

This specific story is probably the longest single story I've written. It's over 120 pages.

[The White knight arc] [3] [The White Knight] [9715]

Rev 1.1

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The Singing stone : A necklace with a slivery chain and a cheap gemstone. Much about the stone was behind a veil.

Juun was off the force for a while. Wemer had given him a suspension, not because he deserved it, because Wemer thought that Juun could use a break.

However, it was not Wemer's decision. Rather it was Sevn who convinced Wemer.

"We should do this more," Serin was giggling. It had been indeed a long time since Juun and she went out together. They were on streets in evening. Serin had her arm crossed Juun's arm. They came across an open market and women were occasionally looking at Juun.

Serin, as a wife, was obviously noticing it. But rather than being jealous or even threatened, she was happy about it. Juun was not a playboy, but his appearance belonged to those who were called handsome. In addition, Juun had a good sense of fashion. Basically speaking, Juun was a perfect gentleman who was also more than capable of defending himself.

Serin noticed a poster on a wall.

"Juun, look," she pointed at the poster which was very clean. It appeared to have recently been posted.

"Desperado? What is that?"

"A popular band on Heaven of Order."

"A band...?" That made him think that Serin was indeed still young. "Is that your favorite band?"

"It's pretty much everyone's favorite band." She sounded excited.

"Well, the band is having a live concert in the city. Why don't we go then?"

Serin frowned momentarily. "The tickets are extremely expensive. Besides, I am sure that it's all sold out by now."

Juun beamed a grin at her. "Don't worry."

"Huh?" Serin was confused.

The concert was going to be held at a federal stadium. Tickets were being sold there as well. All Juun had to do was show them his badge, which was an indication of his position: the knights, and formally asked for two tickets.

"Awesome!" Serin was jumping around with the tickets. "I've never thought I could get a hold of front seat tickets!"

"You've better realize that my job is one of the most respected jobs," Juun pouted.

The date on ticket said the concert was going to be held pretty soon, two days later in fact.

Two days later,

Juun and Serin had their car parked nearby the stadium. The place was extremely crowded, but it was expected. They were looking at the stadium with practically no way to get through all the people packed in the area. Juun came up with an idea.

"This can be a rough ride." said Juun.

"Huh?"

Juun held Serin's waist with his arm. "Hold tight," Juun initiated a high jump vertically and they were seeing the stadium from sky.

"I am going to land on edge of the stadium. Just hold tight and there should be no problem."

"O-okay," Serin wasn't a big fan of height.

Juun landed safely on one of edge and used emergency exit to enter the stadium.

As they entered the stadium, they were faced with fierce fans. The live concert wasn't present at the moment, but the people in the stadium were roaring. Noticing two strange people coming from authorized only door, a guard approached Juun and Serin.

"Excuse me, who are you?"

Juun glanced back and noticed the red fonts on the door: Authorized person only.

He cleared his throat and showed their tickets. The guard was skeptical, but let them through in the end. Getting to their seats was a pain. But they did manage to find their seats and sat.

"Phew," Juun muttered. "Way too many people here."

Serin giggled. "It's always like this."

"Yeah?" He sneezed as well. "It smells awful here, too."

"There she is!"

As Serin pointed at dark stage ahead, people also chanted. A spotlight took its place in middle of the stage and there was a woman with a gothic black dress with white laces. She was carrying an electronic guitar. She had loose and curly hair.

"That's Desperado?"

"No, that's the name of her band."

"Is it a one-man band?"

Juun asked because he was unable to find any other band members on the stage. It was still dark but he was able to see through darkness.

"There are three more members. They usually appear one by one as the concert goes on. She is the band vocal."

"Hmm," Juun scratched his chin.

It was a heavy metal band. Juun was never a fan of music. But, since his wife seemed to be enjoying, he tagged along.

At one point, he suddenly sensed a dangerous aura. It contained intent to harm. He closed his eyes and began to focus. Aura was coming from behind of him. But there was no way to find out who exactly with such many people in a small place.

'Perhaps, I am overreacting?' He thought. Considering how popular the band appeared to be, he figured there were bound to be few manic.

However, as time went on, the aura was becoming even darker and dense. It was reaching to a point where he could consider dangerous.

"Serin."

"Yes, dear?"

"I am going to go to washroom. Watch my seat please."

"Sure, take your time." And then her focus went back to the stage.

Juun quickly left the area and rushed to go down to the stage. Guards noticed him and stopped him.

"You are not supposed to be here," One of them warned Juun. They apparently had stun guns.

Juun reached out his pocket inside to show them his identification.

"So, you are a knight. What business do you have here?"

He told them that there could be a dangerous fanatic among the crowd. Of course, the guards weren't going to letting him pass still.

"We will do our job when needed. We don't need an outside help," They claimed.

Juun could easily surpass them. But that wasn't his intention. Furthermore, it was a public place.

Sighing, he turned around and returned to the seat.

The concert was a blast, at least according to Serin

.

They went back to their house. Serin was cooking dinner and Sevn visited.

"Hey, hey," Sevn casually greeted Juun who was laying on a sofa and watching TV.

"Hello, came for dinner again, eh."

"Yep and to see how you are doing."

"So, how is the others doing?" Juun asked.

Shrugging, Sevn fell into a one-slot sofa. "Nothing's changed. We don't have much tasks at the moment. So, we are mostly slacking right now."

They conserved until a familiar face was shown on TV. It was the vocal of Desperado. The news was regarding an incident after their concert. The vocal was attacked by someone. The vocal wasn't hurt seriously however.

"Eh, I told them so. They never listen," Juun muttered.

"What are you talking about?"

Juun told Sevn what happened at the concert.

"Hmm," Sevn groaned. "Does Serin know?"

"Of course, not," Juun's reply was firm. "Can't you stop overprotecting her? She's a grownup and is my wife, not yours."

Sevn stuck his back deeply into the sofa and ignored Juun's advice, pouting.

Sevn and Serin had a huge age difference. Their parents had a very late child a hundred years after Sevn's birth. In a sense, Serin was Sevn's really little sister. Though he had acted like a father more than a brother.

"I guess it's not fun to have popularity," Sevn changed subject.

Juun narrowed his eyes. The aura he sensed wasn't just a fanatic's. The aura was dangerous, yet rather clean. He believed that it was an aura from someone who had a formal training or some sort.

Nonetheless, it wasn't really his business. So, he decided to forget about it.

"Dinner's ready," Serin called out Juun.

"Hey, you've gotten better."

After Sevn finished a bowl of soup, a baked potato and a roasted chicken.

"I try," She beamed a smile at her brother.

She did try hard. When they were just married, Juun had to do everything, he cooked, he cleaned the house. She was ashamed at the beginning of her marriage. She bought cooking books and asked her mother to teach her about cleaning and

what was needed to be a proper housewife. After decades, she had gotten better. But truth was that Juun was still better.

However, Juun no longer did house chores anymore. He let Serin do all the time.

Next day, Juun and Serin went on shopping. When they came back, there was a black car in front of their house. The car itself appeared to be fairly suspicious. However, Juun sensed no harmful aura.

Not wanting to alert his wife, he remained calm.

Although Serin didn't know, the house had a military-grade security system. If anyone did break into the house, they'd be dead unless they were trained. As they stood in front of front door, three people appeared behind them.

"Are you Juun?" A man in middle spoke.

Juun turned around to face the strangers.

"Yes, I am. Who are you?"

The man struck out his hand for a handshake. "Hello, my name is Darnell. I'd like to have a word with you if you don't mind."

Two other men were behind the man claimed to be Darnell. They claimed to be his bodyguards.

"Sure..., come in."

Juun led them to a living room and Serin went to kitchen to get drinks. There was an antique table in middle of the living room with also antique chairs.

Darnell was the band Desperado's manager. He came to Juun's house regarding the last attack he experienced.

"I believe -"

When Darnell just started speaking, Serin came with drinks on a plate. Taking one, Darnell thanked her and resumed.

"I believe you had given a warning to the guards about a possible attack."

"Yes, I did."

"I'd like to know how you knew."

"Hard to explain. I felt an aura. That's all."

"An aura?"

"Let's say that it's energy that every living being radiates."

"Interesting," Darnell cleared his throat and continued. "Well, we have a situation and I was wondering if you could give us a hand."

"I cannot," Juun's answer was firm.

"Excuse me?" Darnell didn't expect a straight rejection.

"I have a job and I am not willing to have a second job."

"Even if we are willing to pay you as much as you ask?"

"Look around. Do you think I am poor?"

Juun was a multibillionaire. He didn't have to work for a living. And he earned all that money by himself.

Darnell realized he chose a wrong method to hire Juun. He gave another try.

"Our band is consisted of four members. Three male members and one female member -"

"The vocal is the female member, yes?"

Darnell nodded and continued.

"Some fans are very ...extreme. But, for male members, it's manageable. The worst they've gotten was stalkers. But, as for our female vocal, it's been more than dangerous."

Serin was listening to their conversation from the kitchen.

"How dangerous?"

"There has been attempted assaults when she was alone. There were also break ins -"

Juun cut his words again. "Not so bad," He said.

"I am just easing you up."

"There are some very extreme cases that I cannot say out loud," Darnell said.

There was no reaction from Juun. Darnell, of course, did not know Juun's nature.

"So, if I help you out, what will be my task?"

"Well," Darnell rubbed his hands. "You will be her personal body guard, and you will do what a bodyguard does."

"For how long?"

"As long as you can."

"And payment?"

"Twenty five hundred credit a day."

Fifteen hundred credit was an average wage.

"Alright, I will contact you when I have my answer."

Darnell frowned slightly as he wanted Juun's answer right away. And he noticed Darnell's expression.

"I need to talk to my wife before taking this job after all this job will take away our vacation plans."

Realizing there was nothing more he could do to convince Juun, Darnell decided to leave him alone for now.

"Very well, here is my business card. Give me a call as soon as you can."

After Darnell left, Serin came to living room.

"What do you say, dear?" Juun asked.

"I will follow your decision."

Juun crossed his arms. "I don't see this job ending too well. It's a dirty job."

"How so?"

"The way he talked, the way he tried to hire me, he is no ordinary manager. What he does for real, I don't know."

"He manages a band."

Juun shook his head. "I think his real profession is something else."

Serin crossed her arms as well.

"If so, then I don't want you to get involved. I trust your perception."

Juun sighed. "But you are a big fan of the band."

"Yes, but you are more important than a mere band."

Juun grinned. "I will be safe regardless. It's that there is no guarantee for the vocal if what the guy said is true."

"Perhaps, you should consult Wemer before doing this."

"Yes, I should."

Juun stood up from the sofa. "I will visit him tomorrow."

"I checked on the person you requested info of," Wemer returned with a file.

They were in Wemer's office.

"He is a legal drug dealer," Wemer said.

"A legal drug dealer, you say?"

"I know it sounds weird, but he sells drugs legally to those who need them."

"What kind of drugs?"

Wemer answered his question with silence, and Juun understood meaning of his silence.

"I see," Juun responded weakly.

"The band he is managing, it is not his first band. It seems his business style revolves around celebrities, and you can probably guess how his business would work."

Selling drugs to celebrities who could not be able to take on immense pressure was Darnell's job.

"It's a devil's job, but someone's gotta do it," Wemer added.

"How did his other bands end up?"

Wemer made a pause and seemed as if Juun brought up the question.

"The other bands, their ends weren't very pretty. His previous bands all ended up being disbanded after their main vocals died."

"Do you know the cause?"

"No records on why, but I suppose the guy's involved in." Wemer continued. "You do realize I suspended you from work to get much needed break."

Juun nodded. "I am aware. Was it Sevn's request?"

"He did request and I approved his request."

"Well, duh," Juun shrugged. "I am sorry to disappoint you for taking this job."

"I won't blame you. It is Sevn you should worry about."

Juun let out of a quick snicker. "You are right."

Wemer put down his files on his desk and sat down.

"While you do this job, I want you to investigate this Darnell guy as well."

"About his sales?"

"Yes," Wemer nodded in agreement. "The guy's fishy."

"In what way?"

"The vocals, they all died."

"Are you saying he murdered them to conceal his crime?"

"It could well be, but we have no proof."

The Knights were supposed to be elite bodyguards for the emperor, Richard Bau. However, at one point, the Knights had become something of elite police instead. Ever since the Knights was founded, they had never, not once, done any missions that were remotely connected to serving the emperor.

Juun accepted the job in the end, and he was asked to start the job on the next day.

Juun was dressing himself in the master bedroom. As always, he chose to wear a white suit. Serin was assisting him with a necktie. They were having no conversation. Juun was simply dressing, and Serin was assisting. In few minutes,

they were done, and finally Juun equipped his energy blades on his belt. They exchanged a kiss.

Without being given much details, he met up with Darnell and headed to a dorm where who Juun's supposed to protect was staying.

Despite of how Darnell claimed that the vocal was extremely popular, the dormitory didn't seem secured.

Juun and Darnell were apparently standing before what Juun could only classify as a motel.

"Don't tell me ...," Juun sighed. "This is a dump."

Darnell laughed in return. "I understand what you are trying to say, but it's simply a disguise. Interior is pretty high-tech if you know what I mean."

"... Fine, let's go in then."

It did seem high-tech. Juun inspected the motel briefly as they went inside. However, he did not spot any human guards.

Juun sniffed as soon as he entered the room. "This is scent of drug," He said. "Is she a drug user?"

"I am not going to lie to you. Yes, she is," Darnell rubbed his hands nervously.

"But, listen, she is under a lot of pressure. She apparently can't hold on to with a clear head."

"Are you implying that I should ignore this? I am a member of the knights."

"I know that. I also know that you are above the police."

Juun began to see where Darnell was coming from. He was indeed a drug seller, always sneaky, always looking for a way to manipulate others and the system. Yes, Darnell was that kind of person. Juun was ready to kill him on the spot but decided to postpone that thought for the time being.

The vocal's room was on the 4th floor. When they entered her room, what welcomed them was a high pitched sharp shout.

"Darnnie! Is that you?"

A woman in nothing but a thong appeared in front of them.

"Did you bring the stuff ..." Then she noticed Juun. She placed her hand on her waist.

"Who's this guy?" Apparently, she didn't mind her outfit. "A new one?"

Darnell cleared his throat. "Ahem, he will be your dedicated bodyguard from today."

"What?" She shrugged. "I don't need no bodyguard. Just give me the stuff!"

Darnell nervously cleared his throat. He was obviously trying to stop her.

"Fine, have it your way." She restlessly walked back into her place.

"I am sorry about this," Darnell said nervously. "I have ..., um, an urgent business to attend. Now, excuse me ..."

And like that, Darnell left.

Juun inspected his surroundings quickly, and he located few camera drones on the floor. He wasn't certain that they belonged to Darnell. He knew one thing for certain though. The camera drones were military-grade equipment.

The singer was cooking something in kitchen. Whatever she was cooking, it was burning. Yet, she didn't seem to care and continued to cook.

"Hey, Mr. Bodyguard!"

Juun was watching her cook. Of course, she was still literally naked.

"You got a name, Mr. Bodyguard?"

"Juun."

"Zoo?"

"J u u n, that's my name."

She apparently made an omelet. It was pretty ... black, but she took it to a round table in kitchen and started to eat nevertheless.

"So, Mr. Juun, your job is to watch my back," She said.

"That's right. What is your name anyway?"

"Didn't the manager tell you?"

Juun shook his head.

"Well, my name is Fruma. Forty six years old, hot'n young, huh?" She said so proudly in a half-joking manner.

Juun crossed his arms. "So, you are a drug user."

Fruma halted her spoon momentarily but soon resumed eating.

"You got a problem with that?"

"Nope, just consider it as a fair warning."

"Hmph," Fruma scoffed. "Like I care."

"Indeed, you wouldn't care."

Juun's reply carried much sarcasm, but his voice was rather sincere. He really did believe that she would not care. If she did, she would bother at least trying to hide that she is using drugs. What made him wonder is why she wouldn't care. He reckoned that her background may have something to do with her reactions.

"I found these."

Juun released three camera drones onto a table where Fruma was having her meal. The drones were tiny, small enough not to be spotted by unsuspected eyes.

"I believe there are more. Why don't you put some cloths on?"

She briefly stared at the drones and then resumed her meal.

"I know there have been there. I know they are watching me. I bet you that some of them masturbate while looking at me."

She sounded as if she was absolutely certain.

"So, how long have you been harassed by your so-called fans?"

"For a while."

She continued to have her meal casually.

"How long is for a while?"

"I don't remember."

Juun decided not to ask further and leave her alone for the night. He stayed outside of her apartment for the night. He leaned his back against a corridor, crossing his arms, and stayed outside for the whole night.

"You are still here?"

It was Fruma's voice, and Juun slowly opened his eyes.

"You slept here?"

"I did not sleep," Juun answered firmly.

"But you looked like sleeping with your eyes closed."

"It is often better to shut down visual aids and concentrate on sound especially if one is trying to protect someone."

"Yeah, whatever." She shrugged. "I am going to the studio."

"Is that so? Go on and do not mind my presence. If you prefer, I will stay out of your sight always."

Juun followed her to work, which was a music studio. She was to practice her voice and prepare to release an album in few seasons.

Hours passed, and her practice was done. Juun noticed that she was taking some sort of drug even when she was not performing in public. He managed to steal a tablet. While at it, Juun was staying out of Fruma's sight, so no one realized she was being watched and protected. When she came back to the apartment, Juun encountered the manager, Darnell.

Darnell greeted him casually.

"Hey, how's it going? It seems you are doing the job well."

"Yes, I am doing what I can."

Juun made the conversation short and waited for Fruma to return to her apartment. He waited until midnight and left the building. He was going to visit Wemer but figured he'd drop by his home first.

As Juun entered his house, he noticed Sevn on couch in dark living room. Serin was probably in bed considering it was after midnight.

"Hello," Sevn greeted first. "I hear you got a temp job?"

Juun sensed a little hostility from his voice. "Let's go to to a pub." And he dragged Sevn out of the house and went to a street.

"What's up with you?" Juun asked.

"You tell me," Sevn said. "I asked Wemer to suspend you from the Knights to give you a break. I thought you knew that. Yet, you take another job as a bodyguard? What's the matter with you?"

"Listen, Serin wanted me to take on the job. The singer I am supposed to protect is her favorite. I was going to reject it."

Sevn had a bitter feeling on his face. "Damn, well, my apologies."

"No problem," Juun sighed weakly. "I do have a favor for you though."

"What is it?"

"I found out that the singer is a drug user."

Juun handed the tablet he stole over to Sevn. "Take this tablet and analyze it as soon as you can."

"Alright, I will do that for you. I am also going to report this to Wemer."

"Sure, this might turn out to be a full time job."

Sevn sighed deeply. "I tried to give you a break so that my sister can have some time with you. But this is how it turns out. I guess this is your fate, Juun. You are an excellent hyper-human after all."

Juun didn't answer to that.

He returned to the singer's model as soon as possible. He sensed no disturbance in air when he entered the model lobby.

For three days, no abnormality was spotted. It was when Fruma was singing in a small concert. He noticed Sevn who was approaching him.

Juun acted as if he didn't know Sevn, and Sevn acted the same. Sevn stood by Juun who was watching over the concert by the stage. Because of intensive light sources focused on the stage, everywhere else was extremely dark. Juun could not be spotted with bare eyes.

"I have the result," Sevn said.

"I am listening."

"The drug is military-grade, Juun, and the guy is authorized to sell them."

"Can he sell to anyone?"

"No, actually he is authorized to sell the drugs only to either agents or those who have a doctor's note."

"I see. What does the drug do exactly?"

"It's heroin basically. But it's low dose with high concentration."

"Thanks." Juun was about to walk away.

"Wait," Sevn said. "I have some more."

"Go on then."

"I looked up the guy. He was an ex-agent. I suppose that's how he was able to come an authorized drug seller."

"Any shady history?"

"He had no shady history until he became a celebrity manager. Some of his celebrities disappeared suddenly."

"And I suppose he was never charged for that."

"No, he could have not been charged due to lack of evidences."

While they were talking, Juun noticed a sudden surge of dreadful aura from the crowd.

"Wait," Juun said to Sevn, pausing him to talk. He looked up at the stage where Fruma was still singing. He looked at the crowd this time. He concentrated. It took

him few moments, but he did narrow down to certain few people in near end row. It was too dark to make out their appearances however.

Thankfully, Sevn was there. Juun asked to stand in for him and proceeded to the back of the dome. It was when he noticed a group of four people dressed in black. They didn't certainly seem like that they had come for a concert.

"Hey -"

Juun patted one of the men's shoulder. "Would you mind showing me your ID?"

The men were quick to act. They quickly rushed off the scene.

"You aren't going ... anywhere!" Juun was about to draw out his blade. However, he realized that he was in a public area. Safety of others and public order came first.

Growling, Juun had to chase them instead. The four men were too fast to be average men: they were hyper humans. Before Juun could catch them, they were already out of the dome. He chose not to chase them further for Fruma's safety.

The concert was a success. Darnell was certainly looking happy. Juun felt like ruining his mood by reporting what happened at the concert.

Darnell's happy-looking face suddenly vanished. He scratched his chin very carefully as if he was trying to come up with something to say. Then, he told Juun.

"Nevermind them. I will look into it."

Juun had no intention to "nevermind". He had Sevn to search for them. The Knights held much higher authority than the police did, and it didn't take long for Sevn to identify them.

"Credit collectors?"

"Yep, and there is something interesting."

Juun and Sevn were in the lobby of Fruma's apartment.

"They weren't there for Darnell. They were there for the singer," Sevn said.

"Are you saying that the singer has a debt?"

"That would be your job to find out. They were there to make a contact with the singer because she is protected heavily when she is off work."

"I see. Thanks for info."

"No problem." Then, Sevn shrugged. "I can already feel that this is going to be messy."

"Can Darnell be arrested for questioning for selling the drugs to an unauthorized person?"

"He could be arrested for a short while before his lawyer arrives. By doing so, I suppose he might fire you."

"True that."

Juun was back to his post. He was given a room right next to Fruma's. Though the room was not as luxurious as hers, it had a security system which allowed him to watch over Fruma via the camera drones.

As usual, she was literally naked with a small thong.

One third of a season (a month) passed. Juun guarded her earnestly even with her trying to seduce him. During the time, she had two shows which were successful. She was going to have another show shortly in next few days. This time, the concert was planned to be held on Creg's. Therefore, they were on a space vessel orbiting the planet.

Juun was looking down at the purple planet from a window in cafeteria. Creg's was the planet where his parents relocated to some years ago.

"This brings back memories...", Juun mumbled.

Juun's comm. bracelet vibrated. Fruma, the singer, was calling him. He quietly touched the bracelet. "Yes?"

There was no response to Juun's reply for a moment, and then her voice resounded faintly. "H...help...hel..."

When Juun rushed to her quarter, he found her lying on carpet floor drooling. She overdosed herself apparently. Of course, she was literally naked this time as well. He carried her to her bed and called Darnell.

"She will be fine," Darnell said while checking her vital signs. "She overdosed herself. That is all."

Juun was crossing his arms. Darnell came alone. He came alone without a doctor or a medic. He assumed that this had happened previously, and that Darnell was used to this situation.

"No worries, alright?" Tapping Juun's shoulder, Darnell left Fruma's quarter.

Fruma woke up few hours later and found Juun by her bed side.

"Heh," She giggled. "Nice to have someone by my side at a time like this."

"Nothing personal, it is my job."

Fruma looked at Juun vacantly. "What a way to ruin the mood, eh?"

Juun decided to change the subject. "I suppose you take the drugs to ease nervousness before performing in public. I suppose you take drugs even when you don't have any shows to perform because you are addicted. But why did you overdose?"

Fruma looked at ceiling this time.

"I stand alone," She said. "I used to do this with my band, and I was their manager. They all left. They all moved on."

Juun realized that she was opening her mind to him. "Why don't you move on as well then?" He asked sincerely.

"I have no other talent. What am I going to do if I quit this?"

"There are many jobs. In the worst case, you could just be an office lady."

Fruma was quiet.

"Is paycheck a factor as well?" Juun asked. "Or do you feel that it is too late to head back?" Juun felt that he should inform her of the credit collectors.

"Credit what?" She sounded surprised. "I don't owe any credit to anyone."

"Apparently you do."

"How in the world...?"

"It is not hard to figure out who is behind this. After all, there is only one person who manages your account."

"Darnell? You are accusing him?" Fruma exclaimed.

"Who else is there to be accused of? Of course, unless you admit that it was you who owe the credit."

"I ... don't know ..." Fruma sat up from the bed and put on a shirt. Then, she got out of the bed and wore pants. "I am going to talk to him."

"I advise you not."

"Pardon? You started this!"

"True, but I must warn you that he will likely fire me if you do accuse him." Juun spoke again after a momentary pause. "On the second thought, that is not such a bad idea. I would love to get out of this."

"Fine!" She rushed out of the quarter.

"Well," Juun sighed. "Time to pack up my stuff." Indeed, Juun went back to his quarter and started to pack his belongings. He didn't bring much. In the end, he had a small suitcase. When he was about to leave his quarter, Darnell entered.

"What are you doing?" He demanded.

"Leaving?"

"You told her about the credit agency."

"Isn't it obvious?"

"Why?"

Juun narrowed his eyes. "That is my line. Why, why are you doing this?"

"There is nothing wrong with what I am doing."

"Don't tell me that you are serious. You are spending money on behalf of your client without her concert. If that is not wrong, you are insane."

"But she owes me money."

This is messed up.., Juun thought. "Are you going to fire me or not?"

"I was going to," He placed his hand on his waist. "But I change my mind. I will let you tag along for a while longer."

"That will be the biggest mistake you will ever make," Juun said gravely.

Darnell laughed loud as he left Juun's quarter. "We will see about that."

Sighing, he started unpacking. When he was done, he noticed that he had a call waiting. It was from Sevn.

"Hey, what's up." Juun answered the call.

"Hey, I hear there is going to be a concert on Creg's?"

"Indeed."

"My sister wants to go. Can she come?"

"I don't see why not. Is she there with you?"

"Yea, want to talk to her?"

"No, just tell her that I need new suits. I am running out of clothes."

"Alright, we will see you on Creg's."

Juun sat in a chair and crossed his legs. Crossing his fingers, he let out of a long exhale. "Time to end this," He said to himself.

Their ship docked at a small outpost orbiting the planet. It was really a small outpost as its docking capacity was only ten vessels at once. Fruma had been keeping a distance from him, which was fine for Juun. He could care less.

Darnell gathered crew, which included Juun as well, and made his brief speech.

"Aright, guys." He rubbed his hands. "This is it! The big one! A long vacation for you all with a fat bonus after this!"

The crew cheered. Juun obviously did not however. In addition, he sensed something different from Darnell's speech. It was as if he was making his speech for the last time, as if he was ... going to leave. He assumed that Darnell was trying to get out of this.

Darnell and the crew rented few shuttles in order to land on the capital of the planet. It was where the concert was to be held.

Creg's was a well-developed planet, and due to its location, the planet was a hub for traffic. Darnell rented business class suits at a hotel for him and his crew. He

was being unexpectedly generous for this trip. The crew assumed that he was just in a good mood. Juun, however, assumed that Darnell was trying to make his run.

The crew spent days for the setup at the concert dome which Darnell rented.

While at it, Juun received words that Sevn and his wife had apparently arrived at Creg's outpost, so Juun went to the outpost to pick them up.

"Hi, darling." Juun and Serin exchanged a hug.

"Hey." And Sevn waved his hand. "Looks like you are doing alright."

Soon Juun, Serin, and Sevn were in a shuttle bound to Creg's.

"I am very excited. This is my first time I've ever left my home planet," Serin declared. She was looking through a window. Seeing bare space must have been her first time as well.

Sevn noticed an eye signaling from Juun, and they went to a washroom in the back.

"I need you to do me a favor, and I need it done quick," Juun whispered.

"What is it?"

"I need you to do a background search and obtain a credit record of someone," Juun said. "Wemer told me that Darnell, the drug dealer, was clean and an authorized drug dealer. I want you to do the checks on Fruma, the singer."

"The singer? May I ask why?"

"No time to explain fully, but I have a hunch that Darnell may have been impersonating her and using credit on her behalf."

"That's impossible."

"Just do this, alright?"

Sevn took few seconds to answer. "Fine, I will do this, but I will need few hours. What of Serin?"

"I will take her to shopping and a meal. That ought to be enough for you, yes?"

"Should be."

As soon as they landed on Creg's, Juun took his wife for shopping and a meal while Sevn went off to do his given task.

A shopping mall was right by the hotel, so Juun and Serin spent an hour there. When Juun was about to take her for a meal, she insisted to have a meal at the

hotel restaurant. The hotel had a restaurant at its first floor, but it wasn't 5-star restaurant.

"I could have taken you to somewhere better," Juun said while they were being escorted to a two-person table by a waitress.

"This is good enough for me. Are you given your own room at the hotel?"

Juun was Fruma's bodyguard, so whether he was given a room or not did not matter.

"I am not even sure. I am a bodyguard after all. I must be mobile."

"I see."

Juun and Serin sat at a table, and the waitress activated a holographic menu on the table. Juun ordered lobster, and Serin ordered the same. While they were having their meals, Juun spoke.

"Have I told you that I used live on Creg's?" Juun said.

Serin paused eating and answered. "You did?"

Juun told Serin his childhood briefly.

"I had no idea... You were bullied even? And you ran away from home to here?"

Juun laughed weakly. "Why would I lie to you?"

Serin did seem surprised. To her knowledge and experience, Juun was such a fine gentleman. She just couldn't have figured that he had such a rough childhood.

"Have you ... ever visited your parents after you ran away?" Serin was very careful when she asked the question.

"I have not met them, but I have checked on them once. They were still living together last time I checked," Juun answered indifferently. "I suppose it is a love and hate relationship between them."

Serin had never had a fight with Juun. Whenever they were to make any sort of family decision, either Juun or Serin had always compromised. She initially believed that he was simply a nice person. However, after listening to his past, she

thought that it might have been his intention not to get into any fights to avoid repeating his past.

"Are they living here on Creg's?"

He narrowed his eyes, sensing her faint intention. "Do you want to see them?" He guessed.

"Yes," She answered firmly.

"Very well, we will see them after the meal."

"Are you sure?"

"Of course, my dear."

He was calm as if it wasn't important.

When they were paying for their meal at a counter, they ran into Fruma who had come down to eat. She looked up and down at Serin with rather hostile eyes.

"Who might this be?" Fruma demanded.

"This is my wife, Serin," Juun replied. There was no need for him to introduce Fruma to Serin as she instantly recognized her favorite singer.

"Wow, nice to meet you!" Serin literally jumped up and down. "I am a big fan!"

Fruma seemed to have taken Serin's sudden reaction unexpectedly. "Uh...", She recoiled briefly. "Yeah, hello."

"Are you here for a meal?" Juun asked. He was done paying.

"Uh.., yeah, I guess..."

"May I ask for an autograph?" Serin asked innocently with full of excitement.

"Uh..., sure, got something to write on and a pen?"

Juun pulled out a pen from his inner pocket of his white formal jacket, and Serin took out her plain white handkerchief. After Fruma wrote her autograph on Serin's handkerchief, she gave the handkerchief back to Serin while putting Juun's pen in her pocket.

"My pen?" Juun asked.

"Sorry, finder's keepers."

"...Fine." He didn't want to play along with her anymore. For what it was worth, he was no longer really her bodyguard due to the dispute with Darnell. He knew that Darnell could care less whether he did his job as a bodyguard. "Let's go, dear."

"Wait." Fruma called out. "The manager gave you a day-off today. Thanks to that, I am forced to stay in this hotel the whole day."

"...Fine."

Juun rented a car from the hotel and was driving.

"She seems to like you," Serin told him casually in front seat.

"Yeah? Like I care."

"It's just a woman's hunch."

He grinned in response.

"Do they live in the city?"

"Sort of. They live on edge of the city where housing is cheaper."

She silently looked at him who was driving.

"You seem to be well informed," She told him.

"They are my parents after all. I did not hate them. I just had to abandon them for my own sake."

She turned her attention back a side window. "I wonder if I was wrong to ask you to do this."

"Don't you worry. Though I do wonder how they are going to react to my sudden appearance. You might ... need to prepare for the worst."

Where they arrived was an apartment complex. It wasn't obviously for the wealthy. Juun rented an expensive car, and it attracted attention of inhabitants in the complex.

"Here we are." He got off the car and opened door for his wife.

"Thank you."

He knew where his parents were living exactly, including their apartment number.

Juun and Serin were in front of where his parents' were supposed to live. All they had to do was click a door bell.

"Here goes nothing," He said as he clicked on the bell.

"Who is it?" A feminine voice resounded behind a metal door. Juun instantly recognized the voice. It was his mother's. He froze and did not answer. Serin, noticing his condition, answered instead.

"Um...," She cleared her throat. "Do you know Juun?"

"Juun?!"

The door was opened violently, and a middle-age woman in a wornout dress appeared. She raised her eyebrows as she saw who was in front of her. "Juun!" She exclaimed. "It's Juun!" She turned around and went back inside. "Dear, it is Juun! It is our son!"

He was no longer legally their son as their guardianship was stripped away. However, it did not matter to them. He was, nonetheless, their son.

"Juun?!" A male voice resounded from inside. "You are kidding me!"

"No, I am not! Juun is here!"

His parents rushed to the door.

"Juun...," His father was astonished to see him and lost his words.

"My son..." His mother started to sob. "My son..., how have you been doing?" Through her wrinkled cheeks, tears dropped. He could tell that she went through a lot from her wrinkles and her wornout dress. Its color had already faded severely.

To be honest, he did not expect such a welcome reaction. After all, he sued them and ran away from them. Until Serin mentioned visiting them, he had never really thought about them - as parents -. They had been merely some people he knew. He had already severed his emotional ties with them a long time ago.

"Mother...," Juun was finally able to speak. "And father..." He bowed to them as sincerely as he could. "How have you been doing?"

He held Serin's hand tightly. "This is ... my wife, Serin."

Serin bowed to them deeply. "Hello, I am his wife. Nice to meet you, sir and madam."

His mother came to her knees. "Oh, my God..., he is even married, dear! With such a nice looking lady...!"

"Son...!" His father grabbed his shoulders. "Welcome back...! Come in. Come on in!"

The place, to be honest, was a mess. It wasn't organized well, and it was clear that they were having a hard time making a living.

He and Serin were led to the living room where his mother provided them with cups of coffee. His father was busy cleaning elsewhere.

His emotions had stabilized, and he was able to regain himself in such a short period. This time, he decided to be completely honest with them.

"I am surprised that you two are still together," He said. "I figured you'd get a divorce after what happened."

His mother beamed what appeared to be a placid smile. "After...," She spoke after a heavy sigh. "After you sued us and ran away, we realized what we had done wrong."

No, it wasn't a peaceful smile. It was a remorseful smile.

"This is ...," He reintroduced Serin again to them. "Really my wife."

Serin laughed lot loud. "Come on, Juun. I think they believe you."

He grinned in response.

His father entered the living room. "I know I quit drinking," He said. "But I should drink on a day like this!"

"Yes!" His mother agreed joyfully and started to prepare for a quick meal while his father was getting out few bottles of beer out to a table where Juun and Serin were sitting in front.

The father asked while pouring beer into Juun's cup. "So, what do you do now?"

Before Juun could answer, Serin answered pleasantly. "Actually, sir, he is a Knight."

"Knight?" He twisted his head and then exclaimed. "The Knight?!"

Nodding, Serin literally took Juun's wallet out of his jacket and showed his ID. "See?" She exclaimed joyfully.

"He is ... a knight!" He bellowed. "Dear, come back here! He is a knight! The Knight!"

His parents were overjoyed to see their son so successful. The Knights were known as elite police to civilians. His parents finally calmed down after they had a meal with them.

Juun did not speak them too much, so it was Serin who spoke to them most of time. Eventually, they had to leave.

"Come visit us any time you want!" The mother assured. "I will prepare your favorite meals!"

They were on their way back to the hotel. Juun said not a word while driving, and Serin let him be.

"I...," Eventually he initiated a conversation. "I thank you that you made me see them."

She giggled weakly. "I did not know it would turn out like this ... honestly."

After they returned to the hotel, Sevn handed over a file to Juun.

"This is the file," Sevn said. "I have found something."

Serin was not present as she went to her room. Juun read through the file. "Two identical accounts are linked to her?"

"Two identical accounts but with rather completely different credit record," Sevn added.

"I see that. Is this even possible?"

Two bank accounts were linked to Fruma. Those two bank accounts shared the same account number. In other words, they were the same. The only explanation was that either account was a fake.

"It is possible, but it would require an insider to do that, an insider with a decision power."

"Can you give me an example?"

"Well..." Sevn narrowed his eyes. "Neither you nor I could do it, but Wemer as a leader of the Knights, could," He added, "I don't know the exact details though. Wemer would be a better person to explain how it works."

But he was back on Heaven of Order, and contacting him was not an option at the moment for Juun. Realizing this, Sevn spoke. "I guess I will contact him. I should have more info by tomorrow morning."

"Thanks."

"When is the concert?"

"In 3 days, at the Fiidre dome, 2PM."

"Alright, I will tell Serin."

Juun returned to his room. It was also a business class suit consisted of two large room. One was used as a bed room which was connected to a washroom. The other room which was connected to the door acted as a living room with an entertainment system. When he returned from a shower, he spotted Fruma in the living room. She was watching TV from a sofa.

"What is your business?" He demanded.

Fruma remained watching TV. "That was your wife?"

He continued drying his hair. "That is none of your business. Get out."

"I thought you were my bodyguard."

"That contract is off."

She was still watching TV and not looking at Juun and showed no sign of leaving. Slightly irritated by her behavior, he was about to leave his room.

However, his communicator which he left in the room in his jacket started to ring. Juun was certain that it was from Sevn, so he had to answer it. He turned back from the door and answered the call.

"This is Juun."

It was indeed from Sevn. He contacted Wemer and inquired him about Juun's current dilemma. Sevn informed Juun that it was actually fairly easy to duplicate one's identity. What was hard though was to keep the progress hidden from the victim. Apparently, Fruma seemed to be unaware of Darnell's deed. Sevn also informed Juun that Darnell might have hired Juun to exploit a weakness in the laws. Sevn would not tell what it was on a public phone line.

"Alright, I will see you in three days," Juun concluded the call.

"Who was that?" Fruma, still in his room, asked.

"It is none of your business, but I will tell you. It was my brother-in-law."

"Ah~." Fruma swirled her index finger in air.

"Why don't you go back your room now."

She sneered. "What, do you want to get rid of me?"

"Exactly."

His blunt reply stunned her momentarily. "Are you not interested in women at all?"

"I am, but I have a wife."

"No one cares about marriages in this era."

"I do though."

She lost her words for few seconds. "Fine, you have dignity, I admit."

"No, you do not," He claimed. "You think every men starve for women. You are wrong."

She did not say anything for a while. It was as if she didn't know what to say.

"What ... is in your head?" She asked - sincerely -. "You are a type of man I have never encountered."

He shrugged. "I am a type of man who knows what he is doing, who knows where he stands," He replied innocently and firmly. "I respect my wife. I respect my job. And I respect who I am and what I stand for."

"Men... I have met never any who truly respected females. To them, females were merely things that they must either flirt or be flirted."

"Then you've been dealing with wrong men."

"Easy for you to say," She sneered. She didn't mean at him. It was at herself.

She did not bother Juun since that day. And three days passed swiftly. The day for the concert arrived. Fiidre dome was already crowded with people. The shape of dome was that of a flower with eight petals. When the dome was closed, it would appear as if it was just a normal circular-shape dome.

The concert was about to begin. Fruma was in a preparation room. She was being dressed and being put on her makeup. After everything was done, all she had to

do was wait for a signal to come out, and it was when she started to act abnormally.

She was pale. Her face was as if her whole face was bruised. In addition, she was shaking.

"So, this is why," Juun said after letting out of a long sigh.

"Yes," Darnell replied.

"I suppose she wasn't like this in the beginning. What happened?"

Darnell handed few pills to her, and she violently took the pills off him, throwing them into her mouth without water and swallowed at once.

"Well, she was attacked while she was on a stage for few times. She did manage to recover the first and second time, but after the third assault..., she started to fear the crowd whenever she was to stand on a public stage."

Darnell tapped on her shoulder and turned to face Juun who was looking down on miserable Fruma.

"And the fourth attack did it. Since then she was unable to perform on a stage without the drugs."

"Why didn't you deploy more security personal?"

"It doesn't work that way." Darnell firmly shook his head. "You don't see security guards standing in front of a concert stage, do you?"

He had a point.

"She is a performer. Her job is to stand on a stage in front of hundreds and thousands of fans. If she can't do that, that's it for her."

Fruma became stable soon after taking the drugs. Within a half hour, she was ready to go.

"I am ready," She said with much courage in her voice. It was fake courage generated from the drugs. As soon as she went on to the stage, Darnell rushed out of the dome. Juun was tracking Darnell until the moment he left the dome. There was nothing else to be done by him anymore. His job was to protect Fruma. He was not going to abandon his post to shadow Darnell.

When he was back at the stage, the first impression he received was that it was loud as expected. In other words, for Juun, he was unable to use hearing as a sense. It was also severely dark except the stage. Visual range was severely impaired.

Fruma was singing and dancing with back dancers on the stage. She was covered with seats, but she seemed to be enjoying the moments. Was it because of the drugs or was she truly enjoying, he did not know.

The concert was reaching its climax after an hour and half. Fruma seemed to be enjoying though she appeared to be exhausted. Rightfully so, for she had been exercising all this time non-stop.

This was when Juun spotted something abnormal. He was unable to neither see nor hear anything, but he was sensing a strong hostility. He attempted to pinpoint where he was receiving the sensation.

With tens of thousands people shouting in the dome, it was simply too hard to precisely pinpoint where the hostilities were originating from.

He narrowed his eyes and focused as his sensation was proving to be impaired as well.

Then, it happened.

All of a sudden, a microphone that Fruma was holding flew out of her hands after making sparks. It occurred so suddenly, and she was completely lost in what was happening. Fortunately, it was enough for Juun to realize what was going on.

Juun spotted a few snipers from the ceiling. He quickly jumped onto the stage and forced Fruma get down.

"Down!" He exclaimed. The back dancers, realizing what was going on, ran off the stage at once. The crowd realized what had just happened and started to rush out of the dome.

It was utter chaos, and it was perfect for the snipers. They made shots continuously, and Juun was deflecting every shots with his energy blade. They were using laser files. Therefore, the shots were traveling at near speed of light. Fruma was looking up at him with amused eyes as she was observing how Juun was deflecting the shots continuously.

As if picking the worst moment, Serin jumped onto the stage and started to run toward Juun and Fruma.

"No!" He shouted, but with everyone rushing to evacuate the dome, it was too loud for Serin to hear Juun. The snipers changed their aim and aimed at Serin. One of them made a shot which struck right in front of Serin.

"Ah...!" Serin startled and did not know how to react in such a situation. She simply froze on spot.

"Damn it!" Juun suddenly raised Fruma body, and then he kicked her knees from back. As a result, she was forcefully kneeled down, and then Juun quickly ran toward Serin, grabbing her by collars and dragged her behind Fruma. It was the exact moment the snipers made their shots.

"Uh-!" Fruma's body shook as laser shots made impacts with her chest. Pallets of blood was strayed over Serin's face as the shots pierced her chest. However, because of nature of laser shots, the shots didn't exit its target.

Juun had just saved Serin by using Fruma as a meat shield literally. It was a choice he had to make and perhaps a logical choice for him. It was either save his wife or save someone he knew barely.

Fruma looked down at her bleeding chest slowly. "Uh...," She attempted to say something, but all she could do was moaning. Eventually, as she collapsed, she blurted, "It hurts..."

As she slowly collapsed backwards, Serin supported her.

The snipers were no longer shooting. Juun assumed that they had completed their objective and were withdrawing. He quickly drew out a few plasma knives and threw at the snipers or at least where he believed they were. Obviously it wasn't an accurate throw, but two snipers fell from ceiling. The rest of snipers were gone by the time he was preparing for a second throw. They were done with Fruma and her debt, he assumed.

Fruma was still kneeled but only because Serin was supporting her from her back. "Hang on...!" Serin exclaimed "Juun!"

When he turned back to see Fruma's condition, he realized instantly that she had no chance. She was shot in her center mass and was bleeding from five spots.

"That fucking bastard ...," Juun was mumbling cursing words one after another. "He's been giving you the drugs and has been placing debt on your name."

"What...?" Fruma didn't quite get the situation.

"He's a drug seller, but the ones that he's been giving you is out of his domain, so he purchased them from a gang. That's fine, I'd say. However, the issue is he hasn't paid the bill at all."

Fruma twisted her head as if she's trying to realize the situation. Then, pain struck her. "Argh..., hah - ! Hah...," She moaned hard in a labored voice.

A short moment of silence passed.

Fruma was lying down on Juun's lap. Her shirt was completely drenched with her own blood. Serin attempted to seize her bleeding, but there was simply no way for her to do anything at all. The wounds were simply too severe and large.

"Damn..., oh well," Fruma sighed briefly and let out of a short laugh. "This is it, I guess."

Juun was able to see how serious the gun-shot wound was. Her spine was disconnected, and her stomach was shattered into pieces. She could live if she could get a medical treatment right away, but that was not a possibility in this situation. She needed an immediate treatment. Not in a minute or two, she needed an immediate treatment.

"Yes, this is it." Juun concluded. "You have a minute or so."

Fruma remained silent for a few seconds, shocked yet again by Juun's bluntness, but she soon calmed down and smiled gently. Suddenly, she took off her necklace forcefully, which had been hidden all the time underneath her shirt.

"Take this..." With a badly shaking hand, she forwarded the necklace to Juun.

Juun looked at the necklace. It seemed ordinary necklace made of silvery material, but it had a rather large stone attached to the chain. The stone seemed to be an ordinary white jade.

"This necklace?" He asked.

She nodded as if it was too hard for her to speak anymore. She was inhaling more than exhaling. It was one of signs before death.

"Take it ...," She barely managed to say in a heavily labored breath. "It is called ... the singing stone ... the stone in middle ..."

"The singing stone ...?"

"Yes...", She nodded. "It is the legendary singing stone... The... real... one..."

However, he had no idea what the singing stone was. Still, he took it.

"Thank you..." She coughed blood. "Hah..., my life..." She laughed casually while coughing blood. "It sucked..." She gazed into air. She seemed peaceful momentarily before she started to shake her body hard.

Bloody tears started to drop. "God..., it sucked... Drugs..., sex ..., and everything..."

"I am sorry!" Serin repeated. "I am sorry!"

"Why... you sorry... He made the logical choice...," Fruma smiled or at least she tried to. "He chose to save you over a stranger..."

"Still... " Serin held Fruma's bloody hands firmly. "I am sorry!"

"Your hands are so warm ..." Fruma gazed into air. "So warm..., so unlike mine..." She exhaled for the last time, and her body became loose.

"I am sorry! I am sorry!" Serin cried out loud.

Sevn had just arrived and was running toward the stage. "Serin!" He shouted. "Are you alright?" He showed no regard for Fruma. Serin was sobbing and was in no condition to answer, so Juun replied instead. "She is fine. My client, however, is not."

Sevn glanced at Fruma. "Darnell's doing?"

"I wouldn't say so exactly, but he definitely had a part in this," Juun said.

"Where is he now?"

"Probably making a run for it."

"I am going to go and track him," Sevn, turning around, uttered. "How dare he." He was angry that Serin was almost hurt. To him, existence of Fruma and her death meant nothing.

"No." It wasn't Juun who said that. It was someone else.

Sevn twisted his head. "Pardon?"

"No." It was Wemer who had just entered the dome with lunny. "He is protected now."

"Protected?"

"As an authorized drug dealer, if he finds himself vulnerable to assassins and such, he is allowed to request protection from a nearby source."

"And he asked the Knights as his guards?!"

"Apparently, so," Wemer said while sighing. "We are to protect him for two weeks."

"He will have enough time to leave this country during that two weeks," Sevn said. "Ridiculous."

"I assume that is what he is trying to do," Wemer replied.

"That's bullshit!" Sevn exclaimed. "That's just bullshit!"

"I suppose he plans to escape to Freedom colony?" Juun said. "Is that right?"

Wemer shrugged. "Your guess is as good as mine."

Juun put the necklace into his jacket pocket and turned to Serin who was still sobbing, holding Fruma's hands.

"Serin, let's go."

"What about her?" Still sobbing, Serin asked.

Sevn tried to speak to her. "Serin, she's dea-" But his speech was cut by Juun.

"Alright," Juun answered. "She will come with us." He picked up her body and started to carry her. "Serin, let's go."

It was one of few times that Juun's white jacket was getting dirty. Dripping blood from Fruma's body started to drench his jacket.

"Juun," Sevn called out. "No, you can't do that."

At the same time, the police started to rush into the dome. Wemer showed them his identification. "The situation is under control," He explained. "Leave us be."

The police had no choice but to withdraw.

"Wemer," Juun called. "You owe us an explanation."

Wemer beamed a grin at him. "Indeed, that is why I came here. What do you intent to do with the body though?"

"An autopsy should be done. That should prove that Darnell has been giving her illegal drugs," Juun said. "In addition to his crimes."

"We cannot go after him," Wemer told everyone. "This is the weakness of the laws. I will explain everything at the HQ."

Juun narrowed his eyes.

The Knights returned to Heaven of Order. Serin was sent to home, and Sevn went to with her, and Fruma's body was undergoing an autopsy.

Wemer called Juun to his office for an explanation.

"We have enough evidences to warrant an arrest," Wemer explained. "But the problem is that he asked us for protection."

They were in Wemer's office which was a large office consisted of an antique desk and few other antique furniture.

"Answer me this though, why did he hire me? For what purpose?"

"He hired you because he wanted you to be the witness and wanted us to have evidences."

Juun crossed arms in a chair and sighed. "What is the weakness?"

"The weakness is that, even though we, the Knights, are elite police, we are not connected to any law enforcement. It means that we may have the evidences, but they aren't guaranteed to be accepted as verified evidences by ..., let's say, the police."

"That still does not explain why we cannot go after him."

"Well, he has asked us to protect him. His safety is on a higher priority than the arrest. This is a conflict of interest and an exploit in the system."

"So, even if we do pass this case to the police, it will take time to process the evidences?" Juun asked.

"More than two weeks, I am afraid," Wemer replied.

Juun stood up. "That's all I needed to know, thanks." He turned around to exit.

"Juun, you are planning to do something about him, aren't you?"

Without turning back to face Wemer, he replied. "That should be obvious."

"That's fine, but you must keep in mind that you must not be involved."

"I am very well aware of that."

"Good, I do not want to lose you. That is all."

"... Thanks."

A result of Fruma's autopsy was revealed on the same day. Her cause of death was obvious. It was not the aim of the autopsy however. The autopsy revealed that her healing ability was severely hindered due to the drugs she had been taking. It was noted that she might, just might, have survived if her condition was normal. What it meant that she could have survived long enough for an ambulance to arrive if it weren't for the drugs.

After reading the result, Juun recalled how she was talking about how her hands were "cold" during her last moment.

It took him few hours to write up a report to submit, then he was off work for the day. He met Sevn as he was leaving the headquarters.

"How is she?"

"She is fine, just a little shocked, that's all," Sevn answered casually.

"I see."

As Juun passed Sevn by, Sevn asked. "Where are you going?"

"Taking care of the business."

Sevn narrowed his eyes and said, "You mustn't be involved."

"I am aware."

However, Sevn grabbed his arm. "I can't let you go."

"I am just going home," Juun said indifferently. "You've known me for many years. You know I am not reckless."

"I do know," Sevn claimed. "But this has become personal, hasn't it?"

"Very true."

There was a silence moment between them.

"Are you letting me go or not?" Juun asked.

Sighing, Sevn let his arm go. "I will see you tomorrow."

Without answering, Juun left.

"I am home."

As Juun entered the house, he saw Serin cleaning the house throughout.

"Welcome back," Serin answered with a rather bright voice. It was as if nothing happened. In response, Juun also acted nothing happened. They had their usual dinner time and went to bed at their usual time at night.

Serin was fully aware what kind of position Juun was in and attempted to understand how he must have felt when the situation went wrong. After all, it was her fault that Fruma was killed. If she hadn't walked onto the stage, Juun wouldn't have to protect her by using Fruma as a shield.

Her solution was to act as if nothing happened.

When Juun arrived at work the next day, he saw Darnell at the HQ lobby. He was with few bodyguards and was conversing Wemer who was with Luny.

Darnell noticed Juun and said out loud, "Look, who is here! Hello, hello!"

Juun, amazingly, beamed a grin at him. "Welcome back, Darnell."

Darnell froze momentarily, but he reacted normally. "Yep, I am back. Now, excuse me..." He was back with conversing Wemer. Minding his own business, Juun proceeded to office area, which was a restricted area. He found Sevn there crossing his arms and tapped his feet. He seemed angered.

"Did you see Darnell on your way?"

Juun gave him a nod.

"I can't believe this. I saw him walk right in."

"What is he here for?"

"That I don't know yet. Wemer is talking to him to find out why."

After ten minutes, Wemer returned. He was stopped by Sevn while he was trying to enter his office.

"What the hell is he here for?" Sevn demanded.

"He's here to collect Fruma's belongings. He plans to send them to her family."

"You don't believe him, do you?" Sevn was furious.

"I cannot refuse him. He is after all her manager."

"He -was-," Juun added. At the same time, it struck him that perhaps Darnell was after the stone that she gave to him right before her death. "Sevn," He quietly called out.

"What?"

"Do you know anything about the singing stone?"

"Singing stone?" Sevn shrugged. "I don't have a damned idea."

Juun looked at Wemer, and he shook his head as well.

His suspicion became reality when Darnell complained that some of Fruma's belongings were missing. He would not state exactly what was missing however.

It was time to find out what the singing stone was. In other words, Juun needed to find a lore master.

Wemer informed Juun that luny might be helpful. Juun was doubtful because luny didn't appear to be interested in lore. Furthermore, his thug-ish appearance helped him only to doubt more. Still, he had nothing to lose. luny's office was only few meters away from his anyway.

It was Juun's first time entering luny's office. Juun was close to Sevn, but he kept a distance to everyone else in the Knights.

Upon knocking, Juun received an approval to enter from luny.

"Welcome, it's rare that you come to my office."

luny was a big muscular guy, and his desk seemed small compared to his large figure. His office was clean in a sense but there were hundreds of books filed on his desk as well as on floor. The books were filed up properly.

"I didn't know that you were a scholar," Juun said as he entered luny's office.

"I am not. Have a seat."

However, there was no chair. Realizing that, luny stood up from his chair and relocated some of books to make a temporary stool. "Here," He directed Juun to the stool. "This will do," He assured.

"Thanks."

luny was back in his chair soon and asked, "What brings here?"

Juun took out the bloody necklace with a white jade attached to it. "This seems to be called the singing stone. I am wondering what it is."

"The singing stone...?" luny twisted his head. "I have never heard of it, but I might have something." He quickly started to search on his computer. "Yep, I do have an entry about it." He started to read the entry out loud for Juun o listen.

"The singing stone is a charm. It is a necklace with an uncut gemstone. Its chain is usually made out of sterling silver. Its gemstone varies, but usually it is a jade or an emerald."

"... That's it?"

"Yes, that's all it says..." Juun scratched his head. "Hold on, let me see what else I have..." He started to look over the books. "The one I have on my computer is an all-purpose lore dictionary. Let me find a specialized one, like a mythology lore book."

He eventually found one. It did took ten minutes however. He started to search under alphabet S.

"Singing stone..., here," He said and started to read it loud for Juun. "A singing stone is a good-luck charm. It is a necklace with a silvery chain and a raw gemstone. Most of time, green gemstones are used. It is said that its gemstone absorbs life force of its bearer. When it is fully charged, its green gemstone would turn white. Should it turn black, however, it must be destroyed as it will curse whoever bears it."

Juun was staring at the necklace. "Well, it's white," He said casually. "What does it do when it turns white?"

"Um..., heh," luny let out of a somewhat nervous laugh. "It doesn't say."

"Pardon? That's the most important part."

"Hah," He was scratching his head again. "I know, but it doesn't say."

"You didn't purchase that book, did you?"

He froze as he was asked the question.

Juun sighed and said, "So, you did..."

After having a brief nervous laugh, luny told Juun to see his ex-wife.

"Your ex-wife is a scholar?"

luny nodded. "Yes, I think she specializes in folklore stuff. She dragged me into this lore stuff as well as you can see."

"Very well, where does she work?"

"Not far from here actually, she works in a library, she is a researcher in fact."

luny grabbed a piece of paper and started to write down an address. "There."

It wasn't far at all indeed. It was only four blocks away from the Knights HQ.

"I am going to give her a call and tell her that you will visit her now, is that alright?"

"Yes, I am going to see her right now."

Juun left as luny made the call. luny told Juun before he left his office that his wife's name was Ena, and find Ena at the library. What luny didn't tell Juun was that it was a private library. The entrance was open, so Juun entered.

"May I help you?" A guard approached quickly and asked. "May I see your ID?"

Juun showed wallet along his ID.

"A Knight?" He didn't seem to be too surprised and reacted calmly. "Sir, Knight, what brings you here?"

"I am here to see Ena."

"Ena?" It took a few seconds for him. "Oh, Professor Ena. Do you have an appointment?"

"I believe so."

The guard made a call and returned shortly after. "Yes, she is waiting for you at the 4th floor. Please proceed to the elevator."

When he arrived at the 4th floor, a woman in a white coat was waiting for him.

"Hello, I assume that you are Juun? luny called me that you'd be arriving at any moment."

Ugly was a good word to describe her. She was stocky and her hair was disheveled. To make it worse, she didn't have any makeup. It was clear that she didn't pay attention to her beauty.

"Woah, you are a shining man," Ena let out a short compliment. "You really are."

"Thank you." Though Juun could care less. "I assume you are Ena whom luny told me about."

She nodded firmly. "Yes, I am Ena. I am a researcher in this facility. My specialty is history."

"May I ask who owns this facility? It's rare to see private libraries."

"Well, all I can tell you is that this library is being used as a source of information as well as R&D for a company."

Juun did not ask further. He knew exactly what was going on with the library. Tax on research facilities were much higher than any other buildings. Therefore, whichever the company declared this research building as a library. It wasn't exactly breaking the laws, but it was a shady way of getting around tax.

"Let us go to my office. I believe both of you are busy men, yes?"

Juun agreed. Once they were in Ena's office, he went to the topic straightforward.

"What is the singing stone, and what is the story behind it?"

It took Ena sometime to speak. She was gazing as if she was trying to organize her thoughts. She cleared her throat as she began speaking.

"It was made by ESPs, and it was sold only in the Smugger's Den. Selling these was one of the methods for the cult to raise fund."

There was only one cult in the history of the Smugger's den, which was responsible for Milky way to our home tragedy. The cult was dissolved over a hundred years ago.

"Making money off those poor bastards, I don't know what the cult was up to at that time, but geez..." She was obviously disgusted. Juun had a first-hand experience in the event, and he knew that the cult wasn't forcing its members to buy anything. Granted, he wasn't aware of that they were selling necklaces, but he was positive that no one was forced to buy them. He wasn't about to start an argument however.

"I guess it gave them a ray of hope, false hope, but still hope nonetheless," Ena added.

Hundreds of millions died from the tragedy. It was the largest tragedy in the history of mankind.

"Why is it calling the singing stone then?" It was a genuine question.

"I am not sure why. Really, the necklace does not have to do anything with singing. Nonetheless, that is how we call the necklaces now. I have no idea how many are

still left. Most of the necklaces were lost in space since the refugees had it with them." She opened a drawer and took out a necklace. It looked identical to the one Juun had except that it was not covered in blood and its stone was light green.

"I have managed to get a hold of one for a research purposes," Ena explained. "It does have a very slight healing proprieties. It could, in theory, help maintain singers to keep their voice and throats in a better condition since necklaces, by nature, are placed around one's neck."

"Here is mine," Juun pulled out his and placed it on Ena's desk. She stared at it.

"A white gemstone? What's with the blood also?"

He gave her a silent answer, and she understood his silence.

"I see. This one has a story, huh."

"Yes, it will be better for you not to know it. Can you tell me about the white gemstone though?"

She had a magnifier in her hand and was inspecting it. "I thought it was only a made-up story...," She mumbled. "Or a fake to increase its value?" She kept on mumbling words.

"So?"

"Ah? Oh..., yes," She cleared her throat. "There was a story from the Smuggler's den about the white singing stone. I do not believe it but ... I suppose you are entitled to hear it."

She was silent again, organizing her thoughts, then she spoke. "When a bearer of the necklace is dead, it is said that the bearer's soul could be transferred to the gemstone and make it turn white."

It was no wonder that a scholar like Ena would not believe such a story.

"It is a ridiculous story, I know," She scoffed. "But that was what they seemed to be believing."

"And what happens when it turns white?"

"Well..., it is said that its bearer, if the gemstone chooses it, will be protected by the necklace. It is said that its bearer must have been extremely desperate to have it to happen though."

He was confused slightly. "What do you mean?"

"Listen, these necklaces were created during the time when the piss-poor citizens of the Smuggler's den wished to see Earth with their bare eyes. They were willing to die for the cause, and they did. They probably wanted to believe that someone would take them to Earth even if they die beforehand if they had the necklace. I think that is how the story was created."

Wanting to be on Earth even after their death, their spiritual home and hope... Juun recalled listening to something like that from a citizen of the Smuggler's den about a hundred years ago when he was involved in the tragedy.

"That is pretty much all I can tell you. The white gemstone could very well be a fake. It has happened before. A white singing stone is worth a lot, and few scammers have attempted to scam others by just replacing the green gemstone with a white one."

Juun took back the necklace. "Thank you very much for your knowledge. It has helped me a lot."

They exchanged a handshake. "No problem," She said. "I don't normally say this, but if you want to know more, I advise you to visit a legendary ESP. Those ESPs always seem to know a lot of this kind of forgotten lore."

"I see, thank you."

Ena's knowledge had certainly helped him to clear some of his questions, but it also gave him a few more questions.

Was Fruma from the Smuggler's den? It seemed like it was a visible possibility.

Was she earning money to immigrate to Earth? This, he had no clue. It simply hit him.

And perhaps the most importantly..., was her soul transferred to this stone? It was an illogical assumption, Juun knew that well.

He had been laying quietly since then. He was waiting for Darnell to act, and his chance came after five days. Wemer informed the knights that Darnell was to leave for the Freedom colony in few hours. As soon as he heard the news, Juun requested a month of vacation, and Wemer knew exactly why he was getting the vacation.

"Just let me repeat you that people must not find out that the Knights did it. I will be forced to fire you if you fail to conceal your actions," Wemer said with a firm voice.

"Do not worry," Juun assured. "He will die silently but painfully."

Wemer sighed. "I am not going to stop you for I know that this has become personal for you. But would you reconsider your decision? Darnell should not be underestimated. He used us perfectly, he has guts and intelligence to back that up."

Juun said no more. It was a silent answer to Wemer's plea.

"I see." Wemer beamed a gentle grin at Juun and offered a handshake. "Good luck."

Juun was a valued member of the Knights. There was no way that Wemer would want to fire Juun. He needed to keep Juun in fact for his skills and abilities. Juun had rarely demanded anything. He had carried out orders without complaints. This was one of rare occasions that Juun was stubborn, and Wemer was willing to let him have it his way.

Darnell left Heaven of Order with a private cruiser, and Juun headed to the Freedom colony with an express transport. Naturally, Darnell arrived at the colony earlier than Juun. Darnell arrived a day early in fact.

The Knights were mortal enemies of the Freedom colony. As soon as Juun showed his ID at a docking bay reception, the officer's smile vanished.

"Sir Knight, state your business," She demanded.

"I am here to murder someone," And Juun answered earnestly.

"Sir, your joke is not very appropriated."

"I am serious, ma'am. Could I speak to your boss?"

The officer did call someone, they were guards. Surrounded by roughly ten guards, Juun was formally being asked to leave the colony at once. Of course, he had no intention to leave. He was dragging attention on purpose.

"Sir, we ask you to leave quietly," The guards demanded. After receiving a silent treatment from Juun, the guards attacked him only to be knocked down in a matter of seconds by Juun's fist. However, he harmed them no longer once they were knocked out. The officer realized he meant no harm and they made a contact to Reed who was the second in charge of the Freedom colony.

All of a sudden, Juun had suddenly found his head in a water bubble.

It was Gid who answered the guards' distress calls. Gid, she was an ESP specialized in water.

"Leave now!" Gid shouted. "Or you will drown!"

However, to her surprise, Juun appeared to be unaffected by the water bubble. ESP attacks generally exploited weakness and doubts in people's mind, but Gid believed that there was no way for anyone, as long as they were human beings, would have a perfect, as in 100%, mindset. She believed that Juun was simply very resistant against ESP attacks.

'Sorry, Miss, Juun's voice echoed in Gid's head. 'I cannot withdraw.'

Juun swiftly punched Gid in her abdomen. It was a powerful punch, and Gid felt as if her internal organs were being smashed harshly.

"Ugh...," Unable to speak, she attempted to breath, but she simply couldn't. The next thing she realized, she was being punched again in her face. She was completely knocked down, losing her consciousness. The water bubble vanished as her consciousness faded.

The officer, who was behind a protected wall of glass, was in fear after seeing guards and an elite member were defeated hopelessly.

"Don't worry, ma'am," Juun told the officer gently. "I mean no harm at this point."

Juun waited at the exact same spot he was being told to leave. He needed to earn an entry, and he wasn't going to force his way in.

The officer who was in fear in the beginning started to calm down and actually started to become cooperative. She even left her protective booth to look after knocked-out guards.

Few more guards arrived who were pretty much knocked out as they arrived. When Reed arrived at the scene, there were roughly fifty guards who were either knocked out or keeping a distance from Juun.

"What the hell is going on here?" Reed demanded. He had another twenty guards with him. Juun recognized a familiar figure among them also.

There was Sae the little witch among them. In other words, fooling around was about to be over. The officer ran to Reed and explained what happened.

"Alright, Mr. Knight. What might be your name?" Reed demanded.

"Juun, it is."

"Mr. Juun, what is your business here?"

"I am after a man named Darnell."

Reed narrowed his eyes. "What do you want to do with him?"

"I am here to kill him."

Reed sighed. "Do you mind if we tender these you've defeated?" He was changing the subject to lose the tight air, and it worked as Juun agreed. The guards Reed had brought started to tender those who were knocked down.

Reed and Sae were looking down on Gid. Sae kneeled down to check her condition.

"She's been KOed," Sae concluded. "Alive but not kicking obviously."

"Darnell has arrived here, has he not?" Juun spoke.

Reed was hesitant to answer, so Sae replied instead. "Yes, he is here. We are currently processing his immigration application."

"Sae!" Reed exclaimed, and Sae shrugged.

"I think he is here for a legitimate reason," She said.

"What makes you certain?"

Sae looked at Juun. No, she was looking at something else. "What is in your pocket?" She asked.

Juun slowly took out the necklace. Reactions from Reed and Sae were completely opposite as Reed did not recognize it but Sae did.

"So, you have the singing stone," Sae said. "The real one."

"What is a singing stone?" Reed asked innocently.

And Juun said to Sae, "So, you know what this is."

Sae posed to attack all of a sudden. "I am going to have you fight you first," She declared.

Without responding, Juun initiated an offensive stance. As Sae charged toward him, her speed was beyond of what eyes of normal humans could track. To normal people's eyes, they could only see mirages of Sae's movement. Even to Reed's eyes, he could barely track Sae's speed.

Juun saw no weapons when Sae charged, so he quickly swapped his energy blade with a short blade. Sae wielded no weapons as she had no need for them. Her weapons were her fists enhanced by her powers.

In melee fights, Sae had a very short range, but she was deadly in her range. Juun could have kept her out of her attack range by simply fending her off at his distance. However, he chose to fight her directly. It was his pride as a swordsman. As their fight began, people could only see mirages of their movements, and even

Reed, who was a class A hyper human, was in awe for what was happening in front of his eyes.

It wasn't just a mere fight between two people. It was a fight between two class S hyper humans. Sae was throwing her fists as if they were rain, and Juun was blocking, reflecting, parrying, and occasionally riposting Sae's attack.

The fight went on for a few minutes until suddenly a small cut wound was made on Sae's right cheek. Her offense had just been broken. She had no defense as her offense was her defensive methods. She recoiled to regain balance, but by doing so, she had left a hole in her pattern, and Juun, as a skilled swordsman, did not lose that small gap of opportunity.

Sae had just regained her balance and was about to reinitiate her offensive pattern, and then she felt cold breeze to her left and saw that her left shoulder had been sliced away, and that her left arm had just fallen to the floor.

Juun's short blade had apparently sliced off her shoulder.

"Jesus...," Reed said in shock. "That is not possible...," And he was shocked to his bones. Sae was a legendary class S hybrid. No one had hurt her as badly as Juun had just done. As far as he could remember, the most severe wound he had seen Sae got was a cut or two, and that was, the most of time, caused by Sae intentionally by acting carelessly.

But this was different. Sae was giving everything she had, and she still had to recoil.

An uncomfortable smile emerged on Sae's face.

"Heheh," She laughed weakly. "Funny," She said. "It's been a long time." She picked up her shoulder on the ground and attached it right back. There wasn't blood as she didn't bleed much at all.

Juun was silent and was posed to defend.

Sae's smile vanished from her face at once, and her iris started to glow. Both of her arms were starting to evolve with black and white aura.

Reed opened his eyes widely and turned back to his men. "Get out of here at once!"

It was sudden, and they weren't quite reacting to Reed's commands.

"Damn it!" He shouted. "Get the hell out of here!"

A loud howling roar resounded in the area. It was caused whenever Sae's evolved fists made a contact with Juun's short blade. Furthermore, every time their attacks met a wave of shockwaves was generated which were demolishing the area.

Reed's men realized what he meant when he was shouting them to leave and started to rush to leave the area at once.

He turned back to Sae and Juun who were fighting on an epic level. He was amazed that Juun was parrying Sae's evolved fists with just a mere short blade.

Their fight went on for good seven minutes until Juun's short blade overloaded and exploded in air, apparently he had seen it coming and let it go right on time to save his hand from burning. A new replacement short blade was already in his hand.

And they continued to battle again.

Juun's second blade exploded at seventeen minute mark, and a third blade was in his hand shortly after.

"God, just how many replaces blades does he have?" Reed asked to himself. At the same time, he felt a presence behind and turned back. It was Lila.

"That's an epic fight they've got going over there," She said in a moderated voice.

"I figured you'd come here sooner or later," Reed responded.

"That was obvious. I was told that a whole section was being destroyed."

Reed and Lila were a long distance away from Juun and Sae's battleground. The whole area had been already reduced to mere rubbles.

"They need to stopped," Lila concluded. "They are going to destroy this whole deck at this rate."

"We cannot meddle in, ma'am. This is a battle between a class S hyper human and a class S hybrid. No one can stop them."

"True..."

Juun's third blade exploded at twenty four minute mark, and this time, he jumped backwards and equipped his long energy blade.

"Has he run out of short blades?" Lila wondered.

Juun's pose was different this time. He was posing an attack stance. Followed by a short howl from him, he disappeared into thin air as he charged forward Sae, and she charged toward him as well.

They ran past each other and stopped.

Sae's evolved fists started to lose its black and white glow.

"Hehe," She giggled. "I lost."

There was a long cut starting from her forehead to her abdomen. Normally, it would have been a fetal wound, but Sae was free of death.

She turned around as Juun also turned around.

"Juun, isn't it?" Sae asked with her usual joyful voice.

"Yes," And Juun replied her in a calm voice.

"I gave everything I had, and I still lost. If there is a class higher than class S, you'd well deserve it."

"Thank you."

Sae changed the subject. "The singing stone, you wanted to know, yes?"

"Yes."

She turned to Reed and Lila. "I am going to sleep for a bit. Grant him the entry and let's listen to his side of story." After saying so, she collapsed.

Reed was carrying Sae on his back, and Lila was escorting Juun to a hotel room. It was a five star hotel.

"Are you sure about this? This room seems expensive," Juun said. After all, he was still an enemy to the colony as well as a big troublemaker for them at the moment.

Lila grinned and responded, "Don't worry. This will come out of Sae's paycheck. A guard will visit you tomorrow and lead you to a secured place. We will talk there."

"Thank you."

It was an epic fight, even though Juun was victorious, he wasn't without his share of burden from the battle. He had received serve stress all over the body. He needed to rest, and Lila knew that.

The next day, a guard came to visit his room and escorted him to the HQ of the colony. He was taken to an elevator and went down until it reached the very bottom. He was then lead to a room. The area seemed to be very much void of people.

"Welcome," Lila said. Sae and Reed were also present in the room. "We are ready to hear your side of story. Once we hear it, we will determine whether we tell you our side of story or not."

Juun told them everything that had happened so far. He did tell them every single bit of the event. After listening to Juun, Lila, Sae, and Reed left the room for a talk.

"I cannot tell whether he is lying," Lila said.

"Are you implying that he is shielding his mind?" Reed asked.

"Actually, it is the opposite. His mind is wide open. I can read even his deepest inner thoughts, and I can tell that he has no doubts or whatsoever in what he does and thinks," Lila said

"What do you mean?"

"A lie is a lie because one has more doubts than certainty when one speaks of it. That is how ESPs and lie-detectors work. The machine detects it from muscle patterns when they lie, and ESPs find a pattern in one's mind when they are lying. If a lie has no doubt, then it will no longer be a lie even if it is indeed a lie. This is the case for him. I cannot tell neither he is speaking truth nor lie."

"More likely though," Sae said. "He is not lying."

The three agreed on that point.

"However," Lila added. "We cannot simply turn Darnell over to him."

It was matter of money as well as reputation. The freedom colony was a known place for criminals to escape to, and such people were their clients.

"If we do not cooperate with him, he will likely take the matter in his own hands," Sae responded.

They eventually returned to the room and told Juun, "Today is supposed to be the day we summon him," Lila said. "We plan to grant his application at this point."

"Is he a refugee?" Juun asked, though he knew the answer.

Lila explained that Darnell's immigration application type was "express".

Express immigration was for the wealth to escape to another country or faction. It would take only three days for an immigration process would complete once an applicant arrives in a foreign country. Of course, there was a heavy price. One third of one's asset would be taken away. However, it was a much better solution compared from becoming a refugee where one's rights and assets would be stripped away.

"What would you say if I pay one third of his asset. Will you abandon him then?" Juun purposed.

"One third would be twelve million credit. I don't think you can ..."

Juun replied swiftly even before Lila could finish. "I will pay that."

"I am willing to pay extra for your troubles as well as a small dent on your reputation," He added while emphasizing on "a small dent".

Lila knew immediately that Darnell was a criminal when she saw his application, but more than half of people who entered the colony was criminals. She had come to realize that, just because they were criminals, it did not make them necessarily bad people.

Some were seeking a second or even a third chance for their lives. Some were simply entering the colony to escape from unwanted attentions. A few used the colony as a place to hide until they could proceed to the Nebula.

The colony grew big enough to have its own "native" inhabitants. During early time of the colony, their first priority was to grant a safe haven for criminals. As the colony grew in size and started to have its own economy and community, their priorities shifted.

The colony started to confine "bad ones" from "good ones", let criminals pass and let inhabitants to live in peace. Of course, they still accepted criminals who wished to settle down without giving them much troubles.

There had been applications she wanted to turn away, and Darnell's application was a good example. He had the money for the express application but he would not state why he was immigrating. Granted, those who chose the express immigration had something to hide most of times. It was when Lila met Darnell in person for an interview.

As a class S ESP, she felt that something was critically amiss about him. She felt bad omen from him also. However, she had no reason to reject his application ... until now.

"Very well," Lila beamed a grin at Juun. "As long as we get the money, I do not see why not. Twelve millions plus three millions for covering up, do you agree?"

"Yes, I do. Would you do me a favor though?"

"Depends on what you ask, go on."

"You will reject his application, I know, but can you keep traces of documents which will indicate that he fled to the Nebula?"

What Juun wanted was erasing Darnell's trace.

"I was thinking the same," Lila said. "Hence the three millions extra. I don't want to be held responsible for the guy anyway."

It wasn't easy to make a quick payment of fifteen million credit, but after talking to his bank, Juun had managed to make the payment.

"I've just verified the payment," Reed came back to the room, informing Juun, Sae, and Lila.

"My job is done here. Sae will take over this." Having said so, Lila turned away from Juun and headed for the exit. "Good luck."

Reed left as well with Lila.

Juun made a comment, "That was quick and simple."

"Well," Sae laughed casually. "It's not like we are running a government here. We try to make things as simple as possible."

True, Freedom colony was neither a country nor a nation. It was a powerful faction with its own independent rights however.

"What now then?"

"Darnell will be called here for the final stage of his immigration. He has to come here since his signature will be required. He will come here through a secured tunnel, and that will be our chance."

Juun narrowed his eyes. "Our?"

"I will be tagging along."

The secured tunnel was used exclusively for VIPs and high-profile clients for the colony to move unseen.

When Sae was contacted by Lila that Darnell had been asked to come, she led Juun to an entrance to the tunnel. She mentioned that there were various entrances. This was apparently one of many entrances available, Juun was told. After entering a passcode, an access was granted.

The tunnel was more of a large hallway. It was wide enough in width and height that two cars could simultaneously pass through at once. There was a continuous line of light source on its ceiling, and it was dim.

"It is pretty dark here," Juun commented.

"It always is," Sae replied.

While they were advancing into the hallway deeper, Sae spoke, "It will take us good five minutes to reach a good spot."

Juun didn't really have an idea of what "a good spot" was. Regardless, he nodded.

Sae continued, "We have some free time in our hands, so I will answer your questions regarding the singing stone. First of all, tell me what you know briefly. I will fill gaps."

Juun told Sae everything he knew, especially what professor Ena told him.

Sae seemed satisfied somewhat. "Yep, that professor knows it quite well. I am amazed. Though, she is wrong somewhat," She shrugged. "But then, she is pretty damn accurate."

She told Juun that the cult did not sell the necklaces. The cult gave away the necklaces to its members.

"That's some serious money involved," He remarked. "The cult had over six hundred million members."

"Yep, still the cult gave the necklaces away. 99% of their members left for Earth. The necklace you have now is remain of that 1%."

Sae seemed to know a lot, a lot more than Juun had initially suspected. He wanted to know more about the singing stone as well as the cult.

"So, souls exist?"

Sae snickered casually. "Nope, such a thing as a soul does not exist. Every gemstone has a certain capacity to store memories."

Juun narrowed his eyes. "Store memories?"

"Hmmm," Sae groaned. "Perhaps, that's not the correct way to put it. Let's say ... that it can be programmed."

It wasn't any better.

"All gemstone has the same capacity as long as it is the same size. When one's will is strong enough at one's death, it is possible for a gemstone to be programmed to mimic one's personality."

"That's very alien," Juun remarked. "Hard to believe."

"Yes, a gemstone needs to be tamed beforehand though. ESPs can do that."

"Are you implying that the cult leader was an ESP?"

Sae smiled and said, "Yes, he was an ESP, only class B, but he was an ESP nevertheless."

"You sound as if you knew him personally."

Sae shook her head. "I did not know him personally, but I did meet him in person a few times."

They were walking forward while chatting, and at one point, Sae stopped.

"We wait here." Having said so, Sae sat on ground, cold steel ground. Juun leaned his back against a wall on the other hand.

Sae stood up again and said, "Let me make this place a little darker ... We are going to need some shadow." She located a hidden control panel on a wall and tuned already dimming light even darker. As a result, walls and its vicinity were shadowed which effectively placed Juun in stealth who was leaning against a wall.

"Why is it called the singing stone?" Juun continued the conversation in shadow.

"Well, it sings. It's rare but it does humm at times."

"Is that all?"

"Yes, that was why it was named so."

"You sensed the singing stone when I had it with me. What was it that you sensed?"

"Wills, four wills."

"Four, you say?" Juun recalled that Darnell was a manager for five celebrities, including Fruma. "How much does a white singing stone worth?"

"It's worth at least one hundred millions. It's prized for its humming property."

"Have you read Darnell's profile?"

"Yep, I did. He would not submit his own profile, so we had to dig around a bit."

Juun made a brief groan and said, "He was a manager for five celebrities, and you said you sensed four wills."

Sae understood what Juun was trying to imply. "That's possible. He may have been intentionally trying to create a singing stone and auction it."

And obviously it did not go well for Darnell.

"Either way," Sae added, "We will find out soon enough."

There was silence between them which lasted until numerous footsteps were approaching.

"Remain in shadow," Sae whispered.

Darnell appeared with nine armed guards. As soon as the guards spotted Sae, they aimed their guns at her.

"Wait, she is the one they sent," Darnell stated. "That small figure ..., Sae the witch, right?"

Sae scoffed. "Sae the little witch."

"What?"

"Little, you forgot little."

"Oh, yes, of course." He cleared his throat. "Your reputation precedes you."

Sae laughed pleasantly. "So does yours."

He cleared his throat again. It was obviously uncomfortable for him. "You are here to escort me, I presume?"

"Nope!" She declared out loud. "I am here to inform you that your application has been rejected."

"Rejected?!" He exclaimed. "That's not possible!"

"Well, duh, it happened. Get over it."

The guards were confused as well. They were hired to escort Darnell successfully to the freedom colony HQ. Now that Darnell going to the HQ wasn't a possibility, they weren't sure whether their contract was valid.

Darnell realized what was going through their heads. "Don't worry! You will still be paid. The contract is valid," He assured.

"However," Sae said. "I advise you guys to leave him, for this will be his last moment."

"You have no right to harm me! My application may have been rejected, but I am still a valid client of this colony. I need to talk to your boss."

"You talk to no one," She declared. "You may talk to him though." Sae's smile had vanished from her face. "You've better look behind you."

Darnell and his guards looked behind, but there was no one until Juun came out of shadow.

"You...!" Darnell took a few steps backwards. "How are you here?"

Juun beamed a bright smile at Darnell. "Long time no see."

"Ugh..." Darnell turned around to face Sae. He approached to her at once. "Let me talk to your boss. I will adjust the term. Two third! Or more !"

"Why do you fear him? Have you done something bad? Look behind you again."

As told, Darnell looked behind again. Juun was still there but without a smile on his face and with a deactivated energy blade in his right hand.

"Hic..." Darnell turned back to negotiate with Sae, but her fists were evolving in black and white and her iris were glowing.

"The four spirits talked to me," She said, "They showed me their last moments."

Darnell was becoming pale.

Sae glared at the guards. "You may leave, or you will die here. It is your choice."

The guards didn't know how powerful Juun was, but they did know Sae's reputation. The guards turned back and ran. Darnell started to run along with the guards as well.

As they were running past Juun, who was doing nothing to stop them, his energy blade activated all of a sudden.

Darnell screamed with pain as both of his ankles were sliced clean. With no foot, he tumbled like a log.

"Guards..., help..."

But no guards answered him.

"There is no law to make a use of for you here, Darnell," Juun said quietly and slowly.

Darnell was crying out with excruciating pain. Juun and Sae were standing there simply and waited Darnell to calm down.

After a while, Darnell was no longer crying out painfully. He was panting however.

"Was it money?" Juun asked him indifferently.

Darnell didn't answer and was panting. After a while, his panting died down.

"You can't...," He spoke in a labored breath. "Do this to me. I am still ... a citizen of the union. I am protected by the ..."

"Oh, shut it." Sae jumped on Darnell and forced his mouth open, gouging out his tongue without any mercy.

Darnell, without a tongue, could no longer scream but rather emit a loud hiss, and he started to choke on his own blood as bleeding was filling his throat.

Sae forced his head face the floor so that bleeding would not choke him.

Ignoring Darnell's condition, Juun asked Sae.

"What did the stone tell you?"

Sae was playing with Darnell's tongue joyfully in her bloody hands and said, "They showed me their last moments, how they died."

"How did they die?"

"The first one was raped to death. The second one was drown in a pool after paralyzed. The third one bled to death from a car accident. The last one was shot numerous times on a stage."

Juun narrowed his eyes. "The last one" was Fruma.

"Time to end this," Juun declared, and Sae walked off Darnell slowly with his tongue in her hand.

Darnell, knowing what was about to happen, attempted to crawl but soon found both of his hands chopped off by Juun's blade. He had already lost a large amount of blood. As his consciousness was slowly fading with blood loss, the excruciating pain was becoming bearable. He was moaning with pain still, but he was no longer resisting strongly against his inevitable upcoming demise.

It was as if he was being drugged and was failing to realize the inevitable outcome.

Juun realize what was going on after looking into Darnell's hazy, focus-less, eyes, so he decided to end it once for all. He beheaded Darnell with a sharp slash. As soon as he was beheaded, Sae threw away his tongue as if she lost interest.

"All is done," Juun declared.

"Yep done," Sae said in an agreeable voice. "Do you feel that the justice has been served?"

"Justice?" Juun sneered. "I am not in a position to speak such a term. I did not perform any sort of justice. I have done simply what I felt I should have done."

Sae wasn't going to argue with him. "Alright, his body will be disposed soon. On surface, he has fled to the Nebula. No one will locate his precise whereabouts."

"Very well." Having said that, he took out the singing stone and threw it onto Darnell's body, then he turned around and started to walk away.

"Wait, what did you do that for?" Sae picked up the singing stone. "Why throw it away?"

"I have no need for it anymore. Revenge has been done."

"You can sell it. It should cover your loss easily."

"If I do sell it which I would never do anyway, I would go down to the same level as the corpse here," He said indifferently.

"Can I take it then?"

"Be my guest."

Juun left the Freedom colony immediately.

It was dark. It wasn't entirely dark. Candle sconces were found along its wooden-texture walls. The sconces were providing just enough light to distinguish what were in the place.

It seemed to be a large library, an old-fashioned one at that. It had antique shelves full of actual paper books, which was a rare scenery in the era where paper books had been replaced by e-books. The antique shelves were lined up by walls, so the center area was devoid of objects. There was one person in the center area. The person was reading a book lazily.

Sae teleported right into the room, not far from the figure.

"Heya, mentor," Sae said. "Long time no see."

It was Cecil Klisis in the library.

"You don't come here unless you want something done," Cecil said in a low voice. "Does it have something to do with the stone you are carrying?"

"Yeppers." Sae took out the necklace.

It was hard to tell what it was due to lack of light, but Cecil identified it instantly.

"The singing stone," He said. "With four independent memories."

"Yes, I want to forge it into an energy blade."

"For whom?"

Cecil' voice was low as if he was whispering, but his voice was clear as if it was loud.

"For a guy who I owe lots of blades."

"The name."

"Juun."

Cecil paused reading and face Sae. "He is the one who has ended Karl."

Karl was a member of the Hammers, and he was Devon's husband. In other words, he was Hiean and Brellia's father. Karl was on a remote mission given by Cecil Klisis. His contact was lost for seasons until it was revealed that he was killed by Juun.

"Yeah? That's none of my concern."

"Indeed," Cecil said indifferently as if he agreed with Sae.

Sae was a blade smith as well, but she chose to let Cecil do it because she knew Cecil was a better, if not the best, energy blade smith in the current known universe.

For what she knew, the singing stone was a unique case for it contained four independent memories that weren't trying to dominate each other. While she did not tell everything she knew about the stone to Juun, she felt compelled to take the best course of the action for the stone.

The stone was bound to Juun because he achieved revenge they sought out, and one of its memories had a strong emotional tie to him.

A season passed ever since Juun returned. Nobody asked where he had been and what he did. On surface, he took a vacation that was delayed by his bodyguard job.

He was having a dinner with his wife, Serin, in a restaurant. Juun had not told her what truly happened to Darnell. What he did tell her was that Fruma was revenged.

Serin was a pure and an innocent person, but she was no fool, and she knew Juun well enough that his hands were soaked in blood.

They were having a quiet and nice dinner. They used to go to a lesser expensive restaurants, but after Serin found out that Juun's appearance did not fit well with lesser dignified environments, she chose to go to five-star, expensive and exquisite, places where Juun was fitting much better.

"You know," Serin said. "I've been thinking."

Juun was drinking red wine quietly.

Serin continued, "I've been thinking of relocating your parents to this planet."

"Is that so?" Juun's reaction was dull at the best.

"Are you not at all against my idea?" Serin was a little offended by Juun's reaction because it was as if Juun didn't care a bit.

"If you want to relocate them, that will be fine with me. I have no problem with your idea," Juun said after putting down his glass on the table. "However, that is only if my father is able to be employed on this planet."

Juun believed that a man of a house required a job to function properly. He could support his parents fine without a trouble, but he did not want to hurt the man's ego even if the ego was tiny and weak.

Serin did not understand Juun's point clearly, but she did feel that Juun was caring about them in his own way.

"I will let you take care of everything but keep in mind that he has to be employed here," Juun reassured.

They were continuing their meal. All of a sudden, a disturbance was occurring in a lobby of the restaurant.

"Hey, you can't enter without an appointment, where are your parents?"

"Hey, kid! Where are your parents?"

"Get out of my way. I need to see someone."

Juun recognized the voice immediately. It was Sae's voice. It was apparent that she was being mistaken as a lost child and that she was attempting to force her way into the restaurant.

"Just get the hell out of my way!" And a waitress was brutally thrown into the dining area where Juun, Serin, and others were enjoying their meals. The waitress had a bloody nose.

"Security!" The waitress shouted.

Two men in black rushed into the lobby only to be knocked down by Sae. After seizing resistance, Sae entered the dining area where people started to panic.

"What's going on?" Serin exclaimed.

"Stay still, she means no harm," Juun replied.

"You know her?"

Sae looked around and spotted Juun, and she walked to him straight away.

"Heya, long time no see," She casually greeted Juun.

"You do realize that you are a wanted criminal," Juun said.

Sae sneered. "Like they can catch me."

Juun knew he could not arrest her, either. He may have defeated her in a fight, but that was only because Sae chose not to flee and fight to the end. If she chose to flee, it was unlikely that Juun would catch her.

Sae glanced up and down at Serin. "So, this is your woman? She seems too plain for you though. But each to their own."

Serin knew well she was "too plain", but it was certainly unpleasant to hear it from a stranger, especially from a childish-looking person.

"Who is this girl?" Serin demanded.

"This is Sae the little witch," Juun declared, and people heard it. There was a brief chaos where people ran out of the dining area.

Sae giggled as Juun did not forget the "little" part.

"She's the one?" Serin opened her eyes widely with a surprised look on her face. "The cold assassin? But..." She pointed at Sae who was smiling. "She's just a kid?"

"I am much older than you are actually," Sae replied.

"For what purpose have you come here?" Juun asked.

Sae had a small backpack on her back. It seemed to be full of something, and she pulled what appeared to be a small rod out of it with ease.

"Here."

It wasn't a rod. It was a deactivated energy blade. Its blade shell seemed to be unique. It was white and it had strange rune carvings of an unknown origin.

"It is called the singing blade," Sae added. "Its core lens is the singing stone."

Juun stared at the blade. Even though he was not an ESP, he was feeling a strong bond with it.

"It is yours. It is bound to you." She placed the blade on the table. "Hold it."

Juun struck out his hand slowly and touched the blade. The moment he laid his fingers on it, he felt as if some sort of sharp chilling sensation was urging through his arm. He held it tight and lifted it.

"Activate it," Sae said.

Juun attempted to find an activation button, but there was none. Sae knew what he was thinking. "It has no button for activation. It is no ordinary blade. When you want to activate it, it will activate."

Juun was having a hard time swallowing the concept, but eventually he managed to activate it. As the blade came to life, its lenses gathered white energy particles from its core. It appeared as if it was in a progress of shooting a laser in a slow motion.

It took a few seconds to gather particles and shot out a bright white, pure white, energy beam in a shape of a sword.

"Wow...," Serin said in awe. "That's so pretty..."

It was that moment which what seemed to be four ghostly figures embraced Juun from all directions briefly before it vanished. And it was also that moment that Juun's consciousness was suddenly sucked into darkness.

Juun was standing in a place completely void of any light, but he was able to see his own figure. He looked around only to be clouded by complete darkness. He did not believe it was an ESP's doing as he had never been affected by an ESP in his entire life.

Four ghostly figures appeared a distance from Juun. He recognized one of them, Fruma. It wasn't hard to figure out that the four figures were the ones who were murdered by Darnell and likely "the memories" of the singing stone. One after another, they bowed to Juun, then they pointed sideways to their left where another figure appeared. It wasn't a ghostly figure this time. The figure had vivid colors and shape, and most importantly, Juun recognized the figure.

"The Crimson wizard, Cecil Klisis," Juun remarked.

"Cecil?" The vivid figure replied with a mysterious smile which Juun could not make a meaning out of. It was almost as if the smile was a form of remorse.

"Cecilia more likely."

"Cecilia? Is that his true name, Cecilia Klisis?"

The vivid figure was wearing a robe, a white robe with red linings. It was an exquisite robe that resembled a dress more than a robe.

"No, it is just Cecilia."

"Who are you?"

The vivid figure replied with another mysterious smile. "You don't ask where you are."

"That is not important, is it?"

"Indeed, it is not important. You are here, and that is what matters," The vivid figure said. "Welcome to the Seventh sense."

"The Seventh sense? I am not an ESP. I do not possess the sixth sense."

"ESP's sixth sense is an ability by birth. The Seventh's sense is a privilege."

Juun had never heard of the Seventh sense, and he was not interested.

"And you are ...?"

The vivid figure beamed a smile at him and said, "You do not seek anything, and you do not need anything. Be gone, the white knight."

Juun was struck by a powerful invisible push. As he was being blown away, the darkness started to collapse.

"Juun?" It was Serin's voice. "It is beautiful."

He was back to himself. He was staring at the blade, but what he was really doing was trying to figure out what had happened and how much time had passed. It appeared that only a fraction, if any, of a second passed even though the mysterious encounter seemed to have lasted more than just a few seconds. It was apparent that Serin did not see what Juun saw and she also did not notice the four ghostly figures that embraced Juun.

"My task is done. I am outta here." Sae turned around and started to walk away.

Juun had no intention to stop her, but he had a question that rose from the mysterious encounter.

"Who crafted this?" He asked Sae who was walking away.

"I think you know now. Fare well, the white knight." was what she said before she left the dining area.

- *Fin.*