

VILLAIN 47

Chapter 47 Against the Promised Hero

-Frey Starlight Pov-

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A storm of emotions clashed within me as I prepared to face him...

The protagonist of my own story.

The perfect version of myself—the one who had everything I ever wanted.

I raised my sword, steadying my breath.

"Come, hero."

Snow Lionheart nodded, an overwhelming aura surging through him. Three colors intertwined within it—white, red, and green—proof of his tri-elemental affinity.

And that was only half of what he was capable of.

In response, a dense black aura of darkness enveloped me.

I pushed my power to its peak, activating Hawk's Eye and Phantom Steps.

I would give this fight everything I had.

We moved in slow, deliberate circles, each gauging the other. From the sidelines, Dawn and Seris watched in silence.

"You know, Frey... I've been waiting for this moment for a long time."

Snow's golden eyes glowed as he spoke.

He stood several meters away.

Yet in the next instant, his voice whispered right beside my ear.

"Ever since you defeated Feyrith..."

One moment, he was in the distance.

The next, a flickering image of him appeared at my side, his glowing blade slicing toward my neck.

His strike tore through the air itself, but at the last possible moment, I bent my body, narrowly avoiding the blow.

What I had seen before was merely an afterimage—a remnant of his overwhelming speed.

Fortunately, Hawk's Eye allowed me to follow his movements.

I launched a counterattack, slashing at his vital points with a blade wreathed in black aura.

In an instant, Snow shifted from offense to defense, parrying my attack with effortless precision.

Light and darkness clashed violently, each force trying to consume the other.

At that moment, we both had the same thought.

In a flash, we exchanged dozens of strikes.

Black and white collided, locking us within a whirlwind of flashing swords.

From afar, all an observer would see was a storm of dark and light streaks crashing against each other at blinding speed.

My Ten Thousand Steps of Shadow was relentless—sharp, unpredictable.

Yet he deflected every strike with ease, his mastery of swift swordsmanship rendering my attacks ineffective.

Then, with perfect timing, Snow baited me into attacking, sidestepping with expert precision before slipping past my defenses.

"Let's move on to the next phase."

His sword erupted in blinding radiance as he unleashed a devastating wave of aura at my side.

The hall trembled as the force of his attack sent me hurtling backward.

"One Sword: Mountain-Splitting Sword."

Dawn and Seris flinched as the sheer brilliance of the strike filled the room.

For a moment, they may have thought the battle was over.

But within the overwhelming light—

A single black speck expanded, growing at a menacing pace.

A pitch-black slash tore through the brilliance, splitting Snow's attack in half.

My sword burned with dark flames as I raised it toward him.

"Don't think for a second... that defeating me will be easy."

With a powerful swing, I unleashed my full strength.

"Ten Thousand Steps of Shadow: The Black Cutter."

A massive arc of darkness surged toward Snow.

He simply laughed, raising his sword into a defensive stance.

"I never did."

A radiant crescent of energy shot forth to meet my own, equal in size and power.

The two attacks clashed, annihilating each other—

But then, his eyes widened.

Because behind the first slash... came dozens more.

No—hundreds.

In every way, he surpassed me.

Every way—except for one.

"I have an endless supply of aura."

Unlike you... I can fight without ever running dry.

And at last, Snow realized—

His opponent was the real deal.

Surrounded by a storm of black crescents, he chuckled.

Then, suddenly, the light vanished from his blade.

"I'll have to answer in kind."

This time, flames erupted around his sword.

He spun rapidly, his movements generating a massive inferno.

A blazing tornado surged outward, devouring my waves of darkness.

I watched as the fiery vortex rose—

Then, suddenly, it tilted toward me.

At its center, Snow's silhouette flickered.

The flames around him shifted to an eerie blue.

Then, little by little, they evaporated...

And something else took their place.

Lightning.

A colossal storm of crackling electricity surged toward me at terrifying speed.

I clenched my jaw, gathering every ounce of power I could muster.

This wasn't an attack I could take lightly.

He was using higher-order abilities now.

Which meant—he was finally taking me seriously.

I inhaled deeply, muscles coiling like a tightened spring.

To the very last drop—

I unleashed my aura at a reckless rate, my pathways screaming in protest.

"Ten Thousand Steps of Shadow: The Black Meteor."

I launched myself skyward, shrouded in a pillar of darkness.

From my perspective, time slowed to a crawl.

Yet in reality, it all happened within a single second.

Our blades clashed.

A storm of lightning and darkness erupted, each force struggling for dominance.

This might have been the strongest attack I had ever faced.

In the end, we both plummeted from the sky.

Snow landed in his original position, while I stumbled a few steps back.

My entire body ached, electricity coursing through my limbs like molten fire.

I barely managed to steady myself—

But Snow didn't give me the chance.

I watched in alarm as a misty aura spread over his body.

Damn it...

Hawk's Eye.

A thin trail of blood dripped from my eye as I pushed my vision to the limit.

Snow was preparing something.

He tapped the ground—

And in an instant, the world around him shattered.

Black lightning coiled around his form like writhing serpents.

"Void Step."

Snow shot forward, a straight-line charge that obliterated everything in its path.

This technique condensed all his power, combined it with the force of his momentum—

And channeled it into a single, devastating attack.

Using Hawk's Eye, which barely tracked his movements,

And Phantom Steps, which pushed my evasion to the absolute limit—

I dodged by a hair's breadth.

His attack shattered the reinforced walls of the hall—

And still, it kept going, carving destruction into whatever lay beyond.

Snow laughed, already lunging toward me again, lightning crackling around him.

"You even dodged Void Step?"

Gritting my teeth, I parried his lightning-infused slashes.

I held my own—

But his next move shifted the tide of battle.

"It's time to end this, Frey."

My breath hitched as sound waves pulsed through the air.

A sound-based attack?!

He was using the higher-order ability of wind—Sound.

His sonic waves disrupted my reactions, throwing off my timing.

And in that instant, he gained the upper hand.

When he was about to land the finishing blow—

I forced my body to move, activating Mirage.

I layered it multiple times, launching dozens of strikes in under a second—

But Snow matched my speed, the black lightning serpents dancing around him.

Then, at last, we both halted.

Standing mere meters apart, he remained completely unscathed—

While I panted heavily.

I hated to admit it...

But at this rate, I was going to lose.

And then—

A white, ethereal glow spread over Snow's body.

"Frey... I'm going all out. Try to withstand this."

I recognized that power immediately.

And so did Dawn and Seris, gasping in disbelief.

The higher-order ability of Light.

The Star.

The strongest aura known to exist.

The one power Frey Starlight had been denied.

And as I felt the sheer magnitude of the energy Snow had gathered—

I knew.

Things were about to get serious.

" The Second Sword: Sky Cutter "

As he was consumed by his ethereal power, I cast a glance at my own sword...

At that moment, the serpent tattoo on my hand burned fiercely, demanding release.

I'm sorry, my friend... but not this time.

This is something I have to do myself.

Ignoring Balerion's call, I closed my eyes.

Darkness enveloped me, and a thick black mist coiled around my body.

What I was about to unleash was one of the strongest techniques of the Ten Thousand Steps of Shadow.

At my current level, using this technique was reckless—perhaps even suicidal.

But I had no choice.

Judging by the sheer power my opponent had displayed, I had to push beyond my limits.

Snow was strong.

Far too strong.

And that left me uneasy.

He wasn't supposed to be this powerful at this point in the story...

Which meant that something had already changed.

But now wasn't the time to dwell on that.

I let myself sink into the abyss, my eyes burning with an intense violet glow.

Snow activated Void Step, launching an attack infused with the full force of Star Aura.

I didn't hesitate.

I charged forward.

"Ten Thousand Steps of Shadow: Infinite Darkness."

I only hoped my body would survive the backlash of this technique as I unleashed everything.

Darkness swallowed me whole.

Despite our insane speed, time seemed to slow.

I saw Snow approaching, wreathed in a terrifying storm of ethereal energy.

The look in his eyes mirrored my own.

We both acknowledged each other's strength.

We both had chosen to unleash our ultimate techniques.

This was never just a duel.

This was a battle.

A real one.

He was the greatest obstacle in my path—the one I had to overcome if I wanted to return to my world.

And so, without realizing it, I gave it everything.

This technique was deadly. Even Dawn and Seris knew that.

Seris tried to intervene, summoning a massive wall of ice between us.

But our swords cleaved through it like a hot knife slicing through butter.

And in the end—

Our blades met.

A deafening explosion erupted, obliterating the entire training hall.

I watched as my sword shattered into dust.

Darkness consumed me.

"I lost."

-Snow Lionheart Pov-

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I let out a slow breath, exhaling the air trapped in my lungs.

A thin mist of condensation formed before me, vanishing into the cold morning air.

I scanned my surroundings.

I stood amidst the wreckage of the training hall.

Or rather—what remained of it.

The destruction caused by our final clash was far greater than I had expected.

Dawn and Seris stood at a distance, having shielded themselves with their respective powers.

Satisfied that they were unharmed, I turned my focus back to him.

Frey lay motionless, buried within the shattered remains of the wall.

I glanced down at my broken sword... and the deep wound carved into my side.

A strange feeling settled over me—something between awe and disbelief.

Even though I hadn't fought with my full elemental arsenal,

I had still given this battle everything.

And yet—

He had kept up with me.

No.

He had pushed me this far.

He wasn't a third or fourth-year student.

He was my age.

"Not bad... Frey Starlight."

"Joining the temple wasn't a mistake after all."

Pressing a hand against my bleeding wound, I made my way toward him.

When I reached him, it was obvious—his condition was far worse than mine.

But what surprised me most was that most of his injuries...

Weren't even from my attacks.

They were self-inflicted.

I couldn't help but laugh.

"Damn... that hurts."

Ignoring the searing pain in my side, I hoisted Frey onto my shoulder.

"Come on... this isn't where you fall."

I intended to take us somewhere to treat our wounds—

But it seemed our battle had drawn far too much attention.

A crowd had gathered.

Among them, several powerful auras stood out.

Leading them was a short girl with a childlike appearance.

Ellen White—President of the Elite Student Council.

She clutched her head, yelling at the top of her lungs.

"What the hell happened to the First-Year Duel Arena?!"

It was barely past six in the morning, and she was still in her sleepwear—making her appearance almost comical.

Despite my pain, I couldn't stop the chuckle that escaped me.

"Sorry, Frey, but it looks like we're going to be here a while."

Aftermath

Dealing with Ellen White and explaining the situation took longer than I would have liked.

But she didn't hold me up for too long—especially after seeing Frey unconscious on my shoulder.

In the end, both of us received proper treatment.

Since my injuries weren't as severe, I was discharged first.

But Frey remained in one of the temple's medical wards.

As I stepped out of the infirmary, a familiar presence sent a chill down my spine.

"Aegon Valerion."

The silver-haired noble smirked as he approached.

"You're looking well, Snow Lionheart."

His smile was as insincere as ever.

Sighing, I tried to end this quickly.

"What do you want, Prince Aegon?"

He closed the distance between us effortlessly.

"How many times do I have to tell you... just call me Aegon."

Hearing that, I forced a stiff smile.

"How could I ever be so disrespectful?"

"Such a gentleman."

He reached out and ran his hand along my side—

Pressing directly against my wound in a bold, deliberate move.

My body tensed instinctively, reacting to the pain as his fingers tapped against my injury.

"Look at you... Who would've thought you'd be pushed this far?"

I swatted his hand away and took a step back.

"Don't make me repeat myself. What do you want, Aegon Valerion?"

He chuckled, brushing past me.

"Look how rude you've become... I was just checking on my dear classmate."

"We wouldn't want you sustaining a permanent injury and disrupting the class, would we?"

Aegon walked past me, heading toward the infirmary.

A frown formed on my face as I watched him enter.

Without thinking, I asked—

"Where are you going?"

Without even glancing back, he let out a soft laugh.

"Visiting a friend."

"A friend?"

Was he talking about Frey Starlight?

I sighed and turned away.

I would never understand that man.

It was obvious—he had been trying to win me over for some time now.

He didn't want a powerful piece like me moving outside his control.

"People like him... I hate them."

With that thought, I made my way to class, hoping to catch up on the lessons I had missed.

Meanwhile, inside the infirmary—

A young man with jet-black eyes slowly stirred awake, finding himself lying in a hospital bed.

He exhaled deeply, staring at the unfamiliar ceiling above him.

"I don't recognize this ceiling."

For the first time since returning from the Lands of Nightmare—

Frey Starlight had lost.