

THE ONE UNITING

ERA OF MONSTERS



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The One Uniting: Era of Monsters

Chapter 1: Fateful Encounter

by RT BLACK

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Preface

Welcome, my dear readers. When I first started writing I didn't have this book in mind at all! But then came this one day that changed everything. On that day I asked my classmates to give me feedback on a story I had been working on. Well, that day I found out that bad feedback does exist. By that I don't mean that they criticized the story, because that was what I had hoped for. However, they ridiculed my story, not even truly reading it, and that was the day I stopped writing. That day I had many, too many thoughts, flashing through my head. Was it my fault? Did I ask the wrong people? Was my story just too bad? But then I remembered why I had started writing stories in the first place.

Indeed, in today's world there is an abundance of stories. However, for me the feeling of excitement had long ceased. I watched and read stories not to get excited anymore, not to dive into a new world, but only because I was bored. And that's when I realized that this is something I don't want. I want that thrilling feeling back, the time when you saw or read a scene for the first. The time when you got completely lost in the world. The time when you would be happy when two people found together and cry when two people separated.

Damn, I knew what I wanted but I didn't find it in any stories which I consumed. And before I know I had abandoned my own story, my own passion, my own path! However, I found back to it! I decided why not create that story I seek so much? Why not build a world that will leave people excited, myself included? That's what I want to create, an unforgettable story. A story people will be happy to tell on, to show others. And if one day they read a book that is not from me they shall recall how great my book was.

My story will not be a story people will consume when they are bored. No! They won't be bored because they consume my story! And when they start reading my story they will only put the book away when they have read it through. Even if the next day there is an exam, they will read the book through and then go sleeping. Just a joking, hahah! Learn well, get great grades and then immerse yourself into my story.

It was a hard journey creating this book and damn yes, more is coming! I put much sweat and time into my work. Thus, I hope my readers will like my work and feel the emotions and effort I've poured into it. Well, now it's up to you! Enjoy the read

*"In the quiet collision of two wandering lonely souls,
fate whispered the beginning of a story neither dared
to dream or foresee, however, they would see it
through!"*

Important

Person: The persons thoughts-example:

Peter's stomach made noises and so, Peter placed his hand on his stomach. *Peter: I hope mom is done with diner.* "Mom is food ready?", he asked his mother in the kitchen.

Throughout my work you may see chapters likes Chapter 5.5. These kind of chapters are no fillers. Most of the time they will simply be shorter than the normal chapters. Sometimes I will explain things like worldbuilding or similar things in these chapters. If a chapter should be a filler you will know it.

Chapter 1

It was midnight, and the city lay ghost-quiet. Darkness had sunk its fangs into sleeping London, driving away the last traces of cheerful noise. Even the animals had chosen to remain hidden. A bitter cold had settled over the streets, heavy and unmoving.

The moon was full, standing at its highest point, washing the somber city in pale light. And yet, there were places it failed to reach—corners left in dusk, locations people would not dare enter at this hour.

A mild, cool wind wafted through the town. With it came the fresh scent of nature, forcing its way into the lonely, dry streets. In some places, it replaced the thick odor of dirt mixed with alcohol and cigarettes. In others, it merely stirred the filth gathered along the roadsides. Here and there, a stronger gust slammed against glass, making it rattle. Aside from that, there was nothing. No voices. No footsteps. Only the sound of the city breathing in its sleep.

In this chilly night, a hulking building was radiating a blazing light, brighter than all the other few buildings which still bore a flickering flame. Its glow was a vivid pink. The radiance was so intense that it bathed its surroundings in pink and even the moon wasn't left untouched. Here, a man had rented the most expensive room in the best-known brothel in London, Hot Night, expecting an unforgettable night. And indeed, this night would get extraordinary!

In a room in Hot Night

A sweet scent hung in the air, soft and persistent. The odor came from a small machine placed beside the open window, roughly ten meters across from the door. Kissing swans were engraved into rose-colored glass. The walls were painted in shades of ruby and pink, both deep and pale. Strange drawings covered them as well. Pictures hung between the patterns—images of nude people, captured in the middle of sexual acts, their expressions relaxed and pleased. A two-person bed stood in the center of the spacious room. Directly above it, a pink chandelier bathed the chamber in a muted crimson glow.

At that very moment, a man and a woman lay on a feather-soft cherry bed, framed by blood-red roses, ready to begin their intriguing trip. The man gulped when he took in the woman's thick frame. His breathing was rough and untamed; pale mist slipped from his

mouth with every heavy exhale. His tongue hung wet over his lips. He had seen enough and it was time to move.

Slowly, he crawled closer to her on all fours. When he reached her, he lowered his head. His eyes traced the curves of her voluptuous breasts and saliva spilled onto her soft rosy skin. The woman answered with a moan and a flickering grin. *Man: Fuck! I can't wait anymore!* After one last heavy heave, he hurriedly reached out toward her tits. The woman caught his wrist, letting only his fingers graze her bust. She chuckled. Then she shoved him back to the edge of the bed—roughly, but still in a way he clearly didn't mind. Why else would he grin? She climbed on top of him and locked his legs with her long, thick ones.

"You like it, miiiiister?" He nodded, again and again and ceased the motion when the woman swung her black hair behind her slender shoulders. With a smile back on her face, she gently pressed her lavender nails into the man's hairy chest, causing it to open a tad. Thick, red blood welled from the shallow wound. It slid down his chest, traced his arm, and dripped onto the floor. The blood vanished against the red surface. The man hesitated. He pulled his head back. *Man: What's happening right now?* His breath quickened. *This is getting dangerous!*

The woman composed laid her hand on the man's tight and slowly stroked with her fingers upwards. While doing this, she arbitrarily stabbed the man in his leg who flinched each time and squeezed his eyes shut. Whenever the woman pricked the man, she let out an ugly laugh. After the fourth poke the man bellowed:

"Stop this shit! I didn't pay for such a service!" Just then the woman poked him again. Only this time, she dug deeper with her nail. The man's face twisted in pain. He thrust forward with both hands.

"Damn! Huhuh, huh!" His face reddened. "Why won't you budge!" And he tried his luck anew. Veins snaked up his throat toward the head.

"Fuck!" He dropped his arms. Still in faint agony and fatigued, the man's eyes widened at the woman's inhuman strength.

"Please, please, just stop it!" he winced. "This is not normal! And what's up with your fucking force? You're supposed to be gentle and not like a boulder!" *Man: Why did I go to a bordel? This was the most fucked idea I ever had. I should have stayed at home with my wife and family. Is this my karma? Shit, I must escape!* He grabbed the woman by her soft waist

and vigorously tried to throw her off. His effort ended, again, in vain. The woman opened her mouth and stretched out her tongue. Then she slid it twice over her pink lips.

“You are surprisingly strong!” she asserted with a soft voice. “I like strong men!” Her bright pink-violet mingled eyes flickered with a soft glow. “They’re my favorite meal. *Man: What the fuck! Meal? Did I hear clear?* But I am sorry, we must end it now!” While she was announcing this, her expression darkened. Her already menacing demeanor worsened. *Man: Fuck!* At the same time, she commenced to tenderly caress the man’s cheeks. She bent over and tasted from the man’s blood still flowing out of his chest, though less than before.

Despite his critical situation, the man got a boner. *Man: Why now? go down! Oh damn! Please!* His body obeyed immediately. He gave a heavy sigh from him and just for a moment the tension left his body. *Man: I’m saved!* Lucky for him! Who knows what the woman would have done if she had spotted it? This horror thought prevented the possibility of getting another boner. After having a taste of his blood, the woman got up and described with a sexy voice the taste of the crimson liquid, gliding down her chin,

“Your blood is very sweet! Yeahh, lucky me!” Clap, clap, clap! But then her eyes narrowed and her lips sank. She tapped her chin trice, then shook her head. “You should eat more carefully starting now”, she extended one arm and pointed its index finger up, “or you will get diabetes!” She prodded the man’s nose with that one finger and removed it as she went on, “Oh! Sorry!” she chuckled in a soft way while replacing her caring face with an expression of mockery. “Did I say starting now? I’m so sorry. I think it won’t be possible, because you will die today! Hahaha!” *Man: You fucking bitch!* The woman swiped the red and still warm blood gently over her thick lips. In slow motion she wrapped her long tongue over her finger and cleaned it of blood traces. “Even if I may not appear normal for you, I’m still a lady.” She put on a faint grin and blinked twice. “And do you like my new lipstick, innovative, right? I call it Bloody Red!”

Chapter 2

Man: How can somebody have a fucked mind like that? The man's eyes rolled twice before halting at the woman. "Please, just let me go. I've got a family!" It was a good try, but it didn't help. On the contrary, it amused the woman. A shitty and wide grin spread on her face and revealed her white teeth. However, these teeth weren't something a normal human should normally possess. They were tall, long and razor-edged and besides, an unknown liquid substance was dripping from the tip of the fangs. *Man: Shit, what did I get myself into? I just wanted some fun! Is such a wish wrong?*

The man stopped thinking, for he had something better to do for now—surviving! He knew this shit would end ugly for him, unless he got to free himself. Once again, the man sought to free himself from the woman, a lot more violent than at the other attempts. It was now or never! He was like a raging bull, trying to throw off the woman with his hips. The woman each time adjusted to him. The bed squeaked.

"Hahahah, we'll break the bed!" the woman rejoiced. As the man suddenly smelled something sweet in the air, his body gradually stopped moving. "If I knew you had such strength in you, I would have fucked you before!" And lastly, the man's endeavor ceased fully. *Man: What's, what... happening?* From the woman's body came a weird strange yet alluring fragrance, rendering the man numb. At the same time, the pain he felt due to his wounds got paralyzed through the odor. His mind turned foggy and the eyes wouldn't stop blinking anymore, fighting the urge to stay open.

The man might have felt no more pain. However, for that he couldn't move anymore. This fact alone filled the man with despair and fear shot through his body. He couldn't budge anymore and the thoughts of what the woman could now do to him triggered several heavy gulps. Cruel image flashed through his mind, each worse than the previous one. His eyebrows pulled up and his mouth became tense. He wasn't moving, yet sweating profusely. *Man: She... Will kill me!*

In the beginning, the man had appeared a little bit fearless or rather brave. Of course, he had been afraid, but he had hoped to be able to liberate himself. But now he couldn't flee anymore. His hope crumbled and so did the man himself too.

Gradually, the man started losing his consciousness. His image of the woman began to fade. Yet, her blood thirsty eyes were clearer than ever. She resembled a predator gazing at its trapped prey!

"I think now is time for my diner" she let out, "so good appetite." *Woman: Better, I finish him fast!* The woman opened her mouth abnormally wide. For a moment, the semi unconscious man was reminded of his wife. He hadn't yet given up completely! A fire of determination sparkled in his grim eyes and breathed new life into the man, at least, for a moment. Though, that was all he needed, a moment! *Man: I can't die yet! Helene, give me your fucking power!* He used his last powers to desperately shout,

"HELP!" After having yelled with all his might, he instantly blacked out. Having heard this cry, the woman flinched back. As a grimace formed on her face, she started hitting the man.

"Bastard, you nearly gave me a heart attack! How dare you? Can't you just die peacefully? I'm sure your life is crappy as shit! Just enjoy this moment!" The man was unconscious. And a crazy lady was beating the shit out of him. However, he was still alive! And his call got answered. Abruptly, the woman heard a man mumbling behind her back,

"Wow, this is a new kind of having sex, hahah! A little bit rough, don't you think?" Guards up, the woman turned around and gazed at the man standing behind her. The man had his hands tucked into his pants and was leaned against the wall next to the window. *Woman: What? Where did he appear from? Who is he? But more importantly, why is he able to move surrounded by my special odor? My fragrance should paralyze him or at least, make it a lot more difficult for him to walk! But it seems he's not affected at all!* Many questions and yet only one thing was sure at this point. That man was everything but not normal! And he wasn't here to join their game. As the man saw how hard the woman was trying to figure something out, he laughed and an immediate warning followed:

"Don't even try! I have to say in advance, I'm a little bit different. And I assume you know what this means! Don't you, SUCCUBUS!" All at once, the woman froze on place. *Woman: How does he know that I'm a succubus? Unless he's also...* The man smirked. However, his visage swiftly turned serious and dark. In a rough tone, he yelled,

"And now, get off the man!" The succubus immediately obeyed the command. The man gazed at the succubus; his eyes narrowed. *Man: She's gorgeous and fuck! Also an enemy!*

Damn would she obey when I gave her another order? The succubus was only a moment away before pissing herself.

“Who are you?” she asked, her voice unsteady. She tried to keep the fear from showing on her face, but her legs trembled beneath her. Her breath came too fast, her palms slick with sweat.

She took small steps backward, inching toward the door. All the while, she didn’t dare look away from the man—not even for a second. Every fiber of her body was tense. Her movements grew heavier, slower, as if the air itself resisted her escape.

Woman: Just who is he? How can only his gaze make me feel this way? I have to get out—or I’ll—

Her breath caught in her throat. *I will die!* Her heart nearly stopped at that thought.

The man smiled faintly. He could smell it now—the sharp, rising scent of her fear. Slowly, deliberately, he began to walk toward her, muttering something under his breath.

“Not who, but what!” *Man: I better finish that fast! I can feel his presence becoming stronger!* He shook his arms and exhaled. Another deep inhale followed. *Hope I can pull it off now this time!* He came to a sudden halt after four steps and then something weird happened to him. He grew, causing his clothes slowly to tear apart. Thick fur covered his previously so smooth skin. His nails got bigger, bigger—these weren’t normal nails anymore, but big and sharp claws, able to even tear apart the toughest flesh...

The woman didn’t have the luxury to see the transformation to the end. She used this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and dashed toward the door. She had nearly arrived at the door. She reached for the doorknob. A wide smile formed on her face and she puffed a sigh of relief. However then, something grabbed her legs and dragged her back.

“Fuck!” she hissed. When the succubus turned around to see what was holding her, the only thing she saw, was claws filling her vision!

“Ahhhhhhh...

Chapter 3

With wide, swinging arms, Drin walked out of the overcrowded restaurant and headed toward a nearby park, only a minute's walk from the building he had just left.

He stood tall at 1.90 meters, dark-skinned, his long hair braided while the sides of his head were shaved clean. A sharp jawline framed his face, and when he lifted his gaze, his copper-colored eyes caught the light, glowing faintly. There was something in the way he carried himself—calm, assured—that made his presence hard to ignore.

He wore dark pants and a black T-shirt, the muted colors throwing the golden chain around his neck into stark contrast as it glinted with each step.

Outside, a crisp breeze was blowing. The bright sun illuminated and warmed the city. Drove of people filled the roads, people whose voices were echoing through oh so small alleys, adult likewise kids the cause for it. And the traffic was no less colorful, so much that even the street had vanished underneath it.

Drin cheered, lifting his fist to his chest as a sharp, satisfied

"Yes!" slipped from his lips. A grin crept across his face, pulling at the corners of his mouth.

It had been a long time since his last date. And this one promised to be a good one.

He glanced down at the phone in his right hand, still overjoyed. With every step toward the park, his grin widened, his eyes gleaming with anticipation.

His date went by the name cappuccino. But it wasn't just any cappuccino! It was the cappuccino from the restaurant Mr. Morning! Since his childhood, Drin had visited this restaurant countless times. He had waited for the right moment to buy this restaurant's cappuccino. His first taste of this delicious substance Drin had with twelve years, a mistake from his father who thought that he was serving Drin soda at that time. Back there, Drin took his first taste and sure enough, he immediately craved for more. However, he wasn't old enough to buy cappuccino by himself and his parents weren't willing to buy it for him. Therefore, he had waited for a time where neither his work could interfere, nor some persons or parents.

And finally, the wait had paid off. It had been some time since he had a date with a cappuccino and today was his third time in total. The other two dates had gotten interrupted by random incidents. Hence, today it was Drin's first right date. The date was currently

burning his hand, but Drin's grip around it didn't falter. It was only natural that a hot date, would be hot! With thoughts only focused on his date, Drin continued his way straight through the crowd of people. On his way, he ignored or maybe didn't even perceive the people he bumped in. So, he surely didn't also hear the people's resulting insults.

"Are you fucking nuts?"

"What is wrong with him?"

One even shoved him aside whereas a woman let her arm slide along his shoulder. But Drin didn't care. *Drin: Hater! They must be envious of my date! Hahah*—Drin's eyes briefly halted at his date—*Well, I get why!* He arrived at the lush park, full of green trees on which birds were sitting and singing synchronously.

It was mother nature in person and so did it also smell. Due to the bright and warm sun rays, the park was bathed in a faint scarlet touch and the trees emitted a beautiful gloss. Children were playing on the meadow while their parents had expanded blankets on it, immersed in a chat. Other were just reading newspaper.

When Drin spotted a free brown bench, he dashed toward it. He sat down and carefully placed his date on the other site of the bench. *Drin: If you already have a date, then make it beautiful at least!* Now, he was sitting there with his date. Both were staring at each other, at least this is what Drin was perceiving. Suddenly, Drin spoke up in a pained tone, his expression twisted for a beat,

"I don't merit you!" He shook his head and clenched his hands to fists. Some people took notice of him. "Like I said, I don't merit you! Still, I'll try!" After Drin had finished, for outsider, his cringe phase, his expression eased at once. Fire of emotion and determination lit up in his eyes. He reopened his fists slowly, his fingers twitching. Then he clapped once. The sound was loud enough to scare away the birds. "Ok, let's do it!" He would try and he would make it. This date would end successful, for both parties, in their own way! The atmosphere around them turned tenser with every second passing by. Slowly but sure, the surrounding's voices faded away. Drin gulped. The pressure on both parties increased and the atmosphere took a turn to awkwardness. Therefore, Drin decided to make the first move. He extended his hand. Furthermore, he put on a gentle smile. *Drin: I'm still a gentleman! So, I must behave!*

Chapter 4

Drin was so focused on this crucial moment that he didn't realize that people had long gathered around him. A little girl even pointed her finger at him while saying,

"Mommy, he's weird!"

"Stop, you don't point with fingers at strangers." the mother rebuked her child. Gently she lowered the arm of her daughter as she took another glance at Drin. *Mother: Even if they're crazy and retarded like this one! But at second look—*She bit her lip—*he's also sexy!*

Drin stopped in his movement. His eyes rolled three times before halting at the crowd. He let out a big sigh and demanded,

"You people really have too much free time, don't you? Do you enjoy stalking people when they are on a happy date?" *A man in the crowd: Happy date? I doubt somebody could have anything happy with a psycho like you! Woman who bit her lips: Shit, have a date with me! Wherever and whenever you want!* The crowd gazed at the cappuccino and then back to Drin. Some started exchanging wild theories while others could only shake their heads at that scene. Before this situation could get any worse, they decided to disappear from Drin's sight as fast as possible. The last person leaving gave Drin a short miserable gaze, some tears sliding down his face. *Man: May you find one day a woman who'll accept you as you are! As crazy as you are I could picture you even with two women.* Drin just responded with a jumbled expression.

The people had dispersed by yet and once again, Drin was left alone with his date. After a heavy sigh and a brief headshake his grin returned.

"Let me drink you!" he growled. Like an obsessed person, he packed his date with both hands. Drin was impatient and restraining himself wasn't an option anymore. He wanted to finish his date as fast as possible. He himself didn't know why; possibly a hunch. Maybe created due to the previous date failures.

Kiing! Kiing! "What is this?" Drin asked himself. He gazed around. Only when he felt a vibration against his leg, he knew that it came from his handy. Groaning, he took out his handy and answered the call in a loud tone, borderline shouting,

"What's the problem? I hope it's important, because I got a date with my cappuccino to finish!" He wasn't even embarrassed presenting his date, a cappuccino! Drin glanced over

to his date and raised one hand. An act intended to calm down his offended date. *Drin: I'm soon there for you!*

"Drin, hurry up and get your ass over here!" roared the man on the other line. 'We've got a murder, a special one! Right now, I'm in the partly destroyed building on Denmark Street. You have to hurry up! S.M.O or M.H.O could arrive here any moment!' Suddenly, Drin's face switched from annoyed to serious and furious. He squeezed his eyes shut and massaged his forehead. *Drin: S.M.O and M.H.O these bastards always arrive before us and take the cases from us away, especially these weird ones. Not this time!*

"Ok, wait. I'll be there in 15min." Drin let the man at the other line know, in a calmer tone this time.

"Ok, I'll wait here, Drin." Drin tucked the phone back in his pants. However, before he could go solve that problem, he had to deal with another one, his now only half-hot date. No words were needed to express his feelings, for the tears that started trickling down Drin's face made clear what kind of cruel decision he was about to take. He peered into the far distance, lips and eyes shaking. He didn't want to do this, but tough times called for hard decisions. His gaze shifted back to the cappuccino.

"I'm sorry, but I think it's time to say goodbye!" Drin was about to grab his date when suddenly a strong wind blew in his direction. The date was blown away, without even looking back or giving Drin the possibility to touch her a last time.

"You won't even allow me to bid you goodbye! Haha! So, you're also angry! I don't blame you. Go and find a better man!" Drin dried his wet eyes with a handkerchief. *Drin: And now, the other problem!* The time to regret was over and besides, he could have another date, but would it be the same?

Recovered from the emotional damage, Drin ran to the next near street. Arrived, he stopped a yellow taxi by raising his arm. *Driver: Ok, my first target for today!* The taxi halted

"Mister, you look outstanding!" the driver commented "With this handsome face you could even seduce wives! Where shall I take you today?" *Driver: Hopefully my flatter worked and he'll throw a tip in!*

"To Denmark Street!" Drin answered, fast and dry, as he entered the car. *Driver: Fuck! Why do I always get the weird ones? Seem like the flatter didn't work!* Without putting much effort on this thought, the man drove off.

The taxi was soiled, green chips were distributed on the torn and brown leather seats. The seats also bore holes in which something brown was hiding, wait, even moving. And the glasses were smeared with old and sticky brown juice. Surely the juice must have been there for a long time, because it was already merging with the glass. A distinct smell of cigarettes and cheap vodka lingered in the air. Drin viewed the inner of the taxi. His brows and corners of the mouth pulled down. *Drin: Wait, you'll regret to have driven me with something like that!*

Having reached the destination, Drin paid the driver and rushed to the building. While running to the construction, Drin heard the driver cursing at him,

"You bastard, this money is not nearly enough! Didn't you go to school? You fucking, stupid bastard!" Drin simply smiled. *Drin: Idiot, I know that it's not enough. Did you take a look at your fucking taxi? You can be lucky I even gave you anything!* Drin was now out of reach of the man and couldn't hear his complain any longer. He entered the building and sprinted the stairs up. The room was at the highest level. No knocking was needed due to the destroyed door. Thus, Drin invited himself in.

The room carried an old brown-and-green hue. Parts of the walls were torn away, and the ceiling fared no better. There was little furniture—only a few cupboards and fragile white plastic chairs. At the far end, a window stood wide open. Even so, the air inside remained sour and stale, to the point that Drin had to cover his nose briefly.

The only thing that drew the eye were the walls to the right and left of the door, splashed with layers of graffiti.

Drin immediately noticed the dried-up corpse on the floor. *Drin: He's wearing a uniform—*

"Drin!" a man around 2m interrupted him in his thoughts.

His hair and beard were brown, streaked with golden highlights. Sunlight caught in his light-brown eyes, making them glint, then slid across his pale skin. His clothes—one size too tight—strained with every movement, seams pulling as if they might give at any second. Drin quickly regained his composure and looked to the officer. Their eyes met.

"Jeffrey, what exactly happened here?" Drin inquired.

"You forgot the officer!" Drin waved one hand in the air and said,

"Don't mind that!" Thereupon Officer Jeffrey grunted though this was all he did.

“Fine. I’ll let it pass. Well, my men followed a thief to this building, but during their chase they lost him. Therefore, they decided to split up to track down the thief faster. *Drin: Split up? It seems like some people never learn! Do they only have shit in their heads? Don’t they know what happens in a horror movie once people divide into groups? And then they dare to call themselves the police!* All of sudden, one of the men heard the other one shouting, so he rushed to his help, too late! When he set foot in the room, his comrade was already like”—he pointed at the corpse—“this. No trace of the thief. He contacted me and I called you afterwards.” Head-nodding, Drin praised the Officer,

“It was clever of you to contact me! At least, you’re someone who uses his head. You wouldn’t die that fast in a horror movie!” The Officer just let out some,

“Mhh!” Then he nodded. This wasn’t the first time he had done such a thing. Officer Jeffrey and all the other people never truly understood Drin, for that, he was too weird sometimes. So, when Officer Jeffrey was confronted with Drin’s strangeness, he always nodded or just went along with whatever was going on. Fast and effective. Out of the blue, Drin rose a grin, raised one arm to the level of the chest and formed a fist.

“Yeah, we are the first ones to arrive! These bastards of S.M.O and M.H.O always show up before us, but not today.” Drin started rubbing his palms together while putting on a cunning smile. Then he glanced Officer Jeffrey straight in the face. *Officer Jeffrey: Fuck, I’ll have to nod again!*

Despite, being a police, Officer Jeffrey was far too unsportsmanlike. It was really a shocking surprise that he had managed to stay alive up till now. And even a bigger surprise he had not be fired by now. Well, maybe he contributed in his own way. Drin drew closer to him and spoke,

“Imagine that they arrive here and realize that we already took care of everything. I can’t wait to see their faces. Like idiots they will they will stare at us, hahah!”

Chapter 5

“Idiots!” a woman repeated. Drin, the officer, and the other man turned toward the entrance.

Three figures stood in the doorway, half-hidden in shadow before stepping into the light. Two of them wore black, office-like uniforms with S.M.O emblazoned in white across the right side of their chests. *Drin: So it's S.M.O.* His mouth twisted into what was meant to be a menacing expression. It wasn't.

The first was a broad, bald man with a round face and heavy build. The second stood slightly shorter but leaner, his posture sharper, more athletic. Then Drin's gaze shifted to the third. *Drin: Wait... who's that?*

The woman between them was tall — about 1.84 meters — and carried herself with quiet authority. Dark skin, long black curls falling in heavy waves around her shoulders. Her golden eyes were steady, observant, unreadable.

She wore a fitted black suit, the jacket open over a crisp white top. Nothing excessive. Nothing decorative. Yet the way she stood made it clear she didn't need embellishment.

She didn't speak at first. Neither did Officer Jeffrey nor Drin. Her eyes moved to the corpse. For a brief moment, something shifted in them—not shock, not fear. Disappointment. She exhaled softly and went down on one knee. “I am sure you fought well.”

She closed the man's eyes, then rose again. Her gaze met Drin's. Hers didn't waver. Drin, on the other hand, couldn't quite stand still. Yet for once, he didn't let his eyes wander—not even for a second.

For a few seconds, the room stayed quiet. Even Drin didn't say anything.

Then the tension started to itch.

Drin could maybe pretend not to see it, but he did. And worse, he definitely was imagining the woman's ass. *Drin: Authority and sexiness! A dangerous combi!*

He was about to move to the side to get a better view of the woman, but somehow managed to hold himself together. He even had to clear his throat. Twice.

Still, it seemed Drin wasn't the only one struggling with self-control. His two comrades had already lost themselves to the woman's allure, their attention drifting just as hopelessly as his.

For a brief moment, Drin had a prickly headache. But for his luck, it disappeared as fast as it had appeared. So, Drin used this possibility and walked toward the woman. He did so with slow and wide steps, hands in the pants and a grin on his face. *Drin: I already had a hot date today; this shouldn't pose a threat to me.* And with these thoughts, Drin tried his luck,

"Hey, I'm Drin and you're from S.M.O," he pointed at the uniform's writing of the others, "right? I didn't mean what I just said a couple of minutes ago. My tongue slipped; you know." He shortly wiggled his hands in mid-air. "Sometimes shit happens! We should use this opportunity—" The woman strode past Drin, in direction Officer Jeffrey, uttering,

"S.M.O is like my family and you dared insult them! I have nothing to speak with you! And I doubt this is the fitting place to play cozy!" While the woman was walking toward Officer Jeffrey, Officer Jeffrey gave his utmost not to let out a sound. Besides, he slightly directed his gaze toward the floor in order not to let the others, above all Drin who was now observing them, see his grin. *Officer Jeffrey: Oh, shit Drin. You really fucked up! Better if you have a date with your cappuccino. Even though, I doubt that your chances will increase!* The woman halted afore Officer Jeffrey and proclaimed,

"It may be sudden, but we are here to take over the case!" For a moment everyone froze.

"Take over the case?" Drin demanded. The woman slightly turned her head and asked,

"Done looking at my ass?" Drin pointed the finger at him, then at her.

"Me looking at your ass? Woman you crazy or what? I mean what ass in the first place?" The woman completely turned around, smirking faintly.

"Wow. At least have the balls to admit it if you're a man!"

"Balls?" Drin repeated with thinned eyes and a grin. "Seems like you have enough of them!" Officer Jeffrey likewise his colleagues stifled a laugh. Judging their red faces this proved to be a hard task. The woman stayed impassive and calmly contemplated Drin's body from the top to the bottom. She had viewed him whole. She nodded.

"I think it was the right decision to ignore you," she then uttered, "considering your appearance!"

"We both know you like my appearance, lady from S.M.O!" The lady rose one eyebrow and asked,

"You know liking something is not the same as hating something, right?" They stood face to face, gazing deep into each other's eyes. Something unpleasant and certainly ugly was

going to happen. The atmosphere tensed up and gave the spectators goose bumps, preventing them from further mirth. Still, their wide eyes couldn't hide their excitement. *Officer Jeffrey: If I knew something like that would happen, I would have taken my popcorn.*

Even in this situation, Officer Jeffrey could only think about food. Though, it was no surprise, when the reason for his weigh was popcorn. Before the discussion could escalate any further, a male and rough voice interrupted the group,

"So many, just for me? You make me blush and happy!" The group turned toward the entrance and spotted an unknown brown-haired man standing there. Immediately, the police man recognized this man and pointed his finger at him while shouting at the same time,

"This is the thief!" Officer Jeffrey stormed to the front and shouted,

"Who the fuck are you? What did you do to my colleague?" He didn't even wait for an answer, took out his gun and shot the whole magazine at the man. Pang! Pang! Pang! *Drin: Are you stupid, let him answer and then shoot!* Pang...

After the shots, the sweaty Officer Jeffrey and the police man's eyes remained wide open, fixed at the man who was supposed to be dead. The body parts where the bullet had struck had holes. Though, sand filled these holes. Then the sand turned to skin. *Woman: I didn't know he was an elemental type! Well, I am prepared for that!* The people of the S.M.O, including Drin, weren't staggered by this scene at all. For a short moment, the woman side-eyed Drin. *Woman: How can he be so calm after having seen something like that?* She quickly put her thoughts away and focused back on the enemy, declaring,

"Sandman, S-rank I'll arrest you now!"

"Haha!" the sandman howled. "Only S-rank? After today, I'll be SS-rank!" Drin's gaze swayed between the woman and the man. The only way to satisfy his curiosity was by asking,

"Sorry, but is this rank a hot shit?"

"Yes, it is!" the sandman replied, stretching out his chest. "It represents the strength of a person."

"And is S-rank a high rank?" Drin asked. After a brief moment of musing on the question the enemy replied,

"It's not the highest, but not the lowest rank either!" *Woman: Men!* The woman couldn't bear this sorry sight anymore and decided to take control of the situation by advancing to the front. Like a general she commanded,

“Prepare yourself! He’s dangerous!” *Drin: But not so dangerous like you! You’re so hot, I could even end burning myself if I touch you carelessly! But it may be worth it!* The woman wiggled her body as if she was trying to shake something off and judging her disgusted expression it must not have been something nice. It surely had to be due to the creepy gaze of Drin behind her, but she forgot about this feeling and concentrated on the enemy. Everyone took a fight position, everyone but Drin who abruptly started spouting nonsense,

“So you are the sandman and will you now sing me a song to sleep? Hahahah.” It was sad to see how Drin chortled alone at his own joke, but it did his job. The sandman completely lost control,

“I’ll fucking kill you all!” *Officer Jeffrey: If I knew this would happen, I would have taken my popcorn.* Before anyone could think, speak, or do something, the sandman placed one palm on the floor and looked up to the group.

“Let’s see if you can survive a fucking sandstorm!” Immediately after he had finished talking, a sandstorm arose in the room. *Drin: Let the play begin!*

Chapter 6

“What kind of bullshit is this?” Officer Jeffrey bellowed utterly baffled, while trying to hinder the sand from entering his mouth with his hands. At least, it was the case at the beginning. A sand grain connected with his tongue and disintegrated on it. Officer Jeffrey’s eyes shot open. *Officer Jeffrey: Wait, this taste! Just like popcorn!* Smiling, he opened his mouth and welcomed the buffet, still waiting for an answer for this situation. Of course, he didn’t get a reply, but it was worth a try. He viewed the terrible scene and declared, after he had gulped down a kilo sand, “When I survive this shit, I’ll demand a fucking promotion from the higher ups!”

With a twisted expression, Drin stared at Officer Jeffrey. *Drin: First, you should survive! And even if this shit doesn’t kill you, your fat will finish the job one day or you will choke on sand first!* While Officer Jeffrey was still chattering to himself about the topic promotion while enjoying his special snack and Drin observing the sad situation of the sand-eating officer, the last policeman was lying paralyzed on the floor. He shook his head several times as first tears formed. *Police officer: I don’t want to die,...* Drin shifted his gaze to the policeman lying on the floor, but he didn’t focus long on the miserable man. He glanced away from the poor man after he had realized that he had started shitting himself.

“Ihh!” Drin let out. He waved with his hand before his nose and decided to focus his sight on the people of the S.M.O. There was a sandstorm in the room, steadily tearing off the old walls. Surely the S.M.O had come prepared, but what had they planned? *Drin: Just start fighting! Show me what you are made off!* Hands rubbing, Drin awaited the coming show.

The two men of the S.M.O had decided not to take part in this fight as well. And they made it more clear by hiding behind an overturned cupboard. It was strong enough to shelter them from the sandstorm. Not because it could harm them seriously, but because they didn’t want to end up like Officer Jeffrey, alias the sand eater. Maybe there was an unknown substance in this sand, transforming sane people in sand-craving people. Suddenly, they realized that Drin was staring at them, so the skinny guy asked,

“You got a problem with us?” At first, Drin didn’t answer, but just eyed them. After some time, he made up his mind to speak. As he did, his voice turned sharp and deep and a faint became visible on his face,

“Really interesting! The woman fights and the men hide! Aren’t you ashamed of yourself? You put shame on your family name!” The bigger guy spoke, his eyes rolling twice,

“Speak for yourself and your comrades. At least we remained sane and by the way; we don’t have a family.” Thereupon, Drin remained silent for a moment. Then continued in a delighted tone and outstretched hands,

“Lucky them!” He pointed at the two guys. “They don’t have to see their sons in such a sorry state!” The guys hissed and averted their eyes from Drin. They decided to ignore him, but Drin wasn’t that easy to shake off. Officer Jeffrey was eating sand; the policeman was shitting himself and Drin was occupied with the other guys. So, while the men were doing their thing, so only shit, the woman had by now confronted the enemy. They locked gaze. The enemy smirked, then uttered,

“Looks like the sandstorm isn’t strong enough, considering you are still whole. I thought it would be too much to use my full power on a weak and frail girl like you!” The woman sneered back.

“This frail girl will now show you what she is capable of!” She cracked her fingers. “Better be prepared!” For a brief moment, the woman looked at the other people in the room and as expected, they wouldn’t be of any help in the coming fight. Yet, the woman didn’t seem staggered by what she saw. *Woman: Men these days!* She directed her focus back to the enemy quickly. Words weren’t needed anymore. The woman and the enemy would let their fists speak now.

Both struck, fast! Their fists collided, giving each other goose bumps. Bum! This rough sound made everyone else realize, the fight had begun! The men put their personal problems aside and concentrated on the fight. All but, the policeman who was still paralyzed.

Both fighters threw punch after punch. And each time, fists smashed together. Both nearly struck at the same speed. Though, their strike’s power was different. The woman overpowered the enemy. With each attack, she pushed him back. Moreover, the enemy’s fists tore a little more every time fists connected. Blood began seeping through them. *Enemy: What’re her fists made of?* Suddenly the enemy, performed a clean uppercut. However, the woman dodged. And pounced on the enemy. Several precise and violent punches followed, targeting the enemy’s rib. The face of the enemy stiffened of pain and also some surprise. *Enemy: She broke at least three ribs! I underestimated her!*

But the woman wasn't done. Her punches stumbled the man. She used this opportunity by packing his wide shoulders And yanked them toward her as she jumped forward. And lastly, she rammed her knee in his face. Again and again! Crack, crack! The man lost some teeth in the process. And each time the woman's knee connected, blood splashed from the enemy's face.

Soon the fighting place was dyed in crimson. She ceased her attack. Then she packed the man at his hair and pulled his head up. He spat blood, staining his clothes.

"And who is the frail girl now?" the woman demanded. The only thing the man gave from him was a deep and rough swallow. He started gasping heavily. Suddenly he aimed for her face. The woman let go of the wounded man. Retreated some steps, then gave him a front kick. The man fell backwards. Bam!

"Ahhh!" he cried out. A stinging pain cropped up. And yet, he wasn't beaten. *Enemy: Fucking bitch!* He stood up again. He clenched his fists and jaw. Then he charged at the woman, roaring,

"I'll fucking kill you!" He swung one arm at her. The enemy had lost his cool. Thus, he had put too much strength in his already too wide attack. A big mistake! And an opportunity for the woman! She waited, steadying her breathing. The arm came swinging at her. When the fist had nearly reached her face, she swiftly turned to the side, evading the attack. Right after, the woman locked the man's arm. She then then threw the man over her shoulder. Baaam! The sound of cracking bones echoed through the room.

Enemy: Shit! He clenched his teeth out of pain. The man immediately tried to raise. But the woman didn't let him. She jerked forward. As the man rose his head. A kick was already on its way toward him. And it met his face. Baam! The man flew away and crashed in a wall. The impact created a breach in the wall.

Chapter 7

Meanwhile, Officer Jeffrey had stopped eating sand and was looking at the scene demented. *Office Jeffrey: Is this shit for real?* The enemy spat out blood. Blood and sweat mixed together and flowed down in his eyes. They turned red and started burning. While licking over his lips, he hurt himself due to some broken teeth stuck in them. The kick of the woman had broken several facial bones. The already damaged ribs, were now completely broken on one side. His back was burning with great pain. Though the back may have been in a better condition. Yet, this condition couldn't be described as great. In short, his whole body was a big mess! Normally, he would long have lost consciousness, but the throbbing pain kept him awake. He bent forward, one knee on the floor and two hands too, as support.

"Fucking bitch!" he cursed. He had to struggle for some time, but he managed to get up to his shaky legs. Due to the broken ribs, he had a weak hunched posture. *Enemy: I underestimated her. Time to get serious!*

"You want to keep fighting with that form of yours?" the woman asked. "I'm impressed!" She cracked her hands. "And I really mean it!"

The enemy responded with a loud groan. *Drin: Poor guy, the whole beating ripped him off the ability to speak!* He placed his palm on his ribs. Then, he covered the wounded place with sand, emerging from his palm. By doing that, he regained his upright posture.

"Let's see who will be the last one laughing!" the man returned pleased and disappeared in the sandstorm. It was like he had become one with the storm.

The woman couldn't see him anymore. Yet, she had a grin on her face. Shad an extraordinarily keen sense of smell. And the enemy he had definitely a strong odor.

Her nose twitched. Fast, she leaned forward. At the same time, she swung one leg up. The man who had appeared behind her back narrowly escaped. Though, he lost his balance. *Enemy: Come! This time it will be different!* The woman shifted the weight to her arms. At once, she jumped with the second leg. And with the same leg, she gave the enemy a kick. However, the man didn't budge one inch. *Woman: Why was it so weak?* She noticed the sand on the man's legs. The moment the enemy had lost his balance, he had covered his legs with sand. The sand had pulled his legs back to the floor, giving the man back his stability. Thus, the attack had lost its strength.

A wide smile spread on the man's face. *Woman: He waited for it!* The woman was about to remove her leg. Though, the man seized it. He threw her into the air. Again, he grabbed the leg of the woman. This time, with both hands. To strengthen his coming attack, he surrounded his arms with sand. His grip's strength increased; the woman howled softly.

"Payback!" the enemy yelled and smashed the woman onto the ground. Baaam! The material the floor was made of must have been a good one for the floor was still intact. Some cracks in it, however still intact. The attack wasn't strong enough to knock out the woman. However, her head had hit the ground. When she tried moving, she realized she was paralyzed. Everything reeled around her eyes. In addition, she had a large abrasion on the head. The paralyze would only last briefly. For the enemy, plenty enough. He was about to attack again. But he swiftly halted his movement. He felt a firm grip on his shoulder. So he turned around to see the grip's owner. It was Drin in deep thoughts. *Drin: Why I am helping her? She is from the S.M.O and insulted me. But I don't really know—I got this familiar feeling coming from her.*

As the men's eyes met, Drin forgot about his worries instantly. Both men moved, Drin faster. He gave the enemy a targeted punch in the already broken ribs. Crack!

"Ahh! Fuck! Not there!" The enemy contracted. A right hook followed. Its target was the chin. Connected! Bum! The enemy's head jerked back. Drin leapt and drove both legs into the man's chest, launching him across the room. With the fall of the enemy, the sandstorm ceased. ...

Chapter 8

Officer Jeffrey stared at Drin. *Officer Jeffrey: Since when is Drin strong like that? I didn't know about this shit! Is it because of the woman? Would I also be that strong if—*He shook his head. *What am I thinking?* It was too much for Officer Jeffrey to digest. Furthermore, he also had problems digesting the sand that had taken on a porridge-like form and was falling out his mouth. He stopped thinking and started yelling,

“You all saw it too, right? I'm not crazy! *Drin: But a sand-eater!* He created a sandstorm, a fucking sandstorm!” He stopped for a moment and heavily gasped for air. To accelerate the process, he fanned himself with his hand. After he had taken in enough air, he continued, “What is wrong with this man? And why is nobody saying anything?”

Officer Jeffrey gazed around the room in hope of getting some answers. First, he gawked at the police man He still laid on the ground, with shit overflowing his pants. Officer Jeffrey realized that the police officer was now pissing himself. Obviously, he wasn't able to answer, let alone capable to think straight.

Officer Jeffrey: You're no help at all. Shitting, pissing, what's next? Maybe Drin knows something—the way he fought! Officer Jeffrey looked away from the police officer, into the direction of Drin who reached out for the woman. The woman hesitated, glanced over to the enemy, then back to Drin's extended arm. Lastly, she accepted his help. *Woman: He's strong, stronger than I expected—no, to say the true, I didn't expect anything from him at all! Is he also a—*

“Are you alright?” Drin asked.

“Yes, thank you for the help!” she replied, pointing her finger at Officer Jeffrey. “I think your colleague wants something from you.” Drin followed the woman's finger and spotted the perplexed officer who was still waiting for an explanation. But Drin simply shrugged his shoulders. *Officer Jeffrey: And what is the meaning of this? I knew you were always weird but now you're taking it too far!* Officer Jeffrey gave up on Drin and put his last hope in the other guys,

“Do you know what is happening right now?” The bigger one decided to answer,

“You know, people are different. Some people are strong, other are fast and there are people who play with sand. It's nothing special nowadays!”

“You want to fuck me?” Officer Jeffrey yelled. ‘You really think I’ll believe this shit?’ *Officer Jeffrey: These fuckers! It’s always the same shit!* Seeing the reaction of the officer, both guys of S.M.O hid their faces and with that their wide smiles. Of course, they knew what was going on, but they had decided to anger the officer instead. Maybe they hadn’t fought the enemy with the woman, however, at least, they had achieved something in their own way on this mission. The woman spoke up in a calm tone,

“Please calm down, mister.” She slowly placed her arms in front of her to indicate the officer that she meant no harm, to him or his pissing-friend. No, wait! Now he was shitting himself again. Interesting development! Officer Jeffrey completely snapped,

“You want me to calm down? Me?” He pointed at himself. “No! I always knew there was something weird about that S.M.O! Now it’s confirmed—”

“Jeffrey!” Drin called out. “I am sure you will get your answer and don’t listen to these” he jerked his head to the men from S.M.O, “idiots!” While Officer Jeffrey was distracted Luna had sneaked up behind him. With a quick against the neck Officer Jeffrey blacked out. The woman caught him and carefully placed him to the ground, muttering,

“Normally I wouldn’t resort to a sneak attack but there was no other choice!”

“Don’t sweat the little things!” Drin commented.

“I will for sneak attacks are cowardly!” She smiled. “You have a good colleague!” Drin moved his head back. “I mean it! I had to apply some pressure when I hit him. His stature is not mere show!”

Afterwards, the woman moved on to the police officer. However, he had already lost consciousness due to the mixed smell of shit and piss which had already enveloped the man whole. She turned toward her men, her nose covered and her eyes watering, and ordered,

“Take these two men with you and go. And put this man”, she pointed at the full pissed and the man who had soiled himself, “in several trash bags! In the worst case, attach him on the car. When you come back here, don’t forget to take it with you!” *Drin: It?*

She coughed trice, rubbed her reddened eyes, then turned toward Drin. *Woman: I’m sure he could also be one, looking at his strength.* Drin realized the intensive gaze of the woman and glared back at her with a lustful and pleased smile. He pressed his folded arms against his chest and slightly turned to the side. Then he said,

“Oh please, stop that!” He jiggled his body right and left like a snake, made himself small and even blushed softly. “Now, it’s not the right time or place. We can do it later, but”,

he opened up, “if you’re the aggressive type—I wouldn’t mind doing it now!” The woman reacted with,

“Weirdo! *Both men: The fuck is wrong with this dude?* But let’s stay serious for now, ok?” She sighed as she lowered her head. As she rose it, she asked Drin a question he certainly didn’t foresee,

“Are you also a monster?” *Drin: Also!* Drin didn’t answer, instead he pointed his finger at the enemy who was still lying on the floor. His eyebrows rose, while his eyes narrowed.

“He’s not dead yet!”

“Wait, I’ll finish him, then I’ll take care of you!” the woman said. “So, don’t even think about escaping!” *Drin: Take care of me! I can’t wait.* “And you, hurry up! Get these men out and then come back!” Her colleagues picked up Officer Jeffrey and the other one and left the room.

Chapter 9

The moment they had exited the place, the enemy stood up.

"I slept well!" he rejoiced. He started stretching his body, ignoring the cracking sounds in the process. Drin repeated,

"Slept well? Bro, you were knocked out!" The enemy shook his head.

"No, I was sleeping. But you two are really smart!" He swayed his forefinger in mid-air. "You knew I was just playing dead and waiting for one of you to approach me, so that I could attack you. Therefore, you—"

"Shut up!" Drin interrupted, massaging his forehead briefly. He jiggled his head, then went on, "What are you playing at? Dude, what theory are you making up? I just wanted to see how long you would lie down. And I must say it was quite long. Hahaha." Drin couldn't keep up with all the laughter and dropped to the ground. *Enemy: Maybe she!* The man glanced over to the woman, his posture lowered, but still with a bit of hope to be seen on his broken face. The woman also expressed herself,

"I am a warrior with honor!" The enemy's eyes glanced up, a smile flickered across his face "So, I don't hit people who lie on the ground and pretend to be dead." And like that, his shining eyes lost their remaining gleam. "However", a satisfied smile spread on her face, "I enjoyed it when you were lying on the floor!"

"Because I looked good in that position?" the man inquired with a grin, while he was looking for a suitable pose to show off his, at least for him, good looks. "It hurts that we're enemies, but as a last wish, I can lay down on the floor again." *Drin: What a hopeless simp!* The woman gave him a somber look, followed by a reply,

"Sorry, I believe you misunderstood me. I enjoyed you lying on the floor, because I didn't have to see your face that way." You could clearly feel how disgusted she was with the sandman, in her rough tone and expression. Once again, Drin couldn't control himself and burst into laughter. He also provoked the enemy by imitating him and thereby reducing his voice,

"If you want, I can lie down on the floor for you." Drin pointed his finger at the floor while standing up. "Go on! Lie down! Hahaha. How can you be so arrogant and stupid at the same time? And then you act like you weren't hurt badly. Didn't you get a big beating earlier?" The sandman blushed with shame and rage.

“You both have no honor!”

‘Honor?’ the woman asked. Her demeanor had changed and even Drin stepped away. The glow in Luna’s eyes became more intense. ‘Don’t speak of honor, not after all the things you’ve done!’ The sandman clenched his hands to fists.

“You bitch! I will kill you, as my name is John Stone—”

“Hahaha, stone!” Drin interrupted him and lost control due to his laughter. With one hand on the ground, he supported himself. He didn’t want to end up on the floor with all the laugh, again. “That’s why sandman, because you’re made of small stones. That’s so logical, hahaha.” Now, the woman chuckled too and admitted,

“I must say this was quite pleasant. Hahaha.” The woman admitted, calmed down from her previous outrage. Inside him, Drin was incredibly delighted, because he had made the woman laugh, but it was not time yet to act. He had already created several scenarios in which he would win over the woman for himself, maybe even too many scenarios.

Enemy: You’re making fun of me? Drin and the woman both stopped laughing, the woman far earlier than Drin, when they noticed something was happening with the man. Sand formed on the man’s skin, which increased over time. It came out of his body and covered the man completely, until a tall and firm titan of sand about 3m tall stood in front of Drin and the woman. It was large, wide, and so heavy that the ground beneath them began to break slowly. It wouldn’t be long before the whole floor would collapse.

Drin yawned and crossed his arms. His mouth flattened and his eyebrows furrowed.

Drin: It was clear that the sandman would turn into a sand monster! What surprise!

The two men who had left the building with the two policemen previously entered through the window. They each held a large grey container.

“It was a clever idea to enter the room from the window! If you had taken the door, this dumb monster would have smashed you.” Drin applauded as he pointed at the enemy.

“We thought that it would be much safer.” said one of the men, wiping the sweat off his forehead, followed by a deep exhale. The woman took the containers from the men and strode toward the enemy.

“Let’s finish it, sandman!” she proposed. Drin rubbed his hands. *Drin: Now it’s getting interesting!* The enemy gazed down on the woman as he demanded,

“And how will you beat me? You would have to get through my sand armor!” He pounded his chest twice. “And even if you managed to do it, you wouldn’t be able to touch me. I’m an elemental type made of sand, you stupid cow. I let you hit me earlier on purpose. I just wanted to see how strong you are.”

Luna: I was already wondering why all my attacks connected! Drin retreated some steps. *Drin: Okkaaay, if you’re into something like that. Nowadays there are increased fetishes. I don’t mean to criticize you, but that’s a little extreme friend!* The woman formed a grimace and retorted,

“I know a lot about you, so don’t worry too much! If I want to hit you, I will hit you! And is stupid cow your best insult? Are you still a little child?” You could not see it, but you could hear the enemy clapping his teeth in anger. And you could see him clenching his sand hands into two gigantic fists. The woman turned to Drin; she had a strange feeling creeping up her throat. “You will now...see—” Drin got ahead of her,

“Please, don’t worry about me. I’m going to be fine!” *Woman: I forgot; he might be a monster himself. So, it shouldn’t really surprise him! Still, I should take care of him after I am done with the sandman!* She turned back to the enemy.

Shortly afterwards, something happened to the woman—a transformation. She grew and grew and, in the process, she tore her clothes. *Drin: Is this one of those special nude scenes?* At the same time, her skin got covered with thick fur. *Drin: Fuck, not a nude scene!* The woman’s nails turned into mighty claws, her nose turned into a muzzle, she got supernatural, big fangs... she became a werewolf. She was about 2m tall and had silver-grey fur. Just like before, she still had the same beautiful eyes. One could clearly see her ripped six abs and defined muscles.

Her groan was loud and strong. Even the sand colossus retreated some steps. Drin couldn’t look away from amazement. Once again, Drin clasped his head. His headaches were back.

“Oh, a werewolf. That’s why I had this unpleasant feeling. Now I get it.” the enemy rejoiced. “Well, I wanted to be promoted to a SS-rank monster. So, a werewolf just comes right for—” The enemy noticed that he was trembling. *Enemy: This’ll be a great and interesting fight!*

While Drin was still having a headache, he suddenly saw a picture in his head. He saw a silhouette of two children playing in a lush area. Then the picture rapidly vanished again. *Drin: What was that? Who were those kids? But most importantly, why does that woman have such a familiar smell? I curse my amnesia and this awful pain!* Drin hit himself on the head several times. He fought pain with pain, and it worked.

The werewolf was irritated by Drin's strange behavior, but she turned away from him. *Werewolf: I don't have time for that now!* She took the containers, opened them and poured all the water that was inside them over her. *Enemy: Water, it looks like she's got her head on me. She can touch me now. Anyway, I want to know how strong a werewolf really is.*

The enemy, as well as the werewolf, took a fighting position. The enemy assumed the fighting position of a boxer, while the werewolf went on all fours, her head stretched forward and her claws drew out. The enemy provoked the woman,

"Let's play little puppy. Wulff!" Drin slowly shook his head as he commented,

"This is really sad!" *Enemy, You're sad!* The werewolf simply responded,

"No problem, John. Sorry I messed up—I wanted to say Mr. Stony!" Drin had to grin at that comment. He raised his thumb with pride. *Drin: That's the way!* Both fighters cried out,

"Let's do it!" Immediately, the two charged at each other, "Ahhhh..." *Drin: I hope I don't have to intervene again!*

Chapter 10

The fighters had nearly reached each other. Abruptly, they halted. Placed one leg to the front. Then they shifted their weight on it, leaned forward. And struck! Bam!

The impact created a pressure wave, resulting in a feeble tremor. Again and again, fists collided. Bam, bam... No one gave in. Each time punches met; another pressure wave arose. And rattled the room. Both parties were hitting at a fast speed. And yet, they didn't slow down. On the contrary, their speed increased. Their movements strained the floor. Further cracks formed. And surely, it wouldn't stop there.

They were hitting with the same speed. Suddenly, the werewolf increased her speed. And overwhelmed the enemy. Every following hit forced him back. Bam, bam, bam! The titan jerked back with each struck!

For her next strike, the werewolf opened her fists, thus revealing her mighty claws. The sunshine passing through the window bathed them in a soft glow. As she thrust her arm forward, she destroyed the titan's arm.

Then she aimed her next attacks at the armor itself. Several thrusts followed, targeting the titan's upper area. Each one connected! And the armor steadily broke apart. The clattering noises echoed throughout the room. Keck! Keck! They gave Drin and the others goose bumps.

The werewolf noticed the most broken part of the armor—the chest area. She didn't lose time. And right away, aimed with a punch at it. Bam! The armor in the upper area busted.

"Finally, you show yourself!" the werewolf uttered. The enemy's bruises had healed a little bit by now. Still, the swollen face had remained. *Werewolf: He concentrated on healing while I dealt with his armor!* "Not if I'm here!" the werewolf bellowed, resuming her attack.

She swung one arm; the claws widely extended. A weird feeling crawled up in Drin, but he came too late. Abruptly, the enemy covered himself with a new sand armor. The armor was completed before the werewolf's attack could connect. But the werewolf didn't halt. *Werewolf: What help will it be? I'll destroy it again!* Her attack closed in. And met! Bam! Yet, she was the one to get hurt. She retreated, shaking her hand and hissed briefly. *Werewolf: No scratch!* She pounced back on him. Whereas, the enemy only defended, his arms up. Each time the werewolf destroyed the armor, it repaired itself. Strrrg! Strrrg! The armor kept

repairing. So, the werewolf increased her speed. But, so did also the amour's recovery speed.

Enemy: Yes, continue to dig your own grave!

Some minutes had passed. The enemy dropped his guard. And the werewolf laid down her arms. She realized that she hadn't done any damage at all. Instead, she had made the enemy stronger with each blow.

"It's too late!" the enemy rejoiced. He thumped his chest. "Hard, right?" When he noted the gasping werewolf, he chuckled briefly. Then lunged forward. He gave her a blow in the stomach. Out of breath, the werewolf wasn't fast enough to tighten her abs. The punch struck her merciless. And brought her to the ground. Her coughing triggered another laugh,

"Hahaha! I must say, you were quite strong, but not as strong as I expected! I can't believe that you are SS-rank! *Drin: So SS-rank is supposed to be stronger than that! Ridiculous!*" Drin advanced one step, hesitated for the second one, then remained motionless. He bit his lips and twirled his fingers. His eyes were shaking. Unsure about his next action, he drifted into deep thoughts. *Drin: Then why isn't she stronger? Man, she's a fucking werewolf! She must be pretending. But—he touched his chest—what's that unpleasant feeling I get?* Drin had an inner conflict to deal with. Though, it stopped when the headache returned. He clutched his head.

While the sandman was mocking the werewolf and Drin dealing with his throbbing head, the werewolf, done with coughing, tried to get back her strength by breathing calmy. Though, the enemy spotted her. He formed his two hands into a large hammer and rose it.

"Trying to buy time, heh! I won't allow it, bitch!"

"Do you think that you will be able to hit me with your speed?" the werewolf growled. Not wasting any time, the enemy let his hammer fell upon her. The werewolf was about to avoid the coming attack. But she failed.

"Your legs!" Drin shouted. The werewolf instantly stared at them. They were surrounded by sand. The sandman had secretly placed them there while the werewolf was giving him blows.

"DIE!" the sandman screamed before his hammer met the werewolf. It slammed her into the ground. Blood spat in every direction. The floor beneath them broke apart. A hole emerged in which the man and the werewolf fell into. *Drin: Fuck!* Without looking at the two men, Drin yelled,

“We follow them! Hurry up!” Right away they jumped to their legs. Not questioning Drin’s order they followed him. Outside Drin turned left and dashed down the corridor. At the end of the path was a door, leading to a staircase. They were lucky that the stairs weren’t destroyed and so they dashed down.

“Did he become our boss or what?” the skinnier one finally managed to ask. His partner shrugged his shoulder, directing his eyes at Drin. *Bigger guy: The worry in his words before—does he know her?*

Chapter 11

While the man and werewolf were falling, the werewolf used the rubbles as a springboard. She jumped from stone to stone. By doing that, she evaded the enemy's attacks—shooting sand spears. But with their slow speed they didn't hit. The werewolf soon found herself behind the enemy. Although the enemy's attacks hadn't hit once, he was rejoicing,

"Just give up, you can't defeat me!"

"Are you done?" asked the werewolf. Her voice turned surprisingly calm, "I'll show you something, something that'll shatter your entire body." *Enemy: Is she hiding a secret move?* Having said that, the werewolf swung her arms around the armor. She put one hand in the other hand and pressed the armor against her.

"It's futile, I've won!" The werewolf ignored the comment. Abruptly, she started turning herself, with the titan. Faster, even faster! Gradually, a little tornado formed through the rotation. The tornado destroyed every floor it passed. Krrrg... Each time it wrecked a floor, the rubbles became nourishment for the tornado's growth. The tornado, at its greatest speed and force, had nearly reached the floor of the basement. All of a sudden, the werewolf shouted, "Tornado Crash!" With a big impact, the tornado smashed into the ground. Baaang! The resulting shock wave jolted the whole basement.

At the scene of the impact was a massive sinkhole. Thick mist filled the basement and with it, hid through the impact resulting cracks in the walls. Perfect for the already partly broken dirty green walls. It would not be long and the whole building would collapse under the strain. Through the cracks wind blew and took the mist with it. The stench of rotten food also reduced.

The werewolf was the first to leave the crater. With some reeling moves she leaped out it. She landed on her legs, still shaking from the heavy recoil. *Werewolf: That's why I don't like this attack!* The werewolf turned around to the hole in the ground and cleared her nose. *Werewolf: I did a fine job!*

The mist had completely cleared by now and the enemy came to light. The sand armor was destroyed, revealing the sorry state of the man. He was covered with lethal wounds and blood poured out of them. With every move he did, the sound of breaking bones arose. One could even see the tips of some bones piercing through the man's skin. Normally the impact would have killed this now half-dead man, but he had been clever. He had covered his inner

organs with sand to dampen the impact on them. *Enemy: What was that? My body is paralyzed and fucked, shit! Another hit like that and I'm dead!* With some effort, he gazed up to the werewolf who was staring at him. She sighed and demanded,

"You're still alive? Wait, I'll finish the job!" The werewolf leaped up and landed right before the enemy. She performed a low kick. It missed. Or to put it better, it passed through the enemy. *Werewolf: How could I forget about that?* It was now that the werewolf realized that her fur wasn't wet anymore. Before she could react in time, the man placed his hands on the floor.

"Sandstorm!" A tremendous sandstorm arose beneath the werewolf. Way stronger than the first one. It hurled her into the air. The sandman yelled again, "Sand Impact." The rubble lying on the floor turned into sand. The sand took on the shape of immense sand fists. They aimed at the werewolf, still in mid-air. Due to her inconvenient location, she couldn't evade the attack. She timely covered herself with her arms. Soon after, the fists punched her into the ground. Bam!

The sand fists vanished. And once again, the man surrounded himself with an armor. *Enemy: I can't maybe move my body, but my sand armor will do the job.* With lifted chest he stepped out the crater. "It's payback-time!" He smashed fist against fist. "Your fur isn't wet anymore. So, even if you manage to destroy my armor again, though I highly doubt it, you won't be able to touch me. *Werewolf: If I can't touch him anymore, I'll have to approach him in another way! Well, I'm already half-prepared!* I'll let you suffer as I did!" The werewolf laughed,

"Yes, you really suffered. I could get a glimpse of your face. Well, that's still not enough to pay for your deeds!"

The enemy bellowed.

"Let's see how long you'll stay cocky, bitch!" From the sand amour's back several arms emerged. They launched at the werewolf. The werewolf could evade the first fist. However, the second one connected. She toppled back. Several fists followed. Now, the werewolf had only one option left—defending! And so, she did. Fists hit. Again, and again. And yet, the werewolf's defense didn't weaken one bit. And there was a faint smile on her face.

Enemy: I need something stronger! The enemy formed an enormous fist, surrounded with spines. Instantly, he gave her a straight punch. "Sand Jab!" The werewolf crashed into

the wall. Bang! She puked gallons of blood and fell to the ground. *Werewolf: Ok, that's enough! Now, I can finish him off!*

Suddenly, the door to the basement banged open. Drin and the others entered the room. When Drin set foot in the room, he didn't stare at all the destruction, nor the sand titan, but his gaze halted at the injured werewolf lying on the floor. The werewolf was covered in wounds and some holes, most of them in her limbs. Her fur had taken in the blood flowing out of the wounds and taken on a partly crimson appearance.

An emotion of rage arose in Drin. This strong feeling caused his body to quiver. He clenched his hands to fists and firmly pressed them together. So strong, blood leaked from his fists. *Drin: Why am I so furious?* Drin himself didn't understand his anger. He had just met this woman and now, he was already getting angry for her? He didn't understand, but he was sure of one thing—this wrath was genuine! He took a step forward. It seemed like a normal one, but it wasn't. This one step caused a small shaking in the almost destroyed basement. Drin's feet pressed into the ground. He bared his teeth while looking at the enemy and cried out,

"I'LL WILL DESTROY YOU!" The enemy and the other two guys jerked back. Drin's announcement wasn't an empty threat. It was a fact! And the enemy felt it. He became rigid with fear as he felt Drin's blood lust. Suddenly, Drin calmed down, took some quick breaths. *Drin: I must be careful; I still can't completely control that power! And he may come out if I get too emotional!* He sauntered toward the paralyzed enemy. Drin appeared calm from the outside, but inside of him he was burning with rage. He stopped as he felt the arm of one of the guys on his shoulder—it was the skinny one. When Drin turned around, the man recoiled briefly. *Man: He's dangerous!* Despite his fear, he pointed at the werewolf and proclaimed,

"She hasn't lost yet! Why do you think she is the only one fighting? Why do you think we hid ourselves during the fight? And didn't help her? *Drin: Why does he sound so proud of himself?* Heh? It's because she is strong! Trust in her powers!" Suddenly and briefly Drin's ears caught the voice of a small girl. It was unsure from where it came, maybe his own mind. "Trust me!" Drin didn't search for the voice's owner, nor did he question it and instead, simply eased down.

"Ok, I'll trust her!" he let the other guy know who then backed off. Right away, he took out a handkerchief and whipped the sweat on his forehead away. Drin refocused his eyes on

the werewolf. The werewolf twitched and just then a heavy sigh escaped Drin. Back on her feet, she shot Drin a glance and teased him,

“Isn’t it a little bit too early? We don’t even know each other yet. You worry too much! But ... thank you!” Drin said nothing, only breathed a sigh of relief, accompanied by a soft grin.

Drin: Don't scare me like that. A now, kick this bastard in the ass! The werewolf might not have heard his thoughts, but she understood Drin’s assignment. And she would accomplish this feat.

Chapter 12

She put her focus back on the enemy, still groaning,

“Sandman, you’re stronger than I expected, but it’s not nearly enough to defeat me.”

Meanwhile, the enemy had freed himself from the rigid and reacted to the werewolf’s speech,

“Are you for real? You’re covered with wounds. Where is the special regeneration power of you werewolves? Or can’t you use it?”

“Why do you think, I didn’t use it?” the werewolf demanded, her breathing normalized. *Drin: He’s right. She could easily win using her powers. She should still have enough power left to heal herself. So, why isn’t she healing herself?* “I let myself get hurt on purpose” the werewolf answered her own question. *Drin: Don’t tell me you’re into such things? It’s okay, I’ve got a supple mind! It doesn’t matter what taste you’re in, I’ll adapt. Enemy: On purpose, but why? Is she secretly a masochist like me?*

The enemy had a lot of questions, some too dark to be listed, and they would be answered soon. And Drin would see that his thoughts on this matter were utterly wrong. The werewolf took a deep breath and exhaled all the air.

“Time to end this battle!” she muttered. She went on all her fours. “This will be my last attack, sandman! You don’t need to be afraid of this man standing there.” The enemy remained silent. “Should he interfere, I’ll finish him off myself!” Her threat made Drin grin, a grin that was better left unseen. Sadly, the people witnessed it and reacted with a,

“lhhh!”

“Ok, don’t exaggerate!” Drin replied and undid his grin. The werewolf was still on all her fours. She dug the claws deep into the ground, cracking it. She arched her back; her head was bent forward and every fiber of her body was tense. So much so that one could even see veins, at some places on her body despite her fur. Her fur vibrated and her skin hardened. It was even harder than steel at that moment. *Drin: Interesting. It seems like a finisher-move.*

Again, the enemy formed several sand fists. This time, each one of them were covered with spines. The enemy was sure of his victory.

“You think you can beat me? I’ll finish you off for good! And don’t go assuming bull shit that isn’t true! I’m afraid of no one!” *Enemy: When I finish her off, I must disappear as fast as possible. That man may even be higher than SS-rank!*—as he went on with his thoughts the body gradually stiffened—*One thing is sure! I don’t stand a chance!*

"Hey, you still with us?" the werewolf inquired as she realized that the man wasn't in his right mind. Drin thereupon got furious,

"Why did you call him? You could just attack him and over, happy end. And didn't you say that he has no honor? Then he certainly doesn't deserve it!"

"I'm not this kind of person!" the werewolf replied. "When I fight someone, I want to fight fairly, no matter the person standing before me! I won't change because another person. And if I still loose, then at least I do so with honor."

"What worth does honor have if you are dead?" Drin cried out. "The age of knights is long over!" But the werewolf only laughed faintly and returned,

"You speak of death, my friend but am I not alive? And what worth does life have without honor? And it seems like you mistake honor with the armor of men. Steel may rust! But honor does not age! That's my way! Accept it or not!"

Drin shook his head. And he suppressed a smile, yet the marvel in his eyes could not be hidden. The werewolf turned back to the enemy and declared, "Thank you for waiting!"

"Your speech" the enemy began, "I felt it! I want you to know that I did not commit these evil deeds you speak of. I was framed. I could", his voice raised, "do such cruel things!"

"Then I should also excuse myself, sandman! I accused you of something you did not do and I know too well... what's it's like being in such a situation!"

"It's ok!" *Drin: Did they became buddy or what?*

"Seems like we're on the same page now It's my first time in a while that I use this move. It's been so long that I already forgot its strength. Tell me how it tasted afterwards!"

Drin: This self-confidence makes her so sexy. Don't wonder when a masked man attacks you today. Drin looked through his pants, then hissed. *Drin: Fuck, I should have bought a mask!*

She launched his arms at her.

"Then let's do it!" At the same time, the werewolf cried out,

"Umbra Lance!" Immediately, she pushed forward. The ground bust. In the flight, she formed her arms into a spear form. Due to the powerful jump and the spear-form, the werewolf accelerated enormously. Nobody was able to follow the werewolf, except for Drin, but even he had troubles doing that.

The enemy's hands that encountered the spear-like arms effortlessly breached. The combination of the werewolf's high speed and spear-like form allowed her to penetrate the sand armor with ease. It was like pricking your finger in soft butter. In exact the same manner,

the werewolf's arms penetrated the enemy's armor and body. Both crashed into the wall. Baaang! Drin flinched at the impact and waved his hand while commenting,

"Must have hurt! Well, I would have done otherwise!" The mist cleared and the enemy and werewolf came to light. The armor was shattered and it didn't seem like it would repair itself any moment or ever again. The enemy had a large hole in his chest and blood poured out of it, a lot. He glanced up to the werewolf and spoke, blood streaming out his mouth,

"So that's why you let yourself get beaten up and, huhuhuh, didn't heal right away, smart! I was stupid, there is water in blood too. *Drin: Don't worry buddy, you weren't the only stupid one!* I should have taken you out immediately. *Woman: You would still have lost but well!* So, this is a monster from SS-rank, unbelievable. It seems like I wasn't a—" The man spat blood and began wheezing. A sea of red formed beneath the two and mixed with the dirt on the floor. The werewolf suspected what the man was going to say and corrected the phrase he couldn't finish,

"You were a strong opponent, I mean it! I'm sure you could have made it to SS-rank, with a little bit more training." The comment made the man chuckle, but his amusement vanished as fast as it had appeared. He was in great pain and regret filled his face.

"I didn't know that there are monsters like you. I shouldn't have joined JUDGE!" *Werewolf: Don't tell me they framed him? No, they would never do such a thing!* Right after, the face of regret switched to a soft-smile. "I don't care. I was able to fight a formidable opponent like you. I can die without regrets. And before I forget, your attack tasted", he rose his thumb, "yummy!" With these last words and a satisfied grin on his face, the man left the world of the living.

Before he dropped to the ground, the werewolf caught him and gently put him down. She grinned. *Werewolf: So, it was yummy, thanks. You were also a formidable opponent!* After she had put the man to the ground, she glanced toward Drin who was waving at her. *Werewolf: He knows about us, so he can't leave. And he has this weird feeling about him. Mmh, I should just beat him unconscious and take him with me.* She bent over and with one jump she found herself above Drin. *Drin: What is she trying to do? Don't tell me—*

She formed her hands to fists. Then she pounced down on Drin. Drin was able to defend from the punches. However, the attacks pushed him into the ground. He packed one arm of the werewolf, while she was still punching. He pulled it toward him. He then let himself fall along with all his weight on the arm. As he did, he spun inward and took the werewolf's

arm with him. The werewolf slammed to the floor. However, she immediately stood up again. She took out with the leg, whereas Drin placed his fist on her chest. The moment the werewolf kicked Drin; Drin muttered,

“One Inch Punch!” The werewolf felt a strong impact on her chest. Bove of them were blown away and slammed into the wall. Bam! Blood ran down the werewolf’s mouth, but she immediately wiped it off. *Werewolf: This was a strong punch!* She stood up. Drin’s attack had broken several bones in her chest. It wasn’t anything special, but for a human to do something like that—this was something special. Her wounds healed right away. *Werewolf: It was weird suppressing my regenerating ability.* Drin also stood up and noticed the werewolf approaching him. He promptly raised his hands as he proclaimed,

“I give up. I don’t really want to fight you. I know that I saw your secret and Balala—in short, I’ll come with you.”

Due to unknown reasons the werewolf sighed; her eyes dropped. Still, she accepted Drin’s decision. In addition, she didn’t have time for this fight. She needed to hurry back and tell the boss about the sandman and his possible connection to JUDGE. Still surprised about Drin’s power, the werewolf asked,

“What kind of monster are you, if I dare ask?”

“Who says that I must be a monster to be this strong? I could just be a human!” *Werewolf: Don’t tell me he’s a—no, they are already long gone! In addition, I was able to heal effortlessly, so he can’t be one! Still, he doesn’t seem to be a modified human!* She shook her head and mumbled to herself,

“Yes, that can’t be!” The skinny guy tapped Drin’s shoulder, followed by a request,

“Could you please turn around?”

“Why?” Drin asked back.

“She has to transform back” the larger one replied. “And clean herself from blood!”

“Equality for everyone, we have the right at this sight!” Drin insisted.

“First of all” the werewolf joined the conversation, “this doesn’t make sense! And second, if you don’t turn around”, she bared her teeth, “you’ll regret it!”

“Ok!” Drin agreed. With dropped shoulders he did as asked. The other guys did the same. Yet, Drin was still grinning. *Drin: Even if she transforms back, she won’t have any clothes to wear. Yes, nude scene, that’s my moment.* Drin’s jaw dropped and his eyes spread wide

open when he saw how the skinny guy removed his clothes and threw it over his back to the woman. *Drin: The fuck? ...*

“The fuck?” Drin packed that man’s shoulders. At this moment, he was radiating strong killing intent. “Why did you do it? Why damn? Do you even know how many people would kill for this golden opportunity?” A tear rolled down his cheek. “I’ll never forgive you!” His eyes flushed. “As punishment, stay in your underwear and reflect on your action!”

Drin: Wait! His grip on the man eased. *Drin: Maybe I can—*Drin spun with a speed even superior to the werewolf’s attack. Though, he came too late! The woman chortled softly as she glared at Drin. Then she said:

“Pervert!” *Drin: Fuck, who dresses that fast?* Drin didn’t care how the woman called him. He had just wanted a glimpse of her body. The woman walked toward the door of the basement—the only thing that got only slightly affected by the fight and thus, was still perfectly usable. She turned around to the men and ordered, “Let’s go to HQ! I’m sure M.H.O is on the way. And before I forget”, her gaze shifted to Drin. “it seems like your colleagues didn’t know that you are this strong. Why do you work for the police, when you have such power?” Drin answered the question with another question,

“Don’t you want to know my name?” She shook her head, answered uninterested,

“No! If you tell me your name, I’ll have to tell you mine. I don’t want to. I only want to know your goal, if you should have one. You must have a reason for hiding your powers! Well, I assume. Maybe I am just giving you too much credit!” Drin strode past the woman and replied, his eyes directed upward and a faint grin on his face,

“I am here to find myself!” *Woman: Okaay! Let’s just drop this topic!* She didn’t even bother to understand the meaning of this statement and exited the building without asking further questions. The other two guys just followed and so did Drin while rubbing his hands with relish. *Drin: Their HQ-let’s see what awaits me there—I hope at least other women of her caliber! If not! What is the point of a HQ?*

Chapter 13

Officer Jeffrey and his partner were escorted to a hospital, where the S.M.O treated them.

When they woke up, the organization did its best to convince them that whatever they had witnessed hours earlier had been nothing more than a fabrication. A misunderstanding. Stress-induced hallucinations.

Officer Jeffrey wasn't naïve enough to believe that. His partner, however, didn't care anymore. He would accept whatever version of reality was handed to him. One nightmare per day was more than enough. He wanted to forget the chaos, the humiliation of losing control of his body, and return home to his family. There, he would act as if everything were normal. A clean ending—for him, at least.

His clothes, on the other hand, were gone. The S.M.O had burned them. No trace remained.

Jeffrey proved more difficult. Because he refused to let it go, he was subjected to special treatment. The S.M.O erased his memory of the incident.

In addition, they had acted fast enough to exclude the public from the crime scene. The barricade was strengthened. Although, S.M.O had done all this, they weren't the one guarding the building. The people stationed at that place were soldiers from M.H.O.

Meanwhile, Drin, the woman and the other two guys were heading toward S.M.O's HQ in a black van. The trip would take 3 hours and it could have been three peaceful hours if Drin would have behaved.

"When will we finally arrive?" Drin asked for the third time. The woman's gaze narrowed at Drin. Then she exhaled softly and adjusted her posture. *Woman: I don't like imitating Lorena, but this is the only way to make him stop, considering his previous perverse actions!* She crossed her legs, stretched out her chest, slowly put some hair strands behind one ear, gazed Drin straight in the face and demanded with a seductive voice,

"Could you please be quiet? Only till the end of the trip?" The moment she was done with her request, Drin immediately shut up. And the woman leaned back. *Woman: This is not my style but it had to be done.* Drin was able to keep his promise for exactly 10 seconds,

"Oh" Drin commented with a rather amused tone. He crossed his arms and slightly lifted his chin. "Now you reveal your true colors and then you call me a pervert." The woman blushed feebly and pinched her lips. *Woman: How shameful! Never again!* She stopped her

cute reaction when she sighted Drin's wide grin. She noticed Drin's sudden lowered eyes and flattened mouth.

"What's your problem now?" the woman demanded, waving a hand in mid-air. "First you tease me and now this expression! It's not like we're a couple!" Drin gulped before he stated his problem,

"We may not know each other well. *Woman: And I hope it stays that way.* But I—I don't know why, I got irritated when I saw how injured you were!" He scratched his head, whereas the woman raised her eyebrows. "And suddenly, I felt this strong rage in me." He opened his palm as if he was holding something immense in it. As he went on he waved in front of him. "Hahah, it's not a pick-up-line, really!" His waving ceased.

The woman crossed her arms and somewhat lowered her chin. Drin's tone softened, "And I get this familiar feeling from you. Almost like I've known you for a long time. Weird right? Well!" Drin grinned. "Maybe, in another universe there was something between us and the universe wants us to recreate that event!" He met the woman's eyes. It became silent. The two guys at the front exchanged some dubious glances, though it stayed by only that.

"What are you saying?" the woman broke the silence. "It doesn't make any sense! Just be quiet till we arrive, please! Thanks." Immediately, she stared outside the window. *Woman: So I wasn't the only one! His smell! I could never forget a smell! But I can't remember it!* She side-eyed Drin for. Second, yet never turned her head to him. *I know for a fact that this odor— it's connected to good emotions. Hm!*

The rest of the drive it stayed silent. Drin had forced himself to behave, partly for the sake of the woman. And the two guys had chatted via smartphone exchanging the wildest theory.

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Finally, they reached their destination. The group exited the car and walked toward two men, stationed some meters before the HQ in a small shed, the sides made out glass. One of the two guys left the shed with a long round-shaped black device, one side glowing in red. The other one remained in the shed. The one holding the device halted before the group. He beckoned the big guy over with his finger and asked,

"Please raise your hands!" The man placed the device at the fingers of the big guy and slowly went down, always keeping the device close to the body. As Drin watched the inspection he turned to the woman.

“What are they looking for?”

“They are making sure we aren’t shapeshifters.”

“Shapeshifters?” The woman turned to Drin, explaining,

“Shapeshifters are monsters who can take on the appearance of another living being and sometimes even their abilities. Though, they are most of the time very weak and thus hardly pose any threat.” The woman turned back. *Drin: Yeah! When I get to meet a shapeshifter, I’ll make him transform into—*He side-eyed the woman—*you of course. It’ll be the naked version!* The woman knew right away that Drin was thinking about weird things—the nasty grin on his face and the hand rubbing! However, she simply yawned. Drin’s comments had occupied her mind throughout the drive and still lingered in her head.

Chapter 14

After the group had proved the guards that they weren't shapeshifters, they were allowed to pass. They entered the huge building which resembled an iron fortress, only some windows were visible from the outside.

As they entered the giant door behind them closed. The door was made of platin and was 5 meters thick and tall. The moment Drin had walked into the building, he spotted hundreds of people in the room. People of all forms and colors. Some people were just chilling and others were working at some projects. It seemed like they were building fight-machines in humanoid forms. That was certainly the reason for why the room smelled of iron, burnt and gasoline.

"Are you preparing for a fight?" Drin asked, looking around the room.

"Yes" the woman answered. "Although, I doubt that these humanoid machines will be finished till the fight with them! But don't worry about it. *Luna: Well, better we never finish with them. Surely M.H.O will ask something in return for giving us these machines!* First, we're going to meet the bosses."

"Tell me, are they strong?" Drin wanted to know. "They must be strong! They're the bosses, right?" The woman turned around and gave Drin a smile as an answer. *Drin: Ok it's getting interesting!* The group walked on. Here and there they waved after some people. They arrived at the end of the room when Drin suddenly turned back to have a last view of the spacious room.

"I have to say that I am indeed impressed, but I expected a little bit more." His tone dropped. "This room is kind of boring. Only grey walls and nearly no windows to let out this sticky smell. Aren't you a big organization? I expected you to be richer. Damn even broke life isn't that bad!" This was the signal for a dispute that the woman continued to nourish with her counter,

"At least, it's better than your run-down house, only if you even have one! I wouldn't be surprised if you live on the streets, with the rats as your best buddies and news as bed!" Bull's eye! Drin approached her and started his counter,

"Well..."

Meanwhile, the other two guys were idly observing these two, thereby the skinny one was shivering. He was still only dressed in an underwear. *Both guys: Shut up you two! Who*

fucked your heads like that? The two men's eyes widened, likewise their mouth, as they gazed each other's in the eyes and realized that their thoughts had been the same. How gladly the two would speak aloud what they had thought, but they did not, for fear of the consequences, in which there would only be a one-side beating for them. Before the dispute could worsen a gentle voice intervened,

"You get along well." The woman pushed Drin aside and glanced at the man standing afore the group.

"We get along well?" she repeated. She pointed her fingers at grinning Drin who was busy standing up, then at herself. Then she gawked to the other guys and asked again, this time more aggressive and with a threatening gaze, "We get along well? You two agree?" The two guys answered with a fast and dry,

"No!" Their faces were void of any emotion, but inside them an immense rage was boiling up. A rage that unfortunately would never come to the surface. Thus, they decided to just smile. *Both guys: You fucking serious? You got some emotional problems, you and your crazy boyfriend. You fit together perfectly!* Both guys continued to smile, hiding their inner thoughts and their fists they had formed behind their backs. They pressed their fists so tight that they were on verge of getting cramp. The man that had just joined the group, gave them a short glance. *Unknown man: They must be reaching their limit!*

"Hope you enjoyed the mission!" the man uttered, stopping his sight at the two men. "I'm sure you two are tired. Go take a rest!" The two guys did not waste a moment. A brief bow and they walked away. The woman called after them,

"Hey, I have a favor. Please find out if the sandman was really responsible for the crimes?" The woman approached the man and bowed halfway, placing one hand on her chest,

"I greet you, Mr. Maida." *Drin: Where did I end up here?*

"Oh, you don't always have to do it" Mr. Maida said blushed while doing signs with his hand to convey the woman that she could stand up. "Really!" The woman did as asked while responding,

"Well, this shall be the last time then." *Drin: You always do it? You don't get tired of this shit?* "And I meant it with getting well! It is a rare side to see you so worked up. The guest must be the reason for it!"

Mr. Maida was a white man in his late thirties; however, he was a monster—a monster's appearance wasn't always according to its age. How old he really was, was

unknown and maybe this was good so. Maybe he was already an old geezer. And some people tend to get more sensible the more they age. He was 1.90m tall and thus, about as large as Drin. He had a rough-edged face and dark brown eyes, making every person who looked at Mr. Maida's face shiver with fear and a warm smile and that would scare away that fear at once. His big frame would serve as a shield for his friends and as a spear for the enemies.

Mr. Maida may have been old; it wasn't clear, but he was bursting with vitality and Drin remarked it at first sight. He was wearing a black suit and inside a red pullover.

Mr. Maida strolled toward Drin and stretched out his hand to greet him,

"I'm Maida, Maida Wing." Drin did likewise.

"I'm Drin, just Drin." While greeting each other, Mr. Maida eyebrows winced. He started chuckling weakly.

"You are powerful! I can feel it youngster! There is something inside you, but I can't really grasp it. What kind of monster are you?" Drin remained silent. "Sorry, there are monsters who don't want to reveal what kind they belong to. It was rude of me!" Mr. Maida excused. "But if you don't mind, I would like to spar with you. My instincts are telling me that something interesting may happen."

Chapter 15

“You want to spar with me?” Drin asked. He shrugged his shoulders. “Why not!” *Drin: He’s the boss this woman was talking about, so he must be strong! I want to see it myself!*

Both didn’t bother taking a fighting-posture and at once struck. Bum! The woman stepped back. Punch after punch clashed. Nobody yielded. *Mr. Maida: Interesting! Better finish before Jasmin appears!*

For a beat, Mr. Maida lost his concentration. Enough for Drin to react accordingly. He struck Mr. Maida with a karate chop from above. Mr. Maida was fast enough to shield himself with his arms. Still, Drin’s attack was powerful. It pounded him into the ground. Bam! And yet, Mr. Maida didn’t fold. He held his own against Drin.

“Yes, that’s what I need right now!” Mr. Maida cried out. *Drin: What’s this unease feeling?* Instinctively, Drin drew back. Wise decision! Shortly after, Mr. Maida went up in blue and partly crimson flames. They covered his whole body. Strong heat emitted from his body. And he radiated a blue light. The room’s temperature rose rapidly. The spectators also began sweating. Some men gazed away from the fight toward the women whose clothes were turning transparent due to the sweat.

“I was bored of plain red flames!” Drin said, shrugging his shoulders. “So, blue flames just come in time for me.” Mr. Maida charged at Drin. Drin did likewise. He was faster and packed Mr. Maida at his shoulder. Not long, he let go due to the strong flames. “Ouch!” He had lost his chance to attack. It was Mr. Maida’s turn.

He punched Drin in his ribs. Another punch followed in the face. The man didn’t stop there. He confronted Drin with a series of attacks. Every hit burned. “Arggh! Seems like you enjoy playing with fire.” Drin commented, slightly in pain. Suddenly, he grabbed Mr. Maida’s wrists. Despite the flames, Drin didn’t let go. They were burning his hands, yet the grips strength only rose. “Fuck the flames!” Drin roared. And Mr. Maida responded in kind,

“That’s the spirit, boy!” Drin swung his arms up. And with it, threw the man up as well. As he let go of Mr. Maida, he jumped up. He was now in mid-air, slightly above Mr. Maida. In mid-air, Drin did a role while stretching out his leg. He then used the speed of his rotation to strengthen his coming kick. Drin hammered his heel on Mr. Maida’s head. With the face first Mr. Maida crushed into the ground. Bum! And Drin landed on his feet, at least that’s what he

had planning to do after his attack. He fucked up. Instead, he also fell with his face on the floor. The woman shook her head, yet a flicker grin could be seen on her face. *Woman: Idiot!*

Drin as well as Mr. Maida rose up. Mr. Maida wasn't wounded at all and Drin only had minor bruises. Though looking closer at his wound, one could see them healing slowly. The woman's eyes focused on the wounds on Drin's hands. *Woman: He can heal himself too? But his regenerating ability seems to be slower than mine! Well, Mr. Maida is also holding back!* Again, Mr. Maida clamored,

"Interesting. I know you are holding back and I'm doing likewise. Let's go all out, young man!" This time Drin didn't respond. He had noticed something during the short slugfest. *Drin: I know it's not his full power, but he's still strong. I can sense it. I highly doubt I can win against him if he decides to go serious!* Suddenly, the flames surrounding Mr. Maida increased in size and heat—he was about to transform.

"Stop it you fool!" a woman yelled running toward the group. Mr. Maida's eyes shot open as he mumbled,

"Shit, she's here!" He turned around, explaining,

"Wait Jasmin, I was just—" Jasmin grabbed him by the neck. *Mr. Maida: Shit, she still must be angry because of yesterday!* And then, smashed his head into the ground. Bam! *Drin: Who is that? And why does it remind me of my parents?* As the mist cleared, a woman came to light.

The woman had long blonde hair. Her white skin was smooth and her eyes were silver. All this together was a good fit to her violet dress and brown leather jacket..

Mr. Maida, his flames extinguished, was busy standing up. Jasmin packed Mr. Maida at his collar and pulled him toward her, shouting,

"What are you trying to accomplish? Do you want to destroy everything here?" She gently let go of the collar and pulled back, still waiting for an answer. Her strict expression indicated that Mr. Maida would regret it if he didn't have an explanation. And so, Mr. Maida gave his reason for this mess,

"I just wanted to have some fun!" Jasmin's expression softened, likewise the tone in which she then said,

"You can have fun with me!" An awkward silence broke out. During this unpleasant hush, Jasmin realized that what she had just said, had been entirely misunderstood. The weird and staggered gazes on her supported this assumption. She coughed twice and then tried to

correct herself. Her nervousness made her speak rapidly. "I don't mean it this way. I don't want to have fun with you at all—no, I want. But not this kind of fun, never. Never doesn't mean that I hate you and would never considerate to do it with you—well you understand what I mean right?" She began sweating, held her wrist with the other hand "But it doesn't also mean that I want—"

"Just stop, please!" Drin asked Jasmin as he saw that she was digging her own grave. *Drin: I couldn't stand this terrible sight anymore.* While Mr. Maida turned toward Drin to introduce the woman who had just rushed in, Jasmin wiped the sweat from her face. Delight and relief were the only emotions she felt at this moment. *Jasmin: Boy, you saved me—I won't forget this.* However, these emotions faded away as fast as they had emerged letting Jasmin appear a little bit curious and afraid. She focused her eyes on Mr. Maida's wide back. *Jasmin: Did he realize it? I don't think so. Would he even accept it? Maybe I'll have to be more aggressive! Or... fuck! Why's love so complicated? No! It's M who is complicated! Stupid M!*

"Jasmin?" Mr. Maida interrupted her in her deep thoughts while waving with his hand in front of her face. "You still with us?"

"Yes, I am. Sorry, I was thinking about something." Jasmin realized the intensive stare of Drin. "Is something wrong?"

"You seem to be strong. That's everything." Jasmin blushed.

"Thanks and sorry. I had to stop your fight." She pointed with her finger at the walls. "They may be robust, but a serious fight, especially with M involved, could destroy them. Ah, I forgot to introduce myself", she bowed, "I'm Jasmin Golden." She raised. "And I heard your conversation before. You're Drin, right?"

"Yes. And M? You mean Mr. Maida, right?" Drin asked in a striking tone. "Are you friends?"

"Yes!" Jasmin replied with a sadness she was able to hide well. *Jasmin: Only friends!* Drin glanced toward the woman who could transform into a werewolf. *Woman: what does he plan now?* Then he shifted his gaze back to Jasmin and asked,

"Do you know her name by the way?" Although, the woman wasn't asked directly, she still decided to answer,

"My name is Luna Raylan. Are you happy know?" Drin didn't say anything, but for that, his cheerful eyes were enough as an answer. "Now, it's your turn to tell me your name." Luna declared. "I already know it, but only as a formality, if you get it."

“Just admit that you want to hear my voice!” Drin responded. *Luna: Better for me, I stay silent!* “I’m Drin. And by the way, you’ve got a beautiful name. I hope we get along well.” Of course, Drin wanted more than only getting along well, he wanted a lot more. But it wasn’t time to act yet.

“Well, we’ll see how it plays out!” Luna said, stretching out her hand to greet Drin. *Drin: She didn’t say no!* Drin also did the same. Both suddenly felt something strong rushing through their bodies. This bizarre feeling couldn’t be described by mere words, but it wasn’t a bad feeling either. Immediately, they let go of each other’s hand. Both staggered retreated some steps. *Luna: What was that?*

At the same moment, Jasmin was analyzing the scene for oh-so-small details and realized something. *Jasmin: Do they like each other? No, it’s not really love, but something heading in that direction, maybe.* As Jasmin watched the scene, she felt an inner envy forcing her to break the moment between Drin and Luna who had let go of each other’s hand, but were still looking each other’s in the eyes,

“Drin, I’m sure you’ve got a lot of questions, so just follow us. Your questions will be clarified very soon.” When Jasmin walked toward the elevator, located at the end of the room, she bumped into Mr. Maida. Instead, of excusing herself, her face darkened. *Jasmin: Why are you so dumb? Stupid M! Can’t you* Her shoulders slouched! *Look at me the same way?* Mr. Maida stared at Drin and Luna who had regained their senses after Jasmin’s intervention and asked without asking, his impression was enough, what was up with Jasmin. Drin and Luna only shrugged with their shoulders. The three of them decided to follow Jasmin in silence.

Drin couldn’t hide his mirth. It was now that he realized how attractive Jasmin was. He had maybe only noticed the back, but the back alone was enough to show how sexy this woman was. And with her 1.85 Jasmin was like a model. Drin eyes wandered down. As he was about to inspect another part too, he suddenly felt unease—it was Luna’s gaze at his back, forcing him to break off the inspection of Jasmin’s body. Drin turned around and put on his best gentleman-impression.

“She may be hot, extremely hot! Yes, even hotter than most women I’ve seen on the streets and some pages on the internet. Don’t ask for the pages! I won’t tell you the sites anyway. But”, a warm smile formed on his face, “don’t worry! Compared to you, she is nothing. You’re far more gorgeous than her!” He paused, for some seconds, his eyes met

Luna's somewhat shimmering eyes. "I really mean it." Luna remained impassive in her expression and walked past Drin, brushing his shoulder as she muttered,

"I don't care at which women you lay your pervert eyes on. But she's our boss! The same will go for the others you will meet soon!" Past Drin, she took a big breath, in secret.

Luna: He nearly had me there. Till now, I've only seen hideous smiles from him. This was new!

Everyone had now reached and entered the elevator. Jasmin pushed number 10. Drin got excited, but this excitement would turn into fear later. *Drin: Let's see what awaits me. Shit, I already said something similar like that. So, I hope there is something interesting! No, it's so lame...* Drin and his grave problems! And so, the elevator went down.

Chapter 16

It took some time, especially for Drin, for the elevator to arrive. But when it had reached level 10, Drin was the first one to rush out of it. With a twisted expression he watched the door closing and finally, the elevator going up. *Luna: What's wrong with him? Don't tell me—*Luna grinned. *Luna: Maybe that's the reason he was so talk active in the car!* Drin's expression eased down, a little bit.

"You can calm down, Drin!" Luna uttered and gave him a light clap on the back. Luna's worry made Drin smirk. Unfortunately, this one didn't end as beautiful as the previous one before. It was by far worse. "Stop this creepy grin!" Luna added, gazing away. This kind of face gave her creeps. *Luna: Seems like the other smile was pure luck!* Drin ceased the smirk and instead, tried imitating the face of a sweet, wounded puppy. Big mistake! Luna and the other reacted with a,

"Ihhh!" and moved away from Drin. As Drin saw their grossed face, he stopped and stiffly pointed his finger at the light shining brightly at the end of the shady hallway.

"And can we go now?" he requested with low tone. Half-smirking, Luna strolled past Drin toward the source of the light.

"Then, let's go meet the rest of the team." she uttered.

When the group arrived at the end of the path, they entered a room full of people who turned to them the moment they heard their steps. There were about 50 people in the room. The walls of the room were made off ebony, an expensive one, considering its beauty and smooth. There weren't any windows, but it didn't smell bad thanks to the air systems installed in the walls. At the end of the room there was an enormous, round and black table. There wasn't any other furniture to be seen in the room. The group, waiting in the room, welcomed Drin and the others synchronously,

"Welcome!" Just like when Luna had welcomed Mr. Maida, this welcome also appeared exaggerated to Drin. Again, Mr. Maida blushed.

"Please, stop. It's too much. I don't like you doing it." Mr. Maida's words didn't match his bright expression. He was surely savoring this moment, but who wouldn't! "Drin!" Mr. Maida called out, pointing his arm toward him. "If you may." Drin nodded and stepped forward.

“Hey, I’m Drin. Because of some circumstances I was forced to come here. Maybe, we will even have to work together. This is everything that I can say for now.” *Luna: I doubt there’s even much more to say!*

“You’re truly wise, Drin!” Mr. Maida commented, passing with his fingers through his beard. “We still don’t know each other well. Only a fool would reveal everything about himself.” A flicker smirk formed on Drin’s face and some doubt on Luna’s. *Luna: He and wise? I’m sure it wasn’t his intention to appear wise! And isn’t he already a fool for being here?*

Next, Mr. Maida pointed at Luna and went on, “Luna informed me about the enemy. We don’t know what his true goal was but what we know is that he had some kind of connection to JUDGE. Well, I will have Cole investigate that. If something important comes up, I’ll inform you all. If I don’t, consider that affair done!”

One person stepped forward, his cold gaze on Drin. He tucked both hands into his baggy dark grey pants. That man was 1.88m tall. He was certainly trained; however, he rather had a slim body. He came off more like a model than a fighter. Very eye-catching were his glowing blue eyes, seeming to exude coldness. His skin was pale letting his hair which was cut on the sides appear even blacker than it should. He wore a black jacket and a white tight shirt.

“So you fought the boss and came out unwounded!” Others nodded. Drin pointed at several parts of his clothes that had gotten burned during the fight and his hands. However, the wounds themselves had already healed.

“I got hurt badly during the fight.” Drin defended. To make it more credible, he displayed his wounded puppy face again. *Luna: Oh, shit! Not again!* In the room, a small laughter broke out. Mr. Maida and Jasmin stayed reserved, whereas Luna simply shook her head. *Luna: What is wrong with him?* Only the man who had confronted Drin a minute ago didn’t seem to like what Drin had said and especially, done. He hissed and mumbled,

“Another weirdo! Well, I’ll see for myself!” Suddenly, the temperature in the room dropped and it kept falling with every second passing by. Near the man it was the coldest. White mist arose from his body. The floor beneath him started freezing and so did his hands too.

With little steps, he advanced toward Drin, freezing the floor beneath him. He stretched out his hand after Drin. “Are you, his lover?” he demanded, one eyebrow raised, surprised about the fact that he was stopped by Luna instead of Mr. Maida or Jasmin whose job it was to normally intervene in such a situation. With wide eyes Drin awaited the reply.

But Luna didn't seem like she was going to say yes, her cold impression was enough proving, but an even bigger prove was her reply,

"He's Mr. Maida's guest, that's enough as reason. If you want to fight him, you'll have to get past me first!" Luna stood before the man, but not in a fighting-stance. Instead, she let go off the man's hand and put both hands in her pant giving the man enough opportunities to strike her at any moment.

As Drin saw this, he got confronted with an agonizing headache again. However, he did not let it show. Again pictures, pictures Drin didn't understand, flashed in his head. They were the same images as before. Meanwhile, Luna still stood before the man, whereas the rest were just watching. And looking at their wide smiles or the sweet some were taking out from hidden places; help wouldn't come any minute.

"You think you can do everything, because you are the boss of our group?" the man demanded. Drin forgot about his headache when he heard that comment. *Drin: She can't be the boss, not when she is weak as shit!* Luna took notice of Drin's troubled gaze on her, surely due the note of the man. She anticipated what Drin was thinking and made something clear,

"Drin, I know what you are thinking right know, but know one thing, what you saw wasn't me in my best form! In addition, I haven't eaten for several days." *Drin: Blablabla!*

"Then prove how strong you are!" the man intervened with a controlled voice. Drin nodded in agreement and insisted,

"You heard him, Luna! Or are you just a talk?" As Luna saw Drin's reaction, she hissed. *Luna: Damn you Drin!*

Chapter 17

The temperature in the whole room had long dropped to zero Celsius and it was still dropping. The other people in the room started shivering, some even freezing. The right hand of the man was completely covered in light blue ice. He raised his hand in the air and froze it. He froze it so that the frozen air took on the shape of a sharp, long blade.

"Ice blade!" he muttered while gripping it and continued to speak, "If I were to be the boss of our group, a lot of things would change. It's because of you that he was able to escape last time." *Drin: Who is he?* Luna smiled and replied,

"So that's the reason for your provocative behavior! Don't put the blame on me. He's your responsibility not mine! And if you're too weak to beat him, then next time don't come with us! You have to take him back yourself and you know it just too well! So, if you have some honor in you, stop behaving like a child!" *Drin: Oh, it's getting interesting!*

It was rare to see Luna raging like that. Luna was a woman with honor and pride. She always did the right thing and was nice to anyone, sometimes in her own way, but still nice— Drin was possibly an exception. But there was one thing from a few she despised—

"Don't accuse me for something that isn't my fault!" The man formed a grimace and said,

"Maybe you're right, maybe not. But I still think we should settle this score." *Luna: If it's about him he won't calm down that fast!* He was ready to strike when suddenly Luna gave a loud cry from her,

"Argghh!" This cry was called the werewolf cry. Because Luan had done it in her human form the werewolf cry wasn't at full power. Still, it was enough to paralyze some people in the room for a brief moment, especially the man standing right before her.

Luna took out her hand from the pant. While she did, it transformed into a werewolf's hand. Still slightly paralyzed, the man anticipated what she was planning. He covered part of his body with ice. Right after that, Luna gave him a punch. To not lose the ground under his feet, the man threw himself forward. He rammed his sword in the ground. That attack pushed him four meters back, making his sword slice through the ground. The man picked himself up again. He pointed at Luna's hand. It was frozen. *Luna: When I touched him!*

"You still got in you!" Luna complimented while ending her transformation with a smirk. The man destroyed his ice creations. Gradually, the temperature started rising again. The man formed a shivering fist, lowered his head.

"I'm sorry, Luna and the others who nearly got frozen by me, although some people, no! Almost everyone here deserves to be frozen! I lost my cool—" Luna stopped him,

"Hey, what are you getting so emotional? That's not like you! We are a team and we are going to take your brother back together! Either way, I needed some cold air. My body was boiling." While she said this, she side-eyed Drin and Mr. Maida who immediately understood that the cause was their fight. They couldn't utter anything in this matter.

"So you just forgive him Luna?" Drin asked, spreading his arms apart. "Just like that?" Luna shook her head, placing her hands on her hips.

"Drin, he's a good friend of mine, so I won't make a fuss about something like that. Aside from that we are talking about his brother. Family is", her fingers twitched briefly, "important!" *Luna: It's been some days since our mission. What did he say back then to you to rankle you up that much?* She posed her hand on his shoulder. Drin intervened with a question,

"Ok I understand but what do you mean with taking back your brother?" Now, it was time for Mr. Maida to step in.

"OK, you calmed down. Drin I am going to introduce you to the people. Everything will be clearer afterwards. Let's start with this young man. His name is Glace Frost and as you just saw he's a monster of the ice element. I'm sorry for his behavior, it wasn't adequate, but he has his reasons. Glace is a SS-Rank monster. And like you heard some minutes ago; his brother is not with us."

"Where is he?" Drin wanted to know. Therefore Mr. Maida turned to Glace who then nodded to him. So, Mr. Maida turned back toward Drin who was curiously waiting for the answer,

"His big brother is with the organization JUDGE, the enemy. Last time, my people had a confrontation with them, but didn't succeed in taking him back. Well, let's say in defeating him!" Drin stopped Mr. Maida with a question,

"Does he really want to come back? I know, I've never met him, but is taking someone back really that hard? You said yourself that he's with the enemy and I doubt that he is held against his will." Drin ceased for a moment and took a deep breath. As he did, his face

darkened. He focused on Glace insensitively. "Will you be able to kill him if the situation asks for it? I don't know if someone ever posed you that question but it must be done!" Glace pressed his fists together.

"I—" Luna stopped Glace by putting her hands on his head.

"Don't force yourself. If the time comes and you can't do it, I'll take on your brother on. Of course I won't kill him." Glace was sighed, his fist still under tension. It seemed like Drin was about to ask another question when he suddenly saw Luna's dark expression. *Glace: Still, he's right!* Mr. Maida, not really paying attention to the situation, went on,

"His pale skin is a sign of the clan he belongs to, the Shinshu Clan. That's why his full name is Glace Frost Ran Shinshu. The Ran in the middle stands for the second."

"What is there still to know?" Drin inquired.

"Nothing!" Mr. Maida answered. "I'll tell you some information about my people, but that's all. We still don't know you and your intention or if you will even join us. Besides, some information of them is private and I think we should respect them." Drin agreed by nodding his head. *Drin: I also have private information I don't want everyone to know. And maybe these people have weird secrets, maybe abnormal sexual secrets!* Drin had several abnormal thoughts, thoughts that were so weird and crazy that it would be better not to list them.

Mr. Maida realized that Drin was somewhere else with his head, but still continued. *Mr. Maida: Surely, he'll listen again when I went on!* Mr. Maida pointed at a dark-skin woman in the crowd. The woman was wearing a black hoodie.

"This is Aqualisa Merveille. She is a water ghost and has SS-Rank too. Her specialty is the control of water. She can generate water using her body or she can just control the water in her environment. With this water, she can attack, defend and even heal the team."

"Interesting!" Drin said looking at Aqualisa who didn't seem like she was going to say something at any moment. Aqualisa was a shy person and she appeared a lot shyer with her small and fragile figure and 1.36m. Because of the too big clothes she always wore, to hide in them if the situation asked for it, Drin wasn't able to really grasp her appearance.

Through her blue hairs hiding her face, two ultramarine eyes were shining through. They were fixed on Drin. Just as Aqualisa realized that Drin was staring at her, she rushed behind Mr. Maida.

"She is a little shy." Mr. Maida tried to make Drin understand as he saw how confused Drin looked. *Drin: Shy as fuck. Aren't you an adult? Or maybe she's really a child!*

The whole time Jasmin had done nothing. Why would she? She was only observing Mr. Maida and every move of him. It was a behavior she had acquired in the past. Back then, she had told herself several times that this wasn't stalking. She had done it till she believed her lie at some point.

But when she saw how Aqualisa clung to Mr. Maida, Jasmin bit her lip. She looked away. Yet her gaze kept drifting back—to him, to Aqualisa's hand resting where it shouldn't.

Jasmin: Calm down, Jasmin. That's just how Aqualisa is.

It wasn't Aqualisa's intention to provoke her.

That didn't help though.

The longer Jasmin watched, the tighter something coiled inside her chest. She tried to push it down. It resisted. Thin veins began to surface along her temples. *Jasmin: I must stop.*

Luna who had also done nothing, but observe the situation noticed Jasmin's weird behavior. She followed her eyes and saw that they were fixed at Aqualisa.

Luna knew about the feelings of Jasmin for Mr. Maida and had always asked herself when they would start dating. However, Luna wasn't the only one to realize Jasmin's feelings, everyone did, only Mr. Maida stayed in the dark. Therefore, the people in S.M.O had started betting if the two would ever come together. Of course, Luna was for yes.

She walked toward Aqualisa and took her in a gentle hug. Aqualisa friendly accepted and let go of Mr. Maida. Jasmin felt better now and so did Mr. Maida too. Due to unknown reasons, at least for him, he had felt awkward while Aqualisa was hiding behind him and this feeling had grown with time. He adjusted his collar and sighed.

The rest of the people let out a big sigh. The crowd enjoyed the moment when Jasmin got angry at Mr. Maida for reasons like that and they hated the fact that Luna would always intervene or sometimes another person. The moment Mr. Maida felt better again, he continued the presentation,

"Ah, I forgot. There is someone missing from our group. Right now, he's on a mission. I don't know when he'll return. Even now, we still don't know his true identity, nevertheless, he's someone we trust. He's been with us for a while now. He goes by the name Dyran, at least that's the name we decided on. He never told us his true name. He's a ?-Rank." Immediately, Drin cut in.

"What is the meaning of this ?-Rank? Ok, I don't really know what these ranks mean. Still, I'm sure that it shows how strong a person is. So, how can somebody have ?-Rank?" Mr. Maida had a wide grin on his face.

"Dyran is an interesting and mysterious man. I could now give you some information on him. However, I think it would be better if you see for yourself."

"Ok, but is he strong?" Drin wanted to know at least.

"Yes, he's strong. But how strong he really is, is something I can't tell you, because I don't know myself" Mr. Maida replied amused. "However, I can promise you that he is by far the strongest in our organization! A walking catastrophe!" Drin glanced to Luna who only shrugged with her shoulders. The rising excitement in him made his body quiver. *Drin: Dyran, I can't wait to meet you.*

"Are you done?" Luna asked, eyeing Drin. "Mr. Maida wants to continue."

"What will happen if I'm not done?" Drin inquired with a nasty smile.

"Stop this bullshit!" Luna ordered while she rolled her eyes. She jerked her head back.

Luna: What did I do to merit this?

"Ok, I'll continue." Mr. Maida decided for himself. He pointed at another woman. She was just 1.82 and her body certainly carried some meat. Her fiery long hair and her glowing crimson eyes made her appear dangerous, yet at the same time there was something erotic about her, especially with her scarlet lips, whispering a pleasure not from this world. This colors were amplified due to her dark skin. She wore a red pullover. Her pants and leather jacket were black.

"This lady is called Lorena Ero."

Suddenly, Drin got thirsty. He took a deep breath. His throat was dry and he needed something. Without noticing himself, he stared at Lorena's boobs. He had problems to control himself. Suddenly, he backed off. He knew this strange feeling. It was familiar.

"Stop it, don't you have any shame?" Luna asked putting her hands on Drin's shoulder. Surprisingly, her words weren't directed at Drin, but at Lorena who was smiling while sliding her tongue over her red lips, slowly so that everything could be captured. "Are you ok?" Luna inquired.

"Yes, I'm!" Drin responded, gaining back his senses. He shook his head and followed with a question, "Who is this woman?" Again, Mr. Maida stepped in,

“This is the last member with a SS-Rank. She is a succubus.” *Drin: Succubus? No wonder I had this familiar feeling. But it was a lot stronger!* Mr. Maida looked at the rest of the group and let out a sigh nobody was able to hear. *Mr. Maida: Still so much persons to introduce. We don't really have the time for it though!* Mr. Maida was trying to come up with a plan to not introduce the rest without making them feel miserable.

Jasmin who was observing Mr. Maida knew right away what he was thinking. Her stalking finally paid off. She decided to help the lost Mr. Maida,

“M, I think we should stop here. I know that you love everybody here and thus wants to introduce them, but I think this would take too much time. I'm sure that the people will understand it.” And they did understand it. The crowd started cheering loudly,

“We also love you Mr. Maida, but Jasmin is right. You don't have to do it for us.” Everybody fell for Jasmin's joke, except the SS-Rank people who had gathered to watch the scene from afar and Drin. Seems like their ranks weren't just show!

Pleased with Jasmin's achievement, Mr. Maida stroked Jasmin's head. Her eyes nearly turned in and she had to tighten mouth and jaw to not let out her tongue. Drin observed the situation, then the others. No reaction. Almost as if something like that happens every day.

Jasmin was about to lose her consciousness when Mr. Maida stopped and thus, woke her up from her dream. A little moment later and who knows what would have happened to Jasmin. Exhausted, he wiped the sweat from his forehead, whereas Jasmin was already thinking about her next achievement. Drin had joined the group of SS-Rank.

“She is really a cunning and crazy person, this Jasmin.”

“Yes!” Luna replied, a grin on her bright face. “A sweet person in love.” Mr. Maida pointed with his finger at the table.

“Let's sit down first.”

As they moved toward the table, Drin quietly assessed the guests Mr. Maida hadn't introduced. Most of them didn't stand out. No presence. No weigh.

He understood immediately and smirked.

Drin: I see. Most of them are just background. They are weaker than the SS-Rank people. If I were him, I wouldn't bother introducing them either.

The table was big enough that nearly everybody got a place and sure enough, the people who didn't get a place, were background characters. When everybody had calmed down, Mr. Maida started speaking, especially by looking at Drin,

“What is this rank or this rank? What is the S.M.O? What is JUDGE? I know you have many questions. *Drin: Did I ever ask that many questions?* I'll now tell you our story. I know that some of you have already heard the story, however, not everyone. So, I would appreciate it if you could all stay quiet and listen.” Mr. Maida was about to start when Drin had to intervene,

“Excuse me, it seems like this story will be a long one. Do you happen to have something to eat?” Luna was the first to react,

“If you behave till the end of the story, I'll buy you something later. It's a promise.” Luna was the kind of person who would always do what she promised. It didn't matter what or how, she would keep her promise. This promise was enough to render Drin silent and so Mr. Maida went on,

“In order to understand everything I'll have to start from the beginning. With beginning, I don't mean how we were created or the difference between the races. Normally, everyone should know it.” *Drin: Then I belong to the group of people who don't know it!*

Chapter 18

“I’ll first start with the meaning of the ranks. The ranks indicate how strong a creature is, measured by the strength, density and quality of his life energy flowing throughout the body. You can summarize strength and density to quantity.

For us normal mortals, the highest rank we can achieve is the Legendary-Rank. There are still two ranks above, but it doesn’t matter, because I doubt that anyone of you will ever reach it. *Drin: Your people should be grateful for Mr. Maida’s high expectation for you!* Lower than this rank is the Mystic-rank, then it’s SSS, SS, S and least A-Rank till E-Rank. E-rank is the lowest rank.

These ranks can be transferred to any living creatures, even humans. Normal average adult humans with no special abilities normally have E-rank, only as a comparison. The power gap between the different ranks can vary a lot. The higher we go up in ranks, the bigger the power gap. For example, a C-Rank creature can beat a B-Rank creature if it has more skills or battle experience. Maybe it was just pure luck. I don’t know!

However, the power gap between an SSS-Rank creature and one of a Mystic-Rank can’t simply be overcome with pure luck or skill alone. Especially, starting at the Mystic-Rank, the power gap gets a lot wider. Of course, it would be different when someone had a ridiculous strong weapon, but I doubt any of you do.

Even within the ranks, there are still three different levels to separate. We distinguish between, low, middle and high-level. In this case, high is the strongest level. Ok. It’s important to know that these differences within the ranks only exist starting from the Mystic-Rank. Ranks lower than that don’t have levels.

So, with the ranks we can classify the life energy inside a person up to a certain point. With life energy it is enough to get a vague image of the creature’s strength but more accurate the strength of the life energy. However, the individual’s body fitness, sometimes depending on the workout one does, experience and personal skills and whatever also play an important role. Ranks do not reveal anything about these factors. In addition, it doesn’t also reveal something about the specialization of a person.”

“What is a specialization?” a random person asked. Mr. Maida briefly moved his arms apart. He then crossed them and leaned back.

“Let’s...”, he skimmed everyone with his eyes, “ah, yes!” He jerked his head to Luna. “Let’s take Luna as an example. Luna is specialized in regeneration. Now, to the interesting part!” He grinned faintly. “When living beings use their powers, it requires the life energy in us. Let’s say a monster needs 5% of its life energy to generate an attack with his fire ability—let’s take a fireball.

Of, course these 5% will return after some rest. It only becomes dangerous if you fall below a certain percentage. It’s different to each person. Some persons are limited to 50%, while others can use their life energy till only 20% remains. That itself can also be seen as a specialization.

Ok, back to the example! Now, we take another monster who only uses 1% of his life energy for the same attack. Same in strength and size. This monster has an advantage, because now it’ll be able to use these attacks more often than the other. While the other one needs 5%, this monster only requires 1%. His specialization gives him an advantage in attack; thus, it’s specialized in attack.

There’s also another kind of specialization concerning attack, as far as I now! We take another monster. Before I continue, be aware that when I take these different monsters—they all have the same strength concerning life energy. In addition, personal fitness and skills don’t matter!” He gazed around the room and got several nodes back.

“Ok, let’s move on. The monster also uses 5% for the same attack. But this time, his fireball is three times the strength and size of the other ones. Still, his attack needs the same percentage of life energy. This monster is also specialized in attack, but his specialization is different. With the same amount of life energy as the first example, this monster can use the same attack, but superior in power.

It’s the same for Luna. She needs to use less life energy than the average to heal herself. So, her regeneration is faster and stronger.”

“Do you also have something similar?” Drin asked.

“Yes, I have my own specialization, whereby even among the specializations you could call it special! *Drin: I wonder if I will unlock a specializations!* There’re so much specializations, even I don’t know about them all. But Drin, I wanted to make you understand that there’s a lot more besides ranks. The individual’s ability, skill, experience, body type and fitness and specialization can turn the fight to their favor, of course only if the ranks aren’t too wide apart,

respectively the power gaps between the ranks.” Mr. Maida stopped explaining as he saw Drin’s perplexed expression. “What do you not understand Drin?”

“You said that the power gap between a Mystic-Rank and SSS-Rank can’t be overcome so easily. But with the individual’s abilities it should be feasible, judging what I heard up till now right?” *Drin: Damn, why do I feel like a nerd right now?* Mr. Maida took up the topic again,

“I understand what you mean. But the life energy still plays an important role. The greater one’s life energy in quantity and quality, the greater the person’s fighting power. With fighting power, I mean the person’s body or physical abilities (strength, speed, reflexes, senses etc...), special abilities/power (fire, energy, wind, ice etc...) and specialization, if the person should have one.

The quality and quantity of the life energy between ranks is big and it increases more the higher you go up in ranks. For example, if a person in A-Ranks ascends to S-Rank, the quantity of his life energy can increase by 1% and the quality by 0,5%. For you, these numbers surely appear unimportant. However, these little differences can make a person a lot stronger.

And imagine what happens when a person of the Mystic-Rank goes up in levels or even attain the Legendary-Rank. The increase in the life energy’s quantity and quality will be greater than in the previously example. Thus, the power gap will even be wider. A specialization makes a person stronger, but not as strong as an increase of 1% (quantity) and 0,5% (quality) in life energy. Sometimes, there’re special cases, but they’re rare. It depends how well all these factors play together, but that’s where my knowledge comes to an end.”

“Ok, understood.” Drin uttered. “So you can go up in ranks when your life energy gets stronger? Did I get that right?” Mr. Maida nodded. Drin formed a brief smirk. “It’s rare to see me concentrated for this long! *Luna: Oah, we’ve been talking since 5min!* And how can you achieve that? I mean, making the life energy stronger” Mr. Maida answered,

“There are two ways!” For a beat his face darkened and his voice turned rough. Even Jasmin who sat next to him gave Mr. Maida a concerned gaze. “I rather not talk about both! Okay! The best way is by continuously using your life energy to its limit. For example training and fighting!”

“Makes sense!” Drin added, leaning back. *Drin: Think my dad once told me about the second way to get stronger. I don’t know what exactly it was anymore, however I am sure it*

was nasty! “Well, thanks. Don’t have any questions left.” Mr. Maida gazed around and inquired.

“Are there any questions left to ranks or specialization?”

“Yes, I have one?” a blond-haired man replied. “While speaking you mentioned skill. I once heard something about a specialized skill, only accessible to people with specialization, though even among them not everyone has it!”

“Yes, there’s indeed something like that!” Mr. Maida replied, going through his beard. “I must admit that area is limited, but I can—” The man waved with the hand in front of him and explained,

“It’s ok! I only wanted to know if something like that existed!” *Drin: Damn, chill! We are not getting grades buddy!*

“Ok, this was enough about ranks, life energy and specialization!” Mr. Maida proclaimed. “There’s surely still more, but it’s up to you to find out, if you’re interested in knowing more! *Drin: Self-research? Never!* Drin, back there you were curious to know how strong we are. In Jasmin’s and my prime, we had middle Legendary-Rank.”

“Oha, you were quite strong!” Drin complimented. *Drin: So they reached the highest rank of a normal being!*

“Yes, we were” Mr. Maida replied less energetic than he had talked up till now, “but now it’s different. We lost part of our powers and now have Mystic-Rank. Not sure which level though. You will get the reason during my narrative.”

Chapter 19

“I’ll start now! The time I am about to speak of, goes back 400 years. At the beginning, four different worlds existed—of course the creation of the worlds goes farther back, only as introduction—and even though, they were different in their environment, they were tied together by so-called energy or life threads, coming from the four different energy lakes that existed in each world.

These energy lakes were each located in the core of the worlds, whereby each core only has one energy lake. Energy lakes are a collection of pure, not always however, life energy at one place, forming something like a kind of lake. That’s the source of its name. Around the energy lake is a world being held together by it. Or let’s say held alive by it. Yes, it fits better. So, a world can only exist with an energy lake. It gives the world its solid form and keeps it alive. In addition, it hinders the life energy to leak out the host’s body. In this case, the planet.

Pure energy lakes have a luminous dark green color. It’s the same energy lake that resides inside any living creature. Only its size is far greater compared to ours! In addition, the energy lakes inside us are not made of pure life energy. A living creature doesn’t have the body to handle 100% pure life energy. It would result in its destruction, should something like that ever occur. But I highly doubt this will ever happen.

When we use fire, wind, energy and other elements we use the life energy inside of us, as source of power to generate these different elements.” Mr. Maida stretched out his hand and enveloped it in blue flames. “By using the life energy, I can generate blue flame.” He abruptly closed his hand, extinguishing the flames.

“When we found out that the energy coming from the energy lake inside everyone, is needed to live, we named it energy, life energy or also life force. We can use it to martialize different kind of power, but it doesn’t mean that our life energy will deplete completely in the process. Only if we use it over its limit, we can damage our energy lake making it unable to regenerate itself ever again. Ok, that should be enough.

Back to the story! I told you about the life energy, because it will be mentioned during my narrative. Questions?” ... “Ok, good! The time I’m about to speak of, is called the Time of Chaos! The four different worlds at the beginning were the human, monster, dark and light world. Also known as Earth, Chorath, Netherveil and Aetherion. During this time, they had

nothing to do with each other and I sincerely hoped it would stay like that. We and I mean all races, have beautiful emotions like love and a lot more. *Drin: Ok, I hoped for more examples!* However, we shouldn't forget the ugly emotions like hate or greed, envy, sometimes even lust. The evil side of living beings!"

Slowly as if it were too heavy to keep up, Mr. Maida shook his head. "This was our damn problem! We were too damn greedy for more power! As surprising as it is, the humans weren't like the rest of the races. They savored the peaceful time to its fullest and didn't have the urge to get more powerful. At least, that's how we perceived them.

Darkborns (monsters from the dark world), brightborns (monsters from the light world) and monsters looked down on humans, because they were the weakest among the four races. However, this wasn't always the case I heard once. There was a time when humans stood on the same level as the other races, maybe even higher. They had their own warriors who unfortunately disappeared one day.

The humans at the moment were weak and vulnerable, a perfect target for the other creatures and an opportunity they wouldn't let slide through their fingers. Through energy doors they arrived on earth. Like I said at the beginning, the four worlds are connected by energy threads. By using these threads, we can travel through the worlds easily. The moment we arrive at a planet a hole is created, an energy door, giving us the opportunity to pass through. *Drin: Damn! These are a lot of technical terms!*

Arrived, monsters, darkborns and brightborns made use of their power on the human world to spread their power and thus, increasing their influence on earth. A big! Sigh! And easy success! The weak and foolish humans easily got seduced by this new power. With the time, it only worsened! Of course, nothing was openly done in the public, but it would soon happen.

All three races had one common goal, enslaving the humans." Mr. Maida raised his tone and expressed himself in a ridiculous way, "What a great goal!" He resumed his calm way of speaking. "But, because they had the same goal, a conflict was unavoidable. A war broke out and with it, the Time of Chaos arose.

It was a long and bitter battle, a war in which most humans could only take part as spectators, because they were far too weak to be able to do anything. There were big losses on all the sides, for me unnecessary losses."

“Did you also take part?” Drin interrupted Mr. Maida with a curious face. Mr. Maida’s and Jasmin’s faces darkened at this unexpected question.

“Yes, I did take part. Back then, I was still young. In this war I lost my best friend.” Mr. Maida said, trying to regain his impassive face back. However, the broken and whiny voice betrayed him. “I never liked war, but when your world, respectively race, is in danger, you don’t really have a choice, do you?” He glared Drin straight in the eyes, awaiting an answer.

“No!” Drin answered. “You don’t have a choice.” For a brief moment, it was calm and when Mr. Maida and Jasmin had calmed down, Mr. Maida decided to go on,

“Yes, a war broke out. After some time, the rulers of the different worlds regained their sanity. For my taste, a little bit too late. But better later than never. They asked themselves what they had done. Power had blinded their eyes and filled their hearts with rage, erasing all the love they had left for each other. Thus, the rulers decided to stop the war, against the will of the majority who thought that they had the right to rule over everyone.

In my eyes, the advocates of war were just a bunch of crazy bastards. Unfortunately, the rulers’ goal was easier said than done. The war had destroyed the atmosphere of Earth completely. The atmosphere is partly made of life energy and prevents energy holes/doors to open uncontrolled, at any time or anywhere.

The unstable earth was now full of energy holes letting the energy threads flowing in without a care. As a result, the energy leaking into the human world started destroying the environment, because the human world now had an abundance of life energy.

Furthermore, the others worlds tied together by these threads, were pulled toward the human world, but now it really gets interesting. The energy lakes inside each world were attracted to the others energy lakes. The worlds were on the verge of a collision that would result in a big destruction. This strong attraction came about, because the distance between the worlds had decreased.” *Drin: And you call this interesting, geezer?*

“Why were they attracting each other?” the same blonde-haired from before bellowed, curiously following Mr. Maida’s story with every fiber of his body. *Mr. Maida: Why does he always get so loud when asking something?*

“They were trying to merge with each other to create a bigger energy lake and with it, a new—“

“And why?” the same man bellowed, again interrupting Mr. Maida. *Random person: Why’s this bastard yelling?* This story had lit a fire in this man's heart. Till now, he had only

gotten little missions, missions without much importance. His life was boring as fuck. But now, something interesting was happening. *Man: Maybe if I show that I'm interested, boss will let me take part in missions with more importance. I will become like a protagonist!*

Poor, stupid man. He didn't know that he was heading into the opposite direction, far away from his actual goal. It was impressive to see how calm Mr. Maida was. He laid back and put on a little smirk on his face. *Mr. Maida: I think we've got too much personal, time to clarify this issue.*

"Why the worlds were trying to merge together is now another story with little connection to the time of my story. And sadly, my knowledge to that is also limited. If you still have questions tomorrow, I'll answer them." *Mr. Maida: Sorry, but today is your last day!* There was a weird feeling coming from Mr. Maida, but everyone decided to ignore it.

Well, Jasmin simply got turned on by that weird aura of Mr. Maida, but she hid her emotion well. Mr. Maida was about to side-eye Jasmin but his instincts told him better no to. And he went on with the story,

"When everyone became aware of this merger, they started to fight again, obviously against the order of the rulers not to fight. Hahahah! When the worlds are already merging together, they should be the new rulers of the new world. It's exactly what these bastards were declaring everywhere, just plain stupid. *Drin: Somebody's getting too emotional!*

The human world was mostly wrecked, people had died and a lot were still dying. The war had lost its meaning; it was without control anymore, steering into a disaster. Sects believing that they were the rightful leaders of the soon new world formed, human sacrifices and a lot more—chaos had broken out. That's the actual reason why this time is called the Time of Chaos!

The rulers were full of regrets and only saw one way out of this shit, which they had dug themselves deep into. They took the decision to sacrifice themselves. By sacrificing all their life energy, they were able close the energy holes and bring back the worlds to their original places. Having used up all their life energy, the rulers left the worlds afterwards. This loss filled the hearts of everyone, except the humans, with deep and painful sorrow. They decided to respect the last wish of their rulers and left the human world alone.

Still, we didn't want to let the rulers die in vain, so before leaving the three races came together and executed Memoria. It's like a big spell, which was cast over the whole world. Its origin lays in the far past. Every human affected by this spell forgot everything about the Time

Of Chaos. But this was not enough unfortunately. Their world was destroyed, so we had to put some extra memories into their head. We made them believe that there was a world war, but that it had already ended due to the contract of peace between the countries. All monsters, darkborns and brightborns were supposed to leave the human world. The chapter, the Time Of Chaos, finally came to an end.

Chapter 20

We decided to never again meddle in the life of humans. A long peace of nearly 100 years ensued between us three races. After the war had ended people wanted to know why the rulers had stopped the war in the first place. Of course, the worlds were trying to merge with each other and now? I was there when somebody asked that question. What the fuck was wrong with him? What kind of question is that? Cough, cough! But I also wanted to know the answer.

So, we looked for the right man of the rulers. The only ones still alive, was the right man of the deceased monster king and darkborn king. I forgot their names. But I know that the right man of the darkborn king back then was called the Sage of Darkness. We first looked for the right man of the deceased monster king who then told us the whole unpleasant true he knew.

The brightborn queen and the darkborn king had a secret affair. According to the man, they had an affair for more than twenty years. A big shock, but we were able to understand why. The brightborn queen, whoa, she was really not from this world! She was the most—" Mr. Maida stopped suddenly; his instinct told him to. He felt death approaching him and swinging itself around his body tightly. It was Jasmin who embodied the death. She carefully shifted her upper body forward and stared Mr. Maida deep into the eyes, slightly tilting her head to the side. She had a deadly smirk on her face.

"Finish what you were going to say. Please. M!" Her voice was calm and sweet, but the words struck Mr. Maida, just like a knife, through the chest. He started sweating and in order to get more air he loosened his collar. *Mr. Maida: This is the moment where I decide to live or to die!*

"She was ONE! One of the most beautiful women I had ever seen, but not the most beautiful! She could never be", he vigorously shook his head", "no!" *Mr. Maida: Was it enough?* Gently, Jasmin pulled back, still observing Mr. Maida who was still faintly gasping for air. Suddenly, she prodded the scared grown-up man.

"You can chill, M. Why are you so stiff? Hahaha. Don't you know what a joke is?" Nobody laughed with her, only the terrified Mr. Maida who tightly hold onto his chest, his face pale.

"Haha, how right you are. Just a joke!" *Mr. Maida: Yes, I get at least one more day to live!* This heartrending and horror scene made the rest feel sorry for Mr. Maida. Some people

were even hiding their trembling hands behind their backs or under the table. Even Drin was slightly trembling. *Drin: Don't tell me this shit happens every day? I would prefer suicide over this torture. This is worse than in a horror movie!* Calmed down and reassured that Jasmin also had calmed down, Mr. Maida continued after 1min,

"A child was born, half darkborn and brightborn. But this wasn't the only affair. The monster king, an alpha werewolf, had an affair with a female human where a child was born too." *Drin: Are the rulers a bunch of cheaters?*

"And was she beautiful, this human?" Jasmin suddenly asked with the same penetrating tone and gaze she had some minutes ago. Mr. Maida answered reflexively,

"NO!" This probably sincere answer was enough to put Jasmin at ease. Mr. Maida, having escaped death twice today, went on, "Lucky for the father for the girl was a full-fledged werewolf, even though the mother was a human.

The cheating rulers had a lot of luck, because their original partners had died during the war and could never find out about the affairs. We found the children of each. The rulers had hidden them well. But this wasn't necessary anymore. Because these children carried the blood of the rulers, they were their rightful successors. They grew to great leaders.

By putting their blood in the energy threads and performing a spell, they were the only ones now of their race able to travel from their worlds to the others. The two rulers soon fell in love and made a child. Now they had lost any reasons to start another war. At this point, they lived in the monster world.

Some creatures with old wounds or the idea that they should rule over the human world, still existed. They weren't able to attack the rulers directly, but their child was still little and weak, a perfect target. Therefore, the rulers decided to hide their child from the public and I got the privilege to take care of the child.

The rulers were weird. They weren't able to decide on a name for the child. And because I couldn't figure out if this child was male or female, I called him, The." Suddenly, the people in the room busted into laughter.

"The? How innovative of you, boss" it came from a person. Everyone had something to comment on and even Jasmin was barely holding her mirth back by placing her hands on her mouth. Mr. Maida simply looked at his watch. Abruptly, Mr. Maida stood up and left the room. While he did, one person shouted after him,

"Where you going Mr. Maida?"

“I have to take a piss and maybe a break too, a long one. You should also take one.” *Mr. Maida: I still need to calm down from the confrontation with Jasmin!* With these last words, Mr. Maida left the room full of crazy people.

Endnote

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