

Gods Daily 77

Chapter 77: Phoenix Feather

At this very moment, turmoil raged within Rhys's heart.

Regret.

Deep, bitter, choking regret.

If only he had not fallen out with Aurek, the Hyrule War Academy would still have stood as one of the most exalted institutions in the entire empire.

The academy's students filled countless official posts across the imperial government, their influence unshakable.

And as the principal himself, he would have continued to reap endless benefits, wealth, and prestige.

But because he had clashed with Aurek, because he had chosen to oppose him openly, everything had changed.

Now the academy and the emperor stood as sworn enemies.

And worse—he himself had become a pawn, exploited by others in this struggle.

The realization gnawed at him, filling his chest with a poisonous ache.

He regretted it so much his guts twisted as though they were turning green with decay.

And yet—even so, Rhys refused to bow.

He had served as principal of the Hyrule War Academy for over two hundred years.

In his eyes, Aurek was nothing but a boy, still wet behind the ears.

His pride would never allow him to kneel before a child.

Besides—would an apology even solve anything now?

Would soft words mend this blood-stained rift?

The very thought was laughable.

He cast his gaze around.

Where once had been noble lecture halls and grand classrooms now lay only rubble and shattered walls.

Shame.

Disgrace.

This was humiliation on a scale beyond imagining.

Rhys clenched his jaw.

If he had already come this far, there was only one path left.

He would press forward into darkness, whatever the cost.

So he drew in a breath and roared, voice carrying across the ruins:

"Aurek! You brat who hasn't even grown your feathers yet—do you truly think slaughter alone can grant you dominion over an empire?!"

"It was you who brought the Crossbridge Empire to ruin! You are its gravedigger!"

"I will watch with my own eyes as this empire collapses around you, and as you yourself are buried beneath its ruins!"

The words rang out like hammer blows.

They sounded fierce, unyielding.

But everyone who heard them knew the truth—this was nothing more than bluster.

Empty curses spat into the void.

And curses had never saved a man's life.

If curses truly held power, half the great factions of the world would have already been turned to ash by now.

Everyone could see it clearly.

The great principal Everett Rhys—was finished.

And deep inside, Rhys himself knew it too.

Fear gnawed at him now.

For as the head of the Crossbridge Empire's branch academy, he should have had the right to summon aid from the main academy.

Under normal circumstances, when a branch faced destruction, reinforcements would arrive without fail.

Yet now—

The branch had been laid waste, but no support had come.

None at all.

Why?

The question darkened his expression further.

Something was wrong.

Somewhere, somehow, the aid he expected had failed to materialize.

That could only mean one thing—

For reasons unknown, the headquarters had abandoned him.

What do I do?!

His thoughts spun in chaos.

He still had his Awakener Tool.

A treasure of immeasurable value.

But it could only be used once.

Could he truly waste such a priceless item just to flee with his life?

He had been counting on the main academy's support to save him—so he could hoard the Awakener Tool, keep it safe, keep it untouched.

But now...

The ground shook.

The ten Doomsday Warriors advanced again.

Bolts of lightning burst from their gauntlets, searing with deadly radiance.

Above, the heavens darkened as storm clouds gathered once more.

Rhys's stomach dropped.

He understood.

They were not merely punishing him.

They meant to kill him.

If he delayed any longer—there would be no chance left.

With desperation boiling in his veins, he made his decision.

His hand darted to his robes.

He hurled forth a blazing crimson quill, shaped like a single burning feather.

The world ignited.

In an instant, the entire sky blazed with scarlet flame.

Heavenly fire cascaded downward, searing the academy's ruins, igniting towering infernos that consumed everything in sight.

Gasps echoed across the watching factions.

For none had expected this.

Rhys had unleashed a Phoenix Feather.

A relic of legend.

The Phoenix—one of the most fabled mythical beasts, a being even among magical creatures considered supreme.

And here, in the palm of a desperate man, was one of its feathers, aflame with undying fire.

Now the watching powers understood the pained look they had seen earlier upon Rhys's face.

Of course.

Who would ever willingly part with such a treasure?

As fire rained down and the ruins blazed bright, Rhys turned and fled westward.

His half-step master rank strength blazed like a beacon.

Ordinary warriors could never hope to stop him.

To the watching factions, however, this did not appear as strength.

It appeared as fear.

It appeared as desperation.

And above all—it highlighted the true terror of Aurek's forces.

Rhys was half a step into Master Rank—

A man who would stand at the very peak of any great faction.

And yet here he was, hounded like a rat by ten of Aurek's soldiers.

Soldiers, not heroes.

Not masters.

Soldiers.

Forced to burn his greatest treasure—the Phoenix Feather—just to survive.

If this was the plight of a near-master rank powerhouse...

Then just how powerful were Aurek's Doomsday Warriors?

Because of the firestorm and Rhys's desperate speed, the Doomsday Warriors did not pursue further.

Even the Elemental Assassins lurking in the shadows refrained.

Their blades were deadly, but their strength fell far short of Master Rank.

And when a man of such caliber set his heart upon escape, nothing short of a true master could stand in his way.

The battle was done.

Slowly, the black storm clouds broke apart.

For the first time in what felt like ages, sunlight returned, washing the land in warmth.

But in the ruins of the academy, there was no warmth.

Only fear.

And the lingering echo of terror.

The purple thunder that had split the heavens might have faded, but the memory of its annihilating will remained carved into every heart.

And still, one question plagued them all.

How had these Doomsday Warriors—mere soldiers—gained the power to command such lightning?

The mystery unsettled every watching force.

Meanwhile, within Eryndor City, in a secluded chamber, another gathering was underway.

A group of figures, all clad in purple robes, sat together.

Upon their chests gleamed a symbol—a thunderbolt.

These were awakeners of a particular creed.

They were the faithful believers who clung to the notion that abilities were none other than the ancient art of magic itself.

Their views were not widely accepted.

Most dismissed them as eccentrics, even fools.

For everyone knew what abilities were.

Abilities could swell a warrior's body to ten times its size, amplify their strength a hundredfold.

No known form of "magic" could do that.

And yet, this stubborn faction refused to yield.

They insisted abilities and magic were one and the same, and they had even formed an organization—the Union of Magic—to promote their belief.

The Thunder Guild was one such member.

Now, inside their meeting hall, tension hung heavy.

The president of the guild, an elderly man with hair of deep violet, presided.

His hair had not been dyed—it had been transformed over years of channeling lightning into his body, his very essence shaped by his devotion.

It was a practice popular within the Thunder Guild.

As was the equally famous hairstyle that came with being repeatedly struck by bolts of electricity.

He raised his voice solemnly.

"You all felt it just now. That thunder. That annihilating power.

What do you think of it?"

The others fell into silence, thoughtful frowns creasing their faces.

They were experts of thunder, familiar with its every crackle.

And yet...

The thunder that had fallen earlier was not the thunder they knew.

It was something else.

Something higher.

Something they could only describe as Celestial Thunder.