

A Journey Unwanted

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Chapter 11: Chapter 9: One mean Professor

The classroom was grand and spacious, occupying a great deal of space. The walls were adorned with carvings in dark, rich wood, the ceiling was vaulted and painted with a colorful mural. The wide, arched windows that line the walls allow ample natural light to flood the room.

The centerpiece of the room was a massive desk, made of solid oak and polished to a rich, deep shine. The desk takes up a sizable portion of the room. Behind the desk was a tall, ornate chair, intricately carved and adorned with symbols. The chair was flanked by two smaller chairs, also ornately decorated and crafted in the same rich oak. There was also a large black board ingrained into the wall close to the desk.

There were twenty standard, fine wooden desks spread throughout the large room, with most being occupied while the other students' were busy conversing with each other and whatnot. Mikoto sat at the far back of the class next to a window overlooking the academy's vast and beautiful garden; it was quite a view to have.

William was currently not with him; that fact could maybe be attributed to his seatmate. Behind his mask, he glanced at her long, flowing golden hair with a pale complexion and brilliantly bright green eyes that seemed dull, like much of her face, which seemed to be in a permanent frown. She looked like a female version of William—a twin, maybe. But he remembered how his expression had stifled and dropped once he had taken note of her. Every seat was already assigned someone, so unfortunately, you could not just sit where you wanted.

Hence, he had her as his neighbor now; she did not seem too keen on engaging in any type of conversation. But if they were going to be classmates, then he might as well introduce himself.

"Mikoto Yukio. A pleasure." A simple, short, but sweet introduction

The William look alike merely glanced his way, not even fully turning her head to him before she went right back to blankly staring at her desk. Yup, she definitely was no extrovert.

("Whelp, I tried.") With a mental shrug, he turned back to the front of the class, his gleaming red eyes scanning over the faces of his classmates. Barring William and another familiar face, there was really no one else of note in the classroom. There were

only really three impressive mana signatures in the classroom, but other than that, everything was painfully ordinary.

("How do I want to play it?") He asked himself as he leaned back into his seat. ("I don't really want to draw much attention to myself, so I'll mostly be holding back. But I don't want to appear too weak, at least not so weak that any professor in this school would see me as worthless.") But with such an ordinary class, he would have to go the extra mile to appear just as ordinary. It would have been much better if this class had a few outstanding students, or maybe spawns. ("But enough about that; I'm curious as to what the thoughts of my dear classmates are.") As he was straining his ear's it was an easy task to pick up on the chatter of the students around him.

"What's with the guy in the mask?"

"I dunno, but it's pretty creepy."

Mikoto frowned; of course he had expected some distress due to the mask. But still, it might be more troublesome to deal with than he originally thought, he shrugged to himself as he honed in on a conversation between two girls.

"Think he looks hot underneath?"

"Maybe, he's kind of mysterious."

"Those mysterious types are always hot." One stated it matter-of-factly.

"Think he's pac-"

("Yup, not what I want to hear. Let's see...") Focusing in on another pair of boys', he listened away.

"That blonde... that's *her*, isn't it?" One questioned as he threw a sneaky glance at his neighbor.

"Yeah, 'ice gaze' and all. Damn, a shame; she's so damn beautiful too, but scary." One boy spoke with an almost dreamy look in his eyes as he continued. "And she's the spawn of Goddess Isadora to boot."

"Yeah, that's a whole family thing, right?"

"Yeah, some families as a whole are blessed by God's; the Gregory's are lucky to have the Goddess of Creation and Prosperity favoring them."

("Huh, it seems my neighbor has a reputation. And to think she's a spawn too, but from what they were saying, William might be one as well.") He noted as he focused his attention on another pair of boys'.

"Who do you think our class's personal professor will be?" One questioned as the other suddenly got a dreamy look on his face.

"I dare say that I hope it will be Mistress Elizabeth." He said blissfully.

"Mistress Elizabeth! Now that would be heaven to have such beauty in front of my eyes every day." The other seemed to quickly join his blissful state.

"But...by the God's, let it not be Professor Gregory." Of course, that caught his attention, as William had the same family name—another would-be relative of his, maybe.

"Oh God, no." The other shuddered with his friend.

("Do all new students just have basic knowledge of Academy staff?") Mikoto mused as he turned away from the conversation. ("But anyway, it seems like this Professor Gregory is quite the character, hmm.")

"Agatha Gregory." Mikoto blinked rapidly beneath his mask as he turned to his side.

"Huh?"

"Tis my name." The blank-faced girl beside him clarified before she went back to blankly staring at her desk.

"Ah, a pleasure then, Agatha-sa-." He quickly shook his head. It might be best to just drop honorifics. It would probably only serve to confuse people not familiar with his culture.

("I wish I could meet someone from the 'East'; everyone until now assumed I was from there based on my name. But what lies to the east is a small country called Doma. From what I read, they're basically the same as me, as in they're Japanese. Culture and everything, though I find it more interesting how they use magic. It's not that they use it; they use a different power all together. But that's neither here nor there.") Mikoto's thoughts came to a halt as he took note of the door to the classroom opening with someone stepping inside.

Most students immediately made their way to their desks, while others scrambled to theirs.

"Ten seconds is too long. Much too long." The man spoke as his footsteps came to a halt in front of the class before he turned his heel to face everyone. He was a rather tall man, dressed in a pitch black three-piece suit with a black robe thrown over. He had a clean-shaven face with two intense green eyes that sat on his face with a scrutinizing gaze that swiped through the class. His hair was blonde and slicked back, giving him an overall sophisticated appearance.

"This is the first day, so you shall be excused." The man continued with a serious and icy tone. "If I step into this class again, I expect silence in five seconds or less. Is that understood?"

""...""

"I said, is that understood?" He repeated it in an extra-icy tone.

""Yes sir!"" The class quickly banded together to affirm that they did indeed understand.

"Good." The man stated as he snapped his fingers. On the blackboard behind him, a name was suddenly ingrained into the board. "I am Professor Gregory. I am to be your personal professor for the year." Mikoto could tell that groans sat within each and every student, but they were much too intimidated to let their displeasure be known.

("I wonder how classes will function.") Mikoto was not intimidated, just curious. ("Will the teacher come to us or do we have to move from class to class?") While he was pondering his question, the professor's gaze seemed to be drawn to him.

"You there at the back." He spoke as Mikoto snapped out of his thoughts. He turned his head to the side to see most of the student's glancing.

"Uh me?" He questioned.

"Yes you. What do you think you're doing?" The man asked in his ever-icy voice. Mikoto could only raise an eyebrow beneath his mask.

"Minding my own business?" He answered naturally, eliciting a few snickers around the classroom. But everyone was quickly silenced as Professor Gregory's cold gaze swiped through the class once more.

"Remove your mask, boy." He ordered as Mikoto frowned.

"I can't do that, Professor. You see, I'm wearing this-"

"I did not ask you for a story, boy. I gave you an order you're obligated to follow." The man stated with a steady tone. "Refuse, and you will be facing immediate consequences."

Mikoto's brows furrowed as he stared dead into the man's eyes. To think he would be running into such a strict teacher on his first day.

("Fiona I am going to slap you. You told me no one would bother me.") Of course, he was not actually going to slap the girl. But that was neither here nor there; on to the current problem at hand. Professor Gregory, the man, was as strict as they come.

He could already tell so much from just a glance; he would probably not let up with this. But there was no way he was going to just reveal himself as a spawn of Octavia on his first day. Initially, he underestimated just how important he would be; in fact, a full-on war was almost held just for the other spawn. The kingdom's wanted a rare spawn of Octavia for themselves and were willing to fight for it. He was not looking for that kind of attention, but what to do? Oh well, he was going to get punished anyway for refusing to remove his mask. But he might as well try to be nice one last time.

"Sir, I assure you, I have a go-

"I do not wish for your excuses, boy." The man cut him off again. "Remove your mask, or face the consequences. It is quite simple." Mikoto sighed heavily for all to hear. He was so going to get expelled for this, but oh, he could easily just force himself into the library and get what he wanted.

"Professor Gregory...." Mikoto's voice trailed off as the professor in question narrowed his eyes at the boy.

"If it is another excuse, then do not-" This time it was Mikoto who cut him off.

"By any chance, are you senile?" Each and every student within the classroom looked at him as if he had just done the most absurd thing imaginable; even his blank-faced neighbor looked at him in surprise.

"Detention for the year." The man stated bluntly without missing a beat, and Mikoto shrugged. It is what it is. And in his defense, it was a genuine question.

"Now hold on!" Surprisingly, someone came to his defense: William. "Fa-...Professor Gregory I'm sure if you allowed Mikoto to explain-"

"If you are content with defending this ruffian, then you may join him in detention for the year." The man gave his sentence without a blink, but Mikoto did not miss the hint of disdain and disapproval. Family drama, no doubt.

"Wha-..." William could only look on in disbelief; Mikoto would send him a sheepish smile if he could. But he quickly noticed a student raising their hands—a girl. A quite familiar girl.

"What is it?" Professor Gregory asked the blank-faced Ruby

"I must say this is all quite boring." The girl bluntly stated much to everyone's dismay, as they were looking at her as if she were crazier than Mikoto himself. It seemed that Professor Gregory was the type of teacher to rarely receive any kind of backtalk, and it seems he has built a reputation for that, as even first-year students are aware of his strict nature. "May I step out to play?" Ruby requested.

"Detention."

"Sorry about this; probably not the best of things to get a year's worth of detention for sticking up for me." Mikoto sheepishly apologized to William, who just shook his head.

"It's fine, really." Despite the situation, he did not seem that distraught. Even when the three of them were placed in this depressing small room with creaky wooden floors and dusty walls and three desks in the center, they occupied "My, uh, Professor Gregory is always like that; I'm surprised the punishment wasn't harsher." He said with a sheepish chuckle.

"A dick." Ruby's dull voice cut in as William looked at the small girl, flabbergasted.

"P-pardon."

"Professor Gregory is a dick." She announced it all too smugly, as if satisfied with her insult.

"O-oh, I guess so." William was not sure whether or not he should be insulting the man, but he was much too surprised.

"But I must say..." The girl started as she turned to him with a small smile. "I did not quite expect to see you here, Mikoto. Though it was a welcomed surprise."

"Oh, you two know each other?" William deduced as Mikoto nodded.

"Only vaguely, really." It was kind of hard to forget the creepy midget with blue hair.

"Last I recall, you did not wear such a foul mask." The girl spoke, her smile morphing into a small frown. "Why would you want to hide such pretty eyes?"

Mikoto heaved a deep sigh.

"Are you sure you want to know?" Mikoto asked. "It's quite...disturbing..." He said with a shudder.

"Wait, if it's a bad memory, then you shouldn't recall it." William advised with worry laced in his tone, surprising that he was showing so much for a stranger. But Ruby looked much, much too curious.

"No, no. It's fine. We'll be seeing each other for a year, so I might as well let you in on my secret." Though William himself seemed just as curious as to what this secret could be, "You see my face..."

They waited with bated breaths.

"It is much too beautiful to show to this world." He announced.

"Huh?"

"Meanie." Was all Ruby said with a sideways glance and pout? It seems she really got her hopes' up for his supposed super secret. Mikoto just shrugged.

"It's the truth." William could just sheepishly chuckle. "But we'll probably be seeing each other a whole lot, so how about we hang out?"

"Hang out? You mean we should become friends?" William questioned as Mikoto nodded.

"Yeah, let's start with a basic introduction, like our full names. Seeing as you two don't know each other, Mikoto Yukio."

"William Gregory, yes, I am related to the professor." He admitted. "But I'm not nearly as much of a 'dick'." He chuckled.

"Ruby Leonora, a pleasure." The girl introduced with a smile.

At least his day's at the Academy might be interesting now.

Chapter 12: Chapter 10: Combat training in progress

I must not be disrespectful to my superiors.

I must not be disrespectful to my superiors.

I must not be disrespectful to my superiors.

I must not stand up for ruffians.

I must not stand up for ruffians.

I must not stand up for ruffians.

Professor Gregory is an asshat.

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Professor Gregory is an asshat.

"Uhm, Ruby I don't think it's wise to write that." William sheepishly told the girl seated beside him.

"What? I'm merely writing the truth." Ruby stated it bluntly, as if what she was saying was a fact.

"I mean, she does have a point." Mikoto murmured as he wrote down another sentence on the paper.

"I guess, but isn't he going to be taking a look at these papers?" Mikoto just shrugged at his words.

"Dunno." He merely stated as he twirled his pen in his hand. "I'm pretty sure he just had us write all this down because he wanted to piss us off."

"That does sound like him," William muttered lowly as he heaved a sigh. Of course, William was related to the man, so he had an idea as to what his habits were and whatnot.

But luckily, they all did not really get a year's worth of detention; it seems that the Headmaster himself had intervened and lessened their sentence for whatever reason. William and Ruby only had a week, while he had two, as he did call his professor senile. It could be worse; at least he would not have to be stuck in this place for a year.

"Still, though, this is pretty ass." Mikoto murmured as Ruby nodded her head rapidly in agreement. "I'm going for a walk; do you two want me to bring you anything?"

"Pie please." Ruby requested it as William sent him a worried glance.

"I know it's currently lunch break, but we still have detention; you might get a longer punishment." William stated worriedly as Mikoto shrugged.

"I'll take my chances." Mikoto spoke as he left his desk and then promptly the detention room. He found himself in the vast hallways of Luminare Academy. They were fairly crowded with a few students, but the majority were outside in the courtyard. He did not miss the stares he received as he moved through the vast hallways, whether it was due to his mask or due to the fact that him suggesting that Professor Gregory was senile was common knowledge.

Either way, he did not care; he easily navigated his way through the academy until he came to a stop at two large wooden doors. Sure, he has only been attending the academy for two days now, but it was easy to memorize the layout of the place, at least to him. So, pushing past the doors, he was introduced to the vast library.

The school's library was a vast room filled with towering bookshelves and study tables. There were rare manuscripts, spell books, and encyclopedias of magical creatures that

were only found in this library. The library had comfortable chairs and reading nooks where students could spend hours reading and studying. Unfortunately, the place was much, much too large. On his first day here, he asked the local librarian if there were books on world travel, though she just looked at him as if he were insane.

All hope is not lost just yet. Apparently there was a forbidden section in this overly large library; if this place as a whole had so much knowledge, just how much would the forbidden section hold? Mikoto glanced to the side at those large, dark oak wooden doors. Just beyond those doors lied so much sensitive knowledge. Knowledge just waiting to be gained, knowledge that just might be of help to him.

But unfortunately, for the time being, that knowledge will remain unreachable. The wards etched into the room were not of low caliber; in fact, they were quite absurd. Tier 4 ward's no doubt; the teachers he had met in class seemed plenty capable, so it could be either one responsible for these ward's. But apparently there was a way to gain entry. One needed permission from the Headmaster himself, it seemed; now Mikoto highly doubted he could stroll up to the man and demand access. Well, he could, but that was besides the point.

Mikoto hummed thoughtfully as he moved through the library. At his behest, several books flew from their shelves and into his arm's. They were nothing big, just a few works of fiction. He had to somehow keep himself entertained, and he did still have his phone. It was easy to charge when he got more used to using magic, but besides a few games that got boring quickly, he mainly kept it around because of all the memories he had stored in it. So it was not just something to be thrown away.

"Five books; this could keep me busy for the week." Mikoto murmured to himself as he swiftly exited the library, stepping into the hallways of the academy once more. It was a simple thing: if you wanted to borrow books from the library, you could. There was no reason to go through a lengthy ordeal; the books had charms on them. You could keep them for a week; after that, they 'poof' back into their shelves. Brilliantly simple.

"Holy shit!"

"That's her! That's freaking her!"

"By the God's what a Goddess!"

"Holy, it's actually her, Lucinda!"

"I have never seen someone so radiant."

Of course, with all these people yammering so hard, Mikoto could not help but see what was up. So he followed the gazes of the various teen boys; their eyes were as if they were staring at the epitome of perfection incarnate. Even some girls were staring at this

Lucinda like she was the second coming of Christ, but Mikoto could not help but be confused by what he was seeing.

("Damn, that chick looks just like me for real.") When he said that, he quite literally meant it. It was as if she were just him, but with large blobs on her chest and much longer hair.

Mikoto studied her as she took graceful strides through the hallways, greeting her fellow students with a smile that could only be described as radiating. It had an immediate effect on anyone it was directed at; boys fell in love, and girls questioned their sexuality. With her long, flowing, and graceful locks of snow white hair that cascaded down her back and her ruby-red eyes that sat on a face that could only belong to an angel, she certainly stood out.

But Mikoto was much more focused on something else.

("Is that a katana?") He questioned as he spotted the weapon strapped to her back. That golden handle with intricate red patterns and that scabbard—yes, that was definitely a katana. ("Guess my fellow spawn has good taste.") He hummed as he began walking again; he was not really smitten with her with how much everyone else seemed to be. Though that fact is mainly attributed to them basically sharing a face, that was neither here nor there. He still had to pick up a pie for Ruby.

So as he walked through the hallways, he eventually passed the girl in question, and she sent him a smile along with a greeting.

"Good morning." She greeted him with an ever-radiant smile that would make any man's knees buckle.

"Sup." Apparently, his greeting was not well received by the girl's fan.

"Wah! How dare that fiend!"

"Such a lackluster greeting for Lady Lucinda!"

"Inconceivable!"

"How dare he!"

"Who does he think he is?"

Mikoto just shrugged their whining off as he continued moving, not really bothered by the fangirls and fanboys. He missed the curious gaze that came from Lucinda though.

[Luminare Academy]

[Training Area]

The large training area was quite a sight to behold. The place had towering walls made of solid stone that stood at least 20 feet high. The walls were uneven and had vines growing on them, which added to the old-fashioned feel of the area. It also showed just how old the place was.

There was a vast expanse of land with tall trees that surrounded the entire area, casting a blanket of shade over the training ground. The ground was dirt, soft, and pliable underfoot, perfect for combat training. The dirt was uneven, with small hills and valleys everywhere, providing challenging terrain for people to train on.

The area was dotted with various weapons racks, featuring swords, spears, maces, hammers, and axes, all made of high-quality materials. The racks were arranged in an orderly manner, with each weapon carefully placed in its designated spot. The weapons had a rustic look to them, with tarnished metal, and the wood of the handles looked like they had been through countless battles. Though he was not quite sure what use there was to them, when magic was available, using normal and mundane weapons was hardly ever considered.

In the center of the training area stood a massive round sparring pit, at least ten feet deep and sixty feet in diameter. The pit stood on a paved ring with a border of finely crafted stone. The pit was filled with a soft cushioning material, perfect for practitioners to practice their spells or to spar in. Above the sparring pit, a towering viewing tower stood, allowing instructors and spectators to observe those that trained.

The far end of the training area had a small building. It was made of wood, with a peaked roof that had moss growing on it. The building had two entrances: the front entrance, which was guarded by two wooden doors, and a side entrance that led to the training ground. The building housed a small blacksmith workshop that was fully equipped. It also had a room that served as a training room and had various dummies, both for target practice and for weapons training. He supposed that place was mainly for those who fancied weapons.

"Now listen up, you maggots!" Referring to the forty or so students' was an old man with long white hair tied into a ponytail and a face full of a perfectly trimmed beard. Of course, there was nothing quite ordinary about this man, as he was extremely large and pretty muscular. Extremely muscular, his muscles had muscles. The large man was dressed in a tight suit vest that barely kept his muscles contained. Along with that, he had black armguard's and black slacks. Mikoto suddenly felt the last of his masculinity slip away. It seems this man was absorbing it all. "This right here is combat training!"

Their combat professor was Professor Fergus. Quite the manly name for a manly man.

Anyway, combat training was unique as it was a joint class that was shared by two classes. Class Wolf shared it with Class Griffin.

"You there, mask boy!" Professor Fergus suddenly addressed him, much to his confusion.

"Uh, yeah?"

"It's 'yes, sir' boy!" The large man corrected with a yell that seemed to be his passive tone. "Now give me twenty laps around the area!" The man ordered, and some fellow students giggled at his luck. Mikoto did not quite know why he was signaled out, but he just shrugged it off. Twenty laps were nothing, even in such an overly large area, so without a word, he got to running.

The professor gave him a sideways glance as he ran past before the man turned his attention back to the class.

"Poor Mikoto..." Ruby murmured as she watched the running Mikoto.

"Yeah, why was he even signaled out?" William, who stood beside her, could not help but question "He was not even doing anything."

"Now listen up! Cause I ain't repeating myself!" The man started speaking again, silencing any murmuring. "This here is all simple; you lot will be beating the shit out of each other!" He crudely started. "Here you will be evaluated in both your physical and magic performance! So if you runts don't improve, get lost! And also, don't expect to be coddled in my class! I don't care if your dad is rich or if he's the king! You hear that princess!!" He asked loudly as he leveled his gaze at someone particular.

Princess Mirabella who was a spawn of the God Aragorn. She had a head of long and wild dark blue hair that framed her otherworldly face perfectly, and her intense blue orbs stared right back at Professor Fergus.

"I don't care, not old man. For the trash that is in this academy, I don't need to exert much force anyway." She confidently stated that, of course, if she were anyone else, then her fellow students surrounding her might have been much more angry. But she was the princess and, above all else, someone not to be trifled with. But it seems there was someone who did not care for her status.

"Big word's, can you back them up, I wonder?" Agatha leveled a cold gaze at the princess.

"A Gregory, hm? I might find some modicum of entertainment with you." Mirabella stated with a grin creeping onto her face.

"I think you'll find that I'll provide you with too much you can handle." Agatha shot back with a blank face. Of course, these two high-profile girls' practically challenging each other caused a slight uproar with their respective classmates.

"Lady Agatha just challenged Princess Mirabella!"

"By the God's! That would be a match of the century!"

"Between two spawns, no less!"

"But who would win?"

"I can't say."

"Alright, alright! Quiet down, you maggots!" Professor Fergus quickly shut everyone up.
"I can tell you all are fi-"

"Done." A voice to his side suddenly caused him to blink in confusion with his single eye. He turned to his side to see the masked Mikoto standing there.

"Bullshit lad! There's no way you ran and finished your laps so fast." The man stated it with obvious skepticism in his tone.

"You should've kept your eye on me." Mikoto said with a shrug. "But shouldn't we get on with the lesson?"

"Bah! Congratulations, Runt, for that lip, you get to go first!" He stated as Mikoto merely shrugged once more, much to his annoyance. "Fine, then, let us pick your opponent. Any volunteers!" Immediately, a few hands shot up; even Ruby was among them. He would send her a 'what's the deal' look, but unfortunately he had this mask on.

But back to the professor, it was obvious he was going to pick someone who did not raise their hands as his eye stopped at Mirabella; it seems as though he did not quite like Mikoto.

"Come here, princess! Since you were so cocky, I imagine you would like to back up your words." The princess merely clicked her tongue in annoyance.

"Well, he's dead."

"No way he's even putting a scratch on Princess Mirabella."

"Yeah, I thought the guy was unlucky to get detention on his first day, but this is just sad."

"Damn, he has some crappy luck with the professors.

"Poor Mikoto..." Ruby murmured once again, as William could only agree. Princess Mirabella was a prodigy with both magic and martial arts; she already mastered destructive spells that could be considered Master Class or Tier 3. Above that, she was a spawn and had access to Familial Arts, not to mention she did not even need glyphs or chants for her magic. William only knew Mikoto for a short while, and he had not gained a measure of the boy's strength.

"Let's hope the princess at least holds back." William murmured lowly, with worry laced in his tone. Mikoto was already a friend in his eyes, and the boy was so nice too. He did not put him on a pedestal due to his family lineage, nor did he treat him differently; he really hoped the boy would come out alive.

"You should give up." Mirabella stated it almost boredly as she stared at Mikoto with uninterested. "Your mana signature is so pathetic that I might actually cry. If we fight... " A chill went through the majority of the students spines as a bloodthirsty grin grew on her face. "Then I might actually kill you, on accident." Mikoto just smirked beneath his mask.

He did not want to stand out much in this academy. It was a simple process of just going through the academy's library and dipping, but there was that forbidden section that he needed to get into. However small, there was a chance that he could find what he was looking for. But there was only one way to gain entry: permission from the headmaster himself. Now to do that, he would need to win the man's favor. He did not quite know him, but from that short speech on the first day, he could tell that the man valued strength, so with that said...

Mikoto gazed right into the princess's eyes with a hidden smirk of his own as he uttered a few simple words.

"Nah I'll win."

Chapter 13: Chapter 11: Duel

Within the arena in the training area, Mikoto stood across from Mirabella, the two standing a good few meters apart within the large area. The latter had a grin on her face, while the former's expression was hidden by a grinning mask.

From atop the thirty-eight other students' watched from the vantage points, they watched with Professor Fergus along.

"I can't believe the guy actually said that." One student murmured with slight disbelief laced within his tone.

"The guy's either brave or stupid." Another one stated.

"Definitely stupid. Does he even know how powerful the princess is?"

"He must've lived under a rock if he's this cocky and oblivious."

"Let us hope he has someone to go to his funeral."

Of course, everyone thought that this random masked boy would horribly lose to the princess. It was not that they were doubting him or his abilities; it was more that they were just aware of how powerful Mirabella was. This was the same girl who beat every man who wanted to court her half to death, the girl who was the spawn of the God of destruction and avarice, the girl who was a prodigy in both physical combat and destructive magic. In simpler terms, she was a complete monster, and everyone knew it.

But among the crowd of doubtful students, one was slightly more appalled.

("I can't feel it.") Agatha stared at the boy in the arena. In this world so filled with magic, almost everything living had a mana signature or some kind of life signature. Any amateur could sense said signatures with just a little practice; of course, all humans have mana. Even those who did not make use of any kind of magic. Yet this masked boy had nothing; no, it would be more accurate to say that she could not sense an ounce of his mana. There was a simple reason for that; it could be that he was keeping his mana hidden actively or that he was using a magical object to hide it. It could be that mask he wore; it was definitely a magical object, and the much was obvious.

("No, if he kept it hidden, I should still be able to sense a sliver of it, unless... no"). She shook her head to clear herself of the absurd idea. There was no way; she was a spawn.

But putting that at the back of her mind, she glanced away from the area and toward someone else. Besides a short blue-haired girl stood her dearest brother, with a hint of worry in his eye. Right, he was friends with the masked boy; he had even stood up for him. Already on the first few days, he already had friends', while others merely avoided her like the plague due to their fear. Her brother really did have it so much easier than her.

"Okay, you two maggots!" Professor Fergus spoke loudly and clearly for the two combatants to hear as he continued. "The fight starts right now!" No rules were given as they were put against each other.

Mirabella's grin grew increasingly wider as her right hand shot up and the air around her began to swirl with intense mana. A ball of fire formed in her hands, growing larger and hotter with each passing second. She thrust her hand forward, and the massive wave of hot fire shot towards him. The flames were so intense that they seemed to warp the very air around them, creating a ripple of heat that could be felt even from the far edges of the arena and all the way to the spectators.

Mikoto raised his own arm, and a pulsating, translucent red bubble shield of mana formed around him, just in time to deflect the searing wave of her fire. The shield shimmered with energy, and the flames seemed to ripple and dance around its edges, unable to penetrate its powerful magic.

"Tch! Chantless magic too? Big deal!" Mirabella rather crudely stated. With a gesture of her hand, she created a small wave of dirt that rippled across the arena floor. She crouched down, placing her hand on the ground, and began to channel her magic. The earth beneath her hand began to tremble.

And then suddenly, with a burst of force, Mirabella released her magic, and from the ground around Mikoto's position, huge earth spikes surged up, sharp tips glinting in the sunlight. The spikes, each one as large as a tree trunk and much thicker and studier, loomed ominously over the arena, casting long shadows and causing the few students' to gasps in slight awe.

Though the sharp tips of the earth spikes seemed to snake down on him, his barrier held firm as it pulsed, while the large earth spikes shattered as they made contact.

("She's testing the waters with these parlor tricks first, eh?") Despite underestimating him, she was still cautious; it must have been her innate battle sense. Or her instincts.

"What? Gonna just stand there and take all the punishment!!" She taunted, but Mikoto just shrugged.

"Fine, fine. I'll attack." If she was going to stick with elemental magic, he might as well too. So the barrier around him broke down as he raised his right arm, his palm pointing at the idle girl. Suddenly, he unleashed a torrent of blazing white lightning from his outstretched palm. The girl to her credit reacted with lightning reflexes of her own, leaping to the side with cat-like grace as the bolts of energy scorched the ground where she had been standing only seconds ago. The noise was deafening as the crackle of electricity echoed throughout the arena, making it hard for anyone to focus on the fight.

("Dodging huh? No defense spells? Still gauging what I can do, no doubt, well, she'll regret that.")

From on high, the spectators watched the fight take place as Mikoto continued to target the girl relentlessly, unleashing rapid-fire bursts of electricity aimed at every inch of the arena. Despite the speed and power of his attacks, however, Mirabella managed to evade them all with impressive speed. She evaded with dodges, mid-air flips, and even occasional cartwheels. Her movements were so precise that even a centimeter mistake could have cost her dearly.

"Damn, he's actually holding his own."

"And he's not even using chants or glyphs!"

"Doesn't matter. The princess is still holding back. He'll be done soon."

"True, Mask Boy put up a good fight at least." Various comments flew out of the mouths of the watching students. But they were mere whelps when it came to real combat, and even with how much Mikoto showed, they still doubted him. Yet Fergus could not help but frown as he watched the fight.

("The mask brats is missing on purpose.") He deduced as a bolt of white lighting cut through the air before Mirabella dodged once again with surprising agility. Fergus did not quite know why it was that he was missing on purpose, but he could tell Mikoto was planning something; what it was is currently unknown.

Back to the fight, Mikoto's hand crackled with energy as he aimed a direct lightning blast at Mirabella's head. With a burst of speed, the bolt of lightning blasted out of his palm and snaked towards her. The lightning blast neared her face, but at the last second, she pivoted on her heel and twisted her body to the side as the bolt of lighting whizzed past her and struck a wall with an intense explosion that rocked the ground.

Mirabella smirked confidently.

"That's all you got?" She mocked. "A little light show and a pathetic shield that could ward off my parlor tricks?" She was cautious originally due to not being able to detect his mana signature, but it seemed she worried about nothing. Though chantless and glyphless magic was impressive, it was hardly anything ground-breaking. She had used basic weak spells to gauge him, but it seems he really was nothing impressive, and he still needed an ass kicking. She did not need her high-tier spells here, and besides, she would probably end up destroying the whole area with any flashy spells. She would probably only beat him half to death. But as she prepared a spell...

("Why the hell am I short of breath!?) She attributed that fact to her constant dodging earlier, but she knew the extent of her own physical abilities. That little dodging would not exhaust her this much. But now she just felt exhausted and extremely out of breath.

"Say princess..." Mikoto suddenly started. "Ever heard of ozone?"

"Huh? What the hell are you blabbering about?"

"The oxygen in the air can be broken apart with electricity. Oxygen molecules are normally formed from two oxygen atoms, but once the two oxygen atoms break apart, they have a disposition toward connecting together in threes as ozone. Oxygen and ozone are two different things. Breathing it in would not satisfy one's lungs." Mikoto leisurely explained as if he were a teacher giving a lecture, and Mirabella, who was still short of breath, just looked at him incredulously. "Oh right, you probably don't have a clue as to what I'm saying; with your lot being so reliant on magic, it's natural you'd ignore science."

"What, do you think this little bullshit trick of yours is going to put me down?" She scoffed at the notion as her mana flared to increasing heights. Reality itself seemed to bend all around her as a silent chill enveloped all.

"Not really. But still, it seems like you're just a human who needs oxygen. But, oh well, I've seen enough. I forfeit." Mikoto bluntly stated.

"Huh?" That was all Mirabella could blurt out as she breathed heavily due to the lack of oxygen "Hell no! I'm still going to beat you to a pulp!"

"Nah."

"Nah!?"

"Quit it, princess; the lad gave up!" From on high, Professor Fergus announced "The fights over, get your ass back!"

"Well, I guess this outcome was expected."

"Man, it was getting so interesting too."

"I was kind of curious about the guy; it seems he wasn't anything special."

"But I mean, he did use magic without glyphs and chants."

"Yeah, that's kind of impressive."

"Impressive!? It's absurd, he's only a first-year like us!"

Various comments flew from the students as they discussed the short scuffle. But Agatha could just frown as she zeroed in on the masked boy; there was something off about him. Call it intuition, or maybe just her instincts, but she surmised that there was much more to this masked boy than meets the eye.

[Luminare Academy]

[Mess Hall]

It was a spacious hall, filled with long wooden tables, benches, and high-backed chairs. The floor beneath everyone's feet was made of stone and was notably cool to the touch. One could hear the clinking of silverware and the sounds of people laughing and chatting. The aromas of freshly baked bread, roasted meats, and spices fill the air, whetting one's appetite all the more.

At the food stations, one's eyes could not help but be drawn to the grand display of food on offer. Huge iron cauldrons filled with steaming stews and soups. Glistening roasted meats on large platters. Communal bowls of hearty salads and freshly baked bread loaves. Between the food stations were large wooden casks filled with an assortment of draft beer, wine, and mead for the older students and staff.

"I still can't quite believe you fought the princess and got off without a scratch." William said, directing his words at Mikoto, who sat across from him on the long wooden table with Ruby beside him.

"C'mon, where's the faith? I thought we were suppose to be friends'." Mikoto jokingly shot back.

"Hmm, we were rather sure you were going to die." Ruby bluntly stated with a dull expression.

"Uhm, Ruby that's a bit harsh." William sheepishly told the girl, who just tilted her head in confusion. "But yeah, you lasted pretty long against the princess. I had no idea you were so skilled."

"Eh, it's nothing; I had a good teacher."

"Hmm, but still..." Ruby started as she slightly trailed off.

"Something wrong?" Mikoto questioned with a glance.

"When will you take the mask off?" She suddenly asked, so he merely shrugged.

"Dunno, probably when I feel like it." Which was going to be never.

But back to his battle with the princess. Originally, he was planning on making a big show by beating her, but it was more so that he could garner the attention of the headmaster. But he may not need to go through all of that trouble; if possible, the wards that protect the forbidden section could be broken. He had sampled them and analyzed them through the day to see if he could learn of any faults. It seemed a rather destructive spell could break it, but that option was out for obvious reasons. But there was something he was going to try out. At least when it was curfew and everyone was in their dorms.

Yes, that knowledge would be his.

Chapter 14: Chapter 12: Rendezvous

"You're an idiot, Mikoto." Those dull words came from a dull-eyed Fiona, who sat behind her desk. Currently, they were within the confines of her very own private office.

Her office was grand, with high ceilings, ornate moldings, and tall windows that let in streams of natural light. Enormous bookshelves lined the walls, filled to the brim with tomes and books. The massive mahogany desk she sat behind reigned supreme in the center of the room, flanked by plush armchairs and an antique globe.

"Oh wow, we haven't seen each other for a whole week, and this is the hello I get? Booooo!" Mikoto, who sat on one of the plump arm chairs, whined. Seeing as Fiona was the only one in this whole entire academy who really knew his little secret, he did not have to worry about wearing the mask. Though what he did have to worry about was how overgrown his uniform now felt due to the mask increasing his overall size and body weight. And of course now he did not look as boyish as he would have liked.

"I thought I told you not to draw attention to yourself, you dolt!" Fiona sighed as her ear twitched in annoyance. "And you get yourself detention on the first day, and that's not to mention you picking a fight with the princess." That is correct. Apparently, his short scuffle with the princess had made rounds around the academy, and even with her holding back so much, it was still considered impressive that he lasted as long as he did.

"Wasn't my fault though. That Professor Fergus put me against her." Mikoto defended. "And Professor Gregory was a pr-"

"Yes, yes, I get it." Fiona quickly cut him off. "I suppose I should have warned you about Professor Gregory; he is quite a strict man."

"Strict doesn't quite cut it. The guy's a perfectionist; if anything isn't as perfect as he wants it to be, then you get punished." Mikoto scoffed. "Even the teachers back home weren't nearly as strict." He murmured.

"Hmm, I'm quite curious as to what education is like in the East. In your day's within the mansion, you never really went into detail about your home." Fiona admitted, Mikoto merely shrugged.

"Eh, school back home was mundane." He started as he reminisced a bit. "Teachers were strict on a lot of things; your hair had to be a certain length; girls couldn't wear any accessories or nail polish; if you wore your uniform incorrectly, then it was detention." He explained. There were, of course, a lot of other things, especially when he had to go to a private school at his dear old dad's behest. The guy was a surgeon, ironically meant to save lives, yet he was such scum.

"Quite strict indeed. But how do you find Luminare Academy?" Fiona asked.

"Barring that asshat Professor Gregory; everything is fine, I guess." As far as school life goes, this place was extraordinarily—better than ordinary school life, that is for sure. Sitting through a lecture was not actually boring, barring a lesson from the asshat Professor Gregory himself. He actually learned quite a bit about magic and the history

of this world. But still, he was much more focused on creating a spell to destroy those wards in the library.

"But Professor Gregory, I heard both his children are attending their first year here." Fiona spoke as Mikoto nodded his head.

"Yeah, both are in my class. I'm actually friends with the brother; the girl doesn't really ever talk much." Mikoto informed as Fiona hummed in interest.

"The Gregory family is an interesting lot. It's not uncommon for a God or Goddess to bless a family as a whole, but the Gregory's are one of the main noble families that possess the blessing of a Goddess. Isadora is the Goddess of Prosperity and Creation. The opposite of Aragorn, the God of Avarice and Destruction."

"A pretty major Goddess, huh?" But apparently his own blessing still reigned supreme even when put against the likes of Gods of destruction and creation. "But speaking of which, I saw the other spawn just the other day. Kinda eerie how much she looked like me."

"It's simply how things work for the spawns of God's; essentially, you're siblings in some odd way. I'm sure you've noticed how similar the Headmaster and the Princess looked." Mikoto merely hummed at that.

("Siblings, huh? Damn, I really miss that little shit.") Mikoto repressed a sigh as he prevented his mind from wandering; it was better not to think of home. Constantly thinking about what he was torn away from was not good for his mental health. But still, it was not just something he could not think about; it was driving him insane, if he was being honest. If he did not have hope that there could be a way back, his sanity would have long been gone. But still, even though he felt it slipping slowly, the only semblance of peace he gained was seeing the faces of his family through his phone.

"But anyway, I'm supposed to use her as a role model to learn Familial Arts, right? How would I go about doing that? Doubt I can just walk up to her and be like, 'mind showing me that Familial Arts I wanna copy them'." Fiona rubbed her chin in thought as she mulled over it.

"That's for you to figure out, dear Mikoto." The girl stated after a minutes with a smile on her face.

"Great, so you're no help. Fantastic." Though it was not as if it were his main goal, But that was neither here nor there. Standing up from his seat, he placed the mask back on his face, his hair growing longer and darker as his skin slightly tanned whilst his body grew more to fit his uniform. "Well, it was nice seeing you, Fiona."

"You too, Mikoto." The girl said with a smile. "Remember, if you ever need anything, I'll always be here."

"Thanks, Fiona; see ya." With his farewell given, he exited the office and stepped onto the hallways of the school. Tonight he might as well make his way to the library to test some spells on the ward's of the forbidden section. There was a separate building for both the dorms of the girls and boys' as well as the teacher's; from what he knew, no one patrolled late at night to. A few ward's should be activated to help alert someone if anyone was breaking curfew, but a nifty cloaking spell should help him avoid the ward's.

[Midnight]

[Luminare Academy]

When the sky was decorated with darkness and dotted with stars, that was when she could experience peace. When the halls of Luminare Academy were so quiet and peaceful, she liked roaming them for hours on end. No gawking masses, no idolizing fans, no would-be courters, no nothing. Just being alone with her thoughts, Lucinda could not help but exhale deeply.

For someone like her, this was a very rare moment. A moment where she did not have to put up a smiling face for the adoring masses, of course she would still very much get in trouble if she were caught roaming the halls at this late hour. But, oh well, a nifty cloaking spell made her practically invisible for any wards that were set up after hour's. Though not literary, she was still very visible, just not to any wards.

But why was she roaming the academy at such late hours other than for some peace and quiet? Well, she had to return a book to the library. Of course, with the charms placed on the book's, it would eventually find its way back to the library. But were that the case, then the person who borrowed said book would be registered. She did not exactly want there to be evidence of her borrowing such a.....steamy book.

So as she neared the library, a creepy, grinning face suddenly entered her view. Of course, with this creepy face suddenly spawning out of nowhere, she acted accordingly.

"Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeh!!!"

"Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaagh!!" Said creepy face also responded accordingly.
"Ahem...I mean, whoa..."

"Wah..." That incomprehensible word left her mouth as she realized that this creepy face was in fact a mask worn by a person. With that tidbit of information learned, her face went beet red, as she had just let out a shrill scream mere moments ago.

"Jesus, I thought I was going to have a heart attack." The masked boy uttered out, she did not know who this Jesus was, but quickly she cleared her throat.

"Sorry, you frightened me a bit." She spoke while avoiding eye contact.

"From that scream I and most likely all the inhabitants of the academy heard, I'm assuming I frightened you more than 'a bit'." He muttered, but she heard him clearly enough.

"H-hey! You screamed just as loudly!" She accused.

"Psssh. I don't know what you're talking about." He said this as he looked away.

"Why you...." She shook her head of the annoyance. "What are you doing here after curfew?" She questioned him more so to change the subject to something less embarrassing, and despite his face being covered, she could tell he was giving her a questioning look of his own.

"What are you doing here after curfew?" He asked right back, mimicking her question.

"I asked first." She spoke with narrowed eyes.

"Well, I asked second." He shot back as she frowned.

"Well, if you must know, I'm here to return a book." She spoke while gesturing to the book clutched into her right arm.

"Returning a book this late? Quite the diligent one, aren't you?" The boy mused, and Lucinda just now found it odd. This boy was not gushing over her, nor was he showing any signs of admiration. This was a normal conversation, barring his earlier teasing; this was kind of nice.

"Well, I told you what I'm doing here. Now it's your turn." She stated, she also remembered now where she had seen him. A few days ago, she had greeted the boy; she also recalled a few rumors about a 'masked boy' challenging the princess. She wondered if that was him as well.

"Yeah, it's this important thing called 'none of your business'." He bluntly stated much to her dismay.

"Wah! But I told you my reason!" She whined like a child, and the masked boy merely shrugged.

"That's your problem." Mikoto watched as her features morphed into a glare and a pout. It would have looked cute had they not shared a face, but oh well, he has conversed for long enough. "MY GOD, WHAT'S THAT'S BEHIND YOU?" He suddenly announced this as the girl jumped in surprise before swinging her head to look behind her, only to see nothing but darkness.

"Huh? There's nothing the- " She cut herself off as she turned back, only to find him no longer there. "He tricked me!" That much was easy to deduce, and how did he get away so quickly? Instantaneous teleportation? Was he really that skilled?

"Who was that boy?" She could not help but question.

"Boo!"

"Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeep!!!" Another shrill scream left her as she suddenly heard a voice behind her.

"Hahahah!" As her heartbeat quickened, she heard a laugh and turned around to see the same masked boy.

"T-that wasn't funny!" She screamed with a beet red face.

("Lucinda, the blessed child, the one-woman army, the destroyer of countries, the sword saint.") A few titles that were gained by his fellow spawn of Octavia. To others', she was considered a borderline Goddess just for her magical and physical prowess. Yet Mikoto could not help but almost chuckle once again as he stared at her red, glaring face. He had just planned to escape there, but this was a rare opportunity to talk to his fellow spawn one-on-one. With fans constantly surrounding her, it is almost impossible to converse with the girl.

"It was totally funny." He shot back.

"No, it wasn't!" She whined.

"Damn, for a renowned legend like you, I didn't picture you as such a square. Lightened up." He said with a chuckle.

"I will not 'lighten up'!" She shouted. "You scared me half to death!"

"Calm down; it was just a prank." Her glare grew as she prepared to speak, but suddenly she was interrupted.

"What is going on here?" An annoyingly familiar, strict voice asked as the hallways of the school suddenly lit up. Mikoto and Lucinda turned to see the tired glare of Professor Gregory.

"Uhm....I...uhh..." Lucinda seemed to be too deeply affected by the glare to form any words. Mikoto, being a charitable soul, decided to step in and come to the rescue.

"What need glasses to see, old man?" Mikoto questioned as Lucinda looked at him extremely befuddled. "She's obviously here to return her book." He stated it as if it were the most obvious thing. In response, Professor Gregory's eye narrowed dangerously.

"Mister Yukio, detention for two weeks. I expected better from you, Lucinda." The man stated with clear disappointment in his tone. "I would think you above rendezvousing with such a ruffian." The man stated with a glare at Mikoto.

"Sir, this isn't what it looks like, I swear!" Lucinda quickly defended. "I really was just trying to re-."

"Enough, a week of detention for being out past curfew. That is final." Professor Gregory coldly stated

"That's rough, buddy." Mikoto's words merely elicited a glare from the spawn of Octavia.

Chapter 15: Chapter 13: Rumors

[Luminare Academy]

"Lucinda got detention!"

"For real!?"

"Yeah, but that's not even the crazy part. I heard she had a late rendezvous with a boy!".

"You're screwing with me, Lady Lucinda? Impossible."

"It's the truth, man."

"No, not my Lucinda!"

"Calm down, man!"

The academy was in uproar, with some seeing it as unjust for Lucinda of all people to be suffering detention. Even when they did not know the full situation, they still believed it was unfair. Though the majority of the student body was much more focused on the fact that their dear sweet Lady Lucinda had a late-night rendezvous with some random rat. It was inconceivable. It was impossible. And it was simply unforgivable and unfathomable that there was a chance that Lady Lucinda had someone in her life who held a deep value to her.

The boys seethed that day as they used every bit of resources to figure out who this punk was that would dare sully the great Lady Lucinda and her perfect image. The bastard would pay, and each and every boy and some girls' would make sure of that. Lucinda was an angel that should never be tainted; she might as well have been the face of the entire Kingdom of Galadriel. And some punk comes along and thinks to sully her? Not on their watch.

"Good God, what a shit fest." An extremely bored Mikoto murmured as he tried to not doze off at the lesson of Professor Gregory. He noticed a glance from his seatmate.

"Then why not simply leave?" Agatha bluntly asked, and Mikoto turned to the girl with a raised brow hidden behind his mask.

"Eh, I'd get more detention." He said it with a shrug.

"More than you already have for meeting up with the spawn of Octavia?" She questioned.

"Yup. Hold on, how do you even know about that?" He asked, Professor Ass hat Gregory had been keeping it under wraps from what he knew. Sure, people knew Lucinda got detention due to meeting up with someone, but that is all.

"I have my sources." The girl merely mysteriously answered.

"Uh-huh." She had been quite talkative lately. Why? He had no idea, but he indulged her; she was decent company to keep him from getting bored in Professor Gregory's history class. "Say, you've been talking to me a lot lately."

"And? What of it?"

"Any reason for that?" He asked as he glanced at the blonde.

"Do I need a reason to converse?" She merely shot back a question of her own as he shrugged.

"Guess not; just find it odd. You don't seem as outgoing as your brother." He stated that he did not miss how her eyes narrowed at the comparison; it seems that it would be wise to just change the subject. Luckily, the two sat at the back of the class so they could converse to their hearts content. "Anyway, I noticed you sit alone a lot."

"And how would you notice such a thing?" She questioned

"I just see you around sometimes; I just find it surprising considering you're so famous." Mikoto spoke, giving his thoughts. Agatha was pretty popular; everywhere she looked, there were students gawking and pointing. Though it still paled in comparison to Lucinda, hell, even the Princess did not seem as well liked as his fellow spawn of Octavia.

"Fame is nothing. Most fear me." She murmured with a ghost of a smirk. "Ironic considering who's spawn I am."

("Right, even the princess isn't feared as much. Wonder why that is, though?")

"Then you want to hang out with me?" He asked. Sure, he was not really a social butterfly, but it never hurts to make friends. She seemed momentarily surprised by his offer, but she quickly composed herself.

"I..I'll have to refuse." She seemed hesitant to speak those words, but Mikoto just shrugged.

"Suit yourself." He merely murmured with a shrug. If he had to hazard a guess, it most likely had something to do with her brother being in his little friend group.

"Mr. Yukio Is my lesson boring you?" Suddenly he heard the loud voice of Professor Gregory directed his way, and immediately all eyes turned to him. Most were filled with expectations for another verbal battle between the two.

"And why would you say that, Professor?" He merely questioned him cluelessly.

"Do not play with me, boy." His eye's narrowed into a glare. "Though I suppose you do not have enough detention, shall I add another week?" He threatened.

"Now why would you go and do that?" He asked with the same clueless tone. Others could not see it, but he was hiding a shit-eating grin upon noticing the apparent veins bulging on the man's head.

"Very well, another week's worth of detention shall be added." Professor Gregory stated with a cold glare. "And I expect a five-page essay on why you should respect your superiors. I expect it tomorrow." Various whispers began about how Mikoto Yukio once again managed to piss off Professor Gregory with so little effort. It was a ritual that whenever Professor Gregory came to give class, Mikoto would not pay attention to the lesson. It was history; some things were interesting, but when Professor Gregory was the teacher, well, then everything was such a bore. So for the duration of his lessons, Mikoto merely stared out the window or slept, which got him a heap of detention.

But it was funny how only he was signaled out and not Agatha, but barring that...

("Yeah, I'm not doing any damn essay.") He rarely went to the detention room anyway; he just liked pissing off Professor Gregory.

"That's so harsh, sir." Mikoto finally spoke. "And I haven't even done anything. I paid attention to your lesson, honest." Professor Gregory merely glared at the masked boy as he spoke.

"Then you would not mind revising what I just went over?" The man challenged as Mikoto smirked.

"Well, of course. Demons invaded the human realm; something, something; the hero Azael killed some chump demons; something, something... Yeah, that's all I got."

Snickering filled the classroom, and he even saw Agatha crack a smile, but soon all was quiet as Professor Gregory's cold glare swept through the classroom.

"Another week's detention." The professor bluntly stated.

"That's the bastard! That's him!"

"For real, the mask weirdo?"

"I heard he pissed off Professor Gregory again."

"Guy's got balls of steel."

"He's going to have no balls if he dared to meet up with Lady Lucinda!"

"Wouldn't bother; I heard the guy lasted a whole few minutes against the Princess."

"He's good with magic too, I heard."

"I heard he's friends with that failure, William, though."

"That guy? Guy's got crappy taste in friend's."

"It seems I'm quite popular." Mikoto murmured to himself as he moved through the vast hallways of Luminare Academy and past the various glancing and whispering students. It seems merely openly pissing off Professor Gregory was already cause for attention; that attention was further amplified by his very short scuffle with the princess, which seemed quite exaggerated. Then there was the most recent one, his supposed late rendezvous with Lucinda.

Apparently, most did not bother to gain even a modicum of real information. They just heard rumors of Lucinda apparently meeting up with someone, and they went crazy. Apparently it was so unthinkable that their Goddess should be tainted so, but Mikoto did not care. It would all pass eventually. Kids liked gossiping, but eventually they would get bored of the same old subject.

But something else he did take note of was the mention of William. It seems the boy was seen as a failure for whatever reason; he did not know why. He should be a spawn of the Goddess Isadora, which should garner him respect passively. But it was not any of his business; he had detention to attend, though maybe it would not be boring with Lucinda there. Unfortunately, Ruby and William no longer had detention, so he could not hang out with them for a while.

"You there! I demand you stop at once!" He suddenly heard a loud voice directed his way from behind, so stopping, Mikoto turned around to see a seething boy.

"What? You talking to me?" Mikoto questioned.

"Yes, you commoner cur!" The one who directed the insult was a rather tall boy dressed in the standard male uniform. All that stood out about him was that he was tall and moderately handsome, with green eyes and raven hair perfectly styled. "I demand a duel!" He announced, and of course this gained much attention from the student populace, as it did not take much to gain their attention.

"Holy, Isaac is challenging him!"

"This is gonna be good!"

"Maybe Isaac can teach this weirdo a lesson."

"By the God's, I hope so."

It seems mixed in the crowd; many were praying for his downfall, yet Mikoto just shrugged it off.

"So, why do you want to duel?" Mikoto merely questioned the boy, ignoring his earlier insult.

"You have dared to sully Lady Lucinda! I will not let that stand; a cur like you has no right to be in her presence." Isaac declared. "I shall duel with you right here and now to reclaim the chastity that was stolen."

"Uh-huh." It seems Isaac was another victim of the exaggerated rumors surrounding Lucinda and himself. Honestly, he really did not know how those rumors had even spread—was it Professor Gregory by any chance? That man was the only one that knew, and he just might be petty enough to want to make Mikoto's life hell with exaggerated rumors. Well, it did not really matter, but still, this was somewhat troublesome.

"What? Too scared to speak, peasant?" Isaac taunted, but Mikoto merely ignored the boy as he pondered.

("This guy probably won't be the first to challenge me, huh. This is going to turn into a real pain.") He thought of accepting the duel and just brutalizing the boy. He could easily tell a person's magical prowess from observing their mana signature. His was a transparent lime green that engulfed his form; it was neither dense enough nor big enough. He could probably only draw out about 20% of his mana reserves, and his signature was so thin and weak that he could probably only manage Tier 2 spells. Yet

here he was, being so cocky. It could be possible that he was spawn, Familial Arts were powerful but did not take much mana to activate.

His hubris could also stem from him not taking the rumors about him lasting so long against the Princess seriously. Though he supposed that did not matter, as he prepared to accept the duel, he was stopped by a third voice.

"My, my, this simply will not be do." From the students that had gathered around due to the commotion of Isaac, whispering suddenly engulfed the hallways as Mikoto heard footsteps behind him before he noticed someone stop besides. Those ojou ringlest...

"Victoria?" He remembered meeting the girl back at the café in the capital city a while ago. Fiona did not seem to like the girl one bit, but it was kind of hard to forget her due to her elaborate hairstyle.

"Oh, I am so flattered, you remember, dear Mikoto." Victoria glanced his way with a smile adorning her doll-like face.

"Holy shit, this guy knows Lady Victoria too?"

"What sorcery is this!?"

"What a lucky bastard..."

"Just who is this guy?" Various murmurs engulfed the hallways as people commented on the appearance of Victoria. Like most she seemed popular; though a lot of Academy student's were popular so maybe that was not surprising.

("I didn't even know she went to this academy.") Well, most of his time was spent in detention, so he could hardly be blamed.

"L-lady Victoria What are you doing here?" Isaac was bewildered as Victoria merely smirked.

"Well, you're trying to pick a fight with a dear friend of mine." She started, and the murmuring from the surrounding students once again began, but Mikoto just ignored all of the whispering.

("Friend huh? What's she playing at?") He could not help but question

"I-I did not know he was an acquaintance; forgive me, lady Victoria." Isaac seemed strangely pale and fearful, for whatever reason.

"Oh? But now you do." The girl stated it matter-of-factly. "But I'm fearful you will try this again when I turn a blind eye."

"I wouldn't dream of it!" Isaac quickly defended.

"That is great to hear, little Isaac." The girl gave a eerie close-eyed smile. "Now please do get out of my sight." Isaac did not say another word as he all but bolted away, fearful for whatever reason.

"Thanks." Though he really had no need for any kind of help, he should still show his gratitude. Victoria had saved him some trouble with driving Isaac away; a duel would have been a pain, no matter how easy it might have been.

"Oh, think nothing of it, dear Mikoto." She waved it off. "I was merely helping a 'friend' after all, but come walk with me." She gestured for him to follow, so shrugging, he obliged as he walked beside her, ignoring the various murmuring students around her who kept glancing their way.

"So why did you step in?" He could not help but ask.

"I merely wanted to converse, and little Isaac was in the way." She curtly answered.

"Uh-huh, so what could you want from me?" Mikoto questioned.

"Oh, nothing much. I just find you interesting." She admitted it with a smile.

"And why's that?"

"Who knows?" She merely said with a smirk.

"Is it because of the mask?" He asked as he tapped on the eerie, grinning face of said mask.

"Mayhap, it is a magical object, correct?" She deduced, and he merely nodded; it was not as if he needed to hide said fact. Anyone could easily spot out that the mask was a magical object. But her next words did surprise him. "To change one's outer appearance."

"You're able to tell that much with a glance?" He was slightly bewildered.

"A trait of being the spawn of the God Almeric." Almeric, the God of Alchemy and Knowledge, that certainly explained why she seemed to deduce the function of his mask with just a single glance. But still, he really only knew of a few Gods and Goddesses; he might need to brush up on the lore of this world more.

"I see, that sounds like a neat trick." He started with a murmur before he continued. "But why are you talking to me, really? I doubt I'm that interesting."

"You underestimate yourself, Mikoto." The girl merely stated "Most talk around the academy concerns you; talk of how you fought the princess and survived; talk of how you constantly stand up against Professor Gregory. And of course, more recent talks concern you and the ever-radiant Lucinda, the spawn of the great Goddess Octavia. The girl, despite her smiles, is very reclusive, so to meet up with someone here is quite interesting." She informed.

"Rumors all. And they're exaggerated too; I really am not interesting. Just an average boy." He clarified with a shrug. Victoria merely stared at him with an unreadable expression on her face as she hummed.

"Somehow I doubt that." She mumbled