

Chapter 2011

As she was struggling, Erwen tried to stand up. However, she coughed out a mouthful of blood instead.

After losing one drop of her Soul Blood, she felt incredibly weak.

Instinctively, Zeke reached out his hand to help her up.

Erwen's skin was so delicate and tender.

As soon as Zeke's hand came in contact with Erwen, she was thunderstruck. She immediately drew her arm back and blushed.

That was the first time her skin had ever come in contact with a man.

But she collapsed onto the ground again after shying away from Zeke's hand.

Zeke then forcefully grabbed her arm. "You're weak. Please don't force yourself. I'll bring you inside."

Erwen couldn't break free no matter how hard she tried to shake his hand off her.

The moment she felt his domineering attitude, Erwen had finally realized what it felt like to be a woman. It seems like I'm just a weak woman in front of Zeke after all.

Instead of letting Zeke drag her into the room, she protested. "I have to rescue Yazmin because she's in danger. Please let me go. I need to find Yazmin now."

Zeke let out a sigh. "Scrap that. I'll help you rescue Yazmin. Treat it as me returning a favor to you. Since she put her life at stake just to prove my innocence. I owe her that much.

Although Zeke didn't need her help. Erwen insisted on tagging along. She was too worried about Yazmin.

Her determination was unfaltering, so Zeke had to compromise. "How about this? Since you're too weak to walk. I'll piggyback you."

"No!" Erwen shook her head vigorously.

Since she never had any physical contact with the opposite sex before, she was already blushing uncontrollably when Zeke touched her arm just now

She could never allow Zeke to piggyback her. Helpless, Zeke had no choice but to comply.
"Okay, then. You can come along to rescue

Erwen looked at Mona with a concerned expression. "Mona, wait in the room, okay? I'll go and rescue Yazmin."

Mona nodded. "Okay."

After settling Mona down, Erwen was stumbling toward White Muraco Clan's underground cell.

Needless to say, her body was way too weak to stand, let alone walk.

After just a few steps, Erwen tumbled onto the ground once again.

Zeke then walked up toward her and sighed restlessly. "Hurry up! Quit dawdling! Yazmin's life is at stake!"

Erwen's face darkened upon hearing that. Is this man trying to piss me off? Judging by his facial expression, I'm sure he's making fun of me. Grandma was right about men. They're all trash!

Unwilling to give in, Erwen tried to stand up once again. Unfortunately for her, she failed. In the meantime, Zeke's patience was running thin. He pulled her up and put her on his back. "That's it! We're doing this my way. Otherwise, it'd be too late by the time you reach Yazmin."

Erwen mustered every single bit of strength she had left, but her frenzied struggling was to no avail.

Zeke was simply too powerful compared to her.

As she leaned onto Zeke tightly, she could feel her heart racing and face reddening by the second. She had never felt such emotion before.

Her nervousness was intensifying, and she could barely breathe.

Is this how it feels to be so close to a man? This feels so incredibly nice.

Since she had used up every ounce of her energy, she decided to just lean onto him and embrace the warmth.

However, their actions threw the crowd into a frenzy as they walked through the village.

"Isn't she Holy Maiden of White Muraco Clan? Not only is she on the back of a man, but the man is an outsider!" In the eyes of the conservative villagers of Muraco, her act was totally unacceptable.

"This is utter humiliation!" The crowd was displeased. Some of them had even tried to stop Zeke in his tracks.

Fortunately, Zeke was too fast for them. None of them could catch up to him.

Meanwhile, Yazmin was chained up in an underground cell of the White Muraco Clan by Ian and Ryan.

Chapter 2012

At that point, Yazmin had lost her will to live.

Since Peter had teamed up with Jeremiah and Bimble to go against me, I'm afraid this is the end for me. Today, I'll die for sure.

She then closed her eyes shut in despair.

The moment she closed her eyes, she felt a hand on her body.

In shock, she opened her eyes abruptly. To her dismay, she saw Ian and Ryan looking at her with lustful eyes while putting their hands on her.

Yazmin's mind turned abuzz. "Stop it! What do you think you are doing, perverts! Keep your hands off of me!" she roared.

Ian and Ryan burst into laughter. "Stop acting innocent, you whore! Don't you think we know what you're like? Weren't you trying to attract every man's attention with your skanky clothes? Haha! I bet you've been craving this! Don't worry, we'll surely satisfy all your needs today. We will let you experience ecstasy like never before."

"Ah!" Yazmin screamed at the top of her lungs. "B*stards! Get lost! Get away from me! Don't you guys know what you're doing is against the teachings and rules of the White Muraco Clan? Aren't you guys afraid the clan leader will come after you for this?"

To which Ian responded, "Don't worry about that. We'll torment you to your death before telling Jeremiah you've committed suicide to escape punishment. Haha!"

Upon hearing that, Yazmin was devastated. Who would've thought I'd die such a miserable death!

In the midst of her despair, she saw a figure barging in.

Before Ian and Ryan had time to react, the figure sent them flying.

Upon a closer look, Yazmin realized it was Zeke.

She was in utter joy. Finally, I'm safe!

At the same time, a myriad of questions swirled in her head. Did Zeke not kill Mona? Shouldn't he be locked up? Why is he here to save me?

"My apologies for being late," Zeke apologized before grabbing the chains used to shackle Yazmin.

Zeke then snapped the chains effortlessly.

Yazmin was finally free.

She shed tears of joy as she beamed. "Thank you! Thank you for saving me!"

Right then, Erwen was leaning against the wall as she walked in weakly. "Yazmin, a-are you okay?"

Yazmin couldn't help but rush toward Erwen and hold her in her arms.

She was sobbing her heart out. "Erwen, I thought I'd never be able to see you again! I thought I'd be dead for sure."

At that point, Yazmin completely lost it amid all the emotional stress she'd been through.

Heartbroken, Erwen held Yazmin tightly and comforted her.

That was when Zeke said, "Let's get out of here. We can't stay here for long." Indeed, that dark and eerie place was spiritually damaging for the human body. Besides, Erwen's weak state was only going to worsen if she stayed any longer.

Yazmin nodded and turned toward Erwen. "Stop crying, Erwen. Let's get away from here."

Erwen agreed.

With that, both of the ladies helped themselves up and were about to leave.

Ian and Ryan were infuriated. "Hey! You must be the new guy! You've just barged into a forbidden area! You must be punished!"

"As for you ladies, stop where you are! Yazmin is guilty! If she leaves, she's considered escaping from prison! That's a heinous crime!"

While Ian and Ryan were roaring, they both dashed toward Zeke and the ladies.

In response, Zeke casually kicked both of them and sent them crushing back into the cell.

Compared to the formidable GreatMarshal, both Ian and Ryan were nothing but weaklings.

Zeke had practically incapacitated them with that kick. After struggling for a few seconds, they coughed up mouthfuls of blood and remained on the ground.

Zeke then locked the cell from the outside and blurted, "Let's go."

Yazmin glared contemptuously at Ian and Ryan before thundering, "I can't just let them off the hooks so easily!"

Yazmin was fuming when she thought about how they had violated her just moments ago.

"I'm not done with them," Zeke quickly uttered.

Both the ladies were rather amused. "What do you mean by that?"

Zeke took a glance at Ian and Ryan and said, "See it for yourselves."

The ladies took a look into the cell, and they were puzzled because nothing looked out of the ordinary.

However, something suddenly happened.

Ian and Ryan's faces were flushing red.

Chapter 2013

Shortly after, they were both breathing heavily as their consciousness began to slip. While they were both complaining about how hot they were feeling, they took off their clothes piece by piece.

Within minutes, they both seemed like they had lost control over their own bodies. They started hugging and grinding each other while moaning loudly.

It was an extremely disturbing sight so much so that Yazmin and Erwen both looked away in disgust.

As every second went by, the two men moaned louder and the ladies blushed uncontrollably upon hearing that.

By then, Yazmin couldn't help but ask, "If I'm right, they've been bewitched with Lustful Worms. Zeke, did you do that?"

"Yes," Zeke answered.

Although both the ladies had seen that answer coming, they were stupefied upon Zeke's confirmation.

That was because they were both masters of casting spells in the White Muraco Clan. Yet, they didn't even notice it when Zeke bewitched the perverted men. Evidently, Zeke's capability was more advanced compared to Erwen and Yazmin.

Furthermore, the technique to bewitch someone with Lustful Worms was extremely hard to master. It was a technique even Yazmin had yet to master. However, Zeke managed it so effortlessly.

Who is he? Both the ladies were bewildered.

That prompted Yazmin to ask curiously, "May I know where you learned that, Mr. Williams?"

Zeke gave his words a brief contemplation. "To be honest, I can be considered as your grandmaster."

The ladies glared at Zeke with disbelief.

"Are you trying to fool us?" Yazmin queried.

"No, I'm telling the truth. Back then, I was a friend of your grandmaster. He taught me how to do that."

"Pfft!" The ladies rolled their eyes at Zeke before getting out of the underground cell.

Since Lustful Worms were much more powerful than any typical aphrodisiac, the perverted men were still lustfully having a go at each other when Zeke and the ladies left.

On their way back, Yazmin noticed how weak Erwen was. As a matter of fact, she couldn't even walk straight.

"Erwen, what's wrong with you? Why are you so weak?" she asked hastily. "Da*n it! Did Jeremiah and Bimble do something to you?"

Erwen took a deep breath before blurting, "Not now. I'll tell you when we get back."

"Okay!" Yazmin then tried to hold Erwen up to walk. However, her efforts were to no avail. Hence, Yazmin tried to piggyback her instead.

Needless to say, Yazmin didn't have the strength to do that. She could barely walk before putting her down again.

Zeke was their last resort. He had no choice but to piggyback Erwen back to their room.

Upon getting into the room, Yazmin was dumbfounded when she saw Mona. I thought Mona died!

At that moment, Mona seemed to be busy looking for someone. At the same time, she looked perfectly healthy and strong.

"Where is he? Why can't I find him?" Mona was mumbling softly as she flipped through the closets in the room.

Yazmin started rubbing her eyes thinking that she was hallucinating.

After finding out what she was seeing was real, Yazmin broke down in tears. "Mona, is that you? Is that really you? You're fine! This is awesome!"

Mona was jumping with joy when she saw Yazmin, and she lunged into her arms. "You're finally back, Yazmin! I was just about to go look for you!"

Yazmin pinched Mona's cheeks gently and exclaimed, "Yes, it's indeed you!"

"What are you doing flipping the things around, Mona?"

"I'm playing hide-and-seek with Mr. Wolf! He's too good at this. I've been looking for him for two minutes!" Mona answered.

Zeke was amused.

Mona meant Sole Wolf when she said Mr. Wolf.

Since Sole Wolf was an Ultimate Class warrior, there was no way Mona could ever find him.

Based on his capabilities, he could easily mess around with Mona's consciousness. Hence, she could never see him even if he was standing right in front of her.

Yazmin then asked cautiously, "How are you alive, Mona? How-" Before Yazmin could finish her sentence, Erwen cut her off with a cough.

Chapter 2014

A sudden realization then dawned upon Yazmin. Perhaps Erwen doesn't want Mona to know she was "murdered".

Mona looked at Yazmin curiously. "Yazmin, what did you mean when you asked how I am alive?"

To which Yazmin answered abruptly, "Oh? It's nothing. I was just wondering what you were doing in this room?"

Being an innocent child, Mona said truthfully, "I was already here when I woke up! I have no idea who brought me here."

Yazmin nodded. "You're sweating already, Mona. It's time to get some rest."

"No! I must find Mr. Wolf today. He told me he'd buy me candies when I find him!" Mona insisted.

Yazmin immediately shot Zeke a look.

It merely took Zeke a short while to locate Sole Wolf by using his energy. Apparently, Sole Wolf was sleeping soundly on the roof. It was impossible for Mona to find him there.

Upon locating Sole Wolf, Zeke released a wave of energy to deliver a message: Wake up, Sole Wolf. Let Mona find you.

Instantly, Sole Wolf was awakened and replied: Hey, Zeke. You're back! Okay. I'll reveal myself now.

Sole Wolf then jumped off the roof. As he was in mid-air, Mona saw him through one of the windows.

"I've found Mr. Wolf! I've found Mr. Wolf!" Mona was thrilled.

After Sole Wolf made his way into the room, Mona dashed toward him and grabbed the corner of his shirt. She was afraid he might disappear again.

Sole Wolf picked her up lovingly. "Well done, Mona! You've found me!"

"Mr. Wolf, you've promised to buy me candies! Now that I've found you, take me to get some candies!"

"Sure! I'll go get you all the candies in the world in the next couple of days." Actually, Sole Wolf could head out anytime he wanted.

However, he was worried that by doing so, he would penetrate the negative energy barrier. By then, Netherworld from the Black Muraco Clan would get suspicious.

"Okay, then. Whatever you say, Mr. Wolf. You must get me all the candies I want!" Mona didn't dwell on it further.

"Sure!" Sole Wolf smiled and gave her cheeks a pinch. Wow! What a chubby kid!

Zeke shot Sole Wolf a look hinting him to take Mona away. Sole Wolf took note of it instantly.

The moment Sole Wolf brought Mona into the room, Yazmin impatiently asked, "What exactly happened, Erwen? Tell me how Mona came back alive."

Erwen then told Yazmin the whole story. After that, Yazmin looked at Zeke strangely. "Who exactly are you? Not only you're good at casting spells, but you're also an amazing medical practitioner! How on earth did you manage to bring her back alive?"

"Actually, all I did was help Mona regain her energy a little. It was all thanks to Erwen's Soul Blood. It was her Soul Blood that brought Mona back," Zeke explained.

Of course, neither Yazmin nor Erwen believed him.

Both of them weren't strangers when Soul Blood was concerned. They knew Soul Blood would never be as miraculous as Zeke claimed. It was all on Zeke, definitely.

Although they were curious, they didn't question further after noticing that Zeke was reluctant to reveal more.

Yazmin let out a sigh and gazed toward Erwen worryingly. "Since the three drops of Soul Blood are our life force, I'm afraid it'd take you multiple years just to re-cultivate that one drop that you have lost. I'm so sorry, Erwen. I shouldn't have acted on my own. If I didn't lead Zeke to you, none of you guys would be away. None of this would've happened."

"Don't worry about it, Yazmin. I don't blame you because I know you did it out of kindness. So what if I lost a drop of Soul Blood? I'm still alive and kicking. I can always re-cultivate."

Chapter 2015

"But if you lack one drop of Soul Blood, you're no longer perfect in the eyes of the people. You wouldn't be regarded as a Holy Maiden anymore," Yazmin uttered.

Little did Yazmin know, Erwen felt rather relieved. "Holy Maiden? To be frank, I'm no longer interested in that. I just want to be a normal girl living a normal life."

As she was saying that, she couldn't help but spare Zeke a glance. Being Holy Maiden, I would never be able to get married. In that case, how could I ever marry Zeke?

When that thought entered her mind, she was shocked at herself. Da*n it! I'm Holy Maiden of the White Muraco Clan! How could I have such thoughts? I'm betraying the White Muraco Clan with such blasphemous thoughts!

She then shook her head vigorously to expel those thoughts of hers. However, they had now occupied her mind and were impossible to erase. I hope neither Zeke nor Yazmin noticed that.

"Don't worry. I have a way to help you recultivate your Soul Blood," Zeke assured. "With that, you can have your Soul Blood back within half a month."

Yazmin and Erwen were amused by his words.

"Zeke, do you have the slightest idea about what Soul Blood is? We need to cultivate them since we were young! In other words, it took us more than twenty years to get where we are today!" Yazmin mocked. "Do you think it's possible for us to do it in merely half a month? Well, unless you know about the Soul Blood Formula of the White Muraco Clan."

Zeke nodded with affirmation. "That's right. That's what I want to give both of you, the Soul Blood Formula."

"How is that possible?" Both the ladies could not believe it.

"The Soul Blood Formula is the White Muraco Clan's forbidden secret. Only the clan leaders have it. Even Holy Maiden has no right to ask about it! How could a foreigner like you know about the Soul Blood Formula? You're trying to fool us, right?"

"Well, you wouldn't know until you try it for yourselves." Zeke answered. "Bring me a pen and a piece of paper."

Yazmin and Erwen stared at each other confusingly for a moment upon hearing that. In the end, Yazmin brought what was required by Zeke.

Zeke started writing on the paper. Not long after, he wrote down the Soul Blood Formula on it.

The ladies took the paper and read it impatiently.

After a thorough read, they both ridiculed Zeke.

"The ingredients you wrote here are all the ordinary herbs which could be found all over Muraco. Are you saying that you could help us cultivate just by mixing these herbs together? Are you expecting us to believe you? You must take us for fools!"

"Go fetch me those herbs. Stop wasting time." Zeke's tone was authoritative.

Zeke's straight face got the ladies wondering if he was serious about knowing the Soul Blood Formula.

Regardless, Yazmin decided to go along with it and went out to get the required herbs.

The dried herbs sold everywhere in Muraco wouldn't work because Zeke needed fresh ones for the formula.

Hence, Yazmin had to go to the White Muraco Clan's herb plantation to gather the ingredients.

The herb plantation was a restricted area. Theoretically speaking, only the clan leader and Holy Maiden were allowed inside.

Fortunately for Yazmin, she was in charge of the herb plantation.

Hence, she could enter as well.

After an hour, she returned and placed all the herbs beside Zeke. "We have a pot to brew it. I'll go ahead with it."

Zeke waved his hands in dismissal. "The Soul Blood Formula might look simple, but there's a trick to brewing it. Not only is the intensity of fire crucial, but the ratio of the herbs needed is very important as well. I think it's better if I brew it myself."

With that, Zeke started brewing the Soul Blood Formula.

After an hour of complicated brewing, the Soul Blood Formula was close to completion. Erwen took a sniff of it, and she was thrilled.

Yazmin was confused when she saw her reaction. "What is it, Erwen?"

"I've taken the Soul Blood Formula before when the clan leader made it for me last time around. Funny enough, it smelled exactly like the one Zeke is brewing!" Erwen exclaimed. "It seems like he was telling the truth."

Chapter 2016

Yazmin was unconvinced. "Perhaps that's because Zeke is using similar herbs. We don't even know if it actually works."

Swiftly, their gazes fell upon Zeke.

While Zeke was focused on brewing, the ladies felt attracted to him.

When Zeke was done, he poured it into a bowl and gave it to Erwen. "Erwen, drink it while it's hot."

"Okay!" Erwen took the bowl and gulped it down.

After that, she shut her eyes and focused on how she felt.

Beside her, Yazmin was waiting impatiently. In the meantime, she noticed how Erwen's pale face was slowly turning pink. In fact, she looked a lot more energized. Does this mean it works?

A few seconds later, Erwen opened her eyes.

Yazmin asked anxiously, "How do you feel, Erwen?"

Erwen's voice trembled from excitement. "This is the real deal! This is indeed the Soul Blood Formula! I can feel it! I'm regaining my Soul Blood as we speak! At this rate, I'm sure it'd be perfect again within half a month."

Yazmin was getting excited as well. "That means you'd still be Holy Maiden!"

Amidst the excitement, they were also filled with doubt and surprise. How did he learn about the Soul Blood Formula as it's the White Muraco Clan's forbidden secret?

Indeed, only the clan leader of the White Muraco Clan was supposed to know of it.

At that moment, Zeke's identity was getting more mysterious in their eyes.

Yazmin didn't want to beat around the bush anymore. "Tell us honestly, Zeke. Who are you? How did you come across the Soul Blood Formula? Do you know even the Holy Maiden isn't allowed to know about it?"

"I've already told you before. Your grandmaster told me about it."

The ladies were having none of it. They felt as though he was just blatantly lying.

How could that be? Even if the White Muraco Clan's Grandmaster is still alive, he'd be so old by now. How would Zeke know him? That's just impossible.

In response, Zeke didn't try to defend himself even when the ladies distrusted him.

Instead, he asked, "Erwen, are you sure you don't have the antidote for Heart Eater?"

"The Heart Eater is the greatest poison in the White Muraco Clan. It is used for the protection of the clan. Hence, only the clan leader would have the antidote. I don't even have the right to know anything about it," Erwen replied candidly.

Seeing how Erwen looked incredibly calm, Zeke was convinced she didn't have the antidote.

Then, he took a pen and wrote down a list of herbs on a piece of paper and gave it to Yazmin. "Yazmin, could you help me gather these herbs?"

"What is this for?" Yazmin queried.

"The antidote for Heart Eater."

"What?" The ladies were stunned once again. Does he know the formula to make the antidote for Heart Eater as well?

This time around, they weren't as doubtful toward Zeke anymore. Since he had proved himself with the Soul Blood Formula, they wouldn't be surprised if he actually had knowledge of the Heart Eater's antidote.

Yazmin took a look at the list and said, "I can easily get all the herbs here except for Ricalica. I have no idea how to get that."

Little did she know, Zeke had anticipated that.

Ricalica was one of the ten rarest herbs there was. Muraco was the only place it could be found.

Even in Muraco, Ricalica was one of the most treasured herbs. It was understandable if Yazmin wasn't able to obtain it.

Back then, Zeke tried very hard to plant Ricalica at the herb plantation.

However, all his efforts were to no avail.

"Please don't tell me you can't find any Ricalica in the whole of Muraco." Zeke was not amused.

"I didn't mean that. All I'm saying is that Ricalica is regarded as the greatest herb here. Hence, it's only grown in Tier-3 Herb Zone. I'm only authorized to enter the Tier-1 Herb Zone," Yazmin explained.

A contemplative look crossed Zeke's face before he nodded. "Got it. I'm going out for a walk."

"Where to?" Yazmin anxiously asked.

"Nowhere in particular."

Yazmin and Erwen then exchanged a worrisome look.

Chapter 2017

They could actually guess where Zeke was heading to.

They were guessing that Zeke was going to the Tier-3 Herb Zone to get Ricalica.

Since Sole Wolf needed the Heart Eater's antidote to stay alive, Zeke needed it to make the antidote.

Actually, what Zeke was about to do was actually against the rules of the White Muraco Clan.

However, neither of the ladies stop him as they had decided to turn a blind eye to that.

Indeed, the ladies were right. Zeke was going to the Tier-3 Herb Zone to get Ricalica.

The Heart Eater was literally eating Sole Wolf alive.

If I don't get the antidote ready soon, Sole Wolf might even die.

Although Zeke didn't know where the White Muraco Clan's herb plantation was located, it didn't take much for him to find out.

Since she was just there earlier, all he had to do was retrace Yazmin's steps by using his energy.

As he was following the trails, he eventually ended up in the underground cell.

The exact place where Ian and Ryan held Yazmin up.

Zeke was puzzled.

The White Muraco Clan kept the herbs underground? How would they plant the herbs without sunlight? Could it be....

An exciting theory suddenly materialized in his mind.

"Help! Help!" As Zeke was walking, he heard a weak voice coming from the cell.

Indeed, Ian and Ryan were seeking help. They had finally regained their senses after getting bewitched by Zeke with Lustful Worms.

By now, they were both so drained they could die if left unattended.

Zeke ignored them and continued forward. After walking past all the underground cells, Zeke arrived at a cave.

The cave entrance was enormous.

It was about six meters high and eight meters wide.

In the middle, there was even an underground river.

At that moment, he felt a wave of faint spiritual energy coming from deep within the cave.

Spiritual energy? Did I just feel spiritual energy underground? It has to be from where the White Muraco Clan keeps the herbs. Wow! Is a herb plantation capable of emitting spiritual energy? It must be an incredible herb plantation! Besides, since they have a herb plantation underground, it could be the Melted Paradise!

There were a total of five herb plantations in Eurasia.

However, they were nothing like Melted Paradise. Hence, none of them was good enough to plant rare herbs.

They had no choice but to import from foreign countries.

If I can take over Melted Paradise, it would be so beneficial for the field of medical research in Eurasia! Who would've thought the puny White Muraco Clan had such a treasure! Zeke quickened his pace.

As he walked deeper into the cave, he felt the spiritual energy in the air intensifying. After walking for less than twenty minutes, Zeke's eyes lit up.

Along the way, all Zeke could see were rocks and stones. Now, Zeke was looking at green fields.

These are all herbs under the White Muraco Clan's care. None of these is among the ten rarest herbs. Zeke then grabbed a handful of soil and took a whiff. Although the soil had spiritual energy in it, it was too faint for a herb plantation.

This must be White Muraco Clan's Tier-1 Herb Zone. Zeke kept walking forward.

After walking through the Tier-1 Herb Zone.

He arrived at the Tier-2 Herb Zone.

Although Tier-2 Herb Zone smelled a lot more like a herb plantation. It was just an ordinary herb plantation. Nevertheless, there were still valuable herbs found on it. Since that wasn't what Zeke was looking for, he wasted no time and continued walking.

Suddenly, Zeke's heart started racing excitedly when he felt the spiritual energy in the air getting more and more intense. The spiritual energy up ahead is intense! This could be the Melted Paradise I'm looking for.

Since it was Zeke's first encounter with Melted Paradise, he was over the moon.

Zeke was walking deeper and deeper into the cave. All of a sudden, Zeke stopped in his tracks and was in a state of euphoria.

Before his eyes, it was a big field of lush plantations with the top ten rarest herbs.

Zeke could tell by the look that these herbs are of the premium quality.

I can find all the ten rarest herbs here! Judging by the quality, these are all much better than the ones found in foreign lands. Besides, what a big herb plantation this is! Indeed, Melted Paradise is impressive.

Hail Eurasia! Zeke was about to make his way inside.

Suddenly, a voice was heard from a deep corner in the herb plantation. "Stop right there!"

Chapter 2018

Zeke immediately stopped and looked in the direction where the voice came from. "Who is it? Show yourself!"

"Hmph! You're not worthy of seeing me!" the man scoffed. "This is a restricted area of the White Muraco Clan. No one is allowed to enter. Take another step forward, and I'll kill you."

"There's nowhere in Eurasia that I'm not allowed entry. Today, I'm determined to go wherever I want!"

With that said, Zeke strode toward the herb plantation.

The mysterious man was enraged. "Da*n it! You don't seem like you're from White Muraco Clan!"

"I'm not."

"You b*stard! How dare you step into White Muraco Clan's restricted area? I'll end your life today!"

After the man said that, Zeke abruptly halted in his tracks.

Suddenly, he felt breathless. At the same time, he felt like his internal organs were being punctured by a thousand needles, and the pain was overwhelming.

Zeke had to react swiftly. Sh*t! That man has cast a spell on me! But it's okay. I can easily counter it.

The mysterious man was heard chuckling coldly. "I've cast the spell of Lustful Worms on you! You're going to die after taking ten breaths. If you back away now, I can show you mercy by leaving your corpse unharmed. Otherwise, you're going to be my Sacred Beasts' lunch!"

"Oh, really? I'd like to see you do that." Then, Zeke focused his energy on cleansing all his vital organs.

Soon after, the energy forced out all the worms in all his organs through his mouth.

He spat a mouthful of blood. The worms were instantly cleared out.

"What was that?" The mysterious man was stunned. "You countered me with just one move? How did you do that?"

"I'm guessing you don't know anything about energy. do you?" Zeke asked frigidly.

"Energy?" The mysterious man sounded puzzled. It was obvious he had no idea what Zeke was talking about.

"Hmph! You're good with worms! Are you from the Black Muraco Clan? What are you doing in a restricted area in White Muraco Clan?"

At that point, Zeke continued walking forward. "Black Muraco clan is not worthy of me."

"Hmph! I don't care who you are! You must pay the price for barging in! Since my worms are useless against you, I'll unleash my Sacred Beasts upon you! Come on out!"

The mysterious man started whistling.

Suddenly, rustling noises were heard from the dark areas on both sides of Zeke. It sounded like there were things moving around.

Zeke remained calm and collected. I doubt the White Muraco Clan could ever do anything to harm me.

In a split second, two black panthers emerged from the dark.

Their eyes were clear shiny, and their bodies started to exude waves of murderous aura.

They were already incredibly terrifying even without making a move.

The black panthers growled lowly as they moved around the cave in the dark.

The mysterious man whistled once more. This time around, the black panthers were ready to pounce at Zeke.

"I wonder if my Sacred Beasts are worthy in your eyes!" the mysterious man exclaimed.

Zeke shook his head again. "I'm sorry. They're not!"

"Interesting!" the mysterious man exclaimed with a sarcastic tone. "Let me show you what my Sacred Beasts are capable of!"

"Charge!" the mysterious man commanded. The black panthers instantly dashed toward Zeke.

However, Zeke stood still without even taking a glance at either of the black panthers.

"Get lost," Zeke blurted casually.

Although it only sounded casual, Zeke had unleashed a domineering wave of energy within his voice.

Being the Great Marshal, Zeke's energy worked on animals too.

Chapter 2019

Immense pressure instantly engulfed both the black panthers. The murderous aura oozing out of them dissipated right away, and they fell down mid-air.

Seconds later, they became as harmless as kittens. Their eyes shone with so much fear that it was pitiful. They didn't even have the guts to move a muscle.

How is that possible?

The mysterious man gasped. "How did this happen? Why is it happening? D*mn it, wwhat did you do to them? And who are you?"

Zeke continued forging into the darkness after he dealt with the Sacred Beasts.

He heard the mysterious man's voice and knew that the guy was hiding in the darkness ahead.

"Stop right there. Do not enter! This is the restricted area of the White Muraco Clan, and no one is allowed to enter," roared the mystery man nervously.

Surprisingly, Zeke actually paused and frowned. He said, "That's strange. The scent you exude is... familiar. Is that Les' scent?"

"Oy, are you related to Les?"

Curious, the mysterious man asked, "Les? Who is that?"

Zeke replied, "Leslie Gillan."

The mysterious man was infuriated and roared, "He is the elder of the White Muraco Clan and my master. How dare you address him so casually? That is a sin!"

Zeke replied, "Oh, so you're Les' apprentice? Wait, that means you're the clan leader.

"The White Muraco Clan is in grave danger, and you are the clan leader. Yet, you are hiding here like a coward? Man, Les really wasted his time training you."

The mysterious man refuted, "Shut up. You're the coward here. I am not hiding, I am... preparing.

"Who are you anyway? How do you know our elder?"

Zeke replied, "Oh, Les and I are close friends. We go way back."

The mysterious man cussed and demanded, "Shut up. Stop lying. Our elder is over a hundred years old, and you are too young to be his pal."

Zeke replied, "Oh, you don't trust me? Then please allow me to show you some evidence."

As Zeke spoke, he retrieved a jade pendant from his possession and tossed it into the darkness.

A series of rustling suggested that the mysterious man had picked the pendant up.

Moments later, he exclaimed, "This is the elder's jade pendant. It's his pendant!"

"This is his favorite jade and he always has it with him. H-How did you end up with it?" Zeke replied, "What do you think? Your elder gave it to me."

He was actually lying about that. Leslie didn't actually give the jade pendant away as a gift.

Years ago, Zeke saw that jade pendant and thought it looked great, so he asked Leslie for it. Leslie refused to give the pendant away, so Zeke beat the old man up and stole the pendant.

Naturally, Zeke wasn't going to tell the clan leader that story.

The clan leader cautiously asked, "Some time ago, I heard the elder mentioning a good friend he had known for years... May I know your name?"

Zeke answered, "My name is Zeke Williams."

"Mr. Williams!" said the clan leader who seemed a little excited. "Then I'm right. You're his friend."

A series of rustlings later, the mysterious man emerged from the darkness.

The guy had wrinkles all over and a head of white hair. He was so old that he looked as though he was older than the elder.

That surprised Zeke. He couldn't quite figure out why the guy standing in front of him was that old.

The clan leader finally left the darkness and revealed himself before kneeling in front of Zeke without hesitating.

"I am the current clan leader of the White Muraco Clan, Andres Muraco. It's a pleasure to meet you, Elder."

Zeke was a friend of the clan elder, so it was only right that Andres addressed Zeke as his elder.

Zeke nodded and replied, "Hmm, you may rise."

Andres struggled and swayed as he got up.

He couldn't stand firmly and had to lean on the wall to support himself off the ground. Zeke asked, "I have a question for you. The Black Muraco Clan is bullying the White Muraco Clan. Why are you, the clan leader, cowering over here when you're supposed to protect your people out there?"

Andres sighed deeply and answered, "Elder, that is precisely why I'm here. My being here is the only way to protect the White Muraco Clan."

"What do you mean?" asked Zeke.

Chapter 2020

Andres didn't answer that question. Instead, he asked, "Elder, do you know about the Progenitor of the White Muraco Clan?"

Zeke nodded and replied, "Yeah, I know about it."

"The Progenitor is said to be the ancestor of all cursed parasitic worms, and it determines the fate of all the other cursed parasitic worms."

"If the Progenitor dies, all other cursed parasitic worms raised by the White Muraco Clan will die as well. Similarly, if the Progenitor thrived, the other cursed parasitic worms will grow well too."

Andres nodded and replied, "That's right."

"A few days ago, I realized that someone had gravely wounded the Progenitor, and it is barely surviving. I can't afford to let all other cursed parasitic worms die, so I have to heal the Progenitor. That is why I have been spending all my time here caring for it."

Huh?

Curious, Zeke asked, "The Progenitor is, in essence, the most important asset of the clan, and you've set up an incredible security system here. It should prevent any average warrior from breaking in."

"Who on earth would have broken through all the traps and gotten to the Progenitor?"

Andres shook his head and replied, "I'm trying to figure that out too, but my investigation was fruitless."

"The culprit is extremely cautious and didn't leave any clue behind."

Zeke then asked, "Let me ask you something, then. A few days ago, a group of men joined forces with the Black Muraco Clan. I'm sure you are aware of that, right?"

Naturally, Zeke was referring to the Netherworld.

Andres nodded and replied, "Yeah, I know about that."

"As soon as those men went over, the Black Muraco Clan began poisoning the villagers in the Village of Livestock.

"Even now, I suspect those men are too powerful and had forcefully occupied the Black Muraco Clan. That is probably why the Black Muraco Clan is working for those men."

Zeke replied, "Those men are from an organization known as Netherworld. They are extremely powerful, and a few among them are as powerful as I am."

Andres was surprised to hear that. He thought Zeke was ridiculously powerful because the latter had managed to scare the Sacred Beasts away with just a howl.

I can't believe that a few of those men are as strong as Zeke... I guess that means they really are powerful.

Zeke then asked, "Is it possible the men from Netherworld are the ones who wounded the Progenitor?"

Andres replied, "I suspect that is the case as well, but I have no evidence to back my words, so it didn't feel right to judge.

"Also, I can't find any motive. Why would they want to hurt the Progenitor of the White Muraco Clan? Are they trying to destroy the clan? That didn't seem like the case. After all, they have nothing against us, and we've never met before..." Zeke said, "Their objectives aren't something most can understand, so let's put that aside for now. Take me to the Progenitor. Who knows? Maybe I can cure. "

Andres grinned bitterly.

Zeke definitely knows our elder, but he doesn't have the elder's skill, so how can he heal the Progenitor? The Progenitor is one of the most complex organisms in the world, so it's likely even the elder can't heal the Progenitor completely.

However, he has already asked to take a look, so it'd be rude not to let him try. Andres felt as though his hands were tied, so he nodded and led the way.

Andres lit up the torch inside the cave and illuminated the place.

After that, he led Zeke into a separate room within the cave.

That was where Zeke saw the Progenitor.

Zeke had only heard about the Progenitor from the elder of the White Muraco Clan, so that was his first encounter with the worm.

The Progenitor was almost as thick and as long as a human arm. It had a shiny exterior that made it look like a piece of jade.

It also exuded a mild aura that seemed ever so holy.

Wow! No wonder it is known as the ancestor of all parasitic worms.

Unfortunately, there was an enormous cut on the Progenitor's back, and Zeke could sense the Progenitor's life force oozing out of that wound.

The Progenitor was barely hanging on to its very weak life force at that moment, and it seemed as though it might die soon.

Andres sighed and said, "Its wound was even worse off earlier. If I hadn't used Soul Blood in time, it would likely have already..."

Hmm...

Zeke turned to Andres and asked, "Are you using your own Soul Blood to treat the worm?"

Andres nodded and replied, "Yeah. Given its current state, Soul Blood is the only way to save it."

Zeke further questioned, "How many drops of Soul Blood did you use?"

Andres answered, "Two."

Zeke murmured, "Ah, is that why you're so weak? Because you sacrificed two drops of Soul Bloods?"

Chapter 2021

Andres sighed and replied, "Yeah, it is. Truth is, I am only forty years old."

He had lost two drops of Soul Blood, and that caused him to age forty years in a matter of days.

If Andres used another drop of Soul Blood, he would definitely die.

Zeke asked, "So I guess you were planning on sacrificing your life for the Progenitor, huh?"

Andres remained quiet. His silence was basically admitting to it.

Zeke replied, "Ah, fine. I'll help you cure the Progenitor."

Andres grinned bitterly and pointed out, "Mr. Williams, only the Soul Blood of a member of the White Muraco Clan can save the Progenitor. You are not a clan member, so I'm guessing you've never cultivated it before.

"Even if you have, it wouldn't help. The Progenitor will only react to the clan leader's Soul Blood."

Zeke refuted, "There will always be a way around everything."

He retrieved the jade pendant from Andres and placed it on the Progenitor.

The elder of the White Muraco Clan had kept the jade pendant with him for almost a hundred years. Hence, the jade pendant contained the elder's powerful aura.

Years ago, the elder of the White Muraco Clan used his own mental energy to help the Progenitor grow. That meant the elder's aura would be the best cure for the Progenitor.

Unfortunately, it was extremely difficult to use the aura trapped in that pendant. Andres definitely didn't have the skills to do so.

Zeke, however, pushed his energy into the jade pendant and overflowed it until the elder's aura, which was trapped within, seeped out of it. Slowly but surely, the aura fell into the Progenitor.

It healed the wounded Progenitor at an incredible rate.

The Progenitor was recovering so quickly that even the naked eye could see the change happening.

Its body glowed brighter, and its holy aura went from dwindling to brimming. It didn't take long before the worm opened its beady eyes as well.

Andres was so shocked that he dropped his jaw upon seeing it.

He cured it. Mr. Williams actually cured the Progenitor, and he made it look so easy. Holy moly! The Progenitor also looks much healthier and livelier than it used to be. This is so amazing. It's a miracle. How did Mr. Williams do it? Where did he learn to do that? Now that I think about it, the guy is young, but our elder regarded him as a close friend. I should've known that means he is not an ordinary man.

Just then, Zeke retracted his hands quickly and cursed aloud. "Hey!"*

Andres's heart jumped, and he quickly asked, "What's wrong, Mr. Williams?"

Zeke slapped the Progenitor. Naturally, he did so lightly because the worm would've died if he had slapped for real.

"I saved that f*cking idiot's life, and it bit me in return! How ungrateful!" ...I LTE +10 pearls

Huh?

When Andres heard what had happened, he became even more astonished. He knelt down right away.

"I, the current clan leader of the White Muraco Clan, shall greet you, Elder. May you live a long and fruitful life."

Zeke waved his hand dismissively and said, "You don't actually need to call me Elder. I may be friends with the elder of your clan, but we're not the same person."

"No, you don't understand," replied Andres. hurriedly. He explained, "Mr. Williams, as of now, you are an elder of the White Muraco Clan, and we will serve you for all eternity."

Zeke asked, "Huh? What do you mean?"

Andres immediately said, "The Progenitor bit you earlier, but it wasn't being hostile. It was actually marking you as its master.

"Hence, you are its master now, and our clan's rule dictates that the worm's master will be regarded as our elder.

"That, in turn, means you are now our elder."

Zeke was exasperated after hearing what Andres said. "That rule is so ridiculous. What if the Progenitor bit a random three year-old? Are you guys going to regard that kid as your elder, too?"

Andres replied, "You are unaware of this, Elder, but the Progenitor is naturally proud and holy. It won't take just anybody as its master.

us. "That is why it hadn't chosen a master, even though our last elder had passed some time ago. All previous clan leaders, including myself, failed to impress it or get it to bite

"It had been decades since it last took anyone as its master, and you are the one it has chosen!"

Chapter 2022

Zeke asked, "Wait, how do you know that bite isn't hostile? What if it never meant to take me as its master and was only biting me to hurt me?"

Andres replied, "When the Progenitor accepts someone as its master, it would communicate with its master via telepathy.

"You can try communicating with the Progenitor via thoughts. If I'm right, you should be able to hear its thoughts."

worm. Zeke was instantly intrigued. He immediately tried to communicate with the

As promised, he heard a response.

A girl's baby voice popped up in Zeke's mind. "Thank you, Master."

It seemed that Progenitor had already grown to be a spiritual beast and could communicate with mankind.

That trait was similar to Tiger Lord. Zeke turned to Andres and asked, "The Black Muraco Clan is battling the White Muraco Clan, and your clan is in danger.

What will you do about it?"

Andres gritted his teeth and said, "We will never bow down to the Black Muraco Clan. I, Andres Muraco, will fight until my last breath, and our clan will fight, even if only one of us is left."

Zeke dissed. "Seriously? You are drained. and ridiculously weak now, so how are you. going to fight the Black Muraco Clan?"

Uh...

Andres sighed.

Yeah, he's right. For now, I am too weak and no better than a cripple. There is no way I can fight against the Black Muraco Clan in this state.

Zeke tapped his shoulder to offer some comfort, then said, "Stay here and rest well. Just leave everything to me. I am the elder now, so naturally, I have an obligation to help everyone."

Andres was ecstatic to hear that. He went down on his knees and said, "Thank you. Thank you for your help. The clan and I shall be eternally grateful for it."

Zeke requested, "By the way, do you have some Ricalica with you? If so, please get one for me.

"Also, I'll need to use the Melted Paradise herb plantation for a while. It's alright if I grow some rare plants there. right?"

The White Muraco Clan discovered and owned the Melted Paradise herb plantation. Hence, it wasn't appropriate for Zeke to use his title as the Great Marshal to gain access to it. That would just be barbaric and was unfair to the White Muraco Clan.

That was why Zeke requested the use of that herb plantation as an elder instead.

In a way, the plantation was one of the reasons why Zeke agreed to be an elder of the White Muraco Clan.

Oh, you're helping us deal with the Black Muraco clan, so that is no trouble at all, thought Andres.

He was quick to agree. "Of course it's alright. You are the elder of the White Muraco Clan, so that herb plantation belongs to you, anyway."

Zeke replied, "Alright, then go grab a stalk of Ricalica for me."

Andres cautiously asked, "Err... Elder, may I ask a question? Ricalica's only use is to create the cure for Heart Eater. Did our clan members poison you?"

Zeke replied, "No, my subordinate is the one who is poisoned. I need Ricalica to create an antidote for him."

Andres offered, "The cure for Heart Eater must be prepared using a unique and troublesome method. Should I prepare it in your stead?"

Zeke shook his head and replied, "There's no need for that. I can do it on my own."

Oh well, I tried.

Andres swayed and walked to the deeper sections of the herb plantation. He returned soon after with a stalk of very healthy-looking Ricalica.

"Elder, this is Ricalica you asked for. Please keep it safe."

Zeke accepted Ricalica and tossed a red pill over in return.

"This will help you recover. Take it as soon as you can."

Andres replied, "Thank you. Elder."

Zeke didn't say much else. He simply turned around and left with the stalk of Ricalica.

Andres, on the other hand, stared as Zeke walked away. The former's eyes slowly became watery.

"The White Muraco Clan has seen hope now. We'll be safe. Thank the heavens for this."

Zeke walked all the way back to his room. He had just gotten close when he heard Sole Wolf's agonizing scream.

"Oh sh*t, it hurts. Gah, my heart is being torn apart.

"What the f*ck? Which a*shole came up with the idea to set up a trap using Heart Eater? Have that jerk show up right now. I will kick his a*s.

"F*ck! F*ck! F*ck! If I survive this, I will freaking kill all the d*mn worms in the entire world. This is just too much!"

Zeke's expression stiffened ever so slightly, and he rushed into the room. Inside, the almighty Sole Wolf had turned into a cuss-hurling machine and was rolling on the floor while in pain.

He shattered every smashable item in the room and made a huge mess.

That showed just how much it hurt when Heart Eater was active. Even an Ultimate Class warrior was in so much pain that he was cursing.

Both Erwen and Yazmin panicked when they saw that.

Chapter 2023

Yazmin cooed, "Calm down, Wolf. Holy Maiden is working on the antidote now, and it will be ready soon. It'll cure you and take the pain away."

Sole Wolf shouted, "Stop lying to me! I know you don't have the antidote."

"The only thing left to do is to bring the b*stard who designed that trap over. Let me kill that f*cker."

Yazmin insisted, "We may not have the antidote, but we have something to ease the pain temporarily. Please wait a little longer. The medicine will be ready soon."

Erwen busied away at the side to work on the medicine.

When she saw Zeke entering, she hurried over and whispered, "Thank the heavens you're back, Mr. Williams."

"Things are a little troublesome now. We ran out of the herb needed to ease the pain caused by Heart Eater. That changes things. We have to give him the antidote soon or he will die of pain." Zeke waved his hand and replied, "It's fine. I'll create the antidote for him now."

Erwen and Yazmin frowned. "Mr. Williams, d-did you get your hands on any Ricalica?"

Zeke took Ricalica out of his possession as though he was putting on a magic show, but he didn't think much of it. He simply said, "Yeah, I got it. Why?"

What the hell?

Both Erwen and Yazmin dropped their jaws as their eyes shone with disbelief.

T-That's Ricalica. It's the real deal. How did he get White Muraco Clan's most precious plant?

Only the clan leader had the authority to grant someone Ricalica, and he had to ask for permission from everyone in the village before doing so.

Rumor has it that the place where Ricalica is planted is crawling with poisonous worms and guarded by two Sacred Beasts. How did he get past both traps?

Zeke grinned calmly when he saw their exaggerated expressions.

Oh, getting Ricalica is nothing. I even got myself promoted as the elder of the White Muraco Clan

Zeke didn't bother wasting his time with idle chit-chats. He started working on the antidote right away.

The way he kept the fire burning at the precise temperature, the ratio of the herbs he used, the way he stirred the concoction... Everything was perfect.

Erwen and Yazmin bulged their eyes. They didn't even blink, and it looked as though they were trying to learn how to make the antidote.

However, they gave up on that in the end.

Everything was too complicated and troublesome for them to follow or memorize the steps.

It didn't take long before the antidote was ready. Zeke took it to Sole Wolf right away.

"Hey, Sole Wolf. Drink this."

At that moment, the poison had already tortured Sole Wolf to the extent where he was barely alive. He didn't even have the energy to cuss anymore and was curled up on the floor.

Zeke fed Sole Wolf the antidote.

After taking the antidote, Sole Wolf stiffened on the floor. He suddenly stopped trembling, but he also stopped breathing.

Huh? What's going on? Did Sole Wolf die? Is something wrong with the antidote I fed him? thought Zeke as he frowned.

Erwen and Yazmin were scared mindless as well. They didn't know what to do.

Yazmin crouched down and checked Sole Wolf's breathing. Seconds later, she trembled and said, "Oh no, he has stopped breathing."

"What do we do? What do we do?"

Mona, who was sleeping, heard the commotion and hurried over to see what was going on. She asked, "What's wrong? Why is Mr. Wolf lying on the floor?"

When Mona realized that Sole Wolf had died, she bawled and screamed, "No, Mr. Wolf. You can't die."

"Wake up. You promised you'd buy me candies."

Erwen quickly picked Mona up and cooed, "Don't cry, Mona. Don't worry. Mr. Wolf might still wake up."

Mona reacted by struggling out of Erwen's embrace. The child hugged Sole Wolf and kept shaking the guy. "Wake up, Mr. Wolf. You're scaring me. Wake up... boohoo..."

Erwen turned to Zeke right away and suggested, "Mr. Williams, let's take Sole Wolf to the herb plantation right away. That place is filled with a spiritual energy that might help save him."

Zeke, however, waved his hand dismissively and said, "There's no need for that. He's already dead, so we might as well just bury him."

Huh?

Both Yazmin and Erwen were stunned upon hearing that.

They hadn't known Zeke for long, but they could tell that the two men were close friends.

Chapter 2024

They must be close friends. Why else would Zeke risk his life just to get an antidote for Sole Wolf? So why is he suddenly giving up on saving the guy's life now? He's not even a little sad about burying his friend... This is strange.

When Mona heard what Zeke said, she cried even louder and demanded, "No, you can't bury Mr. Wolf!

"Please, please save Mr. Wolf. I promise I will share all my candies with you if you do that."

Mona's innocent and teary eyes gripped Zeke's heart.

He picked the girl up and cooed, "Okay, okay. I'll do as you ask. I'll save him right now."

After saying that, Zeke swung his leg over and kicked Sole Wolf's stomach mercilessly to send him flying.

Both Yazmin and Erwen were flabbergasted. Holy... Even if Sole Wolf had somehow survived, that kick would've sent what's left of his soul right to heaven.

Mona was stunned as well.

Didn't he say he will save Mr. Wolf? Why is he going back on his words now?

The girls never expected it, but Sole Wolf moaned in pain as soon as he landed back on the ground.

"Zeke, isn't that a little harsh? You almost killed me."

Zeke grinned and replied, "Serves you right for playing dead in front of me."

Sole Wolf staggered over and commented, "Fine, you win this time, Zeke. How did you know that I was faking it?"

Zeke glared and pointed out, "Your acting sucks. You are an Ultimate Class warrior, so there is no way you'd die lying down like this."

Sole Wolf replied, "Gah, I knew it. I can never fool you." Both Yazmin and Erwen were exasperated and annoyed. "That was all an act?"

What the hell is wrong with that guy? How can he do something like that at a time like this?

Sole Wolf chuckled. "Awh, I was just playing with Mona. Did I scare you, Mona?"

"Didn't you say that you won't cry, even if I drop dead? Why were you crying earlier?"

Mona had stopped crying at the time. She stared at Sole Wolf in astonishment because she couldn't register the sudden change.

Sole Wolf hugged Mona lovingly and suggested, "Mona, how about you just take me as your godfather? I'll open up a candy store for you, so you can have as many candies as you'd like."

Mona came back around at that moment. She cried even louder and protested, "Mr. Wolf is a bad person. You're not supposed to lie to children. Mona will not play with you anymore. You're a meanie."

Sole Wolf panicked right away because he saw how Mona was crying endlessly.

Hence, he quickly went over to soothe Mona.

Unfortunately, she was truly terrified. earlier, so she wouldn't stop crying, regardless of how Sole Wolf soothed her.

In the end he had no choice but to turn to

Erwen and Yazmin for help. "Hey there. beautiful ladies. Erm... Will you help soothe her? The kid is crying so much. I'm sure you're heartbroken too, right?"

Both Erwen and Yazmin ignored him.

They were going to let the guy clean up his own mess.

That, in turn, gave Sole Wolf a headache.

Everything was still in a mess when an angry roar came from the other room. "Oy, Erwen. Zeke, get your butts over right now!"

Erwen turned pale and said, "Oh no, that's Mr. Jeremiah!"

Yazmin frowned and murmured, "What is he doing here?"

Erwen replied, "I guess he's here to deal with the matter involving Cain.

"Okay, just keep your heads down and follow my lead later. I'll deal with them.

"I am the Holy Maiden, after all, so I have some influence over the White Muraco Clan."

Everything was decided then.

They followed Erwen out of the room.

To their surprise, Jeremiah wasn't the only one there. Almost every resident of the White Muraco Clan was there.

They had the place so heavily surrounded that it was impossible to break through.

Erwen was worried sick, but she pretended to be calm.

"Mr. Jeremiah, what is the meaning of this? Why have you surrounded Holy Maiden?"

Jeremiah sighed and replied, "Let's not play this game, Holy Maiden. I'm sure you know why we're here."

Erwen tested the waters and asked, "Is this about Cain?"

Chapter 2025

Jeremiah nodded and answered, "That's right.

"I'll be honest with you, Erwen. He led a group of warriors from the Black Muraco Clan and barred the village entrance.

"They have sent their ultimatum. If we don't hand you and Zeke over, they will attack and burn everything down. They threatened to destroy the White Muraco Clan and claimed they will drive us to extinction.

"I'm sure you know the Black Muraco Clan has what it takes to do just that. That is why, for the sake of the White Muraco Clan, you must take Zeke over and surrender to them."

Erwen's heart gripped once more. The situation was worse than she imagined.

Still, she didn't show anyone how she felt "Mr. Jeremiah, there is no need for you to worry about that. I will talk to Cain in person and deal with the issue later. "Everyone should head home now for there is no need to create a mess."

Jeremiah sighed and replied, "Erwen, let's put a stop to all this nonsense. Don't make a fool out of yourself in front of everybody, okay?"

"I know you will flee the place with Zeke as soon as we go home. After that, we will be left behind and clean up your mess after that.

"I will take you and Zeke to the Black Muraco Clan today. If you refuse to comply... Well, just don't blame us for being cruel."

Oh my gosh, this is hilarious.

Zeke, who had been quiet the entire time, suddenly spoke up. In a sarcastic tone, he said, "Wow, a group of powerful men is sacrificing a young lady to save themselves... How noble of you."

Shut up!

Jeremiah got agitated and refuted, "You have no right to say anything or share your opinion. You're the reason we're in this mess, so you must pay for it!

"I'm warning you. You better surrender

quietly to the Black Muraco Clan. If you don't, we will kill you and present your severed head to the Black Muraco Clan to beg for their forgiveness."

Haha, this is fun!

Sole Wolf stepped up and challenged, "Oh, getting violent, are we? Well, bring it on.

"It's been so long since I fought to my heart's content. Ah, I'm so glad that I can flex my muscles today!"

His bloodlust and aggressive style revealed itself right away.

Zeke immediately ordered, "Sole Wolf, you are not to attack without my orders."

If that guy starts throwing punches, everyone here will either die or become a cripple! Zeke was the elder at that moment, and he would need the White Muraco Clan's help to defeat the Black Muraco Clan. Hence, he didn't want anyone to get hurt.

Sole Wolf, however, was irritated with that order. He complained, "Zeke, you can't hog the glory like this. You should at least give me a shot at being the hero!"

Zeke glared over and replied, "My order remains."

Sole Wolf seemed a little angry when he glared at Zeke. However, the former didn't have the guts to further complain, so he politely murmured a simple affirmative response.

Jeremiah chuckled. "I know you're a powerful fighter, Zeke Williams, but do you really think we'd solve this problem with our fists?"

"Only barbarians would do something like that.

"Today, I will use our Life-Bound Worm to attack you. Boys, get in position."

The villagers began working as soon as Jeremiah finished talking.

They formed teams of five and stood in the right position to have the entire place surrounded.

Seeing that troubled Erwen. She could no longer hide her worry, and horror bubbled to her face.

"A-Are you in the Myriad Worm Formation?"

Jeremiah replied, "That's right.

"You are one of us, Erwen, so I'm sure you know just how powerful this formation is. No one will survive once we activate it.

"You know what you should do now, right?"

Erwen reprimanded, "Mr. Jeremiah, this formation is banned, and only our clan leader can authorize one to be formed.

"How can you take matters into your own hands and set it up without permission? Aren't you worried about the clan leader putting the blame on you?"

Jeremiah replied, "This is a unique situation. The clan leader is not here, and you have conspired with an outsider to go against the White Muraco Clan. Hence, you are no longer worthy of the position of Holy Maiden, and that means I am the interim boss now. Thus, I can definitely authorize using this formation on behalf of the clan leader.

"Besides, I don't care about the potential punishment. If it means the White Muraco Clan will be protected, then I will gladly accept any punishment.

Erwen tilted her head down. At that moment, she knew that she wouldn't be able to get out of that sticky situation unscathed.

Chapter 2026

Finally, she steeled her heart and said, "Okay, Mr. Jeremiah. I'll give you my word. I'll bring Mr. Williams to surrender to the Black Muraco Clan."

Mr. Jeremiah scoffed, "Now that's a smart choice."

However, Zeke spoke suddenly. "I'm sorry, Erwen. The word surrender doesn't exist in my vocabulary. I'm afraid I can't go with you to surrender to the Black Muraco Clan. Don't worry. I'll make sure all of you won't be harmed today."

Hearing that, Erwen explained hurriedly, "Mr. Williams, you're not a part of the White Muraco Clan. You have no idea how scary Myriad Worm Formation is. When it is summoned, people of the White Muraco Clan will activate their Life-Bound Worm that'll form resonations with Progenitor. Once that happens, Progenitor's consciousness will be added to Life-Bound Worms. With the great number of LifeBound Worms and Progenitor's consciousness, they'll work seamlessly with each other. Nothing will be able to defeat them. No matter how great a person's physical strength is, it'll be insignificant when they're faced with Myriad Worm. Formation."

Upon hearing that, Zeke chuckled.

Truth was, the key to Myriad Worm Formation was Progenitor.

However, at that moment, he was already the owner of Progenitor. Hence, they were basically trying to use Progenitor to attack its owner. That was literally the biggest joke on earth he had ever heard of.

When Erwen saw him laughing, she could not help but doubt herself. Not only is Mr. Williams not afraid, but he's also laughing. Did I not explain it clearly or did he misunderstand?

Zeke waved his hands and said, "Bring it on, then. Let me see how powerful Myriad Worm Formation is."

Erwen was dumbfounded. "Mr. Williams, please reconsider-"

Zeke assured, "Don't worry. I know what I'm doing."

Jeremiah snickered. "Wow. You're really fearless, aren't you? Very well. If that's what you want, I shall fulfill your wish. Folks, attack!"

Seeing the matter had no room for retreat, Yazmin grabbed Erwen and Mona. "Hurry. Let's go back into the room. It'll be able to keep out the worms for the time being. We'll think of a solution once we're in there. There must be a way out. There must be—"

However, Zeke said, "There's no need for that. I can protect all of you."

Sole Wolf then yelled, "Since Zeke has already guaranteed, then there's no need for all of you to worry. All you have to do is just watch them being humiliated."

They've lost it. They really have lost it!

Yazmin realized that Zeke and Sole Wolf could not be persuaded. Furthermore, they were running out of time. Thus, they had no choice but to hide in the room first. Once Myriad Worm Formation was activated, it would launch attacks on anyone indiscriminately. This meant that Yazmin and the girls would be attacked by the parasitic worms, too.

Buzz! Buzz!

Countless buzzing sounds lingered in everyone's ear as though there was a helicopter circling above them.

Truth was, it was the sound of vibrations produced by the White Muraco Clan's LifeBound Worms.

Within seconds, the vibrations combined with Progenitor to form resonations. Immediately after that, Progenitor's consciousness was transferred onto the countless cursed parasitic worms.

Of course, Zeke instantly used his consciousness to communicate with Progenitor.

Although they could only perform simple communications, Zeke was still able to give his complete order to Progenitor. Attack the elders! They must not be forgiven!

As soon as Progenitor received his order, the Life-Bound Worms got furious and prepared to attack the elders.

At the same time, Zeke could feel their anger through their consciousness.

Right then, Jeremiah commanded, "Everyone! Kill him!"

Upon hearing the command, the villagers immediately ordered their Life-Bound Worm to attack Zeke.

However, a strange scene happened.

The villagers' Life-Bound Worms did not launch their attacks on Zeke. Instead, they began attacking their owners.

Being caught off guard, the villagers fled from the scene while howling in pain.

"What the hell? What's going on? My LifeBound Worm has lost control!"

"The Life-Bound Worms are attacking their owners! My Life-Bound Worm is actually attacking me!"

"Why is this happening? We've never mistreated our Life-Bound Worm. Why would they suddenly retaliate against their owners?"

"It's not the Life-Bound Worms that are retaliating against their owners. Their consciousness is being controlled by Progenitor, which is also giving them instructions for their every move. Hence, it's Progenitor that's attacking us."

"That's right! It's definitely Progenitor's doing. What on earth is it up to?"

Chapter 2027

As Erwen and Yazmin watched the chaotic scene and recalled how Zeke swore to keep them safe a while ago, a terrifying thought came to their mind.

Could Zeke have something to do with this? How is he doing it? The most possible answer is that he's controlling Progenitor. But then again, Progenitor only acknowledges the elders. Why would it listen to Zeke? This man is getting more mysterious. No. The more accurate word is powerful.

Since Zeke still needed the White Muraco Clan's help to attack the Black Muraco Clan, he could not wound them severely.

Hence, after letting the Life-Bound Worms teach the villagers a little lesson, Zeke commanded them to stop.

Despite that, the villagers were already covered in grime, blood, and bruises. They looked extremely disheveled.

After a while, when they returned to their senses, they stared at Zeke, trembling in fear. "Did you do this? Is this your work?"

"Damn it. Did you do something to Progenitor? Speak up!"

"He's the devil. He must've used some evil tricks to affect Progenitor's consciousness. and made it attack us!"

"Get the devil out! Get the devil out!"

In response, Zeke asked coldly, "Do you want to know the answer?"

"Of course!" the villagers yelled while nodding in unison.

"It's actually very simple. I'm your elder!" Zeke stated.

"Shut up!" the villagers roared. "You? Our elder? You're not even worthy of carrying our elder's shoes!"

"He's obviously insulting us! He's insulting our elder!"

Zeke felt slightly helpless. Truth was, he knew long ago that they would not believe he was their elder.

He was too lazy to continue defending himself. Hence, he walked toward the door. "Come on, Sole Wolf. Let's go meet the Black Muraco Clan." He then addressed the White Muraco Clan, "I've said this before. I'll personally deal with the troubles I've caused. So if you guys continue causing trouble, then don't blame me for what I'll do. This is just a little lesson for all of you. I promise it won't be that easy next time."

"Okay!" Sole Wolf chuckled and trotted over to Zeke. "You've taken the limelight this time. Can it be my turn next time?"

Zeke answered, "It depends."

Erwen and Yazmin exchanged glances, nodded, and followed behind them.

For some reason, following Zeke gave them a sense of security.

Meanwhile, the villagers exchanged uneasy looks.

"What should we do? We can't let Zeke and Erwen go over to the Black Muraco Clan, right? They'll never forgive us."

"Come on. Let's go check it out. We need to explain the situation to the Black Muraco Clan that it's not that we don't want to hand Zeke over to them. We're just powerless."

"Yes. Let's go. I'm sure the Black Muraco Clan will forgive us."

"Our clan is not a match for Zeke. But if we combine forces with the Black Muraco Clan, we'll definitely be able to take him down."

"I'm going to return the favor a thousand times more for the humiliation I endured just now."

"Let's go!"

Soon, a large group of the villagers followed. behind Zeke.

It was not long before Zeke arrived at the intersection point of both the Black and the White Muraco Clans.

The White Muraco Clan's entrance was already surrounded by the Black Muraco Clan members.

The leader of the team was Cain, Saint of Black Muraco.

Behind him was a team of hundred men.

All of their bodies were well built and radiated warrior energy. It was clear that they were professional martial artists.

Cain had an arrogant look on his face. He sneered, "Remember this, Zeke. I'll be the one who'll have the last laugh today. Anyway, aren't you some kind of big shot? Looks like you still end up in my hands in the end. You should just beg me for forgiveness. Perhaps it might make me happy and I'll let you die in one piece."

Naturally, Cain thought it was the White Muraco Clan who sent Zeke and Erwen to surrender.

To his surprise, Zeke said with disdain, "The person who'll have the last laugh today is still undecided. But I can promise you one thing, even if you beg me for mercy, I'll still burn you to ashes."

What the hell?

Chapter 2028

Cain's face fell, and he turned to look at the villagers of the White Muraco Clan. "Didn't you people send Zeke here to surrender? Well, well. It looks like I've underestimated the White Muraco Clan's courage. Just you wait. I'm going to eliminate your entire clan today."

"Your Highness, it's all a misunderstanding," Jeremiah said hurriedly. "No matter how brave the White Muraco Clan is, we'll never dare to go against you."

Cain questioned, "Then why didn't you people do as I say?"

Jeremiah replied, "Your Highness, it's not that we didn't want to, but we're really no match for Zeke. He's too strong. You'll understand when you look at our injuries."

Cain refuted, "Who do you think you're lying to? Wouldn't you guys have used Myriad Worm Formation? I doubt that dude is able to avoid its attacks."

Jeremiah laughed bitterly. "To be frank with you, even our Myriad Worm Formation could not defeat him. I suspect he might've used some dirty tricks to control Progenitor."

"As if I'd believe that!" Cain scolded. "Do you think I'm stupid? Everyone knows only the elders can control Progenitor..."

Right then, one of his subordinates went up to him and whispered into his ears.

After a few seconds, a look of realization appeared on Cain's face. "I see."

Meanwhile, Zeke frowned.

Based on Cain's expression, it looks like he believes that the White Muraco Clan's Myriad Worm Formation has failed to defeat me. But what exactly did his subordinate say that made him believe it? Did his subordinate tell him that Progenitor lost to me because of its severe injuries? That's highly likely. Looks like Progenitor of the White Muraco Clan is injured because of the Black Muraco Clan!

Cain continued, "Okay. I'll believe all of you people from the White Muraco Clan for now. I'm going to give all of you a second chance to work with my clan and capture Zeke. If you perform well, I'll forget all our past grudges."

Jeremiah agreed instantly, "I had the same idea, too. Thank you, Your Highness."

Cain turned to Zeke with a smug look. "I know you're a good fighter. But no matter how skilled you are, I doubt you can defeat the guards of the Black Muraco Clan. These guards of mine are legitimate martial artists. And with the help of the White Muraco Clan, your life will definitely end here today."

"Guess I'll have to learn from you then," Zeke said.

With a fearful expression, Erwen warned, "Mr. Williams, the Black Muraco Clan's guards are known for being extremely powerful. I don't think we should go head-to-head."

Zeke consoled, "Don't worry. I won't even need to deal with them personally."

The moment Erwen spoke, Cain fixed his eyes on her. "Erwen, I'm going to give you a chance as well. If you stand by my side right now, I'll marry you officially and make you my legal wife. If I have to do it by force, then I can only let you become my concubine. Worst of all, I might just make you my mistress without official status."

However, Erwen stood behind Zeke without a hint of hesitation.

Even if I die, I want to die being on Zeke's side.

"Da'n it!" Cain fumed. "How dare you challenge my limit? Kill them!"

"Attack!" roared the guards of the Black Muraco Clan as they charged toward Zeke.

In the meantime, Zeke turned to look at Sole Wolf, who was staring at the former with a pleading look in his eyes. "Zeke, please let me handle this. Please. I really have an itch to scratch."

"Get it done quickly."

"Okay!" Sole Wolf replied delightedly. With a single order from Zeke, he charged forward rapidly toward the guards.

Soon, both sides started a fight.

The Black Muraco Clan's guards started attacking Sole Wolf with the weapons in their hands.

To their surprise, Sole Wolf did not attack nor did he avoid them. Instead, he kept charging forward like a vehicle that had lost control.

Thud! Thud! Thud!

A series of muffled sounds filled the air. It was the sound of Sole Wolf knocking into the guards of the Black Muraco Clan.

Sole Wolf was so fast and powerful that the guards in front of him could not defend themselves. In fact, they could not even react in time.

Chapter 2029

The guards were like paper figurines in the presence of Sole Wolf.

In a blink of an eye, over twenty guards flew out from the collision. At the same time, Sole Wolf dashed out of a bloody path and appeared before Cain.

The leader of the Black Muraco Clan watched the entire scene in disbelief. What the hell? Is he really just a mortal? He looks more like a machine! Even machines don't have such strength.

Sole Wolf caught Cain by his neck and lifted him like a dead dog. "Haha! How dare you challenge Zeke? You must be tired of living."

It was at that moment when Cain finally came back to his senses. -

He was so terrified that he felt as though his heart was about to leap out of his chest. "Help! Help me!"

"Charge!" Ignoring everything around them, the remaining guards rushed toward Cain, wanting to set him free.

Immediately, Sole Wolf charged into the group of guards again.

Using Cain as his whip, he swung him in every direction and smashed everything that came in his way.

Wails of pain rang in the air and blood splattered in every direction while the guards crashed to the ground one by one.

In less than three minutes, all the guards were incapacitated and slumped to the ground.

Meanwhile, those who escaped were so shocked that they had no intentions of fighting anymore.

Instead, they ran away from the scene.

Unfortunately, Sole Wolf would never let them go. He threw Cain toward them like a piece of rock.

With that, the remaining survivors crashed to the ground and were unable to get to their feet.

Just like that, the battle ended. Cain, who was stained with blood from head to toe, was semi-conscious and on the brink of death.

Sole Wolf dragged Cain by his legs and brought him to Zeke's side with a look of disappointment. "Ah, you guys are too weak. It wasn't fun."

Weak? Too weak?

The people of the White Muraco Clan stared at Sole Wolf like he was a monster.

How are they weak? You are too strong!

After all, the guards of the Black Muraco Clan alone were enough to suppress the entire White Muraco Clan in the past.

Zeke stepped on Cain's face, which gave the latter a shock of his life. At that moment, he was so scared that he believed Zeke would not hesitate to smash his brain.

He pleaded, "Spare me. Please spare me. I know I was wrong. Please give me another chance. I'll give you money. I'll give you as much as you want."

Zeke said coldly, "Don't worry. I won't kill you because I need you alive. Now, go back and tell your leader that I'm going to find and kill all of them!"

Naturally, Zeke was referring to the force behind the Black Muraco Clan Netherworld.

Cain was stunned.

How does Zeke know the Black Muraco Clan has been conquered by an immortal clan? And how does he know we've acknowledged them as our leaders? Don't tell me Zeke came here for them?

Without warning, Zeke gave him a kick in the stomach, sending him flying into the air and landing among the guards.

Cain almost passed out from the pain, but he still gritted his teeth, forcing himself to stay awake.

He feared he would die if he passed out. Gathering all his energy, he uttered, "Let's go. H-Hurry up and take me away."

The guards carried him in a state of panic and retreated into the Black Muraco Clan's territory.

Once they were back in their territory, Cain regained his confidence after making sure they were safe. He bellowed, "Just you wait! I'm going to get all of you! Be it Zeke or the White Muraco Clan, I'm going to kill all of you! You've officially angered me. I'm going to make sure Zeke gets shredded into pieces and wipe out the entire White Muraco Clan!"

Jeremiah begged, "Your Highness, we're innocent. the White Muraco Clan has nothing to do with Zeke-"

Cain chided, "Then why didn't you help me earlier?"

"It's not that we didn't want to help. We just didn't have the time to do so. Before we could even react, your guards were already defeated," Jeremiah explained.

Chapter 2030

Cain yelled, "Da*n you! If you dare spread the news about this, I'm going to destroy all your family graves."

As soon as he finished his words, he disappeared from everyone's view.

Zeke then turned around, and his gaze landed on the White Muraco Clan.

Subconsciously, the villagers took a few steps back, staring at Zeke as though he were the devil.

They could not help but wonder how strong he could be when his subordinate was already that powerful.

Zeke uttered, "I'm sure all of you know what kind of situation you're in. The Black Muraco Clan has officially fallen out with you. Even if you take the initiative to surrender, they'll never let you go easily. And with your clan's current abilities, it's tough for you to fight against them. The possibility of getting wiped out is very high. The only thing you can do now is to join forces with

me and fight against the Black Muraco Clan. I guarantee your clan will be safe. Please think carefully about this."

The villagers exchanged glances, looking hesitant.

Right then, Erwen stepped out and said, "Folks, we've been bullied by the Black Muraco Clan for so many years. They made us slaves and trampled on our dignity. Do you really want to continue living such humiliating lives? Back then, we didn't have a choice but to submit to them. Now that someone is willing to help us turn things around, why aren't we seizing the opportunity? In fact, this could be our one and only chance. Besides, it hasn't been long since Mr. Williams' arrival, and yet he has helped us to take revenge on them. He even saved Mona's life. I believe Mr. Williams will definitely turn the situation around."

Her words had touched many villagers' hearts.

Soon, they started responding, "I'm in."

"Me too!"

"I've had enough of this shitty life serving the Black Muraco Clan."

"We must eliminate the Black Muraco Clan and take my wife back!"

"Ever since my daughter was forced to marry into the Black Muraco Clan, her life has been a living hell. Now that there's a chance for me to bring her back, I must seize it."

In a blink of an eye, more than half of the clan believed in Zeke and was willing to fight alongside him.

However, Jeremiah suddenly stepped forward and yelled, "Shut up, everyone! Quiet!"

His authority among the people was still quite powerful. As soon as he spoke, the crowd quietened.

He scoffed, "So you guys believe in Zeke now? Do you know what his motive is for coming to Muraco?" The villagers shook their head.

Jeremiah continued, "See? You don't even know anything about him, yet you're letting him make the decisions. This is preposterous!"

Someone from the crowd refuted, "But he really does have the ability to stand up for our clan." "Are you sure he's sincere about standing up for the White Muraco Clan? Are you sure he's not working with the Black Muraco Clan to take control over us?" Jeremiah questioned.

What does he mean?

The villagers looked at him with confused expressions.

Jeremiah carried on, "First of all, this guy is powerful, and he even knows how to control poisonous worms. Hence, there's a high chance that he's a part of the Black Muraco Clan. This is because only the Black Muraco Clan members cultivate the skill of controlling worms and fighting skills, while we only cultivate the former. Besides, his family name is Williams. There's a powerful family in the Black Muraco Clan that has the same family name, right? Could this just be a coincidence? And most importantly, why would he want to help us? Don't you think his motives are very suspicious?"

Everyone immediately calmed down after hearing his words.

It's true. All the points Mr. Jeremiah said make him quite suspicious.

All the people who defended Zeke earlier had quietened.

After a brief pause, Jeremiah stated, "All right. All of you should go home for now. I'll discuss with the elders of our clan to come up with a plan. Once we have a decision, I'll inform all of you. Don't worry. I'll make sure to protect our clan's life force, even if it means having our elders beg the Black Muraco Clan for mercy or sacrifice our lives."

With that, the crowd slowly dispersed.

Jeremiah, on the other hand, gave Zeke a glare before leaving.

Although Zeke did not say anything about the matter, Sole Wolf had already lost his patience.

Chapter 2031

"What the hell? What a group of idiots. We're here to save them. Yet, not only do they not appreciate our effort, but they also suspect us. Zeke, these idiots don't deserve to live in this world. Let's not bother about them anymore."

Zeke merely waved his hands. "It's normal for them to act like that. Besides, I have my own plans. You don't have to be involved anymore."

"Okay then." Sole Wolf sighed. "I don't want to waste my time getting angry at them, anyway."

At the same time, Erwen went to Zeke's side and said, "You mentioned something about the Black Muraco Clan's leader just now. Are you saying that they're conquered by the devils that came here a while ago?"

Zeke nodded. "It's highly possible."

Erwen deduced, "So, your motive for coming here is actually because of the Black Muraco Clan's devil?" Zeke nodded.

Erwen went on, "Then... Do you mind if I ask you about your background?"

Zeke shook his head. "I'm sorry, but I can't tell you that now."

If he revealed his identity as the Great Marshal, it could scare the people of the White Muraco Clan and even cause unnecessary panic.

Just then, Zeke's subconsciousness received an emergency calling from Progenitor.

His heart skipped a beat. Crap. Could something have happened to Progenitor?

He said hurriedly, "Go and rest in your rooms first. I have some matters to deal with."

With that, he turned around and left without giving them the chance to ask any questions.

LTE

Not long after, he arrived at Melted Paradise.

He saw Progenitor fidgeting restlessly while making soft screeching sounds. No matter how hard Andres tried to calm it down, it changed nothing.

When Andres noticed Zeke's presence, he quickly got to his knees. "Greetings, Elder."

"What happened?" Zeke asked.

"I'm not sure. Progenitor had been emotionally stable ever since it recovered. However, when it woke up from its sleep earlier, it started getting restless. It's as if... it senses danger. It's useless no matter how I try to calm it," Andres answered.

Zeke gave a brief reply and approached Progenitor, trying his best to comfort it.

It was only then that Progenitor gradually calmed down.

Seeing the improvement, Zeke immediately communicated with it using his consciousness.

At such proximity, their communication. was much clearer. After communicating for some time. Zeke furrowed his brows.

Andres, who could not hold in his curiosity hacked, "Elder, what did Progenitor tell you?

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Zeke replied, "It said it had a dream just now, and it recalled who was the person who injured it."

Intrigued, Andres asked again, "May I know who the criminal is?"

"It's someone from the White Muraco Clan," Zeke answered.

"What?" Andres' blood boiled, and he clenched his fists. "Da*n it! I can't believe there's a traitor among our clan members. No matter who the person is, I'm going to punish him with our clan's worst punishment."

Zeke said, "Progenitor doesn't know who the person is. It only felt the presence of the White Muraco Clan on that person."

"Huh?" Andres' heart sank. "Then this will not be easy. There are so many people in our clan. It won't be possible to expose the traitor."

Zeke said, "Don't be rash. It's actually not that hard."

This piqued Andres' interest. He looked at Zeke with raised eyebrows and asked, "May I know how you plan to do this?"

"The reason for the traitor to harm Progenitor is most likely that he was bought over by the Black Muraco Clan. I'm guessing his objective was to kill it. If that's the case, we shall beat him at his own game by telling the White Muraco Clan that Progenitor is dead. Then, the traitor will immediately inform the Black Muraco Clan about this. All we'll have to do is keep watch on the clan members to see who'll be sending the message to the other clan," Zeke explained.

Andres smacked his head, amazed by Zeke's plan. "That's a great plan! Yes. Let's do that."

Zeke answered, "Okay. You can reveal yourself tonight, too."

"Okay!"

With that, they came to an agreement with each other.

Finally, the night came.

For an isolated little village like this, they rarely had any activities at night. Hence, after having a simple dinner, all of them got ready to go to bed.

However, before they could even enter their dreamland, the loud, clear sound of a bell rang in the village's air.

Chapter 2032

The sound belonged to the White Muraco Clan's alarm bell.

Since it was a dangerous time, the sound of the alarm bell caused everyone to have a strong sense of crisis. The clan members quickly got out of bed and gathered in the clan leader's house.

Zeke was the only person in the village who knew the meaning of this alarm bell. It was to announce the return of the clan leader, Andres, and the death of Progenitor.

Just as Zeke was about to head toward the room, Erwen and Yazmin came looking for him.

"Hold on, Mr. Williams. May I ask where you are going?" one of them asked.

"The White Muraco Clan's alarm bell rang. I'd like to check out the situation," Zeke said.

Erwen said anxiously, "Mr. Williams, I think it's best for you to not go in there. This bell is probably sounded by Mr. Jeremiah to discuss the matter of the Black Muraco Clan with the clan members. If you go in there, he'll probably target you."

Nonetheless, Zeke said, "It's fine."

Without giving Erwen a chance to continue persuading him, Zeke headed straight toward the clan leader's house.

After all, he was the Great Marshall. No one could order him to do anything.

Erwen and Yazmin were exasperated.

"Zeke is so aloof. He never listens to what others says."

"Exactly. No one can change his mind once it's made up."

"Hmph. Erwen, you must win him over as soon as possible and make him fall head over heels for you. I'd like to see if he'll still put on that grumpy expression of his."

"What are you talking about, Yazmin? I-I'm not talking to you anymore."

With that, the two women followed behind Zeke and entered the clan leader's house.

The house was packed with the White Muraco Clan members.

All of them were abuzz with speculation

since they did not understand why they were gathered in the middle of the night.

Shortly after, Jeremiah rushed over.

Someone from the crowd asked, "Mr. Jeremiah, why did you gather everyone? What's the matter?"

To their surprise, Jeremiah shook his head. "I didn't sound the alarm bell."

The crowd was stunned, puzzled by his words. "Who could it be then, if not you?"

"The only people who're qualified to sound the clan leader's bell are the clan leader, me, and Holy Maiden," Jeremiah explained.

"Could it be Holy Maiden then?" someone asked.

Everyone's eyes fell on Erwen, who shook her head. "It wasn't me. I've just arrived."

The crowd launched into a more heated discussion.

It's neither Mr. Jeremiah nor Holy Maiden. Could it be someone who played with it?

"Please be quiet, everyone." Right then, a

raspy voice traveled from the clan leader's room.

Immediately after that, a white bearded man walked out.

Everyone was shocked to see the newcomer.

It was the clan leader, Andres.

But why does Mr. Andres look so old all of a sudden? He had only disappeared for a few days. What's going on?

Jeremiah quickly approached Andres and asked cautiously, "Mr. Andres, w-what happened to you?"

Andres let out a sigh that sounded full of grief. "It's a long story. Do you people have any idea where I've been and what I've been up to all this while?"

The villagers asked carefully, "Mr. Andres, didn't you say you went hunting for medicinal herbs?"

Andres shook his head. "You're wrong. I've actually been staying by Progenitor's side all this while."

Progenitor?

Curious, one of the villagers asked, "I heard Progenitor likes a quiet environment, and it doesn't like to have anyone disturb it. So. why would you be there?"

"Because Progenitor was injured terribly and was on the verge of death. I've been using my Soul Blood to treat its wounds. The reason I look this old is that I lost two drops of my Soul Blood," Andres explained.

What?

The villagers' mind blown.

Progenitor is severely injured? And it's on the brink of death? But Progenitor is the life force of the White Muraco Clan. If it's injured, then the life force of the White Muraco Clan will be harmed as well.

The villagers asked immediately, "Mr. Andres, what's Progenitor's condition now? Have its wounds recovered?"

Andres sighed. "Unfortunately, Progenitor was severely injured. Even though I used two drops of my Soul Blood, I still couldn't save it. I'm sorry, but Progenitor is already..."

Chapter 2033

What?

Andres' words left everyone thunderstruck, echoing in the White Muraco Clan members' minds.

Progenitor is dead!

Progenitor was all the worms' life force. If it died, their Life-Bound Worm would be dead soon.

Without the Life-Bound Worms, their people would die too.

The White Muraco Clan would probably be wiped out.

Immediately, the crowd went wild and a babble of voices broke out.

"Mr. Andres, who was the person who harmed Progenitor? That person is trying to wipe out our clan. We must not let the person go easily."

"I think it's Zeke. Progenitor's death must've something to do with the newcomer, Zeke. Ever since his arrival, strange things have been happening to our clan, and everything is a mess. I bet Progenitor's death is part of his doing."

"Mr. Andres, please give your orders to capture Zeke. We must make him pay with his life!"

Instantly, everyone began hurling accusations at Zeke.

Erwen and Yazmin were so nervous that they subconsciously placed Zeke behind them to protect him.

Thankfully, Andres waved his hand. "Progenitor was injured half a month ago, while Zeke had only appeared in our village a few days ago. Its death has nothing to do with him."

Hearing that, everyone gradually calmed down.

Jeremiah said, "Mr. Andres, now that Progenitor is dead, what should we do? Without Progenitor, our clan will be wiped out, right?"

Sniffling sounds could be heard from the crowd.

"Don't worry, everyone. I'll do my best to cultivate another Progenitor. With the new Progenitor, everything will be back to normal for our clan," Andres assured.

Jeremiah sighed. "I'm afraid things won't be the same for our clan, even if a new progenitor is cultivated. We've officially fallen out with the Black Muraco Clan, and they swore to wipe out our clan. And now, we can't even fend for ourselves--"

"I am aware of the situation. Don't worry. As long as I'm alive, I promise you our clan will be fine. I'll personally contact the leader of the Black Muraco Clan and do my best to find a peaceful resolution for this. There's one more thing. The death of Progenitor is strictly confidential. This news must not be leaked to the public, especially the Black Muraco Clan. Anyone who dares to

spread the word about it will be punished according to our rules. Okay. All of you may return to your houses now," Andres said. However, the crowd was reluctant to leave.

"Let's go," Erwen said to Zeke, who responded with a nod and followed the girls out.

Both Erwen and Yazmin's moods were at rock bottom. What they were about to face was not just the end of their own lives, but also the end of the entire existence of the White Muraco Clan.

Yazmin queried, "Erwen, you're a knowledgeable person. Do you have any ideas on how to save Progenitor?"

Sadly, Erwen shook her head. "I don't know."

"What if-just what if-I offer all three of my Soul Blood? Would that awaken Progenitor?"

Erwen shook her head again. "I'm not sure, but it should have some effect. Yazmin, why are you asking this? Please don't do anything stupid. Our Soul Blood is too weak. Nothing will change the situation even if we give Progenitor all of our Soul Blood. I bet only Mr. Andres' Soul Blood can awaken Progenitor."

"Oh," Yazmin answered absentmindedly.

When the girls returned to their rooms, Zeke secretly sneaked into Andres' house.

Andres greeted as he saw Zeke, "Hello, Elder."

"Are all the men positioned?" Zeke asked.

Andres replied immediately, "Rest assured, Elder. I've arranged for over a dozen trusted subordinates to hide in every entrance of the village. We'll definitely catch the person once he heads off to inform the Black Muraco Clan about the news."

Zeke answered, "Good, good. I'll go over to the other side to keep watch on Progenitor in case the traitor wants to confirm its death before reporting to the Black Muraco Clan. Then I'll be able to catch the enemy."

"Sorry for troubling you, Elder. Actually, why don't I go over there to keep watch over Progenitor?" Andres suggested. "No," Zeke rejected determinedly. "You should stay here so that everyone knows you're in the room. Otherwise, I'm afraid the traitor won't dare to take any action."

"Got it," said Andres.

Under the cover of night, Zeke sneaked into the herb plantation.

Progenitor seemed much more active than before after its recovery. As soon as Zeke returned, it kept nudging his leg with its head.

Zeke kicked at it gently a couple of times, then used his consciousness to communicate with it. Be good and play dead later. Got it? If you ruin my plans, I'll roast you alive.

Progenitor: Are you a monster?

Zeke: If you do as I say, I'll be as kind as an angel. If you don't, then I'll be as terrifying as a monster.

Progenitor just glared at him.

I've had three owners in the past, and none of them were as brutal as you. I can promise you that I'll play dead later but on one condition. Zeke: What is it?

Progenitor: I want you to put an end to the master-servant relationship. I don't want you to be my master anymore.

The Progenitor was filled with regret, wondering why it had such a ruffian as its master and berating itself for being an idiot.

Zeke gave a cold smile. It's too late to regret it now.

Progenitor: If you don't promise me that, I won't cooperate with you.

Zeke: Do you mean that?

Progenitor: Of course!

Suddenly, Zeke slapped Progenitor so forcefully that it fainted.

"You don't get to decide whether you want to cooperate with me or not," he muttered.

Then, Zeke hid in the shadows. Quiet and motionless, he melded so perfectly into the darkness that even an Ultimate Class warrior would probably find it difficult to notice his presence.

As he waited, he could not help wondering who the traitor was.

The first person that popped into his mind was Peter.

Peter went as far as to kill Mona and frame me, just for the sake of getting his revenge. Hence, it's highly likely that he's the traitor. Or it could be Mr. Jeremiah. He has always had it out for me without caring about the clan's interests, so he's a possible suspect too.

As he was deep in thought, Progenitor gradually regained consciousness.

Who am I? Where am I? What happened?

Zeke commanded: You'd better hurry up and play dead. If you ruin my plans, I won't have mercy on you.

As soon as Progenitor heard Zeke's voice in its head, it recalled what happened and flew into a rage.

You b*stard! How dare you hit me! You have no conscience! You're inhumane and despicable! This time, you've gone too far!

Zeke stormed toward Progenitor.

Sensing Zeke's anger, Progenitor paled. B*stard! W-What do you think you're doing? Stay right there. Don't take another step.

I'll... I'll cooperate with you, okay?

There was another loud slap as Zeke struck Progenitor a second time. Once again, it fainted.

Sometimes, brute force is the only way to settle a situation.

Hearing the faint sound of footsteps from afar, Zeke slid back into the shadows at once.

Soon, he saw a shadowy figure walking in his direction, moving through the darkness like a phantom.

As the person approached the cave, two black panthers sprang out from each side of the entrance and attacked. They were the two Sacred Beasts!

However, the dark figure was well-prepared and quickly sprinkled some powder on herself.

The two beasts froze. As soon as they landed on the ground, they retreated. without a sound.

Seeing their strange behavior, Zeke suspected that the powder's scent was

probably reminiscent of someone, such as their clan leader or an elder. Hence, they no longer dared to attack.

Meanwhile, the person who had just fended off the attack was getting closer to Progenitor.

Zeke studied the figure carefully.

Although the person wore a black suit and a mask, Zeke could clearly make out a slender yet curvy figure. He frowned. That's not a man! That's a woman! The traitor is a woman, not Peter or Mr. Jeremiah!

Chapter 2035

Why do I feel like there's something familiar about this person?

Nonetheless, Zeke did not act impulsively and merely watched from his hiding place, curious to see what the person would do next.

The figure in black stood in front of Progenitor, got to her knees, and bowed three times.

Then, she got up and walked toward Progenitor.

Zeke's body tensed, ready to rush out and stop her if it looked like she was about to harm Progenitor.

But instead of trying to harm it, she merely raised her hand and hit her chest hard.

She opened her mouth and spat out one of her Soul Bloods, then fed it carefully to Progenitor.

As she did that, she said apologetically, "I'm sorry! I didn't mean it. If I had any inkling it would end up like this, I... I'd rather be the one to die than you. Don't worry. I'll give

you all three of my Soul Bloods today. Hopefully, that'll be enough to cure you. And if it doesn't... I'll die with you. A life for a life."

As soon as Zeke heard her voice, his heart lurched.

Yazmin! That's Yazmin's voice! D*mn it! How could it be her? Why is she the traitor? It can't be. It must be a coincidence. Maybe it's just someone who sounds a little like her.

Even though Zeke kept reassuring himself that it was not Yazmin, he knew he was merely deceiving himself.

Seeing that she was about to cough up her second Soul Blood, Zeke rushed over at once.

"Stop!"

Someone's here!

The realization struck her like a ton of bricks, and she fled at once without hesitation.

However, Zeke released a burst of energy and stopped her in her tracks.

Unable to move at all, Yazmin turned toward the sound behind her with fear in her eyes.

A look of utter helplessness crossed her face when she saw Zeke emerge from the darkness.

"Mr. Williams, it's you... Why are you here?" she asked weakly.

Zeke strode over and pulled the mask off her face.

The moment he saw with his own eyes that it was Yazmin under the mask, thus confirming that she was the traitor, he felt a pang in his heart.

"Why are you here?" Zeke asked in disbelief.

Yazmin's cries filled the air as she wailed, "I'm sorry! I deserve to die! It's all my fault! I... I'm willing to die to atone for what I did!"

Wanting to end her life, she tried to move. But no matter how hard she tried, she could not budge an inch.

"What's going on? Why can't I move?" Zeke withdrew his energy and said, "Tell me everything, Yazmin. I know you must have a good reason for what you did, right?"

As soon as the energy around her was gone, Yazmin collapsed onto the floor and burst into loud sobs.

Progenitor was startled awake by the sound, and its scream of frustration immediately resounded within Zeke's mind.

You really know how to drive me up the wall! I'll have you know that the White Muraco Clan's elders cultivated me with much care. I'm a distinguished figure within the clan who commands great respect. No one dares to mock me, but you're so bold as to insult me repeatedly! You slapped me so that I'd faint! What you've done is unforgivable! Why are you just standing there? Get on your knees and prepare to receive your punishment!

Zeke shot Progenitor a warning glare. If you continue with your nonsense, I'll slice off your tongue.

Progenitor: You dare to threaten me! Insolence! You've landed yourself in deeper trouble! Just you wait. I'll use Myriad Worm Formation to devour you! Huh? Wait a minute... This aura feels familiar. Hurry! She's the woman who stabbed me that night! Seize her! She must be punished! She attacked me! What she did was unforgivable! We must exterminate her and her entire family!

Zeke's patience evaporated. I told you to shut up! Didn't you hear me?

Progenitor was indignant. No way! Why should I? I want to end our master-servant relationship right now!

At the end of his wits, Zeke marched toward Progenitor angrily.

It cowered at once, guessing what Zeke had in mind.

He's going to slap me again so that I faint. I'm sure of it!

The Progenitor could not stop itself from retreating as it eyed Zeke's tightly clenched fist, and its voice began to tremble. Okay, okay... I... I'll shut up. I won't say another word.

Chapter 2036

Only then did Zeke halt his footsteps. He turned to help Yazmin up, saying, "Come on. Tell me everything."

Yazmin continued to cry bitterly. "No, I made a big mistake! Even my death won't be enough to absolve me of what I did."

It took much persuasion before Yazmin finally calmed down and recounted what happened.

Yazmin had been orphaned at a young age and had never experienced the joys of being in a loving family. Growing up, she would go from house to house in the village, hoping that someone would be kind enough to offer her a meal. Hence, she struggled to survive every day all alone.

A few years ago, she was out gathering herbs on a secluded mountain when she got bitten by a snake.

She usually carried an antidote with her. but she had lost it that day while making her way up the mountain. Without the antidote, she could only sit there and await death.

She was unconscious and moments away from dying when a young man happened to pass by.

He treated her immediately and managed to pull her from death's door.

However, even after Yazmin recovered, she was still weak and unable to walk. The young man continued to stay by her side, taking care of her until she fully regained her strength.

Yazmin was touched by how he had taken such good care of her, and eventually, the two of them decided to begin a relationship.

His name was Claus Muraco, but alas, he was from the Black Muraco Clan. At that time, the Black Muraco Clan and the White Muraco Clan were not on friendly terms, so there was no way their relationship would get blessings from both sides.

Left with no choice, they secretly started seeing each other, not daring to let a single soul know.

Then, just a few days ago, Claus went to Yazmin and told her that he had found a way for them to be together forever.

Naturally, Yazmin was ecstatic and quickly pressed him for more details.

He then said that since Yazmin was an orphan and had no other family, she should consider joining the Black Muraco Clan.

That way, they could get married immediately.

But without giving it a second thought, Yazmin rejected his suggestion.

Although her parents had passed away, she had eaten countless meals at the other villagers' houses over the years and considered them her family. Despite her love for Claus, there was no way she could leave her family, the people who raised her.

Unable to convince her otherwise, Claus finally decided that he would leave the Black Muraco Clan and join the White Muraco Clan.

Yazmin was deeply moved by his decision.

She could only imagine how much he loved her to be willing to abandon his home for her.

However, in order for Claus to become part

of the White Muraco Clan, his Life-Bound Worm had to pledge allegiance to the White Muraco Clan's Progenitor.

However, Progenitor was the White Muraco Clan's life force and was top secret. Hence, outsiders were rarely allowed to see it.

Unwilling to take the risk, Yazmin told Claus that perhaps they should just continue to see each other secretly.

Claus was left disgruntled by her response, saying that it hardly seemed fair that she was unwilling to take a little risk when he was planning to leave his home for her.

Calling her out for not trusting him, he wanted to break up with her.

Under the threat of losing Claus, Yazmin finally relented and agreed to take him to Progenitor.

Unexpectedly, he changed his mind as soon as he had touched the White Muraco Clan's Progenitor.

At that time, Yazmin did not think much about it. She thought that perhaps he suddenly realized he could not leave the Black Muraco Clan just like that, which was understandable.

It was not until Andres told them about Progenitor's injury that Yazmin realized Claus' suggestion to join the White Muraco Clan could have been a trap.

She guessed that he must have hurt Progenitor under the pretense of touching it.

On top of that, the timing of the injury matched.

That realization had filled Yazmin with regret. To make up for her grave mistake, she was willing to sacrifice her life to save Progenitor.

By the time Yazmin finished telling Zeke what happened, she was sobbing uncontrollably.

"I let everyone down! I'm begging you, Mr. Williams. Let me die to atone for what I did. I deserve to die."

Zeke heaved a heavy sigh. What even is love? How is it that people are willing to even die for love? Yazmin used to be so cheerful and full of life, but look at what love has done to her. The Black Muraco Clan is truly despicable!

Once again, Progenitor and Zeke communicated via their consciousness. Since she has admitted to her mistake, I accept her apology. Let her do as she wishes. I don't blame her for wanting to do that.

Zeke glared at Progenitor. Shut up!

His reply infuriated Progenitor. She's willing to offer her life to redeem herself, so I'm merely granting her wish. What's wrong with that?

Zeke: I told you to shut up!

Intimidated by Zeke's murderous glare, Progenitor finally fell silent.

"Don't beat yourself up about it. Actually, Progenitor is no longer in critical danger. It's fine now," said Zeke. -

After a moment of stunned silence, Yazmin turned and stared intently at Progenitor. "How is that possible? Mr. Andres said that it had..."

Before she could finish her sentence, Progenitor rolled over and blinked its big, round eyes.

Tears of joy and relief rolled down Yazmin's cheeks. "Oh, thank goodness! That's wonderful! I'm so glad Progenitor is fine. If something did happen to it, I never would've been able to forgive myself. Even my death wouldn't be enough to make up for it."

When Yazmin finally stopped crying, she suddenly asked, "If Progenitor is fine, why did Mr. Andres say that it was dead? Don't tell me... Did he do that because he wanted to lure me out?"

Zeke nodded.

Yazmin went scarlet with shame. "I... I have let Mr. Andres down. I can't possibly face him again."

Zeke patted her shoulder. "Don't worry. Neither he nor Progenitor blames you for what happened. After all, you didn't have a clue about what was really going on."

"Why wouldn't they blame me?" Yazmin asked, a little confused.

"Progenitor said that it knows you're innocent and has no intention of blaming you," Zeke replied.

Yazmin stared at Zeke, dumbfounded. "How do you know that? The Progenitor can't talk."

"I can communicate with it through my consciousness," Zeke explained.

How is that possible?

Aloud, Yazmin said in a shocked tone, "As far as I know, only Progenitor's master can communicate with it mentally. That means only the elder can do so. You're not part of the clan, so how can you..."

"I've said many times before that I'm the elder of the White Muraco Clan," Zeke said a little impatiently.

Yazmin gaped at him. "Although I've never met him, I've seen his portrait before. He's a white-haired man about seventy or eighty years old, but you're a young man. How could the two of you be the same person? You must be kidding me."

"What can I do to make you believe me?" Zeke asked, exasperated.

"Easy. If it's true that you can communicate with Progenitor, order it to do a few actions and I'll believe you."

"Okay. I'll ask it roll on the floor now."

Using his consciousness, Zeke commanded Progenitor to roll on the floor.

The Progenitor refused at once.

However, when it saw Zeke slowly clench his fists, it had no choice but to comply and roll on the floor once.

Is this for real?

Yazmin's hands flew to her mouth in surprise. "It... It really rolled on the floor! That... Maybe that was just a coincidence. Can you ask it to roll over three times?"

Hence, Zeke used his consciousness and commanded Progenitor to do so.

How childish! The Progenitor rolled its eyes and did as it was instructed.

Oh my god!

Utterly bewildered, Yazmin gazed at Zeke in shock. "It's true... I can't believe it's actually true. You're really the White Muraco Clan's elder! I... I... I'm Yazmin Muraco from the White Muraco Clan I'm in charge of guarding the medicine, Greetings, Elder!"

With that, Yazmin dropped to her knees.

Zeke immediately helped her to her feet, saying, "That won't be necessary."

Struggling to suppress the emotions bubbling within her, Yazmin asked, "Mr. Williams... I mean, Elder... Does this mean that you were the one who cured Progenitor?"

He nodded.

Yazmin looked like she still wanted to ask him more questions, but her thoughts were all a jumble. She was so confused. The elder is supposed to be an old man with a white beard, so how did he become a young man?

At that moment, Zeke interrupted her thoughts by saying, "If you have more questions, you can ask them later. I have a task for you now."

Chapter 2038

"I, Yazmin Muraco from the White Muraco Clan, pledge to be at your service until the day I die," Yazmin replied solemnly.

"I want you to spread the news of Progenitor's death to the Black Muraco Clan as soon as possible," Zeke instructed.

Yazmin looked at him in surprise. "Are you sure about that? Once they learn about its death, they'll seize the chance to launch a large-scale attack on us."

"Just leave it to me and do as I say," Zeke replied.

Yazmin nodded and left, still reeling in shock from what just happened.

Zeke's gaze flicked toward Progenitor. You'll have to continue playing dead after this.

Progenitor: Why should I?

Zeke raised his fist. Because of this.

The Progenitor flinched. You're so evil! After making sure Progenitor knew what it had to do, Zeke left and headed straight for Andres' room.

When the clan leader saw Zeke enter, he immediately reported the latest situation. "The people I sent failed to catch the traitor, but don't you worry. Regardless of whether it takes another day or another month, I won't rest until we find the traitor!"

"There's no need for that. You may ask them to come back," said Zeke.

Andres looked at him, puzzled. "Why?"

"I've already found the traitor," Zeke revealed.

Huh?

Andrea stared at him, overjoyed. "Who was it? We have rules here, and I'll make sure to mete out severe punishment accordingly."

"It was Yazmin Muraco."

What? Andrea's shock was akin to Yazmin's when she found out Zeke was the elder. "Yazmin... How is this possible? That girl... This is disappointing. I'd suspected others, but never her and Erwen. I never expected this... We raised her since she was little, but I can't believe she turned out to be an ungrateful wretch! How despicable!"

"Certain events forced her hand, so don't blame her. You only have yourself to blame for failing to protect Progenitor," said Zeke.

Then, he proceeded to retell the "love story" between Yazmin and Claus.

By the time Andres listened to the end, he was seething with rage. "I knew it! I knew the Black Muraco Clan was secretly plotting something! Who would've thought they'd stoop so low! They have the gall to toy with the emotions of one of our clan members to get what they want! There's no way our clans can coexist! That silly child Yazmin has always had a strong sense of loyalty and righteousness. That's why she was easily deceived by what she thought was love."

After realizing that Yazmin was the victim and was innocent, Andres slowly calmed down.

He had always treated Yazmin as his own daughter, so he could not bear to learn that he had been betrayed by her.

Although she was being used as a pawn in someone's game, I'm glad to know that she didn't betray me intentionally.

"You should withdraw the guards at the entrance to the White Muraco Clan at once. I've asked Yazmin to help me beat them at their own game, so we should make things easier for her," Zeke explained.

Andres immediately summoned a few of his men and instructed them to pass on his command to the guards.

Meanwhile, Yazmin had made her way to the entrance to the White Muraco Clan, making sure not to make any sound.

After scanning the area to make sure she was alone, she took out a bamboo flute and proceeded to play a melody on it.

Previously, Yazmin and Claus would usually rendezvous at that exact spot late at night, and the bamboo flute was the only way she could communicate with him.

Not long after, Claus arrived.

He was dark-skinned and handsome, and he had a bright smile.

That bright smile was one of the reasons Yazmin fell for Claus. However, the only thing she felt was disgust when she saw it now.

What a fake smile.

Claus walked up to Yazmin and reached for her hand. "You wanted to see me?"

She quickly avoided his touch, her expression icy.

Puzzled, Claus asked her what the matter was.

Furious, she burst out, "Be honest with me. What was the real reason for asking me to take you to the White Muraco Clan's Progenitor the other day?"

"Yazmin, why are you asking me that? You know very well why I did that..."

Chapter 2039

Yazmin said, "I want you to personally tell me that."

"All right, I'll come clean with you. I wanted to join the White Muraco Clan. That's why I wanted to let my Life-Bound Worm pledge loyalty to the White Muraco Clan's Progenitor. Only then will I be able to stay together with you forever," Claus admitted.

After a pause, he continued, "But, my family members are all in the Black Muraco Clan. Don't worry, I'll try to convince them to join the White Muraco Clan together with me. That way, we won't ever have to separate again."

"Tell me the truth," Yazmin snapped.

Claus was slightly taken aback as he said nervously, "I am telling the truth."

"Your eyes are telling me otherwise. Tell me the truth right now, or this will be the last you see of me."

Claus panicked. "Yazmin, what do I have to do to make you believe in me?"

Yazmin sneered, "Hmph, Claus. How wellintentioned of you. Did you know how much trouble you've landed me in?"

Exasperated, she berated, "The clan leader announced that Progenitor died today as it could not recover from a serious injury. You must have been the one to harm Progenitor! Why did you do that?"

Claus was stumped upon hearing Yazmin's accusation. He widened his eyes in disbelief and said, "Yazmin, did... Did you just say that the Progenitor for the White Muraco Clan is dead? A-Are you kidding me?"

"Drop the act. Do you really take me for a fool?" Yazmin snickered.

"Do you dare swear to Progenitor of the Black Muraco Clan that the death of our Progenitor has nothing to do with you?"

Claus hesitated.

Progenitor was the anchor of the Black Muraco Clan's belief just like the White Muraco Clan. He was not comfortable with lying about it.

"It was you after all!" Yazmin bellowed as tears rolled down her cheeks. "You liar!

You're a shameless b*st*rd! How could you lie to me..."

Even though Yazmin surmised that it was Claus' doing, she still held onto the glimmer of hope before she had any substantial proof that he was indeed behind the scenes.

Yazmin's heart shattered upon the realization.

"Yazmin, please listen to me!" Claus grabbed her hands and explained himself, "Yazmin, I only did that for us. Please trust that I always have our best interests in mind no matter what I do. I always consider what's best for you."

Yazmin wiped her tears and gritted her teeth in response. "Okay, you said that it's for my own good. Enlighten me, then. How will the death of the White Muraco Clan's Progenitor benefit me in any way?"

"All parasitic worms of the White Muraco Clan originated from Progenitor. So, when Progenitor dies, the Life-Bound Worm of the White Muraco Clan will be dead in a few days' time. The only way to save the White Muraco Clan is to have one unifying Progenitor. If I'm not mistaken, in order to live, people from the White Muraco Clan could only share Progenitor with the Black Muraco Clan. When our clans are combined, isn't it a given that we should get married then?"

Yazmin let out a cackle. "Claus, you indeed have my best interest in mind! How could you do that to me? Get lost! Don't you dare come look for me again!"

She turned around to leave absentmindedly.

Claus stepped forward and held her hands. "Yazmin, I only did it so that we could be together..."

Yazmin tried to slap Claus, but he managed to dodge it in time.

Even though he was a mild-tempered person, Yazmin was getting on his nerves.

However, in the end, he said nothing and let out a sigh. "Yazmin, please calm down. I believe that you will eventually understand my intention."

Then, he left.

Tears streamed down Yazmin's cheeks uncontrollably.

"Claus, you've toyed with my feelings and hurt the White Muraco Clan! I-I will never forgive you! After all this is done and dusted, I will die to atone for the harm I've caused the White Muraco Clan, and then I will drag you along to hell with me!"

When Claus was back at the Black Muraco Clan, the sorrow on his face dissipated into thin air. He could not help but beam with glee, especially after knowing that the Progenitor of the White Muraco Clan was dead.

Haha! Everything is going according to my plan! His Highness will surely reward me handsomely for this!"

Chapter 2040

I want no one but Yazmin. How dare she try to hit me? I'm going to teach you a lesson in bed!

Claus dashed into Cain's room.

Right then, Cain was lying on his bed.

He was withering in pain after getting beaten by Zeke.

Infuriated, he wished that he could skin Zeke alive.

However, Cain knew for a fact that it was impractical to seek revenge from Zeke now.

He clutched a photo of Zeke in his hand and a pair of scissors in his other hand. Then, he cut the photo of Zeke into pieces to vent his anger.

Claus went into the room and kneeled before Cain. "Your Highness, how are you feeling right now?"

Cain threw a daggered look at the man and snapped, "I believe you have eyes to see for yourself."

Claus smiled sheepishly and said, "Your Highness, please do take care. I have good news to report to you."

Cain was intrigued, and he finally looked in Claus' direction. "What good news?"

He desperately needed some good news to lighten his mood.

Claus then announced, "Our plan has succeeded. Progenitor of the White Muraco Clan is dead."

Cain felt his heart racing upon hearing the exhilarating news. "Is this reliable? Could it be some fake news?"

"Don't worry. I heard it from Yazmin of the White Muraco Clan. She was so devastated that even I felt bad for her.

That's great!

Cain slammed on his nightstand as he sprung up from his bed in excitement. However, he quickly came to regret it as he felt his body ache all over.

"W-We will continue with... ah... our plan. Just you wait, the White Muraco Clan... I will make all of you my slaves one day,"Cain said as he groaned in pain.

At the sight of the wounds on Cain's body, Claus appeared concerned. "Your Highness, given your injuries, I'm afraid that you won't be able to proceed with our plan. Why not postpone the plan for a few days. I think that the White Muraco Clan might not even be able to pull through these few days and will seek refuge from us."

"Da*n, I can't wait to make those b*st*rds suffer! But, you're right. I am incapacitated right now. Perhaps I should make them suffer for a few days first," Cain said.

"Your Highness, I have a request, and I hope that Your Highness would not consider it to be presumptuous," Cain said.

"You've served the Black Muraco Clan well. Just let me know your request, and I will gladly fulfill them to the best of my abilities."

"Your Highness, when the White Muraco Clan joins the ranks of the Black Muraco Clan, I would like to seek your blessings in betrothing Yazmin Muraco to me," Claus said.

Cain looked bewildered and said. "Why? Have you really fallen for her?"

Claus gave him a bitter smile. "Your Highness, that might not be the best way to phrase it. I've been together with Yazmin for quite some time, but she's really adamant about not letting me touch her. As a man. I believe you should understand that we love challenges like these more than anything else.

Amused. Cain agreed in a heartbeat. "Don't worry! I will betroth Yazmin to you right away when the White Muraco Clan pledges loyalty to the Black Muraco Clan. Be sure to do us proud when you finally score one."

"Thank you for the blessing. Your Highness." Claus replied delightfully.

Claus was only feigning indifference toward Yazmin. The truth was, he had truly fallen for her.

After all, the two of them had spent quite some time together. Moreover, given her alluring looks, it would be difficult for any man to resist her.

During the next few days, it would appear as if the White Muraco Clan was uneventful when dark forces were brewing within in actual fact.

Zeke had ordered for the Progenitor of the White Muraco Clan to continue to play dead.

Meanwhile, the Life-Bound Worm of the White Muraco Clan grew restless and weak over the days as it could not sense the presence of Progenitor.

Naturally, the people of the White Muraco Clan was worried sick.

They did not doubt the death of Progenitor since Life-Bound Worm became weaker following its death. It would not take long before the whole clan followed in the footsteps of their Life-Bound Worm.

Chapter 2041

However, the clan leader did not seem to have any viable solution to their problems.

On the third day, the people of the White Muraco Clan could no longer live with the torment and gathered at the house of the clan leader.

The clan leader, Andres, finally made an appearance upon the demands of the public.

Andres looked more sallow than he was last few days. People of the White Muraco Clan presumed that the clan leader had aged overnight from racking his brains out for a solution.

A sense of despair washed over them.

Andres cleared his throat slightly and asked, "Why are all of you gathered here today?"

Jeremiah stood out from the crowd and said, "Mr. Andres, now that our Progenitor is dead, our Life-Bound Worm is slowly dying too. There isn't much time left. You mentioned that you have been cultivating a new Progenitor. Please let us know the progress."

Andres hesitated for a moment and said, "It is quite tricky to cultivate a new Progenitor."

Murmured whispers and disappointed sighs ensued.

"Mr. Andres, everyone here is from the White Muraco Clan. Just level with us," Jeremiah said. "Could you cultivate a new Progenitor before tomorrow? A lot of our Life-Bound Worms might not be able to make it till tomorrow."

Andres shook his head right away. "Tomorrow... That's impossible. I won't be able to make it."

Jeremiah sighed. "Then, what should we do? Are you going to sit idly by and watch as the whole clan dies out? I have no qualms dying right now, but to think about the dishonor that I will bring upon our ancestors..."

"Don't worry, everyone. I will make sure everyone prevails," Andres reassured them. "Feel free to voice out any good ideas you guys have in mind so that we could discuss them."

"Mr. Andres, I actually do have a good plan

in mind," Jeremiah said.

"Sure, what is it?" Andres asked.

"Since our Progenitor is dead, we could pledge allegiance to Progenitor from another clan," Jeremiah explained.

"The thing is, the nearest Progenitor is three days' journey away from us. I'm afraid that after three days..." Andres could not bring himself to finish the whole sentence.

However, he continued begrudgingly, "Besides, this is our homeland, the place where our ancestors have taken roots for generations. How will we be able to face our ancestors when we've abandoned their lands?"

"Mr. Andres, we won't need to abandon our lands to pledge loyalty to a new Progenitor, Why don't we just pledge allegiance to the Progenitor of the Black Muraco Clan instead?" Jeremiah quipped.

"Shut your mouth!" Andres was vexed.

"We have always been at odds with the Black Muraco Clan. They're infamous for being heinous. Our ancestors have forbidden us from ever being associated with them. Your suggestion of us pledging allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan is akin to asking us to abandon our ancestors' teachings!"

"Mr. Andres, that's not true. Even though Black and the White Muraco Clans have different ideologies and have been at each other's throats, we actually do share the same lineage. In fact, we are unifying our ancestries by pledging loyalty to the Black Muraco Clan.

"Of course, now is not the time to argue about our ancestry. This is a matter of survival, and I think that our lives should take precedence over the teachings of our ancestors. I believe that our ancestors would not be happy about us toeing the lines of their teachings, only to lead to the eradication of our whole clan. Surely, they would not allow such a thing to happen."

Andres fell silent. It was apparent that he was ruminating over Jeremiah's words.

Then, Jeremiah gave Peter a look.

The latter nodded his head before he fell on the ground with a loud plop as he started to convulse.

"It's painful... Please... Help..."

Then, he passed out.

The sudden turn of events jolted everyone in the White Muraco Clan. They retracted a few steps back as they tried to distance themselves from Peter.

Jeremiah stepped forward to check on Peter.

Moments later, Jeremiah cried, "Mr. Andres, something is terribly wrong! Peter's Life-Bound Worm is on the verge of its death. In an attempt to survive, it has depleted all vital energy from Peter's body, leaving him in a severely deprived state."

Chapter 2042

Everyone grew anxious upon hearing that Peter was on the verge of death.

Peter was in his prime, and yet his LifeBound Worm was about to deplete him of all vital energy. It meant that the others were about to be in the same predicament as well.

The people from the White Muraco Clan started to plead with Andres.

"Mr. Andres, please make your decision soon. There is not much time left."

"I could feel my Life-Bound Worm depleting the vital energy of my body. I think my vital energy is going to be drained in less than a day's time."

"Mr. Andres, where there's life, there's hope. Our best chance in ensuring the revival of the White Muraco Clan is to have surviving clan members. If the clan lineage ends with us, we will truly be da*ned for eternity."

Every sentence felt like a dagger to Andres' heart.

He eyed the land that countless generations of ancestors passed down to him and said in resignation, "Just give me one more day to reconsider-one final day. If I fail in cultivating a new Progenitor, we will go with Jeremiah's suggestion. Please leave, everyone. My decision is final."

Then, Andres turned around to go back to his house.

Jeremiah waved his hands to dismiss the crowd and said, "All right, everyone. Please go back for now. I will update everyone if there's any news."

The crowd dispersed in hushed whispers.

Jeremiah carried Peter over his shoulders and went back to his own place.

However, Erwen did not leave.

She would rather die than serve as a slave in the Black Muraco Clan.

She approached Andres' place. Yazmin stopped her and asked, "Erwen, where are you going?"

"Yazmin, I do not wish to join the Black Muraco Clan just like that," Erwen said
"But this is our last resort if we want to continue to stay alive." Yazmin sighed.

"No, we still have a chance to turn things around," Erwen said sternly.

"I would like to offer my Life-Bound Worm to Mr. Andres so that he could cultivate it into a cursed parasitic worm. If this works, then there is hope for the White Muraco Clan."

Yazmin was flabbergasted.

She would never allow Erwen to do such a thing.

Actually, she knew for a fact that Zeke was able to manipulate the current situation.

She understood that pledging allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan was only part of Zeke's ploy. He would not really allow such a thing to happen.

Hence, if Erwen were to offer her LifeBound Worm, she would die in vain.

However, without Zeke's permission, Yazmin could not disclose the truth.

Hence, she could only resort to advise Erwen. "Even if you're willing to offer your Life-Bound Worm, it will not help with anything. Even the Life-Bound Worm of the clan leader could not be used to cultivate a Progenitor, much less yours."

"No, Yazmin. There is a higher chance that my Life-Bound Worm could be successfully cultivated into Progenitor," Erwen explained.

"Let me ask you, who did I inherit my LifeBound Worm from?"

"You inherited it from the previous Holy Maiden, Mdm. Huff," Yazmin answered.

"So, who did she inherit her Life-Bound Worm from?" Erwen continued to ask. "It was gifted by the Elder of the White Muraco Clan," Yazmin replied.

"That's right. Our Progenitor was also cultivated by the Elder. Since my LifeBound Worm shares the same ancestry with Progenitor, there is a higher chance that it could be cultivated as the next Progenitor," Erwen explained.

Then, Erwen strode toward Andres' house.

Yazmin panicked and said, "Erwen, don't go. Mr. Andres will never agree to your proposal."

Andres should know that Zeke is the Elder of the White Muraco Clan and the fact that everything is an elaborate scheme by the elder. Why would he ever agree to the Holy Maiden sacrificing her own Life-Bound Worm then?

However, everything Yazmin said was falling on deaf ears.

She desperately wished that she could divulge the truth to Erwen as she did not wish to see her agonized.

Just when Erwen went inside Andres' place, his daughter, Mona, sobbed and burrowed herself in Erwen's arms.

"Erwen, I don't want to go to the Black Muraco Clan. They're all bad people. I don't want to be bullied by them for the rest of my life."

Erwen embraced Mona in her arms and stroked her long hair. "Mona, don't worry, I will never let you suffer in indignation at the Black Muraco Clan."

Chapter 2043

"All right!" Mona grabbed Erwen tightly. "I believe you, Erwen!"

Erwen then gently patted Mona's back and said, "Be good, Mona. Go to sleep first. Your daddy and I have something to talk about."

"Mm."

Mona obediently nodded before walking to her own room.

The clan leader, Andres Muraco, raised his head to look at Erwen. "Erwen, is there something I can help you with?"

Erwen asked, "Are you really planning to pledge loyalty to the Black Muraco Clan?"

Andres took a deep breath and replied, "Erwen, you don't need to worry about this. I know what I'm doing."

Without Zeke's permission, Andres dared not tell Erwen the truth. Thus, that was all he could say.

However, Erwen assumed that Andres was silently telling her that he was going to pledge loyalty to the Black Muraco Clan.

Thus, she said, "Mr. Andres, I have a way to help the White Muraco Clan through this crisis."

Oh?

Interest piqued, Andres said, "Do tell me about it."

"The source of my Life-Bound Worm is the same as the White Muraco Clan's Progenitor, so the chances of it cultivating into another Progenitor will be greater. I'm willing to hand over my Life-Bound Worm to make them the White Muraco Clan's Progenitor."

Andres did not even think twice before rejecting her request. "No."

If Erwen were to hand over her Life-Bound Worm, she would certainly die.

The truth was that the White Muraco Clan's Progenitor was not dead; it was still living well. If Erwen were to sacrifice her worm, her sacrifice would be for naught.

Nevertheless, Erwen insisted. "Why do you reject me so swiftly? This is the only choice left for us. I will be in a living hell if we really pledge loyalty to the Black Muraco Clan. Since we're presented with a choice, why don't we try things out?"

Andres then uttered, "Go back, Erwen. I've told you that I know what I'm doing, so don't intervene anymore. Don't worry. I won't drag the White Muraco Clan into hell."

Huh?

Now, it was Erwen's turn to be confused.

What does he mean? He sounds like he's not planning to pledge loyalty to the Black Muraco Clan. However, is there another way to resolve this besides pledging loyalty to the Black Muraco Clan?

Erwen felt that that was impossible.

Just as she was about to say something else, Andres said in frustration, "Erwen, it's getting late, and I'd like to rest. Go back. Please remember that you didn't come to me today, and you've never talked to me about sacrificing for Progenitor, okay?"

At that, a hint of excitement thrummed in Erwen's veins. It seemed like he had a plan --that he was not going to pledge loyalty to the Black Muraco Clan.

However, the plan he had seemed like a secretive one that outsiders could not learn about. Therefore, she had to even keep his rejection of her sacrifice a secret as well to avoid raising suspicion.

Erwen then flashed the clan leader a smile. "I understand. I trust that you'll help the White Muraco Clan through this crisis."

Hearing that surprised Andres, who wondered what he had said.

Erwen then left.

Instead of returning to her room, she went to Zeke.

Zeke was about to make a major move, so he had a solemn frown on his face.

However, in Erwen's eyes, that was a frown of being anxious.

What could he be worried about? It must be about how the White Muraco Clan is going to submit to the Black Muraco Clan.

Therefore, Erwen reassured, "Mr. Williams, I know that you must be thoroughly disappointed right now, but there's no need for you to feel like that. I'm sure that our clan leader will lead us through this crisis safe and sound. So, don't worry, okay?"

Zeke became speechless.

Why is she suddenly talking to me about this? She hasn't found out about anything, right?

Meanwhile, Jeremiah led Peter all the way to his place.

Just as they returned, Peter "woke" and returned to his normal self.

The truth was he had pretended to pass out in front of the clan leader to go along with Jeremiah's show in front of every one of the White Muraco Clan.

Fishing for praise, Peter asked, "Mr. Jeremiah, my acting was good, wasn't it? No one saw through the act, right?"

Jeremiah nodded. "Indeed, it was not bad. I'm not sure whether or not the clan leader believed it, but at the very least, the people of the White Muraco Clan had believed it. Did you see the looks on their faces? They looked terrified!"

Chapter 2044

Peter smiled again. "It's fine as long as the clan people believe in it. I'm sure that the clan leader will have no choice but to submit and join the Black Muraco Clan with the clan people pressuring him. Hmph. I've been wanting to leave the White Muraco Clan since forever. The people of the White Muraco Clan are always pretending to be saints, extending a helping hand to everyone even when they're about to starve to death. I'm really sick of a miserable life like this. On the other hand, although the Black Muraco Clan is constantly doing evil things, at the very least, their people are rich and are well-fed. If the White Muraco Clan is hell, then the Black Muraco clan is a paradise!"

However, Jeremiah suddenly asked, "Peter, let me ask you a question. Do you really think that we'll be able to live a comfortable life once we join the Black Muraco Clan?"

Peter froze. "Mr. Jeremiah, what do you mean?"

Jeremiah continued, "the White Muraco Clan has always been at odds with the Black Muraco Clan, and we've been through various wars against them. In other words,

we're enemies. If we pledge loyalty to the Black Muraco Clan, the people of the Black Muraco Clan will surely enslave us. We'll be at the bottom of their social hierarchy. By then, we'll be no stronger than the villagers at Village of Livestock."

Those words took Peter aback.

"If we join the Black Muraco Clan, we might become part of the Village of Livestock? I... I... I'd rather die than become one of the livestock there!"

"Peter, there's no need to fly into a panic. I have a plan that will let us be of equal status as the Black Muraco Clan. At the very least, we'll be a few levels higher in status than the White Muraco Clan," Jeremiah reassured.

Instantly, Peter uttered, "Please enlightened me on that."

"We'll pledge loyalty to the Black Muraco Clan quicker than them, so the people from the Black Muraco Clan will think of us better than the others. Even if we're not born in the Black Muraco Clan, we'll still have a higher status than the other people of the White Muraco Clan."

Hearing that, Peter smacked his head and gasped. "Yes, yes, let's do that! I'll heed your words, then. Let's not waste any more time and head to them right away."

Jeremiah nodded.

After ascertaining their plan, the two hastily headed in the direction of the Black Muraco Clan.

On their way there, the two encountered Erwen.

When Erwen saw them, she stopped them. "Mr. Jeremiah, what were the two of you doing?"

Jeremiah smiled. "Nothing. We're just walking around and trying to come up with a way to help the White Muraco Clan."

Erwen nodded. "I see. That's very kind of you, Mr. Jeremiah. I won't disturb you anymore, then."

"All right."

Jeremiah then bid Erwen farewell and continued his way.

After that, Jeremiah and Peter met another few people from the White Muraco Clan, and Jeremiah gave them the same answer that he gave to Erwen—that they were wandering around, trying to come up with a plan to get through the crisis.

However, Peter was confused by his actions. "Mr. Jeremiah, why don't you gather a few more people to come with us?"

At that, Jeremiah rolled his eyes. "Are you stupid? If we get more people to come with us, we'll get fewer benefits from the Black Muraco Clan because they'll get more of what should be ours."

"But our families are here. It's fine even if we get one or two with us, right?"

Jeremiah snapped, "Shut up. You have no right to question my decision. Just do as I tell you to."

After getting berated by Jeremiah, Peter dared not speak again. He only nodded in silence.

However, he was now a little less trustful of Jeremiah, for the latter was willing to give up on his family to fulfill his greed.

A man like him was too ruthless, and it would be best to not get too close to him. Soon, the two of them reached the Black Muraco Clan's territory.

Right as they were about to step onto the land, a figure appeared in front of them and stopped them.

"Hold it right there! This is the Black Muraco Clan's territory. Intruders will be killed without any exemptions!"

The one who came was none other than Claus Muraco.

His job in the Black Muraco Clan was to guard the entrances of the clan's territory. Upon hearing him, Jeremiah hastily explained, "Don't do anything rash! I'm one of the people in charge of the White Muraco Clan, Jeremiah. I've come to pledge loyalty to the Black Muraco Clan."

"Oh?"

Claus was surprised.

He was not surprised about someone from the White Muraco Clan coming to submit to the Black Muraco Clan but about the identity of that someone.

He then asked, "Are you really Mr. Jeremiah? "

Chapter 2045

Jeremiah nodded in affirmation. "Indeed."

"If that's the case, then you must be of a high standing in the White Muraco Clan."

"Of course," Jeremiah replied. "Please let us through and lead us to meet His Highness. I really wish to pledge loyalty to the Black Muraco Clan."

Claus then said, "I can lead you to His Highness, but you have to agree to a term of mine."

"Please speak your mind. If it's within my capabilities, I'll definitely do it."

"I'm in love with Yazmin of the White Muraco Clan, but we've had an argument lately, and she's furious with me. I hope that you will be able to resolve the conflict between us by having a talk with her."

Claus knew that Yazmin was loyal to the White Muraco Clan. She would definitely not forgive him for hurting the White Muraco Clan's Progenitor. Even if Cain forced her to be with Claus, her heart would still not belong to him.

That was why Claus wanted Jeremiah to matchmake them and help him mend their relationship.

Jeremiah smiled. "I see. Yazmin's lucky to have someone like you who loves her. Don't worry. I'll do my best to convince Yazmin. I'll be honest with you. I watched Yazmin grow up, and she listens to me best. I'm practically her father."

Hearing that, Claus beamed. "Thank you, Mr. Jeremiah, for agreeing to that. Let's go. I'll lead you to His Highness right away."

Meanwhile, Cain was doing his physical therapy in his room.

Ever since he found out that the White Muraco Clan's Progenitor died, Cain had been in a great mood. He was extremely motivated in doing his physical therapy, hoping that he could recover right away to deal with the White Muraco Clan instantly.

Just as he was in the middle of his exercise, he spotted Claus leading two strangers into the room.

With just one glance, Cain recognized Jeremiah. "Oh? Isn't this Mr. Jeremiah of the White Muraco Clan? May I know why you're here?"

His voice was laced with mockery, for he could guess that Jeremiah was there to pledge loyalty to him.

Jeremiah and Peter then bowed and greeted, "Your Highness, I have come to pledge my loyalty to you. I hope you will accept me."

"Ha," Cain sneered. "Aren't the people of the White Muraco Clan stubborn people? When have you learned to bow to others? However, I'm the Saint of the Black Muraco Clan, so I won't stoop to your level. Just bring all your people in."

Jeremiah then replied, "Your Highness, only Peter and I have come."

What?

Cain widened his eyes. "There are only the two of you here? Where are the rest of the White Muraco Clan people? As far as I know, the White Muraco Clan's Progenitor is dead, and your people will not live for long. Submitting to me is the only way you will all live. Do they all have a death wish?"

"Your Highness, I've gathered the people of our clan to discuss the matter of joining the Black Muraco Clan. I know that pledging loyalty to you is our only way to survive. However, my clan people are stubborn and foolish. They've refused to bow to you. Hence, left without a choice, I can only bring Peter along with me to you."

Still, there's no need to worry. I'm sure that the White Muraco Clan people will soon come back to their senses and pledge loyalty to you."

At that, Cain scoffed. "the White Muraco Clan people are truly brainless pigs. No wonder they're dying out.

On the other hand, the two of you are smart people. Good. The two of you can be the White Muraco Clan's role models.

Since you're here, you're the Black Muraco Clan's honorable guests. Claus, welcome them with the highest degree of respect."

Also, convey this message to the White Muraco Clan: You have another day to come to the Black Muraco Clan. Those who come tomorrow shall be treated the same as the other people in the Black Muraco Clan. They will be of equal standing as the people of the Black Muraco Clan. If you come later than tomorrow, then, my apologies. We won't be accepting them anymore. They will have to quietly wait for their deaths."

"Understood," Claus answered. "I'll work on it right away."

Chapter 2046

With that, Jeremiah and Peter shared a smile, both of them were glad that they had come early to bow to Cain.

The next morning, just as the sun rose above the horizon, a commotion broke out among the people of the White Muraco Clan.

The kindred had gathered. Anxiety and worry were written all over their faces.

It had been only one night, but they could already feel their Life-Bound Worm weakening drastically.

If that continued, in a few days' time, they would all be dead.

Everyone was terrified, and their fear only increased over time.

Whoosh!

A whistling sound cut through the air. When they turned to the source of the sound, they realized it came from an arrow that flew past them to hit the center of a tree.

On it was a piece of paper.

One of them then quickly rushed over to pluck the arrow and unfold the paper.

After reading the note, that person frowned.

"What's written on the note? Tell us quickly," someone urged.

The person then said, "It's a note from the Black Muraco Clan. They've said that we have a day to pledge loyalty to them. If we do it today, they'll treat us the same as the people of the Black Muraco Clan. However, they won't be accepting us if we were to do it tomorrow."

"Huh?"

The people of the White Muraco Clan were devastated but felt thrilled at the same time.

They were devastated because they only had one day to get ready, but they were thrilled because they would not need to become the Black Muraco Clan's slaves if they were to bow to them by the end of the day.

It was truly an opportunity not to be missed.

"Folks, what are we waiting for? Do we look like we have a choice?"

"That's right. Defecting from the White Muraco Clan is the only way for us to live now!"

"Let's go. We don't have much time left. We only have one day."

"Why don't we go to the clan leader and have him lead us there?"

"That's right. Let's go to the clan leader first. If he's not going, then sorry, my life is more important."

May the White Muraco Clan people then rushed toward the clan leader's house.

Erwen, who was watching them from the side, and she let out a sigh quietly. She knew that what was written on the note was just a lie from the Black Muraco Clan.

There was no way the Black Muraco Clan would not enslave the people of the White Muraco Clan once the latter submitted to them.

No one knew about the Black Muraco Clan better than her.

Luckily, our clan leader isn't really going to join the Black Muraco Clan. I'm sure he has come up with a way to resolve this. He's only promising the people that he would pledge loyalty to the Black Muraco Clan to buy time.

At the start, she too thought of going to him with the others. However, after a moment of rumination, she went to Zeke's room first.

Knock, knock, knock.

Zeke soon opened the door.

When he saw Holy Maiden right by his doorway, he smiled. "Good morning."

Erwen smiled back. "Mr. Williams, come with me."

"Where to?" Zeke asked.

Looking in the direction of the clan leader's room, Erwen replied, "To the clan leader's house. Something major may happen. soon."

That was something Zeke knew, for he was the one who planned it all.

"Let's go," he said.

The two of them then headed to the clan leader's house.

By then, the clan leader's house had been surrounded by a lot of people. They were all talking loudly, and the overlapping voices would frustrate anyone who heard them.

Finally, Andres came out of his house as his people called for him.

It seemed like he had aged even more overnight.

After clearing his throat, Andres said, "Why have you all gathered here early in the morning?"

The people of the White Muraco Clan then started speaking.

"Mr. Andres, in just one night, our LifeBound Worm has weakened terribly. I'd say we're all going to die in just a few days."

"That's right. We shouldn't waste more time; we should defect to the Black Muraco Clan right away!"

"By the way, the Black Muraco Clan just sent us a message. They said that the ones who pledge loyalty to the Black Muraco today will be treated the same as their people. We don't need to worry about becoming their slaves at all!"

Mr. Andres then scanned the crowd before sighing, "Will the White Muraco Clan die out today?"

One of the clan members then consoled, "Mr. Andres, you don't need to feel so sad. As long as we're alive, we can revive the clan one day.

Chapter 2047

Andres sighed, desolation evident in the sound. "Do we really have nowhere left to 802"

Right as those words were out of his mouth, an angry roar came from the entrance of the White Muraco Clan's territory. "Come out and get on your knees before me. people of the White Muraco Clan!"

In the next second, a thunderous buzzing sound filled the air.

What's going on?

With a grave look. Andres said. "Come with me.

Andres then led the clan people toward the entrance.

The moment they saw what was at the entrance, the living daylight was frightened out of them.

Cain had brought with him almost all of the people from the Black Muraco Clan to barricade the entrances to the White Muraco Clan's village.

At the same time, thousands of the Black Muraco Clan people were releasing their Life-Bound Worm.

They hovered above the heads of the Black Muraco Clan people flapping their wings and making an ear-grating noise.

All of those worms were emanating murderous auras, and anyone near them would have chills running down their spines.

That was the Black Muraco Clan's Myriad Worm Formation.

The White Muraco Clan's Myriad Worm Formation was already powerful, but the Black Muraco Clan's Myriad Worm Formation was even more powerful. As a matter of fact, there were few in the world who could stand a chance against the Black Muraco Clan's Myriad Worm Formation.

Right then, Andres shouted, "Cain, you've activated the Myriad Worm Formation and barricaded our place. What are you trying to do?"

Cain sneered. "Nothing. I heard that you're about to join the Black Muraco Clan, so I've come to welcome you. At that, Andres roared, "You're blocking the exit with Myriad Worm Formation. Everyone knows whether you're threatening us or welcoming us. Hurry and deactivate your Myriad Worm Formation right now, or else you can't blame the White Muraco Clan for showing no mercy."

"Hahaha!" Cain laughed boisterously. "You're going to show no mercy to me? All right, I'd like to see how you're going to show no mercy to me! The White Muraco Clan's Progenitor is dead, and your clan only has days left. You're on the verge of death, and you need us to save you, but you're telling us now that you're going to show no mercy to us? Who the f*ck gave you the courage to say such things?"

"You-" was the only thing Andres could squeeze out.

Cain then stared at the White Muraco Clan people expressionlessly as he uttered, "Listen up, people of the White Muraco Clan. Your clan leader's actions have infuriated me. Therefore, I'm going to shorten the time you have to come to a decision. I said I was going to give you a day to think about it previously, but now, you only have an hour. If you surrender and join the Black Muraco Clan in an hour, you'll be treated as one of the Black Muraco Clan people. If not... Hmph. My Myriad Worm Formation will enter the White Muraco Clan's territory. I'm sure you don't need me to tell you what will happen next, do you?"

Hearing that, the White Muraco Clan people turned ashen.

An hour's time did not even seem enough for them to make their Life-Bound Worm pledge allegiances.

What do we do? What should we do?

Desperate, the White Muraco Clan people then turned to look at Andres.

By then, there was nothing Andres could do but bow to Cain.

After taking a deep breath to suppress the frustration that threatened to burst out of him, he said, "Cain, I'll ask you a question. Are you speaking the truth? If the White Muraco Clan people join you, will you treat them as you would to your people?"

Cain's response came swift. "Of course. I, the Saint of Black Muraco, am a man of my words. If you don't believe in me, I can show you the proof."

With that said, he snapped his fingers. "Come on out."

Soon, two people stepped out from the crowd.

They were none other than Peter and Jeremiah.

Upon seeing them, the people of the White Muraco Clan gasped.

What's going on? Why are Mr. Jeremiah and Peter on the side of the Black Muraco Clan? Unless... At that very moment, a terrifying thought materialized in their heads.

Andres then said, "Mr. Jeremiah, Peter, why don't you explain why you're standing among the Black Muraco Clan people?"

"Mr. Andres, I'm here to lead the way for our people," Jeremiah started. "Aren't you worried about handing over the White Muraco Clan people to the Black Muraco Clan? Aren't you worried that the Black Muraco Clan would torture the White Muraco Clan people? That's why Peter and I have joined the Black Muraco Clan first to find out more about the situation. Now, we can say that His Highness is truly a bighearted man. Not only has the Black Muraco Clan not looked down on us, but they've even treated us with the utmost respect. Therefore, my people, put your worries aside and join the Black Muraco Clan!"

Chapter 2048

"You bast*rds!" yelled the White Muraco Clan people.

"Ha! You make it sound so nice by saying that you're helping us find out more about the situation, but the truth is that you're a traitor!"

"That's right! You've abandoned and defected from the White Muraco Clan! You're nothing but a traitor!"

"I can't believe that we've trusted you so much and made you one of the people in charge of the clan! Is this how you repay the trust of your people?"

"Mr. Andres, please remove him from his position of power!"

Furious to hear their comments, Jeremiah bellowed, "That's enough!"

Stunned by the roar, the White Muraco Clan people quieted down.

Jeremiah then sneered. "I've only joined the Black Muraco Clan earlier than you. Moreover, it's not like you're not joining

them today! This is just a pot calling a kettle black! Furthermore, His Highness has said that once the White Muraco Clan joins the Black Muraco Clan, I'll be the one in charge of all of you, and that includes the clan leader of the White Muraco Clan. Now, not only are you not trying to butter me up, but you're even chiding me! Aren't you all a little too gutsy? Another word of nonsense from you, and I'll make sure your life after joining the Black Muraco Clan will be a living hell!"

The moment the White Muraco Clan people heard that, they all fell silent, not daring to say anything bad about Jeremiah anymore.

After all, they had no choice but to submit under such circumstances.

Just then, Cain glanced at the time and said, "You only have forty-eight minutes left. If you don't pledge your allegiance now, it'll be too late."

Again, the White Muraco Clan people turned to look at Andres.

A moment later, Andres turned around to look at the White Muraco Clan's land and sighed. "I've dishonored the White Muraco

Clan's ancestors. Not only have I not brought the clan to greater heights, but the clan has even come to an end in my hands. I'm the sinner of the White Muraco Clan. If our ancestors are upset, please put your blame on me alone. I'm willing to bear all the responsibility for this matter."

With that, Andres prostrated before the land. Then, he turned to Cain and said, "All right. We'll pledge allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor."

"Let's begin." Cain grinned. "Let us welcome the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor."

A few of the Black Muraco Clan people then carried a sedan over.

Something in the sedan was releasing a powerful aura, and that aura targeted all of the Life-Bound Worms. When the LifeBound Worms of the White Muraco Clan's people sensed the aura, they were filled with fear, and they began to shake.

The one in the sedan was none other than the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor.

Andres entered the sedan and pledged his allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor.

The other the White Muraco Clan people then lined up and readied themselves to pledge allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor.

Meanwhile, Erwen was dumbfounded by the scene, her face completely colorless.

What... What's going on? Andres is the first to join the Black Muraco Clan? He was so confident yesterday, so I thought he had come up with a good plan. Yet, in the end, he has pledged his allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor!

Erwen could not bring herself to accept the cruel reality. At that moment, she felt the urge to die.

She would rather die than pledge her loyalty to the Black Muraco Clan.

Her mind turned blank, and she kept taking stumbling steps back. In fact, she would have fallen, if not for Zeke's swift reaction.

"Erwen, what's the matter?"

Hearing that, Erwen's tears instantly fell.

"Take me away," she whispered.

Huh?

Zeke frowned. "What did you just say?"

In a shaky voice, Erwen repeated, "Take me away... Even if I die, I don't want to die here. Mr. Williams, please, I have a favor to ask from you. If I die outside, please bury me in a quiet place."

With that said, Erwen turned to leave.

Zeke promptly grabbed her arm. "Erwen, wait. Don't let your hope die just yet. Maybe the tables can still be turned."

The tables can still be turned? The smile Erwen gave him was a bitter one. "Mr. Andres has already led his people to join the Black Muraco Clan. There are no tables to be turned anymore."

Beside them, Yazmin quickly added, "Erwen, you have to believe that there are miracles in this world."

"Trust me, I'll never lie to you."

What?

Erwen was baffled to hear that.

The looks on Zeke and Yazmin's faces, as well as their tones, made her wonder if they had everything under control.

Chapter 2049

There was still a chance for them to change the situation.

But they've already pledged allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor. How are we supposed to turn the tables?

Nevertheless, in the end, Erwen chose to put her trust in the two of them and waited to see how things would turn out.

Soon, the White Muraco Clan people were done pledging their allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor. The only ones left were Yazmin and Erwen.

Immediately, everyone turned to look at the two of them.

Claus, especially, was staring at Yazmin with a pleading look.

He was close to Yazmin. Although he was using her, as time went by, he started growing feelings for her.

Just then, Yazmin took in a deep breath and walked toward the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor.

Just then, Yazmin took in a deep breath and walked toward the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor.

Panicking, Erwen shot out her hand to grab Yazmin's hand. "Yazmin, are you really going to join the Black Muraco Clan?"

Yazmin sighed. "If we don't do that, we'll die. I'm still young. I don't want to just die like this. We can only have hope when we're alive."

"But-"

Not giving a chance for Erwen to say anything else, Yazmin walked toward the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor. She then released her Life-Bound Worm and pledged her allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor.

Erwen was gobsmacked.

Even Yazmin had pledged her allegiance. It seemed there was no way the situation was going to change anymore.

What Yazmin and Zeke had said earlier was only to console her.

With a smile that did not reach his eyes, Cain said, "Erwen, what are you waiting for? Your people have joined the Black Muraco Clan. What other reasons do you have to be against that idea? Yazmin's right. If you don't join the Black Muraco Clan, you'll die. Don't worry. I won't treat you terribly when you join the Black Muraco Clan. I'll even let you keep your role the Holy Maiden.

At that, Erwen shot him a vicious look. Just as she was about to reject him, Zeke grabbed her arm and walked over to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor.

"Let's go, Erwen."

"Where to?" Erwen was shocked.

"To pledge your allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor, of course."

"What?"

She instantly struggled, but no matter how hard she tried, she could not break free of his grasp.

"I won't do it! Even if I die, I won't join the Black Muraco Clan!"

Left without a choice, Zeke used his energy to speak to Erwen. "Trust me, Erwen. I'll give you an explanation later. Your allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor is only temporary. Soon, I'll show you something great."

Where's that voice coming from?

Erwen was taken aback by the voice in her head, and she quickly whipped her head to seek the source of the voice.

Was that Zeke's voice? But why is that voice in my head?

Hastily, she asked Yazmin, "Yazmin, did you hear anything just now?"

Yazmin shook her head. "I didn't."

She didn't?

Erwen then curiously turned to look at Zeke. "What... was that just now?"

Zeke spoke to her with his energy again. "It's my voice. Just do as I tell you to. Don't ask any questions, and don't say anything."

Hearing the voice in her head stunned Erwen even more. Now, she was certain that Zeke was much more powerful than she originally thought he was. It was likely for someone like him to have the capability to change the situation.

Excited and worried, Erwen decided to pledge her allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor.

Upon seeing her pledge her allegiance, Cain relaxed.

Now, Erwen's one of my people. More specifically, she's now my slave. I can make her do anything she wants.

As Cain took in the sight of her pretty face and curvy figure, he wished he could take her to his room that very night.

However, he soon raised his guard again.

That was because he spotted Zeke walking toward the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor as well.

Anxious, Cain cried out, "Stand right there, Zeke Williams!"

At that, Zeke halted in his tracks and turned to Cain. "Is there anything I can help you with?"

"What are you trying to do?"

Zeke replied, "Isn't it obvious? I'm pledging allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor."

Cain sneered.

There was no way he would believe that Zeke would obediently submit to the Black Muraco Clan with how dangerous he was.

Cain was certain that Zeke was going to pull some kind of trick out of his hat.

Thus, he was not going to let him pledge his allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor.

Chapter 2050

What Cain said next was, "You have no right to pledge allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor."

"Why?" Zeke asked. "Everyone has the right to do that, so why don't I as well?"

"It's simple. You're not one of the White Muraco Clan people. You don't even have a Life-Bound Worm. How are you going to pledge allegiance to the Black Muraco Clan's Progenitor?"

Zeke responded, "Who told you I'm not part of the White Muraco Clan? Not only am I part of the White Muraco Clan, but my Life-Bound Worm is also from the White Muraco Clan."

"Do you really think that I'll believe in your words?" Cain questioned. "Where's your Life-Bound Worm? Show me!"

"Sure," came Zeke's quick reply.

Just then, Peter stepped forward to say, "Your Highness, don't waste your time with him anymore. He's just messing with us. I can prove that he's not one of us. He only came to the White Muraco Clan a few days ago. He's just lying about his Life-Bound Worm. Zeke's just messing with us! This bast*rd has insulted Your Highness so many times. Even if you can stand it, I can't. Your Highness, I'd like to ask for your permission to get rid of him!"

Zeke then turned to Peter and nodded. "Sure. If you get his permission, I'll fight with you. Get over here!"

Those three thunderous words almost shook the earth, and it made Peter's heart skip a beat. There was no way he would have the courage to fight Zeke right after that shout.

However, Cain was grinning maniacally. "Zeke, I know that you know a thing or two. That's why you can be so arrogant. However, you can only bow to me now. Everyone, listen up, release your LifeBound Worms and activate the Myriad Worm Formation. This time, we're going to end his life, or else every one of you will be punished!"

With that said, the Black Muraco Clan people released their Life-Bound Worms.

After a moment of hesitation, the White Muraco Clan people also released their Life-Bound Worms.

Now, they were all part of the Black Muraco Clan. If they did not listen to the Saint of the Black Muraco Clan, they would suffer a terrible death.

Hence, there was no reason for them to sacrifice themselves for the sake of a stranger.

Thousands of Life-Bound Worms hovered in the air menacingly, ready to end Zeke's life at any time.

That scene frightened Erwen.

Instinctively, she tried to step forward to shield Zeke, but Yazmin stopped her.

"Erwen, don't. Mr. Williams will be fine."

Yazmin knew that Zeke was the White Muraco Clan's elder, so she knew that he was powerful. Since he was the one who set everything up, she was certain that he would be able to turn the table.

However, that was not what Erwen, who did not know about Zeke's identity, would think.

In the end, she still broke free from Yazmin's grasp and stood in front of Zeke.

"Stop, Cain, order them to stop immediately! You can't hurt him!"

Almost immediately, Cain's expression darkened. "Get over here, Erwen! You're mine, but you're defending another man? You're challenging my limits!"

Nevertheless, Erwen insisted, "Cain, deactivate the Myriad Worm Formation, or I'll kill myself!"

With that said, Erwen took out a pair of scissors and pressed them against her neck.

Cain instantly tensed up.

He had been lusting for Erwen's body for a long time. If she were to die at that moment, he would be filled with regret for the rest of his life.

Thus, Cain hastily said, "All right, Erwen, you want to keep him alive, right?"

Erwen nodded.

"Then let's make a deal. If you marry me and serve me for the rest of my life, I'll let

Hearing that, Erwen hesitated.

Cain then sighed. "If you don't agree to it, then I have no choice but to let the two of you be star-crossed lovers."

"All right, I'll a—"

Before Erwen could finish her sentence, Zeke stopped her.

"Erwen, don't be in such a rush to make the choice. I haven't showed them my LifeBound Worm yet."

"Mr. Williams, why are you still adamant about showing them your Life-Bound Worm at a time like this? Don't you realize what's going on? Even if you prove to them that you're part of the White Muraco Clan and that you have a Life-Bound Worm, Cain won't let you join the Black Muraco Clan. What he wants is your life!"