

Card Apprentice Daily Log

#Chapter 2631: Card Name: Predatory Upgrade - Read

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Date: Unspecified

Time: Unspecified

Location: Myriad Realms, Card World, Southern Region, Southern Capital, Guild Association Mall, Warehouse No. 234, Limitless Celestial Domain, Gainover Manor, Unparalleled Arena

[**Card Name:** Predatory Upgrade

Card Type: Origin Card, Unique Grade

Card Rate: -/-

Card Durability: -/-

Card Effect: Upon the successful upgrade of cards, runes, physique, traits, the grimoire, etc., the Card Apprentice extracts the maximum possible attributes from the materials used, based on how compatible or complementary those materials are with the original foundation.

Additional Effects: Lucky Upgrade, Random Upgrade

i. Lucky Upgrade: Passively increases the success rate of an upgrade based on the realm of the Card Apprentice and the rank of the original and materials used.

ii. Random Upgrade: The Card Apprentice can use this effect to forcefully upgrade cards, runes, physique, traits, or the grimoire using less compatible or complementary materials. This increases the chances of triggering a random upgrade; however, if the upgrade fails, both the original and all materials used are permanently lost.

Note:

i. Use materials lower than the card apprentice's realm to get a higher success rate boost when using Lucky upgrade.

ii. The resulting upgrade from Random Upgrade is very random. Use at your own risk.]

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"What child support? I don't have a father," Anna yelled furiously, rushing at me and grabbing my collar.

I ignored her rage and wrapped my arms around her waist, pulling her into my embrace, she didn't struggle. With a sheepish smile, I gazed into her rage-filled eyes. Deep within them, I found the Anna I had been missing.

"You think this is funny?" Anna raged, her grip on my collar tightening as she tried to lift me. Unfortunately for her, even with her newfound prowess, she was just as helpless in my Celestial Blood Fate Domain as everyone else.

"No, I don't think it's funny I did what I believed was in your best interest. But if you don't want the 'Predatory Upgrade,' you can always give it to your sisters. I'm sure Anne would appreciate it," I suggested, attempting to calm her anger.

Anna and her two extreme incarnations each possessed their own grimoire, connected through their first origin card, Ideal/Dumb/Crazy Daughter. Since they were fundamentally the same, they could exchange their second origin card with one another. It wouldn't be incorrect to say that Anna had four origin card slots, though she could only use two at a time, with one permanently locked to Ideal/Dumb/Crazy Daughter origin card.

"How do you know Anne would like it? You haven't even properly met her," Anna said, jealousy flaring in her eyes the moment I mentioned Anne. Only my Anna would be petty enough to get jealous of her own extreme incarnations.

Hearing her, my lips stretched into a wide grin, and I could not help but say, "I missed you. Welcome back."

Anna froze at the sudden remark, and I seized the opportunity to lean in and gently kiss her lips, sternly warning her, "You had me worried. Next time you practice the extreme path, don't bottom out all your feelings just to create an extreme incarnation. Leave some so you are and not someone totally new."

"You were worried about me? That's hard to believe when you risked your life just to rendezvous with your little mistress in the central region," Anna retorted. She loosened her grip on my collar, then ran her hands over my toned chest, her movements growing bold enough that I even felt a bit of cupping.

I immediately became conscious of my body and released her, retreating a few steps back. She was being far too proactive. She made Jill look like a rookie.

"What happened? Did I make you uncomfortable?" Anna asked playfully with a sly grin on her face as she took a step toward me.

"No. There are too many eyes watching," I replied immediately fearing she would do something bold without my consent again.

The sudden destruction of the warehouse and the appearance of a luxurious manor had immediately drawn the attention of the demigods stationed in the city by me and the Southern Royal family.

By my demigods, I meant those from the Freedom Fighters, as well as the western princess, her companions, her guards, and the like. These assholes had yet to fully retract their intent-sense, even after confirming that everything was fine. They couldn't be more rude.

"Too many eyes?" Anna frowned, continuing to approach me step by step. "You had no problem kissing your mistress on a live stream."

"About that, I didn't know I was on a live stream until it was too late," I tried to explain, but Anna was not having it. She was just as forceful as I remembered. I wanted to ask her to stop calling Jill my mistress but I knew better than to defend my other girlfriend to my girlfriend.

Now that I was experiencing it again, I could not help but wonder what had been going through my mind to miss being sexually harassed. I had never been a big fan of public intimacy, while Anna was the complete opposite. To be precise, she simply did not care about these details.

"You are not leaving until you kiss me longer than you did her right now and right here," Anna declared as she threw herself at me. Her hands wrapped around my neck, her entire body pressing against mine as she hung onto me.

"You know I'm stronger than you now, right?" I reminded her, making it clear she could not force herself on me the way she used to. I could leave whenever I wanted.

"I doubt that. But you can walk away if you want. I won't stop you," she replied almost nonchalantly, then added, "But you know this, right? I know you're conscious of your feelings for me now."

I shook my head as Anna might as well have said, *'Your threats won't work on me anymore, because I know you love me. So shut up and kiss me before I get mad.'*

Chapter 2632: Who Kisses Better, Me or Her?

Date: Unspecified

Time: Unspecified

Location: Myriad Realms, Card World, Southern Region, Southern Capital, Guild Association Mall, Warehouse No. 234, Limitless Celestial Domain, Gainover Manor, Unparalleled Arena

Understanding her unspoken threat, I let out a sigh and nodded. She had me beat. But just as I was about to lean in, she frowned and commanded, "Remove your domain."

"Anna, now you're being too much," I protested, knowing that she had ordered the demigods of the Southern Royal family to live-stream me kissing her across all five regions.

The moment I realized that, I abandoned all ceremonies and closed my celestial blood fate domain, making it difficult for the outside world to peer in on us. I had forgotten to close it after opening it in the unparalleled arena so Anna's ancestor could see exactly how I intended to help her, clearing their misunderstanding.

"Wyatt, stop complaining and just do what I asked," Anna demanded sternly. She was not about to take no for an answer. Just the thought that the entire five regions believed her groom was dating Jill Norley infuriated her. She wanted to rectify that, to tell the world that Jill was nothing more than a slut who had seduced her groom while she was in seclusion.

Seeing me still hesitate, Anna complained exaggeratedly, "Wyatt, for once, could you just go along with what I'm asking?"

"Fuck it." I retrieved my celestial blood fate domain, then grabbed Anna by the head and fiercely kissed her. After a few minutes, our lips parted, a thin string of saliva bridging the distance between us.

Flushed, Anna looked up at me and asked, "So, who's the better kisser? Me or her?"

"Come on, Anna. I've accepted far more from you," I said, shaking my head and feigning disappointment.

Anna's eyes widened in disbelief as she blurted out, "You're sure? There's no way that little square or that money grubber is a better kisser than me. Come on, let's kiss again."

"No, I wasn't talking about the kiss," I said, pushing Anna's face aside. She clearly did not like that and immediately protested. At that moment, I began to recall all the annoying things about Anna that I had conveniently forgotten.

"Then what are you talking about?" Anna asked, sounding slightly relieved and no longer daring to make the mistake of asking that question again. She was content not knowing who the best kisser was in my experience.

In her mind, I had only ever been romantically involved with those people. I, however, did not believe my body count had been reset after my transmigration.

"Why do you feel the need to compete and compare with them?" I asked. "I chose the three of you because you are different. If you were the same, or if I felt one of you was better than the others, or that I loved one more, wouldn't I have simply chosen the best one, or the one I loved most, instead of choosing all three at the risk of losing all three?"

I explained this to Anna, hoping she would stop competing with the other two, while also not going so far as to demand that she get along with them. "Anna, nothing you say will change my mind. And now that I have you, none of you can ever escape my grasp."

"You know possessiveness isn't a good look on men," Anna said, rising onto her tiptoes to kiss my forehead. "But for some reason, I like it on you."

It was hard for me to tell what she was thinking at that moment. Then she continued, her tone sharpening, "But you have another thing coming if you think I'm fine with sharing you with those two."

"What—?" I blurted, only to be cut off as Anna spoke rapidly, "Wyatt, you want to be with other women, is that it? I'll find you the most beautiful women in all five regions as your concubines, but not those two."

Now that I had openly confessed my feelings for her and accepted hers for me, Anna no longer hesitated to speak her mind. Then again, she had never been shy about pressing her opinions.

"Wyatt, promise me you won't see those two anymore," Anna pleaded, her eyes growing teary as she rubbed her chest against mine.

Anna was willing to accept me seeing other women because she knew I was not that kind of man. Even if I were, she believed she would only be sharing my body, while my heart would still belong to her.

But when it came to Susan and Jill, it was different. With them, she would not only be sharing my body, but my heart as well. That prospect frightened her deeply with the fear that one day she might lose me to the other two gnawing at her. That was why she pleaded so desperately for me to stop seeing Susan and Jill, even going so far as to offer to help me choose beautiful concubines herself.

Amid her pleading, however, Anna's grimoire received a message from the very last person she wanted to hear from, her mother. The message read:

[Stop making a fool of yourself and come home.]

The words were short and blunt. Anna did not know what to make of them and briefly wondered if her mother was provoking her. But then Ann mentally spoke to her through their shared origin card:

[Anna, you will never get him to commit to just us. Come home. Our mother will help us.]

If this had been before she fought Gainover, Anna would have ignored both of them. But now that she understood how her origin card truly functioned, she decided to trust her mother one last time. While she was at it, she intended to teach Ann a lesson as well. There was no us. Of the three sisters, only she had a groom.

Having reached that conclusion, Anna stopped pleading with her heartless and faithless groom, who couldn't be more determined to cheat on her with Jill and Susan. Instead, she pulled him into a lingering kiss, lingering for a while before activating her teleportation card.

In a flash, she vanished, returning to the Southern Royal Palace in the Southern Capital.

Chapter 2633: News From Muth Diya

Date: Unspecified

Time: Unspecified

Location: Myriad Realms, Card World, Southern Region, Southern Capital, Guild Association Mall, Warehouse No. 234, Limitless Celestial Domain, Gainover Manor

"What the?" I blurted as Anna suddenly teleported mid-kiss. I was surprised, because I had been worried she might want to spend the entire day and night expressing our love for each other now that our relationship was public, and I had been wondering how to talk her out of it. It seemed, however, that I had been worrying over nothing.

Just as I was preparing to clean up the scene before leaving, a giant snake's head burst through the manor's roof, heading straight for me before coming to an abrupt halt a few feet away. It intimidatingly opened its mouth and hissed loudly. It was Lil' Baem, and standing atop its head was a visibly furious Corey.

"I thought we had taken care of your mood swings," I said, meeting Corey's rage-filled gaze.

"What did I tell you, Wyatt?" Corey shouted, leaping down from Lil' Baem's head and landing in front of me.

"You'll have to be a bit clearer, honey," I replied. "You've told me many things." I squinted slightly, now fully aware that Corey was genuinely mad with me.

"I asked you to pick one and stick with it. But what did you do? You went and found another one. To make matters worse, she even dared to go to big sis Susan and ask to become sisters. What the heck were you thinking? Just leave big sis Susan alone already," Corey yelled, making it clear what had gotten her so worked up.

I wasn't surprised by her reaction. When I decided to choose all three Susan, Anna, and Jill, I knew my biggest obstacle would be Corey, even more so than the three involved. When it came to Susan, this girl had absolutely no boundaries and was also a total psycho. Because of that, I had prepared a contingency. Only Jill and Anna could wait, as their enthusiasm had ruined the timing.

"How's Jill? You didn't hurt her, right?" I asked, knowing that with Corey's temper, it would not have been surprising if she had fed Jill to Lil' Baem.

"I was planning to, but big sis Susan stopped me," Corey replied indignantly. She was clearly annoyed that she hadn't gotten the chance to teach Jill a lesson.

I knew this was bound to happen. Back on the terrace, when Jill said she would handle Susan for me, she had assumed Susan would be easy to control, believing she had no strength or background to rely on. Unfortunately for her, she was dead wrong.

Susan had a reincarnator backing her. Corey had only inherited the memories and fortune of her past two lifetimes out of roughly nine so far, and she was already a peak existence in the card world thanks to her pet. Not to mention, Susan was a demon merchant. If you asked me, Susan had the strongest background among the three.

Jill had seriously miscalculated this time. Even knowing that, I let it happen as I wanted to use Jill to provoke Susan, 'Miss I Need Some Space,' and to teach Jill to leave her calculating mind behind when it came to the four of us. She was treating this like a royal harem and had begun a power struggle. One thing I had always liked about Jill was the absence of drama around her, but it turned out I was wrong. Now that she could control her physique, she was no different from the other two.

"So, where is she now?" I asked, knowing that Jill wouldn't let it rest. I planned to stop her before she escalated things.

"She's with big sis Susan. Weirdly enough, they bonded over you. And how come you only keep asking about Jill and not big sis Susan? I thought you loved her too," Corey asked with a frown.

Hearing that, I couldn't help but chuckle as I replied, "I thought you wanted me to leave your 'big sis' alone."

"I would love that, but I know you won't. I just wanted to point out how fake your love for big sis Susan is," Corey retorted, masking the fact that she was worried about Susan. She could no longer deny that Susan loved their narcissistic boss and was struggling with it. What annoyed her even more was that their boss was not making it any easier for her with his parade of sluts.

"Anyway, I was planning to find you. The time for us to begin establishing ourselves in the Dark Realm has arrived," I said, sharing with Corey's grimoire a list of the seven princes of the hell faction's bases in the Dark Realm, complete with details on the staff and guards on duty. Muth Diya had shared the information with me last night while I was busy massacring the Brothworks.

I had immediately assigned Cuth Diya to verify whether the information his father provided was accurate and to ensure he was not plotting anything nefarious. I had yet to hear back from him. Still, considering the time difference, I would have to wait a little longer before receiving his report.

As Corey went through the list, Corey Park surfaced from her body and asked me, "Where did you get this list? How accurate is it? Because if this list is correct, the seven princes of the hell faction have grown almost tenfold since I left them. Not to mention their territories, which have nearly doubled as well. Such a growth rate for a faction in such a short amount of time is highly exceptional. It also means the information I received from my old allies is either outdated or deliberately omitted. That seriously changes things."

"I'm still determining whether the list is authentic or merely a lure meant to trap us. It seems I was right to share it with you," I replied. "From what you've said, I take it you already believe it's authentic, right?"

I asked this knowing Corey Park would not have spoken with such distress if she doubted the information's validity.

Chapter 2634: Too Critical?

Date: Unspecified

Time: Unspecified

Location: Myriad Realms, Card World, Southern Region, Southern Capital, Guild Association Mall, Warehouse No. 234, Limitless Celestial Domain, Gainover Manor

"Yes, I believe it's authentic. The information here aligns with what I've gathered from the inter-realm network while double-checking the intelligence I received from my old allies and comrades," Corey Park said with a nod.

I nodded in acknowledgement and was relieved to learn that Corey Park was not blindly trusting her former allies and comrades. Otherwise, I would have had to seriously reconsider having her lead my operations in the Dark Realm and look to someone else, such as Moon Frost, since Slay showed no signs of awakening from her slumber anytime soon.

Considering she was using my primordial calamity daughter gem and cursed bloodline to forge her new body, I believed it would take a while, as her racial ability and my cursed bloodline were fighting for dominance. I knew for a fact that the cursed bloodline would win, since the energy used to forge her new body from the thousand-plus curses was being channeled through it. She had no choice in this regard as she possessed none of her own.

The victory of the cursed bloodline was a done deal; the real problem lay in its ability to subdue her racial ability. Otherwise, forging Slay's new body would fail, resulting in her death. Because of that, I didn't dare rush the process. After all, Slay was a crucial part of my plan to secure Card World from the threat of Devil Merchant Code inter-realm transportation function once and for all.

Not that I was in any hurry. I had no intention of making a move until I heard Cuth Diya's report and I personally made sure that Muth Diya had no plans of rebelling at the time being. Until then, I planned to win over the Froslings and turn the Winter Valley, one of the thirteen deadliest places in the Dark Realm, into my own backyard.

"Are you two free right now?" I asked the two Coreys. When they nodded, I continued, "Then I can begin helping you acquire the trait I promised."

Now that my plans were moving forward on their own, I had to ensure my pawns kept pace and were in the right place at the right time. Otherwise, all of my planning would amount to nothing.

"Really? Great," Corey beamed with joy, clearly thrilled that I was finally taking time from my busy schedule to help her gain the trait I had been promising her for a while.

Corey Park also seemed to be in a better mood. She hadn't expected everything in the Dark Realm to remain the same upon her return, but the thought that some of her allies and comrades had sold her out troubled her more than the fact that most of them had joined the "seven princes of the hell" faction after her death. She respected their choice, knowing they had done what was necessary to survive.

However, those who had waited for her return while silently feigning suffering and struggle to both their comrades and her, only to sell her out to Belphegor, were another matter entirely. That was something she could neither stomach nor forgive. She was furious; if not for her desire to give them the benefit of the doubt, she would have already rained down her wrath upon them. Corey Park's anger was as intense as her

patience. She truly hoped she was mistaken and that none of her old connections had betrayed her before she even set foot in the Dark Realm.

"Good, but first help me clean up this mess," I said, pointing at the manor. With Corey's help, I quickly dismantled it and rebuilt a new warehouse. Seeing us at work, the demigods who had been watching stepped in to help, and the new warehouse was erected in no time. Though it resembled the other warehouses, it was constructed using materials conjured through elemental rule power.

Elsewhere, I could afford to be arrogant, but this was my city. Here, I had to lead by example. Otherwise, I couldn't expect others to do what I myself wasn't prepared to do. Therefore, I was very conscious about my actions here.

"All done. Now can we get to my gaining a new trait?" Corey asked as we hovered above, looking down at the newly built warehouse.

Seeing her eagerness, I instructed her, "Head to the TSR building and prepare a card lab. I'll be there shortly." I intended to catch up with the demigods watching over the city first. Although they were from the Southern Royal family, they were working for my sake. Otherwise, there would have been no reason for the Southern Royal family to station a team of demigods in a third-tier city like Sky Blossom City.

"What now? Didn't you—" Corey protested, her face twisting in displeasure, but I cut her off immediately. "Just go. I'll be right behind you."

"Fine, but if you don't come soon, I'll send Baem to fetch you," Corey warned before taking off. Lil' Baem hissed at me as well before turning to follow its master. Though the hiss felt a bit stern, I chose to assume it was a farewell rather than a challenge.

Not willing to lower myself to the level of an overgrown reptile by being petty toward it, I turned to the card demigod guards from the Southern Royal family. After some small talk, I asked whether they had noticed anything suspicious.

"No matter how insignificant it might seem, if it made you take a second look, I need to know," I told the team of demigods, while the western princess and her guards watched me, clearly thinking I was being overly critical. If they had even half the enemies I was facing, they would be just as paranoid as I was. Gideon Grim, Sansa Baylor, and others like them possessed abilities more than sufficient to give anyone a headache. I had to be this critical. Otherwise, those I care for would get hurt.

Chapter 2635: The Whiteburn Family

Date: Unspecified

Time: Unspecified

Location: Myriad Realms, Card World, Southern Region, Southern Capital, Guild Association Mall

"Master Wyatt, I don't know if this is what you are looking for, but I sensed nothing unusual from the Whiteburn family estate. It is always quiet and consistent, like clockwork. Nothing else in the city is as regular or stable as their estate. After noticing this, I even visited the estate personally, yet found nothing suspicious, aside from the fact that the estate's array formation seemed excessively advanced for a prominent family in a third-rate city.

Because of that, I inquired directly with the Whiteburn family head, Jack Whiteburn. It turns out that one of their family members, previously banished for serious crimes, had returned as a capable array master and helped establish the estate's current array in an effort to redeem himself and reenter the family.

I requested to meet this young array genius who had made such a glorious homecoming, but they avoided the meeting, claiming he was in seclusion while attempting to break through. I conducted a discreet check and confirmed that he was indeed in the midst of breaking through to the card lord realm. Considering his age, it is impressive.

Since everything aligned and nothing appeared out of the ordinary, I left it at that," the demigod guard captain informed me, after reflecting on the matter in response to my persistent inquiry.

"The Whiteburn family?" I muttered to myself, my left index finger hooked beneath my lower lip.

The last I had heard of the Whiteburn family was when I met Eliza Whiteburn at the silent auction in Sun Blossom City. At the time, there were reports that they planned to migrate to the Southern capital, leaving a branch family behind to manage their assets and businesses in Sky Blossom City. Since Jack Whiteburn was still the head of the Whiteburn family in Sky Blossom City, I supposed they had put those migration plans on hold.

That was not surprising. Jack Whiteburn was a smart man. He should have recognized that, with my growth, his family stood to prosper far more by remaining in Sky Blossom City, where they were already established and possessed a solid foundation, than by moving to the Southern capital. There, they would have had to contend with entrenched powers just to carve out a small foothold and establish themselves, a task far easier to propose than to accomplish.

Moreover, leaving Sky Blossom City at a time when numerous powerful families, guilds, and companies from various two-tier and one-tier cities were relocating there would have been absurd.

The influx was significant enough that the local authorities were already considering expanding the city, and ministers at the capital were deliberating an increase in Sky Blossom City's tier to secure additional funding and properly accommodate the new wave of immigrants.

Departing under such circumstances would not merely have been foolish; it would have been brain-dead. Simply by investing in Sky Blossom City's real estate, they stood to earn hundreds of times more than they could ever hope to make by moving in the Southern Capital. If the Whiteburns hadn't realized this there was no helping them

Making a mental note to visit the Whiteburns, I turned to the demigod guard captain and asked, "Anything else?"

"We noticed that citizens had been complaining about hearing strange, sometimes eerie noises coming from their home drains and the city's sewers. At first, we suspected that someone was attempting to infiltrate the city from underground through the sewer system, so we immediately launched an investigation. However, after a thorough three-day search, we found nothing.

Even so, we did not stop. We added the city sewers to our regular patrol routes, yet to this day we have found nothing unusual. However, ever since we began patrolling the sewers, our collective mood has gotten irritable and all of us have been plagued by nightmares, even when taking short naps. As a precautionary measure, last night we requested a purification squad to cleanse the entire city sewer system, fearing it might be cursed. They should be arriving any minute now," the guard captain recounted before adding, "Now that I say it out loud, I believe this falls under what you were asking us to look into, right?"

Listening to the last sentence the guard captain added, my face immediately paled as I activated my primordial soul pupils to inspect the demigod guards more closely, only to find that nothing was wrong with them, just as during my previous inspection. My mind immediately suspected Gideon Grim and Sansa Baylor. Only these names came to my mind because among my enemies in the card world only they had abilities capable of playing with an elite demigod's mind, no one else could manipulate a demigod so flawlessly let alone a couple teams of elite demigods.

Even so, I could not shake the feeling that Gideon Grim was behind this, despite finding no trace of his origin card's roots within the demigod city guard teams' soul pathways. The same was true for Sansa Baylor. I found no sign of her soul energy signature in their soul pathways either.

But I didn't suspect Sansa Baylor, my suspicion lingered on Gideon Grim because that bastard had nothing left in the Card World to lose. Unlike Sansa, who had the love of her life, the man of her dreams, by her side as she wished, she would not dare to conspire against me again as she had with Ellen Duskbrown, fully aware of what losing to me entailed. The fear I had installed in her would keep her at bay for a long time. Also,

she was smart to weigh the gains and losses of angering me whose abilities were a bane to her own.

Gideon Grim, however, having sold himself to Belphegor and immigrated to the Dark Realm, truly had nothing left in the Card World to fear from my retaliation. Not to mention, if he hated someone the most in the card world then it had to be me because not only did I ruin his plan to earn merits to rank up in the dark faction he joined, not to forget in the process I revealed his origin card ability and introduced a precaution against it to the five regions. He had enough reasons to come after me and what I held dear.

Chapter 2636: Faith, Fanatics, & Cults

Date: Unspecified

Time: Unspecified

Location: Myriad Realms, Card World, Southern Region, Southern Capital, Guild Association Mall

"Emissary of Light is a bastard spawn of the devils," I yelled, loud enough to reach every nook and corner of Sky Blossom City, after mentally informing the Western princess and her group to use their intent sense to monitor the entire city.

The faces of the guard teams, who had appeared docile and well-behaved and even seemed to admire me, suddenly twisted into manic, fanatical rage. The transformation was grotesque and unsightly, laying bare just how deeply they hated the fact that I had dared to call their lord a bastard spawn of the devils. Before I could engage them in any meaningful conversation to extract information, they all lunged at me, shouting:

"Keep our lord's name out of your mouth, you heathen."

"How dare you curse our lord, you infidel?"

"Damn you, heretic. I will have your head for this."

"You will burn for your insolence, apostate. Let me light the pyre myself."

"I will use your blood to wash away the insult you just spoke, heretic."

Seeing them rush at me without any regard for their own safety, fanatic light blazing in their eyes, I simply watched as they attacked, only to be stopped cold by my limitless barrier. Even after their initial attempt failed, they did not adjust their approach. Instead, they continued to assault me relentlessly, like mindless zombies.

Each of them was an elite demigod drawn from the Southern Watch, trained from a very young age to remain calm and confront problems with clear judgment and disciplined wit. Yet the demigods before me were so overwhelmed and distraught that they seemed to have forgotten their centuries of training, continuing their futile assault despite repeated failure.

I wondered whether they were hoping their lord would lend them strength through his power, enough to shatter my limitless barrier. Otherwise, what could they possibly expect by repeatedly dashing themselves against an limitless chasm? If not that, then they were simply insane. After all, what else would one call those who do the same thing over and over while expecting a different result?

Finally, having witnessed the power of the Emissary of Light with my own eyes, I was convinced that he truly lived up to the terror shown in Clown Mask's future vision. I shook my head and uttered, "Celestial Blood Fate Domain."

The surrounding world was soon dyed red as I followed with a single word, "Silence."

"Kneel!" At my commands, the demigod guard teams lost their access to soul energy and rule power, forcing them to cease their attacks and drop to their knees before me. However, to my surprise, I saw them resisting my authority through sheer will. No one had managed such a feat before, not even the powerful demigods trained by the Masters. Yet these guards were able to withstand the dominion of my Celestial Blood Fate Domain over their blood purely through willpower.

This was only possible because of the Emissary of Light's origin card ability, which had turned them into his fanatical followers, beings willing to betray their land and people in order to worship him.

The only other person capable of flawlessly controlling multiple elite demigods without breaking a sweat, aside from Sansa and Gideon, was none other than the youngest of the three mischief, the Emissary of Light. In Clown Mask's future vision, his prowess was second only to the Supreme Leader, who possessed both Soul pupils and the Myriad Devil Transformation. However, now, he stood as the strongest among the three.

All I had gathered about him from Clown Mask's future vision and from Sansa's account was that his origin card ability revolved around the faith of his believers. In the Dark Realms, faith was believed to be an extremely powerful and fearsome tool in capable hands, yet weak and nearly useless in foolish ones. I believed this to be true, because cults were a major force within the Dark Realm. They were the third-largest force, after the Devil Merchant Code and the Inter-Realm Thief Guild. Unlike others who traveled to foreign worlds to plunder resources and celestial will fragments, these cults instead aided the natives in prospering, cultivating those worlds as vast farms of faith.

These individuals were extremely powerful, despite what their realms might suggest. I had never crossed paths with such fanatics before, largely because they and the Devil Merchant Code did not mix. The ideologies they followed made them natural enemies.

The Dark Cults believed in domesticating native populations to farm their faith, often turning entire worlds into vast, world-level sweatshops. In contrast, the Devil Merchant Code believed in maximizing profit at all costs. To them, the most efficient approach was to mine a world of all its resources and then destroy it entirely to harvest its celestial will fragments.

The Dark Cults did not prioritize celestial will, as faith allowed them to achieve everything celestial will offered and more. Even so, the Devil Merchant Code enjoyed far greater popularity and support than the Dark Cults. This was because the practices of the Dark Cults ran counter to the fundamental principles upheld by the Dark Races. Above all, faith could not be traded. For that reason, most of the Dark Races, along with the Devil Merchant Code, actively discouraged the practices of the Dark Cults within the Dark Realm.

Something that could not be traded was something that could not be stolen or taken, something that could only be attained slowly and steadily through continued dedication and devotion. That fact alone was enough to drive many Dark Races away from the practices of the Dark Cults.

Returning to the matter at hand, what troubled me was why the Emissary of Light was targeting me when we had never even crossed paths. I could not help but wonder whether Sansa had something to do with it. After all, I had made it clear to her that I intended to target the Emissary of Light sooner or later. Had she decided to light the spark earlier rather than later?

Chapter 2637: Soul Projection

Date: Unspecified

Time: Unspecified

Location: Myriad Realms, Card World, Southern Region, Southern Capital, Guild Association Mall

Sansa?

She stood to gain a great deal if the Emissary of Light and I fought until one of us was dead. However, her current situation with Baylor was too valuable for her to risk losing it by angering either of us. After all, once a victor emerged between the two of us, who do you think would be next?

For the first time in Sansa's life, Baylor was seeing her for who she truly was and still choosing to remain with her, regardless of the reasons. It felt like one of her wildest fantasies had come true. His cold indifference was nothing new to her. In fact, she had enjoyed it throughout their entire married life. The best thing to come from this arrangement was the fact that Baylor knew everything she had done to Ellen. That knowledge gave her a sick, sadistic satisfaction, one that almost made up for the reality that Baylor stayed with her out of fear of what she was capable of, not because he loved her.

Be it fear or love, his top priority at that moment was keeping her happy, being her perfect husband. She had stuck to his side when he was blind to her love for him and had shamed their marriage by clinging to the memory of Ellen. As such, she had no problem staying by his side now, when he feared what her love for him could cause and despised her for the harm she had inflicted on Ellen.

At least now, he acknowledged her love for him. It had gone unnoticed for so long that she was now satisfied with any form of attention. And who was to say that, given time, her love for him would not be answered?

With her mind occupied by such possibilities, the idea of Sansa provoking me no longer added up. The last time I checked, she had swallowed her pride and bowed to me in obedience, driven by fear of losing her new life. She was planning to go on the honeymoon she had never been able to enjoy, simply because her husband had been too fixated on Ellen. Now, he knew better.

Yes, the more I thought about it, the more convinced I became that it was not Sansa. Then who was it? Or what would prompt the Emissary of Light to target me? Was he also interested in Silver Milk Powder and the VR-universe? Those seemed far more plausible reasons than Sansa.

These two could easily help him amass more believers and strengthen the faith of his existing followers. With his prowess, it would not be difficult to rewrite everyone's perception, convincing them that he was the one who discovered Silver Milk Powder and created the VR-universe once he obtained them from me. In doing so, he would build his lore and establish an unassailable hold over his believers. Soon enough, he could turn the entire five regions into a vast farm from which to harvest faith. Before long, he would solidify his image as the one true son of the Card Celestial and achieve celestial-hood for himself.

Was that it?

I turned to the teams of demigod guards. They had fallen to their knees once their willpower was exhausted. The Emissary of Light's origin card had squeezed out the utmost of their potential, but in the end, there was no denying that everyone had a limit. It was a limit only they could surpass, and no shortcut could help. Theirs just happened to fall within the scope of my Celestial Blood Fate Domain.

Which was only natural, as they had yet to break past the limits of the current power system of the card celestial, let alone contend with my celestial domain. However, only a handful of living demigods had ever achieved such a breakthrough, and they were not among them. If they were one of them, then they would not have been kneeling before me but found a way to defy me.

Just as I was thinking it was a pity that these elites of the Southern Royal family had succumbed to a fake herald's false heaven, I saw the demigod guard captain's eyes suddenly light up with a warm, pleasant brilliance as he rose to his feet, defying my celestial blood fate domain.

I was astonished as I had no idea what was going on, but somehow the guard captain was managing to defy the dominion of my celestial blood fate domain. Then I heard him speak in a voice that did not belong to him.

"Hi, you must be the Southern Hope I keep hearing about. I'm the Emissary of Light, the one true son of the Card Celestial. Pleased to meet your acquaintance."

My eyes widened in shock. The demigod guard captain before me was no longer himself. He had become a medium for the Emissary of Light's soul projection, allowing his will to project here through one of his believers to communicate with me from beyond our borders, from within his massive and gorgeous church built in his honor by his believers.

My eyes widened at what was unfolding. The fact that the Emissary of Light could project his soul into one of his believers by breaching my Celestial Blood Fate Domain caught me off guard. Honestly, it alarmed me. I knew for a fact that the Emissary of Light had only just stepped into the demigod realm. He was still far from surpassing the limits of the card world's current power system. This could only mean that his abilities allowed him to do so.

It was likely his origin card. The way it worked was simple in principle: when enough people believed the lies about him, they became true, no matter how absurd. However, this consumed an equivalent amount of the faith he had accumulated. Faith, after all, was omnipotent, so long as enough people believed in it.

Chapter 2638: The Emissary Of Light

Date: Unspecified

Time: Unspecified

Location: Myriad Realms, Card World, Southern Region, Southern Capital, Guild Association Mall

I recalled witnessing the soul projection of Demigod Windsor, back when Aba Windsor could not bear the humiliation of her defeat and had called upon her demigod father for help. Fortunately, Anna had been there to handle the situation and deescalate it.

Demigod Windsor's soul projection had relied on a card equipped in his daughter's grimoire, summoning an apparition with a breath of his will. In contrast, the Emissary of Light's soul projection made use of his believers as a medium. By breathing his entire will into theirs through faith, he enhanced a believer's willpower and strength beyond their natural limit. Clearly, the Emissary of Light's method of soul projection was far stronger and more efficient.

Seeing that it was only the guard captain who had managed to defy my Celestial Blood Fate Domain, while the other demigod guards remained firmly under its influence, I calmed myself, confirming what my soul pupils revealed to me. It was merely a trick, as I had told myself, now that I had uncovered the secret behind it. My worries vanished.

Still, the Emissary of Light was capable of many miracles as long as his faith could afford it. So, hiding my shock and unease, I gaze toward the Emissary of Light turned into a one with contempt, sneering, "Man, do you really enjoy tooting your own horn? The true son of the Card Celestial? Why not go further and claim you're the creator of the myriad realms? Or are you worried you can't accumulate enough faith to make that become the truth?"

The guard captain's eyes narrowed as the Emissary of Light spoke. "You seem to have an opinion about me."

"How could I not, when you attacked my people in my city?" I replied, maintaining remarkable restraint toward the Emissary of Light. His shell was a Southern citizen who had been taken prisoner in his body while protecting my city and its people. Otherwise, I would have long since used my limitless domain to finish him off. If he had something to say to me, he should have come in person.

"Now that they have accepted me, they are my believers first, then your citizens. As for attacking your city, I did no such thing," the Emissary of Light argued, his gaze sweeping across my Celestial Blood Fate Domain before settling on me.

I had no idea what he was thinking, but his reaction to my celestial domain told me he knew something. Perhaps he understood that a celestial domain could only be wielded by the celestials or by those possessing a Celestial Will Fragment. His next words only further confirmed my suspicion. "A fine celestial domain. Even my believers, aided by my power, could only submit to it."

I met his words with a deadpan stare, betraying no emotion. The truth behind my celestial domain was one of my least appealing secrets, and it would take far more than that to draw a reaction from me. At best, he would have assumed that I had acquired a

Celestial Will Fragment from somewhere. Never in a million years could he have guessed that I was a newborn hybrid celestial.

I remained calm and indifferent, knowing he was testing me, just as I had tested him when I revealed my understanding that his powers were fueled by the faith he gathered from his believers. We were both probing each other, seeking a measure of where we stood in relation to one another.

I did not bother trying to fake my expressions or emotions to mislead him as the moment he realized I was putting on an act, he would gain a foothold from which he could start reading me, unraveling my methods one by one.

The fact that he was running an entire cult, even after both his strongest allies and his greatest enemies, the Supreme Leader and the Matron, had already realized the source of his miraculous strength were his growing believers, proved one thing. He did not rely solely on his origin card like the Matron. He possessed enough cunning to achieve accelerated growth and development, keeping his friends close and his enemies even closer.

"Hahaha, you crack me up," I feigned a laugh, my gaze blank, before issuing a stern warning. "Erase your hold over my citizens and never again step foot in my territory without my permission. Otherwise, I will pay your little empire a visit this instant. And I promise you, you will never be in the mood to joke in front of me again."

"Master Wyatt, you seem to be under a grave misconception. I did nothing to your citizens here. They became my followers of their own accord. As for you paying a visit to the Empire, we will always welcome a genius like you with open arms. You are welcome to visit the Empire anytime. I will be your host," the Emissary of Light said with a laugh, beginning to understand why the teenager before him was called the Southern Hope.

From the way he referred to these demigods as his citizens, he clearly believed that the Southern Region belonged to him. He had truly bought into his title, the Southern Hope. The Emissary of Light could not help but commend the Southern Princess in his thoughts. From the looks of it, the so-called Southern Hope would never leave the Southern Region, instead spending his entire life living up to that title.

The Southern Princess was truly a diplomatic genius. With such simple means, she had chained an arrogant bird, whose brilliance should have reached far beyond the card world, to the Southern Region. Today, he had learned a great deal from her.

Thinking of the Southern Princess, the Emissary of Light's eyes flickered as he thought to himself, *'As expected of the woman chosen by me.'*¹

He had met the Southern Princess during one of her diplomatic visits to the Empire. He had been instantly taken by her. If not for his fear of the Southern Ruler, the Southern

Prince, the Field Marshal Lorn, the Unstoppable General, and so on, he would have turned her into one of his followers during her recent diplomatic visit to the Empire.

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Chapter 2639: Humbug Herald

Date: Unspecified

Time: Unspecified

Location: Myriad Realms, Card World, Southern Region, Southern Capital, Guild Association Mall

"Hahaha, you really think I am helpless against your tricks, don't you, humbug herald? Stop spouting nonsense and free them. They are citizens of the Southern Region first. Religion has no place in the five regions," I broke into laughter, sensing that the Emissary of Light was looking at me like a clown.

I knew his scorn stemmed from his belief that I was overestimating my place in the hierarchy of the Southern Region. To him, I was nothing more than a tool the Southern Royal family was using to prosper, one they would discard the moment I lost my value. He was not wrong. Many within the Southern Region's upper and top hierarchy thought the same.

My only solace was that Anna and Colleen did not. The Anna I knew and loved was back, and Colleen was the elder I never had. She was not smart but wise in some ways. Her brazenness compensated for the rest. She embodied a simple, direct creed: keep it simple, dummy.

However, this perception of me existed largely because the Southern Princess and I chose to portray it that way to all five regions. The closer we appeared, the more likely we were to draw out the jealousy of the human heart. We gave people something to speak of and laugh about behind our backs: the Southern Princess for her ignorance and narrow-sightedness, and me for overestimating myself despite my humble beginnings. In doing so, they were able to remain satisfied within their own perfect little world and not disturb us, forcing our hands.

This applied to the Emissary of Light as well. No matter how intelligent and cunning he was, when it came to matters of the heart, he was just as ignorant as the rest. I could see him relaxing his guard within my celestial domain, even going so far as to glance at me with disdain. This was human nature. No matter how great or intimidating my other achievements were, once I revealed a single flaw, they began to see themselves as superior to me, even though the reality could not have been further from it.

For example, back in my freshman days, one of my classmates was popular and athletic enough to get an athletic scholarship. He had no shortage of attention from girls. The rest of the boys, driven by jealousy, constantly bad-mouthed him and tried to get him into trouble. One day, he came to us in tears, claiming his girlfriend had cheated on him. From then on, the hostility vanished. Aside from spreading the story of her infidelity, sometimes they defended him and even helped him.

They ignored the fact that she had only cheated because he had slept with her sister, and that he was exploiting the incident to pursue other girls. This was how the human heart worked and was no reflection of their intelligence in any way. How do I know this? Make your best guess.

"Master Wyatt, this is no trick. No one is held against their wishes or being forced. Five regions might not have a place for religion, but their heart clearly does. Otherwise, they could summon as it is my duty to protect my followers. I hope you will overlook this incident on my behalf," the Emissary of Light said, ignoring the fact that it was his so-called followers who had attacked me first. He showed no intention of apologizing for their actions, yet had no qualms about asking me to release them.

I did not understand what he thought was happening here. Underestimating me was one thing, but being so arrogant within someone else's territory? Did he truly believe himself to be untouchable?

Without waiting for my response, the Emissary of Light continued as he slowly neared me. "Humbug Herald? That's a new one. Master Wyatt, it seems you have been ill-informed about me. If you can spare a few minutes of your precious time, I will help you see what these gentlemen and ladies have endured."

Watching him approach, I could not help but smirk, knowing he was up to no good. Even so, I simply stood there and let him come closer. Soon, an apparition of the true Emissary of Light began to emerge from the guard captain's body. The apparition grew until it stood nearly two stories tall. It regarded me with a benevolent gaze, extended its hand above my head, and chanted aloud, "I, the true son of heaven, guide you back to the embrace of heaven. Freeing you from these materialistic illusions."

Soon, a brilliant golden light showered over me, entering my body and attempting to influence my soul and its will. It was similar to a demigod's bestowal, except it targeted the will instead.

I allowed the light to enter without obstruction and run its course while the Hive Spirit recorded all relevant data, so we could later use it to free the other demigods from the Emissary of Light's influence. As I had expected, when the light sought to affect my soul and its will, the World Calamity Tree Seed's shell encasing my mutated Ego Gem protected me. No matter how miraculous the faith appeared, it was merely another expression of primordial energy, the building blocks of the entire myriad realms.

The Western Princess and her group had finished the task I assigned them earlier and were now undertaking the new task I had assigned them. Remembering my earlier order not to intervene, they could only watch us with shock and concern, praying that I knew what I was doing and that things would unfold as I had planned. After all, the horror and terror of the Emissary of Light had long since spread across all five regions.

The mere fact that his soul projection could stand within my celestial domain, a place that had rendered them all helpless, was enough for them to understand that the Emissary of Light was everything the rumors claimed, and more.

Chapter 2640: Live Streaming

Date: Unspecified

Time: Unspecified

Location: Myriad Realms, Card World, Southern Region, Southern Capital, Guild Association Mall

When I inspected the demigod guards assigned to Sky Blossom City for the nth time using my Primordial Soul Pupils and found nothing wrong with their soul pathways, nor any traces of Gideon Grim's Origin Card roots within them, I had to accept the fact that it wasn't Gideon Grim.

With the most obvious suspects ruled out, I had no choice but to consider other likely candidates, such as the Supreme Leader and the Masters.

However, the Supreme Leader's specialty did not involve controlling minds. Even if he had gained such an ability in this timeline, I was certain he would not be proficient enough to avoid detection by my Primordial Soul Pupils. His organization's upper management was filled with his incarnations for a reason. If he could control minds, he would never trust that ability over his incarnations. This removed any possibility of him mastering a mind-control technique to a level that could fool my Primordial Soul Pupils, that could peer into the mysteries of the origin source.

That left the Masters. It could either be them or their hounds. Under normal circumstances, they would have simply kidnapped the people I cared for and forced me to come to them, where they held absolute advantage. But it had already become clear to them that the Card Celestial was biased toward me. For once, the Card Celestial was not at their call, rendering their world decree useless, and they were losing their shit enough to threaten the Southern Region with war and economic isolation.

Having relied on the Card Celestial for so long, they understood better than anyone how much this lone factor mattered. Therefore, unless they were absolutely certain, they would not dare to move against me directly. Instead, they resorted to indirect methods

to keep me in check, such as threatening the Southern Region with war and economic isolation.

They knew this approach was like poking a hibernating bear, but they did not mind as it was clear that once the bear woke up, it would kill them anyway, so they might as well prevent it from getting proper rest, on the off chance it would wander off a cliff while half-asleep.

So, if it was not the Masters, then who was it? Someone I did not know? That was when the Emissary of Light surfaced in my mind. I then remembered what I had seen in the Clown Mask's future vision: how he had turned the most loyal card apprentices of the Eastern and Western Regions into his followers, and how they had betrayed and killed their loved ones for him.

Unable to trust their own allies and comrades, the morale of the Western and Eastern regions' forces had plummeted. However, they soon discovered that the easiest way to identify an Emissary of Light follower was to curse the Emissary of Light aloud. During that period, poets and writers of the two regions composed songs and stories condemning and cursing him. The soldiers sang and recited them day and night whenever they found time to rest, ensuring that those beside them were not followers of the Emissary of Light.

So, on a hunch, I decided to test the same approach. I cursed the Emissary of Light loudly enough for the entire city to hear, after instructing the Western Princess and her group to monitor the city and capture anyone who behaved aggressively or strangely upon hearing the curse. To my surprise, my hunch proved correct. Soon, the Western Princess's group and I had captured all of the Emissary of Light's followers. That was when the Emissary of Light's soul projection appeared to check on them.

I had no idea why the Emissary of Light was targeting me when we had not even crossed paths before today, but that did not stop me from deciding to land a decisive blow on his arrogance. So, when the Western Princess and her group returned after capturing all of the Emissary of Light's followers in Sky Blossom City, I asked them to livestream the entire event while also sharing the footage I had recorded since his arrival.

Yes, all five regions were watching and listening to our actions and exchanges the whole time. Therefore, even as I remained indifferent to his tests and provocations, I deliberately played the role of the innocent and righteous Southern Hope, while showing the five regions who the Emissary of Light truly was and what he was capable of. After all, in trying to reveal the true nature of the Emissary of Light to the world, I should remember not to expose myself as well. Now, that would be foolish.

This approach against the Emissary of Light was a double-edged sword, which was why neither Sansa nor Karl dared to use it against him in the Clown Mask's future vision. After all, the Emissary of Light worked on a belief and faith power system. Had it been

when the Emissary of Light was just starting out gathering belief and faith, then maybe this could have worked, but now that he had enough belief and faith to pull out any miracle out of his ass, it was a very bad idea. They would only be giving him a larger stage and a broader audience to recruit more followers and believers.

However, I had full faith in my abilities, at least enough to know that I could reveal his and his abilities true nature to the five regions. As for the Empire, they were a lost cause for now. Anything I did would only appear to them as blasphemy or provocation, or as deceit meant to confuse them and make them question their Herald, the one true son of the world.

I would not be surprised if they launched a crusade against me after witnessing the livestream. After all, the human mind only sees what it wants to see and only believes what it wants to believe, even if the truth were to drop on their head.