

## Zompiewolf 661

### Chapter 661

In the dimly lit alley, the stench of death hung heavy in the air. Piles of lifeless bodies, drained of their vital essence, littered the ground.

In the midst of it all, the twins and Anna were standing. They had some injuries, and exhaustion was camping on their faces, yet all of them had their attention on the one who raised the dead souls before them.

Before them was a woman, her features obscured by a hooded cloak, who stepped forward, a wicked smile curling her lips. Her dark eyes gleamed with murderous aura as she spoke, her voice dripping with a sinister allure.

"Ah, the infamous Anna and her delightful companions," the bloodmancer purred. "It seems the tales about you haven't been exaggerated at all. In fact, I think they have been downplayed a bit, or our little encounter would be long since over."

Anna, annoyed by the woman, couldn't hold back anymore. "Who are you, and what do you want?"

"What's the hurry, darling?" the woman smiled again. "We got all the time in the world to get acquainted, don't we? And as for what I want..."

"I have a keen interest in capturing you alive, Miss Succubus," she replied as her grin widened, revealing sharp, elongated canines. "As for your charming friends, they would make exquisite additions to my collection. Oh... I can almost feel the pleasure of draining their blood as we speak!"

"Great, another psycho lover!" Irina scoffed as she exchanged glances with her sister, who rolled her eyes. "If you think we're here to entertain you, you're sorely mistaken."

"Why do we always attract freaks! Come on!" Verina chimed in. "For once, bring us someone who asks us to coffee before revealing their damaged attitudes!"

"Oh, I can do that as well," the woman licked her lips. "Or how about we fight it out and decide everything later?"

"Stole the words right out of my mouth," Anna smirked, cracking her knuckles.

With swift and coordinated movements, Anna and the twins launched their assault on the woman. Fiery spells and strikes flew through the air as they sought to overpower the bloodmancer. Yet, to their surprise, she proved to be a formidable adversary.

Her control over blood magic was masterful, and she effortlessly deflected their attacks, weaving crimson tendrils of blood all around them to block their every move. With each passing moment, it became clear that they were at a disadvantage.

Besides the fact she was effortlessly holding her ground against three opponents, her psychotic laughter was more annoying.

The more it echoed through the alley, the more uncoordinated the trio got. as she began to subdue her opponents. The mysterious enemy revelled in their struggle, her dark powers steadily gaining the upper hand on them.

"Is that all you got?" the woman mumbled uninterestedly. "Meh, looks like I got excited for nothing then!"

The twins attacked the bloodmancer from both sides. But to their dismay, the woman summoned thick blood tentacles and slammed them against the wall. But that wasn't all. The tentacles seemed to actively drain them of their energy.

While the twins struggled on their own, Anna lashed out at the woman. The temporary shift in focus was enough for the twins to get the upper hand and free themselves.

However, Anna wasn't so lucky as the woman grabbed her by the neck, lifting the succubus off the ground.

"Tsk, tsk, tsk," the woman smiled as her blood-soaked fingers tightened around Anna's neck. "Did you really think you stood a chance against an Archbishop like me? How naive can you be?"

Anna's eyes widened when she heard the woman refer to herself as the Archbishop of the Cult.

"Oh, right. I never introduced myself properly to you," The woman said as she summoned other tendrils to keep the twins occupied. "The name's Molina; however, people also refer to me as the fourth Archbishop, and with you captured, my task here is complete."

"Like... hell, it is..." Anna gasped for breath, her struggles growing weaker by the second.

Irina and Verina fought desperately to free Anna, but Molina's power was overwhelming. With a cruel grin, Molina leaned in, her tongue darting out to lick Anna's cheek.

"You think so, darling. But you're already mine..."

Anna's eyes blazed with fury as she felt the Bloodmancer's tongue against her skin. And the next second, a powerful shockwave unleashed out of her that sent Molina stumbling back.

Irina and Verina seized the opportunity to turn into Yamauba forms and attack the cultist. Molina tried to dodge the attack, only to stumble into Anna's path.

Molina then tried controlling the blood within her opponents to knock them out. But somehow, she couldn't do it. Even when she tried summoning blood tendrils to protect her, she failed. It was like her powers had been sealed away after she got hit by the shockwave.

Without her powers, it wasn't difficult for the three of them to get rid of the mighty Archbishop.

Soon, Molina was on the ground, panting and defeated. Irina and Verina stood over her. Their demonic forms slowly faded as they regained their composure. However, Anna needed answers more than anything else.

"Why were you after me," she yelled at Molina before slapping her. "what do you know about the Whisperer's medallion?"

Molina's lips curled into a sinister grin, and she remained defiant despite her defeat. "I may be captured, but you'll get nothing from me. The Cardinal's plans are already in motion, and you can do nothing to stop it."

"Well, well, ladies. I must say, this catfight of yours was quite entertaining." Ashton's voice broke the tense silence as he casually strolled into the alley.

Anna shot him a withering glare, her irritation evident. "Ashton, this is hardly the time for your humour."

"Hey, hey, I come in peace!" Ashton raised his hands as if surrendering to the girls. "But in all seriousness, can I do anything to assist you?"

Anna and the twins exchanged quick glances, silently communicating their decision. Finally, Anna nodded.

"You can take the lead in interrogating her. Maybe she'll be more inclined to talk if it's you."

Molina, still restrained by the twins, sneered at Ashton. "You won't get anything out of me, no matter what you do."

"We'll see about that," Ashton said as he approached Molina calmly.

He then gestured for the girls to step back. As soon as the girls released Molina, Ashton pointed his palm towards Molina, and her body drifted towards him like iron to a magnet.

"I... won't talk... no matter what you do!" Molina shrieked as she struggled in Ashton's grasp.

"Who said anything about talking?" Ashton smirked, and before Molina could process what was happening, he sunk his canines into her neck.

Chapter 662 The Path To S-Grade

"Wait, so let me get this straight," Laihud said as he took a deep breath. "You called us here because you want to turn us into were-people?"

Ashton sighed and nodded. "But not only that, I want to make you a better version of yourselves since you have stuck with me from the beginning of my journey as a mercenary."

It had been a couple of hours since Laihud and Vimur arrived on Earth, and after explaining his plan, Ashton proposed to make them stronger. However, Laihud was sceptical, as any sane person would be.

Playing with one's genetics was not a joke, and Laihud was well aware of the things that could go wrong. After all, he was a healer, and as a part of his 'studies', he had learned a lot about genetics and even toyed with them before.

As for Vimur, all he needed to know was that he'd be stronger than before, and he readily agreed. Laihud tried to make him understand what he was agreeing to, but Vimur had already made up his mind. Besides, he trusted Ashton more than anyone else, so it was only natural for him to agree.

"It's... why do you need to do this though?" Laihud asked Ashton. "I have known you for years, and that's enough for me to know you wouldn't abruptly make such a request without a reason."

Ashton smiled as he got up and faced the window. Outside, he could see the happy faces of humans, mutants and aliens alike. Everyone was living their lives, not knowing the constant danger looming over them, whether it be the Xyrans or the Cult.

At first, he only wanted to get stronger for his own sake. To take revenge on everyone who had ever wronged him. Then, it became a mission to help Astaroth and make the Xyrans pay for what they did to the precursors and his father.

But after encountering the Cult, the purpose of his gaining strength shifted to protecting the ones close to him. But now that he thought about it, the only reason for his power lust has been one thing... to fulfil the journey his father had embarked on.

Ashton knew that ideology was absurd, but it was what he valued the most. Besides, he knew whatever the Cult was doing couldn't be good, so he had to stop them, if nothing else. With that, he made up his mind... to tell them the truth.

"I wanted you all to get stronger and stay by my side," Ashton said but broke down laughing. "Of course, I wanted to make you strong so I can get stronger."

The confused look on Laihud's face was enough for Ashton to know he didn't understand what he said. So Ashton repeated his words.

"By converting you into werewolves, I would unlock the next stage of evolution for myself," Ashton said. "Now, do you understand? But I'm not forcing you. I can find other candidates, but since you two have been the closest to me, I thought it would be best to offer you the opportunity first."

Laihud gazed out of the window, lost in contemplation. He thought about the battles they had faced, the dangers they had encountered, and the strength he would need to protect those he cared about.

But primarily, he thought of Vimur and his feelings. If he became a werewolf, he would get closer to Vimur. Close enough to not have any boundaries between them.

Finally, he turned back to Ashton, his eyes filled with determination. "Alright, Ashton. I'll do it. I'll become a werewolf."

A smile of relief and gratitude spread across Ashton's face. He reached out and clasped Laihud's hand in a firm handshake.

"I promise you won't regret it."

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A week later, the ceremony was conducted. While everything went as predicted with Vimur, strange things happened when Ashton turned Laihud into a werewolf.

While Ashton only wanted to turn him into a werewolf, it seemed Laihud wanted something more. When Ashton was done and analysed Laihud's genes, he realised that Laihud had turned into something more.

Laihud had evolved into a hybrid as predicted, but he didn't assume the role Ashton had expected. It seemed Laihud was unaware of dormant genetic material within himself back from his experimental phases, and being bit by Ashton somehow triggered those genes.

By the end of the transformation, Laihud was turned into a Dyrad-Werewolf hybrid, completely abandoning his previous identity. Thankfully, he retained his memories, or else it would have been difficult for Ashton to contain him, as Laihud had become much stronger than before.

While everyone celebrated Laihud's ascension, Ashton received the notification of his ascension. The quests set out for him had been completed, and as such, it was time for him to ascend to the realm only a handful had ever achieved.

(Ascension will begin in 10 seconds...)

[You should lock yourself up for this one... and while you're at it, try not to scream.]

Ashton nodded as he could already feel pain coursing through his body. Without saying a word, he pushed everyone out of the room and locked himself inside.

As soon as he locked the door, he collapsed on the floor. It felt like every cell of his body was ripping itself apart. His insides felt like he drank a shit ton of lava for breakfast.

Blood came gushing out of his skin, nose, mouth, everywhere and before he knew it, the entire room was covered in his blood.

Then came the bone-rattling cold, an icy chill that seemed to freeze his soul. It was a cold that pierced through to his core, numbing his senses and leaving him feeling utterly vulnerable.

The physical pain was just the beginning. Ashton felt his mind was being stretched to its limits, his thoughts spiralling into confusion and chaos. Memories, emotions, and visions collided in a tumultuous whirlwind, threatening to overwhelm his sanity.

Through it all, Ashton clung to his resolve. He knew that this transformation was necessary and held the key to unlocking his true potential and fulfilling his destiny. He gritted his teeth, his muscles trembling with the effort to endure the torture.

As the waves of pain continued to wash over him, Ashton's crimson eyes blazed with determination. He refused to yield to the agony, to let it break him. He was determined to emerge from this crucible stronger than ever before.

In the chamber's eerie silence, the transformation continued, and so did an excruciating journey of evolution that would shape Ashton into a being beyond imagination.

## Chapter 663 God Gene

### 663 God Gene

After what felt like hours, Ashton's eyes fluttered open, and the first sensation that flooded his senses was the absence of pain.

For so long, he had endured unimaginable agony during his evolution, but now it had receded, leaving him in a state of disoriented relief.

"I can't believe this," he softly mumbled. "Even though I have pain resistance maxed out, I still passed out from the pain of evolution... fuck... why do I feel so hungry and thirsty all of a sudden."

However, what greeted him next was a new and overwhelming sensation—a thirst unlike any he had ever experienced.

A primal craving gnawed at his insides, demanding to be sated. A thirst for blood like he had never experienced before. Simultaneously, an insatiable hunger for flesh coursed through him, a desire that clawed at his very being.

"Damn it... this hunger..."

Ashton's Vampire and undead genes were in a state of wild action, their influence warring within him. But Ashton knew if he didn't regain control over his genes, he might end up doing some questionable things like going on a rampage in the city where he was hailed as a hero.

The time Ashton had spent with Dracula, Frankenstein and Lycaon as they left the earth for the first time had taught him many things. One of which was a method to gain control over his bodily needs, such as consuming flesh and blood.

That method was meditating, which was like forcing oneself into hibernation. The only problem was that it was a temporary solution, and once the effects wore off, they'd return with much more intensity.

Another way to control his needs was to simply turn off his genes and rest. However, it was a guaranteed way of losing his sanity because if he casually activated the genes, he risked losing control over his body. That's why forcing his genes to 'hibernate' was a better choice.

"I need to... meditate. That's the only way to get things under control- argh damn... my arms have gone numb."

With immense effort, Ashton slowly pushed himself to a sitting position, his limbs heavy and unresponsive.

However, as he sat up, His gaze fell to the pool of blood that surrounded him, a morbid scene made due to the transformation he had undergone. It was his own blood, ejected from his body as his cells rearranged themselves during his evolution.

"No wonder I feel thirsty, hungry and exhausted... Damn... I want to go back to sleep," he yawned but shook the tiredness out of his mind. "Astaroth, you there? Damn, first all this mess and now this fucker has gone missing. Great... just great."

Exhaustion washed over him like a tidal wave, but Ashton knew he couldn't afford to rest just yet. With a grim expression, he got to work.

It took a while, but he eventually forced his thirst and hunger into submission, refusing to succumb to the insanity that lurked around.

"That's one job done... I should head outside and get something to eat and drink before I lose my shit again..."

As he managed to stand, Ashton's confusion deepened. He took a step forward, and to his astonishment, he almost collided with the opposite wall. It almost felt like he teleported across the room, but Ashton was sure he had just taken a step towards the gate as anyone would.

Staring back at the wall he had nearly walked into, Ashton's mind raced with bewilderment. It was as if the room had shrunk around him, or perhaps he had grown larger during his transformation.

He couldn't make sense of it, and his fatigue weighed heavily on him. But even then, all he could think about was who would clean the mess he had made inside, as his blood had become the wallpaper covering the entirety of the room.

But then, something else caught his attention—a profound shift in his self-perception. He couldn't quite put it into words, but it felt like he had become something more than he had been before. A sense of power and potential surged within him.

Driven by curiosity and the need for answers, Ashton summoned a holographic interface before him, accessing his status page.

"What the hell is this? Where are the numbers?"

To his astonishment, the numbers that had once represented his strength, stamina, agility, and other attributes had been replaced by a single word—incalculable.

The same thing happened when he tried checking his grade. Instead of being shown as A-grade or S-grade like Ashton had expected, it also showed 'incalculable'.

His brow furrowed as he tried to comprehend the implications of this change. What did it mean to have attributes that were beyond calculation? Did he transcend the limits of the system?

"Shit... if that's the case, the Xyrans would know about me... this can't be happening!"

Just as he grappled with this revelation, another system prompt materialised before his eyes, its text glowing vividly and in a light he had never seen before.

The prompt consisted of one line that left Ashton intrigued and perplexed: "You have transcended the limits of mortality. Please provide a name for your God Gene/Bloodline."

"God gene?" Ashton stared at the prompt, a mix of uncertainty and anticipation swirling. "What even is that? Astaroth? You see this shit?"

Ashton waited for a response, but it never came. "Tsk, this fucker always disappears when I need his guidance the most. What should I do..."

The system prompt was still blaring brightly before him, eagerly awaiting a response.

"A name... it should be something that represents me," Ashton mumbled, lost in his thoughts. "Cheat gene? Nah, that's too cringe. Why the heck am I even thinking about complex names? Yeah, let's go with this-"

<Are you sure you want to name the God Gene as Zompiewolf's Lineage?>

"Yes!"

The moment the words left his lips, a profound transformation swept through him. It was as though the very fabric of his being responded to the name, resonating with a newfound power. He could feel it coursing through his veins, an energy unlike anything he had ever known.

"Fuck... here we go again."

Chapter 664 Precursor's Aura (1)

664 Precursor's Aura (1)

After another round of pain surging and guts puking, Ashton finally left the meeting room, where he had stayed unconscious for over two days.

As if that wasn't enough, he struggled to get out of the room, but not because of any reason an average person could guess. He was way too fast, and just taking a step felt like teleporting all over the place.

It was as if he had been granted the power of instantaneous movement, and the simplest actions had become absurdly complicated.

Soon, he realised that walking had become an impossibility. He needed assistance navigating this newfound power and knew exactly where to turn. Ashton attempted to summon one of his loyal undead minions to serve as a carrier.

"Atlas would be perfect for the job."

But to his shock, nothing happened. There was no response. Only to realise they were undergoing evolutions of their own, and for the love of god, Ashton couldn't even summon a single skeleton to help him by being his walking stick or carrying him.

"Great, just great," Ashton muttered, struggling to suppress a chuckle despite his frustration. "I'm stuck in a room with super-speed, and I can't even walk. Can this day get any weirder?"



His next brilliant idea was to transform into his werewolf form and crawl his way out of the room. Surely, he thought, he could manage that without causing too much of a mess.

But it turned out his newfound strength was a tad bit excessive, and his claws tore through the floor as if it were made of paper.

With a resigned sigh, Ashton decided there was only one option left—flight. He propelled himself upward with all the force he could muster, bursting through the ceiling and shooting into the sky at a velocity that defied reason.

Breaking the sound barrier? That was child's play. Ashton had just given birth to the "what the fuck" barrier and broke through that.

While he was slowly getting used to his new body, the citizens of New Lycania were bewildered, thinking they were under attack.

Panic spread like wildfire as people rushed to their designated positions, arming themselves and aiming their cannons at the perceived threat.

Even Flintmace and Vulcan sensed the disturbance and joined the chaos. They appeared at the scene, ready for a battle if need be, but they then realised something was off.

The building Ashton had trapped himself in was in shambles. Both masters looked at each other and realised what was happening. They had known Ashton long enough to understand that when something bizarre occurred, Ashton was often the cause behind it.

"Wait, is that-" Anna mumbled as she rushed to the scene along with Ava and the twins.

"Yup, that's him. Looks like his evolution gave him too much of everything," Flintmace replied as he smiled. "I won't be surprised if he surpassed his masters here."

"Hmph, talk about yourself, Xyran," Vulcan retorted. "There's no human who would be surpassing me!"

"We'll see about that," Flintmace retorted. "Won't we?"

While the masters were engaged in their debate, Ava was happy and wanted to smack the heck out of her son at the same time. He had been unresponsive for two entire days, and when he woke up, the first thing he did was cause commotion.

As much as she wanted to teach Ashton a lesson, she would have to wait because it didn't feel like Ashton was going to land there any time soon.

The people of New Lycania gazed up at the sky, their expressions shifting from fear to confusion as they witnessed their city's 'protector' rocketing upward at unthinkable speeds.

After all, it wasn't every day that one saw someone shatter the laws of physics while trying to exit a building. However, only some were aware of Ashton's shenanigans.

Vimur and Ricochet, who were practising in Tarik's new quick-response jets, heard the sonic boom and immediately rushed to the scene.

They were worried that the Cult or maybe even the Xyrans had attacked them. But they didn't know whether to laugh or cry when they saw Ashton floating in the sky.

"Hey, Ashton, you okay up there?" Ricochet called out through the radio as they approached their airborne captain.

Ashton, still getting accustomed to the mind-boggling agility of his new form, executed a rather wobbly mid-air somersault before positioning himself in front of them.

"I think so," he replied, his voice filled with awe and amusement of the situation. "I just... need to figure out how to land without obliterating the ground. I wouldn't be much of a protector if I ended up destroying my city..."

Vimur couldn't help but chuckle at the absurdity of the situation. "Well, I don't know what's happening, but you've certainly outdone yourself this time."

"Stop laughing and get back," Ashton retorted. "I don't want to injure either of you accidentally."

"Right..." Ricochet mumbled. "We'll be around here, though, in case you need help."

Soon, with some trial and error, Ashton gradually managed to control his newfound abilities. He descended back to the city with a degree of finesse that indicated he was getting the hang of his hyper-speed.

Everyone observed the entire spectacle with a combination of relief and amusement. As Ashton touched down on solid ground, he couldn't help but shake his head in disbelief.

"Well, that was... interesting," he remarked, flashing a sheepish grin at his friends and the concerned citizens who had gathered around. "I would like to apologise for the inconvenience caused-"

"How did you do it..." Flintmace's soft voice echoed through the crowd, and Ashton was immediately focused on him.

But Vulcan's reaction was much more vivid as he went down on his knees as if he were offering his respects to Ashton. Flintmace shortly followed the cue, and so did the confused people around them.

"Um... what's going on here? Please, don't do this!" Ashton asked his masters, urging them to get back on their feet.

"I-I'm sorry..." Vulcan mumbled as he got back to his feet. "It would be disrespectful of someone like me not to pay respect to the Precursor's aura."

"Precursor's aura? What are you talking about?"

Chapter 665 Precursor's Aura (2)

## 665 Precursor's Aura (2)

The streets of New Lycania were soon packed with people trying to know what was happening there. The ever-growing crowd of people around them made it increasingly difficult to maintain privacy.

In the shock of sensing the long-forgotten Precursor's Aura, Vulcan didn't consider their location and spoke whatever came to his mind.

Flintmace leaned closer to Vulcan and spoke in a hushed tone, "I don't think this is the right place to talk about that, Vulcan."

"Right," Vulcan nodded, noticing the influx of people around them. "Let's change locations before I say something I shouldn't. Besides, the kid needs to get used to his new body, and we might as well assist him while we can."

Saying so, the two headed towards the arena, gesturing for Ashton to follow, and he did so without wasting any time. Ashton picked up on their intentions and fell in step behind his masters as they began to navigate through the crowd.

It was as if they were parting the sea of people, But their imposing presence commanded respect and cooperation from everyone, and they made a path for Ashton and his masters without being asked to do so.

However, as Ashton walked past Ricochet, he told him to block the arena's access to everyone, and when he said everyone, he meant everyone.

Not a single soul, not even Anna, was to be allowed entry. Ashton was well aware of the importance of the upcoming discussion, and he wanted only those who were privy to the truth about the Precursors and their history to be present.

[Technically, as the incarnation of Lilith, she has a right to know about the Precursors. After all, she was the first creature the Precursors despised.]

'Be as it may, that's not enough reason for me to allow her to join us,' Ashton replied. 'Also, the less she knows, the safer she would be in case something happened to me.'

[I don't really like the tone of your voice, Ashton. Is there something you're hiding from me?]

'You stay with me 24/7; you think I'm even capable of hiding something from you?' Ashton scoffed. 'But yes, there's something that's bothering me.'

[Is it the Xyrans?]

'Yup. There's no way in hell they haven't noticed me now. They are most likely gathering the troops to send them here for investigation reasons. If not for that, they should have taken notice of Beelzebub's absence by now.'

After all, it had been quite a while since he defeated Beelzebub and turned him into Guilt. The lack of response from the Xyrans till now meant only one of two things.

"Either they didn't care about him in the least, which I doubt," Ashton mumbled. "Or-"

[Someone wanted to eliminate him, and his lack of communication with the Xyrans would prove they were successful.]

Ashton nodded as Astaroth finished his thought. Even though Ashton was stronger than he had ever been or probably ever would be, collectively, the Xyrans were no ordinary adversary. If they were indeed on the move, it meant trouble on a cosmic scale.

However, they reached the arena before Ashton could dwell more about it. Flintmace and Vulcan, still deep in their discussion, gestured for Ashton to follow them inside. He did so without hesitation.

In fact, he was anxiety-ridden to know what the deal about this 'Precursor's aura' was and why his masters were being so secretive about it. Hell, even Astaroth had refused to tell him anything about it, and it only made Ashton more anxious to know the truth.

However, as soon as Ashton entered the arena, his masters jumped him. Taken aback by their sudden attack, he moved his arms towards them as if pushing them away.

The masters immediately jumped back. As such, Ashton's hands never reached them. But somehow, they still got flung backwards. Even Ashton was surprised to see it because their retreating forms carved a new path into the stands.

[You call that a path? You just wrecked an entire section of the arena!]

"I didn't mean to!" Ashton yelled back. "I don't know what happened because I didn't even touch them!"

Vulcan and Flintmace, now lying on the ground where they had been thrown, slowly got back to their feet. They exchanged wary glances. It was an expression Ashton had never seen on their faces before.

"That's... the Precursor's aura I mentioned earlier," Vulcan explained, his tone strained as he spat out a mouthful of blood.

In all the times Ashton had known Vulcan, he hadn't seen him bleed once. But seeing him coughing up blood made him feel conflicted. He immediately turned to look at Flintmace, who was also nursing his wounds.

While Ashton was glad of his strength but also scared of it, if just a wave of his hand could make a couple of S-grade beings bleed, he could only imagine what it would do to everyone else.

If this was the level of his strength when he had just evolved and was categorically weak and starved, he could only imagine what he would be capable of if he were in his best condition.

At that moment, the gravity of Vulcan's words became crystal clear. They needed to train him while they still could. If his abilities were evolving at such a rapid pace, it was only a matter of time before he completely overshadowed his masters' prowess.



As the thought crossed his mind, he couldn't help but feel both excited and worried. He was excited about the strength he was about to possess but also worried that if he couldn't harness that strength properly, then having that strength would turn into poison.

However, more than anything, he was more concerned about the 'Precursor's aura' as he thoroughly understood it. As his eyes returned to Vulcan, the dwarf immediately knew what Ashton wanted to ask them.

"You can say the aura you possess is the force capable of destruction," he said while pointing at the scene behind him. "As well as creation."

"Though the creation part would come after you have tamed the power of destruction," Flintmace chimed in. "In other words, you can say that the aura you possess now is what separated mortals from the Precursors."

"God gene, ever heard of it?" Vulcan asked Ashton, who didn't even need to reply as the answer was written all over his face. "Damn, to think you achieved something I have been trying to accomplish my entire life... as your master, nothing could make me more proud."

Vulcan continued, "However, as a follower of the path set out by the Precursors, I can't help but get jealous!"

"Easy, old man," Flintmace laughed. "You don't want our disciple to get all riled up. Or else, who knows what he might do with his next attack."

"Wait, we're still going to fight?" Ashton asked, clearly surprised. "In your condition-"

"Relax, kiddo," Vulcan scoffed. "This body has been through much more than what you're capable of dishing out. So suck it up and come at us!"

Chapter 666 Training In Progress (1)

As per their promise, Ashton's training began without any delay. The sooner he would master his newfound strength, the sooner they could depart to Euphoria and obtain the medallion. However, it was easier said than done.

Vulcan and Flintmace stood on one side of the Arena. Their faces were filled with anticipation and determination. On the other hand, Ashton felt a mix of curiosity and worry, unsure of what lay ahead.

"Alright, kid," Vulcan began, his voice carrying a firm but encouraging tone. "We're going to start with something basic. Your first task is to obliterate this toothpick."

Ashton regarded the toothpick that Vulcan held between his fingers with a raised eyebrow. It seemed almost comically simple. Still, he couldn't help but feel that there was more to it than met the eye.

"That's it?" Ashton questioned, a hint of scepticism in his voice. "I thought we'd do spars as usual."

"Yes, that's it. But here's the catch," Flintmace, standing beside Vulcan, nodded with his usual calm demeanour. "You need to ensure that the area around the toothpick remains untouched. Only the toothpick should be obliterated."

"You can imagine the toothpick is us and use your power on it," Vulcan mumbled. "When you do... you'll realise why it is a bad idea to spar with you as you're now."

Ashton sighed. He still had a weird feeling, but he had to trust his masters and their experience. Besides, he knew that appearances could be deceiving, especially when it came to their training sessions.

It was a test to control his strength, which he had failed to do in the last couple of times Vulcan and Flintmace sparred with him. Since controlling his newfound power was no easy task, his masters wanted to remind him of that fact.

"Alright," Ashton conceded, his tone was filled with determination and resignation. "Let's get this over with."

He shifted his focus to the toothpick, aiming the palm of his hand at it. He knew the task required precision and control, two aspects of his abilities that still needed refinement. But he was ready to give it his best shot.

The Arena fell into a tense silence as everyone focused on Ashton. He took a deep breath, centring himself, and then released his aura like a burst of energy. The power surged from his palm toward the toothpick, and for a moment, it seemed he had succeeded.

But reality had other plans.

Instead of the toothpick disintegrating into tiny fragments, the outcome was entirely unexpected for Ashton but not for his masters.

A section of the Arena's wall exploded with a deafening roar, sending chunks of debris flying in all directions. In stark contrast, the toothpick remained unscathed, floating in the air as if untouched by Ashton's power.

Ashton's eyes widened in disbelief, and his jaw dropped as he took in the chaotic scene before him. He had not only failed to obliterate the toothpick but also caused an unintended catastrophe.

[It's good that we changed the Arena's location to outside the city, or you'd have committed genocide!]

'No need to rub salt on my wounds...'

The last time Ashton had sparred with his masters in the Arena, it was torn to pieces as it wasn't developed to endure a fight between three S-grade beings.

A destroyed Arena rightfully made Ava mad, who tore a new one into Ashton. They were then forced to create a makeshift arena around the Eastern Palace, where Ashton and his masters were living till Ashton's training was complete.

Meanwhile, back inside the Arena. Vulcan let out a heavy sigh, his hand rubbing his temples in frustration. Flintmace shook his head, his disappointment evident in his eyes.

It was clear that they were both concerned about Ashton's inability to control his power. Because it didn't matter how intense the power was, it would only be useful if one could contain and control that strength.

"Kid," Vulcan said with a tone that held a blend of frustration and disbelief, "what was that? We told you to obliterate the toothpick, not the wall!"

Ashton scratched his head guiltily, feeling a flush of embarrassment creeping up his cheeks. "I... I didn't mean to do that. It just... happened."

"Ashton, this training is essential," Flintmace chimed in, his voice calm but firm. "Your strength has grown exponentially, but if you can't control it, you risk causing more harm than good."

"I know, I know..."

Ashton nodded in agreement, fully aware of the gravity of his situation. His newfound power was a double-edged sword, and if he couldn't harness it effectively, it could become a liability rather than an asset.

Vulcan, visibly frustrated, clapped a hand to his forehead as if trying to shake off the ridiculousness of the situation.

"This is going to be a long day," he said. "Come on, let's do it again!"

Despite his initial mishap, Ashton took a deep breath and squared his shoulders. He knew that he couldn't afford to let frustration get the better of him. Vulcan and Flintmace were here to guide him, and he was determined to learn how to control his strength.

With renewed determination, Ashton faced the toothpick once more. It hovered in the air, challenging him once again.

He concentrated, channelling his power once more, and released it with a burst of energy. This time, he focused not only on the toothpick but also on maintaining the integrity of the surrounding area.

The masters held their breath as Ashton's power surged forth. The toothpick trembled momentarily, but the result was different this time. With a soft crack, the toothpick disintegrated into a fine mist, leaving the area around it untouched.

Ashton's eyes widened in surprise and relief as he looked at the spot where the toothpick had once been. He had succeeded in the task, proving that he was progressing in controlling his newfound strength.

Vulcan and Flintmace exchanged glances, their expressions shifting from frustration to approval. They nodded in silent acknowledgement of Ashton's accomplishment.

"That's more like it, kid," Vulcan said with a satisfied grin. "You're starting to get the hang of it."

"Yeah, but don't forget: control is the key to success," Flintmace added, "With time and practice, you'll refine your abilities even further."

Ashton couldn't help but smile, grateful for their guidance and encouragement. But it was only the beginning.

"Next task!" Vulcan announced as he dragged Ricochet inside the Arena. "Try to give his lazy bastard without blowing up his head."

Ricochet had a piece of cloth shoved down his mouth and couldn't make a sound. But he ensured his unwillingness to participate in Ashton's training went through him.

"Look at how much he trusts you!" Vulcan continued. "He is making it more difficult to do it by vigorously shaking his head. What a great follower you have, Ashton!"

Chapter 667 Training In Progress (2)

A week had passed since the unusual seismic activity had begun to rattle New Lycania. The city's residents had grown accustomed to the minor earthquakes that occasionally shook the ground beneath their feet.

At first, they were taken aback by the sudden earthquakes, wondering what was happening. But after an explanation by Ava, everything calmed down. Soon, it had become an accepted part of daily life, and people carried on with their tasks as if nothing unusual was happening.

Ava sat in a cosy corner of a local cafe, sipping her tea, her expression one of casual indifference despite the tremors. She was joined by the twins and Anna, who had grown accustomed to the peculiarities of life in New Lycania.

"You know, I've heard of earthquakes, but these seem a bit... controlled, don't you think?" Irina, her playful nature shining through, couldn't resist a teasing comment.

"Maybe there's a group responsible for it!" Verina joined in as they teased Ava and Anna.

"Well, only someone like Ashton and his masters would be capable of making the earth shake with their sparring sessions." Anna chuckled, her eyes dancing with amusement.

"Oh, stop it, all of you. Or else the rumours would start again!" Ava playfully smacked them and turned her gaze towards the distant arena. "That said, they've been hard at work lately."

"Yeah," Irina replied as she looked at Anna. "The only one complaining about it is Anna."

"You..."

Suddenly, Anna's face turned red as her hair as she remembered the one night of passion she shared with Ashton before his serious training began.

Since Ashton had gotten seriously strong back then, she had a tough time muffling her voice, and according to the twins, the entire city heard what was cooking in their room. The twins hadn't stopped teasing her about it ever since then.



Their conversation soon shifted to lighter topics as they continued to enjoy their tea. Little did the residents of New Lycania know that day by day, their 'protector' was gaining abnormal strength.

In the heart of the arena, Ashton, Flintmace, and Vulcan took their position for battle. Their bare feet made contact with the cool arena floor, their expressions focused and determined.

The arena's vast expanse provided ample space for their sparring, proof of the grandeur of New Lycania's infrastructure.

Vulcan cracked his knuckles, a mischievous glint in his eyes. "You ready for this, kid?"

"How about you stop asking that question and take me by surprise?" Ashton, never one to back down from a challenge, grinned in response. "Who knows, maybe you'll manage to defeat me for once."

Flintmace, the calm and composed one of the trio, merely nodded, acknowledging the impending clash, while Vulcan got all fired up.

With an unspoken agreement, Flintmace and Vulcan joined forces, teaming up against Ashton. They were well aware of the immense power within him, and sparring against him together allowed them to push their limits as well.

The arena trembled slightly as the trio engaged in their fierce battle. Their movements were a blur of speed and precision, and the air crackled with the energy they unleashed with every strike.

Had there been any spectators, they would be hard-pressed to follow the lightning-fast exchanges between the three combatants.

Ashton, his body turned into a vessel of raw power, met every attack with calculated mastery. He moved with a grace that belied his incredible strength, his instincts honed through rigorous training and battles fought.

So much so that Flintmace and Vulcan, despite their combined efforts, found it challenging to land a decisive blow on him.

Not everyone knew the truth about why the city was experiencing these unusual seismic events, but to those who knew the truth, it was a joyous occasion to feel the sheer force of their sparring sessions.

Despite the intensity of their battle, Ashton's demeanour remained surprisingly relaxed. He was in his element, thriving in the midst of the mighty clash. His movements were fluid and controlled, a dance of combat that he had perfected over time.

Flintmace and Vulcan, while formidable in their own right, couldn't match Ashton's prowess anymore. Their strikes were precise, their coordination impeccable, but Ashton always seemed to be one step ahead.

Ashton dodged a joint attack from Flintmace and Vulcan in a sudden burst of speed, weaving between their strikes with uncanny agility. His palm connected with Vulcan's chest, sending him staggering back.

Flintmace, not wanting to give Ashton any time to himself, lunged forward, aiming a strike at Ashton's exposed flank.

However, Ashton's reflexes were lightning-quick. He pivoted on his heel, narrowly avoiding Flintmace's attack, and delivered a powerful roundhouse kick that sent Flintmace sprawling to the ground.

The arena echoed with the sound of their battle, and the seismic activity continued to send ripples through the city.

At some distance, the ghosts watched the spectacle through cameras, and it was a sensation of awe-inspiring proportions. They all desired Ashton's strength but knew it was well out of their reach.

Despite the numbers stacked against him, Ashton's mastery over his new abilities allowed him to maintain the upper hand. His skills were honed through countless battles and sparring sessions, and his experience showed in every move.

With a final, decisive strike, Ashton landed a palm strike on Vulcan's head, sending him stumbling backwards. With both opponents down, it was a victory for Ashton, and the score between them now stood at 8-2 in his favour.

Vulcan and Flintmace, though panting and clearly bested, wore expressions of pride and satisfaction. After all, it was a true joy for a master when their disciple surpassed them.

Ashton extended a hand to help Vulcan to his feet, their mutual respect evident despite the fierce fight they had just waged. Flintmace, too, rose to his feet, a faint smile gracing his lips.

"That was impressive, kid," Vulcan admitted, wiping sweat from his brow.

Flintmace nodded in agreement. "You're growing stronger with each day."

"It's all thanks to both of you," Ashton bowed before them and to his surprise, his masters did the same for him.

Ashton humbly accepted their praise, fully aware that he still had much to learn. His journey to harness his newfound power was far from over, but with the guidance of his masters, he felt more prepared than ever to face the challenges ahead.

Having borne witness to their intense clash, the arena now stood silent. The echoes of their battle lingered in the air, a reminder of the power that resided within New Lycania's protector and his masters.

"It's time for us to depart," Flintmace mumbled. "We need to get to the medallion before anyone else does."

"I'll get to it immediately," Ashton replied, taking off towards the city.

Chapter 668 Euphoria's Darkest Hour (1)

The spaceship hangar on Earth buzzed with activity as preparations for departure were underway. Ashton's ship, gleaming with newly installed technology, stood ready for the journey ahead. It was a solemn moment marked by both anticipation and uncertainty.

Euphoria wasn't a planet where they'd be welcome, especially with the rules in place. Even if they got past the rules, the first seat would definitely cause problems for them, as he and Ashton had ended their last meeting on a sour note.

Despite all that, Ashton knew they had to get there. After all, it wasn't a vacation they were eyeing but an artefact.

Ava, Ashton's mother, stood at the entrance to the hangar as Ashton oversaw the final preparations. While she was proud of her son, as a mother, she was also worried about him.

Soon, the preparations were complete, and she watched as Ashton, accompanied by his masters Vulcan and Flintmace, the twins, Anna, Laihud, and Vimur, gathered around the ship's entrance. Once they were ready to leave, She approached Ashton, her eyes filled with maternal warmth and love.

"Take care of yourself, my son," she said, her voice quivering slightly. "And look out for each other."

"We will, Ma," Ashton nodded, his own emotions hidden beneath a strong front. "You take care of yourself too."

Ava embraced Ashton tightly, her heart heavy with worry. She then turned to the twins, giving each of them a motherly kiss on the forehead. "You two better make sure he stays out of trouble."

"We'll do our best, Ava," Irina grinned mischievously.

Verina added, "But you know Ashton. Trouble tends to find him."

"That it does," Ava chuckled, her affection for the twins evident. She then turned to Anna, who had become her family. "Anna, my dear, look after them. And Ashton, you better bring her back safely."

"Who do you think I am? Of course, she'll be back with us." Ashton's eyes softened as he looked at Anna, a silent promise passing between them.

With their farewells exchanged, the group boarded the spaceship. Ava watched as the hangar doors slowly closed, sealing her son and his companions inside the vessel. She knew the dangers that awaited them on Planet Euphoria, but she also had faith in their abilities and unity.

The crowd were cheering for their benefactors, and despite her condition, even Rose was in the public, cheering them on. As for Mera, she was accompanied by Nora, who watched them from the comfort of their terrace.

The hangar doors opened as the ship's engines roared to life, revealing the vast expanse of the Earth's sky. With a powerful surge of energy, the spaceship lifted off the ground, ascending towards the stars.

"Good luck, my son..." Ava mumbled as the ship disappeared from their sight.

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The journey to Planet Euphoria was swift, guided by Flintmace's expertise in interstellar travel. However, as they approached their destination, a sense of unease settled over the group. The view outside the ship's windows revealed a grim scene.

"Ashton, you might want to see this..." Flintmace called Ashton inside the cockpit to see the sight before them.

"What the hell...?" Ashton mumbled as soon as he walked into the cockpit.

Euphoria was supposed to be a place of order and prosperity, but something was clearly amiss. The once serene and vibrant planet of Euphoria was now marred by chaos.

Hundreds of ships of various sizes engaged in a fiery battle in orbit, their weapons unleashing destruction upon each other. Explosions lit up the darkness of space, casting an eerie glow on the chaos below.

They were still contemplating what was happening when Otiga's voice crackled over the ship's communication system. It was obvious she had called to let them know more about the situation.

"Ashton," Otiga's voice was urgent. "Abort the landing! Do not, I repeat, do not land on Euphoria!"

"Too late to turn back now," Ashton responded firmly. "Do you have any idea what's happening on Euphoria?"

"It's the Cult, Ashton. They've launched a full-scale attack on Euphoria," Otiga's voice echoed inside the ship as she relayed the horrifying news. "The planet is in chaos. Ships of all sizes are raining fire on each other, and the inhabitants are in a state of panic."

Flintmace's brows furrowed in concern. "How did the Cult manage to orchestrate an attack of this magnitude?"

"It's unlike anything we've ever seen," Otiga was clearly worried about them. "We suspect they've found some Precursor technology and are hell-bent on getting their hands on it."

"Could it be the Medallion?" Ashton whispered, and Flintmace shrugged.

"It could be," he replied. "The Cult preferred doing things in secrecy, but since they have given up on it, it must mean they are desperate for some reason."

"Well, that's more reason to join the party," Ashton announced. "Everyone, in your seats, we're about to make a rough landing!"

Despite Otiga's protests, Ashton's decision was final. He signalled for Flintmace to initiate the descent, and the spacecraft shot through the chaos that had engulfed Euphoria's skies.

The view from the ship's windows was a nightmarish scene. Hundreds of ships, some massive and others smaller, engaged in a frenzied battle. Explosions illuminated the darkness as beams of energy and missiles streaked through space, leaving trails of destruction in their wake.



Thanks to the advanced stealth systems onboard, they managed to slip through the ongoing battle in orbit without drawing attention. One could say the Cultists were too occupied to notice their ship.

The team wasted no time as the ship touched down on Euphoria's surface. They disembarked, armed and ready for battle. The air was thick with tension and the acrid scent of smoke, starkly contrasting the planet's once vibrant atmosphere.

Their first steps onto Euphoria's soil revealed a grim reality. Alien inhabitants, who had once coexisted peacefully before, were now locked in a deadly struggle for survival. It was a scene of carnage, with buildings reduced to rubble and the streets littered with the fallen.

"This... is hell," Laihud mumbled, sickened by the violence, but they had no time to waste.

"Come, let's get going!" Ashton urged everyone to head towards the city's main gates, but fate had different plans for them.

Chapter 669 Euphoria's Darkest Hour (2)

Suddenly, something whizzed past Ashton's head, and they rushed towards the city gate. Everyone turned around to see a nightmarish sight.

Mindless cultists, their eyes filled with madness, descended upon them like a swarm of locusts. Hungry for blood, they closed in rapidly, their eerie chants filling the air.

"Fucking hell..." Laihud mumbled. "No wonder the Euphorians are struggling to keep the cultists at bay! They have all been cursed and only have one thing on their mind... to kill as many people as possible!"

"To think the cult would do something lowly as this," Vimur scoffed, punching his fists together. "If they have been reduced to a zombie-like state, might as well turn them into real dead."

"No wonder Otiga didn't want us to land in this hellhole," Anna said as she looked around and saw a similar scene everywhere.

While they were throwing their two cents, Ashton's eyes narrowed as he analysed their movements. The cultists were relentless, showing no fear in the face of danger.

If someone were to blow their limbs apart, they would still crawl up to their prey. As such, there was only one quick way to handle them. Blow them up into smithereens.

He quickly grabbed a handful of grenades and tossed them into the oncoming horde. The loud explosions sent bodies flying, the blasts shredding through the ranks of the cultists. The ground shook with the force of the detonations.

Following Ashton's example, the rest of the group, armed to the teeth with heavy firearms and equipment, opened fire on the surviving cultists. Bullets and energy beams tore through the air, cutting down any cultist foolish enough to advance.

The once-ferocious mob began to disperse, driven back by the overwhelming firepower. But it was a strategic retreat more than anything else, and Ashton knew they weren't safe just yet.

Their team dealt with as many cultists as possible when something unexpected happened. From a distance, Ashton saw two massive spaceships descend from the sky, casting ominous shadows over the desolate and war-torn landscape.

"Shit!" Ashton cursed as he saw the ships charging their main cannon.

Ashton's mind raced as he assessed the situation. They were outnumbered and outgunned. The cultists outside were one thing, but these ships posed a much greater threat.

Besides, if they stayed there any longer, they'd get trapped and have to forget about recovering the Medallion. No matter what, Ashton couldn't afford that to happen.

For the first time in their life, fighting the cult was a secondary objective, as finding the Medallion took precedence. In order to 'win', they had to find the Whisperer's Medallion quickly and escape the planet's surface. It was then a plan struck Ashton's mind.

"Into the city, now!" Ashton barked, urgency in his voice. "We don't have time to waste here!"

Even though he said that, everyone understood what Ashton was planning on doing, he was trying to send them away while he stayed back and ensured no one interfered with their work.

As such, the group hesitated between following Ashton's orders or staying back and helping him. Flintmace and Vulcan worried the most as they knew why Ashton had decided to stay back.

"Ashton, you can't take on those ships alone," Flintmace stepped forward, his voice low and measured. "The rest can leave, but we should stay and help you."

Vulcan nodded in agreement, his brow furrowed with worry. "This is not the time to act irrationally."

"Don't worry about me, and have faith in your disciple for once," Ashton smirked as those words left his mouth. "Besides, you two are more valuable in helping us locate the Medallion, along with the rest of the team. I'll be fine. Trust me."

Flintmace and Vulcan exchanged another look, but they could see the determination in Ashton's eyes. Reluctantly, they nodded, acknowledging his decision.

It was just like Ashton said; they weren't putting their faith in him but the training they had provided him. Besides, he was never alone. His summons were always there to help him.

"Alright, kid," Vulcan said, clapping Ashton on the shoulder. "You know where to find us if you need backup."

With that, Vulcan and Flintmace led the group to the cityscape in the distance, the colossal structures casting long shadows over the cracked and desolate ground.

The scattered cultists were still outside, momentarily driven back, and watched them with eerie fascination, their chants growing fainter as they retreated.

As they inched closer to the city, Irina couldn't help but ask Anna if she wasn't worried about Ashton. Anna laughed at the absurdity of the question.

"Of course, I'm scared, but more than that, I have faith in him and his strength," she replied. "If anything, we should worry about those poor bastards who think their spaceships will save them from Ashton."

Anna's words made everyone laugh as they slaughtered the remnants of the cultists surrounding the city. Even though they had cleared the cultists from around the city, the city's people were apprehensive about letting a bunch of strangers inside.

It was only when Flintmace showed off his status that the city gates were opened long enough for them to enter.

"Show off," Vulcan spat out, to which Flintmace just laughed.

"Now, where do we start looking for the medallion?" Vimur mumbled

At that moment, they realised they had no idea about it. Thanks to Madame Seraphina, they knew the Medallion was inside the city, but the group had no idea where they could find the damned thing.

"Mayor!" Verina shrieked. "The city's mayor or whoever is in charge must know something!"

"Good thinking," Flintmace said as he quickly divided their group into three smaller groups.

Anna, Verina, and Irina would talk with the citizens and see if they could find anything. In the meantime, Laihud and Vimur would do the same with the security and the clerical people.

At the same time, Flintmace and Vulcan would reach out to whoever was in charge. Due to Flintmace's reputation, it would be easier for him to reach out to someone as important as the one leading the city.

Chapter 670 Euphoria's Darkest Hour (3)

As the group walked deeper into the eerie cityscape, their footsteps echoed through the silent and war-torn areas. The once-great city had been mercilessly torn apart.

Even though the city was now safer from the outside, they could see a few corpses here and there. The Cultists must have invaded the town soon after their attack and killed many people before being driven out or killed by the city dwellers' hands.

Anna, her senses heightened as always, scanned their surroundings cautiously as they entered another corpse-filled alleyway.

"This place gives me the creeps," she muttered, her voice barely more than a whisper.

"It's definitely seen better days," Irina replied wryly.

Verina added, "But we've faced worse, haven't we?"

"Yeah, nothing could surpass the horror we saw and felt inside that Xyran mine." Irina stopped and took a deep breath before continuing to walk ahead.

Although it was their task to talk to the residents, they were either too scared to say anything or were busy saving their city.

As such, the girls took it upon themselves to look for any clues regarding the Medallion, and that's when they came across the corpses and decided to follow the trail.

However, it had been a few minutes, and they hadn't found anything till then... until they heard something crunch in the next alley.

Anna immediately raised her hand, signalling for the twins to be careful as she peeked into the alley.

"My god... what's happening here!" Anna couldn't believe her eyes when she saw a bunch of Cultists feasting over the dead.

Although they had always seen the Undead do it, it was for their survival. But the cultists? They were still alive and yet indulging in cannibalism just for the sake of it.

Without wasting any time, the three lunged at the cultists, destroying them without much effort. But when they were done, they heard someone clapping for them, and as they turned around, there was a woman before them.

"Well, well, well, wasn't that fun?" the woman smiled, and a cocktail of blood poured out of her mouth and the next moment, the cultists they had dispatched moments ago were back up as if nothing had happened.

"This shit keeps getting weirder and weirder," Anna mumbled as she prepared to fight against the woman and her puppets.

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Meanwhile, outside the city, a solitary figure stood alone, facing an imminent threat. Two massive spaceships loomed overhead, their energy cannons charged and ready to fire upon the town.

Ashton, left to confront the enemy alone, was prepared to do whatever it took to protect his team and the Medallion.

"This is going to be tough," he mumbled.

[Hey! Didn't anyone tell you? You're not supposed to be complaining after volunteering for a task.]

"Yeah, yeah, I know." Ashton shrugged and focused on his newfound Precursor Aura, drawing its immense power.



He closed his eyes to fade any and all distractions, as his slightest mistake could cause unprecedented destruction. Ashton took a deep breath, centring himself for what was to come next.

This was his moment to demonstrate his true strength, to harness the ancient energy that now coursed through his veins.

Raising his hands slowly, Ashton aimed them toward the approaching spaceships. With unwavering concentration, he gradually closed his palms. Even then, that inconsequential task seemed to be draining him of his energy.

Ashton's heart pounded in his chest as he felt the immense gravitational pull of his aura taking effect. The two colossal spaceships, floating ominously in the sky, began to quiver and tremble as if caught in an invisible tornado.

The cultists on board the ships panicked, their shouts and frantic movements going unnoticed by Ashton. All his focus was on the task at hand.

With a final, forceful motion, Ashton slammed his closed palms onto the ground. The effect was immediate and explosive. The massive spaceships, unable to resist the overwhelming force of his Precursor Aura, were yanked down from the sky with incredible speed.

There was a loud crash as the behemoths collided with the ground, their colossal frames shuddering and groaning under the impact. The earth trembled beneath the weight of their fall, and the sheer force of the collision sent shockwaves rippling through the surroundings.

Two colossal explosions followed, erupting into towering plumes of fire and smoke. The massive clouds of debris and destruction momentarily obscured Ashton's vision.

However, the sudden silence around him was enough for him to know he succeeded. Ashton managed to take down the ships and crashed them over the ongoing battlefield where the cultists had gathered.

But Ashton wasn't foolish enough to believe the cultists were the only ones caught in the explosion. That said, there was nothing he could do. Taking out the cultists was the most important thing, even if there had to be some sacrifices.

"I hope there weren't many good soldiers there-"

Suddenly, Ashton's legs gave out from the immense strain he had endured, and he fell to his knees, sweat pouring from his brow.

The cost of using his Precursor Aura so extensively was evident, and Ashton knew he had pushed himself to the limit. He could feel Astaroth getting ready to reprimand him for his recklessness, and he was right about it.

[You fucking moron! I told you to just get it over with. There was no need to force yourself to control the aura like an expert! See what happened? You overused the aura!]

"And? What if I sent them tumbling towards the capital?" Ashton replied, his voice strained. "I know I overdid it, but I did it to minimise the loss of life."

[One of these days, someone else wouldn't hesitate to show you the same gesture.]

"I think you screwed up your sentence-"

[Shut it! Exhausting yourself in battle serves no one!]

"Alright, I get it. I'm sorry!"

Ashton nodded despite Astaroth's words stinging his pride. He knew the ancient virgin was right. After all, ironically, controlling his aura seemed to drain him of even more of his strength and vitality.

"Well... I should get going."

Rising to his feet, Ashton wiped away his sweat with the back of his hand and steadied himself. There was no time to dwell on his fatigue.