

Evolution 140

Chapter 140: The Moles.

Four days before the Blood Hunters' major expedition... In The Shadow Dimension.

A man veiled in darkness stepped through the gate of a gothic, forgotten castle, and the first thing he noticed was the silence. Not quiet... silence.

No wind. No echo. Even the crunch of his boots on the ground faded too quickly, as if the castle swallowed sound the moment it was made.

The doors hadn't creaked when they opened. They had simply parted.

The walls around him looked like stone at first, but as he ran his gloved fingers along the surface, he felt no grain or crack... just cold, smooth shadow hardened into shape.

It wasn't natural...Nothing about this place was.

He moved deeper into the hallway, eyes flicking across each corner. No torches. No fire. Only floating wisps of dim gray light drifted along the ceiling, casting dull glows that shifted with his movement.

Soon, he entered a wide chamber with no roof. The walls opened up into a ring of stone teeth, and above them, the sky stretched black and endless... No stars, no life.

The mysterious man's gaze didn't linger on the sky for long. He lowered his head and stared at a broken throne, sliced in half.

It was empty, but the mysterious man waited patiently.

One second, one minute, five minutes...

Then, a movement was captured above the broken throne. A gate of swirling darkness took shape for a moment.

In that moment, a tall, stoic man walked out at ease... He had no darkness cover, not even a face mask.

He had long, straight hair that hung just past his shoulders, split cleanly down the middle... one side pure white, the other deep black.

A short, neatly kept beard framed his face, with a few strands of silver showing through, adding to the sense that he'd seen and done a lot. His gray eyes were sharp and focused, always watching, always thinking...

He stood tall at six feet two, with a strong build that made him stand out in any room. He was wearing a formal black suit with a white shirt and a blue tie.

Then, he sat proudly on the broken throne and placed one leg above the other, his expression deadpan and unreadable.

Seeing his boss without a veil, the mysterious man removed his dark cloak too.

Alaric.

"Alaric, how is the preparation going?"

"My Lord, it's not looking good."

Sir Alaric bowed his head to Lord Darius Morphis, a man whose name carried more weight than most titles ever could.

He was the founder of the Sunstrike Agency, the one who turned scattered Daywalker cells into a force feared across borders. Among the Heliodor region, he was ranked as the third strongest Daywalker alive, a position none dared challenge lightly.

But his influence went further.

He was also the Governor of the Dawnvale settlement. The settlement that stood closest to the most active nests. He held it for over four decades without a single breach.

His name sat atop the Expedition board, holding the record for the most cleared nightcrawlers' nests across the eastern front.

He was beloved across the entire region as he was known to donate SR Pills monthly to the less fortunate, among other philanthropic deeds.

This was just scratching the surface of his overwhelming, respectful reputation.

Yet, titles or not, to Alaric, he wasn't just a superior... He was his owner.

"I thought so, moving our expedition's date to match the Morningstars' was too much of a risk," Lord Darius said, his voice calm, yet capable of causing ripples in one's soul.

"I tried my best, but it's simply impossible to prepare for a major expedition in such a small window without risking heavy casualties," Sir Alaric shared. "We might have to postpone it as the capital Governor recommended."

"No... The Bishop is holding us responsible for the failure of the Harrowing Forest. He needs the refined Daywalkers' blood as fast as possible."

"If I returned empty-handed, it won't end pleasantly for either of us in the Organization," Lord Darius stressed.

Hearing this, Sir Alaric's expression turned grim. If there was one entity he would hate to disappoint, it was The Bishop... Especially in this critical moment of his life.

The Sunstrike Agency had been working undercover for more than four decades now, carrying out many plans for the sake of The Bishop... This was the first time they suffered from such an epic failure.

The Harrowing Forest's plan was tight-proof in his eyes. Sir Alaric was solely responsible for its orchestration.

He contacted Dra'Webra to set the trap.

He helped cover for the preparation of the tunneling network under the forest.

He handed her the Jamming Device to turn off connections.

He even helped Queen Dra'Webra beat the Shadow Castle's Lord and weaken his control for the sake of easing their expedition to eliminate it.

Of course, he sponsored Mantis's cleaning efforts, telling him to gather as many Daywalkers as possible under the pretense of adding the forest quickly under the region's banner.

The plan was simple: Queen Dra'Webra would feast on the Daywalkers and collect their blood... They would later retrieve it from her.

Yet, he neither expected the involvement of Feng Ling nor Ash'Kral. Two variables popped out of nowhere and ruined his strategy... Especially Ash'Kral, who killed Queen Dra'Webra without leaving a trace.

Until now, they were still seeking information about his identity, believing that he was sent by another Bishop to interfere in their plan.

Alas, the only thing they were left with was becoming the primary suspect, even if no evidence was there to support it.

"We will stick to the plan, and our agency will pay a heavy price... It needs to, for our survival," Lord Darius narrowed his eyes.

"You mean..."

"Yes."

"It's either them or us."

"Us," Sir Alaric didn't hesitate to respond.

Lord Darius nodded in approval and added, "While the next major expedition will free us from most suspicions, it wouldn't be fair to be the only ones going down."

"I agree," Sir Alaric nodded coldly.

"Do you have any new findings about the whereabouts of the Blood Hunters' next expedition?"

"No, Lord Idriss is keeping the details private to his trusted circle. With the news of the mole targeting his daughter, he is bound to be cautious..."

"I see..."

Lord Darius leaned his head on his wrist, his gaze affixed on the open ceiling of the ruined castle from ancient times... The order to eliminate Shia came from him the moment he found out she was heading to the forest.

He did it purely to agitate Lord Idriss and cast him into despair. He knew that he cared for his daughter a great deal more than he showed in the open.

That coldness was his way of protecting his family members from his enemies, knowing that if he showed his love in any type of form, they would be his greatest weakness.

If she were to get assassinated, it would deal a massive blow to his mental state, giving him a chance to use his powers on him.

A long dream of his...

Unfortunately, nothing planned worked, and they were left here to salvage whatever was left to avoid The Bishop's wrath.

"If only we had someone accompanying them, and willing to switch sides," Lord Darius murmured as he glanced at a swirling black and white cloud on his palm.

Hearing this, Sir Alaric suddenly recalled Mantis approaching him with a plan to retrieve the Sensebound Pearl... It was related to the upcoming Blood Hunters' expedition!

As Mantis and Demetris's shrewd and hateful faces appeared in his mind, a cruel smile couldn't help but form on his face.

"I believe I have the right people... The Bane Brothers."

Lord Darius thought about it for a moment and asked, "Can they be manipulated to get branded?"

"Yes," Sir Alaric smiled. "Their desire for glory and power far outweighs their loyalty to the region."

"Good, we might not need to waste another Sleepwalker on this... Set up a meeting with them... I will handle it," Lord Darius said.