

Shadow 771

Chapter 771: Familiar Words

He was surprised Lazarak did not know of the twelve Pillars, but then again even he had only heard about them from the Outsiders. Damon scratched the back of his head lightly, his brows drawing inward. It seemed to be common knowledge outside their world, but here even a god like Lazarak did not know.

However Lazarak had theorized the existence of the Pillars but had not been sure. He only knew of the Pillar of Conflict.

Damon sighed with a thin smile, resting his elbows on his knees as he leaned forward slightly.

"You owe me one for this. I will tell you, but you have to do something for me."

Lazarak looked at Damon, then down at his own small body. He curled his fingers against his chest, swallowing visibly. Slowly he placed a hand over his chest with a soft whimper.

"I... I am still in a child's form... but if you insist on having my beautiful body, so be it... just be gentle. It is my first time."

Damon stared at him with a deadpan expression. His eye twitched.

"You are male, you bastard."

Lazarak smiled viciously, baring his small teeth like a smug fox.

"When did that ever stop people like you."

Damon grabbed him by the back of his robe and lifted him up. Lazarak kicked his legs dramatically in the air.

"I only wanted you to say I was handsome."

Lazarak pointed at him accusingly, squinting his eyes.

"Ah ha. I knew it. You start with compliments before getting physical."

Damon winced, his face tightening in frustration. This bastard was good. Too good. Arguing with gutter logic was pointless. Lazarak was not going to take back calling Damon ugly earlier.

"At least admit I am not ugly."

Lazarak sighed slowly, his small shoulders rising and falling in exaggerated despair.

"Just skip the foreplay and do what you will."

A surge of anger rose in Damon's chest. His fingers twitched with irritation.

"Ragebait on this level would not work on me."

He tossed Lazarak through a wall with a flick of his hand as fragments of broken mirror buried the toddler god.

Lazarak stood up, brushing the glittering shards from his hair and shoulders with small irritated motions. He opened his mouth to speak, but Damon raised a hand sharply.

"Not another word."

Lazarak pressed his lips together and shrugged.

Damon sighed, shifting his gaze toward Matia who was quietly scanning the cathedral for dangers. Her wings twitched whenever she sensed movement.

He sat on the stairs leading to the goddess statue, leaning back slightly as he looked up at the veiled Goddess of Doom.

"There are twelve pillars that form the fundamental framework of existence.

The first..."

Damon listed off all the pillars to Lazarak.

Pillar of Beginning, Genesis

Pillar of Reality Aeternis

Pillar of Time Chronis

Pillar of the Soul Anima

Pillar of Emotion Empyros

Pillar of Knowledge Noesis

Pillar of Chaos Pandemon

Pillar of Order Kosmos

Pillar of Conflict Bellum

Pillar of Ascension Apotheon

Pillar of Void Nihilos

Pillar of End Nemesis

After explaining what they each did and their roles within the omniverse, Lazarak nodded softly. He clasped his hands behind his back as if absorbing each piece of new information.

"I see. That makes sense. I see why you referred to them as the omniverse authority. They are in a sense Authorities since they built the framework of everything."

Lazarak smiled warmly, placing a hand over his small chest.

"Thank you for telling me. I never knew how small I was until now. How wide the omniverse must be."

Damon narrowed his eyes slightly, studying him.

"I thought you would give up after seeing how small we are."

Lazarak chuckled and waved his hand dismissively.

"Oh no. I am only more motivated now. Why would I give up. It is interesting the Goddess hid one here. The others must be in the hands of the other true gods."

Damon nodded. That was a good hypothesis, and one that should be an accepted fact.

"The Pillars must be something the true gods cannot create."

Damon whispered softly, imagining the powerful true gods struggling or failing.

Lazarak shook his head, brushing stray mirror dust from his shoulder.

"I do not think so. The Pillars are not that powerful. I should know. Doom can easily destroy and recreate the omniverse. If she can do that, destroying the Pillars should not be difficult for her."

Damon blinked slowly, confused. But Lazarak would know better about a true god's power. Damon could not deny that Unknown Singularity had said similar things.

"Then why guard the Pillar so much if its power does not matter."

Lazarak shook his head slowly.

"I do not know. I only know Doom is more powerful than the Pillars and that fact is enough for me to fear."

His words gave Damon a moment of pause. Damon had gathered many pieces of information, but something from his travels with Unnoticed Singularity resurfaced.

Something called the No Absolutes Accord.

It was an agreement between true beings. The Pillars were separated among them. Whoever found all Pillars would be the one who set the rules.

Damon was not sure if he should tell Lazarak, but after a moment of hesitation he decided to.

Lazarak listened quietly. His breathing caught halfway through the explanation, and then he smiled as tears gathered in his eyes and trailed down his cheeks.

"I see. So that is why we are forced to suffer."

He wiped his face with his sleeve.

"There is only one omniverse yet too many true beings with absolute power. It is like an unstoppable force meeting an immovable object. They all wish to rule, but there is only one kingdom."

Damon sighed calmly, recalling what Unnoticed Singularity had said to him. The memory flickered through his mind.

"If there are no rules to govern even them, then there would be no omniverse. That is why..."

He paused, watching Lazarak to ensure he was listening.

"There was an agreement to divide the Pillars among them. Whoever managed to gain all Pillars would be free to act without the others interfering, even if it was detrimental to their wishes."

"The Pillars were divided. Five for the true gods, five for the true demon kings, and the last two went to the true dragons."

Damon scratched his head as he spoke, finding the entire situation frustrating.

This information was interesting, but it did not help them at all. The true beings were far too powerful. The Pillars were far away. And there was no one truly absolute true god above all others.

"They made one mistake, Lazarak. The rules they made were held by a mindless entity, or so they thought. But it was not. That god had simply not yet been born."

Lazarak went quiet, so quiet Damon could hear his slow breathing. He closed his eyes, then opened them again.

"That explains a lot. I understand why my brother is so determined to follow the rules. It is not just his nature as a war god. It is also his duty as the one who guards the Pillar of Conflict."

Damon glanced at Lazarak with a small curious look.

"Are you giving up."

Lazarak closed his eyes, inhaled deeply, then opened them with a steady gaze.

"Gods scheme, bicker, and rage. Yet it is the mortals that suffer. No. This changes nothing."

Damon smiled faintly and looked at the statue of the goddess made of mirrors.

"How do I kill a true god."

Lazarak crossed his arms, tapping his foot lightly as if thinking.

"Death is a mortal concept. True gods do not die."

Damon had heard that before, in Lysithara when Nemoriel had quoted the Unknown God.

Funny Lazarak would say the same thing.

He glanced at Damon with a thin, knowing look.

"Though I have some workarounds."

Chapter 772: Again

The idea of killing a true god was not supposed to be conceivable after all who could kill God.

That was not possible in the literal sense.

Damon could not help but remember something from a few years ago when he had been traveling with a caravan on the way to the capital with his sister.

It was during the last days of the demon wars.

The caravan had passed through the aftermath of a battle.

During that time an old man had screamed and laughed aloud.

Damon back then had thought the man was laughing and screaming because he was happy the demons had been killed and the caravan did not have to face them.

But he had been wrong. The man had been crying. He was laughing as tears fell down his face.

On that day the man was screaming.

"The gods are dead... the gods are dead."

His long frail hands trembled in the air and Damon could only hug his sister tighter.

Maybe at that time Damon still had some faith and hopes for life but now after so many years he understood that old man.

Laughter was the sound of ultimate despair.

God was dead because if there was a God then why such suffering.

'The cruelty of this world cannot be changed. You live until you die.'

Perhaps that was why the Unknown god believed it was better to not have been born at all because you are born into suffering and into a world where the gods are dead.

Lazarak did not say anything. He merely smiled at Damon not knowing what he was thinking.

Yes gods like Doom were still alive and perhaps the goddess was a god but could it not still be argued that the gods were dead.

After all it was gods like Doom that had slaughtered and deposed the old gods.

Now mortals who had become gods ruled. You would think they would create a paradise but still only hell existed.

Damon's disgusted expression made Lazarak smile.

"A true god cannot be killed. It is impossible. I am afraid even they cannot kill themselves."

He lowered his head slightly but continued.

"There is a work around. A god's nature is the same regardless of what type of god they are. In the end gods are meant to be creators. Their power will always lean toward being part of a grand order even if they transcended it."

Damon knew he would be disappointed but he wanted to know.

"How can one win against a true god."

Lazarak took a deep breath.

"Defy yourself. You cannot kill them but I figured you did not intend to kill one anyway. In order to win against a true god you must betray yourself."

Damon was confused. He was more confused than he had ever been about anything. Betray himself? How was he supposed to do that.

Lazarak had said these same words to himself before, after they had found the lake of tears.

'Did he not remember saying that'

He had already betrayed all his noble ideals and now he was a disgraced and ruined vestige of the kind of man he could have become.

"I do not understand."

Lazarak smiled gently. His smile was soft and peaceful yet there was a trace of sadness in his eyes.

"We must go against our nature. Even gods are prisoners of their nature. To betray yourself is to go against your fundamental nature. Do what you would never do."

Damon still did not understand until he thought about it a little.

"You mean... to force the god to go against... no that is not it. To force them to act within their nature because it is difficult to go against theirs as well."

He scratched his head looking at Lazarak.

"It is like how the gods all have domains in specific areas. You want to make them act out of their domains. Thus a betrayal of their nature... "

Lazarak narrowed his eyes then shook his head.

"No."

He muttered softly biting his lip.

"I was trying to tell you..."

He raised his head in hopelessness.

"It is impossible to defeat a true god. You will never succeed. You cannot force their nature. They are omniscient and all knowing. Your schemes mean nothing. Your advantages mean nothing."

Lazarak tilted his head with a smile.

"Only a true being may face another. You are neither. Maybe you can use their hearts; their hearts are still flawed because they were once mortals."

"Though you will fail."

Damon was not ready to accept this.

"I cannot accept that even if it is a truth written into the heavens."

Lazarak nodded softly.

"You will fail to die Damon. Do not run. Face it."

Damon's hands trembled as he gazed at Lazarak. From the beginning Lazarak had been mysterious to him.

Like the veil of darkness Damon could not see. He seemed wise and ancient yet he was calm and playful.

"I... running away... is..."

Damon was at a loss for words. He did not even know what he wanted to say.

He turned to the statue of the goddess of doom. Damon had been loath to admit it before but he had to. The trial of truth had forced him to do so and Damon knew it very well. This truth.

"Are you afraid of the goddess of doom Lazarak." he asked the toddler god.

Lazarak did not hesitate looking at the statue made of reflective mirror.

His heart contracted.

"We are all god fearing. We are created with the fear of the unknown and gods are the greatest unknown. So yes I fear her."

Unknown. It was funny Lazarak would use that word here.

"You are a god Lazarak. What do you fear."

Lazarak had agreed to be honest with Damon so he did not hide it.

"I fear my death."

Damon did not react. There was more to it so he let Lazarak continue.

"Do you know when a god dies?"

He asked Damon but it seemed rhetorical.

"Gods are only dead when they are forgotten. I fear being forgotten."

He looked up at Damon again.

"Do you want to know what scares a god Damon?"

He tried to smile but his lip trembled just a little. The smallest crack in the facade of a divine being.

"It is not death. Not the way mortals think about it.

"Gods die when they are forgotten. When no one remembers their name. When their story is no longer told. When the meaning of them dissolves."

This was Lazarak's fear and he was not afraid to confide in a friend.

Chapter 773: Worst Off Without Truth

"A god does not die when their body breaks. Or when their power fades. Or even when another god strikes them down."

Lazarak seemed truly unnerved now. Damon was not sure if it was the nature of this place, the trial of truth, or maybe the mirror seraph's power still lingering in the air, but Lazarak seemed terrified even with his calm expression.

"We live as long as someone believes we matter. That is our heartbeat. That is our breath."

He swallowed. He was here before man, before people, so why did being remembered even matter to him? It shouldn't.

"And that is why I am terrified."

The darkness around him flickered.

"I am the god of peace, Damon. Peace is not loud. It is not worshipped. It is not sung in temples. It is not carved into monuments. Peace is the thing mortals want... until they have it. And then they forget who gave it to them."

He clutched at his chest as if something inside was hurting.

"Do you know how many times in history I have been erased? How many tribes slept peacefully and forgot to whisper my name afterward. How many kingdoms lived in harmony and believed it was because of themselves, believing they had won it."

"When it is calm and peaceful no one remembers god. Until it all falls apart. Then they want god to fix it all. I am the little thing no one appreciates. A brief prelude to war."

"I advocate for peace, Damon. But every time I give it... I lose myself. Every time people are safe, they forget me. Every time the world quiets, I become... less."

He stared at his small hands.

"That is why I cling to you. That is why I act how I please. Why I talk. Why I laugh. Why I insert myself into your story."

He wore a tiny, fragile smile.

"Because when I am with you... I do not feel forgotten."

He reached out, barely touching Damon's knees, as if he feared he might vanish if he pressed too hard.

"I do not want to disappear. I do not want to be a quiet god fading into nothing. I do not want to be a story no one tells anymore."

His voice cracked.

"I want to exist. I want someone to remember me. Even if it is just you."

The light in his eyes dimmed to a whisper.

"That is my true fear. Not the violence of war. Not the mercy of death. Not the cruel inevitable hand of destiny. It is the nameless oblivion. More than the goddess. This is my fear."

Damon understood some things. He recalled that when he had first met Lazarak, the darkness had seemed almost relieved to be recognized by him.

Lazarak feared oblivion. Damon feared control. He feared what Lazarak did not. He feared the inevitable hand of fate...of God.

"You truly are a magnificent god, Lazarak. I am ashamed to say I fall short. That is why I cannot understand why you want to be remembered by the likes of me. My story will end soon when I obtain what I wish for."

Lazarak smiled at Damon.

"You will endure. Like you always have. It is not your fate to rest here, my friend."

Damon narrowed his eyes. While he did not bring it up, he still had the spear Lazarak had given him.

Its name was Mutuwa. Its nature was death. And Damon had saved it to end his own life.

"I wonder what makes the true gods so different from gods like you."

Lazarak chuckled lightly.

"For one I am designed to imitate the old ones while having the feeling of the new gods. But the difference is simple."

"I am still a new god."

He raised his hand.

"To a true god death is not real. Destruction is reversible. Suffering is fleeting. Memory is existence. Rules are foldable and time is optional. When they act they are not cruel. They are simply acting the way an immutable being would."

Damon sighed, shaking his head as he looked at the goddess statue.

"I do not understand you, Lazarak, but I am painting a picture."

Lazarak smiled softly.

"I hope it is a good looking picture. I would hate to be ugly."

Damon crossed his arms, looking at Lazarak.

"I would love to remember you, but sadly I would be too dead for that."

"But if I endure once more... I will remember that there is a god who lived before anyone else."

Lazarak tilted his head with a thin smile.

That was enough for him.

He glanced at the goddess statue with a soft laugh.

"The trial of truth has been completed and the mirror seraph is asleep which is good for us, but the next trial will not be easy."

Damon sighed. He really hated to admit it but the whole trial of truth had been unnerving. Even after they took down the mirror seraph he and Lazarak still had to tell each other truths.

It was a given that true gods could not die, so Damon did not really have a way to deal with the Unknown God who seemed even more powerful.

But Damon had learned something important about himself.

He was afraid. Of Unknown.

Having a god looming over you and giving you choices to pick from was terrifying.

Damon only knew to defy. So why would the Unknown God want him.

Still Damon did not change his mind. He would absolutely end his life. He just wanted to see how the Unknown God would stop him now.

The trial of truth was complete and it only left Damon feeling worse off than before. Admitting the truth was a bitter affair. Hopefully the next trial would not be as bad.

This was the third trial.

Lazarak walked to the goddess statue. It must be the gateway to the next trial.

"Now we will challenge the next trial."

Matia had been patrolling the perimeter, giving Damon and Lazarak space. She returned, standing next to Damon.

"What is the trial called." Damon asked. "Hopefully it will not be like this one."

Lazarak bit his lip then cleared his throat.

"It is called the trial of sin."

Damon looked down with a dazed expression.

"Ahhh I am screwed."

He was sure it would be a hellish mental journey and just like this one he would fail it.

He glanced at Matia.

"Matia I will be counting on you."

She nodded slowly as Lazarak began to give them a rundown. Damon gritted his teeth.

This bastard did not tell them about a trial until they finished the previous one.

'I knew he had details of all the trials.'

Chapter 774: Where Are We Really?

For whatever reason Damon could not focus, yet the Trial of Truth had carved a strange clarity into his mind.

That clarity was why he now stood before the sleeping Mirror Seraph, its glassy body rising and falling in slow breaths that made faint ripples across its reflective skin. The stillness of the creature mirrored the hall around it, a hall where every sound seemed to echo twice.

A deep unease curled inside him whenever he thought about Lazarak's authority. The realization that peace could be forced with such domineering power disturbed him more than he wanted to admit.

When he had invoked Serenity, the Mirror Seraph had not accepted peace. It had been compelled into it, its will crushed beneath Lazarak's nature.

'How is this any different from the domination attribute?' he muttered inwardly while studying the creature's slumbering form.

Across the chamber, Lazarak stood quietly beside the goddess statue, hands clasped behind his back while preparing for the next trial. His dark robes barely moved, as if the air itself respected him.

Damon lowered his gaze. The Trial of Truth had stripped him bare. He had been afraid to face his fears, but admitting them had forced him to face his hopes as well.

"Matia..." he whispered.

The tall, stalwart shadow stood a meter behind him. Her armor barely made a sound, yet the faint tilt of her head told him she was attentive. Her gaze remained on the Mirror Seraph but her shadowed presence felt colder than the cathedral itself.

"Waton is dead... I really did not want him to die. I was arrogant thinking I held power over life and death in the War Games..."

Matia stayed silent. Damon almost missed the days when she spoke more, even when she did not understand anything she said. Even her useless comments had been reassuring.

But her silence now felt right. She was here to listen, nothing more, and that was all he needed.

"If we get back... I am going to keep my promise. I will give him an expensive funeral..."

He remembered joking about the foolish prince, swearing he would give him the most extravagant funeral imaginable.

Damon's chest tightened. In his heart he vowed that the prince's already royal funeral would become a national event.

He said it because a new doubt had begun gnawing at him.

What if he did not survive this place?

"If I do not live to the end... this is my will. Pass it to my grandfather."

Matia's eyes flickered. The movement was small but unmistakable. She did not ask anything.

Asking would have meant accepting that he truly might die.

Damon slowly extended his hand and brushed his fingertips against the Mirror Seraph's cool, glassy wing. Its surface quivered faintly at the contact.

"My second truth... I was afraid to hope. I did not want disappointment. But I cannot pretend anymore. Matia... everyone might still be alive."

His voice trembled, as if the hope might shatter the moment he admitted it. The fear of finding only the broken corpses of his friends made his stomach twist.

"Why do you think so..." Matia asked softly. There was a faint shimmer in her voice, a restrained excitement she tried to hide.

Damon breathed out and allowed himself a small smile.

"It does not make sense for them to die. The Unknown God is not the type to destroy all his pieces like that. His setup is too complex."

Matia shifted slightly as she followed his reasoning.

"Lilith is his priestess. Her power comes from an act of love. She carries his divine blessing, not his demonic nature. He would not let her suffer pointlessly when the price for her power was already paid."

He recalled Ishana, Lilith's nanny, who had prayed desperately for her life. The Unknown God had answered her in full. Ishana had been a priestess of the Snake Temple.

"The Unknown God is a god... but somehow I think he hates gods," Damon said under his breath.

"Why is he always condemning divine indifference? Why question why suffering exists if gods exist... only he talks like that."

He crossed his fingers, grounding himself.

"Then there is Sylvia."

Matia tilted her head.

"You mean his journey book."

Damon shot her a surprised look.

"You could see it."

Matia nodded calmly.

"I could see it since I became a shadow."

"Why did you not say anything?"

"It was not important," she replied without hesitation.

"It was not important? That is the Unknown God's book. Ah... forget it..." Damon groaned and rubbed his forehead.

Her casual tone made him want to sink into the floor.

He exhaled slowly.

"Sylvia is not expendable. I doubt he created her for a single purpose. If we think about it, the book might be an extension of his power."

Matia glanced down at her armor, running a finger along her frost glazed plate as if demonstrating her point.

"It is like bringing a sword into a ballroom. If I was not allowed to carry a weapon inside, I would disguise it as cutlery and place it in a child's hands."

She spoke as if discussing the weather.

Damon blinked. She was treating Sylvia like a misplaced utensil, but she was not wrong.

"The child would not know the weapon's true power. She would just stab people with it like a fork. And when you wanted it back, you would take it." Damon added softly.

Matia nodded, utterly unbothered by the analogy.

"The possibility that they are dead is unlikely. The Unknown God likes to retrieve variables he might need again."

Damon nodded back, steadier now.

"Yes. That is what I fear and hope. Everyone consumed by nightmares should be alive."

He remembered the moment the blackness swallowed everything. Those touched by it turned hollow and dark, as if their souls were pulled out.

If that was the case then Waton's sacrifice was for nothing.

The darkness was not death and they all had been touched by it.

His fist tightened.

"Everyone else might be expendable... but not those two. The Unknown God needs them alive. Which leads us to our most important question, Matia."

"Where are we really?"

He looked at her. She met his eyes with quiet certainty.

"We are in a dream," she said. "We are dreaming the Nightmare of Lazarak."

Chapter 775: A New Riddle

"Victory is an endless nightmare, defeat is the moment of wake."

The words drifted through Damon's mind like a whisper that refused to fade. They had been the Unknown God's last message delivered through the system when Damon first awakened in this strange prison.

What if the Nightmare of Lazarak was exactly what the name claimed to be. A dream. A nightmare trapped within a nightmare.

"This is the most realistic dream I have ever seen..." Damon murmured as he lifted his hand and watched how the light reflected along the glossy floor.

He shifted his stance, his weight moving from one leg to the other as he tried to ground himself in this place.

"What if we die here. And how do we escape this dream..." he asked softly.

Matia raised her hand slightly, the movement slow and deliberate. Her eyes did not blink.

"It is also possible that we are in the past. Waton had the time attribute. He died, but what if he was only meant to be a sacrifice."

Her tone remained cold and impassive, yet her gaze sharpened as she spoke.

"The phrase Nightmare of Lazarak might be figurative. If we take it too literally, we might put ourselves in danger."

Damon rubbed his thumb across his palm, thinking the same thought but unwilling to voice it first.

"Let us assume for a moment that it is a nightmare. How do we escape it."

Matia's silence stretched for several seconds. Her hands curled and uncurled once, a sign she had no answer but was running through possibilities.

"The Unknown God really loves his riddles..." Damon muttered.

He rose to his feet, brushing mirror dust from the knees of Ghost's armor. His boots scraped lightly against the ground, echoing in the quiet hall.

The Unknown God was cruel when it came to tests like this. No matter how wise you were, he found a way to twist your understanding. He had trapped the Keeper of False Truth in Lysithara for thousands of years with nothing but a riddle that was painfully simple in hindsight.

This could easily be one of those traps. A mind game woven into a place that felt real enough to bleed in.

But clues existed here. Small, subtle, and just barely visible if he paid attention.

"Alright, just between the two of us, our priority is finding anyone else from our time."

He clasped his hands lightly together, grounding himself.

"It is either a dream or the past. Those seem to be our only options for now."

Matia nodded slowly. Her armor shifted with the movement, the ice frosting under her breath.

Time travel or a dream. Both absurd, but with a god involved neither could be dismissed.

"Should we proceed to the next trial..." she asked softly.

Damon nodded.

"Yes. But first I want to try something."

His eyes slid to the sleeping Mirror Seraph. The creature lay curled upon itself, its body cracked in several places. Its wings were folded tightly, trembling every few breaths as if even sleep caused it pain.

Damon stepped toward it, lowering himself beside the glassy torso. He reached out and let his fingers trace the reflective surface.

"I believe it is time for a little wardrobe change, do you not think."

With those words he let his soul slip from Ghost's body. It was like stepping out of a warm cloak into a freezing storm. The familiar chill of the world rejecting his discarnate form clamped around him.

He did not rush. He focused on his breathing, even though he had no lungs in this form. The Mirror Seraph twitched as he moved his soul-laden fingers in steady circles around its head, drawing thin soul threads with the Soul Conduit skill.

The threads wove themselves into a gentle net around the creature's mind. It trembled but the serenity forced upon it crushed any instinct to resist. Its will had been drowned by Lazarak's authority.

Peace had replaced struggle, and peace surrendered easily to Damon's mental domination.

He slowly pushed forward and seeped into the Mirror Seraph's body. The transition was smooth and eerily quiet.

A moment of stillness passed. Then its long, slender fingers unfurled across the ground as Damon tested the body from within.

He raised an arm. The movement caught at least three different angles in his vision. He blinked and saw dozens of mirrored reflections of the room overlapping with each other.

"Hmmm... this body is strange."

His own body could see in a three hundred and sixty degree arc. This, however, felt like looking through countless shards of glass that each gave him a different angle. A kaleidoscope of perception much like his own but different.

He stood with slow movements, adjusting to the weight. His wings flared out weakly. A painful shock pulsed through his chest, followed by a heavy pressure that pressed down on him like an invisible mountain.

That weight came from everywhere. The world itself was pushing on the Mirror Seraph, trying to crush or reject it.

This was different from the pressure he felt possessing Ghost or using his own form. The Mirror Seraph was far too powerful, and the world wanted it gone.

He felt that power, sealed tightly beneath the suppressive force. The energy within this form belonged to the realm of the sixth class advancement.

Lazarak approached quickly, his expression twisted with concern.

"Are you insane. You tried to possess something far more powerful than you. Your soul could have been destroyed."

Damon smiled inside the glassy face and waved a shimmering hand lazily.

"Look, no one is home. The Seraph is submissive."

Lazarak pinched the bridge of his nose and sighed.

"Because of my authority. That body is easy to control now, but you will not be able to use it freely. And we cannot risk the Mirror Seraph dying. Seraph Null will know something is wrong."

"I know. But this increases our odds for the Trial of Sin. Who knows, the warden of the next trial might even let me pass."

Lazarak scoffed, shaking his head.

"That is never happening. The wardens of the trials are prisoners too. No one comes in and no one leaves."

Damon ignored his worry and let out a quiet chuckle.

"Relax. I am a death seeker. It is what I do."

Lazarak's face drained of color.

"Those are not comforting words. I am more worried than before."

Damon lifted the Mirror Seraph's head slightly to look at him. The creature's face barely changed, but Damon's voice carried an amused lilt.

He did not know if Lazarak was even real.

"It will not be as bad as you imagine."

The mirror body began to shift, reshaping itself. Cracks sealed. Wings folded tightly. The entire form grew more humanoid, making it easier for Damon to move naturally.

He nodded toward Lazarak.

"Let us go. The Trial of Sin awaits."

Lazarak followed with another long sigh.

"You are truly suicidal, my friend."

"I'll take that as a compliment."

Chapter 776: Tobias The Bias

What a sight for sore eyes. It was a library. Damon had fond memories of libraries; back in the academy, it was one of the places where he could be alone and enjoy his solitude.

Not that he didn't have any friends or anything like that.

The academy library was also where he had first interacted with Sylvia Moonveil.

It was a fond memory because Damon had actually not been as rude as he could have been that day.

Sylvia seemed so reserved back then. She had an innocent charm to her, and she was also very beautiful, with long white hair and grey eyes.

Elves really had it all in terms of looks.

That said, she had changed. Damon last saw her having a battle with Lilith Astranova.

Damon chuckled.

He didn't even want to pretend he didn't know the reason Sylvia disliked Lilith.

That said, Damon would rather not focus on it; that would be his problem soon.

He would be crazy to come between two dangerous women.

His gaze glided over the large, wide shelves of books.. The smell of old parchment was thick in the room, and the library was somehow dark yet still bright enough for anyone to open a book and read.

Damon glanced around, walking to a shelf. When he reached the books, the smell of parchment changed to the smell of human blood, sweat, and waste.

He pinched the bridge of his nose as he reached for the book. In curiosity, as soon as he touched it...

A soft groan came from the book, a weak voice struggling. The sound came from the book itself. Damon felt a strange texture from it.

This texture was warm and sticky and familiar... this was the warm texture of sweating human skin.

Damon winced in disgust as he glanced at the book, opening it to see a green eyeball weakly looking at him, and a muffled voice echoed from the next pages.

Flipping through these pages, he opened them until he found the source of the sound. It was a misshapen mouth, attached to the pages of the book.

It quivered weakly in pain and agony. The despair in the tone was so deep that even Damon's cold expression almost faltered.

"He..I..help meeee..." the voice cried out. As the book shuddered, all the books on the high shelf began to tremble with muffled sounds.

Damon remained calm. This was not his first encounter with such a vile and atrocious apparition, once human, twisted by sinister magic and turned into this.

He had his fair share of these in Lysithara. He had seen a man turned into a tree and left to rot for years, deteriorating in body and mind. With time, he had even forgotten something as basic as his name.

Damon looked at the book as the person begged for help...

He didn't change what he wanted to do. Damon merely flipped to the first page, then to the cover made of human skin.

Book title: Tobias the Bias.

What an old title. He was unsure if it was his name, but adding "Bias" to his name was intentional.

Tobias Agar'nal.

Born in Agar'nal, here I archive the records of his sins.

Damon read through the sins of this person, who was called Tobias the Bias.

Tobias was born into wealth. He was raised in abundance. Soon in his life, he became unfairly prejudiced and caused the deaths of thousands with his sins.

"Wow..." Damon whispered. 'That person was truly deplorable.'

Some of the names and cities noted here Damon had never heard of, neither the races. But he didn't really know much, since this was, after all, the Zero Epoch, and he was born in the Third Epoch. Naturally, some names and places would disappear.

His sins were:

Sins of Tobias the Bias

"Elitist Contempt Tobias believed his High Elven blood made him inherently superior; treated others as lesser."

It was an impressive list as Damon read the chronicles, as well as a full written account of everything and how it happened.

"Purity Purges Led expulsions, disappearances, and quiet executions of elves with "impure" lineage in the Crescent Court, especially those with human or beastkin blood."

Damon glanced at the crest of the Crescent Court. It had some resemblance to the modern-day Moonveil royal crest.

'No wonder those elves are so racist... it's in their blood.'

"Genocidal Manipulation Falsified evidence and staged attacks to provoke war between High Elves and tribes of non-elves in the Verdant Continent, eventually leading to the deaths of thousands and displacing millions, driving non-elves out of the continent."

The list was truly impressive. Damon couldn't stop reading.

"Mass Slaughter in the Marble Groves Engineered the conflict that caused thousands of Woodborne and High Elves to die."

This guy was a psycho. Damon thought he was bad as a person, but it seemed this guy was way more impressive than he was.

"Glass Soul Ritual Incident Kidnapped refugees and used forbidden magic to trap and shatter their souls to empower himself."

Damon glanced at the book made of living flesh and shook his head.

'Cruelty existed even before I was born.'

"Betrayal of Cintra Refused reinforcements unless the city abandoned mixed-blood citizens; allowed the city to fall, resulting in mass death."

Another city Damon had never heard about. Then again, how would he, if it was destroyed after all? Tobias made it fall.

"Political Corruption Manipulated councils, silenced dissenters, and used his influence to entrench racial hierarchy as law."

Damon read the impressive list.

"Kidnapping and Torture Secretly abducted "unworthy" citizens for experimentation, magical rituals, or to silence political opposition."

His list didn't include anyone who wasn't an elf. With regard to infants, they were cut apart in the name of magic research.

"Cultural Erasure Destroyed Woodborne historical records, sacred sites, and genealogies to portray them as a lesser race of the forest, inferior to elves and equal to fifty humans."

Damon raised an eyebrow. "What did we even do to this guy? He seems to have it out for humans."

The list of what he did was long, and Damon read them as if entranced. Treachery, schemes, strategy, manipulation, this guy was good.

'A library really is a place of learning. I didn't even know you could start wars like that...'

Damon closed his eyes as he put down the book.

He had learned one important thing from the life of Tobias the Bias.

'I'm not hating to my full potential.'

Chapter 777: The Murder-That-Wasn't

Damon stood up. He had not even realized he had sat down to read the life of Tobias the Bias. Damon understood what the Trial of Sin was, it was the latest of the Prison Eidolon, where prisoners were imprisoned in a record of their own sins.

Tobias was his own book, trapped within it forever, and so were the others.

The Mirror Seraph in the Trial of Truth forced people to face their truths, and when you failed, you became trapped as a soulless husk in the world of mirrors.

In the deeper fifth level was the Trial of Self, which was a challenge of the self and kept you in a beautiful dream, one you didn't want to ever leave.

Each trial had a way to pass. However, Lazarak wasn't clear on how to pass this one. Damon was not bothered.

Lazarak was a god, and while he was weak, he had his mysteries.

Damon was about to go further into the library when he stopped and grabbed a book.

He smiled softly.

"I'll take one for the road... knowledge is power after all."

Damon glanced at the title. It was quite eye-catching.

It read:

Marcellus the Merciless.

Just from the title, Damon knew this person was truly a great sinner. The book even had a few blood chains tied around it, as if he were one of the greatest of sinners.

Damon began reading his impressive record, and the more he read, the more he began to understand that he, Damon Grey, was actually a good person.

Truly sick people had existed in the past. Take Marcellus, for example.

For one, he flayed the skin of his own soldiers so he could make matching banners. When the skin dried up, he replaced it with the skin of new soldiers.

The impressive list continued. He used to tax people for laughing and smiling. Even crying was a reason to be taxed. When newborns were born crying, he taxed them, and if the parents couldn't pay, he whipped the whole family, newborn included.

Midwives picked up a culture of muffling babies so they would not hear their cries.

He made your closest relative or friend carry out your punishment, regardless of the severity.

Damon had to admit: this book was disturbing. He closed it halfway as he walked through the shelves.

"Some names really write themselves."

He glanced at the large library. So many people with sins... he wondered if he would have a name fitting his own.

There was a small shudder as he spat to the side, warding off such evil thoughts.

'I'm too handsome to be a fleshy book.'

Damon had just said that when he felt a presence behind him. He froze. With this body, if there were something behind him, he would have sensed it before it got close.

Even if he didn't, he would have been able to see himself through the reflection in its eyes.

That was assuming its eyes could reflect anything.

Damon's eyes didn't reflect light. Neither did Lazarak's. Matia's eyes were the same, and so was her Shadow Ghost.

It was too late to evade. Damon had not sensed it in time, and from the whistling wind, he knew he was about to be hit...

There was a sensation as something smashed into his body until the glittering sound of glass shattering echoed as his glass body cracked, and he was sent flying into a shelf made of flesh books.

Damon crashed to the ground, standing up just in time to evade another attack.

He didn't get a good look, but whatever attacked him was not remotely human-shaped or maybe it was an unfamiliar shape he would not recognize... maybe. Except for one thing.

"Hands..."

Yes. Hands. It was made of hands.

It was quite a grotesque mosaic to look at. Perhaps a deranged artist had decided to create it. This was not something that should even be moving, yet it was.

This was an entity made solely of severed hands of different shapes and kinds.

The hands of men, large and chiseled, clean and scarred. The smaller hands of women, from rich to poor. The limbs of children.

All kinds of hands formed together to create this creature.

It charged straight toward Damon. He jumped as his hands formed a sharp, translucent blade and slipped down, cutting into the arms.

They spun, and some grabbed the transparent mirror blade, which was an extension of his body and began to pull it down.

Damon saw the arms begin to rise and try to climb onto his body. Seeing this, he raised his other hand and punched the mirror blade until it shattered, taking his right arm with it.

But he didn't mind. It was better than being pulled down by this strange entity, whose powers and abilities he did not know.

Besides, this wasn't his body. He didn't lose anything.

Reaching for his back, he pulled out one of the glass wings and placed it in place of his arm. It became an arm just like the other.

This was one of the Mirror Seraph's skills, which allowed it to regenerate through mirrors.

Damon stepped back as he watched. His eyes narrowed. With a soft crunch, the broken arm was consumed, and soon it began to twitch as it became part of the arms that made up this entity and its grotesque form.

"Sinner... sinner... sinner..." The arms ground together. As this whisper came from it, Damon felt something jolt his soul. He was forced to accept the label of sinner.

"Murder... murder... murder..."

It called out as Damon was forced to accept that he was, in fact, a murderer.

"What is this thing..."

The entity didn't need to answer Damon, but it answered his question as if to say it didn't matter. Even if he knew, he would still be punished.

"Punishment... punishment... punishment..."

"We are the..." There was a long pause as it waited to call out what it was.

"The Murder-That-Wasn't."

Chapter 778: Close Call

He didn't like his odds or what he was facing at the moment. Still, Damon was not about to back out, especially since winning was within the realm of possibility.

[Magic bullet]

He was in the body of the Mirror Seraph, its attribute was mirror, so his magic bullets appeared as silver, marble-sized projectiles.

The arms that made up the body of the creature... the one that called itself The Murder-That-Wasn't were impaled with mirror fragments.

Blood pooled from the hundreds of arms that formed its grotesque body.

Damon raised his arm and locked the mana around him into a single large sword made of mirror.

Soft cracking sounds echoed as it began to crystallize, growing larger until the sword was complete.

[Magic Arsenal.]

The sword sped through the air with a boom as it rocketed through the shelves and passed right through the body of the creature.

It froze for a moment as the body parts that formed it were ripped and lacerated by the sword.

Screeeechhh.

It made a deafening screech as it rolled into the library shelves.

He missed.

Then, slowly, its body began to grow more arms, healing itself.

Damon watched with a calm expression that barely hid his disgust.

"Figured it wouldn't be that easy."

He sighed as he took out the broken sword that was his dealer's hand. It felt cold as it glinted with sharp menace.

There was a faint hum as he held the half-broken weapon.

Damon didn't wait for it to charge. He rushed toward it, sword in hand.

He slashed down as a crescent of sword energy cut through the creature, blood pooling from one of the arms as it was sliced clean through.

A hand reached to grab Damon as he flipped midair, switched his blade to the other hand, and stabbed forward.

Jumping up, he kicked off a bookshelf, slashing at the top of the unusual entity.

Blood splashed down.

Damon raised his hand as he slashed faster and faster, ripping through its body of human arms.

This body was faster and stronger than even his own.

The only difference was that he didn't have as many skills as Damon—

and even though the Mirror Seraph had quite a few, most were sealed.

And Damon was still not familiar with how to fight effectively in this form.

The actual issue came from the fact that this body was suppressed by the world and heavily injured.

Screech...

The deep screech of the creature echoed through the library.

In the halls of this massive archive, Damon heard the sound of different creatures answering the call.

Damon raised his sword.

He would end it with the next move...

The second technique of the Brightwater sword Technique.

Damon took the proper stance, ready to strike, when—

The creature spoke once more.

"... Sinner... murder... punishment."

When those words echoed out, Damon felt the world slow down.

He blinked as an eerie sensation crawled over his body...

Stopping, he glanced down to find his form torn apart. Deep sword gashes ran across him as mirror dust fell from his glass body.

"Ahhh..." he gasped as he bled liquid mirror from his mouth and nose.

Cough cough...

What an insidious creature.

These wounds were all the attacks he had dealt to it—

all the damage it had taken was now being returned to Damon.

"Ah... rgg... hehehehe..." Damon laughed, looking at the state of his body.

Truly, this was a prison where the worst of the worst were kept. One small mistake could lead to death.

He collapsed to his knees as one of his arms fell off, turning into a reflective surface.

He picked it up, listening to the sounds of more creatures approaching.

They had to have a weakness. Otherwise it was simply too dangerous.

There had to be a way to overcome their counterattack.

He glanced at the mirror fragments that had once been part of his body, holding them tightly.

Damon thought, even as his body reeled in pain. He analyzed the entire fight, and Damon realized the problem.

He smiled.

"Right before you said your name, you set this countertrap up... and I fell for it."

Damon wasn't fazed. This wasn't the first time he'd run into an unusual creature and faced powers he didn't understand.

"The chain of words you spoke... sin, murder, punishment. You spoke them first in sets of threes, then gave your name. Afterward you repeated them to finalize the attack only after I had damaged you enough."

Damon was familiar with this type of magic. After all, this was black magic.

He had just been cursed.

It was quite a dangerous magic.

However, just because he understood the theory didn't mean he could stop its use.

It was the same principle as when he fought his classmates in the past knowing their magic didn't change anything.

Just like how a blacksmith could know everything about making a sword,

and still be chopped down by a knight.

Damon watched as the creature called for more.

All around him, from the tops of the shelves and the deep corners of the library, more of them began to crawl out.

The sound of their movement, hundreds of stepping hands, was unnerving.

Still, Damon remained calm, holding the mirror fragment that had been his arm.

Slowly, he began crushing it until it shattered into many glittering pieces.

"Well played... but I doubt this is the last you'll see of me."

He raised his hand and threw all the mirror fragments into the air, high above the shelves, letting tens of shards scatter throughout the library.

He smiled wickedly, looking at one of the fragments lying right beneath the creature's body.

With a wave of his hand, he was absorbed into the mirror fragments and in that same instant, he appeared from the shard in front of the initial creature, plunging his blade forward as he screamed.

"Magic Arsenal!"

Hundreds of mirror swords lacerated and ripped it to pieces.

Damon sank back into the mirror fragment and vanished as its death screech echoed through the library.

Somewhere farther away, where one of the fragments had fallen, he emerged through it and collapsed, a thin smile on his face.

"That was a close call... but I got even with it."

Chapter 779: Pedestal of Accusation

[You have slain The Murder That Wasn't]

He heard the soft sound of the system in his head.

Damon let out a shaky breath. He had managed to avoid those creatures and killed the first one, but he was too damaged and he also didn't have any healing potions with him.

The mirror seraph was a creature of the mirror, so it healed itself with mirrors and could teleport through reflections.

Sadly this library didn't have any reflections, which was why Damon had used the fragments of its body to teleport.

By scattering them in the distance he had managed to escape the encirclement.

His understanding of this body and its abilities was very shallow. While it was powerful, Damon didn't understand all its specs.

He leaned on a shelf as the books begged for help. Damon was in no mood to enjoy whatever tales existed of their past sins.

Damon had to admit this was truly a vile place. So far they had been successful navigating Eidolon, the imaginary prison, but that was not because Damon was particularly strong.

It came down to two factors: Lazarak and luck.

When they had reached a dead end Lazarak would step forward, and when they had to go into a new trial Lazarak would tell them its nature.

However the trial of sin was different. Lazarak didn't have a deep understanding of it, only that its warden was called the Archivist.

Each of the wardens was different in their nature, first was Root Ore who only oversaw and didn't take any action to stop them from leaving after completing the trial.

Then the mirror seraph who actually fought to keep them there even when they passed the trial.

"Which means the way out is wherever the Archivist is."

That was also the most dangerous part of the trial. This place had many prisoners and so far all of them were trapped in the forms of books with a record of their sins.

"Where would I find someone in charge of a library..."

The creatures called the murder that wasn't were in the form of hands. Those things didn't just attack, they were in the form of hands because they had the duty of maintaining the library.

Damon nodded to himself. That made sense.

Though it would be unwise to face whatever the Archivist was in his current state.

"I can try finding Matia and Lazarak but I doubt that would help very much."

Not because they couldn't help, but because the trial would not allow him to find them easily. This library was too big and had many rows and levels.

"The wisest choice would be to find the Archivist. Matia and Lazarak would be heading there."

Damon had the body with enough power to face the Archivist, he just needed to heal from the damage first.

Besides he didn't do much in the trial of truth, with Matia and Lazarak saving him and dealing with the mirror seraph.

He forced himself to stand up as he began to walk through the shadows of the shelves.

The creatures were on the hunt for him, so Damon broke off a few more mirror fragments and began to hide them in random shelves. This was so if he was cornered he could just teleport to another mirror.

As for his body there was still a lot of it left, and he had seen the mirror seraph use mirrors to fix its broken body. Damon closed his eyes as he willed his body to change, closing damaged parts and regrowing shattered limbs.

Of course this came at the price of having less mass. He was now half his size. Damon now looked like when he had been ten years old, at least in height.

Damon stopped as he heard the sounds of many footsteps. Knowing it was one of those creatures he touched a mirror fragment and teleported to the farthest one he could sense.

When he appeared he was in a place that seemed to have a sitting area with a few books opened. The tables were molding and had human veins pulsing out of them.

He felt a deep sense of revolt from the scene, his expression twisting into a wince. Slowly walking forward he looked at a sign at an arch made of white yellowish tissue like substance.

Poking it with his fingers he felt how soft it was. This was not an unfamiliar thing, rather he had seen this before.

It was fat, raw fat from a living entity.

Damon passed under it as he saw what was written there.

Record Halls

He felt a small bit of unease but he was not about to back away. He took a few mirror fragments and scattered them all around just in case he needed to escape.

Walking in he began to hear a familiar sound. It was a sound he had heard many times, one he had made himself, except not this fast or focused.

"The sound of writing."

There were soft flaps as if some hand was flipping through pages.

Damon continued forward past several shelves until he saw a wide opening. When he looked there was someone sitting in a large chair at the middle.

Or something. It was dark, still there was a small flame like a willow o wisp that floated around it as it scribbled on paper.

Then it raised its head in Damon's direction. He ducked behind the shelf hoping it didn't see him.

There was a pause as it continued to write. Raising its hand, a thin white bony hand, it closed the book it was writing on.

"We have been waiting for you, guilty one."

Its voice was a thin hiss that echoed through the air as a chill spread through the library.

"Come forth, do not delay the inevitable. We must write your many sins."

"Stand in the Pedestal of Accusation and plead. Absolve yourself of your guilt."

The shelves slowly parted as Damon was surrounded and forced to stand before a podium.

"Your name is sinner..." the voice hissed.

The trial had begun.

Chapter 780: Damon The Demon

It was getting old and Damon had enough of this. There was only so much he could take and not get tired of the same repeated and beaten up arguments.

Even so, he felt his very soul trembling when he sat before the Archivist in the Pedestal of Accusation. It was as if the long arm of the law had finally caught up to him.

Still, Damon was not about to accept any guilt.

"Huh." He sighed softly, rubbing his temples as if the situation itself gave him a headache.

"Is this one of those mental trials where I am forced to relive my guilt. That is not very original. I survived going through those things before. What is to say I cannot do so again."

His tone was calm, yet Damon mentally went through all the things he had done in the past. If his actions were to be put against a scale where good and evil were judged, then Damon was certain the scale on the side of good would topple before the evils he had committed.

He was so bad that even he knew he was shit.

The Archivist did not reply to Damon's arrogant tone. It merely stood up. When it did, Damon finally saw the furry legs that seemed to belong to a cow, though the fur was too wild and uneven. Its mouth was sewn shut. Damon had not noticed before because the Archivist had been looking down at the book it was writing on.

Its arms were long and bony and it was several meters tall. By his estimate, it was at least thirteen meters in height.

It slowly reached toward a small shelf and pulled out a book.

This book did not have any words inscribed on its hard cover.

Its form was black and it seemed to be made of deep black shadows.

Slowly, it sat back on its seat. The chair creaked under its weight, though Damon could not tell whether it was wood, bone, or something far more unpleasant.

Damon felt a connection with the book, as if it held a complete record of his life.

The Archivist slowly put down the book.

Slowly, the Archivist looked at the book again. Even its pages were blank and did not have anything written inside.

"Every story has a beginning. Yours does not seem to have one yet. You are in the wrong place at the wrong time."

"A breaker of natural order."

Damon was slightly shaken. What. No, he knew what it was talking about. The Archivist was referring to the fact Damon was in a time that was four hundred thousand years before his birth.

This was the Zero Epoch, but Damon was born four Epochs later in the Third Epoch.

Damon stayed calm and did not show any change in his expression. He straightened his back slightly, forcing himself to maintain a steady presence.

The Archivist seemed to glare at him.

"There is no path for you here."

Damon scoffed with disdain. What gave the creature the right to judge him.

"That is not for you or anyone to decide. If I can walk then there will be a path. If I can crawl I will still have a path forward. And even when I cannot do any of those and I have only breath, I will still decide for myself."

The Archivist nodded slowly and began to write in the book it had carried.

"Your words are the arrogance of one who will bring ruination."

"What a grave sin."

Damon was unmoved by these words. He glanced around with the mirror seraph's body, realizing he could not leave and Matia and Lazarak were nowhere to be found.

He was really getting comfortable relying on others. This was not the Damon way. He was used to being the lone wolf who did not even trust himself.

He perished the thought as soon as it surfaced, but even that was written down by the Archivist, added into the archive of Damon's sins.

There was a brief silence as the Archivist wrote and Damon watched. It was as if the Archivist was peering down deep into his soul, taking out information and writing more and more about Damon, maybe even more than Damon knew himself.

"If I may, what happens when I pass the trial. Will I have to face you in battle."

The Archivist raised its head from its writing, glancing down at Damon.

"It is a false assumption for a great sinner to think they will leave this place."

Damon crossed his arms in the Pedestal of Accusation. His foot tapped once against the stone floor, a small sign of impatience leaking through.

"I will. Even if I have to burn this whole place to the ground." There was a certainty in his voice.

This was mostly bravado, but Damon wanted to buy time for Matia and Lazarak to arrive here in case he failed.

There was a soft sigh from the Archivist as it shook its head.

"An extreme disposition for violence."

Its voice was a low hiss that echoed into his very soul, causing Damon to feel shaken.

"You have kept me here for quite a while. Do you intend to bore me to death. I can already see how this is going to go. Save me the trouble. I am conditionally immortal. You cannot kill me."

His tone was calm as he spoke to the Archivist, trying to gain a read on the entity.

The Archivist pivoted its gaze back to its book as it flipped a few pages, stopping to read the contents.

"Indeed. You bear a skill by the name of Deathless, which allows you to survive ordeals that should have killed you on the precondition that you wish for death.

"The skill was achieved as a result of your second class advancement."

Damon tried to stay calm, but it confirmed what he wanted to know. The book the Archivist had carried really was a record of his life, or at least had details about it.

'Figures. I was right. It was worth probing.'

Which meant Damon had nothing to hide from this creature, except he had to be careful. He had no idea how much it actually knew.

The Archivist raised its hand.

"Today we have gathered to bear witness to the sins of one who has sinned.

"Every book should have a title and so too a sinner.

"For this sinner.

"Is

"Damon the Demon.

"Here I record his sins."