

Earths GMagus 371

Chapter 371: Who are you?

There were still a few knights surrounding him, but for now, Emery's gaze didn't waver from the figure that was emerging from the shadows.

The amount of spirit energy the figure possesses made the air thick, each breath he took was crackling with jolts of power. The surrounding knights gritted their teeth in response as the crackling air tickled their skin and made even breathing uncomfortable.

Emery gripped his dagger tight and dashed around, killing the last of the knights surrounding him with a quick slash to the neck.

Splat!

With one swing, two knights fell to his sword. Only four knights were left and they looked at each other before deciding to retreat with their tails tucked between their legs.

Emery was now able to get a clearer look at the approaching figure. The figure was riding on top of a horse wearing a black cloak covering its entire body. It suddenly raised its arm towards the fleeing knights.

Smoke seeped out from the sleeve of its arm, before gathering and forming into a storm of blade-like shadows. The figure snapped its fingers and the blades flew as fast as lightning, piercing all the retreating knights right through their heads.

"Darkness magic!"

Emery knew from the start this person was a magician thanks to his spirit reading ability, but its decision to kill the retreating knights dashed his guess of it being a wizard aligned with the Cantiaci.

Who was the figure behind the black cloth and what did it want?

Emery took a deep breath and prepared himself while the figure climbed down from its horse.

"Help... Help me..." Sir Randi the Golden Knight crawled and tried to approach the cloaked figure, but instead of helping, the figure lifted their hand and created another blade from smoke before stabbing the poor knight.

The figure kneeled for a second and touched the dead knight with a bony hand.

Emery raised his sword in caution as the figure was acting weirdly. Considering he was a fellow wizard that seemingly wasn't aligned to Cantiaci, it put its reason to come here into question. In addition, it carried an unsettling, chilling feel capable of making Emery feel something stir beneath, something not many Earth residents could do.

"Who are you?!"

The figure stood up and walked closer to Emery. The sun had started to dye the horizon in a beautiful orange glow and right when the figure stopped, sunlight illuminated her face, allowing Emery to discern who she truly was.

She was a beautiful woman with long, black hair. Emery looked at her for a few seconds before jumping back, an expression of shock evident on his face.

"Kekekeke... Have you forgotten about me, my dear Lanzo... Or should I say, my sweet Emery?"

She was the person Emery knew as 'Granny', the former Mistshire village healer and the person who took care of him. She was already in her younger form...

It was hard to forget the face of the woman who massacred villages with the cover of deadly plagues in order to take their life force. She was the sister of Nimue, the Lady of the Lake, and her real name was Maeve.

The last time Emery saw her, she managed to defeat him so badly he had to run inside the Khaos space to protect himself. Now after going through training in the Magus Academy he was certain that it would not happen again.

"So, how am I supposed to call you now? Granny? Maeve? Would just plain old hag suffice?"

"Hahahaha!" The woman cackled. "You certainly have grown, my dear Emery... You are much, much stronger... I see you have met my sister, then. I should have known that if you survived, you would have gone there."

Emery took his fighting stance and gripped his sword tight, ready to strike at any time. The woman in front of him was not concerned at all, instead, she slowly walked around the lying knights.

"Ah, this one was a golden knight! Very good!"

Once more, Maeve knelt down and touched the dying Sir Afton. This time, Emery saw the golden knight's skin turn wrinkly, before he breathed his last as a desiccated body made of skin and bones. His eyes, once glowing with vitality, were clouded in pain.

"These golden knights... Their existence is such a wondrous thing, isn't it? But... to have the audacity to openly hate us, wage war with us, and yet... They resort to using the power from the artifact we have given them. I assume you know this, Lancelot?"

Maeve stared curiously at Emery, her eyes blown wide with excitement, her grin just a little bit too large to be natural. Her appearance, young and beautiful it may be, only reminded Emery of an infected dog.

"Of course you know... You are Lancelot, the new champion of the Divine Order tournament! Hahaha... Did you know how surprised I was when I watched you fight? For a second I thought my dear Lanzo came back from the dead! But no, that couldn't be... It could be no one but you, Emery! Although I didn't see you amongst the Lioness convoy, I knew that, if I followed them, they would lead me to you sooner or later..."

Emery sighed. He had to admit she was right. She was the one and only person in this world who could make the connection between him and this 'Lanzo' identity.

But, on the other hand, this could be his chance. His carelessness led him to the witch who slaughtered his companion and for that, he was grateful. This could be a good opportunity to stop the witch's rampages and unleash payback for what she did to Lanzo and to all Mistshire villagers back then.

Emery raised his weapon, sword in one hand and dagger in the other, and narrowed his eyes at the witch.

"Hahaha, yes! My dagger! You even brought my dagger! You will give it back to me, my boy!"

Emery dashed in to attack.

Chapter 372: Fight the Witch

Swisshh!

With a sword in one hand and a dagger in the next, Emery dashed in great speed towards Maeve. However, his attack was quickly blocked by multiple plant roots that could somehow follow his movements.

Maeve cast a plant spell [Entangle] to block Emery's advances.

Slash! Slash!

There were several roots, but none were fast enough nor strong enough, allowing Emery to slash through them with ease. But, with just one second of him being distracted, Maeve had moved away and sunk into the darkness of the woods.

"Hahahaha! Very good, very good! Catch me, dear sweet Emery!"

Emery had participated in a few more fights now thanks to the Magus Academy tournament and he believed that the witch wouldn't be as good as him in close combat. However, the one he was fighting today was a very cunning opponent. Honed through living in the shadows for more than a hundred years, that alone was enough to make her a formidable opponent.

Both Emery and Maeve possessed an affinity for Darkness and Plant spells. There was no reason for Emery to be afraid of being dragged into the woods.

But he won't be so stupid as to underestimate the witch. The last time they fought two years ago she was ranked 6, the same as he was right now. If only he had no restriction on him, probably Emery would be more confident.

He chased the witch into the woods while checking on his status.

[Emery Ambrose]

[Battle Power: 65 (50)]

[Spirit Force: 217 (142)]

[Acolyte Rank 7]

[Immortal Gate: Stage 4]

Unfortunately, he was not at maximum power. He had been using multiple [Spatial Gate] to rush to this place and with the added strain of using [Immortal Gate] for quite a while now, his power had decreased even further.

As for his spirit force, the many short training sessions he did in Khaos space last month had given him a 7 points increase in his spirit force. It was a good increase, but not enough to let him break through the limit and attain the next rank. Though the system said he was a rank 7 acolyte, the restriction made him stay in rank 6 and rendered him unable to use his rank 4 spells.

He could only hope the witch didn't improve much since their last battle.

Knowing this might become a difficult fight, Emery decided to keep hidden as many of his cards as possible. For example, his [Blink] spell could turn the tides of battle at the last moment. Hence, he merely relied on his high battle power to chase her.

Within seconds, the witch was within sight. He dashed forward, jumped and executed a downward slash towards the witch, only to see her immediately grab the bark of the closest tree and suddenly disappear.

Clack!

The tip of Emery's sword slashed the tree bark instead.

Right after she disappeared, she cackled, while Emery quickly pulled his sword and turned around.

To his surprise, he saw the witch walk out from another tree.

"Hahaha, you are fast! Very fast! Where did you get all that power? Will you tell poor granny here about your secret?" She taunted.

Emery had read about the spell Maeve used before in the Magus Academy library. It was a spell called [Tree Stride], and it would allow the caster to teleport from one tree to the nearest tree. The problem was, that spell was a tier 4 spell, which confirmed Emery's suspicion that right now, the witch had reached at least rank 7.

So, this was why she lured him into the woods.

This was going to be a difficult fight, after all.

Emery took his stance and was ready to chase after her one more time. But this time, shadows in the form of a blade came charging towards him, forcing him to dodge by jumping.

This fight had turned into a game of cat and mouse. While Emery chased her, Maeve would stride over to the trees and attack him from afar, while staying safe from harm. Emery wished he could use his [Shadow Root] or [Blink] to quickly catch her, but he needed to wait. The opportunity hadn't come yet.

His body started to feel a bit sluggish, Emery knew he couldn't keep using stage 4 immortal gate any longer. It's draining too much stamina, so he decided to stop and drop his battle art back to stage 3.

[Immortal Gate: Stage 3]

[Battle power decreased by 8]

[Current battle power: 57 (42)]

This number should be enough for this game of cat and mouse. If the witch could sense his strength, this could be a good chance to trick the witch.

"Hahaha! Are you tired already, boy?"

His guess was proven correct. From the start, he had suspected there was a high chance Maeve understood how to read his spirit, therefore, she would know when his strength dropped. If he had to admit it, the shallow breathing wasn't an act, either.

Unexpectedly, his opportunity came faster than he thought and the witch was careless. As she moved into another tree, she couldn't see Emery for all but a second.

A second was enough for him.

Emery quickly cast [Blink] and appeared behind her.

The witch was shocked and quickly turned and try to dodge

Without wasting the opportunity, Emery used the dagger battle art [Hidden Blade] to stab her back.

Clack!

Emery can see the witch's skin change color just a moment before the dagger pierced arrived. She was using the tier 3 spell [Oakflesh] to harden her skin, but fortunately, the tier 3 dagger and his strength were still able to pierce through and draw a small amount of blood.

But, it was not enough. The witch was still able to move and the more time he wasted, the closer the witch would be to another tree. The witch ran and was about to touch the nearest tree to cast her tree stride spell once more. That exact moment,? Emery quickly swung his sword using his strongest [Heroic Slash], the only battle art that seemed to be strong enough to cut through the oakflesh spell.

Splat!

Blood splattered and stained Emery's face, while the witch's arm flew into the air and landed on the grass.

"Aaaaaaarrrrrrrgggghhhh!"

The witch fell and slumped onto the ground, holding the stump of her severed arm with her other arm. She screams in agony cursing towards Emery.

Emery glared at her, while pointing his sword towards her.

"You lost!"

Chapter 373: Power Difference

"Aaarrggghhh!"

The witch laid on the ground and clutched the stump of her broken arm, while Emery stood with the tip of his bloodied sword aimed at her.

"Aaarrggghhhh! My arm! My armmm! How dare you! Aaaaarrggghhhh!"

The witch screamed in pain, while Emery approached her as she tried to crawl and search for her missing arm.

"My arm... My arm..."

Emery stopped right in between her and the bleeding hand and stepped on the bloody edge for good measure.

"You have lost, Maeve!"

Maeve raised her head towards Emery with an expression full of agony. "Yes... You win, you win... Please, please.. just give me my arm back."

The wicked witch, who laughed at his suffering and killed villages in the guise of plague has now turned into a different person in the face of death.

Emery glanced at the severed hand beneath his feet. For a second, he did consider grabbing the arm, but he suddenly realized it couldn't be that easy. He quickly alarmed, turned around right as three shadow blades formed on top of the witch and flew towards him.

Emery instantly cast [Blink] and reappeared a few meters away from her.

"Hahahaha! You are still that naive boy, after all! You should have landed your finishing blow right after that... Such strength, yet without the brain to match!"

Emery glared at the woman in annoyance, but indeed, the witch was really cunning. Her pained expression was quite the top-class act. If only he knew, he would have asked that woman to teach him her acting skills instead of alchemy.

Maeve stood up, grabbed her severed arm and reattached it by converting the stump into roots before letting the root absorb the arm before disappearing. The arm was now in place and she gave it a few experimental moves.

It seemed the spell she used to reattach the arm was similar to the spell the Lady of The Lake used to form Emery's arm.

"Damn, she really is hard to deal with..."

"Aaarrggghhh! That cost me a lot of energy. You! Take some responsibility and give me yours! Your wonderful, powerful energy... I have been dreaming about it for months! What was it, Emery? Tell me your secret, now!"

"If you die, maybe you'll dream of that." Emery gripped his sword tight and took his stance,

Maeve slowly knelt on the ground and used both of her hands to touch the ground.

"Look, look at this, Emery! The result of the power I took from you... It was exquisite!"

A torrent of roots emerged from the ground and spread slowly towards a nearby tree. Right as the roots touched it, the tree started to crack, wither and raised itself from the ground, changing into some kind of life-form. The roots of the tree started to bind together, forming an appendage similar to legs.

It is a [Tree Golem] spell, but it looked a bit different. The bark's color started brown, before it faded as it stepped out of the ground, red veins started to form on its surface, while the bark darkened into a deep, rich black brimming with power.

"This is... Could this be... A combined spell!" Emery thought and his suspicion was instantly proven right when the roots of the tree attacked him, almost catching him off-guard.

Clank!

"Dammit, if only I stopped her sooner!"

Emery placed his dagger into his spatial space and used his free hand to cast [Shadow Roots]

The tree golem stopped moving instantly, bound with the void-colored roots from Emery's spell.

"Amazing! Your [Entangled] spell looks very special. Let me see the extent of your power!"

Once more, Maeve touched the ground and let the dark roots spread, creating half a dozen more identical tree golems.

This time, when the trees transformed, Emery could feel the distinct jolts of spirit energy in the air, along with the small tremors and loud cracking sounds filling the air as the plants started to emerge from the ground.

This was such a display of strong spirit force. Emery couldn't help but worry if their power difference was too far apart

[Shadow Root]

Emery concentrated on his power and tried to pull out the maximum power allowed by the restriction spell. Six giant, dark-colored roots emerged from the ground and all strangled the wood golems. Now, they struggled, trying to break the root binding their neck with branches that seem to function similarly to arms.

At first, their attempts were met with failure, but in only less than a minute, the golems were able to overpower the roots, causing them all to crack and split apart into dust.

Clank!

Emery used his sword to parry the multiple incoming attacks coming from the wood golems. This further convinced him that Maeve really was one level higher than him when it came to spells.

He had to admit, it was impossible to defeat the witch in a battle of spells. Not right now, while his spirit power was restricted.

The six wood golems started to surround Emery and he quickly cast [Shadow Mist] before casting [Blink] to hide in the shadows of the forest. The witch's expression turned wary and she looked left and right searching for him.

"You can't hide from me!" She shouted.

As if to prove herself, she quickly detected the real Emery from amongst the shadow clones and she started to gather shadows in her hand, forming a blade before flicking it in his direction.

In response, Emery quickly used [Blink] and reappeared near her.

But this time she was ready. She touched one of the tree golems nearest to her, and all of a sudden, she reappeared on top of the largest wood golem.

Although she was smiling all the while, Emery still could sense her momentary worry through his spirit reading. The witch looked down, perched atop the highest branches of the golem and shouted at him.

"You are dangerous, indeed!"

Maeve gripped the wooden golem tight, creating black roots all around her as a shield to stop Emery's sudden attack.

"Try to come near me now, if you dare!" The woman taunted.

Chapter 374: Last Move

swish *swish*

Several shadow blades shot through the air as they made their way towards Emery. The witch had taken advantage of her cover, the congregated sphere of dark roots and the wooden golem, to launch her own attacks without worrying about a sudden counter attack by her opponent.

The sphere roots, the wooden golem she was standing on, and the 5 other wooden golems created some kind of an impenetrable shield.

These six wooden golems were a summon that was really suitable for a defensive purpose. Emery was sure that even hundreds of knights would not be able to break through such defense.

These half a dozen wooden golems didn't stay idle as they moved toward Emery. Even though the golems themselves were quite slow, their roots were a different matter altogether. They were as fast as him!

Fortunately, the distance they could reach was limited, especially with dozens of other trees blocking their way.

Bamm!!! Bamm!!

Loud sonorous sounds resounded when the half a dozen wooden golems were crashing over the trees, creating even more loud noises as their hands tried to reach out to him.

At the moment, Emery took and kept his distance carefully while blocking the incoming shadow blades that were flying towards him.

He began casting his [Enfeeble Blade] spells, which apparently were able to nullify the witch's shadow blades.

Bam! Bam!

The two spells had roughly the same strength, so when the shadow blades and darkness blades Emery casted hit each other they both disappeared into nothingness.

If one took a closer look at the two spells, they would definitely notice several similarities in them. However, in reality, Emery knew hers were a stronger version of his.

The only reason his spells were able to nullify hers was because of his unique dark core. If it wasn't because of the dark core, which made the strength of his shadow spells more powerful, the [Enfeeble Blade] wouldn't be able to match that tier 4 [Shadow Blade] spell.

Bamm!!

The showdown of spells continued as Emery and Maeve kept their streaks of casting. Dozens of shadow blades and darkness blades shot through the air, cutting down every tree laying on their path.

The woods around the two figures started to disappear as the clearing became more apparent, causing Emery to have fewer space at his disposal to dodge the incoming roots and wooden golems, which were clearly doing their job to keep him from attacking freely.

Thus, Emery currently stood in a predicament. His shadow mist, which should be able to mislead others easily, was ineffective. His means of attack, the [Enfeeble Blade] spell, wasn't strong enough. His method of constraint, the shadow roots, was overwhelmed by the wooden golem's roots.

Emery had run out of spells he could throw at her.

If only he could cast his rank 4 spell [Dark Matter],

Alas, he couldn't because of the damned restriction!

As if that wasn't bad enough, he also had a limited amount of spirit force to use!

When he tried to forcefully fight the witch using his battle power, Emery only ended up being hit by the roots. There were just too many things for him to fight!

Realizing his usual method of attacking wasn't going to work, Emery was left with his one last remaining card.

He made up his mind in no time, as Emery immediately carried out his plan. One more time, the familiar dark-colored mist engulfed the area as his figure blurred and split apart.

[Shadow Mist]

Seeing that, Maeve guffawed, "Hahaha! Why do you keep doing that?! Are you running out of ideas now, child!?"

Emery ignored the witch's taunt and kept doing his own things. He moved around the area and led the 5 wooden golems to stretch out, away from the witch.

When the timing was right, he casted [Blink] and appeared just behind the huge wooden golem where the witch perched on.

Naturally, Emery was quickly discovered by his opponent.

"Same trick!! Not going to work!"

The roots around Maeve started entangling his body. Even so, he at least managed to arrive within just a few steps distance to Maeve. It was at this moment that Emery used his trump card.

His transformation ability.

[Fey Transformation - stage 1]

[Battle power increase by 10]

[Current battle power: 67 (52)]

Emery's body swiftly transformed into that of a fey. Silvery furs emerged on his legs and arms, his canine teeth grew into sharp fangs, while his nails gradually turned to menacing claws. He roared and clawed himself out of the entanglement, startling the witch with the sudden increase of strength.

However, instead of panicking, the witch opened her arms wide.

"Yes! That's exactly what I have been waiting for!! Come!!"

She was already prepared and bursted out as many shadow blades as she could while Emery was clawing his way through the wooden golem's roots. He pulled, tore and slashed all the roots coming at him and separating them.

"Die! Give your life to me, Emery!!" Maeve roared as she launched the dozens of shadow blades she formed.

Seeing the incoming blades, Emery didn't even try to dodge or anything as he quickly casted his defensive skill. He had mastered the stage 1 transformation, making only his arms and legs change. So, he was still able to cast his spells.

[Granite Skin]

A black layer surfaced on Emery's skin as the strongest defensive spell he could cast at the moment took effect. Unfortunately, the protection that the [Granite Skin] provided was only enough to absorb half of the [Shadow Blade] spells, leaving the rest at his own discretion.

Emery swiftly deflected those that were aimed at his head while ignoring the others. As a result, they landed on his body and injured him.

Meave could only watch in shock as Emery still kept his charge through and out of the roots with his bleeding body.

Without wasting any second, Emery leaped to the air and arrived next to Meave, where she was still surrounded by the defensive sphere made out of roots.

"Impressive! Very impressive!" Meave commented while clapping her hands, as if she couldn't see Emery was destroying her protection at breakneck speed.

Moments later, Emery's claws finally tore the last layer of the sphere, leaving him with just one more step to send the final attack. But what puzzled Emery was the fact that the witch didn't run. Instead of that, she took out a bag and threw out a green powder towards Emery's face.

"You are mine now!!!" shouted the witch with a proud grin.

Chapter 375: Chomp!

The green powder quickly landed on Emery's face and made him cough.

'Was it poison?!

The reason Emery's thought automatically directed to poison was because the same thing had happened in the past. This once again emphasized the dangerousness of this cunning witch, as she truly had so many methods under her sleeve. This powder also somehow reminded Emery of the potion that made him, Lanzo, and the rest of the Misthine village fall unconscious last time.

While Emery was wondering what this powder's effect was, his face changed and the grin on Meave's face grew wider. His question was answered as he felt his strength gradually seeping out his body and saw his silvery fur slowly receding.

Within seconds, Emery could perceive his power had been cut in half.

Meave showed a victorious grin, as she watched the struggling figure in front of her. Alas, the witch clearly underestimated Emery's ability and his resolve.

Emery shouted out loud, channeling his willpower to the world, as he gave his utmost to resist the effect of the powder.

The witch was shocked once again as she watched Emery breaking the last layer of roots, "This is impossible!! How strong your fey bloodline is!?"

Unfortunately, Meave could do nothing other than watch as the reality Emery created hit her like a truck.

CRAACKKK!!!

Even after being pierced by multiple shadow blades and weakened by the powder, Emery was still able to force open the sphere that surrounded her.

The shock of the witch due to what Emery had done made her decide to use her retreating spell once more. Hence, she did exactly just that.

She was about to touch the wood below her and escape when Emery foiled her plan. He had moved fast enough to grab both of her shoulders with his claws and swiftly crush them, disrupting her from doing what she wanted to do.

"You are not going anywhere!!!" roared Emery as he put more strength on his arms.

Sounds of crushing bones were followed by the witch's screams of agony and this time, Emery was absolutely sure what she experienced was real.

Not that he cared about it, but Emery wasn't going to lie and said he was not happy to hear it. On the contrary, he was overjoyed! Extremely so.

"Argghhhhh!! You will regret this!!!"

Meave cursed Emery and the next thing she did once again surprised him.

Through his spirit reading, Emery could tell her strength increased significantly, followed by obvious changes on her body.

Emery's claws on both her shoulders were being pushed back as black gleaming fur slowly surfaced on her skin, while her body was growing with every passing second.

She was transforming into her Fey form!

She was a Fey, after all. Of course, she had the same ability as Emery!

Realizing the situation, Emery swiftly grabbed her neck with both of his arms. He was trying to end her life before she finished her transformation. But to his complete amazement, her transformation turned out to be much bigger than he thought!

His two transformed hands couldn't even choke her previously small neck!

Meave's current physique was bigger than Morgana when she transformed, much much bigger.

After Meave let out a wolf's roar, Emery realized she had transformed into a stage three Fey Monstrous Transformation.

Looking at the towering figure before him, Emery could finally experience what his opponent had felt when they faced his own stage 2 transformation. Following her transformation, a hazy gaze could be seen in her eyes as Maeve lost her mind.

Emery immediately took out the only item able to kill the creature in front of him, because he knew how terrifying Meave would be with the stage 2 Fey Transformation. Not even a second later, the item was already in his hand, the black tier 3 dagger.

The head! Aim for the head!

[Hidden Blade]

In a split second, Emery's hand moved in a flash as the dagger shot forth.

Tap!

The dagger froze in midair as only a meter was separated between it and its target.

Just one more push! It was so close!

Emery's eyes bulged when he saw the measly distance that could determine the life and death of his.

Alas, the black wolf already grabbed his body first with its two large hands, causing the dagger to be unable to reach the former. On the other hand, the wolf clasped its hands with all its strength in order to crush Emery into pulp.

"Arrrghhh!!" The pain from the crushing made Emery drop the dagger. He couldn't believe the sheer strength it could exhibit.

Emery tried to resist with his own strength, but it seemed the powder started affecting him even more due to his momentary loss of focus.

Darkness slowly crept on Emery's vision while memories began fleeting over his mind.

'NO!'

Emery bit his lips! He couldn't give up now!

He realized this wasn't the time to conserve his strength anymore. He had to give everything he had or this would be the end of him!

In an instant, Emery activated his battle art technique.

[Immortal Gate - stage 4]

[Battle power increased by 8]

[Current battle power: 75 (60)]

Emery gritted his teeth as he withstood the excruciating pain. Once again, he tried with both hands to release his body. However, he was about to do so when something unexpected happened!

The monster in front of him opened up its jaw and bit Emery's neck with its sharp teeth!

CHOMP!

She bit the part between his neck and shoulder, and tore off a piece of his flesh!

Blood splattered all over them as Emery once again screamed in pain.

If it wasn't because of his [Granite Skin], he would probably already be dead with that one bite.

The monster even took the time to chew the piece of meat!

Emery's strength just kept dwindling while the monster continued its streak of rampage as it tried its best to bite a piece more off Emery!

CHOMP!

Another big chunk of flesh was torn away by the beast. This time, it was from his shoulder.

'Is this it? Am I going to die here?' The thought of giving up appeared in Emery's mind but he quickly suppressed it.

Realizing his attempts to overcome the monster were pointless and not willing to give up at the last second, Emery suddenly thought of one move he had never tried before, because it needed a lot of concentration. However, looking at his current situation, he truly had no other means.

Even though Emery's body was still being held by the monster, his two arms were actually still available. Therefore, he made up his mind to try the move.

While the monster was enjoying its second bite, the half-unconscious Emery casted [Spatial Gate] spell with one arm. The circle was just small enough for his other arm to go through.

From the small circle, Emery took out the same pitch-black dagger that was supposed to be on the ground.

"One more!!" This time he casted another circle, a little bit bigger and in front of his shaking hand that held the dagger.

[Hidden Blade]

Splatt!! Unexpectedly, the dagger had pierced through the monster's eye!

Rooooaarr!!

This was the first time Emery used the gate as a means to strike, and he succeeded!

Due to the pain, the monster was forced to release him from the pain. The dagger, after all, pierced deep into its eye.

Not wanting to let this precious opportunity go, Emery used the last wisp of his energy to jump towards the monster's head, pull out the dagger and stab it on its neck!

ROAR!!

Unfortunately, Emery wasn't strong enough to pierce the dagger deep enough to kill it.

As a result, the creature instinctively grabbed Emery and smashed him to the ground before deciding to flee into the forest in its heavily wounded state.

Looking at the fleeing creature, Emery wanted to give chase, but he himself was not sure if he could survive much longer. A chunk of his neck and shoulder were gone and caused severe bleeding, after all.

[Nature Blessing]

Emery only managed to cast the spell for a few seconds before the layer of green on his body started dwindling, a sign that his spirit force was exhausted.

Shaking his head inwardly, Emery fell to the ground with a thud, while the bleeding still continued. He lay on the grassy field while his consciousness began to blur.

The next second, Emery's blurring consciousness could vaguely hear the sound of footsteps approaching where he was. He could not be sure if it was real or just his imagination. With that thought in mind, his consciousness dived into endless darkness.

"My lady!!! Here he is! Lanzo is here!"

"Is he alright, Yvain?!"

"He bleeds really bad."

"Then what are you waiting for? Save him!!"

"This... Princess, this. They are definitely his clothes.. But it's... not him!"

Chapter 376: It's not Him

While the battle raged on, the Princess raced through the forest in front of the golden knight.

She had managed to escape from an ordeal that would have most likely got her captured or killed.

If it wasn't because of Lanzo, she knew there would have been no escape from her fate.

While the horse sped through the path, the princess kept on looking backwards, hoping the young man was riding just right behind her.

"He's... Not following us, Yvain. Should we turn back for him?"

Yvain glanced back for a second, before sighing and answering. "No, princess, we are not out of danger ourselves. We should quickly check if there are any surviving knights and, if there are, we will definitely return for him."

It worried her to hear that answer, as if Lanzo really did not manage to escape, coming back later would probably mean retrieving his corpse instead of rescuing him.

There was no way he could fight against those two golden knights by himself.

The sun had peeked out from the eastern horizon, heralding the arrival of dawn. Right as the forest started to brighten with the soft golden light of the morning sun, sounds of horse galloping could be heard getting closer.

Yvain pulled the reins of his horse and grabbed the handle of his sword, prepared to fight against the new threat. But when they came closer, he realized they were the Lioness knights.

There were only a handful of surviving knights, among them was Marc, the new knight who told them about how Lanzo saved them only to go ahead to save the princess.

The princess became even more worried and she looked back at Yvain. "Yvain, we better head back for Lanzo, now!"

Yvain opened his mouth and was about to disagree, but the princess kept cutting him off before insisting on it. The other surviving knights agreed and, together, they returned to the place where they last saw Lanzo.

As the horses dashed closer to the place, the princess' heart beat faster and faster.

Finally, after what felt like an eternity, they arrived at where the carriage was. Princess Gwen stared at the scattered bodies of two dozen knights in slight discomfort and Yvain jumped down from the horse to confirm their current status. As they expected, apart from the unconscious Prince Edward, the others had been killed.

As they were about to wake the unconscious prince to ask what happened, loud sounds and tremors could be heard deep within the woods.

"What is that, Yvain?!"

"My lady, I am unsure, but that sounds like trouble. We should get out of this place as soon as possible." Yvain walked towards his horse, while staring at the trees on the side of the road.

One of the knights following them called out and pointed at two trails of footsteps leading to the woods, right towards where the sounds came from.

Once more, the princess insisted on seeing it.

"That must be where Lanzo went! We have to go, he could really be in trouble."

"Yes, my lady." Yvain nodded and looked deep within the woods, as if trying to see something deep within. "But, we have to be really, really careful!"

Everyone agreed to go and the group of six knights, along with Yvain and Gwen, rode slowly deeper inside the woods. When they were closer, enraged roars of a beast could be heard from afar.

Knowing there was no point, Yvain no longer tried to stop her, instead, he decided to always stay at the front, to ensure he could protect the princess more easily.

They walked deeper and deeper, through twisting paths, bramble bushes and trees so closely packed together, it was almost impossible to pass through with a horse. The roaring became louder and louder, but right as they reached a clearing where the sounds presumably came from, all went quiet and the tremors disappeared without a trace, except for the destruction left.

In the now destroyed clearing, each knight jumped down from their horses. Everywhere they looked, the place was in bad shape, trees uprooted from where they were, bits and pieces of destroyed land, splatters of blood... Whatever battle took place here, it was beyond what they imagined.

When the princess was busy examining a dried splatter of blood on the ground, Yvain suddenly shouted while carrying a body on the ground.

"Princess! Here he is! Lanzo is here!"

Princess Gwen immediately looked at Yvain and asked. "Is he alright, Yvain?!"

"No, princess, he is bleeding really badly."

"Then, what are you waiting for? Save him!"

Yvain kneeled and placed the bleeding body on the ground before turning it over to dress his wounds, only to see that despite the similar posture and clothes, this person was not him. It was a different young man.

"This... Princess, look. These are definitely his clothes, but it's not him."

Curious, Princess Gwen decided to come closer and take a look. Her eyes widened when she saw the young man's face.

"That... This is... This can't be!"

Witnessing the young man's face was perhaps the most shocking experience in her entire life. The bleeding young man lying there, wearing what appears to be Lanzo's clothes, was her late friend, who was supposed to have died two years ago.

Seeing his bleeding body, barely alive in the middle of the forest, felt like a bad dream that came true.

"My lady, are you alright?!" Seeing the princess' pale face and horrified stare, Yvain stood up to comfort her, only for her to stop him.

"No, Yvain, more importantly... Is he... alive?"

Yvain gently placed his hand on the body's chest.

"Yes, he is alive, but he is dying. We need a physician right away!"

Gwen was still unable to contain the disbelief of her childhood friend she thought dead being alive, albeit barely, in the middle of nowhere and with the clothes of someone she knew, but his critical condition was a priority.

With hurried steps, Marc came and approached the man with a bottle of paste he said was given to him by Lanzo. The green paste was apparently effective for external wounds.

Gwen quickly grabbed the paste, without much thinking, she tore up the edges of her dress, and laid the paste on the fabric before covering the wound.

After the man was safely covered in makeshift bandages, she asked Yvain to put him into the carriage.

In total, from 45 men of the convoy, 18 of them died. One group would go with her to the nearest town, another would go straight to the Lioness Castle with the captured prince and the rest would stay and double-check the area.

Along the ride to find the physician, the princess kept on staring at the young man, questions running rampant through her head. How was he still alive? What happened?

But, the young man was unable to answer. All she could do was wait and hope he would survive, else her questions would never be answered.

The next hour passed by and they stopped at the nearest village

Unfortunately, the physician there could only shake his head. Though the young man's wounds had miraculously closed thanks to the green paste, there was something else ailing him. From what he saw, the physician warned it might be poison.

"I can't believe he is still alive, princess... I apologize, but there is nothing I can do."

The princess kept on racking her brain, stressing what was happening right in front of her eyes. Right as she was about to panic, she heard the young man mumble a few words.

"Ve...nn... ta... Quin...tins..."

Gwen didn't think much of it. She hurriedly told the knights to head towards Venta town.

Chapter 377: Awake

Emery stood alone within the veil of darkness, waiting for his fate, hoping that the two words were enough for them.

It felt like an eternity, or was it a moment? It was hard to tell, but he began to see a pinprick of light far away in the darkness and, as he walked closer to the light, energy started to fill his body.

The light soothed his dark core and gave him his vigor back.

When he was finally able to wake up, he saw morning sunlight come through the window of a straw-like wall and ceiling. He could feel the lush green of the forest through the window, flowing with fresh air.

Emery believes he has already returned back to the forbidden forest village.

He tried to move his body little by little to get the blood flowing, while his eyes glanced at his surroundings.

"He's awake! He's awake!"

The jubilant shouting of a woman he recognized made Emery turn around, to see Glita the youngest of the fey sisters running outside of the hut.

Alerted by her voice, a moment later the other sister also came to check on his condition.

"How are you feeling Emery? Asked Tyra the eldest before giving him some kind of a soup to eat? "You have been passed out for quite a while, this is good for you"

"Tyra, how long have I been out for?"

Three days she said, before Chief Brennus and what appeared to be the village healer came to check his condition.

Chief Brennus told him that three days ago, the Quintins brought him back to the forest in a dying state. His condition was almost fatal.

"fortunately the high priestess is all knowing, she was already prepared for your condition"

It took the high priestess half a day to heal him and he has been sleeping ever since.

Hearing this made Emery more curious about the powder that the granny used on him. It was able to make his strong body fall into such a state.

The chief then left the place leaving him with the fey sisters.

Emery decided to sit in the lotus position and start to check on his condition.

Even though he was now able to move, he still felt a little numb and his head was throbbing so hard his vision was slightly blurry as a result. Fortunately, now that his spirit core has been restored, he's able to cast his [Nature Blessing] again. He took half an hour to let his body heal.

He enjoyed the warm green light coursing through his body. Within half an hour, he could breathe properly and the slight numbness weighing his body down had disappeared.

When he opened his eyes, the fey sister was still patiently waiting for him.

"Brother Emery, are you feeling better already?" Glita smiled.

Emery nodded in response. His tongue felt like it weighed as much as a giant rock, while his mouth felt like it was stuffed with clay.

"Outside this forest must have been very dangerous, if it's able to make you so badly hurt!"

Emery could only smile at her, as a sign of reassurance. He was unsure of how to explain what had happened outside of the forest to her. He only felt a bit better moments ago and he would rather not think too much right now.

But, her next question made his headache flare up again.

"Brother, I wonder if sister Morgana is alright out there? She's been away for too long... Did you manage to find her out there, brother?" Glinda stared at him, her eyes full of concern.

"Yes, I found her, and... she's fine. dont worry" Emery tried to give her his best, most reassuring smile, but deep down he once again felt panic. Yet again, he left her there by herself.

He had promised to return in hours, and now he's been gone for days.

Emery felt a small shudder going down his spine when he thought about her throwing a few more fireballs at him, now angrier than ever.

Another big concern was Gwen. Though he was dying, he knew the princess had found him and, unfortunately, when he returned from his wolf form, his fey wolf innate ability [Shapeshifting] was also dispelled. Now, not only did she know he was Lanzo, but now that she also knew about the Quintin's, there was a huge chance she now knew his identity as Merlin as well.

His list of complicated issues had grown thanks to facing that witch, and he didn't even manage to kill her.

He decided to wake up and stand, despite the fey sister warning him not to.

Indeed, he could still feel his body ache and the siren call of the soft bed felt more tempting than ever, but there was no time to waste. There were too many issues at hand and not enough means to solve them.

When he was preparing himself he realized, he didn't have his black dagger on him.

"Hell! Where was it?"

The sister didn't see it when he was brought back to the forest which means, it was either the Quintin's or the princess that had it. There is also a possibility it's still laying there in the woods.

He was in such critical condition that he can't really remember. Emery was hoping he would find it. It was a very useful weapon against monsters like Meave.

Emery gives his gratitude to the sister for taking care of him.

But, before leaving the village, First, he had to see the Lady of The Lake. He had a few questions that needed to be answered.

He needed to ask more about Meave and he also would like to know the exact story of what happened between the fey and the 7 kingdoms. Specifically the knights of divine order in relation to that strange sword he cannot pull.

Chapter 378: Essence

Emery stood in front of the massive mythical tree he came to know as 'Gaia'.

The high priestess was busy tending the tree, as she touched a few parts of its massive trunk with glowing hands, letting the green light heal the peeling bark and slight imperfections. Emery could feel the strange shifts of energy in the air, it was as if the priestess was giving something, yet also taking something else at the same time.

"I see that you had quite the adventure, Emery."

The choice to use the word 'adventure' for his near death experience made Emery almost roll his eyes, but he resisted the urge, as whatever she did, the fact remained, the Lady of The Lake had saved him. In the end, he chose to nod as a sign of respect before saying.

"Yes, High Priestess. I extend my gratitude to you for saving my life."

With a slight movement of her hand, a root appeared from the base of the tree, before the root twisted and formed into some sort of small, standing bowl in front of her. Her hand started to glow and something started to fill up the small bowl.

"Ah, before that, I would like to apologize for what my sister did to you, Emery. After all, she is supposed to be my responsibility."

Emery told the High Priestess everything that occurred, from his meeting with Morgana, the spells Maeve had used and the chilling words she said during their meeting. She listened intently while staring at the shimmering liquid that had started filling the bowl.

"Ah, I see... She definitely is much stronger now and, from what you told me, she's definitely planning something. I am afraid this might be related to the upcoming disaster warned by Gaia."

Emery told her about what he saw within the Knight Order and about the sword in the stone.

"Please tell me, Priestess... Why do so many people hate us? What started everything here?"

Instead of answering, the High Priestess stood up. She appeared to have finished whatever she was doing with the bowl. The roots with the bowl followed the priestess and crawled towards Emery.

"Take this. You will need it to reach your answer."

Emery looked down at the bowl and saw a shimmering gold liquid swirling within.

"Do you recognize this, Emery? This is the answer you are looking for. This is what we call the 'Gaia's Essence'."

The familiar golden liquid made Emery realize what truly happened. He remembered the ceremony and the mysterious gold-colored liquid they gave to each knight before they could receive the blessing from the sword. He started to pull the puzzle together.

To be sure, Emery used his skills to examine what the liquid actually was.

[Analyze]

[Unidentified sap, tier 4]

"Tier 4!?" Emery muttered under his breath.

The thick, golden liquid was actually a sap and it was a tier 4 ingredient! Even back in the technologically advanced Magus Academy, tier 4 ingredients were very expensive and its availability was very limited.

Not wanting to waste the opportunity, Emery quickly cast his special plant spell.

[Fragmentation]

[One essence found]

[Gaia essence]

[Unidentified rank 4 liquid received. You are awarded 10.000 contribution points!]

Emery was speechless when he saw the notification.

He merely identified one ingredient, but he received a massive amount of points in exchange. He decided to focus on the faded mark marring the palm of his hand and summon the contribution points information

[Contribution Points: 98.650]

What surprised him wasn't just the contribution he obtained, but also the detailed information of the ingredient he had received in his mind.

After taking the test and advancing in rank and becoming a second rank apprentice, Emery was not only rewarded with better access to ingredients, but also the second level of the [Analyze] skill along with a more completed version of the [Universal Database]. Thanks to those, he was able to receive more extensive information about the ingredients he scanned.

He skimmed the long information and saw the gold liquid was basically a powerful reagent that was very similar to the spirit serum. It could be mixed with other potions to enhance its potency, or even be used to make two normally incompatible ingredients react against each other. However, the reaction could be unstable unless the potion master knew what they were doing.

In terms of similarity, it shared 90% of its components with a spirit serum. It meant, Emery could use this liquid as a substitute ingredient when he needed to create high rank recipes.

He scrolled through more information and saw one familiar recipe among the list of potions which could be brewed with the golden liquid. One of them was the spirit foundation pill.

"Dang, this is a very precious material indeed..." Emery muttered to himself.

Drowned in his contemplation, Emery kept on scrolling and looking at the information provided by the system, until he realized the High Priestess was still waiting for him.

He looked at the priestess, scratched the back of his head and said.

"I apologize, High Priestess, I was lost in thought, but this liquid is truly extraordinary."

The Lady of the Lake smiled and replied.

"No need to apologize. You are also extraordinary to know its true nature right away."

Now that he had seen how the golden liquid was made, it didn't take a genius to figure out that the sap came from the mythical tree, Gaia. This was most likely the root of why the Divine Order had its secrets, why the seven kingdoms possessed such enmity against Chrutins and why the Divine Water could only be accessed by those who had proven themselves to be loyal.

This must be one of the most closely guarded secrets of the order. The origin of the 'Divine Water' and the secret behind a Golden Knight's power.

As if she could hear what Emery was thinking, the Lady of the Lake nodded solemnly.

"Yes, Emery. Thirty years ago, the order waged war on us and it was this Gaia's Essence that stopped the fight."

Chapter 379: The Incident

50 years ago, the two sisters Nimue and Maeve were the candidates to be chosen by Gaia.

Maeve was the older sister and, at first, she was known to be the much more talented and recognizable one. There was no villager who hadn't heard of her name and reputation as a prodigy. Meanwhile, Nimue was always the quiet one. She had rarely shown her magical power and preferred to practice in peace.

On that one fateful day, Gaia's blessing fell upon Nimue.

At first, as an older sister, Maeve was happy for her sibling. After all, perhaps this was what young Nimue needed to come out of her shell.

Time went by, and Nimue's magical power grew by leaps and bounds from the blessings of Gaia. Happiness became resentment and their relationship deteriorated.

The villagers no longer look at Maeve like they used to, the whispers of her talent became whispers comparing her to her now better sister. The torture eventually got to her and Maeve decided to break the sacred seal of the forest before leaving, exposing the village to the outside world.

Since then, Maeve became obsessed with finding ways to increase her talent by any mean.

With the opened seal, the forest, that was once unable to be entered by people, started to be known. Word started to spread about the mysterious place.

What started as simple curiosity became rumors, rumors became information and the truth about the secretive people of the forest started to spread throughout the seven kingdoms.

It didn't take long until the mysterious place filled with amazing plants and unique creatures became known by explorers.

People started to try and enter the forest, from friendly explorers to hunters trying to steal the bounty of the forest by force. The forest people became more wary and the village started to build its own force tasked to protect the place.

It led to some altercations between them.

Years passed, more and more people attempted to trespass, and the royalty led by the Knights of Divine Order started to get involved.

Envoys were sent between them, communications were built and everything was going well. They started to establish borders between their territory and talks about resources started to be thrown in their discussions, until that fateful day 20 years ago.

Maeve returned to create chaos, leading to the death of the envoys sent by both sides.

They blamed each other and, before anyone could truly take decisive actions to correct the mistake, everything escalated beyond control. The Divine Order sent their best knights to attack the forest, leading to a massive battle that took hundreds of lives. Most of those who died are well-known knights from noble families.

After hundreds of lives were lost, both sides decided to create a pact. They would cease attacking each other and isolate themselves from each other. With the pact, the heat between them quickly died down.

Or at least, that was what history recorded.

"That is the known story, Emery, but the truth was that we managed to stop them all. 20 years ago, the Divine Order was completely defeated. In order to ensure they would not bother us again, we even gave them what they asked."

It couldn't be anything else other than the Gaian Essence currently in Emery's hand.

"Though peace was established, the deed was done. The death of so many important people left a lot of hate lingering between us. There was no way to truly mend it, considering how many had perished. Do you understand now, Emery?"

Emery nodded.

This battle 20 years ago must be the time when Emery's parents met and also the time when the queen, Gwen's mother, died at the hands of the chrutin.

The powers of the fey, in addition to the chaos Maeve caused, was the root of their hatred, but greed was what led to the tragedy.

Now that Emery understood what actually happened. He could face both Princess Gwen and Prince Arthur better.

With gratitude, Emery took the precious gift from the high priestess.

Using that liquid, he could once more try to pull the sword from the stone.

While he was deep in thought, the High Priestess spoke once more.

"Emery, there is a reason that sword is referred to as the Sword of Destiny. I have faith you will be able to continue the quest Gaia trusts you to complete."

"I understand, High Priestess." Emery nodded.

"Ah, one more thing, Emery, I have seen that your path and Morgana's path have started to intertwine. Remember, Gaia has plans for her. I have also seen the young prince in my vision. I want you to tell him that I will see him when he is ready."

Emery was about to ask for the reason, but he felt something unsettling in the back of his mind. Arthur, the Golden Prince, definitely seemed trustworthy, but knowing what he was capable of, there was no way he could place his trust on the prince just yet.

Nevertheless, he decided to agree.

"Yes, High Priestess, I will see to it. I'll make sure he receives your message."

The High Priestess dismissed him and Emery walked through the forest and the bridge with a much clearer head. There was still the problem of Morgana and Gwen.

Morgana was under the care of someone presumed to be an enemy, the Golden Prince of Logress Kingdom himself. The prince might have treated her well, but he couldn't help but worry about the prince's ulterior motives. He had promised to come back within hours, yet he failed to complete that simple promise.

Second, he had to deal with Gwen. Now that his cover was completely blown, he wonders how this childhood friend of his would react. Delivering him to the Quintin's despite knowing was a good sign, but what would she do next?

Both need to be taking care of immediately, Which one should he do first?

Chapter 380: Where is she?

There was no time to waste.

Emery bid farewell to the fey sisters before casting [Spatial Gate].

At first, he had his doubts and considered solving his problem with Princess Gwen first. Both problems could get complicated, but at least dealing with the princess should be faster. He just needed to confirm what she planned to do with him.

But he realized that, even though the fate of his identity was important, it came second to the safety of those he cared about.

Therefore, he decided the best course of action was to grab Morgana first and set his mind at ease.

The spell was cast to the stone formation he set up just outside of Camelot city. Right as he arrived, he quickly dashed towards the old Gaious estate where they kept Morana before.

Fraught with worry, he decided to cast [Spatial Gate] yet again, expending himself just to reach the place faster.

It was at noon when he arrived at the palace. He saw the mansion standing amidst the now bright forest.

Without thinking much, he cast multiple [Blink] and moves closer to the estate

The closer he got, the more worried he became because there was no hint of Morgana's presence in the estate. There was no one else aside from the old magician.

He concentrated and focused on the old mage's presence before appearing in front of him inside the mansion's study room. He asked, trying to keep himself as calm as possible.

"Where. Is. She?"

Emery's sudden arrival almost made the old magician drop his tomes.

"Damn! Do you want to give this old man a heart attack?!"

"I have no time for jokes! Where is Morgana?!"

The old man didn't manage to hide his frown and Emery's anger only burned even hotter, threatening to boil over any second.

"Old man, I have warned you to take care of her, if harm comes to her..." It was clear Emery was about to burst into rage.

"Wait, wait! Don't be rash. She is not here. Please be patient and let me contact Arthur!"

"No. Tell me where Morgana or Arthur is, or I will break down the whole castle if I have to. Tell. Me!"

"She- She was taken by the king, King Ulther Pendragon."

Hearing the news shock him. Emery's expression became even more twisted, he gripped his hands until his knuckles turned white.

"The castle it is, then," he said

"Calm down and listen to me! Listen to me for a minute! If you go there, you will only make everything worse."

Emery took a deep breath and glared at the old magician.

"Please be patient. Remember, there are things at work here and I sincerely hope you will take the time to listen to Arthur's words first. Give me a few minutes and he will come in no time... Please, your actions will only create even more havoc, and right now, that will do nothing but endanger her."

Emery took another deep breath and calmed himself. The High Priestess' words floated in his mind, about Arthur, about his role in everything... He really wished he could just get away from here and try to find the prince by himself, but no matter how he looked at it, waiting for someone to fetch the prince would be faster than searching for him.

Now that the cloud of anger no longer shrouded his mind, he realized he had no idea where to even begin searching for the prince.

"Fine, I will give you thirty minutes."

The old magician quickly wrote a short letter on a small piece of parchment, before folding and placing it inside a small, cylindrical case. He fetched a bird from the next room, whispered some instructions to it and let it fly away from the window.

There was always the grim possibility of the old magician warning the kingdom knights to come and attack him. But, if it really came to that, Emery will ensure the old magician would live to regret his actions.

Emery tried to stay calm, but all the possibilities kept on replaying in his mind, each clamoring for his attention and making him feel a bit constricted here.

A few minutes later, his senses picked up the sounds of a horse galloping closer. He could tell that it was the prince.

The prince came riding alone, that was a good first sign. Right after the prince tied his horse, Emery dashed outside to face him.

Upon seeing him, Arthur's face looked strangely happy. Before Emery could open his mouth, Arthur said.

"It's good that you have come back. Things have started to get out of control."

Emery quickly interrupted the prince and said "Tell me what happened!. What did you do to her?!" Try as he might, Emery couldn't keep the rage from bubbling through his question.

The prince merely shook his head and said. "Our last meeting created more ruckus than I thought. I sincerely apologize, my father found out about her and he sent his knights to capture her."

Once more, Emery tried to calm himself. No matter Arthur's role, this was partially his fault. If only he got her out first. Emery then tried to politely ask.

"If you really care about the relationship of the seven kingdoms with the Fey, now is the time to prove it. Tell me where she is and I will get her out."

"No, please don't do that." Arthur shook his head. "We should not get her out by force. I know this is hard for you to believe, but I will get her out myself!"

Emery merely gave him a mocking smile.

"No! I don't believe you! Why should I?"

The prince fell silent, realizing Emery's words rang true no matter how much he tried to deny them. He thought for a moment before replying.

"Because... It is the will of the sword."