

TECHNOLOGY 1491

### Chapter 1491 A Hateful Assignment

Here?

The woman's eyes shot open.

And In no time, she was back on her feet.

"Quickly, lead the way!" She gestured to the girl who had just run in. And as they moved, the ladies beside her never stopped fanning their mistress.

Camila gave off a witty smile, slowly swaying her hips back and forth out of her private bed chambers.

This was her sanctuary, for when her dear husband was out of the estate on business, that could take too long to accomplish.

Staying away from their main bedroom chambers would make her miss her husband slightly less.

That's right.

Just as her husband was crazy over her, she too was crazy over him.

The 2 mad people found love in this chaotic world.

Camille bit her already pink full, and plump lips, making them dresser and lighter bigger.

What? Just because she loved her husband didn't mean she didn't like attention from others.

"Mistress."

A group of guards standing outside the room all fell on one knee, saluting her humbly.

"Get up."

At Camila's command, the blue-toned burly guards rose to their feet, creating a formation around her.

They blocked her line of sight in all corners, including the forefront. All anyone could see were her legs within the formation.

Hmmmm...

Camila chuckled. This was how she liked things to be, especially when she wanted to mesmerize others with her beauty.

The sudden revelation always allowed people to gasp in awe once she emerged from the formation.

Additionally, a few of her maids fanning her would also place the fans across her face to create the illusion that only those worthy would see her beauty.

The woman knew she was a beauty and made good use of her charms.

"Let's go."

"Yes, Mistress."

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Din. Din. Din. Din. Din. ~

Steady footsteps passed through the many hallways and stairways, moving from the 3rd to the ground floor.

The guests were kept in her audience hall in wait.

And soon enough, she reached the ground floor, took several more turns, and embarked into the hall via the forefront where her throne resided.

The masked men raised their brows in interest, seeing the formation emerge.

Though they weren't interested in having Camila, they had to admit that even they were a little curious to see if she looked exactly the same as she did in her paintings.

"Esteemed guests... I apologize if I kept you all waiting for so long."

"You're excused." The men's voice remained unchanged, as though not intrigued by her air of mystery.

Camille wasn't put down by their attitudes.

"Give way."

The moment she spoke, her guards broke the friction, allowing the one only to see her back as she walked to take her throne.

Finally seated, a few in early hissed at her beauty.

It wasn't an exaggeration. This woman ranked high in being one of the most beautiful on the face of the world... And that was saying a lot since their forces typically sent them around Hertfilia on a regular.

This was the beauty that could topple a nation.

Too bad this woman wasn't one they could have too many thoughts on.

They came to her on a mission. But unlike other cases, they came to her openly.

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"Lady Camila... Your request has been denied."

Camila's face distorted.

Denied? Why?!!

"Go. Excluding you two, everyone, get out!"

Her voice was still charming, yet it oozed of wickedness and cruelty for what she would do to others who didn't move fast

GET... OUT!

The maids rushed away in a blink of an eye, accompanied by the many other guards who went out to stand guard around the hall.

They would prevent any from disturbing the meeting with these masked men.

Taking deep breaths, Camila calmed herself, no longer digging her fingernails into her cushioned armrest.

In a blink of an eye, her face turned innocent and cute.

"Why?... Why did my request get denied? Is it because I'm a woman?"

"Far from it, lady Camila." The red iron-masked man replied.

"Lady Camila. We can all agree that when compared to a majority of men, you stand far tall in power and are more ballsy than the lot. So why would you think we would look down on you? On the contrary, we appreciate you deeply. And that's why we came here in the first place."

Really?

Heh.

Camila had an understanding smile on her face, but deep down, she still felt insulted. If what they said was true, then why did they reject her request?

Men... They were all full of lies!... Except for her husband, of course.

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Lucky for her, blue-toned people, their veins were far less evident in their faces. Or else these people would've seen Camila's veins popping out crazily.

"You're indeed right. If you did look down on me, you wouldn't be here today... However, don't you think you owe me an explanation for turning down my request?"

Naughty.

The men smiled in amusement, seeing Camila's gorgeous face look so pitiful.

If not for their training, their hearts would've long softened by her gaze.

Good heavens.

It was a sin for a woman to look this good.

"Lady... No... Duchess Camila... The reason your request was turned down was because the Society had already promised that I'm a request to someone else."

What?

Someone else joined the T.O.E.P just before she did and requested to sit on the throne too?

Camila's body emitted a dangerous aura.

Who?... Who Is it??!

The masked men smiled.

"It's your dear cousin... Cletus Ghoul."

"Bastard!!!!"

This time, Camila broke character.

That slimy light-headed idiot actually managed to beat her to it?

No way! Her first son must rule Titarian.

She couldn't allow that bastard to take what she and her family had been planning for ages.

Dammit!

What should she do now?

The masked men chuckled.

"Lady Camila... As part of the Society, it's forbidden to kill other members... But, there's still a situation that allows it."

Camila's eyes lit up.

That's right, the killing period.

'Good... Good... Coupon, I hope you don't blame me for being heartless. Who asked you to covert what belongs to my son?'

A dangerous smile spread out on her lips while watching the masked men rise from their seats.

"Duchess Camila, we are here to inform you of your first assignment... And that is to help your cousin take the throne."

### **Chapter 1492 An Abrupt Meeting?**

And just like that, the hidden battle for the throne became even more heated than before.

Enemies were forced to work with each other, while others were clueless about all going on instead.

Some forces were in the light, and others in the dark, thinking they had factored in every possibility to secure their victory.

But little did they know that the heavens had also decided to tag along, putting their own and into motion.

In the end, only the future would tell how the battle for the throne would go.

At present, there were bigger things at stake!

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--The Royal Capital City, Abian Empire, MORGANY--

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In a massive arena-style hall, several leaders and influential men dawned in wealthier all sat behind curtain booths with their guards standing behind and beside them.

The arena-styled booths were stacked 3 levels on each other.

And at the center of the vast hall was an open space with various items covered up and displayed out in the open.

But this wasn't all.

Within the booths, there were also several tables of portable covered items placed on them too.

What was going on?

Why the emergence of this sudden and abrupt meeting?

Some knew the answer, while others seemed perplexed but on edge.

And standing beside these small tables in their booths were 1 or 2 dazzling young ladies with stunning features that made one's mouth water lustfully.

The ladies wore red flirty attires, with their bodies exposed and their ankle-long but thin red skirts resting in their waists perfectly.

They had golden bracelets wrapped around their arms like the coil of snakes.

The women stood firm but very womanly, showing their best sides to the guests in the booths.

They also knew that this wasn't the time to unleash most of their feminine wilds.

And sure enough. They were right. The guests in the booths were more concerned over what lay covered on the tables than what they had to offer.

Of course, they were also extremely excited, seeing such a vast gathering of these few most influential people in all of Morgany.

You have to know that some had traveled from the other empires to Abian for some top-secret matter.

So it was just a coincidence that they could attend this sudden meeting.

Well, even if they didn't attend this one, once they got to their prospective empires, such meetings would also be held there too. So, in the end, they would never miss a thing.

Oh my...

The ladies blushed hard, too inwardly excited to be lucky enough to have chosen to see to their booth guests every need.

One bonus or payment from these people was enough for them to live for a year or 3 without ever working again.

These ladies also hated the poor, especially those out of Morgany.

Their motto was: 'Those who don't have money, do not deserve to have an erection.'

Looking at the rich men before them, they already had layers of filters over their eyes, seeing these people as the most handsome men in the world.

What was a gold customer? These were gold customers!!

Some secretly focused on the booths for the Royal family instead.

So what if these men were married to 3~12 wives or more?

Such men were public property, goods for grabs from anyone.

It was fair game when such men were involved. Even the Abian Monarch was targeted by them. What? Do you expect his old wives and concubines to be better than they, young and vibrant girls?

How good can women who have birthed children be compared to them?

What they liked the most was that even the princes didn't have an issue with them frolicking with their father.

It was customary for men to play outside often, provided they didn't bring these lowly women back to the palace.

So, the princes, who were also deeply rooted in such practices, didn't care much or feel offended, seeing many ladies make their moves on their father.

These women could never get pregnant and knew the contract they swore on when taking the job.

Get in there, do your best and get out.

The message was short and simple.

So what's there to fear or bother about?

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In the biggest booth of all, His majesty Kavian narrowed his gaze at the open space below.

His dark inky eyes shone with a cold glint, still pondering on the information he received over time.

Today's meeting was here to openly address the plague that had bothered him once and for all!

At first, they thought they could handle these matters with little effort.

But as time progressed, he and many others finally understood that things could not be allowed to progress the way they did any further.

But what was he talking about?

Kavian took hold of the wine brought over to him by one of the ladies, taking a cool sip while also crushing on the few purplish grapes thrown into the wine for garnish.

The excellent taste was indeed delectable and good for the hot summer heat. Yet, Kavien didn't have the mind to enjoy its refreshing aftertaste.

Until they managed to close up today's meeting, everything else was going to leave a bitter taste in his mouth.

"Take it away."

"Yes, your majesty."

The dazzling lady dawned in arm jewelry, a red cropped top, and long-skirt attire, bowed and nodded humbly, showing her bosoms to Kavien.

Too bad the man didn't have the mind to get tempted in the least bit.

But just like himself, many felt their hearts pounding with anxiety, wanting the bloody meeting to begin.

Kavien was, of course, the last one to arrive since he was monarch and required the rest to be here already.

Only after he had settled down, with fruits beside him, did he give a light nod for the meeting to officially begin.

And just like that, a man dawning black robes lined with silver patterns calmly walked to the center of the open space, accompanied by 2 dashing ladies and 2 burly men, both wheeling in a large megaphone mounted on a thick box.

For sure, the megaphone should be a powerful one, allowing everyone to hear whatever was said from below.

Many leaned back, seeing the host finally step out.

Good...

Now, they could finally begin!

### **Chapter 1493 Now, They Know**

Step by step, the man in black took center stage, standing before the massive Megaphone.

Today, he was the host of this sudden meeting.

"Your majesty Kavien, his royal highnesses, and many influential esteemed guests... It is our pleasure to welcome you all here. And just as many of you have guessed, today's matter is far beyond our expectations but must be stopped! And that's why you're all here!"

The host's words made many tremble with fierce expressions.

And once again, their interest in the items covered in thick blankets of fabric made their hands urge to yank the damn cloth away.

Heh.

The host smirked, knowing that his words had captured their every emotion, making many lean forward subconsciously.

And with a snap of his fingers, he sent all 4 people beside him towards all 4 tables scattered on the stage.

The women and men held the corners of the fabrics, waiting to pull them off once he gave the signal.

"For thousands and thousands of years, we, the Morgs, have remained untouchable. We are the lawmakers whose words are akin to heavenly orders that cannot be disobeyed!... Yet, not too long ago, a puny rat was found, poking its head in our garden of paradise!"

As the host spoke, the murderous air in the room suddenly intensified.

A rat?

Where did this stinky thing come from?

Eh?

Blink. Blink...

Could it be Adonis?

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Those who didn't know were already making multiple guesses at heart. Some had been too cooked up with the many Morg research projects and discoveries that such news was the first time they heard of it.

But whether they were right or not, only the host could verify such.

'Say... Who are the rats?'

~Snap!

The hist snapped his fingers, and the pieces of fabrics were all drawn out simultaneously.

"Baynard!... Our strange new enemy happens to be a small newly formed empire in Pyno!"

What???!!!!!

Many almost rose to their feet in shock and disbelief.

Pyno? That useless place? If there was indeed such an enemy, then wasn't it enough to send a few fleets to finish them up?

Since when did Morgany grow so weak that they couldn't even handle a small empire in such a lesser skilled and poor continent like Pyno?

This... This was a joke, right?



Up, down, up, down... Many felt their chests rise and fall with reddish faces of anger yet to explode.

They felt it was ridiculous. But soon, their expressions froze, looking at the items now brought closer to them on trays by the ladies in their booths.

That's right. The host wanted to start with items found in everyone's booth.

On a golden tray, the many guests stared at the empty exercise and notebooks of different colors, accompanied by pens, pencils, erasers, and rulers.

"How magnificent!!" Someone exclaimed, almost fearing to pick up the items before them.

What was this? How can paper be this clean?

Look! In some booths, some even had writing exercise books with blue, pink, green, purple, and all other colored-base papers.

For the pens, everyone had blue and red, with a variation of other colored pens in the mix.

The pencils were also different too, with some being shelled in cases similar to those of the pens, while others were 'naked,' having shells.

As for the books, what also shocked them were the words behind them.

Times table? What the heck is that?

$2 \times 1 = 2...$

$2 \times 2 = 4...$

How do you use this thing?

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Amidst the shock and rage, many inwardly felt excited, with their brains pumping vigorously at the notion of new information.

They, Medieval people, loved information too much.

Any new theories or discoveries were akin to having ecstasy.

Many mathematicians, researchers, and others in the audience tried to work their brains to crack this strange code called the Times Table.

How do you use it? And what does it mean? Could it be some secret numerical language the enemy used to talk to one another with?

Or was it an encrypted war message they sent to themselves and their allies in this form?

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They wanted to know... They wanted to know... Who can tell them how to use it?

Flip. Flip. Flip.

Everyone turned the pages like crazy while listening to the host speak on these items called exercise books/journals/ and Jotters.

Many had different types of books with them.

"In and on the inner and outer backs of these books are a few things called the Times table, Emergency Phone numbers, and Calendars, to say the least."

Eh?

Emergency phone numbers?

Pray tell... What exactly was a bone number?

The more they heard, the more many felt their heads swelling in disbelief.

What? You say with these phone numbers they can talk to each other from far distances right in the comfort of their homes?

Wasn't this just sorcery? How can such a thing exist?

Someone couldn't take it anymore, smacking his attest hard and yelling out his incredulity.

"I don't believe it! Do you know what you're talking about? Who has seen these things happen eye to eye? Are your scouts very trustworthy if they can bring back such ridiculous news?"

"I agree. It's just too impossible!" Another famous researcher added.

"I second that. How true is this news? Why do I find it hard to believe?"

Yeah!

They were the top power holders with surplus resources and manpower to create wonders. So if they couldn't do it, they didn't believe a useless Pyno would be able to accomplish such a feat.

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"Enough!!" Kavier's bellow quieted down the skeptic crowd.

"I, Monarch of Abian, can attest to this being true. But if you're shocked with only this much, what will you say about the rest of the items and news we've gathered so far?"

Everyone's face turned distorted.

Baynard... Baynard!... Such a place in a worthless empire could do it. Then what was stopping them from doing it too?

The only consolation they had was that Baynard had indeed stolen the many ideas from them.

How, you asked?

Well... This was all because they had caught genius Morgans and chained them up in their dungeons, peeling off every layer of information to create these many masterpieces.

Kavier narrowed his gaze on the items before him.

Thankfully, they had sent many war vessels to accompany the Arts society to unleash havoc in Baymard.

Their top priority was to steal the manufacturing processes of these items, as well as find the captured Morgs and rescue them immediately!

Yes...

This time, Baymard was done!

### **Chapter 1494 Meeting Dismissed!**

In the land of proud and high most humans, a plan was slowly formulated on how to take care of these barbaric People from Pyno.

How dare they try to climb up the ladders of power? If everyone acted like them, wouldn't there be no peace for them, the Morgs?

Dammit.

They already had enough issues when dealing with Adonis. So they dared not breed space for another continent to grow.

The more the host spoke on each item, the more terrible their faces became.

Water that flowed out from tubes all on their own? Special toilets that could carry poop to some faraway land without the stench?

Lights that come on and off like magic without fire? A box that can create ice on its own for storing food?

The things they heard went on and on. But what convinced them even more were the Baymardian brochures, advertising posters, magazines of goods in stores, and many other images that made them fantasize about seeing this new 'holy land.'

What the hell was this?

How could an entire sky-high building be made of glass? But even more alarming was that the compact female mirror before them was so clear, shocking many with their reflections.

F\*\*\*!

Was this truly how they looked?

Even some of the serving ladies got a glimpse of themselves when asked to put the mirror away. What they saw made them freeze on the spot.

Oh my...

Were they this good-looking? Damn. Drop-dead gorgeous was an understatement in their opinion.

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After seeing such a clear mirror, many inwardly felt disdain over the polished silver, bronze, and golden sources they used as mirrors.

But what was the price of these things?

Could they be worth thousands and thousands of silver or gold coins?

"4 Copper coins."

What?!!!

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Are those Baymardians stupid?

How could they charge 4 copper coins for this compact travel mirror?

In their opinion, these Baymardians should be mental!

Many parched their throats with wine, trying to calm their trending bodies from all they saw.

At this point, it would be a lie to say they were not greedy for everything... Especially all those in the cool, flashy magazines.

"Master, look at this image of this house? It's so luxurious."

"Master, look at their novels! It's so well put together, and just the first few pages have hooked me!"

"Ahhh!~... Master, take a look at this catalog of carriages they call cars? Too good looking! Too good-looking? Damn! The inside of this limo is too suave!"

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The guards standing behind their masters couldn't hold in their surprise the more they saw.

Who can blame them?

They spotted trains, metal ships of wonder with cabins that looked like fantasy rooms, vehicles, images of the zoo, and all sorts of adventurous things that made their blood boil.

Good heavens!

They wished they could appear in Baymard to see these things with their very eyes.

As for their masters, these people gripped the magazines, finding it hard to peel their eyes off the stunning images.

The researchers in particular, felt the urge to send their top forces over and steal the manufacturing processes fast.

These things originally belonged to Morgany. So why should they stay for another day in Baymard?

Many narrowed their eyes dangerously.

'What a good Pyno!'

It's probably all thanks to that late bastard called Alec Barn, who caused many in Pyno to try going against them.

You say this Landon Barn is his son?

Sure enough. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

Disobedience is in their blood!

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Like so, the host finished up his show & tell after 2 and a half hours. During this time, no one felt bored, especially with all the magnificent never-seen-before items around them.

If anything, many felt the show & tell was too short.

Fortunately, they would be allowed to take some of these items away after dropping off a considerable price... Of course.

They could leave the place without getting these items, but it would take 20~30 months for their forces to head over to Baynard, get these goods, and return to the Capital.

So who could wait that long when such genius gadgets were already staring them in the face?

Impossible!

Many had already planned to ready the money and take what they could by the meeting's end.

Sorry girls... But part of the money they initially planned on spending on the ladies, would be lowered by a substantial amount... Though they would still give these ladies enough money to keep them jobless for months and maybe even a year.

The host bowed to the crowd. "At this time, all serving men and women could exit the booths."

Right!

These ladies came from a special high-end brothel. And when it's time to servicing like this? All the guards needed to do was register their names, give them tokens, as well as send a short time to those managing the brothels.

And in the meantime, the ladies would either get sent to the private mansions belonging to the many masters and lords or sent back to the brothel to wait for the lords to come over for gratification.

Of course, some lords preferred to do it in their carriage or the private rooms in this grand building.

So it really depended on the lord's opinion. And like so, the ladies merrily exited the booths.

Good.

Now, they could get down to the first order of business.

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With a massive megaphone before him, his majesty Kavier addressed the gathering.

"So... What do you all think?"

The gloomy atmosphere was already self-explanatory.

What did they think?

Very quickly, someone asked their guard to raise a large red wooden board, indicating their attempt at speaking.

"Your majesty, this threat must be eliminated fast!"

"Agree!" Many seconded.

"Hmmm... I know. And that is why this face on the many posters and pamphlets must become a wanted one!"

As Kavier spoke, his dagger stabbed Landon's eyes on a pamphlet.

With such a giant fairytale castle in the picture, how could he not feel envious?

"For now, we wait for news from the war vessels headed over there. I believe they should be able to handle this newly sung empire that still relied on the other Pyno empires for protection."

Yes...

Many nodded in agreement. They don't think Baymard would win against an attack from them; talk less of a surprise one.

But that said, this period of wait didn't mean they would be completely free.

No...

The fact that these items were displayed meant they were tasked with replicating them for Morgany!

Kavier slowly rose from his seat with a calm yet cold expression.

"I don't care how you do it, but I believe that the other Monarchs, as well as myself, want to see results! Meeting over!!!"

### **Chapter 1495 A Star Is Born**

The revelation made many sit up, murmuring the name of this strange, newly sprung empire in the desolate lands of Pyno.

'Baymard, was it?'

Many had already planned on sending their forces and scouts over in a jiffy.

It would take months and months... But this was expected.

And in the end, this was Morgany's first official 'knowing' of Baymard's treason against them.

What! Kidnap their citizens, steal their technology and expect them to sit and do nothing? Naive!

What belongs to them can ever stay in the hands of criminals!

By hook or by crook, they'll rescue their dear Morgs from the hands of these shameless thieving captives.

And just like that, the matter had come to an end... For now.

But unlike their gloomy atmosphere, far away in the blooming empire of Baymard, many had happy yet nervous smiles on thinking of what today represented for them.

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--Royal Capital City, Baymard, Pyno.--

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~Ring!!!!~

A loud clock rang out in the late hours of the morning, followed by a loud banging noise at the door.

~Bang. Bang. Bang.

"Tina!... Tina... Wake up, girl; you're going to be late! Today is your big day, remember?"

"Ah!-... Big day!" An inky dark-haired girl jumped off her bed in a defensive mode, as though about to karate-chop someone.

The eyes face was still tired, and her sleeping hair cap was long disorientated above her head.

Last night, her entire hair was covered before falling to sleep. But now, the hair cap had shifted from all her rolling, so much so that it was barely hanging on its last wits on her messy bun.

And knowing her, it was clear she unintentionally took it off with her own hands while deep asleep.

The girl was, as they say: A Hand-sleeper... Meaning, she liked to punch, you'll, drag, and move her hands about while deep asleep.

Smacking her lips, the 16-year-old forced her eyelids open while smashing the bottom above her clock.

Dammit.

It was already 10:30 A.M?!

Ahhhhhhhhhhh!

The girl screamed in horror.

You have to know that she had snoozed 6 other alarms prior to this, thinking she had time.

She intended to wake up by 9:15. But instead, she woke up an hour later?

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"Ahhhh~!"

The girl placed her hands on her head anxiously. "No! No! No! No!--"

~Bang. Bang. Bang. Bang.

"Tina, are you up yet?"

"I'm up! I'm up!... But why didn't you knock on my door earlier?"

"I did!... But you didn't even reply, even when I said the house was on fire. Lucky for you, the Theatre isn't far from the Academy, or you'll definitely miss your deadline!"

"Yeah..."

The girl Tina had no time for small talk.

Of course, her friend was indeed correct.

At present, she was in a small single room within one of the academy's living quarters.

That's right.

This was the Arts & Beauty Academy.

Here, one could be a painter, sculptor, fashion designer, actress, actor, musician, stylist, makeup artist, masseuse, and every job pertaining to either Arts or Beauty.

So one could imagine how massive the Campus spaces were.

It was like a mini-city all on its own, with towering residences and teaching buildings all over the place.

And with the sleeping situation, one could choose to stay in the buildings that shared the same meal hall.

These buildings had no public kitchens, just a meal hall with specific eating times, free for those staying there.

It was great, seeing as their staying here hardly had to worry about what to cook or what groceries to get. Even if they got broke, at least their food was still guaranteed.

Of course, in these buildings, there were options for 2~4 people to share the same room like a dormitory or live in single rooms instead.

The bathrooms and showers here were also public too.

But if one didn't like these sorts of accommodations, they could still live in the many buildings designed similar to apartments with their own kitchens, private bathrooms, parlors, and even balconies.



Hey, it all depends on the price and a person's presence.

For Tina, she and 2 others lived in this 3-bedroom in one of the many apartment-styled complexes within the campus grounds.

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Alright.

Pah!

Tina slapped her face, knowing it was time for her to do her infamous morning marathon.

This time, will she make it?

Looking at the time, it's now 10:31, but she had to get to the theater by 11:10.

Well now... That gives her 34 minutes.

34 minutes to take a bath, clean up, get dressed, fix her hair, have her breakfast, drive over and arrive on time.

And for this, she only had one question to ask the nonbelievers... Do you believe in miracles?

Ding~

A nonexistent sound echoed out in her mind.

There was the bell, and there goes Tina.

It was a fast break as Tina led the field around the far turn.

That's it. She was out of the room, making her way through the hallway, over to the bathroom.

What a sensational leap!

In no time, she turned her shower on, waiting for the waters to stabilize to the temperature she wanted. But was she ideal?

Not a chance!

Toothpaste on her toothbrush, cleanser on her face, Tina made a big jump into the shower.

In no time, she overtakes the showers by 2 lengths. And the imaginary baseball crowd goes wild! It's Tina by one!

'Hoop!'

She jumped out the shower, wiped herself off, and headed back to her room fully nude. But who the hell cares?

Reaching the room, Tina stretched her body, proving that humans could only take a minute and a half to dress up.

[The invisible crowd]: Hair Tina, Hair!!

With quick hands, she showed great form and grace as she hastily placed her hair in a bun.

But what about her face?

A dab of this, a dab of that.

And in the end... Tina looked... She looked... Well... No comment.

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Whoosh!

The girl took off like thunder, grabbing a box of Fruitloops and milk.

1 spoon, 2 spoons... 7 spoons, and a large gulp down her throat, keeping her place with indigestion.

Tina finished her cereal, grabbed an apple, and flew out into the car.

8 minutes more.

Vrmmm!

Tina took off without delay, leaving the vast campus and heading off to the theater as fast as she could.

6 more minutes...

4, 3, 2...

Park!

She parked her vehicle and rushed into the theater.

Success! Success!

"I'm here... I'm here..."

Tina almost fainted the moment she arrived. And soon, she heard a familiar voice call out.

"Ahh... There's the star of my show, Miss Tina. There's my Baronin Maria... The lead character of tonight's performance, Sound Of Music!!... But, what's with your face?"

"..."

Don't ask.

Tina walked backstage, feeling both nervous and excited.

She was a Teriquen girl who came to Baymard to pursue a career as a theater performer.

Today was her first time chosen as the main lead in a show. So how could she not feel fidgety?

Who would've known she would make it this far?

Thinking if her journey and the changes she was able to bring to her family since studying here 3 years back, Tina felt warmth from Baynard.

And tonight, her family would be here to watch her first lead-role show ever!

Sound of music...

### **Chapter 1496 The Sound Of Music**

Tina was quickly rushed for last-minute rehearsals to ensure everyone was aligned with one another, knowing where to enter and exit the stage.

Tina twirled and moved, keeping her from while ensuring to bring out her character for all to see.

"Yes!... That's it! You aren't in rehearsals but on stage! The lights are shining on you. That's it. Good. Good, and twirl. Marvelous! I can already see Maria in you. But remember, when reacting to Scene 3 Act 1, you need to show an even more stubborn yet graceful side."

"Billy, that's it! You are Baron Von Trapp! You hate music because of your deceased wife. Music opens the wound in your heart. Yes... Yes... Bring out the pain in you! More... More, God Dammit! Bring me more!"

"Oh... That's it. Don't stop; you've got it now. Show me more!... And... 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3... Tonight's Broadway show must be better than good!"

(\*^\*)

The key instructor dawned in all black with a scarf around his neck and glasses on his face, walked about the stage, commenting on everyone's performance.

Today's Broadway show was one never seen before in Baynard.

That's right. It was an adaptation of the book 'Sound of Music,' written by his majesty, Landon Barn.

Though the book has not yet been made into film adaptation or even cartoon adaptation, it was dubbed one of the greatest love stories since the Baynardian Empire's birth.

Do you know how many copies of it get sold out instantly? Even in school, it's taught in literature, alongside the infamous 'Romeo & Juliet' Story.

But while the latter was a tragic love story, the former was one with a happy ending and more cheerful protagonists in them.

After all, the entire Romeo & Juliet takes place in just barely 4 days.

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Though some were romanced by Romeo's love, many felt he was a creep, a stalker, a cheater, and a flirt.

That is... Wasn't he the one who at the beginning of the play, said he would crash the Capulet's household to see the woman of his dreams, called Rosaline?

Didn't he say he could walk on fire and even die just to have the opportunity to have her?

Yet, this same man turned around and suddenly fell in love with another at the same party?

Men!!

I'm sorry, but this was why women couldn't trust men so much.

Moreover, this guy snuck into her courtyard, planning to do what exactly?

What if he had raped her or done anything dastardly?

And that Juliet girl... So you happen to see a strange man behind your backyard, and you don't even have an iota of shock, fear, or defense?

Look... As people living in dangerous times, they couldn't understand the reasoning behind these 2.

You can say it's love, but they begged to differ.

What sort of love would make the two fall to such unfortunate deaths in under 4 days?

In the end, wasn't it better for them never to meet?

To many, the moral of the story was to teach their children never to rush into things like love.

Many could swear that if the 2 had lived long enough, who knows if Romeo would also fall in love with another the same he abandoned his life for Rosaline and fell for Juliet?

Such a man had 'excess' love and would have 5~10 wives at that rate.

Of course, they found nothing wrong with polygamy. But please, don't make it seem as though this Romeo fellow was some noble guy who found his one true love.

Compared with Romeo & Juliet, they preferred the Sound of Music.

It was far more in tune with their sense of reasoning, with them rooting for the main characters to get together.

.

"And... 1, 2, 3, 4.... 1, 2, 3, 4..."

The key instructor clapped and gestured while swaying back and forth across the stage.

"And... Scene! Good job! You all did marvelously! Now head for the locker rooms, shower, dress up, and get backstage for hair and makeup!"

Of course, they would be putting their makeup on themselves. Only after they're done will the professional team see what's missing or what needs more adjusting.

Unlike models and many flashy professions that allowed makeup artists and hairstylists pamper them in the seat, part of their job was to learn how to do their own makeup instead.

And for Broadway and theater performers, they would apply a whole lot more power because of the lights.

When they hit the overly powdered face, they looked smooth on camera and even on eye-view from the audience's stance.

In a flash, Tina headed for the shower rooms to take yet another bath.

Of course, the reason she bathed this morning was that her little 'aunt flow' was here.

And just like that, the performances got ready for the biggest show of the month.

The Sound of music.

Because of its popularity, it felt like the whole world would be here.

Tina was nervous just thinking about it.

And in no time, the afternoon passed, and the early evening hours came.

The people were jolly and merry while strolling into the best estate grounds called the Baymardian Emerald Theater.

What a place!

This was by far the biggest theater property they had ever seen!

The theater had 10 three-story buildings within its promises, each having several overly grand stages in them.

On the first floor of each building, ken could check-in, get their popcorn and drinks, and head to the theater where their play, magic show, or other shows would unfold.

So grand!

In total, the theater had 20 mega stages.

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"Oh, my! We've booked a ticket for the fireman act of the jungle riders! So hurry up! We can't be late!"

"Ahhh!~... Finally, I'll get to watch the Imaginarium circus show live! Hahahaha~... Oh, honey, this is the best birthday gift ever!"

"F\*\*\*! I can't believe we'll be seeing the Sound of Music! All over Pyno, there are indeed some theater performers who have brought the book's adaptation to life in the other empires. Now, I want to just how different Baymard's adaptation would be from others."

"Me too! I love Maria in the book. She was such a free-spirited girl!"

"Hey, I loved the little Von Trapp children instead. From the book's description, I know they must be very cute!"

"Quickly! We have to head to theater 9! We only have 11 more minutes before the show begins!"

Quickly! Quickly!

Many already felt their feet pick up the place while grabbing their popcorn and rushing into the theater Halls.

And among the stream of audience members was a family of 3; a little boy no more than 9, accompanied by his parents.

"Mom, dad... At this rate, we'll be late for sister's play!"

The young boy of 8 years old was so nervous, pulling his parents along.

How can he miss big sister's first 'big act?' It was because of his sister that he was able to go to school here without worrying about his tuition. As for his parents, they had come to visit them during this coincidental period, making them lucky enough to watch her play.

Though Big sister had been informed she was the lead star several months ago, even if they wanted to invite their parents, they might not have made it on time.

So big sister only promised to write a letter and send a tape of the show after it was over.

But who would've known 2 weeks ago, their parents would come visiting, planning to spend 3 weeks with them?

Because big sister was a lead star, she got a few audience tickets but had been keeping them, but always had a habit of keeping 3 to herself, lest her family arrived.

Both parents smiled, looking at their Little boy pulling them forward.

"Alright. Alright. We are coming."

They felt it funny. They could've long entered the theater hall. But who was it that said he wanted pretzel buns, popcorn, and fruitopia?

Both parents chuckled, quickly entered the hall, and found their seats.

It was in the middle section.

'Not bad...'

They nodded, also feeling proud of their daughter's achievement.

The couple sat, proudly thinking of their daughter's accomplishments.

They had only watched her play on tape and had never seen it live. And never had they ever been in a theater before.

Their hearts pounded with a thousand goosebumps covering their bodies.

This feeling...

What a magical feeling...

"Look! Look! Over there! That's King-Father Lucus, Queen Mother Kimberly, and their daughter princess Kora!"

"What? They too are here watching the show?"

"Ah!--... Look over there! That's his majesty Hidoran from the Romain empire of Tulip. It appears he too is watching the show is family as well."

The couple glanced at the many important figures the crowd spoke about, feeling awed to be in such a grand place alongside them.

Royalty! They actually got to see royalty this close!

'How exciting!' They thought, not knowing that the real magic was just about to begin.

In no time, the curtains went up, the lights dimmed, and the little boy was squirmish in his seat.

"Mom, dad, sister's show is starting!"

(^Δ^)

### **Chapter 1497 The Hills Are Alive**

The audience lights dimmed, and before everyone could react, the stage lights lit up, all facing the massive red curtain.

~Din~~~

A drum-like sound echoed out, giving a tense yet exciting fill across the audience.

What to expect? What would happen next?

Too exciting!

The show hadn't even started, yet everyone felt the magical waves from the music pounded their beating hearts.

So cool!

Whether it was those who had experienced a Broadway show before or those new to it like his majesty Hidoran from the Tulip empire in Romain, everyone had the good kind of goosebumps across their bodies.

And before they could react, their hands had reached for their popcorn and snacks.

[Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed guests, boys and girls, theater lovers and nin-theater lovers... Welcome... Welcome to the Sound of Music!!]

~Lah-Lah-Lah-Lah~~~

The curtains went up slowly, moving in correspondence to the enchanting melody that unfolded.

But that wasn't all.

A thick magical whiff of smoke rose from beneath the stage, making the place look more mysterious.

Everyone tried to peer into what was happening. But just then, the background music changed, the clearer the smoke became.

And then, they heard the voice of a goddess echo out.

"The hills are alive with the sound of music... With songs, they have sung~... for a thousand years~~~."

La-la-la-la~

Everyone swayed their heads, listening to the beautiful melody that echoed out across the audience.

How can a song they just heard be so infectious?

What was even more impressive was the stage.

There were hills, trees, and all sorts of set designs that made one feel they were looking at some fantasy land.

Why did it look so life-like?

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"Hahaha~ mom, dad... That's sister!!"

The little boy was going crazy with excitement, watching his beautiful sister sing and twirl around the many trees and open plains on set.

Yes...

With her, the hills did come alive.

And what was this enchanting music?

It wasn't just the boy and his family who noticed this, but almost all die-hard fans of the book.

You should know that in the book, it just said she was singing on the open hills.

But who knew that the songs she sang were this incredible?

And the octaves behind the lead performer... Sis, don't you think you're in the wrong profession? Should you be a singer instead?

Her voice was beautifully unique yet sharp enough for everyone to hear her word for word, yet so graceful.

Oh my...

"Nowhere can I get a copy of this song to listen to?" Manny murmured, singing along to the only lime they seemed to have fallen in love with.

"The hills are alive, with the sound of music~~ La-la-la-la~~"

They bobbed their heads left and right, singing very enjoyably as the show advanced.



And just then, the lights on the stage dimmed, with only a single circular light focused on 'Maria' while every other part on stage was as dark as night.

Of course, Maria (Tina) did her finishing part, singing the song with all vigor.

And after exiting the stage so beautifully, the lights once again came on.

But what did everyone see? The stage has been changed!

And now, it looked like the insides of an open courtyard with stone walls and floors all around.

This time, they saw many women in black robes and long white headwraps/veils that only showed their faces.

Ah!... These must be the nuns in the book.

Many didn't know what a 'nun' was.

But from the book's description, they roughly understood that they were a religious group with their own cause, though theirs was very noble compared to many in Hertfilia.

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These nuns were kind and very caring toward orphans, the sick, and others in need.

One of their many purposes seemed to be to help and guide people well. And they never force anyone to do so.

But once one entered their group, there were rules they had to follow. No cursing, no swearing, and many other ways of acting. They also had duties to uphold too.

These nuns ran nunneries, taking in all sorts of women, be it those who are barren and mocked, those who are shamed and disgraced.

Provided one wanted to change or mold themselves into better beings, the door would always be open.

In these nunneries, people could choose to leave if they wanted to. Some could leave to marry out, while others could leave if they found it hard blending well with the ways of the nunnery.

In Pyno, they didn't know of any places like nunneries. But who knows... Hertfilia was big.

And maybe, just maybe, out there somewhere, there is a similar religious group too.

In all directions, the nuns in black attires and white headwraps stepped on the stage in song as though leaving some prayer house.

I mean, they were singing about them leaving the worship house. It wasn't hard to guess where they came from and what they had been doing there.

"We pray to the Almighty to keep blessing and taking care of those in need~"

In song, the ladies all danced with bibles in their hands in synched choreography.

What?

Some jumped out from the windows of the stone set designs, while others did backflips, summersaults, splits, and many other moves that kept everyone on the edge of their seats.

The spotlights moved along the beautiful dance that made many clap in satisfaction.

Bravo! Brave!

What a stunning performance!

(^π^)

We're they impressed? Of course!

Some lyrical geniuses in the audience also had a flash of inspiration for their next musical number.

Of course, some were theater performers from other empires, all here to learn a thing or two from Baymard.

'If I can choreograph a good dance in my plays, it would become a hit in Romain!'

What a good theater breakthrough this was...Write that down.

In the dark, a few people scribbled notes with what little lights they had around them.

Such important information must not be forgotten!

(\*^\*)

### **Chapter 1498 Finally Arrived. Time For War!**

The nuns danced and danced, keeping the audience fully engaged.

And after the peak of their song, they suddenly stopped, placed their hands across their chest in a prayerful way, and began moving about like passerbys.

Eh?

Many blinked, taken aback by the sudden change.

But then their attention was quickly drawn to the few gathering of nuns standing still while others were moving about.

They stood still, talking amongst themselves, until someone called from afar.

"Reverend Mother, I simply can't find her. It appears she's missing from the Abbey again."

"Missing? Didn't I say it? We ought to put a cow bell around her neck."

Pff~

Many laughed, already feeling how out of ace this Maria girl was.

This was just the beginning, yet as they listened to the mind sing about her difficulties, the entire audience found it hard to find their laughs back.

The little boy tried not to laugh but couldn't help it.

'Sister, I'm not laughing at you but Maria.'

At the same time, he also enjoyed the songs sung by these nuns.

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"How do you solve a problem like Maria~... How do you catch a cloud and pin it down~."

You don't.

Many inwardly replied, feeling they should leave the poor girl alone. It's clear she isn't suited for the Abbey, so what's the point in keeping her?

It was only after the play advanced that many related Maria was the one who didn't want to leave.

In that case, shouldn't she put an effort?

Didn't you hear them say she was late for everything, except every meal?

Indeed. How do you solve a problem like Maria?

(^\_^)

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As the play advanced, they laughed, felt sad at times, and went back into laughter.

"Pfff!~~ I can't take it. Maria is too funny."

"Did you see her face when getting caught?"

"Aiyo~... I like that song. That, Doh A-deer, one."

"No way! I like 'You are 16 going on 17' one. So cute!!!"

Like so, the crowd was so immersed in the play, as though they were really in the book.

And backstage, Tina was getting ready for one of the biggest and most crucial parts of the play.

"Quickly! Quickly! Get her ready! It's almost time for the ball scene. The romantic dance must highlight her and Baron Von Trapp, cementing their love!"

In a blink of an eye, Tina was twirled as many professionals worked on her attire and hairdo while doing a few makeup touch-ups.

Tina felt her entire body quiver nervously, knowing just how important his scene was.

What's more, her family was seated in the audience, and she wanted them to see her best performance yet.

No matter how many times she stepped on the stage, she always got butterflies in her belly.

'Breath Tina, you can do this!'

Clenching her fist, she empowered herself, thinking how blessed she was.

Back in Terique, when she started as a stage performer at the age of 12, her plays were done on the streets, with some people throwing tomatoes at them if they made any errors or didn't satisfy the crowd.

She never knew stage performing could be so novel and awe-inspiring. Before Baymard emerged, many didn't take stage performers seriously.

They were more or less in line with how jesters and comedians were treated.

But everything changed once Baymard opened its Emerald theater.

And now, everyone was looking at her profession in awe and respect. Moreover, thanks to Baymard creating Tvs, many could watch her performances and marvel at her profession from anywhere in the world.

'Thank you.'

Every time she thought of these, she felt the need to thank Baymard and his majesty Landon for bringing hope to all performers across the world.

And now, the money and fame she made from these shows were enough to let her live comfortably.

"Tina, you're on!"

Tina smiled, calming her anxious heart.

Tonight is her moment to be a star!!!

.

Like so, Tina danced to the best of her capabilities, wowing the crowd who were immersed in the Cinderella-like scene.

"Ahhhhhhhhh~... How romantic! I know I have 2 left feet when it concerns dancing. But after this, I want my boyfriend to dance with me like this."

"So good! Am I the only one who is envisioning herself in Maria's position? Damn! Why is Baron Von Trapp so handsome?"

"But I do feel bad for the baroness. She had come over, thinking Von Trapp would propose to her tonight, only to be hit by the sudden scene of them dancing. Sigh... It's not easy being a Cannon fodder."

For a moment, all sorts of excited yet romantic comments whistled out.

But just like Cinderella's ball, things must come to an end with the little lady running away for fear of her own feelings.

For a moment, the crowd was immersed with worry, wondering if this Cinderella would come back and face her love.

At least she was novel enough to leave, not wanting to be in the way of Von Trapp and the women he brought.

Good girl...

The audience was too engaged, with their emotions going up and down through the entire play until it finally ended.

Hahahahahaha~

She not only came back but had a wonderful happy ending too.

But were they satisfied? Not a chance!

They wanted more!

Many foreign people watching the theater show for the first time calmly rose with nostalgia for all they saw tonight.

However, one thing was clear... Baymard really knew how to put up a show.

(^\_^)

One by one, they left the scene, as unwilling as those in modern times who refuse to leave after watching the ending scenes of the Avengers: Endgame.

Well, at least they left happily.

\*\*[Cough, cough... The author has a big feud with Marvel over that ending.]

Well... Everyone was happy, leaving the theater.

But unlike the bubbly atmosphere here, the same couldn't be said for the many Baymardian men traveling deep into the night.

The men looked at each other tactfully.

They were just 30 minutes away from the perimeters of the Royal Capital city.

"Everyone, stay alert. We need to find a campsite and scout the scene. Air forces, you'll be up!"

Right!

## **Chapter 1499 A Difficult Start**

In the dead of night, the strange sound of nature echoed out, with some being familiar and others not so much.

Titarian was too strange, and even the ground there moved on could harbor a deadly beast using camouflage to sneak up on them.

But with their cheat, they scoured the sight, using night and heat vision goggles the instant they diverted off the main roads and stormed through the forest trails.

One should remember that they were just 30 minutes away by vehicle at high speed. On horseback, it might take on an entire morning or afternoon to get to the Capital.

Hmmm...

The distance they were at was smacked down in the middle between a town and the Royal Capital city.

On horseback, moving between both places would take 9~14 hours demoted on one's horse speed.

Of course, rather than stopping midway, they stopped 1/3 of the remaining journey, considering that the enemy camps might be within the perimeter of the Royal city.

Looking around, there were no enemy scouts anywhere, proving that they were at a far enough place out of reach.

Good.

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Vrmmm!!!

In the vehicles, several people looked to the sky with a similar device one might see in submarines. Only this optical device allowed them to see not just their surroundings but also the sky once the dial settings that move the lenses turned.

Yes... They were still following the few flying dots in the air.

You see, Titarian's terrain was too strange.

Before, they didn't think of doing this during the night. But after traveling for just one day, they started sending up air forces the moment it got dark.

They would find a hidden site and send a few air forces up.

Have you ever seen land that moves on its own?

That's right. During their travels, they reached a particular place that nearly confused them silly.

The hills apparently moved on their own every 6 hours.

So one could get lost if they weren't familiar with the particular sight.

And wouldn't you know it, they spent 5 hours going about in circles. What's more, the shift also brought sudden dangers from heaven-knows-where.

Fortunately, it was almost dark. So they waited for the darkness to completely cover the land before sending a few air force teams to head up and show them the way.

Phew.~

Never again shall they branch off the main road without sending Air Force units. Who knows what other strange things they would meet in these bizarre regions?

It can be seen that only the people of Titarian knew best how to live in these places.

Tch.

To think hunters could enter these regions and come up as though walking through their backyards.

Now, driving away from the main roads, they stayed connected with the air force teams they sent up not too long ago.

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[Reporting to ground command. Suitable campsite located. I repeat. Campsite located!]

"Roger that. Over."

Both air and ground teams worked in sync to find a perfect open plain deep within the forest.

Titarian was the land of the hills, with very different terrain, so it wasn't hard spotting one with open plains.

The land spotted was mainly filled with stones of all shapes, sizes, and structures.

It was odd, but it was their best solution for the time being.

What's more, some giant rocks perfectly shielded the vehicles, making it hard for anyone coming from afar to spot their hideout. But this also meant the other animals and enemies would be able to sneak up on them too.

So very quickly, they assigned scouts to hop on the tall rocks with blankets, weapons, night & heat vision goggles, and everything else needed to keep them comfortable up there.

Yes... The land was so strange, like an inverted hill.

The rocks were the only things filtering, while the land seemed to be going downwards instead

So even without the towering rocks, if one was to stand at a distance on ground level, they won't be able to see the vehicles that went down the deep dip.

As an inverse hill would suggest, it was like a crater, a massive hole made by an enormous commit.

And only the giant stones shot sky high to hill-top height.

If one accurately described the scene, they could say these towering stones looked like sharp teeth covering the deep crater's mouth.

But unlike a mouth with a tongue and smooth gums, the entire path was filled with rugged rocks.

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~Vrmmm!

The vehicles drive down the rocky path, swaying left and right, dodging the small 4-6 sheet rocks scattered about the scene.

Well, compared to the giant rocks around the hill's perimeter, these rocks along the way seemed so small.

But wait. What was this?

Those scouting the scene within the vehicles quickly noticed several images picked up by the heat vision devices: some crawling, some resting, and some running.

And then it was clear.

Sure enough, not everything was as it seemed. Some rocks were animals in disguise.

Everyone quickly stayed vigilant, passing through the vast space.

Provided these animals don't bother them, they too won't bother attacking.

After all, some were the size of rabbits, others the size of dogs, while some were indeed quite large.

All in all, they weren't here to fight and drive these beings out of their territories.

It's clear that these beings chose this sight to camouflage themselves.

And the hill wasn't all fruitless.

It had flowing streams that ran down the craters and vanished into the ground at the very center of the hill.

And what's more, There were indeed sights of greenery... Though all were colored marble white like stones.

The fruits they bore were also white.

Peculiar... Very peculiar...

If Landon hadn't seen it with his own eyes, he would've sworn that such things were impossible to exist.

But the facts were right before him.

What happened to science?

Sigh...

Landon shook his head wryly.

Nature in this world sure was strange.

In the end, the gang drove past the many strange beasts until they found a good enough spot that distanced themselves from the animals.



And using their vehicles to form a circular fortress, they created a line separating them from these nightly beasts.

Of course, a few vehicles broke out in all directions, heading to the towering Hill-heights stones at the perimeters.

They parked the vehicles directly under the stones, planning to rock climb to the top and begin their scouting duties.

They had to watch out for faraway-approaching enemies.

But that wasn't all. A few dogs were released and tasked with controlling the site very vigilantly, accompanied by their human counterparts

And just like that, their campsite was successfully secured.

Now, it was mealtime.

Using the moon's bright pale blue light, everyone gathered within the inner space surrounded by their many vehicles.

Many found seats on the rocks while being served their late last meal for the day from the books in the vehicles.

Whether it was the military doctors, soldiers, or marines, everyone stayed close, with some on top of the vehicles with weapons at hand.

Any animal trying to pull a fast one at them, kill!

As for the rest of the dogs, they took them out to stretch their legs and fed them well.

Landon sat alongside the lead unit leaders, eating his fill as they engaged in discussion.

"Your majesty, we still have 40 minutes for Air Force units to ascend. Before tonight is up, we must find the enemy's location. Time was working against us here!"

Right.

Because of the few inconveniences, they had lost 2 entire days. Their little moment of confusion within the area of identical changing hills wasn't the only thing that kept them from coming sooner.

And now, they had but just 1 more day before the coronation began.

Everyone's heart thumped with urgency.

They were already at a disadvantage, with the enemy knowing the terrain well enough.

They would have to squeeze in all 3-day plans into 1 day. They only had now till tomorrow's end to fit it all in.

Dammit!

One could only blame themselves for underestimating Titarian's strangest. For the land alone, they could score the mission rank high without hesitation.

It can be seen that they were even lucky enough to have made it on time, or else wouldn't they come after the target had been killed?

Landon was even more anxious than they were.

F\*\*\*!

It was his life on the line here!

Anything happens to Gregory, and it would be game over for him.

Taking deep breaths, Landon calmed himself down, finishing his meal up fast.

They were right.

They didn't have time to dilly dally when the unpredictable T.O.E.P were still moving in the shadows like slippery eels.

Landon chuckled, thinking of what surprises Lucy was in for on her own mission.

This land...

This empire's landscape was far more tasking than they anticipated!

"Mealtime is over! All Air force teams line up!!"

### **Chapter 1500 A Gathering Of The Strong**

11 P.M.

The air was heavy with silence.

Whooshh~

Far above the clear starry sky, many could see larger and brighter stars moving across the sky.

Shooting stars? If that's the case, these were the biggest shooting stars they had ever seen!

The many hot air balloon baskets were covered with plastic, bendable, mirror-like materials that reflected the sky and surroundings, giving a camouflaging illusion of nothing being there.

Of course, even without this, it might be hard for one to see the black-colored basket flying too high up in the sky without any strong binoculars.

The bright flow from the flames created a blinding hue around it, just like the sun's Huih rays when one gazed upon it.

To those below, it might be a strong blinding star. But those seated in the many baskets weren't affected, gazing down on the vast terrain.

With heavily advanced heat and night vision devices for higher heights, they began scouting the scene diligently.

"Nothing... Nothing yet."

The many lights had now scattered about the entire perimeter around the many Capital, taking their time to find what they sought.

And soon, many teams indeed had a breakthrough.

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"Look! Look over there! I see them! Scouts on every tree. More than 300 in number!"

More than 300 scouts spotting on trees alone? Then the enemy fortress.

The fortress also seemed very hidden, thanks to nature and the strangeness of Titarian.

'What a huge fortress!'

If not for their night vision devices, they would've thought the fortress the whole place was but a forest zone from above.

But that was where they got it wrong.

Erm... Didn't this look like the massive abandoned temples in the Baymardian Lara Croft movie? Could his Majesty have taken inspiration from this place before writing the script?

Fine! Maybe they weren't identical. But with the vines and all sorts of greenery covering all buildings, it was impossible for one to know if they were structures or not.

Such places should have trapped doors, escape tunnels, and several other hidden features, right?

"What do you think?"

In a particular hot air balloon, one of the soldiers asked her colleague. "I think you're right. Things might not be as easy as we initially thought. What's more, the land alone can give us bountiful surprises? So we should observe and outline all we know."

"Right!"

(\*^\*)

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Like so, the 2 ladies began scribbling depictions of the fortress alongside their colleagues within the other hot air balloons.

Everyone began scribbling things directly close to them

Some concerned themselves with the perimeter leading to this hidden fortress. In contrast, others worked in groups, heading north, east, north-east, central, west, and every other direction to sketch what they saw, as well as highlight the presence of many patrolling guards down below.

"Take a look at that. What weapon is that?"

With night vision on, they could see many holding strange weapons they had never heard of or seen before.

Ah... This majesty must hear of this!

They had to admit these weapons looked more robust than those in Pyno.

Eh?

Was this fortress a hidden T.O.E.P one?

In truth, they were slightly right. The fortress belonged to a member of the T.O.R.P residing in Titarian. This fortress's owner was none other than the one they called Lord Mushu, the number one master and controller of operations in the empire!!

Hmmm...

Many air force officers diligently carried out their duties, not daring to leave out a single thing.

But what they didn't know was that they weren't the only ones getting down to business.

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--Private hall, Hidden Fortress.--

In the room, several powerful men gathered, all with their aides and guards beside them, except for the few masked men in black.

Yes. These were the same masked men who visited Camila earlier.

And now, the 'family' was all here, seated in a circular position.

To the right, Cletus sat with his chest raised high, and his mouth hooked proudly. He looked as though saying: I've won. Soon, I will be monarch, and you all will have to vow to me!

Huh.

Camila, on another end, was still trying to hold her anger in.

'Rat bastard! Don't think I will let you live for long. Soon, your upping's will come!'

As for Mushu, he too had the same thoughts as Camila. Don't blame him for being vicious. Keeping this guy alive any further would be detrimental to his plans.

But even if Cletus Ghoul is out of the way, that doesn't mean he would let Camila's son sit on the throne.

No... Though he didn't want the throne, he would let either his son or someone trained with loyalty to take up the mantle.

Mushu had thought this far ahead. The killing period was the time for the throne to shift hands.

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Oh?

The masked men smirked underneath their masks, already envisioning how bloody the next killing period in Titarian.

There was also that guy, Murdoch, A.K.A, Mr. m, the second most powerful after Mushu, was also likely to fight for the throne.

And one shouldn't forget about number 3, number 4, number 5, and even the crooked number 9...

Cletus might have beaten everyone to the finish line. But it was hard to say who would emerge victoriously.

But of course, that wasn't why they were here.

The lead masked man in black calmly tilted his head toward Cletus. "I take it all your forces have arrived?"

"Yes, my lords. All forces have arrived and are now within the hidden fortress."

Cletus didn't have a private hideout around the Capital. And though he could camp outside in the forest regions in wait, it would be too risky, lest they got discovered. Additionally, the fortress gave them protection against beast attacks.

Hiding such a big army required they had to go too deep into the dangerous lines around the perimeters.

With Titarians terrain and beasts, they would start battling nature before having a chance to fight with Gregory. So who wants that?

In the end, Mushu's fortress was the perfect hideout.

But how could he be so kind?