

The year was 1004, thanks to its revolutionary tactics The Reeveian kingdom of the west was making impressive victories in recent battles but the sheer size of the large Imperial army of the east was preventing "Reeva" from making the push they desired into imperial territory . The second Magis war was reaching a stalemate. The only non-constant variable was the number of casualties in both sides, the number of burned down houses and villages, the number of newly orphaned children and the number of freshly dug graves.

Today I stood in one of these recently burned villages. I looked around me, there was no signs of any survivors. The place was crawling with Reeveian soldiers moving from one house to another, it looked like they were taking the food and supplies they found. " the spoils of war" was the term the Reeveian army often used, a less polite term would be " stealing".

I walked inside a fancy military tent, it was bigger and better looking than the rest. Inside a tall man with an elegant armour stood facing a wooden war table . He was engaged in conversation with a female soldier who had a serious look on her face. I decided to put more weight on my feet and the sudden noise of my footsteps caught the attention of the tall man.

He turned around and stared at me suspiciously:

" You're not one of my soldiers? Who let you in here? " The tall man spoke with a menacing stare.

I noticed the female soldier next to him reaching to her sword and eyeing me down, she was probably trying to estimate my strength. Most soldiers in such situation will be looking around trying to spot other intruders but she choose to focus on me instead. This soldier definitely had special training.

The tall man waited for my answer but whatever I choose to answer him by will be a waste of time so instead I slowly reached in to my pockets, took a small sealed envelope and tossed it in the direction of the tall man.

The tall man's expression quickly changed to an inquisitive look as he bent down to pick up the envelope.

"How dare you make the captain picks up something off the floor "courier"? I shall cut you right now for this grave insult " the female soldier yelled out as she pointed her blade in my direction.

" it's okay First Lieutenant, stand down " The tall man said as he waved his right hand at the female soldier.

" But sir? " the female soldier replied with confused eyes...

" The seal on this envelope, this is the high council's personal seal " the tall man replied .

" The high council? " the female soldier said.

The second he recognized the seal was the moment I confirmed my assumptions. Only few people in "Reeva" can identify this seal and based on his distinctive armour and the fact that the female soldier called him "Captain", this man is most likely " Captain Alexander Welkin ". The renewed officer of the first Reeveian army but why is he stationed in a place like this?

While I was having these thoughts, the tall man finished reading the letter and raised his eyes to face me and said:

" Can you provide me with details of this mission? "

" I'm not authorized to share such information " I replied as I locked eyes with the tall man.

" What's going on Captain? " the female soldier suddenly spoke, her eyes were seeking answers she desperately desired.

" This is a direct letter from the high council, we are ordered to provide any assistance to this man in his missionit says here his mission takes top priority..... " the tall man explained. I noticed his fingers suddenly gripping the edges of the paper as he reached the final part of the letter ...

"This man's official name is "13"A high traitor to the Reevian kingdom but for the duration of this mission he shall be considered a "soldier" and shall receive the same privileges of that of a soldier " the tall man finished explaining the content of the letter ...A hint of surprise was mixed into his words.

" A TRAITOR? This guy is a "Number "? " the female soldier stepped forward with her sword pointing at my legs.

" At ease first lieutenant " the tall man gently patted her shoulders...

" But sir, you heard what the letter said, this man is a traitor. He's armed and possibly dangerous. I will cut off both his legs just to be safe " the female soldier replied without taking her eyes off me.

She was right, I am a traitor or as most people would refer to me a " **Number**". In the kingdom of Reeva, certain acts could make you branded as a "traitor". The high council doesn't believe in executing "traitors" because that would rid us of our sins nor do they believe in impersonating traitors because that would be wasting food and shelter on us. Instead Numbers are stripped off their name and land and forced to live the rest of their lives shunned and humiliated by the rest of the population. We are stripped of our humanity and looked upon like wild savage animals.

" Indeed this man standing in front of us is a "traitor" but the high council has ordered us to consider him a " soldier" and to aid him in his mission so that's what we will dodo you understand first lieutenant? " The tall man declared as he stood in front of the female soldier urging her to lower her blade.

The female soldier was hesitant at first but ultimately followed his orders. The tall man looked at me one more time and said:

" So ...How exactly do you expect us to aid you in your mission?"

" I need 4 soldiers: an archer, a"

Before I could even continue the tall man interrupted my words...

" I've lost 2/3 of my men capturing this region and we are on the verge of attacking "Vastis", I cannot spare any soldiers. All I can offer you is Intel and supplies "

The tall man's words were cut and dry. I anticipated the Reevian army to be launching an attack on the town of "Vastis" soon, this is exactly why I was only asking for 4 soldiers but I failed to anticipate the severity of their casualties.

" I can't accomplish my mission without soldiers " I quickly replied.

This mission was near impossible in the first place, without any backup the chances of success are 0 percent.

The tall man contemplated for a second. Any other military captain would have just kicked me out by now but this tall man was different. He seemed to care. I guess the rumours I heard about him were true.

“ You can take 1 soldier with you to aid you on your mission. This is the best I can do ” the tall man finally replied.

Just one soldier, huh? That’s not enough at all but I don’t think I have another choice. If I’m given the choice to pick out one soldier to accompany me then the obvious way to go is to pick out the captain but there is no way he will agree to abandon his post to aid a traitor on an unknown mission .

“ I pick her ” I replied pointing my finger at the wide eyed female soldier standing there.

The point of view of first lieutenant Karolina Porze

Year 1002.

The eastern border of the kingdom of Reevea.

The command tent on the outskirts of “Vastis”.

First lieutenant “Karolina Porze” of the first Reevian army

I feel disgusted, I feel really disgusted just standing here in the presence of this “Number”. This isn’t right, this isn’t right at all. Why are we ordered to help someone like him and why is the captain even talking to him right now? That letter could be fake, he could have faked that seal. Why is the captain trusting the words of a “Number ”?

He is even offering him to take a soldier with him to God’s know where. This is wrong, this is very wrong.

“ I pick her ” the disgusting number said as he pointed his finger at me.

What ? What ? whaaaaat?

Has this lowly traitor gone mad? Does he really expect me to go anywhere with him other than to see him hanged? If only the captain wasn’t here, I would cut both of his legs and call it an accident.

These thoughts was raging in my head when all the sudden the captain said words I never thought I will ever hear:

“ Understood. First lieutenant you are here by ordered to offer your assistance to this man on his mission ”

“ WHAT? CAPTAIN?” I quickly replied, please tell me he is joking.

“ I know very well how you feel first lieutenant but this is not negotiable. You are to aid this man on his mission and then report back here as soon as possible. This is a direct order ” the captain spoke each word he uttered cut deeper and deeper inside of me. I couldn’t believe my ears.

WHY?? WHY??? WHY?

This word continued to ring in my ears. I turned my gaze to the disgusting traitor in front of me. A deep feeling of hatred engulfed my heartA hatred that was targeted toward one creature and one creature only. A hatred that won’t ever disappear until I see his severed head rolling by my feet.

The point of view of Captain Alexander Welkin

Year 1002.

The eastern border of the kingdom of Reeva.

The command tent on the outskirts of "Vastis".

Captain "Alexander Welkin " of the first Reevian army

The first lieutenant is looking at me with disappointed eyes. I feel if I wasn't her superior officer she would be throwing some harsh words at me. Of course I understand the reason for her frustration. Talking to a "number" not along aiding them is considered the most disgraceful insulting act a Reevian can face. This hatred for "Numbers" is as ancient as our noble kingdom. My father made sure to instil this in me since I was a kid so I'm no exception. I despise and loath "Numbers" from the bottom of my heart.

That said, the moment this person entered my tent I could sense something very peculiar about him. He was wearing horrible light armour, the type bandits won't even wear. His appearance was far from presentable and it looked like he didn't have a decent meal in days yet he stood firmly. He had both hands behind his back and was intentionally putting pressure on his right leg. He looked at me with a blank stare in his eyes and kept his words short.

I could feel his lack of respect for me, his lack of trust. He was a mere number, a traitor to the empire yet he looked at me as if I was nothing. As if I was just a necessary conversation in his way.

I don't know what mission he was tasked with and why would the "high council" even rely on a traitor but I know this is something very crucial to the future of our noble kingdom. I can't explain why I have such feeling. I just do.

This is why I agreed to his request. I have no other reason.

As I observed the number leaving my tent with the first lieutenant walking behind him with a disgusted look on her face. A certain image crossed my eyes. An image of a tale so old I almost forgot about it. I tried to remember the details of this tale but I couldn't no matter how much I tried.

Eventually I gave up thinking about it and focused on the war table in front of me. Another battle is at our door. I need to focusI need to focus for my sake, for the sake of the Reevian people and for the sake of our glorious noble kingdom.

The point of view of 13

Year 1002.

The eastern border of the kingdom of Reeva.

Near "Vastis"

"13"

After leaving the tall man's tent, I left the burned village behind me and started heading east. We were entering imperial territory, this is perhaps why my companion has chosen to wear a cloak.

"Where the hell are you taking me anyway?" my newly found companion asked, it seems she has resigned herself to reality and was just impatiently counting the seconds to leave my company.

" East" I replied pointing to that direction.

" I need something more specific Number!! " my female companion added, this time her irritation was quite visible on her face. This was the first time I paid attention to her facial features. She had long blond hair and deep blue eyes, her skin was fair and pale. She had no makeup on but her face shined bright. She was a pure blooded Reevian. This is most likely why she choose to wear a cloak. She must have realized that her unique features won't blend in nicely with the common imperial look

I on the other hand had black hair and brown eyes, regular features found in almost every Imperial city and village so there was no point in hiding my face.

" East of Vastis " I finally replied after mesmerizing in her attractive face.

" Are you doing this on purpose Number? Do you mean to insult me? " my female companion replied with an angry tone.

" Not really"

" Ughhh, as a first lieutenant of the Reevian army, I hereby command you to tell me our destination you disgusting lowlife creature " the female soldier declared as she looked down at me with disgust.

But while she was awaiting for my answer, my focus was on something else entirely. We been walking on this wooden path for a while now and the same presence continued to follow us. Someone was hiding on top of those trees. I'm sensing 3 maybe 4 men with light weapons.

They were waiting for the chance to ambush us. Forest bandits maybe?

If we take a turn here and start running we should be able to easily avoid their ambush. I doubt they will even bother chasing us.

But instead of making a run I decided to purposely come closer to the trees and just like I predicted a couple of armed men suddenly jumped in front of us .

" Who do we have here? Travellers? Welcome, welcome to "Vastis" my dear friends. My name is "Dean " " the person who spoke was an old looking man with a scar on his left cheek. A menacing grin decorated his rugged face.

" Who are you? What do you want? " My female companion quickly draw her sword and locked eyes with the old man. She must have understood the situation.

“ Oh...A woman’s voice? Why are you hiding your lovely face my dear lady? Won’t you honour us with your beauty ” the old man with a scar spoke elegantly. He must be interested in seeing if my female companion’s face makes her worthy of being sold to a slaver.

“ Step away and move out of our way if you know what’s good for you ”my female companion declared as she held tighter to her sword.

“I’m afraid that might not be possible my lady ” the old man with a scar grinned as he gestured to his men. This situation is becoming rather interesting.

“ They’re fucking bandits. I’ll take the 3 guys on the right you go for the remaining two ” my female companion added as she looked at me with a serious stare. She seems to have formulated a plan in her head.

“ Uh, this might not be the best time to mention this but I’m afraid I don’t really know to swing a sword ” I quickly replied with a confused look on my face.

“ WHAT? You gotta be fucking kidding me. ? Who doesn’t know how to use a fucking sword these days? Were you born on a fucking pig farm? ” My female companion looked at me. Her anger and disgust has increased tenfold and the small vein on her forehead was pulsating. She was really pissed.

After giving me one final look of disgust, my female companion jumped forward. She took a unique stance and swung her sword at the nearest bandit. Her sword moved at such an incredible speed the bandit failed to even notice her attack. The rest of the bandits watched as their comrade’s severed head rolled on the floor. Such sight stunned them for a second as their brains tried to process what they’ve just witnessed.

Filled with anger and fear the rest of the bandits attacked at once. But their effort was in vain as my female companion dodged their attack very easily and delivered swift precise slashes severing their limbs and body organs like they were made of butter.

My female companion swung her sword so beautifully one final time finishing off the old man with the annoying grin. A gust of wind blew over as her sword pierced his chest uncovering her beautiful elegant face. The whole sight was so magnificent it could have easily been mistaken for a work of art

It was exactly like I thought. This woman, this soldier is fucking incredible.

The point of view of Dean

Year 1002.

The eastern border of the kingdom of Reevea.

Near “Vastis”

The leader of the forest bandits “Dean ”

Yes, yes, just like taking candy from a child. Another group of hopeless travellers has fallen for my glorious trap. I was worried for a second because I felt our presence was compromised by that weird looking man but I guess my worries were for nothing.

Not only did we manage to corner 2 hopeless looking peasants but one of them is a woman. Oh my, it been so long since we’ve caught a woman and she looks so young from her voice. She should fetch me a very good price.

“ Step away and move out of our way if you know what’s good for you “ the woman spoke as she branded her sword at me. How cute, it’s so rare to see an imperial woman using a sword. Can she even carry that thing? Once I’m done with her male friend I will make sure to give her my meat sword to grab into Haha.

“I’m afraid that might not be possible my lady “ I spoke as I gave the signals to my men. Let’s not wait a single second more.

The woman seemed to be whispering with the weird looking man. It looked they were arguing about something. Huh? Why is he stepping back? Don’t tell me he won’t even try to defend himself.

Haha, what a fucking coward.

But while I was watching the weird looking man with a big grin on my face. The woman suddenly moved with incredible speed and swung her sword. The next thing I saw was the head of “Tuck” rolling on the floor like it was never attached to his bulky body.

W-What?.....What the fuck just happened?

Before I lifted my gaze off the severed head of my strongest fighter, the rest of my men were laying on the ground drowning in a pool of their own blood.

H-How? How did this happen? No....no....no.....no

I shook my head in denial, this can’t be happening. This doesn’t make sense. Is she even human? She is a W-WitchShe’s a fucking witch.

Before I could finish my line of thought a sudden feeling penetrated my chest followed by immense horrible pain. I looked down, a shiny blade was piercing through my chest. I reached to pull it out but my hands refused to obey. Soon I lost all power in my body and fell on my knees.

With my last remaining strength I lifted my eyes to gaze at the person stabbing me but what greeted my eyes wasn’t human but an angel. An angel with long blond hair and angelic eyes, she stared at me with her cold blues eyes.

“ I been killed by a lovely angel “ this was my final thought before my life faded away.

The point of view of first lieutenant Karolina Porze

Year 1002.

The Western region of the Empire

The town of Radon, the town's Inn (1st floor)

First lieutenant "Karolina Porze" of the first Reevian army

After that bothersome encounter with those scum bandits, we continued walking east. The lowly traitor continue to give me his bullshit answers each time I asked him for our destination then he suddenly stopped and started walking toward a small shady looking town . This town didn't figure in any of my maps so I wondered how he even knew such place existed.

I was going to ask him that but he interrupted me and insisted we spend the night in this shitty looking inn. The nerve on this fucking traitor. Does he even understand his position? How dare he look down on me an honourable soldier of the kingdom when he is just a lowly number?

I have decided. He will taste the tip of my sword once this stupid mission is over.

I continued repeating this last phrase in my head as I gobbled down the food that was in front of me. It was a simple meat stew but the flavour was surprisingly good so I didn't mind eating such a simple peasant meal.

In front of me sat the lowlife Number as he ate the same stew I was having. Look at him, just sitting there so expressionlessly. He should be ashamed of himself not knowing how to swing a sword. Even nobles who grew up in fancy castles can defend themselves. Hell, I even heard the king kitchen's staff were taught how to use swords. What a useless use of space.

" That style of sword fighting you used with those bandits, it's a Myrilian art style, right? " the lowlife traitor suddenly spoke as he focused his gaze on his plate.

" What? How do you know about that? " I quickly replied in astonishment, how does someone like him know of the honourable "Myrilian" sword fighting?

" It's quite a fancy new skill? Who thought it to you? " the Number replied refusing to look me in the eyes.

" Don't answer my question with another , Number! Answer me! How do you know of the existence of the Myrilian sword art? " I asked again. Who's he to give me questions?

"....." The lowlife creature suddenly went quiet as he continued eating his meal.

What a disrespectful asshole! I don't get it, I don't get it at all. Why is the high council entrusting a top priority mission in the hands of a traitor who can't even use a sword.

The first time I saw him what caught my attention was the blade he was carrying on his left side. It was different than the mass produced Reevian rapier, it looked custom made and had an aura of elegance about it.

To think the owner of such a sword can't even use it. What a waste. But while I was lost in such thoughts, a certain person approached our table.

" Hello there my lords, would any of you be interested in my company? " The person spoke as they leaned at our table. They were a young woman probably in her early twenties wearing provocative

Makeup and donning a strong smell of perfume. There was no doubt about it. This woman is a tavern's prostitute. Although prostitution is illegal in "Reeva", here in the Empire it was considered the oldest profession on the continent.

" Yes, I would like to pay for your services " the lowlife traitor suddenly spoke .What? Is he serious? Is this why he insisted on coming here? Fucking disgusting.

Before I could show my objection, the traitor stood on his feet and started following after the prostitute. He didn't even bother to say a word to me. Fucking Numbers, they really are mindless animals.

The point of view of 13

Year 1002.

The Western region of the Empire

The town of Radon, the town's Inn (2nd floor)

"13"

I followed after the escort as she led me up to a room on the second floor. She then closed the door behind her and urged me to sit on the bed.

" Do you require something specific my lord or would the usual do? " The escort smiled seductively as she played with her hair.

" The usual is fine " I quickly replied as I looked at the escort standing in front of me.

She then chuckled and started taking off her clothes with a big smile on her face.

" You don't mind if I keep on my night dress, do you my lord? I'm a bit insecure because of this little scar on my tummy " the escort spoke with pleading eyes, mimicking that of a helpless little girl.

" Sure " I quickly replied.

The escort smiled again and started approaching me seductively but the moment she tried to get on top I made my move and pinned her down on the bed.

" Oh, so you like it rough don't you my lord? " the escort said with a mischievous smile on her face.

" Do you know what's the first rule for every escort young lady? " I replied as I continued pinning her down on the bed.

" Tell me my lord!!" the escort spoke, her eyes shining with intrigue.

" Never leave a piece of clothing on " I quickly replied as I tightened my grip on her neck.

" W-What?? " the escort spoke as she struggled to escape my grip.

" It's a non-written rule that every escort should undress completely in front of her client , this was recently implemented by the Empire due to the increase of incidents where escorts would hide knives in their dresses and use them to rob drunk customers " I explained my words as I continued to tighten my grip around her neck .

"F-Forgive me my lord , I-I meant you n-no disrespect...I shall undress right now " the woman spoke with tears in her eyes .

"That would not be necessary, I know you're not really an escort. I've suspected that the moment I walked in to this room "

"What?? "

" Your room is too clean, too tidy like it was never used. It looks nothing like a room an escort will bring her clients into every night" While I spoke I reached my hand inside her dress and took out a shiny dagger that was hidden there.

" A military knife? I wonder what you were planning to do with such a thing. " I spoke as I traced the knife along her right cheek.

"Forgive me, I didn't want to do it " the woman finally showed her true colour, she must have realized the hopeless situation she was in.

" I suggest you start talking young lady! Who sent you here? Who ordered you to kill me? " I spoke coldly as I locked eyes with the frightened woman.

" I can'tI can't say " the woman replied as she closed her eyes.

" Okay " I spoke as I swiftly shoved the knife in to her left arm.

"Aaaaaaaaaaaaa" The woman shouted in pain as red blood poured from her wound and stained the white mattress beneath her.

" HELPPPP, SOMEONE HELP ME PLEASE " the woman screamed calling for aid.

" That's rather pointless I'm afraid, I've already casted a "sound spell" when we walked in to this room. No one outside of this room can hear anything " I explained as I took the knife out of her arm.

" Please, I-I don't want to die " the woman spoke as she held in to her bleeding arm.

" Then I suggest you talk. Who is it that wants me dead and where can I find them? " I quickly replied as I wiped the blood from the military knife. The woman knew if she didn't talk, this knife will be going in to her other arm then into her legs and eventually cut her throat.

"L-Lord trickster....it's lord Trickster. He ordered me to track you down and quietly eliminate you " the woman spoke with heavy breaths.

" Lord Trickster, huh? Where is he located right now? " I added as I continued to probe the woman.

" Please sir, I'm just a soldier. I was just following orders " the woman begged once again, seems she fears giving her master's location will lead to her execution for treason .

" I need to know his location and I advise you to talk if you don't want this cheap looking room to be the last place you see "

The woman looked hesitant for a second but realizing she had no other choice for survival so she sang. She sang like a fucking bird.

Once I got the information I needed I casted a sleeping spell on her and a healing spell on her arm and then I left the room.

The point of view of first lieutenant Karolina Porze

Year 1002.

The Western region of the Empire

The town of Radon, the town's Inn (1st floor)

First lieutenant "Karolina Porze" of the first Reevian army

By the time I finished my meal, I noticed the lowly traitor walking down the stairs. Is he done already? I guess it's not just his metal sword that he can't use? What a hopeless creature.

The Number came back to our table and took his seat. He then ordered a second bowl of stew.

"Did satisfying your animal desires got you hungry again traitor?" I spoke addressing the creature standing next to me.

"Something like that" the traitor replied with the same expressionless look on his face.

I stood up and was heading to my room when I noticed a suspicious stain on the traitor's sleeve. Is that blood? I don't remember seeing that stain before.

I came closer to the number hoping to get a better look when all the sudden a clinging sound vibrated into my ears. It was a sound I knew very well. The sound of metal clinging to another metal.

I looked in front of me, the traitor was holding a sword in front of my face. What the hell is going on?

Is he trying to attack me? Did he finally show his true colours? I instinctively reached for my sword but that's when I noticed a foreign object laying on our table.

An arrow? A metal arrow?

Right that moment I spotted a person on the other side of the Inn with a crossbow in his hands. He was pointing it right at me and before I could react he pulled the trigger.

An arrow flew straight to my face but fragments of a second before it hit me, the traitor swung his sword in a quick precise move and blocked the arrow from penetrating my skull.

"I see, so this is his backup plan in case the woman failed her mission. Draw your sword, we have some company" the traitor spoke to me as he pointed at 3 strange looking men who were standing on the other side of the Inn. They looked heavily armed and a thirst for blood in their eyes.

I quickly drew my sword and faced the armed men. The other customers of the bar ran away or hid behind tables and crates. It was just us and the enemy now.

"I will cover you from crossbow arrows and give you enough room for a "Red Lotus slash" The traitor spoke as he looked at me, his regular expressionless face has changed in to a serious stare.

Wait, how does he know about the "Red lotus slash" and how did he even block those arrow shots. I thought he didn't even know how to use a sword. No....No I can't be thinking about this right now. I need to focus otherwise I won't survive this fight.

I looked back at the Number, nodded my head and jumped forward as fast as I could but the traitor was already in front of me. Just like before he moved his sword in such amazing speed and blocked all arrows almost as if he could anticipate the enemies' movements. I never saw such speed in my life

While the archer started reloading his next shot I took the chance and swung my sword in a clean horizontal line cutting through his arms and disarming him completely. The main threat was now gone.

I moved my left leg and swung my sword at the armed man on the right. Surprisingly though he managed to block my first attack. These were no ordinary soldiers.

I lowered myself and took the Red Lotus stance then I moved my sword in a 30 degree angle. The armed man reached to block my attack but before he could make contact with my sword I swiftly tightened my grip and changed the direction of my slash. The armed man had no time to block or dodge this time and my blade cut through him cleanly.

The armed man fell on the ground motionless, I turned to my right to see the Number wiping out the blood from his blade and laying on his feet was the body of third armed man.

I fixated my stare at the creature standing in front of me. What the hell was that? What's going on? Who really is he? Who is this "person".

The point of view of 13

Year 1002.

The Western region of the Empire

East of Radon.

"13"

After the events of the Inn, my female companion and I took the horses that probably belonged to the assassins and started moving alongside the river. It was almost mid night and raining quite heavily. Our vision was near impossible but we continued to move.

At least that was the plan when all the sudden my female companion stopped and got off her horse. She then came closer to me and just stared at me with cold eyes. The rain was falling down her porcelain face and her hair was soaking wet, yet she just stood there and continued looking at me without speaking a word.

" We need to continue moving, get back on your horse " I said as I urged my female companion to move.

"I'm not going fucking anywhere until you start talking, who were those men back there? Who are you? How can you use a blade like that " my female companion shouted, her words got mixed with the sound of the heavy rain.

" We don't have time for this. We can talk about this later " I replied as I came down off my horse trying to persuade my female companion to move .

" No, you always say that or avoid my questions entirely. I won't accept this anymore. I want answers" my female companion replied with twitching lips.

""

" Answer me damn it. I'm not just a tool for you to use. I'm a soldier of the kingdom. I deserve to know " my female companion added.

“ Oh now you want to question orders. Have you ever questioned your captain’s order? Have you ever question anything your kingdom asked of you? ” I replied as I locked eyes with her.

“ Don’t give me this shit. You’re not my captain, you’re not my superior officer you’re”

“Just a Number? Is that what you were going to say? I’m a Number so I’m unworthy of keeping secrets from you? But they can. They can order you to fight, to plunder, to kill ” I shouted back at her. I don’t know why I ’m doing this . Why am I arguing with a woman I barely know? Why am I justifying myself to her?

I turned around and started heading back to my horse when all the sudden I felt a sudden punch in my back.

“ Don’t you fucking turn your back on me. I’m not a murderer, I’m a soldier. All that I did, all that I do is for the sake of our people. The people you betrayed ” my female companion spoke.

“ Sure, surekeep telling yourself that ” I quickly replied as I turned back once again to face my horse.

When all the sudden a unique sound caught my attention, I turned around once again to see my female companion pointing her sword at me.

“I said don’t turn your back at me. You’re not going anywhere until you tell me everything ” my female companion declared with firm words. I couldn’t tell if it was just the rain drops falling gently down her cheeks or if she was really crying but I could tell she was serious.

Using the element of surprise I jumped forward and grabbed my female companion from her arm and throw her on the ground disarming her of her sword.

“ Can we stop this now and get back to the mission? ” I said as I parted my arms as a gesture of peace.

“ Not before you fucking talk ” my female companion stubbornly replied.

She then moved toward me and threw a right hook at me, I dodged it and attempted to grab her again but she pushed me away and throw a kick to my temple. I lifted my left arm and blocked it.

“ Speak, who the fuck are you? ” My female companion yelled out as she moved once again for a direct punch, I quickly dodged it but she might have anticipated that as she threw another punch with her another hand. I crossed my arms and barely blocked it in time. Damn, she’s as good with her fists as she is with her sword but I don’t have time for this.

I moved forward and threw a quick punch, she blocked it so I threw another punch this time aiming for her abdomen. My female companion attempted to step back but that was exactly the move I needed. I jumped forward and grabbed her tightly from behind and held her in a head lock.

“ Let go of meLet go of me right nowLet....”

Before my companion could finish her words I casted a sleeping spell on her and she fell on the ground unconscious.

The point of view of first lieutenant Karolina Porze

Year 1002.

The Western region of the Empire

Unknown location

First lieutenant "Karolina Porze" of the first Reevian army

The second I opened my eyes a sudden surge of pain vibrated through my brain. I held my head with both hands hoping it can absorb the pain. I looked around to see myself laying under a mighty tree and covered with a thick blanket. I lifted it up to see a horrific sight. I....I was completely naked underneath.

"WHAT THE FUCK?" I screamed in shock as I hugged the blanket to myself.

"I had to take off your wet clothes otherwise you would have fallen sick" the person who suddenly spoke was kneeling down and cooking a fish over the camp fire.

"You fucking pervert, what else did you help yourself to while I was unconscious and completely naked" I yelled back as I looked at the man I been traveling with all this time.

"Don't flatter yourself lieutenant, angry abusive women are not my type" the man replied with the same expressionless look on his face.

"W-What?" I tried to object but the horrible pain has once again assaulted my brain .

"Don't move too much, severe headaches are common after effect of sleeping spells" the man explained.

"Sleeping spell? Is that what you used on me?" I asked the man to which he just nodded. A magic spell, he can use magic too? Who the hell is this man?

But while I was full of questions, the man stood up on his feet and tossed something at me.

"your clothes are dry now. Get dressed, I will turn around" the man declared as he turned around with his back facing me.

"You better not try to peek or else" I quickly replied as I started getting dressed

"You were right yesterday. I think I owe you some answers, it's the least I could do for making you risk your life at the Inn yesterday" the man suddenly declared as he continued facing the other way. He was acting very odd today. I mean he was always an odd man but today he is even stranger.

"I'm listening" I answered as I pulled up my panties.

"My mission is an assassination job. I am here to eliminate a certain target" the man added.

"Assassination? Who are you going to assassinate?" I asked as I braced myself for the answer, if it is a mission ordered by the high council then the target must be a high profile target. Maybe a military general or a nobleman?

"I'm here to assassinate the man they call "Trickster" the man uttered words I wouldn't have ever expected, not in a million year.

“ W-What? Lord trickster? Are you fucking kidding me? ” this is gotta be a joke? He is making fun of me again. There is no way he is going after that man. I mean lord trickster is the fourth member of “the first knight party”. A legendary group who is rumoured to have been the reason the Empire won the first Magis war. There is no way the high council is sending just one man for such a job.

“ I’m afraid I’m serious” the man replied with a hollow look in his eyes.

“ That’s fucking suicide. You must know the stories, Lord Trickster is credited for destroying entire fleets of soldiers all by himself. That person is not human, he is a monster. How are you going to assassinate him all on your own? ” I replied back shaking my head in confusion.

“ He breaths and bleeds just like any other man. I plan to shove my sword through his chest and continue doing so until he stops breathing ” the odd man spoke as he clenched his right fist. He really not kidding. He really believes he can accomplish such mission.

“ Who are you? ” I asked once again as I faced the man in front of me.

“ 13” the man answered. I see he is back to making fun of me

“ I’m serious here, you said I deserve answers so tell me who you are ” I asked again.

“ I’m serious too, my official name is 13. I’m a Number, a traitor. A man without a past, without a future and I would remain like this until I finish this mission. I will remain nameless until my sword is stained by Trickster’s blood. That’s who I am ” the odd man explained as he faced me. So this is why he agreed to this mission, he wants his name back.

“ Why is getting your name back so important to you? ” I decided to just ask him directly.

“ It’s not important to me but it’s important to someone else ” the man replied with a hint of a smile on his face. I wanted to ask for more information but ultimately decided not to.

Whatever reason he has to do such a suicidal mission must be important to him, otherwise he wouldn’t be here right now. This is all I cared about. All that mattered to me at that moment .

The point of view of 13

Year 1002.

The Western region of the Empire

The fort of Diska

“13”

After a few days of hiking along the river, we finally reached our final destination. The fort of Diska. This is the location of my target, the location of trickster.

I’m finally here, everything ends today. I looked to my side, my female companion was looking at the fort with her binoculars. She then spoke:

“ It’s exactly like you said , the Reevian army is preparing to storm the fort. This is great news, if Lord Trickster is inside then once the Reevian army captures the fort he will be captured along with it ”

“ That’s not gonna happen, the Reevian army won’t be able to capture the fort, not today ” I replied as I shook my head.

“ What? What makes you say that? ” my female companion asked with inquisitive eyes but even if I explained everything to her she won’t believe me and even if she believed me she won’t understand. She can’t understand the truth. The truth about this world and even if she does the truth of our existence will shatter her sanity forever so I decided to ignore her question instead.

“ Here! ” I said as I handed her a sealed envelope.

“ What is this? ” my female companion asked.

“ I’ve wrote it yesterday, this a letter from me to the higher council acknowledging your noble contribution in this mission. If you show it to the high council in the capital they will handsomely reward you and probably even promote you” I answered back as I put the envelope in her cloak pocket.

“ What? Why are you giving me this now? The mission is far from over ” my female companion replied.

“ Yes, my mission is not over but yours is. I will take it from here ” I said as I started walking toward the fort.

“ No, no this is bullshit. You can’t just push me off at the most important part. This is my mission as much as it is yours ”my female companion shouted in irritation as she grabbed me from my shoulder

“ The only thing left is the confrontation between me and trickster. You have no role in this. Go back home report to your captain and get the reward and honour you deserve. This is an order from the person leading this mission ” I pushed myself away from her grip and continued moving forward.

“No, No... waitplease wait” My female companion uttered in a weak voice.

I could hear her footsteps gradually decrease behind me as I made sure to lose her and hide my tracks.

I didn’t need to turn around to know the look on her face or the hatred she must feel toward me right now but then again she had nothing but hatred for me since the day we met so why does it feel different this time? Why does her hatred bother me now? Why can’t she understand that the only thing awaiting her in that fort is her death?

The moment I approached the mighty fort a loud bang echoed in the distance. It has started. the Reevian army’s assault has officially commenced. I need to use this opportunity before it’s too late.

I moved through the fort’s eastern walls and started climbing as fast as I could. Because the assault just started most of the imperial soldiers will be focusing their defence on the northern gate which gives me a good opportunity to try and sneak through.

I continued climbing until I reached the top, sounds of swords clashing and explosions echoed around me. I moved quietly and started sneaking down when all the sudden a fleet of flaming arrow was heading my way, I quickly lifted an abandoned shield and used it as cover.

I reached the main yard, Reevian soldiers were head to head with the imperial soldiers. The fight just started but bodies were already piling up. I need to move quick and reach the grand hall.

I went from cover to cover avoiding the fight until I reached the entrance to the grand hall. This is where the assassin pretending to be an escort said trickster will be.

I gently reached for the handle and opened the door making sure no one notices me but.....

But the moment I opened the door, a whole unit of soldiers was waiting for me on the other side with their crossbows and swords pointing at me.

No...No.....no, no , no

No.... No.... No....Nooooo....No fucking wayThis isn't true, this isn't true.

This can't bethis is not how it supposed to happen. THIS IS BULLSHIT.

I'm supposed to find trickster sitting on his throne, then he and I would have a 1 vs. 1 duel. This is how it was fated to happen.

" THIS IS FUCKING BULLSHIT " I yelled out at the top of my lungs as the soldiers continued to point their weapons at me.

When all the sudden, a person emerged from between the soldiers. He had long red hair and was wearing a shining silver armourHe pointed at me and laughed:

" What's wrong 13? Is something wrong? "

" TRICKSTER!!" I yelled out his name in disgust. What the fuck is happening? Was I wrong?

" What is it 13? You look very confused my friend. I thought you will enjoy my little surprise. Since I knew you were coming I made sure to prepare this little trick just for you. Are you happy? Are you happy 13? " Trickster continued to laugh as he pointed at me.

But How? How did he know I'm coming? How did he know I will be using this entrance? How did he have time to plan all of this?

" Your confusion is very entertaining 13 but if you don't say anything I'm gonna get bored so let me help clear some of your confusion. You see you are not the only one who can see the fabric of the timelines " Trickster spoke words few people could ever comprehend their meaning....The hidden secret of this world.

" That's right 13. That's right. You are not the only puppeteer in this doll show my friend. We want to play too" Trickster spoke as he looked at me with a disgusting smug face.

"Ugh, You are still not talking .This is getting boring.... Kill him! " Trickster spoke his final words as he left the grand hall.

Fuck, this is it. There is no way out of this. I can't face all of these soldiers at once. I'm completely fucked.

I took one final deep breath as I drew my sword. The soldiers circled me and with an anonymous war cry they jumped forward. 6 arrows heading my way at once. I lifted my sword and managed to block 4 of them, the fifth missed me but the sixth hit me straight in my left shoulder. I shouted in pain but while the archers started reloading their crossbow and prepared to shoot again , I jumped forward and stabbed one soldier to my left, 2 soldiers attacked from the right but I managed to block and slash my sword cutting them down. A soldier with an axe attacked me from behind, I turned around and pushed myself off the way and stabbed him in the throat but while I was busy with foot soldiers the archers took their second shot. This times I was able to only block 3 arrows and dodge a fourth. The last two arrows made clear hit in my chest and abdomen.

I fell on my left knee as I wiped the blood pouring from my mouth. I placed my hands on my chest and abdomen and casted a "heal spell" and stood up on my feet once again.

“ Come at me assholes ” I yelled out as I drew my sword once again. My struggle might be pointless, I might be just prolonging my end but I shall fight this fate until the end. I shall die fighting .

The moments I said that to myself, 5 more arrows hit me in my back .

The point of view of 13

Year 1002.

Unknown

Unknown

“13”

There was nothing but bleak endless darkness, I tried to lift my hands but they refused to obey. I couldn't even move my eyes. My body has completely shut down. The only thing remained was my weak consciousness but that was quickly fading away too.

I have failed my mission, I lost the chance to regain my name. I lost the chance to make everything right. I had one chance but completely fucked it up. Was it because I was not strong enough? Or because I was too confident in my fate? Was I betrayed by my own expectations or was I doomed from the start?

No, nothing of this matters. The point will always be the same. I have failed and it's time for me to leave. I surrendered myself to my fate and closed my eyes.

“ Not yet ” A weak voice transmitted in to my ears but I was too tired to care, too tired to listen. I just wanted to sleep, I wanted to rest.

“ NOT YET YOU ASSHOLE ” A louder firmer voice echoed into my ears followed by a fierce punch in to my gut.

I opened my eyes to be greeted with the blurry image of person looking down at me from above.

An angel? No, no ...An angel won't curse .

Before I could think of something else, a soft sensation spread through my lips.

A kiss?

“It's not yet time to die ” the person kissing my lips suddenly spoke. I could feel their warm breath on my skin.

With every strength I could muster, I lifted my hand and wiped out the coagulated blood from my eyes. The image of the person looking down at me suddenly became clear.

“ First lieutenant? ” I weakly whispered these words but she somehow managed to hear them.

“ My name is Karolina Porze, What's your name? ” the girl looking at me spoke softly as she held my head....a gentle smile plastered on her face.

I parted my lips and uttered the correct answer to her question:

“ My name is 13 ”