

Bloodline 1681

Chapter 1681: The Deities Will Never Return

Silence fell where a universe once roared.

Not the gentle silence of a peaceful night... but a hollow, cosmic quiet born from extinction itself. The vastness around them was nothing but an endless graveyard.

Shattered worlds drifted as chunks of molten debris... stars collapsed into bleeding singularities and the skeletal remains of nebulae stretched thin like dying smoke.

Space itself was cracked, leaking prismatic fractures like wounds refusing to close.

Into this ruin, a single star materialized into view. The concealed pocket-star sanctuary, summoned by Gustav with nothing more than a weary wave of his hand.

When it fully materialized, its protective shell peeled open, and the refugees stepped out.

They were humanoids, insectoids, crystalline-bodied beings, scaled folk, energy-based species, children clutching parental appendages, elders leaning on friends. Over a hundred were creatures who had survived only because Endric, E.E., and the others risked everything to evacuate them.

The moment they saw Gustav standing there with his body still steaming with leftover energy from the impossible battle, the refugees fell silent.

It was over.

He had done it.

They didn't need words to understand that.

But when they turned and truly saw what remained of the universe... their fleeting relief collapsed into horrified awe.

A red-skinned mother covered her child's eyes.

A serpentine elder hissed quietly: "All... gone... the cosmos is gone..."

A crystalline being's facets dimmed like fading stars.

Others simply sank to their knees, unable to speak.

Around them, reality was a broken mirror.

Massive spatial fissures cut through the galaxy like floating scars. Spirals of debris formed ghostly rings around newborn micro-black holes. Entire planetary systems had been folded into cosmic origami—compressed, shredded, or erased entirely.

There was no night, no day, no horizon. Just ruin.

Yet among the despair, Gustav's friends surrounded him with relieved looks. E.E, Aildris, Falco, Elevora, Sersi, Ria, Xanatus, and Endric formed a quiet circle around him. They were alive only because Gustav had shielded them within a cocoon of Outworldly force.

Gustav himself sat on a large fragment of a shattered moon with elbows on his knees, staring blankly into the cosmic void. His aura had calmed, no longer raging with pinkish-red chaos. But there was something else in his eyes now... something older, deeper, almost unfathomable.

Endric took a step forward.

"Gus..." his voice trembled, not from fear, but from everything he had held inside for what felt like centuries. "Angy... she planned it all. Everything that brought you back."

The others nodded.

"She never gave up," E.E. added softly. "She refused to let you stay dead. Without her... none of us would've made it."

Gustav let out a heavy exhale that echoed faintly through the empty cosmos.

"...I know."

They blinked and Endric looked confused.

Gustav lifted his chin slowly, staring into nothing.

"I know everything that happened while I was gone," he murmured. "Every sacrifice. Every tear. Every battle. Every moment she held onto hope."

His lips curved as a sad smile appeared on his face.

"I saw it all after I returned... like echoes."

He turned toward the refugees. Toward his friends. "I know what everyone lost."

Every being present, both earthling and alien, fell silent.

He continued.

"Families. Homes. Species. Entire histories. Erased."

His fingers curled slightly. "Because the deities chose madness."

No one spoke.

Some refugees lowered their heads, others trembled. A child asked in a tiny voice, "Can we ever go home again...?"

The question stabbed everyone. With everything destroyed, they knew the answer to that but how could they tell the child?

For nearly a minute silence reigned until Gustav rose to his feet.

"Don't worry..." he said softly.

Golden energy flickered around his skin.

"...I was merely resting for a moment."

Everyone stared.

"I shall rebuild everything," he breathed. "And bring it back."

E.E's jaw dropped.

Sersi gasped and cupped her mouth.

Falco stumbled backward.

Aildris whispered, "You... you can do that?"

Elevora's eyes watered.

A few refugees burst into hopeful sobs.

Gustav stepped forward with his eyes glowing brighter.

"The deities will never return..."

His voice echoed like a decree across time.

"But everything else will."

He raised his hand.

The golden glow intensified and then the space above his palm warped.

Reality twisted.

And then... a massive, ethereal hourglass materialized overhead. It was much larger than planets and its frame was made of starlight and divine script.

It's interior was filled with shimmering cosmic sand.

The crowd stared, unable to breathe.

Gustav spoke a single word:

"Return."

The hourglass slowly rotated and flipped, turning upside down.

And the universe went still.

Then everything changed.

A deep tremor rippled through reality and across the ruined darkness as the hourglass released a cascading wave of shimmering golden threads. They flowed outward in all directions like rivers of time itself.

The threads curved, split, wove, and rewrote.

Planets reappeared in bursts of brilliant light... forming, stitching, growing, reshaping.

Destroyed worlds reassembled piece by piece, from core to mantle to surface. Cities reignited. Rivers reflowed. Mountains rebuilt themselves from dust. Forests sprouted in seconds, oceans filled from the void, skies repainted themselves in layers of atmosphere.

On far-off stars, nuclear fusion restarted like reigniting engines.

Entire galaxies rewove themselves like fabric being unspooled and resewn.

One by one, constellations flickered back into existence. Nebulae blossomed like reborn flowers. The cosmic background healed. Spatial cracks fused. The laws of physics restabilized, smoothing out the wrinkles of war.

Life returned too.

Billions of living sparks—souls, memories, genetic blueprints—flowed from the golden threads and shot toward their rightful homes.

Entire species blinked back into existence.

Civilizations reignited mid-motion as though waking from a dream.

Families reunited without ever realizing they had died.

Every being restored.

Every world restored.

Everything...

Except the deities.

Their essence was permanently erased, their existence swallowed by the Outworldly.

But the universe itself... lived again.

As the hourglass completed its restoration cycle, the last grain of cosmic sand fell and it dissolved into a burst of golden vapor.

The wave receded.

Silence returned.

But not the empty silence from before.

This time, it was the silence of a universe breathing again.

Gustav exhaled and let his hand drop.

His knees nearly buckled from the sheer magnitude of what he had done.

Aildris caught his shoulder.

"You alright?"

Chapter 1682: There Is Nothing Left To Restore

Gustav nodded while wiping sweat from his brow.

"It is done."

The refugees turned in every direction, gasping, sobbing and laughing. Stars twinkled brightly above, planets shimmered around them, and the universe stretched vast and whole once more.

E.E. dropped to sit on a newly formed patch of stone.

"You're insane, bro... restoring an entire universe? Who does that!?"

Gustav muttered.

"Someone who destroyed it... I suppose."

Endric stepped forward and grabbed Gustav's arm, gripping tightly.

"Thank you big brother," he whispered.

Gustav nodded and moved away slightly like he was scanning the surroundings for any abnormality.

After a while he stood alone and peered into the distance.

Fresh stars shimmered like newborn diamonds. Galaxies glowed in vivid spirals. Planets spun in harmonious clusters with their atmospheres restored and their oceans shimmering under sunlight.

Civilizations awakened, breathing, speaking and living as though the apocalypse had only been a bad dream.

Laughter echoed across the small reconstructed moon Gustav created for his friends.

E.E was dancing around with his arms spread wide.

Falco was grinning so hard his cheeks twitched.

Sersi cried openly, overwhelmed.

Aldris sat down and inhaled deeply, like he could finally breathe for the first time in months

Elevora hugged a child tightly while Xanatus cracked jokes with two crystalline beings who were still in awe that they were alive again.

The hundreds of refugees were celebrating just as hard.

Some leaped into the air.

Some curled around their families.

Some sang the songs of their species.

Others simply lay flat on the ground, crying with relief that life had been restored.

It was joy.

Raw, pure joy.

The kind of celebration that could only come after total annihilation followed by miraculous salvation.

And in the middle of that joy...

Gustav stood alone.

He was physically among them but emotionally separated. His head was lowered and his eyes half-lidded with a distant, quiet ache.

No one noticed at first.

The music of celebration drowned everything else.

E.E wrapped an arm around Falco and shouted, "BRO, we're going HOME! Like home home! Earth, beaches, food, my bed—OH GOD my bed! I missed my bed so much!"

Falco laughed. "I can't wait to fix my sound system. If it survived."

Aildris smiled faintly. "Finally over..."

But it was Endric who noticed first that his brother's aura was dimmer than it should be.

"Hey..." Endric whispered to the others. "Gus hasn't moved."

They all turned.

Gustav stood at the edge of the moon's reconstructed surface, staring into the restored universe with a look of indifference. There was not a single speck of joy in the depth of his gaze.

E.E blinked.

"Ayo—why he looking like that?"

"He should be ecstatic," Sersi murmured quietly. "He did it... the universe is alive again."

Falco frowned. "Let's go to him."

The group walked over with curious expressions. E.E walked the fastest and, not thinking too deeply, leapt onto Gustav's back.

"BROOOO!" E.E yelled joyously while shaking his shoulders. "I'm sure you can't wait to see Agy!"

He expected Gustav to laugh.

Or smile.

Or roll his eyes.

But Gustav didn't move.

Didn't react.

Not even a twitch.

E.E paused as the others arrived behind him.

"Don't look so down," Sersi said softly.

"It all worked out," Elevora added with a smile. "Everything is back to normal. Angy's probably searching for you right now."

Aildris rested a hand on Gustav's shoulder.

"You can finally stop carrying the universe on those broad shoulders of yours," he said.

Gustav's fingers clenched.

Then he whispered.

"...Angy is not coming back."

The celebration behind them didn't just quiet... it collapsed.

The laughter died.

The refugees fell silent.

Even the stars seemed to dim.

E.E blinked, then laughed nervously.

"Huh? What are you talking about, dude? You already restored everything. I'm sure she's back on Earth waiting for you. Bro, you better wife her up QUICK—I can't wait to be godfather..."

Gustav slowly shook his head.

And repeated with a hollow voice.

"Angy is never coming back."

This time... they felt it.

There was something in his voice....

Something carved in sorrow deeper than they had ever heard.

Falco stepped forward with a confused look. "Gustav... that's not funny."

"Seriously," Sersi added as fear crept into her tone. "Don't joke like that."

Elevora reached for his hand. "We just got you back. Don't scare us."

Gustav finally turned toward them.

And what they saw—

The pain in his eyes

The emptiness

The devastation

The quiet, brittle grief clinging to him like frost—

It froze their hearts.

Aldris staggered back unconsciously.

Endric covered his mouth.

E.E felt his stomach drop so quickly he nearly puked.

Gustav spoke softly, yet every word hit like a meteor.

"She knew the sacrifice she was making... when she brought me back."

The group's breath hitched.

"She knew the price," Gustav continued as his fist trembled. "She and... our unborn child."

Several of them inhaled sharply.

Sersi's knees weakened.

Elevora's hand flew to her mouth.

Even the refugees nearby stopped to take in the words.

Falco whispered, "Un... unborn...? She was truly pregnant..."

"She didn't tell anyone," Gustav said quietly.

Endric lowered his head in guilt.

Gustav turned away again, staring into the beautiful universe he had just restored.

"She is gone forever," he whispered. "I cannot bring her back."

They didn't understand.

Gustav had restored planets.

Restored galaxies.

Restored entire civilizations.

He could bend the laws of existence

Rewrite timelines

Recover the dead

Reverse extinction

Undo universal demise.

So why not Angy?

Falco choked out, "Gus... why? Why can't you bring her back? If you restored everything, then—then she has to be somewhere! Her soul, her consciousness—"

"She doesn't exist anymore," Gustav whispered. "Not her body. Not her essence. Not her soul. Not her spirit. Not even a trace in cosmic memory."

A tear slipped down his cheek...

"My resurrection consumed every part of her. She used her existence to pull me back. There is nothing left to restore."

Chapter 1683: The Fallen Hero

Everyone froze.

Their chests tightened painfully.

Angy.

Their friend.

Their fighter.

Their sister.

Their teammate from MBO days.

The girl who always smiled at Gustav with warmth.

The one who fought harder than anyone for their survival.

The one who believed in Gustav when he doubted himself.

The one who was ready to die for him—

And did.

Elevora fell to her knees.

Sersi sobbed.

Aldris clenched his fist until his knuckles cracked.

Falco's eyes reddened instantly.

E.E stumbled forward.

His voice broke.

"Bro..."

His lip trembled.

"No... no. Please no..."

He grabbed Gustav's arm.

"Say something else. Tell me you're lying. PLEASE tell me you're lying. Angy can't be gone. She CAN'T be! We've fought together for YEARS! We survived everything! She survived everything! She—she—she wouldn't leave like this—"

Gustav gently removed E.E's grip.

"I'm sorry."

The two words shattered them.

There had been losses before.

Terrible ones.

But Angy?

ANGY?

It felt unreal.

Unfair.

Impossible.

Gustav began walking forward across the moon's surface, slowly but trembling with restrained emotion.

The others scrambled after him, desperate to console him, desperate to understand.

But Gustav suddenly turned around.

The air shifted as his eyes glowed.

"I need to be alone right now," he said quietly. "It's time for you all to go."

"Gus—" Endric began.

The moment Gustav snapped his fingers...

Phuum~

E.E reached out—

"BRO WAIT—!"

Falco yelled—

"GUSTA—!"

Aildris shouted—

"DON'T DO THIS—!"

A golden flash of light engulfed them and they all vanished.

They reappeared on Earth, in the middle of a grassy, peaceful field.

Their sanctuary.

Their home.

Falco stumbled to the ground.

Elevora screamed.

Sersi fell to her knees again, sobbing uncontrollably.

Aldris clenched his fists so tight his palms bled.

Endric punched the ground with a snarl.

E.E stood there trembling—then yelled from the deepest part of his soul:

"FUCK!"

His roar echoed across the open field.

Because they all understood.

The universe had been restored.

But one person hadn't.

And the man who saved existence...

Had lost the one person he wanted to save most.

...

...

...

The world had returned to peace.

No...

The universe had returned to peace.

For the first time in a long time, there were no deities looming overhead, no extradimensional threats descending from rifts, no celestial tyrants splitting the sky with malice.

Earth rotated gently beneath a calm sun.

Winds blew without distortion.

Cities rebuilt themselves with the help of interstellar allies.

People laughed without fear.

But even with peace settling like dew upon the world, one name was on every tongue:

Gustav.

The Outworldly.

The Universe's Savior.

And another name followed it like a whisper carried by grief:

Angy Vilandrobadia.

The Silent Savior.

The Fallen Hero.

Across the continents, the truth had spread.

At first it was rumor... just another galactic tale.

But then more and more survivors began to speak.

They described how the deities twisted existence.

How Earth itself was split into three colossal fragments and held hostage in a cosmic prison.

How the people were tortured by beings who considered them beneath notice.

And how in their final moments, when all hope was lost, Gustav returned.

Returned from death.

Returned from beyond existence.

Returned with the fury of a collapsing star and the compassion of one who had loved deeply.

He rewove reality.

He restored galaxies.

He rebuilt life.

And the universe sang his name.

But soon, the fuller picture emerged.

Gustav could not have come back—

Not without her.

Angy.

The girl who had been gentle even in war.

The girl with dual horns of a unicorn.

The girl who loved fiercely, lived selflessly... and died quietly.

The universe discovered that in order to bring Gustav back, Angy had sacrificed everything...

her life...

her soul...

her existence...

and the life of their unborn child...

The realization struck the cosmos with a grief so intense that even distant planets mourned.

If Gustav was the savior, then Angy was the one who saved the savior.

And the one question echoed across every world:

Where was Gustav now?

Where was the man who rebuilt universes?

Where was the warrior, the friend, the protector?

He had not appeared.

Not once.

Not for interviews.

Not for celebration.

Not even for brief thanks.

He had vanished entirely.

People speculated...

"He must be grieving."

"He must be destroyed."

"He must be somewhere the universe cannot see."

And they were right.

But none dared say it too loudly.

Because the truth was tragic.

Because the hero of the universe was a broken man.

And so, the day finally arrived.

The day of Angy Vilandrobadia's funeral.

It was held on Earth—

the planet where she was born,

the planet she went to school on,

the planet where she fell in love with Gustav,

the planet she had fought to protect more times than anyone could count.

The site chosen was atop a grassy valley in Plankton City.

Thousands were in attendance.

Not just humans.

Aliens from the farthest sectors of the galaxy.

Soldiers.

Survivors.

Children who had been saved.

Leaders of worlds restored by Gustav's hand.

Entire starship crews who had flown across lightyears for the sake of a girl they had never met.

Hovering drones captured the moment, broadcasting it galaxywide.

A memorial podium was raised before a gleaming statue carved of pure lumistone... a rare mineral reserved for only the greatest heroes.

It depicted Angy standing tall, her twin unicorn-like horns protruding proudly from the sides of her forehead. She wore a serene and fearless expression.

Her pose was one where she lifted a hand as though shielding someone behind her while

the other was curled into a fist ready to strike.

The sculptor understood her perfectly.

Around the statue, white petals drifted like snow.

Mr. and Mrs. Vilandrobadia were seated at the front row.

They were a little older now with more gray streaks appearing on their hairs... but one thing hadn't changed:

Their love for their daughter.

Mrs. Vilandrobadia clutched a handkerchief so tightly it tore.

Mr. Vilandrobadia kept his elbows on his knees with hands covering his face and shoulders shaking silently.

Chapter 1684: Funeral Procession

Beside them stood Phil who was taller now, but still with the soft eyes of a boy.

He hugged his parents gently, trying to hold himself together.

But when he looked at the statue—

at the horns,

at the gentle smile,

at the stance that always made him laugh as a kid—

his chest crumbled.

He remembered her waking him for school.

He remembered her stealing his snacks because "grown girls need energy."

He remembered her chasing him around the backyard.

He remembered her strict scolding when he skipped class.

He remembered everything.

His breath trembled.

His fists tightened.

And before he realized it...

He was crying too.

But he held no hatred.

No resentment.

Because he knew—

deep in his bones—

that his sister would never want him to blame Gustav.

She died for the man she loved.

She died for a purpose.

She died so the universe could live.

Phil whispered to himself, "I hope you're smiling, sis..."

Then he wiped his tears and stood straighter.

Reporters swarmed after the ceremony.

"Mr. Vilandrobadia, any words?"

"Mrs. Vilandrobadia, how did Angy behave as a child?"

"Phil, what was she like?"

"Do you have a message for Gustav?"

"Do you hold him responsible—?"

Security cut that reporter off immediately.

And beside them, Gustav's friends walked along with Ancy's family.

Endric.

E.E.

Aildris.

Elevora.

Falco.

Ria.

Sersi.

Xanatus.

And dozens of others who had fought alongside her or been a part of their MBO academy days.

They were dressed in black with badges pinned to their chests and expressions carved from pain.

Reporters swarmed them instantly.

"Endric, you are Gustav's brother. How's he handling this?"

Endric's lips pursed. He didn't answer.

"Aildris, any words for the viewers?"

"Elevora, what do you want the world to know about Angy?"

"E.E, do you know where Gustav is?"

"Will he attend the funeral—?"

But they pushed through silently, their emotions far too raw for media.

E.E's eyes were red.

Sersi looked like she had cried until her chest hurt.

Falco kept rubbing his temples, trying to stay strong.

Aldris placed flowers at the base of Angy's statue.

Elevora whispered prayers.

Even stoic Endric wiped his face once when no one was looking.

They all knew it.

They all felt it.

She was gone.

And the one person who should have been here more than anyone...

Was nowhere to be found.

From the beginning of the memorial

To the placement of the last wreath

To the unveiling of her statue

To the intergalactic salutes

To the moment her symbolic coffin was lowered into the ground—

Gustav never appeared.

Not a glimpse.

Not a ripple of energy.

Not even a shadow.

The universe waited.

The world leaders waited.

Her parents waited...

Her friends waited...

But Gustav remained absent.

Those who had never seen him might have called it disrespect.

However, those who knew...

They understood.

The man who saved the universe

had lost his own universe.

How could he stand before the world and pretend he was whole?

When the ceremony ended, the Vilandrobadia family extended an invitation.

A tradition.

A cultural practice.

A final gathering in honor of the departed.

Everyone who had been close to Angy was welcome to eat with the family.

And so they all went—

Endric,

E.E,

Aildris,

Elevora,

Falco,

Ria,

Sersi,

Xanatus and others—

to the Vilandrobadia home.

The house was pleasantly warm, filled with photographs of Angy in childhood and teenage years.

Her bracelets still hung on the wall.

Her medals from high-school track race lined a cabinet.

Her old training shoes were still by the door.

The familiarity hurt.

The scent hurt.

Her favorite dishes were prepared—gentle soups, spiced rice, fruit-stuffed pastries.

Her mother couldn't speak while she cooked.

Her father kept wiping his glasses unnecessarily.

Phil served drinks silently, swallowing the tightness in his throat.

The entire room was heavy.

Falco whispered, "This... feels unreal."

E.E stared down at his untouched plate. "She would've been stuffing her face right now... making fun of me for eating slowly."

Elevora sighed. "She would have burnt the meal if she did the cooking."

Endric leaned back, rubbing his forehead. "Big brother always teased her about that..."

Aildris nodded. "She had a warm heart. Even when things were bad, she always looked for a reason to laugh."

Sersi sniffled. "Especially when Gustav was around..."

That name stiffened the room.

Even Angy's father paused.

Phil swallowed hard.

He whispered, barely audible:

"Does anyone know where he is?"

Silence stretched and then E.E opened his mouth.

But closed it without saying a word.

Endric finally exhaled and said softly:

"No.

We don't know where my brother is.

He vanished immediately after the restoration."

Aldris added, "...He needs time. More than any of us."

Angy's mother covered her face again, trembling.

Her father clenched his jaw.

"I... I hope wherever he is... he knows we don't blame him."

Phil nodded vigorously as his tears returned. "Angy wouldn't want that."

E.E whispered, "He knows... he just can't face any of us right now."

Falco murmured, "Can you blame him?"

No one answered.

The meal continued, but it was not a dinner filled with chatter or laughter.

It was a meal of remembrance.

A meal shared by the ones left behind.

A quiet promise that Angy would never be forgotten.

...

...

((Two Years Later))

A quiet street on Earth basked in the soft amber of the late afternoon sun. Most people were indoors watching post-funeral broadcasts or sharing memories of the woman the entire universe had come to honor. Today was her remembrance since the universe was saved two years back.

Only a few kids played outside, kicking a battered soccer ball, chasing each other, laughing with the innocent joy only children could still muster after the horrors they and their families had survived.

The ball rolled to a stop when a man stepped into the street.

He moved like a silent whisper with a deceptively calm bearing. He wore a long red jacket and its hem fluttered slightly with each step. Underneath was a black inner shirt, a few buttons undone as though he hadn't bothered to fix them.

Chapter 1685 Tombstone

His pants were a simple and unassuming matching black. His hair was long, dirty blond, brushing over his shoulders and swaying as he walked.

But his face...

His face was expressionless and cold...

Yet bearing a depth of emotion so profound, it made the kids freeze as if some part of them recognized him.

One of the boys tugged at his friend's sleeve.

"That man... he looks familiar."

The other nodded slowly, though not fully understanding why.

The man didn't glance their way. He didn't even seem to notice them. His steps carried him directly into the cemetery by the roadside, moving with an inevitability.

He passed rows of graves, passed old stones cracked by time, passed flowers wilted by seasons.

Then he stopped.

Right before the tombstone that bore the name:

ANGY VILANDROBADIA.

The world fell silent around him.

Not even the wind dared to rustle the leaves.

He lowered himself into a slow squat as his knees bent with the weight of grief he carried. For the first time since his arrival, his hand moved... shaking slightly as he reached out and rubbed the surface of the tombstone.

His fingers traced the carved letters with a tenderness no one alive had seen him show. His thumb brushed the corner of the stone again and again, as though trying to feel some lingering warmth she might have left behind.

A red flower materialized between his fingers and he proceeded to place it gently on the ground.

He didn't speak.

He didn't cry.

He didn't breathe a word of goodbye.

But a sorrow so thick and heavy radiated from him that the sky itself dimmed slightly, as though the sun bowed its head for the man who had saved the universe... and lost the only thing he truly wanted in return.

Miles away, inside the MBO Tower, Falco jolted upright as his senses spiked.

His heart throbbed in his ears.

"—no way," he whispered.

Without hesitation, he grabbed his device and called E.E.

E.E picked up instantly, breathless.

"You felt that too?!"

Falco nodded sharply even though E.E couldn't see him fully through the hologram feed.

"It's him," Falco said. "Gustav. He's back on Earth."

E.E didn't even reply, he just hung up to call everyone else.

Within seconds, Endric, Aildris, Elevora, Ria, Sersi, Xanatus, all received the same sudden message through their communicators:

GUSTAV IS HERE.

They all answered with the same stunned silence before their voices overlapped in disbelief and frantic urgency.

"But where?" Ria muttered. "He completely hid for years."

"He doesn't want to be found," Aildris added quietly.

Endric rubbed his temples. "If Gustav returned now—after the funeral—after everything—where's the first place he'd go?"

A sudden, collective silence filled the communication channel.

Then... all at once...

"THE CEMETERY!"

They scattered into the sky in bright blurs of energy, cutting across landscapes as they homed in on one familiar location.

E.E was the first to arrive since he only had to enter a vortex.

He appeared near the kids still playing on the street.

"Hey—did any of you see a tall guy with long blond hair and a red jacket pass here?!"

The kids nodded rapidly.

"He went inside the cemetery!"

"He looked sad!"

"And... familiar!"

"Shit," E.E breathed as his chest tightened.

One after another, the others warped in:

Endric.

Falco.

Aildris.

Elevora.

Ria.

Sersi.

And the rest.

They rushed across the cemetery grounds together, sprinting past graves until they arrived at the place they feared most.

Angy's tombstone.

And standing in front of it... was no one.

Gustav was already gone.

But something remained.

A single rose on the dirt still glowing faintly with the last traces of his energy.

And next to it...

A note folded neatly beneath a small stone.

The wind blew softly, rustling the edges of the paper.

E.E froze.

Endric's face paled.

Falco swallowed hard.

Aldris finally stepped forward and picked up the note with trembling hands.

He opened it.

They all leaned closer.

The world seemed to hold its breath.

The note read:

"Don't look for me.

I am not lost.

I just don't belong here anymore.

Take care of each other.

Live the life we fought to protect.

Angy would want that.

—Gustav"

The moment the final letter sank in, E.E covered his face with both hands.

"Fuck..." he whispered shakily.

Ria turned away with burning eyes. "Rival!"

Falco clenched his fists till his knuckles went white.

Sersi bit her lower lip with tears falling silently.

Aldris's jaw trembled.

Endric shoulders sagged as a shadow of grief crossed his face.

Sersi shook her head repeatedly.

"No... Gustav... you're not alone..."

But he was gone once more.

He had chosen to disappear and no one knew for how long.

He had chosen solitude over returning to the world Angy no longer existed in.

Because for him...

The universe may have been restored.

But his world had not.

The group stood before the tombstone with wind sweeping softly across the cemetery. The rose lay motionless as a symbol of love, grief, and a farewell they were never prepared to face.

E.E finally broke the silence.

"He saved EVERYTHING..." he muttered bitterly. "Every stupid little thing. The universe... the planets... us... all of us..."

He kicked a pebble hard, sending it bouncing away.

"BUT HE COULDN'T SAVE THE ONE PERSON HE WANTED MOST."

Falco placed a hand on his shoulder.

"He isn't abandoning us. He's just... hurting."

"HURTING?!" E.E lashed out before his voice cracked. "He's dying inside."

Endric closed his eyes.

"He'll come back one day," he said quietly. "But not now. Maybe not for years. Maybe not for centuries. But he will."

Aildris let out a slow breath.

"Until then... we protect what he restored."

Everyone nodded even though their hearts were heavy.

Slowly, one by one, they turned away from the grave.

But Endric lingered a moment longer, gazing down at the rose.

"...Thank you, Angy," he whispered. "For giving us back our brother."

He reached out and gently straightened the flower on the ground before finally walking away.

The cemetery grew silent again.

The sky dimmed a little.

And somewhere far—so far that even their combined senses couldn't hope to reach—Gustav walked alone, carrying his grief like an endless shadow...

And beginning a new path no one could follow.

Chapter 1686 A Time Of True Peace

Time moved in gentle waves across Earth—slow and healing, just as everyone had hoped. With the deities gone, with the universe restored, and with countless worlds finally freed from fear of extinction, peace became the new rhythm of existence.

Though scars of the calamity remained, carved into history and etched into memory, they no longer bled. Instead, they served as reminders of a dark age conquered through sacrifice.

And at the center of every story...

Every documentary...

Every piece of art...

Every intergalactic historical record...

One name shone brighter than all others:

Gustav Crimson.

The Outworldly.

The Eternal Protector.

The God Who Saved The Universe.

Yet no statue, no tale, no monument could ever fully capture him.

People spoke of Gustav with reverence and awe, from humans to alien civilizations to species once believed extinct. His feats transcended mortal heroism; they were mythic, divine.

But even as his name echoed through generations, even as new mixedblood children grew up reciting poems about him, one truth never went away:

The hero who saved the universe could not save his own.

Years passed. Earth flourished more than ever.

New mixedblood generations emerged stronger, smarter, and more diverse. Many inherited latent abilities influenced by the cosmic energies that had once ravaged the world. MBO academies expanded. Intergalactic alliances grew. Earth became a beacon of strength and innovation.

In the advanced cities, children practiced their abilities in training arenas without fear. In rural towns, peace became so ordinary that some could hardly imagine what the previous era had been like.

Earth was evolving even better than before.

Reaching a new golden age.

And all of it was made possible because of one man who wasn't here to see it.

It was whispered in every corner of society:

"Gustav is alive."

"He's watching."

"He'll protect us again if anything happens."

"He is out there... somewhere."

Some believed he had chosen to sit at the very edge of the universe, staring into the starless void where his own universe once existed... basking in sorrow, lingering in memory, guarding the emptiness as though waiting for something impossible to return.

Others believed he wandered countless galaxies, watching civilizations from afar, stepping silently through planets like a ghost, never interfering, only observing.

Some said he created a pocket dimension of his own... an eternal realm of stillness and silence where time could no longer wound him.

But no one truly knew.

Not even Endric, his little brother...

Not even E.E, who shared bonds of friendship most people never dreamed of.

Not even Falco, who could sense fluctuations across universes.

Yet despite their uncertainty, they all believed one thing without hesitation:

Gustav was watching over them.

He would never let the universe fall again.

He was still the protector of all things.

...

...

The city never slept.

Neon arteries ran through the skyline and skyscrapers stretched into the clouds with layered traffic lanes weaving between them like luminous veins. Hovercars zipped past each other at impossible speeds, guided by invisible lanes and anti-collision fields.

Except for one.

This one wasn't obeying anything.

A matte-black hovercar tore through the air like a wounded animal with its engines screaming as it darted between buildings, narrowly avoiding automated freight drones and civilian traffic. Behind it, six MBO pursuit vehicles gave chase with blue sigils blazing beneath their chassis.

What made the fleeing vehicle stand out wasn't just its reckless speed.

It was the cube.

A massive, blueish cube nearly three meters wide was being dragged behind the hovercar by glowing chains of condensed energy. The cube throbbed faintly with glowing symbols flickering across its surface as if reacting to the chaos around it.

Inside the fleeing vehicle, three figures laughed.

"Faster, faster!" one of them barked before slamming a clawed hand onto the console.

Another with veins glowing faintly due to bloodline energy, grinned wildly.

"They're panicking. You see that? That cube's worth more than this whole city."

Behind them, an MBO officer shouted through open comms.

"Unidentified vehicle, disengage immediately! You are transporting classified property of the Rion Corporation!"

The response came in the form of fire.

A burst of crimson plasma shot backward from the fleeing hovercar, twisting midair as bloodline manipulation bent its trajectory. One of the MBO vehicles swerved hard as shields were generated.

"Hostile confirmed!" an officer yelled.

"Engaging bloodline suppression protocols!"

From the MBO vehicles, retaliatory attacks shot forth... telekinetic nets, lightning constructs, gravitic pulses.

The sky lit up like a warzone.

One of the criminals slammed his palm forward as his eyes emitted a silver glow.

A portal tore open ahead of them.

The hovercar plunged through.

The city warped.

They burst out thirteen kilometers away, ripping through an industrial district before the MBO vehicles could reorient.

"HAHA!" the driver howled.

"Did you see their faces?!"

Another portal snapped open.

Then another.

Each jump was more reckless and unstable, tearing holes through regulated space lanes.

Finally, there was silence.

No pursuit.

The city fell away behind them.

The criminals leaned back, breathless and laughing.

"Told you," one said smugly.

"MBO's overhyped."

They aligned the vehicle toward the final portal. This one was tuned to take them beyond city limits, beyond jurisdiction.

The hovercar entered but stopped halfway.

The portal distorted violently with sparks erupting as if space itself had hit a wall.

"What the—?"

They realized that an invisible force was holding them back and before they could react, the vehicle was yanked.

The hovercar was ripped backward out of the portal like a fish caught on a line, spinning uncontrollably before freezing in midair.

The cube behind it rattled violently as the chains clanked.

Then the criminals suddenly felt a strange pressure.

Their limbs locked and their bloodline energy stalled.

The sky above them darkened slightly with a powerful presence.

A figure descended slowly as if gravity itself had decided to cooperate.

He wore a long, dark and flowing coat with its edges rippling.

He had black, curly hair with a calm and composed handsome face. He seemed utterly unbothered by the chaos around him.

His right hand was outstretched.

The criminals screamed and attacked sending bolts of energy, blades of hardened bloodline constructs and shockwaves forward...

However, all the attacks froze in mid air, hanging inches from the man's face as if stopped by a divine force.

Chapter 1687 The Wedding

All the attacks froze in mid air, hanging inches from the man's face as if stopped by a divine force.

The criminals' eyes widened in pure terror.

One of them whispered, with a trembling tone.

"Is that...

Is that Alpha-ranked... Endric Oslov?"

Endric's dispassionate gaze flicked toward them.

The attacks disintegrated into harmless particles with a casual flex of his fingers.

He clenched his fist once and the hovercar collapsed.

It folded in on itself with impossible tightness, compressing layer by layer until the entire vehicle—engine, chassis, weapons and all—became a fist-sized lump of alloy that clinked softly as it dropped into Endric's palm.

The cube fell next, caught gently by telekinesis.

The criminals were ripped from the air, flung backward like ragdolls, then abruptly halted, suspended helplessly with arms and legs dangling.

They flinched as Endric drifted closer.

"You stole private property," he said calmly.

"Attacked officers. Endangered civilians."

His eyes narrowed slightly.

"And used unstable portals in regulated airspace."

None of them could speak.

Far behind, the MBO pursuit vehicles finally caught up.

They slowed and then stopped entirely.

When the officers saw who was floating in the air, their reactions were immediate.

Straightened backs.

Lowered weapons.

Hands pressed to chests.

"Sir—we didn't know you were in the city."

Endric didn't look at them yet.

He flicked his wrist.

The three criminals were shoved forward, landing roughly at the officers' feet.

"Secure them," Endric said.

"And return the cube to containment."

"Yes, sir!" multiple voices answered in unison.

Only then did Endric turn toward the officers and nodded.

Before he could say another word—

Beep.

His communicator lit up.

A hologram sprang to life beside him.

It was Ria.

He folded his arms with his eyebrow raised.

"Bro," he said flatly.

"Did you forget what day it is?"

Endric sighed while rubbing the bridge of his nose.

"You're not about to miss the wedding, are you?"

He glanced down at the city beneath him, then back at Ria.

"...I'm already there."

Ria squinted.

"...Endric."

He smiled faintly.

He pushed the last criminal fully into the officers' grasp, then turned back toward them.

"Good work," he praised.

And in the next moment, he blinked.

Endric vanished and reappeared before a grand cathedral bathed in soft golden light.

Rows of lined up guests turned at once.

"You almost missed it. You're now more of a workaholic than your brother," Aildris voiced from up ahead, waiting for Endric at the entrance.

"Well, perhaps the apple doesn't fall far from the tree," Endric responded with a light smile as he stepped forward.

The warm sunlight fell across the floating cathedral built for the occasion E.E and Elevora's wedding. The structure hovered above a sea of clouds, held in place by quantum stabilizers and anti-grav fields arranged into elegant, swirling arcs.

Thousands of guests attended—from world leaders to MBO commanders to alien representatives who had traveled across galaxies just to witness the union of two heroes who had stood side-by-side with the universe's greatest savior.

The atmosphere was warm, lively, and overflowing with joy.

E.E wore an immaculate white flowing suit with subtle luminescent designs that shimmered like hyperspace energy. Elevora wore a radiant gown woven from a rare, reflective fabric that responded to her aura. When she moved, streaks of gold and purple followed like comet trails.

Endric, Aildris, Sersi, Ria, Falco, Teemee, Glade, Vera, and many others filled the grand space, laughing and teasing E.E, hugging Elevora, recalling their old missions as if they had happened yesterday.

And yet...

There was a small, quiet ache lingering beneath many smiles.

Not a single one of them could speak it aloud, but they felt it.

Gustav should have been here.

He should have been standing beside E.E as his best man.

He should have been teasing him before the ceremony.

He should have been among them, grinning faintly, leaning against a pillar with that bored, half-amused expression he wore whenever people got emotional.

But Gustav hadn't made an appearance in years.

It wasn't a surprise.

It wasn't even a disappointment because no one blamed him.

In fact... they expected it.

For unlike the outer shell of indifference he often showed, everyone who truly knew him understood the truth:

Gustav felt emotions deeper than anyone.

He simply carried them alone.

Always alone.

And the wound of losing Angy and his unborn child... was not one time could heal.

Not when he remembered every detail perfectly.

Not when he could never age.

Not when he lived forever.

...

When E.E and Elevora exchanged vows, the cathedral erupted in cheers. Fireworks lit up the sky. Lights spiraled in artistic displays. Even the clouds below glowed with color as energy particles cascaded from the floating structure.

After the ceremony, they all descended onto the reception platform—a sprawling garden of bioluminescent plants with floating lanterns drifting above.

Aldris hugged E.E so tightly that his feet nearly left the ground.

Endric smirked and handed him a teleportation key as a wedding gift.

Ria teased him relentlessly about becoming a "husband man."

Falco shed a tear, much to his own embarrassment.

Elevora mingled with her siblings and the other bridesmaids, radiant with joy.

And amid all the laughter, all the celebration, all the dancing...

There was a moment when E.E drifted away from the crowd, walking toward the edge of the platform where the wind blew gently across his face.

He looked up.

Not at the clouds.

Not at the fireworks.

But at the sky...

A faint sadness flickered behind his eyes.

"...I just hope you're okay," he whispered.

It wasn't a plea.

It wasn't anger.

It wasn't even expectation.

It was simply the voice of a man speaking to his missing brother.

...

...

MEANWHILE, IN A PLACE NO ONE COULD NAME

Across galaxies, beyond the boundaries of charted space, far from the reach of conventional teleportation or cosmic scans, there existed a desolate planet.

Its surface was barren and it was an endless expanse of black rock.

Its atmosphere was thin and cold, illuminated only by distant starlight.

No vegetation.

No water.

No life.

Nothing.

Nothing but him.

At the very top of a spiky cliff stood a solitary figure.

A long red jacket rested over his broad shoulders.

His boots were dusty from walking miles across a dead world.

His dirty blond hair flowed with the cold cosmic wind.

Gustav sat on the edge of the cliff with one knee up and his arms resting casually.

His left eye glowed faintly and through it, he watched the wedding.

He saw E.E smiling.

He saw Elevora laugh.

He saw his friends celebrating.

He saw Earth glowing with happiness.

He saw the world he saved moving forward.

And as he watched...

Gustav's lips curved upward in the smallest, gentlest smile.

"Yeah... I'm fine, E.E."

His voice was a whisper lost to the void.

He leaned back slightly, letting the cosmic winds brush his hair.

"Happy married life, brother."

He closed his eyes.

The smile remained but it was quiet and fleeting, yet genuine.

A moment of peace amid an eternity of sorrow.

For even if he walked alone...

Even if the universe could never fill the hole left in him...

Even if no one could reach him...

He still watched over them.

He always would.

He was their unseen guardian, their silent god, their eternal protector.

And somewhere, in the depths of his endless life...

He hoped that one day—far beyond the grasp of time—

he might finally learn how to heal.

Chapter 1688 Should You Even Be Here?

This planet had no name.

Gustav never bothered to give it one. It was a silent sphere of silver-blue and black soil and still, empty plains that stretched farther than any human eye could see.

Above it was a sky that never change. It was a starless dusk of neither day nor night, hung like an eternal curtain. Nothing lived here. Nothing grew here.

It was the only place in the universe stable enough to survive his uncontrolled presence because he created it for that very purpose.

The ground did not crack beneath his feet. The air did not tear apart under his pressure. No gravitational storms waged when he breathed.

Earth would never be able to withstand even ten minutes of him being there anymore unless he found a way to reduce his strength.

And so he stayed here.

For centuries.

Alone.

A man in a red long coat sat on a piece of pale rock shaped like a bench with elbows resting against his knees and head lowered. His dirty-blond hair, longer than it once was, fell like a shadowed curtain against his cold expression. His face was expressionless—always expressionless—but his eyes...

His eyes carried storms galaxies could not hold.

In his right hand, a holographic screen shimmered, replaying the same old footage over and over. A woman. A smile that he remembered more vividly than light itself. Hands stroking her round belly while she spoke to him from a time that no longer existed.

Angy.

His Angy.

His child.

Gone.

He had lost worlds, been betrayed by fate itself... died more times than mortals could comprehend.

But none of those pains compared to the scar carved the day he lost them.

The footage looped again with Angy rubbing her belly, telling the unborn child about their father. Gustav's chest tightened like someone was twisting it. He had no heartbeat anymore, but the phantom ache was endless.

He didn't speak.

Words had stopped belonging to him years ago.

This was his eternity... watching a recording of a life he could never return to.

For someone who saved the universe, he was cursed as a living deity, immortality had become nothing but a prison of memory.

A tear slid down his cheek. It didn't fall as water... it evaporated into glowing dust, a power so dense the ground itself trembled.

Even his grief could destroy planets.

He sniffed and wiped the corner of his eye.

More dust.

Then the air transformed.

A circular ripple of lavender gold energy appeared behind him without warning.

It was a portal.

And from it came the only person he allowed to bypass his awareness.

He didn't look up.

A pair of boots clicked gently against the ground.

"Well," a familiar female voice sighed, "you still look like a brooding statue."

Gustav lifted his gaze faintly.

Miss Aimee stepped out of the portal, wearing dark-crimson robes and her hair tied up in an elegant, no-nonsense bun. She still carried herself with that impossible combination of beauty, arrogance, and calm lethal energy that once made her the most powerful woman on Earth.

Her presence alone would make worlds tremble, but compared to him... she felt almost human.

"You're here again," Gustav murmured softly as his eyes returned to the hologram. "Shouldn't you be running your planet?"

Miss Aimee rolled her eyes and walked over, lowering herself to sit beside him on the rock.

"My planet will survive without me for a few days. They know how to respect their goddess. Besides—" She nudged his shoulder lightly. "—I can't bear to leave my favorite student sitting on a dead rock forever."

Gustav didn't react at first. Then he exhaled quietly.

"I'm fine."

"You're a terrible liar," she answered immediately. "You've always been terrible at lying to me."

He remained silent.

Miss Aimee leaned forward slightly, watching the hologram play again... Angy laughing softly, rubbing her belly, speaking gently to the unborn child.

Miss Aimee's expression softened, losing its usual sharpness.

"You've been watching this every day for over three centuries, Gustav."

"It's the last thing she left for me," Gustav whispered. "The last moment I can still... feel them."

Miss Aimee looked at him with deep, aching sympathy.

There were few beings in existence who could understand loss on this scale. Gustav had brought her back from death long ago... he could bend the laws of time, space, and existence... but he could not bring back Angy or the child. The conditions were impossible. The circumstances irreversible. Even for him.

"How long do you plan to keep punishing yourself like this?" Miss Aimee asked gently.

"I'm not punishing myself. I'm remembering."

"Same thing," she muttered.

She waited a moment.

Then she breathed out slowly as her voice lowered.

"Do you really intend to never show your face to your friends again?"

Gustav let the hologram fade.

"They're happier without me. Besides, if I stay on Earth too long..."

"It's risky. Yes, I know." Miss Aimee crossed her arms. "But your friends? They're mixedbloods. They don't age like normal humans. And they aren't afraid of you, Gustav. They miss you."

He stared at the ground.

"Maybe one day."

Miss Aimee frowned.

"One day? Do you think they'll live forever? Not everyone is immortal like you or I. They will die someday—and you'll regret not going to see them before that happens."

"They still have centuries ahead," Gustav replied. "I can wait."

"And what if waiting becomes another century? And another after that? And another?" she pressed. "You are hiding, Gustav. From your grief. From yourself. From everything."

Heavy and unmoving silence fell again.

Miss Aimee studied his empty eyes and broken strength in every breath in took, for a long moment.

Finally, she softened.

"Fine. I'll stop pushing you." She sighed. "But don't tell me you're okay. Don't lie to me."

He didn't respond.

After a moment, Gustav's voice came out quieter.

"Should you even be here...? You really do have responsibilities."

Miss Aimee snorted.

"They can wait. I only have one Gustav." She reached over, placed a hand on the back of his head, and pulled it toward her shoulder abruptly. "How could I bear to leave you alone like this?"

Gustav froze slightly.

She was still as rough as ever. The gesture reminded him painfully of the early days... when he was still weak, still learning under her merciless training.

He let his head rest against her.

For a long moment, they both simply breathed.

The silence wasn't empty this time.

It was warm and comforting.

Old memories drifted between them—training sessions, scoldings, her lectures, his defiance, her grudging pride. She had watched him become a monster, a savior, a god. She had died for him. He had resurrected her. Their connection was beyond normal definitions.

"I miss her," Gustav whispered.

Miss Aimee's expression wavered.

"I know," she said softly. "And you always will. Losing someone like that... it never truly heals."

She touched his hair gently. "...but wounds don't have to stay open forever."

Gustav stayed silent for a long time.

Then he lifted his head, looking at her directly.

"Thank you," he murmured.

She smiled faintly.

They spoke for long hours after that... about Angy, about what she would've wanted, about how fiercely she had loved him, about the child who never had a chance.

They revisited old memories.

Painful ones.

Warm ones.

Miss Aimee had always been harsh, strict and sarcastic but in this moment, she was gentle in a way only she could be.

And Gustav...

for the first time in centuries...

allowed himself to feel the weight of everything he had locked away.

Eventually, the conversation grew softer. Their words slowed. Their eyes held each other longer than before.

Then Miss Aimee inhaled deeply, and her voice came out quieter.

"Gustav... close your eyes."

He blinked.

She moved closer.

"I want to make you feel better," she whispered.

Before he could reply, she gently pushed him backward.

The red coat spread beneath him as he lay back on the pale rock surface.

Miss Aimee straddled him with her knees on either side of his waist and her eyes locked on his with an expression he had never seen from her before.

There was no mockery.

No taunting.

No smugness.

Only raw, aching affection.

Pain.

Tenderness.

Longing.

A centuries-old bond twisted by grief.

Gustav's breath hitched faintly. He knew instantly... this wasn't one of her usual teases.

She reached down slowly, cupping his face in both hands. Her thumbs brushed against his cheeks. Her forehead lowered until it touched his.

"Don't run from this," she whispered.

He didn't...

A moment passed and their lips met.

A warmth spread through the cold cavern of his chest...

Her robe loosened around her as she leaned over him. Her breath mingled with his as her hands trembled slightly despite her usual composure.

The dim lavender sky above them seemed to flicker as low moans and grunts soon rang out in low waves across the surroundings.

● ● ●

Meanwhile...

In far reaches of space... in another universe...

An infant floated with dark scalding marks across its skin. Its eyes were fully closed but it seemed to be breathing which should be impossible in the depths of space.

It floated for ages...

And ages...

And ages...

Remaining the same way as if time had refused to flow for it.

And then suddenly, a strange humanoid entity with a long white beard and a staff approached it with a look of utter disbelief and confusion.

'A baby? How?' His thoughts whirled.

He proceeded to grab the infant and after a long pause, flew off into the distance.

THE END.