VILLAIN 441

| Chapter 441: Turning Point (1) |
|---|
| — Frey Starlight's Pov — |
| One day left. |
| Sitting atop one of the tallest buildings within the Shadow Sect, I gazed over the vast expanse with empty eyes and a face darkened by weariness. |
| The sect had grown massive larger now than Belgrade, the Imperial Capital itself. |
| High walls and towering defenses turned it into a fortress. |
| The Engineer had completed his work here, then vanished without a trace as if he had never been here in the first place. |
| His disappearance at this exact moment I couldn't help but suspect it was intentional. |
| He'd helped me easily over the past few days, asking for nothing in return. But looking back now |

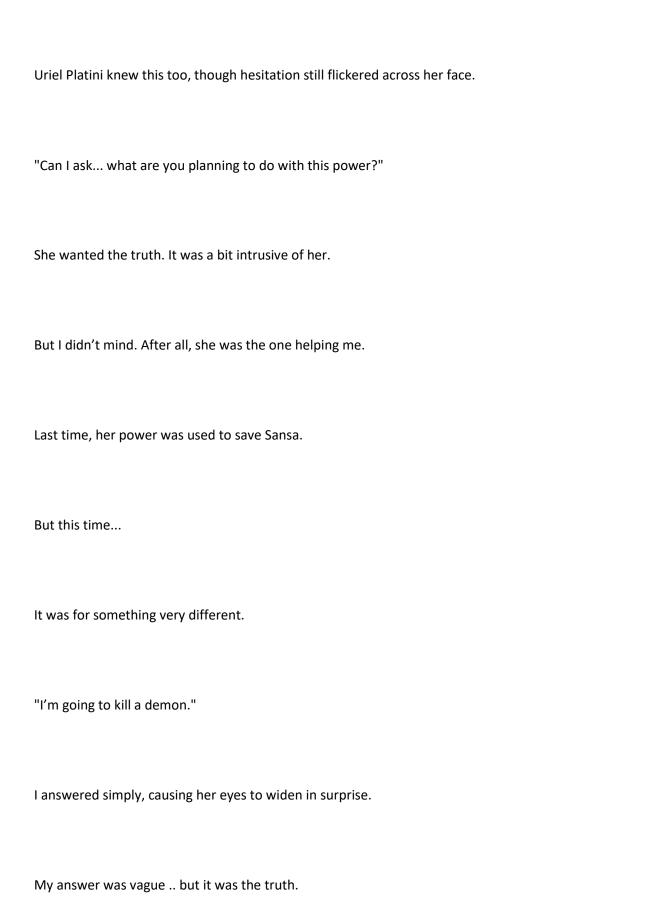
| Perhaps the entire thing had been a setup. A carefully laid trap leading me straight into a pit of despair far deeper than anything I had fallen into before. |
|---|
| Or maybe I had already fallen into it. |
| My relationship with the Engineer was never equal. He could appear before me whenever he wished but no matter how much I searched, I would never find him unless he allowed it. |
| But I was certain of one thing. |
| He was still near. Watching me. |
| He had always been close, from the very beginning. |
| In the end, every move he made, every question he answered, every moment of guidance he offered |
| All of it served a greater purpose—a goal he had likely written out long before I ever crossed his path. |
| And now, it felt like my current situation was just another step on the path he had prepared for me. |
| |

| It was as if a bottomless abyss had opened within me, devouring me from the inside, swallowing me in a storm of tangled emotions. |
|---|
| It was suffocating. |
| But somehow, my face showed none of it. Not a trace of the feelings that tore through my heart with every passing second. |
| I couldn't do anything except sit there quietly, powerless, unable to find a solution to this overwhelming dilemma. |
| But I couldn't sit there forever. |
| There was only one day left. |
| Time |
| "If only I had more time" |
| The thought crossed my mind, but I dismissed it just as quickly. |

| "No. Even if I did, nothing would change." |
|---|
| Either way, I was the one responsible for what happened to Danzo |
| And I would be the one responsible for whatever came next. |
| It was a heavy burden, one that crushed my shoulders without mercy. |
| But I had no choice but to keep moving forward. |
| Because no one else could do it but me. |
| And so, I rose quietly to my feet, casting one last glance at the sect |
| Then in the next second, I was gone vanishing into thin air as I teleported back to the Empire. |
| |
| |

| That night, I visited Uriel at the temple. |
|--|
| The church's top Saint candidate, five full years older than me |
| With her golden hair and noble aura, she shone as brilliantly as ever, drawing all eyes wherever she went. |
| "I'm sorry, Uriel. I keep coming to you for help, asking again and again without giving anything in return. And here I am, asking for your help once more I truly am sorry." |
| I apologized sincerely, but she quickly waved her hands, cutting me off, concern written all over her face. |
| "There's no need to apologize. I'll help you anytime. So please don't wear that face." |
| That's what she said. |
| What face was she talking about, I wondered? I had no idea. There was no mirror here to show me my own expression. |

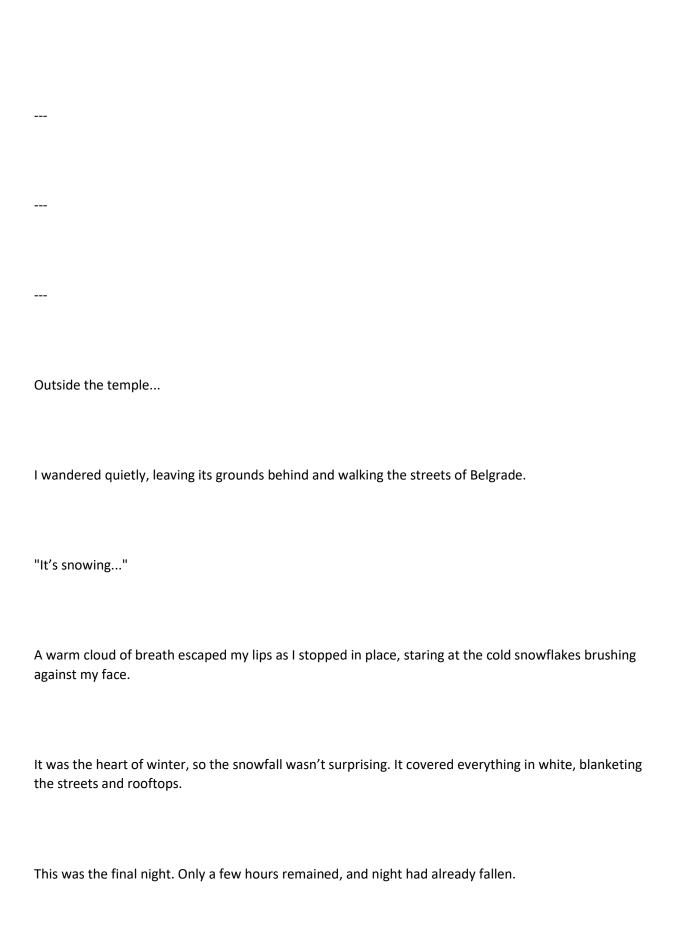
| I thought I was keeping my emotions hidden so I didn't know what she meant. |
|--|
| Still, I nodded to her in gratitude. |
| Uriel hesitated for a moment but soon steeled herself to help me once again. |
| And so, I unsheathed the Dark Sister. |
| My black katana. |
| "It's simple. I need you to infuse it with your holy power once more. That's all." |
| I gave her a faint smile. |
| "We've done it once before it'll be much easier this time and won't take long." |
| I was certain of that. After I'd used her power to save Sansa in the past, the Dark Sister had grown accustomed to her holy aura. This time, it would accept her power far more quickly. |



| I didn't want to give her any further details, and she didn't try to press the matter. |
|---|
| Instead, she simply did what I asked of her. |
| This time, it took barely an hour. |
| And soon, the Dark Sister gleamed with pure white and emerald light, radiating with sacred energy. |
| The Dark Sister amplified aura. |
| And with it, Uriel's holy power surged within the blade, multiplying in strength several times over just as I had intended. |
| "Thank you." |
| I thanked her sincerely before turning to leave. |
| But she stopped me, gripping my shoulder. |

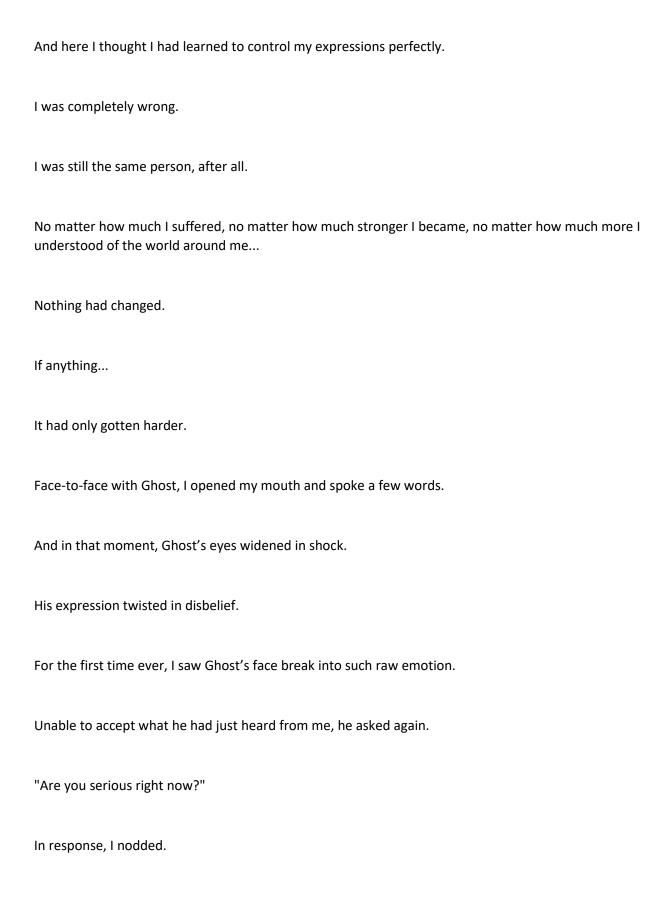


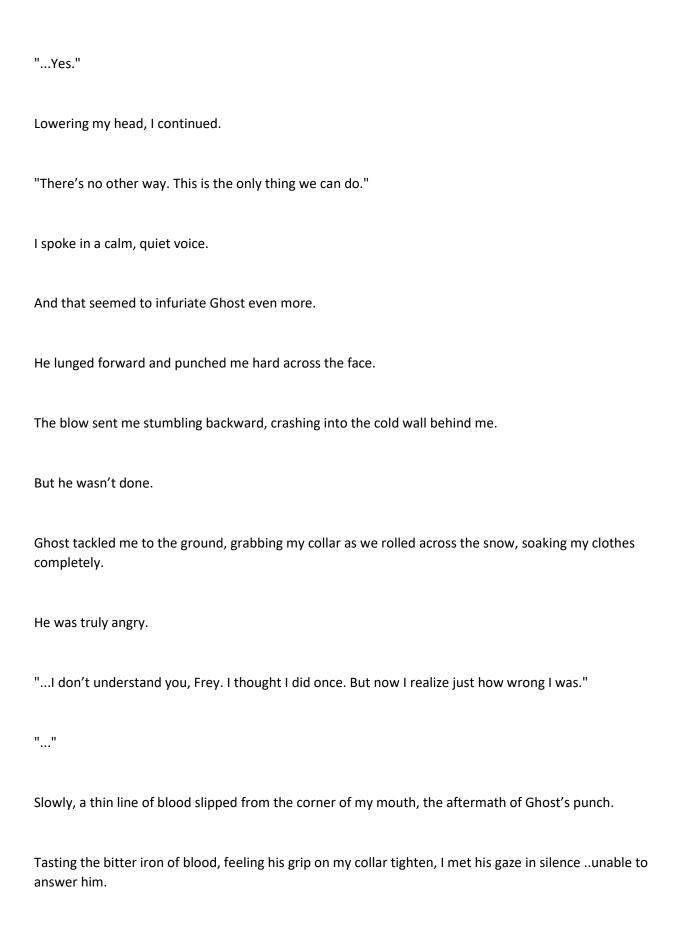




| But the air was peaceful. Calm. |
|---|
| No different from any other day. |
| The Empire was busy with countless matters: the looming war, the aftermath of recent events |
| But I was unaware of any of it, having isolated myself from the world over the past month. |
| The only thing filling my mind |
| Was my sick friend, who had only hours left. |
| Hours before the moment of truth. |
| Preparing for that moment, I met with my other friend, who was waiting for me. |
| In the empty, dark alleys where not even a breath could be heard |

| I stood face-to-face with Ghost, who had come the moment I summoned him. | |
|--|-------|
| Ghost said nothing at first. He simply stood there, staring at my face, unable to find any w | ords. |
| And that silence irritated me more than I thought it would. | |
| "You're all looking at me like that Is there something on my face or what?" | |
| I asked with a faint smile one that couldn't hide the weakness behind it. | |
| Ghost answered my question with one of his own. | |
| "What happened?" | |
| Hearing that | |
| I couldn't help but laugh weakly. | |
| So it was that obvious? | |
| Chapter 442: Turning Point (2) | |

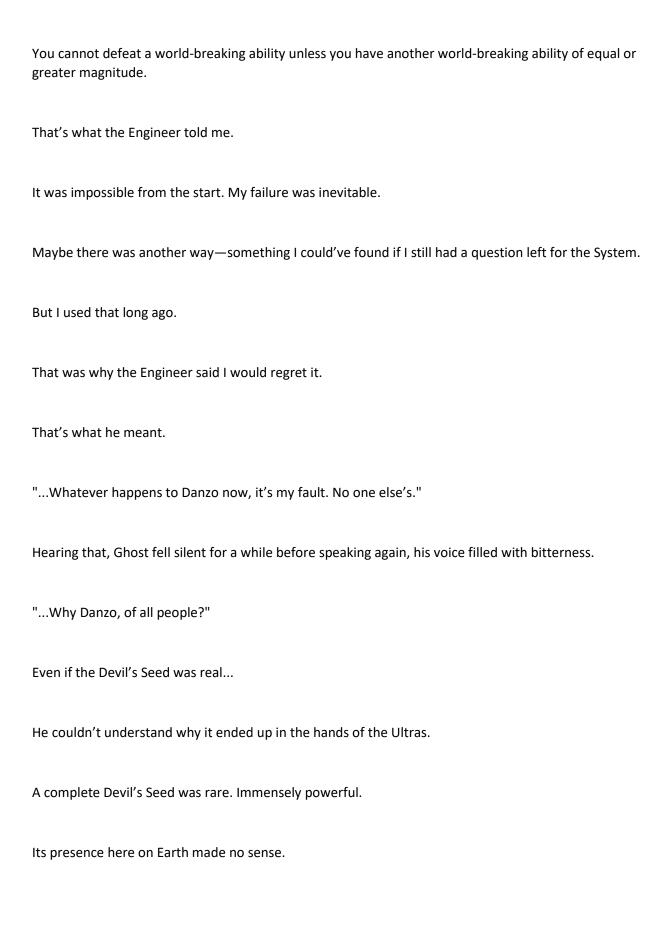




| His reaction was a result of what I had told him earlier. |
|--|
| I had asked for his help. |
| The Silver Dragon Guild was guarding Danzo, so if I wanted to get him out without anyone noticing, I needed Ghost's skills as an assassin and the influence of the Shadow Court. |
| With his help, we could extract Danzo without raising any alarms. |
| And once we were far enough away |
| I would finish it. |
| I would end it. |
| I would kill him. |
| Truthfully |
| I could have simply teleported directly to Danzo's room. But doing so would have risked triggering the demonic power sleeping within him, unleashing a catastrophe. |
| That's why I needed to take him somewhere remote and isolated, where no one would be caught in the aftermath. |
| And that |
| That was what Ghost couldn't accept. |

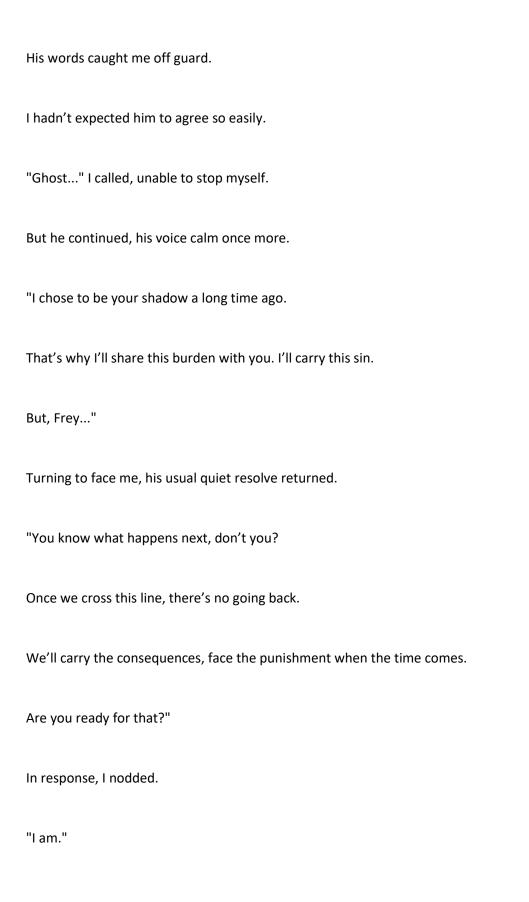
| "Didn't you say you'd save him no matter what it took? That you'd do whatever it required? That's your specialty, isn't it? Turning the impossible into reality" |
|--|
| "Surviving the Moonlight family, winning the Victoriad, journeying to Londor, staying alive alone in the Ultras continent when everyone thought you were dead defeating a thousand men single-handedly You've always found a way to win, no matter what. |
| So what's different now?!" |
| Ghost shouted, his voice raw and breaking something I had rarely, if ever, heard from him. |
| His relationship with Danzo had been rocky at first. They bickered endlessly. |
| But over time, Ghost came to respect Danzo. To see him as a friend. |
| And that was why he couldn't accept what I was saying now. |
| He'd watched countless people die in front of him before. But this time it was different. |
| "I tried" |
| I spoke quietly. |
| "I tried with everything I had. |
| I did everything I could" |
| But in the end, I failed. |
| I underestimated the Devil's Seed—treating it like any ordinary curse. |

| But there was a reason why surviving it was impossible. |
|--|
| The one who created the Seed had already transcended the Law of Life and Death. |
| He made the Seed a living creature in its own right. |
| Separating it from Danzo was impossible. |
| They had become one. |
| To save him, I needed a power that could also surpass the Law of Life and Death—something that existed within Nameless's memories. |
| But acquiring that power was utterly impossible. |
| Because I was human. |
| To obtain that power, I would've had to do what Nameless did spending countless lifetimes studying every species and creature, slaughtering an uncountable number of beings just to complete his mad research. |
| And even if I had an immortal body and infinite time like him I doubted I could've achieved what he did. |
| I was not Nameless. I didn't have his wisdom, nor a fraction of his power. |
| So how could I ever hope to acquire such a power, when I only had a few hours left until the Final Quest ended? |

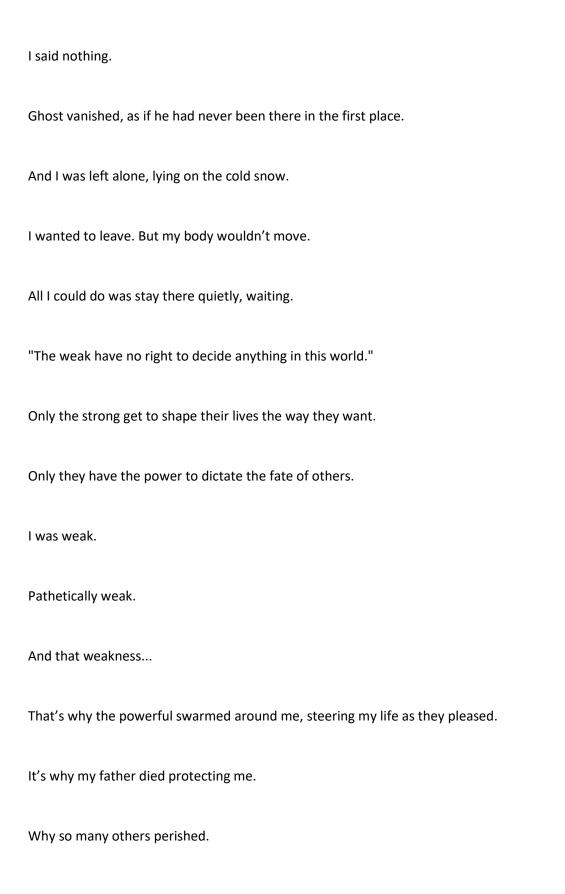


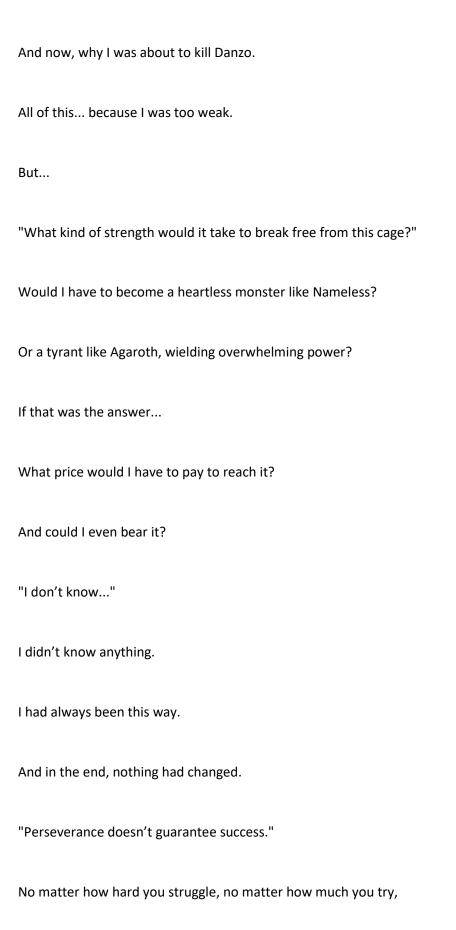
| And of all the people in the world it ended up inside Danzo. |
|--|
| "Why?!" |
| He wasn't special. |
| He was just an ordinary human. |
| Nothing more, nothing less. |
| "Most likely, I'm the reason for that too." |
| I once thought it was just bad luck. |
| But I was wrong. |
| Something like this doesn't happen by chance. |
| Whether it was the Engineer, the Demon King |
| Or someone else pulling the strings behind the scenes |
| This was planned. |
| And the reason Danzo became the target was because he was close to me. |
| That's all. |

| It was a carefully crafted conspiracy, one designed to tighten this noose around my neck. And they succeeded. |
|--|
| We'd reached the point of no return. |
| Ghost stared at me for a long time, a storm of mixed emotions in his eyes. He was furious. |
| He wanted to call me a liar. |
| To claim that everything I said was nonsense—that there was no proof the Seed even existed. |
| But then |
| He remembered. |
| All the bizarre phenomena he had witnessed while staying by my side. |
| And he knew. |
| I wouldn't say something like this without reason . I saw a trace of contempt in his eyes fleeting, born of the heat of the moment. |
| There, in those desolate alleys, on ground blanketed by cold snow, we stood in silence for a long while, |
| swallowed by a void neither of us could escape. |
| Then, after a few moments, Ghost stood up and turned his back to me. |
| "I'll help you." |



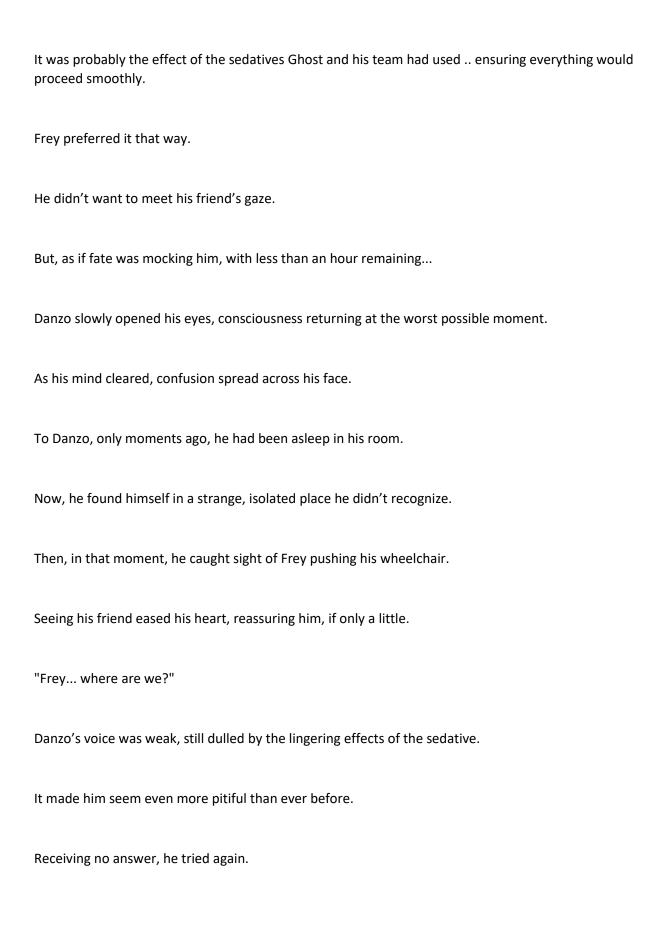
| But would I truly be able to live with myself afterward? |
|--|
| After killing Danzo with my own hands? |
| I stared down at them imagining his blood staining them. |
| And every time I did, the image shattered me. I couldn't bear to face it. |
| I didn't know what would become of me once I did it. |
| But I was certain of one thing |
| I wouldn't be the same person anymore. |
| I tried not to dwell on it. But the end was near. |
| It was only a matter of time now. |
| Ghost saw right through my turmoil, but he didn't say anything. |
| He simply turned and began walking away. |
| "I'll submit your request to the Shadow Court. I'll lead the operation myself. |
| Stay where you are until I contact you. |
| When the time comes prepare to stain your hands with blood." |

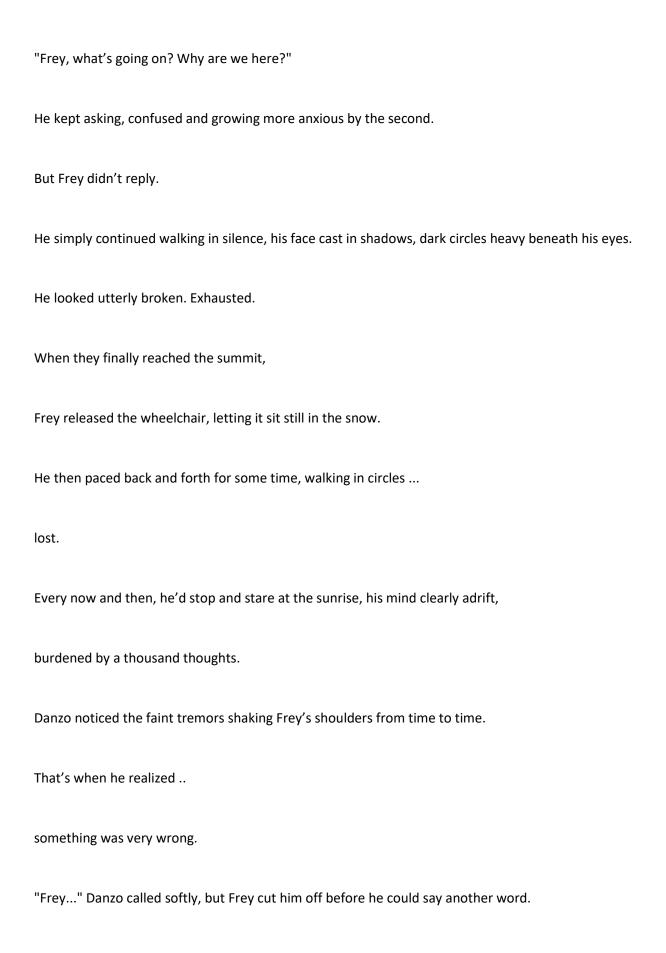




| success is never promised. |
|--|
| This is life. |
| It throws you wherever it wants, never where you choose. |
| "What a cruel world" |
| Leaning against the wall, I sat there quietly. |
| Waiting for the moment of truth. |
| Chapter 443: Turning Point (3) -End of Volume II- That night, |
| the snow fell endlessly from the sky, while the sun slowly rose on the horizon, announcing the beginning of a new day for the Empire. |
| [Time remaining until the final mission's deadline: 1 hour.] |
| The notification reflected coldly in Frey's eyes as he walked forward at a slow, steady pace, dragging a wheelchair up the slopes of a distant hill. |
| As expected, the Shadow Court had moved with flawless precision and terrifying speed, carrying out the task Frey Starlight had entrusted to them, with Ghost personally leading the operation. |
| Without any resistance, they infiltrated the Silver Dragon Guild's headquarters and extracted Danzo from within, bringing him to Frey's side. |

| Danzo remained unconscious in his wheelchair, his body wrapped carefully in warm clothing, thick blankets covering his paralyzed legs to keep him as comfortable as possible. |
|---|
| Frey figured this was Ghost's doing. |
| A quiet, considerate gesture. |
| Ghost himself lingered nearby but chose not to appear, leaving Frey alone with Danzo for what had to be done. |
| Elsewhere, the Shadow Court's assassins secured the entire area, ensuring that nothing would interfere with what was about to happen. |
| Even though they were far from the Imperial Capital, Belgrade, |
| the Silver Dragon Guild had already discovered Danzo's disappearance. |
| The capital was likely in chaos now, and it was only a matter of time before they tracked down their location. |
| There wasn't much time left. |
| And with every passing second, Frey's face grew darker and darker, |
| until at last, the summit came into view, where the morning sun cast its distant rays upon them. |
| Danzo looked terribly weak. |
| Throughout the journey, he would wake briefly, only to slip back into unconsciousness moments later. |

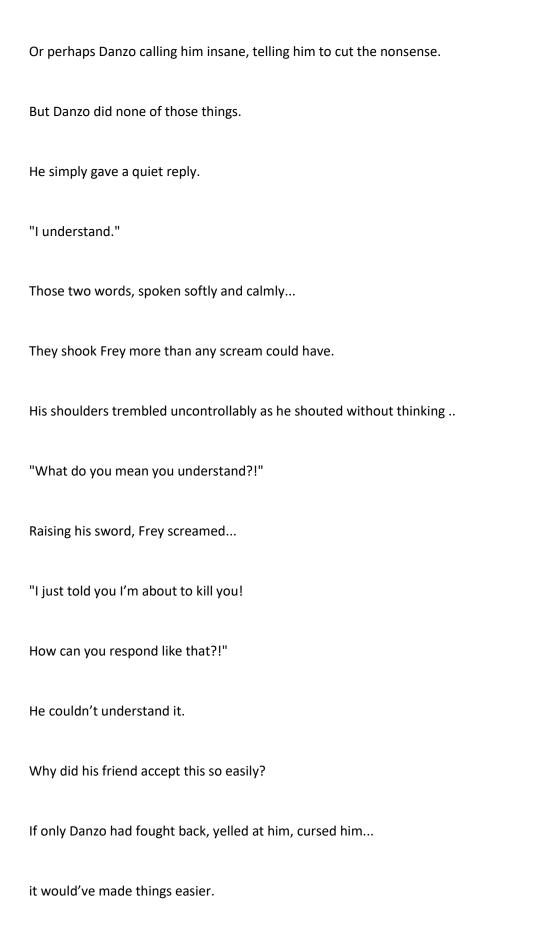




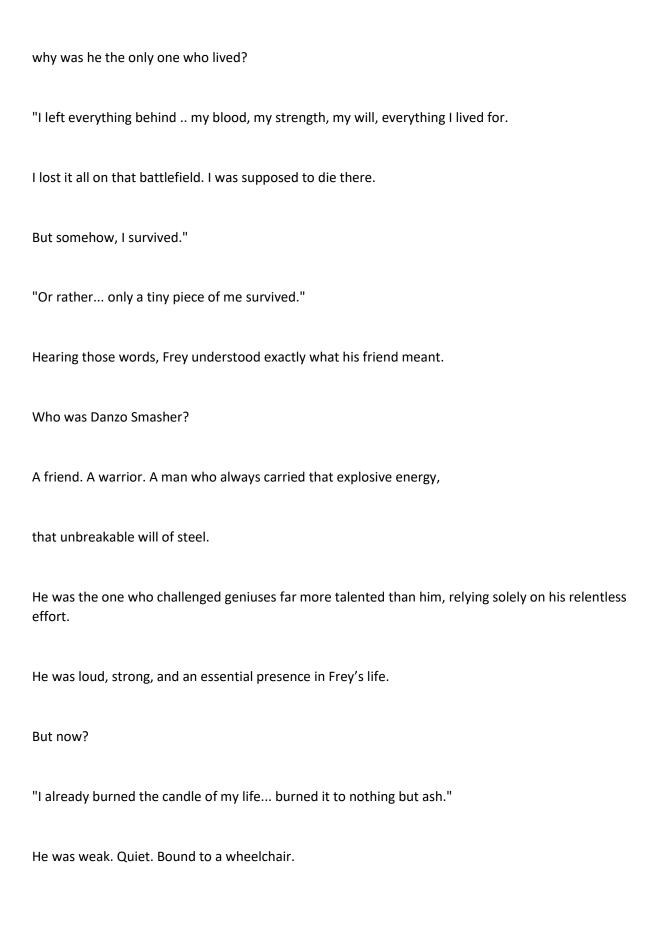


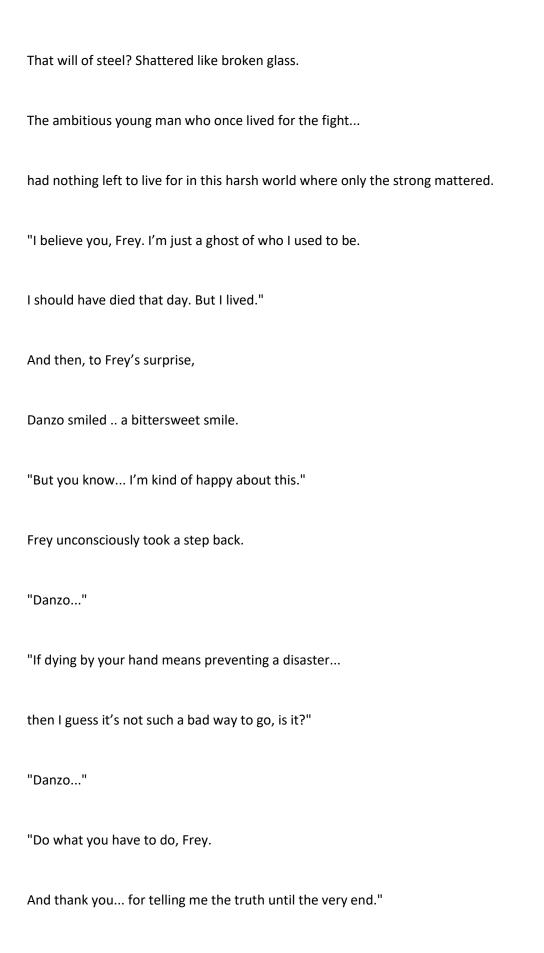


| Gripping the Dark Sister tightly, |
|---|
| Frey stared at Danzo. |
| The latter remained silent for a few seconds, trying to process what he had just heard. |
| It was absurd, wasn't it? |
| For your best friend to suddenly appear out of nowhere, claim that some demon was living inside you, and tell you that killing you was the only way to stop it. |
| Who could possibly believe that? |
| But Frey had to tell him. |
| Whether Danzo believed it or not didn't matter. |
| He just |
| wanted him to know why he was about to die by his hands. |
| Frey expected countless possible reactions. |
| Denial. |
| Anger. |
| Laughter. |

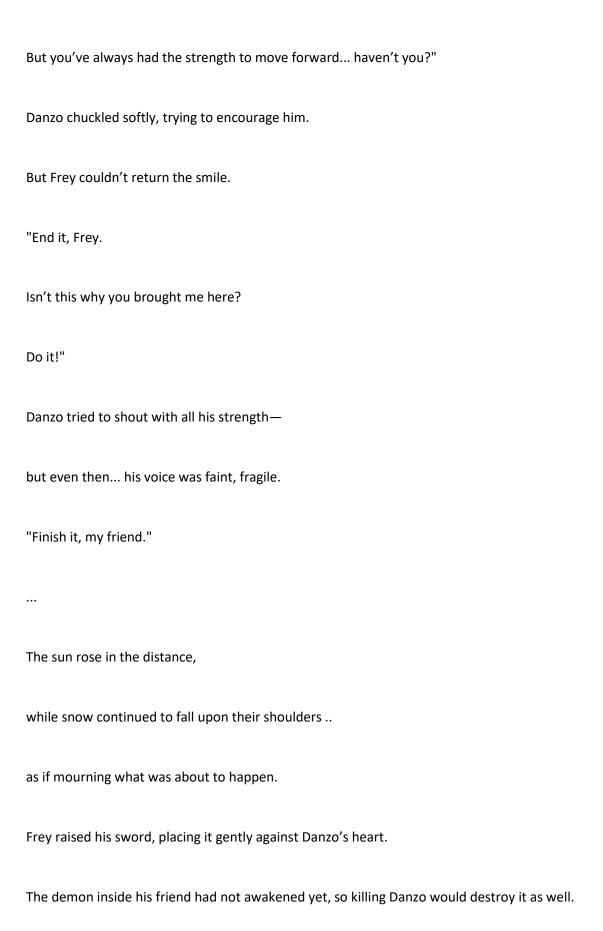




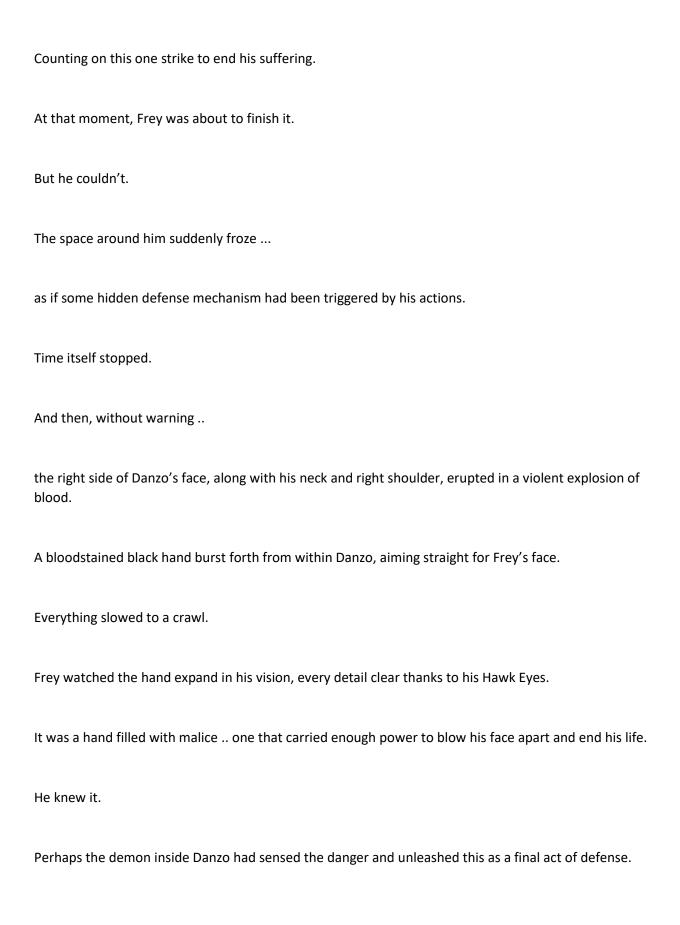


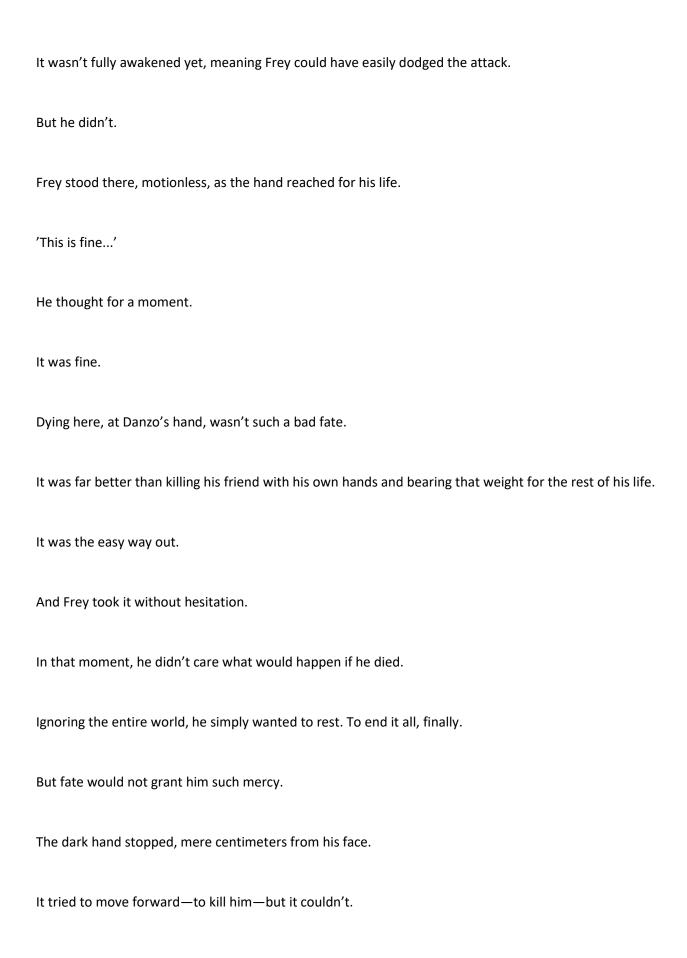






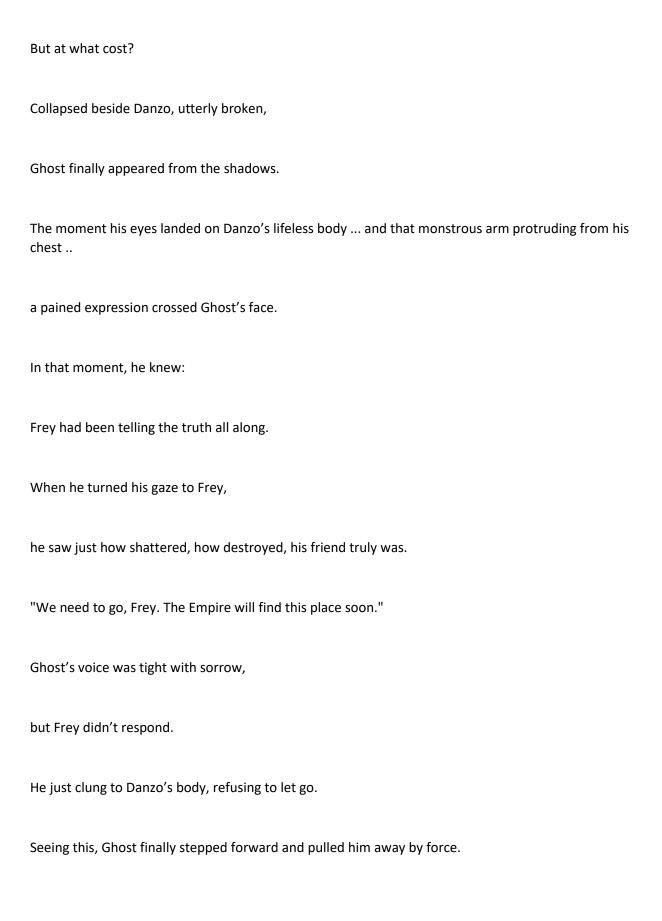
| One clean strike, using a weapon imbued with powerful holy energy. |
|---|
| And the Dark Sister was more than enough for that. |
| With the sword positioned over Danzo's chest, Frey trembled. |
| The Dark Sister itself trembled in his hands. |
| "Compared to your pain, my pain will end in a moment. |
| So don't hesitate." |
| There were only minutes left until the mission's end. |
| Knowing that, |
| Frey gritted his teeth, |
| his hands clenching the sword so tightly that his skin nearly tore. |
| Forcing himself to act, he slowly pushed the blade forward. |
| It touched Danzo's chest |
| piercing it, inch by agonizing inch. |
| Aiming for his heart. |





| And that's when Frey realized what had happened. |
|--|
| Even though half of his face had been blown apart Danzo, with what little awareness remained, was still staring at him with his one remaining eye. |
| With the last drop of his will, Danzo had stopped the hand, saving his friend's life. |
| Danzo couldn't speak in that state, but Frey understood him clearly. |
| "Finish it." |
| That's what he was telling him. |
| So, Frey smiled. |
| He gave him one final smile one he hoped would be the last thing Danzo would see, instead of his own pain-ridden face. |
| Then, he drove the Dark Sister into his friend's heart. |
| It happened in an instant. |
| The sword pierced cleanly. |
| Flesh tore, blood spilled. |
| And the light faded from Danzo's eyes, leaving behind only a broken body, half-consumed by that demonic arm still protruding from his chest. |

| As for Frey |
|---|
| His world collapsed. |
| His chest burned and froze all at once. He felt an unbearable pain as he fell to his knees beside his friend's lifeless body. |
| Soaked in Danzo's blood, his body trembled uncontrollably. |
| In that chaotic moment, he heard screaming, sobbing, and crying. |
| And when reality slowly returned, |
| he realized all those sounds had been coming from himself. |
| Crumpled over Danzo's corpse, Frey wept. |
| He thought his tears had long since run dry |
| But they poured freely now, mixing with the blood of his fallen friend. |
| And amid all that |
| the system notification appeared. |
| [The Final Mission is Complete.] |
| He'd succeeded. |



...

Chapter 444: Echoes of the Cataclysm (1)

The world had undergone countless changes, and even the smallest of events cast the darkest shadows, stretching far across the horizon to shape a grim future.

Danzo was dead.

No .. he was killed, brutally, his body left to freeze amidst the snow.

In one corner of this bleak scene, you could see Frey Starlight, dragged away by his friend Ghost... broken, unable to hold himself together after killing Danzo with his own hands. Now, he was forced to live on, bearing the consequences of his actions.

What a wretched soul .. Frey, a man who didn't even have the freedom to die, yet was forced to kill those dearest to him with his own hands.

The weight of that reality crushed him.

But Frey's tears were not the only ones shed that day.

Elsewhere, an hour later, the Silver Dragon Guild finally reached the same place.

There, before the eyes of all his guild members, Adam Smasher embraced the lifeless body of his only son.

Adam wept and wailed, feeling the coldness of the life that had escaped his son's body.

Danzo was disfigured, a monstrous, demonic hand having burst from within his body, destroying half of his face. With a gaping hole in his chest, he was unmistakably dead.

| Like a wounded beast, Adam Smasher let out a heartbreaking cry that made even the strongest among those present turn their faces away in pain. |
|---|
| That towering man had just lost everything. |
| His wife was gone. His closest friend, Isaac Cloud, was gone. |
| And now, his only son, the one he loved above all else, was gone too. |
| Torn between deep sorrow and raging fury, Adam could do nothing but scream until his voice gave out. His eyes burned red with hatred, vowing to hunt down whoever was responsible for his son's death. |
| An eye for an eye. Blood for blood. |
| In the end, someone would have to pay the price. |
| And so, the curtain fell on that bloody night, giving way to a new day in the empire, one shaken by these devastating events. |
| News of Danzo's death spread quickly, and a grand funeral was held in his honor. |
| Many high-ranking officials attended, along with Danzo's friends, including Snow Lionheart—the hero of the church—who had been secluded in solitary training ever since surviving the ordeal in the Ultras Continent. |
| Who could have imagined that the first thing awaiting him upon his return would be the news of Danzo's death? |
| It was a painful blow. |
| Most of the surviving elite students gathered at the funeral. |

| No one was allowed to see Danzo one last time. Adam didn't want anyone to witness the monstrous state his son had been left in. |
|---|
| Everything was done in silence amidst hearts grieving, and others burning with hatred toward whoever was behind this tragedy. |
| But among them all, Danzo's closest friend was missing. |
| Frey Starlight was nowhere to be seen. |
| Everyone came to pay their respects, whether close or distant. Even Ada Starlight herself was present. |
| But the one closest to Danzo was absent, nowhere to be found. |
| Ghost, too, was missing, raising even more questions. |
| Yet since they were Danzo's closest friends, many assumed they simply couldn't bear the pain, retreating from sight to grieve in silence. |
| But the truth was far removed from that simple explanation. |
| In the end, Danzo was buried. And with him, the final mission that had broken Frey's heart and left his suffering to linger on. |
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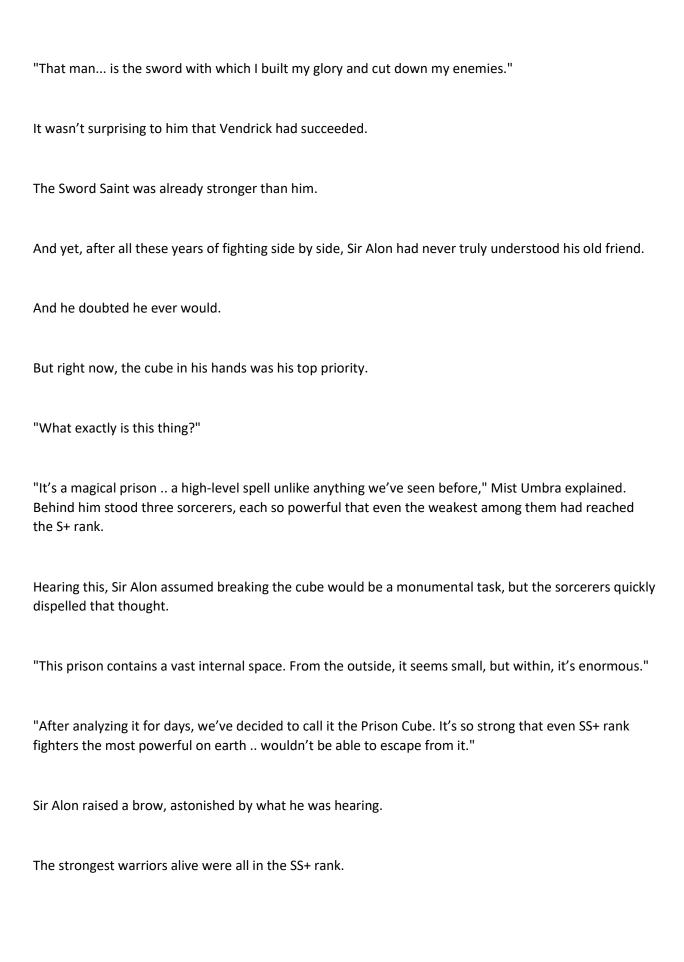
Time moved on. And the turmoil within the empire continued to grow. In the western reaches of the empire, specifically in the territory under House Moonlight's command, the emperor's delegation gathered .. led personally by Sir Alon ... waiting at Winterfell's Grand Port. The port was vast and heavily fortified, functioning as a military base in its own right. It was from this very place that Maekar Valerion had launched his ill-fated raid, the one that ended in disaster, leaving the empire's main forces missing in action. The consequences of the defeat at Shizkclar Bay were massive. Losing the empire's primary military strength was only one of the many crises shaking the nation. Now, Sir Alon was forced to face the anger of the people, who had finally broken their silence. Previously, when the Ultras invaded and slaughtered countless citizens and their children, the emperor made no move. But now .. only because his own sons and the children of the great noble houses had been kidnapped— Maekar immediately rallied all forces for a raid many described as suicidal and reckless. How many fathers left their families to answer the emperor's call? How many parents said their tearful goodbyes to their children, praying for their survival in the coming battle?

And how many ambitious men had their dreams crushed, now listed among the missing?

All of this weighed heavily on the hearts of the people, especially after the latest widespread assault by the Ultras. This is why the mission entrusted to the Sword Saint, Vendrick, carried such critical importance. There was no room for mistake. Standing there, accompanied by many veteran warriors who once again raised their swords for his sake, Sir Alon Valerion watched from afar as a broken ship slowly drifted toward the harbor, carried by the waves. In mere moments, the vessel docked .. and one by one, the survivors disembarked. And first among them was the Sword Saint himself, alongside the Grand Assassin, Mist Umbra, and the Church's Bishop, Joseph Blatier. All of them looked exhausted and wounded. As if they had just survived a long, grueling battle. "Vendrick..." Sir Alon spoke softly as he approached his old friend. For a moment, Sir Alon feared the mission had failed, given that the Sword Saint's ship was the only one to return. But Vendrick surprised him, pulling a black cube from his torn robe. "Here. This is what you were looking for." Tossing it toward Sir Alon, Vendrick walked past him without another word.

| Holding the cube in his hands, Sir Alon was momentarily confused until he realized what it was. His son, along with the others, was sealed within it. |
|---|
| The Sword Saint had succeeded. |
| Sir Alon turned to call out to Vendrick, wanting to finally speak the words that had weighed on his heart. |
| But the Sword Saint simply raised his hand. |
| "I know she's dead, isn't she?" |
| Stunned, Sir Alon froze, staring at Vendrick, wondering how he knew of Millicent's death. |
| But there was nothing left for him to do but apologize. |
| "I'm sorry." |
| It was his mistake, after all he was the one who had sent them back into battle in the first place. |
| Yet Vendrick did not blame him. He said nothing at all, his face void of expression, as he walked away slowly, gazing up at the sky. |
| "We cannot escape the chains of fate." |
| He had known this would happen. It was inevitable. |
| But even knowing that, he could do nothing but bury his sorrow and continue living. |

| Ever since the blue-eyed one had shown him the future long ago, the Sword Saint had prepared himself for such tragedies. |
|---|
| Chapter 445: Echoes of the Cataclysm (2) |
| As Vendrick walked away, both Mist Umbra and Joseph Blatier stared at his back, awe and dread written across their faces. |
| "Sir Alon who is that man, really?" Joseph Blatier asked, his voice low as he recalled the events of the past days. |
| When they tried to retrieve the cube imprisoning Maekar and the others, they were forced to dive into the ocean. |
| Waiting there was one of Beatrice's puppets, armed with a terrifying array of deadly spells. |
| And alongside it, thousands of nightmare sea creatures. |
| The sight was horrifying. |
| But before Vendrick's sword none of it mattered. |
| His swordsmanship was unlike anything they had ever seen, even in all their years of battle. |
| Every strike he unleashed seemed capable of cutting the sea itself obliterating the nightmare beasts and destroying Beatrice's puppet before she could even cast a spell. |
| He was overwhelming. |
| Sir Alon could only nod. |



| "So, if the Prison Cube can withstand their attacks, doesn't that mean breaking it is impossible?" |
|--|
| "Yes and no." |
| Mist Umbra replied again, explaining the situation fully. |
| "It's impregnable from the inside, making escape impossible. But from the outside, we've discovered it's far weaker. If we apply enough destructive force, we should be able to break through it." |
| In other words |
| It would be simple enough as long as the cube was already in their hands. |
| But that didn't comfort Sir Alon Valerion. Instead, it filled him with unease. |
| "I don't understand. If that's true, then why didn't the enemy bother to take the cube back?" |
| If he were in their place, Sir Alon would have locked the cube away in the most secure corner of the Ultras Continent, where the empire would never recover it. |
| But Beatrice had simply left it within their grasp. |
| "Why?!" |
| The Iron Emperor couldn't comprehend his enemy's way of thinking. This was the first time he had faced an opponent like this. |
| As if they never saw them as true opponents, but merely playmates to pass the time with companions for their amusement, nothing more. |

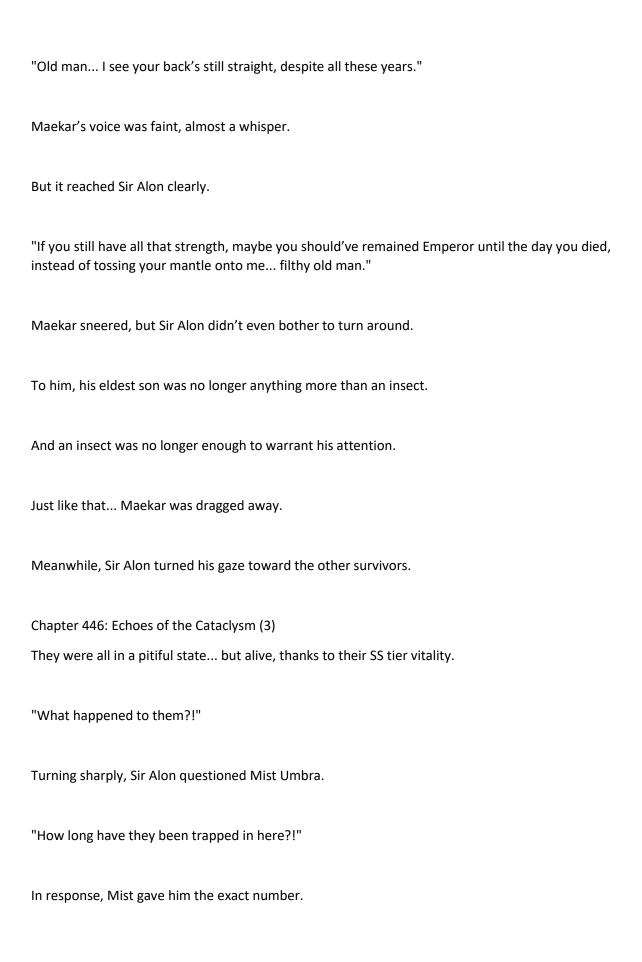
| But what on earth was that terrifying witch thinking during the battle? |
|---|
| Sir Alon could not find the answer. |
| Nor could Mist Umbra or Joseph Blatter, who shared in his ignorance. |
| "Well, that doesn't matter now." |
| Grasping the cube, Sir Alon's body began to glow. |
| "What matters is freeing our forces trapped inside." |
| Relying on that hope, Sir Alon and his men evacuated the harbor completely, placing the cube at its center, knowing how many soldiers were sealed within. |
| In the sky above |
| Sir Alon, Mist Umbra, and Blatter soared into the air. |
| Then, without warning, the three of them unsheathed their weapons and unleashed their auras at full force. |
| With a joint attack containing an overwhelming amount of destructive power, they struck the cube. |
| Under the pressure of an SS+ rank fighter and two others in the SS rank, the prison cube couldn't withstand the force. In just a few seconds, its outer shell began to crack. |
| And then, the cube finally exploded. |
| At that moment, it expanded wildly, covering the entire harbor in an ominous light. |

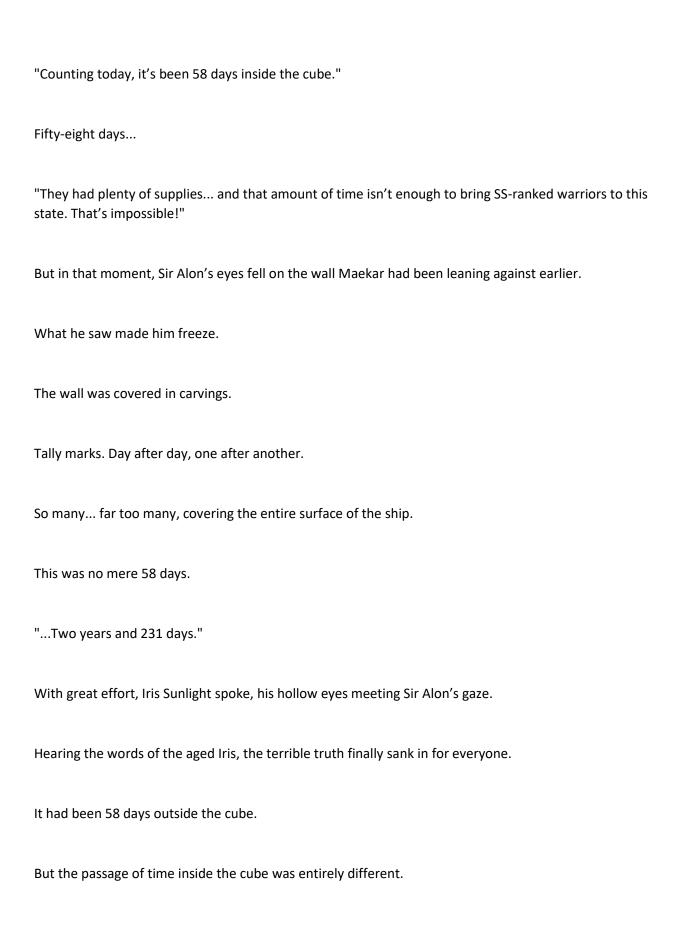
From within, shattered ships and people began falling from the sky as they were released .. Crashing violently into the ground, the explosion caused devastating destruction, and corpses were scattered everywhere. And after only a few more seconds, the true horror of what had been inside was revealed. It was this sight that caused the faces of Sir Alon Valerion and his companions to darken instantly. One after another, the captives fell from the cube . But they were no longer the same fighters they had once been. They were nothing but skeletal remains, stripped of flesh and skin, collapsing across the battlefield. Staring at this nightmare, Sir Alon Valerion could only clench his fist so tightly that the pressure of his aura nearly destroyed everything around him. "What the hell is going on here?!" No matter where he went, no matter how much he searched through the wreckage of the shattered ships, all he found were skeletons... They were all dead. And then, after a grueling search, a group of survivors finally appeared before them.

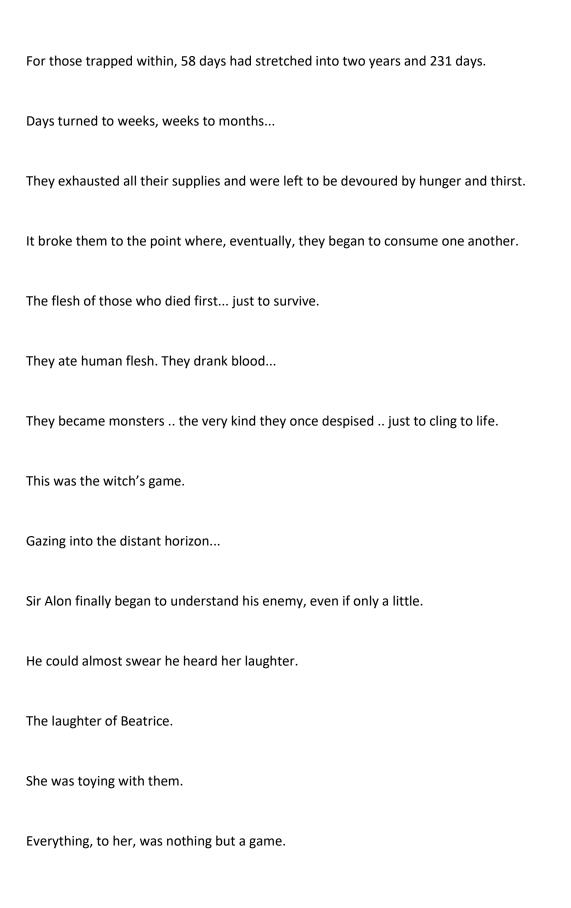
There... sitting atop the wreckage of a ship, was the Emperor .. Maekar Valerion.

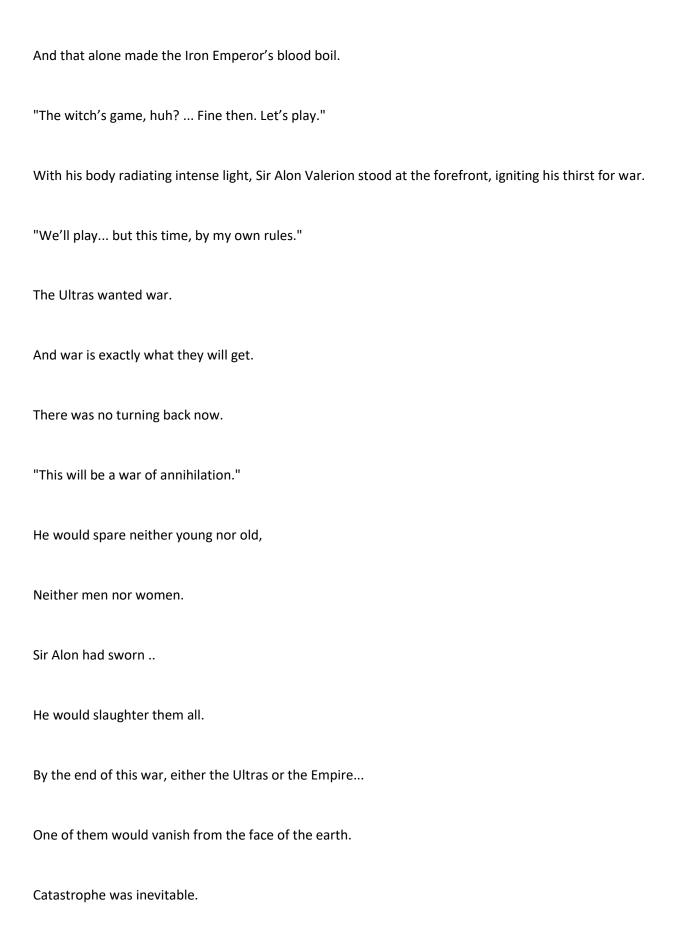
Wearing his battered Fume Knight armor, the once-mighty Emperor now looked so frail that his supposedly perfect body barely filled the armor anymore. His eyes were completely dark as he sat there, staring into the void, utterly drained of strength. Around him, many of the empire's strongest warriors had collapsed as well, their bodies weak and nearly lifeless. Iris, Lord of the Sunlight Family, and his brother Gal... Melina lay unconscious in one corner, and the Emperor's brothers, Ivar and Luc Valerion, were both sprawled helplessly on the ground. Standing before them, Sir Alon remained silent. Maekar was the only one who still retained consciousness. Lifting his head slightly... Maekar now seemed several years older. When he saw Sir Alon, a strained smile appeared on his face. "...Father." He spoke with difficulty, but Sir Alon Valerion's rage flared instantly. "You Fucking Disappointment" Grabbing his son by the chestplate, Sir Alon lifted Maekar effortlessly with one hand.

| "You dare show your wretched face to me, still alive, when everyone around you died because of you?!" |
|--|
| A surge of light gathered in Sir Alon's fist, ready to crush Maekar then and there. |
| Yet despite this, Maekar only laughed in response. |
| "Disappointment? Those are big words coming from you, old man Kihihihi" |
| Sir Alon was truly about to end his son's life, but Mist Umbra and several soldiers quickly intervened to stop him. |
| "Calm down, Sir Alon! Do you even understand what you're about to do?" |
| "He's an SS+ rank warrior and your son!!" |
| That frail man, despite everything |
| Remained one of the empire's strongest weapons. |
| Losing him would be a disaster. |
| Reluctantly responding to his soldiers' pleas, Sir Alon hurled Maekar's body aside violently, unwilling to look at him any longer. |
| "Throw that useless fool somewhere out of my sight. I don't have time to deal with such a disappointing son." |
| Turning away, Sir Alon shifted his focus to the others collapsed on the ground. But Maekar wasn't finished speaking. |









| And as Sir Alon Valerion turned away, leaving with those he could still save— |
|--|
| The sky above them cracked open, answering his will with a terrifying cry, a dreadful omen. |
| A warning that hell itself was all that awaited them. |
| On that day, at that hour |
| The whole world looked up at the sky |
| And saw creatures descending from the void, screeching without end, |
| As if the end of the world had arrived. |
| They looked like colossal black ravens, their immense wings blotting out the sky as they soared through the air, crying endlessly. |
| Their screeches were terrifying, carrying countless emotions within them. |
| At times, they sounded mournful, at others joyful. |
| Sometimes furious, sometimes ecstatic. |
| The world trembled beneath their cries. |
| Yet they did nothing simply circling the skies without purpose, crying without end. |
| Massive black birds, as if they had crawled straight out of hell. |

| Reactions varied, but among them |
|--|
| Frey Starlight gazed at the birds, his face shadowed with darkness. |
| From his lips, he whispered their name— |
| "Chaos Eaters." |
| The disaster was inevitable. |
| |
| |
| |
| The world continued to change with every passing second. |
| As shocking events tore through everything, one after another |
| Meanwhile, within the Human Empire |
| Emperor Maekar Valerion was returned to his castle, completely withdrawn from public view. |
| He was in a miserable state, driving away anyone who dared approach him, demanding to be left alone. |
| His body was frail and weak after all he had endured. |

| And so, he found himself staggering between the walls of his castle, his steps faltering as he wandered through one corridor after another. |
|---|
| The deeper he went |
| Maekar Valerion finally reached his private sanctuary |
| A place he had never allowed anyone else to approach. |
| Opening the door to that secret room, |
| Maekar stepped into a chamber completely frozen over. |
| An empty room, filled with nothing but ice. |
| And within mere moments, he collapsed, leaning against a massive ice coffin that stood at the center of the room. |
| The moment he fell, he began laughing like a madman, his body trembling violently. |
| "Damn it, damn it!!!" |
| He cursed over and over, sobbing all the while. |
| Everything had fallen apart for him overnight. |
| "Why why did it all come to this?!" |

| He cried out, then burst into hysterical laughter once again, turning his gaze toward the coffin behind him. |
|--|
| "If only time could turn back to those days back then, everything was fine." |
| Times when he had lived in peace, and everything had been as it should. |
| "Why did you leave me?!" |
| Maekar continued sobbing like a madman as he clung to that coffin. |
| "Everything was fine when you were here" |
| With a trembling body, Maekar stared at the coffin. |
| And within it the face of a man was revealed. |
| A man who had long since closed his eyes to this world. |
| |
| Chapter 447: Whispers in the Darkness — Frey Starlight's POV — |
| The room was dark. |
| Here in my lonely chamber, the place where I first opened my eyes in this world. |
| How many days had passed? I found myself wondering. |

Sitting on my bed, I stared at the system interface with a face that no longer reflected any sort of

expression... or emotion.

Every time, I thought I had reached my limit.

I told myself .. this is it, Frey. You've reached your peak.

You've endured the greatest suffering and torment, and each time, somehow, I found a way to get

through it and keep moving forward, convincing myself that everything was fine.

That I had already seen it all. After everything I'd been through, I believed I had experienced every

possible form of suffering, and that nothing could surprise me anymore.

But every single time ..

Life proved just how foolish I was, dragging me into a brand-new hell.

And most likely, all of this was part of that Engineer's plan... along with whoever else stood behind him.

This was the kind of fate prepared for me. A destiny I seemed unable to escape.

And perhaps this system interface stretched before my eyes was the very reflection of that cursed fate

awaiting me.

Final Mission: Save or Kill Danzo (Completed)

Reward: 15,000 Achievement Points

Skill: Screenshot (SS Rank)

The Screenshot skill allows the user to release a powerful type of aura that manipulates the reality around them. When the skill is used, it captures everything within the user's surroundings .. freezing time for everything inside the screenshot's range for one second.

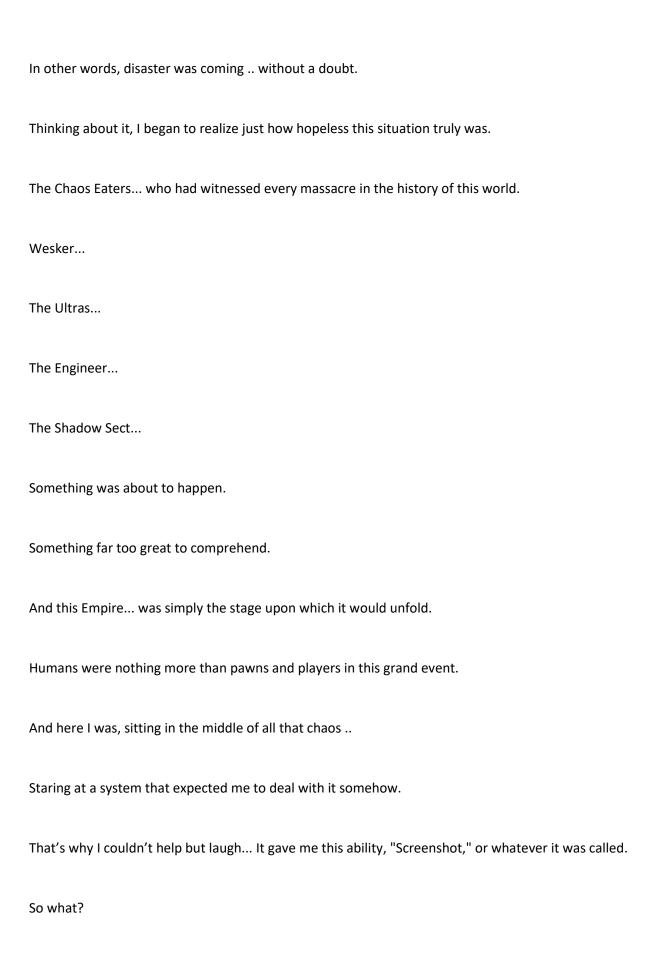
Ding! Missions Updated Main Missions: Kill 10,000 Ultras soldiers: 5,000 Achievement Points. Defeat one of the Ultras' major powers: 5,000 Achievement Points. Final Mission: Eliminate Wesker's Shadows. Mission Description: ??? (Will be revealed when the time comes). ...

Without realizing it, a bitter smile appeared on my face as I read the mission list.



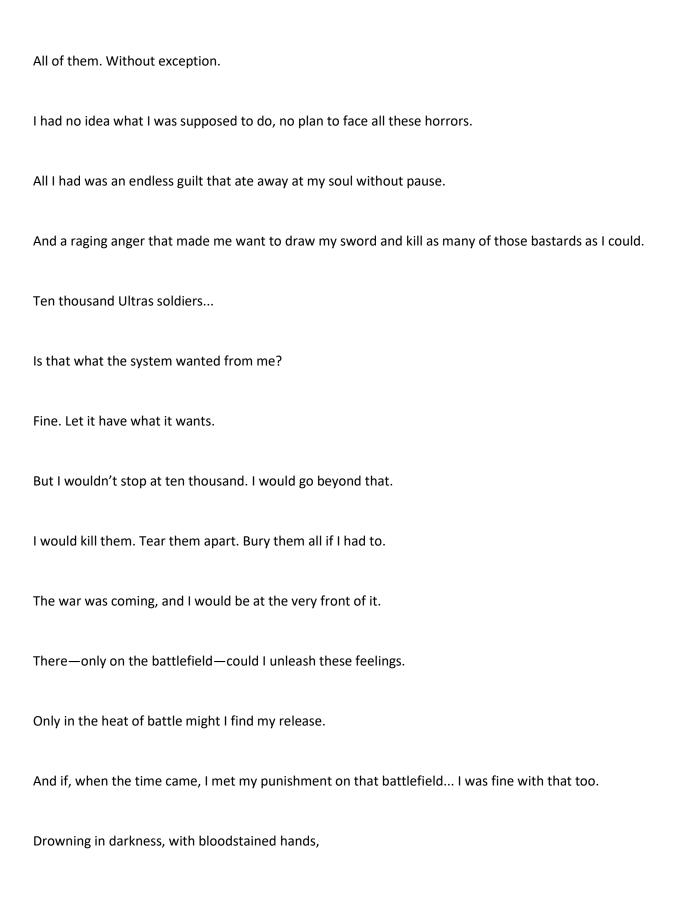


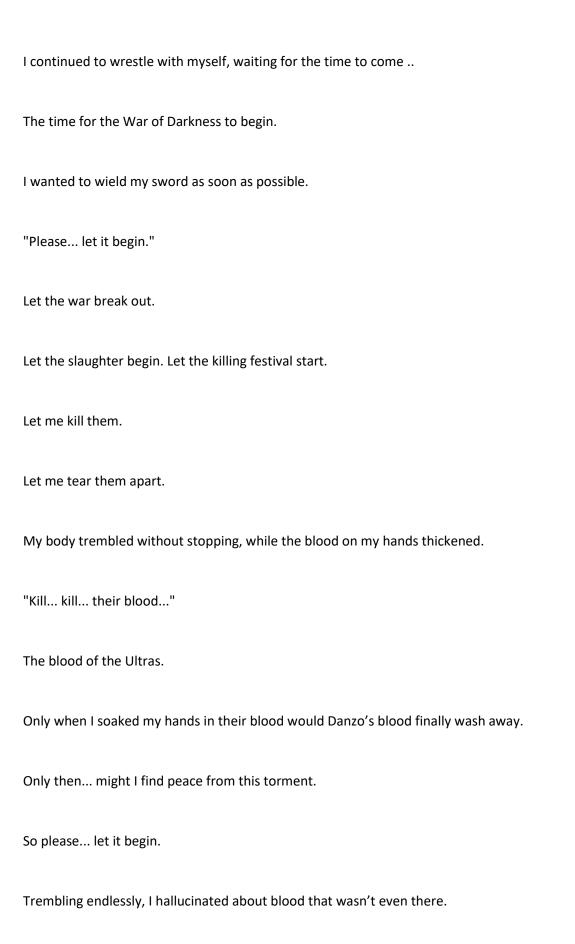
| Many believed the Chaos Eaters were some new kind of nightmare creature. |
|---|
| But they weren't. |
| Despite their overwhelming numbers, the Chaos Eaters were merely fragments of a single entity. |
| A higher being belonging to one of the most mysterious races in existence |
| The Great Ones. |
| Of course, I knew them. I remembered they were supposed to appear at the end of the story I once wrote, back when I was a novelist. |
| As their name implied, the Chaos Eaters fed on chaos. |
| Throughout history, they had appeared many times in various corners of this vast world. |
| Every time it appeared, without exception, a catastrophe would follow one that shook the entire world to its core. |
| That cry it let out each time was the warning bell. |
| A clear sign that disaster was inevitable. |
| And that chaos was the very sustenance of that mysterious entity. |
| And now, it had appeared once again, right here on this earth. |





And in return, what did I do? I drove my sword through his chest and stole from his eyes the light of life that kept him in this world. His ghost had haunted me every day since. And so, once again, I found myself laughing bitterly at my own foolishness. I, who thought I had lost all emotions, found guilt gnawing at my heart without end. Placing my hand over my chest, I listened to the steady beating of my heart... I felt my veins burning, drowning in those hateful emotions. I saw myself as a sinner deserving punishment. For what I had done, I was ready to accept whatever fate awaited me. And at the same time, I was angry—furious—and filled with hatred. Hatred for those who tampered with my fate and Danzo's, manipulating us from the shadows until it all ended like this. Hatred for the Ultras, the enemy from whom this curse had come, the ones who caused so many deaths. Hatred for Gvardiol, the man who planted that demonic seed inside Danzo... "Sons of bitches..." f.(r)eewe/bnov\II.com

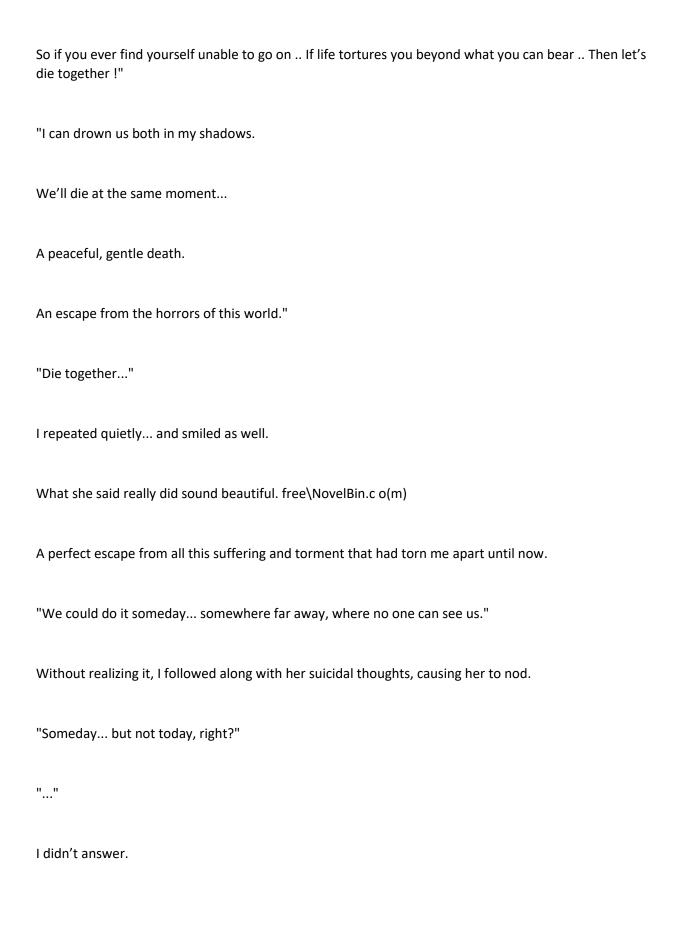










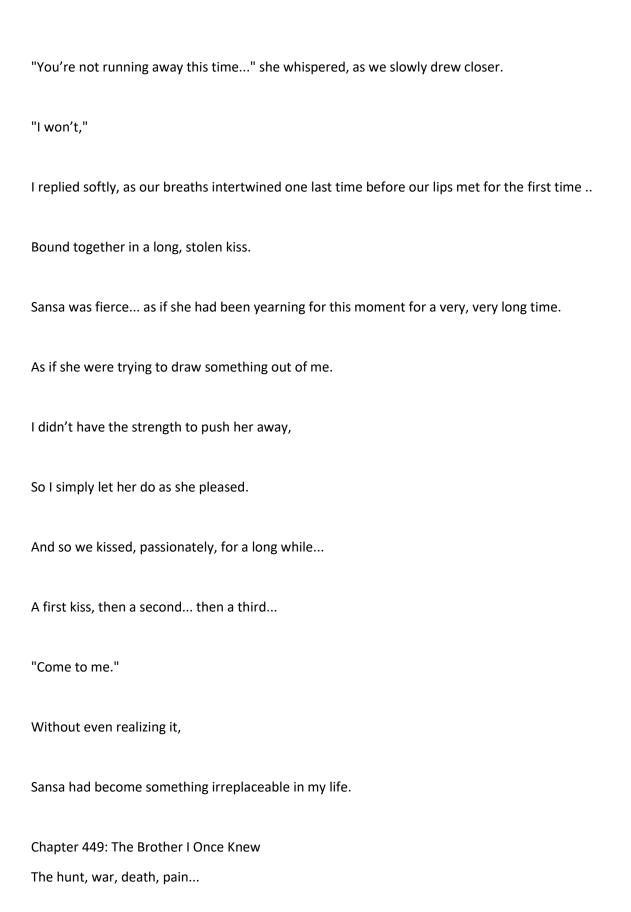






| "You'll suffer greatly, Frey. But at the very least you won't be alone." |
|---|
| "I'll be with you, always. I'll be your strength and your demon who torments your enemies." |
| "The Ultras? Let's kill them all! Let's go to the battlefield and slaughter them one by one!" |
| "We'll keep moving forward. |
| And if one day, you decide you can't go on any longer |
| Then you can reconsider my earlier offer. |
| Dying together in the end wouldn't be so bad. |
| But let's find a beautiful place for that, shall we? |
| I don't want to die in the middle of a battlefield, covered in blood from head to toe." |
| Sansa kept talking without pause, pouring out all her wild thoughts. |
| I suppose, in her own way, she was getting back at me |
| After I had unloaded all my misery on her these past few days. |
| But hearing her ridiculous talk about suicide now |
| I found myself laughing unconsciously. |





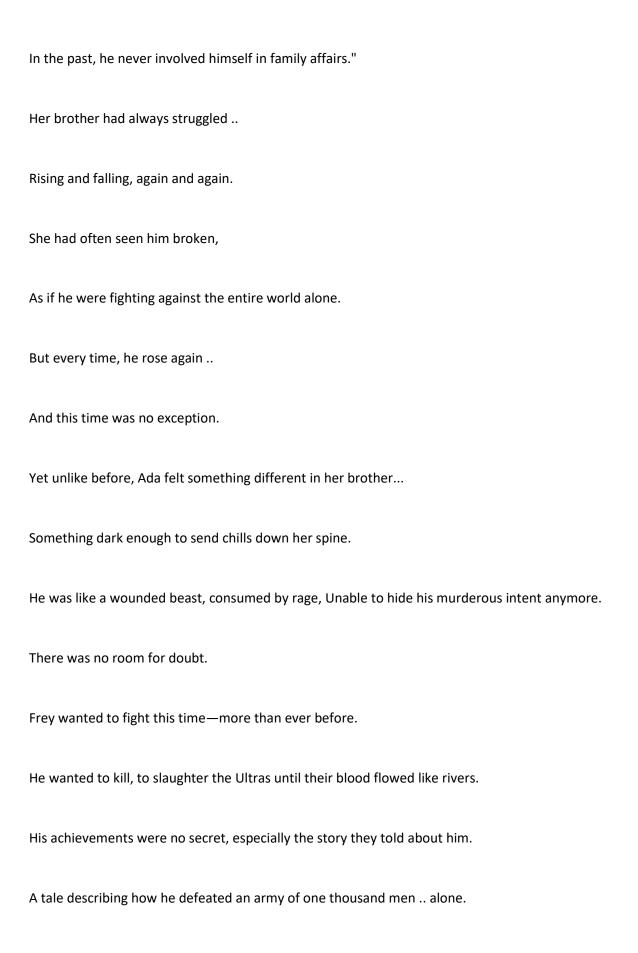
All of these were things the Human Empire had begun to experience one after another. From the kidnapping of their most promising talents, to Maekar's disastrous raid, and finally the last battle where Frey and his companions were rescued ... Or rather... what remained of them. Since then .. Since the sudden death of the Silver Dragon Guild Leader's son, Danzo .. Eight full months had passed. Long months filled with skirmishes between the Empire and the Ultras. During this time, the Empire worked on rehabilitating its most prominent warriors, who had been trapped inside the prison cube, hoping to make use of them in the coming war. Under the leadership of Sir Alon, whose battlefield experience was unparalleled, and Aegon Valerion, who had demonstrated sharp strategic brilliance .. The Empire had managed to close its gates throughout those eight months, withdrawing into itself to repel the Ultras' aggression. Even so, the Ultras never launched a full-scale assault, making the situation increasingly clear. The battlefield for the coming war would not be the Empire .. But the cursed land of the Ultras themselves.

| It took the Empire eight full months to prepare, and the Ultras had willingly given them that time. |
|---|
| As if saying, word for word: |
| "Take all the time you want. |
| The result will be the same." |
| It was obvious that some hidden conspiracy was at work, and invading the Ultras on their own soil was likely a terrible idea. |
| Sir Alon knew this, of course. |
| But he didn't care. |
| War was inevitable. |
| And this time, the Empire would be the challenger Unlike the war eighteen years ago, which they won through the sacrifice of Abraham Starlight. |
| This time, history would repeat itself But on a different battlefield. |
| A cursed land where death had long since claimed dominion. |
| |
| ••• |
| |

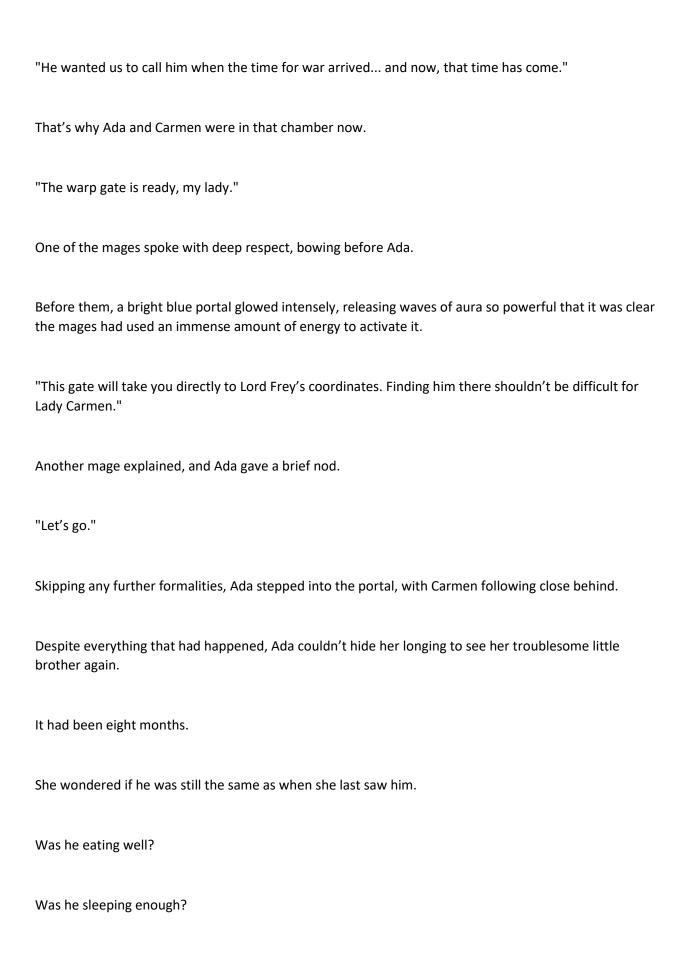
| — Starlight Estate, Eastern Ocklas Mountains — |
|---|
| Inside one of the magical forging chambers of the Starlight family, two women stood at the edge of the room, watching the mages prepare the long-range teleportation array. |
| "Eight months have passed" |
| Ada Starlight spoke with a face that reflected both longing and anticipation. Carmen Starlight, standing beside her, nodded. |
| "The war summit is finally happening it will be a massive event, gathering all the major powers of the Empire to formally launch the war." |
| The Belgrad Summit. |
| It was an event traditionally held every year to discuss the Empire's state of affairs, attended by the heads of the great families and other notable figures. |
| But this time, the summit had transformed into a war council, where the final touches would be made in preparation for the long-dreaded conflict. |
| "They ended up appointing me as the deputy commander of this entire council" |
| Ada sighed in frustration, recalling the moment Sir Alon chose her as second-in-command for the upcoming war. |
| "Am I even worthy of such responsibility in the first place?" |
| She had wanted to refuse at first, but the decision wasn't hers alone anymore. |

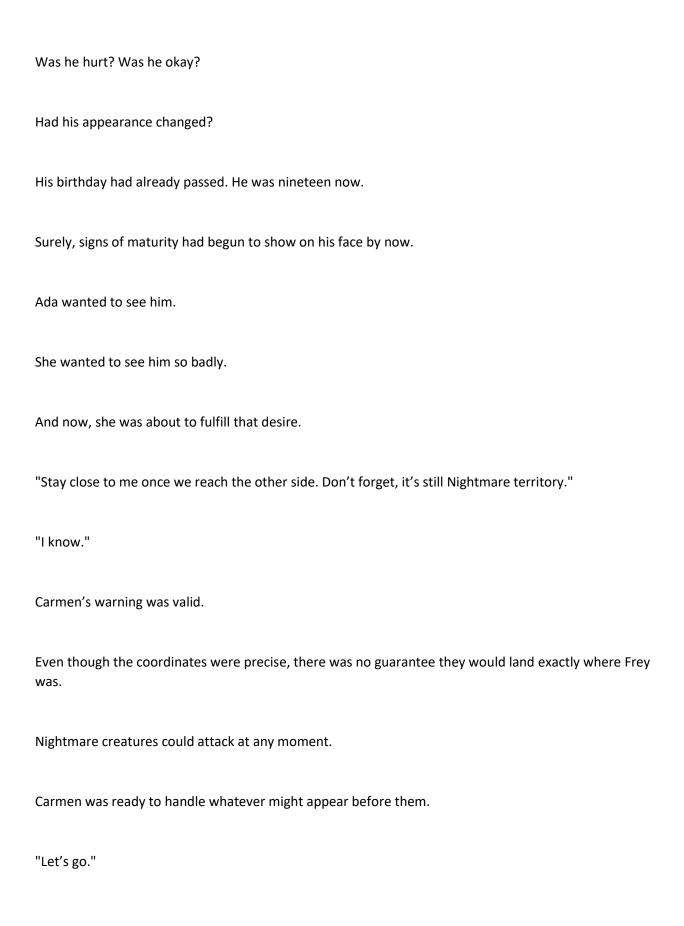


| While veterans like Alon and the elders would supervise from afar, they would enter the battlefield only as devastating weapons of mass destruction. |
|--|
| Speaking of the prince deepened Ada's frown, but Carmen was there for her. |
| "Don't worry. If anything happens, I'll be right there beside you. |
| Let this old woman be your shield." |
| After months of training, Carmen Starlight had nearly reached her full potential, on the verge of entering the SS Rank. |
| Normally, someone like her would have been sent to the battlefield without hesitation. |
| But an exception was made this time, allowing Carmen to stay behind and protect Ada in case anything went wrong. |
| With a faint smile, Carmen remembered the day Ada was appointed as Aegon's deputy commander. |
| It happened eight months ago, right after the Imperial soldiers trapped in the cube were freed. |
| "That was the condition he set for you, wasn't it? |
| Otherwise, he never would have agreed." |
| Ada let out a soft sigh remembering him. |
| "Frey has changed a lot since his friend's death |

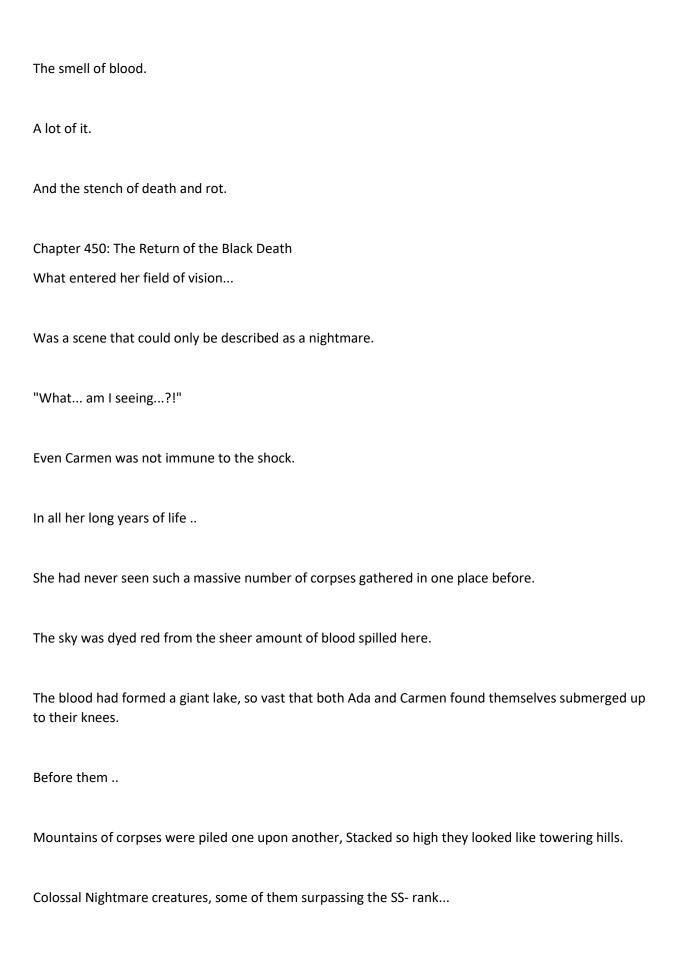


| His burning desire for battle made it clear that Frey would be at the very front of this war. |
|--|
| Even if no one ordered him to go, he would march into battle on his own. |
| And there would be no stopping him. |
| "He's really going back to that hell he barely escaped from" |
| Most of the elite students would struggle with the idea of returning to the Ultras Continent, where they had suffered so much. |
| But Frey was different. |
| "He left home eight months ago, saying he would isolate himself to train and not to disturb him until the war began." |
| He gave them the coordinates of where he was headed |
| The Eastern Nightmare Lands And from that moment on, Frey Starlight disappeared from sight. |
| During his absence, Ada regularly checked his life signal through the device she had planted near his heart, Just to make sure he was still out there. |
| And throughout all that time, nothing happened. |
| Frey wandered alone in the Eastern Nightmare Lands. |
| And since then, no monsters had attacked from the east, leaving the borders eerily quiet. |





| And with that, both women stepped through the portal, initiating the teleportation process. |
|---|
| As the light engulfed them and the scenery rapidly shifted before their eyes |
| Ada and Carmen prepared themselves for several possibilities upon arrival. |
| Perhaps they would find Frey right away. |
| Perhaps Nightmare creatures would attack them. |
| Or maybe, they would simply arrive in an empty, barren place. |
| All were possibilities. |
| But reality told an entirely different story. |
| When Ada stepped out of the portal behind Carmen, The ground beneath her feet was not solid earth |
| But a thick, viscous liquid that made her instinctively recoil. |
| What hit her nose wasn't the pungent scent often found in the Nightmare forests |
| But something else entirely. |
| Something sharp. |
| And repulsive. |



Mist stalker... Cursed Blades... Magma Golems... Grave Birds... All of them were terrifying Nightmare creatures that had wrought destruction for countless years. And yet now... so many had been slaughtered that their bodies were no longer even recognizable. Amid this sea of death and blood, the corpses of the Nightmare creatures weren't the only ones. Upon closer inspection, the two women noticed other bodies... Human bodies. Their heads had been severed and mounted on tall spears, decorating the area like a grim warning. Hundreds of human corpses lay scattered across the land, while the Nightmare beasts numbered in the thousands. Whoever killed those men had deliberately displayed their heads this way ... To serve as a message for anyone who dared approach. It took Ada and Carmen a long moment to process what they were seeing. In this heart of death, even breathing became a difficult task.

The only sound that echoed in this place was the cawing of ravens, feasting on the corpses of the

Nightmares, enjoying their meal.

| And just as Ada and Carmen began searching for the one responsible for this massacre |
|--|
| Death itself came to greet them. |
| Without warning, Ada collapsed into the blood-soaked ground, while Carmen dropped to her knees, unable to stand. |
| Their faces filled with terror, the two women fell under the crushing weight of an aura that came from nowhere. |
| An overwhelming pressure that made the earth itself tremble beneath their feet. |
| It was so suffocating that Ada nearly lost consciousness, If not for Carmen spreading her own aura, trying to shield her from the worst of it. |
| But even with her efforts, the aura pressing down on them was something neither of them had ever experienced before. |
| In horror, Carmen raised her gaze to the peak of the corpse mountain |
| The place where the monster behind this aura stood. |
| "Just how much power does one need to release such an insane amount of aura?!" |
| It was a strange aura yet familiar at the same time. |
| Cold and deadly yet somehow gentle. Familiar. |
| 'SS+ rank? No. It's far beyond that. Even Sir Alon has never unleashed something like this' |
| |

| At first, Carmen thought it was Frey responsible for this terrifying pressure |
|--|
| But she dismissed the thought immediately. There was no way Frey's strength had reached such a level. |
| 'I need to get Ada out of here' |
| Even Carmen struggled to stay conscious. |
| Keeping Ada in this place any longer was far too dangerous. |
| Ready to dash away with everything she had, Carmen ignited her eight stars, casting one last glance at the figure standing atop the corpse mountain. |
| And at that moment, Carmen realized something terrifying: |
| If this person wanted to kill them |
| They wouldn't survive even a single minute. |
| That sudden realization only deepened her despair and fear. |
| But her fears were misplaced. |
| Without warning, the crushing pressure vanished the moment the young man withdrew his aura, finally allowing them to catch their breath. |
| "Sorry. I've been having trouble controlling my aura lately." |
| The voice was familiar. |





| Not in the middle of a sea of corpses. |
|---|
| Staring at the mountains of bodies around him, Frey answered plainly: |
| "This is my hunting ground. |
| I've been hunting Nightmare creatures here for the past few months." |
| Hearing this, both Carmen and Ada finally understood why no Nightmare beasts had attacked from the eastern borders during all these months. |
| Looking closely at the terrain around them, |
| They could see sword marks and destruction left behind by Frey as he hunted the Nightmares. |
| But the Nightmare beasts were not the only bodies in this place. |
| "What about those human heads?" |
| "They're Ultras." |
| Frey answered immediately. |
| "They showed up here four months ago. I think they were planning something, but unfortunately for them they ran into me. |
| They kept sending more forces |

