

Chapter 861 - Henry's Past

"Brother!"

Landon stepped out of his vehicle and hugged the lean man before him.

Henry, himself and Astar had similar body sizes and were all somewhat slim when compared to many.

William and Sirius were a little bit muscular than they were, but not overly exaggerated.

Henry smiled broadly while hugging his lifesaver.

This was the man that saved his life when he got captured earlier.

And this same man still came to his aid to put him on the throne.

Of course, Henry wasn't dumb.

There was no free meal in this world.

Even though he already had a positive feeling towards Landon based on all he heard about Baynard, he still held back a bit when he first met Landon.

Why?

Because he didn't know why this famous man would favour someone like him, so he felt like he wouldn't live up to whatever Landon's expectations were.

In fact, one could see where Henry's inferiority complex came from.

Because in his case, he was truly alone with almost no support in this cold world.

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For William of Arcadina, he had his parents alive, who also pushed him through in a way.

For Penelope in Carona, her parents did the same.

Sirius from Yodan was also similar because his father had hidden the fact that he was the successor of the throne from everyone.

So no one even mentioned him, making him gather more forces in the dark.

His father had cleared the way and done several things in secret for him as well.

Not to talk of Astar from Terique, who had the backing of his family as well.

All these people had support one way or another.

But Henry's case was different.

His mother died when he was still a child, and his stepmother's in the palace prevented him from learning all he could.

They only allowed him to know how to read, write, sword fight, and do addition and subtraction.

Things like learning military tactics or other military skills weren't taught to him in the palace.

Of course, they did all this to him behind his father's back.

So every time his father questioned his sons to see their progress, Henry always remained at the bottom.

In Julius' eyes, he was a worthless son.

That said, Henry's maternal grandfather usually found ways to invite the boy over to teach him some things that weren't taught in the palace.

So Henry wasn't precisely losing out much.

But how could good things last for long?

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Fate played a cruel trick on Henry, as just that a while later, his mother's family seemed to have committed some sort of crime, pulling their status from high-ranking nobles to lower class nobles.

At that moment, their contacts became limited as many didn't want to have anything to do with them, and their money began to shrink.

Of course, everything should've been fine since they had a ton of treasures that could last them decades in their treasury.

But how could things be that easy?

A while later, one of his royal mothers claimed that the family wanted to assassinate her, and all evidence and witnesses testified it to be true.

So his grandfather who was said to be the culprit was executed, and as compensation, 80% of what was in their treasury was sent to the palace.

Henry felt desolate during that time as everything he ever lived was taken away by the royals.

They killed his mother, and then they followed to kill his grandfather too.

Everything made his blood boil and he wanted nothing more than to get revenge.

But how could he when he had no support?

The moment he turned 14 (legal a.d.u.l.t age in Deiferus), he was given his knights to manage, which were made of the weakest knights around.

Of course, he was also given a very remote and dangerous place to govern as well.

The city was filled with criminals, gang members and whatnot.

Fortunately, a few people who were his grandfather's shadow guards came to him and swore their allegiance to him.

Why?

Because of their promise to his grandfather.

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In this cruel world, Henry's grandfather was really a good and simple man.

In his younger days, he broke away from the clan because he couldn't do the things they asked of him.

And then, he bought an estate and started his own family.

He was a war God who only fought justly and had won countless battles for the empire, so his feats were mighty.

He did his best to raise Henry without trying to make it too obvious.

But sadly, the enemy his time was up.

The famous war God of Deiferus died because of a framed assassination attempt.

Even his father was happy about it because his father had always been wary of the war God.

Henry was all alone at that point, and his grandfather's people dared to contact him yet because they would be putting him at risk again.

Nonetheless, the royals captured many of his grandfather's people and killed them off.

Of course, many stayed in hiding and assumed noble lives as farmers and peasants.

Nonetheless, they were very loyal to his grandfather, and they more than anyone else knew that if they ripened their mouth to reveal any secrets, then they too would die.

So many of the war God's secrets ended up dying with him.

The royals who wanted to know everything ended up learning of just one of his hideout bases.

The rest were still a mystery to this day.

It was as if the heavens were constantly preventing them from knowing anything else because they couldn't pry open the mouths of these people.

And so Henry used his grandfather's bases and began his journey of survival.

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At the time, Henry never thought of taking the throne, just getting revenge.

But after speaking with Landon, he changed his mind.

Why?

Because Landon had the same vision as his grandfather.

And after seeing the contract, he was even more convinced of Landon's character.

The man had a goal to help the people and wanted to put good people on the throne.
Apparently, this was the reason why this great man chose to put him on the throne.
It was all for the people's benefit.

Henry saw his grandfather in Landon and felt more motivated than ever.

He was right!

The empire was rotten, and the people were suffering.

Someone had to do something about it.

So why not him?

It was time for Deiferus to change!

Chapter 862 - Into The Hidden Fortress

Henry looked at the vehicles in amazement and awe.

It wasn't just him, as everyone else felt itchy and wanted to rush in and take a look.

Because of Henry's unique situation, they've never left Deiferus for years now.

So they only saw images of these several cars, trains, bicycles and buses on newspapers and whatnot.

That's why seeing the real thing up close almost gave them a heart attack.

Henry's lips quivered, and his hands shook as he anxiously started at Landon.

"Brother, can I take a look?"

"Sure.

But why don't we go in first?

I'm sure some of your men also want to take a look as well.

So we can do all that while we're inside."

Henry's men looked at Landon gratefully before looking at their master in an aggrieved manner.

'Master, how can you think of seeing it alone?

What about us?

Didn't you say that we were family?

Master, is this how fast you've forgotten is?'

(T^T)

Henry smiled awkwardly before getting back on his horse.

With that, they led Landon and his crew into a vast cave.

At the entrance, the cave could only allow one carriage or vehicle to go in at a time.

But as they advanced, the cave began expanding.

It was huge and had several tunnels as well.

Henry and his men escorted their visitors in for a full 34 minutes before they exited the complex cave.

Landon looked at the scene before him as nodded with satisfaction.

He had to say that this particular base was well hidden compared to the one he last saw when he saved William from Connor and James.

As expected of the late God of War's secret base.

The hidden impenetrable fortress was properly camouflaged and blended in very well with the surroundings just right.

Even Landon had a hard time spotting if what he saw were buildings or not.

Henry truly had a great grandfather.

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The gang drove in for another 30 minutes while matching the pace of the horses.

And finally, they arrived at their destination.

As expected, there were over 17 different buildings within the place, and a total of 4 walls, diving the base into sectors.

Vrrrrmmmm.

The knights who were training stopped and stared at the vehicles with their mouths wide open.

Instantly, their bodies responded to their excitement, making them stare without looking away.

In the face of shocking and jaw-dropping technology, their concentration during training had flown out the window.

What a joke.

How often do they get to see such things?

Everyone stared like mindless happy Zombies.

Landon looked out the window and smiled before facing Henry, who was walking alongside his window on horseback.

"Your base is good."

"Thanks.

It was my grandfather's."

'I know,' Landon thought.

"Alright, let's focus on something more important."

Henry's heart rate increased rapidly, and his face turned serious: "Yes, we do have important matters to discuss."

"Exactly.

Nothing is more important than this matter.

It's a do or die-affair that must be solved as soon as possible."

"Brothers, I know.

It's about this war, right?"

"War?"

Who the hell was talking about that?"

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Henry scrunched his face in confusion.

"Brother, aren't we talking about the upcoming battle?"

"Eh?"

Why would I talk about that here?

What I'm talking about is way more important than that."

Henry's mind was piqued, and he couldn't help coming up with many unexpected theories and conclusions.

What could brother Landon mean?

What could be more important than this war?

Wait!

Is there something else that or didn't know?

Instantly, he became anxious.

"Brother Landon, what could be more important?"

"Eh?"

You really don't know?"

"Not a clue, brother.

So what is it?"

"Well, it's food."

" "

Henry felt like his ears were blocked.

He didn't hear what he thought he heard, right?

"Brother, did you just say food?"

"Yup!

That is the most important thing."

" "

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Forget it.

Henry looked at Landon helplessly.

How could he forget that his brother of his liked to tease him?

Was it because he was younger than him by a measly year?

Henry felt like he was being bullied.

Landon chuckled playfully

"little brother Henry, why do you always look at me like this?

I'm being serious.

My men and I haven't eaten lunch yet because we were rushing to get to you.

So to us, food is the most important thing right now.

Or do you want us to starve to death?

I thought you would be happy to see us and would prepare a large feast for us.

But sadly, it looks like I was mistaken.

Sigh... It looks like you never thought of feeding us at all.

Just look at how pitiful we are?"

Henry glared at Landon: "when did I say that I won't? Before going out to meet you, I already asked the kitchen to prepare a hearty meal. We've spent an hour just entering the base. So by now, the food should be ready."

"Hehehhehehe.

As expected, you did prepare a meal for us."

"Ugh.

When did I ever say that I didn't?"

Henry shook his head wryly.

He could never beat this brother of his in a mouth battle.

Earlier on, he left the fortress speedily, using around 35 minutes to get to Landon.

But since they are walking back, they spent a little over an hour before getting here.

So it's been close to 2 hours now, and the kitchen should have something already made.

And even if it wasn't ready, it shouldn't be long before they could eat.

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"Brother, are you sure you won't sleep in the fortress buildings?"

"No.

We have comfortable beds here.

So we'll sleep here.

Don't worry, after I show you the inside of the vehicle, you'll understand."

Henry nodded in understanding.

The gang advanced further until they bypassed the 4th gate within the estate.

They parked their vehicles in formation and only allowed people to tour the vehicles used for sleeping and eating.

Of course, everyone went crazy.

They touched the vehicles and almost kissed them.

What sort of material did they use to make the interiors?

More still, what was used to make the thing called tires?

They also stared at the clear glass windows and the cool designs used in the vehicles' interior and exterior.

At this point, they felt like rushing Henry to take the damn throne so that they could go to Baynard on vacation.

Again, before coming here, Henry had ordered many solar TVs and cassettes.

But the goods will only be given to him after all the enemies were taken care of, lest his men get distracted.

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Anyway, they had their meal very soon.

And following that, Landon, Henry and a few others made their way to Henry's office.

It was time to get down to business.

Chapter 863 - The Councils Of Deiferus

Landon, Henry and a few others sat in Henry's office to finalize some major issues.

One should know that months ago after Henry signed the contract, he and Landon discussed how to put an end to many practices In Deiferus.

Of course, Landon also gave Henry time to discuss these issues amongst his aides as well.

After all, it was their empire, and Landon didn't want to make all the changes himself.

Nonetheless, he educated them on the consequences of many practices, which left them stunned and fearful.

And today, he wanted to discuss the last few things on his agenda.

Henry's aides, Trenton and Mike, were with them, as well as Lieutenant Vlad, Captain Glindor, Captain Amelia, and warrant officer Corwin.

This was a formal meeting.

And in matters like this, they needed someone to take down the meeting minutes.

So Corwin was chosen for the job.

Over time, with Landon's regular visits to Henry, he and his men had gotten very much used to taking meeting etiquette.

And they had to say; it made everything a whole lot better and smoother.

Earlier on whenever Landon warped over, Henry's men had to learn about creating agendas, taking minutes and whatnot.

And now, several months later, they got a handle on it.

So when Landon's team passed the doc.u.ments around, they first wrote their names and signed to confirm their attendance.

From there, they picked up the well-typed doc.u.ment before them calmly.

Of course, water bottles were also shared around the table too.

With that, Henry officially began the meeting.

After all, it was his empire and his region, so he had to take centre stage, while Landon would be second behind him.

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"Lady and gentlemen.

For as long as we Deifers can remember, we have indulged in some traditional practices created by our forefathers with the intention of war only.

These practices have long since made our people uncomfortable.

And some are also unhealthy as well.

That said, we must eradicate the bad practices from our glorious empire permanently.

With that, I'll hand over the floor to his majesty Landon, who will further explain the issues at hand."

"Thank you, Prince Henry," Landon said while nodding before finally focusing his attention on everyone else.

"Everyone!

Like the prince has said, we will work hard to reevaluate and stop some of the practices that seem to hinder the growth and rose of the empire.

So without wasting any more time, everyone should please turn to page 2.

We'll start from there."

Flip Flip Flip Flip.

The sounds of pages turning, echoed across the tranquil room.

Landon looked at them and smiled.

"Lady and Gentlemen, our first problem arises with birth."

Everyone's ears were perked up as they listened attentively.

Why childbirth?

For Landon, the problem was the birth process itself but traditions that followed.

Where to begin?

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Unlike the other empires, Deiferus had a bizarre and terrifying way of raising children.

Right from birth, the children's fates were decided by the Sacramentos.

They were found in every town and city, and those in villages also had to report to the closets towns and cities to meet them.

The Sacramentos were a group of people that decided if a child would live or die.

So every pregnant lady had to inform any Sacramento around.

It was illegal to give birth without the presence of a Sacramento.

Even royalty wasn't exempt.

For Deiferans, from the day they were born to the day they died, their lives were under constant examination.

They were seen as high-level products that would boost the empire to the next level.

It was believed that the only reason they were alive was to make their empire great.

Now, starting from the root of the problem here, from the moment the child popped out of the woman's belly, the Sacramento would do one of two things.

If the child were a girl, the child would be given to his mother to raise as normal.

But, the mother had to take the female child to the Council of Fertility to examine whether this child would be able to bear children in future.

They believed that the fatter the child's thighs, the more children the child would have in future, as it already showed signs of having excellent childbearing h.i.p.s.

As they said, everyone was born to make the empire great.

So even women had their own expectations.

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Now, if the child was a boy, then things got a lot more complicated.

At that point, they would be taken by a Sacramento to the nearest Injang, which was a council with several leading elders that were very skilled in war or other positions.

From there, the child would be inspected like goods in a store

If the child was disabled, mentally ill (by not crying) or seemed d.i.c.k, then he was no use to the empire.

A real man came out of his mother's w.o.m.b strong.

So why would they want such weaklings?

And so when a newborn was deemed as useless, what do they do to it?

They would be abandoned in the wilderness to survive and prove themselves, even though they were just a few hours old.

So many-a-times, over 70% of these babies got eaten by wild beasts.

While the rest were sometimes picked up by peasants that would take them, intending to use them as cleaners to clean their houses and do their work for them.

Everyone knew that babies in the wilderness were wastes.

So why not pick it up and get free labour?

Of course, some somehow manage to survive but were taken in by wolves or other animals, which was strange but true.

At times, slave traders will also collect these babies after they were thrown in the wilderness.

For them, they got these slaves free of charge without paying for anything.

So why not?

This was a good investment.

Again, the female children who were rejected by the council of Fertility also got thrown into the wilderness.

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All in all, the councils decided the fates of the children.

And for this matter, Landon was utterly speechless.

If they didn't want the babies, why not send them to Baymard?

Do these people know how dangerous the wilderness is?

Just the crazy creatures in this world were enough to deal with a handful of a.d.u.l.ts.

So why send a poor innocent, defenceless child there?

Wasn't this too cruel?

This Deiferus was really something else.

Chapter 864 - A Brutal Empire

Henry smiled bitterly when he saw the reaction from a few people from Baymard.

He, more than anyone else, knew how barbaric his empire's rulers were.

Just because they have been doing it for so long doesn't mean that the citizens approve of it.

Some mothers woke up after labour to hear that their child was sent to be thrown into the wilderness.

No matter how evil or good one was, their child had a bond with them.

And they weren't even allowed to see that child from the moment they birthed it.

Some didn't even know what their children looked like.

Of course, even though there were councils around, some people still managed to cheat the law.

Some royals or nobles had successfully fought over some people in the council, which guaranteed their children's lives.

But peasants and poor people were different.

They had no connections or power, so the verdict sometimes made them annoyed and unwilling.

Who would like to have their baby thrown away?

In Henry's case, he was almost thrown away since his stepmothers wanted him dead.

Fortunately, his grandfather threatened the council, and that's why he came to be alive to this day.

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Back on the matter of the babies, those deemed healthy and beneficial to the empire, were sent back to their families immediately.

The girls were brought up ordinarily, but the boys were groomed for toughness.

So they were never bathed with water but strong rum instead.

This in itself was a bitter test that these babies had to go through.

And any baby that had convulsions and died would be taken as those who tried to pull a fast one on the council.

They managed to slip past the first test, but now with this test, weren't they caught?

Hmph.

So young, yet so deceitful!

[Babies:...(-_-) are you all okay in the head?]

Again, the babies that passed this step were preconditioned to stay in extremely dark rooms, even in the daytime.

Why?

Because they wanted them to get used to darkness and loneliness.

If they were to cry or complain, those taking care of them ignored them until they learnt to bottle things up.

As a man, how can they be whiny?

They had to suck it up!

Of course, all this lasted till they were 7 years old, which was when they would go to the fourth test.

Of course before this time, many had already begun working and earning a living, as children within this era worked the moment they could walk and speak correctly.

But their first 7 years belonged to them.

And now, their lives were owned by the empire.

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Anyway, at 7 years old, they began their fourth test by going to the council once more.

They would head on to the Parigon and register themselves there.

And that's where they start as Pages, the lowest knight rank.

Here, they would undergo an intensive 12-year long test that shaped them into fearless warriors and schooled them in survival tactics.

Of course, females had their own place where they would be taught how to strengthen their thighs in order to give birth to strong future warriors for the empire.

They also learned how to properly ride a horse, run and do simple exercises as well.

Everything was beneficial for strengthening their thighs.

And back in the matter of boys, during their 12 years of training, those who are good enough will be dropped out and can resume duties as farmers and whatnot.

And after that, those who remained would be stuck as knights.

They either died during training or survived.

Previously, they could be sent back to their families after failing the rank up within the training fields.

Rather than their opponent killing them during training, they were expelled.

They were also forced to walk barefoot, even on the snow, because doing so would harden their feet, creating calluses so that they would be able to march for miles.

Even the early humans walked barefoot and survived, so why can't they?

And so they began their hellish training.

But after 4 years, there was no such thing as expelling them or keeping their lives.

The opponent that took them on during training had the right to kill them.

So now, everyone fought more seriously to survive.

What they learnt earlier on were things that the army wouldn't mind non-specialists knowing.

But now that there was no turning back, they were taught the serious stuff.

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From here on out, the weak were mercilessly brutalized and beaten randomly to keep them on their toes.

Teachers created tension by creating friction between them to stimulate their potential and find the strongest among them.

In short, the weak were treated with disdain.

And as for their body form, each child was given a very bright yellowish garment to wear all year round.

They were to wear nothing else when outside their homes.

They would wrap the cloth just like the Greeks did, which exposed their legs and one side of their upper back.

And why were they told to wear this garment?

Well, it was just to control their body weight and fat.

So if they were fat and didn't know how to fit into what they were given, then they had no choice but to exercise.

The garments given to each batch were the same length and width range that the army wanted, bringing about tremendous results.

The sizes were cut depending on the age range.

At the same time, after joining the Parigon, the boys would be underfed to encourage them to sneak out at night and hunt food for themselves or steal food.

And if they were caught, they were severely punished by being caught.

That's right!

They weren't punished for stealing but for getting caught.

So they would be whipped and beaten because they were sloppy enough to get caught.

Again, reducing the rations for food made the boys used to hunger.

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All in all, throughout their training, over 40% of people died.

And over 70% of babies died after birth.

One might think that the people were happy and should be used to it.

But that assumption was wrong.

Mother's silently prayed for their children to survive as almost every day, fed bodies were sent back to their homes.

Many prayed that their children would be amongst those who had dropped out earlier on during training.

But their children wouldn't make such apparent moves because those who don't fight with everything they had will be killed as well.

One should know that these trainees could only be allowed to live outside the Parigon (barracks) after the age of 27.

So they never got to see their family or even write to them until they got permission.

And even though some got married, they could only see their families once every 4 years.

They used that holiday period to procreate with their wives and ensure that they had an heir.

Of course, this was for the future knights.

Those who got expelled became regular farmers, servants, workers and whatnot.

They were no longer the concern is the entire and were free to do as they liked.

In other words, they were wastes in the empire's eyes.

And nobles who owned property were even freer than everyone else.

Undoubtedly, throughout history, the people had tried to stand up against these practices.

But the results remained unchanged, so they gave up.

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One might think that this was just one of the things that Deiferus enforced.

But once again, assuming that would be far from the truth.

They also believed that if a woman couldn't give birth after marriage, she was guilty of fooling the council when she was born and should be put to death.

For this, Landon just felt like they had to stop such rules and traditions.

That's right!

They had to dissolve the councils.

Chapter 865 - A Spoon Full Of Crap!

Everyone was fully engaged in the discussion, as they candidly expressed their opinions.

"Your majesty Landon, I agree with removing the council." Mike, who was one of Henry's aides, said.

And another aide massaged his chin and nodded in agreement as well.

"Yes, I second that.

Not only should they be removed, but the practices should be changed as well.

These laws were made way back when Deiferus had numerous empires within it.

At that time, Deiferus' size was similar to a handful of a few cities, towns, and villages.

Its size was relatively small back then.

But because of that, the early leaders made these rules to ensure that only the strongest warriors would be birthed and survive in order to conquer the other territories, hence expanding Deiferus' size to what it is today.

These rules only want the string to survive in Deiferus and had no place for the weak, which shouldn't be the case.

Your highness Henry, your majesty Landon, Lady and Gentlemen... I speak in agreement because I came from a poor pleasant family and understand the pains of those below power.

The rich can always bribe the council leaders to share their child's life, but many peasants have suffered tremendously because of these laws."

Everyone listened with pain at all the injustice within the empire.

For Mike and Trenton, they earnestly prayed that this meeting wasn't a dream.

Why?

Because many have fought for change but failed and were smacked in the face with refusal from those with higher authorities.

No one thought that this day would come.

Women were killed or sold into slavery after 27 (menopause period in this era) if they couldn't birth a child.

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Again, it was a rule for slaves to be used as lab rats for the training soldiers.

They would send slaves to fight these trainees.

The slaves weren't allowed to kill the trainees, but the trainees could kill them if they wanted to.

Slaves were nothing but dirt.

So if they died, what did it have to do with the empire?

In short, there were more than 100 rules available that kept the people living in fear.

Be it men or women; they lived in constant fear that one day, someone would end their lives for these reasons.

And so those without money lived miserably.

Everyone carefully went through these laws in Deiferus and decided which one stayed and which one could go.

These rules were made way back then.

So now that the empire was this big and stable, then obviously, a change was needed.

The meeting went on until they reached the final thing on their Agenda.

"Alright.

The last thing for today is more so about the dangers of some jobs in your empire.

And the most troubling job is that of the Chimney Cleaners."

Eh?

Everyone, including the Baymardians, looked at him in confusion.

Chimney cleaners?

What's so dangerous about that?

Landon looked at them sternly.

This matter was indeed a serious one which was no joking matter.

"Everyone, please turn to page 32, and we'll begin from there."

Flip Flip Flip Flip.

With that, many turned their pages and were immediately met with a gruesome visual that almost made them puke.

The picture was so disgusting that it caused a gut-wrenching effect on their insides.

What was this?

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Landon observed and was pleased with their reactions.

Why exactly were chimney cleaners at risk?

Well, that was all because of what they took in while cleaning the chimneys.

The story starts with Deiferus' unique buildings.

Because unlike the other memories that built their chimneys in a strategic way that didn't rely on chimney cleaners, Deiferus' famous buildings did.

Without a doubt, the master architect for the buildings in Deiferus was a very artistic person that loved to think outside the box.

Of course, the person launched a vision of what he wanted Deiferus to look like thousands of years ago.

And since then, the nobles also chose the building styles as well since it made them feel closer to the royals, who by the way had the same building designs too.

Unlike other buildings in other empires, Deiferus' buildings had smaller and narrower Chimneys.

And in massive buildings for the rich that had over 15 or so fireplaces, rather than separating the chimney Flues (passages/ducts), Deiferus made it complicated instead.

One can imagine their setup as a maze that connected, separated, and reconnected over and over again before finally exiting through a massive while at the very top of the building.

There were both horizontal and vertical Flues (chimney spaces), with some bending at right angles and whatnot.

The entire thing was like a puzzle that utterly confused the people that had to clean it up.

Oh yes, most people would happily think of Disney's Mary Poppins when they imagine Chimney cleaners.

But the truth was, these poor cleaners lived very brutal and short lives.

In fact, one could arguably say that they had the shortest life spans due to the cruel nature of their jobs.

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With the very narrow and maze-like Chimneys in Deiferus, the design constantly needed people's help to clean it up, unlike the other chimneys in other empires.

And for how narrow the chimney was, only small children could fit into them.

So, these children would start right from the base of the buildings, using one fireplace.

So they would begin climbing up the chimney with some firm bushes/plants which were tied together to form a brush.

They would climb up with the brush over their heads.

As they climbed, they did what any ordinary cleaner would do.

Brush down the soot, which would fall straight to the bottom.

Again, with how narrow the flues were, they typically crushed like lizards completely nude while climbing up and trying to find on to their dear lives.

Because if they fell, then the results would be disastrous.

Buildings in this era were typically tall, massive and were primarily high-ceiling ones.

Just the ground floor was as tall as 2 and a half modern-day building floors combined.

They loved the very castle-like tall designs that showcased their paint on the walls and ceilings, which in turn showed off their wealth.

You could enter a hall on the second floor and feel like an ant within the massive tall room with enormous pillars.

The higher the floor height, the wealthier one seemed.

So if a building had 3 or 4 stories, then that was extremely high.

But since the chimneys needed cleaning, the boys had to climb up and do their jobs.

From there, everything was a maze that troubled the very young boys.

One should know that after climbing up vertically for a bit, they would be met with several horizontal and vertical paths leading to other directions.

The whole thing was a dangerous web that Landon felt the need to educate these people before it was too late.

Because no spoon full of sugar would make this medicine go down.

And that was a fact!

You hear that Mary Poppins?

.

[Mary Poppins: erm... Could you please leave me out of this?... Just a spoon...

Landon: Shut up! She's an accomplice. Take Her Away!

Mary Poppins: Wait! I'm innocent; I'm innocent... It was Walt's idea.

Walt Disney: Excuse me ma'am, but who are you?

Marry Poppins: (-_-)

Landon: Take her away Boys!... A spoon full of sugar, my ass!!!]

Chapter 866 - A Very Shameless Merchant

Everyone listened incredulously.

They never knew that such a seemingly ordinary job could be so dangerous.

The key was in the soot.

Chimney cleaners typically had to work as apprentices under their masters for at least 8 years before they could be released.

Every day, they would go to work cleaning one chimney or another because with how complex these chimneys were, they needed to be cleaned at least 4 times a week.

So if a single massive building had over 15 chimneys, there would undoubtedly be more than 40 flues connecting like a maze.

And that was just in a single building, not to talk of the other buildings within the estates or manors.

One should know that by the time the cleaners had managed to emerge at the top of the building fully nude, their entire bodies would be covered in soot.

So, since they worked every day, coming in contact and ingesting such large amounts of soot, of course 9/10 times, they wouldn't last long.

Many developed Asthma and other breathing ailments with time.

They also had sores and other inflammation on their eyelids too.

Moreover, the job stunted their growth since they remained crouched in unnatural positions while inside the right chimneys, which damaged their growing joints and bones... With their knees and elbows, getting swelled up and remaining heavily affected.

Mind you, these children began work at the age of 4, so they were still growing.

Of course, these cleaners were typically the discarded citizens thrown away in the wilderness at birth and rescued by their masters to be chimney cleaners.

.

Moving on, when it came to their work environment, it was one that would make many across the work terrified since the insides of the flues were pitch black.

Of course, for the Deifers, it wasn't the darkness that scared them.

But the fact that they didn't know where they were going or what was in front of them.

They just entered the dark tunnels and hoped to come out of the maze.

The chimneys were very claustrophobic and brutal to navigate.

So even if the cleaner managed to fit through the narrow portals, there was no guarantee that they would get out.

That said, with the complex design, even if they managed to reach the top, they would still have to go back down again.

If they kept on taking the wrong way, then too bad, they would be stuck in a pitch-black maze while nude.

And the thing was that even when they were working, the fires were on.

So soot and heat constantly clouded the portals.

The lost ones eventually suffocated and choked to death, while others died of extreme dehydration.

That's right!

90% of chimney cleaners didn't last for more than a few months on the job; that's why most masters got slaves rather than citizens to do the job.

But when someone was stuck there, what would their master do?

Well, he either let the child die there or sent another sweeper into the pitch dark maze.

But many-a-times, even the rescuer would get lost, leaving the master to lose 2 money makers.

Hence, the masters usually didn't send any rescue team and just left the unfortunate child to die within the maze-like portals.

But to further show how cruel these masters were, at times, they would increase the flames at the starting point below to encourage the boys to work faster.

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Once again, the most prominent danger was cancer.

Yup!

They were indirectly smoking an unhealthy amount of cigarettes daily.

So typically, by the time they reached 10, they were already sick as hell since they started work at age 4.

That's why their lives were the shortest.

Again, that wasn't the only form of cancer they got, as they also developed Cancer of the Scrotum, A.K.A Soot Wart.

As they are fully nude while doing the job, well, somethings were bound to happen.

The disease makes its first appearance at the bottom of the Scrotum, where it produces a painful ill-looking sore that makes that particular area as red as a tomato.

The pain they felt was sometimes equivalent, if not worse, to the feeling of one having their lower region kicked.

So try living with that every second, minute, hour and day.

Of course, the pain level varied throughout the day, so one never knew when the pain level would rise to max level.

Again, Scrotum cancer only began to show after boys who managed to survive successfully hit puberty.

That's right!

Even if they somehow struggled to survive, newsflash, they would still be hit with some deadly disease and die.

It all happened like a bad dream.

And after puberty, in no great length of time, it penetrated the skin and took hold of the testicles before making its way to the abdomen like a plague.

From there, one could imagine what other damages it would cause.

In fact, it would be a miracle if these chimney boys who got the disease after puberty lived past the age of 20.

Sigh... The life of a Chimney cleaner was awful.

As expected, Mary Poppins and Bert had fooled everyone.

Maybe this was the supercalifragilistic-expialidocious that they were talking about?

.

Landon properly explained all the dangers involved with the matter, all the while showing them several gruesome images that he created as well.

Instantly, Henry was now more worried than ever.

Now that he knew the dangers, he would never allow them to do this.

It strictly went against his morals.

But like Landon had said, because of the complex chimney design, Deiferus needed a way to clean the chimneys.

So what can they do about the matter?

Landon smiled broadly at the men who were currently trying to crack their brains on this matter.

Even back on earth in modern times, there were narrow chimneys and professionals that also cleaned them while wearing safety equipment.

So even though it was impossible to send a child in, that didn't mean that they couldn't do anything about it.

"Everyone.

Solving this issue won't be a problem.

To make it easier, I've detailed the solution on the documents as well.

That said, if you have any suggestions, then we can also talk about it as well."

He already had a solution for this complex issue?

Henry's eyes opened wide in astonishment as he carefully turned to the page that Landon mentioned.

His eyes beamed with joy and turned to Landon gratefully.

"Thank you."

Landon tapped his shoulders and chuckled: "What's this? Why are you getting all emotional on me? Like I said, our empires are all united now. And since you've officially joined in as the 5th ruler to enter the U.N (united nations), then you should understand that it's everyone's responsibility to better the people's lives. The better the lives of the citizens, the stronger our empires. So it's nothing."

Everyone looked at Landon with awe.

His goal of world unity was truly heartwarming.

Henry firmed his heart and swore to be a great monarch as well.

He would follow his brother's footsteps and lead his people to longer, safer and more financially stable lives.

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"Alright.

If you remember, on the contract, there was an act with rules and regulations for Chimney Workers.

First, they must be of a.d.u.l.t age to begin work.

Of course, there are many rules that ensure their safety there, which you can look up later on.

Again, while cleaning is going on, no one is allowed to use the fireplaces.

Anyway, for how you'll go about cleaning the chimney, I propose you create what my Baymardian people call a laundry shoot or vent hole.

Except, yours will have a hard door that needs to be locked at all times unless someone comes over to clean the chimneys.

Essentially, you have to create several of these rectangular holes on different point intervals along the very long Flues.

That way, people won't have to necessarily go in.

Again, you can also buy extendable brushes and brooms that stretch for long distances.

So you can just open the shoot/vent doors on the walls and clean from there.

Additionally, when faced with horizontal flues, we also have Solar fans to hold against the vents to blow the cleaned-up soot towards the vertical vents, making it fall right down below.

Of course, you will also need to buy face masks and other things from us for safety as well."

" "

Your majesty Landon, why does it seem like you're marketing your products instead?

Henry shook his head wryly.

Just when he was about to praise Landon, this once again showed his shamelessness.

Well, at least what he said does make sense.

.

Just like that, the meeting finally concluded with Henry treating the documents as gold.

He kept them away because they detailed many key points of what he should do once he became king.

And what made him happier was that later on, he would receive yet another document on the meeting minutes, which would also cover some suggestions that had been brought up, just in case he forgot.

So, with all that out of the way, it was time for battle!

Chapter 867 - War Preparations

With the meeting finally coming to an end, Henry's men decided onto different groups and given individual missions to do during these next few days.

Of course, they will work alongside the Baymardians diligently.

Henry was even more grateful to Landon.

Why?

Because he didn't even know that his father was this ill?

So if he weren't directed by Landon months ago, he would still be in another base far away, very clueless about the current facts.

Like he said, he never thought of being king.

It was only after meeting Landon that he changed his mind.

He was also very shocked that his second brother had chronically poisoned their father.

It looked like his second brother would have his men stationed and react to fight his first brother for the throne.

But these 2 weren't the only ones.

His 3rd and 4th brothers were at it too, alongside his 2nd sister, Eldora.

It looks like everyone had been preparing and planning for a long time.

And only he was left in the dark.

For sure, he had more siblings, as his father Julius bore 21 children with many wives.

So gave him 4 children, while others gave him 2.

And what was so funny was that his first brother, the crown prince, was just a day older than his second brother from another mother.

And in that same year, his 3rd brother was born too.

So all 3 were the same age.

His father just jumped all around his Harem, impregnating people here and there.

But what was so funny was that these 21 were the ones that survived the council's judgments.

.

The haram was a deadly place with all the women plotting against each other.

So his father should have had roughly 33 children.

But they were thrown away into the wilderness.

And at the same time, many of these children were secretly murdered before they were even thrown away.

Who would want an enemy living in hiding and waiting to take the throne?

Many of the harem's women paid heavily to have their enemy wife's baby killed secretly.

And even if the mother of these babies sent their guards to protect their child, one could never be too sure since the enemy could hire assassins or stalk that baby for life.

Bottom line, his father had a lot of children.

But from what brother Landon had told Henry, only his first 4 brothers, as well as his second sister, were ambitious.

Again, he had to watch out for 2 of his uncles from his father's side, who also wanted to take the throne alongside their families.

Heavens!

His enemies were many.

Luckily, he had brother Landon with him, or he wouldn't know how to face this storm alone.

He wasn't ashamed to seek help because at times, even a ruler needed allies that will come to their aid in emergencies.

Henry, Landon and their men quickly placed everyone in teams and went through their battle preparations, as well as the duties everyone would play on the day of the battle.

The day was long, and when night-time came, they all went to sleep swiftly.

Tomorrow was a busy day.

Zzzzzzzzzzzz

They had successfully gone to dreamworld.

Meanwhile, all over The Capital City, several people were also making their plans as well.

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--Rocky Peak Courtyard, Royal Palace, Deiferus--

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A young, strikingly handsome man sat on an exquisite table that was filled with all sorts of delicacies.

The maids and servants around him waited on him patiently before leaving the room as fast as they could.

As they say, the more handsome the man, the deadlier he was, which was particularly true in the young man's case.

The man had a habit of always eating alone, as he didn't like to be disturbed casually.

So the maids and servants who knew his preferences hurriedly left.

Of course, some blushed and secretly dreamed of having a chance to trap this man and make him theirs.

After all, the man was Deiferus' crown prince, his highness Ulrich Tudor.

He was a man of steel to many and a dangerous one at that who instilled fear even to the old goggles that secretly opposed him.

Everyone knew that the current King Julius' life was hanging on a thread.

So if these women could latch onto Ulrich, then wouldn't they end up being related to the royals through pregnancy?

Of course, many knew that such a thing couldn't happen.

But there were always one or two that couldn't stop fantasizing about taking down their prince Charming.

.

With the room all cleared up, Ulrich slowly bit the food before him in silence.

And only after getting his fill did he push the dishes aside.

"Blue Wolf."

Swish.

"Master!"

Out of nowhere, a man dressed in all black popped out of the shadows and knelt before Ulrich, who still had a cup of wine in his hands.

He served the glass for a bit while staring blankly at the space before him.

"Report."

"Master, that Quibolt guy is still heavily guarding your father.

So this one failed in approaching them.

Quibolt was in high alert and didn't give me a chance."

"Hmm... I expected that.

After all, Quibolt is a legendary assassin who is heavily valued not just within the Pyno continent but within Veinita and Morgany too.

So you will be spared from punishment."

"Thank you, master."

"Oh?"

Don't thank me yet.

Even though you couldn't approach them, did you succeed in getting information from the physician?"

"Master, this humble servant did succeed.

This humble servant hid in the dark and listened to the physician's conversation with one of master's uncles.

The physician was having a conversation with Duke Bulkington."

Ulrich sneered when he heard of that greedy uncle of his.

Just yesterday, his men told him that the bastard tried to force his father to write a verdict making him king.

But his father refused.

And now, the bastard was there again, but this time, he went to see the physician.

"Master, the royal physician recorded that sometime within this week or next, your father should die."

Ulrich dropped a gr.a.p.e into his mouth and smiled.

Finally, the old geezer would die, leaving everything to him.

As crown prince, he knew that his father would leave it all to him.

So how, he just had to keep all pesky bugs away.

Luckily, he was fully prepared for these bastards.

He didn't know exactly when his father would die, but within this time range that the doctor had mentioned, he needed to be fully prepared at all times.

Since they want a fight, then he would give it to them because this empire wasn't big enough for all of them.

Only he could stand high up triumphantly.

Chapter 868 - Winston Tudor

Of course, Ulrich wasn't the only one ready for action.

Within another courtyard, the 2nd prince, his highness Winston Tudor, was also ready to give it everything that he had.

CRASH.

"F***!

Who the hell does he think he is?

Did you see the way he treated me today?

So what if he's the crown prince?

Isn't he just a day old from me?

So why can't I be king?"

Crash.

Crash.

Crash.

Everyone silently stood alongside the walls, far away from the overly violent Winston.

They were more than glad that after his coming of age at 14, he had left the palace and headed towards his official territory.

All these years, they thought that he would at least change from his very violent and crude ways.

But sadly, they were wrong.

He was even more destructive than ever!

They all sucked in their breaths and leaned into the wall as if trying to disappear into thin air.

Their bodies trembled whenever something broke on the floor or walls.

Winston was mad and indeed by anger.

He swung his sword at the decorative vases and ornaments all around his massive luxurious room while thinking of today's event.

.

Right before the ministers, his father and many others, Ulrich had led Winston into a trap, making his suggestions seem downright stupid.

That nonchalant arrogant look made him very like he was nothing.

They were both the same age, so why does father not see his potential and choose him as ruler of Deiferus?

With him, he would even go as clear as to claim that he would be able to swallow Yodan while expanding their empire.

After all, Deiferus had the strongest warriors of all, so why not break the agreement they made to not engage with Yodan decades back?

Sure, many daughters and some have married royals from other empires to ensure peace.

But so what?

It's not like he cares for his aunts and sisters who have married other nobles out of Deiferus.

What does it have to do with him?

It's not like they had any written agreement for peace.

It was just the exchange of daughters and verbal consent that made people remain at peace with one another.

And at times, they would let some princes or princesses go to other memories as prisoners.

But did that change anything?

On the surface, yes... but behind closed doors, no.

In secret, the empires fought to take down a few border territories in hours of slowly expanding their empires.

So all he was doing was being more open about his future plans.

That said, wasn't he the best candidate to rule Deiferus?

He felt like his father was too old school and liked to follow principals a lot.

Why must it be the first prince that becomes ruler?

For him, Ulrich's only advantage was that his mother, that sl**, had managed to give birth a day earlier than Winston's mother.

.

Winston was so lost in his rage that he began attacking the servants.

Spluh.

He stabbed several of them, imagining that it was Ulrich instead.

Some were so scared that they wanted to run away.

But how could the rage-filled Ulrich let them flee?

"You dare move?"

He sent his sword towards the 13-year-old girl, slicing her head clean from her body.

Slash.

Bam.

The head rolled, while the headless body dropped to the floor on its knees before falling completely.

Sprishhh.

Blood forcefully squirted out of the headless girl's neck, painting part of Winston's face.

Everyone instantly froze as panic spread amongst them.

Winston smiled coldly while smashing the girl's dead body.

"Look at it?"

If only you stood still, then you would've just received a sword injury just like the rest.

But Nooooooooo.

You just had to run, making me kill you.

Now, don't you find yourself stupid?

Just like that stupid first brother of mine, you're also mocking me as well, right?

How dare you disrespect me by walking away from me first?

Who the hell do you think you think you are?"

Pah Pah Pah Pah Pah Pah.

Winston released his rage on the dead body before kicking the head faraway.

Dammit!

Even an ordinary nobody cared to disrespect him today.

.

Winston, who finished letting out steam, was soon visited by his mother, Queen Abodila.

Bam.

An arrogant woman rushed in impatiently while looking at her warmly.

She heard about what happened today, and she too had just come from letting out steam as well.

Now she was here to comfort her poor son, who got bullied by others.

She dashed in and jumped the body to hug her very pitiful son.

Everyone looked at her as if she were their saviour.

They even began wishing for the king to hurry it up.

Either he does, or he gets better.

No matter what situation it would be, this arrogant prince would have to leave once everything was settled.

Hopefully, he wouldn't become Deiferus' monarch, or their days would be numbered.

Just thinking about it sent shivers down their spines.

Seeing the woman before him, Winston felt very warm.

Only she understood him completely.

Even his sisters, the 3rd and 6th princesses, didn't understand him at all.

They too were very greedy women who started thinking of the throne after Penelope of Carona got crowned.

That's why he sneakily made them marry far away from the Capital and sent them off.

He didn't want more competition than there already was.

And no matter what decisions he made, only this woman would stand by his side and never betray him.

Winston felt warm.

"Mother.

That bastard is too bullying."

Abodila rubbed her son's back and coldly glanced at everyone.

"Get out now!"

"Yes, my queen."

As if hearing the sounds of liberation, they fled happily for their dear lives.

Who wanted to continue staying here?

No way!

It was better to mop the floors or do more tasking jobs than to serve these brutes.

Soon, the entire room fell silent with no one at sight.

Of course, the guards were outside, strictly guarding the room.

Abodila's cold eyes turned warm as she glanced at her son.

"Hush now.

Don't worry about that bastard.

Why worry when we will soon have him and his bastard mother kneeling before you soon.

So why worry about them?

What matters is that we will become victorious.

And as such, the victor is the rule maker.

Don't worry, after the throne is yours, you will have more time to play with that bastard and his sl** of a mother.

Son, always remember today's humiliation.

Very soon, you will have your time to play."

Winston calmed down and smiled coldly: "Yes, Mother."

How could he forget?

Soon, he would pay them back ten folds.

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And so just like that, all forces silently waited for the day King Julius would die.

On that day, Deiferus would usher in a storm!

Chapter 869 - Operation Midnight

Time flew by very quickly, and Landon, Henry and his men were ready for action.

'System, you're sure he'll die tomorrow?'

'Of course, host.

What do you take this system for?

I feel very insulted when the host keeps doubting my alright self.

Host, from the world and fate detection, King Julius' shouldn't be able to make it past 10 A.M, tomorrow morning.'

Landon nodded and before leaving his bed.

The major advantage he had on his side was that unlike his enemies, he knew precisely when the king would die.

So, to not raise any suspicions, he had planned to take out the backup enemy teams lurking around the shadows tonight.

The reason he didn't attack them all this while was because he assumed that they would undoubtedly be communicating with their masters these days.

So it was likely that they would send in reports every night to their masters in the Capital.

That's why Landon chose to wait in order not to alert them.

And come tomorrow morning, by the time the King draws his last breath, these enemy forces will be utterly shocked by his little gift when they send for their backup to march into the city.

Tonight, they'll strike at midnight.

At the same time, when the city gates open at 6 A.M, they'll have enough time to sneak into the city around and position themselves all around the place.

More specifically, they had to go to the palace.

.

Landon wore his shirt calmly and stepped out of his room.

The other soldiers stayed in the vehicles comfortably while he stayed on the same floor as Henry in one of the buildings.

Of course, this was to reciprocate their hospitality since they outdid themselves to arrange his room so much in preparation for his arrival.

Pam.

Standing outside was Captain Glindor, who saluted Landon.

"Your majesty, all units are ready!"

"Good.

Let's go."

With that, they descended the stairs and headed towards one of the Courtyards there.

Landon nodded in satisfaction when he saw everyone standing in line neatly.

Even the Deifers were standing in line as well, although they were not as proper as the Baymardians. These few days here almost seem like hell to them.

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Typically, these men just trained with their swords 2 hours, 2 times a day or did other random things. But the Baymardians were always on their feet.

They had weird exercises like Frog jumps and so on, which were extremely painful.

What made them cry was that they were forced to do all these weird exercises too.

A schedule was also given to everyone, indicating what they should be doing throughout the entire day.

There was a slot for free time and slots for training, doing their duties and so on.

It indeed kept them on their toes.

They used to think that Deifers were strict, but now they know that there was another level.

What sort of discipline did these people undergo?

Some of the Deifers almost cried when punished for talking and laughing when they spoke during one of the Captains' Speeches.

They were punished to run around the courtyard several times while everyone followed the strict mealtime.

It was quite tragic because they missed breakfast and could only eat snacks until lunch.

They tried sneaking into the kitchen, but the place was so heavily guarded that one might think some mysterious treasure was inside.

The men secretly cried and swore to follow the rules for the time being.

Again, what made them more pitiful was that the names of those who would go to Baymard for training after the war, had already been selected.

Some had already envisioned their hard life there.

Honestly, how will they be able to survive?

.

Landon met with Henry, and both climbed the wooden stage ahead, alongside the team leaders and Henry's aides.

Everyone went on bended knees to salute them.

"You may rise," Henry said, with both hands raised.

Everyone stood firmly and glanced at their leaders on the stage.

"Everyone, today, we will begin what our Baymardian Brothers Call [-Operation Midnight-].

We will attack the enemy, giving them no chance for survival.

We have powerful allies on our side that have the same vision as ourselves.

Tonight, we have gathered here to fight for Deiferus' future.

Now, my brother will say a few words as well."

Landon stepped forward calmly.

"Brave warriors and soldiers.

Today will be a memorable day that will be written down in history and foretold countless times.

And we will be the voice that fought for the people who needed someone to be there for them.

We will be a beacon of hope to many and fight for the motherless, the childless, and all those who have suffered any forms of injustice throughout the years.

You all are carrying a heavy responsibility on your shoulders; that's why we, your brothers, are here to help you lessen that burden.

Why?

Because we believe in your talent, your heart and your compassion.

More importantly, we want to better the lives of the people.

Deiferus needs a change, and only we can stop it from falling into destruction."

.

As Landon spoke, everyone felt their hearts drum loudly with excitement.

His speech seemed to deeply penetrate their lines, giving them some sense of enlightenment.

Many began thinking of their unfortunate families that fell victim to this cruel society.

They clenched their fists in determination and swore to do their very best today because now, they truly felt the weight of the empire's problems.

It was funny.

Somehow, after listening to his speech, they really felt more alive than ever.

"Make no mistake!

Even though every one of you is brave and fearless, we do not need people who will willingly give up their lives at every turn.

If you are in a pickle, withdraw and signal for help.

And remember, in our teams, we do not leave any man behind.

Is that understood?"

"Yes!"

"Good!

Now get to your units as planned and prepare for Operation Midnight!"

Chapter 870 - The Mignight Battle Begins!

"Go, go, go, go, go!"

In a flash, everyone was rushed like crazy.

All team's assembled and headed out for battle.

Some air force baskets could fit 5 people in it, while others could fit 3 people.

The biggest size that they brought out was that which could fit 10 people at once.

There were 12 massive steel van-like trucks that transported several hot air balloon baskets and other parts needed for flight.

Many of Henry's men looked at the balloons in awe rather than shock.

After all, they had somewhat gotten over their shock these past few days since the airforce teams mapped the territories around the Capital using the balloons.

Again, this was the thing that his majesty Landon used to bring their master and a few others back when he rescued them.

So they had already heard of it, even though they found it somewhat unbelievable.

How can man fly?

At first, they felt like it was a joke or something, but at that time, they had no choice but to believe because their master's sudden appearance was too magical.

A journey meant to be done in a few months was completed in a few hours.

So wasn't that magic in itself?

They looked at the mysterious contraction and felt even more determined to visit Baymard.

Unlike before, those chosen to train there were now overly excited.

Good!

They get to visit the strange empire called Baymard.

Looking at the sight before them still left them in a daze.

No matter how many times they saw this strange floating ball, it was a truly groundbreaking site.

It was simply amazing!

.

11:45 P.M

"Teams Alpha, Beta, Omega, Gamma, Z, Hechi and Delta.

What are your duties?"

"Surround the enemy and give them hell!"

"Yes!

All seven teams will surround all 7 enemy hideouts belonging to first Prince Ulrich Tudor, second prince Winston Tudor, third prince Bonivier Tudor, 4th prince Joffrey Tudor, 2nd princess Eldora Tudor, Duke Bulkington and Duke Osias.

Hit them with everything that we've got.

Is that understood?"

"Affirmative, Sir!"

"Good!

Teams, Dasher, Prancer, Comet, Cupid, Donner and Rudolf?

What are your duties?"

"Cover the roads and perimeters around the city, and keep a lookout.

And if necessary, cause distractions in case of emergencies, sir!"

"Hm.

Airforce Units, do you know your tasks?"

"Keep a lookout below and provide battle assistance just as planned, sir!"

"Excellent!

Everyone else is to remain here and either protect the base or get to a brief nap.

Because come 4:30 A.M, it will be time to rise, eat and prepare for victory.

The gates open at 6 A.M.

And we must be there!

Now, those on tonight's mission only have 5 more minutes to get in the vehicles and balloons.

It's time to move out!"

"Yes, sir!"

With that, Operation Midnight officially began.

Henry and Landon hopped onto one of the hot air balloons alongside the soldiers.

Of course, a few soldiers on today's mission stayed within the base in one of the vehicles that acted as their control station (tower) for tonight's operation.

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Vrrrrmmmmmmmm!

Vincent Otheno looked out the window in disbelief.

How could they be moving this fast?

Heavens!

Wasn't this faster than his highness' famous stallion?

How could a distance of several hours be done in minutes?

Vincent touched the inside of the vehicle in a daze while convincing himself that he was truly here.

His heart leaped with an indescribable amount of joy, and his body began trembling to the little vibrations from the vehicle as it bumped along the uneven roads.

He looked out the window and saw several tiny glowing dots floating easy up in the air.

If it were before, they would think that it was some moving star or something, but now, he knew that there were amazing men from Baymard who seemed to know everything.

Just interacting with them these few days made his blood boil as they broadened his mind to a whole new level.

During the training battle, they beat them hands down, which left them holding their heads in shame.

Some even took 15 of them at once and beefed up victoriously with no hassle.

For the first time, they truly saw how lacking they were.

And the way these Baymardians were more disciplined made them feel like they were on some crucial mission to save humanity.

More so, Vincent liked how they gave each other team names and carried out duties as if they could read each other's minds.

He felt like he'd like to be in that kind of team.

And coupled with what he saw today, he was more than happy to be selected as one of the trainees that would go to Baymard.

Tonight, he swore to do his best!

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Vrrrrmmmmmmmm.

In no time, they were already around the perimeters for T2, which was the hideout for Winston's backup.

Bam.

The vehicle doors opened, and just like that, all units stealthily jumped off.

Vincent quickly got down and followed the lead while remaining vigilant.

Even though he didn't understand all the hand movements they did, he understood the basic ones taught countless times to him over the past few days.

A palm means stop, creaking an O-sign with his thumb and index finger means okay, or the coast was clear.

He just understood a total of 5 signals only, which was enough for tonight's mission.

And if he really wanted to convey more words, he would have to create the opportunity to do so without giving off his position.

His team had a total of 7 units, all working on this base.

And he was in Unit 6, which was one of the rescue units.

Lieutenant Jennie looked at them one more time: "Everyone, you know what to do. We have just 45 minutes to get all hostages out undetected before the other units take action. Now, let's go!"

Vincent nodded and followed along until they were extremely close to the enemy's base.

Vincent's eyes flickered with a strange light.

It was time.