

## Chapter 336 - Interlude Nora



As I'm walking through the alley, I think about Shuuya. He didn't try to have sex with me. He simply listened to my story while silently urging me to continue, apparently having guessed my feelings towards my family, my little sister...

In the end, he told me with a smile, "You've been talking for a good while now. You must be tired from the shock, right? It's better for you to go to sleep now," and tried to leave through the veranda.

Seeing his back as he didn't stop acting like a gentleman, I felt a stinging pain in my chest. While once again recognizing that I do love Shuuya after all is said and done, I grabbed his dark green sleeve as if clinging to him from behind as he tried to leave.

And then I asked him in a whisper to stay with me, as if to voice the throbbing in my chest.

After shifting my hold from his hem to a tight clutching of his arm, I pulled him atop the bed. And then, although it was embarrassing...I honestly confessed with a soft voice that I never had laid with a man while looking straight at him.

Shuuya immediately smiled, but it wasn't a nasty type of smile. He put on a bright expression...so very befitting of him. It was a look that gave me the impression as if he was telling me, 『I don't really care about stuff like that.』

And then, because it was my first time, he embraced me as if caressing a baby. However, soon after he went at it with a force that made me clearly feel his manly strength. His movements were perfect, blending intense and gentle waist motions...

It felt as if his two hands had their own consciousness. Shuuya whispered something incomprehensible about it being an exquisite skill said to also have been learned by Tokugawa Ieyasu.

But, I can agree with the part of it having been exquisite.

I ended up experiencing the pleasure of feeling a man in me several times, despite it having been my first time. I wasn't aware that it'd feel so dreamy.

It might be a natural outcome since I did it with my beloved, but for the first time in my life...

Furthermore, no sooner than him whispering kind, honeyed words in my ear and asking, "How about this?", he stuck to me closely, setting a slow pace, and shifted to a vibrating attack.

At that moment I cried out with my body writhing in agony. Apparently having seen my expression, he guided our sex session toward a break while leading me properly. And even during the short period of us resting, his eyes full of worry about me, those black eyes, were irresistible.

Those eyes with night dwelling within...strangely they wake the urge in me to stare at them for eternity. I wonder what kind of life I'd be able to lead if I could always stay at the side of such a wonderful man...

The highly addictive night, so intense that it made me consider a sweet life with him and so dreamy that I would likely never forget it in my life, passed all too quickly.

No, it wasn't just sweet. I feel like I also gained the energy to go on living. Not only can I feel happy over my sister being alive which allows me to meet her, but I also feel like I received vitality accompanied by a special, emotional strength as if having been officially accepted as a person and woman who lives her own life.

It gave me a sensation as if that night washed away all the blood tainting my soul. This might be another power of Shuuya's race, Lucival.

He mentioned that it's a new race that evolved from vampires. But, it's kinda surprising for such a race to have been created...a vampire combining light and darkness...

It's enough of an unprecedented event to overturn heaven and earth.

I was very confused when I heard about it for the first time. A vampire who's resistant against light...a Lucival with the seal of a saint carved onto his chest.

Because the Opperheimann region had a small church as well, I often listened to the stories of the priest there. Besides, the old bookshelves in a part of the Egbayn family's treasury stored a precious collection gathering thousands of books ranging from pharmacology to teachings of the divine will as part of the vampire countermeasures used by the vampire hunters of the Egbayn family for many generations.

For some reason, the collection also contained a mummy releasing sinister mana without any meaning, and magic creation books. Including the items, it also contained a book about the great war of the wild gods and a book about the ancient gods, stored in an old wooden box, as very valuable parts of the collection.

It also had harvest legends and myths of Mahaheim as thick, leather-bound books, and many, many more books I won't list here.

Among them was an old, sacred scripture, and that one spoke of the mark on Shuuya's chest as proof for the Holy King, the Divine Child of Light. It's evidence of a legend that has been reborn.

The pope of the religious state will very likely make some kind of edict if he learns of this. It sounds like Shuuya has been in the religious state and the Holy Kingdom in the past. I wonder how he slipped through the surveillance network of the Demon Extermination Agencies.

I don't think they'd stayed silent if they found out about the Lucival race, but...well, each city in the religious state has its own peculiarities, and since there's also a holy crusade against the undead on the way right now, they might have been too busy to bother themselves with monitoring the countryside.

But, if not for Shuuya, I wouldn't believe that my sister has become a vampire.

By now my work as the tenth generation...oops, that's no good. Shuuya told me to cheer up. First I have to directly ask my sister what she's planning. Even if she's now a vampire, she's still my little sister...

Shuuya talked about some branch family or such with an awkward expression, but did she become a servant of a vampire who's part of the twelve founding vampire families?

But if the eighth and ninth generation hear about this, they'll likely attack me as well, saying 『You've also become a target for purification... We'll just burn the blood filth! Fuhahaha』.

...That's a scary prospect.

They give me the same impression as the elites of the Demon Extermination Agencies. No matter what I do, I cannot allow them to meet Angie. In Shuuya's case, I can't even imagine how an encounter with them would turn out.

『A vampire of light? You're totally suspicious, black-hair! We'll make you regret having made a move on someone of our Egbayn family!』

With those words, he'd throw his iron crosses...and the ninth generation would likely attack using his army of light bees and thread eaters without saying anything...

Thinking all this, I got totally flustered at first, racking my brain about all kinds of things in a jumble, like my sister, the Egbayn family, the hunters, and the Opperheimann region. Moreover, I felt like I lost my bearings to keep living as a vampire hunter.

But, I somewhat calmed down after talking with Shuuya. For a while, I continued being agitated. He properly kept an eye on me as I was in such a state. He's a truly gentle man...

He made me forget about vampires and my sister for some time. While we kept having sex, my frail heart naturally faded out. I think that describes it rather well.

Because of his open-hearted, relaxed attitude, he didn't seem to be overly concerned about it, though. Anyway, it really, really, soothed my mind and heart.

I couldn't say so into his face, but...thanks, Shuuya.

But, the person he wanted to meet...I wonder what kind of woman she is.

『I love women, and if it's for the sake of a woman I like, I'll do my best in my own way. Kinda like right now, right?』

He said so with a calm smile, leaving all the pretentious stuff away.

Given how gentle he has been to me, I can imagine that he's quite popular.

In addition, he fervently explained to me about the Wind Spear Style's techniques that focus from

fine body weight shifts to the grip and muscles, and also said 『I plan to go back to meet my Master who taught me spearmanship and martial arts, no, gave me a goal in life』, but I didn't quite get what he was talking about. But, his face looked so adorable as he ranted about his hobbies and preferences with a verve, making him look like a very normal human man, rather than some special race possessing light and darkness. Back then, I felt my heart throb...

If he did that on purpose, then he's quite the schemer...

Now then, it's not like I got influenced by Shuuya, but I must wrap up my unfinished work. Even if my sister is a vampire, I'm currently still a vampire hunter. I'll head over to Pelneet after sorting out this workload.

While thinking that, I chose a great number of subjugation requests for monsters frequently appearing in the area from the east to the south of the sea of trees at the adventurer's guild.

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Right now I'm walking on a road with wheel tracks which is relatively safe as the area is dotted with camps of other adventurers. While feeling the drizzle on my skin, I leave the wheel tracks, and step into the real forest.

It's the woodland continuing from the 【Sea of Trees】 which houses many tall trees and animal trails. At once, I run into a platoon of goblins. I bisect a goblin as I place my hand on Holy Sword Guryudoborug and draw it in one fluid motion. I deal with the other goblins as if pruning the foliage around me.

The goblins belong to the type with the thick eyebrows, categorized as Telka. After looting those eyebrows while wondering how it's possible for these to be raw materials, I head deeper into the forest as I still get a reaction from <Divine Response>.

Thereupon I discover lamplight and an insignia I recognize. It's the symbol of the adventurer clan 【Wargod】. Looks like they're coincidentally camping out here.

It's raining, and midnight is soon going to pass, so let's intrude upon them for a bit.

With that decided, I run up to the place with the multi-flysheets tents

"——Good evening, Dragon Killer Galnarev-san. Long time no see." I greet Galnarev-san.

He's the leader of the warrior group that played an active part in the evil dragon king subjugation which was mainly organized by the adventurer's guild and Oseberia a few months back. There are many dwarves with him, but some elves and humans can be seen here and there, too. It seems to be a joint party.

"Ohh, what a pleasure to see the beautiful vampire hunter Nora! What happened to the A-Class, no, S-Class vampire whom we failed to catch after chasing him together with everyone the other day?"

Ugh, and here I had finally forgotten about it...the vampire with jet-black hair who doesn't belong to the Valmask family. He was an opponent we should have cornered after hunting him down with many vampire hunters and adventurers.

He skillfully used ring-shaped magic arms, and magic techniques as well as taijutsu allowing him to nimbly evade our light-based attacks. I think he must have been a considerably mighty vampire at progenitor level...seeing how he managed to escape in the direction of Benrack.

No, rather than escaping, it felt as if he guided us there.

"It came to nothing in the end. I don't know whether he had a showdown with the wolves or if there's a unique barrier in the sea of trees, but I couldn't catch up to him."

"So the opponent was a vampire you couldn't take down, huh? No wonder that he was so hard to deal with... Hmm? Does that mean there's a similar vampire around here right now?"

"The one back then was an exception. That's why I believe the opponent to be another vampire this time."

"Nunu, I suppose we must rev up our night countermeasures then." Galnarev-san scans the vicinity.

"That'd be smart. Do you have holy water with you?"

"Two unused bottles. I also got feathers of the Holy Bird Kunkurd and Argalma's Nectar with me. The nectar should also work to some extent."

Galnarev-san swiftly takes out some bottles from the pouch at his waist belt, and shows them to me. His movements of taking out his tools are clearly based on years of experience similar to a blacksmith. They look quite fluent and practiced.

"...Then you should be able to cope with a vampire in an emergency."

"Vampires who slip through magic source detections and wind detections are a pain in the ass."

"Do you have someone with a clergyman-based combat occupation in your joint party?"

The members around him don't seem to have changed much, though.

"We have two, but they've got no experience in fighting a progenitor vampire that'd require your help. That's why it'd be a huge help if you could help us out, Nora..."

"I'd like to help since I'm going to use your camp, but please let me keep it limited to tonight."

"Even without you explicitly asking to camp with us, you're a fellow acquaintance, right? No need for any words there, okay? In addition, this place is quite chaotic and unsafe. But, only until morning, huh...? How unfortunate."

"Yes, this time I have to hunt monsters for requests, and there's also the vampire I'm targeting...I'll head out as soon as it becomes bright out. Sorry."

"Don't worry. You're someone who saved my life in the past. Feel free to use the empty tent at the edge. Even if it's just tonight, it's convenient for us to have an anti-vampire guarantee, you know?"

"How about a bottle of holy water as a reward then?"

"Gahaha, you're pretty, but as usual, you're as attentive as ever. But, can't you find a partner or man with that face of yours?"

I know that Galnarev-san means no evil with that, but it's still rude. Well, it's no use for a female adventurer to hope to get the same treatment as a noble lady. Since I spent a night with Shuuya, who treated me gently just like a noble lady, my senses have been thrown off...

"...Private matters are off-limits, okay? Don't forget that I have a holy sword with me."

"...Sorry, I remembered about Sebi. Anyway, go and get some rest in the free tent over there."  
Galnarev-san suddenly reveals a flustered smile with his cheeks trembling.

Sebi is the name of a man who previously got involved with me, trying to get into my pants. Going by Galnarev-san's expression, I think he knows the details.

Well he looks like that right now, but Galnarev-san is a hero who led the dwarven warrior group during the evil dragon king battle. Since that hero has offered me a resting place, I politely bow my head, and move over to the empty tent.

It's not dawn yet, but I exit the tent anyway, greeting the person standing watch.

"Force, force, is that two-handed sword on your back a special weapon against vampires?"

"...Yes."

A blind woman? But, for her to see through the characteristics of my weapon... Her eyes are hidden behind a high-class cloth tinged with mana, but can she actually see? Or does she possess some kind of <Mind's Eye> skill instead of normal eyes? Maybe she simply excels at appraisal or mana probing?

It looks like she's on shift as guard right now. I'm slightly interested in her, but...

"...Please excuse me then."

"See you."

A huge man suddenly appears from behind the blind woman. He's holding a kind of bow weapon at the height of his belly. A <Hide> skill?

Considering his huge frame, he doesn't spread any magic elements into the vicinity. He must be highly skilled. A duo of remarkable fighters? Or maybe wandering mercenaries since I haven't

really seen them around here.

I leave the camp while pondering about all this. I advance through the forest overgrown with muku leaves, memen leaves, and other weeds, plowing my own way open.

The campfire, which I can see diagonally behind me, keeps getting smaller, before it eventually vanishes completely.

I remain alert of my surroundings as I head southwards where I sensed a vampire before.

As I move through the forest for a while, I perceive the scent of vampires with <Divine Response>. But, it's difficult to proceed here as memen grasses are growing all over the place.

While somewhat forcing my way by pruning the grass, I head for the place that stinks of blood. It comes from ahead of the Ayram tree with a ridiculous amount of branches. A strong response from the inner place where the branches are extending to the left like swords.

Activating my concealment skill, I focus on the way I walk. Moreover, I use several instances of the Egbayn family's skill <Cross Walking>. It was worthwhile having studied it by reading <Foot Techniques of the Secret Spirit Turf Theory> I found within the dark treasury with its bad vibes. Back then Angie asked me, "Nora-ane, are you going to be alright in such darkness?", didn't she?

As I recall the past, I erase my presence in a very hunter-like way. This will allow me to launch a surprise attack even on vampire ranks capable of having their own servants.

A vampire who scatters his scent. Prepare yourself! First I'll stop his movements with my silver light spiders, and then I'll finish him off with my holy sword!

I keep running, full of enthusiasm.

Suddenly I'm grazed by iron, and the hard sound of stone being scraped reverberates. Is my target fighting someone else? Does that mean there were other pursuers besides me?

While asking myself, I run underneath trees with densely growing, light brown leaves. And before long I come out at a place where trees have fallen unnaturally.

A vampire and a wolfwoman are fighting each other with such a force that they're mowing down everything around them. The wolfwoman has many silver claws extending from both hands like rapiers.

Adorable fangs are also growing out of her mouth. Well, any vampire would get pissed off if you say that they look like the fangs of vampires. And, the silver claws at her hands aren't her only weapon. She also got pointed, sharp claws growing out at her feet.

Her magic combat style-based technique using those legs of hers is high. After stepping in so powerfully that she leaves footprints in the ground, she kicks. Her stride gives her a wide range of activity. Her movements of unleashing kicks remind me of tigermen or leopardmen.

And her swaying, silver hair...is so slender and delicate that you wouldn't think of her as a

beastman. It makes me slightly jealous. It's very pretty. Her face also looks like that of a beautiful woman.

But, silver fur is growing out through the gaps in her torso armor, becoming proof of her being an ancient wolfman. Her fur is protruding out, but even the size of her chest somehow feels graceful, or is that just my imagination?

Since there seem to exist various types among ancient wolfmen, she might be high-ranked. Since ancient wolfmen are famous for also attacking humans without care, I need to be careful...

My target is the vampire. The magic sword in the vampire's right hand curves inwards, and just half of the blade is shining in blue. His other hand holds an other magic sword with a straight blade. That means, the vampire is a dual-wielder.

A vampire using two swords, and a wolfwoman using several claws like swords. He and her glare at each other, before quickly approaching each other, and clashing in close combat. The silver claws and magic swords scatter sparks and hard, metallic sounds.

As they seem to sense each other's distance, they're exchanging blows at a paper-thin distance as if having their faces almost glued to each other. And then, after the vampire skilfully uses an unguarded moment of the wolfwoman to unleash an attack, he slices through the lower part of her ear with the curved blade.

No sooner than I wonder whether he grazed her, the wolfwoman evades by rotating repeatedly with her torso as axis. She keeps evading the vampire's swords at a nice rhythm.

The vampire's swords cut at empty air or at nearby branches. The slender branches fall to the ground, leaving a glitter behind.

Next, the wolfwoman thrusts her foot diagonally in front like a dancer, launching a counterattack. She aims at the vampire's torso with a unique, two-staged, middle kick.

But, the vampire dodges that kick with a smirk. And the wolfwoman's kick impacts on the thick trunk of the tree behind the vampire. The tree bends inwards, and breaks.

...What power.

There are several holes in the trunk. I guess they come from the claws at her feet. Was that a kicking skill?

But, the vampire is faster, no, they're even since both evaded? Once more I grasp the situation around me.

The roots continuing on as if crawling across the ground are dented and broken, a rock wall has been sliced into two, and countless cut plants are flying through the air. Moreover, many small animals with their entrails hanging out are scattered all over the place. It's such a gruesome state that it's almost as if you can hear the ground screaming.

It looks like the battle between the vampire and wolfwoman has been going on for a while now.

That's convenient for me. But, the vampire doesn't show much of an opening I can take advantage of.

Though you could call it a chance since neither has noticed my presence...

