

The World Is Mine For The Taking

#Chapter 11 - 2 - The Woman Named Shredica (5) - Read The World Is Mine For The Taking Chapter 11 - 2 - The Woman Named Shredica (5)

Chapter 11: Chapter 2 - The Woman Named Shredica (5)

I lifted her, placing her voluptuous butt on top of the desk. My hands traced along her meaty thighs, still clad in pantyhose, delivering a sensual massage.

Gabrielle typically avoided pantyhose, favoring slacks to deter lecherous gazes from other men. When working as a professor, she shielded herself with slacks, reserving the miniskirt and pantyhose combo for moments alone in her office. It was evident she was tailoring her appearance to my liking.

As our lips parted, I gazed into her eyes, where desire emanated in misty waves. Though her yearning was palpable, my own insatiable arousal took precedence. My hands ventured boldly between her legs, and with a deliberate descent, I explored the secrets concealed beneath the tight fabric of her miniskirt.

"You smell intoxicating down here, Gabrielle," I provocatively remarked, savoring the alluring essence emanating from her pussy, tantalizingly cloaked by the delicate veil of pantyhose.

"D-Don't. The scent might be overwhelming right now."

"I just said it's smell intoxicating, didn't I?"

"But I haven't showered yet."

Without hesitation, I forcefully ripped a portion of her pantyhose, exposing the crotch of her panties. I moved the fabric to the side, unveiling her feminine treasure—a glistening pussy adorned with a delicate golden bush and alluringly spread lips. "Oh, that's why it smells so damn good. You're completely soaked here."

"Uuuuh. Just do whatever you want. Don't complain if it smells."

"Is that so? Well then, thank you for the meal." I whispered, my breath hot against her exposed pussy as I buried my face between her thighs, unleashing my tongue on a relentless exploration.

"Fwaahh! Ah...ahhh!"

Each meticulous stroke of my tongue along the delicate edges of her pussy sent shockwaves through her thighs, constrained within the silky embrace of pantyhose. Her upper body arched and convulsed in pleasure.

"Ahhh... Ahhh!"

I assailed her pussy, my hands clenching her thighs in a vice grip to ensure she couldn't escape my relentless onslaught. Purposefully orchestrating a symphony of explicit sounds, I skillfully traced every inch around the entrance to her pussy. The intoxicating blend of sweet and sour aromas from her pussy enveloped my senses, and I reveled in the sensory feast.

Her love juices surged from her pussy like a dam giving way, forming an obscene, glistening pool on the floor of her office.

"Nnah... nn... ahh...!"

Her moans reverberated throughout the office. Each time my tongue flicked her clitoris, she shivered intensely. Her legs clamped around my head, and one hand found its way to the back of my head, while the other rested on the desk for support as she arched her back in pleasure.

At a certain point, I sensed the tightening of her insides around my tongue. She was on the brink of climax. Determined to intensify her pleasure, I increased the fervor of my licking.

"Nn, M-Master...! M-Master, I'm about to... Nnnnnnnnn!"

To muffle her impending scream, she bit her finger. However, her other mouth released something.

I skillfully caught her juices in my mouth, rising to my feet afterward. When she witnessed my cheeks puffed out from holding her essence, she leaned in, capturing my lips in a hungry kiss.

Transferring the intimate elixir from my mouth to hers, she eagerly gulped it down.

I released my lip lock on hers, taking a moment to admire her. She held her hand gracefully to her lips, savoring the taste. This woman was undeniably kinky, and I reveled in it.

"You really enjoy drinking your own cum, huh?"

"Not as much as I enjoy drinking yours," she replied with a grin. "But right now, I want it inside me. C-Can you fuck me now, Master?"

Her body clamored for immediate satisfaction, and I wasn't about to deny her. My own arousal had reached its peak.

"I...I can't wait any longer..." she begged with impatience. As she pleaded to be penetrated, she laid herself down on the desk, spread her legs, and lifted her butt slightly, making her pussy easily accessible with me standing like this.

"Since you're a very demanding pet, I suppose you need to be punished. With my cock," I declared, pulling my erect cock from my pants and pressing the tip against her eager pussy.

"H-Here it is! It's going inside me!" she exclaimed.

I penetrated her slowly, the tight opening gradually yielding to the intrusion of my erect penis.

"...Knnnh!"

Simultaneously, Gabrielle emitted a seductive cry, her body seeming to almost convulse. The inner folds of flesh eagerly wrapped around my shaft, as if they had been anticipating this moment.

Countless beads of flesh seemed to stroke across my entire shaft, creating a sensation that threatened to ensnare me entirely. Damn, this woman had an exceptional pussy. If I wasn't careful, I might just become enslaved by it.

I thrust my entire length inside her, and the tip of my dick made contact, lightly stretching the somewhat resistant ring of flesh that eagerly opened and closed around me.

"Nhaaahh... ahhh..."

Below me, Gabrielle's ample tits bounced with each breath, a chorus to the damp moans escaping her lips.

I gazed down at her, observing the rhythmic rise and fall of her breath. Her intimate folds had thoroughly adapted to my shape, the tightness of her vaginal walls, the intricate folds, and the inviting entrance all perfectly stimulating my shaft. Even the entrance to her womb seemed to open wide, as if eager to swallow the tip.

"I'm going to move."

"Nn," she nodded.

Seizing her hips, I began to thrust. As I did, Gabrielle's expression melted into pure pleasure, the light of reason vanishing from her eyes.

"Nnn, Haaa, Ahn, it feels so good... Master..."

I continued to drive my dick into her wet pussy, fixating on her face. There was an undeniable allure to the way she looked when we fucked – an ahégao expression. How did she know how to make such a face? Simple – I taught her. There was a memorable instance when I fucked her senseless, and she fell unconscious while still sporting that ahégao visage. I yearned to capture that moment with a camera, but unfortunately, such technology didn't exist in this world. Fortunately, smartphones were now available. With this, I could immortalize her unconscious ahégao expression, making it even more memorable than the last time.

"Ahhh, amazing, amazingg!! Moree, please fuck me more, Master!"

I claimed her lips as I gyrated my waist in a circular motion. Simultaneously, I pinched her clit, drenched in love juices, and tugged on it.

"Ahhhhhhh! That, that feels good, it's so goodd! I... I'm cumm...ingg!"

Just then, Gabrielle's voice soared to a higher octave.

"That's right, Gabrielle. Cum before my dick. Cum as your master fucks you."

"Ahhhhhhhhhhhh!!!"

Gabrielle's body arched backward as waves of pleasure coursed through her, causing her to quiver and vibrate in ecstasy.

Even as she climaxed, I persisted in driving my dick into her, my own release still pending. With a forceful maneuver, I turned her around and took her from behind.

"Haah! Nn! ...Master... AH! Haaah—Fuahhhhhh!"

Gabrielle responded with heightened sensitivity, her waist-length golden hair cascading loosely as she released a womanly cry of pleasure. Eager for more of those seductive sounds, I thrust forward, creating ripples on her pantyhose-clad buttocks, intensifying the wild encounter.

"Yahh! Aahhh... Master... It feels good."

Her enchanting moans compelled me to glance ahead, catching a glimpse of our reflection in the window. The imagery portrayed two figures engaged in a steamy, passionate act atop the desk, my vigorous movements causing her ample breasts to sway with each impactful grind.

In the fervor of our carnal dance, I continued to relentlessly pound her ass, savoring the way her every movement mirrored my own. This woman, in every detail, held me

captivated. Taking a moment to intensify the experience, I indulged in the taste of her arousal, licking my thumb before tearing through the already-shredded pantyhose, revealing the delicate pink of her anal opening. Placing my thumb on the small hole, an electric jolt ran through her, causing her vaginal walls to clench tighter around me.

"Ya—Fuaaaaaaahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh——!"

Gabrielle's body convulsed violently, a primal scream escaping her lips and resonating throughout the room. In that climactic moment, a torrent of her warm essence cascaded over her pussy, a visceral manifestation of her ecstasy. Cumming explosively from the intrusion of my thumb on her anal, Gabrielle's climax was a symphony of pleasure and release.

Her body, now flushed with the aftermath of intense pleasure, took on a vivid cherry-pink hue. The climax left her moaning incessantly, saliva trickling from the corners of her mouth, and her limbs devoid of energy as she collapsed, resting her head on the desk.

Undeterred, I continued to fuck her with renewed vigor. Soon after, I released my cloudy fluids deep inside her. As my essence flooded her eager pussy, Gabrielle arched her body backward, shivering in the aftermath.

"Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!"

Her pussy tightened around me like a vice-grip, milking me as I filled her to the brink.

Yet, the climax didn't mark the end. My dick, relentless in its hardness, showed no signs of surrender. I withdrew and thrust my cock back into her.

"Ahh, ahh, ahhh... Nnnhhaaa, ahhh... Nhhu!"

I fucked her relentlessly, reveling in the gasps for air that escaped her trembling lips.

Chapter 12: Chapter 2 - The Woman Named Shredica (6)

I pounded Gabriella in the missionary position with an intensity that sent shivers through the room, causing her body to pitch forward perilously close to the edge of the desk we were entangled on.

The room echoed with the rhythmic slaps of our bodies colliding. I had already released my seed inside her five times, and the top of her crotch swelled with the pooled semen, my throbbing member still lodged within.

In a fervor, I stripped away all of her upper garments and discarded her miniskirt, leaving only the seductive sheen of pantyhose that accentuated every curve.

"Ahhhh! Ah, Ah! Master, please, no more! Have mercy!"

Ignoring her pleas, I persisted, driving her to a state of ecstasy that surpassed my own climaxes by threefold. With each forceful thrust, Gabriella's breath came in ragged gasps. As I continued my assault, I seized one of her exposed nipples between my lips, alternating between sucking and nibbling.

"Nhhiii?! D-Don't suck on my breast nowwww!"

Her body writhed in the throes of our carnal embrace, and as I skillfully licked and rolled her engorged nipple with my tongue, she screamed in a desperate blend of pleasure and surrender.

"M-Master, I'm cumm...ingg!"

"That's it, surrender to the pleasure. Let it consume you. Cum as hard as you can!"

"Ahhhhhhhhhhhh!"

Gabrielle's body contorted beneath me, a symphony of quivers and vibrations echoing the intensity of her impending climax. In response, my throbbing meat rod convulsed with an uncontrollable rhythm, sending electrifying pulses through my urethra as if my very essence sought liberation. A scalding torrent of cloudy fluids erupted, painting the canvas of her womb with the culmination of our fervent union.

"Fuahhhhh—cumming, I'm cummmmmmmming!"

With her back arched and in a rhythmic spasm, Gabrielle's velvety walls tightened around my pulsating object, greedily attempting to draw every last drop of my essence into her depths.

Still, even after the torrential release, I persisted, my unyielding dick still throbbing with unrelenting hardness.

"Eh?! Again?!"

"Why are you so shocked, Gabrielle? It's not as if you're still not accustomed to it, right?"

I resumed pounding her once again. With each forceful thrust, the previously lodged semen deep within her pussy oozed out, as if I were scraping it off of her.

Looking down at her, I noticed her eyes rolled back, only the whites visible. It seemed like she was approaching her limit. I felt a twinge of guilt for pushing her to this point, but who could blame me? A sexy professor like her, with a top-notch pussy—there was no way I'd settle for just one round.

Gabrielle lay there, collapsed on top of the desk, resembling a cat luxuriously basking in the sun during a nap. My cloudy fluids spilled from her filled pussy, creating a sensual spectacle.

Rubbing my dick up and down, I admired her sweaty, sexy face. As I felt the familiar sensation of cumming, pleasure caused me to tiptoe, and I released my thick and abundant white fluid onto her face first, then her breasts, and finally her stomach. Even though this was the seventh time now, my semen showed no signs of diminishing in volume.

I grabbed my phone and snapped a photo of her in that post-climax state. Checking out the picture, damn, she looked amazing covered in my cum, her sweaty body, sexy face, and golden hair messy and slicked on her face—it was a masterpiece.

"Haa... That felt good," I said, making my way to her chair and taking a seat.

Gabrielle shot me a pout. "M-Master, you meanie."

"Didn't you enjoy it?" I teased with a smile.

"Of course, I liked it, but can you please give me a break when I say so? I thought I was a goner there for a second."

"If you enjoyed it, then it's all good, right?" I grinned. Standing up, I presented my semi-hard dick to her, still impressive in size compared to her face.

Gabrielle knew the routine and willingly opened her mouth. I guided my dick inside, letting her suck off the remaining semen lingering on my urethra. Her skilled tongue worked wonders, leaving me in awe. This woman's talents knew no bounds, both top and bottom.

The temptation to plunge deeper, to explore the depths of her throat, was strong, but time pressed on. It was already 10 P.M., and the dormitory loomed with potential inquiries if my return was delayed. Suspicion would be inevitable. Rumors of Gabrielle and me not returning to our designated rooms—the dormitory for me and the professors' dormitory for her—would stir curiosity and judgment.

After granting her a moment of blissful attention to my dick, I collected my scattered clothes. "I'm heading back to the dormitory now," I declared. "Clean yourself up before returning to the professors' dorm." Fully dressed, I approached the door, swung it open, and, before stepping out, added, "And don't forget to cover for me."

"Yes, yes. I know," she replied. Sitting up, she scooped off the semen from her face with her fingers, sensually bringing them to her mouth.

As enticing as the scene was, time was of the essence. I left her there, closing the door behind me.

On my journey back to the dormitory, amidst the academy's grandeur, a fountain served as a centerpiece. Unexpectedly, near the bulletin board, I spotted someone whose silhouette leaned against it. As my presence registered, they turned, revealing a pair of icy eyes scrutinizing me.

"What took you so long?" They spat, disdain lacing their words. "I've been waiting for you, what, five hours already? What kind of marathon did you partake in Professor Gabrielle's office that it stretched for five hours?"

The woman with purple hair, the one who had been following me earlier, was none other than Shredica.

"W-What do you mean? I didn't go to the professor's office," I stammered. It wasn't a feigned stutter; it was genuine nervousness.

How hadn't I noticed? Perhaps, my overwhelming horniness had blinded me to my surroundings. It made sense. Suppressing my nervousness, I steadied myself.

"Don't lie to me." Shredica materialized in front of me so swiftly it felt as though she were the very wind. "I saw you walk into her office. What did you do?"

Her face hovered dangerously close, our noses mere inches apart. Her piercing, cold blue eyes bore into my soul.

"I-I don't know what you're talking about," I stammered.

"You really have no idea?"

"If I did, I would know exactly what you're talking about."

Sparks seemed to fly from her eyes as our gazes locked. After a tense moment, I decided to break the standoff. I pushed her aside and began to distance myself. In that very instant, a sense of impending danger gripped me. It seemed aimed at my head, prompting me to instinctively tilt it to the side to avoid a direct hit, although some strands of hair still got caught in the turmoil.

I spun around, locking eyes with her. "You..."

In her hand, she held a silenced pistol, smoke wafting from its muzzle. She had tried to shoot me. No, it was more than that. She was testing me.

"How did you dodge that?" she asked, a smirk gracing her face. It marked the first time I'd seen her smile, and though it was strikingly beautiful, I harbored an impulse to wipe it away. "You're not... really a loser and a weakling, are you, Mr. Leon?"

Silently, I gazed back at her, choosing not to utter a word.

"It's weird, you know," she remarked, the same smile lingering on her face, the gun still leveled at me. "Even though you're tagged as weak, I couldn't sense that from you. But, I chose to overlook it since I didn't care about what you were hiding at the time. As long as you didn't get in my way, I had no interest in you. However, what you did yesterday? That piqued my curiosity. How did you escape serious injury from that clown's punch, a punch that could've been lethal? The answer struck me immediately. You jumped backward to lessen the impact, didn't you? Why was I so sure? Because I've done that multiple times myself. You see, I've always been in wars. Even at a young age, I became a commander, winning battles. Constantly facing threats to my life, I honed my reflexes to the point where my body instinctively reacts to danger. Just like what you did just now, dodging that incoming bullet by a hair's breadth."

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"Seeing you pull that off just now, I became convinced. You're just like me. However, you must understand, Mr. Leon, that our similarities don't mean we're on the same side," Shredica continued, her eyes still piercing through me. "I have my goals, and I won't let anyone stand in my way. So, answer me truthfully: What is your agenda, and what were you doing in Professor Gabrielle's office for so long?"

I remained silent for a moment, weighing my words carefully. "I don't have any agenda against you or anyone else. As for Professor Gabrielle's office, I was just talking with her. Nothing more, nothing less."

Shredica's smile faded, replaced by a stern expression. "Talking? For five hours? You expect me to believe that?"

"It's the truth. We were just talking."

She eased the gun down slightly but retained her grip. "Fine. I'll give you the benefit of the doubt for now, Mr. Leon," she said, her smile returning with a hint of skepticism, "Let me ask you then. Are you an agent?"

The unexpected question left me puzzled. "Agent?"

"An agent of a country attempting to gather information here, posing as a student. I mean, there's no way someone with that fighting capability could be just a random, normal student, right?"

"I'm not. I'm just a regular guy with no special skills. As for what you're thinking about me, you're wrong. I was raised by nuns and trained my whole life because I wanted to get stronger. If you doubt me, go ahead and investigate, for all I care."

It's not like you'll find anything beyond the fact that I was raised by nuns anyway.

Chapter 13: Chapter 2 - The Woman Named Shredica (7)

"Trained your whole life, huh? Is that why you came to this school? You aiming to become a magic knight?" Shredica questioned. "If that's the case, why hide what you're really capable of? Revealing your true skills might put you at the top."

"What, in the bronze class?" I scoffed. Did she not grasp it yet? No matter how hard she struggled, she'd be eternally stuck in the bronze class. Those without a special skill couldn't ascend. They simply didn't belong to the chosen few. That's the brutal reality of this world. "Why waste my time on that crap?"

"Don't dismiss it as a waste of time," she said angrily. Then she sighed, "So, why did you come here then?"

"Simple. Curiosity. I want to witness firsthand the true capabilities of those so-called chosen ones."

Every word I spoke was a lie, of course. I wasn't about to spill the real motives for coming here.

"What a lame reason," Shredica sneered, raising her gun and aiming it at me again.

"You're one hell of a scary woman."

"Scary? That's the first time I've heard that. All my peers always call me a beauty."

"Put that gun down, and maybe we can have a civilized conversation."

"If I don't have something to hold over you, you're gonna reject me."

"Reject you for what?"

"I've got a little request."

"It's not exactly the best way to request a favor while pointing a gun at someone. What you're doing right now is threatening," I said, my tone steady despite the heightened tension.

Shredica's smirk deepened, the gun still unwavering. "Sometimes a little threat is necessary to get what you want."

I sighed, maintaining eye contact. "Fine, state your request. But remember, waving a gun around doesn't guarantee compliance."

I waited for her to break the silence, locking eyes with her. Suddenly, a blush adorned her face, a pink hue spreading across her cheeks. What the hell? Is she about to confess to me? No way, that couldn't be possible. But that's the vibe she's giving off right now. How the hell did our conversation, where she threatened me with a gun and almost killed me, turn into a confession?

"I-It's really hard to say this since this is going to be my first time doing it, and it's kind of embarrassing, but..."

This was getting awkward. Seeing that cold woman squirming like this as she held her gun aimed at me was a unique experience, one no other guy would likely ever have, except for me. She was kinda cute, if not for the fact that she was pointing a gun at me.

She closed her eyes. "Will you go out with me?"

She peered at me with one eye after saying that. But from my perspective, it seemed like she was aiming her gun at me with one eye open. It felt as though if I were to decline, she might just shoot me.

"Go out... Wait, where the hell are we going? You're not hinting at us becoming lovers, are you? I mean, you're definitely easy on the eyes, but..."

I sensed the impending danger, so I smoothly dodged the bullet by contorting my upper body backward until my hands met the ground. With practiced ease, I bounced back on my feet, executing a move that resembled a slick backward tumbling act.

"The notion of you and me becoming lovers isn't something I'd resort to pointing a gun at you for you to agree to," she retorted.

Okay... So she wasn't some crazy yandere or something. Good to know. I wasn't in the market for a woman who'd pull a gun on me if I missed our anniversary. I just wished she hadn't shot me out of nowhere, though.

"Well... First, I've got a few things I'd like to clarify with you," I said.

"Very well. Let's hear it," she replied, her eyes focused and intense, like a predator locking onto its prey.

I took a deep breath. "First things first, what the hell do you mean by 'will you go out with me'? I don't want to jump to any conclusions, so I need some clarification."

"Are you really that slow on the uptake? Can't wrap your head around a simple idea?" she snapped, frustration etched across her face. "Go out with me. Anywhere but here. Is that sinking in?"

"Okay... So, am I correct in assuming that, in simpler terms, you're strong-arming me into going on a date with you?"

Shredica kept her guard up, glowering at me. But then, a blush once again painted her cheeks.

"Are you really making me say it? Fine then. Yeah, it's exactly as you say. So, what's your reply?"

I still didn't have a clue about how to respond, even though the choices were as straightforward as yes or no.

I crossed my arms, eying her with a mix of skepticism and bemusement. "Alright, let me get this straight. You're threatening me with a gun, nearly turning me into a corpse, all for the sake of dragging me on a damn date? Your approach to asking someone out is... unconventional, to say the least."

Shredica huffed, "Quit making a joke out of it and just give me a straight answer."

"Alright, alright. But before I agree to this date, there's one more thing I need to know," I said.

"Spit it out."

"Why me?" I asked. It was the million-dollar question. "I'm just an ordinary guy with a knack for dodging things. I might be more than what meets the eye, but there's no apparent reason for you to approach me., is there? What's your deal? What's your angle in all this?"

Shredica locked eyes with me, her intense blue gaze holding me in place as if by some irresistible force. After a few moments of silence, she sighed and finally holstered her gun, concealing it somewhere.

Even so, she remained tight-lipped.

"You're clearly keeping something from me. There are plenty of things I'd like an explanation for."

"I'm fed up with your relentless questioning..." she finally said. "But fine, I'll say the details, but not in this place."

I cocked my head, "Where, then?"

"Anywhere but here, moron."

Damn, this woman had guts, calling someone she wasn't close to a moron. But I finally realized what she meant. She was saying she'd spill the beans on my questions, but not in the academy. Translation: she'd answer my inquiries on our date somewhere. That's why she mentioned earlier that she wanted to go out with me anywhere but here.

What could be the reason she couldn't spill the tea in this place? I was getting intrigued, wanting to uncover the mystery.

"So, what will it be?"

"...I'm in." I replied.

If I wanted to know, then going on a date with her was the play.

"Great," she said, then pulled something out of her pocket.

It was a sleek smartphone, a high-tech marvel that momentarily left me wide-eyed at how she managed to snag one, but I kept my surprise under wraps. Given her bounty hunting exploits, it wasn't beyond the realm of possibility that she raked in enough cash to splurge on a smartphone.

"You did something to the princess of Bethlan so you could message her up on this, right?" she remarked, brandishing the device. "I want the same setup with me."

She wanted my number. It was a refreshing change to have a girl taking the initiative in the digits game.

"Sure," I nonchalantly replied.

I handed over my number and gave her a quick rundown on how to use the messaging features. After that, she peered at her phone, checking out her new contact. My name was the sole entry—no extra details.

"Well then," she said, smoothly sliding her phone back into her pocket. "I'll hit you up with the details about our plans tomorrow tonight. Be sure to shoot me a reply pronto when my message lands in your inbox."

"Alright," I affirmed. "So, is that all? If it is, I'll bounce back to the dormitory." I executed a smooth turn on my heels, but then realization struck. "Wait? We're doing this tomorrow?"

"But of course. When else if not tomorrow?"

"Uh, I've got something lined up for tomorrow."

"Cancel it, then."

Wow. She wants me to cancel it?

"Look, it's something I can't just casually scrap. Do you even know how crucial this is for me?"

Tomorrow, I planned to put my schemes into action, attempting to win over one of the second-years I've set my sights on. She was always out shopping with her friends during breaks, and tomorrow was my chance to capture her interest and unlock the prerequisites for conquering her. This wasn't a plan I could just toss aside. I had fierce competition with other guys, and I couldn't afford to waste any more time. I needed to make my move before someone else beat me to it.

"Is it more important than going on a... a d-date with me?" She said it with a straight face initially, but when she hit the word 'date,' her face turned red. Stoic expression maintained, though.

"It is important," I asserted with a stern face. It seemed like she might pull out her gun or unleash some other threat if I didn't make it crystal clear. "But if you're dead set on tomorrow, can we make it in the evening? I can carve out that time."

She fell silent for a beat before letting out a resigned sigh. "Fine, then. I suppose evening it is. I'll tell you the details later – the time and the spot. Just remember, no tardiness. Otherwise, I'll unleash everything in my arsenal to make you suffer in ways you can't even fathom. Got it?"

Wahh, scary. "I get it," I replied.

"Well then, I shall make my way back to the dormitory."

"That's probably a good call. It's pretty damn late. I'm sure the dorm guards are already side-eyeing us for not being there. Hold up, why are you tagging along?"

"We're in the same dormitory, remember?"

"Oh, right." I'd completely spaced. This woman was from the bronze class.

Both Shredica and I strolled toward the dormitory, an unspoken tension between us. Luckily, we managed to slip in the dormitory without catching flak for staying out late. That was a relief, at least.

Chapter 14: Chapter 3 - In The Dead Of The Night (1)

It was exactly midnight when I, Elise, strolled down the dark alley, the sharp click of my black stilettos echoing on the cobblestone pavement. The full moon cast its glow, revealing three figures hiding in the shadows.

"Took you long enough, Eclair," one of the men in the middle, seated in a wheelchair, remarked. He leaned in, allowing me to see one ember eye as the rest of his face remained shrouded in bandages, lit by the moonlight.

"It looks like that man really did a number on you," I said with an amused tone.

The man in the wheelchair scoffed, his ember eye narrowing at me, the dim moonlight casting an eerie glow on his scarred face. "This is just a temporary setback."

I couldn't help but chuckle, my voice a sultry symphony laced with a hint of mockery. "Temporary? From where I'm standing, it looks like a permanent downgrade."

His grin widened, revealing a set of sharp teeth that glinted in the shadows. "You always did have a sharp tongue, Eclair. But let's get down to business. I've got a proposition for you."

I crossed my arms, raising an eyebrow. "I'm listening."

"We need your skills, your... expertise," he said, gesturing to the dimly lit surroundings. "The underworld is changing, and we need someone who can adapt."

I smirked, knowing there was more to this than met the eye. "Adaptation comes at a price. What's in it for me?"

The man's ember eye gleamed with a sly glint. "Protection, power, and a taste of the pleasures this world has to offer. Join us, Eclair, and you won't regret it."

I considered his offer, the allure of the dark side calling out to me. "Maybe, but I don't play second fiddle to anyone. Remember that."

He chuckled, the sound resonating through the alley, echoing like a dark hymn. "You were never meant for a supporting role. We want you at the forefront of this new era."

To be honest, the proposition was tantalizing. If I took a leading role in this underworld transformation, the chances of finding my younger brother would skyrocket. However, caution held me back. This man, a master of betrayal, spoke with a silver-tongued persuasion. I couldn't simply accept what spilled from his lips.

"You seem a tad guarded," he observed.

"Who wouldn't be, especially when dealing with someone like you?"

The man chuckled. "Do not worry. What I'm telling you is the unvarnished truth this time."

I cast a furtive glance at the two men flanking him, their shadows dancing in the dimly lit alley, before returning my gaze to him.

"As of this moment, I've got zero interest in diving into the depths of the underground, let alone leading it. I've got to apologize for that."

"I had a feeling you'd say that," he sighed. "Well, nothing much I can do about it, I suppose."

"I half-expected you to pull a gun on me for turning you down, but I guess I was off the mark."

"Seriously? You think I'd dare to pull a stunt like that, especially with someone as formidable as you, given my current state? Even these two here wouldn't stand a snowball's chance in hell against you. Am I right?"

No argument there. Those two were nothing more than lambs headed for slaughter in my presence. Any foolish attempt at violence would only lead them to a swift and futile demise. And if this man in the wheelchair wasn't as battered as he is now, the tables would be turned, and I would find myself at the mercy of his strength. Fortunately, he's been so thoroughly beaten that it's beyond the realm of possibility for him to defeat me.

"You're not quite the hot-headed troublemaker the rumors make you out to be, huh?"

"I've been on my best behavior lately, thanks to a certain someone."

"I don't know the details, but that someone must be pretty powerful to have you acting like this."

I didn't have all the details about what had really gone down with this man, but I'd caught wind of some rumors. The moment those whispers reached my ears, I found myself oddly intrigued by the individual who had pulled off something like this against the underground's second-in-command. I knew he wouldn't be thrilled with me prying into his affairs, but I had to ask. There was this gut feeling, this inexplicable intuition, that delving into this might provide some insight into my brother's whereabouts. I couldn't quite put my finger on why I felt this way, given the slim chance of this case having any connection to my brother, but the feeling gnawed at me relentlessly.

"Mind if I hit you with a few questions? I'll entertain your proposal if you indulge me."

"Really? Well then, lay it on me."

Our eyes locked, a tacit agreement forming between us. "Just how formidable is this individual?"

He held my gaze for a moment, his lone eye locking onto mine before he let out a resigned sigh. "I knew you'd ask that..."

He then tapped his bony finger, also swathed in bandages, onto the armrest of the wheelchair.

The men flanking him delicately adjusted his position until the moonlight fully bathed his entire body. Witnessing his complete form, I grasped the harsh severity of his condition. It was almost inconceivable that this man clung tenaciously to life, given the state he was in.

He held the prestigious position of the underground's second-in-command, a role second only to the underground king. His ascendancy to this position was attributed not only to his exceptional intelligence but also to his formidable strength, a strength that even surpassed my own – a fact I begrudgingly acknowledged.

Yet now, observing him in this state, his body wrapped in bandages like a mummy, one arm severed along with a leg, it was genuinely shocking.

"I reckon you can gauge the might of that man just from the injuries I've endured. But, if it's to satisfy your curiosity, I can elaborate... Truth be told, I have no clue about his true strength. He toyed with me like a puppet, effortlessly controlling me even as I exerted every ounce of my skill. I pushed myself to the brink, almost to the point of self-destruction, and yet, he never went all out."

"...He restrained himself when you were at your limits?" I queried, genuinely puzzled by this revelation.

"That's right. I threw everything in my arsenal at him, and still, I couldn't land a hit. Couldn't even get close. His power... it felt akin to waging war against the very essence of darkness itself."

His solitary hand, ensconced in blood-soaked bandages, clenched with such intensity that the fabric itself reddened, evidence of lingering wounds that still bled.

"He mocked me, you know," he rasped, his voice tinged with the bitterness of that haunting encounter. "Dancing around, effortlessly evading and deflecting. All the while, that damned smile never left his face. I'll never forget the frustration that consumed me, the sheer powerlessness. I, renowned as the underworld's strongest, reduced to a pawn in a man's twisted game."

His gaze bore into mine, and the bandages seemed to drink in more and more crimson, saturated with the weight of his words.

"But... the true helplessness engulfed me when he unleashed a magic spell beyond my comprehension. It was like facing the might of a monstrous entity," he uttered, the words hanging heavy in the air.

I listened in silence as he recounted the tale of his futile struggle against a force that seemed beyond mortal comprehension.

"He played with me, toyed with my every move as if I were nothing more than an insect," he continued, his one visible eye reflecting a mix of anger and resignation. "No matter what I did, it was like trying to grasp smoke with my bare hands. And then, the magic... I can't even find words to describe it. It was as if a colossal beast had awoken, and its sheer presence overwhelmed me."

The moonlight cast an eerie glow on the scene, emphasizing the grim reality of his injuries and the torment he had endured. The air seemed thick with the echoes of his struggles.

"Even now, as I stand before you, I can still feel the remnants of that dark magic lingering within me," he confessed, a haunted look in his eye. "I've been broken, physically and mentally, and I fear I may never fully recover."

Recovery seemed an elusive specter, drifting out of reach for him both physically and, judging by the visible tremors, mentally as well. How had someone managed to bring down the supposed strongest member of the underworld? And if this enigmatic figure truly existed, what inscrutable motives fueled his actions?

"I've got another question for you."

The man in the wheelchair ceased his trembling, as if snapping back to reality. Despite this, a lingering unease still haunted his lone eye. "Go ahead. Ask away."

I drew in a deep breath before continuing, "What did he call himself?"

I was aware of the titles bestowed upon him by the underworld—virtuoso, playwright, showman—all signifying a mastermind and performer of grand spectacles. But I sought his true name, if he had divulged it to this man. Yet, the man shook his head, indicating that no such revelation had occurred.

"...But," he added after the decisive shake, "he left me with a dire warning. The reason I still draw breath is to relay a message to the underworld. He proclaimed that a day would come when only one king would reign in this world. Those donning the guise of kings should renounce their titles, lest they incur the wrath of the sole and undisputed monarch."

Chapter 15: Chapter 3 - In The Dead Of The Night (2)

A king, huh? Was he harboring ambitions of world domination or some grandiose scheme? It sounded like a fantastical dream, but given the unsettling details this guy shared, maybe it wasn't as implausible as I first believed.

Yet, amidst these thoughts, I wondered if this case held any connection to my brother. There was an inexplicable sense that unraveling this mystery might reveal something linked to him.

Yet, perhaps it was merely my imagination running rampant...

"I'll entertain your proposal," I said, my tone edged. "But for now, I've got somewhere urgent to be." I spun on my heels, ready to make my exit, but his next words froze me in place.

The man chuckled, "Sorry, Eclair, but you're not going anywhere."

"What do you mean?" I shot a glance over my shoulder.

"Just what it sounds like. You're staying put."

Behind me, the ominous symphony of guns being cocked reverberated, creating a chilling atmosphere. And it wasn't confined to the rear—I felt the intense gaze of a sniper fixated on me. As I scanned the surroundings, a realization dawned upon me—I was encircled. Any misstep or inkling of resistance, and the ominous promise of bullets ripping through the air awaited me.

"You talking about being on your best behavior seems like a damn joke now, huh? Real cowardly move to pull this shit when I let my guard down, thinking you were on the level."

"You know what grinds my gears, Eclair? The one thing I can't stand in this godforsaken world is losing. Losing to someone the underworld didn't even know existed until he decided to make a grand entrance, wreaking havoc on Milham's capital three damn months ago. It shattered my pride into a million pieces. But make no mistake, I refuse to accept defeat. I hunger for victory at any cost. You can't fathom the burning desire I have to claim your head as my trophy right here, right now. The moment you turned down my offer, you signed your death warrant. And when you drop your guard, I'll end you. Sure, taking your head won't magically mend my pride, but it's a damn fine prize, especially considering you're only worth a measly hundred gold less than my bounty."

"You sure know how to pull a complete 180," I remarked. "You claim to loathe losing, but how the hell do you plan to take on that guy in your current sorry state? Are you really going to throw down with just one arm and one leg?"

"As I've said, this is just a temporary setback. I'll bounce back, and mark my words, I'll do whatever it takes to make that man kneel before me."

"Men and their damn pride..."

I kept a watchful eye on him, all the while heightening my senses to pinpoint the individuals lurking around me. Three figures concealed within the buildings, five—no, six—on the rooftops. Wait, scratch that. It felt like there were only five on the rooftop, but why did I sense a lingering sixth presence? Not that it truly mattered; I could handle them all, surely. Two discernible pairs of eyes trained on me—likely snipers. Then, right in front of me, two men. Simultaneously, two more lurking behind me.

Fourteen individuals, to be precise. If there indeed was a mysterious sixth person eluding my senses, the count would climb to fifteen.

"Well then," I declared, activating my skill. Threads of silk, stronger than any metal, materialized in my fingers. With a subtle sway of my hand, they danced in harmony with my movements. "I suppose reasoning isn't on the table anymore, is it?"

"Believe me, I'm a man of reason. I just... don't appreciate when things refuse to go my way."

As he uttered those words, a barrage of bullets came hurtling towards me from all directions. Swiftly, I pivoted to face him, and with a deft flick of my wrist, I unleashed the silken strands in my hand. The bullets split into fragments as they collided with my lethal threads, the motion of my hands and the silk so rapid that they became a blur.

I manipulated the threads with an effortless grace that seemed almost like a dance. The metallic pings of bullets meeting their swift demise resonated through the narrow alley. There I stood, an immovable force, my hands the only parts of me in motion.

As time elapsed, the four figures near me, those lurking behind, and the ones flanking the man emptied their guns, the ominous clicking of their now-useless firearms echoing. Seizing this brief window of advantage, I unleashed my silk threads upon them. In a masterful display, I slashed the silken strands through the air, cutting through each assailant from top to bottom, right down the middle. Once severed, their bodies stood frozen for a moment, an eerie pause, before succumbing to the inevitable and splitting apart.

In a fluid motion, my threads extended to the rooftop, snaking their way around the unsuspecting figures. Like a macabre puppeteer, I seized their ankles with my silken strands and effortlessly pulled them from their lofty perch. As they hung in the air, I deftly slashed my threads, severing their heads. The moon above bore witness to this macabre ballet, illuminating the grisly display of heads parting from bodies. Blood sprayed from the stumps, cascading down like rain in the narrow alley. The crimson shower splattered on me, turning my silhouette into a canvas of dark, gruesome art.

My eyes, now as red as the blood that rained down, locked onto the distant tower where two snipers had been observing. With lethal precision, I attacked them, slicing their bodies into a multitude of unrecognizable pieces.

Having dispatched all threats, I retracted my silks back into my fingers.

The man observed me with a somewhat amused smile. "Well, I guess that didn't work out. Seems like no one, other than myself, is capable of putting up a fight against you."

"Too bad you're only half the man you used to be."

"Yeah, I suppose that's a damn shame."

"You're flipping that 180 again. Is this the real you, or the prideful one?"

"Both this and the prideful version are the real me," he said.

"So, which one is it?" I questioned, locking eyes with him. "Are you the ruthless fighter who'll do anything to win, or the guy nursing a wounded pride?"

He chuckled, the sound reverberating off the alley walls. "In this unforgiving world, you've got to adapt, Eclair. Sometimes you play the ruthless game, and sometimes you nurse your pride. It's about survival, not tethering yourself to one version of who you are."

My eyebrow arched in skepticism. "Survival, huh? Well, you certainly tried to play the ruthless card, and it didn't quite pan out for you, did it?"

He grinned, an unsettling gleam in his eyes. "Maybe not this time, but I'll adapt. I always do. And the next time our paths intersect, you might encounter a different me standing before you."

The prospect of our next encounter lingered in the air. I could have opted to end him right then and there, but hesitation held me back, knowing he possessed a skill that rivaled, if not surpassed, my own. Attacking him head-on would be foolhardy, and I wasn't one to make rash moves.

I smirked. "Looking forward to it. Just remember, adaptability works both ways. I'm not one to remain stagnant either."

With that, I pivoted on my heels, exiting the dimly lit alley. Glancing behind me, I noticed the man had vanished, leaving no trace, not even the wheelchair he occupied.

A peculiar sensation gripped me as I stepped into the open. If I were to pinpoint it, even the hairs down there seemed to be on edge. It wasn't fear, I was certain of that. So what was this unfamiliar feeling?

"That's a nice skill you got there. What do you call it?" A voice, as deep and abyssal as the void, resonated from above. I looked up to find a man clad in an all-encompassing black outfit, his hood obscuring his face entirely. Beneath the hood, a pair of crimson eyes, darker and bloodier than mine, pierced through. My chest resonated with a heightened heartbeat. Was this... a sense of connection?

I responded, my voice competing with the rhythmic thud of my heart, "Silk Threads of Death. I assume you're aware, yet it seems there's more to it that you haven't grasped. Or perhaps your lack of knowledge stems from not knowing who I am."

"That's why I'm asking, because I have no idea who you are."

"It's not exactly polite to inform someone who's supposedly famous that you're in the dark about them, you know? Well, I guess when you're a rising star yourself, there's no time to acknowledge those who reached fame a while ago, Mr. Playwright," I retorted, a smirk gracing my face as I looked up at him and activated my skill once again. Simultaneously, he mirrored my smirk and gathered mana around his palms, conjuring fiery orbs.

"Then I suppose a good way for me to gauge your fame is through a battle," he proposed.

"You might be right."

With that, we prepared for the impending clash. However, he suddenly halted and stared at the air before him.

"Hmm? Huh... What... What?!" he exclaimed.

Curiosity led me to tilt my head, observing his reaction. In his surprised exclamation, I managed to catch a fleeting glimpse of his face. To my astonishment, his visage bore a striking resemblance to mine.