

Evil 601

Chapter 601: A clash of powers.

Rasmus followed the small path into the forest behind Natia's castle, a place that was said to be untouched by everyone, not even Zechariah because it belonged to Natia. It took him a while until he walked out on the other end of the forest and was welcomed by the beautiful lake and a vast field. The sound of crickets and frogs, the view of the stars in the sky, the smell of water and grass, and the view of the city down below were amazing.

Aris and Rullein were standing in the middle of the field with a portal made of black smoke behind them. Rasmus looked at them from the distance for a few seconds before he approached them. He stood in front of the portal and then looked at both of them, he then nodded with understanding as he walked into the portal. Aris and Rullein followed after him into the portal before the portal disappeared into thin air.

They entered a different dimension of the world, everything was the same, but the difference was there were no living beings other than them. It was a complete silence until suddenly Aris pulled out Aristoria's sword and Rullein turned black smoke into two greatswords in her hands. Rasmus watched those two walk their separate ways as he pulled out the two blackswords, one a long sword and the other a greatsword.

Rullein's body slowly released black smoke, covering her body and the swords with it. Her eyes began to glow dark orange as wings made of black smoke came out of her back. On the other hand, Aris held Aristoria's greatsword with both hands as she closed her eyes and took a deep breath. Her silver hair slowly turned light blue from the root until her whole hair began to glow, and the moment she opened her eyes, her eyes glowed bright blue as her body began to release a visible light blue Mana around her.

Rasmus hadn't used his power ever since that incident in West Neva, and one of the many reasons was fear. He feared that his body would be taken over or worse, that it would self-destruct because his body might not be able to withstand it. However, Aris had assured her that he would be fine and that he had to use the Overlord's power so he could tame it and get used to it.

The moment Rasmus exhaled deeply, a cold breath was released and it was enough to drop the temperature into sub-zero. The ground around him began to freeze, from that alone was enough to make Aris and Rullein glance at him. The more he let out his breath, the colder the air and the more ice covered the ground.

The air grew denser and denser as cold mist began to surround him. It wasn't the past where both Aris and Rullein were shocked, it was the alternate dimension that began to crack. Even during the spars between Aris and Rullein, they needed to use a lot of force to affect space, but the cold that Rasmus released, it was already enough to break the space.

"Can you maintain this space?" Aris turned to look at Rullein.

"No, I don't think this space can hold the three of us fighting each other. I need to use my full power to maintain this space if he's going to use that much of his power," Rullein shook her head as she let the swords in her hands dissipate and used her energy to maintain the barriers. "What do you want to do? I can't join the spar like this."

Aris stared at Rasmus and the whole mountain that began to be covered in ice as the cold mist began to wrap around it. It was the same view when Rullein showed her the inside of Rasmus' body after that incident.

"The cold that succumb all things..." Aris muttered as she readied her stance and pointed her sword at Rasmus. "Maintain this space for as long as you can. I'm going to spar with him, to see how strong he is with that power."

A hand rested on Aris' shoulder, it was Aristoria who stood behind her. It had been a while since Aristoria showed herself, and mostly she appeared when it came to Rasmus.

"A part of me has become one with the Overlord, devouring it and turn it into Rasmus' power. That power contain not just my memories, but it also the Overlord's will," Aristoria said as she observed Rasmus with a gaze that showed pride and joy.

"You're saying I need to be cautious?" Aris glanced over her shoulder at Aristoria.

"Both his swordsmanship and his power. One wrong move you'll be hurt, another wrong move, you'll awaken the Overlord's will to devour. You'll be the target of it all," Aristoria warned before she pulled her hand away from Aris' shoulder. "I want you to be careful, not too hard, and not too soft..." She muttered before she disappeared.

A breeze of extreme cold air reached Aris, and that was when she watched her hands react to the cold. She narrowed her eyes, finding it disturbing, to see her body react to it. She looked at Rasmus, but this time, she looked at him through her draconic eyes. Pale gray strings filled the whole space, there were no other colors, even Rullein's strings were overwhelmed and subdued by Rasmus'. She also felt like her energy was being subdued by the Overlord's energy due to her nature as an Aristoria that was inferior to the Overlord's.

"This is bad..." Rullein said as she watched her black smoke turn into mist and slowly the mist entered her body. "I think my power is being converted..." She clenched her fists and pushed out the mist using her power.

Rasmus slowly opened his eyes and noticed what the power he possessed did to Rullein. He took a deep breath and controlled the mist like it was his limbs. He pulled the mist back into his body and made sure nothing remained in the air. It was quite hard to control the mist, he couldn't keep it at bay once he released it.

"Sorry, I had to try the power of the Overlord," Rasmus looked at Rullein and Aris. "I think I understand a bit of my power, and I need this space to train more about it in the future," he pointed out as he swung his swords around.

"You scared me for a moment there," Rullein sighed as she rested her hands on her hips. "But are you fine? You feel nothing after using the Overlord's power?" She asked with a serious expression.

"I'm fine, nothing feels different other than my body feeling light," Rasmus nodded. "Let's spar, no holding back," he looked at Rullein and Aris before he readied his stance.

The three of them glanced at each other, but the moment Rasmus and Rullein's eyes met, they decided to do the same thing.

The moment Aris dashed toward Rasmus, she felt Rullein's presence beside her and Rasmus instantly appeared in front of her. She took a step back and immediately used her sword to block both of their attacks at the same time. The impact immediately cracked the barrier that separated the two dimensions.

"Two against one?" Aris smirked as she stared at both of them.

"Who said it was two against one?" Rullein glanced at Rasmus and used her other sword to stab him, but to her surprise, Rasmus had predicted her move and used his other sword to block her attack until their swords clashed and worsened the cracks in the barrier. "I hate that you can read my mind..." She grinned at Rasmus.

"You're just that easy to predict," Rasmus smiled at Rullein as he released more energy that his eyes began to glow in light gray.

Chapter 602 - 602: Aftermath.

Anastasha sighed, looking at the spot on the wall with her heart that couldn't stop racing. She had been trying to sleep for the past hour, but she felt anxious due to her fast heartbeat. She got up and slowly rubbed her face as she took a deep breath, trying to calm her heart once again.

"What's wrong with me..." Anastasha muttered under her breath with her palm on her forehead, feeling the beads of sweat on her scalp.

She wondered if it had something to do with the gathering or the party banquet from today. She dealt with things as she had planned and she did it flawlessly. She didn't think she missed anything or if something was amiss, and yet she felt anxious for no reason.

While she was deep in thought, a knock on the door was heard. She glanced at the door with her brows furrowed, finding it suspicious for someone to bother her in the middle of the night. But she knew nobody could enter the castle without Natia's permission, not even her father.

"Young Lady, Master wants you in her chamber," the maid spoke before Anastasha could say a word.

"(Mother wants to see me at this hour?)" Anastasha raised her brows, staring at the door. "I understand," she responded as she slowly got out of bed.

Anastasha didn't bother to put something appropriate on, she just wore her nightgown when she walked out of her chamber. The maid escorted her to Natia's chamber, which was on the other side of the castle. She noticed how the maid was sweating, and how the maid's gaze mirrored hers.

"Looks like I wasn't the only one who couldn't rest. Did my mother do something that makes all of us anxious?" Anastasha asked the maid that was walking behind her.

"I don't know, My Lady. However, everyone has been anxious, and nobody could sleep. This has never happened before, and I don't know if it was Master's doing or not," the maid answered with her head lowered, looking down at the carpet.

"I see, but now that I'm closer to mother's chamber, this feeling doesn't worsen. I believe this isn't mother's doing," Anastasha pointed out as she looked at the room at the end of the hall. "You may leave," she glanced over her shoulder at the maid.

The maid bowed her head before she turned around and left.

Anastasha stood in front of the door, and it slowly opened with the thick smoke and smell of a flowery scent. She could see nothing until the silhouette of Natia appeared through the smoke. She walked into her mother's chamber and the door was slowly closing behind her.

Before Anastasha could say a word, she watched Natia's weary expression and pale expression appear from the thick smoke. She was worried that she immediately wrapped her arms around Natia's and supported her mother's weight. She could feel the roughness of Natia's skin, and when she looked at her mother's arm, she saw the scales that began to appear from her skin.

"Mother?! What happened?" Anastasha asked as she stared into her mother's eyes that began to glow dark purple and her pupils shrunk into slits like a snake.

"I'm fine, but not for long..." Natia muttered under her breath as she leaned toward Anastasha.

"What's going on? What's happening right now?" Anastasha looked at her mother with a confused look. "Everyone is anxious, nobody could sleep because of this... whatever this is..."

"It's them, those three..." Natia sighed as she walked toward the bed with Anastasha's help. "They're clashing their powers, and the sky is falling..." She pointed out. "It's not just us, the whole mountain is trembling, and the people in the city are feeling what you're feeling."

"What?" Anastasha was confused by what her mother said.

"If they don't stop clashing their powers, the people will be in danger. Their lives will be absorbed by those three, everyone will die without exception..." Natia pointed out as she looked at Anastasha with a serious expression.

Anastasha knew that Rasmus and the others had gone to the lake behind the castle since she was the one who told them about that place. She knew that they were going to spar, but she didn't expect that the spar would affect everyone in the city. With that being said, she hurriedly left Natia's chamber and left the castle.

The moment she left the castle, her heart skipped a few beats and it felt like she was having a heart attack. Her breath became heavier, and her lungs felt like the air was being sucked out of her body. She looked around and watched the guards running around as if they were looking for the culprit behind the phenomenon. She then hurriedly went into the forest, to ask Rasmus and the others to stop sparring.

When she looked up at the sky, she saw a whirlpool of clouds, a vortex that circled around that blocked the two moons. The clouds were dark, flashes of thunder could be seen above them, and there was a glowing pale blue light in the middle of the vortex. It gave her chill down her spine because it reminded her of what happened in Central Neva when the humans fought the demons.

The deeper Anastasha walked in the forest, the worse the feeling she felt. Sweat began to drip down to her chin and neck, and she felt both hot and cold at the same time. Not only that, but her mind also became hazy, waves of different emotions took over her mind. She felt anger, fear, sadness, and confusion for all the things that had lingered in her mind in the past few months. She began to forget what she was doing, where she was, and why she was in the forest in the first place.

"Ugh, what's the point of this..." Anastasha mumbled something nonsense as she leaned against the tree, slowly sliding down until she was sitting on the ground. "I feel sick. Someone. I need. Help..." Her gaze was hazy, her eyes half-lidded.

Anastasha heard footsteps and the rustling sound of the bushes behind her. She felt a cold hand tapped her shoulder, and she felt like a thirst that got washed away by the cold and refreshing water. Her mind slowly became clear, and she remembered why she had gone into the forest. When she turned around, she saw Serena staring at her with a gentle smile formed on her lips.

"Feeling better?" Serena asked as she offered her hand to Anastasha.

"I... yes... thank you..." Anastasha held Serena's hand and slowly stood up. "This is terrifying, whatever they're doing right now," she muttered as she looked in the direction of where the lake was.

"Hmm, this is the first time I've felt something like this from them as well. As you can see in the sky right now, it's similar to the powers they possessed," Serena said as she stared at the sky and walked beside Anastasha. "The dark clouds are from Rulein's power, the raging weather is from Rasmus' power, and that mysterious blue light in the middle of the vortex is from Aris' power. The overwhelming emotions you feel and the sickness you feel, that's from Rullein's power, but the worst part is the life force that is being absorbed by the vortex might be from either Rasmus or Aris, but my guess would be from Rasmus' power," she pointed out.

Anastasha could only shake her head in disbelief.

As soon as they walked out of the forest, they saw cracks in the air that leaked black smoke and the lake was covered by cold mist. If it wasn't for the divine barrier that Serena put around them, Anastasha might have died from the cold.

"Stay back please," Serena smiled as she clasped her hands together and closed her eyes.

Anastasha stood behind Serena, and then suddenly a bright ray of light pierced through the dark clouds, dispersing the clouds and calming the weather. The divine energy began to take over the lake and its surrounding area, cleansing the black smoke and dispersing the cold mist. She then listened to the unknown language that Serena muttered, wondering what kind of language Serena spoke. Suddenly a blast of ray light up the night sky, making the sky as bright as dawn, cleansing the effect of the clash of powers that Rasmus and the others created.

Anastasha stood there and chuckled in disbelief. She realized that all this time, she was walking among monsters, no, she believed that she was walking among Gods. While she was deep in thought, thinking

about the truth about Rasmus and the others' powers, a portal of black smoke appeared from thin air. She then watched Rasmus, Aris, and Rullein walked out of it with swords in their hands.

Rasmus and the others looked at Serena and Anastasha with a confused look on their faces. They had no idea that the whole mountain and the city were affected by them.

"You guys are causing a lot of trouble for the people," Serena chuckled as she crossed her arms and stared at them. "You have no idea that you guys are killing everyone slowly?" She arched her brows.

Rasmus and the others looked around at the lake and then up at the sky, seeing the remnants of their powers.

"I see, we were unaware," Rasmus said as he kept staring at the sky. "Thankfully that you're here, and sorry for that."

"So? Who won?" Serena asked.

"Hard to decide," Aris shook her head. "If we had a few more hours, it might be possible to decide the winner," she pointed out.

"Is that so? I guess if we gave you a few more hours, the mountain might disappear along with the city and the people here," Serena chuckled softly.

Chapter 603 - 603: Bound and Respect.

The morning after the incident, everyone couldn't stop talking about what they saw and felt. The whole city was in fear, something that never existed in their dictionary whenever they stayed in Marooth City. Their fear got amplified when they saw dozens of guards patrolling the city every half an hour. Nobody knew what happened last night, and everyone had been looking for an answer to that incident.

On the other hand, Natia's castle was visited by the most important person in the whole city, Zechariah Asghar. However, he wasn't alone, he came with all the elders and even his other wives, something that had never happened before. Anastasha would never expect to see the mountain move, and when it did, wherever the mountain moved to, it would destroy in its wake.

"Mother..." Anastasha watched her mother walk down the grand stairs with a dozen maids and servants behind her.

"Stay by my side," Natia said before Anastasha could ask or say anything else. "Whatever you do, don't stare, don't speak," she warned as she walked past Anastasha and toward the main entrance.

"Yes, mother," Anastasha followed Natia and walked right behind her. "I think I know why they're here, and based on what happened last night. Should I notice them, mother?" She asked.

"They're your guests, not mine," Natia responded as she flicked her hand over and the tall double door began to creak open. "Do what you want to do," she muttered under her breath.

As the light entered the castle, the first figure that blocked the sun was no other than the patriarch of the Asghar family. A man with long black hair and a beard, staring down at both of them from where he stood. The aura that he emitted was enough to make everyone from Natia's side lower their heads in fear. The only person who dared to lift their head was no other than Natia herself.

"It has been a while since your last visit, would this be your second visit? I hardly remember..." Natia spoke softly, her pale skin finally basking in sunlight after decades of hiding in her chamber. "However, I never thought that you would bring everyone here, especially them..." She glanced at the women behind Zechariah, the wives that weren't humans but Great Spirits just like her. "It feels like I'm being judged—"

Before Natia could finish her sentence, the air became suffocating for her. She couldn't finish her sentence and her shoulders slumped as if she was being forced to bow. However, she could still resist it and a smirk appeared on her face, but then Zechariah's wives released their Mana to subjugate Natia.

Anastasha was affected by her father's energy as well, and it was the first time she felt this. She felt her blood was boiling and her muscles felt like they were melting. She collapsed to her knees and her arms lumped on the floor like mush. She realized that she never had power over her father, she had just found out how powerless she was in front of her father.

She glanced at her mother, and she could see the scales on Natia's arms, the color of the scale was dark purple with gold gradient. She glanced up to see Natia's face, and she saw the fangs that produced dark purple venom. She watched how her mother was forced to submit, and that was when she understood no matter how powerful her mother was, her father was the one who put Natia on a leash.

"Ugh... who the fuck is trying to ruin my sleep..." Rullein's voice could be heard in the air and instantly all Zechariah's wives collapsed.

The air that felt suffocating suddenly became normal again, and Natia began to resist Zechariah's energy while her both slowly turned back to human form once again. Although she resisted Zechariah's energy, she didn't try to overpower his.

Zechariah's focus shifted when he saw Rasmus approaching with Aris and Serena behind him, and then a puff of black smoke appeared next to them that turned into Rullein. The four figures that had been causing a lot of incidents ever since they came, and the worst part was they didn't get any consequences for their actions.

"Did you feel threatened last night, Patriarch?" Rasmus asked with an impassive expression as he stared into Zechariah's eyes.

The elders and the guards that came along with Zechariah couldn't take the insult that Rasmus said. They were ready to order their guards to unsheathe their swords and to attack Rasmus. Natia on the other hand, she moved aside, walking away from the conflict. The maids and servants moved to the side as well, knowing their master didn't want to get involved in it. That act alone was enough to prove Natia's innocence from whatever accusations or assumptions that Zechariah had toward her.

Zechariah raised his left hand and all the guards immediately lowered their guards and their hands away from their swords.

"We apologize for the disturbance that we didn't intend to do. We tried our best to keep our training in a secluded area that wouldn't even harm the grass. However, we underestimated our powers," Rasmus explained as he lowered his head slightly to show responsibility for the discomfort before he lifted his head again and stared into Zechariah's eyes.

Rasmus' words could be interpreted differently, but Zechariah didn't care about interpretation but rather the words themselves. He only heard what was being spoken and knew if they were genuine or not.

"Prepare a place for me to have a private conversation with Count Blackheart," Zechariah glanced at Natia since she was the owner of the castle.

"Prepare the parlor," Natia glanced over her shoulder at the maids and servants. "And I'll personally brew the tea," she stared at Zechariah before she excused herself and signaled to Anastasha to follow her.

Rasmus saw the performance of authority from both Zechariah and Natia. The gap of authority between those two was almost non-existent because Zechariah barely had any power over Natia. On the other hand, Natia respected that gap more than a servant to their king. He then glanced at the other wives, wondering if their positions were similar to Natia's or not.

"(They have such respect for each other, and yet Zechariah sent an assassin to kill Anastasha? Was it a test? A warning? Or something else?)" Rasmus thought as he closed his eyes for a moment.

"It's such a waste to support my daughter. You could achieve what you want if you chose to support my sons instead," Zechariah said before Anastasha could walk far enough to not hear his words.

"Perhaps, but who knows," Rasmus responded without giving it a thought.

Anastasha listened to both of them and she didn't know what to feel. She left to be with her mother and whatever those two were going to talk about, she could only wish it wouldn't affect her plans for East Neva.

"Your Grace, the parlor is ready. Please allow us to escort Your Grace," the butler said as he bowed.

"You all can leave," Zechariah said as he walked into the castle.

The elders, the wives, and the guards bowed before they all left.

"You can go back to sleep," Rasmus looked at Rullein.

Rullein yawned and slowly she became black smoke that disappeared into thin air while Aris and Serena walked away to go back to the room.

As soon as the butler began to move, Rasmus and Zechariah walked side by side following the butler to the parlor. Neither of them said a word, and both of them stared at the front, unbothered by each other's presences.

Chapter 604 - 604: It's Justified.

The sound of ceramic cups and the pouring of tea were too sharp for the ears in the parlor. Rasmus and Zechariah watched Natia gracefully pour the tea into the teacups that looked mesmerizing. The Natia Rasmus saw was different from the Natia that was standing in between him and Zechariah. She looked sober, and her expression looked more alive than the ones that she had shown in her chamber.

"Stay," Zechariah broke the silence as soon as Natia finished pouring the tea that she had brewed herself.

Natia let a smile appear on her face for a brief moment before she hid it as soon as Zechariah saw it. She put down the tea pot and settled down on the soft couch beside him, not too far, not too close, enough to look comfortable with each other's presence.

Rasmus was the first to make a move by leaning forward toward the coffee table and grabbed his teacup. He hovered the cup right under his nose to give the tea a smell, wondering what made it different and why Natia wanted to brew them herself. The tea had a sweet fruity and floral smell, but it wasn't overwhelming, the mix of fruity and tea smell wasn't uncommon for him, but there was something else in the scent that made him wonder.

"It's poison," Natia revealed as she stared at Rasmus. "It subtle down the fruity taste, the tangy flower taste, and the acidic or the tea. The bitterness of the tea, the sweetness of the berries, and the tangy acidic taste are blended in by that poison," she explained in a lazy and gentle voice.

Rasmus took a sip after he heard the explanation, and it was so rich that every half second he could taste everything and then the aftertaste that lingered around his tongue was delicious. The tea was thicker than normal, but the taste was rich and then subtle.

"If a normal human drinks that, they'll die in a matter of seconds," Natia pointed out with a cold and dangerous smile painted on her face.

"A delicacy that nobody can experience," Rasmus responded and took another sip.

"They certainly can, but with the cost of their lives," Zechariah said as he grabbed his teacup and took a sip, letting the taste linger in his mouth for a moment before he swallowed it.

"I don't believe Lady Natia has a desire to brew such tea to just anyone. It's still a delicacy that nobody can experience because they can't have it even if they wanted to," Rasmus responded as he took another sip, finding the tea to have a subtle addiction effect.

Zechariah hummed and took another sip before he put the cup down. That exchange alone was enough to see what kind of a person Rasmus was. A man that didn't care about hypothetical statements and focused on what was real and true.

"He's nothing like everyone else. You should put away everything you know about others," Natia whispered into Zechariah's ear while staring at Zechariah's jawline with a hint of adoration.

Rasmus looked at both of them and still couldn't figure out how they both could be standing side by side. The amount of recognition they both had with each other held a secret deeper than a mere mutually beneficial relationship.

"Is an apology not enough, Your Grace?" Rasmus asked as he stared into Zechariah's eyes.

"My initial purpose of visit was to subdue Natia, but you came forward and confessed of what you did, clearing the misunderstanding," Zechariah answered without hiding a single truth.

"With such a relationship you two have, that seemed a bit excessive," Rasmus pointed out as he put down the teacup. "I suppose this wasn't the first time that Lady Natia had caused trouble after seeing how much force you brought, Your Grace."

"Inflicting fear gives an immediate result. That was what you and Anastasha used in the gathering. It was unnecessary, but it did the work," Zechariah responded as he sat comfortably and crossed his legs with his hands rested on his lap. "For why I'm here, I have gathered enough information related to you. For a young man that isn't older than Anastasha to have such mindset, insight, and achievements, that's unheard of."

"With a big enough ambition, I believe you can achieve what I have achieved, Your Grace. I'm merely flaunting my bloodline and the power I possess to create connections, and use one achievement to gain another that somehow works in my favor. There's no secret behind it," Rasmus revealed as he shook his head. "Without that power, I would have been buried somewhere on the ground by now."

"Humility can be interpreted into two things, it can be interpreted as a mockery toward someone's intelligence, Count Blackheart. You're not a humble person," Zechariah stared into Rasmus' eyes with an impassive expression.

"If it was hard to understand, perhaps the mockery toward one's intelligence was justified," Rasmus pointed out as he reached out to his teacup. "And no, I'm not a humble person," he muttered and took a sip of the tea.

Natia chuckled softly as she leaned down toward the edge of the couch, enjoying something other than consuming opium. Zechariah glanced at Natia and saw that smile he remembered a long time ago.

"However, taking over is easier than maintaining it. My achievements mean nothing compared to yours, who can maintain neutrality from two powerful titans and yet hold them on the leash for decades. You were raised to tame, I was raised to survive. You stayed to take control, I walked away and left everything behind. We came from two different worlds, that's all there is," Rasmus said with a serious expression as he emptied the teacup.

"And yet, here you are..." Zechariah maintained eye contact with Rasmus while Natia got up to pour tea into Rasmus' cup.

"And yet here I am, unfortunately..." Rasmus looked at Natia and lowered his head slightly at her before his gaze met Zechariah's again. "As I said, taking over is easier," he added.

The silence once again filled the parlor because both Zechariah and Natia knew the meaning behind Rasmus' words. He blatantly said that he came to take over and then threw it away once it was over. Everything that Zechariah had built, that his late father and his ancestors had built would be destroyed by the man that stood across from him.

"As I have mentioned earlier that I used my power to create connection, and used my achievements to gain another. The fall of your nation is inevitable, it's the process of why I'm here," Rasmus said calmly

and stared at his reflection on the tea. "What you call stability, I call it stagnation. I need a power that can thrive, not power that can maintain. If I'm not here, something else will do it in a more dangerous way," he explained as he glanced out the window.

"You're talking about them? The ones that had caused the downfall of North Neva? The millions death in South Neva and the complete annihilation of Central Neva?" Zechariah asked, but his tone slightly shifted, showing a sign of curiosity.

"That one I already made peace with by giving them West Neva. The other forces are more unforgiving. One is currently slowly gaining power in South Neva, a force that called angels with power that can erase this world with God's will. The other force is led by a being that ruled demons and tortured human souls in the afterlife," Rasmus revealed as he took a sip of the tea. "I know you don't believe in angels or the one they called God, none of the people in East Neva do, and that gives the angels a reason to either annihilate this continent or force you to bow. The other force? Even if you beg, they will make you suffer anyway," he added.

"We are ants to the mountains," Natia hummed as she stared at Rasmus' expression and she didn't find any deception.

"No, the mountains are dust in their eyes. That leaves human existence as worthless," Rasmus shook his head.

For the first time, Zechariah allowed himself to be in a daze, to be deep in thought in the presence of a stranger. He had seen the power that Rasmus and his people possessed, and yet the beings that Rasmus mentioned seemed to make his power wasn't worth mentioning. However, even in the face of powerlessness, the man that sat across from him didn't even show any despair but kept moving forward, one little step at a time in the face of those beings that seemed pointless.

"You can enjoy your reign, Your Grace. While you still can," Rasmus turned his head and stared into Zechariah's eyes. "You're the only one left that still thinks about the joy of holding power over people. Everyone outside this continent will send you their condolences for what's about to come," his expression turned cold and serious.

Zayn was taking a stroll in the garden of his palace's backyard, he couldn't stop staring at the sky, fearing and worrying that something like last night would happen again. His mind was occupied by a lot of things, about his father that hadn't left Natia's castle, about his father inviting Rasmus for tea, about Rasmus' words during the banquet, and about his succession.

"Young Master, the two Young Masters came to visit. What's your order?" The butler appeared without any presence.

"Zeke and Zoran? Send them to the parlor and tell them to wait because I want to be alone for a few more minutes," Zayn said calmly, his gaze never leaving the two moons that were next to each other. "They want to speak about their alliance against Ana. They will wait no matter what," he pointed out.

"As you wish, Young Master," The butler bowed his head and disappeared into the night.

Zayn walked into the garden maze, his eyes closed as he felt the wind flick either on his left ear or right ear. He was guided by those flicks as to whether to turn left or right and he would keep moving forward if he didn't feel anything. When he felt the wind flicker on both ears, he stopped and he slowly opened his eyes. He saw a pale skin woman wearing North Eastern Neva's traditional gown and hair pins that decorated her long blonde hair that sprawled and pooled around the chair where she sat.

"Mother, you wants to see me?" Zayn lowered his head.

The woman slowly tilted her head to the side as she turned her head to look at Zayn, revealing her light gray eyes and her lazy gaze. The breeze of refreshing wind began to circle around the center of the maze and Zayn felt his body was as light as a feather and his worries that had been weighting his shoulders were blown away.

"Sit with your mother, Zayn," The woman spoke in a lazy and soothing voice.

Zayn walked toward the table and when he was about to pull the chair, the chair slid until it stopped right beside her mother's chair. He put on a bit of a smile and slowly approached the chair and sat beside his mother. The scent of morning dew on a fresh grass hit his nostrils, a scent that always reminded him of his mother. He then watched his mother's right hand reach out to him, and he instinctively put the back of his hand on the table with his palm wide open.

"You're tired..." The woman muttered as she rested her hand on top of Zayn's. "Humans tend to keep up with the world that keeps moving, unaware that the world doesn't care. Those who keep chasing the world will leave and miss a lot of things behind them. They believe they are ahead when in truth the ones that are left behind receive the most," she added with a lazy smile on her face.

"But that's not my reality, mother. If I stayed behind, I would lose everything. Staying behind leaves me nothing," Zayn turned to look at his mother.

"That's not your reality, that's the reality you chose to chase, my child. You'll lose everything because the reality you're walking on isn't yours to begin with. Nothing is yours in that reality," The woman muttered as she brushed her fingers on Zayn's calloused fingers and palm.

"Mother..." Zayn exhaled deeply as he closed his eyes, feeling the weight coming back to burden his shoulders. He was too tired to argue, and it was too late to walk away.

"I understand," The woman muttered as she intertwined her fingers in between Zayn's, holding her son's hand gently. "I know you because I made you. You're at a crossroads, being pulled from all directions at the same time. You want to meet my expectations, your father's expectations, your people's expectations, and your enemies' expectations. The more you walk this path, the more branches that appear that will bind you and sooner or later you'll lose everything eventually," she pointed out.

Zayn put on a weary smile as he leaned back and looked up at the sky with every blink that showed weariness and acceptance. He could see the concern in his mother's gaze from the corner of his eyes, and he didn't care, he didn't care if he looked weak or tired because he knew that his mother loved him more than anything.

"What do you think of Count Blackheart and Ana, mother? You said this reality isn't mine, and yet both of them seem fine and can walk ahead of others without losing anything behind?" Zayn turned his head and stared into her mother's eyes.

"Natia's child is just like her. Anastasha doesn't care about what she's left behind because in the end she wants to make sure what's left behind is worthless. Not only in Anastasha's eyes but to the people that chased that reality," The woman answered as she caressed Zayn's arm with her left hand. "I don't know much about Count Blackheart, but from what I have seen so far, he never looks at anything and just keeps walking. He has no attachment whether he choose to or if he has to," she pointed out.

"So they're not pretentious like me?" Zayn asked with a mockery smirk but toward himself rather than outward.

"Every living beings are pretentious, my child. Wanting to be a better of themselves can be called pretentious. Nobody in this world is pure, everyone to become a better version of themselves. That doesn't mean pretentious is a bad thing, it's bad when you keep pretending knowing you know you'll never become what you want to be," The woman shook her head slowly and held Zayn's arm firmly.

"Then what am I, mother?" Zayn turned his whole body to face his mother, his weariness in his eyes becoming more dominant.

"That's for you to find the answer, and if you already know the answer... your mother is always be here by your side," The woman smiled softly as her hands slowly cupped Zayn's cheeks. "Stay here for a little longer, you're tired and you need to rest."

Zayn succumbed to his exhaustion and slowly leaned his head on his mother's shoulder. He could feel his mother's fingers brushed the back of his hair, hugging his head in the most loving and caring way possible.

Zeke and Zoran were sitting patiently waiting for their eldest brother to come, and they had been so anxious about the fact their father had visited Rasmus and had a tea time with him. When they heard the door opening, they all looked at Zayn respectfully, the man that they had looked up to since they were kids. They both stood up and lowered their heads to Zayn as they watched Zayn sit across from them.

"I know the reason why you're here. You want me to join your alliance to get rid of Ana," Zayn said as he stared at both of them with an impassive expression. "My answer is no, I will not join your alliance. I don't want to hear anything about this anymore from both of you. So, is there anything else you want to say?" He asked as he crossed his legs and leaned back.

Zeke and Zoran expected their eldest brother might decline their offer for an alliance, but they didn't expect to be rejected before they could even open their mouths.

"Then does that mean you're planning to fight all of us on your own, eldest brother?" Zeke asked with his brows furrowed.

"Yes, anything else?" Zayn responded without hesitation.

Zeke and Zoran looked at each other for a moment before they looked at Zayn as they nodded with understanding.

"No, eldest brother. We will excuse ourselves," Zoran answered as he and Zeke stood up.

Zayn didn't bother to look at either of them as they left the parlor, and the moment he was alone in the room, he let out a long sigh with his eyes closed. He turned his head toward the window and watched the trees move by the gentle wind.

"I will not abandon this reality, mother," Zayn muttered as he watched the trees move. "But I will create my own branch of that reality," he added as he slowly stood up and walked toward the door. "Please watch over me..." he said under his breath as he opened the door and then left the parlor.

Chapter 606 - 606: One after another.

Rasmus glanced at the window and noticed the two moons outside, he didn't expect Zechariah would stay and have a tea with him this long. He already had everything he needed to know about the man that controlled the flow of the continent. The war that was happening and what Zechariah had planned from both sides, Rasmus already knew. However, there was one thing that he found it surprising about Zecharia, and that was when Zechariah willingly shared crucial information with him.

"What do you want to gain from all the information you gave me, Your Grace?" Rasmus asked. The conversation had bloomed where guessing was no longer necessary, but transparency was.

"Every generation when the Asghar succession happens, the leashes are loosened. It's not a surprise that many will break free from the chains. Unfortunately, out of all time, this year will be the year where the succession happens," Zechariah answered and took a sip of the tea.

"The war that you initiated. You knew you might not be able to control the outcome because the leashes aren't yours to hold anymore because your children are trying to prove that they can take your

role," Rasmus nodded with understanding. "It's highly possible that both sides will take control over your children instead. They're greenhorn after all," he pointed out.

"They imitated my strategies even though their power and authority aren't the same as mine. They're bound to fail," Zechariah glanced at Natia who had been lying on the couch beside him, listening to the hours of conversation between him and Rasmus. "You know that already, and that's why I'm giving you all that information willingly."

"But not Anastasha because I'm on her side. You're giving me free information with the intention of keeping those people underneath your family. In the end, you lose nothing from this," Rasmus crossed his arms and stared at Zechariah with an impassive expression. "But you should know that she's going to burn this family down and rebuild it from nothing. You believe she can do it?" He asked with his brows slightly raised.

"Rather than believing in her ability, you have proven yours," Zechariah stared back at Rasmus. "You keep the powerhouse alive, and use them to rule over the continent. Central Neva, you maintain the Angelis, the Suncrown, and the Magic Tower even after the great war. South Neva, you maintain the South Neva Union's power and make them the sole ruler and protector. West Neva, you were planning to do the same, but unfortunately, you gave the continent away. Even so, you let one power have control over the continent. I'm assuming, you're using my daughter for that same reason, and I know what you're capable of," he pointed out with an impassive expression.

Rasmus smiled when Zechariah said that he was using Anastasha. Although it wasn't wrong, it wasn't right either, and yet he didn't care to correct Zechariah's way of seeing his relationship with Anastasha. He then glanced at the ceiling when he felt a presence coming toward them.

"This is the end of our conversation, Count Blackheart," Zechariah said as he slowly got up from the couch, and then Natia stood up not long after.

Rasmus nodded with understanding as he slowly got up and fixed his suit. He watched Zechariah and Natia leave the parlor, he then glanced at the ceiling, noticing the presence had disappeared. He wondered how strong Zechariah was since Zechariah was also a half-breed like him.

Natia walked behind Zechariah without saying a word, her eyes were closed all the way downstairs and at the front of the main entrance. She flicked her hand and the door slowly opened on its own, but when she thought Zechariah would leave her castle immediately, she was confused when he stood still even though the door was wide open.

"Walk with me," Zechariah said as he took a step out of the castle.

Natia smiled softly and followed Zechariah once again, leaving the castle that had become her nest, her hiding place, and her sanctuary.

"When was the last time you had a long conversation with someone, Your Grace? Spending a whole day, conversing with a stranger," Natia asked as she felt dozens of Zechariah's assassins following them from a distance.

"It has been a while since the last time I hear you being talkative," Zechariah responded and stared at the sky as he walked in the middle of the road toward the peak of the mountain where his palace was. "If I have to recall, I have never wasted a whole day like this," he answered.

"Wasted? So he's not someone to your liking?" Natia stared at Zechariah's back with her slit pupils that glowed in the night sky. "I found him interesting, it's like seeing the old you, Your Grace. Perhaps he's even dangerous and more interesting than your younger self," she narrowed her eyes, almost mischievously.

"No, it's quite the opposite. I enjoyed it, but it was meaningless for a leader, for a patriarch that requires more power and authority to maintain his position. I could put a leash or two to a powerful figure in a day, but I got none here," Zechariah answered and saw the carriage coming toward him.

"You have always been true to yourself, Zechariah. About power and desire. But..." Natia paused as she watched the carriage. "Why does it feel like you have become something other than yourself?" She asked as she stopped following Zechariah.

Zechariah stopped walking as soon as the carriage stopped in front of him. His eyes were fixated on the carriage door while the coachman opened the door for him and waited for him to walk in.

"I have changed," Zechariah answered as he walked into the carriage. When the coachman wanted to close the door, Zechariah stopped him. "The man you saw back then, he's gone," he stared at Natia, who was staring at the distance with an impassive expression and cold gaze.

"He's not gone," Natia smiled as she slowly turned her head to look into Zechariah's eyes. "I just saw him, in the parlor," she responded as she took a few steps back from the carriage. "Have a good evening, Your Grace," she lowered her head slightly and listened to the carriage door closing in front of her.

Zechariah arrived at his palace and immediately a dozen palace guards welcomed him as soon as he walked out of the carriage. He went straight into the palace with all the guards following him from behind. There was only one reason why the guards were following him even after he entered the palace, and that meant there was a guest that could be counted as extremely dangerous and had authority to enter the palace without his permission.

"Where is he?" Zechariah asked Safir, the commander of all the soldiers in the city.

"It your office, Your Grace," Safir answered as he walked right behind Zechariah.

"All of you are dismissed. I'll be fine on my own," Zechariah said as he removed his coat. Safir immediately took the coat off and stopped following Zechariah. "Send everyone away from the palace," he glanced over his shoulder at Safir.

"Yes, Your Grace," Safir bowed his head and then turned around, ordering the guards to bring everyone in the palace out of the building.

Zechariah stood in front of the door into his office. He could feel the air around him thinning out, but he suppressed the pressure with his Mana. Once he knew there was nobody inside the palace other than him and the person in his office, he slowly opened the door.

The first thing he saw was an old man standing next to the chair, wearing a black coat that hid the black armor underneath. The old man wore an eye-patch that covered his left eye with a long scar from his forehead and down through his left eye to his jaw.

"Sit," the old man pointed at the chair. "There's no time for formality," he said before Zechariah could say a word.

"It has been a while, father. The last time I heard, you went to that place," Zechariah said as he walked toward his desk and sat on the chair. "I thought you said you would never set your foot on this mountain again," he looked up at the old man.

"And you should know what that means," the old man stared down at Zechariah. "The Land of Great Spirits is in danger, something powerful is coming," he warned.

Zechariah furrowed his brows, and the first thing that came into his mind was what Rasmus said about those beings. He didn't want to believe something like an omen, but after gathering enough information about Rasmus, he saw Rasmus as a bad omen because he brought chaos to wherever he went.

"Please tell me the detail, father," Zechariah said with a serious expression.

Chapter 607 - 607: The possibilities.

Rasmus entered his chamber, finding Rullein still asleep on the bed while Aris and Serena were enjoying the warm tea. He stared at Rullein as he walked toward the couch where Aris and Serena were.

"She has been sleeping a lot lately, do you know what happen?" Rasmus asked as he sat down across Aris and Rullein. "Is she still recovering? But I thought she has regained most of her power?" He looked at Aris with his brows raised.

"She's a Dark Spirit who can live in different realms. Not just ours, not just another dimension of this world, but she can also live inside the memories she took. To put it simply, she's not here with us since that's only the shell of hers," Aris answered and glanced at Rullein, finding Rullein's new habit of sleeping to be questionable since Rullein never spent her time sleeping this much. "But, I'm not sure why she's like that either. I can't tell from just seeing, even with my draconic eyes," she pointed out.

Rasmus looked over his shoulder at Rullein who was sleeping so peacefully. He noticed that Rullein had got her new habit ever since his body was being reformed. He wondered if something had happened to her while she was stuck inside his body.

"We can just ask her about it once she's awake. I'm also a bit worried about her," Serena said with concern written all over her face. "But that's that. Should we continue to eavesdrop on Zechariah and

his father? I think that's far more important," she looked at Aris who had been eavesdropping on the conversation the moment she felt Zechariah's father's presence in the mountain.

"Zechariah's father? He's here?" Rasmus furrowed his brows, unaware of it. He recalled that Zechariah's father, Anastasha's grandfather name was Zehan. A man that was said to be the most powerful Asghar in the past century.

"Yes," Aris nodded as she closed her eyes and used the all-hearing ear ability to continue to listen to the conversation between those two.

(At the same time in Zechariah's office)

Zechariah rubbed the back of his forefinger on his lower lip, his gaze was fixated on the spot on his desk. He was still deep in thought about what his father had revealed that the land of Great Spirits was in danger.

"How did father find that out?" Zechariah looked up at his father who was staring out of the window, staring down at the city that once he ruled over.

"Your mother told me, Zagres also told me," Zehan glanced at Zechariah with a cold and serious expression.

Zechariah's eyes widened when he heard those two people mentioned, but what shocked him the most was when Zehan mentioned Zagres. Zagres was the Great Spirit that blessed the Asghar's bloodline from centuries ago, one of the nine oldest and most powerful Great Spirits in the whole Neva. The first time he saw Zagres was when he took over the Asghar family, and it was also the last time he saw it. Until this day, whenever he remembered that day, he remembered what fear truly was.

"I also overheard that the Khan Empire is making a move now, after decades of being passive. Didn't I warn you not to play around with one of the two titans?" Zehan stared right into Zechariah's eyes.

"I was the one who had been delaying their movements for the past five years, father. I have to admit, the current situation outside East Neva has caused unpredictable stirs in this continent," Zechariah answered and stared back into Zehan's eyes, reminding his own father who sat on the throne and who

had stepped down from power. "Two peaceful continents fell in a year. Ours is the easiest one, yet it's the last to fall," he pointed out, his tone flat and his expression maintaining its impassiveness.

The silence grew louder and neither looked away nor blinked until Zehan finally looked away and stared out the window once again.

"Even if war is inevitable between Khan Empire and the Sultans, Khan Empire will never be able to overpower the Sultans with half of his force staying neutral," Zechariah said as he turned to look at his office.

"The treaty between the Khan Empire and the Heavenly Alliance? The powerful clans that have helped the emperor build the empire from nothing, a force that is equal to the empire itself. One couldn't control the other and maintained a healthy relationship for centuries," Zehan put his hands on his back while he stared blankly at the city.

"Yes, the Heavenly Alliance and the clans wouldn't support the empire's cause to unify East Neva but would lend their hands if the empire's land is threatened. That treaty operation was fabricated by our first patriarch, and the foundation why we are this powerful," Zechariah nodded slowly. "Even knowing that, why did the emperor decide to push this war even knowing he only has one arm and leg to the battlefield?" He asked as he rested his elbows on the desk, his hands clasped together in front of his mouth.

The silence once again reigned over the room, but the silence was peaceful yet heavy. The former patriarch and the current patriarch thought the same thing, but neither wanted to ask the question knowing neither knew the answer.

"For this to be called a coincidence is far too stretched," Zechariah broke the silence. "Whether the Khan Empire win or lose the war, our family will be in an imminent danger because we are the last thorn to pluck off," he muttered under his hands with his eyes closed.

"Is that why I have been feeling anxious ever since I stepped my foot into the mountain?" Zehan pointed his chin toward Natia's palace. "Who are they to possess such power and make the Evil God looks so small and puny?" He asked.

"Count Blackheart and his wives, the ones who brought devastating storms through the continents they went to," Zechariah answered, still with his eyes closed. "Have a seat father, I have so many things to tell you about the world outside ours," he slowly stood up and pointed at the couch.

Zehan hummed as he nodded slowly before he turned around and walked toward the couch with Zechariah walking beside him.

Rasmus looked at Aris and gave her a nod, signaling to Aris that it was enough eavesdropping. He never agreed to listen to their conversation, but since it was Aris and Serena who wanted to listen, he took this opportunity to gain information about the world through Zechariah and Zehan's eyes.

"So? What do you think? Do you think it's just a coincidence or if it was Satan's scheme? After all, we know that she sent one of the most dangerous Fallen Watcher here," Serena raised her brows and stared at Rasmus who seemed unfazed by the conversation between Zechariah and Zehan.

"She sent Azazel to this continent, which support the reason behind Khan Empire to push this war against the Sultans. But, I don't think the danger that's approaching the land of Great Spirit is Satan's doing. She's already in between Orthias race in North Neva and the Angels force in South Neva..." He muttered as he narrowed his eyes slightly. "Well, it's possible that she's also making a deal with the Angels since all of them want me to fail. But that's still impossible because based on what we know about Great Spirits here, the Fallen Watchers even in their prime conditions, they might struggle to fight them. Not only that, Satan knew that we are here, and she should know that we wouldn't let it go her way even though we both agreed for treaty," he added.

"So that leaves us with the only possible answer," Aris raised her brows and stared at Rasmus.

"Yes, Videl. The only one that's currently freely roaming the world, gaining force for himself. There's also a possibility that he's trying to sabotage me in gaining the upper hand in this continent. I betrayed him, played him, and I believe now is the time for karma to come back to haunt me," Rasmus nodded.

"Right, he managed to resurrect a True Dragon and now is under his control. Not only that, but he's also still the Devil with almost an infinite amount of force that he controls. From the three Sovereigns, Videl is the most cunning one compared to Satan and Lucifer. What will be your move, Rasmus?" Serena's expression became serious, seeing how Rasmus began to think deeply.

"I have observed him long enough to understand him, but not long enough to understand him," Rasmus muttered. "Does he want me to take the bait or not. One wrong move will be enough to give him branches of possibilities that we might not be able to prevent," he sighed as he closed his eyes and leaned back, rubbing his brow with his forefinger.

"What's the plan?" Aris tilted her head and crossed her arms, her expression beginning to show seriousness.

Rasmus took a deep breath as his eyes fluttered open and stared at both of them that were waiting for his decision.

"Well, it's called the land of Great Spirits..." Rasmus slowly looked over his shoulder at Rullein. "Might as well we send one to help them. If we are lucky, they will have a spirit to serve," he slowly turned his head to look at Aris and Serena again. "Each of us is capable enough to annoy him," he said with a serious expression and stared at the spot on the wall behind Aris and Serena.

Chapter 608 - 608: An Anchor.

"I was surprised when I heard you wanted to leave," Anastasha said as she walked the hallway, staring at Rasmus. "Where to?" She asked and stood in front of him with a smile on her face.

"Khan Empire," Rasmus answered with a serious expression.

Anastasha's smile faded away when she saw the seriousness on Rasmus' face. She hummed and nodded with understanding before she put a serious expression as well. She already knew what kind of conversation Rasmus had with Zechariah from her mother, but she didn't know why suddenly Rasmus wanted to make a move.

"Give me a moment to pack my things," Anastasha said as she looked out the window behind her. "While you wait, you all should meet with my mother for one last time. She have something to say to you," she pointed out.

"Yes, the maid came and informed us that your mother wanted to see us in her chamber," Rasmus said and heard the door behind him open. Aris, Rullein, and Serena walked out of his chamber.

"Okay, I'll be right back," Anastasha nodded and looked at them before she walked away.

Rasmus and the others went to the other side of the castle to meet Natia. When they arrived, the door into her chamber was already open, and they walked in to find her sitting on the carpet. There was no opioid scent nor thick smoke in the room, and she let the sunlight bathe her room. She looked less lifeless, her skin wasn't pale and she was wearing something more appropriate this time.

"Have a seat," Natia muttered, her voice still as lazy and soothing as usual. She pointed at the cushions next to the table in front of her. "I have prepared this special drink for all of you. Something that I thought you might enjoy more than the tea you had last night, Count Blackheart," she smiled lazily and pointed at the teapot on the table with her left hand.

Rasmus and the others sat on the cushions and watched Natia pour the drink into their cups. She then signaled to them to give it a taste of the drink she had prepared for them. Rullein was the first to grab the cup and take a sip of the drink while everyone waited for her reaction. The moment she swallowed the drink, her eyes widened and a huge smile appeared on her face.

"What's this? This is delicious?!" Rullein looked at Natia with a stunned expression.

"What else? It's poison," Natia chuckled softly. "All the opium that I had consumed in the past decade had dulled my power, now that I have stopped consuming them, I have regained my power, allowing me to produce more powerful poison. Although, I can make something hundred times more stronger than this one once I recovered all my power," she explained.

Rasmus, Aris, and Serena grabbed their cups and took a sip of the poison that Natia had made for them. Unlike the poison tea that Rasmus drank last night, this one tasted more like a liquor with a strong floral and fruity taste, sweet and bitter at the same time with a hint of refreshing and cold sensation on the aftertaste. Every sip gave a strong numbness feeling to their tongues and brains, almost feeling like they were getting drunk.

"Oh, wow..." Serena was stunned as she covered her lips with her fingers. "I can get drunk with this! My divine power can't easily neutralized the poison..." She pointed out and looked at Natia in disbelief. "You have no idea how much I have been wanting to get drunk, Lady Natia. Thank you..." She smiled gently at Natia and lowered her head to show gratitude.

"If that's the case, perhaps I must make a few bottles of this," Natia smiled lazily at Serena and nodded.

Aris didn't need to say a word but her expression was enough to tell that she enjoyed the drink just like Rullein and Serena. However, she looked at Natia with a confused look, noticing something was off.

"You stopped dulling your power, meaning you're planning to regain your power. Consuming opium for a decade and decided to stop in a single night, and for what reason?" Aris asked with her brows furrowed.

Rasmus closed his eyes and took another sip of the drink after he listened to Aris' question. On the other hand, Natia's gaze turned blank as she stared at the teapot.

"As a Great Spirit that has lived in this continent for as long as I can remember, I can feel something is about to happen. It's what humans called it an instinct," Natia answered as she took a deep breath. "It's the movements of the other Great Spirits. I can sense them. Right now? They're flaring throughout the sky, like an animal trying to look big toward the threat that's approaching," she pointed out as she looked out the window.

Aris immediately used her draconic eyes and it was as what Natia had described. The sky was covered by silk cloths of various colors, waving through the vast sky. It was similar to when she felt the presence of divinity from South Neva, the night sky turned bright like the sun. She slowly got up and looked toward Southwest and still saw the divine power that flared to the sky and to her Northeast was where the colorful cloths were waving through the sky.

"Rasmus, do you think the angels might come here? If they found out what was coming to this continent was no other than Videl himself?" Aris asked as she stared at Rasmus with normal eyes. "After all, the Angels are also after Videl," she added.

"Then we might be trapped here," Rasmus answered as he opened his eyes. "I might be trapped her," he corrected himself.

Natia glanced at both of them back and forth, sensing something more dangerous might hit the continent.

"No plans?" Serena raised her brows and stared at Rasmus.

"Dealing with the uncertainty of that possibility? None," Rasmus answered as he shook his head. "But if I weren't alone, there's a possibility that I might be able to pull off," he pointed out as he put down the cup, not wanting to indulge in the numbness anymore.

Rasmus looked at Natia who had been staring at him like a predator. Natia could sense and smell desperation, but there was something else that made that desperation feel like motivation. She saw something similar a long time ago, and that was when she was with Zechariah during his time fighting for succession.

"Can you tell us about the land of the Great Spirits?" Rasmus asked with a serious expression.

"There was once a man who asked the same question, and risked my existence for that man because I gave him the answer he wanted," Natia sighed as her fingers brushed on the teapot. "It's a land where the living aren't allowed to visit or even to see. It's a sacred land and only the chosen can step foot there. That land has Great Spirits who have shaped Neva after the True Dragons went extinct. It's not a nest, it's an anchor. Removing them is equal to letting nature let loose of its restraint," she answered with a cold expression.

Rasmus looked at Rullein with his brows raised, and then Aris and Serena turned their heads to look at her as well. Natia tilted her head slightly when they looked at Rullein, and so she turned her head to look at Rullein with a curious look written all over her face.

"Can you do it?" Rasmus asked Rullein.

Rullein emptied the cup and licked her lips, not wanting to waste even a single drop of the liquor. She put down the cup and slowly a grin formed on her lips as she stared back at Rasmus.

"You should ask when, not if I could do it," Rullein chuckled mischievously.

Chapter 609 - 609: Diamond in the rough.

Rasmus and the others walked into the carriage and Anastasha had been waiting for them inside. Their departure was unannounced, but since they were in the Asghar family's territory, nothing was unheard of. When they were about to leave, the carriage was blocked by a group of personal guards of the eldest son. Anastasha looked out of the window and let out a scoff before she decided to get out to greet her brother.

"This reminds me of that day, my dear brother," Anastasha crossed her arms as she watched the guards split, opening a path for Zayn to walk through. "Are you going to stop me from leaving like last time?" She asked with a smirk on her face.

Zayn looked at his guards, and without saying a word or moving a muscle, all of his guards walked away to give him privacy. He then looked at the carriage, knowing that Rasmus was in there, the man that had made him question himself more than necessary.

"Where are you going this time, Ana?" Zayn asked, his voice was deep and relaxed, nothing like when he spoke in the hall in front of the guests.

"Khan Empire," Anastasha answered as she shifted her weight to her left leg.

"Khan Empire? Surely that wasn't your decision," Zayn narrowed his eyes slightly when he stared at Anastasha. "I remember back when you were still a young adult that you wouldn't set foot on the Khan Empire ever again. Seeing that you take back your words, it seems you really like him," he pointed out as he glanced at the carriage.

Anastasha glanced at the carriage over her shoulder and she put on a bit of a smile. She then took a deep breath and exhaled deeply, staring at the view of the city from the mountain.

"I like my family more, don't get too jealous, dear brother," Anastasha chuckled softly and rested her hand on her waist. "Blood is thicker, my dear brother," she stared into Zayn's eyes, her voice quiet to hint at honesty and truth in her voice.

"I won't make the same mistake as last time," Zayn said with a serious expression. "I won't send anyone to harm you again. I know what I want to do, what I have to do," he added.

Anastasha stared at her brother without showing any reaction at all. She stayed quiet and let the silence pressure Zayn.

"Blood is thicker. Father repeatedly said those words when we were still a child, and yet he never told us to not kill each other..." Zayn nodded slowly as he looked on the gravels around his feet. "But you shouldn't trust him that much, Ana," he said with a serious expression as he stared into Anastasha's eyes. "He's not someone you want to be around with. You're going to get dragged by the current that you'll end up devoured by it," he warned.

"I know, my dear brother," Anastasha answered. "He warned me about him long before you knew him. I'm aware," she pointed out.

Zayn chuckled as he nodded before it turned into a shook, he knew how smart his little sister was, the golden daughter of the Asghar family. She was the only lady in the whole Asghar family that had the ability to make even the elders lose for words. He always imagined what it would be like if Anastasha was a man instead of a woman, he wondered how much she would resemble their father or perhaps more powerful and more dangerous if she wasn't treated differently because of her gender. He wondered if he should be grateful that Anastasha was a woman or if he should be terrified that she was a woman and not a man.

"Is this what you want or is this something you have to do?" Zayn asked, the question that resembled the question his mother asked him the night before. "What I mean is..." he paused, not knowing how to put it in words. "Are you still being true to yourself even until now?" He asked.

"Of course, my dear brother. I have always been true to myself, and that's something that I realized a long time ago when I knew that I'm just a woman in the Asghar family," Anastasha answered as she walked toward Zayn.

Zayn was mildly surprised by Anastasha's answer that somehow connected with his thoughts, as if she was reading his mind and anxiety.

"At first I felt like it was unfair, I despised myself for being a woman in this family, and I found this body as a curse. However, the more I see it from a different perspective, I realize this is a blessing. I don't need to pretend, I'm not judged by how I breathe. I'm free from expectations," Anastasha explained as she stood in front of her brother with a smile on her face. "If I can be honest, my dear brother..." She

paused as she placed her hand on Zayn's shoulder. "You're less pretentious than the other brothers. You're naturally similar to the patriarch. No, not similar, you're the spitting image of the patriarch when he was young," she revealed as she stared into Zayn's eyes, forcing her neck to look up at her brother's face.

"Is that a warning?" Zayn asked, it wasn't a sarcastic question or a playful question, it was an honest question.

"Does a diamond know they're not a diamond but a stone? Can they change back into stone even if they knew that they were being pressured until they finally became something else entirely? Rather than asking if you're not yourself, you should make sure you're a diamond in the rough instead of one of the many," Anastasha tilted her head with a soft smile painted on her face.

Zayn remembered his mother's words and had been pondering about it the whole night, and now with Anastasha's words, he finally found a meaning. Slowly but surely, smile formed on his face, something that he had forgotten that he was capable of doing.

"You shouldn't open the eyes of your opponent, Ana," Zayn said in a playful tone.

"Where's the fun when I can easily dominate the game," Anastasha winked at her brother as she pulled away. "I really have to go now, my dear brother. My esteemed guests can't idle when they're going to change the world," she smirked as she took a few steps back.

"I won't stop you," Zayn nodded as he took a few steps aside.

"Welcome back, my dear eldest brother. It has been a while since I saw you," Anastasha smiled widely at Zayn before she turned around and got into the carriage.

Zayn watched the carriage move past him and he continued to watch until it disappeared into the distance. He exhaled deeply and his head felt a lot lighter the moment he inhaled the smell of fresh grass and the dew of the morning. He stood there longer than he should, and finally he lifted his head to look at the vast sky without having to pretend that he could see right at the sun.

"What a pleasant morning walk," Zayn said before he walked away and the guards immediately followed him from behind.

Chapter 610 - 610: Caged.

Rullein sat beside Rasmus, her eyes blank when she stared at the wall behind Aris. She was spacing out and Aris noticed when she stared into Rullein's eyes that they seemed blank. Aris narrowed her eyes slightly, releasing her energy and that was enough to snap Rullein back to reality. When their eyes met, the way Aris stared at her was like a scalpel that tried to dissect her to find the problem.

"(You have been spacing out the whole journey. You slept a lot as well, almost concerning)" Rasmus spoke with his thoughts, knowing that he could speak with Rullein with his thoughts because her core was in his body, already one with his existence.

"(I'm fine... I just feel like I'm in peace when not doing anything or think of anything)" Rullein responded as she kept staring at the spot on the wall behind Aris.

"(Since when?)" Rasmus glanced out the window of the carriage, staring at the dried land and sand crevasses in the distance.

"(I'm not sure. You can say it's recently)" Rullein answered as she shifted her sitting position to be more relaxed by leaning back against the wall.

"(Where did you go when you sleep?)" Rasmus asked.

"(Your past... on Earth)" Rullein glanced at Rasmus.

Rasmus' eyes suddenly turned cold before he closed his eyes and took a deep breath. He slowly turned his head as he opened his eyes and stared right into Rullein's eyes. The temperature in the carriage suddenly turned cold, and everyone immediately stared at Rasmus with a confused look.

"(You shouldn't look into my past, for your own good)" Rasmus's eyes stared into Rullein's eyes back and forth. He knew his past, and his past changed him, and he didn't want anyone to experience what he experienced, especially learned anything about him that way. "(I'm asking you)" he added.

Rullein nodded slightly and then averted her gaze to look out the window. However, when she was about to enjoy the scenery, she felt fingers under her chin and gently turned her head toward Rasmus again. Although she wasn't forced to look into his eyes, somehow she was being held captive by his gaze.

"Promise me," Rasmus said with a serious expression.

"I promise," Rullein answered with a straight face.

Rasmus let go of her chin as he closed his eyes, seeing the expression Rullein made when she responded. His hand turned into a ball of fist before he loosened it up afterward. He took a deep breath and opened his eyes before he looked at the eyes that were staring at him and Rullein.

"How far is the land of the Great Spirits?" Rasmus looked at Anastasha.

"Three weeks with a ship, but the current, the sea beasts, and unpredictable weather make it almost impossible to go there," Anastasha answered, but her curiosity of what had happened between those two were still shown in her eyes. "If you're going to send Rullein on her own, maybe it only takes her a few hours depends on how fast she can fly," she pointed out.

"How strong are they based on your observation, Aris?" Rasmus looked at Aris with a serious expression.

"It's as you said last night. The Prime Lords, the Fallen Watchers even in their prime, they might struggle against them. They're powerful, and if I can be honest, Rullein's current power can't subdue the Great Spirits of East Neva," Aris answered as she looked out at Yur in her owl form flying up high in the sky. "But since you want to send her away, there's a way to cover her lack of power," she pointed out.

"I already know," Rullein responded as she stared out the window. "I can borrow the Overlord's power from Rasmus' body and turn it into mine," she glanced at Aris, seeing the way Aris narrowed her eyes in

suspicion. "How do I know? Because I have been spending my time inside his body whenever I'm asleep," she revealed before Aris could ask the question.

Aris finally connected the dots to what was happening between Rasmus and Rullein earlier. She realized that Rullein had been spending her time entering Rasmus' memories, which was why he looked concerned and disappointed at the same time. She knew how much Rasmus respected boundaries between those who were around him, and she was one of the few who had experienced how much he respected her past and origin.

"Ready to go and blow off some steam?" Rasmus glanced at Rullein with his brows raised.

Rullein smirked as she kept looking out the window.

"Go, have fun. Don't hold back and do whatever you want," Rasmus smiled as he crossed his arms.

Rullein didn't need to say a word and puffed into a black smoke but everyone could see a glimpse of a huge grin on her face before she completely turned into a puff of smoke. The smoke moved through the glass window and flew up high into the sky before it completely dispersed into thin air. Aris looked out the window and sensed Rullein's energy fading away into the distance.

"You're okay?" Aris glanced at Rasmus with her brows slightly raised.

"I'm fine, but she's not," Rasmus crossed his legs and leaned back. "Her nature is chaotic, and she has been suppressing it this whole time. The only escape she had was to feed her curiosity. I have caged her for too long and I want to apologize once she comes back," he muttered as he closed his eyes as his body moved because of the bump on the road.

Serena could only chuckle and shook her head as she looked at Rasmus.

"What?" Rasmus raised his brows.

"I think she's not the only one who has been suppressing her nature. Aris over here is also doing nothing but drinking tea or liquor this whole time. And you know what happened? She has been spending her

whole time eavesdropping on everyone's conversation whenever she could," Serena answered with a big smile on her face and looked at Aris.

"Right," Rasmus nodded with understanding. "After all the wars and battles, and now just sitting here and traveling most of the time must have been a bit too much," he said as he leaned forward, resting his elbows on his lap and staring at Aris. "However, fortunately, we are going to the empire where it's divided by two powers, the emperor and the clans with the Heavenly Alliance. Do you have a way to help us get back in shape?" He asked and looked at Anastasha.

"Back in shape?" Anastasha raised her brows as she chuckled. "You, Lady Aris, and Lady Rullein almost destroyed the whole mountain and almost devoured human souls out of their bodies because of your spar that night. That wasn't enough?" She asked in disbelief but with a huge smile on her face. "Well, I have a history with Khan Empire, especially with the Heavenly Alliance. They're not fond of the Asghar family, so, if you want to poke on the so-called Immortals, who are said to have reached enlightened and ascended, you can try and poke them for fun," she suggested with a playful smirk on her face.

"Hmm, that sounds fun," Aris smiled and made eye contact with Rasmus. "I believe you can gain from this as well, right?" She asked with a smile on her face.

"There's a possibility," Rasmus nodded with his eyes closed. "And maybe something as well," he added.