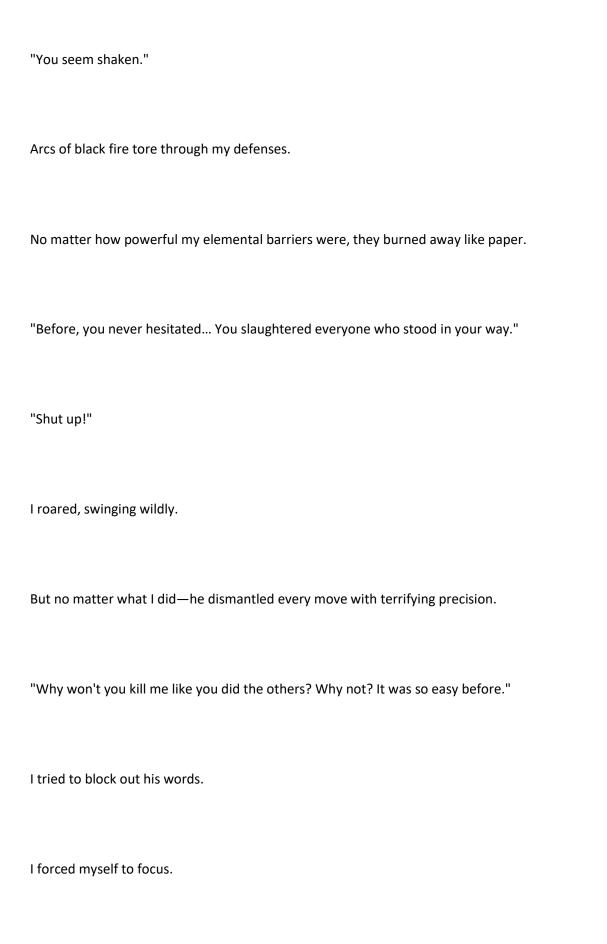
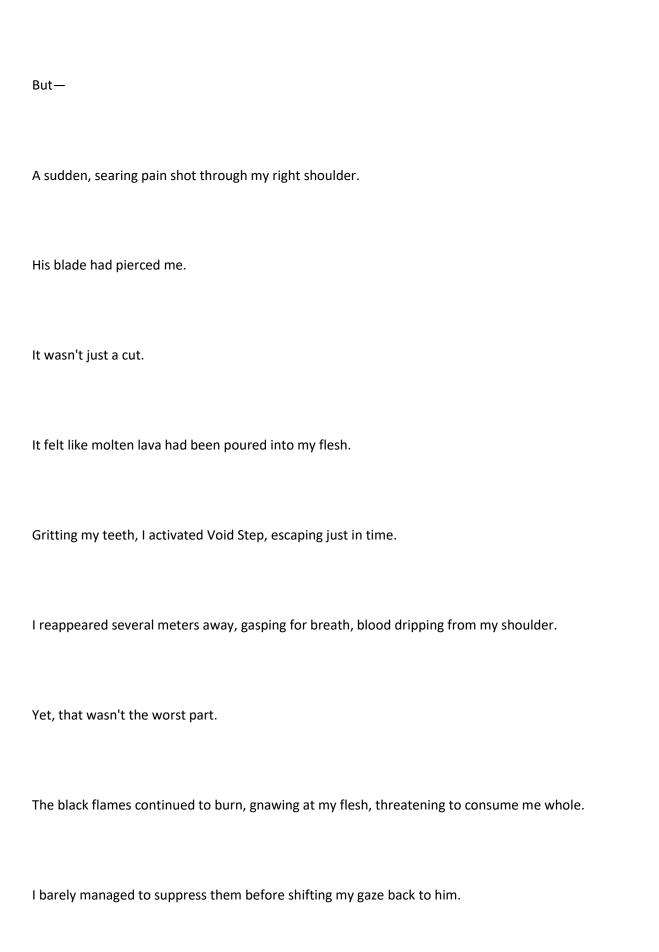
VILLAIN 80



"Is this all you've got?"
I clenched my jaw, frustration boiling inside me.
The fact that this man was an Ultras only made things worse.
I forced my Star Aura to its absolute limits.
"Void Step."
The distance between us vanished in an instant as I lunged at him, pouring every ounce of strength into my attack.
But he saw through me.
He raised his sword to defend, but this time—it wasn't just the ominous silver aura surrounding his blade.
There was something else.







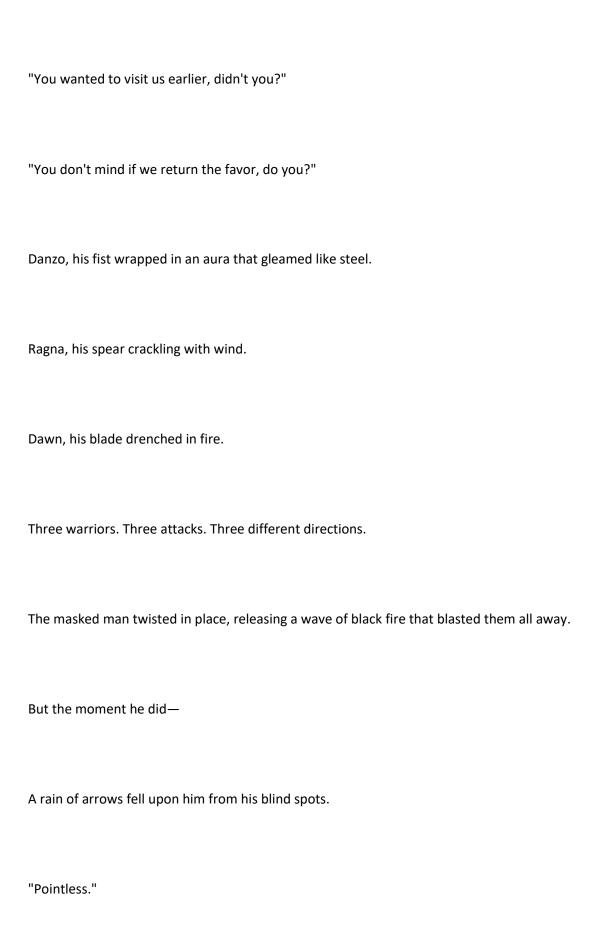
I forced myself to stand—
But the moment I moved—
My sword shattered into countless pieces.
"What?"
"Looks like you've reached your limit."
He took slow, deliberate steps toward me.
His black flames burned fiercer than ever.
"Your friends are fighting so hard against the Nightmare Beasts"
His voice was calm. Almost mocking.



I launched forward with everything I had.
"Second Sword : Sky Severing Slash!"
The sheer force of my attack reflected in his crimson eyes.
Yet—
He didn't flinch.
He simply raised his sword.
And in an instant—
A massive eruption of black fire engulfed the battlefield.
"You still don't understand."

The flames devoured everything in their path.

My strike was swallowed whole.
"You can't defeat me."
The masked man stood amidst the raging inferno.
Unscathed.
"No one can."
The black flames roared toward me, fast and merciless. But just before they could reach me, a wall of ice erupted from the ground, blocking the attack.
"Hmm?"
Neither I nor the masked man had anticipated an outside interference.
Before he could react, three figures closed in, surrounding him from different angles.

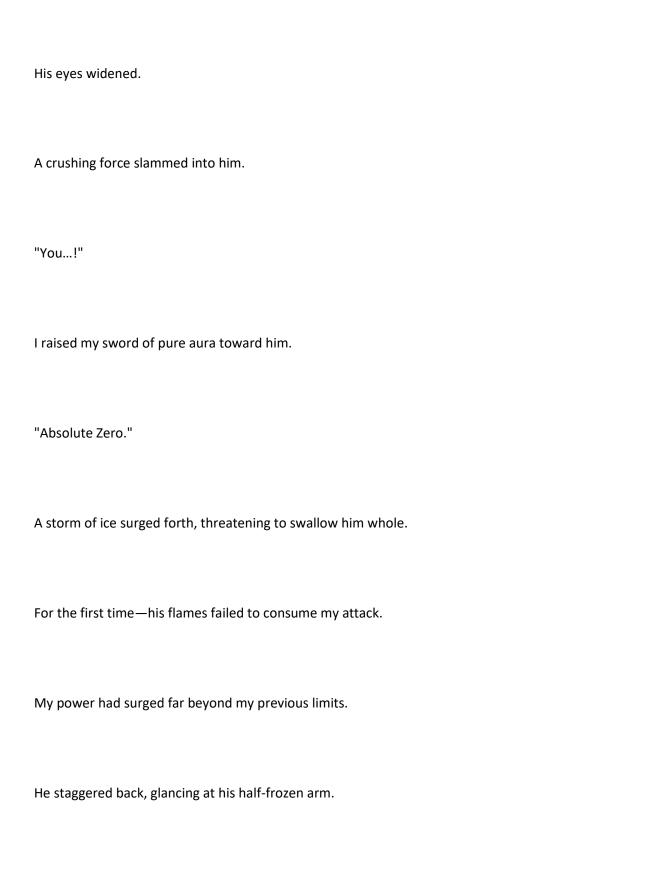


The second they neared him, the arrows were reduced to ash.
"Snow! Are you alright?!"
Turning around, I found Lara Croft and Seris Moonlight standing behind me.
I hadn't expected them to be here—defending me.
"You guys"
The masked man regarded them briefly before tilting his head.
"The Nightmare Beasts?"
No one answered.
But the carnage surrounding us—the countless corpses—made it clear.

They had wiped them out.
"I see."
He raised his sword.
Everyone around me braced themselves.
"Oi, princess."
Danzo muttered, sweat dripping down his face.
"I hate to admit it, but we need to work together if we wanna take this guy down."
Something about the masked man sent a chill through him.
It was the same suffocating pressure he had felt only once before—when he faced monsters leagues beyond him.
And he already knew.



"I see now."
He was after me—and me alone.
As he walked toward me, his sword pulsing with silver light and black smoke, a twisted grin spread across my face.
"You're strong. You must hold a high rank among them."
The masked man paused, studying me.
"What are you getting at?"
"Nothing."
I smirked—
And removed the ring from my right hand.
The moment it hit the ground—



But when he looked up—
I was already above him.
"Let me show you the true power of the stars!"
"Third Sword : Dimensional Severance!"
A colossal white dragon materialized around my blade, its fangs bared, its aura threatening to devour him whole.
For the first time—he felt it.
A genuine threat.
He unleashed the full force of his black flames, now surging with that silver radiance, forming a desperate defense.
And when our swords clashed—

The flaming prison shattered.
I had poured everything into that final strike.
If he survived this—
I didn't know what I would do next.
So please—
"Burn."
The Star Aura surged.
I watched as he was sent flying, engulfed in a cataclysmic explosion that consumed everything in its path.
My body collapsed onto the ground, searing with pain.

The remnants of his black flames still clung to my skin, mixing with my own Star Aura, both forces tearing away at me.
I lifted my gaze.
Everyone around me did the same.
Searching through the destruction—
Scanning for any sign of him.
And then—
A shadow emerged from the smoke.
Unharmed.
My breath hitched—not from the fact that he had survived.
But because of his face.

His mask had been shattered.
And beneath it—
A boy.
Jet-black hair. Crimson eyes.
A young face, barely mature.
The monster who had pushed me to my limits
Was a seventeen-year-old kid.
A boy our age.
He smirked, his crimson eyes gleaming.

"Not bad."