

The World 72

Chapter 72: Leonamon (7)

Martha is dead. Seeing her lifeless form on Sandra's back confirmed it. Her skin, once warm and alive, had turned a haunting pallid shade, accentuated by cracked lips. Her eyes, once filled with life, now peacefully shut, resembling someone in undisturbed slumber. There was no trace of blood; Sandra must have healed every bruise and cut.

Yet, this tender care proved insufficient to snatch Martha from the clutches of death.

Gently, Sandra lowered Martha onto the couch. In this serene pose, she seemed more at rest than departed.

"...I'm sorry, Lord Mephisto. I did everything I could, but..." Sandra's voice faltered.

I didn't respond, approaching Sandra and checking Martha's pulse. The moment I touched her wrist, a cold realization swept over me. I could feel the chill, and I knew she was gone. Still, I needed to confirm, so I checked her pulse.

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Nothing.

Martha is dead. Truly, she's gone.

My heart raced, a sensation I hadn't felt in my second life. The last time this surge of emotions gripped me was back on Earth when I stumbled upon my sister hanging from the ceiling, her neck tethered to a noose. In that moment, all I could do was stand in shock, watching her body sway like a pendulum.

The vivid memory of that tragic event remained etched in my mind. The cruel reality that blindsided me with its brutality.

An aging apartment, bathed in the dwindling sunlight of the setting sun. A looming shadow, elongated and gently swinging, reminiscent of a grand clock's pendulum.

I couldn't bring myself to look directly at it, let alone comprehend the grim reality before me.

The woman who had always stood by me. The one who tirelessly toiled for my well-being. Closer to me than a first love – she was my sister from my previous life.

Martha, in her mannerisms and behaviors, reminded me so much of my sister. Even the tendency to avert her eyes when lying mirrored my sister's habits.

Seeing Martha like this unleashed a torrent of emotions I had buried deep within me. Waves of bloodlust radiated from my core, swirling with such intensity that everything in the room was sent flying outward.

The anger I had never directed at those responsible for my sister's death surfaced. If I could return to Earth, I would mercilessly kill those bastards, tearing them limb from limb. I craved to make them comprehend the agony they inflicted upon her. I yearned to instill true fear in them. The desire to kill them consumed me.

Yet, I had no clue how to return to Earth at this juncture. I was still in search of a way, seeking someone possessing the skill to transport me back. In the meantime, this bubbling anger had no outlet.

"...Sandra," I spoke, tempering my voice to avoid sounding furious. I didn't wish to punish Sandra for Martha's unfortunate fate, nor did I hold her responsible. When I called her, she promptly shed all her clothes, prostrating herself naked, head pressed against the floor.

"I have no excuse for this failure, Lord Mephisto. I will accept any punishment you deem fit."

"Stand up," I directed. "I won't punish you. I simply want to know who did this to Martha."

Sandra didn't rise but lifted her head to meet my gaze. "...Norman Amarathea. He beat her to the point of her... succumbing."

"I see..." Her own brother committed this heinous act? Unforgivable. Gazing at Martha again, I murmured, "Spell Creation."

I resolved to harness the arcane potential of Spell Creation to address Martha's dire state. Spell Creation, while not an omnipotent force, allowed me to weave spells within certain constraints. It granted me the ability to craft spells that mirrored the Foundational Six, a set comprising Fire, Water, Earth, Wind, Light, Dark, and Healing spells—common staples in magical studies.

Barrier Magic, due to its infrequent use, stood excluded.

Spell Creation was confined to spells reminiscent of the Foundational Six. For instance, my Illusion Magic, akin to Water Magic, birthed illusions reminiscent of elusive mirages. Levitation Magic, drawing parallels with Wind Magic, harnessed wind to facilitate graceful levitation. Mist Magic echoed elements of both Water and Fire, while Smoke Magic embodied the essence of Fire.

Now, my intent was to forge Resurrection Magic. If my assumptions held true, Resurrection could draw from Light, Dark, and Healing. I hoped I was on the right track.

"Create Resurrection Magic," I declared, sensing a gradual weakening within myself. This was the typical drain experienced during spell creation. The process demanded a considerable amount of mana, often leaving me feeling depleted. It was important to note that this effort didn't guarantee success; I could only hope for a positive outcome.

After some time, I successfully created Resurrection Magic. As I did, information about its use floated in front of me, while I heaved from mana depletion.

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Resurrection Magic

Successfully Created!

Usage: Use to revive dead people.

Warning: Can only revive others. The user can't revive themselves.

It only works if the target has only been dead for a week.

There are side effects on the magic, affecting either the user or the resurrected. The user may face death, and the resurrected may not have completely healed from the fatal wounds or may experience memory loss. Physical and/or mental deterioration of the resurrected may occur. The chances of these happening are 50%.

Requirements: Summon the target's soul to properly resurrect the body.

To adhere to universal laws, resurrecting someone may require the death of another. The chances of success and avoiding side effects increase if the person was the killer.

Note: The resurrection process may take a long time, depending on how traumatic the demise was; and it may not happen at all if the soul of the intended resurrected individual refuses to return to the living.

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I see... Reviving someone isn't as easy as snatching candy from a baby. That much was clear. Tinkering with the boundaries of life and death, essentially playing God, meant that this magic would inevitably bite the user back when invoked.

Summoning a soul was also a puzzle to me. It looked like I'd have to ask Gabrielle to dig up some information...

Time was ticking. Just one week. That's all I had before Martha would truly be lost. I didn't want her to die. I wanted to bring her back. Not for her sake, but for my own.

The thought of losing someone resembling my sister filled me with anger and fear. I dreaded turning into a heartless monster, capable of offing anyone in sight. I couldn't let that happen. I'd do anything in my power to bring her back.

I'm putting my life on the line here. And honestly, I'm scared. I want to savor life a bit more. That's why...

"...I'm going to hunt that fucking Norman," I declared.

I needed to up my odds of survival. Using Norman as the key to revive Martha seemed like the best shot. However, Norman was a slippery snake, rarely revealing himself. Blindly hunting him down would only make me look like an idiot running in circles. Exhausting and time-consuming.

I crouched down near Martha, gently brushing some hair strands away from her face. She looked as if she were only sleeping, but the coldness in my fingertips hinted otherwise.

"I will save you..."

Maybe I was projecting my sister onto Martha, driving my desire to rescue her. Perhaps it was the failure of saving my sister that fueled this determination. Regardless of the reason, one thing remained unchanged—I genuinely wanted to save Martha. Leaning in, I planted a kiss on her cheek.

I woke up in an unfamiliar room, staring at a very different ceiling. After a moment, I slipped out of bed, finding no one else beside me. That indicated no nighttime escapades. I left the room and headed to the bathroom.

Using magic, I splashed my face to shake off the grogginess from sleep. Following that, I brushed my teeth, gazing at my reflection in the mirror. As I did, I noticed someone walking behind me in the reflection. They approached, mirroring my actions.

"You're up early," I remarked after finishing brushing my teeth.

"This is my usual waking hour. What about you? Why the early rise?"

"I just... had nightmares, that's all," I replied.

"Must've been a pretty scary one if it woke someone like you. Anyway, congrats on climbing ten ranks in the ranking."

"I'm not sure how long I can cling to that rank. I'm not exactly the most skilled person, you know. So, no need for any congrats from you. Actually, I should be the one tipping my hat to you for acing the midterm examination."

"Well, I poured my heart into it. It would've been gut-wrenching if I didn't pass despite all the effort. I might even find myself shedding a tear or two."

I chuckled, "You? Shedding a tear? Now, that's a tough pill to swallow."

"I'm not jesting. I'm genuinely excited about going to this place."

"Is that so? Well, fair enough, I suppose." I said as I turned to leave. "Just don't try to boss me around while we're here. I've got a full plate these days."

She didn't bother looking at me, "I'm swamped too, so I guess we're on the same page."

"Great." I said, sighing with a fake sense of relief. "Let's just make it a point to avoid each other during our stay here, and hopefully, this is the last one, Miss Shredica."

"I'm totally fine with that," she replied.

I exited the bathroom, a surprisingly spacious setting that could easily accommodate around 50 people. It was the solitary restroom in the vicinity, open to both males and females. An alternative suggestion was given to handle nature's calls in the forest and take a refreshing dip in the lake.

I guess that's the only practical advice because, for the seven days we're here, it's unlikely that females would be thrilled about sharing intimate spaces with males.

"Now then..." I whispered, savoring a deep breath of the surprisingly fresh air. "...which day will Norman unleash his kidnapping plot, I wonder?"

Today marks the kickoff of our joint training—a seven-day immersion for all Milham Academy students here in the Hertan Village. Little do the students and staff know, beneath the surface of this seemingly tranquil setting, Norman Amarathea, the infamous Don of the Black Market, is brewing a plan to snatch individuals away.