

Strongest 841

Chapter 841: Let's See Who Deceives Who In The End

"So, you've finally come," Morax said as he looked down on William from his dragonbone throne. "Well, what do I owe the pleasure of this visit?"

"Of course, I've come for my reward," William answered. "You're going to give me my reward, right?"

"Well, technically, you were not the one who found the mirror," Morax grinned. "It was one of the members of the Glory Shelter. Also, only the Leaders of the Shelters may ask me for a request... last time I checked, you were not one of them."

William arched an eyebrow as he eyed Morax. The two stared at each other for half a minute before the Half-Elf snorted and turned his back to leave.

Morax watched him go with a smile. 'Fool, you think you can take advantage of me? Dream on.'

William didn't even glance back at Morax and left the Black Tower without saying a word.

"You're done already?" the Death Lord that was looking after William's bike asked in confusion. Usually those who met with his Master would spend some time inside the Black Tower in order to have their request granted.

He could have sworn that it hadn't even been ten minutes since William had stepped into the throne room and now he was leaving?

William didn't reply to the Death Lord and simply rode his bike away from the Black Tower. After traveling for half an hour at full speed, the Half-Elf arrived at the Glory Shelter and hurried towards Raizel's room.

After closing the door behind him, the Half-Elf scratched his head in irritation.

"What happened?" Lilith asked as she handed William a cup of tea. "Did Morax agree to your request?"

William shook his head. "Even better. He didn't even bother to hear it. I'm irritated right now because we've gone to all that trouble to brainstorm a request, and he didn't even bother to listen to it."

Raizel giggled after seeing William's irritated expression. This was the first time that she had seen him react this way and she found it very funny.

"Well, at least that's one problem over with," Lilith stood up and gave William a light shoulder massage. "Good job, Will."

The Amazon Princess then lowered her head and planted a kiss on William's cheek, which surprised both the Half-Elf and the young beauty inside the room.

"What?" Lilith asked in confusion after seeing that the two were staring at her.

"Nothing." William coughed lightly. "I didn't know that you were someone who would openly show your affection to me."

Lilith smiled as she sat on William's lap. "Trust me, I won't do this kind of thing in public. I'm not like Sidonie, or Chiffon, who will cling to you for the whole world to see. I'm not that kind of lady."

"But, you just did it in front of Raizel?"

"That's right. I'm right here."

"Raizel doesn't count," Lilith replied with a smile.

She then traced William's lips with her finger and whispered something in his ear.

"Do your best, Papa," Lilith whispered in a seductive tone that wouldn't lose to Princess Sidonie. "I am looking forward to holding my daughter soon."

William could tell that Lilith was very serious, and he couldn't help himself from glancing at the young beauty that was sitting across him.

"What?" Raizel asked. "Is there something on my face?"

"No. Your face is just fine," William replied as he wrapped his arms firmly around Lilith's waist who was still sitting on his lap.

Raizel felt conflicted. A part of her didn't want to see William and Lilith showing PDA in front of her because it left her feeling hot and bothered.

The other part of her, on the other hand, was giving them a thumbs up in her heart.

Fortunately, William and Lilith behaved and simply stayed in their current position.

"As I was going to the Black Tower, I took a detour and observed the movements of the other Shelters," William explained. "Except for Avril, all the other Leaders, including Swiper, were still hard at work in trying to find the mirrors. Also, the Demonic Boar told me something interesting."

Raizel frowned. "Something interesting? That Demon just spouts absolute nonsense."

William chuckled because he wanted to agree to Raizel's words. But, he knew that there was something behind Swiper's words that deserved merit.

"You're right, but I think he spoke out because he was starting to get worried," William said. "I think the Alliance is falling apart. That is why he told me to be careful of the Leaders of the Alliance because they are planning something behind our backs to dispose of us."

William then made some hand gestures, which Lilith and Raizel instantly understood.

"So, you're telling me that someone, or some people, in the Alliance wants to eliminate us?"

"Absolutely. I think this idea isn't far-fetched, don't you think?"

Lilith who was seated on William's lap hummed in agreement.

"So, who do you think is targeting us?" Raizel asked.

William smiled as he leaned lazily on the couch.

"I think it's either Eldon or Wade," William answered. "Perhaps both of them."

"That's some serious accusations you have there," Lilith commented. "As far as our relationship with them goes, we don't have any quarrel with either of them."

William nodded. "And this is why it makes them the best suspects. Usually, those whom you think are harmless are the ones who will stab you in the back. Well, anyways, enough with this talk. We will deal with them once they make their move. Now, let's have lunch."

"Okay."

"Sounds like a good idea."

William smiled as he eyed Raizel who was eyeing the door the whole time.

When the young beauty held up her hand in a peace sign, William and Lilith both nodded their heads. They had prepared the necessary bait, and if the latter still didn't take the bite then they would probably start to doubt Morax's intelligence.

Back in the Black Tower...

"Hmm... so, such a thing is going on? How intriguing," Morax muttered as he opened his eyes. "So much for the so-called Alliance."

The Dread Lord sneered as he cut his connection with his spy inside the Glory Shelter.

"Eldon and Wade, is it?" Morax rubbed his chin. "Why not? It will be more interesting that way. I'll play along with this little game of yours, Half-Elf. Let's see who deceives who in the end."

Morax laughed in amusement. "I'd like to see the look on your face when everything you hold dear in this world... disappears, right in front of your hateful eyes."

Chapter 842: I Didn't Know You Swing That Way

Three days had passed after William met with Morax, and an unsettling atmosphere settled in the Deadlands.

Swiper, who had been actively looking for the mirrors, had just ordered his men to gather resources as their primary objective, placing the finding of another mirror as a secondary objective.

Avril and the Elves had also been very low-key. Similar to what the Glory Shelter was doing, they didn't leave Mimameidr Shelter, and allowed the others to freely explore the Deadlands uncontested.

After the last Haunting, the other leaders had returned to their own Shelters to manage their territories as they had in the past.

Eldon and Wade had been invited by Morax to visit the Black Tower together. Whatever the three men had talked about, nobody knew, but after the two leaders returned to their respective domains, they had temporarily transferred the day-to-day management of their shelters to their trusted subordinates.

Both of them had then holed themselves up in their rooms, as if contemplating something very important.

Two days later, the Fifth Mirror had been found by one of Wade's subordinates, leaving only four mirrors up for grabs.

While this was happening, William and Raizel continued their experiments, leaving Lilith to keep watch on the spy that was doing their best to be as low-key as possible.

"Raizel, although it's a bit late to say this, this ability of yours is quite something," William said as he eyed the young beauty who was lying on the couch, who didn't even have the strength to lift a finger.

"Don't worry, Will," Raizel replied. "I'm only showing you this because I trust you."

Although she couldn't move her body, talking was not an issue for her.

"I know," William replied as he carried Raizel to the bed to let her rest properly. "But, it is easy to abuse this kind of power. I just hope that you don't use this to play pranks on people."

"..."

The corner of William's lips twitched because he could tell that the mischievous girl had indeed used her powers to prank people in the past.

After settling the girl down, William went to open the door and looked down the empty hallways.

A minute later, Lilith appeared and entered the room without saying another word. It was her turn to look after Raizel, while William went to find something to eat for the three of them.

When he arrived at the kitchen, William found Cathy humming a song as she busied herself with cooking their lunch.

The meals in the Deadlands were pretty random, and most of them were just canned goods and biscuits that they found in abandoned convenience stores.

This time around, the pretty lady, who seemed to be in her early twenties, was just reheating canned soup for everyone in the shelter.

"I didn't know you were a good cook," William teased as he approached the pretty lady, who had an appointment with him later in the evening for their regular blood drinking session.

Cathy smirked as she eyed the Half-Elf whom she would be meeting tonight.

"This is nothing," Cathy replied. She then wagged her finger at William with a mischievous smile. "If I only had proper ingredients to work with, then I would be able to let you taste something that would make you fall in love with me all over again."

"... But, I'm not in love with you?"

"I'm just giving an example! Why are you taking it seriously?!"

The two stared at each other before chuckling. Clearly, the two of them had a good relationship, so they were able to joke with each other so casually.

"Any news about the other Shelters?" William asked.

Cathy tasted the soup to see if it was still edible before answering William's question.

"Aside from Wade getting the mirror, nothing else of importance floats in the Deadlands," Cathy answered. "Ah! I almost forgot. We will be resuming our resources gathering tomorrow. Although we still have plenty of food, it is always best to have more here in the Deadlands."

William nodded in understanding. "All of you, be careful when you go out there. Try not to go to the outskirts. Just stay as close to the shelter as possible."

"Are you finally worried about me?"

"Of course I am worried about you. Can you add two more scoops to my bowl? I'm pretty hungry."

Cathay clicked her tongue and lightly punched William's arm with her closed fist. "I knew it! You only think of me as your food supplier!"

"... well, you're not wrong," William replied, chuckling as he defended himself from Cathy's ladle strikes.

It was at this time when Xenovia entered the kitchen and gave the two a weird look.

"... Am I interrupting something?" Xenovia asked as she looked at Cathy who had pinned William down on the table in a suggestive pose.

Cathy hurriedly backed away like a frightened squirrel, while giving William the "I'll deal with you later" glare.

William just scratched his head before he picked up the three bowls of soup to be brought back to the room where Lilith and Raizel were waiting for him.

Just as he was passing Xenovia, he whispered something in her ear, and the Death Lord nodded her head in understanding.

"I didn't know you swung that way," Xenovia said in a teasing tone. "What's this? You're already tired of making love with live girls and now you want to experience necrophilia? You sure are something, boy."

Cathy, who was busy transferring the canned soup to different bowls, froze when she heard Xenovia's mischievous words. She then looked at William weirdly as if trying to determine if there was something wrong in his head.

"Look what you did? You scared poor Cathy." William snorted as he eyed the Death Lord who had a wide grin on her face. "Just remember, right after the sun sets, got it?"

"Alright."

"See you later."

William left the kitchen pushing the food trolley down the empty hallway. He, Lilith, and Raizel, had holed themselves up in the training room, only leaving for short breaks at a time.

Although it doesn't show on their faces, they were feeling a bit anxious because the mirrors were being gathered faster than their initial estimate.

'Fortunately we managed to alter the mirror in time,' William thought. 'Now that everyone is paying attention to the last four remaining mirrors, it will be harder to do anything without arousing suspicion from Morax. The Bastard had been sending his scouts to monitor the Shelter these past few days and it is getting annoying.'

The Half-Elf was very sensitive to the Undead, so it was very easy for him to tell if they had infiltrated the Glory Shelter day or night.

In the past three days alone, there had been a total of twelve attempts to spy on them, which William thwarted successfully.

'I'm sure that his surveillance will increase as more of the mirrors fall in his hands.' William sighed. 'We don't have much time left.'

The red-headed teenager walked the empty hallways, while thinking of the inevitable final showdown that was about to come.

According to Raizel's estimate, the most optimistic outcome was that the mirrors would all be gathered in a month.

However, all three of them agreed that it was quite possible that Morax would have all of them in less than two weeks.

Not only that, the Alliance was already crumbling and although there were no signs of infighting between the Shelters, the three of them were already preparing for the worst case scenario.

A scenario that none of them wanted to see.

Chapter 843: I Don't Mind Being A Jester Sporting A Crown

Inside the Dwarven Shelter...

Eldon and Wade sat opposite each other as they played a game of chess.

"So, are you going to accept Morax's proposal?" Wade asked as he moved his pawn forward.

"What about you?" Eldon asked back as he moved his knight sideways.

"It's impolite to ask to answer a question with another question."

"It's fine. You're taller than me, so you should be more generous."

Wade rolled his eyes at the Dwarf who always used his height to avoid answering important questions.

"The problem with you is that you always play safe," Wade said as he used his bishop to take one of Eldon's pawns. "You don't take the initiative and always wait for others to make their move. Didn't it cross your mind that they will also do the same? When are you going to grow a pair?"

Eldon brushed off Wade's taunts like a passing breeze. He didn't take anything the Human said to heart because he and Wade were born from different races and viewpoints.

Dwarves cared about stability. Although they wouldn't hesitate to go to war to protect their homelands, their actions would always be a reaction to an external force.

Humans were different. They actively sought to expand their domains and attack their weakest neighbor in order to gain as much advantage as possible. This was why Humans were the most dominant race in the world.

Not only did they reproduce quickly, but they were very greedy as well. For Humans, they would not settle for anything less when they could have the best. They would not settle for an inch, if they could get a mile.

The same thing was happening in the Deadlands.

Wade was the most recognized leader of the Human Faction. For them, Raizel was just a little girl playing house. Although she had the strength to protect the Glory Shelter, she didn't have any ambition.

Wade, on the other hand, had a surplus of it.

"You met with Morax earlier. What did you ask of him?" Eldon asked in order to shift the topic of conversation.

Wade snorted because he knew what the Dwarf was trying to do, but he didn't voice his dissatisfaction at the Dwarf's timid approach to the current structure of power in the Deadlands.

"Nothing much, just things I'd like to have," Wade replied with a devilish smirk.

"You like a lot of things," Eldon replied. "Which one are you referring to?"

"Why don't you make a wild guess?"

"No need to make a guess. You're just after what is under Avril's skirt."

The smirk on Wade's face stiffened after the Dwarf revealed one of his secret fantasies.

"Close, but no cigar," Wade replied as he took out a cigarette from his pocket and lit it.

After taking a long drag, he exhaled the smoke towards the Dwarf who immediately glared back at him.

"Both of us know that Avril doesn't wear skirts," Wade commented as he pointed his cigarette in Eldon's direction. "Also, that is not what I asked Morax."

"Of course she doesn't," Eldon answered as he waved his hand away to dispel the smell of cigarette that lingered in the air around him. "You and Swiper would be howling like dogs if she did wear one. So? What did you ask him?"

"Something you will never wish for."

"Ah... world peace. Wishing for it is just a pipedream."

Wade shook his head because both of them were now just talking in circles. He had personally gone to visit Eldon because he wanted to know what his stance would be after Morax had gathered all the mirrors.

Every Leader of the various Shelters were not stupid. They knew that once Morax collected the mirrors, their role in the Deadlands would also come to an end.

There were only three outcomes for them.

One was to leave and return to their worlds as per agreement with Morax.

The second was to join his side and start a conquest that they could only see in their wildest dreams.

Or third, get in his way and be crushed like a bug.

There was no fourth option, and everyone was either hoping that they would have a smooth transition back to their homeworlds, or become Morax's lackeys and follow him for life.

As for the third option, only fools would do that.

Wade was not a fool. He knew that he would not stand a chance if he fought against the Dread Lord, so his only choice was either one of the first two choices.

Naturally, Morax had extended an invitation to the two of them. He wanted them to become his subordinates, and promised them rewards that they would never have back in their respective home worlds.

"So, what is your final answer?" Wade asked as he moved his queen. He only needed two moves in order to end the game as he eyed the Dwarf who still had an indifferent expression on his face.

"My final answer is this," Eldon moved his own Queen and placed it right next to Wade's King.
"Checkmate."

The Human leader frowned because he didn't notice the bishop that was hiding at the corner of the board, which supported Eldon's Queen to checkmate Wade's king.

"Thank you for the game, friend," Eldon said as he stood up from his seat. "I still have matters I need to discuss with my subordinates. I will not see you out. May you have a good day."

The Dwarven Leader left the room with steady steps.

Although he was shorter than the average Human, Wade noticed how broad Eldon's back was. It was a back that had seen many hardships in the world, and no longer wanted to participate in the game of intrigue that was now becoming apparent in the Deadlands.

'What a fool,' Wade thought. 'When the time comes, there will be no neutral ground to stand on Morax will not allow people to sit in the fence and watch this show unfold. Only he has the qualifications to do that.'

Wade stood up from his seat and flicked Eldon's King, making it fly off the chessboard.

He then watched as the chess piece shattered into pieces as it hit the wall of the room.

"There is only one King on this chessboard, and that person is the one sitting on that dragon bone throne in the Black Tower," Wade muttered. "Everyone else is just a jester sporting a crown on their head. They are there for comedic relief, and once he no longer finds them amusing... they no longer need to exist."

Wade left the room behind with a sneer. He had discovered the answer to his question, so he no longer needed to visit the Dwarven Shelter in the future.

Eldon watched Wade's truck disappear in the distance as he stood on the roof of his Shelter.

"This is the problem with you Humans," Eldon said softly. "You all forget something important. When the King is on his Deathbed, who do you suppose will take his place? Will it be another king? Of course not."

The Dwarven Leader looked in the direction of the Glory Shelter as he crossed his arms over his chest.

"You always stare at the person wearing the crown, but in the struggle for the throne, it is always the Prince who has the last laugh," Eldon stated. "I don't mind being a jester sporting a crown. If that is the only way to survive, I don't mind dancing the courtship dance that won me the love of my life."

Eldon closed his eyes as he thought of his significant other who was waiting for him back home. No matter what happened, he would find a way to escape this hell-hole without selling his soul to the devil.

Chapter 844: I'll Just Ask For Compensation In The Future

"How is it?" Xenovia asked after William finished his regular check up on her Sea of Consciousness.

"Everything is fine," William answered. "I don't see any signs of collapse or corruption."

"That's good to know. I still feel anxious knowing that Morax could possibly take control over my mind and body again."

"Relax. With me around, he won't be able to do anything to you."

Xenovia smiled as she looked at the Half-Elf that was looking at her with a smug expression on his face.

"Well then, I'll take my leave," Xenovia stated as she walked towards the door. "By the way, should I call Cathy for you?"

William glanced at the clock on the wall and noticed that it was just half past six. The sky outside the window was starting to darken, which affected the Half-Elf's vampiric powers.

"Tell Cathy to have her dinner first," William replied.

"Alright. I will tell her that you plan to have her for dessert. You're such a sinful man, you know that?"

"Well, you are not the first, nor the last lady to tell me that," William replied as he flicked his hair. "What can I say? I'm simply irresistible."

Xenovia snorted as she closed the door without saying another word. The smugness on William's face disappeared as soon as he deemed that the Death Lord had gone away.

'I knew it, Xenovia was not the spy,' William thought as he gazed outside the window of his room. 'I've made a full sweep of her Sea of Consciousness several times already, and I can say with confidence that Morax no longer has his hold on her. That could only mean one thing...'

William, Lilith, and Raizel had already thought of the possibility that several members of the Glory Shelter had fallen under the Dread Lord's control. Their only problem was that they were still unable to pinpoint who they were.

'Should I bite all of them?' William mused. This was his last resort in order to ensure that their plan wouldn't be compromised. If he couldn't find the spy or spies before Morax gathered all the mirrors then there was a high risk of the Dread Lord discovering their plan.

While William was deep in thought, the door of the room opened and a pretty lady walked in with a smile.

It didn't take long before she stood beside the Half-Elf who was looking outside the window, while thinking of ways to solve his problem.

"I thought I told Xenovia to tell you that you should have dinner first," William said in a teasing tone. He then glanced at the pretty girl beside him and poked her nose with his finger. "Are you that excited to be eaten by me?"

Cathy giggled as she batted her eyes on William. She then walked towards the bed and sat on top of it, crossing one leg over the other.

"Well, I'm always ready to be your main dish," Cathy said as she lazily gazed at William who was still standing in front of the window. "But, you and I know that I'm just a 'Convenient Woman' at your beck and call, isn't that right, Will?"

William walked towards Cathy and sat beside her.

"I'm sorry," William apologized in a serious tone. "I didn't know that I made you feel that way. I will no longer drink your blood from today onwards."

"Now that you're tired of me, you're just going to throw me away? Boo hoo, what a pitiful lady I have become. Um, I knew I should have taken my eyedrops with me. Without tears, my acting skills aren't as effective. Hey, do you have eye drops on you? Let me borrow it for a while."

"..."

William wasn't able to react to Cathy's silly solo performance because he suddenly felt drowsy. He tried to force his eyes open, but it was no use. The urge to sleep was so strong that even if he used his willpower to fight it, he was unable to form any kind of resistance.

"What's this? Now you find me so boring that you fall asleep in front of me?" Cathy complained as she pinched William's left cheek. "Um? Are you really going to sleep on me?"

"T-That's not it... Cathy," William struggled to hold on to his consciousness, but he was slowly losing the battle.

As an act of desperation, the Half-Elf bit the tip of his tongue, letting blood spurt from it. However, something unexpected happened.

The pretty lady seated beside him suddenly kissed his lips and drew in the blood that had spurted out from between his lips.

The Half-Elf suddenly felt weak as Cathy absorbed his strength, rendering him unable to move.

As the thoughts of shock and disbelief flashed across his mind, he felt himself falling downwards into a bottomless pit. Cathy managed to pry his lips open wider and take his tongue into her mouth. She sucked hard on his tongue and William finally lost consciousness, his last thoughts worried about what was to come as the pretty lady continued to hold onto his body and drink his blood.

"Rise and shine! How long are you planning to sleep?"

"Oi, sleepyhead, wakey wakey!

"You still don't plan to wake up? I guess I have no choice but to do this seriously.

"Mister, I am giving you ten seconds to wake up. If you don't, I'll cut off your ding ding dong and stew it!"

William opened his eyes, and saw Cathy's pretty face looking down on him. His thoughts were still in shambles, so he couldn't understand what had just happened.

The last thing he remembered was...

What was it again?

William blinked once then twice and blinked again. He couldn't form a coherent thought no matter what he did.

"I guess she did a number on you on a subconscious level," Cathy muttered as she poked William's nose repeatedly. "Oi. Can you hear me? Can you understand me?"

William wanted to reply, but the mere thought of replying even slipped from his mind like sand falling in an hourglass.

Cathy sighed as she pulled William into a sitting position.

The scene that appeared in front of him was a blue sea that reflected an equally blue sky. The scenery was quite familiar and the words "Sea of Consciousness" passed through his mind for a brief moment before disappearing completely.

"Even sitting you up does nothing?" Cathy pouted as she let go of William's hands, letting his body fall until he was facing upwards.

"You've been very careless, Will," Cathy sighed as she caressed the side of William's face. "Morax used the powers of the mirrors to set a trap in Xenovia's Sea of Consciousness. He knows that you are a hindrance to his plans, so he decided to incapacitate you until all the mirrors were gathered."

Cathy pinched the unresponsive Half-Elf who was still looking at the sky above him, unable to reply to her complaints.

"I guess I have no choice," Cathy mused. "I can't let Morax succeed in his plans."

Cathy's clothes fell off her body as she gave William a complicated look.

She knew what she needed to do, but she was still annoyed that the Half-Elf wasn't in the right state of mind to appreciate what she was about to do for him.

"I'll just ask for compensation in the future," Cathy sighed. "He won't be able to pay me back if there is no future anyways."

Chapter 845: She Is Waiting For You

William dreamed.

A dream that he had never had before.

Haleth, Amelia, Pearl, Priscilla, a pretty lady with a single horn on her forehead, a green-haired beauty with a tail that resembled that of a lizard, and a Half-ling who looked like a doll that was only a little more than three feet tall held on to his body.

All of them caressed him in different places, and murmured something in his ears, but he was not in a condition to understand what they were saying.

All he knew was that the places they touched made him feel warm, and at peace.

It made him feel that everything was going to be alright.

William didn't know how long he spent in that world, in the company of these ladies. But, with each day that passed, he was starting to grasp his fleeting thoughts. Day by day, he felt strength returning to his body.

In time, he was able to understand what they were saying. They were words of encouragement, telling him that he must stay strong and not give up hope.

They all looked at him with affectionate gazes, as if they had known him for a very long time.

They would kiss his forehead, his ears, nose, cheeks, neck, hands, fingers, feet, and every other part of his body, except for his lips.

"It's time to go, Will," Haleth said lovingly as she kissed his cheeks one last time. "They are waiting for you... she is waiting for you."

Each of the ladies gave William a hug, and kissed him one last time before turning into particles of light.

The Half-Elf unconsciously reached out to hold onto them, but they had already disappeared completely.

"You're finally awake!" Lilith cried out as she hugged William's body.

The Half-Elf was still in the gesture of reaching out to something when he realized that he was no longer inside his Sea of Consciousness.

Raizel joined Lilith in hugging William, with tears streaming down her face.

"We thought that you were not going to wake up," Lilith said as she lightly pounded William's chest with her fist. "We were scared. Very scared. What happened to you?!"

"I'm sorry," William said as he held the heads of the two girls who were bawling their eyes out because of him. "I got careless."

A few minutes passed before Lilith and Raizel were able to regain their composure. William asked them to tell him everything that happened, while he was sleeping, and the two girls complied without leaving out any details.

"You've been sleeping for two weeks," Raizel explained. "During that time, Cathy would come to see you every three days to feed you some of her blood. Seven of the mirrors have already been found, and only a small part of the Deadlands has been left untouched. It's possible that they would discover the eighth mirror any day now."

Lilith, who was holding William's hand also joined in explaining the current situation. "Conflicts have broken out between the Shelters due to the intense competition that is happening. The Demonic Shelter suffered a joint attack from three of the Shelters that still haven't found any of the mirrors because Swiper keeps getting in their way.

"If not for Eldon, mediating between the four parties, the Demonic Shelter might have already ceased to exist."

William's expression became grim as he listened to Raizel's, and Lilith's narration of the events that had transpired while he was out of commission. "How about Xenovia? Where is she?"

"Xenovia had locked herself up in her room, refusing to come out," Raizel sighed. "She discovered that her thoughts were being manipulated a day after you fell asleep. Because of this, she decided to lock herself in and forbade us from interacting with her."

William tried to stand up from the bed, but his body had become very stiff and he was finding it hard to move.

In the end, he had to ask the two girls by his side to help him sit in a more comfortable position.

"It's possible that the mirror will be found today or tomorrow," William stated. "We have to prepare for the worst. Fortunately, our preparations are almost complete."

William looked at Raizel, and the latter nodded her head in acknowledgement.

"We've done everything we can," Raizel replied. "There's nothing we can do now except to make last minute preparations."

William clenched his fist as he thought of Morax who had successfully trapped him in his own Sea of Consciousness. If not for the seven ladies who did their best to wake him up, he might have remained unconscious until Morax's plan had come to fruition.

The Half-Elf didn't even want to think of what Fate would have befallen Lilith and Raizel, who had no way of protecting themselves, once the Dread Lord had taken full control of the Black Tower.

'Fortunately, I woke up at the last minute.' William shuddered at the thought of losing the two ladies by his side, who played an important role in his life. 'We can still do this.'

"Okay, for now, listen to me," William said as she held Lilith's and Raizel's hands. "We will continue to make Morax think that I'm still asleep. Don't let anyone visit this room, especially the people from other Shelters. By the way, has anyone visited me during those two weeks?"

"All the Leaders came to visit a day ago," Raizel replied. "Even Swiper came, but we didn't allow him to step foot inside the stadium. We know that he has a grudge against you, so we didn't dare take any chances."

William nodded. "For now, don't let anyone visit. If someone asks, tell them that I'm still unconscious and haven't shown any signs of waking up."

The two girls nodded. They are in agreement that William's condition must be kept secret no matter what.

"I will try to regain my body's functions as soon as possible, so when the operation starts, we will be ready," William added. "Don't let anyone inside the room."

"How about Cathy?" Raizel asked. "You are scheduled to drink her blood today."

"... You can let her in." William had already spoken before he even realized it. However, he didn't feel that there was anything wrong with what he said, so he decided to put it aside for the time being because he was thinking of other ways to pay back the Dread Lord for what he had done to him.

Lilith and Raizel also had no complaints about letting Cathy enter the room. The pretty lady was the one that informed them of William's condition, and was also the one who had zealously supplied him with blood, while he was unconscious.

Chapter 846: I Can Only Cheer For You In Places Where You Couldn't See

"Cathy, can you tell me everything that happened back then?" William asked as the pretty lady arrived in his room.

Lilith and Raizel decided to leave them alone because the Half-Elf had said that he needed to have a private conversation with Cathy. Both of the girls trusted William enough to know that this might be something that he couldn't tell them, so they decided to give way and respect his request.

"You suddenly felt drowsy and lost consciousness," Cathy answered. "After that I panicked and called for help."

William eyed the pretty girl who had sat beside him on the bed.

"I've indeed heard from Lilith and Raizel that you were the one that informed them that I had lost consciousness," William stated. "But, before I lost consciousness, I can still remember what you did. But, why did you do that?"

"Are you referring to the time that I kissed you and sucked the blood that was gushing out of the tip of your tongue?"

"Yes. I admit that I might have still fallen unconscious even then, but I still didn't understand why you did that."

Cathy smiled as she gazed straight into William's eyes. "I just thought that since you were the one always drinking my blood, it would be interesting to know what would happen if I drank yours as well. By the way, your blood doesn't taste too good."

The trace of complaint in Cathy's voice made the corner of William's lips twitch.

Girl, you were the one that drank my blood without my permission. Now you have the gall to complain to me?

William was about to voice his counter complaint, but Cathy's delicate finger pressed on his lips, preventing him from speaking.

"Listen, Will, and listen well," Cathy said softly. "When the past no longer illuminates the future, the spirit walks in darkness. But, no matter how frail Hope is, it can never be killed."

Cathy then cupped William's face, as her eyes teared up a bit. "Will, you are very pitiful. I pity you so much that my heart aches for you. Even now, you have forgotten many important things. Things that you can no longer take back."

"Cathy, just what are you talking about?" William asked.

He wanted to take the pretty lady's hands away from his face, but for some reason, he couldn't muster enough strength in his body to even move his hands, which were clenching the bed sheets firmly.

"Sorry, I got carried away," Cathy removed her hands from William's face as she returned back to her usual self. "I pity you so much that I have a strong urge to give you a good beating just for the sake of venting my frustrations."

"... How unreasonable can you get?" William rubbed his face with both of his hands. "Can you answer my question seriously."

For some reason, he was starting to feel drowsy again, but it wasn't as strong as the one he felt before he lost consciousness.

"But, I already did?"

"That's not the answer I am looking for."

Cathy giggled because she felt that William was being unreasonable. Even so, she noticed that the Half-Elf was starting to feel drowsy again. Because of this, she decided to finish the important issue first.

"I'll answer your question next time," Cathy said. "Also, in the future, I will ask you to repay your debt to me."

"What debt?"

"You'll know in the future."

"Hello? Can you speak Human?" William sighed. "Why are you being vague? If I owe you something, tell me what I owe you, so I can pay it back."

Cathy giggled as she presented her neck on William. The pretty lady wrapped her arms around William's head holding him in place.

"Don't worry," Cathy whispered. "You will pay me back in full all in good time. For now, just drink and sleep. You still haven't fully recovered, and you need to rest properly. When morning comes, the eighth mirror will be found, and this theatrical performance will soon come to an end."

William stopped caring and finally bit into the pretty lady's neck to draw blood.

The drowsiness he was feeling instantly disappeared as soon as Cathy's sweet, and delicious blood, passed through his lips.

"Take your time to drink," Cathy whispered. "I'm not going anywhere, so drink until you are full. This might be the last time you will be able to drink my blood, so savor it completely."

'Last time?' William thought as he steadily drank the rich blood that was vibrant with life. He had to admit that Cathy's blood was the best that he had tasted so far, and thought that it would be a waste if he were unable to drink it again.

In the past, it didn't strike him that Cathy was someone special.

He only found out that she was a very lively and optimistic person after interacting with her during his stay in the Glory Shelter.

If not for the scarcity of blood, Raizel wouldn't have resorted to asking Cathy to become one of William's helpers when he needed to drink blood.

A few minutes later, William finally finished drinking, and the pretty lady kissed his cheeks before tucking him to bed.

"Cathy, just who are you?" William asked. "Please answer me honestly."

"Even if I tell you who I am, you will not believe me," Cathy answered as she sat beside the bed.

"Try me."

"Your future wife."

"Lies."

"See?"

Cathy covered her lips and chuckled. "I told you so."

"Be serious, Cathy," William replied as he eyed the pretty lady suspiciously.

Cathy shook her head. "I can't be serious, Will. If I do, I will take you away from this world, and keep you for myself. Both of us know that it's not going to work out that way. Since that is the case, I'll just go with the flow... at least for now."

The room descended into silence as William and Cathy stared at each other's eyes. Both looking for the answers to their questions, that could only be found at the deepest recesses of each other's minds.

"Cathy, are you my enemy?" William inquired.

"No," Cathy answered as she planted a kiss on William's forehead. "I am forever by your side, because you represent me, Will."

The pretty lady stood up and walked towards the door. However, right before she was about to leave the room, she glanced back at William and smiled.

"I will lend my help, but the help I can give you in this world is limited," Cathy stated. "The two people you can rely on the most at the darkest hour are none other than Raizel and Lilith. Truth be told, I envy them. At least, they will be able to fight side by side with you."

"My role is to forever be on the sidelines. That is why, I can only cheer for you in places where you cannot see. Goodnight, Will. I pray that when tomorrow comes, you will have fully recovered your strength."

Cathy waved her hand before closing the door.

When Lilith and Raizel returned to the room, they saw William sleeping snugly in bed. The Half-Elf was sleeping so peacefully that both girls couldn't find it in their hearts to wake him up.

Cathy, who was walking through the empty hallways, finally stopped in front of a room where the sound of someone pounding the wall could be heard.

"Time to solve the issue with this problem child as well," Cathy muttered as she opened the room to Xenovia's room. "Will is already having a hard enough time as it is. He will need all the help he can get."

Chapter 847: A Gamble Worth Taking

"This is what you get for getting in my way," Morax sneered as he used the power of the seven mirrors to scry on William's current condition.

The image of the Half-Elf sleeping on the bed appeared in front of him, and it made the Dread Lord extremely satisfied. Although he had received the report from Wade, and the other Leaders, that the red-headed teenager was still in a coma a day ago, he was still not convinced, so he decided to confirm it himself.

After seeing that the Half-Elf was indeed still in a comatose condition, he felt as if a thorn had been dislodged from his chest.

He no longer worried about any kind of resistance from the denizens of the Deadlands because more than half of them had already sworn fealty to his side.

With this matter settled, the Dread Lord felt confident that he could secure not only the Black Tower, but the entire Deadlands under his control.

The reason why he started to have ambitions to acquire the Deadlands was due to one simple matter.

No Gods could enter this world.

Morax had sacrificed most of his Divinity until he had regressed to the peak of a Demigod. Even then, the injuries he received from the pursuit of the Gods of Hell left him unable to leave the Black Tower, or else his existence would crumble to dust.

This was why he manipulated the Undead to do his bidding, and even had to stoop even lower in order to befriend the Leaders of the Shelters. He needed them to help him acquire the mirrors, which would allow him to return to his peak strength, and once again step into the ranks of the Gods.

As if he was laughing at William's current condition, one of the Death Lords under his command barged inside the throne room bearing a message that made the smile on Morax's face widen.

"Your Excellency, the Eighth Mirror has been found," The Death Lord reported.

"Excellent!" Morax laughed and ordered the Death Lord to bring the mirror to his hands as fast as possible.

The Death Lord bowed respectfully before leaving the throne room in haste.

"One more." Morax chuckled. "Just one more and I will be invincible!"

Morax rejoiced for the time he had envisioned was close at hand.

"Now, whose Domain should I visit first after I regain my powers?" Morax rubbed his chin in a good mood. "Ah... I know who to visit first."

The Dread Lord smirked as he remembered the irritating Grand Marquis of Hell that had played an important role in his downfall.

"Aamon, I will start with you," Morax smashed his fist on the armrest of his dragon throne. "I want to see your expression as you watch your precious daughter getting defiled right in front of your eyes."

"Ah, yes, that girl... that cursed girl that was born from the union of a cursed God, and a God that was about to meet her end. Such a happy union, I dare say. But, alas, you dared to offend me, so I'll make sure you regret it for the rest of your life."

Morax raised his hand and a golden goblet appeared out of thin air.

A moment later, a beautiful Elf with long green hair, and a pair of beautiful ruby-colored eyes, poured wine inside the goblet.

"How are the preparations going?" Morax asked.

"Everything is in order, Your Excellency," the beautiful Elf replied.

"Good. Once the last mirror is acquired, you will get everything you ever wanted," Morax promised.

"Not only in this world, but in all the worlds where I will reign. So, serve me well."

"I will, Your Excellency," the beautiful Elf replied. "I look forward to seeing your glory."

Lindir sighed as he sat on his make-shift throne in the Swamptide Shelter.

Even after exhausting everything, he wasn't able to find any of the mirrors in the Deadlands.

The morale of his shelter was also at an all time low because several of the Leaders in the Alliance had started to switch camp to Morax's side, which made Lindir and the other neutral Leaders feel anxious.

The only thing he could hope for now was that Morax would honor his promise to open the doorway that would allow them to leave the Deadlands.

As long as he could return to his homeworld in one piece, he would be able to start over and rebuild his tribe, which had been destroyed during an intense struggle for territorial expansion.

While the Lizardfolk were thinking on what to do next, an unexpected visitor appeared in front of him.

"Xenovia? What are you doing here?" Lindir asked in confusion. "Did something happen to the Glory Shelter? Did that boy, William, wake up?"

Even when Xenovia was still a living, breathing, human, she and Lindir never had a close relationship. Although they don't antagonize each other, the Lizardfolk had no idea why the Death Lord would come and visit him.

William's presence in the Glory Shelter gave Lindir hope that he would act as a deterrent, just in case Morax went back on his word to let the people of the Deadlands free.

However, after the red-headed boy fell into a coma, they started to suspect that it was Morax's way to eliminate all opposition.

Even Swiper, who hated William to the bone, felt alarmed when he heard of the Half-Elf's comatose state.

Although they didn't get along, the Demonic Boar had recognized William's strength. Swiper hoped that the Half-Elf would help balance the playing field to prevent the scales from tipping in Morax's favor.

Lindir eyed Xenovia with a guarded expression as he did his best to prevent his inner feelings from showing on his face.

"I'd like to talk to you in private," Xenovia replied. "This is a very sensitive issue, so I hope that you will listen to me just once."

Lindir pondered for a bit before nodding his head. Right now, he wasn't doing anything special, so he was more than willing to hear Xenovia's purpose for coming to visit him.

Half an hour later, Xenovia left the Swampside Shelter to return to the Glory Shelter.

Lindir didn't escort her outside, but remained inside his room to digest the Death Lord's proposal.

"I guess I'll just have to take a gamble," Lindir muttered through gritted teeth. "I just hope I will get to live after everything has come to pass. If not, I will be one of Morax's undead minions, who are stripped of their freewill to serve him for all eternity."

Lindir hated gambling the most because he wasn't good at it. Now that something big was at stake, with the odds stacked up against him, he was feeling helpless.

Even so, he was willing to take a gamble. There was only one problem.

Was it a gamble worth taking?

Chapter 848: You're Not Getting Any Sleep Tonight

Standing inside his Sea of Consciousness, William looked up at the sky with his arms crossed over his chest.

He could see the image of Morax looking down on him from on top of the ceiling of the room. A sneer could be seen on the Dread Lord's face, which made William sneer back at him in return.

After a few minutes, Morax's scrying ended and William could tell that the Dread Lord was gone for good.

"Seriously, you should have just told me Cathy," William muttered.

The pretty lady had somehow managed to force the Half-Elf into deep sleep, which allowed him to trick Morax into thinking that he was still out for the count.

Suddenly, two ladies appeared inside his Sea of Consciousness, and they were none other than Lilith and Raizel.

"Will? What's wrong?" Lilith asked as she held William's hand. "I'm surprised that you called out to me using the earrings."

"Sorry, everything happened so fast that even I had no time to react." William squeezed Lilith's hand. "Morax gained the ability to scry on others when he gained the Seventh Mirror. It is also highly possible that the Eighth mirror will be found today."

"We can no longer rely on normal means, so we will do the exercise in my Sea of Consciousness. If everything works out properly, we still have a chance to turn everything around."

Raizel looked around William's inner world with great interest.

"So, this is what your consciousness looks like, Will," Raizel said. "As she gazed at the countless weapons that were embedded in the surface of the sea."

"It's nothing special," William replied. "Now, let's get back to business. Morax now thinks that I'm no longer a threat to him, so this will work in our advantage. Unfortunately, the rest will have to rely on the both of you to make the plan succeed."

Lilith and Raizel nodded their heads in acknowledgement.

"After finding the Eighth Mirror they will definitely go all out to find the last one," Raizel smirked. "Unfortunately, it will not be that simple. Unfortunately, it will take a few days for them to find it."

William shook his head. "Three days. In three days, the last mirror will be found."

"Eh?"

"How?"

William scratched his head in helplessness as he gazed at the two ladies who were looking back at him in disbelief.

"A little bird will tell Lindir where it is located," William replied. "He will make a move in three days."

Lilith's and Raizel's expressions became extremely serious. They thought that the last mirror would allow them to buy some time to make the necessary preparations, but the Half-Elf was telling them that they only had three days to get everything ready.

"Do we have enough time?" Lilith inquired as she looked at Raizel.

Raizel crossed her arms over her chest. "Theoretically we are ready to carry out our plan anytime. But, why does it have to happen in three days?"

William smiled. "It's because a bird told me that this is the day which has the highest chance of success."

"Wait, is that bird the same bird that told Lindir where the Ninth Mirror could be found?"

"No. This one is a different bird. A rather eccentric one, but she meant us no harm... maybe."

Lilith raised an eyebrow. "Maybe?"

The red-headed teenager coughed lightly because the eccentric bird had forbidden him from sharing her identity. Although William had a feeling that everything would still be fine even if he told Lilith and Raizel about her, he still decided to play it safe and only said what he was allowed to say.

"Whether we are given more days or not, it doesn't really matter," William stated. "Our plans are already set, so it will be best for us to settle this sooner rather than later. Besides, I don't like pretending to be in a coma for a long time."

Raizel sighed but still nodded her head in agreement. "Very well. We will carry out our plan on the third day. Should we tell Lilith the full extent of our plan?"

William and Raizel looked at the Amazon, who looked back at the two with a confused expression on her face.

"Lilith, how good are you at acting?" William asked.

The Amazon Princess frowned because she wasn't really good at acting. Although she could exert some effort in making it work, acting had never been her forte.

"Just average," Lilith replied honestly. "Why? Do I need to act to make things more convincing?"

"Yes, but since you can't do it, let's just scratch that plan." William patted her shoulder. "I'm sorry, but it will be best if we keep you out of the loop for all of our sakes."

Raizel could only smile apologetically at Lilith who had a dissatisfied look on her face. Even so, the Amazon Princess still nodded in the end.

"Will, I trust you," Lilith said. "If you really think that it is best not to tell me anything then I will support your decision. But, this will be the first and last time that you will do this to me. In the future, you will not keep anything from me, and just give it to me straight. Do we have an agreement?"

William nodded and kissed her cheek. "Sorry. I promise that I will not do it again in the future."

"I'll forgive you just this once."

"Thank you."

Raizel, who was feeling left out, moved closer to the two and gave both of them a hug.

"We're all in this together," Raizel said but her voice carried a trace of anxiousness.

"Don't worry, everything will be fine," William assured the anxious young beauty. "I believe in you, Raizel."

"How about me?" Lilith interjected.

The Half-Elf chuckled as she looked at the Amazon Princess who was still feeling pouty.

"Of course I believe in you as well," William stated. "As long as the three of us are together, there's nothing that we can't do."

"Um, can I tell you guys something?" Raizel asked.

William and Lilith looked at the young beauty whose face was still blushing. It was very rare for Raizel to take the initiative to open up to them, so the two were more than willing to listen to her.

"Go ahead," William replied.

Lilith nodded her head and waited for Raizel to tell them what was on her mind.

"You see, I just want to let the two of you know that my Ma and Pa conceived me in that strange world that they were trapped in during their youth," Raizel said. She was unable to look at William and Lilith whose faces had started to turn weird.

"Um, that's why we should do our best," Raizel said in a voice that was so low that it almost sounded like a mosquito buzz. "All of us, especially the two of you. Please, do your best!"

After throwing a bomb at the two people who were very dear to her, Raizel turned into particles of light and left William's Sea of Consciousness in haste.

William and Lilith stared at the empty space where the young beauty had stood a moment ago with complicated expressions on their faces.

"Lilith..."

"You don't have to say anything. You can just sleep, and I'll handle the rest. All you need to do is make sure that it stays up."

William didn't know whether to laugh or cry at Lilith's determined words. Clearly, the young beauty was just instigating something, but the Amazon Princess had taken it seriously.

"L-Let's just do it in moderation," William replied. "We still have a job to do."

"Relax," Lilith gave William the "you're not getting any sleep tonight" smile, which made the Half-Elf feel like he was about to fight a wrestling match with her.

A match that would definitely not end in his favor.

Chapter 849: The Calm Before The Storm [Part 1]

When Lilith opened her eyes, the first thing she saw was the man that she had chosen to be her partner for life.

She gazed at his peaceful sleeping face, and brushed the hair that was covering his face with her hand.

The Amazon Princess hadn't believed in love before, but now she was sure that she was starting to truly fall in love with William.

Of course, she knew that the Half-Elf also hadn't expected a day like this would come. Both of them didn't really see each other as a potential love interest. That all changed after they had arrived in the Deadlands and met Raizel

Without her, neither of them would have taken that final step.

That step that allowed them to grasp a possibility that they never knew existed.

"I love you," Lilith whispered in William's ears as she gave him a kiss on the cheek.

Lilith then propped herself from the bed, letting the blanket fall from her sensuous naked body. Last night was a bit intense because she was the one that took the lead in everything. Even now, she felt that William was still inside her and it made her blush, despite just having woken up.

She then removed the blanket from William's lower half, and kissed the one responsible for making her feel good.

"I love you too," Lilith said as she gave the Little Will a smooch, which made the latter very lively.

Lilith stood up from the bed and did a few stretches to let the blood flow inside her body. If not for the fact that they were facing a very dangerous situation, she would have loved to continue making love to the red-headed teenager to ensure that she became pregnant with his child.

'Unfortunately, I can't do that,' Lilith sighed as she took out a bath towel to wrap William up like a spring roll, before lifting him up from the bed.

She carried the "sleeping" Half-Elf towards the shower room in order to clean him up from the aftermath of their intense night battle.

Just as she was about to enter the Shower Room, she heard the voices of people talking inside the room.

Lilith was surprised, but she wasn't too concerned because she was familiar with the voices of the two ladies.

As soon as the Amazon Princess stepped inside the shower room, Raizel and Cathy glanced in her direction.

The pretty lady wasn't able to stop the chuckle that escaped her lips when she saw the wrapped up spring roll in Lilith's hands.

Raizel, on the other hand, wasn't able to stop the wide grin that spread across her face. However, if one were to look closely, her face was starting to redden.

"He's still asleep?" Cathy asked. She eyed the Half-Elf whose sleeping face made her wish that she could lock him up in her own room and suck him dry. "You're spoiling him too much, Lilith. If you continue like this, he's going to end up as a no-good person in the future."

Lilith chuckled as she chose a place that was far from the two ladies to wash him, while preventing them from seeing her lover's naked body. If this was in the past, she wouldn't have minded sharing William with her sisters in the Amazon Empire.

However, right now, she was feeling possessive, and no longer had the intention of letting others see something that belonged to her.

Seeing that Lilith had no intention of letting them see some eye candy, Cathy shook her head helplessly as she soaked inside the bathtub.

Raizel on the other hand was humming in her brown bathtub. Clearly, she was feeling very happy at the moment, and Cathy knew that it was best to not poke fun at her happiness.

A few minutes later, the two ladies left the shower room because both of them had duties that they needed to attend to.

It was also at that moment when Lilith came out of the shower, carrying William in her arms. As much as she wanted to soak with William in the bathtub, she couldn't do that right now.

Morax might use his scrying skills to check on his condition anytime, so she didn't dare to take too much time in cleaning him up.

A few minutes later, both of them returned to the room right next to Raizel's. After dressing the Half-Elf properly, Lilith laid him on the couch for the time being.

She then changed the bed sheets, as well as the blanket that they had used the night before. Only after finishing these two things did she return William to the bed and laid down beside him.

"Synchronization."

Lilith still needed to train inside William's Sea of Consciousness to check how long William would be able to use her powers. The Amazon's Divinity was the key to overturn Morax's plans.

William's body needed to learn to contain Lilith's Divinity for a period of time to ensure that their strategy would succeed.

"Okay, we will resume looking for resources today," Cathy said with determination. "Everyone, please, do your best!"

""Yes!""

"Be careful," Raizel said as she gazed at the gloomy skies of the Deadlands. "It seems that a storm is coming."

Cathy also glanced at the dark-gray sky with a calm gaze before nodding her head in agreement.

"We will not be away for too long," Cathy replied. "At most, we will return after three to four hours."

Raizel looked worriedly at Xenovia who had her arms crossed over her chest and leaning on the truck.

"Don't worry, I'm fine now." Xenovia grinned at the young beauty who was looking at her with concern. "Besides, we can't let Cathy's group wander around the Deadlands with such high tension in the air, right?"

Raizel nodded. "Be careful. At the first signs of trouble, immediately return to the Shelter."

"Got it," Xenovia replied.

A few minutes later, the Glory Shelter's scavenger team moved out to look for resources.

Although no one said anything, they could feel that something was different in the Deadlands today. There was some kind of invisible suppression that was coming down from the sky.

They couldn't help but think that something bad was going to happen, and that that something was going to happen very soon.

Chapter 850: The Calm Before The Storm [Part 2]

"Such ominous clouds," Eldon said as he gazed out the window of his shelter. "It seems that the countdown to the end of the world has finally started. Do you feel that way as well?"

Lindir, who had visited the Dwarven Shelter so early in the morning, clicked his tongue in agreement and irritation.

"I hate being treated like a chess piece by people," Lindir complained. "For someone of my status to stoop this low, I think I'm going mad."

Eldon laughed as he walked towards his friend and patted his shoulder. "It's good to be mad every now and then. Only the crazy people in the world can do the crazy things that people deem impossible."

"You're crazy, too!" Lindir hissed in anger. "Why are you being stubborn? I know that Dwarves are stubborn, but you are on a whole new level. I came here so that you could convince me to side with Morax, so that I don't have to go through this madness!"

"You went to the wrong Shelter. You should have gone to Wade's or Avril's instead."

"But I hate those two-faced bastards!"

Eldon shrugged as he sat on the chair opposite the raging Lizardfolk.

Lindir sighed before drinking the cup of water on the table. After quenching his thirst, he once again glared at the Dwarf who had started to play with his beard.

"Look, I'm not asking for too much," Lindir said in a voice that reeked of anxiety. "Just, what are our chances of winning?"

"Close to zero."

"F*ck this, I'm out!"

The Lizard stood up and walked towards the door. He then opened the door and turned his head to look at the Dwarf who was still playing with his beard.

"Aren't you going to stop me?" Lindir asked in disbelief.

Eldon raised his head to look at the Lizardfolk whose green scales had started to change to red.

"Why would I stop you?" Eldon asked. "It's your life, so it's your choice. The last thing that I want to happen is to have someone scream in my ear, 'I shouldn't have believed in you!' as I am facing death. You're old enough, Lindir. You, I, everyone, need to take responsibility for their own choices. Whether it leads to defeat or victory, you should do it with the knowledge that it is the choice you made, and no one else's."

"F*ck this, I'm out," Lindir growled as he slammed the door shut.

Eldon shook his head as he picked up the beer on the table. Just as he was about to enjoy his beer, the door of the room opened and Lindir barged in once again. Only this time he was not alone.

"Tell me, Dwarf," Swiper said in a voice that reeked of anxiety. "What are your chances of winning?"

The corner of Eldon's lips twitched as he looked at the Demonic Boar Kin and the irritating Lizardfolk who looked at him as if they would die if he didn't give them a proper answer.

"Close to Zero," Eldon repeated the answer that he had given Lindir.

"F*ck this, I'm out!" Lindir said for the third time as he walked out of the room.

"Damn! I don't want to be on the losing side! I'm out of here!" Swiper declared as he, too, went out of the door and slammed it shut.

Eldon watched them go as he opened his canned beer with a pop.

The Dwarven Leader had just taken a sip of his beer when the door of his room once again opened.

Swiper and Lindir walked towards him with serious expressions on their faces.

"Hey, do we really have no chances of winning?" Lindir asked.

"Fess up, old dwarf," Swiper glared in anger. "I hate to be on the losing side. If you think that you have a chance of winning, say it now or I swear that I will haunt you if I die here in the Deadlands!"

The Demonic Boar then grabbed the beer from Eldon's hand and drank all of its contents in one go. After he was done, he crumpled the can and tossed it aside before glaring at the Dwarf who was looking at Lindir and him like they were dead people.

Eldon stood up from his chair and summoned his sledge hammer.

"You bastards!" Eldon roared as he gripped his weapon with both hands. "Stop asking me and think using your own goddamn minds!"

Eldon's mighty roar reverberated inside his Shelter. He then swung his weapon, in order to pulverize the two pests that kept on pestering him.

Unfortunately, Swiper and Lindir had expected this to happen and had already started to run away.

Although the Lizardfok and the Demonic Boar had no redeeming features, neither of them would lose in the "running away for their lives" department, which almost made Eldon suffer from aneurysm as he chased after them with his weapon held high.

Inside the Black Tower...

Morax gazed at the eight mirrors hovering in the air as they projected the images of the people in the Deadlands.

He watched with amusement as the enraged Dwarf ran after Swiper and Lindir with the intention of beating the crap out of them. The Dread Lord even laughed out loud when Eldon almost smashed Swiper's face after the Demonic Boar accidentally tripped on the stairs, in his desire to run away from the dwarf whose beer he had drank without permission.

After having his fill of the trio's antics, the Dread Lord gazed at William who was currently lying in bed with a beautiful Amazon by his side. Morax had labeled the Half-Elf as a variable in his plans, so he made sure to cripple him during the most crucial moment.

Now that the Half-Elf was out of the equation, he no longer felt any threat from the inhabitants of the Deadlands, even if they all ganged up against him.

Only William, whose Vampiric power could be boosted by the Black Tower, posed the most serious threat to Morax's desire for conquest. As long as the Half-Elf remained asleep, no one in the world could stand in his way.

Morax shifted his gaze to the other mirrors, which showed him the people from the other Shelters still frantically looking for the last mirror.

The Dread Lord looked at them with appreciation because without their help, he wouldn't have been able to collect them in such a short time.

Two hours later, the Dread Lord finally grew bored of watching the goings-on in the Deadlands and raised his hand.

The mirrors flew towards their respective pedestals and remained motionless. Only their surface rippled with power as they waited for their ninth brethren to join them to fulfill the purpose for their creation.

Everything once again settled down in the Deadlands as if the eye of the storm was passing through.

Morax knew that after that brief moment of reprieve, his dreams, and aspirations would finally become a reality.

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Three days later...

Lindir stood on the rooftop of his Shelter with his hands behind his back. He watched as a lone figure made her way in his direction under the cover of dawn.

Today was the promised day, and Lindir had to make an important decision.

He had spent the last few days trying to convince himself that he should just join Morax's side and get it over with. But, something deep inside him was resisting and unwilling to hold hands with the Dread Lord that had tempted him with promises beyond his wildest dreams.

Lindir sighed as he gazed at Xenovia, who had landed a few meters away from him.

"I came here for your answer," Xenovia said. "What is your decision?"

Lindir clenched his fists as an internal battle waged inside his head.

Xenovia crossed her arms over her chest and waited patiently for Lindir's answer. Right now, the main actors were about to take center stage.

Whether this story would lead to a happy or sad ending, would all depend on how they played their part in the bigger picture.

Xenovia eyed Lindir with a devilish smile from where she stood. If Lindir agreed to their proposal then everything would be fine and dandy.

However, if Lindir backed out then they would go with Plan B.

Cathy had told Xenovia that if Lindir didn't agree to their proposal, she had permission to beat the Lizardfolk up until he agreed.

This was their Plan B, no matter what happened. The only answer they would accept from Lindir's lips was yes, or yes.