

The Noble 356

Chapter 356: What Did I Do Wrong?

Yes, the person in front of me was Lily. I didn't know what she was doing here, or rather why she was the informant and why the twins were here too. Now that I think about it, number 1, who was at the academy, lost sight of them at some point.

Leaving that aside, the atmosphere and the fact that they were barely visible was great, but the twins' small silhouettes detracted greatly from their aura and impressiveness; that's why in these cases they would only serve as companion cats or when Eira was really pissed off.

'Hmm, what to do? They're doing more fun things behind my back. Hmmm, well, I'm going to tease her a little—for not telling me.'

"You know what? Better not. It's not that important now. I want information about one of the new boys in the kingdom of Avaloria, the most handsome among them."

"...Oh, you want information about Alex—?"

"About Christian Leonhard!"

'Damn it, Lily, why did you say Alexander? When obviously in your heart I'm the most handsome. Number two: go for Alexander's ass; on second thought, earth affinity would improve our combat strength.'

'Yes, anything to be stronger.'

"...Then you've come to the wrong place. We don't handle any information about that person here. If that's all, you may leave."

'Oh, the atmosphere changed!'

I didn't expect to be suddenly kicked out, although she was obviously using something to alter her voice; you could tell there was more caution and threat in her.

'Hmm, could this be her surprise? Did she get a job as an informant? And did she bring the twins to show off? It sounds like something she would do. Hmm, it's a rare opportunity. I'll bother her a little more.'

It was strange to see her acting like this, and I definitely wouldn't miss the opportunity to get revenge for some things she has done to annoy me.

"No? What a pity! Well, never mind. You know, I'll settle for information from other people. I've got my eye on some cute twins named Eira and Sele—"

"We don't handle that kind of information here either. I've thought about it, and you're not a client, so please leave now."

'She's really angry! That's very rare to see.'

I don't think I've ever seen Lily really angry. It's a new experience, and even though my logic tells me to stop, I feel like I want to continue. This isn't something you see every day.

"Hey, what kind of place is this? Why don't you have any information on anything! Why does it seem like you're hiding it on purpose? Are you their mother or something?"

"Please leave. Oh, I'll take measures to remove you."

"Hmm, why does that sound like a threat? Are you threatening me?"

"Only if you resist leaving,"

"So, if it was, you probably don't know that I don't like to be threatened, I get dangerous when they do that. Oh! But now that I get a good look at that silhouette, it's not that cutie I was telling you about. you, come closer."

"Ah!"

"...Yes."

I was having more fun than I thought I would and decided to be more aggressive: I activated the resonance. At that moment, I saw the twins' ears perk up in surprise.

Eira seemed to understand the intention, and Selene, I think, too, since she followed what I said; she quickly came to me and sat on my lap, so as not to ruin it, I gestured to Eira to be quiet.

I looked at Lily, and although she was in the shadows, she seemed to be frozen and surprised by Selene's actions, but that was brief.

"What did you do? No! Get away from her or you'll regret it."

Now she sounded very threatening and gave off an immature but real murderous intent; I didn't think she would have that, being a city girl and only gaining rank in the last few months.

'Maybe, because of her skill, she has inherited intentions? Hmm, maybe, she is an apex beast after all.'

I know it's wrong for me to be doing this, but the more I do it, the more it shows me a side of Lily that I don't usually see, and I want to continue.

"About what? You know? Right now, I brainwashed her; she's at my mercy and will depend on me from now on. Huehuehue. Hey! Wait, wait, are those siege barriers? That can kill a ninth rank instantly! I give up."

I wanted to continue, but suddenly I saw that she started activating some barriers around us; I didn't notice why, I was paying more attention to the atmosphere and Lily and the twins.

It was dangerous and not something anyone would have. Then I remembered that technically she is the wife of the Minister of Defense, who has and manages the magical technology to defend the kingdom, so it's not unusual for her to have them.

"Let her go and remove the brainwashing or you'll regret it."

"Hey, stop playing around! My mother is seriously upset now."

"Don't get involved, dear; this is dangerous. It's my fault for bringing them here, I'll definitely fix it, and you, I'm not kidding, I'm going to count to three."

"I give up, calm down, Lily, it's me, calm down, I was just kidding. Turn that off; Selene could get hurt."

"Sweetheart?"

"Yes, it's our idiot boyfriend!"

'Mental note: don't make Lily angry.'

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"Hmph! Sweetheart, you ruined everything! You made me look bad, hmph!"

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'Mental note: it's worth making her angry if I act with restraint.'

Now Lily seems angry about what happened, and very dissatisfied because I apparently got in the way of something she was doing.

She stood there with her arms crossed, acting childish and annoyed; those 'hmpfs' really are food for my soul.

"So, are you going to tell me what's going on here, or is it a secret?"

"Hmph! I have nothing to talk about with you, Sweetheart. What you did was very wrong; I'm not going to talk to you anymore..."

"..."

"What? Why are you looking at me like that?"

"Well, wait for a final 'hmpf,' ahem! And I already apologized. Rather, I think it will serve as a lesson to you. I mean, why didn't you dress up or something? It's silly to have that voice change when your figures are clearly feminine."

"That's not fair, Sweetheart. You only caught us because the artifacts we carry are the ones that alter perception. All three of us carry artifacts to change our appearance; you should see us as three big guys, and with the barriers, it was absolutely safe."

'Oh, that explains everything.'

Apparently, it wasn't that they made silly mistakes, the problem was me, who unintentionally blocked the function of those artifacts, she was well prepared.

"Hey, but Lily, I'm surprised you didn't realize it was me. It's not the first time I've bothered you by taking on another appearance; with your instincts, I thought you'd spot me as usual."

Since I fixed her physique, her instincts are no joke, not to mention that she has a good sense of smell, although the latter is easily avoided by me by casting a purification spell.

"Ugh! I was more focused on showing them how I work, and I wanted to show them my cool side. You were very bad, Sweetheart, you ruined everything!"

"What exactly did I ruin?"

"Hmph!, I'm not telling you."

"Hey, you two, stop fooling around. And if you want to know, why don't you just ask directly?"

"It's not necessary, I already understand what's going on."

I really want to ask what's going on, and I don't understand much. I can deduce a few things: that she's the informant and that they're here, but I'm not sure.

I know Lily had been plotting something for a long time, making arrangements she never wanted to tell me about.

I'm sure this is part of it; her suspicious face when I asked her was obvious: she wanted to surprise me and was enjoying my doubts.

So now that I'm the one who surprised her, I'll pretend I know everything, just to deny her that satisfaction.

"Don't pretend, you still have the resonance activated. You're obviously dying to ask."

'Oh, shit, she caught me.'

"And your mother."

"Mommy."

"Damn it, don't start with that now! You old hag! Don't try to change the subject — you've already lost. He caught you, so start spilling the beans; because if you don't, I will. I'm tired of being caught in the middle between you two."

"Ugh! I don't understand how you ended up like this. I did my best to raise you right. Was my love not enough?"

"No, she's still like this even though you give her so much. It's like it's predetermined that she acts like a street thug. Don't worry, you're not the problem..."

"Really?"

"Yes, you're an excellent mother. Look, Selene turned out fine, and even though she acts like that, she's very cute."

"That's true, she's adorable when she's not trying to bite you."

"Even when she is, she's still adorable."

"That's true, she's adorable, no matter what, even though she is, as you say, a..."

"tsundere, if that's the term."

"Stop it already!! You two are really pissing me off, and no matter how much you want to change the subject, I'll tell them if you don't want to say it."

"Ugh! But I didn't lose, I know everything too, so technically, it's a tie!"

"You're lying, you don't know anything."

"Yes, I do, hmph! (¯ε(¯))."

"Stop acting childish...! Okay, let's see if you can continue, Selene."

"Huh?"

"Eira, sweetheart, I don't know what you're doing, but you better stop."

"Listen, you must remember from now on that our mother is a sore loser, and she also likes to lie when..."

"Stop it! Okay, stop it, I get it. I don't know anything, fine; I lost. Ugh! Sweetheart, I lost. Okay, I said it, don't involve your sister."

"Hee~, I knew it, I won!"

"And you don't know what we're talking about either, right? Selene, you also have to remember that that guy who calls himself our boyfriend is a—"

"Stop it! Okay, I lie too, I don't understand what you're talking about or that I won. I just have some suspicions, but stop it. What if Selene starts calling me a 'liar' all the time?"

"...You two really are more alike than I'd like to admit. Let's go to the room first; it's a long story."

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Chapter 357: I'm Not Someone Summoned

"So, Sweetheart, basically I'm the leader of the best information organization in the kingdom; that's what I was hiding from you."

"Wow! I really didn't expect that!"

I mean, that was a surprise, but it answers a lot of questions: like what the marquis gained by marrying her, which he didn't mention, leaving out that he was in love, and it even clears up some doubts in my inherited memories.

Basically, Lily told me how, after the incident in which the twins were almost kidnapped, she decided to make a change and started looking toward the future.

To improve the gentlemen's club and bring it to its current glory, she understood that information was a valuable resource and slowly built a network of connections and information that unexpectedly flourished far beyond its initial purpose.

And it took off even more when she married the marquis, expanding it and giving them the mutual benefits we talked about earlier.

With the extensive network of contacts she formed, she gathered information and gave it to Cedric as a priority.

As Minister of Defense, being prepared was a priority, and so he did not hesitate to heavily fund Lily, strengthening all her connections and methods of gathering information.

That was why she was here as the informant; she was the leader of the organization.

It wasn't her job, but when she arrived in the morning, she called the twins, as she had promised herself that when they both left the capital, she would show them this. The twins clearly knew about it, but they never got involved.

But when the time came, she brought them to see it and familiarize themselves a little with all of this; and well, she did the informant's job, because she thought it was the coolest part of it all.

Until, coincidentally, her first client here was me, and I ruined it, which is why she was very dissatisfied. I ruined something she had been waiting for for a long time.

"Well, Sweetheart, that's what I hadn't told you, but there's something more important: we haven't done it in over a week, and I'm at my limit!"

"Oh, that's true! Priority matters must come first! Let's get down to business."

"Hehe~ I expect fair compensation for last week."

"Huehuehe~ I'll do it until you pass out, what's more, I'll bring a doppelgänger and—!"

"Hey, you two, stop it! Where are your priorities? We're not done talking yet. Old witch, don't change the subject! You already said that, but you haven't talked about the rest, and you have to say that to my mother too."

"(3) But I really want to do it. academy ended suddenly and I had a lot to do; this week was crazy, and now I'm horny. That can wait."

"(3) Yeah, we haven't done it in a week, I miss Lily; the rest is secondary stuff".

"No! We'll talk here and now! And you have to tell that horny old witch your secret; knowing her, tomorrow she'll play dumb and continue with this nonsense."

"Ugh! I shouldn't have said I was horny; it's not good for my daughters' education!"

"It's too late for that, Lily. Anyway, let's get these little things over with quickly so we can get to the important stuff faster."

"Yes, that's true, but I already said what's important; the rest is small stuff. The important thing is to go do it."

"You're really pissing me off! You more so, you old witch; how dare you say it's a little thing when you looked like you were going crazy? Don't even think about dragging this out; this will end today!"

"But my pride... haah~ I guess it's over. I really lost. Well, Sweetheart, it's not that important, but the reason I was hiding it from you is, well, because I thought I could figure out your secret on my own."

"Huh?"

"Ugh! At first I wanted to play with you. I mean, you seemed so sure it was a big secret, and since you didn't know I was the leader of an intelligence organization, I thought I had the upper hand and could easily figure it out on my own."

"Huh? You were playing this game too?"

"Yes, just like you did with Aurora; I wanted to figure it out on my own too, and I didn't want you to tell me. I thought I was capable, but the more time passed, the less I found out, not to mention that Eira kept bugging me to give up from time to time. I just couldn't lose. My pride as a mother and leader was at stake."

"Hey! Who was provoking you? I was just telling you the truth; it was useless to investigate. I was just trying to stop that nonsense that you even got my father involved in."

"But I wanted to act like the one-san who knew everything; I wanted it to be the scenario where he provoked me by saying I would never find out, when I already knew; being the mature one in the relationship, I wanted to tease him."

"Oh! That makes sense."

I mean, even though she was different, she must have thought the same way I did about Aura at first. It was fun to see her trying to hide things from me when I already knew them, and it was fun to tease her with things I knew and she didn't.

"You two are two of a kind, hopeless fools who like to drag others into your nonsense."

"Haah~ but I could never find out anything about you, Sweetheart. Your information was well guarded, the Silvercrests are more difficult than even the royal family."

"No, that's not why, hmm so basically you didn't want to tell me your secret because you wanted to find out mine first?"

"Yes, I really had no problem telling you that I was the leader of all this. But, you know? My pride was at stake."

"Yes, Lily, I totally understand you; it's completely understandable. But I won! Ha! And I didn't even know I was in a competition, I found you out before you found me."

"Ugh! Sweetheart, you're mean. If it weren't for the fact that it would also be a loss for me, I wouldn't do this to you today. Okay, now, Sweetheart, what are you hiding? Really, like Eira said, I was going crazy; you know? I was searching and I found a guy from a remote village in the neighboring kingdom."

"Ugh! Okay, it's my turn."

My celebration of my recent and unexpected victory couldn't continue; it was time for my revelation. I've been ready to tell her my secret for a long time.

In fact, Lily is the person I trust the most, and I know nothing will happen. I mean, she herself said and has proven, with Astrid's body, that she has no problem with women, in any way possible. Sometimes she's even bolder than I am, and Astrid was a victim of that.

'But what if... she does? What if she wants a man?'

But that thought couldn't help but pop into my head now that I was about to tell her.

I mean, sometimes the things a person is most confident about are the ones that go wrong. If she rejects me, I really won't know what to do.

Who said having a harem was only good things? I've had to go through this many times before, but I really feel like it's something that's never that easy to say or get used to.

"Lily, the truth about my identity is that I... I..."

I was about to remove my morphogenesis, as usual, and get it over with, but the previous thoughts invaded my mind and my nervousness wouldn't let me calm down.

The feeling of déjà vu came over me; obviously, I wouldn't make the mistake I once made, it would be foolish to do the same thing again.

But the nervousness wouldn't stop and my thoughts were wandering, and they were affecting me, and when I finished morphogenizing...

"I am your—"

I have to say that I don't work well under pressure, and nervousness causes intrusive thoughts to win out and I do what I shouldn't.

"Daugh- Ugh!"

Bang!!

I didn't make the same mistake, but I messed up again, and before I could finish, a huge impact hit me in the stomach. It was a concentrated mass of ice and frost.

"Bastard!"

"W-wait, Eira, it was because I was a little nervous. I didn't mean to do it again."

"That's not why, you idiot. Why the hell did you change into my appearance and give yourself big breasts? You're mocking me!"

"Ugh! Wait... how did you know it was you? ... It was Selene."

"Don't play dumb. That was my hairstyle! It was obviously me, plus those breasts are even bigger than Selene's. If you wanted a fight, you got one, idiot!"

"Ugh... wait. To begin with, it was unintentional, I couldn't concentrate and I had to use the space and... I mean, I was nervous and maybe it was a fusion of both... agh! Don't bite me there! Hyaa!"

"Excuses! Grrr! Nya! Hey, don't grab my tail!"

"Don't think I'm going to let you beat me without a fight. I already said I was nervous, and yet you bit me mercilessly. Don't expect mercy from me, you damn little chihuahua."

"Grrr! I'll rip those tits off, you bastard!"

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"= ω =, they're getting along well."

"I see you're happy for your sister, dear, although I have mixed feelings because it seems like you two are fighting. Ouch, that bite on the nipple looks painful... young people are so energetic."

"...Yep, they get along well."

"Well, as always, your sister doesn't express herself correctly, but honey, is it really that shocking? He seemed nervous out of nowhere. I don't think it's that bad. I mean, if you know him and still love him, it can't be that bad, right?"

"Hmm, it's not bad."

"Yes, it must not be a big deal. They seem like they're going to keep fighting, and I really can't take it anymore. Since it's no longer a secret, tell me! What's his secret, where does he come from? Although it's just a hypothesis, I can only think that he's one of those beings from another world in legends."

"Yes, he is..."

"Huh? Really? So, I was right! That explains why there's no information. I didn't lose, I just didn't have confidence in my hypothesis. Ah! It's not a big secret, it doesn't matter that he comes from another world, it's no big deal!... Is there anything else?"

"...He is Phina."

"Phina? ah! Miss Silvercrest, the one you spend a lot of time with... Wait! What did you say? Who was who? Selene, dear, please use more words, otherwise I'll misunderstand."

"Hmm... Chris is Phina... they're both the same person."

"What? Wait, are you telling me that Sweetheart is pretending to be Seraphina?"

"...Yes."

"Hey, no! Wait, Eira, time out, time ou-ugh! Damn take!"

"Argh! Bastard!"

"Alright, time out. Selene isn't explaining my secrets properly, and that's not good."

"Grrr, just get it over with quickly and don't ever use my appearance again."

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I was in a catfight as usual, but I could hear what they were saying. I didn't say anything before because I thought it would save me from having to say it, but Selene is very bad at explaining.

I had no choice but to do it myself. I separated myself from Eira, who seemed dissatisfied and wanted to tear off a piece of my ears at any cost, and explained, while returning to my original appearance:

"This is the truth, as you can see, I am Seraphina Silvercrest."

"Sweetheart, what have you done? Even if you were brought to this world, it's wrong to do something like that. What happened to the real one?"

"Wait, I think you're confusing a few things. First, I'm not someone summoned to this world. I'm someone reincarnated into this world by a god."

Chapter 358: Envy is bad.

"Huh, isn't it the same thing?"

It seemed that my revelation was going down a strange path. Even when I transformed into Seraphina, there wasn't much reaction from her, apart from the misunderstanding caused by Selene.

I'm not surprised that for Lily, who knew I could morphogenise, taking on Seraphina's appearance wasn't unusual. I mean, I just took Eira's form and she wasn't surprised.

I had to clarify that I was not a summoned person, but someone who had been reincarnated. There was a big difference between the two. In this realm, such beings are legends and can easily be confused or overlapped, as little is known about them.

But we are very different in purpose and actions, and if I didn't clarify this, it could later bring me unnecessary problems or misunderstandings, like the one she had just formulated.

"No, they are not. I'll tell you the difference later. And second, I'm not impersonating anyone. I am Seraphina Silvercrest. Well, you could say that because I reincarnated in her body, I impersonate her, but that's how I came to this world. And it was Aeloria's doing."

"Phew! I thought the secret was that you had killed Princess Silvercrest—wait, that means—"

"Exactly, my secret is basically that I am a woman, I am Seraphina. Christian is an appearance I take on with my skill. And what you see now is the basis. Well, I've said it.

"...I-I knew it, ha!, you thought I'd be surprised, well I'm sorry, that's just what my research turned up. Yes! After all it's a tie, my pride is intact!"

"Damn, you old hag, you didn't want to lose so much! Acting even now that you heard something like that, ay!!"

"You know, you've been calling me an old hag for a while now. Don't think I'll let it slide. It looks like I have to give you more motherly love to correct you."

"What motherly love? You just hit me, old-mother!"

"Well, I'd like a 'mommy' better, but I can't stand giving you that kind of motherly love."

"Hey, don't ignore me! I think I just made a big revelation here. I even said a 'wow' to you... why is the reaction so normal?"

"Hee~ like I told you, this one-san always knew. I was just pretending a little to play with you."

"But you've got a lot of nerve!. You just confessed, the opposit—ugh!Why are you still hitting me?"

"Motherly love?"

"Grrr, fine, whatever you want. If you don't care if the silly is a woman, so what, at least I won't be in the middle of your bullshit anymore, hmph! I'm not going to stop you from going and fucking or doing whatever you want, I don't care, hmph!".

"Yeah! Sweetheart, let's go! There are some things I want to try."

"Y-yes."

I mean, it's good that nothing happened, but it was so simple, so emotionless, that it took me by surprise.

Lily, as before, seemed more eager to make up for the lost week than to pay attention to or comment on the secret I was so nervous to tell.

I'm not complaining, but I have mixed feelings as she dragged me into another room.

Plack!

"Sweetheart, can you put up a sound barrier?"

"Huh, yes?"

Click!.

"You put it up, right?"

"Yes, don't you want them to hear? Are we going to get that wild?"

"Sweetheart, this is not the time for that! What's this about you being Seraphina?"

"Huh?"

"I want a really clear and convincing explanation."

"Huh?"

"Why do you look surprised? Do you think I'll take it easy?"

"Yes, I mean... just now..."

"Of course, I mustn't lose my cool in front of my daughters. For her, I must always be a capable, reliable, and calm mother, that's why I acted that way."

"You know, I think that impression is no longer something that... no, rather, are you surprised by my revelation?"

"Of course I am, sweetheart. Being told that the person you love with all your heart, soul, and body doesn't even exist is very shocking. I almost fainted! I understand why your older sister Astrid did it! I thought I was prepared, and even so..."

"I thought it had been very easy, but Lily, about the fact that I'm a woman? What do you think about that?"

"No, that doesn't matter. Didn't I tell you? I was about to jump to that side before I met you. There were no decent or trustworthy men anywhere. Until you showed up... wait! You're not a man, which means I

did jump ship. Ah! Even my daughters! Ah! I thought it was strange that Eira let go of her hatred for men so easily."

"Wait, don't jump to conclusions! Let me explain everything properly. Take a seat... by the way, which do you prefer? The sexy Quipao or this sexy sailor uniform?"

"Oh, they both look nice, but the last time I wore a skirt, so the Quipao... No! Wait... I'm still digesting the truth that you don't exist. Hmm... but since you're a woman, can you wear the sailor outfit?"

"You want us to do it as women? Well, I don't see a problem with that. And don't worry, it's not like Chris is completely made up. Let me explain from the beginning, to start in my world..."

If the problem wasn't that I was a woman, I'm not afraid of anything anymore! So I gave her the full explanation, just like I did to all the members of my harem. ..

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"Well, that's why you don't have to think I don't exist. In a way, Chris is another part of me."

"Hmm, well, if you put it that way, I understand why you created a male identity. I really like him a lot... well, you are him, but... ugh, this is really a bit complicated."

"Yes, I understand, most people react that way. And to correct you, Eira did fall in love with my male version. In fact, you know, I think she had the same thoughts as you. There was a time when she threatened me that if I made Chris disappear for no reason, she would kill me and finish the job."

"Hee~ sounds like her. I would be very sad if Chris disappeared, but you're right, in the end he's a part of you and that won't change, even if he disappears... but don't do it."

"I won't!"

Well, Chris is me, and I really appreciate that she love that part of me so much.

After all, it doesn't change the fact that she loves me, even if she clearly prefers one over the other. I've always thought it's unreasonable to ask her to fall in love with the part of me she doesn't know, so I'm more than satisfied as long as she doesn't reject me.

'Now I've explained everything and she's explained everything to me, so it was time to get started.'

I would make sure to have a night of passion with Lily and then go to the twins who are waiting outside and...

"Hey, remember the information, set your priorities!"

"Huh? What's that I hear? I sense a tone of envy. Is someone jealous?"

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'Envy's bad for you. You've got your share...go up Alexander's ass".

'That's it, I won't stand for this, I rebel, revolution! I demand equality'.

There is no such thing! But I will ask for the information. Number 1, I notice strange movements, for now forget about Alexander and come and collect the information'.

'No, I'm on strike! For my rights!'

'Tsk, how annoying. If it's not important, come here. After all, I also promised her group action.'

'Now we're talking diplomatically, the place isn't far from where you are, huehue, Lily, I'm coming.'

'...'

Sometimes I don't understand why I have to convince those idiots, but then I remember that it's me, and it's basically what I'm doing myself...

"Lily, before we start, can you give me my brother's information? I have something to do and I need everything I can get, especially if he has an expedition coming up soon."

"Oh, right, that's why you came! I'll give you everything, everything I have is yours, sweetheart. In fact, if you want, you can be the leader of the organization."

"Really?"

"Yes, well, Ced uses it too, but you can be the owner."

"Huh? But I don't know how to do it. I mean, I have no experience. Wouldn't it fall apart if you just gave it to me?"

"No, actually, even though I started it, I'm not good at it. You know, my memory isn't the best, it was really hard for me to remember things at first, I had to write it down in a notebook."

"Oh, that's right, you can't remember a single rune. But how does this work?"

It's true, now that I think about it, Lily is very bad at using her head and memorizing things. That's why, even though I wanted to teach her magic, I gave up.

Even though she has good mana stats and should improve her head, it seemed useless.

When I think about it, it's surprising and impossible that someone like her started and ran this.

To be the boss, she has to handle a lot of information, and it really doesn't seem possible.

"Actually, this works even without me. How do you think I always have free time? My grandmother and older sisters are the ones who always run things."

"Huh? So you don't do anything?"

"I used to, but when it grew so big, my grandmother and older sisters started helping me, and at some point, they were doing fine without me, while I was busy running the shop in the capital."

"So you're just the leader in name only?"

"No! If there's an important decision to be made, I always make it. You know, I'm never wrong. As long as I'm given someone's profile, I feel like I know how they'll act. Don't you think that's impressive? That's why we've grown so much. I'm the heart and soul of all this. I'm indispensable!"

"Oh, you've been relying on your instincts to run this?... Well, that in itself is an impressive skill, especially since you - someone who can't even cast a simple rune of the lowest class - and a wealth of information are opposing concepts."

"Sweetheart! Don't think I don't know you're calling me stupid. Besides, my power lies in the physical—I don't need magic. And even if I did, I'm fine because now I have two affinities."

"Well, that's true. Anyway, you can stay as the leader, I don't think I can do what you do"

"hee~ I see you understand how awesome I am, well I'm already looking forward to it. I'm going to call my grandmother quickly, so she can bring me the information we have".

"yes"

I feel like our relationship progressed a bit more, she never talked to me about her family, nor had she ever mentioned anything apart from the twins, and the fact that she started to mention it meant that now she was starting to tell me more about herself.

'later I will ask, who is this 'grandmother'?'

"Okay, sweetheart. One of my sisters will give it to Eira shortly."

"Oh, that was fast. A doppelgänger is on her way! And she'll take it away. Well, it's time to get started."

"Okay, but sweetheart, even though I have no problems and want to try some things, in the first few rounds I want you to do it like Chris. I'm so excited! And I'd like you to act at least in the first round like someone who is being abused by me, I want to see tears."

"Oh, you're sadistic today. Okay, I'll take it. No problem! Do whatever you want to me, Lily-one-san, but then let's switch roles, and you'll be the part-time employee at my Chinese chicken restaurant who didn't understand what kind of man hired her."

"I don't know what 'Chinese' means, but I'll take it. Did you bring ropes?"

"I always have them!"

This is going to be a good night, I have no doubt.

Chapter 359: Change Of Plans

'Tsk, I'll say it again, what a crappy night. Life is really unfair.'

'That's true, although it was his luck, since he was looking for information and found a hot Lily.'

'It really was a surprise and we finally told him my secret... but damn, that doesn't change the fact that he's enjoying himself now, and I'm here taking a man I just seduced to a hotel, damn it!'

'It was our bad luck. I was also thinking of dragging Alice into the bathroom and not putting up a barrier just to annoy her, and then I would sneak into Elena's bed and... haah~.'

'The only reason I not going on strike is because he doesn't know what's coming.'

'Yeah, let him enjoy it while he can! He doesn't have much time left.'

Yes, that relieved me a little, but even so, it didn't change the fact that I was in a situation straight out of my worst nightmares. But sometimes a man (woman) has to do what they have to do, for the greater good.

And with that mindset, I carried the man leaning on my shoulder, who was very drunk, to the hotel. .

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~A few hours ago~

"Damn it, what is this? Why me? Where did my passionate night go? What the hell is this crap?"

I was really frustrated. I was excited about the group action with Lily.

But once I went to get the information, I realized that there really wasn't much time left; my brother would be leaving on the expedition the next morning.

That didn't give me much time, and I had to act fast.

'This is for my family.'

I repeated to myself, and in a feminine appearance, wearing a dress that showed a lot of skin, I approached a lonely man in the corner of that lively bar.

"Hey, handsome, why so lonely?"

'Self-suggestion, self-suggestion, imagine he a pretty girl.'

"M-me?"

"Do you see anyone else handsome around here?"

"Y-yes, that one over there, that other one... hmm, that one too."

"Hahaha, not only handsome, but funny too! You know, I'm liking you more and more."

"R-really?... I-I don't have any money."

"Hehehe, why would I want your money? Are you silly? Hey, waiter, I heard there's a high-class liquor here called spiritual essence; bring me some of that."

"N-no, I said... I don't have much money."

"You're misunderstanding me. I didn't come here to get free drinks from you—I'm buying. After all, it felt like love at first sight. I don't even know what it was, but something about your plain face caught me."

"R-really?"

"Yes. Why don't you tell me a little about yourself? That way, when tonight is over, maybe something more special than just love at first sight will be born."

"Y-yes, I'm a..."

He was pushy, but it worked. Now I had to get as much information about him as possible, and there was no better way than drinking.

I wasn't in my original appearance because, although it sounds bad to say, if someone as beautiful and high-status as me approached someone as simple as him, it would be very suspicious.

In fact, even though I'm not that pretty now, he seemed a little suspicious about why I had approached him, although he calmed down when he found out I didn't want his money.

I listened patiently to his story while staring at him intently; he seemed embarrassed, and as he spoke, his eyes wandered everywhere except toward me. Obviously, his experience with women is almost nil; he was excellent prey.

"I see, so everyone here is your comrade. Tomorrow you're going on an expedition, but why are you here alone? Why don't you go with them? Look, things are lively over there."

"I... I'm not very good with crowds."

"Oh, what a coincidence, neither am I. Well, we have more and more in common; I feel more and more that fate is at work here. But you're single, right? Well, you're so... interesting? I wouldn't mind sharing you or fighting for your love."

"Hehehue, no, I'm single, and I swore I would only give my love to one person, hehue. Yes, I'm very available."

'Tsk, what a disgusting laugh.'

I really regret the fate that brought me here. Rather, things were so exciting in the rest of the bar that I wanted to go join them, they seemed like good people to have a good party with.

This was, in fact, a pre-expedition party. They were all part of one of the two factions that would be going with my brother on the expedition, they came from other kingdoms; they were all first generation.

It was lucky—and unlucky—that the expedition was tomorrow, as I wasn't late. Even so, with little time left, my options were limited, and now I had to, for the greater good, seduce this guy, whom I had no idea who he was until I saw his profile in the information Lily gave me.

I was observing his face in detail while pretending to be captivated: expressions, reactions, and his story.

I had to gain his complete trust and needed to get to know him in depth in order to join the expedition.

And the drunker, the better. The drinks kept coming, and he and I drank. I drank little.

Finally, when I realized that he really didn't have any friends and was a total loner, I was more than sure that my plan would work, although I still had to do one final check.

When he reached the point where his mind seemed completely unclear, I thought it was time to act...

"Handsome, don't you think this place is too noisy? You know, there's a hotel nearby. Why don't we talk some more there? You know what I mean, right?"

"Huh? Yeshh..."

I don't think he understood, but the important thing is that he said yes. He was drunk, but still conscious, so I got up, took his hand, and dragged him out of the bar, trying not to attract attention.

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Bang!

'This bastard!'

He fell down in the middle of the road, and I had no choice but to pick him up and carry him over my shoulder. Still, I stubbornly made my way to the hotel.

The older woman who was minding the entrance looked at the man and then at me. She seemed not to understand what was going on, as if my situation was the opposite of normal.

'Damn it! I'm not even that pretty. What's the problem?'

"My friend made a reservation for a large room. Her name was Auphi."

"Ah... yes, that's right. It's door number 12; your two friends are already there."

"Okay, thank you."

I'm going to ignore the fact that when I said that, the woman's eyes seemed to sparkle and she looked even more doubtfully at the man I was carrying, as if wondering what kind of male god he was for a beautiful woman to take him to the room where two others were waiting.

'I hope this is the last time I do something like this.'

When I arrived in front of the room, I looked both ways and saw no one, so I undid my metamorphosis and immediately entered.

There were two people there... well, one; since Number 1 was one.

"Ugh, really, what did I get myself into?"

It was Aurora, who, upon seeing me arrive with a man in tow, began to doubt the situation.

Number 1 had a hard time convincing her to come.

I took the man to the bed...

"Let's see how well this goes."

I think it's going to be a long night, but I'll make sure to get everything out of that man.

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'Strike! I'm on strike!'

'Huehue, it's karma time, how about that? Besides, you can't, you're the real one.'

'The world is fair and maintains balance, plus you're the real one.'

'Damn you! Karma doesn't affect us. So what if I'm the real one? I have human rights too. You guys are resentful about last night, but it was just one night, and who knows how long I'll be here.'

'Go back if you want, it's not our problem.'

'Well, obviously we won't. Besides, what's the point of complaining to yourself?'

'...'

yeah, this isn't productive... lately I've been calling myself a bastard a lot, and it's true that it's just complaining to myself but I still feel like I had to do it.

I was distracted by Lily and didn't realize what was going on.

And surprisingly, in the morning I was on my way to an expedition. I was surprised that it was the very next day. Luckily, they had already made the arrangements, but I complain because I didn't have time to mentally prepare myself.

I really don't know how long this will last. From my experience, it could be just a few days or even more than a month. If it's the latter, I might go crazy being away from girls for so long.

but at least I thought that since they stayed I can enter the doppelgangers whenever I want, and see them but....

' Ugh! It's better to abstain, or the tragedy will repeat itself.'

If I'm the one who's isolated now, at least I'm learning from my mistakes. And even though it hurts not to see the girls for so long, I'll ignore that side of me completely and focus here. After all, I can't exploit this body.

Now I was riding on a flying ship belonging to my brother. I looked like David, the guy I seduced last night. I was in a corner, calm, pretending to use my breath with a don't-come-near-me vibe.

Anyway, with how lonely he is, I doubt anyone will approach him; that's why I chose him. I was thinking about how to proceed from here on out. The situation is no longer as simple as I thought.

After receiving the information about the location of the expedition, I realized it was a place I had in my memories, and connecting the dots, I began to understand what would probably happen to him.

I realized that, contrary to what I originally thought, my brother's incident did have something to do with me, or rather my alternate self, only he never knew it.

Now I had three goals, and one was very important, as it was the first step in ending this continental battle.

At least for me, my time of relaxation and tranquillity had come to an end.

Chapter 360: Bad Luck Difficult To Explain

"Everyone get ready. From here on out, it's uncharted territory."

My brother, who was leading the expedition, stood at the front and, with a strong voice amplified by magic, reminded everyone that the real journey was about to begin.

We had spent a day and a half traveling on the flying ship, and then another half day walking, until we reached our destination: the entrance to a large valley.

I already knew this place. For now, it was uncharted territory, but that would change later. And I knew what was hidden in its deepest parts, it was something I had to secure at any cost.

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"Damn... I can't take it anymore. If this continues, I'll go crazy. Why is my luck so bad?"

"Bad is an understatement. There are more than 130 people here, and they paired you with that stinky ball of fur. It's your total loss."

"I'm really going crazy. I even have to sleep near her. The only time I have peace is when we eat... Even covering my nose doesn't help with her smell. Why did they have to bring her?"

"Well, that may be true, but when it comes to poisons, there's no one better than her. And without knowing what we'll find in this place, having her is indispensable, like insurance in case of the worst-case scenario."

"I know, damn it. Still... why me? Hey, don't you want to...?"

"Nope! Don't even dream about it. Besides, we're both magicians, so it wouldn't work anyway. Did you forget? I heard that if you spend too much time around her, you even start having episodes of amnesia. Was that true? It's already affecting you... it's only been a day."

"No, well, I don't think so... Ugh, really, her scent won't let me think. The only good thing is that the beasts don't come near us, but neither does anyone else. They always stay at least ten meters away."

"Yeah, even I pretend I don't know you. You really got the worst of it, but it's necessary with this thick fog. I think that's why they left this to chance."

"If this keeps up, I'd rather go on my own. It's unfair to be forced to stay within three meters of each other when we move."

"Yes! That's your bad luck too! It's the leaders' order; they don't want anyone to suddenly disappear. That's why groups of mages and warriors must be formed to deal with any situation."

"Damn it, I know. But even if you keep repeating it to me, it doesn't change how awful she is."

"Shh! Lower your voice, she's right there. She might hear you."

"To hell with it, she must know how awful she is."

"You're really driving yourself crazy... Well, I don't know if it makes you feel any better but my partner isn't the best either. He's uncomfortable to be with; I've been trying to talk to him all day and find something in common, since it's the first time we've interacted, but he hasn't responded to me once. I had heard he was like that, but it's very frustrating. We are both unlucky. We get stuck with the weird ones.... Well, you're in a much worse situation."

"Oh, I know! Let's switch. He's a warrior, you're a wizard, I'm a warrior, and she's a wizard. That way, everything would be fine."

"Um... that's true. I really don't like being with that guy, but we can't just switch, can we?"

"Who said we can't? I've seen some people switch to be with someone they get along with better. The leaders don't mind, because that way there's better collaboration. They only did it randomly because there are fewer magicians, and they didn't want two magicians on the same team."

"Right! I'd rather be on Maya's team than yours, but at least you can talk to you. He has to agree. If he resists and draws attention, what you want will definitely not happen."

"I will definitely convince him. My mental health depends on it. No, I think even my life is in danger; I will give him such a convincing talk that he will accept without realising it. I will use everything I have, I will show what I am capable of when I am cornered. I will get to the point where even he will ask me instead to change.s".

"Yeah, yeah, very talkative. Too bad that's not really your strong suit. Okay, let's get this over with and try it, although I doubt anyone in their right mind would want to. I'll help you a little."

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'Why don't you put up a sound barrier?'

I wondered inwardly, but I didn't quit, so it was convenient, because I wanted to listen to their conversation and see if they doubted me or my performance. Luckily, they didn't.

Since we entered the valley and started pairing up in pairs of mages and warriors, one of the guys I was listening to was my partner.

We were on a lunch break, and we were only allowed to separate if we kept an eye on our partner, so we weren't that far apart.

Although they hadn't put up a barrier, they spoke quietly, so they wouldn't be overheard. But I was paying attention to see if they were talking about me.

There was no suspicion towards me, which was good. Besides, I didn't care about their conversation... or so I thought, until they started talking about "that thing" that was ten meters away from us and everyone else at the time.

Only now did I understand from their conversation that it was a woman, because—as they said—it could only be described as a ball of hair.

Not only did her hair reach her feet, but it was also thick. If I hadn't heard them, I would have continued to think that it was some kind of trained beast belonging to someone.

I was a little curious, especially because her hair was black, and that kind of hair caused problems in this kingdom. But looking closer, it was just a very dark green, although from a distance it looked black.

Well, anyway, I'm glad their conversation wasn't because I was acting strange, but it seems that, somehow, I'll be involved in another way. They both finished eating and came towards me.

"You're David, right?"

"Yes."

It was time to act. I had to behave like him: be as antisocial as possible. In fact, from what I knew, last night he talked like never before because he was drunk and a girl approached him. Normally, he didn't say anything, and if he did, it was only short answers.

"I wanted to ask you if you're up for a swap. Actually, your partner is my best friend, and I'd feel more comfortable with him."

"Okay."

"Huh? Just like that? I mean, aren't you going to hear what I have to—?"

"Hey, stop. He already said yes. "Well, thanks for agreeing. She's your partner from now on. Bye, it was nice working with you."

Given my quick acceptance, the warrior seemed incredulous, but the mage—whose name I think I heard but have already forgotten—stopped him, thanked me, and dragged his friend away as if fleeing before I could change my mind.

To be honest, they were very timely, which made things more convenient. The guy who had been my partner was a compulsive talker.

He kept talking even when I answered with short, simple sentences, as if he needed to keep the conversation going at all costs and wouldn't stop.

The more I talked, the more I risked exposing myself, so I didn't hesitate at all to accept the change.

In fact, it was a relief that he wanted to switch. Now that I'm with someone who seems as lonely and isolated as David, I feel like everything will be easier and simpler.

My alternate self didn't know her, she was too peculiar to forget after seeing her, and she had some characteristics that made her recognizable. Which meant that he had probably never had contact with her and that she was one of the victims of this expedition.

Anyway, the important thing is that I am now more confident that I can go unnoticed, considering that everyone naturally stays away from her.

If the problem was that she stank, I would simply cast a purification spell on her.

I don't understand why I hadn't done so before. If she was so smelly, that's what those spells are for.

And being me, the last thing I cared about was her smell, so I finished eating quietly and the expedition continued, this time with a new companion... a less annoying one.

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"Ugh."

"What the hell is this? Why is it like this?"

I am the highest authority on the concept of purification in the mortal world. I am, basically, the embodiment of purity.

So, in the mortal world, there should be nothing that I cannot purify.

If I wanted to, I could make something in an advanced state of decay edible and safe. There is no poison or adverse effect that I cannot eliminate. That is what purity means.

But I've been discreetly casting several purification spells on that woman, and the smell just won't go away.

Yes, it's just a bad smell and it's not dangerous, but it's damn stinky, and persistent enough to irritate me. Honestly, I'm regretting making the trade.

That I can't purify that smell with my own purification means only one thing: this chick is blessed by some god.

And considering that I have six metamorphoses and she has eight, it means that it's not because of a big difference in ranks, but rather that it's not just any god... it must be on the level of Aeloria or higher.

While I was only using simple spells with my blessing, since I didn't want to attract attention, it doesn't change the fact that it would be enough for anything ordinary.

That smell had something to do with divinity, yet I believed I could purify it if I put enough effort into it, but that would draw too much attention, and I'm supposed to be a warrior.

I tried other methods, such as putting a discreet barrier around my body also imbued with my blessing, but after a while the smell seemed to penetrate it.

In my memories, there was no record of any user with a similar blessing.

But I have three candidates: erosion, poison, and corruption.

Of these three gods, they are equal to or more powerful than Aeloria, and there are many who have received or inherited their blessing, with aspects of their divinities that are very curious and unknown to me; she could be one of them.

Really, being around her is a kind of bad luck that's hard to explain in words alone. I even wanted to break out of my antisocial role and talk to her, to see if I could do something about that smell...

But I thought that if she could, she would have already done so. Maybe she can't control it, or it got out of control.

And she didn't say a word, and all she did from time to time was pick some curious plants or mushrooms.

Every now and then I felt her gaze, but the smell prevented me from looking at her favorably.

I guess I must have looked disgusted every time I looked at her, and yet she didn't say anything, which, I think, is the only good thing.

That, and the beasts didn't come near her, so I didn't have to fight.

'Ugh... why don't I have any spells that kill my sense of smell? What a misfortune.'

All I could do was keep trying to block the smell in different ways. There had to be something that worked.

With how desperate I am, maybe I can awaken some other function of my blessing that I don't know about yet.