

## SUPREME MAGUS

### Chapter 20 Break Ups

The original plan was to kill them all, erase the evidence and then make Orpal have an "unfortunate accident". As Lith calmed down, however, he realized that it was an idiotic plan full of holes.

"If five young men disappear suddenly in a sleepy village like Lutia, it is bound to cause a commotion. Also, Orpal knows they were here. Once he discovers they are nowhere to be found, he could come too close to the truth for comfort.

I don't want to give him any kind of leverage on me. There is also the possibility that these blockheads shared their plan with their siblings. Killing is the wrong answer here, too many things can go spiralling out of control. Worst of all, if I make Orpal disappear too, the whole family would worry and grieve for him. Most certainly I don't want to turn him into a f\*cking martyr! I want him to pay. To suffer for his whole f\*cking life!"

While in deep thought, Lith would release streams of lightning from his right hand, keep the spell active for a couple of seconds, then give his assailants a few moments of relief before zapping them again.

They had already lost control of their bladder and bowels multiple times. When they were not writhing in pain, they were sobbing and begging for mercy.

"I can't let off this trash easily either. Always remember to pause between lashes. The short interval without pain fills them of false hope that it's finally over, making the next hit more painful than the previous. To punish them is not enough, I want to break them!"

There were too many variables. Lith was sick of running circles, so he decided to resort to an modified version of his very first plan, back on Earth.

"Those guys were trash too. I wonder how they reacted after my death, when the photos got leaked all over the internet with their names tagged."

Lith had a cruel smile at the thought of his revenge, backstabbing them after so many years.

With a final spell, Lith made the five lose consciousness and started arranging their bodies with spirit magic.

"I must keep both spirit and fusion magic a secret, so I need to create a stage from which I could end up a winner with just normal magic. An encirclement is too much for a five-year old, I'll fan them out."

He put back the wooden stick in the hand of his owner, making sure it was smeared with blood.

Lith was arranging the final details, when he heard someone calling his name from afar.

"Sh\*t! I took too much time thinking. My family must have sent someone looking for me. This screws up a good part of my plan, dammit. I must play it by ear and hope they did not send Orpal, or it's going to get ugly."

Lith looked through a window, spotting Elina approaching Selia's house with long and fast strides.

"Good, it's mom! Rena or dad would have been better, but I can work with this."

When she got close enough, Lith responded to her call with a moan, slowly opening the door while begging for help.

Elina started running with all her strength, and once inside what she saw was bone chilling. There was blood everywhere, teeth on the ground and Lith was almost unrecognizable.

He was losing blood from multiple injuries. His face was swollen to the point that his eyes were barely visible amidst all the black and blue.

Lith was holding his left arm like it was hurt, and just by talking he could make her notice his bleeding gums and missing teeth.

"Mom! Mom! Thank the gods it's you." Lith voice was distorted by the injuries into a lisp. "I was so afraid they would get up before I could call for help. They tried to kill me, mom, and I have not the strength to fight anymore."

Elina quickly embraced him, feeling him yelp and shivering from the pain caused by even such a gentle touch.

"My baby! My poor baby. Who did this to you?" The two of them started to cry at the same time. Elina because she was scared to death, Lith because while in his mother's embrace he could finally allow himself to vent all his rage and fears.

"Orpal! It's all Orpal's fault! These are all his friends They even told me their plan when they thought I was about to die!"

Elina was shocked by those words, refusing to believe such a terrible thing. But those five really were Orpal's closest friends. One of them, Rizel, was even holding his grandfather's wooden stick, and it was stained with blood.

Elina looked at Lith's head, easily spotting the bruises and cuts shaped after the cane.

"Why would they assault you otherwise? And how could they possibly know that today Selia was out of town?" Elina thought out loud.

Among the sobbing and crying, Lith was inwardly smiling. Feeding her facts was a last resort, it would have a much deeper impact if she put the pieces together by herself.

"Can't you heal yourself, even a little bit?" Elina's voice was full of worry, her son's condition seemed dire. Lith was expecting this question.

"Now that I had the time to recover, I could. But I won't."

"Why?" That answer made no sense to her, Elina started worrying his injuries were affecting his mind.

"Because when you and dad decide what to do with Orpal, I want you to take a good look of what he did to me!" Lith screamed, coughing a mouthful of blood from a wound he had reopened on purpose.

"Orpal has always hated me! Always will! No matter if I help you all with chores or your health. He does not care how much game I bring to the table or money to our house, nothing is ever enough for him!" Lith kept screaming and sobbing.

"Am I such an awful son, such a terrible brother to deserve this?" Lith hugged her with all of his strength, bawling his eyes out.

Elina was at loss for words, but only for a moment. She held her son tightly, raising him up from the ground and carrying him back home.

Then she brought the whole family to Selia's house to let them witness the scene with their own eyes. The matter was too serious, she could not hide it from her children.

When Orpal saw Lith, he became pale as a ghost. Elina refused to call him by his name, and if glares could kill, he was certain that she would make him leave the fields feet first.

"What the heck went wrong? Those morons knew the plan! They had only to rough him up. Teach him respect and humility. But most importantly to force him to shut his f\*cking mouth up! Now my stupid parents will never let me hear the end of it."

And when he saw all the blood on the floor, with his friends still there and out cold, he felt his life falling apart.

As soon as Elina let him do it, Raaz embraced Lith before checking his conditions. After that he looked around the room, easily recognizing the five culprits.

"Rena, go call their parents. Take Tista with you, I don't want her to hear what I am about to say." Raaz was even paler than Orpal, clenching his fists so hard that they started to bleed.

Elina had whispered to him only three words after coming back with Lith.

"Orpal did it." In the beginning, he had refused to believe that one of his beloved children could do something like that, but the truth appeared so horrifyingly simple to his eyes.

No one outside of the family knew that Lith worked for Selia. No one else could possibly know that exactly on that day and time Lith would be left alone in Selia's house.

But the most painful and irrefutable truth was that no one but Orpal could possibly resent Lith so much. He barely knew anyone outside of his family and their closest friends.

Lith had always been working so hard to help all of them, especially Tista, that he never had the time to make friends or enemies.

Raaz felt those thoughts ripping his heart out of his chest, but he had to know.

"Did you do it?" Raaz looked Orpal straight in the eyes.

A terrible silence fell in the room, revealing the truth that Raaz was trying so hard to deny, looking for a possible alternative explanation.

But there wasn't any.

"How, how could you possibly do this to your brother?" Tears were streaming from his eyes.

"Dad, I swear, it's not like you think! I can explain!" Orpal mind was desperately trying to find a plausible excuse.

"Is there anything to explain?!?" Raaz roared out of anger.

"Aren't those your friends?"

"Yes, but..."

"It wasn't you telling them what to do? It wasn't you planning how, when and where to ambush Lith? Causing him to be almost beaten to the death? In the gods' name how could you possibly explain all that?"

"Because that wasn't the plan! They didn't listen to me, just like you! You never listen to what I say! You never let me have my way, always siding with Leech and the cripple. You are never on my side! Never!"

"They got carried away? Is that your explanation?!?" Raaz didn't know if to laugh or cry.

"Do you mean that ambushing and beating your brother, my son, is perfectly fine as long they do it with moderation?" He raised his fist, tempted to give Orpal a taste of his own medicine, but Elina stopped him.

"Too much blood has already been shed today. Don't do it. You'd only harm yourself, he is beyond saving." Elina was crying too, but her face and tone were stone cold. She had already made up her mind.

Raaz was too broken to stand anymore, he needed to sit down on a chair, weeping.

"You are right, my love. I have lost count of the times I have tried to make him understand that respect is something that you must give before receiving it yourself. That we were his parents, not his friends. We are supposed to help our children understand their mistakes, not enabling them. The gods know if I haven't tried to teach him that his siblings were not his servants, that a man's authority lies in the responsibilities he shoulders, not how strong he is. I know I have not been a perfect father, but I did the best that I could. I don't know what to do with him anymore, Elina." Raaz wiped his own tears, looking for his wife's support.

"I agree. Even now he doesn't show any remorse. He never loved his brother, stealing his food and calling him names even before Lith was able to walk. He is clearly unable to understand the enormity of what he did. I believe that if we allow this to continue, he will do it again. If not to Lith, to Tista. And I'm not going to let him doing more harm to our family."

She held Raaz's hand tight, searching for the strength she needed.

"I think we should disown him. Strip him of his name and report him together with his accomplices for attempted murder to the village militia."

"Thanks, my love." Raaz had no more tears to cry, his resolve steeled like his voice.

"I don't think I had in me the strength to say it."