

The dim evening light passed through the large windows of the mansion, illuminating the somber expression on my mother's face as I confronted her. I had already endured the humiliation of having to endure Kase's mockery, so I must make that shame count for something. No matter what, I must leave this mansion knowing more about who I am.

"I'm not here to reconcile. I need answers; I need to know the truth about me, about my true origin," I said, maintaining a firm tone, "I came here because I have questions about my past, about who I am, and you're the only person who can give me those answers."

My mother's brows furrowed. Her confusion looked genuine as she asked me to clarify what I meant, "Darx, I'm not understanding what you're talking about. What exactly do you want to know?"

I gritted my teeth, frustrated at her apparent ignorance or unwillingness to share the truth, "You don't have to pretend any longer, Mom. Just tell me the truth!"

"...Darx," She sighed, "I've always been truthful with you. I don't understand what this sudden question is about."

"So you're just going to keep pretending..." My mom's words didn't sit well with me, and I remained unconvinced.

My mother's face drastically changed when she heard my harsh words. Her expression was a mixture of hurt and offended, "Very well, Darx," She conceded, "I don't know what this is about, so ask your questions, and I'll answer them as best as possible. I hope that after I resolve your doubts, you can listen to me in order to find a way for you to understand me and forgive me."

I wanted to tell her that that would never happen. That I would never accept her marriage to Kase, but I decided to stay silent, not wanting to start another fight and waste the fact that she agreed to answer my questions. I couldn't shake the feeling that I was only scratching the surface of a much larger, darker truth – one that would inevitably force me to confront not only my own problems but also those who sought to control and manipulate me for their own ends.

"Very well..." I bit back my anger, letting the matter rest for now, "Since I was a kid, I was always different. My strange nightmares. The color of my eyes. The fact that I never got sick as a child. I always ignored that as a simple coincidence. However, since I arrived in the capital, even more strange things happened to me. No matter how much I try to ignore or pass them off as coincidences, it is no longer possible for me to disregard them. I need to know why. Why am I different from others?"

My mother looked at me with concern, as if she could feel the desperation that my face probably was reflecting. After a few moments of silence, she finally responded, "When I arrived in the capital, Harold asked me the same thing. Harold was really intrigued by you. After all, your awakening as an adventurer was strange, and that's not even counting the intense red color of

your eyes," My mother once again stopped her words, leaving me in anticipation of what she would say next, "Regardless, I will tell you the same thing I told Harold," My mother continued, "There is no secret to reveal. Your eyes, your awakening, your nightmares are indeed strange, but that is something that I cannot explain either."

"You must be lying," I said, frustrated, "There must be something... something you're hiding from me!"

"Darx, calm down... What I'm telling you is true." My mother said, noticing my distress.

Feeling desperate, I started saying things that maybe I shouldn't have said, "So explain to me.... who is Zaine? Why... Why do I see her in my dreams? What does the goddess want with me? H-How can I get the church off my back? Why am I getting stronger at a speed that shouldn't be possible? Every day that passes, it is as if a new problem arises. I-I have no idea who to trust anymore. I feel like there is a darkness in me that, if I don't keep it under control, will consume me. I..."

My intention was not to say all that or express my frustrations, but at that moment, I simply couldn't contain myself.

"Z-Zaine? Goddess? What are you talking about?" My mother said with a worried expression as she approached me.

In a moment of desperation and helplessness, I continued saying things I shouldn't have, "...Are you even my real mother? Why I don't look like you?" The words left my mouth before I could stop them.

I saw my mother stop approaching, making a shocked and sad expression, "Darx." Her eyes turned red, and her voice choked with emotion, "How can you say that? You are my son and the most important person to me."

My hands trembled at my sides, and I found myself unable to meet her eyes.

"I know things between us are not well right now, largely because of me, but what you just said is very cruel," My mother said as she looked at me with tears about to come out of her eyes, "I told you once that I couldn't have children because of an accident I had as a child. When I got pregnant with you, I always considered it a miracle. From that day on, you were the most important person to me."

"Ha... That's a lie. Otherwise, you wouldn't be Kase's wife." I reply.

As the tears streamed down my mother's face, I realized that my relationship with my mother would never be the same. The bond we once shared had been irreparably damaged by her choices and mine.

"Darx," Ilene's voice trembled, "I know you're upset about my marriage to Kase. But I want you to understand that you'll always be my son, whatever happens between us."

My hands clenched into fists, and I fought against the urge to scream in frustration, "Then tell me about my father!" I reply, remembering how little information she had shared about him. Maybe if it's not my mother, the secret of everything may lie in my father.

My mother's eyes widened when she heard my request. Still, she answered without hesitation, "Your father... Azriel was a good man, loving and caring. Your father died before you were born, but I've never hidden that from you," My mother said, her eyes clouding with memories, "I had already mentioned to you before that I met him when I was a member of Dark Dragons in my youth. He was a good and brave person who made friends quickly. Azriel got along with everyone, and he liked to make people laugh. The most impressive thing about him is that he was a very talented mage. To this day, Azriel is still the most incredible mage I have ever met."

"What else? Where did my father come from?" I asked, "Did he have my same problems?"

"In the years that I lived with Azriel, he was an ordinary person. He told me that he lived in a small village north of here near Oidao, which was destroyed by monsters," My mother said before pausing for a few seconds, "What I can tell you is that your father was very excited about your birth. I'm sure Azriel would have been happy to see the good man you had become."

"Did I look like him?" I asked, eagerly awaiting her response.

My mother looked down at the floor, and seconds later, she raised her gaze with what appeared to be sadness in her expression. "N-No... there isn't much resemblance between you and him."

"...I see," I reply.

My mother saw me with sadness in her eyes. It seems that she realized that I was somehow hoping she would tell me that I looked like my father.

"I'm sorry...", " She replied, sadness filling her voice, "I don't know why your eyes are red or where your abilities come from. I wish I could give you the answers you seek, but I don't have them. Still, if you have problems or need help with anything, I am here for you."

My chest tightened as I struggled with the whirlwind of emotions swirling inside me. It's strange. I didn't expect to feel the sadness that I now feel after knowing that I don't look like my father. My mother seemed sincere, but at this point, I didn't know what to believe anymore. Was she telling the truth or hiding something else from me? I couldn't decide, leaving me feeling even more lost and confused.

"Fine," I muttered, turning away from her, "I'll find the answers myself."

"D-Darx, please wait!" My mother called out as I stormed towards the door, but her words fell on deaf ears.

My frustration boiled over, and I couldn't stand being in that mansion any longer. As I slammed the door behind me, I knew I was leaving my mom alone with her own distress and unanswered questions, but I couldn't bring myself to care.

Outside, it was already night. The cold air did little to quell my frustration as I walked through the streets of Riledo toward my guild. Sunshine tried to talk and encourage me since she foresaw everything that happened in the mansion. However, I ignored her attempts at conversation, too deep in my thoughts to pay her any mind.

"Come on, Dox," Sunshine said, her voice tinged with concern, "I have a few jokes that might cheer you up, but I can't say them when I see you with such a sad expression. You're not going to cry, are you?"

"Save it," I replied, not in the mood for her jokes or playful banter. All I wanted was to be alone, away from everyone and everything that reminded me of the mess my life had become.

"Alright, alright," Sunshine conceded, "Just know that I'm here for you, okay?"

"Uh? Since when are you so nice?" I muttered, barely audible even to myself.

"I have always... w-well, on some... hmm... rather few occasions, I have been kind!" Sunshine responded.

As I continued to walk through the dimly lit streets, my thoughts kept returning to my mother and my father. It was really frustrating to have gone through all that and not gotten any concrete answers.

When I finally reached my room at the guild, I closed the door behind me and leaned against it, sighing heavily. My body ached with exhaustion, both physical and emotional. I needed sleep, but as I lay in bed, my mind refused to quiet down, haunted by the events that happened to me in the mansion.

The night was cold, and the wind blew gently through my window. As I closed my eyes, attempting to sleep, I heard my window open. Swiftly, I opened my eyes and turned toward the window. Suddenly, the window opened wider, revealing a woman coming through. However, she was no ordinary woman. Large wings adorned her back, and horns protruded from her head. She was a demon, without a doubt. When she turned to see me, the moonlight illuminated her face. At that moment, I recognized her. She is the same demon from the cave. I quickly got up from my bed and ran to grab my sword.

"Wait!" She pleaded, raising her hands defensively, "I just want to talk."

Ignoring her request, I approached her menacingly, ready to strike. But then she spoke again, her voice urgent, "I'm here to talk about Zaine!"

Surprised by what she just said, I paused. How the hell does she know about Zaine?

"Who are you?" I demanded, maintaining my defensive stance, "How do you know about Zaine?"

The demon smiled before answering, "I guess I should introduce myself now that you are seeing me with my true face. My name is Namy," She said, her voice soft and cryptic.

Examining her more closely, I confirm that she is indeed a demon. Namy has long, straight black hair, split by two prominent horns atop her head. Her hands are unusually dark and slender, with thin fingers and elongated pointed nails. Namy's facial features are strikingly beautiful, yet her pupils and tongue resemble those of a snake. She doesn't appear very tall, showcasing a slim figure.

"But forget that... Darx, I'm here because we can help each other," Namy said as she stared at me, and her snake-looking tongue licked her lips.

"Uh? How do you know my name?" I asked her while tightly gripping my sword, ready to attack if she tried anything.

"Oh, I know a lot more about you than just your name," Namy said with a more prominent smile.

Suddenly, Namy appearance underwent a sudden transformation. She now resembled Caroline, the woman I had met at the castle. Shocked, I realized Namy must be the one who had infiltrated the castle disguised as Caroline.

"Did you miss me?" Namy said, looking and sounding exactly like Caroline.

"H-How did yo-"

Before I could speak, Namy changed her appearance again, now looking like Oliver, "Perhaps you prefer a more familiar face to speak with more confidence, hahaha!"

"W-What are you?" I asked, saying my thoughts aloud.

"Shouldn't that be obvious by looking at me!?" Namy responded, crossing her arms, "I'm a demon. A succubus, if you want me to be more precise."

How does Namy know about Oliver? Could it be... There is only one answer I can think of.

"You've been spying on me, haven't you?" I asked. At that moment, every time I felt watched since I returned to the capital made sense.

"You're right," After answering that, Namy transformed again. This time, she resembles Syvis. Now, with Syvis's appearance and voice, she continued, "Imagine my surprise to see you back in the capital after what happened to you in the cave. I really thought you were dead." While talking, Namy was rubbing her breasts.

"STOP THAT!" I YELLED.

"Mmm? Stop what?" Namy said mockingly, "You're still the same boring guy from the castle, Darx," She spoke as she spread her legs, revealing Syvis' private parts.

"Tss... I'm warning you! Stop looking like Syvis right now!" I said, looking and sounding more upset.

"Okay, Okay... hahaha!" Namy returned to her original form, looking again like the demon from the start.

"I don't know your purpose in showing you to me, but I won't fall for your games. Answer my question, or else I'll cut off your head!" I said, trying to sound as threatening as possible.

A demon that can transform into any person is really dangerous. Maybe it's best to get rid of her right here.

"I'm here to open your eyes to the truth. Darx, come with me. You are the key to rescuing Zaine." Namy spoke.

"What? How do you know Zaine in the first place?" I asked, my anger rising.

"Ah, that's a great question," Namy replied, a sly grin on her face.

"Enough with the cryptic talk!" I demanded, "Tell me now, or I'll cut you in two right here!"

"Are you sure that's the right way to talk to me?" She spoke, relenting to my demand, "But first, let's make sure your little fairy friend doesn't interrupt us," With a swift movement, Namy grabbed the medallion on top of my desk.

Sunshine! How the hell does Namy know about the medallion and Sunshine? How long has she been spying on me?

"Give that back!" I demanded.

"Of course," Namy replied, dangling the medallion in front of me like bait, "As long as you put down your sword and listen to what I have to say."

Shit... With no other choice, I reluctantly dropped my sword to the floor. After that, I kicked my sword away from me. In response, Namy smiled as she looked at the medallion as if trying to provoke me. If Namy lies to me and doesn't give me the medallion, I will use my ring to attack her with magic. I was planning my next move when Namy tossed the medallion back to me. Catching it, I clutched it tightly as if holding onto a lifeline.

"Good boy," Namy smirked, "Now, will you listen to what I have to say?"

"It's not like I have any other choice," I grumbled, still wary of her intentions.

Namy replied, "I'm amazed that you managed to return from that void after everyone, including myself, thought you were dead. "

"So you were there too?" I asked.

"Of course, darling! After you killed Olval, there was no way I could leave it just like that. Unfortunately, your companions arrived for you before I managed to take you with me, so instead, I followed your steps and saw everything that happened next."

In that group, there were many high-ranking adventurers. I can't believe no one there detected that Namy was following us. I wonder what kind of ability she has.

"What do you know about Zaine? And why should I trust a demon who's been spying on me all this time?" I asked.

"Ah, getting straight to the point, are we?" She chuckled lightly, seemingly amused by my impatience, "I won't tell you my relationship with Zaine or who she is, at least for now. What I can tell you is that she doesn't have much time left. To be honest, before the cave, I thought Zaine was dead, but my sister felt her coming from you. How or why, I don't know."

Just what is she talking about?

"As you can imagine, it was a great shock to know that Zaine was alive and that, for some reason, you were the key to understanding what happened to her. However, soon after, you ended up locked in that strange portal. I thought it was absurd, that it was cruel false hope, until as a joke of fate, one day you return to this city as if nothing had happened. It's absurd if you ask me, but it is still a great opportunity."

"Opportunity? If you're not going to tell me who Zaine is or your relationship with her, then tell me why you're looking for me?" I asked.

"I want you to come with me and meet my sister Usofra. She was the one who felt Zaine through you. Whatever happened to Zaine, you are the key to finding her." Namy continued, "Besides, I get the feeling that you are also worried about Zaine. I'm the one who's curious about how you know her and your relationship with her."

"Are you out of your mind?" I scoffed, incredulous at her suggestion, "You think I'll join forces with a demon like you, especially when your kind is about to wage war against humans? Not happening."

"Such a shame," Namy retorted, her expression darkening, "However, if you really wanted to stop the war, then you'd come with me. Zaine is the only one who can put an end to it."

"I will not fall into a demon's trap!" I snapped, "If you've truly been spying on me, then you must know that I'll soon be leaving the capital with Syvis to head to the territory of the Dark Elves. I don't have time to follow a demon into a trap."

"HAHAHAHH!!!!" Namy laughed mockingly, her eyes gleaming with amusement. The sound grated on my nerves.

"What's so funny?" I demanded, my hands clenching into fists.

"Darx, you're so stupid for trusting your girlfriend," Namy replied, her voice dripping with condescension, "Your precious girlfriend isn't what she seems. Choosing her over Zaine would be a huge mistake."

"What? More lies? I already told you that I won't fall for your tricks!" I growled, my patience wearing thin.

"Alright, let me enlighten you," Namy began, her voice sounding seductive, a wicked smile playing on her lips, "I was the one who trailed Syvis and her group in the cave. I witnessed some... moments full of passion between her and Kase. If I told you the things Kase did to your dear girlfriend, hahaha!"

"Impossible! You lie!" I roared, rage boiling inside me. Without thinking, I lunged at Namy, aiming to strike her down.

Namy easily dodged my attack, flying out of the window, her laughter echoing through the room, "Hahaha! Verify the truth yourself if you don't believe me," She taunted as she moved away from the window, "And remember, I'll keep watching you. You'd better decide quickly about joining me to rescue Zaine."

As she disappeared into the night, I was left standing there, my heart pounding with a mix of fury and confusion. Syvis and ...Kase. Ha, ha... haah... t-that impossible... that evil creature was lying! Syvis betrayed me with Kase? The thought was unbearable. Why did Namy tell me

something like that? I wanted to believe that Namy's words were lies, but my doubts about those days began to arise. When we found Syvis, she was with Kase. Syvis told me that they also met at that time. Did Syvis lie to me? No, that is impossible! Syvis would never do that! But then, during the whole time in the cave, Syvis and Kase spent a lot of time together... Was it the reason Syvis has been strange since we left the cave? I-I'm an idiot! What am I thinking... Why do I believe the words of a demon? Syvis would never do something like that to me. Syvis... she...

Thinking about the possibility that Syvis lied to me and had something to do with Kase, I started to feel like I was out of breath. I felt like the room was suffocating me. Without thinking I ran out of my room, rushing into the streets.

"Darx, what's going on?" Sunshine's voice pulled me back to reality. I looked down at the medallion in my hand, realizing I had been gripping it tightly.

"N-Nothing, I..." I muttered.

"Who was that woman, and why are we on the street in the middle of the night?" Sunshine kept asking.

"Syvis..." was all I managed to say, my mind still lost in a whirlwind of doubt and uncertainty.

"What?" Sunshine asked, sounding confused.

Without thinking, I ran barefoot through the cold streets, ignoring Sunshine's questions until I reached the nearby streets where the Oblivion building was. I wasn't sure what I was doing or if confronting Syvis right now was the right thing to do.

As the guild building came into view, I stopped, feeling the night's chill cut into my skin. My heart raced, and my thoughts became clearer for a moment.

...Was I really willing to trust a demon I didn't know over my girlfriend? The one who swore love and loyalty to me? The Syvis that I know would never do something like that. Frustrated and unsure of what to believe or do, I sat down, leaning against a wall, gazing at the distant guild building entrance.

"Dox, seriously. What are we doing here?" Sunshine complained, but I barely registered her words. I continued to stare at the building.

"Please give me some time to think," I requested, my voice barely audible over the howling wind.

"Fine, take your time, but don't freeze to death out here," She replied, some of her usual sass returning.

I sighed and focused on the floor, trying to make sense of everything. Seriously, what am I doing...? If I confront her in the middle of the night, accusing her of cheating on me with a bastard like Kase, what will she think of me? Syvis has been by my side, supporting me at all times. Syvis will never...

Namy's words must be lies. But how does Namy know about Zaine? I know Zaine doesn't have much time left. She told me herself. If I go with Syvis, am I really abandoning Zaine? What will happen to her? She is alone in that dark place...

The cold night was doing little to calm my nerves completely, but at least it gave me some clarity.

"Dox," Sunshine whispered, "Someone's coming out of the building."

My eyes shot towards the entrance, and I tensed up as I saw Kase leaving the guild. He looked around cautiously before getting into his carriage.

W-What is he... Though Kase was also a member of Oblivion, it struck me as odd that he would be there so late. When I saw him in the mansion, he left the mansion, telling my mother that he had things to do. What could Kase have been doing in his guild until these late hours of the night? My mind raced with thoughts of Kase possibly being with Syvis. Every possibility tormented me, fueling my jealousy further. All I could tell myself was that it was a coincidence and that Syvis would never betray me in that cruel way.

I-I will meet Syvis tomorrow at Oliver's daughter's party. I will ask her, and she will clarify everything. Yes... It's all a misunderstanding. I trust Syvis. I... trust Syvis...

Feeling tormented, I drag my feet back to my room in silence, telling myself countless times that everything must be a misunderstanding.

The moonlight filtered through the gaps in my curtains, casting eerie shadows on the walls of my room. My eyes were bloodshot, wide open in the darkness as I tossed and turned restlessly in bed.

"Damn it!" I muttered under my breath, my fists clenched tightly as Namy's words resurfaced in my mind, tormenting me.

The morning came after I couldn't sleep at all. Today is the birthday party of Oliver's daughter. Syvis and I had agreed to meet there, and I hoped beyond hope that she would clear up my doubts and assure me that nothing had happened between her and Kase. The mere thought of seeing her brought a mixture of eagerness and anxiety welling up inside me.

I stayed in my room all day. As the sun climbed higher in the sky, anticipation buzzed beneath my skin like electricity. Each minute felt like an eternity as I counted down the minutes until the party. I couldn't focus on anything else, my heart pounding with a mix of anxiety and dread.

Finally, the time came. I took the medallion from my desk and left for Oliver's Inn. My steps quickened as I wished for Syvis to be already there.

Upon arriving at Oliver's Inn, my body tensed, and my mind started racing. I scanned the room, my heart racing as I searched for any sign of Syvis. But she wasn't there yet. The cheerful decorations and laughter of the guests did little to ease my anxiety. As people mingled and chatted around me, I tried my best to smile.

"Darx! You made it!" Oliver greeted me with a wide grin. Emma stood beside him, beaming with pride as they welcomed guests to their daughter's party.

"Of course," I replied, feigning cheerfulness, "I wouldn't miss it for the world." As the party progressed, I couldn't help but feel increasingly anxious and nervous, waiting for Syvis to arrive. Every time I heard the door open, my head snapped around, desperate to see her face. Yet each time, my heart sank as someone else entered instead.

"Isn't this wonderful?" Emma smiled, her eyes shining, "Our little girl is growing up so fast."

"Yes, it's amazing," I agreed, trying to sound upbeat while my thoughts were consumed by Syvis and where she could be.

Oliver clapped me on the back, "By the way, Darx, where is your girlfriend?"

"Syvis must be on her way. She will be here soon," I mumbled, not entirely convinced. My stomach churned with unease, and I couldn't shake the nagging feeling that something was wrong.

As the party continued, laughter and chatter filled the room, but all I could think about was Syvis. Where was she? A million questions raced through my mind, each more distressing than the last. I tried to push them away, focusing on the joyous occasion instead.

But every time the door opened, my heart leaped in anticipation, only to plummet once again when Syvis was nowhere to be found.

More people began to arrive, and among them was Mia. She entered the room wearing a beautiful dress, her eyes sparkling with excitement. Catching sight of me, she approached with a warm smile.

"Darx! I'm so happy you're here," Mia exclaimed, hugging me tightly.

"It's good to see you too," I replied, forcing a smile onto my face.

The party started in earnest as everyone mingled and chatted about various topics. While I did my best to engage in the conversations around me, my heart wasn't in it. I couldn't stop thinking about Syvis and why she hadn't shown up yet.

"Are you alright, Darx?" Mia asked, noticing my distant expression, "You seem a little... off."

"Uh, yeah, just tired, I guess," I lied, not wanting to burden her with my concerns.

"Alright, if you say so," She said hesitantly, giving me a worried glance before turning back to the others.

As the minutes ticked by, my disappointment and unease only seemed to grow. My chest tightened painfully every time someone new walked through the door, and it wasn't Syvis. The ticking of the clock seemed to taunt me, amplifying my anxiety and making my chest tighten with each passing second. The joyful atmosphere that filled the room began to feel suffocating, and I found myself retreating further into my thoughts.

What if something had happened to her? What if she was hurt or in trouble? Or worse, what if she is with Kase... The thought of them together made my blood boil, and I clenched my fists tightly, trying to control my rising anger.

"Darx, are you sure you're okay?" Mia asked again, her voice laced with concern, "Syvis is late, isn't she!?"

"Yeah, but I'm sure she'll be here soon. Something must have kept her busy." I said, avoiding her gaze and forcing a smile.

"Alright, well, let me know if you need anything," She said, smiling at me.

"Alright, everyone, it's cake time!" Oliver announced, his voice booming through the room. Everyone gathered around the table, their faces lighting up as they saw the elaborate cake he had prepared for his daughter.

"Happy Birthday!" we all chorused as Oliver's daughter eagerly broke into the cake, her eyes sparkling with joy. Her laughter was contagious, and soon, everyone was laughing and cheering, momentarily pulling me out of my dark thoughts. I looked around the room, trying to focus on the happiness surrounding me, but the nagging feeling of unease still lingered in my mind.

Suddenly, a loud crash echoed through the room, and all eyes turned towards the door. Fabe burst into the party like a madman, his face twisted with rage and a knife clenched tightly in his hand.

"Emma! You bitch!" Fabe screamed, his eyes wild, "I'm here to take what's rightfully mine!"

The room fell silent in shock. Then chaos erupted as people scrambled to get away from the insane man. Some tried to shield their children or loved ones, while others made for the exit in a desperate attempt to escape.

"Fabe, what are you doing here!" Oliver yelled, stepping protectively in front of his wife and daughter.

"You damn pig! That's my daughter and my woman!" Fabe shouted with a crazy look as he pointed the knife in Oliver's direction, "You no longer have anyone to protect you. This time, you're going to pay!"

"Stay away from my family!" Oliver said, trying to shield Emma and his daughter with his body.

In the blink of an eye, Fabe lunged at Oliver with his knife. I wanted to intervene, but many people around me were not letting me pass. Oliver did his best to protect his daughter, but he wasn't quick enough to avoid Fabe's attack altogether. The blade sliced through Oliver's arm, and a spray of blood splattered onto the floor.

"Oliver!" Emma cried out in fear, clutching their daughter tightly.

Despite the pain, Oliver managed to keep his grip on his child, shielding her from Fabe's grasp. It was then that I decided I had seen enough. Finally, I was able to pass through the desperate crowd. I rushed towards them, positioning myself between Fabe and Oliver.

"Get away from them, Fabe!" I snarled, my eyes filled with rage.

Fabe let out a mocking laugh, "Darx!? HHAHAHAHA! Always playing the hero, just like when we were kids. Some things never change."

"You will never bother Oliver or his family again," I warned him, my voice cold and unyielding.

"Or what?" Fabe taunted me with a sneer, "You think you can stop me?"

With that, he lunged at me with his knife, aiming for my chest. But it was so slow and weak. I easily caught his wrist, stopping the knife's trajectory inches from my body. With a firm grip on Fabe's wrist, I glared into his eyes, making my intentions clear.

"Leave this city, Fabe," I repeated, tightening my hold on his wrist, "And don't ever come back."

"Ha! You don't understand, Darx!" Fabe spat, frustration evident in his voice. "You managed to become a strong adventurer and join a good guild, while I failed as an adventurer. It's not fair!"

Hahaha...! I don't have anything... But I'm going to get my bitch and my daughter back that the pig stole from me!"

His face contorted with anger and resentment as he struggled against my grip. This Fabe looks very different from the Fabe I used to know. Before, Fabe looked imposing, but now he looks abnormally thin, and his eyes look like those of a madman. In a way, I felt bad seeing how far Fabe had fallen, and I made the mistake of letting go of his arm.

In a fit of rage, Fabe lunged at Emma, grabbing the cake knife that was on the table—time seemed to slow to crawl as I watched him charge towards her.

"Emma!" Oliver yelled.

I sprang into action, rushing towards Fabe and delivering a powerful punch aimed directly at his chest. My anger clouded my judgment, and I didn't hold back my strength enough. To my horror, my fist broke through Fabe's ribcage, passing straight through his chest.

A guttural gasp escaped Fabe's lips as his eyes widened in shock. He stumbled backward, clutching at his chest where my hand had just been. He looked down at the gaping wound in disbelief before collapsing to the ground.

In his last moments of life, Fabe turned to see me with tears in his eyes, "...I-it's not... fair..." Those were his last words.

"NO!" Someone screamed.

Panic and dread washed over everyone as I stared at Fabe's lifeless body, unable to comprehend that I had just killed someone—a man I've known since childhood. Though Fabe had chosen a dark path, I couldn't help but question whether there was another way, whether I could have done something else instead of taking his life.

Screams filled the room as people scrambled to get away from Fabe's bleeding body. I stood there, frozen in shock, unable to tear my gaze away from what I had done.

"Darx!" Mia's voice broke through my stupor. She rushed over to me, her eyes filled with concern, "Are you okay?"

I couldn't respond, still staring at Fabe's lifeless form on the floor. I felt sick to my stomach, and my hands were shaking uncontrollably.

"Darx, you saved my sister!" Mia said, grabbing my face and making me take my eyes off Fabe's corpse and look at her, "It was Emma or him, so don't feel bad. It was Fabe's fault, not yours!"

Oliver also approached me; however, I couldn't hear his words or anyone else's anymore. Seeing my bloody arm, Oliver took me with him, pulling me to clean myself. My mind was blank, and I was acting out of inertia.

Sometime later, we heard voices outside the Inn, "Make way!" A commanding voice shouted as the city guards pushed their way through the crowd. They quickly assessed the situation, taking note of Fabe's body. Their gazes settled on me as they approached, weapons drawn.

"What happened?" The guard captain asked, his face stern, "We need you to come with us for questioning."

"Wait!" Mia interjected, stepping protectively before me, "He was defending us! Fabe was trying to hurt everyone here!"

The captain's eyes softened slightly but remained resolute, "We understand that, miss. But we still need to take him in, given the circumstances."

Feeling numb, I silently nodded and allowed the guards to escort me away. As I left the Inn, I glanced back at Emma, who watched me with a mixture of worry and sorrow in her eyes. The weight of what I'd done pressed down on me, filling me with a mix of sadness and guilt.

At the city guard headquarters, I was questioned about the events leading up to Fabe's death. When it was revealed that Fabe had a criminal history and threatened the lives of innocent people, they released me without any charges. However, that did little to alleviate the crushing guilt I felt.

Outside, Oliver, Emma, and Mia were waiting for me.

"Darx, I'm so sorry this happened," Emma said, her eyes filled with tears, "Thank you for protecting us."

"Darx, you saved my family... I will be eternally grateful," Oliver chimed in, placing a hand on my shoulder, "If it wasn't for you, Fabe might have killed Emma. I don't know what I would have done if that had happened."

Mia nodded emphatically, "Darx, I know you, and I know you must be feeling guilty, but you did the right thing."

Their well-intended words did little to quell the storm inside me, "I know..." I said, barely having the energy to speak, "Go back to the Inn. I'm sure you'll have a lot to clean up after that mess."

"But, Darx..." Oliver tried to say.

"I'm fine! Really!" I reply.

Oliver and Emma didn't want to leave me, but I convinced them that it was more important that they return to the Inn and be with their daughter since she must have been very scared. Mia wanted to stay with me, but she agreed to go after I told her I needed to be alone for a while.

I found myself wandering aimlessly through the streets at night. Fabe is not the first person I have been forced to kill; however, ears streamed down my face as I struggled with the guilt of killing Fabe. Despite him being a notorious criminal who deserved punishment for his crimes, I couldn't shake the memories of the Fabe I knew from childhood—the Fabe who was my rival, the one I competed with for so long.

Although we were never friends, the weight of having killed someone I had known since childhood was heavy on my conscience. I really hated him for the bad things he did, especially to Oliver and Emma, but I couldn't help but wonder if I could have helped Fabe through his bad times. Maybe he could have straightened out, just like Cal did.

I walked through the quiet streets, lost in thought, feeling the darkness closing in around me. The more I dwelled on it, the more my heart ached. Yet, amidst the pain and guilt, my thoughts returned to Syvis. They haunted the back of my mind, casting a shadow over everything else.

Before I knew it, my feet had led me to the entrance of Syvis' guild. I stared at the doors, feeling a mixture of heartbreak and anger swelling within me. She lied about not showing up to Oliver's daughter's birthday party, and I couldn't help but wonder if she had been lying about other things as well.

"Enough," I muttered to myself, clenching my fists, "I need answers now."

"Sunshine," I whispered, holding the medallion in my hand, "I need your help."

"Ohh, will you finally listen to me?" She said angrily.

If Sunshine was talking to me before, I didn't really notice it.

"I need your help," I reply.

"Ooh, what do you want?" She asked, her voice tinged with excitement.

"I need to get into that building. However, I will have to do it secretly. Once I break in, there may be guards. I can't fight them, so I need you to put them to sleep with your magic," I explained, "Yesterday, you said you could use magic to put people to sleep, right!? Will you help me?"

Sunshine's eyes lit up, and she eagerly agreed, "Are you kidding? I love doing illicit stuff! Let's go!" She said with a mischievous grin.

With a determined sigh, I freed Sunshine from the medallion, and together, we snuck inside the guild after I forced the door. As expected, we encountered several guards. Sunshine giggled as she cast her sleep magic, effortlessly putting them to rest without anyone noticing. Luckily, since it was so late at night, there were no adventurers around. Otherwise, it would be a big problem.

"Such fun!" She exclaimed, barely containing her laughter. Worried that her laughter might give us away, I quickly placed Sunshine back into the medallion.

"Stay quiet now, Sunshine," I warned her, "We can't afford to be discovered."

"Alright, alright," Sunshine whispered from within the medallion, finally settling down.

My heart pounded as I carefully made my way towards Syvis's room. I recalled one occasion when she had mentioned where she resided inside the guild building. She told me she had to pass the great hall and take the hallway to the left, which led to an open area. Beyond that open space was another corridor where her room would be found.

With each stealthy step, my senses heightened, listening for any sound that could give away my presence or reveal someone else's. The tension in the air grew thicker, making it difficult to breathe, but I couldn't afford to slow down now. I took the hallway, crossed the open area and reached the hallway that had to take me to where Syvis lives. Finally, I arrived at the door where I hoped to find Syvis inside.

My hands were shaking, gripping the door handle. I really hope this is the right door.

Despite my suspicions, I wished that I was wrong. I wanted nothing more than once inside to apologize to Syvis for doubting her loyalty and beg for her forgiveness. I will do my best to apologize, and together, we will travel for a long time to go see her father. Maybe I'll get enough courage to ask Syvis to marry me down the road. I really imagine living with her all my life.

Gathering my courage, I forced the door open with a quiet creak and stepped inside. The room was dimly lit, casting eerie shadows on the walls. There was a strange mix of anxiety and determination coursing through my veins, urging me to press on further.

"Syvis?" I whispered, hoping to hear her familiar voice. Though there was no response, I couldn't shake the feeling that I was getting closer to the truth.

The place was much larger than I expected, resembling more of a house than a simple room. I silently walked along the first floor, my eyes scanning the surroundings for any sign of Syvis. Finding nothing, I started to question whether she was even here. Perhaps my paranoia had led me astray.

However, just as I began to doubt myself, I heard faint noises coming from the second floor. My heart raced in my chest, and a cold sweat broke out on my forehead. The sound was unmistakable – it was Syvis's voice.

"ah...ahh...mn.."

Syvis's voice could be faintly heard from the second floor. I started to climb the steps, and Syvis's voice became clearer and clearer.

"Mnn...Ahh... Ahhh..."

W-What is she... I-It sounds like Syvis is m-moaning....

With every step I took toward the stairs, her moans grew louder and more intense. A mixture of shock, confusion, and dread washed over me. What could be happening up there? I couldn't bear the thought of Syvis betraying me.

Climbing the stairs to Syvis's room felt like an eternity. I started to get dizzy, and my breathing began to accelerate. My mind raced with thoughts of what I might find, yet I forced myself to keep moving forward.

As I reached the second floor and approached one of the rooms, the sound of a bed creaking and Syvis's moans became more distinct.

"AHHHH! MMNAHHH!!! AHHH!!!"

Apart from the moans, the sound of a bed squeaking and another sound similar to clapping could be heard inside that room.

"Please... no," I muttered under my breath, praying that I was wrong about everything.

My hand hovered over the doorknob, hesitating momentarily before gripping it tightly. With a deep breath, I turned the handle and pushed the door open, bracing myself for what I'd find inside.

As the door swung open, revealing the scene before me, my world shattered into a million pieces...

