

Evil 361

Chapter 361 - 361: Aider Sullivan.

Rasmus listened to the Jester's full story and who he was before he became a Jester. He was an ordinary farmer, but he learned the art of stealth, espionage, and assassination from Celline. He had the talent to learn those things and learned all three arts in just a few years.

The Jester met with Celline similar to when she met her end, being heavily wounded. He treated Celline's wounds and hid her from her enemies. During that whole week, he fell in love with her, but she pushed him away as she distanced herself from him. However, fate made them see each other more than once or twice.

Celline was tasked with embezzlement and stealing documents from corrupted low-ranking nobles and merchants. The Jester, who was a farmer was one of the many people that suffered from those people. Countless of times Celline came to rescue him as a token of gratitude for saving her life.

"Celline wasn't your late father's favorite, Count. She was nothing to the other Black Hands, and she always tried to push beyond her limits, and that oftentimes caused more problems. She wanted to prove herself worthy," the Jester said as he stared at the gate entrance where he hung the heads of the royal family. "Celline didn't want to admit it, but your father was a man who didn't respect others until they proved they were worthy of his respect. He was an arrogant prick in my eyes, and if only he didn't act like that, Celline wouldn't have tried to push herself beyond her limit and capability. She would be still alive by now..." he muttered with his jaw clenched, staring into Rasmus's eyes with his disfigured and deformed face.

Rasmus only heard the good things about his father from others, and he knew there was more than just that. He knew that Erglade wasn't a perfect human, and finally he could see one of Erglade's traits.

"So you despised the Blackheart family and the royal family equally?" Rasmus asked, his gaze cold.

"Yes..." The Jester answered, the word filled with unending hatred and rage. "But you weren't the one who caused Celline's death, and I'm grateful that you gave me the opportunity to fulfill my revenge," he said as he lowered his head.

"I see that you're quite rational even for someone who doesn't care about morality anymore," Rasmus said with his arms crossed, staring up at the hanging heads of the royal family above him. "But you haven't given your name, Nameless man."

For a brief moment, the Jester's gaze seemed to be searching for something. He almost forgot his name, the name that Celine used to mutter and give comfort to him.

"Aider... Aider Sullivan..." The Jester muttered.

"What are you going to do now, Aider? To live a quiet life until you finally die in peace?" Rasmus asked as he turned his head toward the entrance and saw Rullein walking beside Aris. "But the question is, do you even feel peace after you have achieved what you came for? Or is it the pain and the nightmare remains?" He asked as he walked away toward Aris, to check if she was okay.

Aider slowly turned his head toward Rasmus, thinking about what he had just heard. He knew the moment he embraced his madness, peace had turned into something dark and comforting, an illusion. He slowly looked down as he listened to the sound of dripping blood from above that hit the ground. He didn't know what he wanted to do in life because he never thought he would reach this far, to take the lives of the royal family.

Aris looked at Aider and was confused as to what had happened to his face. However, Rullein placed her hands on Aris's shoulder, allowing Aris to watch the gruesome memory of Aider first-hand. It felt like a blink of an eye when she relived Aider's memory and watched how humans butchered and mutilated Celine.

"You're feeling better?" Rasmus asked, staring into Aris's eyes.

"Yes, but it's complicated..." Aris answered as she stared at Aider, realizing and understanding how his madness was justified. "I might have been tainted," she said and stared into Rasmus's eyes.

Rasmus furrowed his brows, not understanding what tainted meant in Aris's explanation. However, Rullein chose to explain it to him that basically Aris's body had been marked. She would be easily detected by the demon's master and those who were close to the master. To put it simply, Aris wouldn't be able to hide her identity even if she changed her appearance as her whole existence had been marked by Satan.

"Smart..." Rasmus muttered under his breath, realizing that Satan had brought the wyverns with the sole purpose of marking him or Aris. "Once we regroup with Videl and Serena, let's see if those two can do something about that mark. Until then, don't bother to think about it," he said, nodding with understanding.

Aris nodded with understanding while Rullein had been smiling and grabbing Aris's shoulders as if those two had something intimate going on. Those two were usually against each other's throats, but somehow their closeness was a bit unnerving to Rasmus.

Ayla and Erdinand walked out of the palace and approached Rasmus before they lowered their heads.

"Everyone is ready to leave, My Lord. What will be our task?" Erdinand asked.

Rasmus turned around to look at the Jester who seemed to be frozen in time. He then glanced at Erdinand, wondering if he knew anything about Celline.

"Do you know Celline that used to be a Black Hand?" Rasmus asked.

"Celline? My Lord?" Erdinand furrowed his brows, surprised that Rasmus knew about Celline. "Yes, My Lord. She was a part of the Black Hand but went missing during a mission, and we assumed she's dead," he answered.

"She's dead," Rasmus nodded his head, affirming that. "That Jester over there is her husband. Do you know that?" He asked with his brows raised.

Erdinand and Ayla looked at Aider, they were shocked that Celline had a husband. They had never seen any Black Hands to have any form of relationship or intimacy toward other people. Ayla looked at the Jester's real face, deformed and disfigured, slowly understanding what had driven him to insanity.

"Aider, can I borrow your time?" Rasmus called.

Aider slowly turned his head to look at Rasmus, Ayla and Erdinand. He didn't care when Ayla showed a bit of discomfort when she saw his face. He slowly walked toward them with a cold and empty gaze.

"Have you decided what are you going to do with your life now?" Rasmus asked.

"No, I haven't, Count," Aider answered as he shook his head.

"I can't give you purpose in life, nobody can," Rasmus said as he stared into Aider's eyes, never bothered or lingered on his deformed face. "But I can give you something to do, to prevent the pain and the nightmare from consuming you completely," he offered as he crossed his arms.

"To be your worker, just like these people?" Aider smirked as he tilted his head toward Erdinand and Ayla. "To be used and then be forgotten when you're done with me?" He added.

Aider chuckled eerily as he shook his head and then slowly stared at Rasmus. He knew that Rasmus was trying to be considerate when the face Rasmus could easily make him bend and forced him to accept the offer in the end. However, he didn't want that to happen because it would only make himself look weak and powerless.

"I believed I had made a deal with you, Count. You gave me the stage and allowed me to kill the royal family with my own hands. In exchange, you wanted me to be a part of your circle, and I remember that," Aider said and turned into manic laughter, trying to prepare himself for what was about to come. "Fine, I'll accept your offer, Count. Tell me what you want me to do," he grinned as he glared at Rasmus.

"I want you to spread the words that I, Rasmus Blackheart killed the royal family and all the guests during Princess Amarylis's coming-of-age ceremony. And I want you to tell the world that I'm also the one who flattened the capital city, killing all the innocent lives," Rasmus said with a cold smile on his face.

"You want me to travel across nations to speak of your deeds? Me?" Aider asked.

"You have an amazing skill to recite, your poems, your melodies, and your songs. You will be the only person that I could think of to spread my deeds with such attraction," Rasmus answered as he looked at

Erdinand and Ayla. "However, you won't be alone. I will spread the Black Hands to do the same but in their own methods," he added as he nodded.

Erdinand and Ayla lowered their heads, understanding their task.

"What about us? Where are we going?" Rullein asked with her head tilted.

"We are going to the Cerdantis Kingdom. We are going to pay Nemu a visit," Rasmus answered as he looked up at the sky. "It's time we push the rat into the corner and let it dig and bit every obstacle that prevents him from escaping."

Chapter 362 - 362: The unblinking gazes.

Aurelia stared at her reflection, wearing a mitre hat and a white robe. She took a deep breath as she closed her eyes before she heard a soft knock on the door. She didn't respond and kept herself silent for a moment before she finally decided to speak.

"Yes?" Aurelia asked, her gaze lingering on her reflection in the mirror.

"Everyone is almost here," Serena's voice could be heard from behind the door. "I have nothing but bad news for you," she warned.

Aurelia let out a shuddering breath before she turned around and approached the door. She slowly opened the door and saw Serena wearing a simple white gown and a circlet on her head. She realized that Serena had the air of being a Saint more than herself, feeling like she was just a child playing a Saint in the face of a real Saint. However, she shook that thought and knew it wouldn't matter soon enough.

"Bad news?" Aurelia moved aside and pointed at the couch.

"Demons, powerful ones are here. Wearing the skins of humans or even shape themselves like one," Serena said, her voice soft and soothing as she walked past Aurelia and went to sit on the couch. "The time is short. You can change your mind before it's too late," she pointed out, sitting on the couch and staring out at the window.

Aurelia closed the door behind her and walked to the couch, placing herself across from Serena. She had to carefully sit down because she didn't want her robe to crumple and become unpresentable. The moment Serena's eyes met hers, Serena knew that Aurelia wasn't planning to back down, and had steeled her heart.

"Chaos it is then..." Serena smiled softly at Aurelia, nodding her head with understanding.

"You have seen it, and I have never asked what you think of it. Can I ask you that now? What do you think about the secret that this nation and my family have kept hidden from the world?" Aurelia asked with uncertainty in her voice.

"Your whole nation should be burned down and disappear from this world," Serena said with a cold gaze pointed right into Aurelia's soul. "Humans can be purer than angels, but they can also be more vile and evil than demons. Your family, they fall on the second category," she pointed at Aurelia, affirming how sickening the truth was.

Aurelia's heart clenched, didn't expect to hear a blatant truth like that. She also said something similar to her mother when she found out about the truth. She realized how painful it was, to be looked at and to be told at like that.

"I know..." Aurelia muttered as she lowered her head.

However, the atmosphere got defused when a priestess knocked on the door, informing that all the guests had gathered in the great peristyle. Aurelia was anxious and her hands couldn't stop trembling because she knew that there was no going back. She exhaled deeply as she rose from the couch and fixed her robe before she told the priestess to announce that she would be there soon.

"Will you stay by my side, Saint Serena?" Aurelia asked, her voice shaky and breathy.

"Of course, Saint Aurelia. After all, I'm one of the countless victims that your family has murdered," Serena answered as she stood up and offered her arm to Aurelia.

Aurelia nodded as she wrapped her arm around Serena's arm and began to leave her chamber. They went straight to the great peristyle, and their presence was enough to make everyone quiet. The kings, queens, leaders, and powerful figures began to murmur about the rumors that had been going on

"They're here, I can feel them..." Serena muttered as she kept her chin up high and faced forward, unbothered by the intense gazes. "Beware..." she warned, her voice low and cold.

Aurelia nodded and kept her face forward toward the podium that had been prepared for her. She then glanced at Astrea, being surrounded by leaders of nations since she had never appeared ever since the great war against demons in South Neva. She could see how Astrea didn't show any fear and anxiety in her eyes when their eyes met. When She saw how her mother gave her a nod, she knew that she wasn't alone.

Aurelia walked up to the podium and looked at the dozens of pairs of eyes in front of her. She had seen their faces and remembered who they were since she had traveled across continents since she was small.

"What is right and what is wrong?" Aurelia asked, opening the gathering with such a question.

"I believe everyone must have pondered about this question in their lives more than once, but it's too vague, too taboo to even think of," Aurelia said as she placed her hands on her lower abdomen, stacking them together. "Because the answer will never be a satisfying one even it's aligning with your belief," she continued and never shy away from staring back at the gazes that were pointed at her.

The peristyle went into complete silence when she spoke, but then soft murmurs were heard from every corner of the peristyle. She then glanced at Videl, the only one she could trust to carry the dark and the most disturbing evidence.

Everyone turned their heads toward the knight that had been wearing his helmet, hiding his identity. They saw the knight walk into the door and heard the sound of something heavy being dragged. When the knight came back, everyone covered their mouths with their unsettled gazes toward the coffin.

"For this nation, this family..." Aurelia said, to pull the attention back to her. "There's no such a thing as right or wrong. We fall to the place called greed of power," she revealed with a cold and stoic expression as the coffin was brought up to the podium.

Astrea's expression was unreadable when the leaders turned their focus to her. Her eyes only focused on the coffin, knowing exactly what was inside it. They wondered what the coffin was for or who or what was inside it. There were so many questions, but no hints to allow them to speculate, something that unnerving and terrifying.

"You must be shocked and wondering what kind of nonsense am I talking about," Aurelia said as she stared at the shocked, confused, and discomfort expressions that everyone put on their faces. "Let me reveal the truth, the day long before the Angelis family and the Holy Nation exist," she slowly turned her head toward the coffin and walked toward it.

"The history of this world, about Neva, there seems to be a massive gap that we don't even know. From this world before humans existed, when the ancient race Orthias protected this world, or when Dragons roamed this world. There are gaps in our knowledge, but let us not go that far," Aurelia said as her hand hesitated to touch the coffin. However, when she held the coffin, she felt shivers all over her body. "The Blackcliffs, the civilization of humans before ours. The world where humans could travel the remaining a third of the world, before it became a place that no humans had ever reached for hundreds of years..." she continued.

Everyone at the peristyle never bothered to find out about what had happened at that time. The scholars had tried to unravel the truth about the missing civilization. However, no matter how hard they tried, they couldn't even find any clue related to their disappearance and why it was coincidentally being blocked by tall black cliffs that separated the two-thirds of the world as if the black cliffs were meant to protect them.

"There are records about the ancient race Orthias, of how we humans hunted them, trying to take over their reign from this world. That glimpse of history should be enough to make you grasp of the story that I'm going to tell you," Aurelia said and stared at the tiny gap in the coffin. Although she couldn't see the inside, she knew what was inside the coffin and got chills all over her body as if the thing inside was staring back at her.

Everyone was unconsciously holding their breaths when they realized where Aurelia was trying to lead them into the story. They knew they were intrigued, but somehow deep inside them, they felt like they didn't want to hear it and told their hands to cover their ears.

"All of you must have heard the real culprit behind that history, the one who led humans to hunt the ancient race Orthias," Aurelia slowly turned her head toward the crowds, noticing their unblinking eyes.

"The first Saint of human, the one that was so powerful with their miraculous feat and power that could bring down the most powerful race had roamed this world for thousands of years," she continued as she walked to the edge of the podium, staring down at all the figures.

"The first Saint, Urius Zevrathi," Aurelia revealed the name of a figure that was enough to make everyone's hearts stop beating for a moment. "Open your ears, and I will reveal the truth..." she muttered.

Chapter 363 - 363: The connected dots.

Serena observed all the guests's eyes and expressions that gathered around the peristyle. So far, she could only smell them, the smell of demons that only she and Videl could smell. She couldn't tell which among them were the demons that blended in with the humans. However, when Aurelia mentioned the name of the first Saint, Urius Zevrathi, she noticed a group of people that began to steal glances at each other as if they knew something.

The other guests were confused by the name, not knowing the name of the first Saint that roamed Neva. They were intrigued by the story and chose to open their ears as Aurelia had told them to.

"Who is Urius Zevrathi other than known as the first Saint? The Zevrathi is a family from the missing and lost civilization, the family that was so powerful that said they ruled over humanity," Aurelia said as she scanned the faces in front of her. "A whole family of Saints, not one, but every single one of them are capable of bringing the dead back to life," she continued.

Everyone's eyes widened when Aureliar revealed a glimpse of the Zevrathi family's power. They didn't want to believe such power to exist in Neva, but they couldn't question it or ignore it when the one who spoke the words was the Saint herself.

"No, it wasn't just that they could bring the dead, they could bring someone back to life even when the only thing that had been left of their bodies was just a piece of meat or a limb. That was how powerful they were, they were so powerful that they were invincible, feared, and respected by everyone," Aurelia revealed, and could see the anxiety and shock in everyone's eyes, except for a group of people that seemed to stay calm even after the revelation.

"If all of you think it's impossible or doesn't make any sense, then I can agree with you. However, if you think about it, how could humans defeated and hunted the ancient race Orthias when humans aren't supposed to be strong enough to hurt them?" Aurelia asked, trying to let them understand why it sounded more believable than humans hunting a race that was told and proven to be the protector of Neva.

Everyone began to nod their heads, murmuring about the amazing feat that Saint Urius Zevrathis and the Zevrathis' family had accomplished. They wondered if those people still existed to this day since they were so powerful. However, they began to think and found it weird that the Zevrathis were never mentioned in any book or seemed to have disappeared from the face of the world.

"Your Holiness, if such a family was that powerful, where are they now? What happened to them?" A queen asked with her hand raised.

Aurelia stared the queen in the eyes, her expression stoic and cold as if the queen had just asked for something forbidden. The queen gulped as she slowly lowered her hand, and everyone became quiet when Aurelia didn't say a word after the question hung in the air for too long.

"What did I say about my family?" Aurelia asked back at the queen.

The queen remembered the controversial words that Aurelia said about the Angelis family. She hesitated to answer the question because it would sound blasphemous.

"That the Angelis family has fallen to greed for power, Your Holiness," the queen answered, her voice echoed throughout the peristyle.

Aurelia nodded, affirming and assuring that the queen didn't said anything blasphemous. She looked at Astrea, the mother who had chosen and accepted such a burden before her. She then turned her gaze back to the audience.

"The reason why the Zevrathi family no longer exists in this world is because of the greed of humans. Power blinds everyone, even the Zevrathi family fell for that," Aurelia answered as she turned around to look at the coffin. "Once humans hunted down Orthias, humans began to think, who would be next in line? To deserve to sit on the throne of Neva?" She asked.

"Bloodbath is the result of that. War between humans broke out, worse than ever. The Zevrathi family killed those who killed the innocents, and that made the Zevrathi even more powerful indirectly. That power and status only corrupted their intention, and that was when everything changed..." Aurelia explained as she stared coldly at the coffin. "It was no longer about the righteousness, it was about control."

"No matter how righteous you are, the moment you cover your hands with blood, you either get addicted to it or are disgusted by yourself. Either way, you're slowly getting corrupted by it and lose yourself in the process," Aurelia continued, glancing at Serena who had been staring at a certain group of people, the same group that herself found them suspicious. "In the end, the powerful giant that was supposed to be the protector has turned into a power hungry beast. That was when the second war broke out, a single family against the world," she added.

Aurelia spoke about the missing and the lost civilization, and although it was incomplete, it was enough to see the big picture. The grace had turned so corrupted that they began to dwell in the shadows than in the light. The power that was used to help now was used to make people suffer, and yet the being who gave such power didn't care how the power was used anymore.

"The Zevrathis family lost everything and fled..." Aurelia turned around to look at the anxious gazes that were pointed at her. "They hid for hundreds of years, but they didn't just stay quiet, they tried to create an army. The Divine power that had been so corrupted, it turned into something vile and evil... demonic..." she revealed, her gaze empty and distant.

The leaders that gathered at the peristyle began to connect the dots thanks to their keen insight. They began to murmur and wondered if the Great Era of Neva had something to do with this follow-up event. They could see the missing pieces of the puzzle, and they began to feel chills down their spines, thinking if they should probe into this matter or not.

Aurelia could see it in their eyes, listening to their quiet murmurs when they mentioned the Great Era of Neva where a great war broke out a few hundred years ago. She could see the anxiety in their eyes, and yet those specific people that had gathered in the group still put on unreadable and calm expressions.

"(He's King Relius from the Refenus Kingdom...)" Aurelia thought after she took a glimpse of the man who seemed to show dominance in the group. "(The Refenus Kingdom... that's where Count Rasmus went to...)" She furrowed her brows slightly as she let the silence fill the air again.

"Your majesties, have you finally connected the dots? Where the story is slowly leading into?" Aurelia asked with her brows raised.

Slowly all of them nodded as they gulped nervously and their lips suddenly became dry.

"The Angelis family. Who knows exactly when it becomes a family of a Saint?" Aurelia asked, staring into the eyes that had finally shown discomfort from the topic. "I believe everyone knew that the Angelis family came in and became one of the major figures during the Great Era of Neva. How can a Saint miraculously appeared out of nowhere at the right time?" She asked, smiling coldly as if she was mocking her own family and her ancestors.

Nobody dared to speculate, and none of them wanted to know the answer. However, deep down, they wanted to know the truth, the truth that might keep them awake in the upcoming nights.

"The Blood of Zevrathi..." Aurelia said, her voice echoed throughout the peristyle.

Everyone's mind suddenly connected the dots and heard the click inside their skulls. Their expression turned pale as they slowly moved their attention from Aurelia to the coffin behind her. Their hearts raced and they knew that soon the truth would be revealed.

"Yes, that's correct..." Aurelia slowly took a few steps back and held the coffin's handle. "The Angelis family knew the truth about the Zevrathi's existence, the power they held, and the power that could grant them. The Angelis family was nothing but murderers, killing thousands of innocent lives to achieve what they were looking for."

Aurelia gripped onto the handle tightly before she swung it open and revealed the truth. Everyone's eyes widened in fear and shock, their jaws dropped as they led their hands to cover their mouths. A preserved body of a woman with blonde hair in a white robe, a woman who had been covered with thousands of small cuts.

"For this! The Angelis family was never a family of a Saint! We are not chosen by God! We made ourselves a Saint!" Aurelia raised her voice as her eyes narrowed in disgust at herself and her ancestors. "What's right? What's wrong? It doesn't matter because what matters is that the Angelis family became the face of righteous!" She chuckled, her heart squeezing and racing rapidly. All the emotions mixed and became a tangled mess.

Suddenly the sky became dark as dark clouds covered the sky, and people couldn't help but look up at the sudden change in the weather. A surge of demonic energy was released and everyone collapsed with such intensity. The only ones that stayed conscious were Aurelia, Serena, Vide, Astrea, and the group of people that had been acting so suspicious.

"So it's here all this time..." King Relius smirked coldly as he walked over the bodies. Every step he took, it drained the lives of humans until they were as skinny as skeletons. "Kill everyone..." he muttered.

One of the people dashed toward Astrea who was on her own in the open, unprotected. However a black shadow appeared in front of him and a sword swung right in front of him. He stopped and noticed he had lost his head.

"Finally you revealed yourself, demons..." Arandil smirked as he swung his sword around.

Chapter 364 - 364: A plea.

Relius looked at his man who got decapitated and didn't come back to life. He was surprised that a human could kill a Duke-rank demon with a single swing of the sword. He didn't expect that he would fall into a trap and lose his man so easily.

"So he's not Relius, but a demon..." Astrea said as she put herself behind the strongest Swordmaster in Neva. "Thank you, Lord Arandil for accepting our request, and..." She paused to glance at the great sword in his hand, the same great sword that Aristoria used during the rebellion. "It seems you have finally tamed the sword as well. It would be helpful in this kind of situation."

"No, I haven't tamed this sword. I could barely hold it still..." Arandil answered as he held the sword with both hands. He couldn't believe a greatsword like this was held by one hand when Aristoria held it, and how she wielded two swords like this was terrifying to think about. "What should we do, Your Holiness?" He asked, the question that was pointed at Aurelia.

"Protect the guests... I don't want all the witnesses of the corrupted Holy Nation to die. I want the world to know, to let them spread the words how corrupted the Holy Nation is and how we have been lying to the people..." Aurelia answered without hesitation as she looked at all the guests that were unconscious, and some of them had been drained to their deaths.

Ulric and Esper came to Astrea's side to protect her from the demons. Relius looked at the numbers, but he knew that he could get rid of them so easily. Relius's hands slowly reached his face and wrapped his arms around it. Slowly but surely his face shifted and deformed until suddenly a demonic energy covered his whole body. When the demonic energy disappeared, it was finally revealed who he was.

"Nemu..." Aurelia narrowed her eyes as she stared at the white mask with gold engravings and the white robe he wore.

Slowly but surely all the Nemu's companions ripped their human skin and flesh, revealing their true form. Seven demons and Nemu were standing in between the unconscious guests. They were about to drain the remaining consciousness guests that were still alive, but suddenly a divine energy pushed them all away except Nemu.

"Don't even try you mut..." Serena smirked as she walked over the unconscious body and formed a divine barrier that spread as she walked closer and closer to Nemu.

Nemu's glowing red eyes could see the familiarity that came from Serena's eyes. He wondered where he saw that confidence and fearless gaze, but he had long forgotten when he saw that gaze.

"Daydreaming?" Serena flicked her finger at Nemu and a surge of divine energy pushed Nemu away.

Wall after wall couldn't stop the force that pushed Nemu as his body took huge hits from the solid walls until he rolled to the ground. Nemu could believe it at first when Kiel and Yaza warned him about Serena, a variable that wasn't supposed to exist in this world. On the other hand, Aurelia, Arandil, Ulric, and Esper were shocked by the sheer power of Serena. Astrea had seen Serena's power back in South Neva during the big war, so wasn't surprised at all, especially Videl who could match with the Fallen Watcher.

The Demon Dukes immediately flew away and landed by Nemu's side, knowing that staying at the peristyle would be a death wish. Serena looked down at all the unconscious guests, letting the divine energy enter their bodies. Slowly but surely all of them began to open their eyes with a massive headache. They were unaware of what was happening until some of them screamed when they saw the lifeless, drained to the bone bodies beside them.

"It's already too late now to get scared. Get to the far back now or else," Serena looked at the guests with her brows raised with a smirk on her face.

Without saying a word, they all followed Serena's words and hid behind her. However, Serena felt an immense demonic energy from the distance and could tell how powerful it was. The beam of demonic energy was released and poured all the divine energy within her to reinforce the barrier. However, it shattered in just a matter of seconds before her body got exposed and hit by it.

Serena screamed in pain as she fell to her knees and how the demonic energy lingered around her body, seeping through her ears, nose, and her mouth. Aurelia panicked and wanted to help her, but Videl stopped her before she could jump down from the podium.

Everyone listened to Serena's screams of pain, and Arandil was ready to kill her the moment he raised his sword and stared coldly at her. However, to everyone's surprise, she began to chuckle as the demonic energy got purified by the divine energy. She slowly got up and rubbed her nape with a smirk on her lips, staring at the demons in the far distance.

"Adorable..." Serena muttered under her breath as she wiped off the dirt on her robe as if nothing had happened to her.

Serena was the only human being that had been tortured and lived in hell the longest. Something as corrupting as demonic energy was already like a daily thing to her. Nothing can corrupt what was already rotten and corrupted inside, and that made Nemu feel threatened, finding her immunity to demonic energy to be inhumane. He knew something wasn't right about her by the way she brushed off such demonic power at ease.

Nemu knew fighting here would be pointless, not after he saw it with his own eyes and with the too many eyes that might reveal his mask. He was lucky that the guests didn't see him at all, and with that being said, he opened a portal behind him and slowly took a few steps back until he was completely disappeared into the void, along with the demons that were with him.

"They left..." Serena sighed as she turned around and noticed the gazes that were pointed at her.

Arandil lowered his sword and knew that his sword wasn't needed in the situation anymore. However, he glanced at the coffin and Aurelia, realizing that the main issue wasn't the demons who tried to take the asset but rather Aurelia's intention of revealing the asset to the world.

"Esteemed guests..." Aurelia said with a serious expression.

Everyone slowly turned around to look at Aurelia and the body that seemed to be a member of the Zevrathi's bloodline. They remembered where they were and what they were there for, the truth about the Angelis family who wasn't actually a family of Saint but a family that took the power from the body of a Zevrathi.

"What you're seeing right now is the truth of what the Holy Nation and the Angelis family were built from. We are just one of the many families that wanted nothing but power." Aurelia said with a serious expression.

Everyone fell silent when Aurelia admitted and revealed the truth. They could see the disgust in her eyes, disappointment at the former Saint, Astrea, and her whole bloodline.

"Your Holiness. Even if it's the truth, that doesn't change the fact that you have served the people for those hundreds of years. Your ancestors, the former Saint, your mother, and you have done nothing but to help the people. Everyone has their own dark history, even our own nations have them at some point in life..." A king asked, looking at Aurelia with genuine kindness and unwavering admiration for Aurelia to reveal the dark past of the Angelis family and the Holy Nation.

Some of them nodded in agreement, but some didn't agree with the King's words. Aurelia could see it, and they also saw it that not everyone agreed with the King's words.

"No, I want the world to know the truth, and I want to get rid of this nation. I want to rebuild something new, but I'm unworthy of such a position because the blood of murderers runs through my veins. There are so many more examples of how corrupted this Holy Nation has grown to be. I will spread my words, but I need all of your help, to convince how corrupted the Angelis family and the Holy Nation have become," she continued, staring at them with a plea in her words.

"Are you sure about this, Your Holiness?" A Duke asked with a frown on his face. "This will cause chaos to the whole world, and worse this whole continent especially with the demons that are lurking around us..." He uttered his concern and fear.

This time everyone nodded their heads, agreeing with the Duke's words.

"Don't be afraid because I will still help the people, not as a Saint, someone from the Holy Nation, or from the Angelis family, but as myself, Aurelia. I want to regain their trust and I will show my devotion to the people with my own hands, blood, and tears. So please, esteemed guests, fulfill my wish..." Aurelia slowly bowed her head in front of the dozens of figures in front of her.

They all looked at each other and murmured until suddenly it became silent and their heads bowed to Aurelia.

"What are you going to her body, Your Holiness?" A queen asked as she pointed at the preserved body.

Aurelia turned around to look at the body as she took a deep breath.

"First, please stop calling me the Saint or Your Holiness, or any title that separates me from everyone else. Call me Aurelia..." Aurelia said as she kept her eyes on the pale face of the corpse. "Second, I will display this body so the world can see the truth, and then I'll burn her down, to let her free from the shackles that this family and nation have placed on her."

Chapter 365 - 365: Clarity amongst the blurs.

Aurelia watched the bodies that got drained by Nemu being carried into the carriages. She prayed to God as she stood in front of those carriages, asking for forgiveness, for letting those people die. She knew she was guilty of letting it happen and knew that demons would appear and do something. However, deep within her heart, she didn't feel so conflicted about it or any guilt, she knew that asking for forgiveness was all that mattered.

Astrea could see the changes in her daughter's expression and the way she held her chin up even after everything that had just happened. She could feel the bond that she had with her daughter had weakened and the gap between them had gone wider.

"Your Holiness, I have to excuse myself and report this matter to His Majesty," Arandil said as she approached Astrea.

"Yes, and thank you for saving my life, Lord Arandil," Astrea smiled softly as she looked at Aristoria's sword on his back. "Count Blackheart asked about his late mother's swords, and I lied to him. I told him that I didn't know where the swords were," she continued.

Arandil glanced at Astrea, finding out that she didn't put her trust in Rasmus at all. He slowly nodded with understanding and it assured him that Astrea could see how Rasmus shouldn't have more high grounds.

"A man like him shouldn't possess or hold more power than what he already has," Arandil responded as he watched the carriages that carried the bodies move. "I hope he will never find out, Your Holiness. Your lie will be safe with me, and I will carry all the consequences of that lie," he assured as he looked at Astrea.

"He knows that I'm lying, Lord Arandil. He knows," Astrea smiled, staring at the carriages with a blank gaze. "The only words he believes are the words from a dying man," she continued. "You should go now, Lord Arandil. May God be with you," she placed her hand on Arandil's shoulder before she walked away.

Arandil lowered his head and then walked toward his horse.

Aurelia stood still, not moving a muscle as she kept praying for the lives that she had sacrificed to reveal the truth. She then noticed presences behind her, and when she turned around, she saw powerful figures staring at her. They had read all the evil deeds that the Holy Nations had done in the past hundreds of years. All the prophecies that people believed came from the mouth of the Saints of the Angelis family, turned out they were prophecies that the Zevrathi's had warned thousands of years ago.

"Aurelia, the world will become your enemy. And yet, you will keep fighting for humankind. We may not be able to support you, but know this, our hearts will be with you. For once, let us show our last respect to you," A king said with a soft voice. "Thank you for everything that the Holy Nation and the Angelis family have done for the people."

All the esteemed guests lowered their heads to Aurelia. She nodded and bowed her head at them as well, and then watched them leave. At that moment, she felt like the world was blurred around her, nothing seemed clear in her eyes except those figures. Only those who seemed clear in her eyes were the ones who had recognized her as who she was, not less, nothing more, and yet she felt more lonely than before.

Aurelia went back to her chamber, and everything was still blurry in her vision. The faces of the Paladins, the Priests, the Priestesses, the Cardinals, everyone, they were all blurry and their words muffled. When she stood behind her desk, she opened the drawer, revealing a piece of paper inside. She pulled out the piece of paper and stared at it with a hint of a smile on her face. The paper that reminded her of what she learned back at Gratlan Academy, the assignment that Rasmus gave her, the plan to gain recognition without her title, power, or influence.

"Thank you, Instructor. I will live the life as what I have believed to be the right path..." Aurelia closed her eyes as she held the paper tightly into her chest. "It is us to decide where to draw the line..." She recited the words of Rasmus before he left the academy.

Aurelia decided to gather all the servants of God into the grand hall, wanting them to know the lies, the corruption, and the lies that the Holy Nation and the Angelis family they had served. She stared at them in the eyes, but all of them had blurred faces, they didn't recognize her for who she was.

Hours had passed since the gathering, and Aurelia sat at her desk, her expression cold, empty, and distant when they heard murmurs, screams, and yells outside. The servants of God were disgusted by the truth, they felt betrayed, they felt used, and they couldn't handle the truth. However, those words were muffled out, she didn't find guilt, pain, or sadness.

The sound of a knock on the door snapped Aurelia back to reality. She let whoever it was to come in, and when she saw Serena, she saw her clearly, however, when she looked at Astrea, she was surprised that her face was blurred. She realized and was a bit disappointed that her own mother couldn't even see her like how Serena saw her.

"Sweetheart..." Astrea called.

Aurelia could hear Astrea's words, barely because it was muffled. She couldn't see what kind of expression her mother was making, or what kind of tone her mother used when she called her 'Sweetheart'. It was terrifying, but somehow it felt real.

"Yes, mother?" Aurelia looked at Astrea as she got up.

"Everyone is leaving, only a few of them have stayed behind. Not all that stayed are because they wanted to serve you, but because they have nowhere else to go," Astrea said as she approached Aurelia and saw how her daughter had grown colder and more distant, almost as if she was looking at a glimpse of Rasmus within her daughter.

"It's their choice to stay, but sooner or later, their only place to live will be destroyed, ravaged, and conquered by others. Since they have no choice but to stay, then I will give them a choice to leave," Aurelia said as she turned around to look at the blurry scenery outside the window. "I'll give them enough money to live a new life," she muttered.

Astrea nodded with understanding, showing a bit of sadness in her eyes. She then turned around to look at Serena, hoping that Serena could prevent her daughter from turning into Rasmus. She decided to leave the room, knowing that no words could reach Aurelia since she knew how hard it must have been, to reveal the truth to the world. She wanted to be there, but she knew that Aurelia didn't want her to be a part of it, pushing her away.

"You're really pushing everyone away, Aurelia. Is it out of necessity or is it what you want? To stand up on your own without anyone's support?" Serena asked as she sat down and stared at Aurelia.

"I don't want anyone to stay by my side out of pity, obligation, or belief of who I was. So far, none of them have seen me like how I want them to see me," Aurelia answered as she turned around to look at Serena, finally she could stare into someone's eyes.

"I see..." Serena smiled as she crossed her arms. "Are you trying to live your life like Rasmus?" She asked with her brows raised.

Aurelia chuckled as she shook her head and sat down at her desk. She placed her hands on the table, her gaze tired and yet gentle.

"I'm not as heartless as him, and I don't think I have the strength or the will to get rid of my humanity. So no, I'm not trying to become like Count Rasmus, I want to become a better version of him. I want to do what's necessary and what's right," Aurelia answered with a serious expression.

"What's right? And who are going to decide if what you did was right or wrong?" Serena smirked with her head tilted and stared into Aurelia's eyes.

"I did, I will determine what's right or wrong, Saint Serena," Aurelia answered without hesitation and with confidence.

Serena slowly raised her brows and she began to chuckle which turned into a suppressed laugh as she covered her mouth. She stared at how serious and confident Aurelia was, and it made her let out her unsuppressed laugh.

"You might think that I'm no difference than him, but you're wrong, Saint Serena," Aurelia kept her serious and stern gaze as she looked down at the paper on the desk in front of her. "Count Rasmus doesn't care what's right and does what's necessary. The reason why he can climb this high is because he's abusing the broken system and morality, and I will do exactly what prevent him from abusing the new system," she explained.

Serena's laugh got subdued when she listened to Aurelia's explanation. She slowly leaned forward, resting her elbows on the desk and rested her chin on her fist with a smirk on her face.

"I thought you were about to spout nonsense, but who would have thought you could say something so controversial like this..." Serena muttered as she narrowed her eyes. "I would love to see that... I really do..." She bit her bottom lip in excitement.

Chapter 366 - 366: Crown Prince's belief.

Isador was taking a walk in the garden on his own, not wanting to be accompanied. When he was deep in thought with a letter in his hand, he overheard the maids and the gardeners gossiping. He listened at their fear and concern when the words had spread, about the lies the Holy Nation and the Angelis family had kept hidden.

Aurelia's words received all kinds of reaction, from understanding, anger, disgust, envy, and hatred. It hadn't been a week, and the effect of the news had an immediate effect. Not a single nation dared to protect or support the current Saint, or what the people called the the Fake Saint. Not only that, Nemu's position had rose higher, making himself the most prominent religious figure in Central Neva.

"Your Highness, Crown Prince... His Majesty is looking for you..." Isador's personal maid came and bowed her head.

Isador turned around to look at his maid, his eyes then moved to the grandiose and massive palace in front of him. He knew what it was all about, and why his father wanted to see him, and the answer would be Aurelia.

"Yes, I'll get going now. Thank you," Isador smiled and then walked toward the palace.

Isador nodded his head at the royal guards that guarded the big double-door to the throne room. The royal knights bowed their heads and immediately opened the door for him. He saw his father, his mother, older sister, and Arandil in the throne room. He was surprised to see his older sister home since she had become the Queen of the Cerdentis Kingdom, Queen Visika, and it had been years since the last time he saw her.

Isador walked in and the double-door behind him slowly closed shut, the silence and the tension palpable. He took a deep breath as he lowered his head before he approached the thrones where everyone was gathered.

Visika smiled softly as she walked down the steps and opened her arms. Isador replied with the same fondness to her and let himself be hugged by her. The way she hugged him, he could feel her trembling hands and breath, the tension and the fear within her, something that she was only allowed to express to the only person that was close to her.

"You have grown even more handsome than the last time we saw each other, Idor..." Visika muttered in a soft and soothing voice, cupping Isador's cheeks with adoration and admiration. "You seem to have grown more mature. Your eyes are of a man, and that saddened me in a way," she smiled weakly as she caressed his cheeks.

"You look unhappy, sister..." Isador said, holding her hands on his cheeks.

"I'm the mirror of what my people feel, Idor, nothing more, nothing less..." Visika said as she slowly pulled away her hands from Isador and wrapped her arm around his. "But we are here not for my well-being, it's about you," she smiled softly and guided him up the steps to be with the others.

Isador looked at his father, Julius and his mother, Esmeralda, the most beautiful flower in Central Neva. He could feel the gazes that were pointed at him, but he wasn't nervous or anxious.

"You must have received the letter from Saint... Aurelia, about the situation that had happened in the Holy Nation. You knew this would happen, didn't you?" Julius asked, resting his cheek on his fist. His voice was quiet and soft, and yet felt so heavy on the ears and the hearts that heard it.

"Yes, father. This was Aurelia's plan all along, after she found out the truth. The truth that we all have kept hidden from the world," Isador answered as he nodded. "She chose to break the chain and destroy everything to the ground because she doesn't want to use even a single brick that was used when they built the Holy Nation."

The room fell silent after Isador gave his answer, and the only one who felt moved by Aurelia's act was Isador. Visika placed her hand on his shoulder, signaling him to calm down. She was trying to become his anchor, his source of comfort for what was about to come.

"You should stay away from her, Isador," Esmeralda said with her eyes closed, her expression unreadable. "Cut ties with her as you're soon going to be the emperor that will rule this empire. I don't want you to show even a hint that you want to support her," she continued.

Isador clenched his jaw, angry and frustrated not because of his mother's words, but because of the expectations of the people. His life was never his to begin with, the only time he felt like himself was when he enrolled into the academy.

"Yes, mother. I understand," Isador nodded as he lowered his head, hiding his frustration.

"If you were in my position, Isador, what would you do?" Julius asked, straightening his back and stared at Isador with a cold and unreadable gaze. "I want to hear your answer, so think carefully," he warned.

"What would I do? I wouldn't hesitate to declare that I would support Aurelia. Not out of loyalty, not out of pity, not out of friendship or connection, but because it's the right thing to do. I don't want to be a hypocrite, and I will do the same to this nation. The world might need stability, but this is also a chance to break everything to the ground and rebuild it into a better world. Not based on lies and deception,

but truth," Isador answered as he stared into Julius' eyes, not showing any fear, guilt, uncertainty, or hesitation in them.

"It's the right thing to do? By who?" Julius asked with his brows raised.

"By me. I'm not a tyrant who believes my words are always right, but I know what's necessary. If the world sees me as evil, then so be it. It's still better than acting righteous but stepped on a mountain of dead people just to claim myself righteous," Isador answered, not wavering in every word he said. "I will make mistakes, I don't know what kind of hardships I will face if I chose this path, but I knew that I wouldn't look back and regret every thing I had done to reach that moment."

Isador's words echoed throughout the room, and everyone was looking at him as if he was a different person. The son, the little brother, and the crown prince of theirs seemed different than what they knew. Since both Julius and Esmeralda were emotionally distant to their children, they couldn't understand where or when their son became like this. However, they wondered if it was because of Rasmus, the one who taught their son at the academy.

"Is this what you learned from the academy in that short time?" Julius asked with his brows raised. "You're learning this from Count Blackheart?" He stared into Isador's eyes with a cold gaze.

"No, I learn this by not believing every righteous acts are righteous, just an excuse to make their acts to feel justified," Isador answered, staring back into his father's eyes, something that he wouldn't dare to do before.

Julius hummed, nodding his head with his eyes closed. Isador didn't know what that gesture meant to him, if his father was satisfied, disappointed, or even understand him.

"Speaking of Count Blackheart, there's something that you need to know," Julius said as he pulled a small piece of paper from under his sleeve and offered it to Isador. "Read it..."

Isador took the piece of paper and slowly unrolled it to see the content inside. His eyes widened, shocked and petrified when he found out that the Refenus Kingdom had been attacked. He read the information thoroughly, finding out that the whole capital city was flattened and the heads of the royal family were all being hanged on the palace wall for everyone to see. The most devastating blow was when it was revealed that Rasmus was the one who caused the chaos.

"What do you think of this, Isador? What do you think of your former instructor, the man taught you in the academy?" Julius asked, leaning his cheek on his fist and resting it on his fist.

Isador was speechless, he was in disbelief, not knowing what to say. He knew that Rasmus wasn't someone who dwelled on morality, but to kill innocent lives and even the whole royal family, it was questionable. He knew the history of the Blackheart family and the Refenus Kingdom, but he never thought that history would repeat itself, and this time nobody stopped him.

"He's sending a message..." Isador muttered as he pushed his hands down and looked at Julius. "I don't know everything about Count Rasmus, but he's not someone who dwells on the past or someone who seeks revenge. He's not dwelling on emotion, and this isn't out of revenge, but a message that he's pointed at at someone..." he continued.

Julius glanced at Arandil who had been silently listening to the whole conversation. Arandil gave him a nod, knowing that King Relius appeared during the meeting with Aurelia when the real Relius had died in his own palace.

"Yes, we believe so, but is it justified that he killed countless of innocent lives?" Julius asked.

"Are we? Are we justified our actions of killing countless of innocent lives to stand where we are right now?" Isador asked back to his father's question, something straight out outrageous and unmannered, but he didn't care.

Julius could only smile and let out a soft chuckle, shocking everyone, even Esmeralda because she had never seen or heard her husband chuckle like that.

"You can go now, Isador. I know Visika would love to spend her time here with you, so go, and be with your sister," Julius said as he nodded his head.

Isador bowed his head and left the throne room with Visika.

"You have become a man, Idor. I'm so proud of you," Visika smiled and leaned her head over Isador's shoulder. "Truly proud of you..." She said in a soft mutter.

Chapter 367 - 367: Let loose.

Rasmus arrived in a small town, and this time he didn't bother to hide his identity anymore. His arrival was enough to put the knights and guards to tremble in fear even though they pointed their spears and swords at him. Although they wanted him to leave, they didn't dare to do anything, not when an Orthias was by his side.

"Please, Count... leave us alone..." The knight's captain begged as he pointed his sword at Rasmus with dozens of knights behind him. "We have nothing to offer nor do we want to serve you. We just want to live in peace."

"And I'm not asking you anything. We just wanted a place to rest for the night. You can keep pointing your weapons at us and see where it leads you, or you can put your weapons down and nothing will happen to any of you, or the townspeople," Rasmus responded as he stared at the knight captain.

The knight's captain clenched his jaw, gripping his sword more tightly, but then he closed his eyes and let out a shuddering breath. He lowered his sword and signaled to the knights to lower their weapons. They knew that they had lost everything, the lord to serve, the income to feed their families, and the future they had planned.

Rasmus walked past the guards and the knights while the townspeople stared at him with disgust, hatred, and fear combined. None of it bothered him as he looked for the best inn for the three of them to stay in.

"So many drinks to choose... lovely..." Rullein grinned as she looked at the shelves filled with bottles of alcohol. "You chose this place just for me, right?" She looked over at Rasmus, who was reading the red book he had taken from the royal palace's hidden vault.

Rasmus was sitting at the counter with the book in his head when he glanced at Rullein. He noticed the changes in Rullein's appearance, especially how she projected her body to be more appealing and alluring. Ever since she devoured the Fallen Watcher, she had become more and more bold in expressing her emotions and feelings.

"All yours, but do keep in mind that Aris might fancy a few of them," Rasmus answered and continued to focus on the book. "Share it with her, and please don't make a scene since I have promised them that we won't cause any trouble," he muttered as he flipped the page.

"That depends, if Aris took the bottle that I fancied, then there would be matter to discuss... in our own way..." Rullein chuckled as she glanced at Aris with a cold gaze.

Aris shook her head as she looked at the gauntlet of Aristoria, trying to understand the power behind the armor. Yur was standing at the table, trying to help Aris understand the power. However, Yur had been feeling down ever since Yur found out that all the spirits in the Trivula forest had been devoured by the Fallen Watcher. Although the spirits were technically in Rullein's body after she devoured the Fallen Watcher, the world couldn't produce more spirits because the essences were gone.

Rasmus had read half of the book, and he could finally understand the content of it. The lost civilization, the civilization of humankind that was powerful enough to outmatch Orthias. The existence of the Zevrathi family and their miraculous power that could make humans immortal by their power. Such power was unquestionably suspicious, wondering if God truly allowed mortals to hold such power.

Rasmus unveiled the events behind the fall of Orthias and the fall of the lost civilization. However, on the last page, it was stated that the Zevrathi family still existed and was hiding, but their location was unknown. There were so many powerful figures to this day that had sworn their loyalty to the Zevrathi family. They were waiting for the moment of the resurrection of the Zevrathi family, the true heir that could rule over Neva.

"You... love... books?" Rullein sat beside Rasmus, her breath smelled of alcohol. "Not women?" She asked, her striking orange eyes with draconic pupils staring right into Rasmus's.

Rasmus closed the book and stored it in the spatial ring before he stared back into Rullein's eyes. He was convinced that something had changed within her as if she was being corrupted or if it was she had finally broken her limitations as a Dark Spirit. He could see a seductress in her eyes, a monster that was holding back from appearing, and the insatiable thirst for something immoral and sinful.

Aris ignored Rullein since she didn't want to be a part of it and thought similarly as Rasmus about her.

"What makes you think so?" Rasmus asked.

"You have two beautiful ladies with you..." Rullein rested her elbow on the bar counter and cupped her own cheek as she kept her eyes on Rasmus's. "You had a few encounters with beautiful ladies like, Anastasha, Serena, Erlina, and those pretty ladies in the brothel house, and yet you never touched them, not sexually..." She narrowed her eyes, her lips curved into a more playful way.

"I'm not questioning your sexuality at all, Rasmus... I'm just wondering if you're interested in something intimacy..." Rullein arched her brow, reaching Rasmus's hand with her free hand. "After all, a man needs its time to loosen up a bit. How about it? Just once?" She muttered with a playful smirk.

Rasmus slowly pushed himself away and got up from the stool chair. He walked toward the stairs and looked over his shoulder at Rullein. He didn't need to say a word, but a simple stare was enough to make her smile widely. Rullein then followed him upstairs while Aris was focused on the gauntlet she was holding.

The morning came, Rasmus walked down the stairs with a few buttons open on his shirt. He saw Aris was still busy with the armor, trying to decipher it, and when their eyes met, Aris raised her brows.

"Did you find out what makes that armor special? Compared to your skill?" Rasmus asked as he poured himself a glass of water before he walked toward Aris's table.

"No, not yet..." Aris muttered as she stared at the tiny details with her draconic eyes. "I have never seen anything like this before, not even on the equipment that the elders or previous Aristorias made. This is completely different, and I'm confident that this armor is unbreakable," she continued as she offered the gauntlet for him to check.

Rasmus sat down and took the gauntlet from Aris's hand and used his draconic eyes to see what she meant. However, it was as Aris said, the metallurgy of the armor was indeed unheard of. Every inch of the armor seemed to be carefully tampered with and hammered with an immense amount of the blue energy that lingered and lived within the steel.

"It's beautifully made, impeccable even..." Rasmus nodded in agreement.

A hint of black smoke appeared behind the bar counter and thickened in an instant before it dispersed and Rullein appeared. She poured herself a glass of whiskey and then turned into a big puff of black smoke before the puff of black smoke appeared behind Rasmus and she reappeared there.

"Ayla is outside..." Rullein took a sip of her whisky, staring at the door and used the black smoke to act like a hand to open the door.

Ayla was about to knock on the door, but it had been opened in front of her. She immediately walked in and closed the door behind her. She bowed her head and pulled out a scroll from under her cloak then offered it to Rasmus.

"Something happened in the Holy Nation, My Lord," Ayla said as she watched Rasmus take the scroll.

Rasmus read the report and found out what had happened in the Holy Nation in a detailed manner. He found out the truth behind the Holy Nation and the Angelis family, connecting the dots he found from the red book. A smile appeared on his lips when Aurelia chose to strip all of her identity as the Saint, as the Angelis, and as the leader of the Holy Nation. He slowly burned the report and took a sip of water, still with the smile on his face.

"Someone is happy," Aris raised her brows as she stared at Rasmus.

"Yes, it appears my former student has decided to play her own game," Rasmus answered as he put down the gauntlet. "This momentum, we should use it."

Rasmus stood up as he buttoned his shirt and pulled out his suit from the spatial ring. He looked at the others, giving them a nod, signaling to them it was time for them to get ready.

Aris looked at the spatial ring that Rasmus had taken from the royal palace's vault that was given to her. She then placed Aristoria's armor into the ring as she got up from the chair. Rullein simply wrapped her body in black smoke and turned it into her black long see-through gown.

"Let's force Nemu to start the war..." Rasmus said as he fixed his suit and walked toward the door. "Let's make the world confused who's the evil one in this continent."

Chapter 368 - 368: To waste or to appreciate.

Rasmus stopped his horse, staring at the distance with a stoic expression. His draconic eyes and ears could see and hear the sounds of footsteps in the distance. The rustling sound of heavy armor and the heavy thuds on the ground filled his ears. Aris and Rullein calmed their horses as they stared at the hundreds of knights and mages with different banners in the distance.

"Looks like some people don't value their lives..." Aris said, looking at her surroundings to see if there was any demon that instigated this whole situation. "No demons..." she muttered.

"That's not surprising at all. The moment some people lost their purpose, their minds always fall to embracing death," Rasmus muttered as he got off his horse and pulled out his cane. "I'll deal with this. I owe them to satisfy their anger and desperation. I caused this," he said and began to walk toward almost a thousand army with the cane in his hand.

Aris and Rullein stayed on their horses, watching Rasmus walk toward the army who had nothing to lose. They didn't need to be on guard or to make sure Rasmus was safe because they knew those knights were no match for him.

The knights raised their banners up high, showing from which lord they served. They had lost their lords, ladies, their families, and friends that were in the capital city of the Refenus Kingdom. So many knights and mages came from different nations, and they all stood side by side to face their source of pain and loss.

"Count Blackheart!" A man shouted his lungs out, glaring at Rasmus standing in the distance with the cane in his left hand. "You killed innocent lives! The lives that matter to us! Our brothers, sisters, our nieces, our nephews... everyone. You're a monster!" His voice was shaky with unshed tears.

"I am," Rasmus responded as he stood tall and kept his head high as he stared at them.

The grudges, anger, hatred, and disgust were written all over the knights and mages' faces. One of the mages raised his staff and began to cast magic formations, and the others followed suit. They combined their strength to create a greater spell, a Solar Orbs that appeared from the sky similar to fireballs but with much greater intensity and destructive power.

Rasmus glanced at dozens of blinding bright orange orbs in the sky that slowly grew bigger and bigger as the Sun fed the orbs. He slowly looked down and rested both hands on the cane, embracing the rage.

The moment the Solar Orbs flew down and hit the ground, the deafening blasts and explosions filled the air. The ground trembled like a heavy earthquake, and they could see chunks of dirt flying around. The rapid explosions were like endless airstrikes, and nobody could survive if they were inside it.

When the bombarding stopped, they saw thick smoke of dust lingering and floating in the air. They were hoping that it would be enough to kill Rasmus, however, when they saw Aris and Rullein still in the distance, unbothered, they all became anxious. The moment the dust thinned out, they saw Rasmus's silhouette, still standing still with his hand rested on his cane.

Rasmus slowly opened his eyes and lifted his head, unscratched by the destructive spell. There was no sign of arrogance or smugness in his eyes or expression, just an unreadable stoic expression. His eyes on the other hand, he reflected the anger, hatred, desperation, and fear of the army in front of him.

"He's a monster..." The mages muttered under their breaths, their hands shaking uncontrollably. They didn't have the strength to even lift their staves, or to be exact, they didn't have the will to wield them anymore.

"Argh!" A knight screamed his lungs out as he charged toward Rasmus, brushing off all his fear.

Everyone watched as the knight jumped down to the small crater and climbed back up to reach Rasmus. The knight coated his sword and body with Aura as he swung his sword at Rasmus. However, the moment the sword hit the Mana barrier, his sword flung off the knight's hands.

"Coward!" The knight screamed in front of Rasmus as he began to use his fists to punch the Mana barrier rapidly. "Fight me! Fight me!" He glared at Rasmus as his gauntlets began to bend and dent, hurting his own knuckles and fingers.

Rasmus stared at the desperation in the knight's eyes as he removed the barrier and began to grab the knight in the throat. His hand crushed the knight's windpipe before he snapped the knight's neck and killed him. It happened so quickly that the knight couldn't even scream in pain or even feel it happening. Rasmus released his hand from the knight's neck, watching it collapse in front of him with the knight's eyes wide open, still filled with unsatisfied rage.

The silence was deafening. The knights knew they couldn't win, not even with numbers on their side. Still, one of them raised his sword, eyes burning with fear, anger, and desperation. He stepped forward and that was enough to make the others follow. It wasn't bravery, it was fearlessness, the kind born when nothing was left to lose.

Rasmus drew his sword from the spatial ring and met their conviction head-on. Their fury and hatred couldn't smother the bitter respect they felt. He accepted their challenge, not as a victor mocking the fallen, but as a warrior acknowledging equals. This battle wasn't about who would survive, it was about fighting with the same determination until the end.

The knights charged and screamed off their last shred of hesitation and the lingering emotion. Rasmus swung his sword, clashing with a few knights at the same time before he overpowered them and swung his sword horizontally. The heads of the knights rolled to the ground as he clashed his sword with the next wave of attack.

"He could kill all of them in an instant, why is he waiting his time?" Yur asked, tilting its owl head, confused.

"In the human world, this is what they call respect. Rasmus has never belittled others, underestimated others, he sees them and gives them recognition if they're worthy of it. Right now, he's basically giving granting them their last wish before death embraces them," Aris answered, watching the numbers of the fallen knights increase significantly in every breath she took.

Rasmus moved so swiftly and no matter how many swords and spears that reached him, he could dodge them. Every arrow that could pierce through his heart, they ended up hitting the ground. Before each head fell, he locked eyes with them as if speaking without words, as if granting them acknowledgment in death. He didn't show disappointment or excitement, he only did and showed what was necessary in every life he took.

"He's not even using Aura, just his Orthias bloodline strength," Rullein smirked, as he watched the greenfield turn red with a pool of blood.

The loud battlefield from clashing steels, heavy armor dropping to the ground, and screams, it slowly and eerily became quiet. The screams of determination and fearlessness slowly replaced with the screams of fear and regret. However, it would soon disappear, leaving only nothing but silence.

Rasmus stood there, in the middle of the battlefield with almost a thousand bodies around him. Not a single one of them suffered, or that their deaths were prolonged, he gave them all a quick death. He closed his eyes as he took a deep breath, letting the silence linger more before he decided to walk back, leaving the pile of dead bodies until a single amber appeared in the air and slowly moved to the ground. The amber turned into a blazing flame that melted everything, to respect the dead.

"Are you going to deal with these weaklings again from now on?" Rullein asked with her brows raised. "I know you're not enjoying it, so why don't you just kill them not like it matters how they died," she watched Rasmus climb his horse and settle in.

"Yes, maybe there will be less of them in the future. Not everyone is stupid enough to throw away their lives, they will choose to cherish what they have left instead," Rasmus answered as he gently kicked his horse.

Aris and Rullein followed Rasmus and continued their journey to the Cerdentis Kingdom. They were only a few days away from their arrival, and they had heard information from the Black Hands about the situation there. Nemu seemed to have gathered more powerful people and nations to his palm.

"The Queen of the Cerdentis Kingdom is one of your student's older sister. Are you planning to kill her as well or are you going to spare her?" Aris asked.

"That depends," Rasmus answered, wiping off the blood on his body and suit. "Whether she stands with the people or not. Just like those knights, is she willing to waste everything away or appreciate what she has left."

Chapter 369 - 369: The lies.

Everywhere Rasmus went, he left trails of blood of those who tried to stop him. His image was ruined from being the hero and savior of South Neva to the monster of Blackheart. His deeds spread like wildfire, and finally reached Lenin's ears that were already red from listening to the Council of Neva's concerns and fears.

"Master, there's another guest that wants to see you..." Novia said as she walked into Lenin's office in the Magic Tower. She could see the exhaustion in Lenin's eyes and the entangled mess of thoughts

inside her head. "I can send them away, Master. You have been spending the past week talking and listening to the members of the council. I think you should get a day off from all that," she suggested.

Lenin's mind was somewhere else, not listening to Novia's words at all as they sounded like a soundless murmur. Novia sighed and decided to approach Lenin and put her hand on Lenin's arm. It was enough to snap Lenin back to reality, but she didn't try to hide her anxiety or exhaustion.

"Master. I'll send the guests away, you need to rest at least for a day," Novia said, not a request, but more of an order.

"Yes, thank you, Novia..." Lenin smiled as she nodded in agreement.

Novia smiled back at Lenin before she approached the button on the wall. It was a device similar to an intercom and informed the Sages about Lenin's wish to rest. She then went back to Lenin's side and made Lenin's favorite tea that could give her comfort and relaxation.

"Master, did you know about that? About the truth behind the Holy Nation and the Angelis family?" Novia asked as she placed the teacup in front of Lenin.

"No, I don't," Lenin shook her head. She smiled at Novia, thanking her for making the tea for her. "They must have kept it a secret from everyone, even to the previous Great Sage, my master..." she muttered and took a sip of her tea.

"The lies... everything is a lie..." Novia sat beside Lenin, her gaze almost empty and distant. "How could they do that?" She asked, turning her head to look at Lenin with her brows furrowed.

"No matter what I'll say is going to matter, Novia. It's justified. Everything happened centuries ago, and no matter how hard you want to point your fingers at them, they're the reason we achieved peace now," Lenin placed the teacup on the table before she leaned back and let out a deep sigh. "If they wanted to seek justice or to make them pay for what they had done in the past, what for? The old system is long gone, the victims? They don't exist anymore. The deeds they have committed, the real people that are accountable for all those things are already dead. There's no point," she muttered.

Novia hummed and nodded with understanding. There were so many things she wanted to ask and discuss, but she knew that all of them would be left unanswered, unsolved.

"Then, what about Count Blackheart? What do you think of his action? Is he finally showing his true color?" Novia raised her brows, copying Lenin's gesture by leaning back and staring at the spot on the wall.

Lenin closed her eyes and let out another deep sigh, this time it seemed more troublesome than the whole situation that had happened in Central Neva. Novia could see it, the toll on her master's mind from one single person, making other situations look pale in comparison to his deeds.

"His true color? It's more like he's the one that's revealing people's true color, Novia. He unveiled the corruption, the rotten truth of what this whole continent was built on," Lenin smiled as she shook her head. "I'm sorry if I sounded different. I have been trying to digest and process everything. Right now, I don't have anything else to say, to find a reason to take action of his deeds..." She slowly turned her head to Novia, holding Novia's hand tightly as if Novia was her anchor and comfort.

Novia placed her other hand on top of Lenin's and held it tightly. She had known Lenin for so long and it could be said that she was the only one who could see Lenin inside out. This, she had never seen Lenin so troubled as to draw the line and what to do with it.

"Why does someone like him exist, Master? We have seen countless of people who could be said to have the same suffering as him. He wasn't different from them, they all hurt from being chewed by the cruelty of this world, but why was only him capable of doing all this? To think like this? To be so capable? Why he could do it and feel like he didn't take any consequences of his actions?" Novia asked, staring into Lenin's eyes with desperation to know the answer.

"I don't know, Novia. I don't have the answer either," Lenin shook her head, her eyes empty and distant. "I might need to get some rest now..." She muttered as she slowly got up and pulled her hand away from Novia.

"Yes, I'll handle matters here in the tower. You take as much rest as you need, Master. I'll inform the Vice Chancellors in the academy that you will be away for a while," Novia nodded as she got up and looked at Lenin. "You don't have to worry about anything, Master."

"Thank you, Novia..." Lenin smiled before she left her office and went to her personal chamber to rest.

Lenin entered her chamber, and it was a spacious room with soft carpet covering the whole floor. She walked toward the glass wall and looked down at the whole Gratlan floating island beneath her. She was at the peak of the tower, everything seemed blurry because of the thick clouds underneath.

Lenin turned to the shelf on the wall and stared at it for a while before she closed her eyes and muttered.

"Everyone has their own secrets to hide, and yet he revealed them so effortlessly. Hope it's not our turn next," Lenin went to bed and decided to rest her eyes and keep her mind empty.

(At the same time at the Cerdentis Kingdom territory)

Rasmu, Aris, and Rullein were standing in the long line outside the city wall. They wore cloaks to hide their appearance, and they had been staying low for a whole day. The reason behind it was because the city that they were about to enter was the headquarters of where Nemu and his followers stayed.

"You know soon enough they will know we are here because of her," Rullein glanced at Aris since her body was marked and no matter what she did, she wouldn't be able to hide from high-ranking demons. "So why bother to hide now when we can just make ourselves known?" She raised her brows and looked at Rasmus.

"I don't think that's necessary anymore..." Rasmus pointed his hand at the guards at the city gate.

Rullein stared at the guards and noticed how their gazes were pointed at them. She could tell that those guards had already found them suspicious, three people in cloaks and riding their horses. She also saw the thick demonic energy in the air disrupt a bit and grow thicker.

"Ahh, you're right... they have noticed..." Rullein grinned, her dark orange eyes beginning to glow and ready to devour everything.

"Don't get your hopes up, Rullein. They won't fight, not here, not now," Rasmus said as he calmed his horse. "They have an image to maintain, and they won't dare to reveal who they are, not now. So we will respect that," he muttered and watched the guards walk toward them.

Rullein's eyes slowly dimmed and furrowed her brows in disappointment.

"For now, at least," Rasmus added, glancing at Rullein. "So be patient."

Rullein nodded with understanding and stayed put on her horse while Aris had been quiet the whole journey. She glanced at Aris, and noticed it as well, but she was unbothered by it.

When the guards surrounded them, they could see Rasmus, Aris, and Rullein's faces. They didn't show any fear or hostility toward them as if they didn't dare to make a move at them. Those three knew all the guards were demons, which was why they weren't acting on impulse.

"What's your purpose here?" The guard asked, his eyes cold and expressionless.

"Bring us to Nemu. I believe he has no choice but accept that," Rasmus answered, staring down at the guard. "Or we can do it in my own way and get rid all of you while you're all still an easy target," he smiled coldly.

The guards kept their unreadable expressions on their faces until the guard nodded his head and pointed at the city gate.

Rasmus, Aris, and Rullein kept their faces hidden under the hood as they followed the guards. They were being escorted like important guests, attracting the merchants, and the other visitors that wanted to enter the city.

They were escorted into the temple that was being built, a massive temple that was said to be the temple of God. It was half-way done, and the money came from the loyal and devoted followers of Nemu and his teachings.

When they entered the area of the temple, knights in full-plate armor approached the guards. There were no words, only simple stares until the knights nodded with understanding. The knights then took over and escorted those three into the temple, to meet with Nemu.

Rullein didn't expect it to be that easy, and she didn't understand why Rasmus could expect this outcome. However, she stayed quiet and followed him as she absorbed the demonic energy and made it her own.

When the knights pointed at the door and were told that Nemu was behind it, they all left immediately. Aris and Rullein glanced at Rasmus, waiting for him to open the door.

Rasmus reached for the handle and slowly pushed the thick wooden door open. The smell of candles and some kind of sweet scent filled his nostrils. He then saw Nemu, a man in a white robe with gold engravings and a white mask that covered his face.

"Welcome, Count Blackheart, Aristoria, and Miss Lurrein, or perhaps that's just a name that she used," Nemu said, his voice soft and soothing. "What do I owe the pleasure of your visit?" He asked, his eyes began to glow red and stared into Rasmus's.

"To make a deal, of course. Something that benefits both of us," Rasmus answered with a smile on his face. "Well, it's more like you don't have a choice but to agree with the deal. But I can assure you, I'll play fair."

Nemu stared into Rasmus's eyes and found nothing in them. He nodded his head and pointed at the couch.

"It seems that I have to listen to what you have to have in mind, Count Blackheart," Nemu's eyes narrowed, smiling with his eyes.

Chapter 370 - 370: A sword on the throat.

Rasmus and Nemu were sitting across from each other while Aris and Rullein were standing behind Rasmus, staring down at Nemu. For a Fallen Watcher who had raised their hands against God, he

couldn't shake the feeling of anxiety. He didn't like it at all because it hurt his pride as an angel, the being that God created to be perfect.

"You came here to threaten me with those two powers behind you. I must admit that this is a bit discomfoting, to be on the receiving side of world's cruelty," Nemu said, his eyes never leaving Rasmus. "Not only that, you made one of us cease to exist..." He slowly moved his gaze toward Rullein, feeling the essence of the Fallen Watcher within her, slowly glowing even brighter.

Rullein's eyes began to glow with a huge grin on her face, responding to Nemu's wrath. She challenged Nemu by beckoning him with those long black nails of hers.

"You have taken countless human lives, and it's as you said, to be on the receiving end of the world's cruelty. That's just how it works here in the mortal world," Rasmus said with a smile on his face. "But this one isn't about the world's cruelty. He took what belonged to hers, and of course, he should know the consequences. So it's fair to say that he chose the wrong side to mess around," he explained.

Nemu glanced at Rullein once again, finding her existence to be an enigma, another variable that they didn't predict. First was Serena and her paladin, then Rullein who seemed to appear out of nowhere. One thing that he found it in common was the fact that they all connected to Rasmus.

"I thought you're not siding with humans, or at least that was what Kiel believed. However, you lied to him, and stabbed him in the back," Nemu directed his burning red eyes toward Rasmus's.

"Lied?" Rasmus tilted his head slightly with his brows furrowed. "I never lied to Kiel. I gave him what he needed, and I kept my promise. I gave him and Yaza time to grow stronger, to build their own demons army. The fact that he lost by human's hands with my help, that wasn't a part of the deal, and their defeat wasn't of my concern," he continued as he leaned his back forward and rested his elbows on his knees.

"Just because I'm not siding with humans, that doesn't mean I'm taking your side either. How hard is it to understand?" Rasmus raised his brows. "Don't get me wrong. I do want humankind to perish, and that's why I'm here. To offer you the same thing," he continued.

Nemu narrowed his eyes when he stared into Rasmus's eyes, and he found no deceptions, tricks, or lies. It was as what Kiel had warned him about Rasmus, and Kiel wanted him to get rid of him, but knowing

that Rasmus was the first who reached the sword and now pointed at his throat, he was powerless. Rasmus didn't need to say it out loud that he could kill him and everything that he had built without hesitation.

"Same offer?" Nemu asked, his hands clenched against the armrests.

"Same offer," Rasmus nodded. "I'll let you do whatever you want with this continent and I won't bother you. Straightforward and not exception," he stared into Nemu's eyes and wasn't affected by its power that could burn the souls of the starrer.

"And what do you want in return, Count Blackheart for this such opportunity that you're giving me?" Nemu asked, his voice calm.

"What I want is simple. Kill as many humans as you can, turn them into your demon slaves, turn them against each other, or just devour their lives for your own gain. I don't care what will happen to them," Rasmus answered as he got up and buttoned his suit. "Oh, and one more thing. I want you to do it now. The momentum is perfect for you, so make the best of it." He continued and stared down at Nemu.

Nemu stared at Rasmus, finding it suspicious why Rasmus wanted him to make a move immediately. He wondered what would Rasmus get from distracting the humans and the demons to kill and fight each other. He tried to understand what Rasmus would get from the time he would be given. He didn't like the idea of letting Rasmus be, but at the same time, he had no choice either.

"You don't have a choice, Nemu..." Rasmus said as he fixed his suit collars. "Nor do you have the luxury of thinking about me and what my next moves are. If I don't see any changes in a week, expect me to come and visit again. However, there will be no talk," he smiled coldly at Nemu as he reached out his hand for a handshake. "Do we have a deal?"

Nemu stared at Rasmus's hand, and thousands of thoughts came into his mind. He could break Rasmus's hand, cut the arm off, injecting demonic energy to ruin his inside, but he chose not to do anything. He reached for Rasmus's hand and shook it with a hint of irritation and wrath that had been trying to reach the surface.

"Zevrathi..." Rasmus mentioned as he stared at Nemu, still holding Nemu's hand with a firm grip. "That name has been the main topic on the whole continent. Do you know anything about it? I believe you

might know something since the Zevrathi's family chose to associate with demons after they fell from their grace," he said, staring into Nemu's eyes.

Nemu narrowed his eyes, finding a hint of what Rasmus was trying to do in his free time. Knowing that Rasmus had taken an interest in Zevrathi, he didn't want Rasmus to climb even higher and further than he already was.

"No, unfortunately we don't know," Nemu answered.

Rasmus stared into Nemu's eyes and hummed with understanding as he pulled his hand away from Nemu. There was only silence for a few seconds before Rasmus decided to look at Aris and Rullein, giving them a nod.

"Well then. I hope we don't have to see each other any time soon. Until then, may God be with you," Rasmus smiled at Nemu and walked away with Rullein and Aris following him from behind.

Nemu stared at the door, listening to the footsteps that were slowly fading away. Suddenly a breeze of wind put out all the candles in the room, leaving only Nemu's glowing red eyes that were visible in the room.

"Should I keep an eye on him?" A demonic voice asked, echoing throughout the room.

"You want to end up like him? Die and disappear from existence?" Nemu asked back. "No, we don't want that. You need to focus on consuming those pure souls. Your task from our Master is to let you two regain your power. But we made a huge mistake, losing one of us. We can't afford to lose one of us," he said calmly, slowly his glowing eyes dimmed until the whole room became pitch black.

"Keep yourself safe in this place. They didn't notice you at all, and that's a good thing," Nemu said.

"We can't make the same mistake as Yaza and Kiel. We don't want our Master to handle this matter since our Master is currently dealing with Orthias race up north, and things aren't looking good up there," the demonic voice said. "I'll follow your lead, so make sure we won't fail miserably like what happened down south, Penemue..." The voice slowly faded away until it became complete silence.

The candles were lit once again, and Nemu was still sitting on the couch, not moving a muscle. He slowly closed his eyes as he stood up, fixing his white robe and removed his right glove and burned it. He was completely disgusted that he had touched a human's hand, especially Rasmus's who had been rubbing on his pride.

Rasmus, Aris, and Rullein managed to get out of the city safely, and they didn't feel anyone was following them. Rasmus knew that it would be risky and foolish of Nemu to send more demons to keep an eye on him, wasting the resource that had been reduced quite significantly since he had lost one of his brethren.

"You handled that really well, as always," Aris said as she looked at Rasmus who was climbing on his horse. "Where to now?" She asked and got up onto her horse.

"Make more scene and meet our lovely couple down south to ask about their progress," Rasmus said as he looked at Aris and Rullein. "You'll love them, Rullein," he smiled and rode his horse.

"Who?" Rullein arched her brows.

"Erlina and Carrion," Aris answered as she rode her horse beside Rullein. "I don't like Carrion, but Erlina, she's lovely," she pointed out.

"Oh? For someone like you to take interest in human, that's quite interesting," Rullein chuckled. "But right now, we can let loose, right?" She looked at Rasmus.

"Yes, you can let loose," Rasmus nodded.