

Evil 331

Chapter 331 - 331: Legacy.

Rasmus couldn't believe that his mother had raised such an entity, an error in the world of the living. He couldn't understand what he was seeing still, and no matter how hard he tried to look at its eyes, it only stared back.

"Are you a Dark Spirit?" Rasmus asked, looking up at the entity in front of him.

"Yes, that's who I am. I was born to this world with nothing but hatred, and I have killed countless of lives, finding joy in it," the Dark Spirit answered. "I was told to wait, to stay, and to endure until the time comes," the Dark Spirit continued, slowly lifting its shadowy and formless head.

The dome of smoke was still preventing the outside world from seeing and entering the forest. However, the smoke above the island began to disperse, revealing the bright moonlight.

"And is this the time you have been waiting for?" Rasmus asked with his eyes narrowed.

"No..." The Dark Spirit answered. "But now that you're here, I feel at ease..." The Dark Spirit revealed.

"At ease?" Rasmus furrowed his brows, staring at the Dark Spirit and listened to its vibrating voice, unable to understand the emotion behind its voice.

"That Aristoria lives within you," the Dark Spirit answered, staring down at Rasmus.

Rasmus remembered when he relived his past during his first awakening process. He remembered that his mother had sacrificed her power to give birth to him. Aristoria was in fact living within his body and making him who he was, an anomaly just like the Dark Spirit in front of him.

Rasmus showed a glimpse of his vulnerability, and it made him snap back to reality immediately. However, when he stared into the Dark Spirit's eyes, it also reflected what he felt, showing a moment of vulnerability in its gaze.

"My father, he came here a lot. He brought me here once," Rasmus said and glanced at the island. "He said if I got older, I should go to that island," he continued, staring at the dead tree. "Is it perhaps to see you, or is it for something else?" He asked.

The Dark Spirit slowly moved aside, giving Rasmus permission to go to the island. Rasmus took a deep breath as he began to walk on the water. Every step he took, the water beneath his feet froze, giving him platforms to walk on.

The Dark Spirit floated, walking beside Rasmus, escorting him toward something that he had been waiting for. The Dark Spirit then glanced over its shoulder at Aris, and the way it stared at Aris, there was nothing but mockery and arrogance.

"Lady Aris... please don't fight..." Yur muttered wrapping its wings around Aris's neck.

"That thing, why do I feel like it's the opposite of Orthias and yet oddly familiar..." Aris said, showing nothing but a cold and stoic expression at the Dark Spirit.

Yur tilted its head, staring at Aris's cold expression. Yur carefully nuzzled its puffy and soft head on Aris's neck. Its soft feathers were enough to calm Aris, and she immediately hugged Yur to comfort her thoughts.

"One is the seed that will bloom into a True Dragon, and the other is born from a True Dragon. One is predestined to become the ruler and order of the world, and the other is rebellious and chaotic. One who has no attachment to emotions and the other is bound by them," Yur said and hooted as Yur watched Rasmus step his foot on the island.

Aris hummed, agreeing with what Yur had just said. Both seemed to be the same coin but on different sides, contradicting each other but coming from the same root.

Rasmus walked toward the dead tree, staring at it from up close. The leafless tree with lots of cracks in its bark revealed how old the tree was. When he touched the tree, something went through his fingers and moved rapidly into his body, making his heart race.

"This tree..." Rasmus muttered, still with his hand rubbing on the tree's bark. "It feels familiar..." he added.

"Yes, this tree I made it myself as my resting place," The Dark Spirit answered. "Aristoria spent nights with me here. She shared her exciting and thrilling stories while I was in this tree, still weak and vulnerable..." The Dark Spirit continued.

"This tree absorbed quite a lot of her essence. This tree always gives me comfort and it reminds me of her," The Dark Spirit touched the tree and suddenly the branches began to move to the Dark Spirit's will

Rasmus hummed, realizing what he felt was his mother's presence. He then looked at one of the cracks, noticing something was off about it. He narrowed his eyes and noticed there was a book in the crack, and his hand could easily reach it.

"That book, it's yours?" Rasmus asked as he pointed at the book in the crack.

"No, that's something that Erglade left. He asked me a favor to keep it safe, and he would repay me with whatever I wanted. However, he died before he could even repay his favor," the Dark Spirit answered, staring at the book. "I believe that book is the reason why you came here. It's yours, and I have no reason to prevent you from taking it since it belongs to you," the Dark Spirit said.

Rasmus nodded and slowly put his hand in the crack, reaching out to the book with his fingers. He could barely reach the book, pulling it with his index and middle fingers. When he managed to retrieve the book, he noticed that the book was preserved as if it hadn't aged at all. He wondered if the dead tree had such power to preserve everything inside it.

"You may stay here..." The Dark Spirit said, and began to float toward the lake.

Rasmus hummed as he sat down, leaning his back against the dead tree. He looked at the Dark Spirit, floating across the lake toward Aris. He didn't know why the Dark Spirit had been provoking Aris ever since it woke up. He hoped that those two wouldn't make a scene and endanger Yur and the other spirits.

Rasmus slowly opened the book, it was indeed the journal that Lenin mentioned a while ago. The journal that would turn the world upside down because of the information that it held.

"If you're reading this, Rasmus, that means you have grown strong enough to withstand Rullein's power. You must be shocked when you see her, but you don't have to worry because she's not an Evil Spirit, she's a Dark Spirit. I know you must have so many questions, and I have written everything that might answer some of them."

"First, I must apologize for what you have been through. I know that the chance of you surviving will be close to none, but that's if you're just an ordinary child. Your mother, Aristoria, she gave more than half of her power to bring you into this world. Your chance of survival is guaranteed even if you didn't have anything to eat for months or even years."

"You're an Orthias, Rasmus. You're not like me, not like the rest of us. You're born from the womb of an Orthias, and you will inherit all her power, and you will become someone who will excel in everything. You're unique, and I can imagine how dangerous you are right now when you're reading this journal. You must have gone through a lot of hardship, and I believe that hardship is an understatement."

"However, I believe that should be enough opening before I will tell you everything that I know about this world. Rasmus, use all the information that I have written for you in this book, use it however you want it to be. You can save this world or turn it upside down, both me and your mother, we have left a lot of legacy for you to use. The Black Hands aren't replaceable tools, they're a unit that's worth hundreds of thousands of army. They will topple a kingdom with your will, and they will bury history without everyone knowing it. They're all the best people you will ever meet."

"Your mother has left herself as her legacy to you. She left you Rullein, the Dark Spirit that she has raised from when she was still a tiny spark of calamity. Your mother also lives inside you, and she has something that no other Aristoria has, the seed of a True Dragon. That seed is the key to making her ascend and turn into the sovereign of the world. However, that seed also can be used to destroy the sovereign of the world, the True Dragon's Blood."

"My son. What you're about to read will be enough to cause turmoil within you. I don't know what kind of hardships you have gone through, what kind of death doors you have missed, and how numb and sick of this world you have become. But, son, between us two men, I want you to prepare yourself and don't read it when you think it's not the right time for you to read it. This book will not only be a legacy but also the book that will rewrite Neva's fate."

Rasmus read the last paragraph as he held his breath. He slowly lifted his head, staring at the peaceful scenery and atmosphere. He then slowly closed the book as he exhaled deeply after those few paragraphs of information that were already too much to process. He decided to store the journal in the spatial ring. He slowly got up and looked at Aris and Rullein, who were standing face to face.

"Rullein, so that's your name," Rasmus muttered under his breath as he walked toward Aris and Rullein.

Chapter 332 - 332: Two sides of the same coin.

"So you were born from her essence as well, what an interesting one you are," Rullein said, staring down at Aris with its draconic eyes. "I don't like seeing her essence in someone else's body, especially toward an arrogant race like you, Orthias," she added.

Aris smirked as she crossed her arms, finding the Dark Spirit's hypocrisy hilarious. She had been around Rasmus for so long that she had learned self-control. If it was herself from before meeting Rasmus, she would have raised her sword and tried to kill the Dark Spirit.

"Why do you think I'm here? Don't you find the pattern to be similar to my predecessor?" Aris asked with her brows raised, staring back at the Dark Spirit. "Look at me thoroughly, and tell me what do you see," she challenged the Dark Spirit as she dispersed the Mana around her body.

Rullein stared into Aris's eyes and found out that Aris showed feelings and emotions. It was a raw moment for Aris to be seen through by someone else other than Rasmus. She had learned that emotions and feelings weren't a hindrance if used correctly just like how Rasmus did it.

"Tell me, do I look like those Orthias?" Aris asked with her eyes still on Rullein's eyes.

"No, you're different from them. You're similar to your predecessor, but different in a way," Rullein answered, however, she still found Aris's bloodline to be arrogant and didn't like her at all.

"Let's see, you're calling me arrogant but you're acting like one as well, such hypocrisy. Why don't we settle this in a spar?" Aris said as she arched her brows, challenging Rullein for the first time.

Rullein's eyes widened when Aris finally took the bait on purpose. Her gaze was enough to bring turmoil into the whole forest as the wind blew the trees and created havoc on the peaceful night. Yur was screeching in fear as Yur hid behind Aris's back, already hating it to be near those two.

"Rullein..." Rasmus called in a soft voice.

The tension and the heavy atmosphere suddenly dispersed in an instant. Rullein slowly turned around when her given name was spoken. It had been a while since someone called the name that Aristoria gave her, and the way Rasmus called her name was similar to how Aristoria used to call her.

Rullein suddenly absorbed the oozing dark purple smoke around her, and slowly molted herself into a dark orb that was as big as a basketball. It was how big her spirit form was, and compared to lesser spirits that weren't bigger than glitter, it was enough to tell how powerful she was. Yur was shocked by Rullein's size because Yur was barely bigger than a tennis ball, and Yur realized the gap in power was too extreme.

The Rullein's ball of spirit suddenly expanded and exploded, releasing a gentle breeze of wind with a unique scent that no words could describe. Rasmus, Aris, and Yur finally saw Rullein's human form, a pale woman as white as snow with her long straight jet-black hair. Her bang covered her forehead and almost covered her eyebrows. Her eyes were bright orange, enough to tell that she wasn't a human by anyone who saw those eyes.

Rullein coated her body with the black smoke, sticking into her skin and turning into a slim and see-through black dress. She stared at her long white nails before she raised her right hand, pulling out her black dragon wings from her back ribs. She then created two long black swords from the smoke that came out from the gap in her nails.

"That face..." Rasmus said with his eyes narrowed. "That was my mother's face," he pointed out.

Rullein looked at Rasmus, staring into his eyes with that bright and friendly face of his mother, unlike Aris's face who seemed cold and expressionless. She then carefully placed her fingers on her cheeks as if she didn't want to ruin the face of the woman who raised and took care of her.

"Yes, it gives me peace when I look at her face from the water's reflection. I know this would disturb you, but she's the only face that I want to put on mine," Rullein responded, her voice deep and yet soft, similar to Aristoria's voice.

"You can wear her face, I don't mind it at all," Rasmus said as he shook his head. "What are you going to do with that sword?" He glanced at the black swords in Rullein's hands.

"I want to have fun with her," Rullein answered without showing any hesitation.

Rasmus raised his brows, glancing at Rullein and Aris, back and forth. He realized that he had found another battle crazy person. He didn't know if he should stop her or not, but he knew it wasn't his place to stop them from doing whatever they wanted.

"Can you do it somewhere so it won't disturb my people who's resting in your forest?" Rasmus asked with his brows raised.

"Of course. We won't be fighting here," Rullein answered as she redirected the dome of black smoke toward her right hand where she was pointed behind Rasmus.

The black smoke became an oval shape as it moved in circles that made it look like a portal. It surprised both Aris and Rasmus when they saw that Rullein could create a spatial space with her will.

"Well then, have fun, you two," Rasmus said as he stared at both of them. "Yur, you can come with me," he glanced at Yur as he nodded.

Yur nodded and hurriedly flew toward Rasmus and hid behind his back. Rasmus then pulled out his sword and Aris's sword from the spatial ring. He tossed the swords at Aris, and she caught them without having her look at the swords. She had been wanting to find someone that she could go all out again since it had been a while.

"Have fun, Lady Aris..." Yur said quietly.

Aris nodded and then she walked toward the portal with Rullein walking in the front. Rasmus and Yur watched those two disappear into the portal like they were being devoured by it. The portal suddenly dispersed, and it made Yur panic because Yur was afraid that Aris wouldn't come back. However, Rasmus assured Yur that those two wouldn't kill each other.

"Let's go back to the village," Rasmus said as he looked at the peaceful night sky above him.

"Yes..." Yur nodded and turned back into an owl, resting on his shoulder.

When Aris entered the spatial space, she was taken aback that the inside of the spatial space was exactly the same as the Trivula Forest. She looked around at how spacious it was, and the only difference was that there was no sky, only pitch black that seemed to have no end.

"Tell me, what's your intention with him?" Rullein asked as she disappeared and reappeared in the distance. "You who have been following him, using him, and helping him. What's exactly that you're after?" She asked, her voice echoed throughout the forest.

"That's none of your business," Aris answered as she swung her swords, warming up her wrists. "You're asking as if you have the obligation to take care of him," she stared at Rullein in the far distance, floating right above the island on the lake.

"I do, Aristoria entrusted him to me. I'm going to be his guardian, and I will follow him when the time comes. All she wanted was to let her son to grow up into someone that he wanted, not someone who got stirred by someone else, like you," Rullein responded as she pointed her sword at Aris. "Now tell me. What's your intention?" She asked again, this time with a cold expression.

"I'll answer your question if you win against me," Aris smirked as she readied her stance, coating her body with the immense Aura and bright blue energy of Orthais. "Prove yourself worth of standing by his side," she said as she dashed forward and flew toward Rullein beyond the speed of sound.

Rullein spread her wings as she swung her swords at Aris with all her might. The moment they clashed with their swords, the spatial space immediately cracked by the shockwave. Rullein expected that to happen, and it only made her even thrilled as she reinforced the spatial space.

"Be careful... I was taught by the best..." Rullein said as her eyes began to glow with trails of dark orange energy around her eyes.

"You were taught by her. I was reborn from her..." Aris's eyes glowed bright blue, leaving trails of bright blue energy around her eyes.

The moment they both released their energies, the spatial space cracked once again. Neither could overpower the other, shocked by each other's strength. One who was believed to be the best warrior of Orthias, and the other believed to be the only being that was born from the strongest being in the world. Both were still buds, and yet they both showed power that no humans could stop.

Chapter 333 - 333: Selfless.

Aris stabbed her swords to the ground, her face covered in scratches. It didn't take a few seconds before the wounds began to heal and her face became smooth again. She was out of breath and fell to one knee, using the swords to support her body. She was completely spent, and it had been a while since she felt that way, making the spar was quite satisfying.

"You're still standing..." Aris stared at Rullein, who was floating above the ground, staring down at her. "I have to admit, you're stronger than I thought..." She closed her eyes, taking a deep breath before she forced herself to stand up.

Rullein didn't say a word until suddenly the spatial space crumbled and collapsed. She fell to the ground with the black smoke seeping through her back as if she was overheating like an engine. At the same time, they were back into the real world because Rullein couldn't maintain spatial space anymore.

"It's my lost..." Rullein said as her body began to crack, evaporating like ice until she completely turned into a ball of spirit.

Aris dragged her foot as she approached Rullein's ball of spirit, holding it in her hands. She then approached the dead tree, knowing it was the only place that could help Rullein recover. Once she placed Rullein in the dead tree, she felt what Rasmus felt, Aristoria's presence on the tree. She could feel Aristoria's presence as if she was beside her, sitting and leaning against the tree.

Aris decided to sit down, leaning her back against the tree beside Aristoria's presence. She then looked up at the sky, enjoying the silence and the peaceful night. She felt comforted by sitting there with Aristoria's presence beside her, and it reminded her encounter with Aristoria in the Void Realm.

"You raised a dangerous monster, Aristoria..." Aris muttered as she folded her knees, hugging them tightly. "If Rullein didn't spare her power to maintain the spatial world, I would have lost back there..." She glanced over her shoulder at the tree.

Aris made herself comfortable under the dead tree, and she found herself drifting off, falling into sleep. Her thought before she fell asleep was how weird it was for her to feel tired and sleepy.

"Rullein... Rullein? Are you hiding from me again?" Aristoria's voice could be heard from beside Aris.

Aris eyes fluttered open and slowly turned her head to the left. She saw Aristoria standing beside her, trying to peek at the cracks in the tree's bark. She slowly got up and noticed she was dreaming, or perhaps reliving the memory of the dead tree.

"Rullein, are you angry at me?" Aristoria asked, her voice was gentle with a hint of sadness in it. "I came all the way here, and you're not going to greet me?" She frowned as she kept looking into the cracks.

"I'm not..." Rullein's voice could be heard from inside the tree's bark.

"Rullein, please come out," Aristoria pleaded as she touched the tree's bark, whispering into the crack.

Aris watched the dead tree release black smoke and it made Aristoria take a few steps away with a huge smile on her face. In less than a second, Rullein showed herself in her human form, but rather than the one that she had seen earlier, Rullein was a small girl in an oversized black dress. Even in her small girl appearance, her eyes and gaze were intimidating.

"There you are..." Aristoria immediately picked up Rullein from behind and hugged her tightly. "I miss you..." She said as she sat down and leaned her back against the dead tree with Rullein sitting on her lap.

At that moment, Aris realized why she adored Yur so much. She found out that Aristoria was like that toward Rullein, adoring her like a plush toy. It made Aris smile without her realizing it.

Rullein furrowed her brows as she slowly looked up at Aristoria's face. She noticed the drastic change within Aristoria.

"What happened to you?" Rullein asked with her brows furrowed.

Aristoria grinned widely as she nuzzled Rullein's head, showing how happy she was. It shocked Rullein when she saw how happy Aristoria was because she had never seen Aristoria like that before.

"I gave birth to a child, my own child," Aristoria said with a happy chuckle as she hugged Rullein tightly.

"What?!" Rullein pushed Aristoria's arms away from her body and got up from Aristoria's lap. "What are you doing?! You sacrificed your life for a human?" She shouted, glaring at Aristoria in disbelief and a hint of anger in her eyes.

Aristoria sighed, closing her eyes as she nodded.

"Why! Why would you do that to yourself!" Rullein began to shout even louder, the sunny day becoming cloudy in a matter of seconds. She showed how angry she was when the storm began to brew in the sky. Every time she clenched her fists, thunders rumbled as if the thunders were her veins.

"That's why I'm here, Rullein. Will you calm down and let me explain?" Aristoria raised her brows, opening her arms, hoping that Rullein would go back into her embrace.

Rullein breathed heavily as she glared at Aristoria because she knew that the woman in front of her had become so weak that her life would be in danger. She knew that nothing good would happen to Aristoria, and she had a feeling that Aristoria might leave her in the future, leaving her lone in this world.

Rullein unclenched her fists and slowly walked toward Aristoria. She turned around and forced herself to sit on Aristoria's lap, enough to make Aristoria groan in pain.

"Rullein, you saw what happened in the Dragon's Maw, the place where you were born," Aristoria said in a gentle voice, slowly wrapping her arms around Rullein's body. "True Dragons died, powerless in the face of mysterious power that came down to this world at that time..." she muttered as she began to caress Rullein's long black hair.

"I might have gained something that my race has been searching for, but that alone isn't going to be enough to fight whatever being that wiped off the True Dragons from this world," Aristoria looked down at Rullein, holding Rullein's tiny arms. "The world where I have to fight that kind of threat alone, this world is fated to be annihilated," she revealed as she rested her chin on top of Rullein's head.

"But you're not alone! You have me! I'm going to grow stronger, strong enough to even kill a True Dragon!" Rullein said with such an impulse, clenching her hands on Aristoria's hands, enough to hurt Aristoria's hands.

"Rullein... there were hundreds or even a thousand True Dragons at that time, but they were powerless. Do you think the two of us could kill that many on our own?" Aristoria asked with her brows raised.

Rullein couldn't answer the question, knowing well that it would be delusional to believe that the two of them could win against hundreds of True Dragons. However, she still couldn't understand why Aristoria chose to sacrifice herself to give birth to a human, a hybrid that couldn't be compared to an Aristoria.

"Are you giving up? That's why you're giving more than half of your life to that child? Are you going to leave me behind?" Rullein asked, not wanting to look at Aristoria.

"No, it's quite the opposite, Rullein..." Aristoria shook her head wrapping her body around Rullein. "I believe this is the only way for us to face that threat in the future," she answered.

"Us?" Rullein slowly looked up at Aristoria with her brows furrowed.

"Not me, but my successor. The future Aristoria, You, and my child. The three of you are connected to me, a handful of powerful beings, an Aristoria, a Dark Spirit, and my child, that could surpass both of you," Aristoria answered with a gentle smile on her face.

"Just the three of us? That's only one body difference..." Rullein narrowed her eyes.

"Is it? I don't believe so," Aristoria smiled at Rullein, there was confidence in her voice that made Rullein confused. "You must be thinking how am I so confident right now, and I'll tell you the answer. The answer is when you meet my child in the future. I have seen him, the one from the future, and I have seen it in his eyes that he's ready to devour this world," she looked down at Rullein with a soft gaze.

Rullein didn't know what to say because it was baffling for her to see that Aristoria seemed happy and excited. She had been following Aristoria for more than two decades, and she had never seen Aristoria like that. However, she knew who Aristoria was, she knew that Aristoria was the type who moved forward when she knew she could do it even if she was at odds.

"Rullein... I have raised you and taught you a lot of things. I will teach more in the future too, so can I ask you for a favor?" Aristoria whispered, caressing Rullein's hair.

"What kind of favor?" Rullein asked.

"Can you be my child's guardian? Watch him for me when I'm gone. You don't have to follow him if you found him not to your liking, but at least protect him when he's on the brink of death," Aristoria said with her brows raised.

"That's all?" Rullein asked.

"That's all..." Aristoria nodded.

"Okay, I'll see what I can do..." Rullein looked away, still didn't like the fact that Aristoria would leave her behind.

"Now, let me give you half of my remaining life to you, Rullein. After all, you're my child as well..." Aristoria said as she closed her eyes, forcing her life essence to enter Rullein's body.

At that moment, Aris witnessed how Aristoria spent almost all her life giving to others, leaving only a little so she could give it to her successor which was Aris. Aris saw the selfless act of Aristoria, something that she had never heard of or seen among Orthias.

"What are you preparing for us, Aristoria?" Aris muttered under her breath as she narrowed her eyes.

Chapter 334 - 334: Blind obedience.

Rasmus was inside a cabin in between the two cabins where all the records, documents, and archives that the Blackheart family had collected were. The cabin was made like a small library, and everything was neatly sorted, making it easy for him to find what he wanted. If he decided to read all of them, it would take him days without taking any breaks.

The first few documents that he took were about the new royal family that took over the Refenus Kingdom. He knew so little about them, and all he knew was that the new king was the younger brother of the previous one, who was at that time abroad, acting as a delegation of the Refenus Kingdom.

"Count..." A woman's voice could be heard from outside the cabin.

"Come in," Rasmus said, staring at the door.

The woman opened the door, bowing her head down when she noticed that Rasmus was staring at her. She brought a bowl of meat soup and a cup of water. Rasmus nodded at her, signaling her to approach him.

"I made the soup as you have instructed, Count. I'm unsure if I did it right, but I did my best," the woman said as she walked in and put the bowl of meat soup on the table.

"I trust your skill," Rasmus said as he took the bowl and put it close to his nose. He could tell if she had made it the right way because it smelled as good as his cooking.

"Thank you, Count," the woman bowed her head, overjoyed by the compliment.

"You're quite young to be a Black Hand. Perhaps you're only a few years older than me?" Rasmus asked, and took a sip of the broth that tasted like his own cooking.

"Yes, Count. I'll be 26 this year. I did my first mission when I was 9, two years before the rebellion started," the woman answered as she nodded.

"You're the youngest here compared to the others. In fact, you're the only young one when the others are at least ten years older than you," Rasmus said with his brows furrowed, curious about what had happened to the other Black Hands that were the same age as her.

"I believe I'm the only one, Count. I was raised and taught personally by the former Count, your father. I was different to the other Black Hands, I didn't grow up with the other Black Hands, I was alone until the former Count sent me on my first mission, meeting with the other Black Hands for the first time," the woman answered, standing still like a statue.

Rasmus wondered why the woman was raised differently compared to the other Black Hands. He couldn't find the answer behind it, and so he decided to ask her for the answer and told her to sit at the table with him.

"The former Count said that I would become the most important Black Hand in the future," the woman said as she looked down at her thighs. "I was the most inexperienced compared to the others, but ever since we became nomads, I was the only one who could gather information the easiest. The others believed they were being watched, while I always did it so smoothly," she added.

At that moment Rasmus found out the reason why his father raised the woman. He realized that the Black Hands' existence was to be revealed in the future after the rebellion. His father knew that once the Black Hands were revealed, the enemies would know how old they were by assuming the time that had passed since the rebellion. However, since the woman in front of her was still young, the enemies didn't bat an eye on her.

"(You were raising only one to avoid being exposed when some made mistakes. However, you created a burden that should be carried by many to one person. You chose a woman because the society takes less interest in them. You created a brilliant plan, but you put her human nature aside...)" Rasmus thought as he enjoyed his soup.

"What's your name?" Rasmus asked.

"Ayla, Count," the woman answered.

"Ayla, then I'll call you that from now on," Rasmus nodded as he put down the empty bowl.

Ayla saw how Rasmus didn't leave a single drop of soup in the bowl made her extremely happy. Rasmus could see it in her eyes, and noticed that she was indeed having been suppressing her emotions and feelings. However, Rasmus wondered if her happiness only revolved around the good things that had happened to him or if she could feel that emotion somewhere else.

"Now that you told your story, I assume you have been doing a lot of mission ever since the rebellion?" Rasmus asked, leaning back as he crossed his arms.

"Yes, I have been gathering all kinds of information in the past decade, Count said. These documents, they were from my observation, and I can assure you, they're all proven to be the right information," Ayla answered as she looked at the documents scattered on the table. "I have been gathering all kinds of information that I could get. Those shelves over there, they're all mine, Count," she continued as she pointed at the shelves in the back.

"I see..." Rasmus muttered as he looked at the shelves. "Turns out my father was right about choosing you, Ayla," he continued as he turned his head back to the front, looking at Ayla.

"Yes, thank you, Count," Ayla smiled shyly, however, when she noticed Rasmus's gaze, it was cold and stoic. She felt as if she had made a huge mistake by showing emotions, and she immediately put on a straight face and looked down again.

Rasmus was convinced that Ayla was indeed living her life to serve. Unlike Javi who owed his life and he was raised to be the best assassin in East Neva, Ayla was different. He didn't like blind faith, he despised them and he showed it when he spoke with Aurelia and Astrea about their blind faiths in Gods and the religion they spread.

"Tell me, Ayla, why do you serve me?" Rasmus asked coldly.

Ayla furrowed her brows while she was still hiding her face, she was confused by the question. She slowly lifted her head as she gathered her courage to look at Rasmus in the eyes.

"Because I was raised and taught by the Blackheart family, Count. I swore my loyalty to the Blackheart family, and to repay them for allowing me to live a comfortable life, an important asset that they can rely on," Ayla answered while she was still confused.

"So you serve the Blackheart family because they raised you? Is it because of your own accord or because they asked you to?" Rasmus asked, staring into Ayla's eyes.

"It's both, Count. However, I swear that I want to serve the Blackheart by my own accord more than because they asked me to," Ayla answered.

"Why?" Rasmus asked again.

Ayla was confused by the question again since she had given the answer as to why she served the Blackheart family. She couldn't answer with the same answer again because she knew it would disappoint Rasmus. However, she didn't know what kind of answer she should give to convince her loyalty.

"It's my choice, Count..." Ayla answered, this time she sounded a bit hesitant.

"So if I asked you to die, you would end yourself?" Rasmus asked.

"Yes,, I'll end myself if that's what you want, Count," Ayla answered without hesitation.

"Then do it," Rasmus nodded up, staring into Ayla's eyes coldly.

Ayla felt her heart stop for a second when she could tell that Rasmus was being serious about it. However, that was when a thought appeared in her head, she didn't want to die, she wanted to serve him.

"If I'm giving you two choice, to follow my order to end yourself or a choice that I'll grant you, which one will you choose?" Rasmus asked as he raised his brows.

Ayla's eyes roamed around Rasmus's face, thinking if this was some kind of a test. However, she didn't know what to choose, to follow order, or to choose a choice that Rasmus would grant her. The latter resonated with her more than her duty, her unbendable loyalty toward the Blackheart family.

"I will choose the latter, Count. I want to wish to follow you until the end of my life, Count..." Ayla answered as she lowered her head.

"Why? Didn't you say that you lived to serve the Blackheart family? Doesn't that mean every word I said is a command that you must follow?" Rasmus asked.

"Because I know I'm useful when I'm alive, Count..." Ayla answered, slowly doubting herself.

"Who said that you're useful?" Rasmus asked with his brows raised.

Ayla's heart felt like it was being squeezed that her eyes flinched because of that sting of pain. She didn't expect such a response, and it hurt her more than it should. She began to feel insignificant in that moment, realizing that she wasn't the person she believed she was. She began to see the hollowness within herself, she realized she was tough, intelligent, and skilled on the outside, but deep down, there was nothing inside.

"Come back to me in the morning and answer the question that I asked you, Ayla. You may leave now," Rasmus said as he continued to read the documents in front of him.

"Yes... Count..." Ayla slowly got up and bowed her head, her voice shaking and her gaze empty. She then left the cabin silently without making a noise.

Rasmus glanced at her, but then put his focus back on the documents.

Chapter 335 - 335: Journal of the past.

Rasmus was busy reading about the current situation in the Refenus Kingdom with Ayla's reports and observations. However, he couldn't stop getting distracted by the sound of slurping in front of him.

"Aris? You're acting a bit off right now..." Rasmus looked at Aris, sitting across from him with a few empty bowls on the table. "Did something happen during the spar with Rullein?" He asked with his brows furrowed, noticing that Aris was trying to attract his attention.

Yur also noticed how Aris had been acting a bit weird ever since she came back. Yur could sense the disruption of Mana around Aris as if her mind was in a jumble.

Aris put down the last bowl, the meat soup that was supposed to feed a dozen men, she ate them all on her own. She then stared at Rasmus, silently, she was thinking about what Aristoria had said to Rullein in that memory lane she had seen. She wondered how Rasmus could become something that was strong enough to defeat the mysterious powers that put True Dragons into extinction.

"Don't mind me, just do your things," Aris said, however, her eyes never leaving Rasmus's face. She then pulled Yur to her lap and hugged Yur tightly.

Rasmus closed his eyes for a moment as he took a deep breath. He decided to keep reading the documents, continuing to where he had left off.

The Refenus Kingdom was one of the vessel countries of the Zevrathi's. That was when Rasmus got confused because he had never heard of that name before. He looked through the shelves for hours and there was no information related to the Zevrathi's. He didn't know if it was a nation, a family, a person, or a cult because there was no record related to that.

The previous king, Fredrick Runesche was said to be one of the members of the high table of Zevrathi. All the Runesche family had served the Zevrathi for more than two hundred years, and lived a prosperous life.

The Refenus Kingdom's nobles were said to have become a part of the low-table. Out of 25 noble families, 21 of them were a part of it, creating a massive web that turned the Refenus Kingdom into one of the vessels of Zevrathi's.

"(The Runesche family, that includes the current king of the Refenus Kingdom...)" Rasmus thought as he crossed his arms.

Rasmus looked at the spatial ring on his finger, thinking if the answer to his question would be there. After thinking of the time he had and the amount of information he needed, he decided to pull out his father's journal.

Aris saw the journal in Rasmus's hand, remembering it was the item that he had been looking for. She was curious about the content of the journal, wondering if she would find out Aristoria's plan there.

Rasmus began to read Eraglade's journal from the moment he became the head of the Blackheart family when he was still 18. The first task that Eraglade got from King Fredrick was to investigate the revolutionary party that had grown in numbers. Eraglade gathered enough information to find out that the revolutionary party was prepared to raise their banner to get rid of the nobility system.

In less than a week, King Fredrick gave another task to Eraglade to eliminate the revolutionary party. Eraglade accomplished the King's order, eliminating the revolutionary party without the world knowing. He erased them and the family members that knew and connected with the revolutionary party.

At first, Eraglade didn't find anything suspicious out of it because he knew it was necessary. However, in the span of three years, he had been tasked with getting rid of the seeds of revolution. He always found it weird how many seeds out there that caused them to revolt, to show dissatisfaction toward the Refenus Kingdom. He was confident in his skills to eliminate such doubts from the roots, however, it didn't matter.

Eraglade decided to share his suspicions with the elders of the Blackhearts, and with his father as well. He gathered them all and expressed all he had achieved in the past few years. He was shocked when the elders revealed about the tasks his predecessors had done for the Refenus Kingdom.

Eraglade began to see the pattern, and found out that the Blackheart family had been tasked with cutting off the grass on the field for decades. That was when he was introduced to the Black Hands, a unit that dove into the abyss of lies, dying from suffocating and drowning in the pursuit of the truth.

The elders revealed that the Runesche family was the one who spread those seeds on the field. The nobles partook in it as well, playing both sides to lick the royal family's feet and to embrace the commoners to give them false hope, a path to their own demise by the hand of the Blackheart.

At that moment, Erglade was furious, but he understood the reason why his predecessors stayed quiet. He understood how dangerous and time consuming it was to pull out the truth from the abyss. It took them decades to find that out, and it was now in his hands to use that truth. That truth was pointed at one family.

"The Zevrathi, a family that has existed longer than the Blackheart family could trace. They have existed for more than five hundred years. Unfortunately, the elders and I couldn't find out where they were located." Erglade wrote in the journal.

Rasmus furrowed his brows, surprised that the answer that he was looking for was already revealed in the first few pages of the journal. He then looked at the thickness of the journal, there were at least a few hundred pages left. He could feel the weight of history that was being kept hidden from the world

Erglade began to use the Black Hands to do the tasks of gathering information on the nobles that were a part of the low table. He personally chose to deal with the royal family on his own, gathering information while at the same time acting like the royal family's dog.

When Erglade was 25 years old, he had gained the trust of the royal family, however, his task was still the same, to cut off the grass. He became well-known by the nobles and the people as the guardian of the Refenus Kingdom. That was when he got an offer by King Fredrick, to join the low table with the other nobles, to maintain the prosperity and wealth of the Blackheart family for hundreds of years in the future. That was when he chose to accept the offer, entering the den of a dangerous beast.

During his time at the low table, nothing seemed suspicious at all, especially when everything seemed normal, except how the nobles began to show interest in the Blackheart family. He knew that he was being observed thoroughly by the royal family, and that was a risk that he was willing to take. At the same time, the Black Hands found nothing suspicious about the nobles that joined the low table, no shady businesses. However, he found out that those nobles were close to nobles from neighboring nations.

Erglade spent years gathering information, connecting the dots that had turned into a massive cobweb. The elders of the Blackheart family were amazed by his skill, pulling out something like this. However, those gathered information worth anything unless they found anything odd or unusual. The weirdest part was the fact Erglade hadn't found out anything about Zevrathi.

One day, Erglade was summoned by King Fredrick, and it was unlike before where he was ordered to eliminate threats. This time, King Fredrick mentioned about the demonic cult, and that surprised him because he had never heard anything about the demonic cult.

"King Fredrick got information of a few incidents that had happened in the past two weeks of missing children. They found the bodies of the missing children to be missing their heads. I have done my research and it's similar to what witches and warlocks do to gain power through sacrifice. I'm not sure if it's them, or if it's something else. My father suspected that this was a trap, or another distraction that King Fredrick put on me, however, I believe this is different." Erglade wrote in the journal.

Rasmus noticed that the sun was rising, seeping through the window. He remembered about Ayla, and it was as he had expected, Ayla knocked on the door as soon as the sun rose. He immediately put the journal in the spatial ring and allowed Ayla to come in.

Ayla came in with an empty gaze, she looked like a mess when she stood at the door. Aris was confused by her condition until Yur explained everything to her in spirit language.

"Have you found the answer to my question, Ayla?" Rasmus asked as he stared into her empty eyes.

"No, Count..." Ayla shook her head. "I realized that my life means nothing without the Blackheart family. I... I don't have an answer to your question, Count, nor do I have a meaning in my life without the Blackheart family..." she continued.

"Then find a meaning. You're still young, and you're not being targeted like the others. Go out there and be free," Rasmus responded.

"I... I don't know if I can do that, Count. I don't know how or where to start. Also, I still genuinely want to follow you, Count. This isn't about what I was taught or ordered, but this is coming from my own will to follow you," Ayla said as she clenched her fists behind her back.

"Then you can follow me," Rasmus nodded with understanding.

Ayla was thrilled, couldn't hide the big smile on her face as she nodded with understanding then bowed her head.

"I'll prepare breakfast for everyone, Count," Ayla said and then left the cabin.

Rasmus sighed as he closed his eyes and rubbed his face. Aris noticed the exhaustion in Rasmus's face, something that she rarely saw.

"Too much?" Aris asked.

"A little bit..." Rasmus answered as he turned around to look at the shelves. "Let's deal with what's in front of us first," he said as he stood up.

"And what's that exactly?" Aris raised her brows.

"I promised the jester a stage to perform on. I believe I can use all of these information to set up a grand stage for him," Rasmus answered, leaning against the table with his arms crossed.

Chapter 336 - 336: Tag along.

"Count hasn't left the cabin?" Joshua asked Ayla who was busy making breakfast for everyone.

"No. The Count is busy reading all the records that we recovered. I'm not sure if the Count is going to leave the cabin anytime soon," Ayla answered as she put the herbs into the pot as soon as the soup began to boil.

"He must have read quite a lot of them since he had been there all night..." Joshua said as he helped Ayla prepare the meat and the vegetables. "So, what kept you up all night, Ayla?" He asked, cutting the meat evenly with a dagger.

Ayla looked at Joshua, didn't expect him to know what happened last night. She didn't know what to say, and she didn't want to tell him about it either because she believed it was a private matter.

"It's nothing..." Ayla shook her head with a soft smile on her face. "I... I just found out something important..." she continued.

Joshua was curious about two things. The first one was Ayla's words about her finding out something important. The second one was the fact that her demeanor had changed, no longer lifeless.

"I see, everyone seems happy as well. I believe it's because the Count is here with us. We found our purpose again," Joshua said as he put the meat into the pot. "Although, I feel like Count Rasmus is different from his late father. Something about him that makes him look so intimidating in a way..." he continued, lowering his voice, not wanting anyone to overhear his words.

Ayla looked at Joshua for a moment before she averted her gaze and thought of something similar. She respected the elders and even Eraglode, and she feared them. However, when she spoke with Rasmus, she felt a completely different sense of fear and anxiety.

"You're not wrong," Ayla nodded as she put the vegetables into the pot and began to stir the soup. "But, I like the Count. He's different from the elders and his late father," she added with a soft smile on her face.

Joshua was surprised once again when he saw Ayla's smile and how happy she looked. He knew that Ayla was in the cabin with Rasmus last night, but he didn't know what had happened. He wanted to pry on what was going on, but he knew it wasn't his place.

Erdinand had just come back from taking a bath in the river, and he saw Joshua and Ayla on the campfire preparing breakfast. He decided to join in and helped them prepare breakfast for everyone. When he was about to say something, he saw Rasmus walking out of the cabin with Aris and Yur.

"Good morning, My Lord," Erdinand bowed his head at Rasmus.

All the Black Hands immediately looked at Rasmus and they all bowed their heads at him. They admired him because they knew that Rasmus hadn't been asleep and kept himself busy reading the documents and archives that they had recovered. They felt proud about themselves because they had kept them safe and were useful to Rasmus.

"Is everyone here?" Rasmus asked as he looked at Joshua, Ayla, and Erdinand at the campfire.

"Some are going out hunting and foraging for vegetables and herbs, Count. Would you like to gather everyone here, My Lord?" Erdinand asked with his brows raised.

"Yes, please gather everyone after everyone has eat their breakfast," Rasmus nodded. "I'll go for a walk first, and it might take an hour. So all of you don't have to be in a hurry. Take your time," he said as he looked at everyone.

Everyone bowed once again and watched Rasmus leave with Aris and Yur.

Rasmus went to the dead tree after he heard what had happened after the spar. He wanted to know how Rullein was doing since she was in her spirit form because she had exhausted her energy from the spar with Aris. Based on what Yur said, spirits weren't like humans who could get injured and be unable to fully recover. Spirits could recover to their prime, and the time to recover depended on how strong the spirits were.

When Rasmus and Aris saw the lake in the distance, they saw Rullein, sitting under the dead tree with the black smoke that acted like leaves on the branches. Rullein had a relaxed expression, playing with the smoke that flowed in between her fingers like a river.

"I heard you won against Aris, Rullein," Rasmus said, standing on the edge of the lake, staring at her on the island.

Rullein slowly glanced at Rasmus and saw Aris standing beside him, hugging Yur in her arms. She slowly got up and turned into a puff of smoke while at the same time a puff of smoke appeared in front of Rasmus. The puff of smoke turned into Rullein, floating above the lake and staring at him with lazy eyes.

"I lost, it wasn't even close..." Rullein answered as she glanced at Aris. "She was holding herself back from unleashing all her power. She didn't want to nurture the seed within her," she continued.

Aris didn't say a word because Rullein was right about it. She had told that to Rasmus that she didn't want to become a True Dragon. She also didn't want to be a part of the Orthias anymore because her people had high expectations of her to become a True Dragon.

"You're following her path. Is it because of your own accord, or is it because deep within you that told you to do so?" Rullein asked with her brows raised.

"Does it matter if it was Aristoria's will or mine?" Aris asked back.

"No, it doesn't matter. I'm just thinking if you're fine when your path is predetermined by your predecessor," Rullein answered as she shook her head. "You were there, weren't you? You saw the memories of the dead tree, when Aristoria revealed her plan," she asked with her brows raised.

"I did, I listened everything," Aris nodded.

Rasmus looked at both of them back and forth, wondering what they were talking about. Hearing from Rullein's words and how she mentioned his mother, it made him curious. Suddenly, Rullein stared at him without saying a word, similarly to what Aris did last night when she stared at him without saying a word.

"What's your plan now, Rullein?" Rasmus asked with his arms crossed. "Are you going to stay here forever?" He added.

Rullein hummed as she rested her cheek on her palm, staring into Rasmus's eyes. She had no reason to stay in the forest anymore since Rasmus had come to see her. She also promised Aristoria that she would protect him, acting as his guardian. However, she still wanted to understand why Aristoria had entrusted the future to this man in front of him.

"Tell me what what you're planning to do with this world, Rasmus?" Rullein asked.

"I want to destroy it," Rasmus answered without hesitation.

"Destroy it?" Rullein narrowed her eyes.

"Give me a reason why should I not destroy it?" Rasmus asked back, staring into Rullein's eyes.

Rullein was born from resentment and hatred, and she didn't owe anyone or anything in this world. She had killed countless lives that entered the forest as her nourishment. She treated mortals as food, and similar to what Orthias saw in the human race, as an insignificant being.

"I have nothing," Rullein answered as she tilted her head. "But I can ask you the same thing. What's your reason behind your desire to destroy it?" She asked, touching her feet on the lake and freezing it in an instant.

"It's not a desire. I want to destroy it to see if there's someone strong enough to prevent me from doing so. If the world is so easily destroyed, I believe this world isn't worth saving in the first place. If it's easily broken, what's the point of keeping it intact," Rasmus answered.

"So you're testing what this world is capable of? Do you know that you're going to fight not just humans if you do so. Her people, they're going to hunt you down," Rullein pointed out.

"I know, and who knows if Aris would be there on the other side," Rasmus answered.

Rullein raised her brows, finding it interesting when Rasmus didn't even shy away from the possibility of Aris going against him. She then looked at Aris, and she saw nothing in her eyes or expression, completely shutting off her expression which made it impossible to read. Yur could feel how Aris's arms tightened around its body, so subtle that it was unnoticed by Rullein.

"That's interesting to hear, and oddly enough, we both have something in common. I don't mind fighting Orthias and getting rid of them from this world," Rullein answered, grinning and widening her eyes that glowed bright orange.

"Then, what's your answer to my question? What are you going to do now?" Rasmus asked.

"I'll tag along and see if you're only all talk and no bites," Rullein answered with a cold smile.

"Fair enough," Rasmus nodded with understanding. "Then I'll go back because I have something to do with the Black Hands," he said as he took a few steps back before he walked to the village.

Aris stayed behind, staring at Rullein with a stoic and cold expression. However, Rullein only let out a mischievous chuckle before she turned into smoke and disappeared into thin air.

Chapter 337 - 337: Raw emotions.

Everyone was gathered at the campfire, 50 Black Hands, a unit that Erglade believed to be able to destroy a nation in a single night. Rasmus stood there and looked at each one of them, remembering their faces under the morning sun that seeped through the leaves.

Before Rasmus could say a word, a thick black smoke appeared behind him. All the Black Hands knew what it was, and they were anxious about it. They had seen that black smoke roaming around the forest in the past decade. They knew it was the spirit that guarded the forest, the one that allowed them to stay in the forest.

Rullein showed her human form for the first time to the Black Hands. They were petrified and in disbelief when they saw the face of the Lady that had married their former master, Erglade. They were shocked when they saw Aristoria's face, the same beautiful, gentle, and friendly face.

The lingering black smoke that seeped through Rullein's head, shoulders, and back made everyone tremble. She looked like a ghost, a bad omen that would not only bring bad luck, but also death.

"What? Am I not allowed to be here?" Rullein raised her brows as she stared at Rasmus, who seemed confused by her presence.

"No, not at all..." Rasmus closed his eyes as he shook his head, and then when he opened his eyes, he saw Aris and Yur coming from the corner of his eyes.

Rullein didn't need to turn around, and she already had a wide smirk on her face when she felt Aris's cold gaze that pierced through her nape. The amount of dark energy that she produced had increased, looming over the forest. The surroundings became dark as black smoke covered the air, preventing sunlight from piercing through. The Black Hands could feel the immense tension in the air when Aris and Rullein were in the same place.

Rasmus cleared his throat, taking the Black Hands attention back to him. He then pulled out the documents from the spatial ring and began to read them one by one.

"Based on the report that Ayla had gathered, the Refenus Kingdom and the nobles are still one of the vessels of the Zevrathi. It seemed my father's rebellion went to waste, close to pointless," Rasmus said with a stoic expression as he read the documents in his hands. "Now I understand why they have been trying to look for me. I encountered them when I was hiding in the forest two years ago..." he continued, remembering the assassins who tried to kill him. "The Wraiths..." he muttered, and found out that the Wraiths existed in the report.

The Black Hands were surprised when Rasmus had encountered The Wraiths. They had gathered enough information about them in the past decade, and found out they were one of the extensions of the low-table. They didn't expect Rasmus to be able to escape from The Wraiths' grasp because those people were trained assassins.

"I have a task for all of you to do," Rasmus put down the documents in his hands. "Gather as much information as you can on Viscount Heward and his merchant guild the Silver Platter," he said as he looked at the Black Hands in front of him.

"I need a few of you, the ones that are fit for another task. I need you to gather information about the ceremony of Princess Amarylis's coming of age. I need all the lists of the guests that are invited, and point out which of them that are a part of the low-table," Rasmus continued as he looked at Ayla. "I need all the information to be send to me in 3 days," he said with a serious look.

None of the Black Hands looked away or stole glances at each other. They received the order loud and clear, and there was no uncertainty in their gazes. However there was one person that raised his hand, and it was the man with the scarred face.

"My Lord, if I may ask, what are we going to do with this order? We would be able to make your plan even smoother if we knew what my lord was planning to do with the information," the scarred faced man asked.

"I'll make them all disappear," Rasmus answered, staring right into the man's eyes.

There were only raw emotions that the Black Hands showed in their eyes and expressions. They had never thought of the day of seeking revenge to finally come true. They could see the confidence in Rasmus's eyes that only fueled their desire to kill the people who had used Erglade and the Blackheart family like a tool, and then executed them all in front of the public. There wasn't a greater feeling that they could feel at that moment, the bloodlust, the killing intent, they were felt in the air.

Rullein was exalted, she was grinning from ear to ear as her eyes began to glow. She could taste the delicious taste of human emotions. She could devour them all in their current states that were enough to satiate her needs for months. However, she didn't want to do it, and by smelling their emotions was enough to bring the appetite to devour humans.

"Today will be the last day that all of you living in this forest," Rasmus said as he looked at them with a serious expression. "Feast and drink all you want because from tomorrow and onward, all you'll see is only chaos and death. If there's nothing else, you all may enjoy your peaceful day for one last time. We will meet again at the Drunel Town at dawn of the 4th day," he continued as he nodded his head.

All the Black Hands bowed their heads and began to prepare their belongings. They didn't need to indulge themselves in worldly affairs. They had long abandoned those needs, only necessity.

Rasmus went into the cabin where all the records and archives were stored. He touched them all with his fingers, putting them in the spatial ring. The messy and preserved cabin became empty, leaving only empty shelves and dust that lingered on the back of the shelves and on the walls.

Rasmus only went inside the cabin for a few minutes, but when he came out, he was surprised when he saw that all the Black Hands were ready to leave. They were waiting for him, and they were ready for whatever they were going to face to gather the information that he wanted.

"My Lord, we will take our leave now," the scarred faced man said.

"You, what's your name," Rasmus asked.

"Herman, My Lord," the scarred faced man answered as he lowered his head.

"Good luck, to all of you," Rasmus said as he looked at the others, knowing he needed to know everyone's name.

All the Black Hands bowed their heads and immediately left the forest. There was no sound when they ran, and they didn't leave any trace on the ground when they pressed their feet on the grass. It was enough to tell how skilled they were at moving like shadows in bright daylight.

Rasmus looked at Aris, sitting at the campfire while Yur, in its child form stood in front of her. He noticed the frown on Yur's face as Yur stared at Aris, and he decided to join in and ask what was happening.

"Am I really going to stay here?" Yur asked, looking at Aris.

"She's not going to be here, you don't need to be scared of her," Aris answered as she stared at Rullein, staring down at her with a smug look on her face. "This place won't be scary for you. There are so many spirits here, and this place is good for you and the other spirits to live in," she continued.

Rasmus could understand immediately where Aris failed to understand.

"Yur wants to stay by your side, Aris," Rasmus pointed out as he looked down at Yur's shy gesture by playing with its tiny fingers while pouting.

Aris raised her brows, didn't expect Yur to get attached to her because she thought that Yur feared her. She felt warmth in her chest when she saw how Yur wanted to stay by her side, and it gave her happiness, something that she had never felt before.

Rullein was a bit disturbed by that happiness that Aris felt because it reminded her of Aristoria. She remembered how happy and caring Aristoria was whenever she visited her.

"Is there any Great Spirits here, Rullein?" Rasmus asked as he looked at Rullein's gaze that was cold toward Aris.

"Yes, there are three Great Spirits here. There are three territories here that I allow them to rule over," Rullein answered, her gaze still pointed at Aris.

"Then it's settled. I think you can let go all the spirits here and let the other Great Spirits take care of them while Yur can follow you," Rasmus said as he crossed his arms.

Yur pleaded with its eyes at Aris, hoping that she would take Yur with her. Suddenly, Aris smiled softly at Yur and carried Yur in her arms like a plush toy. They both looked so happy together, and Rasmus could have Yur around since Yur had shown how useful Yur could be.

"Where are we going now?" Aris asked, looking at Rasmus with her brows raised.

"Well, let's meet those people that have been following us ever since we left the Holy Nation..." Rasmus answered as he pulled out his suit from the spatial ring and put it on. "It's our turn to follow them now..."

Chapter 338 - 338: Beyond the world.

The five robbed men ran without making a single noise, they were all running side by side until they all decided to go separately. They looked over their shoulders and found nobody was chasing them. Their eyes glowed red, checking to see if they were still being chased. However they found nobody behind them, but they didn't stop running because they knew they should keep running.

As the five of them entered a small village, they hid in the shadows behind the houses. They were separated, but they could feel each other's presence. Their silent ragged breath and their gazes that were pointed at every corner showed how anxious they were. They never thought that they would be the ones who got chased, and the fact they were threatened by a mere presence in the distance was enough to make them anxious.

They were about to regroup when suddenly the night sky became a lot darker. They looked up and saw the black smoke that was slowly covering the whole village. They immediately tried to run away from the village as fast as they could. However, as soon as they stepped their feet out of the village, the black smoke had already covered the village. They tried to use their magic and brute strength to break the smoke, but they all bounced back at them.

No matter how hard they tried to cut through the thick smoke with their swords, they couldn't make the smoke disperse. They had no choice but to get out of the bodies they possessed, revealing their demon

forms. They tried to use their demonic energy to devour the smoke, and to their surprise, the smoke that they devoured began to eat them from the inside.

They began to screech in pain, however, their screams were silent. They couldn't produce any sound as they were being devoured from within. They all collapsed to the ground as their tar-like bodies melted to the ground.

"Keep one alive for me..." A man's voice was heard from behind the demons.

The demons slowly turned around and saw Rasmus and Aris staring down at them with a cold gaze. They were unable to beg as their insides melted and were torn apart. They then saw Rullein, appearing from thin air in the form of a ball of black smoke until it personified into a human body.

The demons gargled with their glowing red eyes, glaring at those three. Slowly but surely, their eyes no longer glowed, revealing that they were losing their powers and dying. They all collapsed, leaving one alive as Rasmus had requested.

The one demon under Rasmus's mercy watched as the other demons turned into black smoke. It looked like they were evaporating as their existence disappeared into thin air just like the black smoke.

The demon had lost all its power, powerless and weakened as it tried to crawl away. Rasmus raised his hand, pulling out his sword from the spatial ring then stabbed at the demon's tar-like body.

"Kieeek!" The demon screeched as it tried to keep crawling but its body was stuck on the ground.

Although the demon screeched so loudly, no villagers were awakened by it. The space between them and those three was separated by Rullein's power. They could do whatever they wanted to the demons, and nobody would know that pain and death existed that night.

"Who sent you?" Rasmus asked as he walked to the front, facing the demon's face.

"Just kill me..." The demon screeched with its glaring eyes pointed at Rasmus. "Do you think I'm stupid like humans? I know you won't keep me alive even if I said everything," the demon continued.

Rasmus knew that, and he still tried anyway because he wanted to know how much demons valued their lives. He then took a few steps to the side when Rullein suddenly appeared in front of the demon.

"I'll devour your whole existence and read everything you know..." Rullein grinned as she grabbed the demon's head and began to cover the demon with black smoke.

As a Dark Spirit, they were said to be the chaos in order and were also above nature's law just like True Dragons. That was why Rullein was capable of reading memories and creating spatial spaces as she pleased. However, there was one thing that Rullein was unprepared for, and that was the truth beyond the world, the existence of higher beings.

Rasmus could see in Rullein's eyes the fear and the pain that she felt from the demon's memories.

"Aris, can you make her unconscious?" Rasmus asked as he kept his gaze at Rullein's expression that became darker and darker.

Without thinking twice, Aris coated her fist with blue energy and Aura. She punched Rullein right in the face, creating a massive shockwave that was enough to break the spatial space that Rullein had made. Rullein hit the ground so hard that it left a big crater, and that woke all the villagers when they felt the ground shaking.

Rasmus hurriedly carried Rullein in his arms and left the village with Aris and Yur following him from behind. Yur turned around and manipulated the ground, making sure they didn't leave any evidence of a fight that happened. Yur buried the bodies of the humans that the demons possessed, deep into the ground and made sure the villagers wouldn't smell or find out about it.

The moment they had gone far enough, Rasmus put Rullein down, noticing that she was still unconscious. He wondered if Aris punched Rullein too hard or not, but to him, it looked like she punched her more than necessary.

"Ugh..." Rullein groaned as she reached out to her face, feeling the pain on her face.

Rullein slowly opened her eyes, and she immediately flinched not from the pain but from something that she had seen before Aris knocked her out. She looked shocked as she slowly sat up with her pale face because she vividly remembered most of the demon's memories.

"You saved my life..." Rullein said as she held her forehead, closing her eyes as if she tried to erase what she had just seen.

Aris was intrigued by what Rullein saw that made her out of her character like that. She knew that Rullein was quite the opposite of her, and they both could be said to be the ones who were capable of knowing the truth. However, seeing Rullein like that and how pale she was, Aris wondered what made Rullein so scared like that. That question then was pointed at Rasmus who oddly knew that Rullein wouldn't be able to comprehend the demon's memories.

"Did Videl make you watch what it was like to live in hell?" Aris asked.

"Yes, I experienced it myself," Rasmus nodded. "I wasn't just seeing memories, I was brought to hell by him," he continued. Sourced directly from NovelFire.

Rullein glanced at Rasmus and narrowed her eyes for a bit, realizing what she saw was what humans called hell.

"Hell... so that was hell?" Rullein asked in a muttered voice. "And who's Videl?" She looked at Rasmus and Aris with her brows furrowed.

"He's the Devil, the ruler of hell, the one that's currently working with me," Rasmus answered as he offered his hand to Rullein.

Rullein's eyes widened because she saw in the demon's memory of a being that was bigger than the sky itself. A being with its breath could topple and send mountains flying, a being that made True Dragons look like tamed cats. Even though it was only a glimpse, she knew the being that she saw was the person called Videl, the being called the Devil that all demons feared.

Rullein looked at Rasmus's hand, realizing what Aristoria had said about him. The man with the eyes who would devour the world, and it was at that moment she understood why Aristoria had entrusted

the future in his hand. She closed her eyes for a moment to take a deep breath before she grabbed Rasmus's hand and pulled herself up.

"You need to tell me everything, your adventure ever since Aristoria died," Rullein said as she kept holding Rasmus's hand and pulled him closer to her. "I want to know everything," she stared into Rasmus's eyes.

"You'll know everything, don't worry. Our journey is still far, and there are people that you might be interested in," Rasmus nodded with understanding. "But for now, what did you find from the demon's memories? Did you find out where Nemu's location?" He asked with his brows raised.

"Nemu... that thing is a powerful demon..." Rullein narrowed her eyes as she glanced at the distance.

"Yes, he's called the Fallen Watcher, and there are a lot of them here in Neva. He's only one of the many," Rasmus nodded.

"I know where he is, but it's quite far from here..." Rullein answered.

"How far?" Rasmus asked.

"He's located in the Cerdantis Kingdom, and there are two demons that are like him, the Fallen Watchers," Rullein answered as she pointed to the northwest.

"That's too far..." Rasmus hummed as he nodded his head with understanding. "And there are three of them in total as well," he stared at the distance where Rullein was pointing at. "Let's pay them a visit once we are done with the Refenus Kingdom," he looked at Aris and Rullein.

They both nodded with understanding.

Chapter 338 - 338: Beyond the world.

The five robbed men ran without making a single noise, they were all running side by side until they all decided to go separately. They looked over their shoulders and found nobody was chasing them. Their eyes glowed red, checking to see if they were still being chased. However they found nobody behind them, but they didn't stop running because they knew they should keep running.

As the five of them entered a small village, they hid in the shadows behind the houses. They were separated, but they could feel each other's presence. Their silent ragged breath and their gazes that were pointed at every corner showed how anxious they were. They never thought that they would be the ones who got chased, and the fact they were threatened by a mere presence in the distance was enough to make them anxious.

They were about to regroup when suddenly the night sky became a lot darker. They looked up and saw the black smoke that was slowly covering the whole village. They immediately tried to run away from the village as fast as they could. However, as soon as they stepped their feet out of the village, the black smoke had already covered the village. They tried to use their magic and brute strength to break the smoke, but they all bounced back at them.

No matter how hard they tried to cut through the thick smoke with their swords, they couldn't make the smoke disperse. They had no choice but to get out of the bodies they possessed, revealing their demon forms. They tried to use their demonic energy to devour the smoke, and to their surprise, the smoke that they devoured began to eat them from the inside.

They began to screech in pain, however, their screams were silent. They couldn't produce any sound as they were being devoured from within. They all collapsed to the ground as their tar-like bodies melted to the ground.

"Keep one alive for me..." A man's voice was heard from behind the demons.

The demons slowly turned around and saw Rasmus and Aris staring down at them with a cold gaze. They were unable to beg as their insides melted and were torn apart. They then saw Rullein, appearing from thin air in the form of a ball of black smoke until it personified into a human body.

The demons gargled with their glowing red eyes, glaring at those three. Slowly but surely, their eyes no longer glowed, revealing that they were losing their powers and dying. They all collapsed, leaving one alive as Rasmus had requested.

The one demon under Rasmus's mercy watched as the other demons turned into black smoke. It looked like they were evaporating as their existence disappeared into thin air just like the black smoke.

The demon had lost all its power, powerless and weakened as it tried to crawl away. Rasmus raised his hand, pulling out his sword from the spatial ring then stabbed at the demon's tar-like body.

"Kieeek!" The demon screeched as it tried to keep crawling but its body was stuck on the ground.

Although the demon screeched so loudly, no villagers were awakened by it. The space between them and those three was separated by Rullein's power. They could do whatever they wanted to the demons, and nobody would know that pain and death existed that night.

"Who sent you?" Rasmus asked as he walked to the front, facing the demon's face.

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Chapter 340 - 340: Troublemakers.

Rasmus stared at Aris and Rullein who made a scene and involved the town guards. He didn't know what had happened that made those two beat up nine men and made their faces unrecognizable. He had no choice but to meddle in and approached those two who seemed proud of themselves.

"What did you do?" Rasmus looked at both of them while the town guards were pointing their spears at them.

"These hu—" before Rullein could finish her sentence, Aris elbowed her right in the gut. "These men, they were asking for it. They bothered our peaceful time while we were enjoying our drink," she answered.

Rasmus glanced at Aris, staring at her in disbelief because he thought that she would be mature enough to stop Rullein. However, it was quite the opposite, she joined Rullein and enjoyed her time beating on these men.

"All of you! Come with us! You have disturbed the peace!" The town guard shouted at the three of them.

Rullein and Aris glanced coldly at the town guard, and with their sharp eyes and tall figures, it was enough to make the guard's hands tremble. Rasmus immediately threw a pouch of gold coins right under the guard's foot. The sound of coins attracted everyone's attention who was on the scene.

The town guard's eyes widened when he saw the glimpse of gold coins inside the pouch. He immediately took it from the ground before anyone could steal it from him.

"I believe that should be enough to pay for the inconveniences. Of course, we will pay for the damage and to treat these men. I hope we can let this pass," Rasmus said with a calm and stoic expression. His tanned skin and dark hair made him look like a wealthy man from East Neva.

Rasmus took the opportunity to create an image as a wealthy man from East Neva. The more eyes on him with the rumors of his wealth and generosity, it would make things go smoothly for later plans.

"Do you think you can go that easily? You disturb the peace, and you have to be punished for it," the town guard said with a smirk on his face.

"That pouch," Rasmus pointed at the pouch in the town guard's hand. "You have taken it and meaning you agree with letting this pass," he said, his face still calm.

"Oh, this is for the inconveniences as you said. But no, I didn't say that I could let this pass," the town guard answered with a smug look on his face.

"Your greed knows no bounds. You don't value your life, aren't you?" Rasmus asked, his gaze becoming cold as he walked toward the town guard.

The town guard arched his brows, scoffing at Rasmus's threat. He immediately signaled to the other town guards to point their spears at Rasmus.

However, when they pointed their spears at Rasmus, who was getting closer, they felt immense heat. They had no idea what was happening until they saw their spearheads melt. Their hands began to feel the immense heat and made them throw away their spears to the ground.

Everyone watched everything unfold from the sides and they were petrified by Rasmus's power. They were glad that they didn't partake in this, and they knew how fucked up the town guards were after they provoked the mysterious man.

"Is there any law that can prevent me from killing you?" Rasmus asked as he stood in front of the town guard, who was petrified by what had just happened.

"He—here, My Lord... Please take this back..." The town guard offered the pouch of gold to Rasmus again. His hands trembled in fear as he tried his best to keep his hands up.

"No, I did say that I give that money for causing a problem and for the inconveniences. It's yours, and you can use that to buy new weapons for the guards," Rasmus said as he looked down at the town guard. "But will you let it pass?" He asked with his cold gaze staring into the guard's eyes.

"Yes? Yes! Yes, we will let it pass! Thank you for your generosity, My Lord!" The guard bowed his head repeatedly. "We will take our leave!" He said and then signaled the other guards to leave.

Rasmus sighed as he watched the guards run for their lives. He then turned around to deal with Aris and Rullein, it was the first time he looked at them with a stern look. Aris knew that he was annoyed, and it was the first time she saw him getting annoyed by something.

"Are you done here?" Rasmus asked, staring at both of them.

"Yes, we are done here," Aris nodded.

"Wait, I haven't drank everything ye—" Rullein said but got interrupted by Aris's elbow on her gut once again. "One more time you do that, I'll repay you a thousand fold..." She glanced at Aris coldly.

Aris treated Rullein like air, ignoring Rullein's threat which only fueled Rullein's frustration.

"You'll drink something more expensive later. You can drink as much as you want," Rasmus said as he broke the tension between the two. "Come on, we have to meet the Viscount. You can enjoy the

expensive drink there," he looked at Rullein. This+ c-o@n^t#en+t is pres\$e.n*t-ed! by M!4V\$L&EM^PY-R.

Rullein crossed her arms and nodded with understanding while Aris was shaking her head in disbelief. Rasmus realized having those two around would bring more trouble as they moved. Those two reminded him of siblings, always picking a fight with each other and there was nothing that could stop them or when they would fight each other.

Gorge watched everything from his office when the commotion happened. He was frozen still, seeing how Rasmus could be aggressive like that when someone tried to push their boundaries. He was glad that he chose to be on Rasmus's good side, and he was lucky enough that Rasmus didn't do something like that to him.

"I really have to pack my things up, and leave when it's time to leave..." Gorge muttered under his breath before he walked away from the window.

The three of them went to the place where Viscount Heward lived, the biggest mansion in town. People were looking at them and realized where they were going, and it made them murmur with each other thinking if they were esteemed guests of the Viscount.

When they stood at the fence gates, the knight stopped them and approached them. The knight narrowed his eyes when he looked at them until Rasmus pulled out the letter from his suit. He looked at the seal that belonged to Viscount Heward, the Fergel house seal. The knight immediately moved to the side and ordered the other knights behind the gate to open it.

They looked at how big the mansion was and how it almost looked like a palace, quite unnatural for a Viscount. The fountain and the gardens with rare plants decorated the outer layer of the mansion. They saw a few maids and the butler came out of the mansion in a hurried manner. They wanted to welcome them to the mansion, and to guide them inside, which meant Heward already knew about their arrival.

The butler and the maids escorted them into the mansion, and they were welcomed with the luxurious chandelier and the big paintings of Heward and his family. The butler stole a glance at those three and noticed that none of them were impressed by the luxury. The butler was tasked with checking every guest's expression when they entered the mansion, and to report it to Heward to understand what kind of person that Heward was going to meet.

"My Master is waiting for you in the parlor. Please come this way," the butler said as he pointed his hand at the hallway.

The three of them entered the parlor and noticed how spacious it was with its own dining table, couches, and shelves of luxurious items made of gold and silver. They saw a fat man with gray hair, sitting on the couch with his gaze pointed at the fireplace.

"You can leave us, Bern..." The fat man said, his voice quiet. "Please, have a seat..." He turned his head to look at the three of them with a gentle smile.

The butler left and closed the door in front of him while Rasmus, Aris, and Rullein walked toward the couch. Rasmus could see the calm in Heward's eyes, and it intrigued him because he had seen many people like that. The eyes of people who knew they were in control and knew how to use it.

"Ladies... and gentelman..." Heward looked at the three of them who sat across from him. "Welcome to my humble place. I'm quite honored to be meeting with such esteemed guests," he smiled softly, not looking away and kept his eyes on them.

The three of them didn't say a word and just stared at Heward with a stoic expression. Anyone would feel anxious, but not him, he was as calm as water.

"May I know your name?" Heward asked with his brows raised, staring at Rasmus who sat in the middle.

Rasmus pulled out a crest from his suit pocket and slowly put it down on the coffee table. The crest of a snake wrapping its body on an egg, the only crest that would put everyone on the edge, the crest of the Asghar family. At that moment, Heward was shaken by the revelation of the people in front of them that appeared to be from the Asghar family.

"Do we need to explain it more?" Rasmus asked.

"No.. but I would appreciate it if I could know your name, My Lord, and Lady..." Heward answered.

"You can call me Vije," Rasmus answered. "She's Sira, and she's Lurein," he introduced Aris as Sira and Rullein as Lurein.