

## **The Noble 361**

Chapter 361: This Shouldn't Happen

'Huehue, the time has come!'

"Everyone, stand firm. Don't let the fog carry you away, don't lose sight of your partner."

Awoooo!!.

Boom! Swoosh! Bang!

It's funny how opportunities always arise when there's chaos. It was already the third day since we entered this foggy valley.

And things had gone well overall, since we were a group of over 100 people and, except for me, everyone was at least rank 7, so few beasts would approach our group even if they weren't intelligent.

Even so, sometimes we would enter territories or large groups of beasts, and fighting was inevitable.

Today, in particular, we encountered a gigantic herd of beasts: chimera wolves, a peculiar breed endemic to this valley.

It was a single species, but it had the characteristic of gaining skill and mutations depending on what they ate, so they were very varied in appearance.

Like humans, beasts also possess skill, but this breed has the peculiarity of being able to obtain them.

They were not powerful skill, mostly simple affinities or skill taken from other beasts,

but that in itself was very abnormal and a great subject of study, and the reason why this place would become well known in the future.

But that's not what's important. What is important is the opportunity created by their attack. This valley is always covered in fog, but today it was very thick and you could only see a meter ahead. The mages were doing their best to disperse it, but the fog here was not normal and it was not so easy.

The wolves, although outnumbering us, were intelligent and were using hit-and-run tactics.

It was an intense and highly stressful situation for us—or rather, for them.

"Ughm."

My stressful situation was elsewhere, and I planned to use this situation to end it; so, without hesitation, when the chaos and intense battle began, I grabbed the stinky ball of hair and gagged it.

It was a surprise and treacherous attack, dragging her with me into the fog without giving her a chance to react. ..

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'Huehuehue, now we're alone.'

I didn't even have to erase our presence: the wolves simply let us pass; for them, getting rid of something rotten was more of a benefit than a problem.

Click!.

"W-what are you... doing, w-why did you bring me here?"

"To end this. Your smell has been driving me crazy all this time. It's time to put an end to it."

"N-no! —I don't want to—"

"Stay there. No casting spells."

"Ugh!."

It seems I expressed myself incorrectly; upon hearing me, she tried to defend herself, and I saw the movement of mana, I noticed that there was no chant and the spell formed quickly and was powerful: it was a poison spell, so it must have been affinity with poison, at least rank A.

She almost cast magic, but unfortunately for her, I was too close, and even though she is two rank higher, she was purely a mage.

I easily stopped her and poked her several times with my fingers, blocking her mana flow.

"Well, you won't be able to throw anything now. You feel it, don't you? You can't move your mana. Anyway, I'll cut to the chase. Sign this, or whatever it is you're thinking I'm going to do to you might come true."

"W-what is it?"

"A contract, so you won't tell anyone what happened here. Sign it or I'll make you disappear."

"D-disappear?"

"Yes, you'll disappear. How I'll do it, I'll leave to your imagination."

I was going to use a great purification and she would clearly notice it and might question my identity; it was my insurance.

I always have a blank contract that I fill out when I need to; after all, that way I can use my second technique of abuse of power.

If she didn't sign it, I would tie her up and throw her into a corner of the dimensional stone and pretend that some wolf with a taste for strong-smelling meat had taken her away.

I preferred to risk attracting attention than to continue smelling her damn scent.

"Y-yes."

Surprisingly, there wasn't much resistance; she signed it without even reading it. I felt silly for hiding some of the clauses in super small print.

It was very easy—too easy to be true. That's when I noticed it. There was something about her; even through that thick layer of hair, I could feel it. It was a familiar sensation coming from her, a strong sense of familiarity that made me realize right away what it was.

She was like Silvia, a pushover, someone who was easy to corner.

'Yes, that's the vibe she gave me at first, too bad she stopped being like that.'

I found that interesting. I mean, Silvia is like that with everyone except me, which makes me feel excluded. And maybe for that very reason, it seemed like it would be interesting to mess with this ball of hair.

'No, that's not relevant; let's get rid of the smell first.'

"Okay. If this doesn't get rid of it, it's definitely because you're the representative."

If what I was about to do didn't work, it meant she was like me: someone with the ultimate blessing of a powerful god.

But it really didn't seem to be the case, so I prepared myself.

"Abite!

Integritas regnet,

Animus purgetur,

Absentia malitiae,

Exsul immunditia, discede."

I was ready to give my best.

Normally, due to my blessing, purification spells are treated as if they were an element, and I possess affinity with it at Ex rank —something that doesn't exist—, allowing me to cast them without chanting or preparation.

But I began to recite the purification spell to make it more powerful, more complete, and reinforced it even further with my affinity for runes.

Not only that, but I was stimulating my blessing to pour into it as much divinity and the pure concept of purification as the spell could withstand.

I even incorporated the white flame I had discovered some time ago, in a moment of crisis.

It seemed like a concentration of purity; it didn't harm anything unless I considered it impure, but it was highly aggressive towards what was.

I was giving it my all, in the most powerful purification I had ever done in this life, to eliminate that damn smell that had been bothering me for two days.

"W-wait, you shou—uek!"

The woman seemed to want to stop me; she was scared and very nervous, even biting her tongue mid-sentence.

I didn't understand the problem. She was a mage; she should have known that my chants, although they included the white flame, were a kind of purification spell that would cause no harm.

'Well, never mind, this will benefit her too. Who wants to stink all the time?'

"Exsul immunditia"(Exile from impurity).

I finally finished it and cast it at her. The result...

"Gyaaa!!"

She literally began to burn, letting out a heart-wrenching scream that seemed to come from the depths of her soul.

"Gyaaa!!"

Yes, that scream didn't sound like the relief after feeling the refreshing sensation that purification spells usually give, and they're not supposed to make you writhe in pain and agony, as if you were being cooked alive... as she is doing.

'Hmm... that's strange, that shouldn't happen...'

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~A few days ago~

"Ah, wait, Elena, this is irrational; I'm within my rights, I didn't do anything wrong."

"My lady, no matter how you look at it: there was no consent. You were unilaterally doing something wrong."

"B-but she's my girlfriend, something like that shouldn't be wrong."

"My lady, I have always told you that, no matter how aberrant and dangerous to society you are, you must have limits and—at the very least—if you want to do something like that, you must have the prior consent of the other party... and it does not appear that Miss Cordelia had given it."

'Damn, I should have asked first, but that would have triggered her Iron Syndrome.'

she not wrong, but I still think it's irrational. I mean, Cordelia and I have been dating for over half a month; I don't see why I shouldn't do it.

The same person isn't against it... but I can't deny that she's not exactly in favor of it either.

I looked in her direction and she was lying on the bed, her hands raised, completely still; if it weren't for her breathing, she would look like a statue.

Because of this, I haven't been able to seal the deal with her, even though I've had more than one opportunity.

Although she is very proactive—she takes my hand, hugs me, and even sleeps with me—the problem starts when I take the initiative; she enters a state that I call Iron Syndrome.

I don't know if her blessing is really to blame, but even if it's not literal, she really does become as rigid as a piece of iron.

Just holding her hand puts her in that state, which can last from a few minutes to an hour.

Once I kissed her on the cheek to see what would happen, and she remained frozen all day; I had to take her to the academy like that and carry her like a statue when we had to move.

I didn't even know what would happen with a real kiss, and I feel like going further didn't seem possible in the short term, unless we found a solution.

And unfortunately for me, I haven't been able to talk to Astrid since we arrived in the middle world.

But putting that aside, today I wanted to satisfy a curiosity I'd had since I discovered I was Astrid's daughter: I wondered if she had inverted nipples too.

Knowing she would freeze, I approached her from behind and took her by surprise. I quickly raised her hands before she could freeze, and just as I was about to take off her clothes, Elena arrived and caught me red-handed.

"What did you do now?"

At that moment, I heard the voice of a possible way out and moved instinctively.

"Silvia-mon, help! Elena is trying to hit me for no reason! Your best friend forever is suffering domestic violence!"

"...Elena, what did she do now?"

"Hey, you have to take my side unconditionally."

"Did she try to abuse Miss Cordelia while she was... unconscious?"

"No! It's a misunderstanding. I just wanted to check if she had inverted nipples."

"That's still just as bad... Well, if she's like you told me, I don't think..."

"Yeah, right? You understand: Elena is irrational, whenever she gets angry she is—. Ah! Now that I think about it, she just wants revenge because I got into her bed this morning and Lys almost caught us. Ah! And that's why you've been so surly all day. It all makes sense now."

"눈\_눈, I don't have such petty thoughts, my lady."

"You're lying; you're one of the most petty and vindictive people I know and—"

Bang!

"ehem!. Okay, I understand it was my fault, and I didn't let you sleep. We'll talk later; I'll give you adequate compensation for damages."

It's not like I was intimidated because she slammed 'George' hard against the floor; it was always better to seek the path of diplomacy.

'Elena, if you're reading my mind, let's make peace and love. Yes, it's true that you're petty, but I still love you.'

"...Just try to avoid doing things like that in the future. I'll go get the food... Miss Silvia, I'll be gone for a moment; keep an eye on her so she doesn't do anything inappropriate."

It seems that my mental message worked, because even though she still had a dissatisfied look on her face, Elena put George away and headed for the exit, but not before turning around and giving me a quick loving glance (she was looking at her coldly and warningly). It seems that we did resolve it correctly.

Besides, it was recorded with Silvia as a witness that she left without specifying what I wasn't supposed to do, so it's not my fault if I do it again.

### Chapter 362: Friendly Match

"She's really angry! I don't understand how you do it, since she's always so calm and understanding. You have a gift."

"Hehe~ you don't need to praise me."

"It's not praise... rather, I also have to complain. What are you doing with everyone here? Isn't it uncomfortable for you?"

"A little, but there's nothing I can do about it. I'd also like a private room... although that feeling of doing it in secret... it's like it's awakening something in me."

Since we arrived in the middle world, the comforts of having private rooms were gone. To begin with, the academy wasn't even that: it was just the royal mansion hastily remodeled to function as an academy, and the dormitories weren't enough for everyone.

We had to share a room with at least ten people.

Luckily, with my techniques of abusing authority, I was able to get all the girls in here and prevent them from putting more in, that way if anything happened, it would be among acquaintances.

Most of the time I dragged them to the dimensional rock, but sometimes I just found it fun to mess with them. Today, I didn't let Elena sleep, and that must've annoyed her — not to mention Lys got close and almost caught us.

It was good that I moved fast and did some quick purification, and that it resulted in her thinking that we were just two friends sleeping together.

'Hmmm, but it didn't feel bad; she felt a little different. Huehue~, maybe I can awaken a new fetish in her, hehueh!'

"Hey, what are you thinking about? Why is the only thing in your head perversions! Haah~ Anyway, before the rest arrive, I want to ask you: where are you? Neither you nor the other one are the real one; where is the original?"

"Oh! You noticed. I see you're starting to master your blessing, ."

"Yes, so what are you up to?"

"Well, I snuck into an expedition to the Valley of Mist—well, it's not called that yet."

"Huh? You snuck into an expedition?... ah!, the Valley of Mist."

Silvia must know that place from her memories, and since it's so important, she must deduce what my goal is, even though I was originally only going for my brother. I'm going to kill three birds with one stone.

I also have to tell the rest of the girls. Elena already knew, because just when I finished getting all the information out of David with Aurora's help, she had nothing to do, and since it was the first time Aurora had interacted with two Seraphinas, she kept looking at me.

I started to tease her a little—perhaps because of the atmosphere in the hotel or because she was confused to see two versions of me—and she got carried away by our words.

There came a point when she was so red that it looked like she was starting to give in, but in the end, she kept refusing to do any of the many things I proposed to her.

And since she forcibly changed the subject, we started talking about other things: what I was doing, the expedition, and so on.

One thing led to another, and I let slip that I also had a charm-like skill.

Aurora began to look at me suspiciously, as if she were forming a crazy theory about my identity.

I wanted to help her by using morphogenesis and looking like a succubus, but before I could do so, Elena—as if she knew exactly what I was thinking of doing—appeared out of nowhere and stopped me.

Apparently, she had followed me to make sure I wouldn't harm or do anything inappropriate to Aurora when she saw me sneaking her away.

My heart almost jumped out of my chest, but what did come out was a very "masculine" battle cry, both from me and Number Two.

In the end, I told her one of my three goals for going there, which was reasonable. And since it was an expedition with so many people, including my older brother, and I also had room to leave the doppelgängers behind, she wasn't against it.

'Yes, considering she only got to sleep for an hour until I idly crawled into her bed... oh shit, with how angry she is, she won't help me with my homework.'

"Ahem, Silvia, ahem: since you know, I'll also let you know that my brain doesn't work well when I'm a doppelgänger. So, as my best friend, ahem, I'd like you to help me a little with my homework. Elena is dangerous, and I don't think she'll help me."

"Don't take me for a fool! Do it yourself..., rather do you think you can come back in four days?"

"hmm, nope, why, you need me for something, I'm a doppelganger but I can do anything the original".

"No, I rather thought that with the announcement of the Friendly match , you'd be anxious and want to do it with your main body, considering that you'll be meeting some of your targets,"

"Huh? What are you talking about?"

"You have to stop sleeping at the academy. Doesn't Elena scold you?"

"No, I've mastered the technique of sleeping with my eyes open."

"Haaah~ I don't understand why you're even going; with all you know, the academy must seem silly to you..."

"No, not at all. I also learned many things I didn't know. Oh, and speaking of advantages, remember to buy good materials with your academy points: Ciel and I are going to make the equipment. There are no good blacksmiths or magical engineers on this continent."

"Hmm, you already told me that, but I really don't know much about it. What do you recommend?"

"Well, you always buy equipment to cover your weaknesses. You're a balanced mage, but you lack mobility and defense. You have the robe you got from William's legacy, but I still don't think it's enough. Internal armor would be good, and some kind of movement-enhancing artifact... or better yet, something that helps you move. That's why I would recommend trading your points for Echostone."

"Yes, I thought so too, but to create a staff, since it conducts fire and earth magic well, and other elements."

"Nah! Echostone is better for creating a movement artifact, since it supports spatial runes. Instead, I have some 'magma golem heart' stones I got; I also have a good staff, and Ciel has a useful skill that will recycle it and transform it into a staff tailored to yo"

I still had things like armor and weapons from William's legacy, but really none of them were suited to us or our rank; same with the blessings.

So, with Ciel's help, I'll remodel them, adding materials and upgrades, not just for the girls but for our whole group.

That's why I had everyone buy materials instead of buying something complete: that way they could get more and have better things.

I spent mine on Aurion and Pyrophrax. They were rare materials that were worth a lot of points per gram; in fact, the academy didn't have much, but since I wanted those specifically, they did their best to get more.

It wasn't really for me, but for what Rosy needed. I completed the Aurion and I have all the Pyrophrax; unfortunately, the academy had no way of finding the other three, but if all goes well, only two will be missing... and I think I know where to find one of them.

"He can? Didn't you say he's still young?"

"Yes, but that doesn't change the fact that he has the potential to reach the top of the magical engineers and blacksmiths. I think he can even reach a good level of alchemy. The skills that come with his race are a trap, and even more so since he inherited the entire repertoire. Well, for now he's just an antisocial brat. Anyway, what was that about a Friendly match?"

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

"You seem curiously excited. What are you planning?"

"In Death by Snu-Snu, ahem—I mean—in upholding the good name of our academy."

"Save your nonsense for those who believe it."

"Oh, but I'm serious."

"Hmm... if that's the case, could you tell me the name of our academy?"

"Tsk! Eira, do you think I'm a fool? We've been here for over half a year; how could I not know the name of the academy whose name I want to uphold?"

"So, what is its name?"

"...Avaloria Kingdom Academy."

"You didn't even try! Fool! Tell me what you have in mind; you've been smiling for a while now, and nothing but wicked intentions come out of you."

"Hey, do you see any trace of wickedness in these eyes?"

"Don't play dumb, you're wearing the blindfold—why even wear it if you're the doppelgänger?"

"It still works for training the senses. I already told you we're all basically the same."

"...Whatever, then. What are you going to do? Remember, this is friendly; you must act with restraint."

"Of all people... you're the last one I expected to hear that from."

"Huh? What are you insinuating?"

"What you heard: if anyone goes crazy, it's most likely going to be you; with how easy it is to provoke you, I bet someone will say 'I choose the pink dwarf over there' and piss you off, you'll go out and destroy them to the point where it's no longer friendly."

That's what happened in the alternate timeline, so there are precedents.

'I wonder if that idiot who ended up with an ice pick stuck in a place I don't even want to imagine will do it again?'

"The only one I'm going to hit is you, idiot. Who are you calling a pink dwarf?"

"Hey, it was just an example, and look! It's so ea-! Ugh!... I'll let that display of aggression slide, since one of us has to be the mature one in the relationship and... Ouch!, you little shit, you're asking for it!"

"Come on, bastard, last time you got away with excuses."

"I... Tsk! Now is not the time for that. I'll let it slide for now; when we get back, I'll get you back. I'll give you a good spanking for old times' sake—although lately you seem to enjoy it more than anything else and—"

"Shut up! Don't talk nonsense! What if someone hears you!?, put up a barrier."

"No! Besides, you're the one who started yelling."

Well, everyone was focused on what was happening in front, so I don't think anyone is listening.

"Grrr... Let's drop that subject, we'll sort it out later."

"I see you're looking forward to it, I won't disappoint you: I'll leave you red."

"You won't, and I'm not looking forward to anything... Ugh! You really are like my mother, you change the subject too easily. I don't know why I let myself be led. Haah~ So what do you have in mind? It's definitely nothing good."

"Well, I won't do anything... but if things go well, there will be a new member of the harem. Huehuehue!"

Chapter 363: Destiny meeting

"Who is she?"

'Oh, that's the first thing you ask?'

I found it curious that this was her reaction when I told her I would try to bring in a new member, considering that she is the one who always objects.

"Do you see that woman with bronze skin like your mother and red, orange hair?"

The woman I was referring to was in plain sight, so I pointed her out.

"Are you kidding me?!"

"Why? Is there something wrong with her?"

"You told me it would only be... grrr, you know! And obviously, she's not."

"But I did deliver... Cordelia joined, didn't she? And Lys and I are almost dating."

"That's a lie! I asked her recently what she thought of you... she only sees you as a friend."

"Ugh... she's just being shy....and I think she wouldn't dare tell you she's interested in me, I think she's a little afraid of you."

"..."

I guess she, better than anyone, must have noticed that.

"Anyway, I already told you that it's not that I prefer them to be big or anything, huehue~! In fact, yours is... huehue~."

"Stop it, you perverted bastard!"

"Yes, I am, that's why I like them as flat as you, hehe... licking and seeing your cute reactions... argh!. Hey, stop pushing your luck; don't think I won't fight back."

"You're the one talking nonsense! That's not even the point! The point is—who the hell do you want to stick it in? She's a damn nine-foot giant!"

"No, she's only about eight and a half feet tall — that's actually short for a giant. She's half-giant,"

Right now we were in a large open space at the Ivoria Kingdom Academy.

The top twenty from each institution had come. At that moment, under the theme of "challenging someone," several fights had begun.

It was supposed to be a friendly encounter, but thanks to Lily, I realized that it was all provoked by some instructors from our academy, who kept bragging in meetings with other kingdoms about how excellent our generation had turned out to be, pissing off the others and starting this to shut them up.

Unfortunately for them, our teachers aren't bragging, and this won't end the way they want it to.

Unlike the Kingdoms of Avaloria and Puridora, which were dominated by humans, the other three kingdoms had different ruling races: one of elves and dwarves united, another of giants, and another of beastmen.

Of course, there wasn't much fighting between us, as there were beings of various races among them, just as we have beastmen, half-elves, dwarves, and elves.

The giants, on the other hand, due to comfort issues, almost never live in other kingdoms.

Obviously, this never happened in the alternate timeline, but although under different circumstances, I remember there was something similar.

If I wasn't mistaken, it could follow the same course, although I hope that this time Eira doesn't stab anyone. It's something I want to avoid seeing.

But the important thing is that it was an opportunity to have a new member in the harem.

' I like them big, huehue... the possibilities she would bring would be huehueh...'

"Yes, you're definitely thinking something perverted. But what do you plan to do? Yours wouldn't even tickle her; that's why giants don't get involved with other races. If they do, they either kill their partner or just tickle them."

"Hey, love still exists. That can overcome those problems. Why do you think half-giants exist? Although only the mother can be the giant. And who do you think you're talking to!?"

"An uncontrollable fool who goes after other girls when he already has so many."

"I see you're against it... ugh, haaah~ well, although it would be a shame, I can refrain. After all, you and the girls are my priority."

"So, if I say I don't want any more girls, will you stop?"

"/\_ \ Yes, it's a shame, but I value you above all else. And if doing this makes you unhappy, I'd rather stop."

"..."

"Although it's a shame/\_ \, I wanted a big girl in my harem/\_ \, there were many things to try. Akihara left me with some scars, and besides the giants... haaah~ /\_ \ It's a shame..."

Yes, it was a shame, but I was already clear that I wouldn't keep going after other girls if it made the ones who are already with me unhappy. I can do many things, but never something as foolish as that.

I've only continued because no one has objected; rather, for some reason I don't understand, they encourage me, sometimes forcing or coercing me.

'Yes, if I think about it, Eira is the only normal one here. There's definitely something wrong, but I'm not complaining. I've come too far.'

Leaving that aside, I don't mind stopping: I haven't developed any attachment or anything like that yet, and I can easily leave it. It's now or never.

'Although it's a shame.'

'Well, it's our fault for getting so excited without considering Eira.'

'Oh! Number 1, are you paying attention?'

'Yes, well, anyway, who cares? I'll give everything I had to Eira.'

'Yes, that's true, and she can't complain that I shower her with love.'

'After all, she's so cute that I can do it with her indefinitely.'

'And she's one of the most durable ones... and even though I would be the biggest, we can still continue with the size difference theme, hehue.

"What are you thinking!? Because I feel all that lust towards me!"

"Why wouldn't I? You're my cutie. Fine, I won't go for her, as you ask... although it's a shame."

"Grrr! Who asked you anything? Do whatever you want, you always do the same thing. If you can make her join, I don't care!"

"Huh? Really? Why the sudden change of heart?"

"No reason, hmpf!. Did I say I was against it? You assumed that yourself, hmpf!. Whatever, lately I'm starting to understand Elena and the rest. You're an insatiable bastard... you know, thinking that there was a time when she had to control you all by herself, it must have been difficult. I understand that she has scars and acts this way."

"Hey! What the hell? Elena loves me very much, and I've given them a lot of love, the same with you and the rest."

"I'm not talking about that, you fool. For starters, this isn't something you do every day, and you do it all the time, damn it, and with everyone."

"Of course, it's my duty to keep them satisfied. Who knows if some bastard will come along and try to take advantage of their dissatisfaction or something. Look at Lily, for example."

Yes, in my harem, that opening doesn't exist. No one will take advantage of their dissatisfaction; I always make sure they never experience that feeling.

"Don't use her as an example!"

"Well, I give you love and attention too, don't I?"

"Hmph, you're cloying in that way too. But I'm not complaining; you fulfill your role as a boyfriend well and I have no complaints. Hmph, that's why I'm understanding and allow you to go after whoever you want, just like Elena says: you keep multiplying like a cockroach... and it will probably get worse later. It wouldn't be bad to have some extra help. Besides, it feels weird that I'm the only one against it, hmph. Selene also said that the more, the better. Besides..."

"..."

Well, she seems to be giving me a lot of excuses and dragging it out, but to sum it up, I don't think she minds me adding more members either. Maybe she can't say it directly because she was strongly against it at first.

'But I wonder why...'

'Why do the members of my harem end up like this?'

'It's a mystery, isn't it? I really don't understand what the problem is.'

'Is it even a problem? It's fine as long as it's not because they don't like me anymore.'

'Yes, we always tell him that if that happens, it's better to tell us.'

'Yes, and Eira isn't the type to beat around the bush. She would definitely cut us off if she didn't want to continue.'

'Hmm... maybe women in this world are like that. When they have a lot, do they like to share it?'

'Yes, women are still a mystery, even if we've been living as one for years.'

'But it's a shame. I don't want to lose Eira acting jealous.'

'Well, I don't think she'll stop. I still feel jealous, and in fact, this morning I got all lovey-dovey with Alice or Selene, and she seemed angry.'

'Yes, it's weird. Maybe there's something we're not understanding.'

'Well, the important thing is that she didn't stop me.'

'Later we'll ask the all-knowing and omniscient Lily about her daughters. She must know what's going on.'

I was talking to number one. She was at the back, furthest away from William, who was at the front, not far from me.

Although she came, I don't think she'll fight, as the top 10 started fighting, and Seraphina was further down. That's good, I don't like to draw attention to myself, especially with William watching.

"Oh, is Lys."

In fact, I was now paying attention to the arena, where Lys was fighting an elf, whom I recognized as one of the best in that kingdom. Both are specialized in speed, but not long after they started...

"She won!"

It wasn't more than five seconds. There was a quick exchange and Lys won. She didn't even give it her all.

"It was overwhelming. The ones from the other academies are very weak."

"No, we are very strong! Thanks to me."

"Hmph, how shameless of you to take all the credit. William sometimes gives us those strange stones that make us stronger".

"Yes, but that doesn't compare to a wild night with me, huehue."

"Ugh! Why do you always end up going in that direction!?!... Well, you're not lying either, hmph! silly method... Anyway, when it's our turn to choose again, it's Alexander's turn. I wonder who he'll choose."

"Hmm, I don't know, maybe someone from the kingdom of Vestalia. An elf, since he likes them?"

Well, although I'm not sure, since the circumstances are different, it's possible that it will happen. In my memories, he had chosen an elf, and I think it was his destiny, because a kind of rivalry began, and at some point, that elf became his partner.

But it would be many years later, when he gave up on Alice and understood that it was useless, since she loved William.

'Ugh, just thinking about it upsets me. We can't challenge people from the same kingdom!?'

'Yes, you can. Didn't you see the two giants fighting? I think it was a faction fight.'

'Oh, I was distracted talking to Eira... Hmm, but it's not worth it, that would attract attention. Well, later we'll give her some... I mean, intensive training.'

'Yes, it's just training. I'm not being irrational about something that happened in an alternate world.'

'Well, back to the elf, she was pretty too. I just hope they start their relationship quickly this time; Alice is starting to get annoyed by his insistence.'

Yes, and my pretty sunshine is not someone capable of doing anything to him, so I will have to intervene if he keeps it up.

'Let's help them get together.'

'Yes, once he finishes his destiny meeting and wins, we'll help him with the best of my skill, skipping the useless rivalry phase!'

'Yes, technically it's like the first spark between them — the beginning of their real story. And that will make Alice happy too.'

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Finally, another round began. Someone from the kingdom of Aquila, the kingdom of dwarves, challenged him, and Mike won, and it was our turn again.

It was Alexander's turn to challenge. He walked to the center of the arena and looked at the other kingdoms.

I was a little worried that he wouldn't choose that elf again, but that wouldn't change my plans.

However, just when I thought he was taking too long to choose, he suddenly turned, looked in our direction, and...

"I challenge you to a duel, Miss Seraphina Silvercrest."

'What the hell did this bastard say?!' (x2)

Chapter 364: Potential

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"Gyaaa! Nooo! I don't want to die, no!"

"..."

I had sworn that, even though it was charged with that peculiar flame that destroys everything I consider impure, the spell I cast should not cause any real harm.

"Gyaaaaa!!"

But there she was, like an evil spirit, burning as she literally burned.

"It hurts!, so much, help! Someone please help me!"

'Is it because, after smelling her for so long, I consider her impure? Or is she really an evil spirit?'

I had questions as I continued to watch the woman writhe in immense pain and agony, her skin burning, but for some reason her hair did not.

'How curious... hmm, this anomaly, oh! It could be a unique physique.'

My legacy cannot identify physiques, but when abnormal things like this happen, that is a possibility, and a possible explanation for her reaction...

"Help!"

"No, this is no time to think, I have to turn it off. Damn it, how do you turn this thing off?"

It was my own blessing, but I had never wanted to stop a purification; it had never been harmful.

Even demons, with their chaotic mana, did not suffer to that degree; purification and she are not compatible at all.

For a moment, I didn't know what to do; I remembered that it was my blessing, and exercising my will, I wanted the purification to stop and...

"Haahh... aaahhh! Help!Ah!?!... I-it doesn't hurt anymore?... It doesn't hurt anymore!"

'Ufff... I almost killed someone without meaning to.'

She may have smelled bad, but she hadn't done anything wrong. It would weigh on my conscience if I purified her from this world.

I cast some healing spells on her, based on the plant element, and saw her burned skin begin to recover.

"Let's see... yes! It worked!"

And now, breathing the air, I felt nothing: it meant that, despite some unexpected events, my purification had worked.

"Sniff... sniff... I, I... ssniff... Waaaaah!"

"...come on, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to, I didn't want to kill you or anything; it was just a purification."

It was my fault; although it wasn't my intention, it seemed to be very painful. Enough to make a woman in her mid-to-late twenties cry like a little girl.

If Elena found out about this, she would kill me; I would be judged by the rest, and even Alice or Selene might be disappointed in me.

"Waaaaa! I... finally... waaaAA!"

'Ugh, why is she crying louder and louder? How do I calm her down? Let's see, in cases like this—'

"GWAAAAHHH!!!!"

"Hey! Stop it! You're overreacting, stop or I'll set you on fire again!"

"...Sniff."

'So the threat was the solution. Right, '

"Okay, now that you're calm, we can talk. I won't do anything to you anymore; I've already achieved my goal, the smell is gone."

"Really??"

"Yes, I just cast a purification spell to remove it. I don't know why it hurt you, but it wasn't my intention, so—"

"I don't smell bad anymore?"

"Huh?"

"I really don't smell bad anymore? You're not lying?"

"Well, if you still smelled bad after I cast my best spell on you, you'd be the goddess of decay or something."

"Hahaha, I don't smell, it doesn't hurt, hahaha! Finally, thank you, thank you so much! I don't know what you did, but thank you! Sniff, I-I, gwaa!"

"Hey, hey, stop right there! Don't start crying or I'll light you up again."

"Ugh... sniff... I-I un...sniff...understand."

I had to threaten her again before she started crying, but I found it amusing how she literally swallowed her cry, struggling to keep her mouth shut.

This hairball was more entertaining than I expected... but I couldn't waste any more time.

"Well, it seems there are many things I don't understand. I'd like some explanations, but we don't have time now; let's go back. You can explain it to me later."

The opportunity I had gotten was over; I felt that the wolf pack had retreated for now, and the group began to reorganize and see if anyone was missing.

Anyway, the important thing was that it no longer stank. Later, during the break, I will resolve my doubts.

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"Tell me, have you always had that bad smell?"

"N-no, two years ago, when I went through the seventh metamorphosis, it just happened... and it got worse when I recently went through the eighth."

"So you don't know why you had it."

"N-no."

"Hmm... do you have any skills?"

"Y-yes, I have an affinity for po-poison and a skill called 'symbiotic toxin'."

"Hmm, you're very connected to poison... when was the last time you had a test?"

"...When I entered the military academy."

"Military? Oh, you're from Ivoria. Well, beastmen do things similarly to us, so more than five years, huh!... Let's see, come a little closer."

"Y-yes."

She was even worse than Silvia. Although right now I'm pretending to have seven metamorphoses like David—when in reality I only have six—it doesn't change the fact that at this moment I am of a lower rank.

Even so, she responded and obeyed everything I said easily, without resistance.

"Oh... did I see wrong? Do you have vertical pupils? Let's see... don't you have scales on the sides of your face? Oh, do you have long fangs? Hmm, your anatomy also feels strange... what are you?"

Because of the cloaks of hair she had, I couldn't really identify her race, but now that I pushed it aside and took her chin to examine her better, I could see a vertical pupil, something common in felines and reptiles among beastmen—although not all of them have them, like the twins.

However, she had normal ears, not feline ones, and they weren't even pointed, nor did she have scales on the sides of her face or neck, which was characteristic of reptilian beastmen.

There are few of them on this continent, There were other races, but she didn't have any characteristics of any of them.

"I'm a snake beast woman. Well... my mother is, and my father is human."

"Snake? Now that I look closely, you even have a forked tongue, but you don't have scales. Oh! You're a hybrid."

"Y-yes."

Remembering what I knew about beastmen, I thought about how unusual her situation was. Very unusual. So unusual that she didn't even have a race name, like half-elves or half-giants.

Humans have always been beings that can mix with other races and give birth to hybrids, but that doesn't happen with beastmen: either they come out human or they come out beastmen.

It is said that this is because beastmen are already hybrids between humans and polymorphic divine beasts. Or, if there was a pervert, beast without polymorphing.

Perhaps that is what makes them so peculiar and allowed beastmen to be the only species that became a stable race, without reverting to one of their parents in later generations.

Beastmen have always been a peculiar race; in fact, "beastmen" is a general term.

Technically, each one is as different as humans would be from dwarves or giants.

But there were many types, and for some reason, they always stuck together, which made the other races group them together as a single race.

And it was fortunate that they weren't born hybrids with humans, because that would be worse... although, as always, there are exceptions.

Sometimes they can be born like her: a hybrid. That made her more human than beast; hence the lack of scales and tail. She only had fangs, a forked tongue, and vertical pupils.

Anomalies like her are sometimes a genetic disaster... or something very good. Which led me to reaffirm my previous theory: she had a unique physique, like Lily and Akihara.

Perhaps increasing her rank awakened or stimulated it and led her to that state. She gained a skill, and since it was closely linked to her body, that may be why she was burning with my purification.

'Hmm... even so, she shouldn't be able to resist my blessing or go through it.'

Click!.

"Hey, tell me something: you were blessed by an evil god, right?"

"N-no, I don't have any blessings."

"No, you definitely do, and you know it. You're lying to me."

"..."

yeah, it was her bad luck to lie to me while I was still in contact with her, that was a clear lie.

"Well, I guess you obviously want to keep it a secret, considering you had to go to a temple of that god and everything. You must be a devout believer."

"No, I'm not! I didn't know it was a temple and... ah!"

"Yes, I understand what happened to you. Those bastards like to bless people without their consent."

It seems it was unintentional. Perhaps she entered some ruins of that god that still functioned as a temple, and he blessed her.

They don't need anyone's consent. As long as you didn't have another blessing, it was a free pass.

Anyway, now I know what I wanted to know. I really wanted to understand more deeply what blessing or skill she awakened to be like that.

But she didn't feel lust towards me; I tried my luck, but it was in vain.

'I guess it's just because of David's simple appearance. That won't be easy.'

"I-I... don't want to die, no..."

"Oh? You're sweating cold and shaking, you're so scared".

"Please, no... I-I ukg"

'Bit herself—wonder if it's hard with a forked tongue'

In my previous life, it wasn't like that, at least not as much, but I guess this time, with the constant attacks from demons and early appearance of the idiots blessed by lesser gods.

Made everyone more cautious and strict about everything regarding the gods that are not worshipped by the five kingdoms, if it was discovered, it would be very bad for her.

"Don't worry, I won't tell anyone. Well, since you don't smell anymore, I guess I've fixed what was wrong with you".

"You won't?"

"Nah, I don't care about that. Anyway, let's continue as before: I don't talk, you don't talk, and everything will be fine. Remember that you can't tell anyone about my purification or you'll feel great pain. Do you understand?"

I wanted to annoy her, but that would jeopardize my performance, so I decide to continue with the antisocial theme and not talk to her.

"Y-yes."

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"Hey! I thought I told you we'd continue as before."

"I-I'm just walking."

"..."

She's playing dumb. After the midday break, when I asked them the questions, for some reason she's been following me closely.

We're not supposed to stray too far, but she, who used to keep a maximum distance of three meters, was now basically on my heels.

When I scolded her like this, she would distance herself, but slowly she would come closer again, and now it's the third time I've complained.

Not only that, but before she would only look at me from time to time, but now I feel like she hasn't taken her eyes off me the entire walk, even when we started fighting.

There was another attack by the chimera wolves, and without the protection of her foul odor, they attacked us. She was so distracted looking at me that one almost bit her. It was her luck that I got there in time.

'Well, it's somewhat understandable.'

Now that I know their secret, she must be anxious about whether my words are trustworthy or not.

It's not like I don't understand her, but her being so focused on me is a little annoying.

"Hmm... what can I do to stop her from worrying about it? Tell her a secret of mine? Nah, that's silly... An exchange? What could she give me... her body?"

There's a saying that goes: 'In wartime, any hole will do as a trench'. I really try to avoid thinking about it, but it's been more than five days since I've seen the girls and it's taking its toll on me.

I'd seen her face before. She wasn't a stunning beauty like Aurora, but she was pretty — a bit exotic, with green eyes and vertical pupils, and slightly longer fangs.

I hadn't paid attention to her at the time, but she also had a fairly decent-sized chest.

Overall, she wasn't bad at all. She had dark circles under her eyes and plenty of moles, but that only added to her exotic look.

All she needed to do was cut all that hair and tidy herself up a bit to be a decent person.

'Hmm, actually, now that I think about it, she has a lot of potential... not to mention that forked tongue. Will it be long? Hmm...'

Yes, he thought so. Now that there was no smell, she wasn't so bad. In fact, there were some interesting things to try, and the more he thought about it, the better.

"Elena and the others don't mind a little fling, as long as I do it with her consent...'

Yeah, everyone wins, and I don't have to worry about getting beaten up. If she accepts this exchange, it would count as consensual... I guess

"Hey!"

"I-I didn't get any closer!"

"If you're so unsure that I won't keep your secret, why don't you—"

[Mission: Destiny Meeting

Objective: Accept and win the challenge of the Blessed of Orvhal.

Reward: Quintessentia.

[Accept Mission]

[Reject Mission]

(Consequence: Aeloria's dissatisfaction)]

'Shit! What happened!'

Chapter 365: My Mark On This World

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"Can I ask what this is about?"

This bastard suddenly challenged me, and with everyone watching, I had no choice but to step forward.

I could already guess what it was about, but I asked anyway, just to be sure. If this idiot says he wants to court me, I'll kill him right here.

"...it's time to settle this."

"I really don't understand. You and I have nothing to do with each other, right?"

I played dumb, it might save me this, but it was obvious why he did it. I looked in the direction of Alice, who was now facing me; her face looked calm.

She's seen me beat them up a lot—training with him many times with Alexander, so she shouldn't worry.

But there was a strange expectation in her eyes.

That made me smile. I already knew what her pretty eyes wanted to convey to me, so I gave her a little wink; she immediately went from calm to a very intense red.

'Yes, your reactions are very cute. Hmm, I guess it's time.'

I turned my gaze back to Alexander, and he, seeing our exchange, didn't seem calm at all.

He seemed hesitant for a moment, but finally spoke to me again.

"...Miss Silvercrest, don't feign ignorance. This is for Alice."

"Huh? So you're telling me that if you win, I have to stay away from Alice, and if I win, she's mine?"

"No! Alice is not an object, she can decide for herself. I just want to make things clear. Once I win, I want to—"

"Unnecessary! You know, I liked that answer, so I'll give you mine easily: as you think, Alice and I are dating, we're in a romantic relationship. Well, you heard it. I hope that's enough for you."

"Ugh!... So it was like those bastards said... Even so, this isn't over, I have something to prove and I don't know if—"

"Haah~ Save it! If it's that nonsense about 'being worthy,' it's futile; even if you beat me and prove that you're stronger than me and that I'm not worthy of her, it's not something that will change Alice's thoughts, because we didn't spare each other this."

"No... I still want to know."

"Fine, since you want to fight so badly, we'll do it; I hope you give up on Alice after that."

Yes, I tried to avoid it until the end, but since I couldn't, at least I guess I could use it to end Alice's annoyance.

"...I won't..."

"Hey, what the hel—" 'Oh no, I have to swear or Elena will kill me!' "—Ahem, then I don't see the reason why—"

'What's going on!?... Oh! I remembered who Orvahal was; so he's the god of solid rock. I was scared for a moment!'

'Huh? What's going on all of a sudden? Didn't you say you wouldn't see this side until you were done?

'Yes, but the goddess's order has arrived—or rather, whoever is watching over us. Well, make Alexander into mush; we'll be rewarded with Quintessentia.'

'Oh! Free stats. Oh, I see 'Aeloria's satisfaction'—or rather, I wonder, is it that angel's satisfaction? Does she have something against Alexander's god? Is she the same bastard from our previous life?'

'Who cares; the good thing is that we finally have confirmation of how the protection works.'

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"both parties agree to the duel?"

"Yes."

'Let's talk later.'

"...yes."

Well, it was useless to keep talking; the referee seemed to be losing patience, and even divine forces wanted me to slap Alexander.

"The duel begins now."

Bang!

"Ugh! What was that... huh?"

I wanted to finish quickly, so without wasting a moment, I made the first attack. A crystal projectile quickly shot out of my hand in the shape of a pistol and hit Alexander in the shoulder.

I had already made arrangements with my father's help, so it didn't matter if I used crystal magic.

Bang! Bang!

Several more projectiles shot out of my finger and began to aggressively attack Alexander, but he wasn't so easy to defeat.

By the second impact, he had already placed an earth element barrier around himself, and then began to form three large stone stakes around him.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

I fired three shots at high speed, and they hit his three stakes with the intention of destroying them—unfortunately, it was somewhat difficult to do without my eyes of lust, and I myself taught him not to let others break his magic easily.

In the end, I only broke one of his stakes, and the other two came toward me.

Bang! Bang!

I fired two more shots: I was able to destroy one before it reached me, but I couldn't do it with the last one.

Boom!

I molded mana in my hand and formed a crystal staff that hit the stake and deflected it.

'Well, after all, he did not receive my training in vain. hmm... I wonder how much I should show?'

That's what I thought, but then I remembered that he's not someone I should have those thoughts about.

Quickly, three giant spikes of earth emerged from three different sides, attacking me simultaneously. They were huge, so there was no room to escape.

'Okay, I'm going to try this; first, Darkness.'

Bang!

Unfortunately for him, I was just as fast and fired a crystal projectile; what looked like a crystal staff was more like a crystal musket rifle, so I aimed it at one of the stakes and destroyed it.

The power was higher than when I did it with my bare hand.

I opened a gap and was able to escape the encirclement.

'Okay, now, Plant.'

Thud! Thud!

But he didn't wait a second and immediately conjured what looked like stone snakes; there were five of them, and they were highly mobile and flexible, despite being made of stone.

It was too complex and powerful a spell; to do it so quickly, even with affinity, and this was because of the self-suggestion I taught him.

Striking his staff against the ground was his activator, and what he chose was a powerful spell that, even with his affinity, required him to chant.

'Light'

Bang! Bang!

The stone snakes were coming at me from different directions. I kept moving and dodging while shooting and trying to destroy them.

Thud! Thud! Thud! Thud!

He kept hitting the ground, sending snake at an even faster rate than I could destroy them.

I may be getting caught up in continuing to use only the crystal gun when I have other methods, but there was something I wanted to test.

Boom! Bang!

I kept shooting rapidly and added another rifle in my other hand.

'Lightning'

Alexander was too fast with his own affinity and autosuggestion; any other mage of his rank would have been easily destroyed by him, but I kept up with him.

Bang! Bang!

The stone snakes kept on coming and coming.; I felt the pressure of being increasingly surrounded, and not only that: I feel that Alexander is using this space to prepare other things in the background.

Still, I didn't stop using only the glass rifles and managed to create a third one that floated and fired.

I continued moving and dodging the snakes that I couldn't destroy, which is not unusual for a wizard who knows how to make magical reinforcements.

'Hellfire'

I felt that with each shot I understood better what I wanted to achieve; it was the first time I had put them into action, it was something that was still in its trial and error stages, something that, if it worked would help me to reach my full combat potential as a mage-warrior.

the art of shining, an art that my alternative self created to break free from the shackles of being a pure magician, and honestly the one that best suits me for what I want, but it was tied to a single element, like the rest of the arts.

Therein lay the problem: unlike my alternate self, I have multiple affinities.

Among all the libraries of arts I have in my head, the only one that escaped that rule was the art of lust which can work with all affinities and even mix them.

But the elements were not its focal point, only a support like all combat arts.

So I thought: how to solve this.

Contrary to my alternate self, I wanted to escape the feeling of being on the side of a warrior and casting support magic while fighting, even though it works, it didn't quite convince me.

There was a certain balance in his art, but his middle ground was not mine, so I sought my own balance point.

Having a doppelgänger free most of the time, along with a personal preference, I came up with something that I believe is the beginning of what could be considered my personal magical art.

Bang!

"Ugh!"

Among so many stone snakes I found a gap and pointed one of the pistols in Alexander's direction. This time, instead of crystal bullets, rapid bursts of light came out.

Alexander was taken by surprise, but those bullets were only meant to blind him.

Bang! Bang!

"What was that! Argh!"

But the next three perfectly coordinated crystal bullets broke through his defense.

'Ice'

By this time, I had even created another musket rifle, so I had four; but that wasn't all. I was also preparing something in the background and had six crystal bullets floating near me.

Crystal magic was a type of magic that I really liked; it had the speed of light magic and at the same time the hardness of earth magic.

Two elements that were very far apart, but they worked so well together that I took a special liking to it and used it as the basis for this new magical art.

"Ugh... You always go so unnoticed, but, as Chris says, messing with you is no simple matter."

He reassembled his defensive spells almost immediately and even started talking to me. I understood what he was doing; it's a simple tactic, but often effective, but I played along.

"Hee~ and after so many warnings, you go and challenge me. How foolish!"

"That's not why, it's just that now I know you won't die from this. Get ready! Here is my everything and my resolve: Pluvia Saxorum."

"Well, it seems you just wanted to buy a few seconds."

I looked up and a huge, colossal ball of stone had formed; it was already descending and I only had a few seconds left.

There was no room to escape, but to begin with, I let him complete it because it was my chance to try out what I was also preparing.

'I hope it works. Okay, now Affinity for Runes.'

"Lux Vinculum, Lumen Ferrum,"

I quickly joined the four rifles together and a larger one was formed; I reinforced it to make it harder.

The same thing happened with the six bullets: they melted into one, even though what I did seemed simple I was using all my concentration, the slightest mistake and it could be ruined.

I finally put it in the rifle and pointed it upwards.

As I concentrated, this art, which is still in its early stages, circulated through my body.

I won't deny that I cheated a little and used the fundamentals of the art of lust.

It is the only art that can use all the elements, and I truly believe that no one has ever thought of creating an art based on them.

The arts of the fourteen legacies are very complete and perfect; they lack nothing. Anything created based on them would only be an imitation or something poorly done.

And maybe it's true that this art will never surpass the art of lust, and maybe it won't result in something really powerful, but I didn't care.

'Hey, this doesn't feel right, stop!'

The mana circulating through my body finally passed into the crystal weapon. I thought I heard someone, but I was too focused on this.

"Art Of The Nexus Ballistic "

Yes, it may just be one more art among the thousands that already exist, one more among the dozens I already have.

"First Stance"

But it's something that wasn't given to me; this is something that is mine.

"Chaos Bullet"

'My mark on this world.'

BANG!

I saw how, even though I reinforced the crystal rifle, it was destroyed and my hand was torn off.

But I focused on the bullet, which despite this managed to fly out at high speed.

I felt it was an important moment and everything seemed to go in slow motion. I saw the tiny little bullet hit the colossal rock...

Nothing happened, not immediately, but a fraction of a second later

BOOOOMMM!

A loud explosion sounded.

'What the hell, that's too much power! Holy shi—!'

And before I could finish thinking, everything went white.

I don't know what the hell I created.

[Protection of lust A >>> Protection of lust EX]