

VILLAIN 189

Chapter 189 The Moonlight Scheme

—Day 28 on the Island—

Two days until the end...

I was drenched in sweat.

The weather had suddenly flipped on the final day, becoming intensely sunny for no apparent reason.

I was still dashing around like a madman, slaying Nightmare Creatures, then capturing the required zones...

It had become eerily easy, with so few students left. That meant the competition had thinned.

Sometimes others would beat me to a spot, and I wouldn't even catch a glimpse of them. I assumed they were either Snow or Daemon, or one of the other high-ranked players still fighting for a top-eight seat.

Ding!

Leaderboard Update:

1 – Daemon Valerion: 6,300 points

2 – Snow Lionheart: 6,240 points

3 – Frey Starlight: 4,300 points

4 – Seris Moonlight: 4,180 points

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9 – Dawn Polaris: 3,500 points

Aside from the first and second place, the rest of us were neck-and-neck.

I had pretty much secured one of the top eight slots.

Just a bit more...

I dashed through the towering trees at full speed, aiming for the next target zone.

But the way wasn't clear. Out of nowhere, a swarm of Nightmare Creatures leapt out—ones I hated facing the most.

"The Ganado..."

They were lying in wait, surrounding me from every direction.

I was ready to slice them down and move on—but I didn't have to.

Without warning, a blazing inferno ignited above their heads, consuming them all.

The way those flames manifested through magical circles...

I heightened my senses, scanning the area. That's when I finally felt it.

"Come out."

I turned toward a shadowed nook between the trees.

Silence fell for a few seconds...

Then the sound of heels tapping against the earth broke the quiet.

As she stepped into view, I recognized her instantly.

"Selena?"

The young witch who had joined our class not long ago.

Hidden beneath her pointed mage's hat, her crimson eyes looked straight at me.

"It's been a while... Frey."

I had almost forgotten about her. The witch who once walked with me through the walls of Moonlight.

"It has been a while... though should I really call this a coincidence?"

Selena had clearly prepared that fire spell in advance... so it was hard to believe this meeting was by chance.

She didn't deny it.

"No... I was looking for you."

The young witch seemed unsettled.

"And what exactly is the reason?"

Selena was strong—one of the main heroines, after all. But witches, in general, were vulnerable against someone like me.

If she tried anything... I was ready to shut her magic down.

Selena froze in place for a moment. She didn't even look at me.

Then, without warning, her head lowered.

"I'm sorry, Frey. I truly apologize for everything that's happened... and for what's yet to come."

I raised an eyebrow, unsure how to react to her words.

"Sorry for what exactly?"

I was confused.

But as I thought about it, something clicked.

Something about the situation I was in—how everything flipped upside down overnight.

"Aegon..."

Selena's expression darkened the moment she heard that name.

As for me, it all became clear with a bit of logical thinking.

Aegon Valerion never moves unless he's a hundred percent certain.

To be that certain, he would've needed someone close to me. But he never came near.

The only ones who did... were Seris, Ghost, Danzo—and Selena.

The first three were completely out of the question. That left only one.

"It was you. You were the one who reported me to Aegon."

Selena clenched her fist slowly.

"...That's right."

I calmly placed my hand on the hilt of my sword, feeling the rough leather of the scabbard.

Selena didn't say anything.

She looked like she was bracing herself—for a fight, maybe.

I didn't need any special ability to know she was battling a storm of thoughts in her head.

Her eyes reflected a swirl of conflicted emotion.

'Frey Starlight... I dragged you into a cycle of suffering that caused you so much pain—and it might still continue. No matter what my reasons were, I can't justify what I did. And what I'm going to do next, following that dark prince's orders...'

'If you want to strike me, do it. If you want to cut me down, then go ahead. Maybe then, the guilt crushing my chest will lighten... even a little.'

Her thoughts were crystal clear to me.

But I'm sorry, Selena. That's hypocrisy.

"So? How did he do it exactly?"

"What?"

"The prince. What did he threaten you with to bring you over to his side?"

Caught off guard by my composure, Selena didn't know how to respond.

"Did he hurt you? Or... did he take someone from you? Your parents, maybe?"

I watched her face closely.

"So, the last one, huh..."

Aegon was exactly that type of manipulator.

Someone who understood human emotions with terrifying accuracy—who could move people like pieces on a board.

I walked past the young witch, slowly.

Selena couldn't accept it. Suddenly, she lost all composure.

"Why?! Why aren't you angry?! Why are you acting like it's nothing?! I'm the reason for your suffering—why are you so calm?! If you face me like this... then what am I supposed to do?!"

Thinking about it, the girl in front of me—and all my classmates—they were just seventeen-year-old kids.

"Why don't you attack me?! Take your revenge already—please!"

The young witch broke into tears.

How her parents' lives now hung on the whim of someone more demonic than demons themselves...

How she brought so much agony to a boy her own age...

Even before all this, she'd discovered that her respected mentor, Kai Luc, was a traitor...

Her old classmates were dead... and now only one person remained.

That was a lot for those small shoulders to carry. Too much, even.

She wanted me to attack her. To curse her.

Because maybe that would ease the guilt tearing her apart.

But I had no intention of doing any of that.

"Angry? ...Sorry, but this level of suffering has become part of my daily life."

I smiled as I kept walking.

"I know it's not your fault. I get it. But I don't care."

I was never some hero who cared about people's feelings.

"As long as you stay out of my way, I won't do anything to you. But if you show up again as an enemy—

I'll cut you down with everything I have.

It's always been that simple."

Selena watched my back as I walked away.

That back... carried burdens far beyond her understanding.

Far more than anything she had ever known—yet it still kept moving forward.

"How can you bear all of that?"

It was pressure that defied reason.

"How can you remain like this... when you're thrown into that kind of chaos?"

In response, I simply smiled at her without saying a word—and kept walking.

Others might've already broken. The very idea of enduring something like this was madness.

But I would endure. Because I could. Because the ending I was striving for... was worth it.

That's all there was to it.

I vanished between the trees, leaving the confused young witch behind—without an answer.

I'd always wondered why her name never showed up on the rankings.

Now I knew.

Her body was here with us—but her mind was somewhere else entirely.

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– Day 29 of the Island Trial –

One day remained.

The final moment was drawing near.

And a lot was happening beneath the surface.

Within a shadowed domaine...

A girl with white hair and a face bearing faint traces of maturity—one of the third years—lay helplessly.

Her eyes had been ripped out, and she cried tears of blood.

She screamed in agony... but no one could hear her.

Standing before her was Ghost—who had finally reached his limit with every last descendant of the Moonlight family.

"Filthy spawn... all cut from the same rotten mold."

The silent assassin had remained active for the entire 30 days on the island.

Ghost had already eliminated more than 30 individuals connected to the plot to kill Frey—

All except for Professor Kaizer.

The girl in front of him was the last.

A killer with terrifying prowess, he left no traces behind. Every death he caused looked like a casualty of the nightmare beasts.

His mastery over shadow manipulation allowed him to obscure the island's surveillance broadcasts, keeping every murder hidden from the outside world.

That level of precision... was terrifying.

But Ghost knew something was about to happen.

And his unease grew deeper with every secret the Moonlight bloodline tried to bury.

He was reaching his breaking point.

Gripping the girl by the hair—one of the final remnants of the extremist faction rooted in the Moonlight family—

He spoke coldly.

"Listen carefully to my words, and carve them deep into your mind."

He was exhausted from all the blood.

"I've killed your comrades."

The girl sobbed.

"I've killed countless people—innocents... and bastards like you."

His dead eyes bore into her trembling face.

"I could kill you now, and I could go after your parents next. Your siblings, if you have any. Everything you hold dear in your pitiful life—I'll end it. So the choice is yours."

He exhaled sharply, asking the same question for what felt like the thousandth time.

"What's your plan? What's going to happen at the end of this trial?"

How exactly were they planning to strike Frey Starlight?

His patience wore thin.

The dagger in his hand caressed the girl's neck, as her blood and tears blended into a grotesque mix.

The girl finally broke.

"Please... don't hurt my family... I beg you... We're just avenging those who were wronged—"

"Not what I want to hear."

"No! Stop! I'll tell you!"

The last of them. Ironically, she was the weakest.

And then she started talking.

With each word that left her lips, Ghost's expression grew darker—until, by the time she finished, he cursed out loud—

"Sons of bitches!"

—Slash!

The girl's severed head hit the ground.

Ghost emerged from the shadows in a flash, clearly shaken.

"They're really going that far? All this... for one man?"

He had to find Frey Starlight. Immediately.

Before it was too late.

Ghost fumbled with his watch—

"Are you sure you want to spend 500 points to locate another player?"

He accepted without hesitation.

He had to warn him.

He had to.

Otherwise, Frey would keep walking straight into death...

He typed the name hastily:

"Frey Starlight."

But his expression collapsed the moment he saw the result.

"No player by that name found."

It was already too late.