

Evil 581

Chapter 581 - 581: Bond and Offering.

The whole city was frozen still, people's chins were lifted to see the magnificent mythical beast that perched on the top of the palace. Its presence was enough to make a lot of people faint due to the intense aura it released. Only people with the ability to use Mana could withstand its magnificent presence. On the other hand, Rasmus stared right into the golden eyes of the Garuda that seemed to stare right into his soul.

Rasmus released the Overlord's power, his draconic eyes stared back into Garuda's soul. However, he was surprised that the Garuda didn't tremble by the presence of the Overlord, unlike the ones that he had encountered before. Rullein also released her power, the black smoke began to appear around her.

Although the Garuda didn't seem to get affected by the Overlord's power and Rullein's power, it slowly shifted its position. It stared at those two and immediately screeched as it released a strong energy that burned the sky. The energy was so intense that everyone in the city fainted from clashing with it.

"We are not a threat," Aris spoke with a calm voice as she stared at the Garuda that seemed to be preparing for the worst. "Your concern is unnecessary," she pointed out.

The Garuda looked down at Aris and believed what she said because the Garuda knew who Aris was from the aura she emitted. The Garuda flapped its wings and floated right above the palace until its size rapidly shrunk. The moment the Garuda landed in front of Aris, its height was a bit taller than her.

"It has been centuries since the last time an Aristoria grace its presence to this forsaken land," The Garuda said as it folded its wings. "The keeper of the world will once again raise to take its place," the Garuda slowly lowered its head to Aris, feeling the undeniable power that ran through Aris's body.

Aris felt something bitter in her mouth when she was reminded of her predetermined path. She had been ignoring it and trying to live freely, but she knew that she couldn't escape it.

"Do you have a name?" Aris asked.

"Name? They called me Garuma. I have long forgotten the name that I was born with. It has been too long," Garuma answered and shook its head.

"And you're the one who protects this family? Because the Ashenvale family has your blood running through their veins?" Aris asked, knowing that she had to gather as much information as needed in Rasmus' stead.

"Yes," Garuma nodded, but then it glanced at Rasmus, "That man... thing... being... who is he? It has the blood of an Aristoria, a dragon, a human, and something ancient..." Garuma asked, its eyes narrowed when it stared at Rasmus' heterochromatic draconic eyes.

"He's the child of the previous Aristoria, a half breed and he possesses something primeval that runs in his blood," Aris answered and looked at Rasmus, looking at his reaction to whether she did something wrong or not to reveal his identity. When Rasmus nodded his head, she knew that she had done the right thing.

"Primeval..." Garuma muttered and that word slowly reached deep into its consciousness that the world was in imminent danger. "And that? What is she?" Garuma asked and glanced at Rullein.

"She's the remnants of the True Dragons, long after the extinction of True Dragons. She's raised by the previous Aristoria as well," Aris answered and looked at Rullein, who was already thinking of devouring a spirit like Garuma due to its pure Mana and energy that was perfect for her nutrients.

Garuma looked at the three of them and noticed they were connected to each other. Something big was about to happen and Garuma could sense it, thinking if it would be for better or worse. Garuma then turned around and saw Malik and his children and wives. They immediately went down to their knees and lowered their heads since Garuma was like a God to them.

"I'm expecting that your presence is due to them?" Malik asked as he lifted his head to look at Garuma.

"Yes, I noticed that my descendants were in danger and in distress. I came to check who dared to cause my descendants to feel that way," Garuma looked at the youngest son of Malik, noticing the distress was coming from him. "Now that I understand the situation, it seems something must have happened."

"And, what's going to happen now?" Malik asked and glanced at Rasmus, knowing he was the cause of this whole situation.

"Nothing will happen," Garuma answered.

Malik and Valari were in disbelief when Garuma, a being that had been protecting the family for centuries would let this matter go. Valari realized that even a being like Garuma didn't dare to do anything to Rasmus. It was at that moment the Ashenvale family realized how untouchable Rasmus Blackheart was.

"I noticed that it took you a while to come here when things were already over," Aris pointed out with her brows furrowed. "You're not staying here to protect them, and you sent others to protect them in your stead. Meaning, you're living somewhere far away from here," she assumed.

"Yes, spirit like me, we can't live in the same space as humans. As you can see, my presence alone is enough to cause chaos here," Garuma looked at the guards that collapsed and all the people in the city were unconscious.

Rasmus furrowed his brows, finding it weird that Garuma could be this powerful. Garuma was a Great Spirit like Yur, but Yur wasn't this powerful and nothing like Garuma in terms of power. Something felt off about Garuma, and it wasn't just him who noticed it, Aris also noticed that as well.

"How did you grow this powerful?" Aris asked.

"We grow powerful due to our bond and through offerings," Garuma answered. "Humans are unique beings unlike anything else. They have the ability to empower other beings and they're capable of inheriting other beings powers," Garuma explained and pointed its hand at Rasmus as an example. "History has proven how special humans are, and even from the moment they set their foot on this world, they seem to have no limitations."

Aris and Rullein turned their heads to look at Rasmus, and they still couldn't find an answer as to why he was capable of possessing three different powers within his body. Not only Rasmus but there were individuals that had proven how powerful they were. There was another discovery that half breed between humans and spirits existed. Garuma's explanation made Aris, Rullein, and Rasmus realize that humans' potential was limitless.

"Bond and offering?" Aris furrowed her brows as she crossed her arms.

"Life energy, we are consuming human life in a different way. They offer their vitality to us and we offer them our power, and that creates an unbreakable bond that will keep us connected to them, including their offspring since they share the same blood," Garuma explained. "The more offspring they have, the stronger we become. That means if the offspring died before they could reproduce, we would grow weaker. That's why we protect the humans who have created bond with us."

"How did you find out that you can do something like that?" Rasmus asked.

"We learned that from an Orthias, she taught us how to become stronger," Garuma answered and glanced at Malik and his family.

"She?" Aris arched her brows.

"Yes, Lady Sanya taught us," Garuma turned to look at Aris. "She taught us centuries ago."

Rasmus, Aris, and Rullein immediately looked at each other, realizing that Sanya had done a lot of things behind the scenes. It was when they wondered if this was her way to anticipate a future where history would repeat itself, a calamity that brought extinction to True Dragons.

Chapter 582 - 582: Pushing boundaries.

Anastasha watched those four get into the carriage while the situation on the streets was hectic due to the appearance of Garuma. Rasmus, Aris, and Rullein looked at her as if they were observing something about her.

"What's the matter?" Anastasha raised her brows, unfolding her fan and covered the lower half of her face. "Is something wrong with my face? I was sure that my table manners are impeccable..." She used her other hand to grab her handkerchief and tried to clean her lips.

"No, it's not about that," Rasmus shook his head. "You were fine when Garuma showed itself and released its power. Do you have any explanation?" He asked after he found out from Erdinand that Anastasha was the one who woke him up when he fainted from Garuma's power.

"I believe everyone who has Mythical Beast's blood running to their veins, we are quite resistant toward the power of other Mythical Beasts," Anastasha lowered her fan and folded it immediately. "Although not all half-breeds are capable of resisting such a Mythical Beast like that one. Not all Mythical Beasts are the same in term of power and status," she pointed out.

"Right, we heard a lot from Garuma about Mythical Beasts. They all live on the same island called Spiritual Island," Rasmus looked out the window at the people who looked terrified from what they had just experienced.

"It's a big island, at least a quarter of East Neva continent," Anastasha nodded. "They're quite territorial, and they often clash to become the Mythical Beast King," she explained.

"It's funny that Great Spirits are fighting each other when they're supposed to live in harmony," Rasmus muttered and listened to the confusion of the people, wondering what had happened to the Ashenvale family that the guardian Mythical Beast had decided to show itself. "That island is going to be a great addition to everyone's forces," he sighed, thinking what would happen if either Satan's forces, Videll's forces, or even the Angels possessed or tamed the Mythical Beasts.

Anastasha stared at the four of them and had seen enough of their power, yet she could see the concern in Rasmus' eyes.

"You have such a powerful force on your side as well. How powerful are those forces that you're not confident with your own power?" Anastasha asked, something that she had been wanting to ask since Rasmus' goal was grander than hers.

"The first force had put True Dragons to extinction, the second force had fought the first force and they basically won, the third force was the ruler of the underworld, the king of demons. Three formidable forces that could easily turn the world upside down by just clashing with each other. If you think humans have a chance, it would be similar to ants trying to harm a mountain," Rasmus revealed, his gaze lingered on the Blackhands that had spread the rumors about what had happened to the people.

"That makes my plan sounds pointless to achieve," Anastasha said, but this time there was no playfulness in her voice or in her expression.

"Better than just sit around and do nothing. I can say that you should enjoy it while it lasted or at least while it still mattered," Rasmus turned to look at Anastasha.

"And that should apply to you then," Anastasha stared into Rasmus' eyes, her expression stiffening into a serious one. "It's not like you're any better than those forces," she pointed out.

"The more powerful someone is, the more complex their life becomes due to the risk and consequences. It also applies to those beings, the more powerful they are, the bigger their boundaries. What I'm trying to do is not to overpower them, what I'm trying to do is to push them close enough to the boundaries they shouldn't cross because once they did, that would be when they lost their power," Rasmus answered.

Anastasha narrowed her eyes, finding it bizarre that Rasmus knew a lot about those beings. She wanted to dig deeper about what he knew, about his true goal but she knew that she couldn't. Not out of fear but out of boundaries between them that she didn't want to cross, which she understood it well about what he explained about those beings.

"So you're trying to make them violate the very rule that makes them powerful," Anastasha grasped the concept of his plan.

"Yes, and that somehow applies to everyone, every being. Maybe it's the law of nature, just in a grander scale," Rasmus nodded and noticed the Blackhands had successfully put the seeds into the people's heads about what had happened earlier.

Anastasha hummed and glanced out the window, looking at the people until suddenly a smile appeared on her face. She had heard about what had happened in the palace, about Rasmus making the Ashenvale powerless in front of him and about what he did to Malik's youngest child.

"Speaking of grander scale, you're a mad man," Anastasha chuckled softly. "You're spreading rumors about yourself harming the youngest child and even making their guardian Mythical Beasts kneel. You know that's one way to make yourself as a threat to the whole continent in just a few weeks," she shook her head, not knowing if she should be amazed or terrified by his plan to make himself known like that.

"I'm walking the same path as Princess Anastasha Asghar, playing the game safely doesn't match with your playstyle," Rasmus answered smirked as he stared at Anastasha.

"My, I feel like I'm going to become a villain," Anastasha smirked back at Rasmus. "Sounds befitting, isn't it?" She chuckled as she glanced at the people, knowing that some of them would die for her goal, to feed the survivors and herself in the future.

"Let's leave, we are done here," Rasmus said as he knocked on the wooden wall behind him, signaling Erdinand to move the carriage.

Everyone looked at the carriage, knowing the people inside it. They didn't expect Anastasha would visit the Ashenvale family and it would have been enough to make people assume that the Asghar family had finally made a move toward the Ashenvale family. By the rumor that they had digested, they realized the changing tide was inevitable and they feared that the current situation between North and South of East Neva conflict would be affected by this.

(At the same time inside a palace)

A sound of footsteps on the marble floor echoed throughout the dark and empty long hallway. A woman with a thick veil that covered her lower face, she glanced out the window where the city was at the bottom of the cliff. The woman then glanced at the castle on the higher ground, at the peak of the man-made mountain.

The woman stood in front of a golden door and slowly knelt with her head lowered. Instead of the door opening, the middle part of the door was slid open, but it was reinforced with grates that made it impossible to look through beyond the door. Even with the thick veil that covered her nose, she could smell the strong scent that could make her mind blank in just a few seconds.

"Your Grace, The Princess has set foot to East Neva," the woman said and immediately held her breath.

"Send someone..." The lazy and relaxed voice of a woman could be heard from behind the door. "Bring her here..." She ordered.

"Yes, Your Grace," the woman bowed and immediately stood up, walking away from the door because if she stayed there for another second, she knew she would die from the scent of the drug.

Chapter 583 - 583: Spiked.

Rasmus, Aris, Rullein, and Serena were sitting on the couch, looking at their surroundings where all the men in the room enjoyed their hookah with pretty women surrounding them. The place was covered with smoke with the scent of fruits and flowers combined. Most of them men couldn't resist their curiosity toward Rasmus and the women that sat with him. They didn't know why Anastasha brought them into this place, but she said that she wanted Rasmus to meet with some people.

They were traveling from one city to another in the past three days just for this. Every visit, the Blackhands spread rumors about Rasmus and what he did to the Ashenvale family. The rumor spread widely, faster than Rasmus had expected.

"And here he is, in the flesh," Anastasha approached the booth, pointing at Rasmus with a few men following her from behind. "Let me introduce him to all of you, the man of the rumor, Count Rasmus Blackheart of Centriwa and his wives..."

They looked at Rasmus and the others, their eyes lingered on the women beside him. They didn't bother to hide their lust and desire, but it was given since Aris, Rullein, and Serena wore something that was quite revealing.

"Remember their faces, Rasmus. They can be relied on," Anastasha smiled at Rasmus as her hands pointed at the men behind her. "Now then, shall we get somewhere private so we can discuss the matters that I have assigned to all of you?" She raised her brows and stared at the men.

Rasmus thought that he would meet with some people and get to know them. He didn't expect that he would come only for that simple introduction. However, he didn't say anything even after Anastasha and those men left his booth.

Not long after, Rasmus summoned Javi, asking him about those figures that Anastasha went with. Javi knew some of them because they were a part of a secret organization, brokers that connected buyers and sellers.

"Brokers but a part of a secret organization? What kind of things are they dealing with?" Rasmus glanced over his shoulder where Javi stood in the shadows.

"All kinds of slaves, drugs, weapons, information, assassination, mass murder, and mythical beasts. They're doing illegal businesses, a counterpart of what the Ashenvale and the Urion family do. They're called the Eclipse, it's a well-known organization only to royal families and powerful figures," Javi explained without worrying about being detected because he knew nobody noticed his presence.

Rasmus watched the women who worked at the pleasure house to be stealing glances at him. He ignored them because his mind was processing what Javi had explained.

"They knew but they didn't get rid of the organization. So they're using the Eclipse to do all their dirty works and desires without having to worry about being detected and blamed for," Rasmus poured a glass of water into his glass, not wanting to drink anything else in this kind of place.

Javi nodded, affirming that was exactly why the royal families and powerful figures kept the Eclipse to exist.

"But that doesn't answer the possibility of them being replaced. Who's the founder and the owner of that organization?" Rasmus asked and took a sip of his water, and it tasted weird.

"We don't know," Javi shook his head.

"We?" Rasmus put the glass down. "You're including the Sand Tower? You're saying even the Sand Tower doesn't know?" He raised his brows and once again noticed the gazes toward him instead of Aris and then the others.

"Yes," Javi nodded.

"You can leave now. It's getting heated in here," Rasmus looked at his glass of water and knew something had been dissolved into the water. "They're almost on the same level as yours it seems."

Javi nodded and knew what Rasmus was talking about because he felt it too. The numbers of assassins that existed in the room, but he couldn't detect all of them. He immediately disappeared into the shadows and was left unnoticed.

"All the drinks here taste weird..." Aris pointed out after she put down her glass from her third bottle of liquor.

"All of them have bitter taste at the end, something that doesn't match with the intensity of the alcohol," Rullein nodded and pushed away her six bottles of different liquor. "Also the last bottle tasted a lot bitter than the previous ones," she looked at the bottles on the table and noticed that Aris nodded in agreement.

"I can't taste anything harmful. All alcohol tastes like water to me," Serena pointed out, finding her divine power to be quite a hindrance when it came to indulgences like this.

"It's poison. Everything we ordered has been poisoned, and they increased the dosage every time you ordered new bottles. I'm not sure how much on that last bottle, and I think the effect is deadly, no living beings should be able to live from a single drop of that bottle," Rasmus answered and looked at all the bottles on the table. "I don't know who they are, but I know they're not sent by the Ashenvale. they didn't hesitate to use poison to test us, it's quite a bizarre method to test someone," he glanced at Rullein, signaling her to use her power and read everyone's memories, everyone in the room.

"What a lot of troubles..." Anastasha suddenly came to the booth and sat across from Rasmus. "What with the stiff faces?" She glanced at Aris, Rullein, and Serena's faces.

"Nothing, it's not important," Rasmus answered as he shook his head. "About those people you introduced me to earlier. You seem to trust them that you didn't even think twice to be left alone with them, knowing what kind of place we are at," he crossed his arms and noticed the calm and relaxed expression of Anastasha's.

"They're dangerous and cunning, yes. However, they're also honest with their desire and lust, wouldn't that make them trustworthy? I gave them what I'm capable of, and they gave me back something equal," Anastasha answered with a smile on her face as she reached for Rasmus' glass of water.

Before Rasmus could even warn Anastasha, her hand hovered around the glass. Her expression stiffened and her fingers curled into a ball of fist, not too tight and not too loose. She slowly leaned away from the glass and when she stared at Rasmus and the others, she realized why they were so tensed earlier. On the other hand, they were surprised that she could smell the poison at that distance.

"It's poisoned..." Anastasha pointed out, but she already knew that they knew.

Rasmus, Aris, Rullein, and Serena looked at the four women walking toward their booth. Those women were the ones who had been glancing at Rasmus and he knew they were the assassins and perhaps the ones who had spiked all the bottles and drinks. Those women stood behind the couch that Anastasha sat on, and they all immediately leaned down, the whispers weren't unheard due to Rasmus and the others' sensitive ears.

The whispers were enough to make Anastasha sit straight and her pupils shrunk. Those women belonged to the woman that she called Mother, the one who gave birth to her. The woman that wanted to see her child came to visit her. The women immediately left and acted like workers of the pleasure house once again.

"That's why you can smell the poison. It belongs to your family in the first place," Rasmus glanced at the bottles on the table once again.

"Not my family's, but my mother's," Anastasha answered, finding it shocking that none of them were affected by the poison. "That poison you drank, it could even melt or rust steel in a matter of a second..." She slowly stood up and her expression still stiff and anxious.

"How nice of her to treat us with such hospitality," Rasmus smiled coldly at Anastasha.

"That's my mother," Anastasha wanted to smirk but it faltered by the idea of meeting her mother. "You can say it's motherly love," she added.

Rasmus slowly stood up as he straightened his suit, Aris and the others followed suit.

"So? Are we going to meet your mother now? Seeing how she has shown how much she's so eager to bring you home, I suppose we can't take a detour," Rasmus asked with his brows raised.

"Yes, it seems like it," Anastasha nodded, her gaze was blank as she stared at the glass and the bottles on the table.

Chapter 584 - 584: Ascension.

The sound of bells rang echoed throughout the sky of a sunny day, people coming into the cathedral that was bigger and taller than any building in West Neva. Hundreds of carriages have swarmed the cathedral since two days ago with banners from different nations and royal families. They came to celebrate Ascension Day, a day when the Westerners rose into a higher position above other humans by the blessing of Saint Ermaine and the Orthias.

All the prominent figures including Sorcerers attended Ascension Day to receive the blessing. The cathedral was so big that it could fit more than a thousand people easily. The commoners couldn't attend because Ascension Day lasted for a whole week, and the first day was exclusively for royal families and nobles.

Agnesia and Marina, the twin Sorceresses that had become the image of power in West Neva also attended Ascension Day. They had no choice but to play along or they would be seen as threats to Satan and her followers. They had been trying to gather more forces to resist against the wolf wearing the shepherd's skin. However, they couldn't find more trustworthy people in West Neva or their scheme would be exposed.

"They even come for the Ascension Day," Marina whispered as she looked at the two figures that had caused anxiety to the whole continent and taken countless lives due to their turf wars.

Agnesia looked over her shoulder and saw the two leaders walking side by side so proudly without any shred of shame in their eyes. She wasn't the only one who looked at those two figures, everyone in the cathedral were looking with various expressions written on their faces.

"They have become their puppets. It wouldn't be a surprise if those two suddenly became good friends," Agnesia learned from Rasmus that those two leaders were being used by the Fallen Watchers, Satan's followers. "But I have to admit that it's quite concerning to see them here. We just need to stay out of this for now," she muttered and sat straight, facing the front and looking at Ermaine, a young woman wearing a black cloak standing at the altar, a fake Saint and a false prophet with Satan and the Orthias standing behind her.

A normal place should grow louder and the atmosphere should grow lighter by the bigger amount of people gathered, but not in this cathedral. The more people entered, the silence remained and the atmosphere grew heavier, it was as if none of their presence could overwhelm those who stood at the altar.

"(I have never believed in Gods, but would it be too late to believe in them?)" Agnesia thought to herself, remembering how powerful Satan and the Fallen Watchers were.

When the giant wonder doors closed shut, the slamming sound echoed throughout the cathedral. Everyone held their breath without them knowing, there was no sound, only silence. It didn't matter if they believed in Ermaine or not, they all felt the same way, anxious.

"The day has come. For those who believe in themselves for centuries, unwavering beliefs of who they truly are..." Ermaine's voice was soft and gentle, a voice that showed humility and innocence. "The ones who have stayed pure, the ones who have resisted the impurities. Those people are here, gathered in this holy place," her expression was impassive, but her gaze saw through everyone's souls.

Almost everyone in the hall was touched by her words, like cold water that washed away the dry in their throats. It was that feeling of being validated, of being seen, and heard. Her voice was like arms embracing their heads and her eyes were like the warmth that had spread inside their chests.

"To exist in this world, everything is seen as special. The trees, the mountains, the water, the sea, and all the creatures. But there's one creature with limitless potential, to grow stronger, to grow smarter, to reproduce, and lastly to rule and take care of this world. And what's that being called?" Ermaine put her hands on the altar, looking at all the masses in front of her.

"Humans..." Everyone muttered.

"Humans, us..." Ermaine smiled softly and nodded. "The Orthias taught us how to live, to give us knowledge. But what did the humans do to them?" She asked with her brows raised. "We slaughtered them in the name of what? Gods?" She added.

Everyone in the hall was silent, not wanting to admit it because even though they were humans, they weren't a part of it. They were the ones who were against the massacre of the Orthias, they kept devoting their lives to the ones who taught them.

"Yes, their Gods!" A voice echoed throughout the hall. "We don't believe in Gods!" He added.

That voice resonated with everyone in the room, and without them realizing it, they were nodding in agreement.

"You don't believe in Gods? Then who made you?" Ermaine asked. "The Orthias came from the essence, the remains of True Dragons, Mana. But humans? Animals? Beasts? They bleed. Until this day, the Orthias never said that they made humans or the lives before us. Then who?" She looked into everyone's eyes.

The hall grew silent once again. It was a fact that they never wanted to touch or even to look at. They knew there should be an explanation, but Gods, those who believed in them had done nothing but bloodshed.

"God, it sounds familiar and yet it feels distant, is it not?" Ermaine asked as she walked down the steps. "What is God? All of you must have known the answer or at least heard of it. Omnipotent," she stood in front of a king who looked pale and sick.

"We want to believe in God, but the humans have tarnished that name until we want to ignore its existence..." Ermaine held the king's fragile and wrinkly hand. "Yet God never abandoned us," she muttered as she closed her eyes.

The stained glass that prevented the sunlight from blinding the hall suddenly grew brighter. The rays of light pierced through the stained glass, it was a white light, unfiltered by the stained glass. The king who looked old, pale, and sick suddenly grew younger, his skin turned pinkish, and he looked nothing like a sick old man a few seconds ago.

Agnesia, Marina, and the others who knew the truth were shocked. They had seen Serena's divine power, they were shocked when Ermaine could do the same and the worst part was it seemed that Ermaine's divine power was stronger than Serena's. They wanted to be skeptical, but they found no traces of demonic energy, only pure divine power.

"(Why does someone like her, who's a false prophet, a false Saint to show divine power? Isn't she supposed to turn us astray from God? What are they scheming...)" Agnesia was utterly shocked.

"All of you have shown your devotion toward yourself, of what kind of human God wants you to be. You have proven yourself worthy to be called a human. I'm not trying to use you, to turn you into a martyr. What I'm trying to do is to make you understand, it's not only that you're different from the other humans, but God has come to reward you for your purity," Ermaine spoke as she walked in between the benches, looking everyone in the eyes. "You will remain the same, God wants nothing back but for you to be yourself, like you have always been," she smiled softly as she turned around, looking at the altar in front of her and the thousands of people around her.

"Now! Close your eyes! I'll raise you to ascension..." Ermaine clasped her hands together and the divine light hit everyone's bodies.

The pain, the stress, the sickness, and all the burden inside everyone's bodies were lifted. They could feel their bodies floating from how light their bodies were. Nobody had experienced something like that before, and they began to believe they had ascended into something more superior than other humans.

"Now stand and rejoice in your ascension!" Ermaine smiled softly as she walked back to the altar.

When everyone opened their eyes as they stood up, tears fell to their chins. Basked by divine light, to be given a gift for their beliefs, for staying pure, and knowing they had done the right things, it empowered them. Agnesia and the others were petrified once again, it was too overwhelming and it was hard to resist the feel, the words, and rightness.

"You are now embraced," Ermaine said in a soft voice.

Satan stood there as a smile slowly formed on the corner of her lips.

Chapter 585 - 585: Blackest night.

The cathedral was never empty in the past week because of Ascension Day, but on the last day, the cathedral was completely empty as soon as the sun went down. No soul existed inside the cathedral, only Ermaine, Satan, and the Fallen Watchers. The Fallen Watchers stood on either side of the isle, bowing their heads when Satan walked toward the altar with her black gown that got dragged on the marble floor.

"Out of all five continents, we could only achieve one," Satan muttered as she walked up the steps and stood in front of the altar. "However, the fact that we survived was a miracle. This world is nothing like Earth, so many powerful beings, so many hidden power, so many secrets..." She muttered and stared blankly at the altar.

"It's not them that made us lose the other continents, Master. It was a single man," Shemyaza pointed out. "He's favored by Him. It's always like that, especially those who are chosen by Him."

"Favored? That's a strong word to say to Him," Satan glanced over her shoulder to look at Shemyaza, her expression was cold and her eyes were cold. "Don't bring Him into this," she warned.

Shemyaza's wings trembled and if his head could shrink, he would. The other Fallen Watchers who wanted to say the same thing immediately threw it away.

"It's not that He favored him, not entirely," Satan turned around and looked at the hundreds of Fallen Watchers standing on the isle. "Rasmus had Iblis with him, and that's the reason why he knew how to deal with beings like us," she looked down at the marble floor and her bare feet as she walked down the steps.

"Can we trust what he said, Master? Him and Iblis are no longer allies, at least that's what we know. If this is their scheme, we are right where they want us to be," Shemyaza watched Satan walk past him.

"We don't need to trust him. Our plans, what we have done here, none of them have anything to do with him. It doesn't matter if he's telling the truth or not, it doesn't affect us in any way," Satan shook her head and looked at the stained glass where the moonlight pierced through and lit the dark hall. "Focus on what we have here, this is the foundation of our plans."

All the Fallen Watchers bowed their heads and knew that they had to use everything they got to meet Satan's expectations. They had failed to capture the remaining four continents, and to disappoint her again, they couldn't let this one last chance go to waste because it would make them feel useless and worthless in Satan's eyes.

Satan suddenly glanced over her shoulder when she noticed presences had entered the cathedral. They were Lucifer, in a body of an Orthias and there were six Orthias behind him, they were the Angels of Rebellion, the angels that Lucifer led to their demise. All of them had possessed the bodies of Orthias, and although the bodies looked perfect, the bodies couldn't entirely contain the magnificent and the powerful Cherubim. The bodies didn't decay, they slowly cracked and disintegrated that they had to cover them with a cloak.

"We have brought good news, Master," Lucifer said with a serious expression as she lowered her head. "We found traces of Iblis and his demon army. They're beyond the Blackcliffs, far west of this continent," she revealed.

Satan raised her brows with a tug of a smile on the corner of her lips. She didn't expect to find Videl this early, but she knew what kind of being Videl was. Iblis was created with emotions that were as fierce as the fire that created him, the moment he showed his emotions, that would be the moment where he was confident in himself.

"And? What did you find there?" Satan asked.

"Flattened land. It was as if something had just blown off the trees," Lucifer answered, her eyes staring right into Satan's.

"Flattened land? What else?" Satan's eyes narrowed slightly, knowing that Videl was trying to show off something to them.

"Demons, hundreds of thousands of them and they seem to be preparing for an invasion," Lucifer answered. "We didn't dare to go any closer to find out more about it because we might get caught," she added.

Satan crossed her arms before her right hand cupped her chin, her gaze fixated on the stained glass and at the moon. She remembered what Videl did to West Neva, turning humans into demons. She wondered if Videl also brought demons from Hell, the powerful ones that were loyal to him.

"Invasion you say? He's not stupid enough to fight the Orthias with that army of his. He's obviously won't dare to confront the angels in South Neva, not when he's alone," Satan muttered, her forefinger tapped on her lips. "East Neva is too far because he needs to move across the globe. The closest place from his is this continent," she pointed out.

"What is your command?" Lucifer looked at Satan's body basking in moonlight, but her body didn't cast any shadow.

"Command? I'll personally go there and see what's happening," Satan glanced over her shoulder at the Fallen Watchers. "All of you stay here, protect the whole continent and make sure nothing happens to this land. That's the command," she ordered.

Without questioning Satan's decision, the Fallen Watchers, Lucifer and the fallen Cherubims bowed their heads, heeding her command. Satan walked the long isle toward the exit as she flicked her hand, opening the doors in front of her. She stood at the door and looked up as her black feathered wings with a hint of gold came out on the back of her black gown. When she spread her wings, there was no sound, not even a gush of wind. She then flew away and disappeared into the night sky without a single sound being made.

It only took Satan a minute to fly beyond the land of the living, crossing the vast sea that would take months for a ship and a blimp to reach. She looked down at the perfectly formed tall natural walls with its unique black color. She never knew how the Blackcliffs were made, it was a mystery that only the elders of Orthias knew. She then landed right beyond the wall, looking at the flattened land as what Lucifer had informed her.

Satan stared at her surroundings at the toppled gigantic trees as if they were being blown away by a powerful storm. She knew there was no storm or if a storm had happened based on the weather in the sky. She knew that something had happened here, something that she wasn't aware of. She decided to fly once again, going further into the abandoned land to find the army that Lucifer had mentioned.

It didn't take her a minute when she found the demon army, and it was a sight that she remembered really well. A ginormous sinking hole with burning black flames around it existed with hundreds of

thousands of demons circling around it. The sinking hole was so big that it could swallow a whole mountain, or perhaps there was a mountain there, but it got swallowed already.

Satan casually descended right in front of the sinking hole, and the demons didn't notice her presence until she was right in front of them. The demons unconsciously took a few steps away from her because they knew who she was based on her wings.

"You dare to show off your army in front of me?" Satan chuckled softly as she slowly turned around, glaring at the demons with her glowing golden eyes. "My only restriction is to forbid me from harming humans unnecessarily. To demons? There's no such a thing..." She grinned as her wings spread widely, casting a shadow that no light could enter, the blackest night that ever existed.

Chapter 586 - 586: Making an enemy.

The vast land turned pitch black, no light and the demons couldn't see through the darkness at all. Demons weren't like any living beings, who required light or reflection to see, but this darkness was different. They couldn't see, all they sensed was the sound being produced around them.

The demons used their power to create fire to get rid of the darkness, but that was when they saw the horror of a cosmic being, the shadow of God's throne. Bodies scattered on the ground, shredded into pieces as they floated in the sea of demonic blood, dark as tar and thick as pus. They didn't know what had happened until they looked up and saw black feathers falling from the sky.

The black feathers that shredded everything they touched without any warning or making any sound. It was petrifying that the demons began to scream and scatter from the horror. However, no matter how far they flew or ran, darkness followed them and they couldn't run from the feathers that appeared out of nowhere around them.

The numbers of demons decreased rapidly, and amidst the chaos, there was only one being who stayed still. Satan with her cold and impassive expression watched the demons get obliterated by her power.

"You should be here..." Satan muttered to herself as she looked around. "Or perhaps..." She paused and looked over her shoulder at the pit.

The ground trembled heavily and cracks appeared around the pit as if the ground was being split into many. Satan flew away from the ground and watched the corpses sink into the cracks, along with the sea of blood. She knew that demons couldn't be killed, she could only send them back to where they belong.

"You're out of your mind..." Satan stared down at the cracks that grew bigger and further into the distance.

Satan knew what Videl was trying to do, and it was to open the gate to Hell and connect both worlds directly. She wondered how far Videl could push his authority and the boundary he had with God, but seeing it with her own eyes, she knew that Videl wasn't planning to let things out of his reach and control.

The demons who were struggling to survive from Satan's power, they flew into the cracks and the pit to find safety. The crowded land suddenly became quiet and empty, leaving only Satan, the only being that existed there. She floated in the sky, looking down at the pit that grew bigger without trying to stop it. Her reason was simple, she needed a greater force to exist, not as a challenge, but to fight the angels in the future.

Satan's expectations were crushed when she felt a dangerous power that suddenly got released from the pit. Her brows raised, her wings spread as if she was preparing for the worst. She was surprised, or perhaps she felt disturbed by what was coming.

A hand came out of the pit, a hand that could trample a small fortress. A hand with a visible cuff and chain, a being that wasn't supposed to be free. The demons that were hiding inside the cracks and the pit got spat out, their bodies were crushed, crumpled, and lifeless. The being that tried to crawl out of the pit, its presence was enough to make nature react by forming dark clouds above the pit as a storm brewed above the clouds.

Satan spread her right arm to the side as black feathers covered her whole arm to her fingertips and beyond. The moment the feathers dispersed, they revealed a thin shiny blade that was as thin as a piece of paper. She flew down and pierced the hand with the blade, her expression showing a hint of anger. The hand slowly melted into tar, and finally it let go of the ground and immediately went back into the pit.

"How was that?" A familiar voice could be heard behind Satan.

"Is that your plan?" Satan asked back, her gaze cold and sharp when she looked over her shoulder at a man wearing a black suit, black trousers, black leather loafers, and a black collared unbuttoned shirt that revealed his collar bones and the muscles of his torso. "You're planning to release the Sealed One? You're going too far, Iblis..." She turned around and stared at Videl's glowing red eyes.

"Too far? What are you talking about? You saw it yourself that it could come out and He didn't try to stop it," Videl answered with a huge grin on his face, knowing what kind of a being Satan was, more than any other being. "You had your fun, taking thousands of lives and even turned them into your little lambs," he smirked and walked toward Satan. "Aren't you being too selfish for doing whatever you wanted while I hadn't done much, incomparable to what you have done?" He arched his brows.

"Is that how you want to do this?" Satan asked, her eyes almost like a slit, finding Videl's provocation and mockery of the boundaries that higher beings shouldn't breach. "If you brought that thing into this world, you'd become an immediate threat to the angels. Use your intellect or you'll end up fighting us and them at the same time," she warned.

Videl laughed as he covered his forehead with his right hand, something that Satan couldn't help but notice. Once he stopped laughing, he scoffed and shook his head, his gaze fixated on Satan's face.

"Oh, don't you worry about that. I was just showing you a glimpse of the future," Videl smiled coldly. "Of course, I'm not that crazy to release that thing now," his smile turned mischievous, almost playful. "However, I don't think you'll have an issue with that one," he tilted his head to the side and pointed at the pit.

A surge of energy crawled on Satan's legs up to her back, and when she turned around, she saw two massive wings with its tempered scales. A dragon that looked similar to the one she saw not too long ago, the dragon that Rasmus and the others fought and defeated. She was searching for that dragon but she couldn't find it, and now it was flying in the sky with its shiny and jet-black scales that reflected the moonlight.

"I know you were looking for this, for our brethren, didn't you? I bet Lucifer would be so disappointed that the only dragon that could contain his existence is now in my possession," Videl grinned widely and finally his horns pierced through his skull and skin on his forehead. "What a magnificent creature, don't you think?" He giggled.

Satan reacted with a soft chuckle, and that surprised Videl. She crossed her arms and couldn't hide the smile that appeared on her face. She let out a sigh, a sigh that could only be interpreted as showing pity toward another.

"Oh, Iblis, you have no idea what you just did..." Satan stared into Videl's eyes and then glanced toward something behind Videl.

Videl noticed the glance and that was when he noticed a faint presence in the distance. He slowly turned around and that was when he saw a woman with white long straight hair with glowing bright blue eyes, wearing a fur robe and a cold expression. It was Sanya, the one who was said to be the oldest Orthias, the one who led countless wars against Satan and her force and managed to send Satan away from the North.

"You just made yourself an enemy of an Orthias. How unfortunate," Satan chuckled mockingly.

Chapter 587 - 587: Survival.

Rasmus and the others were taking a short break in the nearby town where they could have a proper lunch. They had been traveling for a week, and they were only a day away to reach Marooth, the territory that exclusively belonged to the Asghar family. They had been staying in estates that belonged to Anastasha, not the Asghar family, and it showed how big the connection that Anastasha had. It was still a mystery how influential Anastasha was without her last name's influence.

Rasmus, Aris, Rullein, and Serena were sitting at the table, waiting for their lunch. Anastasha didn't join them since she had some business to take care of while they were in that town. Although Anastasha didn't have any guard with her, she didn't show any fear when her head was being hunted by her siblings.

"She's quite an interesting woman, don't you think?" Serena glanced at Rasmus. "Now that I think about it, you wanted your former students to be like her, correct?" She added as she grabbed a glass of water.

"That's a dangerous one instead of an interesting one. And no, I don't want them to be like her, she's too ambitious and I have seen enough what kind of things she would do for that ambition," Rasmus shook his head.

"Hmm, I think I know someone with that kind of personality," Serena chuckled as she stared into Rasmus' eyes, the person that she had just mentioned. "So, you're calling yourself dangerous? But didn't teach your former students to think like you?" She wondered with her arms crossed and her head tilted to the side.

"If I wanted them to be like me, I would have killed them before they could become like me," Rasmus answered and glanced at the maids coming into the dining hall with trays of food. "If a world needed someone like me, that world was bound to fail," he muttered and let the maids put the food and utensils on his side of the table.

Serena decided to stop the topic to enjoy the food with the others. As soon as the maids left, she was waiting for everyone to dig on their food, especially Aris and Rullein since they were the ones who usually took the first bite. However, none of them even grabbed their utensils and they sat still like a statue. When she turned to look at Rasmus, he was the same, motionless and his gaze was distant.

"What's the matter?" Serena asked, wondering why everyone was acting so strangely.

Rasmus, Aris, and Rullein looked at each other, and they all had the same stare. The three of them immediately looked out the window on the east side of the hall.

"We feel the presence of a True Dragon, it's so strong that we can feel the distress it feels," Aris answered with her eyes narrowed, finding the feeling to be bizarre.

"Distress is an understatement. Its fear, anger, hatred, and desperation are too strong, I can feel the bitterness in my mouth," Rullein corrected as she looked at her hands, trembling and beyond her control. "Is that from the True Dragon that we defeated?" She glanced at Aris since she was the one who had awakened and one step closer to becoming a True Dragon herself.

"Yes, it's the same True Dragon. Someone or something brought it back to life in the most forceful way possible..." Aris muttered and her fists clenched slightly, finding it disturbing and dangerous.

Serena raised her brows and looked at the three of them. They all had something in common on their faces, the uneasiness and the discomfort of knowing such a being could be resurrected.

"Satan? Did she finally find where you buried the dragon?" Serena asked with concern in her voice. "Resurrection on that scale, that's not possible for any being, so it should narrow down into certain beings," she pointed out.

"I'm not sure. It could be Videl as well since he knew where we buried the body of the True Dragon. My instinct tells me it's Videl's doing, and it's his way to gain more force to his side," Rasmus crossed his arms and his gaze fixated on the window, expecting this to happen the moment he decided to cut ties with Videl. "After all, he knows everything, and he's going to use that everything against me," he added.

Aris glanced at Rasmus, remembering that there was a way to know who was the one behind it.

"We can find the answer if you visit Sanya. I'm sure she knows, after all she's the one who has been protecting the Dragon's Maw being discovered," Aris suggested. "I know that she must have felt it as well, and I know she won't stay still when she feels a presence of a True Dragon," she pointed out with a serious expression.

Rasmus nodded with understanding and it was a good idea. He made himself comfortable in his chair when he slowly closed his eyes. His consciousness slowly faded away along with the sounds of his surroundings. The moment he opened his eyes, he was in the middle of a flattened land in the middle of the night. He could see the damage on the vast land he was at, noticing the land was the evidence of a great battle that had happened. He then saw Sanya standing still while her left hand clenched on her chest, she looked exhausted and weak, but that wasn't the most surprising part. He saw Satan standing in front of Sanya with her wings folded on her back, staring at Sanya with an impassive expression.

"A truce?" Sanya stared Satan in the eye.

"A truce," Satan nodded. "As you can see, we have a common enemy. I'll leave North Neva alone and I'll never touch that land without any harm intention or any ulterior motive," she said with a serious expression.

"You took a few of our people, turning them into your own. Why should I consider your suggestion?" Sanya tilted her head.

"What's taken can't be given back. I can give them back to you, but they'll become merely a vessel without a soul, a corpse. I did what I needed to do, for my own survival and those who are following me.

If we want to trace the string to the very beginning, it wasn't me who came and tried to get rid of you or the humans, it was the opposite," Satan pointed out, reminding Sanya about what happened back then beyond the Blackcliffs.

"And look at you now, what did you do to human civilization? You caused chaos and bloodbath. Your survival is equal to this world's destruction, you're not here to survive, you're here to cause chaos and destruction," Sanya responded with a calm expression.

"Yes, that's true, but that doesn't change the fact what I did was for my own survival," Satan smiled coldly. "We can argue about this for as long as you want, or I can use this opportunity to take you while you're in that state. However, I don't want either of those, I want a truce, not an alliance. The enemies are powerful, and I want to survive, and so are you and the remaining people of yours," she slowly walked toward Sanya with her hands raised.

Sanya knew that Rasmus was there and was listening to the conversation. He wasn't there physically, he was there through her perception that Satan wouldn't be able to notice.

"The beings that caused the extinction of the dragons are here already, and that being that we both fought against was another force that is growing exponentially fast. You don't care about humans, you never did. Orthias is the protector of this world, not the lives that live in it," Satan stood in front of Sanya as she slowly lowered her hands. "I also made a truce with Rasmus Blackheart," she revealed.

Sanya was about to ignore the words Satan said until Satan mentioned Rasmus, and that was the only reason it took her interest. Satan could see it in Sanya's eyes as well that Sanya was intrigued by the fact that Rasmus had made a truce with Satan.

"Are you interested in what I'm about to tell you?" Satan asked with her brows raised.

Sanya stared into Satan's eyes, and she wasn't worried if Satan was telling the truth or not since Rasmus was right there to tell her if Satan was telling a lie or the truth. It was a good opportunity for her to understand the true nature of Satan, and what kind of a being she was.

"Speak," Sanya said with a cold expression.

Chapter 588 - 588: Left behind.

Sanya watched Satan disappear into the night, her expression impassive even after what Satan had revealed to her. She slowly turned to look at Rasmus, this time her expression turned cold, she was staring at him with the intention of judging. However, Rasmus didn't react, not even after what Satan revealed.

"So that being called Iblis was your ally," Sanya asked, her eyes never leaving Rasmus'.

"Yes, he was the one who came to me and helped me. I knew who he was from the very beginning," Rasmus nodded, he didn't have a reason to hide anything from Sanya. "I used him, and he used me. Now he's reaping what I sow," he added.

"He reaps what you sow," Sanya hummed, her arms crossed. "Does that mean that you know everything before all of these? Before the chaos, the beings that appeared one after another?" She asked.

"To some extent, yes. I was preparing for this, and the reason why I'm here, who made me who I am, it's all for this moment," Rasmus nodded once again. "If you're asking why is everything ends up like this, it's all because of me and that being called Iblis," he revealed, knowing that Sanya wanted to hear that.

Sanya broke eye contact and slowly lifted her head to look at the night sky. Her expression was still impassive, and Rasmus couldn't decipher anything from her because she was nothing like humans who showed emotions. Her pale skin like snow basked under the moonlight that made her look almost ethereal.

"If that's the case, that being the humans called Gods, they're the ones planned everything?" Sanya glanced at Rasmus from the corner of her eyes. "From the moment they brought those beings to bring extinction to the True Dragons, brought creatures called humans, brought chaos into this world by hunting and killing us Orthias, turning this world into a complete mess, bringing those demons into this world, and so forth..." She added.

"I can't predict what I'm about to say next, now how can I predict something like that?" Rasmus responded as he shook his head.

"Then how could you say that it was all because of you?" Sanya asked and slowly turned her head and stared at Rasmus. "If you have the structure, you should be able to see what it would look like when it's done, or at least the purpose of it," she tilted her head and raised her brows at Rasmus.

Rasmus showed a faint smile before it disappeared a split second afterward. He had been spending time with Anastasha that he forgot the being that stood in front of him was something beyond human. A being that had lived through many civilizations before humans existed.

"Let me live and those beings will bring chaos, let me die, and the result will still be the same. I am the ember that lit the fire, but I'm not the fire that will burn the whole forest," Rasmus answered with a serious expression, explaining that his existence was the trigger of those events that led everything to this moment, but his existence no longer matters due to the sea of flame that would wipe each other out.

Even with that revelation, Sanya stayed impassive because it was exactly like what Satan had said about Sanya. Sanya cared about the world but not the lives in it, and even to this point, she didn't find the truth to be disturbing.

"And who exactly are you, Rasmus Blackheart?" Sanya asked.

Rasmus took his time to answer the question, not to find the right answer, but to accept the answer as who he truly was.

"A man," Rasmus answered.

Sanya's expression didn't change at all, but she broke eye contact once again. She understood the big picture of what was going on around the world and what kind of beings she had to deal with. She knew that she couldn't just stay still, not when all sides were growing stronger each day.

"What's your purpose, Rasmus Blackheart?" Sanya looked down at the ground, the filthy demonic energy that had rooted deep into the land that no life could live in this land.

"If I want destruction, I wouldn't cut ties with Iblis, I wouldn't agree to the truce, and the world should be devoured by flame a long time ago," Rasmus pointed out before he gave his answer. "My purpose is something that will never cause you harm, nor the humans," he answered vaguely.

Sanya let out a sigh that almost sounded like a suppressed laugh.

"I heard you never lied, even a being like Satan commended you for your honesty. Hearing that's your purpose, should I believe you?" Sanya asked, but she didn't look at Rasmus this time.

"I don't see a sea of flame anywhere," Rasmus answered, repeating his previous statement.

Sanya nodded her head without saying a word or if she was satisfied with the answer or not. Rasmus on the other hand was waiting for more questions from her because deep down, he enjoyed her questions more than him answering the questions.

"And your purpose in East Neva?" Sanya asked.

"To unite them, not just the whole continent but unite them with Central Neva and South Neva. The reason is because the survival of humankind is almost non-existent when the enemies are those beings. As I said earlier, my purpose isn't to erase humankind, and I want them to work together to survive," Rasmus looked at the evidence of a great battle between Sanya and Satan against Videl and the True Dragon. "As of now, West Neva has become Satan's territory and humans are slowly being taken away. There's no hope for them. On the other hand, South Neva is also being in a dangerous situation because the cult has brought the angels, and the one behind it is the Zevrathi family, if humans can't survive, there's no point of me doing this," he explained with a serious expression as he stared at Sanya.

"Doing all that so you can become their savior..." Sanya muttered as she stared at the distance where the pit was. "Or at least that what you were expecting to hear," she flicked her hand and created a Mana barrier that went across the vast land like a wall that separated both sides. "You would answer that if you wanted that from the beginning, you wouldn't create the fire in the first place," she looked at Rasmus, and there was a faint smile on her face that immediately disappeared.

"That's not my intention," Rasmus nodded in agreement. He realized that Sanya was trying to dissect him and was trying to understand him even deeper.

"One last question. What's your real intention of sparing the humans and us Orthias?" Sanya raised her brows.

"Which is worse? To see your people die or to see them all betray you and ignore your existence until they forgot you exist?" Rasmus put his hands in his trousers' pockets.

Sanya furrowed her brows, and for the first time, she looked confused.

"You won't understand..." Rasmus said under his breath as he looked down at his loafers. "But He will," he continued and looked up at the sky.

Since Sanya said that her question would be the last one, she didn't say a word. That question somehow stuck in her head, and before she knew it, Rasmus had disappeared.

Rasmus opened his eyes, and noticed that Anastasha had joined the dining table. She was staring at him with a curious gaze because to her, he had been sitting still with his eyes closed for a long time. Before she could even open her mouth, Rasmus stood up and looked at the food that had turned cold and unappetizing.

"Took you long enough to come back," Rullein said with a rib bone in her hand as she chewed the meat in her mouth.

"It was Videl," Rasmus gave the answer that Aris, Rullein, and Serena had been waiting for. "I'm no longer running out of time, I have been left behind," he glanced at his wristwatch.

Chapter 589 - 589: Marooth City.

Rasmus looked out the window, and he was blown away by the landscape and the city that was built on top of it. Marooth City, or what people in East Neva called it the Sacrosanct, a city that had never been invaded, harmed, or even scratched by any living beings. The city was built around a mountain and the higher the building, the higher their status. The mountain was no longer visible due to the buildings that were built around it. Lastly, a huge palace rested at the peak of the mountain, the palace alone was at least a third of the size of the mountain itself.

"Welcome to my homeland, Count Blackheart," Anastasha muttered, her eyes fixated on the palace. "It's small compared to kingdoms and nations, but it holds more power than any nations in this world."

"The whole world..." Rasmus' voice was barely above a whisper. "The way you said it makes it believable," his gaze lingered on the palace, wondering how long it took for them to carve the whole mountain.

"If I can be honest, I don't want to believe it either. But reality denied my doubts," Anastasha chuckled softly and moved away from the window. "Please keep this in mind, I don't want chaos. I want to use this land as the center of East Neva in the future. I don't want any sacrilegious befall this land," she stared at Rasmus with a serious expression, but her gaze was more of like a plea rather than a warning or an order.

"Does that mean your brothers and even your father won't act the moment we enter the city?" Rasmus glanced at Anastasha.

"Well, they'll do it in such discreet," Anastasha muttered as she took a deep breath. "If you can take care of them in such manner as well, I don't really mind it at all," her gaze lingered on the city wall and gate ahead of them.

Rasmus didn't say a word nor responded with any gesture, his gaze still fixated on the palace. That message wasn't meant for him, he redirected Anastasha's words toward Aris, Serena, and especially Rullein. His eyes then scanned through the city, looking through the countless tall structures on the mountain.

"Those large buildings on the mountain and below the palace, they belong to whom?" Rasmus asked.

Anastasha took another deep breath before she leaned to the side to look out the window. She knew which buildings that Rasmus mentioned, and there was a split moment where her expression turned cold but immediately masked with impassiveness.

"The wives, the relatives, and those who shared the same blood as the main family," Anastasha answered. "None of them are my allies," she revealed.

Rasmus hummed, remembering why it was called the Asghar family as the family of patriarchy. Seeing how Anastasha reacted to the question, he realized the moment she showed any sign of a desire for power that didn't belong to her, the same blood that ran through her veins had chosen to abandon and disown her.

"And which building your mother lives in?" Rasmus asked, his eyes trying to guess the buildings they saw on the mountain.

"That one over there..." Anastasha muttered, her forefinger pointed at the far west of the mountain where a castle-like structure with dome roofs was. "The only place in the whole city with zero visitor," she glanced at Rasmus with a smirk painted on her face.

"And the reason?" Rasmus made eye contact with Anastasha.

"Curse? Prolong sickness? Death?" Anastasha chuckled as she leaned back and crossed her arms with her head slightly tilted to the side. "They called it the Castle of Unveiling. Those who have shown desire will end up dead after their visit."

Rasmus nodded with understanding and stopped asking questions because they were close to entering the city.

The line to enter the city was long, and it would take hours due to strict policy and safety. However, Anastasha didn't bother by that and sat comfortably without making a scene. Rasmus on the other hand, had been observing her through the corner of his eyes. He wondered if her calmness was to prepare herself from the storm or if she was genuinely unbothered by the tension that she was about to encounter.

When it was finally their carriage to be checked, Anastasha opened the door when the guards requested it. The moment they saw the way a woman sat, a folded fan covering her mouth, and the way she smiled with her face, the guards's faces turned pale. They immediately kneeled and their faces touched the ground, unbothered if there were droppings or if the ground was dirty, they all bowed to her presence.

"Thank you for your good work, you may continue your duty. But please refrain from checking the three carriages behind me, they're with me," Anastasha said in a soft voice.

"Yes, your Highness the Princess," the guards said in unison and immediately stood up to close the carriage door.

As soon as they entered the city, they were escorted by high-ranking city guards that opened the path for them.

"Wow, even a powerful King didn't have such authority over someone's dignity like that," Serena chuckled, commenting on what she had just witnessed.

"Even a king bow before the Asghar, something that I have learned from the moment I was born into this world," Anastasha turned to look at Serena with a soft smile. "It's something that I have grown accustomed to, not something that I find it pleasing in any way," she sighed and then looked out the window at the busy street.

The mountain was surrounded by walls and heavily guarded with more than ten thousand elite guards every shift. The guards were taught and trained by the Asghar family's commander himself, making them on the same level as Swordmasters. The whole journey, everyone in the carriage was quiet, silently observing the world that they had entered.

When they arrived at the castle, which was where Anastasha's mother lived, the high-ranking guards left and continued their duty. Anastasha walked down the carriage and looked at the castle made, realizing that it had been years since her last visit. Unlike other families where maids, servants, or even knights welcomed their master, in this place, nobody welcomed her. There were no knights or even guards that guarded the castle, it looked vulnerable, but not to those who could see beyond naked eyes.

"Curse you say? Now I know why," Aris looked at the energy around the castle with her draconic eyes that turned every material into strings and cloths of colors. "Whatever lives inside this castle and produces that energy, they're not humans," she pointed out and turned her eyes back to normal before she turned to look at Anastasha.

Anastasha only responded with a smile as she looked at the domes on top of the castle.

"That's one way to ruin the surprise, isn't it?" Anastasha chuckled softly as she looked at the entrance to the castle. "Come, I'll introduce you to my mother. The only person in this whole world that matters to me," she said as she walked toward the castle with grace and poised posture.

Chapter 590 - 590: Evil God.

Rasmus and the others stood in front of the big wooden doors of the castle, and suddenly the doors were pushed open. It was an old man that opened the door, he was wearing a robe that almost looked like a scholar. Anastasha pointed out that the old man was her mother's personal butler and also the one who took care of the castle. She also mentioned that her mother took him when he was still a small child.

"Young Lady, it has been a while..." The old man smiled with his eyes closed.

Rasmus, Aris, and Rullein could see the Mana around the butler, and they were surprised to see the amount of Mana he possessed. The Mana around him was on the same level as a Sage, and it made Rasmus wonder if the old man was a scholar from the Magic Tower.

"Yes, it has been a while, Hassan. You look great as always," Anastasha smiled softly as she walked into the castle. "How's mother?" She asked as she looked around the castle that was well-maintained, nothing like the gloomy and unmaintained outside walls of the castle.

"Master is doing well," Hassan kept smiling and his eyes were barely open. "She has been waiting for your arrival, Young Lady. It would be unwise to keep her waiting," he pointed at the hall behind him.

Anastasha nodded and allowed Hassan to escort her and the others to her mother's chamber. When they walked the long hallway, Rasmus could see the immense Mana that was coming out of the door at the end of the hallway. Based on what Aris had said before, the one who could release such energy was something that no humans could do.

"Master is waiting for you inside, Young Lady," Hassan said and then excused himself.

Anastasha took a deep breath, staring at the door for a moment before she used both hands to open it. As soon as the door was opened, a thick white smoke escaped from the door, and an overwhelming sweet scent hit everyone's nose. It was so strong that Serena coughed and forced herself to use divine energy to protect her body from it.

"This scent..." Rasmus furrowed his brows. "Opioid?" He glanced at Anastasha.

Anastasha nodded as she walked into the dark room where thick white smoke blocked her vision. The room had no ventilation, and it would be impossible for air to get in or get out unless the door was open. However, as soon as they entered the dark room, the door behind them closed on its own.

Rasmus, Aris, and Rullein used their draconic eyes to see through the darkness and the thick smoke. That was when they saw a woman sitting on a massive bed, with nothing that covered her body. The moment the woman stared back at them, she smirked and covered her body with a silk duvet. She then revealed the long smoking pipe in her hand, smoking the opioid before she puffed a dark purple smoke.

The air became too thick that it was impossible to breathe without feeling sick and dizzy. The smell of the air instantly became pungent like a rotten carcass. Rullein and Serena were affected by the miasma and they both felt weak from inhaling the air. It was intriguing because Rullein was still in her weakened state, not yet regained her power completely. That was enough to explain how powerful Anastasha's mother was, and they knew that she wasn't a human. But what surprised them even more was the fact that Anastasha didn't get affected by the miasma.

"Mother," Anastasha lowered her head as she approached the bed that was protected by sheer curtains.

"You're still alive..." A woman's voice that almost sounds like a breeze of wind, quiet and gentle.

"For some unknown reason, yes," Anastasha nodded as she kneeled next to the bed, her arms resting on the edge of the bed. "How are you mother?" She stared at the figure hidden behind the purple sheer curtains.

"You have asked that question to Hassan already, there's no reason to ask the same question twice," the woman responded as she slowly shifted her position to look at her daughter. "I already know everything, save your breath for something more useful," she added.

Anastasha nodded and then turned her head to look at Rasmus and the others. She noticed Serena and Rullein's heavy breath and pale faces.

"Mother, they're my guests, they're someone I trust," Anastasha pleaded.

The woman hummed and she began to blow the miasma away with her breath. Her eyes fixated on Rasmus and Aris, two people that could withstand the miasma.

"Introduce me," the woman said as she slowly lied down on her belly and took a big hit on the opioid.

Anastasha slowly stood up and cleared her throat.

"Rasmus, this is my mother, Natia. As you have figured out, she's a Great Spirit, one of the Three Malevolent in East Neva. Humans called the Malevolent Spirits as Evil Gods, and she's one of them," Anastasha's hand pointed at the silhouette of a woman with long legs and long wavy hair.

Rasmus glanced at Anastasha and the explanation opened up all the mysteries hidden behind the doors about her. He had been wondering why the Ashenvale family had spirits and Great Spirit that protected them, each of them possessed one guardian. However, the whole time Anastasha got into danger, she didn't have any guardian even though she explained that all powerful families had ties with Great Spirits, producing half-breeds. The only possible answer was that as an Evil God, Natia didn't have spirits under her, and the fact she stayed in the city of humans, that explained a lot that she was on her own.

"Take a seat..." Natia whispered with her lower body shifting its position almost like a snake, flowing flawlessly underneath the silk duvet. Her voice and her movements were so hypnotizing that it made anyone imagine what she looked like and the undeniable sex appeal she possessed.

Rasmus looked down at the seat cushion on the carpet. He sat down and crossed his legs, Aris and the others looked at how he sat and copied him. Anastasha walked toward the cushion and sat across from Rasmus, her eyes fixated on his, signaling him to not do or say anything.

"Do you know why I summoned you back home, my daughter?" Natia asked as she puffed the smoke, filling the room with a strong opioid scent.

"No, mother," Anastasha shook her head. "Is it due to my circumstances? Of what I did?" She turned to look at her mother that slowly rose from the bed as the duvet fell over her shoulders and pooled around her legs.

"It's not what you did, it has something to do with what your father did..." Natia walked down the bed and hidden behind the folding screen next to the bed. "Your father dared to send his people to harm you. So I decided to meet your father with the same intention..." She muttered, her hands grabbed the red silk robe hanging on the folding screen.

Anastasha remembered that day, the assassination attempt that her brothers made. One of the assassins that were sent to kill her, they belonged to her father, and it was the only time she lost her composure. She glanced at Rasmus because he was the only person who saw her vulnerability.

"He received my message..." Natia walked out of the folding screen from the other side, revealing her appearance. "Not just him, but also your other siblings," Natia stared at Anastasha with her sharp eyes like a serpentine, her bright yellow eyes with slit pupils where one of her eyes hidden underneath her hair. Her skin was bright pale like an ash, her wavy long hair reached her thigh, covering half of her body with it. She looked as young as Anastasha, and her beauty beat Aris.

"And of course it's because I'm your mother. I want to see my daughter," Natia answered after she took a huge hit of the opioid and puffed the smoke that lingered around her face, hiding her cold smile.