility from either side.

However, Jonathan did recall the royal guards he had placed under Ashton's command. Citing a reason that no other nobles had them, thus Ashton shouldn't have them either. But Ashton could literally see right through Jonathan's lies.

He was worried that Ashton was growing too strong and influential. So much so that he began doubting the loyalty of his soldiers, thinking Ashton would take his throne away from him. All this despite Ashton saying he had no intention of ruling over a country.

He even said, as long as Jonathan did not interfere in his business, he wouldn't care what he does or doesn't do. But Jonathan was right to fear his soldiers slipping away from his command.

Something he saw first-hand by Sheera's reluctance to leave her new lord. But since she was completely loyal to the throne, she had no other choice but to do as she was told.

That being said, after a month of hmms and haws, Ashton had managed to tame the remaining members of the Morgans. It wasn't as easy as it seemed, with everyone objected and did not accept him as their lord, as most of them believed Marcee and Bishop were still alive.

It was only when Ashton showed their severed heads to Marcee's would-be wife, did they accept Ashton as their lord.

If Ashton wanted, he could have decided not to go through all the troubles and simply forced them to join him under the might of his iron fist. But since he needed trustable people from within the crowd who would help him run their city, he had to be patient and behave as such.

Running an estate as huge as the Morgans wasn't an easy task, thus he needed some help. Having some people around him would only do him good and refrain other nobles from acting out against him.

As for Mera, she was nowhere to be found. Almost as if she disappeared from the face of the planet entirely. Even though Ashton did want to see her suffer, he decided to let the matter rest for a bit. It wasn't like he had any other choice as he doubted Mera was going to show her face to him in a long time.

"Feeling nervous?" Verina asked with her usual smile.

"Nah, not nervous but a bit annoyed, I guess?" Ashton replied indifferently.

"Why though?"

"When the mistress 'marked' me as her property, a lot of them said one day I will return there as a noble or some other high ranking member of the society. Back then I hated the nobles with a passion... well I hated everything that wasn't human, to be honest."

Ashton continued, "Long story short, I yelled at them that I would rather die than become one of them. A few years later... here I am, and I can't wait to see their 'I told you so' faces."

"Well, technically you fulfilled your promise. After all, you became an undead first before a noble." Verina said with a smile.

"Hm, maybe they were fortune-tellers or some shit. Humans used to have those right? I wonder if they were able to predict their loss in the battle and thus ran off the planet!" Virgil chimed in through the radio, "Maybe they'll predict my future with Fae as well. Hmm... a warning regarding married life would be appreciated. Oh wait- I didn't mean it!"

Virgil was so caught up in the moment, that he forgot Fae was with him in the same car. As Fae attacked Virgil, Ashton couldn't help but laugh. A few seconds later, he realised the sisters were staring at him as if he was a monkey who did a trick.

"Is there something on my face?" He asked them. Both of them nodded in synch, "What?"

"A smile." Irina replied before turning her gaze away, "You should smile more."

"Look who's talking." Ashton shook his head but smiled again.

By this time, they reached the enclosure. Ashton looked outside from the window and the memories of the place came flooding back to his mind. Almost a year had passed since he had seen this place and nothing had changed.

The entire 'prison', looked the same as it had done before. The guards were patrolling as usual even in Mera's absence while the people inside were doing what they did best, nothing.

'I guess some things never change?'

As soon as the humans saw the cars approach them, they immediately bowed down, regardless of their age, gender or physical condition. It was whipped into them that no matter what, if they see a member of werewolf society, they had to greet them like this or well get punished.

Ashton was all too familiar with the rule because he was punished every couple of weeks because he refused to follow the rules of the enclosure. He stepped out of the car and a moment later he was greeted by Gustavo Volga, the captain of the voluntary guards.

"I greet my lord." He said.

Ashton was a bit weirded out by seeing the man who often whipped him for disobedience, bowing before him.

"You're still here huh? Well, you won't be around for long."

"M-My lord?"

"I'm demolishing this enclosure and taking the humans with me." Ashton replied, "Now a destroyed enclosure wouldn't need security would it?"

Chapter 245 Missing

People often see truth from different perspectives, as a result, their narratives of the same events are bound to be completely different. Just like it was for Jonathan who was still having a tough time in taking a side between Mera and Ashton.

"If only those who would let along, conquering the continent wouldn't have been an impossible task." He sighed heavily.

Jonathan was in his private chambers all alone, gazing out of his window. The silence he used to cherish so much was now driving him crazy. The look on his face wasn't of a king but of a man who had gotten lost from the path he had carved for himself.

He wasn't the confident man he had been just a few days ago, all because his daughter decided to disregard his warnings and went ahead with her pitiful plan of taming the brat. He knew about the attack Mera was planning against Ashton long before she even put it into action.

But back then he couldn't stop her. Not because he didn't want to, but because he thought as long as she did not kill the boy, everything should be fine. The two of them would work together and he would achieve what he desired the most... complete control over the werewolves.

He was so sure of Mera's success that he even came up with the excuse of the portal being destroyed when Sheera contacted him. All in hopes that Mera would be able to take care of Ashton before he eventually made his way to the city.

It was only when he heard Sheera's report of the incident did he mobilise his army. However, it wasn't to save Ashton but to save Mera.

The moment he was informed that Ashton was using explosives that could harm and even kill werewolves, Jonathan realised the boy had already predicted something was about to happen and had prepared accordingly.

Thus Jonathan raced to the battlefield, praying to god that he reached there before Ashton could defeat Mera, or worse, kill her.

Sadly, what Jonathan wasn't aware of was the fact that Mera was using one of her precious clones to do her dirty work this time. Otherwise, he would have allowed Ashton to kill the clone and have his 'revenge', while Mera was safely hidden somewhere else.

That would have been the true win-win scenario. However, he intervened and by the time he realised he was defending a clone, it was already too late to back down and let Ashton kill her because it was no secret to him how much he cared about Mera as her father.

But he didn't need to do anything as Ashton already seemed to know that the Mera he was fighting was nothing but a cheap clone. How did Ashton know about the existence of the clones was a mystery to Jonathan, as him, Mera and a couple of others were the only ones who knew about it.

'I sure know how to pick and lose them.' Jonathan smiled wanly, 'If only I was half as lucky when it came to finding people...'

Jonathan already had his hands full, but now he had to worry about finding Mera. He had not seen or heard from her ever since she took down the Morgans and turned them into her slaves. On top of that, after her defeat at Ashton's hand, she was nowhere to be found. It almost felt as if she was trying to hide from everyone on the planet.

She had abandoned her territory for good, something which she fought tooth and nail for before, and no one had any idea where she had gone to. But Jonathan did not give up. He instructed his shadow assassins to drop whatever they were doing and find her first.

After all, he needed to keep her safe. But so far, they had been unsuccessful in doing so.

"Anything?" He asked without turning his back and a woman appeared out of nowhere, before kneeling behind him.

"Nothing of substance, your highness." She responded, "Just some rumours that we're trying to find concrete evidence to prove their authenticity. Until then there isn't much to work-"

Jonathan did not like her answer at all and completely lost it. Days worth of tension and exhaustion had made him easily irritable. He turned around and grabbed the shadow assassin by her neck, before slamming her against the wall.

"It's been days since I told you to find her," He snarled at her, his canines were merely half an inch away from her neck, as his rage-filled eyes stared at her horrified face, "I wanted results and all I hear are excuses but not a single result. Forget about finding her exact whereabouts, your idiots can't even find the continent she could be on!"

No one had ever seen him get this angry. Not even when his first wife died at the hands of someone whom he trusted the most. It was one of the major reasons why he was so attached to Mera. But now he was breathing fire on anything that moved in front of him.

"W-We looked for her... everywhere... your highness." The Assassin spoke in a squeaky voice as the pressure around her neck kept increasing, "She's neither in any werewolf territory nor in any vampire territory... she could have left... for Nirvana-"

Jonathan eased his grip around her neck, but kept her lifted mid-air, "What did you say? Nirvana? How could you be sure of it?"

The assassin found a new life as soon as Jonathan eased his grip and took quick breaths before replying to her master.

"There's a man in the coastal town of Foxenmore, who says he saw her there when we showed her photographs around. We haven't been able to verify whether he was lying or not, that's why I kept the information from you. My sisters are in the middle of finding out the truth-"

"There's no need," Jonathan calmed down and let go of her, "I know why she is headed to the undead territory. To find her mother... but why?"

Chapter 246 Washed Away (1)

The sun was dawning over the land of werewolves, which meant it was time for everyone to pack up, stop working and enjoy the night in Livan. Everyone, but the heads of various departments needed to discuss the development of the city now that they didn't have any shortage of resources.

Numerically, there were several secretaries that served under Ashton's command. Virgil, who was the secretary of defence. Fae, the secretary of healthcare. Renee was made the secretary of food procurement and supplies. Baiter was considered to be made the secretary of technological advancement and development.

However, even after giving them their tasks, there were a lot of things that still needed to be taken care of and thus Ashton needed more secretaries. Thankfully, he had no shortage of capable people on his side to fill the most important roles.

The minute Duncan and Daniella decided to stay with Ashton, despite the things he had done to them in the past, Ashton decided they would be the perfect candidates to voice the opinion of the humans in his city. Thus, Duncan was given the position of Secretary of Human Relations.

This move also made the humans that now lived and worked in the city feel safe as now for the first time in their lives, their voices would be heard on an equal level as the werewolves.

Apart from them, Ashton also gave Verina a post, even though she shouldn't have been assigned a role as their stay in Livan was considered to be 'temporary'.

However, when Verina asked for Alucard's permission, he readily agreed to the proposal thinking it would be the perfect way for the sisters to show their usefulness to him and win him over.

As a result, Verina was made the secretary of external and internal affairs due to her cool-headed nature. In the meantime, Irina was made the secretary of training armed forces along with finance. Because she happened to be good with numbers and money as a whole and also training people for warfare.

Obviously, in time he would need more trustworthy people to fill in for more secretaries as his city expanded. But for now, seven secretaries were enough.

To anyone who saw his city, it was clear that Ashton wasn't treating his territory like a city, but as a kingdom of his own. After all, there was no reason for him to make a secretary for external affairs if he was merely restoring a city.

But he did because he knew Jonathan wasn't on his side completely and also simply because he could do whatever he wanted to. No one would dare to go against him as long as he minded his own business and they minded theirs.

"Alright, people," Ashton started the meeting as usual, "Let's start with Verina. What do you got for me tonight?"

"More lords have offered you money, for atonement." Verina shrugged her shoulders, "Or so they say."

Ashton shook his head and replied, "That's no atonement money, but blood money. They want to ease their guilt and I'm not going to let that happen. They will pay for what they did, but not now."

Getting money and resources from the neighbouring lords had become a custom. They often send things his way, thinking he would forgive them for their 'irrational' behaviour. But Ashton had no intention of doing such a thing.

Soon the lords got a wind of what happened to the Morgans and Mera, but they couldn't do anything about it. Mainly because they were just as guilty as the Morgans had been.

As for the matter of women and children who had been kidnapped from Livan, most of them were safely returned to Ashton as a strategic move to not invoke his anger. But some were unfortunate.

A few of them had already been sold to a variety of buyers, and even sent to some uncharted regions that were the home to the most vicious night creatures. just because their buyers wanted them to suffer. But they weren't sent just like that.

Surveillance devices were strapped across their bodies so that they could enjoy watching them suffer while they had fun betting on how long they would survive.

It was safe to say that all of those people died horrific deaths. Earlier humans were used for this purpose but now even the werewolves weren't safe.

How did Ashton know all of this? Multiple Lords had confirmed it themselves. But these weren't the ones who indulged in it, that's why they agreed to inform Ashton all about it in the hopes of getting on his good side.

The guilty lords, especially the Gruntas, readily compensated their loss with money, but Ashton declined their offer. The blood of the innocents was on their hands and Ashton wasn't going to accept some blood money to ease their guilt.

By offering him the money they wanted to force Ashton into keeping his hands to himself, but now that he had declined their offer, they were afraid of retaliation.

Especially the Gruntas who were known to go against Ashton ever since he was just a student at the academy. Not to mention, they were directly responsible for what happened to Livan and its people, so they were afraid Ashton might do what he did to the Morgans and Mistress Mera.

They even went to the king to beg for his help but to no avail. He, who barely managed to protect his daughter, was in no shape or form going to do anything to protect them. On top of that, every noble household was aware of their 'crimes' and decided to distance themselves from them for good.

"Should we attack them or something?" Virgil asked calmly, "I mean they know sooner or later we will come for their heads."

"We do not have the resources to start another war." Fae interrupted, "Also, waging wars so often would only make everyone conscious of having any contact with us. Not to mention, wars could also hinder the development of our city to be added to a merchant route."

"As much as I want to rip their heads off myself, Fae is correct." Ashton nodded, "Fighting against them would do us more harm than good. Now is the time for us to make more friends than enemies so we should focus on that. Anything else?"

"Hm... not at the moment but I do have a personal request from father for you." Verina replied, "There's something he needs to discuss with you."

"Oh, did his intelligence network find those Conundrum rats?" Ashton said with a smile on his face, which disappeared once Verina shook her head.

"They found something alright, but it has nothing to do with Conundrum." She said, "They found an Undead creature washed away at the shore of one of the vampiric kingdoms."

"And...?" Ashton couldn't figure out how it was any of his concern.

"Since you're an Undead too... well, at least a third of it, he was hoping you could have some clues for finding more about that creature."

"Oh... hm. That could be arranged easily. I was looking for an opportunity to go there as well."

"Anything special?" Irina asked him.

"No. Just a few things I need to do there."

Chapter 247 Washed Away (2)

'What do you think?'

[What do I think? I don't know much about this world, let alone someone I've never seen before.]

'So much for being a Xyran.' Ashton sighed before focusing his attention on the Undead creature in front of him, 'I can't believe even with the [Detection] skill something so trivial would turn out to be so... complicated.'

Ashton had arrived at Transylvania the next day. Alucard seemed very interested in Ashton's genetics and his evolution, but at the moment finding out more about the undead creature was more important.

Thus, Ashton parted ways with the overlord and his daughters to visit the lab the undead was being analysed in.

Ashton accepted Alucard's proposal for two reasons. Firstly, he was hoping to find out more about the undead region of North America that was now known as Nirvana. All because he wanted to get in contact with the man Ashton thought to be his father. And secondly, he wanted to talk to his 'mother' regarding Mera's clones.

Why her? Because she was supposedly an expert in the field and probably the only person who could have helped her. If she hadn't Ashton would apologise for his behaviour the last time and move on, but if she did... then he would have a shit ton of questions Avalina would need to answer.

Thankfully, By agreeing to study the washed away undead corpse, Ashton was automatically brought into contact with Avalina who too was studying the undead to try to find the reason why or how the undead crossed the Atlantic ocean to reach the vampire territory.

The most troubling part was that the creature had crossed the ocean and was alive when found by the locals. It was during the transportation process did the creature 'died'.

Now the question was, how did an undead swim across the ocean which should have felt like crossing an ocean full of poison.

As it was a well-known fact that the undead creatures are extremely susceptible to salt and can be killed by injecting a large amount of highly concentrated saline solution.

Avalina wanted to discuss it all with Ashton and check whether he too had the same weakness or not. She did not have any bad intentions and only wanted to make sure Ashton did not have a weakness any could easily exploit.

But the awkwardness between them was obvious for her to even get close to him, let alone test her theory. On top of that, both of them wanted to apologise to each other, and yet none had the will, words, or courage to do so.

"You've gotten stronger..." Avalina finally broke the silence.

"Uh... yeah. You have to keep getting stronger as the number of people who would want to chop your head off increases." Ashton replied without taking his eyes off the corpse, "It helps to keep them in check."

Avalina nodded and carried with gathering various samples from the undead to analyse, "Being a tribrid must be fun. Especially for having the best of all the species? No wonder you had to hide it from everyone."

"Yeah, being a tribrid is like being a rose. It looks beautiful and harmonious from the outside but full of thorns on the inside. Being someone like me, isn't all sunshine and meadows."

Once again, silence swallowed their conversation.

"Is there anything else you'd like to ask?" Ashton mumbled before finally giving up on making sense of anything out of the undead, "It felt like you wanted to say something before you went silent."

Avalina smiled thinking how much Ashton was like Benedict, his father. Just like she was his mother, Benedict was his father in all the sense of the word. He too had the talent to interpret her silence into words, and although Ashton couldn't do so, he could at least know that something was off with her.

"I'm dumbfounded thinking how you would have had a tough time hiding your powers, waiting for the right moment to reveal it all. To show everyone and everything how strong you are, all the while living under the fear of losing everything. That kind of bravery and patience is rare to have."

She continued, "Just thinking about everything you had to go through makes me... feel like a failure."

[Patience and this brat? You couldn't have been more wrong lady!]

As usual, Astaroth didn't miss the opportunity to pull Ashton's leg. But Ashton had long since learned to filter the Xyran's voice off whenever he felt like it. At that moment, all of his attention was solely on Avalina and nothing else.

At the same time, a realisation hit him as well. Avalina right not have been the one to birth him, but she had been his mother since day one. His hazy memories of them being together was the proof of that, and as he realised that, he felt so ashamed to behave the way he did in front of her.

"I wanted to tell you something as well," Ashton began his forgiveness speech, however, before he could say more, the Undead raised his head and launched itself at Avalina.

"For Nirvana!" The bastard roared loudly and was about to bite her neck.

"No, you won't!"

The Undead must have thought his mission was a success, but to his bad luck couldn't have been worse. As the following moment, Ashton rushed over to them and slammed his fist onto the undead's face, turning the lower half of his mouth into mashed potatoes... with a lot of rancid tomato puree and chunks of rotten teeth.

Ashton then grabbed the creature's head and ripped it apart with ease. But that did not seem to calm his nerves down as he began stomping on it.

"How fucking dare you touch my mother!?"

He kept repeating over and over until Astaroth yelled at him that Ashton had killed the creature a dozen times over. As soon as he stopped, he turned to check on Avalina who was crying tears of joy as soon as she heard him referring to her as his mother.

"Are you hurt anywhere?" Ashton squatted down to check on her, but she grabbed his face and planted a kiss on his forehead as she used to before.

However, before any of them could say a word more, they were interrupted by someone.

"So, you're her son... interesting." Alucard mumbled.

Chapter 248 Bonding Time

Ashton instinctively jumped in front of Avalina, ready to fight Alucard.

[Oi, idiot, back off now. Did you forget what I said? He's more experienced than you.]

However, Ashton was not going to listen to anyone who tells him to back down, especially if someone close to him was threatened. Not to mention, his level was higher than that of Alucard, therefore he didn't have a reason to back down.

"Oh, protecting your mother huh? That's a praiseworthy thing to do." Alucard smirked and took his sword out, "I knew you were somewhat like me. I too killed the people who were responsible for my mother's death. Those were the times... but let's see what can you do first, shall we?"

Ashton did not waste any time and charged straight toward the overlord. As usual, he placed all his strength behind his swords and attacked. Spark flew in all directions as their blows connected with each other.

Ashton's attack was backed up by raw strength but Alucard had a century worth of skills on his side. The kid's attack might have forced him to take a step back, a feat not many on earth have achieved. But that was all there was to it.

"Your attacks are too simple and lack substance. It almost feels like a monkin stole a sword and decided to play the hero." Alucard mocked him before deflecting Ashton's strike and smacking him in the head, "You think you can protect someone like this? It's a miracle you have been able to protect yourself so far."

Ashton paid no attention to him and threw a tornado kick at Alucard. Since the latter was well aware of Ashton's brute strength, he didn't even try to block or parry the strike, instead, he ducked below and swiped Ashton's legs off the floor making him lose his balance and eventually fall.

With his trusty sword, Alucard tapped Ashton's neck.

"And you're dead, then I killed your mother and you wasted all of your talents. End of story." Alucard smiled putting the sword away, "Wanna have a go again?"

"Eh?"

"Don't tell me... you thought I was going to kill you for real?" Alucard acted surprised, "I would never do something like that. If I did, my daughters would never forgive me and that's something I can't live with."

"So... what was this?"

"Hm... an impromptu sparring session, I guess?" Alucard replied, before pulling Ashton to his feet.

[Huh, you really thought he was fighting you? LMAO!]

"..."

With Ashton back on his feet, Alucard turn his attention towards Avalina, "Ava, you good?"

"Yes, your highness. Ashton saved me in the nick of time." She replied, "If it wasn't for him, I don't think I would be talking to you or to anyone in fact."

"I'm glad you were saved by your long lost son, although there are a lot of things he needs to learn. You might be a good brawler, but your swordsmanship is a bit lacking. Not that I blame you, those wolves think strength is the only thing that matters. Which also reflects in the way they handle their weapons."

"That I can't argue with..." Ashton scratched the back of his head.

He was feeling a bit embarrassed regarding how easily he lost his cool and fought Alucard, without thinking of the consequences. On top of that, as Astaroth reminded him of the things he said, Ashton couldn't help but cringe at himself.

'I really said such a thing in front of her?'

[Sure did, Mr self-proclaimed protagonist.]

'What?'

[What?]

'Nevermind.'

"Well, it's a good thing my daughters chose you. Now I can teach you the way of the sword and hopefully make a great knight out of you. Only if you want of course."

Alucard left the ball in Ashton's court and Ashton wasn't a fool to decline the opportunity to learn swordsmanship from such a great swordsman.

"I'll be honoured to."

"Haha, consider it a father-in-law and son-in-law bonding activity." Alucard laughed heartily all the while patting Ashton's back.

"Uh..."

"You will marry them, won't you?" Alucard brought his face eerily closer to Ashton, as the latter nodded vigorously, "Good, good. For a second I thought you were having cold feet or something."

[Damn, first he's gonna force you to marry them, then they'll force your virginity out of you... quite literally.]

Soon, cleaners were brought in and they cleaned up the mess inside the lab while Ashton, Avalina, and the sisters accompanied Alucard to his private chambers. Well, it was private chambers only in name, it appeared more like a treasury than anything else.

Once everyone had settled down, Alucard wanted to know more about Avalina and Ashton. He didn't have any reason for it, but since Ashton would one day become a part of his family, it was given that he wanted to know more about him.

However, Alucard could not believe his ears as Ashton and Avalina explained how they were separated from each other for about 12 years now. Irina, who barely ever showed any emotions had a sad look on her face, while Verina was trying her best to not hug Ashton.

They had no idea why Ashton was so cold-hearted but now that they were aware of his backstory, his hostile demeanour towards strangers made a lot of sense.

Once that was out of the way, Alucard turned their attention towards the real reason why he had invited them to his chambers... to discuss what happened in the lab.

"As far as we are aware, salt should be the weakness to the undead. However, it's an indisputable fact that the undead not only somehow managed to survive in seawater but also fool us into thinking it was 'dead'."

Avalina continued, "As for the reason for attacking me... I think we all know the answer."

She was obviously referring to the research she had been doing. If she managed to complete her research, not only would she find a cure to reversing the 'Coffin' effect, but the undead would also lose the one advantage they have over the vampires.

But she couldn't; openly say it because Ashton was present there and the research was supposed to be kept a secret from everyone who didn't belong to vampire nobility.

"What answer?" Ashton looked at everyone as they silently nodded in agreement.

"All I can tell you is that it's related to research I have been doing for a decade," Avalina replied.

She did not state what kind of research, but Ashton was not a fool and immediately connected the dots.

"Is it about the weakness of the vampires against the undead?"

He asked them and all of them stared at each other, trying to figure out who could have told him that. But Ashton cleared the confusion before any of them blew things out of proportion.

"No one told me, so don't point fingers." Ashton smiled, "I'm part Undead too remember? On top of that, I have fought vampires before. Don't you think one of those times I would have discovered something like that on my own?"

"Aah... it does make sense." Alucard nodded, "But what doesn't is the fact how did the undead get to know about our plans?"

Chapter 249 Training (1)

Despite brainstorming for a couple of hours, all of them could only come up with two scenarios to answer Alucard's question. One, the undead were slowly evolving and hence were gaining some sort of resistance or immunity to salt, which would explain how the undead crossed the ocean.

And second, the undead had infiltrated the other continents. None of them wanted this to be true, but no one could ignore the possibility either.

This conclusion was a bit unsettling due to obvious reasons. There were undead creatures walking in their midst and no one knew about it. Something like that wouldn't have affected the werewolves much, but for the vampires, the undead's presence was nothing short of a pandemic.

Not to mention it was a direct violation of the treaty between the species which stated no species is allowed to step foot into the land belonging to other species until and unless they are invited to do so.

However, it wasn't possible for the undead or anyone for that matter, to do so without being detected. Which meant... someone, a vampire, was in on this too. It could be anyone, from a high-ranking member trying to climb the ladder by eliminating everyone or a small timer who would do so for material things.

On the outside, Alucard appeared to be normal, but inside his head, he was already making a list of the people who could do something like that. Anyone who ended up there... would not have a peaceful life anymore, to say the least.

"All of you can leave now," Alucard dismissed them with a reassuring mind, "I will handle this on my own. In the meantime, Ashton, we can start your training from tomorrow onwards. If that's okay with you."

"Thank you, your-"

"Training? What training?" Irina immediately jumped up.

For years she had begged her father to teach her the way of his sword. But Alucard declined her every time and instead sent them to get trained by the swordmasters spread across their continent.

That's why when Alucard said he would be training Ashton, she was a bit offended. In her mind, it almost felt like she wasn't worthy enough, but Ashton, on the other hand, was.

"Yes, I am training him." Alucard did not beat around the bush or tried to diffuse the situation, "But it's not because he is capable that I am doing so. Actually, it's the complete opposite of it."

"Father, we have fought against him and we know he is stronger than us-" Verina chimed in, but Alucard interrupted her.

"All he knows is using brute force. Nothing else. Since his strength far exceeds yours, it was obvious you would be defeated. That being said, unlike you and your sister, he is terrible when it comes to handling his weapon and the only reason I am teaching him is that he has to protect the two of you not the other way around."

[He is such a sly man. I like him.]

Ashton couldn't disagree with Astaroth even if he wanted to. Alucard's diplomacy was always a sight to behold and never disappointed any spectators either.

'I could learn a thing or two from him.'

[That's something I should say. As for you, you could learn an entire encyclopedia worth of things from him.]

'...'

Judging by how easily Alucard managed to calm everyone down and did not make any of them feel offended, was something to admire. Not only that, but he easily managed to get his point through to everyone as well.

In other words, what Alucard told everyone was that, while Ashton was strong he lacked the essential techniques to master his weapon. While at the same time, the sisters had the skills but did not have the strength to overpower anyone. Thus satisfying both the parties without making any of them feel slighted.

'Maybe he has an ability for-'

[That's not the case every time... some people are born with talents no one else has. Just like you.]

'Having you inside my head isn't a talent. It's called cancer.'

[...]

Meanwhile, somewhere in Deja.

Jonathan was walking through a dimly lit corridor. A place that was hidden from the rest of the world and only a select few had the knowledge that such a place even existed.

Even Jonathan wasn't aware of it until twelve or so years ago when he accidentally stumbled across the room that happened to be some sort of armoury. A place that must have been used during the war with humans. A place that had been turned into a secret lab since.

"Any progress?"

"Not much, your highness." A man replied, "The subject keeps rejecting the gene implants."

His face wasn't visible in the low light, but it was obvious he wasn't a werewolf. Hell, he didn't belong to any of the dominant species on the planet. For he was just an ordinary human.

However, since he was covered in some kind of a special black suit, coupled with the bad lighting, his presence was completely hidden. Had he not answered Jonathan's question, no one would even know he was inside the room.

"I want results Tom," Jonathan whispered while staring down at Mera's unconscious clone inside a pod filled with a mysterious liquid, "I already heard today's quota of excuses somewhere else. We both know it's possible. That kid is the living proof of it."

"Yes, but his existence shouldn't be possible." Tom shook his head, stepping out of the shadow, "These genes aren't meant to coexist. There must be something else inside him that's binding these genes and not allowing either of them to overpower the other two."

Jonathan sighed heavily before grabbing the human by the neck. But as soon as he realised how important Tom was, he let him go.

"Stop telling me what I know and tell me something that I don't. That kid has the power, but now that he has gone rogue, I need someone else with the same kind of strength by my side and it's your job to make it happen or else-"

"You will feed my family to your domesticated undead creatures. I know it very well. Give me a few more weeks, I will find a way to make it work by then."

After hearing what he wanted to hear, Jonathan turned around and left the room, not suspecting anything that had been going on inside Tom's head.

"He's gone." He spoke through his communicator after making sure Jonathan was gone.

"Good. Just keep up the act. When the time comes, you'll be generously rewarded." A mysterious feminine voice replied, "Long live Nirvana."

"Long live Nirvana..."

Chapter 250 Training (2)

In the sky laden with mist, the sun found it a herculean task to penetrate the mist and grace the land of vampires with its presence. Under the watchful eye of the mist, a beautiful garden was flourishing with plants that no werewolf had ever seen before.

However, at this moment, the spectators gathered around the garden were not appreciating the beauty of the flora, but the ones clashing swords in their midst. The loud sounds of metal clashing had left everyone mesmerised. After all, it wasn't every day Alucard used his 'soul sword' to spar against someone.

The soul sword wasn't an ordinary sword. It was a weapon that had a will of its own, hence the name 'soul sword'. Unlike other weapons, Alucard didn't need to wield this sword himself, all he need to do was to think about what he wanted to do with the sword and it did it all by himself.

It was also a weapon that was the closest to Alucard as her mother was the one that blessed the weapon, providing it with a soul in the process. Thus, when Alucard used the sword to its full potential, it almost felt like fighting two Alucards at the same time.

But for now, Alucard decided to use the sword as usual, because he wanted to teach Ashton, and not test him. Not yet, at least.

"Oh, so you're already applying what I told you yesterday? Impressive." Alucard praised Ashton, "However, you're still full of openings."

He then kicked Ashton's exposed abdomen, forcing him to take a couple of steps backwards. Although Alucard used about 70% of his strength behind the kick, Ashton did not feel an ounce of pain. The only thing the kick managed to do was to push him back a bit.

"You are so used to attacking others, that you don't know how to defend your openings," Alucard once again emphasised his shortcoming, "You take too much time to switch from offence to defence and even then, your defensive form is only half-assed. Thus, even your defence is a tad bit useless."

"Focus on defence. Got it." Ashton replied and got back into his battle stance, "Let's do this one more time."

"Oh, don't worry about that." Alucard smiled, "We'll do it as many times as I need to beat it into your head."

"Look at him go. I can't remember the last time he had this much fun." Verina said with a smile, "I wonder if he's doing this for his own training or for Ashton's"

It was a rare sight to see Alucard spar with someone because there wasn't anyone in their kingdom that was strong enough to challenge him. As a result, he only ever practised with his soul sword.

But now that someone stronger than him was standing in front of him, Alucard was more than happy to spar against Ashton to assess both of their strengths and sweat a bit himself... the only thing was, it was impossible for a vampire to sweat.

"I think I understand why father never taught us the soul art," Irina mumbled.

"Why?"

"Maybe only someone with a soul can master that art. Since we have none, we can't?"

"I'm pretty sure that isn't the reason. Still, we can ask him about it later. Let's watch them for now. Who knows, maybe we'll be able to learn a thing or two?"

Their swords clashed once again, but the result remained the same. However, it wasn't as if Ashton wasn't improving at all. he no longer senselessly charged at his target but took a moment to analyse their posture, their demeanours, everything.

Basically, he was taking in every bit of information he could about the target before coming up with a plan to beat them. Even though, all that was a failure in front of Alucard.

'If only I could use my abilities...' Ashton thought as he was pushed back again.

[They are the reason why you never perfected your skills at swords. The only thing you did was perfect your abilities and skills which made you overpowered. What would you do if your skills did not work against a certain enemy?]

'Yeah, yeah, I get it.'

Before Alucard started his training, he had made one thing absolutely clear. Ashton wasn't allowed to use any ability, it didn't matter whether it was an active ability or passive. Because the training was to enhance his swordsmanship and not his battle aptitude.

To ensure that his passive abilities didn't work 'passively', Ashton had to wear a special cuff that disrupted the mana links within his body, rendering him unable to use mana at all. Alucard also used the same cuffs. But since he didn't require mana to use the soul sword, it didn't matter too much to him.

However, the cuffs themselves weren't too staring and Ashton could rip them off whenever he pleased. Since the cuffs were designed such that in an emergency, they would not limit the abilities of the one using them.

"Did they decide to stop?" Verina asked her sister who was much more knowledgeable when it came to swords.

"No, Ashton is about to do something-"

Before Irina could even complete her sentence, Ashton disappeared from their sight. However, he wasn't using any ability or item. It was his own speed that he hadn't been using till now.

The sisters weren't the only ones shocked to see the speed at which he was attacking Alucard. For the first time since they started sparring, it seemed like Alucard was on the backfoot. His speed had forced Alucard to use his full strength as well.

"The best defence is a good offence huh?" Alucard smiled, "Why did I even bother to lecture you about defence?"

He was forced to use swing his swords hard in order to merely block the strikes coming at him at blinding speeds. Dodging the strikes was out of the question because one wrong step could lead to a bunch of shattered bones.

Not only that, Ashton's ability to use his sword to jab his enemies at such speed was astonishing.

'I got this!' Ashton thought to himself as he launched an attack at Alucard's back, however, his attack ended up getting blocked.

"Congratulations, Ashton. You just cleared the tutorial." Alucard said as he let go of the soul sword to defend his blindspot, "Now the real training begins."