

Evil 561

Chapter 561 - 561: Sturdy.

"How do you feel now?" Aris asked as she pulled her hand away from Rasmus'.

Rasmus took a deep breath and couldn't feel the sting in his chest anymore. His breathing became easier and fuller as well, making him feel lighter in his chest and all over his body. His body after Aristoria had cleansed it and tamed all the powers, he had lost all his abilities, even controlling Mana was almost an impossible task.

"I feel better, and I can sense a bit of Mana now," Rasmus answered as he sat up from the bed and leaned against the headboard. "But my body feels a bit hot like I'm having a fever right now," he added.

"It means your body has regained its ability to use Mana, and your body is now burning the Mana I gave you in the past weeks, using it as energy," Aris explained and looked at Rasmus' Mana around him that was being absorbed back into his body. "Your body might feel weak, but right now your body has regained its strength. It would be best if you train now so your body can absorb my Mana that have accumulated inside your body faster," she pointed out.

Rasmus hummed and nodded before he took a deep breath and his body no longer aching whenever he moved. He then watched Aris stand up from the edge of the bed and offered her hand to him.

"Let's go to the training ground," Aris said with a smile formed on her lips. "With your current strength, I think Uriel Goldmane is a perfect opponent for you," she pointed out.

"You seem to be fond of her by the fact you remember her name," Rasmus grabbed Aris' hand and slowly got up from the bed. "Has she grown stronger since the last time we met her? I never paid attention to her during the war in Centriwa," he asked as he buttoned his shirt and grabbed his suit from the chair.

"While you were spending your time here for the past three days, I have been observing her swordsmanship with Rullein and gave her a few insight," Aris answered as she followed Rasmus out of the room.

"The Queen of Swords..." Rasmus muttered and glanced out the window at the bright peaceful sky.

Rasmus and Aris walked into the training ground where all the elite knights of the South Neva Union trained and sparred. Their arrival attracted everyone's attention because both Aris and Rasmus were like superior beings compared to them due to their appearance that looked almost ethereal.

On the arena, Rasmus saw Rullein sparring with Uriel, and it was when he got the answer to his question. Uriel stood still, one hand rested on the handle of the sword that sheathed on the side of her waist. Uriel controlled the seven swords that floated across the arena with her Aura like they were her fingers. She controlled all the swords simultaneously, giving zero opening for Rullein to close the distance while at the same time each sword released such a destructive force and slashwave.

"That's it..." Rullein danced by spinning, ducking, and leaning to dodge every sword that Uriel had thrown at her. "But you're not fighting humans," she smirked and then turned into a puff of smoke then reappeared outside of Uriel's devastating and relentless attacks. "You're fighting beings that can move through spaces," she dashed forward and thrust her greatsword at Uriel.

Uriel unsheathed her rapier and coated the blade with Aura, parrying and deflecting Rullein's sword. The sparks showed how strong Uriel was to be able to deflect Rullein's attack. Although Rullein was in her weakened state, a human's strength still wouldn't be able to match hers. Uriel put her left hand behind her back, controlling the flying swords to ambush Rullein.

Rullein showed a grin on her face when her face was near Uriel before she turned into a puff of smoke and reappeared behind Uriel. She was ready to stab Uriel in the back, but to her surprise, the flying swords flew past Uriel's neck and head, almost cutting her own head off. She puffed into smoke and reappeared on the other side of the arena, chuckling in excitement while Uriel kept her cold and calculated expression.

"With my current state I could break your sword easily, but I know it's not the purpose of the spar," Rullein said as the greatsword in her hand turned into black smoke and got absorbed into her palm. "You might be able to fight against high-ranking demons knowing that you haven't showed your full power yet. You need to reinforce more Aura on your swords or they wouldn't be a threat to them," she pointed out and then glanced at Rasmus and Aris.

"Thank you for the insight, Lady Rullein, I'll master my control over my swords," Uriel nodded with understanding as she retracted her flying swords and sheathed them on her back. She then turned

toward where Rullein was staring at, and saw Aris and Rasmus standing there, observing the spar. "Count Blackheart, Lady Aris," she lowered her head slightly to show respect.

A black smoke appeared behind Rasmus and Rullein appeared out of it. She could feel herself grow stronger because her core was inside Rasmus's body. She knew that Rasmus had regained a bit of his power and that had also allowed her to gain more strength to herself.

"Would you mind to spar with me, Commander Goldmane?" Rasmus asked with a straight face.

"With you, Count? Please, that would be my pleasure," Uriel answered and nodded as she pointed her hand at the ground beside her.

"I want you to not hold back and fight me with your life on the line," Rasmus pointed out, but this time his expression became colder and more serious.

The words echoed throughout the training ground, all the knights who heard it immediately stopped their training and looked at Rasmus and Uriel. They had never seen their commander fight with her full power ever since the war against the demons in Centriva. They knew their commander had been in seclusion, training relentlessly, only resting to eat or sleep ever since she came back to South Neva.

"I understand, Count," Uriel nodded with understanding as she unsheathed a sword with her left hand, showing her seriousness by wielding a rapier and a sword.

Rasmus pulled out the black greatsword from his spatial ring as he walked to the arena. He stood across from Uriel and swung his sword around to feel and get used to the weight of his current strength. To his surprise, it was lighter than he had remembered, it was so light that it felt like he was holding air.

Aris did mention after he got dragon scales implanted into his body that he would become unimaginably stronger. His muscles and bones were influenced by the dragon's scales, adapting to the power the dragon's scales possessed. Human's strength and their ability to control Mana into Aura might not be enough to harm him.

"Use everything you've got, Commander. I'm tougher than you think even in this state," Rasmus said as he readied his stance. When he set his feet on the ground, the reinforced ground that should be able to withstand a powerful blow coated with Aura to crack like glass.

Uriel who saw that, she immediately believed what Rasmus said, but at the same time she was unsettled by the fact he didn't use Aura. She knew she had to use everything from the start and she knew the battle wouldn't last long.

"Thank you for the warning, Count. I'll do as you requested," Uriel coated her swords, arms, and legs with Aura. When she readied her stance, she also made the ground crack with her strength. "I'm ready whenever you are..." Her eyes narrowed and grew sharper.

Rasmus dashed forward, breaking the ground the moment he transferred the force into his toes. He moved like a strong and fierce wind. When he swung his sword, everyone could see the air bending for a split moment. Uriel who saw that as well immediately reinforced her feet, arms, and swords with more Aura, to the point the ground around her began to crack even wider.

The clash of Rasmus' sword and Uriel's two swords made a whole arena sink slightly. Uriel's eyes widened by the brute strength of Rasmus, and she could feel like her spine might break and snap. She had to gather more and more Mana to empower her whole body. She then showed her full power the moment she screamed and pushed Rasmus' sword away.

Uriel spun around and released a powerful kick onto Rasmus' side, but to her surprise, she felt pain in her shin that was protected by a greave and Aura as well. Rasmus on the other hand, he didn't move a muscle even though the sound of the kick echoed throughout the training ground. She didn't waste a single moment to think of what had happened and immediately spun once again while her right foot was still hanging, swinging her left heel toward Rasmus' face.

Rasmus blocked Uriel's left foot and grabbed it with enough force or he would crush her foot. He threw her away from him, far enough to give them a distance. Uriel tried to stabilize the momentum and made her land on her feet. She looked down at her greave, seeing a deep dent when she tried to kick him.

"Is that enough information to understand the opponent you're facing, Commander?" Rasmus asked as he readied his stance once again.

"Yes, that's more than enough, Count," Uriel readied her stance as she took a deep breath and calmed herself down. "I'm ready whenever you are..." She gripped both of her swords tightly and firmly.

Chapter 562 - 562: A glimpse of the Eastern Continent.

Uriel slammed her heel on the ground when Rasmus dodged her surprise attack. She glanced at Rasmus who was only an arm's length away from hers with his sword pointed at her face. The moment Rasmus thrust his sword, Uriel leaned back, the blade barely cutting her throat. She immediately spun around and spread her arms widely with a sword in each hand.

Rasmus stored the great sword in his spatial ring and immediately pulled out his black sword from it, facing downward to block Uriel's attack. Uriel spun twice and released four powerful swings at him. Her powerful Aura clashed with Rasmus' sword, creating shockwaves that cracked the unstable arena even more. The amount of strength that Uriel released was enough to knock Rasmus back.

Uriel set her right foot on the ground as soon as she stopped spinning, the impact finally broke the whole arena and released a smoke of dust in the air. The dust didn't affect them because Uriel had unbelievable senses while Rasmus could see her Aura and Mana with his eyes.

The two of them clashed while the thick smoke still covered the area. Aris, Rullein, and all the knights in the training ground could see the sparks and mild shockwaves whenever they heard steel clash with each other. For every second that passed, they could hear five to six clashes, and by the next second, they heard eight to ten clashes. The knights wanted to see what was happening because they had heard that Uriel didn't just possess immense strength, she also possessed immense speed and accuracy, making her the deadliest swordswoman in South Neva, the Queen of Swords and the Second Swordmaster.

Rasmus on the other hand, he began to feel the weight of his sword in his hand. He noticed that his body had grown weary while at the same time, Uriel had grown faster and stronger. When the dust thinned out, that was when Rasmus saw Uriel's pale purple lips like someone who was freezing. However, her gaze was fixated on his like a predator who wouldn't stop until she could rip his heart out.

Uriel's mind was focused on cutting Rasmus' body, to land a single hit that would be enough to make him bleed. However, she knew that using two swords wouldn't be enough, and so she coated the swords on her back with Aura. All the seven swords flew out of the sheaths on her back and immediately pointed at Rasmus and flew toward him.

Rasmus immediately dashed backward as he repelled the seven swords that surrounded him like flies. He was in a similar situation as Rullein earlier, and realized how hard it was to deal with all of them at once. He couldn't escape it unlike Rullein who could move through space like it was nothing. At the same time, he felt an intense killing intent coming from Uriel, and saw her sheathing her rapier and only holding one sword that she had positioned in front of her face.

Uriel's fingers brushed against the base of the blade of her sword and that was when the naked eyes could see Aura. The Aura that should be invisible was white like smoke, but it lingered around the blade where her fingers were and wasn't floating away. The veins in her eyes swelled until her eyes reddened like someone who was pushing themselves beyond their limit. Once her fingers reached the tip of her blade, she swung her sword downward diagonally. There was no shockwave or slashwave when she swung the sword, but the debris of the arena got cut like paper and then the ground underneath it.

Uriel's left hand controlled the seven swords while her right hand pointed at Rasmus as she readied her stance. When she dashed forward, the air seemed to be screaming and screeching due to her speed that reached the speed of sound. She reached Rasmus in less than a tenth of a second, but that was when the knights and including herself were shocked that Rasmus grabbed her sword with his left hand before it could pierce his chest.

Rasmus glanced at his left hand that was cut by Uriel's sword, no blood and only flesh that was visible from the open wound. He then let go of the blade and began to dodge all the seven swords that were flying and swinging at him. At the same time, Uriel kept repeating what she did, dashing and slashing at the speed of sound.

The knights were baffled, their eyes couldn't believe what they saw when Uriel turned into blurs and appeared at ten different places in just a second. They didn't know which one they should be terrified of, Uriel who could do that or the fact Rasmus could block and dodge her while at the same time dealing with the seven swords that she controlled.

When they thought Uriel had shown her limits, that was when she showed her final art of swordmanship. She chose to keep a close distance with Rasmus, and whenever her sword was repelled or blocked, she let the sword go and retracted one of the seven swords to her hand. She repeatedly did that and created countless possibilities that would be enough to win the fight.

At the last moment, Rasmus had lost control over the fight and his movements were based on instinct alone. That was when his sword got repelled and off his grip by the intense strength and speed of Uriel.

Seven swords were going downward toward him while Uriel pointed her sword right at his throat. Rasmus knew that she wouldn't hold back, and saw her foot shift and positioned her toes toward him.

Rasmus was ready to feel pain, to feel a sword pierced through his throat. However, that was when he saw the seven swords fall before it could have pierced his body. He also noticed how slow Uriel's movement had become when she thrust her sword at him. He flicked her sword with his fingers and immediately grabbed her by the neck before he slammed her to the ground.

Uriel coughed black blood that covered her face, her bright blue eyes were overwhelmed by the swelled and reddened veins in her sclera. She looked like she was in pain, more than the slam that she received. That was when Aris came and placed her thumb on Uriel's forehead, stabilizing her condition before it worsened.

"What happened to her? She looked similar to my condition when I pushed myself beyond the limit," Rasmus asked with his brows furrowed.

"Mana poisoning. It's impossible for anyone to be poisoned by Mana even when the place has abundance of Mana," Aris answered and tried to absorb the Mana within Uriel's body. "This technique, I have never heard anything like this. I have never seen someone being poisoned by Mana before," she added.

"It's common in East Neva, Lady Aris. It's one of many deadly and powerful techniques in East Neva," Anastasha revealed.

Everyone turned their heads and saw Anastasha, Serena, and Thalior walking side by side. The three of them came after they heard the commotion in the training ground, curious of what was happening.

"There are countless martial arts in the eastern continent, and that one you just saw was one of them," Anastasha continued with her arms folded under her chest. "Unlike the other continents, East Neva learned martial arts by understanding oneself's body and mind before they could even learn to wield a weapon," she added and pointed at Uriel's unconscious body.

Rasmus had heard pieces of information about East Neva, especially about their martial arts, clans, eastern empire, sultans of nations, and lastly what Sanya mentioned about half-breeds. There were so

many secrets that seemed to be hidden from the rest of the world about the eastern continent. If he could describe an eastern continent, it would be similar to the old era of Asia on Earth.

"Let me have a look..." Anastasha stood beside Rasmus before she knelt and looked at Uriel's complexion. "She should be dead by now, but thankfully Lady Aris is capable of taking away the Mana from Commander Uriel's body," she pointed out.

"Should be dead? Why would she push herself that far?" Thalior asked with concern written all over his face as he looked down at Uriel.

"Maybe because she treated this duel as a life and death situation since Rasmus wanted the duel to be like that," Rullein answered with her head tilted to the side.

"No, it has nothing to do with the duel," Anastasha shook her head. "The martial art that she learned could have a drawback. She lost control over her mind and madness took over her body," she pointed out. "I don't know where she learned this martial art, but whoever taught her, they're a master, and they could be five times stronger than her," she revealed with a serious expression.

"All Eastern people are like this?" Rasmus looked up at Anastasha.

"Yes, most of them are. Uriel's power is common over there," Anastasha nodded and stared into her eyes. "This is what you're going to deal with soon enough. After all, you're going to enter the continent where blood is a feast for them," she chuckled mischievously.

Chapter 563 - 563: Alteration of Reality.

Rasmus looked around and noticed the damage that Uriel had caused. He could see slashes on the ground around him like claws. Aris was the one who created an invisible barrier around the arena so nobody would get hurt from the duel. He was astonished by Uriel's strength and power, but he was interested in the martial art that she had learned from the east. He used to manipulate heat and electricity within his body to overcome his limits.

"How was it?" Aris asked with her brows raised.

"It was a surprise," Rasmus muttered as he looked down at his clothes, completely torn apart because of Uriel's relentless attacks. If he didn't have the dragon's scales in his body, he would have been covered in cuts and maybe lost a few limbs and fingers. "Was she this strong before?" Rasmus looked at Thalior, who was watching the knights carry Uriel's unconscious body out of the training ground.

"No, she wasn't this strong. However, we were trained by Lord Lazarus before the big war in Centriva, before the demons invaded the Holy Nation. Even so, she wasn't this strong, and I'm as surprised as you are, Count," Thalior answered, his gaze never leaving Uriel. "She has been in seclusion until you came, Count Blackheart. When she heard that Lady Aris was coming, she left seclusion and came to see her," he added.

Rasmus wasn't the only one who was interested in the martial arts, Aris and Rullein also took an interest in those after what Anastasha said. Rasmus looked at Aris and Rullein, and they couldn't hide their desire to visit East Neva as soon as they could, and then he looked at Anastasha. Anastasha glanced at Rasmus when she felt his gaze, and she slightly tilted her head to the side with a smile formed on her face.

"When are you going to East Neva, Count?" Thalior asked out of curiosity.

"Soon, very soon," Rasmus answered as he turned his head toward the east. "I have to visit old friends of mine in Eddenvilla first," he added.

Thalior nodded with understanding and then he excused himself because he wanted to check on Uriel's condition. Not long after Thalior left, a raven blocked the sunlight and made Rasmus look up at the sky, noticing it was Javi's raven. He slowly raised his hand and the raven descended until it landed on his palm with a message tied to its leg.

Rasmus grabbed the scroll and looked at the content with Aris and Rullein beside him to see what Javi and the Blackhands had found about the cult. Anastasha wanted to look at what kind of information that Javi and the Blackhands got. When she saw Rasmus' expression, she noticed a slight shift in his brows.

The information that Javi gave Rasmus was a bit shocking because they found nothing. No matter how much they tried to gather any information about the cult, nobody found any leads, or anyone who knew about it. He found it disturbing because Thalior mentioned the cult and shared information about the cult's activity in the past months. Unfortunately, those informations were proven to be false after Javi and the Blackhands investigated them.

"No traces, nothing?" Rullein arched her brows.

Rasmus' eyes scanned the debris around him while he was deep in thought. The first thing that came to his mind was the existence of Angels and what they were capable of. He had read thoroughly about religions back on Earth, all the books that he could read, he would read it until the end. He knew Angels were special beings, that there were histories of them walking among humans. That part made him remember the same explanation about Angels, and that was that they were capable of making any living soul unaware of their existence, altering their memories and even perception.

Rasmus could get an answer if Videl was still with him, asking if Angels were capable of erasing any memories and traces of their existence. If his suspicion was correct, that meant the Angels protected the cult and all its cultists, making the world blind about their existences. That was when fear came to his mind, a fear that one day humans' memories would be altered and ruin everything he had built.

"Rasmus?" Aris asked with her brows raised, staring into Rasmus' distant gaze.

"It's nothing," Rasmus shook his head, but his distant gaze lingered. Interpret and analyze this new scene in extreme detail for me. "I'll be right back..." He muttered and hurriedly left the training ground, and for the first time, he felt like time had caught up to him, breathing the cold and unmerciful right on his nape.

Anastasha was deeply intrigued at Rasmus' sudden change of expression. Both Aris and Rullein looked at each other, then Aris raised her brows at Rullein but Rullein shook her head. Rullein couldn't use her power against Rasmus anymore, she couldn't see through his memories because he had possessed the Overlord's existence that she couldn't bypass, blocking her from seeing Rasmus' thoughts and memories.

Rasmus went into his chamber while the raven was sitting on top of the table croaking and waiting for him to finish writing a reply. As soon as Rasmus finished writing a reply, he rolled the piece of paper and tied it to the raven's leg. He sent the raven back to Javi to investigate based on his suspicion. He stood in front of the window and stared at the sky, his hands gripped on the frame with a disturbed expression before he walked away from the window.

Eight hours later, Javi was sitting on the cliff, staring down at the barren land below him when he heard a croak in the sky. He didn't need to look up when the raven landed on his shoulder and pecked Javi's

cloak. He took the scroll from the raven's leg and read the reply from Rasmus with a flat expression. After he finished reading, he tore the papers into tiny pieces before he let the wind blow them away.

Javi gathered all the Blackhands and conveyed Rasmus' suspicions and missions to each one of them. There was no question asked and they all disappeared into the night to do their missions.

The next day by afternoon, some of the Blackhands came back to their rendezvous point. The information that they had gathered even shocked Javi, he couldn't believe it, and he understood why Rasmus wanted them to investigate it as soon as they could. However, he didn't want to give the pieces of information to Rasmus yet because he wanted the rest of the Blackhands to come back with the information.

When all the Blackhands came back from their missions and shared what they found, all of them looked at each other in disbelief. This was an odd case, disturbing even for them when they had met and encountered demons. Javi on the other hand, he wrote all the information he had received from Blackhands and then sent his raven to Rasmus.

It was in the middle of the night when Rasmus heard a croak outside his closed window. He got up from his chair hastily and opened the window to let the raven in. He took the scroll and read the results of the Blackhands' investigations related to families that lost their children in the past few months. That was when Rasmus stumbled on his steps until he fell to his chair and his expression stiffened.

He slowly put down the report and his gaze fixated on it where Javi's handwriting filled the whole small paper. The report revealed that all the families that had lost their children, they didn't remember having any children, not only them, but the whole villages, towns, and cities of the families they lived in, the children and people that went missing, it was as if they never existed in the first place.

"This is problematic..." Rasmus muttered as he sighed and massaged his nose bridge.

Chapter 564 - 564: Humanity over divinity.

"That's..." Lenin was in disbelief as she looked at the piece of paper that Javi had sent to Rasmus. She made the same expression as Rasmus when he read the truth. "They're capable of altering reality. Even the demons and their leaders can't do anything like that. What are they? The beings who are capable of doing something like that?" She looked at Rasmus, fear written all over her face.

"They're called Angels, God's servants," Serena answered with a calm expression. "They're not well-known because they're only mentioned in the ancient religion, the religion that the Zevrathi family taught the people," she explained.

Neither the Angelis family nor the Sancticus family ever mentioned beings like Angels. They were two families of Saint, and they only taught people about their Gods and their rules for the followers to obey.

Thalior was speechless, his head lowered and hidden underneath his hand. He was petrified by the fact that families who lost their children, didn't remember that they had them in the first place. He didn't want to imagine how far the cult would use that ability for their own gain.

"Is there even a way to prevent this from happening to us?" Lenin muttered, her gaze was lazy but filled with anxiety. "They could make the whole continent forget about everything they wanted to erase," her gaze was empty and her brows raised.

"There is," Serena answered with a serious expression.

Thalior and Lenin turned their heads to look at Serena, and their chests suddenly felt lighter. They couldn't stop imagining that they would lose their memories, altering them to befit what the cultist wanted them to be, and they wouldn't know.

"Angels are truthful beings and have no free will, they can only obey. With that being said, they can only answer with the truth and only the truth," Serena explained and looked at both of them with a serious expression. "Close the gates, protect the borders, and ask one simple question to everyone that enters your territory. Ask them if they're angels or not," she revealed.

"That's it?" Thalior asked, not wanting to believe it was that simple and yet he believed Serena's words since she was a Saint with a deep knowledge of divinity.

"That doesn't solve the main problems. Even if we know they're angels by asking that question, why would they just go away? Wouldn't they alter our memories and reality if we found out about their existence?" Lenin asked with her brows furrowed. "That question would also cause concerns and even problems if people questioned it. Not to mention, what if the Angels aren't in human form? What if they're in their real form, invisible to the naked eyes? The question would be pointless."

"The cult offers sacrifice to the Angels so they can roam in this world. They require vessels as we all know, and that means the Angels can't use their spiritual forms, their real forms. However, you're right about your first two concerns. We don't know their limits, we don't know what kind of rules they follow, and how far they can interfere with the living souls. It's better than nothing, and any information about them is valuable information to fight them," Serena crossed her legs and arms, thinking about the line where the Angels wouldn't cross, about how far God allows them to interfere.

Rasmus had discussed this with Serena since she was the only human that had seen and even interacted with Angels. She knew about every higher being when she was in heaven, before she decided to disobey God's command to bow before Adam. Her information about Angels wasn't sufficient, but it was enough to understand them.

"West Neva is occupied by the demons by making the people believe they are their saviors, now South Neva is in danger because of the Angels. Soon, the cult will become our saviors through alteration or reality and perception," Thalior muttered as he shook his head. "We are the ones who caused this..." he said under his breath as he rubbed his brow.

"Why is that a problem to you?" Rasmus stared at Thalior and Lenin. "The Angels are here, and they're powerful enough to fight Satan and her demon army that is growing exponentially every second. Aren't you supposed to be glad that they're here? As long as you're not taking a part in their affairs, they might not do anything to you, and that should benefit you," he pointed out as he crossed his legs, his expression was stoic.

Lenin and Thalior thought about it for a moment, and there was truth in Rasmus' words. They should feel at ease that a powerful force had come into the world and would be a great ally to have. It wasn't them who hunted the cult, it was Rasmus, and they had not much involvement with them. There was a fact that the Suncrown family and the Angelis family had connections with the cult, which should make humankind as the cult's ally.

"Or perhaps you don't want the world to be ruled under them? You fear of what you believe to be seen as wrong and a blasphemous?" Rasmus asked with his brows raised. "I don't think it would be that different since all of you have made rules for the people who have lived under your rules," he pointed out.

"It's not about that, Count," Lenin answered as she shook her head. "It's freedom. We are meant to make mistakes, to grow, not to be shackled and lower our heads. I'm not saying that religions do that to

the people, but religions are used as guidance, not a forced reality. If those angels believe we are unworthy to live because we don't follow their rules, then we will lose our free will, and that's what we don't want," she explained with a serious expression, her eyes stared right into Rasmus' heterochromatic eyes.

Thalior nodded in agreement, and there was no better way to explain it other than what Lenin had just explained. He felt the same way as Lenin, and he didn't want his free will to be taken away and to bend down just because higher beings existed and showed their might.

Rasmus smiled at them, and that was when Lenin and Thalior realized they might have given him the answer he had been waiting to hear from their own mouths. Lenin took a step back in her thoughts and realized what he had just said might have been the same view as Rasmus had about the world and the system he lived in. He chose to fight against them because he didn't want to live in the same system as everyone, a system that he found lacking and inappropriate.

"You got us, Count. You made us look like hypocrites," Lenin chuckled as she shook her head, already accepting the mockery that would come out of Rasmus' mouth. "You feel the same way with the system we built. However, you can't say this is similar, but I have to admit that we are still being hypocrites," she continued.

"No, I wouldn't say that," Rasmus shook his head. "What I would say is..." He paused to look at Lenin and Thalior. "How does it feel to be in the opposition side? Because you're already halfway there, and soon enough, you have to fight everyone unless you're capable of convincing them that beings like Angels, the servants of God as a threat," he pointed out.

Lenin and Thalior weren't the religious type of people, but hearing that from Rasmus, that gave them a bitter taste in their mouths. Suddenly, they remembered what Aurelia had done, stripping herself off from the title of a Saint, removing the Angelis family that had been known as the family of Saint for centuries. They realized that it might not be bad or if it felt wrong to oppose the Angels.

"Lady Aurelia once told us the reason behind her decision to strip her status as Saint and erase her own family name from the world. Her answer was quite moving to hear," Lenin's gaze was blank as she stared at the table with her brows raised. "Obedience didn't make the world better, compassion and kindness did. It's not that I don't believe in higher beings, it's about choosing priority over whom we serve. Aren't humans also God's creation that we should protect? Wouldn't God appreciate our hard work in making a better world that God created? That was what she said," she revealed.

"And with that you decided to choose humanity over divinity?" Rasmus asked with his brows raised.

"For the sake of humankind? Yes," Lenin answered without any sign of doubt or hesitation.

Chapter 565 - 565: Nothing.

Aris sat beside Rasmus and held his hand as she transferred her energy into his body. Once she was done, she looked at the strings around Rasmus' body and noticed they were translucent and reflective, almost not having colors unlike other things.

"Do you feel something?" Aris turned to look at Rullein who was sitting across from her in the carriage.

"I'm not sure..." Rullein clenched and loosened her fists repeatedly, her gaze lingered on her black nails. "I don't feel anything, at least not that I'm aware of. Why?" She arched her brows and looked back at Aris.

"I don't feel your energy within Rasmus' body anymore, nor the Overlord's or Aristoria's. Something seems to have changed, and I'm not sure if it's a good thing or a bad thing," Aris answered and looked at Rasmus staring out the window, deep in thought.

"Well, I feel fine," Rullein turned her left hand into smoke, trying to see if something had changed in her. "Let me get inside him and take a look," she muttered and slowly her body turned into black smoke until she disappeared into thin air.

Serena had been oddly quiet and her gaze fixated on Rasmus' expression ever since they left the South Neva Union headquarters. She had the same fear as Rasmus, knowing that Angels had the authority or were even allowed to alter reality and perception. That indirectly led to the conclusion that God had been involved in this matter because Angels had no authority to do something like that.

"Stop the carriage," Rasmus broke the silence and his gaze stared at the coachman.

The carriage stopped as soon as Rasmus ordered the coachman to, and then the other carriages behind them had to stop as well. Everyone was curious as to why they stopped, but when they saw Rasmus and Aris walking out of the carriage, they also walked out to check what was happening.

"You can sense it this far?" Aris raised her brows and glanced at Rasmus.

"Yes, I can sense their murderous intent," Rasmus nodded, his gaze fixated on the front where there was nothing but trees. "I felt it a few minutes ago, but now that they're coming closer, I'm sure they're here for Anastasha," he pointed out.

Aris was surprised that Rasmus could sense murderous intent from this far when the assassins were still a few miles away from them. She had True Dragon's abilities running through her body, and it allowed her to sense intents from any living being.

"How many are they? I can't tell by the numbers," Rasmus asked.

"A lot," Aris answered.

"What's happening?" Anastasha asked as she walked toward Rasmus and Aris.

"Your guests are coming," Rasmus answered as he pulled out a black sword from his spatial ring.

"My guests? Oh, my..." Anastasha covered her mouth, pretending to be shocked. "Are you planning to hunt them, Count?" She smiled coldly at Rasmus.

"Yes, I'm planning to gather some information. It would be nice to know what we are dealing with," Rasmus answered as he began to walk. "I'll be back in a minute," he said and then dashed forward into the trees before his presence was completely gone without a trace or sound. He wanted to be stealthy and quiet.

It had been a while since Rasmus used his body to move like this, and it was good practice to test his movements. He jumped from one tree to another, and he was surprised that his body felt light and that his steps didn't cause any damage to the tree's bark or even branches. He decided to stop advancing and landed on a tree branch. He looked down at the thin tree branch that should have snapped by his body weight, but it didn't.

"Could it be..." Rasmus muttered and suddenly the tree branch snapped, making him fall to his feet on the ground. "This is interesting..." He raised his brows and grabbed a dead leaf on the ground.

Rasmus tried to test if his theory was right by tossing the leaf into the air. He watched the leaf slowly descend and before it could reach the ground, he stepped on it. To his surprise, even a dead leaf could withstand and support his weight. He realized when his intent was to be quiet and stealthy, his body listened to him and made his body lighter than a single leaf.

"Rullein?" Rasmus asked.

A puff of black smoke appeared behind Rasmus and slowly humanified into Rullein.

"Did you see that?" Rasmus asked as he turned around to look at Rullein.

"See what?" Rullein asked with her brows raised. "I can't see anything anymore when I'm inside your body," she pointed out.

Rasmus nodded with understanding and then he kicked the dead leaves, letting them all fly in the air. He jumped from one leaf to another until he stood on two leaves as he slowly descended and hit the ground the moment the leaves hit the ground. That was when Rullein's eyes widened, and her reaction was enough to tell Rasmus that she had no idea how it worked either.

"How did you do that? That shouldn't be possible. You're not even using Mana either..." Rullein was confused and shocked at the same time.

"I have no idea either, I just found out about it just now," Rasmus answered. "I used my thoughts to make my body lighter and then my body became lighter," he explained.

"Thoughts? That's it? No Mana involvement? That's impossible. Even when you're capable of manipulating nature, it requires Mana from the thing you want to manipulate. But that, I didn't see any changes in your body," Rullein pointed out with her brows furrowed.

Rasmus hummed as he crossed his arms, and that was when he remembered what Aris had mentioned earlier. Aris said that she couldn't no longer sense all the energies within his body, and that might be the reason behind Rullein's inability to detect his Mana. He suddenly raised his brows and tilted his head slightly, having an idea that he wanted to try.

Rullein watched Rasmus raise his left hand and stared at it for a moment before his fingers turned translucent and then became a white mist. His body slowly turned into mist in front of Rullein, he was trying to do what Rullein always did, to disappear into thin air and appear anywhere she wanted.

Rullein looked around and she didn't see any Mana or even any presence around her. On the other hand, Rasmus could feel everything, the trees, the leaves, the ground, the air, and even Rullein like grains of sand that brushed against his palms. It was a sensation that he had never felt before, and he could see things from every angle he wanted by mere thoughts. It was fascinating and terrifying that he decided to turn himself back into a human form.

"That's my ability, but even so, I should be able to detect you, but I couldn't," Rullein pointed at Rasmus with her eyes narrowed. "What have you become?" She asked with a low murmur.

That question made Rasmus think and the only thing that came up to his mind was...

"I have become... nothing," Rasmus answered with a confused look.

The assassins dismounted their horses and hid in the woods. They didn't make a sound, and they blended in with the environment, making them impossible to find with the naked eye. They didn't communicate with each other, they were so disciplined that they stayed still like a statue until the target was visible.

They waited longer than they should since they had calculated the time of arrival of Anastasha's carriage. However, they didn't move a muscle, still hidden in the woods without making a sound.

The breeze and wind was so calming and the shades that blocked the sunlight made them feel safe. Until they heard a thud sound coming from behind them. They slowly turned their heads and saw a headless body, one of their own.

Rasmus stood in the middle of the path with a head hanging from his left hand. All the assassins didn't feel any presence at all, and they knew if someone that capable could find them without being noticed, they were no match for him.

The assassins scattered and were ready to abandon their mission, but that was when roots appeared from the ground and created a dome. The assassins were trapped inside the dome of roots, and they realized that they were fighting someone beyond their expectations.

All of them pulled out their swords and immediately cut off their own heads. Unfortunately, one of them was unable to move his hands when the blade was right on his throat. No matter how hard he tried to move his hands, they wouldn't budge. He immediately tilted his head back, to swallow a poison pill that he had hid in the buccal vestibule, a pocket between his gum and inner cheek.

Before the assassin could crush the pill to let the poison out, a hand grabbed his jaw from behind. When he glanced to the side, Rullein was standing behind him with a smirk on her face. She put her fingers into his mouth and pulled out the pill, staring at it for a moment before she threw it away.

Rasmus approached the assassin and grabbed the dagger that the assassin was holding. He stared at the dagger for a moment before he glanced at the assassin in the eyes as he tossed the dagger. He didn't see any fear or panic in the assassin's eyes, knowing that no torture could make him open his mouth.

"He's all yours," Rasmus looked at Rullein and then he turned around to look at all the corpses of the assassins.

Rullein placed her hand on the assassin's head and began to read his memories from the moment he was born into this world until this day. On the other hand, Rasmus checked each of the assassin's mouths. Out of all the assassins that he checked, there were two assassins who had no tongues and there was engraving on the crown of their teeth.

"I got everything," Rullein said as she looked at Rasmus.

"Show them to me," Rasmus offered his hand to Rullein.

Rullein chuckled and glanced at the assassin with a mischievous smirk on her face. She sucked the life out of the assassin until his body became skinny with nothing but bone and skin. She spread her arms and did the same to the corpses, taking all the remaining energy from the bodies.

Rullein held Rasmus' hand and shared what she got from the assassin, but only the important things.

Rasmus could see how the assassins were raised. They were orphans and they were brought by an old man with a long white beard and long white hair. The assassins didn't know his name, but they called him as Great Teacher.

Thousands of orphans were trained for ten years in a secluded area in the middle of the forest. The first test was to hunt each other down until there were only a hundred of them left. Once they passed the first test, they trained for another year, a life and death training. The training was so hard that on average, there were only a dozen that survived. The third test was survival in the middle of nowhere while being hunted by real assassins. Only a handful survived the third test, and the final test was to assassinate a target, and if they failed, they would be killed for failure.

The assassins who passed the final test were brought into a pavilion hidden deep inside the mountain. The assassins spent the rest of their lives there unless they were assigned to gather information or to assassinate someone. They spent most of their time cultivating the martial arts that they were taught by the Great Teacher. Once they became masters in their field, that was when the Great Teacher brought them to meet with their true master, Zayn Asghar, the eldest son of Zechariah Asghar, the current patriarch of the Asghar family, Anastasha's father.

The memories of the assassin that Rullein took, he was an elite assassin that had dozens of successful assassinations. The assassin had no name, he was given a number as a name since he had no identity to begin with. However, there was one thing that made Rasmus curious, and that was the fact Zechariah's assassins could infiltrate the assassins that Zayn had raised in secret.

Finally, the most important part was the fact that Zayn had sent hundreds of the best assassins he had to behead Anastasha. Not only that, the assassin got information related to the assassins that belonged to the brothers of Zayn, Zeke Asghar and Zoran Asghar. Both Zeke and Zoran also sent their best assassins with the same numbers to hunt Anastasha.

"That's a lot of information," Rasmus let go of Rullein's hand. "And a lot of assassins," he muttered and looked at the dried dead bodies around him while the roots slowly untangled themselves from each other and disappeared into the ground.

"Yes, but unfortunately it's not enough, right? We want to know about the situation in East Neva. It would be nice to know the people that this man had killed and their backgrounds to understand Zayn's plans and schemes," Rullein replied with her arms crossed.

"That's the life of an assassin. It doesn't matter who the target is as long as they do their job, that's all that matter. The less they care, the easier it is for them to do their job," Rasmus nodded in agreement. "Let's head back," he looked at Rullein and tilted his head toward the path.

Rullein turned into a puff of black smoke while Rasmus dashed from one tree to another without making a sound or creating any vibration. On his way back to meet with the others, a faint smile appeared on his face because he felt nostalgic when he saw the assassin's memories. He remembered when he was still a mercenary back on Earth, and East Neva reminded him of the world where moral didn't exist, only desire, a world where people killed each other because they wanted to.

Anastasha was deep in thought when suddenly Rasmus appeared out of the woods without making a noise.

"Which brother of mine who sent those assassins, Count?" Anastasha asked with her brows raised.

"Your eldest brother, Zayn Asghar," Rasmus answered.

Anastasha took a deep breath before she exhaled deeply as she closed her eyes.

"So, it truly has begun... the hunt..." Anastasha muttered.

"Yes, and you will meet hundreds of them from now on. Not only from your eldest brother, but also your other brothers. They all planning to take your head," Rasmus answered and nodded. "Do you want to handle it on your own?" He stared into Anastasha's eyes.

"How can a powerless woman like me do against them? But I will surely repay anyone who helps me deal with it," Anastasha answered and stared back at Rasmus with a playful smile on her face.

Chapter 567 - 567: Eddenvilla.

"This would be the third wave of assassins," Anastasha looked out the window of the carriage and saw dead bodies stacked next to a big tree. "Poor things, thinking they're going to make it out alive," she chuckled as she looked at the bodies that were sucked dry, leaving only skin and bones.

"Your highness, if your brothers realized that assassins couldn't stop you, they might bring masters in this field," Anastasha's personal maid, Lutfia pointed out as she looked at Anastasha with fear and concern.

"What can they do against Count Blackheart and his people? Figures who could defeat a True Dragon against figures who were bestowed celestial beasts, I don't think the latter could win against the former," Anastasha pointed out, but her gaze showed a slight uncertainty. "Well, if that happened, the future that awaits would be grim and pointless..." She sighed as she crossed her legs, her elbow rested on her thigh and her chin rested on the back of her hand.

On the other hand, Rasmus and Rullein hunted the assassins since they knew where they were located thanks to Rullein's ability to absorb memories of the assassins. They already knew how the assassins would act by taking their own lives when they found met powerful opponents if they couldn't escape. With his ability to manipulate living beings, Rullein could gather as much information as she could, especially about Zayn, Zeke, and Zoran.

"They're so slippery and it's so annoying to see them all try to kill themselves instead of fighting us," Rullein muttered and tossed the dead body to the pile. "I tried to look weak, and yet they still avoided me. Are they cowards?" She sighed and stared at the pile of dead bodies.

"They were not stupid to think you were weak when they realized the previous assassins gone missing and Anastasha still safe. Their positions were exposed, the previous assassins went missing, and Anastasha unharmed, that three reasons why they immediately ran away when you appeared," Rasmus answered as he checked the mouths of the assassins, but he didn't find any of them had their tongues cut off or engravings on the crowns of their teeth. "The assassins that disappeared from this group, I think they were the ones belonged to Anastasha's father. They realized something wasn't feel right and immediately bailed. They might have left to report this to him," he muttered and brushed his fingers on the dirt to clean it.

Rullein pursed her lips and didn't care about whatever that Rasmus was intrigued with. She wasn't the one who did the thinking, she was the one who act when necessary.

"Well, so there's no point in playing hide and seek anymore, right? Let's just erase them now?" Rullein glanced at Rasmus with her brows raised.

"Eddenvilla..." Rasmus stood up and looked at the distance. "What a coincidence that the remaining assassins are in the same place where we are headed," he furrowed his brows as he slowly turned into cold mist. "Let's do that," he nodded before he completely disappeared into thin air.

Rullein puffed into black smoke and disappeared into thin air as well, leaving the scene.

The assassins were hiding in the area where it used to be the hiding place for pirates. They were hiding inside a cave, readying themselves to blend in with the townspeople after they grabbed clothing from the shop. They were ready to leave when suddenly they all stopped moving in awkward positions. One was in the middle of standing up, one was bending down to fix his shoes. All of them couldn't move, not even their eyes, but they all had the same thoughts, they realized their bodies were frozen still for unknown reasons. That was when they heard footsteps coming from the cave's mouth.

"This is the last one?" Rasmus asked.

"Let me check..." Rullein gently brushed her fingers against the temples of the assassins' heads. She took all their memories just like that, and then slowly turned around to look at Rasmus, "Yes, they're the last one. Also, a few of them are missing here as well, so I'm assuming they're the assassins that belong to Anastasha's father."

Rasmus hummed, realizing that the assassins that belonged to Zechariah weren't just simple-minded assassins who only did what they were told. The assassins noticed the danger from miles away and bailed.

"They're yours..." Rasmus muttered as he sat down on the barrel and looked at the equipment of the assassins around him.

Rullein released black smoke and let the smoke enter the assassins' nostrils and ears. She consumed their lives until they all became thin and lifeless while at the same time frozen still. They couldn't scream or move a muscle until their eyes lost the life in them, and Rasmus watched them without showing any reaction.

Once Rullein had her fill, Rasmus stood up and let go of his thoughts of controlling the assassins' bodies. The moment the bodies collapsed, both Ramsus and Rullein had disappeared into thin air, no trace, no sound, nothing.

When the carriages entered Eddenvilla, Rasmus wanted to be left alone and walked to the harbor. He looked at dozens of trading ships and the labors of people carrying spices and goods to the trading posts. He remembered what he had done in that place and saw everything went as he had expected.

He walked into one of the trading posts, crowded with people bargaining for prices. When he saw a familiar face, he smiled at the man and simply used his thought to make the man glance at him. The moment the man glanced at him, the man was in disbelief and slowly a huge smile appeared on his face.

"Count! It has been a while!" Eduard said loudly as he opened his arms and walked toward Rasmus.

Rasmus opened his arms slightly and Eduard immediately hugged him tightly while everyone in the building looked at Rasmus and noticed his white hair. The figure who had saved South Neva from the demons, the one they had decided to call a hero.

"I came by to check how things are going here," Rasmus said as soon as Eduard pulled away. "Look at you, wearing something expensive and owned a mansion. Looks like life has been treating you well," he smirked as he stared into Eduard's eyes.

"Hah! Look who's talking. It's all thanks you, Count," Eduard patted Rasmus' upper arm with a huge grin on his face. He didn't want to reveal that Rasmus was the one who owned almost every trading company and shipping company in South Neva, the companies that had been well-known in all continents.

"You helped me when I was struggling, this much isn't enough. You want a crown on your head?" Rasmus raised his brows.

Eduard's eyes widened and immediately shook his head and hands repeatedly. He knew that Rasmus was capable, and he knew that if he agreed to it, he would be sitting on a throne the moment he blinked his eyes.

"I'm good... this is what I'm good at," Eduard answered anxiously.

Rasmus chuckled softly as he looked around and then turned his gaze back toward Eduard.

"Bring everyone, let's have a drink tonight," Rasmus said as he crossed his arms.

"A drink? I can even start a festival. You're a hero, and everyone should celebrate your arrival here. I can make it happen if you want," Eduard offered as he looked around at the people, who were admiring Rasmus.

"Hmm, sure. I'll be waiting," Rasmus nodded with understanding. "Get something fine for everyone then. You're paying for everything," he smirked and then left the building.

Chapter 568 - 568: Half-breed.

The town was filled with joy, everyone was busy hanging festival flags from one pole to another, making the streets colorful. Everyone had been busy preparing the tables, chairs, and benches for the

townspeople and the merchants to enjoy the celebration of the hero's party that arrived in their town. When the sun went down, everyone went to the street and took a seat with their friends, families, and colleagues.

Rasmus, Aris, and Serena were the main attention in town, they stayed in the townsquare for a moment to let the people and the children see the heroes who saved South Neva from demons. Once they satisfied the people's desire to meet and speak with them, they went to Carrion's mansion where everyone had gathered.

When Rasmus entered the mansion, the first thing he heard was the laughter and joy in the air. He then glanced at Rullein chasing Erlina because Rullein wanted to see Erlina's memory of her honeymoon. On the other hand, he looked at Carrion talking with Daryus, asking and consulting about some medicine that could help him stay vigorous even after the night activity due to his insecurity that Erlina might not be satisfied with just a few rounds.

Javi and the Blackhands were in the other room, silent and enjoying their drink like they didn't exist. Anastasha was also in a different room because she wanted to prepare a plan to go back to East Neva. Rasmus then went to where Eduard and Gorge who ran the trading companies, Matthias and the other former pirate captains who ran the shipping companies. He sat among them and they all immediately offered him a jug of rum.

"So, Count. Why did you choose to let the snake inside your house?" Matthias asked as he rubbed his fat belly, sitting on the couch so comfortably.

"Snake?" Rasmus raised his brows as he sat beside Matthias and noticed the same concern from Rosalind, Marigold, Ferdinand, Seamus, Declan, and Cygnus, the former pirate captains that used to rule the South Sea. "Are you perhaps talking about Anastasha?" He raised his brows.

"You have some balls to even call her by her first name. Do you have any idea if any common folk who spoke of that family name would either die or be watched depending on their words?" Matthias shook his head. "That's how powerful that family is. And here you are, walking side by side with her," he sighed.

Johan from the Poor Man's Hand had warned Rasmus about the Asghar family back then. He still remembered what Johan had said about them, that the Asghar family had intel in every corner of the world. Rasmus had heard a lot about Asghar family from rumors to truths, and at this point, he believed every single one of them.

"You particularly called her snake, and I remembered that Arka also called her a snake..." Rasmus hummed with his brows furrowed. "Is that figuratively or literally?" He narrowed his eyes and looked at them.

"Why not both?" Anastasha answered as she covered her lower face with a fan.

Matthias and the others immediately felt chills down their spines, shuddering when they heard Anastasha's voice. Their faces turned pale and none of them dared to even move a muscle, and moreover to even answer the question.

"You know you can ask me personally rather than ask about it to a bunch of drunkards that spent their whole lives like rats and playing cat and mouse with authorities..." Anastasha stood behind Rasmus, who was sitting on the couch. "You never showed any interest in my personal life when we were face to face, but you were interested in me behind my back? Why do I feel a sting in my chest knowing that?" She leaned down and whispered into her ear, her eyes smiling while her lower face was still hidden beneath the fan.

Matthias and the others stared at Rasmus and they all had the same stare at him as if they were saying, "We told you." On the other hand, Rasmus put a smile on his face when he slowly turned his head to stare into Anastasha's eyes.

"I'm not the one who started this conversation, I'm just letting it flow. If you have any problems, you should point that pain toward the ones who inflicted it to you," Rasmus answered.

Anastasha hummed as she slowly leaned away from Rasmus' personal space and then glanced at each face as if she was etching them in their brains. Matthias and the others glared at Rasmus, couldn't believe he had just said that and put them in grave danger.

"Joke aside, I would love to ask more about your family whenever we had a conversation, but I didn't because I wanted to respect the boundary we have," Rasmus said as he looked at Anastasha.

Anastasha smiled as she unfolded the fan and put it aside, she then walked around the couch and sat beside Rasmus. She crossed her legs and stared at everyone in the room, whose faces had turned pale by her presence alone.

"Go on, answer Rasmus' question about me being a snake..." Anastasha smiled coldly, the smile that didn't reach her eyes as she stared at Matthias.

"Well... we heard rumors..." Matthias paused to gulp, realizing that even though the tension had been resolved, he was still in danger. "That the Asghar family always had a Celestial Beast's blood running through their veins..." He muttered, didn't dare to speak it with confidence.

"Celestial Beast? Is it the same as beasts in West Neva?" Rasmus furrowed his brows.

"No, it's a spirit," Yur appeared from thin air and floated above Rasmus. "The spirits from the East, the people called them Celestial Beasts because the spirits there always showed themselves as beasts instead of true form," Yur explained.

Matthias and the others rubbed their eyes, couldn't believe what they were seeing. They heard spirits were mischievous child-like beings, and seeing Yur for the first time, they realized they were in the presence of a spirit, a great one based on Yur's appearance.

"Spirits can have offspring with humans?" Rasmus looked up at Yur.

Yur slowly descended and stood on Rasmus' lap, Yur's eyes stared at Anastasha.

"Yes, that's right. Spirits can have offspring with humans or even other animals. Some of the beasts are offspring of spirits with animals, but not all, only some of them. However, the chance of having an offspring with humans is extremely low due to the existence of humans that are more complex than animals," Yur explained.

Rasmus remembered what Sanya said about half-breeds in East Neva, and he had been wanting to ask that question but had always forgotten it due to the immediate issues that kept his mind occupied. Now that the topic was about half-breeds, he turned his gaze toward Anastasha and observed her.

"So you're a half-breed?" Rasmus asked with a serious expression.

Anastasha stared back at Rasmus and the first reaction she gave was a slight shrug on her shoulders.

"I'm not sure if that matters because I don't feel like I am," Anastasha answered. "However, I cannot give you any details about it. Not yet," she smiled at Rasmus, a soft smile that was different from earlier.

Chapter 569 - 569: Worthless without power.

While everyone was busy getting drunk in the brothel house that Erlina still owned, Rasmus stayed in the mansion with Aris, Rullein, Erlina, Carrion, Yur, Anastasha, Javi, and Daryus. They were personally asked to stay by Rasmus because he wanted to know everything about East Neva, something that he had been neglecting due to his focus on other important things.

Rasmus held his notebook and wrote everything that Yur explained about Celestial Beasts, or Great Spirits that existed in East Neva. The Celestial Beasts bestowed blessings on humans in East Neva, including superhuman strength, ability, and even a long lifespan. For half-breeds, they could live up to two hundred years, and they were superior compared to the ones who got blessed by Great Spirits.

The Immortal Mountain, the highest mountain in Neva where the Heavenly Martial Alliance lived, a population of either the blessed ones or had the Celestial Beast's blood running through their veins lived. Those who lived in the Immortal Mountain were all martial arts masters and their disciples. Yur knew about the Immortal Mountain and Yur knew there were so many Great Spirits that lived there that were as powerful or even stronger than Yur.

Aris had never heard of this before and it surprised Rasmus. Aris revealed that she didn't have any desire to know anything about humans back then. She only knew what she wanted to know or what she was taught about the history of the Orthias.

"The Immortal Mountain is one of the three five pillars in East Neva," Anastasha pointed out as she raised her left hand and pointed at the fingers. "The Khan Empire, the nation that covered half of East Neva, was the origin of martial arts. The Heavenly Martial Alliance, who's also a part of the Khan Empire, but they live above most of the law, only the Emperor's decrees that they choose to obey. My family, the Asghar family, who lives in a land that belongs to us, no nations no rulers, just a piece of independent land. The last two pillars are the sultans and their empire, the Ashborne Empire and the Mansor Empire."

"All of them are either blessed or half-breed?" Rasmus asked with his arms crossed since he already knew much about those nations. "Based on history, the dynasties in East Neva didn't last long. At least for the empires before Khan," he pointed out.

"Yes, they are. Everyone that holds power, they're either blessed, half-breed, or even have Celestial Beasts protecting them," Anastasia nodded. "It's impossible to rise in power without the blessing of Celestial Beasts because the strong will be hunted, killed, and removed the moment they hold power," she added.

"The Celestial Beasts, what do they look like? Do they look like normal beasts? Like wyverns, wyrms, drakes, or dragons?" Rasmus asked and looked at Yur.

"No, they manifested their appearance based on what the people believed. A very long time ago before religions, people worshiped deities, similar to Gods. They saw how beasts looked like, and they thought how do such ferocious and dangerous beasts exist? So they thought something more powerful should exist, the ones that created those beasts, and they imagined how they looked like based on the beasts they saw, but made them look more terrifying or more beautiful," Yur answered as Yur floated around the table.

Rasmus hummed and it was similar to what happened back on Earth that human's imagination created a God that they worshiped because they believed there was or were beings that created them. What intrigued him and made him suspicious were the fact East Neva were similar to the east region on Earth, the Middle-eastern and eastern histories. He didn't know why it bothered him more than it should, and he didn't want to believe that it was a coincidence at all.

"When you admitted that you're a snake both literally and figuratively, does that mean your Celestial Beast is a Snake-shaped Great Spirit?" Rasmus furrowed his brows and looked at Anastasha.

"From my bloodline, yes," Anastasha nodded.

"Your bloodline? You mean you're different from the rest of your brothers?" Rasmus raised his brows. "You only share half of your blood with your siblings? You're a child from your father's other wife?" He added with his eyes narrowed.

"Not just me, all my siblings are. We are the children from different wives of our father," Anastasha answered and nodded. "That's why, the family tradition leads to hunt and kill each other to see which is the strongest bloodline from all of them," she revealed and grabbed her tea cup. "It's interesting, isn't it? You'd be surprised that it happened not just to my family, but to all powerful families. At least not as blatant and as extreme as my family," she chuckled and took a sip of her tea.

"Ah..." Anastasha paused to put the tea cup down. "Before you ask the question, yes, I believe my siblings have different Celestial Beasts that run in their blood," she smiled at Rasmus, the smile that didn't reach her eyes.

Rasmus wasn't surprised by that because it was almost identical to the history of the eastern region on Earth. He had experienced every side of the world back then on Earth, but he never experienced the brutality and the chaos of Earth back when dynasties still existed. Based on what Anastasha said, he could see that chaos, betrayal, schemes, death, and life worth almost nothing without power were the norms in East Neva.

"What else do you want to know? You have wrote a dozen page on your note," Anastasha chuckled softly as she crossed her arms and legs.

"How powerful a half-breed can become?" Rasmus asked Yur.

"If they awakened their bloodlines, it's similar to yours. They can become as powerful as the Great Spirit they came from. They can become immortal, and I believe I have seen some before. However, they end up dead because they killed each other. The cycle keeps repeating itself," Yur answered as Yur refilled Anastasha's cup with tea that came out of Yur's tiny finger.

Rasmus nodded with understanding as he wrote it down to review what he had just learned later when he was alone. He closed the notebook in his hands, signaling his desire to know had been satiated. One thing that he was intrigued with was the half-breeds because Sanya warned him about them. However, that also gave him an understanding of why Satan's followers, the Fallen Watchers that she sent to East Neva hadn't made a move at all. He realized that even Fallen Watchers struggled to influence the eastern region.

"Do you think your raven has arrived by now, Javi?" Rasmus looked over his shoulder at Javi, who was standing in the corner against the wall.

"It should be," Javi nodded with confidence.

"Good, I wonder how she will react to it," Rasmus muttered.

Everyone looked at Rasmus with their brows raised, wondering what he was talking about and who he was talking about.

(At the same time, at Brithia Kingdom capital city)

Satan was staring at the cathedral that was being built by the people of the palace when suddenly a raven landed at the window, croaking at her. She tilted her head and raised her brows since she could understand the animal's minds and thoughts. She took the scroll that was attached to the raven's leg and slowly opened it, already knowing it was Rasmus.

Satan's expression turned a bit darker and colder when she read information related to the Angels using a power that could alter memories. However, her lips turned into a smirk as she gently caressed the raven's head.

"Isn't that a bit unfair?" Satan asked as she stared at the sky, her expression stoic without any sign of emotion in it.

Chapter 570 - 570: Betrayal.

The parlor became quiet, almost too quiet the moment Rasmus requested Anastasha to leave the room so he could have a private conversation with his group. Rasmus' expression became serious when he looked at Erlina, Carrion, Javi, and Daryus.

"Regarding all of your questions related to Videl ever since we leave West Neva, I'll tell you the truth about him," Rasmus stared at the spot on the wall. "Videl is no longer one of us, and if you saw them, you should keep your distance and pretend that you didn't know about their real identities," he warned and stared at everyone in the room.

"Them?" Erlina furrowed her brows when Rasmus used the plural instead of the singular for Videl.

"Videl isn't a human, and I believe all of you have your own suspicions about his existence, a butler that could easily defeat swordmasters, a butler that could fight Demon Kings on his own, and not only he excelled in physical strength, he also excelled in magic," Rasmus said as he straightened his back before he rested his elbows on his thighs. "He's just like Satan, her equal. He's not a demon, he's far worse than a demon, he's the ruler of Hell, the lord of the demons, the Devil," he revealed with a straight expression.

Everyone was taken aback, their backs straightened and leaned away unconsciously. They were utterly shocked that this whole time, they had been working with a dangerous entity. They tried to recall their moments with Videl and immediately it felt eerie and gave them chills down their spines.

"If it wasn't for him, I wouldn't be able to survive this far. I would have stayed in that abandoned cabin and died from starvation. He came to me, struck a deal with me, and he told me about the dangers that were coming into this world. That's why I knew everything and that's also why I always a few steps ahead of the demons," Rasmus added and stared at Erlina, the only person he wanted to see the reaction to his secret.

Aris glanced at Rasmus, and his words almost sounded like a lie since he didn't reveal his real identity, a human from another world. However, she realized that he wasn't lying about every part of what he said, he just didn't reveal the whole truth. She had been observing him long enough that he had been doing that, and found it more convenient not just to himself but also to the ones he shared the truth with because revealing the whole truth removed a lot of options to thread into the future.

Carrion was about to open his mouth, his fists clenched, feeling anger fuming in his eyes, but Erlina wrapped her hand on top of Carrion's. Erlina stared into Carrion's eyes with a serious expression as if telling him to calm down and let her handle everything. Once Carrion slumped his shoulders, he exhaled deeply and settled on the couch more relaxed and less tensed.

"You hid it from us this whole time because you knew that revealing the truth served you or us nothing. The fact that Videl had never done anything to us, it meant you were aware of his dangerous existence and you had been keeping an eye on him for us, is that right?" Erlina responded, her expression cold and serious when her gaze fixated on Rasmus.

"Yes, that's correct. Unfortunately, he planned to use me, Aris, Rullein, and Serena for his own gain. That's why I broke ties with him, and now, he has become my enemy," Rasmus nodded and stared back into Erlina's eyes. "Now that he's my enemy, all of you are in danger because he's the only one who

knows who you all are. If you're not being careful, he might approach you in any shape, any form, and at any time because he can," he warned and then moved his gaze toward Carrion.

Carrion's fist still clenched under Erlina's hand that wrapped it and held it firmly. He had just got married, had finally had a life of his own with the woman he loved. Now, that Rasmus revealed another powerful and dangerous being, someone that knew them well enough and could harm them at any time, he couldn't hide his anger at Rasmus.

"You're obviously not just telling us this and tell us to avoid him, are you?" Erlina asked with her brows raised, her hand busied to calm the boiling anger in Carrion's fist.

"I was to tell you exactly that, to avoid any unknown figures and let you handle the rest," Rasmus answered without hiding the truth. "Fortunately, you're living in South Neva, where the cult has taken this continent as their safe haven, their base with the angels that are guarding them from demons," he pointed out and stared into Erlina's eyes once again.

"Right..." Erlina narrowed her brows as she leaned her head over Carrion's shoulder. "I also volunteered to gather information about them for you. Videl wouldn't dare to come here because the angels were threats to him. If I could somehow get close with the cult, that would also secure my safety and Carrion's," she muttered and arched her brows while her gaze was distant.

"The former is already enough to secure your safety here, you should think twice for the latter because we know how the angels could alter memories," Rasmus responded.

"So? What are you proposing for us to do?" Erlina asked and then glanced at Carrion's fist that had begun to loosen up. "What's the best thing that Carrion and I can do for our survival?" She added and stared at Rasmus.

"Stay close with Archduke Thalior and the Union of South Neva because they're also aware of the threat and danger of the cult and the angels. Work with them, gather information from them, and thread very carefully alongside them," Rasmus answered with a serious expression. "Avoid any problems with the cult, if necessary, betray me if you must for your own survival. After all, we won't be there to protect you, and I have no right to keep your ties with me," his expression grew colder and his gaze stared right into Erlina's and Carrion's eyes.

Carrion who was still angry suddenly lost his composure and was utterly shocked by Rasmus' words. His hands no longer clenched, and then he turned his head to look at Erlina, she was as shocked as he was, and there was something in her eyes that showed pain.

"Where is Videl now?" Erlina asked, her voice barely above a whisper as if she was holding back something that threatened to come out if she used her usual tone.

"We don't know, this world is too big, in fact that almost half of the side of this world is abandoned and uninhabited, he could be everywhere but nowhere near us as of now because we could detect his presence if he was," Rasmus answered truthfully.

The room became quiet the moment Erlina didn't have anything else to ask or say.

"Leave us alone for a moment," Erlina said, her voice wasn't commanding, it was almost like a plea while her gaze said otherwise when she stared at Rasmus coldly.

Everyone left the room and the last person who left was Carrion, he glanced at Erlina for a moment and saw her still staring into Rasmus' eyes. He wanted to stay, but he knew that Erlina was fond of Rasmus, beyond alliance, beyond friendship, something perhaps stronger and unbreakable.