

Strongest Mage with the Lust system

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"I'm sorry, my Lord." Esme apologized, "I thought the room's isolation formation was activated, so the slight fluctuation from her Earth Resonance wouldn't be detected by anyone outside. If I had been a little more careful, Mina might not have been taken away."

Max shook his head. "No need to blame yourself. You didn't know she was going to show her law resonance to us. Also, we would have failed miserably even if we had tried to hide or escape after she used the resonance."

Esme knew this, but she still felt guilty. She was the older one among them and more knowledgeable, after all. She should have taken some preventive measures, but instead, she started explaining about the resonance without a care in the world.

"So, what did you mean when you said you were wrong?" Max changed the topic, knowing she meant something else from her earlier words.

Esme let out a weary and self-deprecating sigh before she spoke, "I had thought I might be able to rescue my family members if I had the thunder sword, but I gravely underestimated the might of a Monarch realm expert. Although those from the Thunder family might not be as strong as her, they still wouldn't be something I could handle."

Max didn't know what to say. She should have already come to this realization way before this encounter; her decision to become his woman was the proof.

She, however, still held a flicker of hope. He didn't know whether it was a good or a bad thing that it was no longer there.

Right then, he felt his communication crystal vibrate.

He checked it, and immediately, his expression turned ugly.

"What is it, my Lord?" Esme asked,

"I'll tell you later. Stay here and don't tell anyone that Mina was forcefully taken away; it will only worry them. Say that she found a master and went to train under her."

Leaving these directions, Max left the room.

The message he just received was from Ryan, who told him Amara and Ashroth had been captured and that he needed to hurry over to the newly built palace for the emperors to stay in near the city library.

He knew Ashroth wouldn't be allowed into the city; that was why he had messaged him to stay outside and not make any suspicious movements before he came to meet Esme last night.

He believed after seeing he came with him, they wouldn't bother with him as long as he stayed put, but now, not only was he captured, Amara was too.

Since [Mask of Terra] could hide her identity from everyone beneath Tier-9—Supremes, he knew she must have exposed herself when Ashroth was captured.

'Troubles keep piling up.' He resisted the urge to rub his forehead as he rushed out of the city lord's mansion.

Just a minute later, he arrived at the newly built, expansive structure. At the entrance, he saw Aria, Rima's master, waiting for him.

She gave him a look that he couldn't quite understand, nor did he try to.

"What's happening?" He asked,

"Something big has happened. The demons have used some kind of sacrificial ritual that killed almost all the living beings across the various kingdoms and three empires."

Max didn't react much as he had already expected this.

"Because of this, unlike before, they have become everyone's enemy. So, when the emperors sensed that demon outside, they wanted to kill him. It was then that girl revealed herself as a demon.

Fortunately for them, Ryan, Elena, and Father stepped in and delayed their execution."

Max nodded, "I understand. Now, tell me, what can I do to save them?"

Aria looked at him. "I'm not sure, but since the emperors allowed Ryan to summon you, there might be a way."

Max raised his brows upon hearing this.

'So, they want something from me?'

...

A short while later, Aria led him into a large hall where over a dozen elves with powerful auras were sitting around a rectangular table.

To their side, Ryan, Elena, and old man Raku were standing and were looking at Ashroth and Amara, standing at the center of the hall.

When they entered, everyone's attention shifted to Max.

The elven emperors watched him intently, their thoughts unknown; Ryan, Elena, and Old Man Raku looked at him with a hint of reproach in their eyes, while Ashroth and Amara heaved a sigh of relief.

They seemed to want to say something but were unable to. Max quickly realized that while they were not tied up, one of the emperors' auras was enveloping them, completely restricting them.

He nodded at them with a reassuring look before facing the emperors.

"Greetings, esteemed emperors!" He greeted them with a light but respectful bow.

The emperors nodded before one of them, a man, glanced toward Ashroth and Amara and asked, "They are your... friends, I heard?"

"No, senior. They are not my friends." Max shook his head, which made everyone frown, while Amara's eyes went wide in disbelief.

Beside her, Ashroth's eyes flashed with admiration, 'What a guy!'

"...They are my family. That beautiful lady is my woman, and the one beside her is my brother-in-law." Max added.

He knew doing this would make things difficult for him, but that didn't faze him because as things were, they were plenty difficult already.

Amara's expression of disbelief gave way to a beautiful smile while the elves narrowed their eyes.

"You are bold." The male elf emperor said after a moment.

"Are you aware of what the demons did yesterday?" He asked,

"Yes," Max nodded.

"Good. Before, my elven race and demons weren't on good terms, but we tried to stay out of each other's way as much as we could. This was why the demons never targeted us, and we didn't join the humans when you fought wars against them."

Now, however, we have become mortal enemies. We are to kill every demon spawn as soon as we see them. These two aren't an exception." The elf spoke.

"I understand your point, senior." Max nodded, "But I want you all to spare them, and I know you can do that because they are innocent as they haven't harmed a single elf yet."

There was silence in the hall for a few moments before the elven man nodded, "You are right, they can be spared since my own people..." He said while glancing at Ryan, Elena, and old man Raku, "...And you, a benefactor of my race, are pleading for their lives. However..."

He paused after speaking until here, which made Max sigh and say, "Senior, let's not talk in riddles. I know you want something from me. So, just tell me what it is, and we can discuss things from there."

Aria, Ryan, Elena, and old man Raku broke out in cold sweat when they heard him.

'What are you doing, kid? They are freaking emperors. Speak with some respect. If they got angry, no matter how much we plead, we wouldn't be able to save you.' Ryan scolded him in his mind.

He very much wanted to send him a mental transmission but knew the emperors would immediately sense it, so he had no choice but to grumble inwardly and signal him with his eyes. Unfortunately, Max wasn't looking at him.

Silence ensued in the hall after Max spoke, and as he and the elven emperor stared at each other, the air became thick with tension.

Amara's heart was beating rapidly, and cold sweat appeared on her forehead. She was worried that the emperor might swat him to death.

Fortunately for her, nothing such happened, as a few moments later, the elven emperor calmly nodded, "You are right. We do need something from you. If you give them to us, then seeing they haven't harmed any of my people yet and you guarantee that they won't either, we can spare them."

Max's expression didn't change when he heard that they wanted multiple things from him, nor did he respond and simply stared at him, waiting for him to say what those things were.

The eleven emperor narrowed his eyes slightly, not liking his response to his words, but he understood his feelings. If his loved ones were being threatened and he was being demanded for his important things to save their lives, he wouldn't have been happy either.

After staying silent for a moment, he said, "The first thing we need is the Valiant family's sword, the one the Thunder family is after. And second is... Give us the medicine that healed your father and that old woman and also tell us where you acquired them."

Max's expression still did not change, but his gaze turned cold.

After a moment, he asked, "Is there anything else?"

"Oh? You have something else worth our attention?" The female emperor, who had been restricting Ashroth and Amara, asked, a greedy glint flashing in her eyes. Other emperors also seemed interested.

Max didn't answer.

He understood they didn't know about his bloodline or the Death energy, which was strange because if they could find out about the Thunder Sword, they should know about them too. But since they didn't know, it was good, and he wasn't stupid enough to tell them about them.

As he silently stared at the elf, the emperor raised his brows slightly and suddenly...

Whoosh!

His aura flourished and crashed down on him like waves of a tsunami.

A hint of killing intent flashed in Max's eyes as immense pressure fell upon him. He tried to resist, but just a moment later, his bones creaked, and he was forced to kneel on one knee.

Thud!

Crack!

As his knee landed on the ground, the stone floor cracked.

"My Lord, please have mercy!"

Old man Raku, Elena and Ryan implored as they knelt toward the emperor.

The man, however, ignored them and continued staring down at Max, who was similarly staring at him with reddened eyes and blood flowing down his nose, ears, and the corner of his lips.

Other emperors watched on with indifferent expressions on their faces; some even looked amused.

Tears appeared in Amara's eyes while Ashroth's expression turned incomparably cold from the rage, but he was helpless to do anything.

Several emotions flashed in the emperor's eyes: anger, admiration, greed, killing intent, and hesitation. In the end, he sighed and withdrew his aura after a few moments, which—to Max—felt like an eternity.

He then glanced at a green-haired female emperor, dressed in a forest green dress, who nodded and pointed her finger at Max.

Shu~!

A gentle gust of wind blew toward Max, and then all his injuries instantly healed, and his blood-stained face was cleaned.

When she put her finger down a moment later, Max appeared the same as when he entered the hall. If not for his crumpled clothing and the broken stone slab beneath his knee, it would have seemed as if the event just now didn't take place at all.

"So, do we have a deal, kid?" The emperor asked,

Max stood up and took in a slow and deep breath before nodding, "Yes, we do."

Saying this, he took out the sword and sent it flying toward him with a wave of his mana, "Here, I hope you can keep it safe."

The emperor's eyes narrowed slightly.

He sounded as if he was handing it over just for a temporary keepsake and would return to take it back?

Not giving any of them a chance to react to his words, he continued, "As for the medicine, I found it in an ancient ruin to which I was accidentally teleported after acquiring an old ring. I only had enough for two people, so it has all been used up; otherwise, I would've gladly offered it to you, senior."

The elven emperor stared at him silently before he said, "Show that ring to us."

Max shook his head. "I can't do that, senior, because when I was teleported back, I no longer had it on me."

The emperor nodded, "I understand." He then glanced at the female emperor, who was restraining Ashroth and Amara, "Release them."

The female elf hesitated, which made the emperor frown and say, "Do you want me to go back on my word?"

"I... No." The female elf shook her head and withdrew her aura.

Thud! Thud!

Ashroth and Amara, suddenly free, fell to their knees because their bodies had become numb.

Max glanced at them before sweeping his gaze across the present emperors. Finally, he stopped on the male emperor and bowed slightly, "Now, please excuse me, senior."

The emperor nodded after a few moments.

Max walked over and helped Ashroth and Amara up. Just as they were about to leave the hall, the emperor's voice sounded, "Oh yes. They can't stay in the city or anywhere nearby."

Max's steps paused. He then nodded and continued forward, leaving the hall.

On their way to the city gates, none of them spoke. Amara parted her lips several times, but no words came out.

When they were about to reach the city gate, Ashroth finally broke the silence, "Now you know just what you promised my father?"

"No," Max shook his head, "I always knew."

Ashroth nodded and fell silent.

A while later, they left the city.

After several minutes, Ashroth and Amara could finally walk on their own. Ashroth glanced at him and asked,

"So... How are you going to help us escape from here?"

As soon as he said this, they felt a presence getting closer to them at a very fast speed. Within a few seconds, whoever it was would be upon them.

Max calmly flipped his palm, and a palm-sized disk appeared on his hand.

"A teleportation formation disk?"

Ashroth's eyes lit up for a brief moment before he smiled bitterly.

It would have been a good way to escape if they had some time to set it up properly and could make sure their pursuer didn't find out where they teleported to.

Now, however...

'Even if it can be set up quickly, they will know where we teleported over to.' He thought, 'Damn, this is absurd. Who said the elven race was a gentle and peace-loving race?! They are greedy and ruthless like everyone else.'

"Place your hands on my shoulders."

Max's sudden command snapped him back to his senses, and his eyes widened in surprise upon seeing Max had already placed the formation nodes—small metal flags—and activated the formation disk.

He didn't have time to think about how he did it so fast and placed his hand on his shoulder. Amara did the same.

Max looked in the distance and calmly stepped on the formation disk before placing a mana crystal on the formation nodes.

Buzz~

Fwosh!

A moment later, the formation buzzed to life, and they disappeared from the place.

Swoosh!

Just a moment later, a figure appeared there. She was the same female elf who had been suppressing Ashroth and Amara with her aura.

Her expression was dark because they managed to escape, and it grew even darker when she saw a grayish energy was rapidly disintegrating the formation disk and flags.

She waved her hand, sending a wave of her mana to separate the energy from the components, but her eyes narrowed when she failed.

'What is this energy?' She thought and sent a stronger wave of mana, which immediately ripped the grey energy off the formation disk and flags before condensing it and bringing it over to her.

First, she looked at the formation disk and flags, which made her expression ugly—they were both ruined and wouldn't be able to help her find the location Max and others had teleported to.

For a moment, she entertained the idea of searching them blindly. After seeing the formation disk, she knew they wouldn't have been teleported too far. So, if she flew at her top speed and was a little lucky, she might be able to find them quickly.

However, in the end, she shook her head, not willing to put in so much effort.

Then, her focus shifted to the grey energy. She looked at it carefully for a while but failed to recognize it. In the end, she released her divine sense, wanting to scan it to find its secret, but... Just as her divine sense was about to touch it, she had a premonition and hastily stopped.

"Just what kind of energy is able to give me such a dangerous feeling despite having such a weak presence?" She muttered. Then she took out a small bronze container and put it inside before storing the container back into the spatial ring.

Swoosh!

She then disappeared from the place.

High up in the sky, two figures stood. If Max saw them, he would immediately recognize them, as they were none other than Mina and the Elf Monarch who kidnapped her.

"Hehe, that little boy is really something to be able to escape from the pursuit of an emperor." The monarch chuckled, impressed.

Mina sighed in relief before muttering, "After seeing how good the city lord and others were, I had mistakenly thought all elves were kind and benevolent."

As she said this, she subtly glanced at the monarch, who laughed uproariously in response, "Keke, it's a good thing your illusion broke and you learned a lesson. Now, you won't judge a whole race, family, or organization based on their reputation, and this might save your life in the future."

Mina didn't notice it, but a complicated glint flashed in the wild beauty's eyes when she said this.

"Alright, let's go. I can't wait to get stronger."

Swoosh!

...

Shua!

Max's trio appeared in a forest, right above the withered corpse of a large ox.

Fwoosh!

"Grab me. Let's escape." Ashroth flourished his wings, ready to fly away to increase their chances of escape.

"No need to rush," Max said. "We are safe for the time being."

"What do—wait, you mean those elf bastards wouldn't be able to track us down?" Ashroth asked, surprised.

"Yeah." Max nodded, and knowing he would ask why he was so sure, he added, "I left something behind to destroy the formation."

Ashroth frowned. "What if they manage to save it?"

"No need to worry about that. When we were teleported, the formation disk was about to become useless." Max said,

Ashroth was a little concerned, but seeing how confident Max was, he didn't say anything and looked around. "So, where are we now?"

Max shrugged.

Amara was looking at them with a smile on her face.

The duo noticed this and asked simultaneously, "What is it?"

"I-It's nothing." Amara shook her head. While she liked the fact these two were getting along quite well, she wouldn't say it and jinx it.

Ashroth and Max raised their brows but then stopped thinking about it.

A while later, they left the forest, and Max recognized the place—it was a town north of Claymore town.

It was deserted as the people seemed to have left when the demon invasion happened.

They found a decent house and went inside.

"What do you plan to do now? Return to the elven city?" Ashroth asked, curious.

Amara looked at Max worriedly. Seeing how he helped them escape from the pursuit, which she didn't even know about before Ashroth told her, if he went back, the chances were he would be targeted by the people who came after them.

But she also knew he had no choice but to go back as his family was there.

To her surprise, however, he shook his head, "No, I can no longer return there. Even if they don't make things difficult for me, I would be under their constant watch and wouldn't be able to do anything."

"But what about your family, my lord?" Amara asked.

Ashroth scrunched up his nose hearing how she addressed him but managed to suppress his displeasure. However... his expression became a little unfriendly as he looked at Max.

Max ignored him and said, his gaze flickering, "They should already be in the Royal Capital right now."

"Oh?"

Max smiled seeing her confused expression and asked, "Remember I took out my communication crystal right before we left the city just now?"

"Yes, but you put it away without using it." Amara said.

He had indeed taken it out and seemed to have fallen in deep thought while holding it as if deciding whether he should contact someone or not, but after a short while, he had shaken his head, looking helpless, and put it away.

"I did use it." Max said, "I contacted Ryan and asked him to send my family to the Royal Capital secretly using the teleportation formation the city lord's mansion surely has. He agreed."

Amara's eyes widened in surprise, and she excitedly grabbed his hand. "That's amazing, my lord. Since the teleportation formation is in the city lord's mansion, and with you out of the city and those bastards having gained what they wanted from you, no one would be monitoring the mansion, making it easier for him to send them away without anyone noticing."

Tch!

Ashroth clicked his tongue seeing this and looked away, muttering to himself, "What's so amazing about it? I would have done the same if I were in his place."

A genuine smile appeared on Max's face when he sensed how relieved she became after hearing him. This told him she had become close to his family and was even treating them like her own.

'It's good,' He thought. Then he heard Ashroth and sensed his envy and irritation.

Smiling teasingly, he wrapped his arm around Amara's slender waist.

Boom!

Immediately, Ashroth's irritation skyrocketed.

"What are we doing here then? Let's go to the Capital and find your family." He said, starting to walk out of the house.

Amara looked at him in surprise and confusion, not understanding why he suddenly seemed to be in a hurry.

Max felt he had teased him enough and subtly removed his hand from Amara's waist before calling out to him, "We can't rush things too much. After what your people have done, no previously established rules will be followed. If some king or emperor saw you, they wouldn't hesitate to kill you."

Ashroth's steps paused. He then heaved a deep breath and turned around, and seeing his little sister was out of his clutches made him relax further.

"You are right. It'll be too risky to travel haphazardly." He nodded, walking over to him. Then, he stopped just two meters away from him, and looking into his eyes with a serious look on his face, he asked,

"Do you think only my people were involved in the sacrifice?"

Max stared at him before shaking his head calmly, "Does what I think make any difference?"

Ashroth nodded, "You are my little sister's man which makes you family. So, yeah, what you think matters."

Amara could feel the tension rising between them, but this didn't make her uneasy; instead, she felt happy because currently they were behaving like... brothers?

"Since that's the case... I don't think it was only your people responsible, but my people too. And maybe other races were involved too." Max said,

Ashroth's blood-red eyes glinted, "So, you also think..."

"Yeah." Max interrupted, "This war was never about the demon race conquering a part of the human continent, but it would be better if we didn't talk about it before we are strong enough to make any difference in the grand scheme of things."

Ashroth nodded, while their conversation shook Amara's heart. She wanted to ask what they were talking about, but since Max already said they shouldn't talk about it yet, she stayed silent.

"So, what are we going to do now?" Ashroth asked. Since all of his tribe members were now dead and his aunt, Beille, had gone off the radar after informing him about the sacrifice, he had nowhere to go.

That was why he planned to stay with and protect his precious little sister even though she didn't really need it with Max beside her.

Max understood this and had no problem with his staying with them.

"Well, right now I want to test my strength. So, why don't you become my sparring partner for a while?" Max said, noting he had also improved and reached the Four Star, high stage.

The scene of him slaying one Five Star demon after another on the battlefield flashed in Ashroth's mind when he heard him, and... his eyes flashed with excitement and battle spirit.

"Sure," He agreed. Then suddenly his brows shot up, and he asked with a surprised look plastered on his face, "You... have reached the Four Star peak?"

"Yeah," Max casually said before leaving the house to scout the area to make sure there was no one in the vicinity.

Amara, seeing her big brother's expression, felt proud, and with a playful smile on her face, she asked, "What surprised you so much, big brother?"

"He was at Four Star High Stage just yesterday, but now he is already—" He suddenly stopped speaking when he saw her expression.

"What's with that look?" He asked,

Amara smiled mischievously, "It's just that you always appear calm and collected, unfazed by everything, so it's refreshing to see you so shaken up."

Ashroth's brows twitched upon hearing this, and then he suddenly appeared in front of her and pulled her ear. "You little brat! You think you have grown big enough to make fun of me, huh?"

"Ouch! Ah, stop it, big brother. My ear hurts." Amara let out pained whimpers while her eyes became teary, which made Ashroth stop. But when he saw her giggle, he realized she had fooled him, causing him to smile wryly.

After a while, his expression became grave as he said, "Little Amara, there is something I need you to promise me."

Amara also grew serious and asked, "What?"

"Promise me that no matter what happens, you won't act recklessly and risk your life foolishly like you did when they caught me."

"I... Big Brother, at that time..." Amara started to explain herself when Ashroth harshly interrupted her.

"Promise me!"

Amara flinched and bit her lip. "I... I promise... I'll try my best to not make any reckless decisions."

"Good," Ashroth nodded in satisfaction.

"Now, listen carefully..."

When Max returned, his brows furrowed because Amara looked downcast and the rims of her eyes were red from crying. A few droplets of tears could still be seen clinging to her eyelashes.

He glanced at Ashroth with a questioning look.

Ashroth calmly shook his head. "There is nothing for you to worry about."

Max's frown deepened. How could he not worry when something was clearly bothering his woman?

Just as he was about to ask Amara, however, she looked at him, intense emotions roiling in her eyes. He also felt them through his bloodline sense, but currently the most intense one was her desire to be left alone.

Max walked over to her and gently hugged her to comfort her.

After a while, Amara calmed down slightly and said, "My Lord, I would like to rest here while big brother and you spar."

"Alright," Max nodded. Amara turned around and entered a room.

Max took a breath, shaking his head. From her emotions, he figured out she was worried and anxious about something.

As they left the house and moved toward the town's garden, Ashroth suddenly started speaking, "Because our mother passed away when Amara was just a child, and our father was always busy, she didn't have anyone to teach her things and make her ready to face the world. Aunt Beille did her part, but she was rarely home, so it didn't really make a difference."

Max silently listened, knowing it was a concerned big brother speaking for his sister.

"While I did my best to teach her everything I could, I was still young and had limited knowledge. Then, because we were isolated in our family, she couldn't make any good friends either."

Ashroth paused and looked at him. "I'm telling you all this to let you know that even though she appears strong from the outside, she is very vulnerable on the inside. When it comes to the people she loves, she tends to become overly emotional and act recklessly, just like she did earlier in the elf city."

Smiling wryly, he continued, "She should have gone to you when she saw me getting captured, but instead she exposed herself by getting all worried."

So, to make sure she doesn't do anything like that again, I made her promise me and also told her that hostile people might find me in the upcoming days and I might end up dead and that at that time, she shouldn't panic and expose her again."

"I see," Max nodded in understanding.

While Amara had [Mask of Terra] to conceal her identity, Ashroth didn't have anything. If they traveled to the capital city, the chances were they would encounter humans, elves, and people of other races who should be out on the hunt for demons right now. When that happened, Ashroth would surely die.

'I wish I had bought another Mask of Terra!' He sighed.

From the moment he left Ninam City with them, he had been racking his mind to find a way to keep Ashroth safe, but aside from keeping him somewhere hidden, he found no other way.

Unfortunately, Ashroth clearly wasn't willing to stay hidden in one place because he wanted to find a way to return to the demon continent as soon as possible.

As for why? It was because when Beille informed him of the sacrifice, she had also told him to return to the demon continent as soon as possible.

They soon arrived at the garden and stood facing each other.

Max slowly stretched his muscles and started circulating his mana. Ashroth also got ready, his blood boiling in excitement.

"Show me just how much stronger you are than me!" He shouted as his wings flourished, and he shot toward him like a cannonball.

Boom!

A resolute and grim light flickered in Max's gaze as he suddenly released his aura, mana, and bloodline energy.

Thump!

Ashroth's heart skipped a beat, feeling his presence skyrocketing, and when he saw the look in his eyes, a premonition arose in his heart, dousing his excitement.

"Wait! Let's not—" He began shouting, but it was already too late, as Max was already upon him, his fist crashing toward his chest.

Bang!

An extremely severe pain shot through his body, and this was the last sensation he felt before everything blanked out.

Shua!

Max gently stopped the unconscious guy from crashing into the ground.

"Though I understand your resolve, I can't let you die and make my woman sad." Max muttered and then hefted him on his shoulder and left the place.

The chances of Ashroth leaving the human continent alive were nearly zero. Even if he was extremely lucky and returned to the demon continent safely, he knew he wouldn't be able to convince his father, Orlan, to leave the continent.

Why was Max so sure about this?

It was because Orlan was the Bloodwing tribe's leader first before he was Ashroth's and Amara's father—which the fact that he imprisoned his son and almost abandoned his daughter clearly showed. The fact that he secretly took care of them was another matter altogether.

So, even if Orlan agreed to leave the continent, convincing the whole tribe would be too difficult, and without them, he wouldn't leave, making Ashroth's efforts useless. Then if Beille was right and something like a grand sacrifice took place, he would die alongside them.

Since his death was certain, Max decided to be a little selfish and forcefully keep him here.

'Too bad I couldn't test myself.'

...

When he returned to the house, Amara got worried when she saw Ashroth unconscious.

"What happened?"

"Calm down. He is alright." Max calmly said and slowly told her everything.

Amara felt complicated after hearing everything—she didn't want Ashroth to go on a one-way trip, but she didn't want her father to die either.

Max stayed silent, letting her resolve her feelings.

Almost an hour later, she took a deep breath, hardened her heart, and said, "Let's keep big brother here."

Max nodded, and seeing she was feeling guilty and sad for her father, he said, "Don't worry, I will try to find a way to contact your father if possible."

His words gave Amara hope and helped her relax.

In the evening, right as the sun started setting, Max left the town and headed toward the capital city.

He had incapacitated and imprisoned Ashroth so when he regained consciousness, he wouldn't be able to leave the underground room he dug open and reinforced with his bloodline energy.

But then a problem arose.

Because he had blocked Ashroth's mana, or rather demon veins, he wouldn't be able to go without food and water for several days like other Four Star beings.

So, Amara decided to stay to look after him.

He was a little concerned about her safety, but she assured him that since with [Mask of Terra] she could change her appearance and become a human, elf, or any other race according to the situation, she would be safe.

Since it was a remote town where no powerful expert would go, he knew she would be relatively safe, but... he didn't like the fact that he had to leave her behind. Unfortunately, he had no choice because she wouldn't leave Ashroth alone.

...

The next day, Max arrived in front of the capital city in the early morning.

On his way, he encountered several teams of both humans and elves, who, after seeing he was a human, didn't bother him and continued on their way.

When he saw how eerily silent the capital city was, just like the rest of the villages, towns, and cities he had seen after the sacrifice, his expression turned grim.

Before entering the city, he messaged Pauline and Kriss but received no reply. He then messaged Flavia, but no response came.

'I hope... they are alright.' He thought, thunderous rage and murderous intent filling his heart and mind.

After calming himself down, he entered the city, and following his senses, he arrived in front of a simple house on the outskirts of the city.

Calmly walking to the door, he knocked and waited.

A moment later, the door opened and Esme appeared, wearing a veil on her face. When she saw Max, she visibly relaxed and smiled, "Come in. Everyone is waiting."

Nodding, Max entered the house and saw everyone in the living room. They all looked anxious and a little sleepy, which told him they didn't sleep last night at all.

"Are you alright, little Max?" Anna was a lot calmer compared to the last time he saw her but had a worried expression on her face while her eyes scanned him for injuries.

"Yeah, I'm fine." Max nodded. He could see they were all confused as to why they suddenly had to leave. Clearly, Ryan hadn't told them what had happened.

Just as he was about to explain what happened, he narrowed his eyes and asked, "Where are Belen and Leticia?"

While Esther, Anna, Noah, his wife, Rima, Esme, Gene, Garima, Ellie, Ella, and Maria were all present, he couldn't see Belen or Leticia.

He hadn't seen them in the hall when he returned to Ninam City either, but because everyone was grieving, and since Garima hadn't told him about anything happening to them, he decided to ask about them later.

Then, he met Esme and got busy in healing her and then in cultivation. Then, he met Mina; she was taken away, and then he left to save Ashroth and Amara in a hurry, which gave him no chance to inquire about their whereabouts.

But seeing they weren't here, he couldn't help becoming worried.

Then something happened that shook him—everyone, except Esme, looked at him in confusion as if they didn't understand what he just asked.

He looked at Anna and asked, "Do you know Belen and Leticia?"

Anna raised her brows in confusion before shaking her head, "...I don't think so."

Hearing this, a bad feeling welled up in his heart, and he immediately flashed in front of her.

Putting his hand on her head, he scanned her body and mind with his bloodline sense but didn't find anything wrong. He then checked others one by one, but there didn't seem anything wrong with them.

His expression turned dark. He knew there was something definitely wrong with them; it was just that his bloodline sense wasn't able to find what it was because Esme seemed fine, as she didn't have that confused look on her face.

He knew why this was so.

Either whatever had made them forget about Belen and Leticia didn't affect her because she was an emperor mage, or it was his Nascent Energy that cleansed it.

He turned to her and asked, "Where are Belen and Leticia?"

Esme's expression was also grave as she understood what was going on. She said, "A few days after you left, they visited me, and talked to me and Gene for a while before leaving. After that day, I didn't see them. In fact, I seem to have completely forgotten about them."

Her answer confirmed his suspicion.

"What did you guys talk about that day, and did they behave strangely?" He asked,

Esme took a moment to recall her memories and said, "They were just asking how I got injured and how severe my injuries were. Then our conversation shifted, and we talked about quite a bit of minor stuff."

Max frowned; he was about to tell her to tell him everything they talked about when she said, "There is no use in telling you what exactly we talked about because they were just making small talk, but something strange did happen when they were about to leave my room."

"What?" Max asked,

"That younger girl, Leticia, suddenly said she was feeling thirsty and took out a jar of water. She drank some, gave some to Belen, and then offered the rest to me and Gene. Not wanting to be impolite, we drank it. I remember seeing Leticia smiling strangely at that time."

Max's eyes flashed, and his expression shifted rapidly before he cursed angrily.

"Damn it!"

He realized they had left on their own and, for some unknown reason, decided to make everyone forget about them through some strange means.

While the latter part confused him, he relaxed seeing they left on their own and weren't taken away.

However, what made him angry and even more worried was... Because they had left, they most likely didn't have any emperor to protect them from the sacrificial formation.

Suddenly, he sat down cross-legged, took a deep breath, and closed his eyes, falling into a deep state of meditation.

After a few minutes, he exhaled deeply and opened his eyes.

Currently, although he wasn't able to sense his women's location if he was too far away from them, he could still sense if they were alive or not if he focused on their connection enough, and Belen's and Leticia's connections were still intact, though very faint.

'It's good as long as they are alive.' He thought.

Esme saw how he appeared a lot more relaxed compared to a while ago and couldn't help but ask curiously, "What happened?"

"I just found out they are still alive," Max said. Since Esme was his woman, he didn't intend to hide much from her.

As he expected, a surprised look appeared in her exposed pretty eyes when she heard him and then asked, "How?"

[Thanks to my bloodline...] Max said this through mental communication before continuing out loud, "...I have a connection with all of my women. I can sense whether they are alive, and if they are not too far away, I can sense their rough location."

"..."

Esme was dumbfounded.

While there were some things other than a soul lamp that could tell a person's status and even more things that could find them when they weren't too far—she had never heard of any bloodline possessing these abilities.

A moment later, she smiled wryly beneath her veil. 'If his bloodline can even produce that mystical energy, it's nothing strange if it has other... strange abilities. Sigh, I should really stop treating him like an ordinary person.'

Then, she realized and muttered, a blush appearing on her face, which her veil hid, thankfully, "No wonder you found us without any of us telling you our address."

Max nodded and then looked at the confused crowd.

"You must have realized by now that you guys do know Belen and Leticia. It's just that your memories of them have been tampered with, but don't worry, I will find a way to restore them."

Everyone naturally became concerned when they heard that their memories were indeed tampered with, but after hearing his words, they calmed down.

"T-Thank you, Max."

Max became a little surprised because it was Noah who just thanked him. It should be remembered he used to bully and mock him almost as much as Mark and William did. Therefore, Max had never held any familiar feelings toward him,, and he was sure the same was true for him.

So, because of his past deeds, Max reckoned he would be too embarrassed to ever meet his eyes and would never have the courage to speak to him. This, Noah proved when he helped him calm down in the hall when they were mourning their losses. He didn't say anything and kept his eyes glued to the ground when he was nearby.

Now, however, he took the initiative to speak? So, Max was naturally surprised.

After a moment, he nodded in acknowledgement. No matter what, he was family, and after going through so much, he had clearly realized his mistakes. So, since he wanted to make amends, Max naturally wouldn't be too petty.

Noah's tense shoulders immediately relaxed when he saw this. He wanted to apologize for his past actions but felt too ashamed to do so and thus decided to delay doing it.

"Now, tell us what happened." Esther asked, a hint of worry visible on her usually aloof face.

"Let me first tell you, there is nothing to worry about, so everyone please relax." He said. He would have used the Nascent Energy to help if he had any left.

His words had the intended effect, as everyone seemed to relax, albeit a little.

Seeing this, he nodded to himself and asked, "You all know Amara, right?"

Everyone nodded while Anna's eyes widened. "Why isn't she with you? What happened to her? Is she alright?"

Max had the urge to facepalm himself.

Did she not hear him say just a moment ago that there was nothing to worry about?

But knowing she was emotionally unstable right now, he nodded reassuringly at her, "Yes, she is completely fine and is in a safe location."

This put her worries to rest, but then she frowned, "Why didn't she come with you?"

"Because..." Max swept his gaze across everyone and calmly revealed, "She is a demon."

Boom!

The revelation was too stunning and made their eyes go wide in disbelief.

There was absolute silence in the room before Esther's voice shattered it, "Her identity was revealed?"

Max looked at her with a hint of surprise on his face. Even Esme hadn't regained her calm yet, but she did and seemed completely unbothered by the fact that Amara was someone from a universally hated race.

"Yes. I returned with her brother, who, unlike her, didn't have anything to hide her identity..." He slowly explained what happened, except for the fact that he was forced to give up the Thunder Sword.

After hearing everything, Esther nodded, "You did right. So what if they are demons? They are already family. No matter what happens, one should never betray or abandon their family."

As she said this, a deep look of hurt, sadness, anger, and coldness flashed in her eyes.

Anna bit her lip when she heard her, and tears welled up in her eyes. Others stayed silent, knowing what she meant.

Max nodded.

After a while, the mood lightened a little, and Esme asked the more important question.

"What are we going to do now?"

"We will go to the Central Plains." Max announced, "This place isn't safe to live in right now."

No one had any objection, and they decided to leave the next day.

They could have left that day itself, but because Max intended to check the Fuller, Martell, and Arasia family estates to see if anyone was left alive and also wanted to help Esme heal a little more and stock up some Nascent Energy for emergency situations, he decided to delay it a bit.

A short while later, he had everyone move to a bigger house in the vicinity and then left for the Fuller family estate with Gene, who requested to come along.

He wanted to refuse her, but Esme also requested it. How could he bear to refuse his lovely woman?

Gene's expression was ugly as they moved towards the Fuller estate because the streets, shops, and houses were littered with dried-up corpses.

She already knew this was the result of demons using a sacrificial formation and had even seen a few corpses in the house, the basement of which they teleported to from Nimam City.

However, seeing a few didn't nearly have the same effect as seeing this seemingly uncountable number of them.

"How can someone be so cruel?" She muttered to herself.

Max gave her a sidelong glance and one thought appeared in his mind, 'A sheltered flower.'

"What's with that look?" Gene narrowed her eyes when she saw him looking at her with a strange look.

"Nothing." Max shook his head, not wanting to trouble himself by telling her what he was thinking.

"Hmph!" Gene hurrumped in displeasure and thought, 'You are lucky you are helping Granny; otherwise, I wouldn't have let it go, humph!'

Max shook his head inwardly when he felt her indignant emotions.

'Women are really complex creatures. Just a look can upset them so much.'

Not long after, they arrived at the Fuller estate. The main entrance was wide open, and several people's dried-up corpses, who were probably on guard duty at the moment the sacrificial formation activated, were lying there.

After taking a glance at them, he entered the estate, his expression not changing in the slightest. In his heart, however, the situation was different.

He wouldn't mind if everyone else from the Fuller family died, but he wouldn't be able to endure it if something had happened to Sera's adoptive mother, Riva; her sister, Sophie; and especially Claire, her son, Ruo, and her grandfather.

Unfortunately, as he entered the estate deeper and saw corpses lying around, the hope he held in his heart was getting smaller and smaller.

If the Fuller family had the capabilities to save his close ones, they should have saved their own people too, but... this was clearly not the case.

From the entrance, Riva's manor was closest, so he first went there.

The gates were wide open. As he entered the place, he noticed the corpses of servants and maids.

Although there wasn't any change in Max's expression, nor did his footsteps slow or get faster, and his body language was also the same, Gene, walking a step behind him, could feel the air around him getting heavier.

Without her knowing, she had held her breath and made her footsteps so light that she had stopped making any noise altogether.

...

A while later, the duo walked out of the manor.

They had scoured the entire manor but didn't find any trace of Riva and Sophie, which gave him a slight hope that they might still be alive.

They then arrived at the guest houses, and... they didn't find Claire and others either.

Just as Max was thinking about going to check the family head's manor, Gene walked out from the house, holding a letter.

"Hey, I found this," She said with a relieved look on her face.

Seeing her expression, his flicker of hope intensified, and he immediately started reading the letter.

After he was done reading, he trembled due to the surge of happiness and relief that coursed through him.

Seeing this, Gene smiled and secretly sighed in relief, 'Whew! Now, I can finally relax around him.'

The letter was addressed to Max, and it was from Claire.

When the sacrificial formation was activated, Riva and Sophie were with them. It was no coincidence because after he, Emily, Lily, and Sera left for the battlefield, Riva and Sophie spent most of their time with Claire and others, not wanting them to feel alone.

While everyone else froze when they felt that overwhelming sense of danger take root in their heart, Little Ruo's body suddenly burst with a strange glow that enveloped them.

After a minute or so, she suddenly fell unconscious, which made them concerned about her. Riva left to find some medicine for her, but when she returned, it was not with medicine but a horrified look on her face.

Upon asking her, they found everyone had died.

Not knowing what had happened, they became scared and stayed inside the guest house, hoping whatever had killed them wouldn't find them.

Then, several hours later, some people—from the Royal family—found them and told them about the event that took place.

In the end, Claire had written that they left with the survivors of the city for the Central Plains under the Royal family's lead.

After regaining his composure, Max led Gene to the Arasia family's estate. He scoured the entire estate, and when he didn't find any corpse that resembled Flavia, he sighed in relief and murmured, "Please be safe. I'll soon find you."

"Let's go,"

After a moment, he suddenly wrapped his hand around Gene's waist.

Gene's eyes went wide, but before she could say anything or move away from his grasp, he activated [Phoenix's Wings] and rushed back toward the outskirts of the city, heading back to the house where his family was.

...

Swoosh!

Arriving in front of the house, Max released Gene, deactivated [Phoenix's Wings], and rushed inside, leaving a red-faced and disheveled-haired Gene standing there.

"Argh! What a rogue! Didn't even give me a heads-up." She stomped the ground in anger before walking in.

"Where is that hateful—"

She asked angrily, wanting to vent her anger on him, but stopped mid-sentence when she noticed everyone had odd looks on their faces and were trying to avoid looking at her.

Frowning, she was about to go to Anna and ask what was wrong, but when she saw her dark expression, she changed direction and went over to Ellie.

"What is it? Why do you all have that strange expression?" She asked in a low voice,

Ellie's expression turned cold, and she said through gritted teeth, "H-He... that pervert, he took your granny into the room."

"Oh? What's wrong with that?" Gene asked, thinking he must be helping her heal.

'But there was no need to be so much in a rush, no?' As this thought crossed her mind, she also found this a little strange but didn't think much about it.

Ellie opened her mouth to say something but shook her head. "Let's not talk about—"

Ahng~

Just as she began speaking, a loud and sensual moan reverberated in the house, silencing her.

Her eyes went wide before her face flushed red.

"That scoundrel!" She bit her lip, her eyes becoming moist.

Esther, Noah, Ella, and Maria's expressions turned awkward while Anna's face went blank before a mixture of disbelief, anger, jealousy, and heartache flashed in her eyes.

She then stood up and silently left the house.

The next day, in the early morning, Max was sitting cross-legged on the ground in a room where Esme was sleeping soundly, wrapped in sheets, a rosy hue on her enchanting face.

After a while, she slowly stirred awake and looked at Max with a bright look on her face while her face blushed red in embarrassment as she recalled what happened all day and night yesterday.

Phew!

As if sensing her gaze, Max exhaled deeply and slowly opened his eyes. When their gazes met, he gave her a charming smile that made Esme's heart skip a beat and made her feel hot all over.

Immediately, she got flustered and averted her eyes. She was afraid if she continued looking at him, she wouldn't be able to control herself again and might end up in his arms again.

'Although the thought is tempting, my body is too sore after all that.' She thought, a displeased look appearing on her face.

Max's lips curled when he sensed her emotions. And as he stood up and walked over to the bed, he teasingly asked, "What are you displeased about, my temptress?"

"Mou!" Esme pouted and looked at him with an aggrieved look in her eyes. "My Lord, you promised you won't sense my emotions without my permission unless it is extremely necessary."

"Oh, my bad, my lady. I... forgot about it." Max chuckled before leaning his face down and placing a gentle kiss on her lips, which he did not seem to get enough of.

Esme closed her eyes and enjoyed the kiss, completely forgetting her displeasure.

After he broke the kiss, she sat up, holding the white bedsheet to her chest to cover her naked body as she leaned her head on his shoulder and asked, "Are we leaving today?"

"Yeah." Max nodded, moving his fingers through her silky blue hair before asking in a teasing tone, "Why? You don't want to?"

Esme gave him a look that made him chuckle sheepishly.

"I just feel... conflicted. My family members are imprisoned there. I would be there, but I wouldn't be able to do anything." She muttered, a complicated expression on her face.

Max was silent for a few moments before he said, "I know it's hard for you, but wait for some time more. When we have enough strength, not only will we save your people, we will also destroy the Thunder family to avenge all those people who they slaughtered in cold blood."

"Mm," Esme hummed in response. She believed him but didn't know if she could bear to wait for long.

After all, Max was a Four Star mage and would take quite some time to reach the emperor realm, not to mention the necessary monarch realm.

She, of course, knew he could boost his cultivation level quickly by using Nascent Energy, but there was no use in doing that because not only would his foundation be shaky, his battle prowess also would be lower.

If she knew using the Nascent Energy to increase his cultivation wouldn't compromise his foundation and battle power, she wouldn't be thinking like this. Unfortunately, she didn't know it yet.

After a short while, she gathered her thoughts and got out of bed. "I'll go take a bath."

Saying this, she slowly dropped the bedsheet covering her body, revealing her perfect body to him, and walked toward the bathroom.

Max wanted to rest for a while because he hadn't been able to do it since yesterday.

He worked hard on her all day and through the night.

When they stopped just a few hours ago, he immediately sat down to cultivate, wanting to use half the Nascent Energy he managed to take from her after helping her heal completely—save for her dantian, which was still untouched—to push his cultivation toward the Five Star.

'This vixen... She would drain me completely.' He thought, licking his lips before jumping off the bed and rushing after her.

A few moments later, a symphony of moans echoed out from the bathroom, permeating the room.

If not for the isolation formation he laid down after his negligence when they began yesterday, everyone in the house would have realized what they were up to, and it certainly would have bothered them.

...

An hour later, they emerged from the room.

Esme was walking slightly funny, but she had a healthy glow on her cheeks and a blissful smile on her face, which froze when they stepped into the living room, where everyone looked at her with awkward and not so friendly expressions.

She gave Max a resentful look. If not for how he took her in the room, she wouldn't be facing this now.

Max rubbed the tip of his nose awkwardly. He had managed to hide the fact that he had made a tiny mistake yesterday; otherwise, he knew she wouldn't be giving him just a look.

A weird silence befell the living room.

Unable to withstand it, he coughed and asked, "Is everyone ready to leave?"

"Hmph! We have been ready since yesterday. If not for some hateful pervert... Hmph!" Gene hurrumped coldly, her eyes flickering with rage.

She was initially clueless, but after hearing her granny's shameful moans, how could she not realize what they were doing?

And the realization, without a doubt, made her furious.

How dare he take advantage of her granny's vulnerability?

She wanted to barge into the room and beat him up, but Ella and Esther stopped her, saying her granny would be too ashamed if she did that and that she should talk to him when they came out.

When she saw him just now, she wanted to attack him directly but then saw her granny looked happy, which confused her.

Shouldn't she be gloomy and angry?

Esme blushed in embarrassment and lowered her head, not able to meet her gaze.

Just then, Esther spoke and dispelled all the awkwardness.

"What about Emily? Isn't she coming?" She asked,

Max had told them Emily was safe so they wouldn't worry about her.

He shook his head. "Emily is with Lily and Sera. They said they will go to the central plains a few days later with Wyomin and Lily's master, Rose, who are emperors."

Esther nodded before asking, "Then shouldn't we wait for a few days? If we go with them, we won't encounter any danger on the way."

"No," Max shook his head, "We don't know how those elven emperors would react when they realize Ryan had sent you all away. If they were to force Ryan to tell him where he sent you and come here, we'll all die."

"Second, the demons can return any time now, and the moment they do, things will become a lot more dangerous here. So, we have to leave now. Also, because the empires and the wild areas through which we will travel were also in sacrificial formation's range. So, we won't encounter any danger right now."

"I understand." Esther nodded in understanding.

A short while later, they left the house and began their journey toward the Central Plains.

Gene was walking beside Esme, but she was uncharacteristically silent, which made Esme sigh. She knew Gene had misunderstood her relationship with Max, but she was too embarrassed to talk to her about it and clear up the misunderstanding.

chapter 810

Over a month later...

A group of twelve—two men and nine women—was moving toward a town after crossing the border of the central plains.

The group was none other than Max and others.

Just as Max had said, they didn't encounter any danger on their way, though some people had caused them some trouble after seeing the beauties in the group.

Thankfully, they weren't too strong, and Max easily dealt with them.

The border between the three empires and the central plains wasn't clearly marked, but anyone would be able to tell when they entered the central plain's territory.

How?

It was simply because there was a sudden spike in mana density from where the central plains' territory began.

"The mana density is slowly increasing as we walk farther from the border." Esther muttered, feeling the surrounding mana as they neared town.

"You find it strange, don't you?" Gene asked, a small smile on her lips.

"Yes," Esther nodded.

Immediately, Gene put on a serious expression on her face and began to explain.

"There are two theories behind it. First, it is said that a long time ago, to keep the mana from thinning out in the central plains, the sovereign forces came together and laid down a massive array to keep the central plains' mana from dispersing to the ocean.

At that time, the place where the kingdoms and three empires are was just a desolate land where no one but wild magic beasts lived. So, they also excluded that part of the territory too."

She paused for a moment and continued, "Second theory is... Because central plains are at a higher elevation, and mana is light, it naturally stays up."

"Heh!"

Anna snorted, "If the second theory was correct, there wouldn't be any mana there at all, nor would the mana stone mines form."

Gene nodded, "I also think the same. This second theory is simply there so the people from the empires and kingdoms wouldn't revolt."

"You know, I even heard..."

Gene kept talking with Anna, and Ellie also joined in the conversation after a while.

Max glanced at Anna and sighed in his heart.

After a month, she had significantly recovered from the loss of her mother and Ashton's cold abandonment, but... she hadn't talked with him properly after that day in the Royal Capital, which saddened him a lot.

[Don't worry, My Lord. She just needs some time to settle her emotions.] Esme said through mental communication after noticing him looking at Anna.

During this month, he continued to sleep with her and used most of the produced Nascent Energy to slowly heal her dantian, which was now almost completely healed, allowing her to use her divine sense, aura, and even mana, though in limited quantity.

After just a few more sessions, her dantian, mana core, and Ascension Pillars would be completely healed, returning her to her peak.

Max nodded.

They soon reached the town.

Two Five Star mages in white robes were leisurely sitting on the chairs on each side of the gate, discussing something.

When Max's group arrived near them, they swept their gazes across them, their eyes lighting up upon seeing so many beauties, but when their eyes landed on Veiled Esme, they immediately controlled their wandering gazes.

"You all are from the desolate region?" One of them asked, looking at Esme.

Clearly, even though they controlled themselves and no longer had any evil intentions after seeing she was a mid-stage Emperor, they weren't afraid, which surprised Max and others.

"Yes. We are." Max took a step forward and nodded before asking, "How much do we need to pay to enter the town?"

He had noticed a few people entering the town from afar—they had paid them some mana stones before they were allowed in.

Surprise flickered in the mages' eyes when they saw Max speak instead of Esme.

"Hundred high-tier mana stones per person." One of them calmly said,

Max's brows shot up—it was too expensive.

"Wasn't it ten mana stones previously? Even if you increase it because of the war, it shouldn't be any more than fifty, according to the Central Plains alliance's rules. Moreover, because of the mass sacrifice, the alliance should have issued the order that all survivors should be able to enter freely, no?" Esme coldly said, releasing her aura.

The mages stiffened upon hearing her and cursed in their hearts.

"You are not wrong, My Lady." The mage who spoke before said, after regaining his composure, "Alliance really did issue such an order, but you see, our town is already full of people. So, the town lord ordered us to restrict further entries. If you don't want to pay, you can go to any other nearby town."

Esme stared at him with narrowed eyes.

Gulp!

As the tension built between them, the mage gulped. Although he was unafraid of her because his force had many emperors in the town, it wasn't easy enduring the pressure of an emperor.

Fortunately for him, Max placed his hand on her shoulder, which made her retract her aura.

"Here you go." He said, waving his hand and sending twelve hundred high-tier mana stones flying toward them.

The mage counted them with a scan of his divine sense before storing them away.

"You can now enter, but know that you are only allowed to stay for a week. If you want to stay longer, you have to pay the fee at the town lord's mansion." He informed them after opening the gate.

Esme and Gene frowned in confusion. They didn't remember the border towns having this rule.

Noticing their confusion, the mage smiled, "It's a new rule, My Lady."

Esme snorted in displeasure seeing he didn't explain the reason behind it but didn't do anything else. Besides, if there were really too many people in the town, this rule made sense.

She knew the town lords overseeing these towns were emperors, and she didn't want to fight one yet, not only because she was yet to fully recover but also because it would reveal her identity.

Upon entering the town, the group realized those mages hadn't lied about the town being full of people.