

VILLAIN 107

Chapter 107 The Mysterious Library

- Frey Starlight's Pov -

"Welcome to Lady Semiramis Library."

Silence lingered for a few moments.

I was still taking in my surroundings—the towering bookshelves, the spiral-like structure of the place—and then my gaze returned to the girl seated in the wheelchair.

Semiramis Library... Was this the Institution's library?

After another brief moment of contemplation, my attention shifted back to the girl who had just greeted me.

"Ah... Thank you."

"Um... forgive my question, but who are you?"

I hesitated slightly at her question. She didn't seem to recognize me.

"Don't misunderstand," she continued. "I identify people by their auras... but I've never sensed yours before."

I could have lied to her. But I chose not to.

"My name is Frey Starlight. I'm here with the temple's delegation."

The moment my name left my lips, her expression shifted slightly.

She turned to the little girl nestled in her lap, a soft smile gracing her face.

Gently stroking the child's head, she asked in a calm voice, "Azura... were you the one who brought him here?"

The little girl—Azura—opened her violet eyes, glancing at me before looking back at the girl in the wheelchair.

"Yes."

Reem nodded the moment she heard the response.

"Then everything is fine."

She turned back to me, her smile gentle.

"My name is Rem, and I am the librarian here. You are welcome to stay as long as you wish."

She was still welcoming me.

I had expected something different after she heard my name.

"Miss Rem, forgive my question... but do you not know who I am?"

"I know you well, Lord Frey."

"Yet you're still allowing me to stay?"

Rem nodded.

"As long as Azura was the one who brought you here, there is no issue."

"I see..."

I moved carefully, my gaze still fixed on her.

I didn't want to make any reckless moves. Even entertaining the thought felt dangerous.

After all... the girl before me was far from ordinary.

'Hawk Eyes.'

The moment I activated my enhanced vision, I saw it—an overwhelming aura surging from Reem, so vast that it seemed to press against the very ceiling of the library.

This pressure... was stronger than Carmen's.

Rem smiled knowingly, fully aware of my reaction.

"Don't worry, Lord Frey. You are my guest now."

"Apologies... this is just a bit much to process."

For a moment, I considered turning around and leaving through the same door I had entered. But I chose to hold back.

"Perhaps you're looking for something?"

Rem's question lingered in the air, and I answered vaguely, "Something like that..."

"The books here hold knowledge accumulated over the last 400 years. Perhaps you will find what you seek."

The last 400 years of knowledge...

Was there truly such a library in the first place?

I searched my memory, recalling the world of my novel.

I hadn't delved too deeply into the Moonlight Family in the original setting... but I was sure I had never mentioned a library like this.

There was no way I could have forgotten something this significant.

I ran a hand through my hair, frustration bubbling within me.

It felt as if I wasn't the writer—just someone who knew fragments of what was to come.

Everything about this was shrouded in mystery.

Then, suddenly, a thought struck me.

The last 400 years of knowledge... in that case...

I turned to Rem at once.

"Are there any books here about curses?"

As if anticipating my question, Rem nodded immediately.

"There are plenty."

Gently setting Azura aside, she gestured toward the upper floor.

"Azura, would you guide him to the Ancient History section?"

The little girl nodded before running toward me.

Upon reaching me, she stopped and held out her tiny right hand.

I instinctively took it. Her hand was so small that I loosened my grip as much as possible to avoid hurting her.

Rem may have been blind, but she saw far more than I did. That much was evident from the faint smile on her face as soon as Azura reached for me.

"She seems comfortable around you."

"I suppose so..."

I didn't understand why this little girl had been so affectionate toward me from the start... but I didn't mind it.

My mind resisted her, yet in the end, I always relented.

Azura led the way to the first upper floor, her small hand holding mine as I followed.

Rem simply watched us from afar.

"Are you sure about this, Iceflower? Allowing a stranger to roam freely here..."

A deep, raspy voice echoed in the air—one only Rem could hear.

That was natural.

After all, I couldn't see the things that stood behind her.

Two eerie phantoms with ethereal forms loomed behind the blind girl—each more terrifying than the other.

"It's fine. I've never seen Azura act this way with anyone but me. At the very least, he is not a bad person."

How many outsiders had set foot in this place over the past hundred years?

And how many had she cast out?

What happened today was unprecedented... yet Rem accepted it without hesitation.

And at that moment, no one could have foreseen what lay beneath her calm demeanor.

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Azura led me to a secluded section filled with countless books.

Volumes detailing the empire's history during wartime—particularly the brutal torture methods used on prisoners.

A simple chair stood in the middle of the corridor.

Lifting Azura, I gently placed her on it.

"Sit here quietly while I look around."

Azura nodded without a word.

She was eerily quiet... but I liked that about her.

I began scanning the bookshelves, my fingers trailing along the spines of the volumes, until I randomly pulled one out.

The moment I read a few lines, my expression darkened.

The book described, in unnerving detail, how the Moonlight Family had tortured their prisoners during war.

The methods were laid out so explicitly that a wave of disgust rolled over me.

The more I read, the more hollow I felt.

Then, my eyes landed on a particular section.

"Torture through Curses."

At times, executioners and high-ranking individuals resorted to cursing their victims, as physical torment alone did not always yield the desired results...

A curse imposes powerful restrictions on its recipient, binding them to a strict set of laws and conditions dictated by the caster. Below are examples of how curses can be used...

I had read about many different curses—some could manipulate minds, while others could turn people into slaves. But the explanations were lacking. They didn't give me the answers I needed.

Suddenly, I felt a tug on my shirt.

Azura.

I hadn't even noticed when she had jumped down from her chair or how she had appeared beside me so quietly. In her hands, she held a book with a black cover.

She pushed it toward me, signaling that she wanted me to read it.

I wouldn't dare brush off this strange girl's actions, so I quickly accepted the book.

"Thank you."

When I gently patted her head, she looked pleased.

She really was... adorable.

Leaving Azura behind, I opened the book.

"The Four Great Curses."

An interesting title.

Unlike the previous book, this one delved much deeper.

Many people mistakenly associate curses solely with magic.

Magic has many branches, and while curses do intersect with sorcery, they are not the same. In fact, the strongest curses do not originate from magic at all.

The greatest proof of this lies in the Four Great Curses—each belonging to a prestigious noble family.

The Curse of the Blade and Hourglass – exclusive to the Valerion Imperial Family.

The Curse of the Iliad – wielded by the Starlight Family.

The Curse of the Black Flame – belonging to the Sunlight Family.

The Curse of the Frozen Heart – tied to the Moonlight Family.

That last one...

The moment I saw the title, a strange sensation washed over me—like a dagger slowly carving into my heart.

I wasn't entirely sure... but deep down, I knew.

This was it.

This was what had been afflicting me.

Without hesitation, I began reading.

The Curse of the Frozen Heart

A terrifying curse that turns its recipient into a slave to the caster.

It cannot be removed and remains active at all times. The curse automatically activates whenever the victim is near the caster.

It binds the victim's heart to the caster's aura, granting the latter the power to end the victim's life at will.

Disobeying the caster's commands results in excruciating pain—agony beyond human endurance.

The curse is unstable. If excessively triggered, the victim will die even without a direct order. The longest recorded survival period for a victim under continuous exposure was 30 days.

If the victim remains within the caster's range, they will die within this time frame—or sooner, depending on their endurance.

However, if they distance themselves from the caster, the effects will pause—though the issued commands will never be undone.

The more I read, the colder my body felt.

These conditions meant...

I was completely powerless against whoever had cursed me.

This was a disaster in every sense of the word.

Conditions for Casting:

The caster must possess an aura stronger than the victim's.

If the victim has a stronger aura, they must willingly accept the curse.

The caster cannot curse more than one person at a time.

Methods of Breaking the Curse:

The caster willingly lifts it.

The caster dies—though their commands remain in effect even after death.

Note:

The Curse of the Frozen Heart is an advanced curse, passed down only among the highest-ranking individuals, and is extremely difficult to learn.

... What now?

I finally understood why the system had given me a 30-day deadline.

Even if I did nothing, I would die in 30 days just by staying near the caster.

The curse had been placed on the original Frey long ago, meaning the truth behind it lay within his memories.

But I had no way of accessing them.

All I had were scattered, meaningless fragments.

I didn't even know what commands had been imposed on me.

So even if I killed the caster, it wouldn't necessarily end the curse.

Still, I had a hunch...

This was somehow tied to the Moonlight Family's secret—the one I knew.

And as the book stated, the caster was someone of high rank.

That meant...

Everyone I had met on the train was irrelevant.

The curse had only activated once we neared Moonlight Manor.

At the very least, the one who cursed me was far stronger than I was.

I needed to find them before the deadline ran out... and somehow convince them to lift the curse.

I let out a dry laugh.

"Isn't that impossible?"

Then, a thought struck me.

The Moonlight Family wanted me dead.

So why hadn't the caster killed me yet?

It should have been effortless.

Then why was I still alive?

A dull headache pounded in my skull.

None of this made sense.

I was completely lost.

Then, all of a sudden, I felt Azura tug at me again.

Her timing was strange... yet perfect.

"Are you worried about me?"

Her violet eyes lingered on me for a moment before she extended both arms, silently asking to be carried.

This tiny creature...

Was the only warmth in this cold, desolate place.

I spent the next few hours trying to learn more about curses.

When it got late, I finally left the library, leaving behind both Azura and Reem, who waved at me with a gentle smile.

The rest of my day passed in a haze.

My mind was consumed—either trying to process what I had read or figure out who had cursed me.

I couldn't even focus on training. Everything felt distant.

Every so often, a strange coldness would seep into my chest, as if the curse itself was reminding me of my time limit.

Desperate, I attempted to remove the curse using the system.

The cost was... astronomical.

Given the difficulty of breaking a curse of this level, gathering the required Achievement Points in time was impossible.

I was on my own.

With no other options, I decided to return to that mysterious library.

Despite the countless questions surrounding it, that place made me feel at peace.

I retraced my steps exactly as I had the night before.

I had a sharp memory—I was certain I had found the right path.

Yet when I arrived...

I felt empty.

The library had possessed a massive gate and a smaller entrance beside it—so large and distinct that it was impossible to miss.

But now...

Where the entrance had once stood...

There was nothing but a wall of ice.

The library... had vanished.