

The Lustful Time Lord's Revenge

#Chapter 51 - The Pouring Heart - Read The Lustful Time Lord's Revenge Chapter 51 - The Pouring Heart

Chapter 51: Chapter 51 - The Pouring Heart

I took a shuddering breath, my voice hoarse and thick with bitterness as I continued to pour my heart out.

"Do you know what it's like to be stripped naked and put on display for everyone? It felt like true hell! They laughed at every inch of my body, every look of shame on my face... and you know the most painful part? Not a single person cared. And you, Mom... all you did was force me to go back to that hell, over and over again!"

I stopped, my body trembling violently from the outburst of long-suppressed emotions. My tears fell, dripping onto Delilah's cheeks as she lay beneath me.

For the first time, the hard expression on my stepmother's face softened. Her eyes, which had been filled with hatred, grew moist, as if jolted by my bitter confession.

"It hurts, Mom!" I screamed, my voice rising even higher. "Every night when I close my eyes, I dream of all that torture! Every time I wake up and leave this room, I'm haunted by all of the faces and stares! I genuinely wanted to die, but if I killed myself, all of you would just laugh at me! And the thought of that made me furious!"

This time, tears began to stream down Delilah's face. A silent cry, but real.

"I hate all of you!" I yelled even louder. "All of you who just stood by and watched! Who just let me be tortured like that! I don't know why, but I despise people like you! I can understand them staying silent because they're weak, but you, Mom... you're one of the strongest people in the world. How could you just stand by and let all of that happen to me?"

With a gentle movement, I wiped the tears from Delilah's face. My powerful, hardened stepmother was crying before me. "Why are you crying, Mom?" I asked, my voice suddenly becoming calmer. "Do you feel guilty?"

Delilah remained silent. I had intentionally given her a question, not a command, and she knew it.

"Mom, this is a question," I said, staring deep into her eyes. "Did you know that I was going through all of that and ignored me? You must have known that your two bitches treated me like garbage and beat me, right?! Or... did you not know about any of it and never cared about me at all?"

I stared directly into her eyes. "Which one is it, Mom?"

Delilah remained silent. I knew why—because every possible answer was wrong.

So, I clutched her face tightly. "Answer me!"

And with that coercion, she finally spoke, her voice trembling: "I... I didn't know about any of that... I ignored you on purpose all this time."

I fell silent for a moment, looking at her with mixed feelings. Then, in a voice that suddenly broke, I said: "Mom, if you had paid just a little bit of attention to me... maybe I wouldn't have become like this. You said I'm sick, right?! Yes, I'm sick! So fucking sick! I'm broken, Mom! Shattered to pieces! Just like our relationship is now, Mom... it's beyond repair."

Then, with a malicious intent to drive her guilt even deeper, I continued in a voice full of bitterness: "Remember this, Mom! I could become this broken because I'm your son! Because I'm your family! If only I weren't your family! If only you hadn't sent me to that academy! I would never have experienced any of this!"

Even though Nine Stars Academy was a Hunter Academy, it didn't mean there were no regular students. But they were treated much better than Adam. The reason? Because Adam is a student who failed to Awaken, but has two parents who are SSS-ranked Hunters.

My breath hitched, my eyes, which had just dried, welling up again with overflowing anger. "I hate you, Mom! I hate you so much! You're the one who created this monster! And now, no one can stop me!"

I stared sharply at Delilah, trying to pierce the soul of the woman lying helpless beneath me with all the hatred I had stored up for years.

Then, something unexpected happened.

From Delilah's trembling lips came a word I never anticipated.

"Sorry."

I froze.

The word echoed in the quiet room, piercing straight to the deepest recesses of my heart. After all the atrocities I had committed against her today—raping her, enslaving her, humiliating her—I never expected to hear an apology from her. I didn't even want it. And that was precisely what sent my emotions spiraling into a storm of confusion.

"Why... why are you apologizing, Mom?" I asked, my voice trembling as my hand clutched her face again, this time with a mix of anger and bewilderment. "Your apology... it's far too late!"

I fell silent for a moment, feeling the turmoil inside me growing. "My feelings are so messed up right now, Mom. I don't even know how to explain it. I feel angry, hateful, hurt, guilty... but strangely, I also feel satisfied, happy, and most importantly, I feel excited and turned on!"

A short, nervous laugh burst from my lips.

"It's a truly delightful feeling, and it makes me eager to destroy all of you!"

Delilah clearly shivered upon hearing the inner chaos I revealed. After saying it, I realized something. I sat up straight, released my grip on her, and stared at the ceiling. I took a deep breath, trying to calm myself from the emotional storm I had just experienced.

It seems what people say is true. Talking and pouring your heart out to someone, even if it's to your own victim, can bring a strange relief. My mind, which had been in turmoil, now felt calmer, and my feelings were clearer. A new understanding about myself and my purpose now felt more distinct and straightforward.

"Thank you, Mom," I said, my voice suddenly very calm and controlled, looking at her again. "Thank you for letting me pour my heart out to you. Because of you, everything feels clearer now. I won't hesitate or go easy on any of them anymore!"

Delilah stared at me, witnessing my transformation from an emotional explosion to a terrifying calmness. I leaned down, approaching her face once more.

"But don't worry, Mom," I whispered, as if giving reassurance. "I'll treat you and my sisters gently. After all, despite everything, you're still my family, and I just made a promise, didn't I?" A faint smile spread across my lips.

"It's just that Gwen might need a slightly... harder punishment. Considering how wicked she's been all this time."

Hearing her eldest daughter's name mentioned, Delilah gritted her teeth, yet remained powerless.

"And for you, Mom," I continued, stroking her cheek, still wet with tears, "you've already failed as my mother. But don't worry, I will definitely train you and teach you how to be a good mother for me."

My seemingly gentle touch contrasted sharply with his cutting words. I took a breath, looking at her with a gaze full of possession.

"Right now, you probably regret everything about me, Mom? But I'm sure, one day, you'll be grateful for it. You might even come to enjoy it."

Delilah could only stare at me, her feelings a tangled mess as she witnessed her stepson, who had completely lost his sanity, yet found a disturbing peace within the chaos he himself had created.

'How did it all come to this, Frey?' Delilah's silent thought echoed in her mind, a memory beginning to spin back within her.

Chapter 52: Chapter 52 - A Slave's Kiss

"You know, Del? Even though our marriage is just a contract on paper, born from our own different needs... I'm glad I got to spend time with you. You're truly a good friend." Freyden Socheron's voice was warm, yet held a hidden sorrow.

The handsome man with stone-grey hair and purple eyes stood tall, his sturdy and authoritative figure radiating an aura of both power and gentleness. His face was strikingly similar to Adam's, as if showing what Adam would look like in the future.

Delilah stood before him, her usually calm eyes now gazing into the distance, as if trying to pierce through an unavoidable fate.

"Do you really have to do this?" she asked, her voice flat yet firm.

"Yes," Freyden answered succinctly, without hesitation.

"Why?" pressed Delilah, a hint of bitterness audible in her tone. "It's not your responsibility."

Freyden let out a soft sigh. "I have to die, Del. And it is my responsibility."

"Why do you have, Frey?" Delilah didn't relent, stepping closer. "We can fight together."

"We don't stand a chance," Freyden replied gently but definitively. "I absolutely must do this, Del."

"WHY?" Delilah's voice rose slightly, her emotions finally breaking through. "For this world?"

Freyden gave a faint smile, a sad one that lasted only a moment before fading. "No, of course not. It's for my child... and for you, Del."

Silence enveloped the space between them, heavy and meaningful. Two powerful people bound by a contract, now faced with the heaviest of choices.

Finally, in a voice almost a whisper, Delilah asked the question that had been buried in her heart.

"Hey, Frey... if you didn't know you were going to die, would you have properly pursued me?"

Freyden was startled for a second, his purple eyes blinking. But soon, the sad smile returned to his lips, his expression seeming to yearn for a beautiful future they would never have. "Del..."

Seeing that expression, Delilah already knew the answer. No more words were needed. Her heart felt both relieved and aching—relieved to know her feelings weren't entirely one-sided, aching because they never had the chance.

A moment later, Freyden spoke again, his voice heavy yet full of conviction. "I entrust my child to you, Del. Please protect him."

Delilah nodded slowly.

She didn't know that this promise would one day lead her to an unimaginable situation—becoming the sex slave of the very child her husband entrusted to her, tormented by the memory of that husband's death, and trapped in an endless cycle of vengeance.

That was the reason Delilah had ignored Adam all this time. Every time she saw Adam, Freyden's shadow would resurface in her mind, accompanied by a deep regret.

She regretted not stopping him.

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I woke up feeling light. After so long, I finally managed to sleep through the night without any nightmares.

As my eyes slowly opened, my still-blurry vision was met by a sight I could barely believe—Delilah's perfect face, like a goddess descended from heaven, right above me. Before I could fully process it, her soft lips were already touching mine in a kiss.

I was startled for a moment, but quickly kissed her back. Right, last night I had ordered my stepmother to kiss me every time I woke up, and she was actually following through.

Our kiss turned wild, full of passion. I could feel the unmatched softness of her lips, her skilled tongue exploring every corner of my mouth, while my own tongue eagerly explored the cavern of hers. We kept making out intensely for nearly five minutes before I finally felt satisfied.

When we parted, I gazed at my stepmother, still completely naked. My hand casually kneaded her large, incredibly plump breasts, so soft my hand seemed to sink into them. I still found it hard to believe that the famous Star Witch was now my personal sex slave.

"I'm sure you've heard this a lot, Mom," I murmured, "but I really have to say it, you are the most beautiful woman I've ever seen."

Delilah just responded with a cold stare, unaffected by my compliment.

I continued, my voice filled with desire, "It's still early, but looking at your lewd appearance and after that kiss, my little brother is already very excited."

"Now help me calm him down, Mom. Use that pretty mouth of yours to serve your son. Suck it all, and do it well."

Delilah moved off the bed without hesitation. She pulled back the covers and lowered my shorts and boxers. My thick, long dick stood straight up in front of her face. Without preamble, she opened her beautiful mouth and began licking my balls with the tip of her tongue. The sensation sent waves of pleasure shooting through my body.

"Ah... see? Our brief blowjob training last night in the bathroom is already paying off," I praised, groaning in pleasure.

Delilah then licked all along my shaft up to the head, kissing it gently. My moans grew louder, my fists clenching.

After teasing the head for a while, she finally opened her mouth wide and took my entire length inside. The wet sounds of her mouth moving back and forth were driving me crazy.

I used [Eye of Desire] to check her status.

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{SLAVE}

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NAME: Delilah Socheron

AGE: 41

CLASS: Star Witch

RANK: SSS

DOMINANCE: 16%

SEXUAL AROUSAL: 9%

VAGINA VIRGINITY: No

ANAL VIRGINITY: Yes

WEAK POINTS: -

FETISH: -

'Hmmm... Wasn't her dominance 14% last time? When did it increase? I didn't do much to her last night besides playing with her breasts and pussy with my hand. Was it because of our conversation?' I thought.

After a moment's consideration, I was sure that was the reason. Our conversation last night was indeed very intense. So, I can increase dominance without always resorting to sex? Surrender—is that the key?

Yes, surrender.

Not just fear, but a deep, internal acceptance that there is no way left to fight. Every attempt at resistance must be made to feel futile, every hope must be crushed one by one. When she realizes my authority is absolute, obedience will come naturally and inevitably. Especially if that surrender leads her to pleasure. That's the real key to increasing my dominance.

I groaned again, feeling her blowjob technique improving, and stroked her head. "Thank you, Mom! Because of you, I've realized something important once again."

Delilah shot me a sharp look, murderous intent clear in her eyes even with her mouth full of my cock. But now, that look didn't scare me at all.

While continuing to enjoy her deep sucking, I picked up my phone and opened the social media account I hadn't checked in ages.

My inbox was flooded with insults and curses—the main reason I avoided this platform. Why not just make a new account? Unfortunately, the strict verification system required every citizen to have only one lifetime account linked to their digital ID card.

This policy was implemented by the Hunter Global Authority to prevent the spread of false information and to facilitate the tracking of online activity, particularly related to national security and Hunter operations.

My eyes landed on a message from Nerissa that had arrived two days ago. When I opened it, a short video showing me fucking Arianna played. Below it was a long string of threats:

"Watch closely, trash. If you don't come to my lab immediately and be my guinea pig again, I'll spread this video throughout the academy."

"Useless, ungrateful trash! How dare you ignore me! I'll make sure everyone sees how pathetic you are!"

"Silence? How dare you play games with me!"

"If you don't respond within 24 hours, I'll spread this video to the entire academy."

"You think this is a joke? You have 12 hours left!"

"Fine, have it your way. Tomorrow everyone will know that this trash can get an erection!"

"You're really underestimating me, huh? Now just spreading the video isn't enough, I'll make sure you get expelled from the academy!"

"ANSWER ME, YOU PUSSY! I WILL DESTROY YOU!"

I was shocked to learn Nerissa had a recording of that. When did she take it? I wondered briefly but then shook my head; it wasn't too important right now. I sighed and closed my phone. My initial plan was to get revenge on Maximus first, but it seems I need to change my priorities.

Soon after, thanks to Delilah's increasingly vigorous sucking, I reached my peak.

"Fuck! I'm cumming, Mom!" I moaned, releasing hot streams of semen into her mouth.

Delilah then opened her mouth, showing me the pool of white inside, before swallowing it completely, just as I had ordered—every time she sucks me, she must swallow every last drop of my cum.

Chapter 53: Chapter 53 - Thank You for Disciplining Mom

My breath was still ragged as I looked down at my stepmother, who had just finished servicing me. My hand stroked her disheveled golden hair. "Good Mom."

Delilah turned her face away, her lips pursed in unconcealed disgust. Seeing her reaction, I couldn't hold back a smile.

"Mom, remember this," I said. "If you have even the slightest malicious intent in your heart to hurt me when you want to do something, don't do it. This is an order!"

Instantly, Delilah's body stiffened. I could see the last shred of hope for freeing herself crumble in an instant. And immediately, that notification appeared:

[Domination over Delilah increased to 21%]

Five percent at once. Incredible. Last night, I had to fuck her for hours just to raise it a few points.

My guess was right—shattering her hope and breaking her psychologically was very effective.

The words I had just said to her were deliberately designed as a test and a safety measure. I'd spent the night thinking about how this [Slave's Collar] works. The collar can force her to obey all my commands, but only physically. It can't change her inherent nature or the feelings in her heart.

For example, if I ordered my mom to become a prostitute, she'd be forced to do it and act like a genuine whore. But deep inside, her disgust, shame, and hatred would still burn fiercely.

Conversely, it's impossible for me to command her to love me—because love is a feeling, not a physical action that can be forced.

Furthermore, while the collar prevents her from directly harming me, I still don't know the full extent of its protection.

The bottom line is, the [Slave's Collar] might shackle her actions, but not the malicious intent and hatred in her heart.

"I know exactly what's on your mind, Mom," I said, staring sharply at her. "Even though you can't raise a hand to hurt me yourself, I'm sure you're looking for a loophole. Searching for a way to attack me without using your own hands, perhaps by leveraging other people or specific situations."

Delilah's expression grew even darker.

I smiled with satisfaction seeing her reaction. Her deep hatred no longer scared me—it was just proof that I was truly in control.

Even though my little brother had just been satisfied by Delilah, it wasn't enough. He was still throbbing uncontrollably. I shook my head while looking at my stepmother.

"Instead of calming my little brother down, you've just gotten him even more excited, Mom."

Truthfully, I wanted to continue playing with her right away, but I had something important to do today. I needed to be in prime condition; I don't have unlimited stamina—at least, not yet.

So, no matter how strong the temptation, I had to resist it.

A little while later, I opened the bedroom door and got a surprise. Angeline, my stepsister whose virginity I took last night and fucked until she passed out, was already standing in front of the door. She looked suddenly flustered and nervous when she saw me.

It seemed she'd been waiting outside my door for quite a while.

My curiosity was immediately piqued. What had changed in her after my dominance over her reached 100% last night? I immediately activated [Eye of Desire] on her.

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{SEX SLAVE}

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NAME: Angeline Socheron

AGE: 20

CLASS: Paladin

RANK: A

DOMINANCE: 100%

SEXUAL AROUSAL: 39%

VAGINA VIRGINITY: No

ANAL VIRGINITY: Yes

WEAK POINTS: Tongue, Vagina, Breasts.

FETISH: Sadistic and Masochistic

No information had changed since the last time I looked. She was now officially my sex slave. But interestingly, her sexual arousal level was quite high—39%. Was she turned on right now?

"What are you doing here?" I asked her, curious about her reaction.

Angeline bowed her head, her cheeks flushed. "I... I wanted to serve you," she said in a small voice, but with a faint, rebellious undertone. "You're the one who ordered me to suck your cock every day... so... don't get the wrong idea! This is only because you ordered me to!"

I almost laughed at her antics. Just last night she was still terrified and disgusted every time I ordered her to serve me, but now she's suddenly acting like a shy girl who secretly wants it. This must be the effect of her Sex Slave status after I successfully Mind Broke her.

"Even though I just took your virginity and fucked you senseless last night, you already miss me this much," I teased, moving closer. "Waiting for me outside my door first thing in the morning, my little cocksucking angel."

"W-who said I missed you?!" she protested, but her eyes kept glancing downward. "This... this is only because you ordered me to! I don't want to do this at all! Really, I don't!"

Her sudden tsundere attitude made me curious. Is this her true nature, hidden all this time behind her rough and cruel exterior? All this time, she just treated me like trash—hitting and humiliating me. But now... she's like a normal girl confused by her own feelings.

I observed Angeline with great interest. According to the notification last night after I fully dominated her, she was supposed to have become a sex slave who lives only to serve my cock. I imagined she'd turn into a shameless, lewd slut, always begging to be satisfied. But in reality, she still looked like the usual Angeline—just with an unexpected tsundere attitude.

Suddenly, her eyes peeked into my room. Her face instantly paled when she saw Delilah, who was straightening the bed, completely naked.

"You... you promised you wouldn't touch Mom!" she protested, her voice trembling with a mix of anger and disappointment. "Last night you promised that if I... if I gave you my virginity, you wouldn't lay a hand on her!"

I didn't answer immediately. Instead, I touched her shoulder gently, making her flinch slightly.

"Angel," I said in a feigned sad tone, "I did promise. But your mother tried to attack me. So I had to discipline her, it's for my own safety, and for the good of all of us."

Angeline looked confused, conflict visible in her eyes. I continued in a firmer voice, "You need to understand, as my slave, you must always support your master. Your mother did wrong, and I had to punish her. You should be happy that now your mother can experience the same pleasure you felt. Isn't it better if we can all feel happiness together?"

My twisted, perverted logic seemed to be sinking into her mind. I watched the resistance in her eyes slowly fade.

"But... but..."

"No 'buts'," I cut her off. "I am your master now. Everything I do is for the good of all of us. You want your family to be happy, right? Now we'll be closer than ever before."

Angeline bowed her head, seemingly processing my words. I could see the internal battle within her—between the remnants of her old morality and her new programming as my sex slave.

"I... I understand," she finally whispered, though she still sounded a bit uncertain. "I... I will support you."

"Good," I praised, stroking her head. "Now, what do you have to say?"

She took a deep breath.

"Thank you... for... disciplining Mom."

My smile widened. Her mental break was truly perfect.

Then, shyly, she looked at me. "So... so... let me serve you now," she whispered, her hands starting to undo the buttons of my pants.

But I stopped her hands. "Patience, Angel. I have important business today."

I stared deep into her eyes. "But for tonight... I want you to prepare yourself. Wear your sexiest clothes, and... don't wear anything underneath. I want you wet and ready, waiting for me in your room."

She nodded, her face flushed bright red but her eyes sparkling—a mixture of shame and anticipation.

"Oh, and Angel..." I added, turning to leave, "Say it like you mean it. Beg!"

She took a deep breath, then in a voice trembling with shameful obedience, said, "Please... Big Brother... use my body tonight. I... I promise I'll be a good sex slave..."

I smiled with satisfaction.

"Good. I promise I'll fuck you so hard you'll wish you were dead."

She turned and walked away with a light step, nothing like a traumatized rape victim should be. I could only shake my head at her drastic change. Total mind break and domination—it's truly something else.

When I glanced back, my gaze met Delilah's, still sitting on the bed. Her eyes were filled with profound despair, witnessing how her daughter had completely transformed into her stepson's sex slave—and was even eager for it.

[Domination over Delilah increased to 31%]

Chapter 54: Chapter 54 - A Daughter's Vengeance

Right now, there's something far more important than just satisfying my fucking desires, or even going back to the academy to start the long-awaited revenge I've been harboring. Everything else can wait.

My focus is fixed on one thing only: completing the Quest the System gave me. There are only a few days left. Failure is not an option.

[WEEKLY QUEST]

OBJECTIVE:

Kill 50 Rank D or higher monsters.

TIME LIMIT: 3 Days

REWARD: 200 EXP

FAILURE: The System and all acquired abilities will be permanently lost.

Not funny, is it? Just imagine, I could lose everything. The System that's the backbone of my power, every ability I've worked so hard to acquire... all gone, just for failing this stupid quest.

I use the [Faceless Mask] to alter my appearance. I recalled the face of some random person I passed on the street and carved that image into my mind, letting my form shift to match it.

I changed into a man in his early thirties—broad-shouldered, tan skin, and a sharp, clean-cut look. My eyes narrowed into a deep brown, and my black hair was neatly styled. Handsome enough, but not flashy or suspicious. Just the kind of forgettable charm I needed.

Now I sit across from Ruth Anvilhart in her lavish office. Cold and cynical, as always. She holds a paper containing our agreement. Before either of us reads it or signs, a few nagging questions run through my mind.

"Before we proceed any further, there are some things I need to know," I say, breaking the silence. "What exactly caused the Iron Knight's death?"

Ruth, expressionless, answers curtly, "He died while exploring an A-rank Dungeon."

But that answer doesn't satisfy me. From the start, something about this woman has unsettled me.

"I've been curious since the first time we met," I say, staring at her sharply. "You're an S-rank Hunter, aren't you?"

Ruth's eyes widen for a moment, surprised. "How did you know?"

"That's a secret."

Of course I won't reveal my [Eye of Desire] skill. Though with her intellect, Ruth likely suspected I had some kind of scouting ability.

My next question cuts deeper. "Why hide your real rank? It's strange. You said you needed me to impersonate the Iron Knight so other guilds wouldn't attack you. But Iron Knight was only Rank A. If you revealed you were Rank S, the problem would vanish, nobody would dare challenge you. What's the point of this charade?"

Ruth sneers, matching my tone with her own cynicism. "That... is a secret."

Hearing that, I stand up. "Then there's nothing more to discuss. The deal's off."

As I turn to leave, Ruth quickly stops me. "Wait!"

She takes a deep breath, as if struggling with herself. "Fine. The reason I hid my rank... is closely tied to the Iron Knight's death."

I sit back down, urging her to continue.

"I reached Rank S almost at the same time he died." She pauses, her eyes flashing with restrained emotion.

"And... I lied earlier. The Iron Knight didn't die in the dungeon. He was murdered. I hid my rank and needed you to pose as him to lure the killer out of hiding. I want to catch him myself and make him pay."

Oh. Now things start to make sense. But anger immediately wells in my chest. I've been lied to.

"This is a death trap for me!" I protest. "You forced me into your scheme without telling me the real risks!"

"Of course I lied," Ruth replies without remorse. "If I'd told you the truth from the start, you would have refused."

Silence settles. I try to process everything. Ruth watches me, her gaze calculating. I can sense her mind turning—if I refuse, she might use threats or other methods to coerce me.

"Back then," I say slowly, breaking the quiet, "you said only you and one other person knew about his death. Do you mean... you and me?"

Ruth is silent for a moment, her eyes widening as she grasps the implication of my words.

"What? You think... I... killed him?"

I nod slowly.

Suddenly, the corner of Ruth's mouth lifts into a strange smile, then explodes into loud laughter, as if I'd just told the funniest joke in the world. I remain silent until her laughter subsides.

When she's satisfied, she dabs at the corner of her eye. "Why would you think that?"

"You could have engineered the whole thing," I say evenly. "You needed someone to impersonate the victim so the official investigation would stall and you'd be free from scrutiny."

Ruth shakes her head, the smile turning bitter. From her pocket she draws a silver locket and opens it. Inside is an old photograph of a girl about ten, standing next to a tall, handsome man. At a glance you can tell they are father and daughter. Studying them longer, their faces resemble Ruth and the Iron Knight.

"Iron Knight was my father," she says, her voice suddenly soft but filled with vengeance. "The reason I concealed his death and didn't report it to the authorities is because I wanted to find his killer... and kill them with my own hands."

A murderous aura radiates from her, chilling the air in the room.

Ah. That's why.

This information would never appear online and understandably so. Most Hunters guard their private lives fiercely.

Seeing genuine grief and rage in her eyes, I believe she's speaking the truth. Still, I need to be certain.

"Is there anything else you're hiding?" I ask flatly.

"No. That's everything," she replies.

"Very well," I say, this time with a threatening edge. "But know this: this is the last time you hide anything that concerns me. If you do again, I will teach you a lesson you'll never forget."

Others would find the scene amusing: a student not yet graduated, daring to threaten an S-rank Hunter feared by many.

Ruth doesn't pull back in anger; instead she looks amused. Her lips curve, challenging. "Oh? What kind of lesson could you possibly teach me?"

Inside, I seriously consider activating [Time Stop] or [Mind Control], then taking her right there on her desk to wipe that arrogant look off her face. But before I decide, Ruth gives a small laugh.

"I'm kidding, don't take me too seriously," she says, though her eyes stay probing. "But there's something different about you. Why have you become so sharp all of a sudden? It's like you're a completely different person. Did something happen?"

I exhale. "I just feel... my mind is much clearer now." It's a large understatement; I don't want to share more.

Ruth doesn't press. She nods, though her curiosity is still obvious.

"So, what about our deal? Will you go through with it?"

I fall silent again, weighing my options. On one hand, it's a deadly trap. On the other, it's a golden opportunity: access to her guild, information, resources, and—most importantly—the Dungeon. Passing it up would be foolish.

After careful thought, I decide.

"All right, I'll take it," I say firmly.

Ruth's face brightens immediately, a flash of hope and satisfaction showing. I quickly dampen her enthusiasm by raising a finger.

"But on one condition."

Chapter 55: Chapter 55 - A New Persona

I put the pen down after reading through the entire agreement one more time. The inked letters looked cold beneath the crystal lamp, yet the promises written there felt warm to me. A clear role, safe boundaries, and payment generous enough to make my eyebrows rise.

The terms were simple and in my favor. I would only have to act as the Guild Master during public events and meetings. I wouldn't fight. And if anything ever felt too dangerous, I could refuse without facing any direct consequences. The benefits alone felt like Ruth was giving me more than she should.

Ruth looked me up and down and asked, "What name should I write for your new identity?"

I paused. A familiar name flickered in the back of my mind, a memory of a man who sometimes visited me in my dreams.

"Freyden," I said.

Ruth blinked in surprise. "Freyden? That's... your father's name. You're really going to use it?"

My father used to be very famous, so it was no surprise that his real name was known to many people.

I nodded silently. There was nothing else to explain. With that, Ruth signed the document and stamped the guild seal onto the bottom corner. The deal was official. Binding.

I couldn't always pretend to be Iron Knight, or I'd be found out, and using my real identity was out of the question. The only solution was to create a new persona and join Crimson Dawn under that name. From there, access to dungeons, and every path leading toward my goal would be mine.

Ruth leaned in slightly, her voice dropping to a whisper. "Did you catch the attention of the Guardian Council during that meeting?"

I shook my head.

She closed her eyes for a moment, considering something far larger than us. "The Divine Archer wants to recruit you for a secret mission. The rewards are... extraordinary. An opportunity that could raise your status faster than anything else."

"You already know my answer."

"Don't be too quick to shut it down," she urged gently but firmly. "Rejecting a Council member outright would raise suspicion. Every Hunter wants to be in their good graces. Turning them away now would only make people question us."

"No matter what they promise, I'm not the Iron Knight," I replied. "Getting involved with the Council is too risky. And it goes beyond the terms we agreed on."

Ruth held my gaze, then let out a small, knowing smile. "I figured you'd say that. I already refused on your behalf. I told them Iron Knight is currently focusing on recovering from injuries and undergoing intense training. I'm only telling you this so you'll be more careful."

As agreed, I would receive two Rank A artifacts and exclusive access to one dungeon per day. Only me. No sharing. No oversight.

A privilege far greater than it sounded.

I kept my satisfaction hidden, though I could feel it humming beneath my ribs. This was more than I could have hoped for.

In a city this large, dozens of low-level dungeons sprout every single day. Sometimes in tiny alleyways, sometimes underground, sometimes right in the middle of crowded buildings. If a dungeon goes undetected and the timer runs out, a Dungeon Break follows. Monsters flooding into the real world.

According to Ruth, a Tier IV guild like Crimson Dawn is officially granted only two or three dungeon slots per day by the Hunter Global Authority. Giving me one completely for myself was an enormous sacrifice on her part.

After all the paperwork, Ruth led me to the Hunter Trade District. A marketplace restricted to licensed Hunters only, guarded by heavily armed enforcers. Without the proper papers, the massive iron gates would never open.

Despite living in this city for years, it was my first time walking inside.

Immediately, the world changed.

Colorful stalls and busy shops filled every corner. Potions bubbled with strange energy inside crystal bottles. Artifacts pulsed with dim light as if a heart still beat inside them. Monster crystals vibrated softly, as though some feral force waited to break free. In some places, massive fangs and bones were hung like trophies or grotesque ornaments.

But the loudest sound of all was the clanging of blacksmiths' hammers. They struck heated metal with rhythmic violence, forging weapons that gleamed with power. The smell of hot steel, oil, and a faint hint of blood saturated the air.

It was hard to look away.

Ruth eventually stopped in front of an old shop with its wooden sign peeling. The place was called Old Man Emporium. Compared to all the luxurious shops around us, her choice looked... humble. Which told me enough. This must be coming from her own pocket.

Inside, the scent of aged wood and rusty metal drifted in. The shelves were packed with weapons, trinkets, and mysterious items I couldn't even begin to identify. Skull-shaped boxes with glowing runes. Glass orbs showing reflections that didn't match the real world. Dragonhide gloves hanging from the ceiling like sleeping bats.

The shopkeeper, an elderly man with silver hair and a thick beard, lit up as soon as he saw us.

"Welcome, welcome! Are you looking for a recovery potion? A physical enhancement artifact? Perhaps something rare from the eastern dungeons? Oh, I also have Frost Salamander potion, very popular nowadays," he said, firing words like rapid arrows.

"I need a Rank A dagger," I cut in.

He froze, then offered a sheepish smile and shook his head. "Rank A daggers are out of stock. But I have exceptional Rank B alternatives that are practically just as good."

He quickly presented two blades.

The first had a dark handle with shifting engravings, like shadows reshaping themselves. "Crafted from Shadow Panther claws. Light, fast, razor sharp. Rank B armor would crumble like paper."

The second had a serrated greenish edge.

"Forged from a Basilisk fang. The toxin still lingers inside the metal. One scratch can paralyze a Rank C monster in seconds."

I nodded vaguely, unimpressed.

Ruth suddenly turned to me. "Why not a sword? Your father is the Sword Saint. The greatest blade master in the world."

The question struck like a blade itself. My throat tightened.

"It reminds me of him," I muttered.

Ruth seemed ready to pry further but stopped when she saw my expression.

I exhaled once, steady myself.

Time to face what I had run from.

I looked at the shopkeeper. "Old man, show me the Rank A sword you have."

His eyes gleamed with excitement. He bent down and carefully produced a long black scabbard, well cared-for despite its age. Slowly, he revealed the blade.

A curved saber. Midnight black. It swallowed the light around it, reflecting nothing. Faint patterns slithered across the metal like living shadows.

My heartbeat kicked up.

This was no ordinary sword.

The old man snapped the scabbard shut again, almost nervously.

"This sword's name is Mindrender. It has the power to drive anyone struck by it into madness," he whispered. "And if the wielder is not strong enough, it whispers into their mind until sanity frays. No one truly knows who loses themselves first. The victim... or the owner."

The description of the sword caught my attention.

"I'll take it," I said without hesitation.

Ruth stared. "You're certain?"

"Completely."

A shiver crawled up my spine just from gripping the scabbard.

"You're sure, boy? I have warned you," the old man insisted.

I nodded again.

The shopkeeper looked absurdly relieved, like he had finally rid himself of a cursed burden.

Once the sword was mine, I turned back to him.

"For the second Rank A artifact, do you have a rope or restraint of some sort? Something capable of binding or incapacitating a Rank S Hunter."

Ruth whipped her head toward me, eyes narrowed. "Why would you ever need something like that?"

I met her gaze and let a slow, meaningful smile curl on my lips.

"I need it to discipline my older sister."