

VILLAIN 58

Chapter 58 Frey Starlight's Fate

-Frey Starlight Pov-

A full week had passed since the assassination incident.

I lay on my bed, eyes fixed on the holographic screen hovering in front of me—something akin to a futuristic television.

It had taken me an entire month to figure out how to operate it properly.

Right now, the news was playing. It hadn't stopped for even a moment all week.

No matter how many channels I switched to, they were all covering the same story.

As a side note, the Holy Church, led by Bishop Joseph Plattier, had launched a large-scale purge, executing countless individuals labeled as "traitors."

Joseph Plattier... That was a name I remembered.

After all, SS-ranked Awakened were exceedingly rare, yet the Church had three of them—and he was one of them.

Fortunately, I had no intention of staying in this world long enough for them to become my problem.

But setting the Church aside...

The main headline across every news outlet remained unchanged:

"Temple Scandal: Dozens of Students Assassinated Within the Temple Grounds!"

"A tragedy that raises serious doubts about the place once considered the safest sanctuary..."

"Is it truly safe to send our children there? Why did we pour so much money into supporting the temple?"

And to make matters worse...

The assassins were students themselves.

No intruders. No external enemies.

Everything had happened from within.

The temple wasted no time. Every last culprit had been apprehended.

But it wasn't much of a mystery—these students had committed their killings in broad daylight, almost as if they wanted the world to know.

Through Ada, who contacted me daily, I managed to gather more details.

First, all the captured students displayed identical symptoms—mysterious runes appeared across their bodies, temporarily granting them a massive surge in power before triggering severe side effects.

Vomiting. Coughing up blood. Panic attacks. And more.

The temple was at a complete loss, unable to understand what they were dealing with.

Meanwhile, Carmen had managed to secure the biggest lead. Unfortunately, he hadn't survived.

For now, they had no clue what was going on.

But, of course, I did.

The source of their sudden strength?

Demon blood.

A specific type of demon blood had been injected into their bodies, and the runes served as catalysts to activate that power.

This was what they called the "Second-Generation Contract."

The First-Generation contract had only allowed demons to grant a fraction of their aura to a human.

But now, they had advanced to the next stage.

The level of power they gained depended entirely on the demon's rank—the higher the rank, the greater the strength.

It wouldn't take long for human scientists to uncover this, especially now that they had live specimens.

...

At that moment, I pushed aside all unnecessary distractions, focusing only on what truly mattered.

I opened my laptop with a sigh.

The Infiltration Event had officially begun.

This was just the start...

I navigated to my quest log.

Side Quest: Rank First in the Target Test

Reward: 500 Achievement Points (Completed)

Defeat Snow Lionheart

Reward: 1,000 Achievement Points (Completed)

The second quest caught me off guard—my previous clash with Snow had been recognized as a victory, granting me a hefty amount of points.

Current Achievement Points: 8,800.

So close... I'm so close!

Ignoring my total for now, I scrolled down to what I had truly been waiting for.

Main Quest: Survive Until the End of the Infiltration Event.

Reward: 1,000 Achievement Points.

Failure Penalty: Death.

Main Quest: Stop the Ultras.

Reward: 3,000 Achievement Points.

Failure Penalty: Death + The Death of All Main Characters.

"Huh? Not just one... but two main quests?"

And why the hell did both penalties result in my death?!

I let out an exasperated sigh as I recalled which event this was.

"Now that I think about it... this is where the original Frey Starlight dies in the story."

We had already reached this point.

After assassinating the princess, Frey Starlight had become an Ultras agent within the temple.

Eventually, the Infiltration Event would erupt, igniting a massive battle between both factions.

And in the end...

Frey would be killed by Snow.

At that moment, he would have been seconds away from violating Seris Moonlight, who had been unable to defeat him after his unprecedented power boost.

Snow would save her, and from there, their bond would deepen.

That was the original setup.

A setup that was now completely meaningless.

Because I was here.

...

"Alright, let's do this."

I opened a blank document and started mapping out my next moves.

First... Why am I here?

To win the Victoriad.

That would be my ultimate goal. Everything else was secondary.

To win the Victoriad, what must I do?

Defeat Snow Lionheart.

To achieve that, I needed to prepare myself.

My current plan was to obtain at least four skills to stand a fighting chance.

Phantom Step and Hawk's Eye—to counter his Void Step and match his overwhelming speed.

But that alone wouldn't be enough.

Which brought me to the third skill I had been targeting for a while now...

One of the biggest reasons I had pursued Anti-Magic Resistance.

After all, the owner of this skill was none other than Kai Locke— the Grand Mage of the Temple and the mastermind behind everything that was about to unfold.

An S-Rank Skill...

Ascension .

I had to obtain it no matter what.

A grin tugged at my lips.

All I needed to do was deal with Kai Locke... and after that, I wouldn't even need to participate in this event.

I would simply wait for the end.

Originally, Frey Starlight was the leader of the student assassins.

Now that things had changed, that role would either fall to another elite student or someone from Class Abyss.

Either way, the internal conflict between students would drag on for at least another week.

I just needed to lay low and focus on preparing for the final battle.

Yes... that was the best course of action.

This time, Frey Starlight wouldn't die.

Step One: Acquire 1,200 more Achievement Points.

Satisfied, I finalized my plans and went to sleep, excitement thrumming through my veins.

Unfortunately...

Plans don't always go as expected.

The Next Morning...

I woke up early as usual and made my way to the new dueling arena.

Despite the chaos consuming the temple, the Elite Class had remained largely unaffected.

All other classes had been temporarily suspended for investigation.

After all, it was almost certain that more contractors were hidden among the students.

But since the Elite Class wasn't under suspicion, I used the opportunity to stick to my routine.

Upon entering the new training hall, I found Snow and Dawn already there.

Do these two ever sleep?

After a brief greeting, I grabbed a training dummy and began warming up.

Barely a few minutes had passed when someone approached me.

It was Dawn.

"Hey, Frey. How about a spar?"

"Of course."

Since I started training here, we had dueled dozens of times.

Gripping my sword firmly, I raised it toward Dawn.

"Let's make this a duel of swordsmanship only."

Dawn frowned.

"You want to rely solely on swordsmanship?"

I nodded.

Dawn had never truly understood my reasoning. In terms of swordsmanship alone, he surpassed even Snow—though that wouldn't last for long.

Under these conditions, my defeat was inevitable.

But that didn't matter.

The duel began, and Dawn lunged toward me.

I remained still, watching him intently. Then, I activated Hawk's Eye.

Time slowed.

My vision expanded, granting me a full view of the entire arena.

Snow stood at the sidelines, observing. Dawn approached from the front. I focused on his sword, murmuring—

"A strike from the right."

As expected, the attack came from the right. I blocked it with my blade.

"A feint from the left... then a downward slash."

Again, it played out exactly as I had foreseen.

I was predicting his movements before they even happened.

After countless battles against him, I had begun to understand his fighting style.

Bit by bit, I was progressing.

Shadow Adaptation: 0/7

Slowly but steadily, I was working my way toward completing the first stage of Shadow Adaptation.

But... it was still too soon.

Though I could anticipate his strikes at first, Dawn's speed gradually increased. His attacks came from trickier angles.

I managed to hold my ground for a while, but eventually, I abandoned the idea of reading his style altogether—

And simply fought my own way.

After ten minutes of relentless exchanges, my sword was finally knocked from my grip. Dawn's blade rested against my throat.

I let out a breath, raising my hands in surrender.

"I lost."

Dawn smiled.

"Thanks for the duel."

Just then, Snow approached.

"Why did you choose to fight using only swordsmanship? You knew Dawn had the advantage in that aspect."

Retrieving my sword from where it had landed, I responded casually,

"I know... But every time I face him, I feel myself improving. Because he's already above me."

Snow smirked at my answer.

"In that case, how about a sword duel against me?"

I lifted my sword, turning to face him.

"No. Since it's you, fight me with everything you've got."

"I figured you'd say that."

We charged at each other.

As our swords clashed, sending shockwaves through the air, we both grinned.

"We should hold back. I don't want to destroy this place again."

Our blades collided at an incredible speed, yet we continued our conversation with ease.

"Why worry? They can rebuild it if that happens."

Snow took several steps back, a troubled look crossing his face.

"What are you saying? I barely got away with it last time because of the Student Council President... If I destroy the place again, they'll make me pay for it."

He stomped the ground and lunged at me.

"And as you can see, I don't have any money."

I chuckled at his complaint.

"Don't worry. I'm the spoiled son of the Starlight family... Though my status within it isn't exactly great."

We fought freely, neither of us managing to overpower the other while restraining ourselves.

Still, I didn't mind.

As long as I improved my swordsmanship and advanced in Shadow Adaptation, I was satisfied.

After the Duel...

Taking a short break, we stood side by side.

Dawn spoke first.

"It seems like the temple is going through difficult times."

Snow nodded.

"Yeah... Many students have died."

A moment of silence followed before Snow turned to me.

"Frey... You're from one of the major families, so you might know more than us. Tell me..."

He hesitated for a second—

But in that brief moment, a suffocating killing intent radiated from him, making me tense up.

"I heard traces of demonic energy were found in the bodies of the culprits... Is that true?"

Hearing his question, I grew serious.

I knew how much Snow hated demons and those who made contracts with them.

After all, demons were responsible for his parents' deaths... and the destruction of the orphanage he once called home.

Snow was the hero I had created—an extension of myself.

That's why I didn't want to lie to him.

I nodded.

"It's true. Somehow... they acquired contracts with demons."

After confirming his suspicions, Snow nodded coldly.

"I see... Thanks for being honest with me."

Without another word, he returned to training, his aura fluctuating violently.

Dawn and I continued our own training separately.

But the atmosphere had grown cold.

Not just because of Snow's reaction—

But because of her.

Seris Moonlight.

She hadn't abandoned sword training, it seemed. I spotted her practicing alone.

Fortunately, I could now suppress the old Frey's instincts with ease, so I wasn't concerned about her approaching me.

Even so, I still preferred to keep my distance.

She was, without a doubt, the most beautiful woman my foolish mind could imagine...

Yet, I couldn't feel at ease around her.

Especially knowing her past.

6 AM – Time for Class

I stopped training, heading off to shower and prepare for the day.

So did the others—except Snow.

After returning my practice sword, I made my way out.

And that's when Seris blocked my path.

...Here we go.

Standing before her, I kept my expression neutral.

"Do you need something?"

She shook her head.

"No... I just wanted to thank you for saving our class during the last test."

I frowned.

She's thanking me? That's... not like her.

Deciding to play along, I replied indifferently,

"No need to thank me. I did it for my own benefit. I don't deserve your gratitude."

"I see."

She nodded, her expression unreadable as always.

Silence followed. Assuming the conversation was over, I stepped past her—

But just as I walked by, she spoke again.

"Frey... are you okay?"

Her words made me pause.

"What?"

I turned to face her.

"Have you been experiencing insomnia? Losing your temper? Feeling like you're not in control of your emotions?"

Ah.

So that's what this was about.

Without a care, I continued walking, dismissing her concerns.

"I'm fine. Stop asking strange questions... It doesn't suit you."

Once I was out of earshot, I cursed.

She's suspicious of me.

Classes went on as usual—except for the gloom hanging in the air.

It was especially noticeable with Sophia.

Hours passed, lesson after lesson.

As always, I sat alone in Professor Fleming's class.

But I frowned when I noticed someone else staring at me.

"Now what?"

It was Sansa.

She wasn't the only one. Even some professors shot me occasional glances.

Amid this suffocating atmosphere, I wanted to leave as soon as possible.

And sure enough, as soon as class ended—

Sansa approached me.

Before she could speak, I beat her to it.

"What's the matter?"

Caught off guard by my irritated reaction, she hesitated for a moment before asking the question she had in mind.

"Nothing... I just wanted to check if you've been doing okay lately."

I clicked my tongue. Just as I expected.

"You too, huh?"

She raised an eyebrow.

"Me too?"

Shaking my head, I turned away.

"I'm fine... Don't waste your time worrying about me."

As I walked out, a bitter laugh escaped me.

How naive.

This was the moment where Frey Starlight was supposed to die.

There was no way I'd escape my fate that easily.

Realizing the absurdity of my situation, I scoffed at myself.

"Now that I think about it... Seris was the one who exposed Frey in the first iteration."

If I pieced everything together, I fit the exact profile of a demonic contract holder.

A complete shift in personality.

A sudden surge in power.

A missing year with no clear records of my whereabouts.

And to top it all off—the element of darkness.

If people kept suspecting me, certain factions would seize the opportunity to either eliminate me or force me out of the Elite Class.

I clenched my fists at the thought.

If that happened, I'd lose my chance to participate in the Victoriad.

Everything would go up in smoke.

Taking a deep breath, I muttered to myself.

"Looks like I have no choice but to step in early."

I needed to crush these suspicions before they spiraled out of control.

And to do that—I had to find the real contract holders.

"What a hassle."

With my plans for the day utterly ruined, I made my way back to my room.