

藤井三打

原作・監修

正田 崇

(Greenwood)

カバーイラスト

Gyuusuke

(Greenwood)

Dies irae  
- Song to the Witch -


# Dies irae

## ~Song to the Witch~

Dies irae~Song to the Witch~  
presented by Sanda Fujii  
original & supervision /  
Takashi Masada(Greenwood)  
cover illustration /  
Gyuusuke(Greenwood)

©2017 light All Rights Reserved.





~~~~~  
Dies irae~Song to the Witch~  
presented by Sanda Fujii  
original & supervision / Takashi Masada(Greenwood)  
cover illustration / Gyuusuke(Greenwood)

©2017 light All Rights Reserved.  
cover design / 5GAS DESIGN STUDIO  
~~~~~





# Dies irae

## ~Song to the Witch~

~~~~~  
~Dies irae~Song to the Witch~  
presented by Sanda Fujii  
original & supervision / Takashi Masada(Greenwood)  
cover illustration / Gyuusuke(Greenwood)  
~~~~~



©2017 light  
All Rights Reserved.





# Contents

Prologue	
Johnny Got His Just Deserts	005
Chapter 1	
Der Staat gegen der LDO	013
Chapter 2	
There Are No West Side Stories	021
Chapter 3	
How To Kill A Millionaire	029
Chapter 4	
There's No Business Like Witchcraft	037
Chapter 5	
The Amazing Rusalka	049
Chapter 6	
Witches Like It Hot	067
Chapter 7	
Lady Of The Flies	079
Epilogue	
Song To The Witch	099

*Dies Irae*  
THIS TV  
~Song to the Witch~





# Dies irae

~Song to the Witch~



////  
Dies irae~Song to the Witch~  
presented by Sanda Fujii  
original & supervision / Takashi Masada(Greenwood)  
cover illustration / Gyuusuke(Greenwood)  
////

©2017 light  
All Rights Reserved.



Illustrations by  
**Minatogawa Kazuomi**

Binding and design by  
**5GAS DESIGN STUDIO**

Translation by  
**stuff i like to do**





# Prologue

Johnny Got His Just Deserts



The new recruit made light of the situation. After all, it was as simple as finishing off an enemy that already stood on death's doorstep.

The experienced recruit was vigilant. After all, a cornered enemy is all the more frightening, one can't know what they might pull.

There is a big gap between those who know war, and those who don't. Between hardened soldiers and those unexperienced. But there was one thing both sides recognized:

*The enemy is beyond hopeless.*

The new recruit's carelessness, and the experienced recruit's vigilance stemmed from the notion that the enemy's downfall had already been set in stone. But they were gravely mistaken.

Awaiting them beyond were no gallant Third Reich soldiers, no resistance soldiers shouting their victory cries and no civilians rejoicing their liberation. The hundreds of thousands of soldiers would soon find out that they were neither soldiers nor men, but mere *sacrifices*.



*Sainte-Mère-Église*, a town in the French peninsula Normandy. It was here where private John Steele was left dangling on the remarkably tall spire of its church. He belonged to the 82<sup>nd</sup> batallion that parachuted into the town in order to liberate it from the rule of Nazi Germany. However, John got swept by the wind and failed the drop, and as luck would have it, his parachute got stuck on the church's spire. All on his own, defenseless, surrounded by enemy troops. All he could do was feign death, but instead his eyes widened.

The unreal sight before him would not grant him the luxury of playing dead. One by one his comrades fell, and not in the sense that the drop point had accidentally been miscalculated, no. One after the other, before the soldiers had a chance to touch the ground, they had their guts scattered, their heads smashed and their limbs devoured. What rushed about the dead soldiers could only be described as a *white wind*. It moved along the town, shooting the midair soldiers to death. It crossed the rooftops and used the hills as scaffolding to leap into the air. This wind could not be stopped. Over ten-thousand men had dropped into *Sainte-Mère-Église*, but likely none of them had ever been able to set foot on the ground.

The village below John's vision had been dyed red. Not just made up of the blood and flesh of the late 82<sup>nd</sup> batallion, but also that of the townspeople. The wind had noticed John's presence. Once he realized this, it had already made its way to the top of the spire with John right at its summit. Without thinking, John closed his eyes. Not to try and feign death, but because he wanted to look away from his death. Every time his body swayed in the wind, it hit the tower. The parachute's wire wavered, and John was assailed with intense pain. But he was alive. For some reason the murderous wind had only approached him gently, and didn't do anything. The wind's shockwave had almost killed him, but he was alive.

*"You surprised me! Looks like you won't die today."*

John could hear a voice from above so refreshing it'd make one forget this is a battlefield.



*"I thought maybe the rope would break, but it didn't! Then I thought maybe the rope would coil around your neck, but it didn't! Amazing! With your predicament and fortune, they ought to erect a statue in your honour. Might even make for a good tourist attraction."*

John rubbed his eyes, he couldn't see the owner of the voice. He knew intuitively that he couldn't play dead.

*"Ah, no need to be so scared! I'm told to leave one alive anyway. Let's make you the lucky winner! So, hey..."*

Gently, the wind dropped down from the spire, and that gentleness had subconsciously deceived him. He lost the strength in his arms.

*"Make sure to keep your eyes open."*

His gaze met that of the voice's owner, for a split second they passed each other. His arms hanging loosely, his view was cleared again. His will to resist and to live. That chance meeting that lasted not more than a handful of seconds ended up robbing him of all of his strength. Once more the paratroops were being dissolved in the air. The cause of it being that *wind*, no, that *person*. The true form of that wind was a person. Somebody with speed like the wind blasted through the town. No matter how many soldiers, all would be annihilated. How absurd. But absurd it may be, this was reality. And the comrades he had shared his meals with, died before him.

*Ten thousand versus one.*

Wearing an SS officer's uniform, it was a one-eyed... Boy? Maybe a girl. Either way it was a beauty, and that ephemeral beauty was tearing through its path of carnage. If a paratrooper touches the ground it's game-over. That's the kind of game the person seemed to be playing. In that case, was he a mere bonus character? John began to despise his parachute that had become his lifeline. If only it'd break, it would all be over. He didn't want to behold this scene any longer, much less tell the tale.



June, 1944 marked the start of the Invasion of Normandy at the hands of the allied forces. These allied forces were made up of America, England, Canada and Australia. The strategy: attack by land, sea and air simultaneously. The enemy was already down to a single nation: Nazi Germany, as such, the idea of crushing them by means of overwhelming numbers was certainly not wrong.

If one were to point out a flaw in this plan, it would be that most of the forces' generals did not believe certain intel coming from correspondents and soldiers at the front lines. Intel that was also leaked by the Soviet Union:

The *Longinus Dreizehn Orden* was founded by Heinrich Himmler as a social club of make-believe knights. But this club had been spearheaded by the Golden Beast, Reinhard Heydrich, and today it has become a corps of true superhumans and demons. Each member is said to possess tremendous power and to be able to match thousands of soldiers. Forget Himmler, not even the führer can control them anymore.



The generals of the allied forces spared only a laugh at these reports. Did a comic book writer wind up on the front lines? Paying any heed to these stories is preposterous. Unlike the Soviet Union, that had recently made itself an enemy of Nazi Germany as well, most of these generals had never fought the German nation before. As a result, their view on the situation had been most naive. Thus the curtain began to draw on a great tragedy.

Members of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden were located across key locations in the Normandian peninsula. All of them were on their own, but that did not stop them from decimating the flooding soldiers with ease. Cut. Stabbed. Minced. Smashed. Roasted. Whatever the cutting edge technology and weaponry, it had no meaning in their presence. Overwhelming numbers would only serve to make the undertaking more tedious for them at best.

Individually, the knights that had come to battle with the allied forces each had different motives. Where there are those that work to execute their missions rigorously, there are also those that take pleasure in bathing in the flesh and blood of their enemies. But the one who most deeply understands their mission and even lives for it would be *her*.

*Rusalka Schwägelin*, Number VIII of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden's Obsidian Round Table. Neither a soldier nor a maniac, she is the Obsidian Round Table's only *witch*. Her lurking place during this operation is the coastline that connects the two communes *Sainte-Honorine-des-Pertes* and *Vierville-sur-Mer: Omaha Beach*. The place that would come to be called *Bloody Omaha* soon after.

The strong ocean wind rustled her red hair.

*"Ah! This is why I hate the ocean..."*

Rusalka fixed her hair in a listless mood, this day's ocean wind had a stormy feel to it. The beautiful girl in question has a small stature and seems like the type to get along with anyone. Most people would feel at ease when observing this scene of Rusalka having an innocent bout with the wind. The manner in which she readjusted her hair would almost resemble a kitten washing her own face. But kittens are simpleminded creatures that have no leash on them. Without a leash, simpleminded creatures will display cruelty to those that are weaker than them.

Rusalka sat on a trench created by the German army, the coastline ahead resembling nothing less than a living hell. That is because the beach and the sea were dyed in red. The type of paint that was used to dye the area red was the blood of the unfortunate soldiers that have come to disembark here. The members of the Obsidian Round Table that are participating in this defensive operation have received but one order from their leader, Reinhard Heydrich:

*"Make yourselves known."*

They each interpreted this order in their own way, and moved to carry it out. The honest soldiers among them made their power known. The cruel mainacs among them made the stench of blood known. And the witch, Rusalka, made *despair* known. With their transport ships stopped by the coastline, the allied soldiers devotedly charged the beach with no tanks to shield them from harm. And they would come to die.

Buried in the sand up until their necks, trampled by their frenzied comrades. Swallowed live by shadows appearing at their feet. Strangled to death by chains. Crushed by walls covered with spikes appearing out of nowhere.

These weapons are all part of Rusalka's magic arsenal. Hundreds of years ago, she had attained the power to control magic familiars that consume their victims' souls. They are man-eating shadows: *Nachtzehrer*. She has also received another power from the the Longinus Dreizehn Orden's vice-commander,

Mercurius. That power is *Ewigkeit*. The ongoing spectacle at the beach is a product of these two magic powers.

Mercurius can be said to be Reinhard Heydrich's only sworn friend. All members of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden have come to possess magic powers through the *Ewigkeit* that was bestowed upon them by Mercurius. The key parts that make up this power are faith and hatred, using a holy relic imbued with vast intrinsic notions as their vessel. These holy relics are called *Ahnenerbe*, and through a spiritual connection to them can one gain the power of magic.

*Elisabeth Báthory*

Rusalka's *Ahnenerbe* is the diary of the countess of blood: *Die Blutgräfin*. The vile countess, Elisabeth Báthory, had tortured numerous young girls in an attempt to attain eternal beauty by bathing in their blood. By connecting to this diary, Rusalka can freely give form to countless torture tools, turning Omaha Beach into a den of torture devices.

Rusalka could hear the soldiers' cries, carried by the ocean wind. The shriek of the experienced recruit, being torn apart as he shields the new recruit from harm. The screams of soldiers that try to flee but are nonetheless taken by death. These wails of lament are sure to pierce the heart.

Two soldiers attempting to cover each other are hugged by a hollow metal puppet that is modeled after a holy woman. The inside is set up with numerous spikes, designed to squeeze out the victim's blood. Specializing in extracting blood and inflicting severe pain, this device can be said to be a representative of Elisabeth Báthory herself: the *Iron Maiden*. The blood spilling out of the device, after forcibly swallowing the two soldiers, stained the red beach with increased thickness.

*"That must be so cozy in there! Could there be a better soldier's death than being embraced by a woman together with your best pal? No way there is!"*

Rusalka actually believes this. Instead of bearing resentment for being killed, she feels they should be thanking her for granting them such a good death. Forgetting about the wives back at home, falling on the battlefield together with one's comrades is certainly an honourable death. If not, said wives would not get compensated for the loss of their husbands...

*"Yup, definitely! Now everyone gets a happy end, I'm such a philanthropist... Of course, the happiest one here is the one who did their very best, t h a t ' s m e "*

Rusalka spun around, striking a pose along with a smile. Quickly moving on from the gloomy train of thought from before. The idea that Rusalka got the happiest ending here is definitely not wrong. The souls of the late soldiers that just had their blood and guts scattered all over the beach quenched her body. This is not a metaphor for some sense of satisfaction or accomplishment, she genuinely absorbed their souls.

*Ewigkeit* feeds off of souls. Through killing, other people's souls become one's own. Kill a hundred and gain one hundred souls. Kill a thousand and gain one thousand souls. On a fundamental level, souls function as fuel for using *Ewigkeit*. Additionally, the more life force one absorbs from other people, the more powerful one's body, senses and life force become. But gathering souls serves a purpose far greater than something as trivial as strengthening one's body, a key to a grand miracle...

Even if all the soldiers that were present at Omaha Beach fired their weapons at Rusalka in unison, they would likely not be able to harm her. If one wants to defeat a member of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden, it would require some sort of magic intervention, or perhaps the cursed power of an *Ahnenerbe*. In other words, at this moment at Omaha Beach, Rusalka is using a cheat code that grants invincibility. No soldier on the beach meets the requirements necessary to defeat her.



*"Now I've got free time, huh... If only it were a little warmer I could go for a swim, with a sexy revealing kind of swimsuit- But I didn't bring one... Not that there's anyone to see it anyway..."*

Rusalka was in a pretty laid back mood because she had already ascertained her victory, but somebody who meets the requirements for her defeat suddenly appeared before her eyes, blowing away the trenches and walls the Germans had set up.

*"Hey Anna."*

Most members of her corps call Rusalka by her alias, *Malleus Maleficarum*. Only one person calls her Anna...

*"Schreiber!?"*

Rusalka exclaimed the intruder's name. Even "*Rusalka*" is another alias of hers, *he* is the only one who calls her by her true name.

Wolfgang Schreiber, Number XII of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden's Obsidian Round Table, the Ashen Knight, one of the three battalion commanders.

He stared at Rusalka's face from an uncomfortably short distance. His white skin and hair clear as day, his face resembling that of an angel, he was beautiful. But this beauty is absolutely untouchable. Underneath it lies great danger, like that of a gun barrel on the verge of firing.

*"Your jurisdiction is more inward, Sainte-Mère-Église, isn't it? Is it really okay for you to be here?"*

Rusalka, questioning Schreiber on why he had left his area of jurisdiction, had a much more tense expression now, befitting somebody on a battlefield.

*"Yeah, I know. But there's nobody left there anymore."*

*"There's nobody left?"*

*"The ones who came falling from the sky, I turned them into mincemeat one after another, but then they noticed and suddenly stopped the party... I got lonely, so here I am."*

This is not surprising. Nobody would decide to drop in anymore when they know what will happen to them down there. The operation would likely already stop after around three battalions. Schreiber has no sense of restraint when it comes to things like this. He is a lunatic.

*"But I left one behind, you know. He was dangling from the spire, so much fun! I'll let you see him later."*

That was about the only form of restraint Schreiber exercised today. In order to show power, it is necessary to leave at least one witness. The only chains on Schreiber are Reinhard's words. If He orders it, even Schreiber will understand.

The untamable wolf made a very unreasonable request from Rusalka.

*"So Anna, let me have this place."*

Now wouldn't that be awfully convenient for him? Rusalka had prepared countless contraptions on Omaha Beach, one could call it her makeshift hunting spot. Schreiber, on the other hand, ravaged his hunting spot without a second thought and lost track of his prey. And he has the nerve to ask her to surrender hers? His request is absolutely out of the question.

*"... Fine..."*

But Rusalka surrendered the fruits of her labour without sign of resistance. Much like ants surrendering the reserves they had worked at through the harsh winter to predatory crickets.

*"Ah, thanks Anna!"*

Schreiber smiled and grabbed Rusalka's hand. Rusalka could only return an awkward smile.

*"You know, you're really..."*

Really what? Schreiber didn't even finish that line, let alone give her time to respond. He already started dashing across Omaha Beach, the soldiers and Rusalka's traps all turned to pieces before his immense speed. Out of her destroyed iron maiden fell a single man, filled with holes.

Being a battalion commander, Schreiber is above Rusalka in both status and actual power. Rusalka may be the Longinus Dreizehn Orden's number six, and Schreiber number twelve, but this number is not based on power. The current number one is Reinhard, but the vice-commander Mercurius is number thirteen.

The reason Rusalka retreated was not because of the difference between their ranks. Schreiber is lacking on a fundamental level, his morals and common sense simply do not function properly. To the point fellow lunatics would laugh at schreiber's idiocy.

If Rusalka resisted him, she would surely become his lunch. What would that be like? Friend or foe, Schreiber is a beast that knows only how to hunger. If she were to someday face a crisis of some sort, the last person she would want to be saved by is Schreiber. She absolutely cannot rely on him, absolutely not, don't even think about it. Whatever, nothing like that would ever happen to her anyway...

Rusalka released all the contraptions she had set up. At this point she didn't want to engage with Omaha Beach or Schreiber anymore.

*"Right, I guess I should pay that survivor of his a visit."*

Rusalka turned her back on the beach. Perhaps now that Schreiber left, the drop operation has begun again. Probably not, but she needed an excuse to get away from this place.

Wolfgang Schreiber would end up scoring a kill count of 185,731 people by the fall of Berlin. This number is the highest not only among the Longinus Dreizehn Orden, but it is also the highest individual kill count in history. Even the thousands of soldiers Rusalka had commendably gathered in Omaha Beach were but a trivial amount of people for him.





Thus, the Invasion of Normandy and the victorious D-Day by the hands of the allied forces bore a gloomy result.

Members of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden managed to make a full retreat in a matter of days, but the allied forces would only disembark on Europe over a month later. Overcome by the fear of the unknown, they could not make their move for quite some time. This delay had its repercussions, and the Soviet Union had reached Berlin first. They would come to witness the power of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden and the anomaly that was Berlin's citizens' mass suicide.

But the Longinus Dreizehn Orden disappeared along with Nazi Germany. They were not defeated, they simply vanished. With that, the world's major powers had become the disgraced victors. The Longinus Dreizehn Orden was treated as if it did not exist, and it did not appear in the history books. Only their individual members' names were recorded, and they were designated as war criminals.

The reason for this was certainly to cover up the disgrace, but a much bigger reason was the fear that was buried deep within the countries of the world. What if they come back after disappearing? As a result, their name was never mentioned anymore.

But over the years it got easier, every year the disgrace lightened, the world would come to forget that fear. Some tens of years later, the two great powers of the world, America and the Soviet Union, considered themselves the great victors without a sliver of doubt. The other countries of the world likely felt the same way. Even Germany, that had been split in two at the time, had almost forgotten about them.

But one man's testimony, the legend of invincible soldiers dwelling the battlefield, blew that overly naive presumption to smithereens.

*The Longinus Dreizehn Orden exists.*

With their memories of the war fresh as ever, a new conflict moves ever closer. It is now the sixties. The world shall know of them once more.

The background of the entire page is a stylized American flag. It features a black field with a large, white, five-pointed star in the upper left quadrant. To the right of this star is a vertical black stripe. Further right is a wide white stripe. On the far right is another vertical black stripe. The white stripe contains a series of smaller, black, five-pointed stars arranged in a vertical column. The overall effect is a high-contrast, graphic representation of the flag's colors and patterns.

## Chapter I

Der Staat gegen der LDO



The Longinus Dreizehn Orden disappeared when Berlin fell. In truth, this statement is not completely off the mark. Their leader, Reinhard, and His battalion commanders, vanished into another plane that was brought into being as a direct result of the ritual that was the fall of Berlin, only to return half a century later on their <sup>Day of Wrath</sup> *Dies Irae*. Mercurius, too, disappeared to an unknown place in the east to prepare his *representative*. One that would come to take his place in a new ritual on that fated day in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The remaining members were to patiently await the Day of Wrath under acting commander Valeria Trifa, Number III of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden's Obsidian Round Table. Simply passing the time. All they had to satisfy them during that time was the order bestowed upon them by their leaders and the remunerations that came with it.

*Reap. And in accordance with your tally, you will be gracefully rewarded.*

To create life, and to stretch it to infinity. The creation of undeath. That is the reward, the transmutation of Gold that grants immortality. Kill, and the ritual will let you imbue the souls you have reaped into those dear to you, or perhaps into yourself if you so desire. Thus, with each their own desires, they waited for the Day of Wrath.

Tonight's events take place in 1962. Some tens of years still remain.



White houses with green lawns. A street block where residences like these are neatly lined up. In spite of this, the young woman had a hard time finding the residence she was looking for. It is the dead of the night, making the search that much harder. Every time she looked down at the note that had the address written on it, her blonde ponytail swayed. She wore a lemon-yellow cardigan over her shirt along with a checkered skirt, emphasizing her youthful beauty. The weather was clear, but she carried quite a tall umbrella. A little out of place.

Finally, she had located the residence she was looking for, she rung the bell. After a short wait, a young boy opened the door.

*"Uhm... Uh, hello. Who might you be?"*

The young woman started smiling at the the young boy who had a little trouble voicing his question.

*"Yeah... Are mommy or daddy home by chance?"*

*"They are."*

The boy returned to the living room. It was a very peaceful sight, this was probably a lovely household. But upon realizing something, the grip with which the young woman held the umbrella strengthened.

*"They said come in."*

She entered the living room at the young boy's prompt.

*"Ah, we have a guest."*

*"Please make yourself at home."*

The father who greeted her with a warm welcome sat comfortably in his chair. The mother was busy doing the housework. When she saw the couple, the young woman started feeling uneasy.

*"What's the matter?"*

The young boy asked her with a curious expression, she remained still. She had to answer the boy.

*"Haven't you noticed anything strange about mommy and daddy?"*

*"Hmmm... I don't know. They're more pleasant than before."*

*"Yeah... Pleasant..."*

*"Yeah. Daddy used to stay away from home all the time. When he came home he would fight with mommy lots, but now he's always home and everyone's happy!"*

Ah, so that's it. To this child, who doesn't understand what's going on, this happy family vibe gives him all the more joy. This stench and abnormal situation means nothing before this newfound happiness. The young woman lightly hit the boy's medulla oblongata to make him lose consciousness.

*"Oh, what's wrong?"*

*"Come, sit."*

The parents didn't seem to mind the fact that their child just fainted. This was not surprising, as the father's head was split open and the mother's stomach was visible. From a moving corpse's perspective, fainting is but a trivial matter. The young woman held the umbrella she was carrying in front of her, its handle started glowing. In a flash, the top of the umbrella burned off and a concealed saber became visible.

She used it to cut not flesh, but a short wire. The two corpses, that had been controlled like puppets by this wire, collapsed on the spot. The name of this saber is *Thrud Walkure*, modeled after the blade of the Maiden of War: Valkyrie, forged of lightning, blade of the emperor. Imbued not with hatred, but with faith. This is her Ahnenerbe.

*"What do I make of this... These tasteless acts are sickening."*

The name of the young woman muttering to herself is *Beatrice Waltrud von Kircheisen*, Number V of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden's Obsidian Round Table, also known as *Valkyrie*, another superhuman. She had received orders from the Divine Vessel to pull weeds, so to say. To investigate those who have their eyes on the Longinus Dreizehn Orden and those who intend to harm it, and to take care of them if the opportunity presents itself.

Beatrice has been traveling around America, chasing various leads. But all people at the end of these trails have suffered a kind of death similar to this one. The other day in California, the subjects were found decapitated with a remarkably sharp finish, tonight in Washington, moving corpses. Beatrice shakes her head to try and forget about the patterns in these cases. At this point she wants to brush it off as a simple coincidence, the moment she realizes the connection between these cases, she would surely become agitated. She tried her best to hold herself in.



In her housesearching quest, Beatrice found a particular something awaiting her at each site. It was somebody's message in each bedroom...

*Hagazussa!*

This word was written using blood on the bedroom wall, giving off a terrible stench. The word *hagazussa* is German and means *woman passing the fence*. An obscene woman who pleasures herself on a pole. One who goes over the fence that is the boundary between the world of man and magic. It is said to be the origin of the German word for witch: *hexe*. These serial killings appear to mock a certain member of the Obsidian Round Table. Furthermore, there's the phrase on the wall, in actuality the reference is obvious. it is now clear who the killer wants on the case.

If nothing else, now that Mercurius has disappeared, there is only one member of the Obsidian Round Table who knows how to analyze this type of magic that makes corpses dance. The Divine Vessel would no doubt put her on the case when he hears this report. There is probably no way to avoid getting in touch with Rusalka Schwägelin. Beatrice pondered how to deal with this house, but she could already imagine how she'll be tossed around by that happy-go-lucky witch. She let out a troubled sigh.



*"Achoo!"*

Rusalka sneezed.

Right now she was in a country far from America. In a way, this gives her an alibi. Of course, that is when we forget about the fact that magic does not have to abide by the laws of physics and distance...

Rusalka, too, received an order from the Divine Vessel, and she had travelled to this land to fulfill it. The SS-uniform she was once again wearing after a long time fit her as well as it ever had. This is not surprising, as her immortal body had not changed a bit either. Rusalka comfortably walked about a gloomy facility. No one had likely ever walked through those hallways in a Nazi uniform, as if they owned the place, the way she so leisurely did.

This is a prison in *Ramla, Israel*. In this place where disdain for Nazi Germany is still ripe, Rusalka came to see an old compatriot who was on the brink of dying. She calmly arrived at the man's cell.

He was locked behind multiple layers of thick steel bars with a sturdy lock on them, but to her, it was as easily breakable as a sheet of paper. And break it she did, Rusalka moved past the bars that had already melted, and entered the cell. She looked the exact same as she did around ten years ago, but the inmate was not surprised. Instead, he only gave her a glance with his lifeless eyes.

*"Hi! Long time no see! Ah, you've lost weight, haven't you?"*

*"..."*

Rusalka greeted the man she was clearly acquainted with. He did not respond.

*"I'm here to bust you out. If you leave now, there'll be nobody standing in your way. All the guards are all comfy inside my shadows, and the doors are wiiiide open."*

“ ... ”

*“You know, if you stay here, your head goes off! Do you realize this? The guards were all lively preparing a big fat rope with your name on it. Do you think they would be floating around in shadowland right now if they wanted to hang someone else?”*

“ ... ”

*“Come one... Say something. Aren't you lonely?”*

“ ... ”

No matter what Rusalka said, the inmate would not talk.

*“Not long ago you spilled all the beans on us and now you're completely quiet. Isn't this awfully convenient for you?”*

He was once Lieutenant Colonel of Nazi Germany's Schutzstaffel. After World War II, he managed to flee to South America and hide under a new identity. But he was captured by the Israeli intelligence agency known as Mossad and brought here to Israel.

This inmate is not a member of the Obsidian Round Table, but he was a member of the Nazi Party and comparatively closely related to the Longinus Dreizehn Orden.

*“You know, Spinne told me all bitter looking that you'd returned us quite the favour. And what do you know... Not only do you get yourself caught, but you went and told on us... What actually is your deal?”*

The one who aided the inmate in his escape to South America was Röt Spinne, Number X of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden's Obsidian Round Table. His mission after the war was to aid the Longinus Dreizehn Orden, and in that, aiding in the escape of war criminals served as nothing more than a diversion.

Then the diversion got captured and spilled the beans on the existence of the missing Longinus Dreizehn Orden. A rather unfavourable deal. Thanks to this, multiple people, like Rusalka, were tasked with shutting people up and pulling weeds.

Even with Rusalka's interrogative tone, the inmate would not show any signs of responding. An offer of salvation or threats by one who surpasses human knowledge, nothing seemed to sway him. Wouldn't that mean this man has become nothing more than an empty shell? In that case there is no intel, emotion or anything at all that can be squeezed out of him. Doing any of the things she planned to do would seem to be a waste of power.

Rusalka was tasked with the torture of this inmate who had sold out the Longinus Dreizehn Orden. Figure out just how much he revealed about them, and also figure out how much he even knew about them in the first place.

But honestly, that didn't matter. The important part was the punishment for his betrayal, making him suffer and beg for death. But torturing an empty shell is pointless work. That which is to be drawn out of him is already rotten. Of course, if this man was not a skinny old guy, but a cute boy instead, that would still be worth doing.

Rusalka suddenly remembered a certain someone who might sway the inmate's heart.

*"That's a shame... Lord Heydrich thought highly of you, too..."*

The inmate's eyebrows twitchingly moved. For the first time in ages, a ripple once more shook his heart. This man had been an acquaintance of Reinhard Heydrich for far longer than anyone in the Obsidian Round Table, even longer than Mercurius.

Rusalka continued...

*"You may not have been a part of the Obsidian Round Table, but because of your excellent management of finance and logistics you made everybody's job easier. Everyone is very grateful to you, you know? Even Lord Heydrich loved you and your dedication."*

*"And now He's expanded his horizons to all of creation, has He not?"*

Those were the first words to leave the inmate's mouth.

*"I wanted to keep serving Him, he was a truly brilliant and attractive man, the ideal Aryan. Not some omnipotent god, no. I wanted to be at the side of the perfect man."*

*"Oh how very much of a selfless desire, isn't it? Oh I love God so much, oh I wanna be with him! - Don't let any religious people hear that, you'll make them jump."*

*"It doesn't matter what the target of one's worship is. A person, a tree, or even a rock. He became something else that day... That christmas, when he took you lot with him... I would have gladly given it my all to stop Him from returning to that wretched place, even against all orders. But, there is still hope... One day He will return to His humanity, I have been holding onto that hope for the latter half of my life."*

*"Ah, I see..."*

How pure of him. Rusalka felt for him a little bit. This man had been revering Heydrich since way before He met the man who calls himself Karl Krafft, back when He was still being tormented by His hunger for more. That's why he distanced himself from the Obsidian Round Table, while still working with Him. Holding onto that hope that one day He will become human again.

Such naivety reminds us a little of a certain maiden of war. Even though he's a grown man...

Either way, that changes things.

*"It doesn't look like you talked because they offered to spare you, or out of spite for us..."*

He may not have had any loyalty for the Longinus Dreizehn Orden, but he had plenty for Heydrich Himself. He's a backstabber, yet he isn't. That is the kind of person this man is.

*"Did you forget? I oversaw resources and logistics. I wonder what will happen now that I've revealed all about you lot. Oh, that's right. You made a lot of enemies wreaking all the havoc you wanted. It may have been about 20 years since the war, but that's not long enough. All the fear, hatred, disdain and envy that have remained in people's hearts have been unleashed in their full glory, by my testimony."*



*"So you brought new enemies to our doorstep? Well look at you go! I'm personally not the type to wander off to the battlefields, unlike Bey. Jungles are muddy and riddled with bugs, the desert is just full of nothingness and the camels stink, the battlefields of late haven't really been to my liking."*

*Collect souls until the Day of Wrath is upon us.*

This inmate has created the perfect opportunity to do so. In this period of cold war, he created enemies that take the trouble to come to come to us. How nice of him.

By ☆ the ☆ way...

Rusalka had a broad smile.

*"If, by chance, by one in a million, no a billion... We die... Then the Obsidian Round Table members that are here right now will perish, Lord Heydrich would be disillusioned with this whole thing and get His head back in the game. Wouldn't you like that? Well, not like that'd happen..."*

*"Oh I am vouching for you. Please defeat your enemies and welcome Him back. Well... Knowing Him, even without you all He would still return some day."*

In other words, no matter how this bomb goes off that this man just threw at the world, it is a win-win situation on his end. Loyalty to Lord Heydrich and hatred for the Obsidian Round table. He presents them with this opportunity and vouches for his own defeat. A fifty-fifty chance.

Rusalka has what she came for. There is no point in torture anymore, it is best to leave him to die in the next few days.

Rusalka turned around but remembered something she forgot to ask.

*"I wanted to ask this ever since the war ended. What happened to all those documents and relics from when you were stationed at Ahnenerbe?"*

*"Most of those should have been sent to your castle."*

*"Well the rest disappeared."*

Most of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden's holy relics known as Ahnenerbe were brought in from the German Ahnenerbe Administration. Rusalka was formerly stationed here.

*"Did I forget any?"*

The inmate's eyes were lit up. At this moment, he was no inmate. He was an official who had just been told he made a mistake.

*“Ah, you know, never mind. We know where most went, actually. And maybe some were just thrown away. Auf wiedersehen, Lieutenant Colonel. It's been great catching up!”*

Rusalka left the cell, but the inmate stayed quiet. He showed a scornful smile.



There were *some difficulties* along the way, but after a couple of days the inmate was executed as planned. Lieutenant Colonel of Nazi Germany's Schutzstaffel: Adolf Eichmann, the man who was acquainted with Reinhard Heydrich for far longer than anyone in the Longinus Dreizehn Orden, the man who was supposed to be His trusted friend, was hung in 1962.

What did he speak of inside that prison? What were his parting words? The records contradict each other, and even today it remains a mystery.

The background of the page is a stylized American flag. It features a large, white, five-pointed star in the center-left area. To the left of this star is a vertical band containing a series of smaller, white, five-pointed stars. The rest of the background is a dark gray color with a subtle, grainy texture.

## Chapter 2

There Are No West Side Stories



After America became one of the victorious countries of the second great war, it attracted fortune and talent from all over the world. With these, New York became the source of a flourishing culture and economy. It was a leading example of civilization, and the many visitors and immigrants made it all the more chaotic and dazzling. At one of the entrances to New York's skylines, Idlewild Airport, Beatrice was waiting for Rusalka. Or, she was *kept* waiting.

*"My, she's the worst. How long do I have to wait..."*

In the back of her head played the conversation she had with Rusalka two months earlier. Beatrice went through enough trouble to get in touch with her, and explained the state of affairs. Her response was simple...

*"Sorry! I'm a little busy, could you wait until like June?"*

Well, she probably has her own things going on. Her being quick to hang up and the simple response, they are but part of her personality after all. The specifics about the time and place were handled via telegram, though she went and sent her replies to Beatrice's new private residence she really wants to keep under the radar. All that she could forgive... However, making her wait for over an hour might really be crossing the line here.

Irritated, Beatrice waited at an open space in the airport. Around here were people coming and going, exchanging chatter in all sorts of languages. This airport is much like a miniaturized America.

*"Man, America sure was an amazing country, huh!? My eyes have truly opened!"*

*"I'm so grateful to Mr. Herman for inviting us here. And it's all thanks to the guys back in Suwahara City."*

Beatrice turned around without thinking, after hearing Japanese people utter that city's name. She had already finished her Japanese language studies, as it would surely become an indispensable tool in the future.

Shambala

Suwahara City. A city in the far east of Japan, and the promised land of Reinhard's return. Beatrice, too, would one day set foot in that city. The Japanese people met up with a group of others. Enthusiastically talking about the best parts of their trip to America.

Hearing this chatter hurt Beatrice. Would they make it through the Day of Wrath? Would they even be in Suwahara City at all? As long as they live in that city, they are all sacrifices. Looking at the smiles of those whose lives she might one day take made her feel that sense of guilt she should have gotten over once more.

*"Alright everyone, this marks the end! Did you all enjoy the bullet tour of America? I hope you all had buttloads of fun!"*

The woman leading the group addressed the people while holding a flag that read "Tour group from Suwahara City".

*"Wh!!!"*

Beatrice rubbed her eyes. This petite tour guide looked too familiar. The tour guide paid no heed to the perplexed Beatrice and continued on.

*"We'll be going our separate ways now. Now you all taught me this phrase, but the excursion doesn't end until you're all home safe! Be careful on your way home!"*

*"It was fun!"*

*"Thanks, little miss!"*

The petite girl's body became the center of applause and praise by the people.

*"Stoop I'm an adult guys!"*

The tour guide saw the group of people to the boarding gate while brushing off the compliments. After they disappeared to the other side of the gate, the guide turned around and smiled at the perplexed Beatrice. Her eyes and senses did not betray her, that tour guide is definitely Rusalka Schwägelin. Rusalka tossed the flag in a trash bin and headed over to Beatrice.

*"What on earth are you doing!?"*

Beatrice broke the ice.

*"Hm? I'm a tour guide. You know, I've barely been to America so I thought I'd gather some intel. This is Bey's turf after all. He's the type of guy who snaps when you poke your nose into his business. You know, like vampires and dogs."*

Wilhelm Ehrenburg, Number IV of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden's Obsidian Round Table, also known as Bey. Another maniac among the Obsidian Round Table, like Schreiber. While he would normally settle in North America, he went to the battlefield for a lack of blood and massacre that he needs to survive. His current preferred spot is the front lines of Vietnam that has turned into a big swamp.

Realizing there's no point in discussing someone who isn't here, Rusalka continued.

*"It's super easy to remember things when you explain them to other people. At first I started doing this as a joke, but people have been praising my wealth of knowledge and my beautiful voice, maybe a tour guide is my calling!"*

*"That's all great."*

Beatrice interrupted the ever so fluent Rusalka's enthusiastic chatter. She is good at making small talk and has a beautiful voice, maybe she actually is cut out to be a tour guide, but that is not the issue at hand.

*"If you're already here, please call me next time!"*

*"It looked like the guide work would take some more time and I'd be late... I'm also not sure how I should've contacted you, I figured you would be more forgiving, kind of like the Italians, sorry!"*

*"We're both German here."*

*"And we're both Germans who got fed up with Italy's bullshit during the war, I'd prefer to leave them out of it this time. Though that's exactly what we're doing..."*



The ritual in the far east will take place far from Italy, so she is correct. The alliance between Germany, Japan and Italy is a thing of the past now too, it seems.

*"So I actually arrived in America a couple days ago. I got acquainted with an African dictator and he let me borrow his private jet. It's amazing what you can do with money, you can do whatever you want and you don't even have to kill anyone. Thanks to that I got here early. I can't get over how great it is to profit off dictators!"*

We can never know if she is telling the truth, but knowing her, she could definitely pull it off. It has been a while since Beatrice last saw Rusalka, but the density of souls inside her has definitely increased. She probably has been gathering them from all over the globe.

*"Interested? I can introduce you. The spot of wife number 5 is open right now! Apparently the last one had a bit of a jealousy problem, picked the wrong fights..."*

*"I'll pass..."*

Beatrice pretended not to hear that second half and returned her answer. If she accommodated Rusalka's conversation like this, it would not end before dark. Beatrice turned around to lead the way.

*"The situation has changed somewhat since a couple months back, so I'll fill you in on the way."*

Some steps later, Beatrice noticed Rusalka was not coming along.

*"Haha stop it you! But, you know... I'm here with a friend... She's kind of new to all this but she's a real beauty!"*

In no time Rusalka had attracted a group of locals who started flirting with her. And she was into it. No, she might have been the one flirting with them instead. Beatrice covered her face. She could already tell this case would exhaust her like none ever had.



Hell's Kitchen - Manhattan, New York. A place even the police prefer to avoid as a place worse than hell, riddled with gangs who commit wicked and heinous crimes. Murder, robbery, rape... Cases like these tower above the rest in terms of frequency, and not even those curious dare come close.

But tonight, the city that normally reeks of conflict is awfully quiet. Not a soul to be found out on the streets. One would be forgiven for thinking all criminal gangs were suddenly cleaned up by means of divine punishment. But striding about the city right now is no God, but something wicked. Two women who would normally make for easy prey...

*"Hmmm. Do you feel it? This atmosphere, this presence... So exciting."*



Rusalka sniffed the air. A place as dangerous as this one makes for a great reservoir of souls that are sure to be defiled and easy to obtain.

*"Where are Lisa and Bernard anyway? Maybe they'll come walking out of an alley if I sing and dance..."*

Rusalka took light steps and danced. A dance befitting a witch under the moonlight, giving off not a ghastly vibe, but an innocent one that would make people mistake her for an innocent girl.

Unlike Rusalka, Beatrice was exhausted. She has no intention of being inferior to any other member of the Obsidian Round Table, neither in combat prowess nor talent. However, she can never quite escape her junior position. A junior can not become a leash to a witch to whom everything is a toy. If anything, Rusalka has been tossing Beatrice around like one. What a little devil.

*"So, there really is a CIA safehouse around here?"*

Rusalka, twirling around, asked Beatrice.

*"Yes, the top floor of that house up ahead is apparently extensively used as a safehouse. This place may be vile, but in turn, that makes it suitable for obtaining intel that can't be found anywhere else."*

*"I read your report, you did a good job on the investigation. As expected from a former Gestapo operative."*

*"I was an officer of the SS after all."*

From the Schutzstaffel to the Gestapo to the Obsidian Round Table. All of Beatrice's fond memories came solely from her time at the Schutzstaffel.

Beatrice leading the way, the two set foot in the practically deserted house. The wooden stairs creaked with every step. This was not a matter of being stealthy anymore.

*"First a branch politician, then FBI, then the Pentagon... So our next meet and greet will be with the CIA. We sure are popular... Though it's not quite the same thing when your fans are all dead when the time comes..."*

The people whom Beatrice was trying to meet, those who sought the Longinus Dreizehn Orden, were one step behind and subsequently massacred. And this incident once more. The house already more than reeked of an eerie silence that only the dead could cause. Beatrice reached the top of the stairs and entered the nearest room, then she moved a bookshelf near the wall. Behind it lay an iron wall.

*"Isn't this something little boys like to do, rather than actual spies...? Oh well... Anyway, mine is on the other side, right? I'm getting kind of excited ♪"*

*"Is that so..."*

Beatrice shivered, seeing Rusalka unable to hide her excitement.

*"Oh, you don't like it, Valkyria? I honestly can't wait. Isn't it admirable that someone would try and be like us? And only the girls! Though if I end up seeing Schreiber's face again after opening my arms I'll be real pissed."*

Rusalka is already aware that the Obsidian Round Table's female members are being imitated.

The first victim was decapitated by means of a sharp blade. This resembled Beatrice's killing style as a knight. At the site of the second victim, corpses moved. Lisa Brenner, Number XI of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden's Obsidian Round Table. Her power concerns corpses.

As for the third victim...

*"Ah, so this is what you don't like. You can't appreciate it when they try to imitate your big sis..."*

Rusalka had a broad smirk. The third victim was burned to death in the bedroom. He was toasted to the point his corpse was completely black, and a prostitute who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time met her fate along with him. Only her silhouette was visible. Only the right half of her body was scorched.

Eleonore von Wittenburg, Number IX of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden's Obsidian Round Table, one of the battalion commanders. She is currently in another plane along with Heydrich and the other battalion commanders. A heroine who possesses both fiery discipline and cool-headedness. She played with fire and suffered a burn wound in the form of a battle scar across the right half of her body. This particular case is imitating her. This hit particularly close to home for Beatrice, who once served under her even before they joined the Obsidian Round Table.

Upon seeing this mockery that hit harder than one of hers could, Beatrice became so agitated she could barely think straight. She did not respond to Rusalka's laugh. It only served to ignite the spark in her blade and turn the thick iron door into dust. With what is beyond the door exposed, the results are not unlike what one would expect.

A messy room, covered with maps and documents stuck on bulletin boards. Once again the wall had *hagazussa!* written on it. There was a chair centered in the room, a man sat on it. The man's body was covered with torture tools. His fingers, knees, all of his joints had contraptions pierced into them. He was *shut tight* by means of countless spikes and bolts that resembled the fangs of a beast. A device called a *tiger bench* was used to break the man's knees to pieces.

But that was not all.

He had scratch marks all over him, peeling his flesh all the way off. The steel fangs used to perform the deed were scattered all over the room. These were called *cat's paw*, part of a Spanish torture technique. These unsanitary claws probably killed more than enough people throughout the years by means of shock and infectious diseases.

Countless scattered torture tools and countless wounds. Unless this man had superpowers, there was absolutely no need to hurt him this much in order to kill him. It is painfully clear this man was tortured on purpose.

*"I don't like this."*

Much like Beatrice before her, Rusalka was visibly upset. She felt ashamed of this spectacle, of what is normally her own work. However, she is not one to be swayed or sickened by witnessing something being taken *this* far so much as to be tempted by her sense of justice. No...

*"They tried this hard to imitate me, huh... I see..."* Anyone can grab some torture tools and inflict pain to a person to their heart's desire. Even a child can do it. In fact, if anything this resembles the work of a child. So simple. Ah, to think someone would do such a poor job of imitating you... Rusalka tossed away the bright mood she had since she arrived in America and left the scene.

Beatrice did not stop her. She is like an artist who just had their work defiled. It would seem pointless to try and stop her when you can not understand her rage. She simply stood there watching her off.



## Chapter 3

How To Kill A Millionaire



*“And that concludes the report, Malleus has been missing for some days now.”*

A couple of days have passed since she set foot in the safehouse in Hell's Kitchen, Beatrice reported the details of the events that had come to pass.

*“I see. Forthwith continue your investigation.”*

Valeria Trifa, *The Divine Vessel*. Receiving the report, he did not issue any outstanding new orders. The other end of the phone line felt only calm.

*“For the time being, you may cut down the number of reports. After all, most are naught but harmless back and forth chatter.”*

The Divine Vessel felt like he had a bitter smile on the other end of the receiver.

Not once, not twice, but four times. Slipping through Beatrice's vigilance and one-upping her. A single person cannot do that, it must be an organization of some sort. In order to stay ahead of an Obsidian Round Table member, who thrives by their individual strength, manpower is needed. And whatever group is behind the murder of so many people who belong to different organizations, that group must be unusually large. In other words...

*“To think they have not learned their lesson yet, even after the war... Or could it be that they want to try their hand once more with greater numbers? Individuals are yet easy to read, but against an entire colony that becomes somewhat impossible for me...”*

It seems America is closely connected to this case. No, in fact, they might be the instigators. Either way, they seem to want to pick a fight with the Longinus Dreizehn Orden.

*“Let us leave the rest of this to Malleus. After all, she will surely take proper action for us. No matter what our foolish adversaries are plotting, eventually their plans will wither away.”*

These words were not for Beatrice. They were likely aimed at whoever wiretapped into the phone line. There are plenty of ways to communicate without the risk of a third party listening in, but Trifa used this method despite knowing it would be wiretapped. Because of this, every call, he would purposely toy around with threatening and humorous dialogue. Beatrice felt sorry for the person in charge, who surely had his guts and heart tossed about. Their sense of duty was seen as nothing but a toy rubber duck by Trifa.

She could relate to that.

After hanging up, Beatrice grudgingly reflected on her way of life and on the orders bestowed upon her by The Divine Vessel.



Who to make the first target... A member of the secret organization in question is a no-go. Their deaths are likely not even reported. A politician is not a bad idea, but they naturally have plenty of enemies and are typically disliked. There are probably many who would rejoice their deaths. In other words, it has to be someone who is loved instead of hated, someone whose death would hit the front page of the newspaper. It would take something like that to make an entire country pay. The important part is not the method of the murder, but the identity of the victim.

Rusalka had the same idea as Trifa. She was going to mercilessly kill. None of the members of the Obsidian Round Table have a particularly strong sense of guilt for their murderous behaviour. Even Lisa, who tends to only say what others want to hear, and Beatrice, who still has some of her purity left, have devoured the souls of thousands. In particular, Wilhelm and Schreiber are exceptionally lacking in their sense of guilt. To them, murder is like dinner, it is something that must be done.

On the other hand, Rusalka kills for fun, though she also has a plotting nature. She kills in order to pursue her personal goals as well. Spinne, who is a tactician, is probably similar to her in that regard. If Wilhelm and Schreiber have natural talent, Rusalka is a hardened professional. At killing, that is.

Rusalka actually already decided who to make the first target. Clearing step one. It is someone who is very dear to the American people, to the president, even. One who eases the minds of those who fear the outbreak of an impending war between the United States and the Soviet Union. That is exactly what makes them worth taking. The important part has now become the presentation of the murder, step three.

The second step, how to actually go about the act, is simple. Once the desired result is determined, there are plenty of ways to achieve it. There is no need for special tricks or an alibi, those are usually produced on the spot anyway. If some decorated detective does end up solving this case, well then that would be too bad. Nothing about this warrants solving, or any sort of common sense to begin with. This case needs something anomalous that goes beyond what people can comprehend.

This is about more than just causing harm, otherwise it would bear no more fruit than that despicable display the other day. Besides, cruelty and pain give rise to hatred. And breaking a heart that is full of hatred is interesting in its own right, although that is a different kind of pastime. Sadness rules people's hearts, *why did it have to be like this!?* - it makes people full of regret. This case needs a tragedy.

First, Rusalka got in touch with the target's fanclub. Someone as popular as the target would have many, but Rusalka picked the most exclusive and fanatical one. Repressed love comes boiling over and turns into obsessive love.

Next, Rusalka got in touch with those who hate the target. And not just those who simply see her as a burden, no. Someone extravagant like the target is bound to have many enemies. Having good looks alone is enough to make others jealous, even enough to lead to murderous thoughts. This is something Rusalka knows all too well.

Now that exceptional love and exceptional hatred are all gathered in one place, it is time for Rusalka to move to the target's mansion.



Brentwood, Los Angeles. A place surrounded by a beautiful ocean and mountains, where one can feel the wind of Santa Monica on their skin. Even in America, this is an outstanding place to live. Rory Mitchell enjoyed the happiness. His job is to protect a big white mansion and its inhabitants. In the mansion lives a princess. Of course, not one of an actual royal lineage... Although the American people love her and she has gained the favour of those in power.

However, she has a hard time being crushed beneath all that love. And a princess' guard ought to protect and support her. Rory's conviction went beyond that of a bodyguard.

*- I want to become a knight and protect the princess!*

Rory is now around 190cm tall, weighs upward of 100kg and can bench press over 150kg. Yet he still clings to his childhood dream. His daily training and his experiences serving the Green Berets has all been for this purpose. And today, this dream is proudly fulfilled. Surely his comrades feel the same way.

The attorney lawyer who quietly came to see the princess left, Rory had been patrolling the mansion up until now, it has become midnight. Besides stalkers and papparazi, some dangerous folk have started targeting her recently... There are many rumours floating around, like the Mafia receiving assassination requests, one would start thinking they were all true.

Patrolling the entire estate from one end to the other, being over two thousand square meters big, takes quite some time. He spotted a sight he had never seen before, a little girl petting a Dobermann dog.

*"There, there... That's a good pupper... Dogs really are cutest in black..."*

If one were to forget it is the middle of the night, and she is trespassing, this would be an utmost pleasing sight. But even stranger is the fact that a Dobermann, trained to be a watchdog, is okay with having its head patted by somebody he has never seen before. Even if that person is a child, this should not happen. But no, this is still going on. The dog's cropped tail is wagging in all directions.

This wagging actually indicates fear, and a cry for support. It did not take long for Rory to notice. After all, his own legs were trembling.

*"Good evening."*

The little girl noticed him and greeted him. Rory did not hesitate and drew his handgun.

*"Stop right there!"*

The voice that came from his throat spasmed. Not even on the battlefield would one feel this sort of sensation. It was a kind of repulsiveness that the girl emitted. The garden that normally sprawled of exquisite colours, lost all saturation in that moment. This repulsiveness engulfed the entire mansion.

*"But I'm not going anywhere..."*

The girl smiled as if she talked to a crazy person. A very reassuring smile. Oh, it must have been a misunderstanding... A beautiful girl like that could never be repulsive... Yet Rory still pulled the trigger. He cannot let himself be fooled by her sugary smile. This is a trap. Rory's dignity as the knight he always wanted to be, as the soldier he trained to be, fearless in the face of adversity, was no match for the girl's simple trick.

In a stroke of luck, the bullet bursting from the barrel hit the girl's thigh. But that was all.

*"Whoa, you can still fire that in this state? You're pretty good."*

She neither bled nor fell over. She was unharmed, even though the bullet definitely hit her. It simply did nothing. Not even an attempt at dodging it, what a body.

This was Rory's favourite gun, neutralizing targets in a single shot. The M1911's design philosophy is focused around that one moment. Rory let out a sound unfamiliar to even him.

*"Abhhhhhhhh !"*

With a shriek that was more akin to a war cry, he tackled the girl. But she did not move an inch. Rory's Judo technique, that had him tossing around giants at over 200kg in the past, had no effect on the girl. No matter how much strength he put in, he could not sway her body in the slightest.

She touched his chest. There was not even a hint of martial arts technique in her movements, a complete amateur, but Rory's huge body was pushed down to the ground in an instant. His muscle fibers were cut and his bones broken. With but minimal arm strength, the girl overpowered Rory's gorilla-like body.

*"Hmmmmmmmm ♪"*

The girl mounted Rory with a cutesy smile. The stars lit up her body. Oh, but her beauty was greater than that of any star. Her small lips, her green pupils, all of it.. Rory could feel his manly feelings rise up inside of him, feelings of lust he should have eliminated back when he became the princess' bodyguard... Those feelings that were once sealed away took him over once more.

*"You..."*

Her voice reverberated inside his chest. But this time he was not feeling fear, it was pleasant. She ran her finger across his chest, almost unbearably pleasant. The girl still sat, bewitching him.

*"Why are you still holding back?"*

*Holding back...* Those words never quite had any application to Rory to whom hardship and moderation were obvious things. Thinking about it, what did he really mean to achieve by serving the princess? Having his smile returned by her once in a while- Was not enough, was it... He wanted to be loved by her, he wanted to be her only one. He wanted to-

Suddenly the girl's pupils had gone from green to red. Having been satisfied, the girl rose up from Rory's body, but he himself was not satisfied yet.

*"That's enough playing with you."*

*"What!?"*

His tone was rough, but he was actually pleading. His own voice sounded foreign to him.

*"But don't worry, there's plenty of fun left! You know, I'm confident you'll win... Out of all the people here, you were the best."*

A battle had started around the mansion. Well, to call it a battle would be a bit too flattering, this was nothing more than a riot. A bunch of guys he did not even know were strangling his bodyguard colleagues. Doing their best to fulfill their duty, they were once more assaulted by another group of unknown naked women. The dogs were ripping the women apart.

A crowd of people Rory did not know were flooding the mansion. Up until a few hours ago, this estate was elegant and peaceful, now it has devolved into the most vile place on earth.





*"Ah, hatred and love... You know, it's really hard to live while suppressing the way you feel. But today, it's okay to let it all out! Nobody to stop you, nobody to judge you... It's like a paradise."*

Rory felt the bliss of being in paradise, but also the pain of having a sledgehammer strike his legs. Rory grabbed the throat of the man swinging the hammer and strangled him. The man's movements stopped after taking another punch and having his throat broken. Rory's knees should have been destroyed, but he can still move. No matter how much he tried, he could not stop this riot.

This place is an all-you-can-eat buffet right now. Rory exercised his strength as he pleased. The more he did, the more his rational thoughts left him. His head became filled with violence and adrenaline, only a sudden high-pitched scream managed to bring him back only slightly to some form of rationality.

He wanted to be loved by her, he wanted to be her only one. He wanted to fuck her up. His primitive instincts took over Rory's mind once more, and just like the other survivors, he acted as he pleased. His dream of becoming a knight who would protect the princess was shattered. No, this was probably some sort of curse that had always been in his way, rather than a dream. He felt eternal gratitude to the girl, no, to the holy woman who made him an adult.



Rusalka returned to Beatrice in the latter half of September, taking over a month since she left in the start of October.

*"I really went all over America, and everywhere I went was fun! California and Las Vegas were great, but Los Angeles has to have been my favourite!"*

Rusalka purred on the bed like home sweet home. The problem, however, is that this is Beatrice's single-person hotel room with only one bed. Not quite her own home.

*"Hey, I can shower first tonight, right?"*

*"You're not staying!"*

As if she could spend the night, use the bed and use other people's stuff like it is hers. Beatrice's rants made her disapproval very clear.

*"By the way, did anything interesting happen while I was gone?"*

*"In particular..."*

Right. She had to tell her. So far this month, no traces of people investigating the Obsidian Round Table have appeared. Before, traces of them would be easy to find, but recently there have been none at all. Like a turtle that has retreated into its shell, no movements, and no traces.

*"Oh, I don't mean it like that... More like, in general? Like, did anything interesting hit the front page of the newspapers of late?"*

*"Somebody managed to take a small yacht from Japan all the way across the Pacific Ocean to San Francisco. There was a pretty big commotion about it."*

*"Hmmm..."*

Rusalka sulked. There seems to be a particular piece of news she wants to hear. Beatrice thought of something that seemed like the unpleasant kind of news she would probably be looking for.

*"And the death of Marilyn Monroe..."*

The death of Marilyn Monroe shook not just America, but the entire world. There were few who did not know of this superstar who balanced youth and voluptuous sex appeal. Her blonde hair, red lipstick and her famous longest walk in cinema history. She was someone who left her mark on the entire world.

*"Yeah, that's the one! Did they already do the funeral?"*

*"It seems to have been a private funeral. "*

While a superstar, Monroe's funeral was held only for close friends and relatives. There remain many mysteries surrounding her death. That morning, the maid found Monroe dead in her room. Her cause of death was ruled poisoning from taking an overdose of sleep medication, likely suicide. That is the only information the people got, a mysterious death.

*"Hmmm, yeah that's true. I guess you'd do a private funeral for that..."*

Rusalka said that with a triumphant expression. Beatrice then understood what Rusalka was up to while she was missing. She made a display of what a real witch is, of how far the Obsidian Round Table is willing to go.

Not just Monroe, she probably killed other figures deemed politically influential too, in ways that probably should not be elaborated on. Rusalka is directly responsible for the decrease in unsettling vibes around Beatrice, and the sudden disappearance of her investigation target's movements. In fact, the person who imitated the Obsidian Round Table might be mistaken for the culprit. Their adversary the size of a country suffered a severe blow by means of being shown what the real thing is. Like The Divine Vessel predicted, Rusalka took proper action and made their blood run cold.



## Chapter 4

There's No Business Like Witchcraft

America experienced a surge in the development of certain cultural aspects that were very underdeveloped before the sixties. Art galleries and museums, the country that boasted the status of world leader had very few of those. When the American people caught wind of this, they set up some of the world's biggest establishments in this category, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the American Museum of Natural History. It can be said that 1962 is the year America's culture started booming. Gradually, more and more art and discoveries would see the light of day. Rusalka frowned, standing in a warehouse with items such as these on display.

*"Isn't this range a bit too long..?"*

Before her stood an axe that was said to be used for executions at the Tower of London. Rusalka traced its long handle with her finger. At a glance, its blade looks sharp and it is stained with blood, but this axe contains no souls. In other words, it is a fake. This warehouse contains plenty of items with a historical background that have the potential to become an Ahnenerbe, but unfortunately they are all forgeries. Not just some of them, but all of them are fake, making one think there might be more going on here than meets the eye.

Following the stagnation of their enemy's activities, Rusalka decided to chase her own goals again. What piqued her interest was the whereabouts of various holy relics gathered by Ahnenerbe. Eichmann hinted that some had made their way to America. Rusalka had heard that a number of these relics slumber in this warehouse, but like all of the other ones, they have been swapped with forgeries. Rusalka had been traversing America for over half a month, visiting all museums and galleries, but the situation was all the same. Where did they disappear to?

Rusalka suddenly picked up a wicked presence. All potential holy relics in this warehouse are fake, so the atmosphere should have been clean. But the room was filled with malice. The source of this malice quietly appeared on the other side of the table. The woman who appeared wore a seemingly old army uniform, a velvet uniform that looked more worn than Rusalka's own SS officer's clothing. Rusalka remembered it from one of the museums she visited, was it not used during the period between the American Civil War and the American Indian War?

While somewhat hidden beneath her unfashionable clothes, the woman had quite the measurements, but what drew the most attention was the piece of cloth wrapped around her eye. It was a rather large piece, wrapped around the area around her eye like a headband, but it seemed to serve as a sort of eyepatch. Of course, it covered both of her eyes. The cloth had one eye drawn onto it, but that is simply a drawing. It makes one wonder if she can even see in front of her.

The source of the wickedness Rusalka felt was the uncovered saber the eyepatched woman held. It was a gorgeous saber with a handle that had an imbued gem and gold plating. If anything, it seemed more like a decoration rather than a weapon, yet a glastly aura emanated from it. That saber contains a large amount of souls and malice, it is somebody's Ahnenerbe.

Before Rusalka had a chance to open her mouth, the eyepatched woman struck at her. A gallant attempt, but there was too much distance between them. The eyepatched woman witnessed Rusalka's man-eating shadows appear before her, she would be free to speak her mind after submitting to their grip. This was what Rusalka thought, but she felt a sudden sense of unease... Something unlike anything she has ever felt before, she felt an unusual tremor.

The eyepatched woman took advantage of this opening and slipped right through the shadows. With her saber still in a striking position, she managed to overtake Rusalka.

*"..."*

Without saying a word, she then sheathed her saber and disappeared. The woman managed to escape thanks to her fluid movements without much hesitation, and thanks to Rusalka's surprise to actually suffering an injury for the first time in ages. Rusalka picked up the letter the eyepatched woman left behind. It was waxed shut, the contents were yet unknown. Only the recipient's name was visible, making Rusalka laugh scornfully.

*"Blessed witch, huh..."*

*Blessed* is not exactly a word that has any application to a witch, no matter how you interpret it. Such a ridiculous combination, a *real* witch can only laugh at this. The sneering Rusalka had a small cut on her neck, bleeding slightly. Her first wound in a long time, its pain gave way to nostalgia and unease.



What did the Gods feel when they were angered by the Tower of Babel? Looking upon the skyline makes one think about such trivial things. Out the window of a limousine, a great view of Manhattan is visible, representing man's ambition to go beyond. It is a nice view. If a war with the Soviet Union were to break out next year, this may all turn to ashes. It would surely be a shame, but it would also simply represent the path man chooses to take, and that is interesting in its own way. Rusalka chuckled.

The letter Rusalka received from the eyepatched woman was actually an invitation to a party. It was an elegant letter, with the party's time and location written onto it. When she went to the given location at the given time, a pitch black limousine was waiting for her. The chauffeur quietly guided the guests into the car and took off. Could he be a skilled professional? Or was he told precisely what to do? The chauffeur's movements were precise to the smallest detail, and he never flinched, even after seeing Rusalka's military outfit that represented her membership of the Obsidian Round Table.

The limousine eventually stopped in front of a fancy-looking hotel. The quality of an overnight stay in New York can vary greatly, where there are cheap hotels aimed at backpackers, there are also high-class hotels such as the *Waldorf Astoria* and the *Plaza Hotel*. The limousine had parked in front of the latter.

*"Ah, this hotel gets guests from all over the world!"*

*"Why are you looking at me like that? I'm staying at my hotel because I want to, I only need the basic necessities!"*

Beatrice, exiting the limousine after Rusalka, voiced her displeasure. Indeed, the place where Beatrice is staying is very simple and has only what is necessary. The type of place Eleonore would certainly like. The invitation specified that Rusalka may bring one guest, and naturally she brought Beatrice. Surely the host would see this coming from a mile away.

*"You know, I thought maybe it'd be funny to bring a bunch of unrelated guys we've never met before, the host'll never see that coming! What do you think?"*

*"I don't really care. More importantly, don't you think the lobby is awfully quiet?"*

Beatrice immediately rejected the offer and voiced a different concern. She is already more than used to being treated like a rubber duck, but she can never quite lose that greenhorn status, making her irresistible to tease. Rusalka entered the lobby after Beatrice in order to observe the area.

At a glance, the hotel looks opened, but there are no people. No sign of any guests, and only a handful of staff members. This luxurious hotel felt lonely. The two stepped into the hotel, their military clothing and young appearance did not alert the staff at all, they simply offered a formal greeting.

*"Some sort of barrier?"*

*"I can't sense one."*

Then what is this eerie feeling?

Possibly a power yet different from a barrier, a way to control people's thoughts and behaviour through authority. Rusalka entered the elevator and opened up a panel that was located below the elevator's control pad, as per the letter's instruction. The panel hid a button that would send the two to the upper floor. Rusalka pressed the button, and the elevator gently started moving.

After the door shut, Beatrice grabbed her Holy Sword of the Valkyrie *Thrud Walkure* so that she could unsheathe it at any moment. She had already heard all about the eyepatched woman who wields a saber like her.

The two reached the top floor without hinder, right away they were greeted by two huge doors. They could already *smell* something that made them feel sick. It was like a thick perfume, many different smells seem to have come together to create a nasty odour. Furthermore, the presence of people with rather high *density* could be sensed, coming from the other side of the door.

*"I really don't want to open this..."*

Beatrice voiced her unfiltered thoughts, then she opened the two doors.

*"Wha..."*

*"Wow!"*

Overwhelmed, but one by astonishment and one by joy. Before them played out a feast of sexual pleasure. Below the pink and purple lit ceiling, men and women laid together as far as the eye could see. All ideas of reproduction out the window, all that remains is the pleasures of the flesh.

Rusalka sniffed. She could identify the scent that filled the room as a combination of aphrodisiacs from many different countries and eras.

*"If you take too much of this stuff, you won't be able to return to being a normal member of society anymore. Are you feeling anything, Valkyrie?"*

*"I'm feeling fine."*

Beatrice was beating up a man who tried to grab her from behind. What was he thinking?

In the center of the room, there was a stage with a stripper in a cowgirl outfit performing a pole dance. A poledancer can be found in many places, but adding a stripper into the mix is not a bad idea. The poledancing act itself is obscene, and perhaps in the near future it might become mainstream for other strippers to perform it.



Rusalka was somewhat enthralled, but her neighbour was grinding her teeth. Beatrice seemed like she was about to start cutting away at her surroundings. She probably felt disgusted by this spectacle, but it was not enough. Would she acknowledge it like Rusalka? Maybe become inspired by it like Lisa? Or burn it all to a crisp like Eleonore? As a member of the Obsidian Round Table who has laid her eyes on this spectacle that could rival the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah, she wanted to be better.

Rusalka and Beatrice walked past the stage and approached the center of the room. They felt an even thicker magical pressure, its source was a small area in the middle of the room that was covered by thin veils. Even the participants of this feast dared not approach that place. Beyond the veil is the lord of this sabbath. Beatrice steadily walked up to the veil and rended it without a hint of hesitation. Her hatred towards that place made her movements all the more swift.

In spite of her determination, Beatrice's movements suddenly stopped. Even Rusalka, who peeked inside the veils, showed signs of shock. The identity of the person inside the veils was so unexpected it shocked both Obsidian Round Table members.

*"Welcome to my sabbath! It is hastily put together, but could it have been to your liking, perchance?"*

The person's face had a bewitching feeling, with her nonchalant blonde hair and youthful visage. She had a mole beneath her lips and beautiful slender legs. Marilyn Monroe, who should have died some time ago, was sitting on the throne of her own sabbath. This throne was made up of men crawling on all fours, it was a throne made of flesh. Ah, this sight is likely both pleasing and extraordinarily despairing to the American people.

*"Please, sit. Our chat might take some time. Being the only one sitting down feels a bit awkward."*

Though told to sit, the seat in question was once again made of men. They are wearing leather masks and underwear, so they are not completely naked, but even given the benefit of the doubt, they are very lightly dressed. Rusalka sat down elegantly, as prompted. She did not sit on top, however, she sat with her back against that of one of the men. The seat trembled of the pleasure it had received from this.

*"Aren't they comfortable?"*

Rusalka did not move an inch. Neither did Beatrice, but instead of sitting down, she stood and stared. She was able to hold back her discomfort with rationality.

*"Oh, even among monsters, we have a real cutie..."*

The lord of the sabbath made fun of her, but Beatrice did not waver. She stayed quiet, leaving the talking to Rusalka. This was not out of spite, her mission here was to serve as backup in enemy territory.

*"Are you the real Marilyn Monroe?"*

Rusalka, who was to do the talking, blatantly asked the lord of the sabbath.

*"Am I the real Monroe? Hmmm, that's a tough one. The girl who died was my stand-in. I once lived the celebrity life, but it's horribly hectic and I got bored of it all, so lately I've been leaving everything to her. She just seemed to be succumbing to the pressure of late, so I think even if you lot hadn't interfered, she would have suffered a similar fate. I didn't think she would bite the dust the way she did, though, I must admit."*

*"I see, so that girl is a fake, and you are the real deal... Or... What if you're just somebody who had plastic surgery to look like Marilyn Monroe? What if you're a body double who decided to take this opportunity to pretend to be the real deal? Or what if you're a psychiatric patient who genuinely believes she's the real Marilyn Monroe? Wouldn't that be much more interesting?"*

*"You're right, that would be more interesting. But you're free to call me Monroe either way, after all, I don't really like being called blessed witch..."*

*Blessed witch.* Monroe remained completely calm even after being called out by Rusalka. Going by guts alone, this person has much more courage than the one who died crying in her own home, befitting a celebrity.

*"So blessed witch, huh. It's such a silly nickname to give to people, but you call yourself that deliberately?"*

*"Yes, after all I am blessed."*

Monroe paid no heed to Rusalka's sarcasm and continued.

*"I'm rich, loved by the masses and I can do whatever I want. I am so blessed it can't be helped... The star Marilyn Monroe is just one side of me, I have plenty of faces and social positions. America belongs to me. So the least I can do is call myself blessed and acknowledge the hardships those around me have to go through... The modern witch cares about those around her, you know."*

*"You are so sweet."*

Spreading her kindness to the masses, just what world leader is she trying to be? Rusalka became irritated by her. A witch is someone who does not get what they want, someone who is avoided by the masses. This is how Rusalka defines a witch, and seeing this person in front of her so free of troubles really annoyed her.

*"Would you please stop looking at me like you hate me? I even went and got rid of those in your way for you..."*

In a way, what Monroe said was completely predictable.

*"So it was you?"*

*"Yes, I took the liberty of walking two steps ahead of you. After all, I have the power of an entire country behind me."*

It has become clear why Monroe drew out Beatrice.

*"So what did you hope to achieve with this? Right now it's been nothing more than unsolicited help..."*

*"Hearing that saddens me... But no, that's not all. Like I said before, I can do anything. This was just a simple demonstration, showing I can even do things like that."*

*"Is this a joke?"*

Rusalka already realized what she is implying. Beatrice's expression remains steady, but so has she. They are astonished by this person who doesn't know their place.

*"I don't joke around, unless I'm doing a comedy drama... I want to join the Obsidian Round Table, as I'm certain I can do good work. We were originally created to fight you, but I thought it'd be more interesting if we became allies instead."*

It is like they thought, the woman herself has said it, but it still sounds like the words of somebody who does not know their place.

*"Ah, alright. Well, it's kind of a hassle so I'll tell you right now, you can't."*

Rusalka tossed the application out of the window, with no room for negotiations. Beatrice nodded silently.

*"Why?"*

*"Why? Well, our CEO is currently unavailable and we are perfectly staffed. Seeing as there are no open positions, I kindly ask you try elsewhere. I do, however, wish you luck in your future endeavours. - So kind of like that. Get it? There's not enough room for more than one witch."*

Currently, and at any point, Rusalka is the sole witch in the Obsidian Round Table. No matter how beautiful or powerful you may be, with Lord Heydrich gone, there are no plans to take in any new members. There is Valeria Trifa, the acting commander-in-chief, who has a position where he can recruit new members, but surely he would not take a request such as this serious. Not to mention, this would mean Rusalka would gain yet another opponent in the race for immortality via the Transmutation of Gold, thank you but no thank you.

*"If there can only be one witch..."*

The moment Monroe spoke these words in such a quiet voice the rest of her sentence could not be heard, the heads of the men forming Rusalka's seat split open. The hand that split their heads belonged to Rusalka. Their guts splattered towards Monroe and defiled her face.

*"Ah... Do you have any idea how much it takes to maintain my beautiful face?"*

*"So that means we can smash it all we want, right?"*

Monroe leapt away from the enraged Rusalka, from below her throne made up of men appeared a monster. The monster carried a collection of torture tools atop its hardened muscles, it wore a crude leather mask, and its appearance would remind anyone of an executioner. It had slight traces of a protruding chest and smooth groin, implying, though faintly, that it is female.

*"If there are no vacancies, we can just create them anew. Did you hear that, girls? If two new spots open up tonight, one of you might be able to join!"*

There are multiple witches in this area, the blessed witch Monroe is likely their ringleader. The executioner stood in front of Rusalka and reached for her own spine, what she took out of her body was a large axe. It was the original version of the axe that had been replaced by a forgery, the axe that had been used for many executions at the Tower of London. This true weapon was flooded with true hatred and animosity, the angered Rusalka stood face to face with the executioner.



Beatrice was astounded. She always knew Rusalka was pessimistic and easy to get riled up, but she is also a tactician. To think there exist simple words that could get a tactician like her so worked up... What could Monroe possibly have said to push Rusalka so far? Beatrice did not hear the remainder of Monroe's sentence. Either way, here ends this sorry excuse of a negotiation attempt. Beatrice could already sense murderous intent, neither from Monroe nor from the executioner, but a much more refined murderous intent came from behind her.

*one of you might be able to join!*

If Monroe is to be believed, there are at least two more enemies. Beatrice turned around, and she saw the stripper atop her stage staring at her, her back straight in a pose one would sooner find in a drawing. The stripper stuck out her tongue, and down it came gliding two double-action revolvers with particularly large barrels. How in the world did she fit those down there? Before asking herself anything like that, Beatrice leapt back. The guns delivered bullets one after the other, one of those bullets shot right through the heads of an unfortunate couple that got in its way.

*"Look at you go!"*

As if overwhelmed by the room's thick scent, the stripper's voice sounded high-pitched and excited. The stripper put her twin handguns back into the holsters that were attached to her cowgirl outfit. Apparently this was no cowgirl outfit, but rather a gunman cosplay.

A single bullet had scraped her leg slightly, leaving a wound. She did not know what those revolvers truly were, but they certainly were Ahnenerbe capable of harming her body. The part that surprised Beatrice was not the revolvers, however. It was the way she reloaded them.

*"Blh!!"*

Beatrice witnessed something painful and repulsive, and impulsively bit her tongue. The stripper was holding a freshly reloaded gun in one of her hands, and the other gun was in the process of being reloaded by four hands sprawling from her stomach. They were like the hands of two children, having become perfectly in sync, focused solely on their task of reloading the gun.

*"Alright, here we go again, kids!"*

The stripper was able to fire as she pleased, leaving the reloading to the hands bursting from her stomach. What teamwork between parent and child. Beatrice had been dodging the bullets with superb speed up until now, but stray bullets have been taking out intoxicated men and women left and right. Going out while tripping and without suffering may also be another decent way to die, from a different perspective.

*"Don't you see guns are stronger than swords!?"*

The stripper's joyous voice reached Beatrice, who had her hands full with a shower of bullets. Beatrice suddenly stopped moving and stood still in place. Surprised at her sudden halt, the thus far trigger-happy stripper stopped as well. *The blade is mightier than the gun.* - There is a saying like that, but that does not mean it is correct. As a knight, Beatrice was trained knowing this fact. Lightning surged from the Holy Sword of the Valkyrie *Thrud Walkure* she wielded, in an attempt to extinguish that light, the stripper's revolver unleashed another burst of flames. A lump of human meat that appeared in front of Beatrice shielded her from the wall of fire, it was a corpse she kicked up in front of herself at the last second.

The stripper tossed one gun into the air for her stomach's hands to reload, and took another newly reloaded gun back. In what little time this took, Beatrice had already closed in on the stripper. She proceeded neither over nor around the corpse she kicked up, but below it. She slid below the corpse with such massive speed it cracked the floorboards, and not even the stripper, with her talent for keeping track of moving objects as a gunman, could keep up with her.

With a backhand grip, Beatrice cut off one of the stripper's arms with a speed even greater than that of a percussion hammer. And in a continuing fashion, she took her other arm too. With this, the stripper lost her ability to fight. Blood surged from the stripper's arm sockets, and she kneeled. This was likely just another occupational hazard to her, as there was still passion to be seen in her gaze.

*"My stomach..."*

*"It's over now."*

Beatrice had already cut the pleading stripper's carotid arteries. As blood came gushing out of her wounds, the arms in the stripper's stomach slowly became weaker and eventually died. With a faint smile, the stripper too died. As would be expected of someone who treated other people's lives so indifferently, a large number of souls came flowing out of her. Not quite giving the impression that a single person was just killed. But these souls were not for Beatrice.

There was a sheer difference between the amount of souls she should have gotten, and the amount she did get. Beatrice noticed the souls all flowing to a different place. At end of her line of sight stood Monroe, holding her hand up, strangely licking her lips. There is no mistaking it, Monroe stole Beatrice's spoils of war. As Beatrice headed towards Monroe, she felt a sudden sense of unease.

*"!?"*

Beatrice deflected the saber that came flying at her from above. The saber's owner landed by Monroe's side, before Beatrice.

*"You know the ropes, huh..."*

Beatrice commended the eyepatched woman in front of her. Her precise attack just now, her violent landing and above all, her masterful use of her saber. She is no amateur, she has to have plenty of training and experience behind her back to reach such a level. This earnest display of swordsmanship closely resembled Beatrice's own.

*"..."*

The eyepatched woman swung her saber without saying a word. It now clear that by her pride as a knight, she would respond to Beatrice's commendation with her blade.



Rusalka was having a blast.

*“Ahahahahahaha! This is the stuff!”*

She could easily avoid the shrieking executioner's axe, and with each missed swing, the bodycount increased. If a giant chases you with a huge axe, that would normally scare most people to death, freezing them in place. However, this giant is stupid, very stupid. After all, it is not paying any heed to the traps Rusalka has set up. Even when its path is blocked by a stone wall, even when it is restrained by chains, it forcefully breaks through.

Yes, her wall is crushed and her chains broken, but that is no big deal. Normally, when an Ahnenerbe is destroyed, its owner receives suitable damage as a form of feedback, but the torture tools Rusalka is able to summon are but a small part of her arsenal, and when destroyed, the damage she receives is negligible. The enemy is springing all of her traps, ruining their aim, making dodging easy. This is too much fun. Rusalka is starting to get satisfied, and her anger has lessened too.

*“Now then ~While we're at it, let's have a look at you...”*

While having such an easy time, Rusalka's eyes started glowing. Rusalka has the ability to view the target's life force through colours. Based on the shade and hue, she can determine someone's danger level and strength. For example, the executioner going rampant before her shows red and black. Typically found in madmen, but conflicting colours are nothing to boast about. Palettes that should be feared are one single colour. Lord Heydrich, Mercurius and the three battalion commanders all have very basic hues. Even the most gentle colours can represent a very dangerous person if thick enough.

Some distance away, two people with green hues are having at each other. There may be some subtle differences in their palette, but fundamentally they resemble each other. Looking over at Monroe, she showed as complete black, with some irregularities to be found. Compared to a certain battalion commander whose palette is perfectly black, Monroe's is very chaotic. Oh see... She is not a big deal after all... Rusalka made light of Monroe, but that opinion of hers would change a couple minutes later.

*“Wait, is that-”*

Rusalka let her guard down and had the executioner's axe swinging at her once more. Annoyed, she caught the executioner's arms with a vice she summoned. After tightening, the vice captured both of the executioner's wrists.

*“Graaaaaaaaaaaaaa!”*

*“Ah, for the love of... Please shut up!”*

*“Hg!?”*



A chain that appeared from above wrapped around the executioner's mouth and neck. Escaping has become quite hard with both wrists broken. Rusalka's shadows stealthily approached the struggling executioner. They devoured not the executioner itself, but the floor beneath its legs. Without sufficient foothold, the executioner fell through the floor, crushing floor after floor below it due to its immense weight. When it reached the lobby, the sound of cracking floors stopped and sounds of bones and meat breaking were audible. Rusalka's chains were not quite long enough to reach all the way to the lobby, making this more of a hanging, rather than a fall. Rusalka stared at Monroe, not even giving a glance to the hole created by the executioner fell through.

*"If you look at me so passionately, I won't be able to bear it, you know."*

Monroe swayed her body. Her sex appeal made America drool all over her, but to Rusalka, who could see her true colour, it was just another worthless sight. Monroe's colour is definitely black and chaotic, but her black is not just any chaotic black. To be exact, it is not even black. It is more like the undesirable colour that would come from mixing a bunch of colours on a palette at random. So naturally, her colour is the opposite of simple, but instead of chaotic it is more like an abomination of a colour. Rather than indicating somebody dangerous, it indicates somebody indecipherable. Not hard to look at, but ugly.

Rusalka stared suspiciously at Monroe. She paid Rusalka no heed, however, as she held her arm up in the air. Stretching and contracting her fingers, almost as if she was touching an invisible object.

*"Now that I'm all hot and bothered, I'll have to cool down."*

Monroe clenched her hand shut. Behind Rusalka, something was suddenly shredded away. Not too long ago, the corpse of the stripper Beatrice killed was lying there. Now only parts of her arms and legs remain, along with a small pool of blood.

*"What is this..."*

Rusalka inspected the remains of the stripper's corpse and tried to ascertain Monroe's power. The eyepatched woman, the stripper and the executioner all used their Ahnenerbe as a straightforward weapon, though sometimes in strange ways... But Monroe's case is different, her power is far more conceptual and magical. If one was to compare it to Ewigkeit...

*"Now onto the next!"*

*"W-Wait! Hold on, at least give me some time to think!"*

Monroe waved her arm in dissidence, furniture and walls around Rusalka started being shredded away as if chasing the fleeing Rusalka. Closing, and opening her hand. Such a simple gesture allowed Monroe to bring about such an unfathomable level of destruction. And now her wave of destruction had reached the clashing Beatrice and the eyepatched woman. The two noticed the impending force and let their next attack pass each other, allowing the invisible force through.

The fleeing Rusalka reached Beatrice's side.

*"Haha, I thought you made it in time."*

*"That was the plan..."*

On Beatrice's cheek was a small saber cut. The unharmed eyepatched woman was fittingly standing by the side of Monroe, who had shut her hand by now.

*"Let's call it a day."*

Monroe singlehandedly announced the end of this bout.

*"You're running away!?"*

*"Call it running if you want, I'm just pulling back. I overdid it a little today, sorry "*

The rampaging executioner and Monroe's mysterious power caused damage not only to the walls and the floor, but also to the building's integrity. The building had started to sway, and there was a large hole connecting their floor to the lobby, with a large corpse hanging in its center. Aside from using a barrier, it has become very hard to cover this up as if nothing happened using only her authority.

*"Like I said before, this has been a demonstration. I have proven that I can leave light wounds on you two of the Obsidian Round Table and get away with it! Wouldn't you say that's an unparalleled accomplishment?"*

Monroe's tone was unpleasant, but she was right. From the day of inception until now, nobody outside the Obsidian Round Table had ever gotten this far.

*"You're right. I'll keep that in mind on your first day. But nothing more, though."*

Rusalka also had an unpleasant tone, but she did acknowledge Monroe's accomplishment.

*"Thank you very much. If possible I'd like it if you could tell your stand-in CEO, or your actual CEO, about this. Next time I'll bring fresh new candidates!"*

Monroe opened her hands and spread out her arms, she then vigorously joined her hands in front of her chest. With such power that made the destruction from before look like child's play, the space around Monroe became completely shredded in an instant. Even the debris that formed as a result of this destruction completely disappeared in the next instant. When the air became clear again, Monroe and the eyepatched woman were both gone.

*"Did we find out anything useful?"*

Beatrice sheathed her weapon. Now that any trace of them had disappeared, trying to chase them has become useless. They had no choice but to call it a day too.

*"We did, we got plenty of intel about the nature of this little group of witches. It's just..."*

Looking around, any traces of blood of the men and women had now turned into wreckage. The intoxicated couples had passed away while intoxicated, leaving not a single survivor.

*"We didn't get any tangible results."*

People died, a large amount of cursed souls came about. Normally, they would all be ripe for the taking. But Rusalka and Beatrice only burned souls today by exerting their power. The souls of the deceased, those released from the late stripper and executioner, all were taken from them by Monroe. How aggravating... Could this too be counted among the other party's accomplishments? This was a recommendation she had no plans to tell her superior about, but sadly it would not leave her thoughts.



## Chapter 5

The Amazing Rusalka

October 23rd. The day Lisa Brenner set foot inside New York was the same day America announced its naval blockade of Cuba, in order to deal with Soviet missiles that were stationed on the island next to America. From this point on, the relations between these two behemoths would likely only deteriorate. One wrong move and a third world war may be on the horizon. What kind of order would Valeria Trifa give? If mankind were to burn themselves to the ground, all would be for naught, would he tell them something unfitting such as to go save the world? Or is he so certain it would never lead to a nuclear war? It is as if he has a clock on display that displays the time mankind has left until the end of time, as he stares at it with his cold eyes. The clock's hand can easily be swayed by mankind's actions, and when it hits midnight, mankind would end. The Obsidian Round Table can easily influence this hand's movements, but as long as individuals such as them have such stronger wills than the masses, this clock that displays the end of time holds little meaning. When Lord Heydrich's Day of Wrath finally comes, this clock would be turned into a piece of trash. The day He finally returns as a man, not just mankind, but those of the Obsidian Round Table too would come to experience the unknown.

Lisa Brenner swallowed her feelings of disgust and unease and walked about the city. She is one of the few Obsidian Round Table members who still has intuition close to that of a normal person, but she is not taking a stroll in order to get away from those feelings of disgust and unease, no. To be precise, she only continues to embrace her sins. To be less precise, she is a hypocrite. Lisa Brenner is a woman who is full of these disgusting traits.



This is one of New York's general hospitals, located right in its center. It performs not only internal medicine and surgeries, but also employs specialists from overseas, actively taking applications for surgeons. Its lobby is filled with people, and walking through it means passing by a lot of patients and staff. Lisa arrived at the agreed upon hospital room at just the right time.

*"Ah, if it isn't Babylon! What a surprise."*

The hospital's director greeted her, using her alias.

*"I'm more surprised by what you're wearing."*

*"Really? But it looks good on me, right?"*

Rusalka enthusiastically looked at her own outfit, following Lisa's remarks. The girl who sat in the luxurious director's chair wore a tight fit nurse's outfit. At least the intention here is to look like a genuine nurse.

*"Not like anybody's complaining! Well, not like they can anyway..."*

Rusalka has become this hospital's director. Of course, she did not do so through legitimate means, but by using her magical powers to set up a barrier and brainwash the staff. It has been a while since their chance meeting with Monroe at that hotel, and Rusalka has seized this hospital with a clear objective in mind.

*"Besides You're not one to talk in your nun's clothing..."*

Rusalka stared at Lisa, who wore a habit. While typically a rather proper and tidy outfit, Lisa's curvy figure made it hard for her to hold back her sex appeal, even in these clothes. Her large breasts, slim waist and her glasses, if anything, served to add a touch of seductiveness to her look.

*"I've been meaning to tell you, but you still look way too obscene like that. Almost looks uncomfortable to walk in..."*

True obscenity is not just a special physical trait, life itself must also be obscene, as people cannot come together without it. Lisa Brenner's alias, *Babylon*, is not just for show.

*"These are the documents Spinne asked me to give you."*

Lisa ignored Rusalka's rude comment and handed a thin sealed document to her. Rusalka stared at the document, her desk in the director's office already had plenty piled up. Without looking away from the letter, Rusalka made small talk with Lisa.

*"I asked Spinne, so I figured he'd bring them himself... He's sure getting all high and mighty."*

*"Spinne has a lot going on, including things like this, so this particular case probably isn't on top of his shopping list."*

*"Hmmm, then you must have free time."*

*"I have my own things to take care of, the time for them just hasn't come yet. "*

Spinne is in charge of intel and finances. As the bridge between the Obsidian Round Table and society, he has been very active as a jack of all trades ever since the war ended. Lisa on the other hand, has not been appointed a task yet because it is not yet her time. Currently she simply runs errands for the Divine Vessel.

*"You're right! But this time I really thought he'd bring it in person... You know, 'cause this is New York?"*

*"Bey is a given, but how is Spinne connected to New York?"*

*"You know, he's a spider. Spiders have a thing for New York. Here, take a look at this comic that came out this summer, it's selling really well."*





Lisa scanned through the comic book handed to her by Rusalka. Its main character was a young man who had gained superpowers like a spider, he wore a fitting costume. The young boy who had used his superpowers for his own happiness had made light of others, and as a result he is in regret of having lost someone dear to him. It was a story filled with fitting youthful radiance, and matching youthful sadness.

*"It's so original, isn't it? The red-blue tights, the fact that he's young but not cocky, but still also standing up for himself... But more than anything, I almost can't bear seeing him in such pain, I might end up buying the next issue..."*

(So he doesn't expect to be rewarded for his deeds...)

Lisa managed to swallow these words.

*"Yes, it's well written."*

Lisa praised the story, but the part that connected with her was different than Rusalka's.

*"With great power comes great responsibility."*

These words were uttered in the final scene, and they pierced Lisa's heart. With great power comes a great curse, Lisa knew this very well. If there were to be a next issue, she wished at least for him to be rewarded.



IN A DARK ALLEY IN NEW YORK CITY, LATE AT NIGHT, A WOMAN IS BEING ROBBED!

***"HAND OVER YER' MONEY!"***

THE WOMAN REVEALS THE CONTENTS OF HER BAG AS COMMANDED. IN THIS BACK ALLEY, THERE ARE NO COPS, THE WOMAN IS HELPLESS. BUT THE CITY'S SAVIOUR IS ALREADY AWARE OF THE SITUATION! HE SWINGS AROUND THE BUILDINGS USING HIS METAL WIRES. AGAIN, THERE HE GOES! TRULY, THE WAY HE MOVES, SO FAST HE MAY AS WELL BE FLYING, SO ELASTIC IT EVEN SURPASSES FLIGHT, HE LEAPS ABOVE NEW YORK'S CITYSCAPE. THE SAVIOUR LANDS BEHIND THE ROBBER WITHOUT MAKING A SOUND.

***"LWAAAAAAAAA!!!"***

RIGHT AFTER, THE ROBBER'S BODY IS WRAPPED IN WIRE AND CUT INTO SIX PIECES. LONG ARMS AND LEGS AND A SLENDER BODY, THE SAVIOUR INTRODUCES HIMSELF WITH A SMILE SLOWLY CREEPING ONTO HIS FACE.

***"IT'S YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD ROT SPINNE!"***

***"KYAAAAAA!"***

THE WOMAN'S SCREAM IS MUCH LOUDER THIS TIME THAN WHEN SHE WAS BEING ROBBED.



A middle-aged man who resembles a spider, and a young man who has spider powers. As a result of the overuse of said keyword, a terrible scene unfolded in Lisa's mind.

*"You just imagined something crazy, didn't you?"*

Rusalka asked Lisa, who made a bitter face.

*"I did not!"*

Lisa shook her head and tossed that unexplainable image from before away.

*"Uhuh, I see. So anyway, have you seen the contents of these documents?"*

*"I haven't."*

*"Then you ought to take a look. It's sure gonna change the way you view the news, it's quite moving, really... Brave, if anything."*

Lisa checked the contents of the documents she handed to Rusalka. For the most part, the documents listed information about the logistics of goods and placement of agents, but the language and dates used were all over the place. There were even some documents from their beloved Nazi Germany in there.

*"So much for a Third World War, or a Cold War for that matter... How despicable, they're pretending to claw at each other, while in reality they're teaming up to face a common enemy. Maybe they're afraid now that they know we live, or maybe they just want to become more like us... Either way, they're fully prepared now."*

It was not just the holy relics that used to belong to Ahnenerbe that Rusalka was investigating, the conspiring countries all provided large amounts of new holy relics and funds to the operation.

*"They really collected everything and anything that could trace back to us, huh..."*

Lisa turned the pages expressionlessly. She was now looking at documents relating to the Lebensborn association. The organisation, originally established after World War I to protect the German population increase and pure-bloodedness, had transformed into an inhuman organisation that tried to create geniuses and superhumans. The research data coming out of these experiments, along with information about those associated with it, had found their way to the rest of the world in secret.

*"Thoughts?"*

*"None in particular..."*

Lisa remained expressionless even after Rusalka's question. She was once a member of the organisation Lebensborn, the person responsible for orchestrating its fall from grace. Surely there must have been emotions swirling around inside her heart, yet she remained completely calm.

While she appears graceful and happy, Lisa Brenner's personality is stubborn. She is not the rival of Eleonore Von Wittenburg just for show. If anything, Lisa, the one who looks far easier to manage than Eleonore, who looks tough on first sight, may be the more wicked one of the two. She overcomes her troubles with strong force of will, and the regrets and hypocrisies she carries with her have become ingrained into her being.

*"If I had any outstanding thoughts, it'd be the fact that some of these resources were leaked not after the war, but during the war..."*

*"It just means people weren't as fond of us as we thought they were. We didn't even realize what Eichmann was up to either..."*

*"You mean Adolf Eichmann? Did he really...?"*

*"Yep! He only ever swore allegiance to the Reinhard Heydrich who was the head of the Gestapo, not the head of the Longinus Dreizen Orden. His testimony against us may have even been part of the plan all along. Like a start signal..."*

Even Lord Heydrich's most loyal follower had a different agenda. All things considered, ever since the founding of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden, its members have been devouring the sanity and power of many people around them. Formally, even the leaders of Nazi Germany, Himmer and the Führer, feared Lord Heydrich and the Longinus Dreizen Orden. With this growing fear and envy towards them, it comes as no surprise that people started plotting against the Obsidian Round Table even during the war.

*"I was under the impression that America simply started collecting things we deemed worthless, but look at them now, all worldwide. Isn't this nice? It feels great to be the bad guy. 'Cause, even the Soviet Union is in on this! Their pride basically went and disappeared. This is the best!"*

If I will be hated and envied, it had better be good. If I will be pushed to the brink, I had better laugh last. Rusalka now has both positive and negative memories of her time as a witch, but she has taken pride in that.

*"But now that they know we exist, wouldn't it be easier for them to attack in a more upfront way?"*

Rusalka answered Lisa's question.

*"There are probably way too many people in charge. They want to pretend we don't exist, but they also want to destroy us. It's all become so complicated, they can't mobilize their forces properly, don't you think? I also doubt every single one of them knows about us, this isn't a comic book, I'm sure the current cold war and nuclear threats have them and their loved ones more than occupied. Considering how hard it is to gather a bunch of major leaders to work together, this will never work."*

Too many captains will steer the ship up a mountain. That is, having too many people in charge has made the system defect. To a colony that now has its own will, there is strength but also weakness in numbers.

*"Oh, and then there are also those who want to follow our lead and become like us."*

*"Like the witches from before..."*

Lisa had already heard the news, including the poor imitations of them that were left behind.

*"I've done a lot of research on them, having a sample at my disposal really is a game changer. Have a look..."*

Rusalka stood up, the reason she placed the hospital under her command was to study this sample. Lisa called out to Rusalka, who was about to leave the office.

*"What about Valkyrie? Isn't she here?"*

Lisa noticed Beatrice was missing.

*"She's taking a break. Something about needing time to think. That girl tends to get hot-headed anyway, so this type of work isn't really suited for her anyway, no matter how hard she tries..."*

Beatrice cannot do the things Rusalka can, and likewise, Rusalka cannot understand what she is going through right now. This needs the right person on the right job.

*"Ah, I see."*

Lisa was relieved.

*"Oh, and it's not because she doesn't want to see your face... I didn't tell her you'd come anyway, but lately she'd get all upset by even hearing your name. She even witnessed this huge orgy that resembled Babylon's office, so she gets a little sensitive."*

Lisa's expression turned gloomy after Rusalka's rude comment. Beatrice has been keeping her distance from Lisa, to the point of never even speaking nor talking to her. She has come to continue Lisa and Eleonore's unique relationship in an odd way.

*"Well that's fine, I'd like to avoid any unnecessary drama. "*

Lisa easily accepted Beatrice's distant behaviour, though she is the subordinate of her comrade, like a little sister. If the person in question does not want to talk, then so be it. Rusalka snickered at the sight of Lisa's determination.



The first time she passed the hotdog owner, he smiled at her.

The next time she passed him, he looked confused.

The third time, he looked scared.

The fourth time, he had simply vanished.

Beatrice sat down on a bench, realizing why. She was never out of breath, nor sweating at all. Her performance sprinting a course of over 10 kilometers long is no longer a matter of training, just extraordinary. If this had been way back then, before she joined the Longinus Dreizehn Orden, then of course she would be exhausted. She would remember jogging until she threw up, following her beloved superior's back and being told she did well. These memories, along with the actual feeling of accomplishment are now a thing of the past.

That kind of weakness felt awfully nostalgic to her right now. However, just the other day, she suffered an actual wound for the first time in a long time, and it made her feel a sense of weakness again. Checking on her already mostly healed wound, Beatrice remembered the fight at the hotel, and the eerie feeling Rusalka mentioned. This eerie feeling would return each time she clashed blades with the eyepatched woman.

When they fought, she felt a strange disturbance in her intended movements. When compared to Wilhelm and Schreiber yelling their lungs out whenever they went at each other, this was not nearly as violent. But the disturbance seeped into her being in a very tangible way, and each time, she would miss her fatal attacks and almost take those of her opponent head on. It had to somehow be part of the eyepatched woman's ability.

But even then, there was another mystery. Even if the eyepatched woman had strange powers and an Ahnenerbe that was capable of hurting Beatrice, her physical strength was not all that great. Normally, she would be able to overpower her with no trouble... But her swordsmanship skills did not allow that, even in that ridiculous getup of hers. Her skills were refined, and in a way even resembled Beatrice's. Perhaps her sudden desire to train again has been an unconscious result of her fight with the eyepatched woman.

Monroe wants to become a member of the Obsidian Round Table, even if she has to kill others. Would that not mean that the eyepatched woman is aiming to kill Beatrice and take her place? It seems she is more specialized in fighting Beatrice than she is generally skilled. This must be the reason Beatrice is at such a loss right now, the eyepatched woman's blade simply matched her own too well. Beatrice has thought highly of many people that stood above her, but she has never had many people who looked up to her.

*"This is almost embarrassing..."*

This feeling of the unknown, and her very unknown opponent's skills have managed to light a faint flame in her heart. One that had been dormant for tens of years until now.



Rusalka comfortably opened a steel door that stood much taller than herself.

*“Ah, I could do without this stench... Babylon, you must love it though, right? Ah, get out! Did you get wet?”*

*“I did not...”*

The place Rusalka brought Lisa to was the morgue below the hospital. The morgue had rows of smaller doors lined up along the wall, each serving as a cryopreservation cabinet for storing corpses. These corpses no longer had the ability to complain, resulting in this questionable way of storing them. There was one corpse in the center of the room, however, that was too large to fit inside a cabinet. And so it had to be put down over multiple tables connected together.

*“Is that a cow? Wait, an elephant... A hippo?”*

*“You should’ve stopped at elephant, give it some credit. Hippo is just a little...”*

Rusalka interrupted Lisa’s abusive comments. The large corpse in the center of the morgue belonged to the executioner Rusalka lunged all the way to the lobby of the hotel. Most of the survivors of that event, including the stripper, were shredded to pieces. But the executioner fell all the way down and so her corpse remained.

*“Carrying that thing here was a huge chore, you know? I prepared a place to examine it, ended up being this place. I had to go through great lengths to carry this hippo here, ‘cause it really is big. I vented a little and accidentally nailed the hotel’s staff... Though the place was empty anyway, so I had a clear path. Guess it’s no problem...”*

Apparently, the hotel’s history, status and traditions were worthless enough to Rusalka to destroy in a fit of rage. Then again, the hotel’s lifespan had probably already reached its finale from the moment the witches entered it.

Lisa examined the body. Its frame was too large to have been attained via strength training alone. It is clear that she was experimented on to give her a body like this.

*“Has to be...”*

And as she thought, on the executioner’s head there were multiple scars that could only be from surgery. Rusalka continued her explanation.

*“Not only is her Anterior pituitary dislocated, they even implanted a tube so they could administer growth agents. This girl’s brimming with hormones. ”*



Because of the excessive secretion of these hormones, the executioner has shown impressive growth, a phenomenon that's also called gigantism. There are cases of other people using steroids to achieve a similar effect, but that usually ends up weakening their bones, affecting their heart and generally not going the way they want. If the executioner is such an example of manmade strengthening, then it definitely is a successful one.

*"Lebensborn attempted surgical operations like these back in the day, but they always failed."*

*"I wonder if technology today has advanced that much, or perhaps failure after failure has finally yielded good results, we'll never know... These witches sure are tenacious though, I'd almost respect them."*

This involves more than just magic. This is about medical science, drugs and superpowers. Created from all kinds of science, technology, things the Longinus Dreizehn Orden left behind, whatever they could get their hands on. That is what Monroe and the witches are, what modern witches are.

*"But wouldn't they be complete amateurs, then?"*

Even with an Ahnenerbe, if there is no solid connection between it and its wielder, they would not be able to inflict damage to members of the Obsidian Round Table. Superpowers and steroids are no substitute for Ewigkeit.

Rusalka showed Lisa a container.

*"What's this?"*

It contained the stripper's revolvers. The stripper herself disappeared along with the hands in her stomach, but her beloved weapons remained unharmed.

*"A Colt M1877. These weapons were favoured by many legendary gunmen during the American Frontier, including Billy the Kid. I don't know whose these really are, but it's no doubt a true American Ahnenerbe. You can tell the killcount on these is high just by looking at them."*

*"I'm no expert on guns or Ahnenerbe, but are they supposed to be rotting?"*

The revolvers inside the container had started to rot. And it was not rust, it was more like the rotting of human flesh. They gave off a horrid stench, and slowly rotted away. If they weren't submerged in Formalin, they probably would no longer look like guns at all.

*"Where the Ewigkeit formula connects people to their Ahnenerbe using their soul, the witches' formula instead forms a physical connection between them. So if we see this Ahnenerbe as an extension of its owner's body, with the owner dead the Ahnenerbe itself will rot just like her."*

Looking back, all of Monroe's witches either pulled their Ahnenerbe from their own bodies, or made them appear from their mouths, their Ahnenerbe had become one with their bodies. Where Ewigkeit makes Ahnenerbe cling to their owners, Monroe and her witches have devoted their bodies to theirs, and cling to them instead.

*"How is that any different from an Amalgamation Type?"*

Rusalka and Lisa belong to the Conjunction Type, Beatrice is an Arms Type and anything that does not fall into any of those three categories or simply exhibits more than one special trait is an Anomaly Type. The shape of someone's Ahnenerbe changes depending on the characteristics and nature of its owner, these are the four possible categories it can take. Among them, Wilhelm, Schreiber and even Spinne's weapons take a form that is the most integrated with their own bodies: Amalgamation Type.

*"That one is pretty messed up, true, but no. It's worse. If we view the Amalgamation Type as a custom fit suit, what we have here is simply a bunch of cloth wrapped around the wearer, pretending to be clothing. Even calling it a formula is honestly giving it too much credit."*

Perhaps it was because of her pride as one who deals with magic, Rusalka's tone was very harsh.

*"So mixing man and machine, reminds me of Project Philadelphia..."*

This *Project Philadelphia* that Lisa mentioned refers to an experiment on people that was performed on the USS Eldridge in the midst of World War II. Under the pretense of attempting to develop stealth technology using Tesla coils, the crew of the ship found themselves in strange situations after the experiment. Death, insanity, bodies bursting into flames, bodies freezing, body parts merging with the ship itself, and many other strange occurrences.

Project Philadelphia remains an urban legend, but what if these experiments had actually taken place? What if it had been an attempt to become more like those under the effect of Ewigkeit?

*"Us Obsidian Round Table members have treaded the Assiah, Yetzirah and Beri'ah stages, but this formula of theirs forcibly pushes them onto the Yetzirah stage, and no further."*

There are stages to Ewigkeit based on the user's aptitude with their Ahnenerbe. First up is the stage where the user can fundamentally harness the powers of their Ahnenerbe, the first stage: <sup>Activation</sup> *Assiah*. At this stage, the user walks their first steps as a superhuman, the risk of losing control at this stage is relatively high. It takes talent to reach this stage.

The second stage: <sup>Formation</sup> *Yetzirah*, lets the user physically use the powers of their Ahnenerbe. It is at this stage that the user can reach a level of power befitting of a one-man army. This stage serves as the bare minimum stage among members of the Obsidian Round Table. For Lisa and Spinne, this is the highest stage they have reached.

Then the third stage: *Beri'ah* lets the user realize their deepest desire and paint the world with their own rules and wishes. Once the *Beri'ah* stage is reached, neither the laws of physics nor common sense will stand in the user's way. The majority of the Obsidian Round Table, including Rusalka and Beatrice, have reached this stage.

There is one more stage above that: *Atziluth*. Current, no member of the Obsidian Round Table has reached this stage, and the only possible candidates for it are the current two commanders. It is said to make even the *Beri'ah* stage look like child's play.

*"They only barely managed to reach the point where they can properly use their Ahnenerbe as a weapon. Their physical abilities are far from superhuman, and they can never reach Beri'ah. What they lack, they try to make up for with shoddy magic, makeshift superpowers and science. It doesn't compare with Ewigkeit at all. Aah, so disgusting. I never expected anything like this from the US or the Soviet Union, with their almost infinite supply of soldiers and battleships..."*

Instead of creating superhumans of the same caliber, they decided to mass produce witches that can deal a blow to them instead. If they cannot have Ewigkeit, they will simply find another way to match them. It is disgusting yet admirable.

Rusalka mentioned a special case among these witches.

*"But only Monroe is different..."*

During the second World War, the German army with their relatively modestly sized army had plenty of ace soldiers, whereas the United States, with their far larger army, had only few. Though they still had their *Richard Bong* and their *Chuck Yeager*. The point being; Monroe is the United States' ace of today.

*"Is that really the real Marilyn Monroe? I honestly find it hard to believe..."*

*"We know too little to say for sure, but there are two things I can say with confidence. The first being that there's a possibility she has already reached the Beri'ah stage, although she would still be no different from the others, forcibly holding onto that stage... And the second..."*

Rusalka stopped for a moment, then whispered as if spitting out an ugly truth.

*"...the second being that the basis for her Beri'ah, her desire, is a far more vulgar and wretched one that any one of us has."*



Mornings are when she validates herself.

*"I am Monroe. I am Monroe. I am Norma. I am Ellie. That's right. I am Monroe."*

*I am a little devil who can lead even the president around by the nose, the greatest superstar to ever live, Marilyn Monroe.*

She gets out of bed by these words. This is not a joke, this is her sincere effort and belief. And if she does not keep telling herself this, the little voices inside of her will call her by a different name. She put on her makeup, as superstars do, and headed out for her pre-breakfast walk.

Monroe lives in a mansion by the coast. Its value surpassing even that of the White House, this mansion boasts a level of luxury like no other in the country. She used to love going for walks around the coast, but lately battleships have started passing by, much to her distaste. As a result, her walks have now become much shorter. Although if there was one thing she still enjoyed, it was watching the young woman training with her blade by the beach.

She wore an eyepatch and swung her blade around with passion. Even with blood starting to cover her body, she did not waver. Even with her blood starting to cover the sand, she continued her training. Beatrice Kircheisen was a much better knight than she had anticipated, she could feel a powerful aspiration coming from her sharpened blade every time they clashed. Even with all her anti-Beatrice training, she could not win. If she hadn't taken a multitude of drugs before that fight, she would have likely been killed on the spot.

That is why she trains. Her body is already past its limits, the only way for her to survive is to create an open spot in the Obsidian Round Table and to receive the blessing of Ewigkeit. But her effort is not going towards that goal, it is so that she can come closer to Beatrice, you can tell simply by looking at her.

*"Don't overdo it."*

*"..."*

She simply nodded at Monroe's feedback, not even stopping her training for a second. Not even Monroe has ever heard her speak before.

As Monroe walked around the backside of the mansion, she stepped into an underground facility. This facility is the witches' den, and Monroe's go-to place to get breakfast. As she greeted the staff and other witches good morning, she headed into the mess hall. Preparations for breakfast had already been made.

*"Good morning!"*

The head of breakfast greeted Monroe.

*"Good morning, what will we be having today?"*

*"We've received a group of illegal immigrants from the border police."*

A group of men and women, young and old, were gathered into the room ahead. How would these people, with the state they are in, possibly plan on getting past the border? People do unimaginable things when desperate. Not that it mattered, the variety in ages between these people more than mustered up Monroe's appetite.

*"Then without further ado..."*

Monroe moved her hand, and the front half of the nearest young person was ripped right off. With her left hand, she finished up the remaining organs and meat that were now fully exposed. The victim's soul was absorbed by Monroe, but that was not important to her right now. The important part was the taste, the young man's fine and hardened muscles had a rich flavour to them. Each time she moved her hand, she could taste the deliciousness. Her lips definitely did feel something.

Monroe's hands are her mouths, and her fingers her teeth. She does not shred her victims, she eats them. Young people, old people, mothers, children, they were all the same to her. When people eat meat, they do not consider what kind of cow they are eating when thinking about the taste. She is the hunter, and everyone else is her prey, this is a clear line that has now been drawn between Monroe and other people.

*"Thanks for the meal."*

Five minutes had passed and the room was now empty. Only traces remained of the tens of people that were sitting there before, they would now find themselves in Monroe's slim stomach. She had probably eaten the lady who provisioned her meal by accident as well, but that did not matter, she can be replaced. She was nothing more than just another expendable staff member anyway. Monroe is blessed after all, she can have whatever she wants.

...but if she is so blessed, then why would she ever leave her home country?

Well, things are getting more and more tense every day and...

*"But wars are super scary!"*

From inside her stomach came uninvited comments. After all, she only just ate, and cannot immediately digest it all. In a panic, Monroe started talking to herself again:

*I am the real deal. I remember my love affair with the son of the King of Comedy, I remember going to Japan with my Major League husband, I remember holding my skirt down as the wind from the subway came blowing from below. I remember it all.*

The blessed witch wiped her mouth and left the mess hall.



After hearing Rusalka's reasoning, Lisa could now understand why Rusalka thought of Monroe as so vile.

*"Her desire is nothing more than gluttony. She is a beast that eats souls and flesh alike, to the point you'd think of us as perfectly normal, simply atrocious. I don't know what kind of Ahnenerbe she uses, but I'm sure it's got something to do with cannibalism. "*

Schreiber and Wilhelm kill out of impetus, Rusalka kills for fun. Most members of the Obsidian Round Table kill people and eat their souls. But however sadistic they may be, none have ever engaged in cannibalism. None have an appetite for human flesh. Even if flesh dances around as they kill, they do not consume it. That very difference puts Monroe on the other side of the spectrum. To a third party, this may seem like the difference between Shura and Rakshasa, but to the people in question, the difference is huge.

*"But her lust for souls is greater than ours, top class even. She took the souls Beatrice and I should've gotten right out of our hands, although she's still lacking in certain aspects in that department."*

*"Like what?"*

*"Basically her digestion system."*

The essence of Ewigkeit is the usage of souls as a form of fuel. But Monroe's digestion is weak, so the souls she digests are only left in a half-digested state in her stomach. Instead of properly turning souls into her fuel, she leaves them doomed to exist in her stomach. When Rusalka inspected Monroe for her colour, the dark and ugly colour she saw came from the slight traces of colour that the souls she had not properly digested emitted.

*"This way, the souls inside of her all influence her memories and her very being, and she will slowly forget who she really is. She bites off more than she can chew, she'd be better off taking after Schreiber."*

*"So does that mean she's not the real Monroe? But simply ate her corpse and took plastic surgery to come off as the real thing?"*

*"Who knows... It's also possible she truly is the real Marilyn Monroe who ate too much and is losing sight of who she really is. That thing has now become one big colony in the shape of a person, a monster very befitting of this country."*

Nothing more than a mass of people with no strong leader, like a mob. Rusalka's clash against Monroe, among witches, has truly become a set piece of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden vs the world.

*"So what will you do now, Babylon? Surely this won't end at a delivery job for Spinne, right? Take that comic book from before with you for the road home, at least."*

*"I'd love to help, but I'm not combat-oriented."*

*“Ah, so you didn't bring him... Well then there's nothing that can be done. Ah, is there anything on who's in charge of this now? Do I have to take Beatrice into account, or can I just do whatever I want? It makes a difference.”*

*“The Divine Vessel has ordered that Rusalka Schwägelin is in command of this operation.”*

*“I respectfully accept the honours. The Father knows what he's doing, as expected of the acting commander.”*

Rusalka is in good spirits. This is the best possible way things can go from here: exactly the way she wants them to. She had no other choice but to count on Valeria Trifa's intuition, and it paid off.



Lisa felt odd seeing Rusalka in such high spirits. Rusalka is a selfish person, never tainting her hands when unnecessary, and only ever picking the tasty parts. She has that very human straightforwardness to her. That is why this behaviour of hers is weird. Standing on the front lines by herself, not trying to push anything onto others... Even if the enemy carries a large amount of delicious souls, she is not the type to act like some courageous leader who takes on the world by herself for the spoils of war. Does it bother her that much that there are other witches walking about? Or is there something they did that was so unforgivable?

*This is a conflict between women, we men would not dare intervene...*

The voice of the Divine Vessel came back to her, surely the reason he gave Rusalka permission to lead the operation by herself is because he understands why she is acting so strangely. He also had one last command for Rusalka, for all three of them...



*Shall we begin?*

Lisa spoke to Rusalka, who looked like a fish who'd just found a pond.

*“I will now recite the Divine Vessel's command, this will be a command for all of us, so I'd like you to pass it on to Valkyrie too.”*



After taking a breath, Lisa recited the command from the Divine Vessel, and from One even further above.

*“Make yourselves known.”*

Rusalka shivered at the order she had already heard once before. The acting commander Valeria Trifa had repeated the order Reinhard Heydrich had given them tens of years before.

*“Then I shall indulge like only a demon would.”*

*“Then I shall tame the mob as I see fit.”*

*“Then I shall bring about hell so that no one will ever forget.”*

*“Sieg heil!”*

*“Sieg heil!”*

*Victory is within our grasp*

Both Rusalka and Lisa exclaimed this phrase at the same time. This was the moment the Longinus Dreizehn Orden made the blessed witch and her home country their enemy.



## Chapter 6

Witches Like It Hot

Using Spinne's intel as a basis, Beatrice set out on foot, while Rusalka used all the tricks up her sleeve to pick up traces left behind by Monroe and her witches, to finally get a clue onto their whereabouts.

*"I can't say I didn't see this coming, but how the hell are we going to get there!?"*

There were some worries as to the newly discovered location. For starters, it could only be reached via airplane, and the girls in question were unlikely to be able to board one.

*"You're right, we need some sort of magical solution..."*

Beatrice put her expectations towards Rusalka, the witch among them, this time.

*"That's a bit harder than you might think. Magic isn't all-powerful, you know? If it was, I wouldn't have any troubles at all in life, and the world would be moving towards a magic era instead of a science era... Wait, what if we use subsurface vessels? No, that'll attract too much attention. Either it'll put a huge target on our backs or we'll end up crashing right into something."*

*Obviously both will happen.*

Beatrice withheld from giving any unwanted advice.

Between not using an airplane or somehow getting their hands on one, the two agreed on the latter option.



It was another busy night at the airport as Rusalka and Beatrice quietly walked about the runway. The airport had a very wartime-like vibe to it, and nobody stopped to think if the girls even belonged here or not. This place is actually an airport inside an American military base located near the outskirts of New York, civilian craft likely do not even land here.

*"This really feels like the calm before the storm. So nostalgic... Oh, Valkyrie, can you even fly today's planes?"*

*"I only learned to fly them in a classroom setting during the war, and that was mainly about biplanes and propellor-fitted planes."*

*"Yeah, well I asked about these ones... Well whatever, we'll just take one along with its pilot."*

The two had decided to hijack an airplane. Military aircraft can at the very least take them somewhere close, so they should be able to move a certain distance with it.

*"Hey, look. How about that one?"*

Rusalka pointed to a medium-sized C-130 transport craft. This plane is able to fill the many transportational needs the American air force could possibly throw at it, and boasts great popularity.

*"That one isn't very fast, nor stealthy..."*

Beatrice stated her honest opinion.

*"Hmmm... But it's big and looks comfortable."*

*"Are there really military airplanes designed with comfort in mind?"*

Perhaps this craft is intended to transport people of higher rank. Either way, its engine is already running and it is easy to board. The two approached the plane as the first step to their hijacking operation, but they were interrupted by a saber.

*"Why are you here!?"*

*"They probably had this one waiting for us. However chickenshit they may be, they still have plenty of national power at their disposal."*

Beatrice was astonished, but Rusalka remained calm. The eyepatched woman stood in front of the freighter, serving as its bodyguard, and stopped Rusalka and Beatrice. Or rather...

*"I can pass, right? I can see my invite from here."*

The eyepatched woman gestured that Rusalka could pass, and stopped only Beatrice. As she created some distance between them, it would seem she really wants to settle things for once and for all here. Beatrice said nothing and accepted her challenge.

*"Go without me, I'll catch up somehow."*

There is also a chance the plane will not even take off unless they do what the eyepatched woman indicates.

*"It'll be pretty lonely for me, but I get it... Oh, and you know about that blade of hers, right?"*

*"Yeah, I'm pretty up to date on its origin. I've seen her techniques before and I already have countermeasures."*

Beatrice had been focusing solely on her sword techniques, and as a result, she remembered something important. It was way back during the war, about an old mysterious style from Japan that she discussed with a Japanese blacksmith. It appeared to be a technique that would allow the wielder to freeze their opponent's body for a small window of time. Its original user was said to have been unbeatable, until one day he blinded himself by accident and lost.

If this story is true, then the disrupting feeling the eyepatched woman causes to her could possibly also be avoided using this method. The key to her technique probably lies in her eyes, in the pupils that are drawn onto her eyepatch.

*"Hold up, did you just say "countermeasures"? That's the wrong approach..."*

So why did Rusalka disapprove of her plan without even knowing what it is?

*"Huh?"*

*"Did you remember the order the Divine Vessel gave to us?"*

*Make yourselves known.*

There is no way she would forget this order that she had heard even from her true commander.

*"So why bother coming up humanlike tricks? You ought to provide a victory not as a knight, but as a demon. Crush them with overwhelming power."*

Beatrice was at a loss for words when she heard this. That's right, she definitely did put a lot of effort into her new plans and skills, but what she has to show the rest of the world is not her skills as a knight, but her demonic powers. Her one-on-one with the hardworking eyepatched woman had made her remember her younger self once more.

That is why she trained herself in return, so that she could match the eyepatched woman in diligence and training.

*"That one there gets like a measly 30% at best, a failing score. You get more than a passing score, though, without getting into the details. So please do use that overwhelming power of yours."*

Having said what she wanted to say, Rusalka finally boarded the plane. Beatrice watched it take off, leaving her alone with the eyepatched woman. She could feel even deeper refinement, and even excitement, simply from the eyepatched woman's stance. The adrenaline she feels whenever they fight was probably mutual.

But Beatrice was about to mercilessly step all over her excitement.

*Forgive me, for I have sinned*  
*"War es so schmähhlich,"*

Beatrice sang, but not to her opponent, to herself. Thinking, no, remembering her circumstances and her beloved superior.

*borne of loyalty, your will I once defied*  
*"ihm innig vertraut-trotzt'ich deinem Gebot."*

*Forgive me, for I am naught but a fool, never your equal*  
*"Wohl taugte dir nicht die tör'ge Maid,"*

Neither her faith nor her song was aimed at the person in front of her. With such intense emotions, how disrespectful could one possibly get?

let your crimson pyres have their fill  
“auf dein Gebot entbrenne ein Feuer;”

But there is no crimson here, only lightning.

Her vocal solo would come to end right here.

Creation Fgment  
“Berī’ ah ”

On lightning I dance For I am Valkyrie!  
“Donner totentanz - Walküre!”

It was a cold aria.

The light that Beatrice and her sword of the Valkyrie emanated, lit up the dull airport. In a warzone covered in blood, smoke and darkness, Beatrice wants to be the light that illuminates and guides her comrades. Such is her pure and honest desire.

The moment Beatrice moved, the eyepatched woman’s head had already come off.

“!?”

This was the first time the eyepatched woman showed astonishment. Before she even had a chance to feel pain, Beatrice had already passed her. She is now lightning. Being light itself, no human can catch up to her, and no blade can pierce her body. No measly techniques or disturbing feelings can stop her now.

The eyepatched woman's eyepatch came off, and she stared at Beatrice with her true eyes that laid below. The large veins that covered her large eye spat out blood, and her pupil and lens shivered. But most remarkably, she only had one eye. Her single eye now dealt even more pressure to Beatrice than ever before. Whatever her pupil birthed had been the source of her power all along.

But unfortunately, she could not rely on it fast enough. The blade of lightning broke her saber, cleaved her torso and blew her head off.

“You- mon- ster...”

It was unclear if she outed these words before or after she lost her head.



Beatrice sheathed her blade, her body returned from thunder back to normal. She felt as if the eyepatched woman's eye was still gazing at her even now, was she born with that eye or did she acquire it later? Was her power truly magic, or perhaps psychokinesis, or perhaps telepathy? We may never know. With her eyepatch off, her face is now fully visible, the woman had dark brown skin, probably Indian.

*I believe that outfit and weapon were used during the American Indian Wars. Just from the design of the weapon and the souls it carries, you can tell it's a pretty big deal.*

Rusalka's words resounded in Beatrice's head. The American Indian Wars refer to the conquest of America's native people by the hands of white settlers. Many Indians met their ends during these conflicts. The eyepatched woman had been using the weapon that was used to kill her ancestors, how many terrible curses did that carry with it? She likely figured such a curse to be a means to catch up to Beatrice, but what we know for sure is that she went to hell and back to try and reach Beatrice, that her bouts with Beatrice awakened her sense of joy as a knight and that Beatrice, with her overwhelming power, grinded it all to dust. The power she had always wanted to use to guide her comrades to the light, could not even grant hope to a single soldier. In fact, it only helped to induce despair instead.

Having destroyed her enemy, Beatrice began absorbing her souls. They were surprisingly few, but more than enough to compensate the ones she had burned up until now. It was now that the part of her that was still human, that part that had been faintly slumbering, would start to rot away. To Beatrice, this overwhelming victory was in fact more despairing than any defeat could be.



A quiet sky, with only the low pitched sound of the C-130's engines roaring about.

*"Not bad for a transport craft, but it still does sway a bit in the wind. The stewardesses here are a joke too, maybe I should've taken a private jet instead..."*

This loudmouth was Rusalka, sitting in one of the plane's seats. Surrounded by a bunch of freaks ready to strike at any time, but looking as if they just came back from a carnival festival. The faint smell of magic power and curses gave off an oddly comfortable vibe. This eccentric sense of fashion is probably their image of a true witch.

But this is all just for show. Even if their boss appears to be the real thing, simply playing dress up does not make you a good actress. Even if your face is completely scorched, or if you hold marionette strings, it remains meaningless. Their misunderstanding of what a witch really is, is more entertaining than it is truly upsetting.

*"You can just listen to what I have to say, no need to respond. I'll explain to you one aspect of what it means to be a witch."*



There is plenty of time to waste, anyway. Why not lecture them? Rusalka is very generous.

*“There is always a reason why someone became a witch. I’m so jealous ‘cause she’s so rich! Let’s destroy her reputation because she’s so beautiful! As long as you convince people she’s a witch, it’s easy to ostracize her! Hey, isn’t that odd? It’s like magic.”*

Hundreds of years ago, Rusalka, too, was once a normal girl. But one day she was made out to be a witch. This label was thrust onto her by the jealous women of her village, who envied her beauty that even Monroe and Lisa could not match. Rusalka’s counterarguments turned on deaf ears, and even her husband abandoned her.

*“Now, the part where I actually became a witch is another story. If I really was a witch at the time, I’d have died along with the other victims of the witch hunt. Identifying as a witch is nothing to be happy about.”*

The person who turned Rusalka’s destiny around, when she should have been burned at the stake at the summit of endless disgrace and sexual assault, was a mysterious figure who claimed to be a confessor. She would receive true magic powers from him and massacre the village people with them. That is when Rusalka became a true witch.

*“‘Witch’ is a title for someone who shoulders that envy, the burden and the curse, without a trace of shame. Now, don’t you think it’s a little ridiculous to pretend to be one as a fashion statement? It’s embarrassing, you girls probably don’t even realize how silly you look. A blessed witch? Actually thinking you’re any kind of blessed and then acting like a bully is just the peak of stupidity.”*

From Rusalka’s point of view, these witches are simply a humorous existence. With power they themselves attained, they do not rebel, they do not act as they please, they simply want to please the person who exploits them and steps all over them, and they are okay with that. A blessed and satisfied witch is nothing but a joke.

The witches did not respond to Rusalka’s grave remark, Rusalka could only sense their anger. It was then that the lights inside the airplane were extinguished. The plane’s windows shut, and the inside was now covered in jet black darkness.

*“Hey wait! What am I supposed to do now!?”*

Rusalka uttered the same kind of line she did when she was in a pinch before. Her man-eating shadows and Creation Figment both make use of actual shadows, where there is light, there are also shadows. Which is why most of Rusalka’s power becomes effectively sealed when she is in complete darkness like this. With her vision completely blocked, all she can feel is the murderous intent around her.

*“Just kidding...”*

She may have done research after her encounter with them last time. Either way, it is beyond stupid to think she would not have a counterplan the second time around. The ceiling of the plane came off, and one of the witches standing close by was sucked right out. What came and entered the plane through the newly opened hole was none other than the executioner, wearing a strange mask.

*"Babylon, how was the trip by air?"*

Rusalka spoke to Lisa, who was held in one of the executioner's arms. The starry night sky faintly lit up the inside of the plane again, and with the newly opened hole, the atmosphere inside the plane started to change and its course started to shift. This new atmosphere, along with the hole that was still sucking people out of the plane, felt like nothing more than a breeze to Rusalka and Lisa.

*"Right. Even if it's an outdoor spot, and knowing I'd be fine in places normal people can't be, I've learned that it's more comfortable on designated passenger seats."*

*"Yeah, sorry about flying first class all by myself..."*

Lisa had changed from her sister's outfit to her SS-uniform and was not wearing her glasses anymore. Where Rusalka wore no sleeves, Lisa had a long slit. As far as the quality of their uniforms is concerned, they were both top class.

*"So what's up with that body?"*

*"It's the best I could get my hands on."*

She does not compare to *the one* who normally gets to wear the mask, but considering Rusalka left her a corpse like this and there was nothing else suitable, she went with it. Rusalka was also in full charge of the operation, so she was in no place to speak up. The mask that the executioner wears is Lisa's own

Palinda

Mors

Ahnenerbe: The Pale Mask of Death. By forcing it on a corpse, Lisa can take full command over it. This Ahnenerbe is not one from history, it is Lisa's own relic that she created using multiple layers of dead infant skin. It represents her continuous love for babies and is her personal relic.

The executioner served as Lisa's puppet, and held its already-rotting axe in its hand, running rampant. Neither pain, damage, nor otherwise crippling attacks worked on it. Right now, she is at an even greater rampage than when she was alive. Around half of the witches had been fighting back, but the rest seemed to be too scared of the crashing airplane and cowered in fear. The executioner crushed them without prejudice.

*"I can't take control of it!"*

That is what one of the witches holding marionette strings yelled, before having her head smashed in by the executioner. She appeared to have a similar role to Lisa's, controlling the dead with her strings. If that is the case, then surely *she* would also have a copycat around. The executioner was hit with a small vial, the liquid inside covered not only her, but also Lisa, who stood nearby.

*"I can just scorch everything... Everything..."*

Flames appeared from the hands of a walking third degree burn wound covered in bandages, or one of the witches. The flammable liquid from before caught fire, and started covering the executioner and Lisa in flames.

*"Wait, YOU're supposed to be her!?"*

*“Ha!?”*

The burned remained calm and the burner panicked. Lisa was on fire and moved not even a single step, she remained calm and displayed only animosity. And it was deep, it was deep and dark like an endless ocean. This was the way she tried to copy Eleonore? To Lisa, who had been her rival since she was young, this was nothing less than an insult. The one silver lining here to the witch was that Beatrice was not present. If there had been a layer of killing intent on top of this deep animosity, her heart probably would have stopped on its own. On the subject of what exactly she lacked; it was not the power of her flames, it was her head. It was her inability to understand that fire is light that takes a certain form.

*“If all it takes is summoning a little fire, then anyone with a match can be Lord Samiel.”*

Rusalka became impatient and brought out her man-eating shadows, devouring the surviving witches, leaving none alive.

*“Go now.”*

At Lisa's command, the still-burning executioner bashed into the arsonist responsible. At every move, the executioner's flesh burned and fell off, it had started to produce a strong smell.

*“Whaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!”*

The witch who played Eleonore, who did not know her place until the very end, let out a scream Eleonore would definitely never make, and was crushed against the wall by the hands of the executioner. By the power of the fire and the executioner's strength, a new hole came about in the side of the airplane.

*“Oh. Gotta be careful...”*

The moment the two burning bodies fell out of the plane, Rusalka grabbed the Palinda Mors Pale Mask of Death from the executioner's head. The two tumbled out of the side of the plane and to their deaths. With a second hole, the C-130 had now finally reached the limits of its ability to fly.

*“What do we do? Jump?”*

Lisa asked, taking the mask back from Rusalka.

*“I guess. Let's jump right before it hits the ground.”*

Rusalka looked outside through the new hole. All she could see was water, so jumping out now would be too early. No, only just barely too early, in fact. Looking ahead, Rusalka could see their destination approaching.

The C-130 crashed onto the beach, crushing itself in the process. It started blazing, and the fire did not appear to stop any time soon. The smoke flew up into the sky almost like a beacon.

*“Maybe we jumped too soon...”*

*“Better than too late...”*

Lisa was soaked and Rusalka was covered in sand. Drying your hair and clothes and getting rid of all the sand is probably about equally bothersome.

*"Well, I'm off again, what about you?"*

*"I'll take some rest. I don't think I'm useful anymore."*

There were no usable corpses left anymore. There might have been some good ones left inside the C-130, but those are unsalvageable now.

*"I guess that's fine."*

Rusalka immediately approved her proposal. Her legs were already moving towards a mansion in the distance. There was something weird going on, though... Was it really in-character for her to be going up against an army by herself? Against the enemies up ahead, she won't have an absolute invulnerability mode anymore.

*"Oh yeah. This island might get covered with corpses soon, so when that time comes, be sure to come help out! After all, you're good at controlling like a bunch of corpses at once, right?"*

Having said that, Rusalka left Lisa behind. Looking in the opposite direction, Lisa could see military warships and aircraft using her vision enhanced by Ewigkeit. This territory has been completely blocked by the United States Navy. Soviet vessels could also be seen loitering around the blockade. In this land, the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union are reaching a critical point. This is America's neighbouring communist nation: Cuba. Because the Soviet Union had planned to station nuclear missiles here, the United States set up a naval blockade. If a third world war were to begin, this would be the start of it.

What's more, being a communist nation close to the United States, it would create a huge advantage if the United States and Soviet Union joined forces behind the scenes. It is easy for either nation to transport troops and weapons here, and against their common enemy, the Longinus Dreizehn Orden, this would make for a suitable base of operations.

*"Even still..."*

Lisa pondered the intentions of the warships and aircraft. It is too quiet, even if the C-130 that had just crashed had been an exceptional case, so far there has been absolutely no response, despite the wreckage. Even if they cannot come ashore, at least some sort of reaction would be expected.

Almost as if they knew a plane would crash here...

*"What if they're not watching out for nuclear missiles or enemy troops, but..."*

...us? The Longinus Dreizehn Orden? What if the story about nuclear missiles being stationed on Cuba is another diversion, and the United States and Soviet Union are actually teaming up to get rid of the Obsidian Round Table? Perhaps we had more enemies than we thought in these countries where people are getting more and more anxious by the day. Or perhaps they simply fear the witches who have set up their headquarters on this island?

Right now the world fears women.

The overwhelming silence coming from these naval warships would make one believe such a preposterous story.

The background of the page is a stylized American flag. It features a black field with a large, white, five-pointed star in the upper left quadrant. To the left of this star is a vertical column of five smaller white stars. To the right of the large star is a vertical column of five smaller white stars. The background is composed of horizontal stripes of black and white, with the stars appearing as cutouts or negative space.

## Chapter 7

Lady Of The Flies

Rusalka was calm as ever.

*“Man, what luck! This is like a walk in the park...”*

She has been conveniently separated from Beatrice Kircheisen and Lisa Brenner. Of course they provide a great deal of military power, and it would be more advantageous if they were there, but they would simply get in her way for three reasons. First off, Rusalka's share would decrease. The opposition is but third-rate mass-produced witches, even if their power is nothing to speak of, they still possess plenty of souls ripe for the taking. Even if slightly troublesome, it is much preferable to go in alone instead of splitting the rewards. After all, soon enough, both Beatrice and Lisa will become Rusalka's competitors.

Then, there is a certain spell Rusalka wants to try out. The Ewigkeit of others, the power of herself, the despicable Monroe. With these ingredients, a brand new concept can come to life. But this concept can only become reality in limited situations, most likely only now. She wants to play around with her new trick to her heart's content, a much more playful desire than a simple soul reward. If Beatrice and Lisa are present, they would just get in the way. Rusalka had no way of guaranteeing they would not join her. Now, as for the most important reason...

It is what Monroe told Rusalka, back when they first met at the hotel.

*If there can only be one witch, only the blessed should prevail.*

A witch is fundamentally not blessed. Rusalka ridicules a nickname like the Blessed Witch, and understands this very well. That is why she could never possibly take that head on, she could never let someone ridicule her like that and let it slide.

*“Only the blessed, huh... I know I am not blessed. And I'll show you what an unblessed witch can do.”*

I will take the self-proclaimed Blessed Witch's all.

I will make her throw up all she has inside.

I will strip her of that wretched skin.

And when she has lost it all, when she finally cries her eyes out, I will not even let her say it is because we outnumbered her.

In order to humiliate her to the greatest extent and slaughter the Blessed Witch, only one unblessed witch is more than enough.

*Make yourselves known.*

When this order was given way back at Normandy, Rusalka particularly took it to heart to show herself off. Even now, it is once more Rusalka who truly understands what it meant. And she was not simply showing off to the enemies at hand, no. She would show him, the man who abandoned her long ago. She would give it all back to him. Given the situation, it provides the perfect opportunity for her to do so. Right now, Rusalka is likely the finest witch to walk the earth, to the point anyone of the Obsidian Round Table would acknowledge her.



The modern witch is no longer someone who is made out to be the black sheep by the world, but someone who has the full support of their country behind them. After the war, there were those who swore to resist the Longinus Dreizehn Orden even after witnessing their might firsthand. They would come to collect intel and all things the Obsidian Round Table left behind. Knowing that they would one day return, the search for a final solution to the Obsidian Round Table began.

They were few, but they did have some of the time's higherups among them. And while there were those just in it to reap the benefits, there were also those who had the guts to back the cause. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, a demon for a demon. Nuclear weapons of mass destruction would prove ineffective against an enemies numbering in the single digits. The consequences of that would be out of the question. However, no matter how many Ahnenerbe they collected, they could never replicate Ewigkeit. The formula was known only to few members of the Obsidian Round Table, and nothing beyond a general outline had been left behind.

*"What if we use Tesla coils like with Project Philadelphia? "*

One man's idea, however, gave birth to an alternative approach. The physical amalgamation of man and Ahnenerbe, this idea would eventually come to succeed, and the refinement of pseudodemons had been accomplished. Following the mastermind's opinion that young women would be most suited for such a fusion, the test subjects ended up only consisting of little girls. Then, it would only be natural for them to start calling themselves witches.

These weapons of war have gotten everything they desired. Clothes, food, a roof above their head, superpowers awakened through surgery and a battlefield for them to fulfill themselves in. So then when was it that this admiration for these weapons of war turned into fear instead? The witches who kept growing in strength by the day would make the most remarkable among them their leader and escape from the grasp of their country.

This is why the force that was meant to fight back against the Obsidian Round Table was so easily able to make an attempt to join them instead. Now, both the uninhibited witches and the undead are considered nothing less than a threat to the world. The coast around Cuba is now surrounded by warships. While motives are varied, they are all here to face the wicked ones on this very island.





Monroe had been dozing off on her terrace. Neither the demons from the Obsidian Round Table nor the fleet surrounding her home seemed to warrant fear just yet. In fact, even when Rusalka finally showed herself she was still lying down, prompting Rusalka to raise her voice.

*"Don't you think you should be a little more welcoming? You invited me."*

Monroe rubbed her eyes and apologized for her poor reception.

*"Sorry about that... But I figured this level of hospitality would be befitting of somebody of your status."*

That was not sincere at all.

Monroe comfortably got up, yawned, then asked Rusaka again...

*"So what did you decide? "*

*"About what? "*

*"Did you forget? My job application, whether or not you'll take me into the Obsidian Round Table."*

*"Ah, right. Sorry. It was just so high on top of my todo list I forgot all about it. It's no good though, we don't even have a "we're hiring!" sign on our window."*

*"Isn't headhunting all the rage these days? "*

*"Exactly! If you paint an unrealistic picture of yourself, you'll never find a job."*

The two snickered at each other in this back-and-forth, but there was no mutual understanding to be found. From Monroe's perspective, Rusalka is a witch of the old world. A simple weakling who managed to crawl out of the pit of other weaklings who were ostracized by the rest of the world. On the other hand, the witch of today is an accomplished figure from the get-go, and is simply granted the power to take control of the world. It is painfully obvious which of the two is superior.

*"Well, I wanted to eat up the Obsidian Round Table from within anyway, so this works too... I can just take you head on. After all, I have many friends..."*

As Monroe clapped her hands, tens of new witches suddenly appeared around them. Each of them trained to the limit, full of souls gathered in actual warzones and absolutely first-rate. They are nothing like the ones from before on the airplane that could not even move a limb. There is one aspect of the usage of Tesla coils to bind Ahnenerbe to flesh that surpasses even the original formula, Ewigkeit. That aspect is mass-production. There are many more than just thirteen of these witches. Even counting just the ones that can control their powers, their numbers would probably pass one-hundred. The number of witches lurking on this island is even greater than that.

The surrounded Rusalka looked ecstatic. This smile was no bluff, nor scornful. Rusalka was pleased.

*“Good. Amazing. Ah, this is the best, I can't hold it in! ”*

She blushed, and even sweated a little bit. This is the real deal, Rusalka is truly enjoying her predicament. Neither the witches nor Monroe could ever understand that joy.

*“You girls all look like you think of me as some centenarian hag. But having lived for this long only makes me strong, you know? Age isn't all about experience and technique, it's about having having tasted contempt, pain and humiliation.”*

*“Can you hear her barking, girls? ”*

Monroe mockingly laughed at her. However faint, all the witches could see her smile. Snickering could be heard from all around Rusalka, but Rusalka showed no anger, and simply turned her head.

*“When you hold a grudge, it makes you want to show them who they're dealing with. When you hurt, you try your best to never feel that pain ever again. When humiliated, you want to return the favour tenfold. Because of you all, I've become motivated to return the favour to a despicable, terrible man that I can't stand from way back. And you know what? I feel sorry for you, because you will never feel the way I do now.”*

Those who have never had their heart smashed to pieces have no right to speak.

From Rusalka's own shadow appeared chains with hooks attached to them, capturing a number of helpless witches in their path, but the chains were headed for the limbs of a beast. From the shadows emerged blade-like claws and hulking legs. The claws easily cut through the body of a witch they swung at.

*“I didn't know about this! ”*

*“Idiots! ”*

Monroe reprimanded one of the witches who whispered what she did a tad bit too loud. Indeed, the phenomenon Rusalka presents belongs to the unknown. But confirming that by saying it out loud would inspire fear, and fear slows people down.

The beast grabbed a witch and moved her towards its mouth, one of its fangs opened sideways and sealed the witch inside, followed by blood flowing out. These fangs were actually multiple *iron maidens* stacked side by side.



The beast's claws are butchering blades, its limbs are made up of devices made to crush people, and holding it all together are chains that bind and shadows that devour. This thing Rusalka brought forth is a terrible beast of metal and blood composed of torture devices. There are some in the Obsidian Round Table that use gigantic and destructive Ahnenerbe, so it would only make sense for Rusalka to have created this in order to stand up to them.

Rusalka mounted the shoulder of the behemoth and shouted:

*“Do you all know my alias? It's Malleus Maleficarum. It's thanks to you all that I can finally spite the filthy bastard like he did me! ”*

Hammer of Witches

Malleus Maleficarum, Rusalka's alias can be easily mistaken to refer to the witch swinging the hammer, but its true meaning represents a hammer that strikes witches instead. It is the title of a handbook on witchhunting. Of course, the person who gave Rusalka her despicable alias is none other than Mercurius. But today, now that she hunts other witches instead, this alias has temporarily become proper for her. She is now a witch who hunts other witches.

The beast did not stop devouring witches, constantly ripping and moving. Keeping control of something like this would take ingredients with a far above average level magical power and soul count, and these witches fill that role most suitably. Rusalka's man-eating shadows act as reins to the beast and the torture tools which make up its parts get the job done for the most part, but in this state, it is having trouble lunging at smaller targets. While she is not yet completely used to controlling the beast using her shadows, Rusalka could see a working combination. For example, if she had a smaller, more powerful familiar to make up for what the beast lacked...

*“Die! ”*

*“Whoa there ~”*

Rusalka dodged the strike of one of the witches who had ascended a tree and leapt towards her. This courageous witch was caught inside the tail of the beast, a birdcage covered in spikes, and then violently shaken about. The fountain of blood and despairing shrieks filled Rusalka's heart. A great number of witches had started their counterattack, but at the same time there were many who tried to run. A fine display of those who were worthy and those who were not. But in front of the beast, all were equally prey.

Rusalka started to chant her desire, that she wished to not let a single witch get away...

Within the dark of night, a sleepless night.  
“*In der Nacht, wo alles schläft*”

Any who heard her aria could feel the mood change.

I part with the water's womb in jubilation...  
“*Wie schön, den Meeresboden zu verlassen.*”

It was not fear they felt, but envy.

as my head leaves its clear cradle, sending joyful ripples along the surface.  
“*Ich hebe den Kopf über das Wasser, Welch Freude, das Spiel der Wasserwellen...*”

If you think about it, the girls here simply either decided to call themselves witches, or somebody who knows nothing of the subject decided to give them that title.

The crisp air trembled as we played, exchanging cries loud and high;  
“*Durch die nun zerbrochene Stille, Rufen wir unsere Namen*”

They do not even know what a real witch or a real spell is.

my hair, drenched and green, danced in the air.  
“*Pechschwarzes Haar wirbelt im Wind.*”

Both fear and courage are here crushed by the overwhelming unknown.

And so we danced on, my hair drying in the cool air.  
“*Welch Freude, sie trocknen zu sehen.*”

Or could it simply be left reverberating deep inside?

Creation Figment  
“*Beri' ah*”

The voracious shades from the castle of torture  
“*Csejte Ungarn Nachtzehrer*”

Even if death awaits at the end of the tunnel...

Shadows came blasting out from all sides around the beast, assaulting all witches and stopping their movement upon contact. The beast pinned and devoured the witches one after another, as they went on to become Rusalka's fuel.

*“It's time for a bonus round! Or maybe not... I'm just too perfect right now, so there's no fun in that. Say it with me now: I'm p e r f e c t ~”*

Rusalka probably spoke to somebody out there, but of course nobody answered.

The voracious shades from the castle of torture  
Csejte Ungarn Nachtzehrer: if she cannot catch up to someone, she will simply pull them down from above. This is Rusalka's desire, creating a phenomenon that freezes the movements of anyone who touches her shadow. By itself, this is quite the simplistic power, but she can freely control the reach of her own man-eating shadows. Furthermore, by incorporating the rest of her magic arsenal, the utility of this power becomes even greater. With Rusalka being this much of a skilled user, it is hard to see her creation figment as inferior to anyone else's.

At this point most of the witches were already slain, and Rusalka only now caught wind of the absence of a major character.

*“Hey, did Miss Monroe take a run for it? Now I can't see her acting like she's all that and then jump ship when it counts... That'd be a PR disaster!”*

Despite her provocations, Rusalka knew very well that Monroe did not flee. Miss high and mighty knows very well what happens when she tarnishes her public image. Coming from Rusalka, who has crushed the hearts of many such people before, there is no mistaking it.

Suddenly, the beast lost its balance and its giant body started tilting backwards.

*“Tch...!”*

Rusalka tightened her grip on the beast using her reins, and regained its balance. But what bothered her more than this sudden loss of balance was the pain. Normally, having maybe one or two torture tools destroyed does not return much if any damage back to her at all, but with a monstrosity such as this one, it becomes hard to avoid the pain...

...that is because the tip of one of the beast's leg had been devoured.

*“I am the only one who gets to eat!”*

Monroe clenched her hands tightly, shouting just by the feet of the beast.

*“Don't try to act like the greater witch, I won't allow anyone to steal from me!”*

Though watching her falling comrades and faced with overwhelming power, Monroe stood strong and continued inciting jealousy and anger, she certainly has nerves of steel. It seems there is still more pain and ridicule left to go around...

...but there was also something very satisfying about looking down on someone so desperate.

*“Hey, this is your first time, right? Then I'll make sure to be gentle with you, NOT! Try getting used to doing it hardcore!”*

Right when Rusalka shouted this, the remainder of the beast's leg came off, split into a million pieces and assaulted Monroe. Monroe used her hands to devour most of the storm, but she could not eat all incoming projectiles, and some of them came through and damaged her.

*“This is still pretty vanilla!”*

Monroe widened her arms and started completely eating up all torture tools. The incoming rain weakened, at this rate she could certainly eat it all up.

*“That's because we're still at the foreplay part!”*

Rusalka answered indifferently. A wheel that was frankly too large to still be called a torture tool overshadowed the rain of torture tools completely and came rushing at Monroe.

*"Gyaaaaaaaaa!"*

The spikes around the wheel peeled Monroe's face right off and took her flesh with it. In only a fraction of a second, her trademark features were taken away from her and she was degraded to *the woman who was once Monroe*.

*"I can see it!"*

Monroe's insides were now completely exposed, and Rusalka was able to see her Ahnenerbe. *It was her head*. Somebody's skull had been fused with her own head. Come to think of it, for someone whose obsession is eating, their tongue, teeth and mouth... Their head is very much related to this obsession.

Monroe, who was still airborne from the impact with the wheel, was subsequently caught in a large cross made of iron bars, with chains binding her still wide open hands with unreal force. The chains were still connected to all the eaten witches inside the belly of the beast, the weight of their deaths held Monroe down.

*"A leader should properly lead their subordinates. Looking at you now, they ought to frame you in the director's office as an example of what the ideal leader looks like."*

The beast's body fell apart, and from within appeared a pendulum-style guillotine with an arrow-shaped blade. Rusalka jumped onto the guillotine and from midair it launched towards the cross that held Monroe. The arrow-shaped blade swung intensely, and when it reached Monroe, the mouth on her already-destroyed face opened wide. The thick and sharp blade sliced right through her mouth and sliced the top half of her head right off.

*"One, two..."*

Rusalka jumped off the guillotine and made a wonderful landing. There was no longer anyone left who dared to come after her. The complete silence after this display of slaughter signalled the end.

*"So this is what happens when you use a shotgun to kill a fly... This formula is no good, the efficiency couldn't be worse."*

Rusalka referred to the poor consumption rate and high damage feedback, a retrospective of her formula from just now. Even if just for collecting this prey, the return rate is way too low. If it had been against a fellow member of the Obsidian Round Table, the consumption rate would destroy her, and she would only end up becoming a big target for her opponent. Not to mention, she was not able to collect that many souls from Monroe's remains at all. Rusalka clearly felt the number of souls she could reap from Monroe was severely lacking, apparently the inside of that gluttonous belly of hers was nothing more than a wicked cesspool, and contained nothing of value. What an anticlimactic ending...

...but Rusalka was yet excited. Because in the facility below the ground she stood on, there were likely tons of Ahnenerbe lying in slumber. It is not very surprising that someone would get so excited when they stand before a treasure mountain. Having slain the dragon, Rusalka entered its treasury, her heart pumping...



Now then, this is where the witch made the wrong decision.

If she had taken a closer look inside the belly of her enemy, it would be hard not to notice. Perhaps the chaos before her let her attention waver someplace else...

And this is where the witch made the right decision.

It was when she was about to take the blade of her enemy head on. It was not in an act of courage, neither in an act of fear... She was just hungry. Her appetite turned everything around.

A simple desire led to the rekindling of her depleted souls. Her heart's all, for her hunger. *I want to eat, I want to it whole.* The simplicity of her desire was of absolute purity and of godlike quality.

In an attempt to find she who would steal the hearts of all men, he hybridized many young girls with his many Ahnenerbe, and it paid off. An actress worthy of the main stage had finally been born. Certainly an actress this fine deserves her own chance to stand in the spotlight.

The actress sung. While reduced to mere shrieks, her wholehearted aria shook the world, granting her wish...

May her wish shake even the foreknowledge<sup>ghetto</sup>. As the *shadow* that guides both the blessed and unblessed witch, may her prayer come to fruition.



This facility located below the earth's surface is a wicked factory for witches. Rusalka thought she heard a faint noise.

*"If that was a bug, must be a big one..."*

But in this place it is not so strange to hear noises, Rusalka ignored the sound. This underground facility succeeded in bringing about a gruesome hatchery of magic no matter the costs. Here lie otherworldly remains created by means of surgical science, Ahnenerbe gathered as a source of magic power and contraptions of all sorts brought about by inhuman means the likes the Obsidian Round Table could not even match. A place like this would not be the same without a despairing cry or two.

Rusalka assessed the stock of Ahnenerbe, if there ever truly were Ahnenerbe that got lost from the institute, they would certainly be among this collection. These shelves were stuffed with items and documents, and with a simple touch some of the documents would already come falling off.

*"Keep things organized, will you. I guess it's no surprise 'cause they got the witch part wrong too..."*

Grumpy, Rusalka picked up the fallen documents, among them one of the pages caught her attention. It was a data entry about a particular Ahnenerbe.

*"Of course, if you shove this into someone's skull of course they'd get a thing for cannibalism."*

The document did not mention any names, but Rusalka could recognize the Ahnenerbe in question, it was the skull that was fused with Monroe's head. In the 19th century, George Donner led the Donner Party in an attempt to move from the east coast of America to the west coast, but following a series of less fortunate events, they became snowbound in the mountains. Eventually, they even resorted to eating each other's flesh in order to survive, these bones belong to those who survived and escaped the mountains.

The bones of those who have eaten the flesh of multiple people are sure to be riddled with curses, but is a single Ahnenerbe of this caliber truly enough to make one so gluttonous? Rusalka noticed a connection between the documents she was reading.

*"What!?"*

Reviewing the next document, Rusalka sounded discomforted, these documents listed the knives, axes and other tools used by famous cannibals. All of these, including the bones from the Donner Party, were at some point given to the same person: Monroe. Rusalka knew the names of these people all too well, as she searched her memories for the cases they were involved in, she realized what they all had in common...

...they all purely ate people. It was not a matter of famine, poverty or mental disability, they were all cannibals who loved to eat other people. Even the last survivor of the Donner Party ignored the food offered to him by his rescue party and chose to continue eating people instead. To him, there was no longer any difference between the meat of cows, pigs, sheep or humans. Then of course it makes sense for someone like that to prefer fresh meat over preserved meat.



For this many diverse Ahnenerbe to be gathered in one place and to be forcefully fused into a single person, of course that would create a gluttonous monster the likes the world has never seen before. It is easy to see why Monroe was so full of herself now, every other person was like a lesser being to her, and her potential dinner. Now even Rusalka had a strange expression when faced with a pastime that went too far even for *her* standards, and the monster in question would come to present itself to her shortly afterwards.

It was a woman with the top half of her head blown off. It was easy for Rusalka to tell even without using her magical eyes that her colour is now nothing but a muddy mess. Her body had strange protrusions lined up almost systematically, it took some time for Rusalka to finally realize that those protrusions were teeth and fangs.

*"Wait, you're Monroe!?"*

" — "

Rusalka addressed the woman, but she did not answer. Still, judging from the cut on her head, there is no mistaking that this is indeed Monroe. It makes sense that she cannot answer, as she no longer has a brain, but somehow this brainless body still managed to jump at Rusalka. Taking this anomaly head on is a fool's errand, Rusalka retreated, causing Monroe to crash into the table holding the Ahnenerbe collection from before. For quite some time after crashing into the table, Monroe went motionless.

*"This has to be a joke, right? You're eating those?"*

Rusalka whispered dumbfoundedly. It is not so much that Monroe is not moving, but rather that she is eating the Ahnenerbe along with the table. And not just with the remaining lower half of her mouth, but the teeth all over her body are all moving and eating. Right now, Monroe's entire body is her mouth. In fact, her leap from just now was probably not even meant to reach Rusalka, she simply wanted to sink her teeth into the magical power before her.

Monroe is now only a glutton and nothing else, craving only to devour her prey according to her primal instincts. She has become something very far from being called a witch, instead a perfect incarnation of *Beelzebub*, the demon of one of the seven deadly sins: *gluttony*.

The disorder in her shaking skin, along with the eerie satisfaction in having become one with so many disgusting people gave a similar vibe as a swarm of flies. The Lady of the Flies, ruler of her colony, had manifested right here and now.

*"Tch- "*

Rusalka clicked her tongue and released her man-eating shadows without hesitation, dropping the wall on her right-hand side on top of the monster. Perhaps if she does not raise her arms, it might ignore her. But if it is going to eat up all that it can inside this facility, then its next move remains unpredictable. Perhaps a village? A city? An entire country? What if this fattened abomination starts going after the Obsidian Round Table, the biggest possible prey? Rusalka's sense of impending doom and self-preservation gave her that extra push to keep going.

Eaten by shadows from below, and assaulted by a large wall from above, Beelzebub was being attacked from all sides. But that next instant, Rusalka could sense great hunger. Her shadows and the wall were both eaten up whole, violently scooped up down the very stomach of the perpetrator. In only a split second, a portion of souls Rusalka had worked hundreds of years to collect had been taken from her. To think that all her magic along with her torture tools and shadows would be devoured like this... Just how much of a glutton is this?

The teeth inside Beelzebub crunched away. In harmony with this faint sound resounded a sense of unease, and at the same time, curiosity. With this new taste, it seems she has determined Rusalka to be the tastiest prey she had ever eaten.

*"I really would've liked to fight someone a bit more sublime than this..."*

Having said that, Rusalka retreated, left the room and hid behind the wall. This is no opponent she can fight head on, or rather, she does not want to. Only somebody like Wilhelm could happily trade punches with that thing. On the bright side, this is indoors. If she can take some distance and set up traps, she could probably put up a fight. If she really is the avatar of gluttony, she should be easy to trap. Rusalka's back was trembling even thinking about it.

Acting on that fear, Rusalka turned around, but Beelzebub's sudden appearance after eating the wall and bursting in was a matter of a split second.

"..."

Beelzebub turned to Rusalka, emitting some high frequency noise. Beelzebub is nothing but gluttony incarnate, this pure craving of food is a powerful form of desire, and with that, magic power. It has made her movements extraordinary. However, she can probably not see Rusalka's traps in this form, all she can see now is her prey; Rusalka.

*"This was my best suit, you know? At the very least I'd have hoped for you to still have a head that can understand what "compensation" means."*

Rusalka's military outfit had torn during her close escape from just now, and her white skin now lays exposed. Luckily she was not hurt, but had her skin been touched, her flesh and souls would have surely been scraped off. Not even her defenses at the level of the Obsidian Round Table can pretend to be able to withstand that.

Beelzebub went for Rusalka again and leapt. But this was not just any leap, she twisted her body and spun. With her entire body being her mouth filled to the brink with teeth, she would devour the entire space around her. With this penetration power and frenzied rage, she is like a food excavator.

Rusalka dodged the leap of hunger, but Beelzebub made a quick landing and started to wave her limbs and head around freely. This is truly a mouth that will eat up the enemy no matter how it does it. Even traditional Chinese lion dancers act more mature than this. Rusalka would keep getting more and more driven into a corner in this small hallway, and when Beelzebub had finally devoured the last bit of distance between them and grabbed hold of Rusalka, her body would defy the laws of physics and fly across the hallway.

*“Ouch, this really does hurt... Guess I’ve learned that now...”*

Rusalka let go of one of her own chains, she managed to narrowly avoid death by pulling it to get to safety, but Beelzebub had already started twisting her body and leapt at Rusalka once more. There is still some distance between them, so she probably needs to jump a couple of times more until she reaches Rusalka, but there is not enough time to escape.

This is a dead end, there is no other option than facing her head on. It was here that Rusalka contemplated her own powerlessness. Her man-eating shadows, Die Elisabeth Báthory<sup>Elisabeth Báthory</sup> and Csejte Ungarn<sup>The voracious shades from the castle of torture</sup> Nachtzehrer all have very little effect now that she has to use them to fight head on. What she needed most at this moment was brute courage the likes she has never had before. For Rusalka, who has always put herself before anything else, this was unlikely to ever happen.

If she were to be eaten right now, Beelzebub would come to know the taste of an Obsidian Round Table member and surely target Lisa and Beatrice. In Valkyrie’s case, she would definitely have enough brute courage to fight back. It was at this moment Rusalka had an idea. Applying what she knew from memory and her new idea, she came up with a quick formula and strategy, this may actually work...

Looking at the remaining distance, Beelzebub seemed to have around two more jumps left. In that case, there is still enough time.

<sup>Formation</sup>  
*“Yetzirah”*

<sup>The Pale Mask of Death</sup>  
*“Palinda Mors”*

O, my beloved. I have laid my lips upon yours.  
*“Ah! Ich habe deinen Mund gekust, Jochanaan.”*

*“Ah, forget it! I’m skipping this! Why in the world does your Formation stage even have an aria? Take after Spinne, will you, he doesn’t have to sing anything at all!”*

Rusalka disregarded the aria she herself had begun singing. After all, this is but a rip-off. She thought to at least properly copy her incantation, but she did not even have time for that. If its owner, Lisa, heard about this, she would surely get upset. Rusalka wrapped her own body in shadows, covering up the parts of her body that were exposed. It was a jet black dress. There is another use for Lisa Brenner’s Pale Mask<sup>Palinda</sup> of Death<sup>Mors</sup> besides using the mask to raise a single corpse. When she requires quantity over quality, the mask can extend to form a dress that covers her body. Rusalka simply wanted to copy that dress.

Beelzebub has one jump left, one jump until she reaches Rusalka. Rusalka pulled back her arm and thought of another Obsidian Round Table member. What she would receive from Beatrice is her fearlessness and calm and collected skill. Using what she has received from her fellow female Obsidian Round Table members, she would pierce through the Lady of the Flies.

Beelzebub had come yet closer, and her body had already opened up, focusing on a single target point. While her entire body is a mouth, only the part that opened up is connected to her stomach.

*“Eat shit ---- !!! ”*

Firing herself up with a scream quite unlike her, she lunged her arm forward. Her shadows extended up her arm, forming a spear and penetrating Beelzebub's insides. Every time the dress shrank, the spear would become longer and stronger. Rusalka clenched her teeth, bearing the agony of her body slowly melting away, and focused on one point, her enemy's stomach. Her spear made of shadows had reached inside Beelzebub, split into a million branches, and ransacked and destroyed Beelzebub's stomach.



“!?”

As if choking, Beelzebub's body shook heavily. The souls inside her stomach that she never digested were released all at once.

*“If you're so fond of eating, at least try being a little mindful of your health. Eating and eating like an animal is something that only noblemen of hundreds of years ago would do.”*

Rusalka watched Beelzebub in discord. Even if her hunger and stomach size had become infinite, her digestion system had never evolved. It is only natural that when you prick a hole into the stomach, any yet vital souls inside would come flying out.

“!”

Souls came bursting out from all over Beelzebub's body. Those with no strength left came flowing over the floor, and those that still held power flowed towards the ceiling. If anything, this could be visualized as a powerless precipitation together with a lofty sublimation. It is like maggots crawling over the floor while a swarm of flies disperses.

Rusalka tried her best to absorb as many souls as possible. She could regain the souls she had burned up and taken from her, but she could not take any additional ones for profit. Souls with no strength left in them served no purpose after all. At long last, Beelzebub's corpse melted into the ceiling and disappeared, there was no way she would ever return now.

*“I wouldn't wanna be found dead with undigested food inside of me... Poor thing...”*

Rusalka trembled without thinking. After all, if she had taken one wrong step she may have ended up just like that. Such a scenario crossed her mind. Why, of course she eats people with her shadows too, but at least she possesses enough moderation to not expose herself to such a death. And right now she is the one who won and lived, so she has yet to live on beyond Monroe's demise.

Rusalka brushed her premonitions aside and thought of what to do about her current situation, being almost completely naked.



Lisa Brenner waited patiently on the beach and had her eyes dead set. She figured the strange presence she felt came from the inward part of the island Rusalka disappeared into, and pondered a worst-case scenario. But her eyes were actually fixated in the opposite direction; the various battleships floating on the ocean. Lightning flickered around the fleet.

*Make yourselves known.*

This current display must be a literal interpretation of that order. Beatrice, who was late to the party, was in the process of making her power known to the American navy, running across the water, cutting about. She looked dazzling and elegant doing it, but also somewhat lost in thought.

*"To think she'd actually still catch up... She's so punctual."*

Rusalka's voice resounded behind Lisa, who still looked at the ocean.

*"Welcome back. What happened to you? "*

Lisa looked around and noticed Rusalka's white appearance. It appears she had changed into a long white dress. Likely made of a tender material, it swayed heavily in the wind.

*"Oh, this? I got my clothes all torn so I tried looking for something else, but this is all I could find. If the wind were just strong enough to blow my skirt away, I could show you levels of obscenity that shouldn't even be possible. 'Cause, I'm not wearing any! I'm really not! "*

*"You should, it's cold out and you might get sick."*

*"I love that part of you, Babylon."*

Rusalka stood next to Lisa, holding down her skirt.

*"Valkyrie's really right on time, huh. How'd she get here? She couldn't have come running? "*

*"That girl is way too clever, there's no way around it."*

*"She doesn't look like all that much of a meathead at all from here, although meathead allies are scary enough in their own way... I thought maybe she wouldn't show up and I already went and made backup plans..."*

Rusalka pointed at the ocean body, with a group of boats on the other end. They all advanced in a straight line towards a nearby fleet.

*"Are they carrying bombs? "*

*"Hmmm, you could say they're bombs. Maybe more like human bombs? They're all witches. I found them locked up in the facility below, those are all failed products. They don't listen to orders, they're insane or their powers are too dangerous. And so they've been banished from their witch community. Outcasts, the lot of them."*

*"Ah, so then..."*

Lisa understood. The witches inside those boats were all the black sheep of the herd, even more twisted than the ones she had the pleasure of meeting inside the airplane, and much farther removed from the pack.

*"But I believe they represent the true witches. They have been through much more contempt for no reason at all than those well-behaved little princesses with collars around their necks. And now they are finally free to roam the wild, I think that is a true witch... Of course I may have brainwashed them a little bit, but once they finish their battle royale on board those ships and set foot into the wide world, they will be free. There will be no more chains on you!"*

While many of the boats ended up sunken, the witches succeeded in boarding the battleships of the nearby fleet. The decks of these ships must be in total chaos at this point, with the chain of command in complete disarray.

Facing such a bright light, Rusalka covered her eyes.

*"Well then, time to go. I think it's about time for us to let Valkyrie's light guide us home."*

On the ocean, one of the battleships had been cut by lightning, a perfect dissection through its center. Surely a sight to reaffirm what Beatrice's absolute brilliance and power output looks like. Rusalka started to walk towards the water, letting the shadows below her feet create a way for her to walk on.

*"You coming? If you're tired, I can make you a moving footpath. The kind that keeps moving even if you sit down or take a nap. I'll even order drinks."*

*"Oh? I didn't know you offered service all the way out here."*

*"Well, see it as a form of compensation for infringing on your copyright... Actually, forget I said that. I'm just a sweetheart."*

Somewhat suspicious, Lisa stepped onto Rusalka's moving pathway. Even on top of the raging waters, the shadows retained their composure and repelled the incoming waves. As she started walking, Lisa suddenly remembered something important.

*"Oh, that's right. I heard you'd been tracking down lost Ahnenerbe from the institute, what happened to that? "*

Rusalka had been hunting these down since before this adventure begun.

*"I've stored everything of value inside my shadows. Other than that, I tracked down a little more than just Ahnenerbe along the way... I guess they just threw the rest away. So it's fine, don't worry about it."*

Rusalka kept walking as she answered Lisa's question. It was easy to see how she had already conceded the case, and how she was even a little saddened about it.





It was November the 28th in 1962 when the Soviet Union finally removed their nuclear missiles from Cuba, and the world was at peace. The Cuban Missile Crisis came to a resolution and the cold war would move towards an era where strained relations between the United States and the Soviet Union would heal once more. It had been fear that drove the top brass of these two behemoths to do what they did, all under the pretense that the Cuban Missile Crisis would destroy the world. The people of the world thought that nuclear missiles would spell their doom, the governments of these two sides did not deny that either.

On that day, on the island of Cuba, mankind suffered a massive loss and bended the knee to a danger even greater than any nuclear arsenal could pose. And it would be buried in history forever.



# Epilogue

Song To The Witch

November the 22nd, 1963. Lisa Brenner was having a cup of coffee at a newly opened teahouse in Suwahara City. It was a far more popular shop than the traditional coffee shops that had been gaining traction as of late, but the taste of the coffee here was not bad at all. The person sitting across from her was enjoying coffee like she was, and he was laughing. Although this was no indicator about whether or not he liked the coffee, because he was always laughing.

*"It has already been a year since then. So, how are your holiday memories, Lisa?"*

Valeria Trifa, the Divine Vessel, asked her.

*"If you call that a holiday, travel agencies will want to have a word with you. You know, reputational damages and such. "*

Lisa answered calmly. Because of her work as the assistant of the Divine Vessel, they are more than familiar enough with each other to the point of getting along like husband and wife. Although both sides know there are things about the other that they will never know, so a fine line is drawn somewhere.

*"My, putting that matter aside, it is all thanks to Malleus' wonderful wit that our work has become so much easier today... Well, of course we shan't forget the hard work you and Valkyrie did for us."*

*"You don't need to pretend."*

One year ago, on Cuba, the Obsidian Round Table showed their power to the United States and the Soviet Union. As a result, they seem to have completely stopped their attempts to intervene. They would rather look away than face an enemy they could never even comprehend. It also appears the outcast witches Rusalka released had found their way to freedom, and ever since then, the number of paranormal cases involving thrillseekers and cultist groups have increased drastically. They do not belong to the Obsidian Round Table, they are products of their home countries. The very creations of their fatherland who desired only for them to save it, for them to cause it this much despair, how very heartbreaking.

Trifa put down his coffee cup that was not even halfway empty, and spoke up.

*"But I have to say, the fight between the blessed and the unblessed witch was not a very rewarding one. Especially because the unblessed came out victorious..."*

*"Shouldn't you be a bit more happy about a comrade's victory?"*

*"Oh, but of course I am happy about it. However, not only did she acknowledge the fact that she was unblessed, she also ended the life of her blessed fellows. A necessary act in realizing her own unblessed nature, sure, but it also completely rubs her blessed future into the dirt. Malleus reaffirmed who she is, but also took away from herself any hope of a better future. "*

If a witch is blessed, that means she is fortunate. A grounded star that has never seen the light of heaven has pulled down the shiny stars like itself. Now, is that not proof that this star itself could never climb to the heavens? It has not yet given up on its spot in heaven, and yet it keeps denying the very phenomenon all the same.

*“They wanted to join the Obsidian Round Table, they wanted to take our- No, Rusalka’s place. From Rusalka’s perspective, who pulls down anyone above her and tramples on anyone below her, anyone who would want to take her place would be fresh new blood, and they cannot be allowed to exist.”*

Lisa stated her personal opinion. Looking back, she felt that the Cuba incident was setup so as to not let Rusalka escape. The same goes for Beatrice, who had a knight like herself prepared especially for her. She seemed to be a target too. Why those two? Now that it is in the past, it is not important anymore, but the question remained in the back of Lisa’s head.

*“It’s almost time...”*

Trifa moved his gaze to the television inside the shop. It did not matter what channel it was on at the moment, because every channel would switch to an emergency broadcast in a minute. The reason these two were even in this shop to begin with was because of the television.

*“But why this teahouse? Surely there are better and quieter spots to watch?”*

*“This one is a colour tv, I want to see this special moment across the entire spectrum.”*

Although the testing phase is over and widespread adoption has now begun, in Japan of 1963, black and white televisions are still mainstream.

*“I also want to see the reactions of those who do not yet know, unlike you.”*

Trifa adjusted the bridge of his glasses. Besides them, there are many people in this shop right now looking at the television. Surely in some tens of minutes, there should be some good reactions to see. What is about to transpire is far too heartstopping for the world to handle.



Beatrice had been looking at Rusalka’s back for about an entire year now. That said, there was no visible change in her, even if tens or hundreds of years pass, she would not change physically at all.

Beatrice asked Rusalka;

*“Is there anything I can do?”*

*“I asked you to stick with Bey.”*

*"Well he went like 'Huh!?' You wanna hang around me or some shit!?" in anger, and when I told him why, he left to Vietnam, saying interesting things were about to happen there..."*

*"I guess he never changes. He's also not that great at this kind of work, but considering he came all the way to America for this, and his sense of smell is pretty useful... Oh well, all obstacles have disappeared on their own, I guess you can just go about your way too, Valkyrie."*

*"I'm here now, so I'll see this through to the end."*

*"Really? I guess you have a VIP seat here for a hit that will all be over in a flash, I suppose it would be a waste to just leave."*

They are inside the storeroom of a dark warehouse, but because they are on the top floor the view is not bad at all. You should be able to see it just fine from here. Even if it would be over in a flash, there is still some time before the target window, the two remained silent until Beatrice spoke up.

*"Just what are we doing..."*

*"Why, work of course?"*

*"I mean, sure... But sometimes I just don't know anymore, what do I even live for? Why am I in the Obsidian Round Table?"*

Because she wants to save her superior who has fallen into darkness. To do that, she must defeat Reinhard, who had tossed her into that pit in the first place. Even if she does not hold any loyalty for Reinhard, she still belongs to the Obsidian Round Table. But this willpower of hers keeps withering more and more, and she will only keep on letting go of what she holds dear in order to follow orders. Can she really keep this up for some tens of years more and still maintain a healthy mindset?

*"To complete the transmutation of Gold and reap the rewards, of course."*

Rusalka answered nonchalantly. She has been alive for hundreds of years longer than Beatrice. Could that be how she can consider things in such a simple way? Or is that the only way she can tackle issues now?

Beatrice asked again;

*"Do you have anyone you want to bring back with the transmutation of Gold?"*

*"Yeah, myself. I want to become immortal, 'cause I don't feel like dying anytime soon."*

*"Why do you want to live forever?"*

Rusalka looked lost in thought at this question, almost troubled. If she can so blatantly say she does not want to die, why is she so lost for words?

*"I have a feeling I had a completely different reason not too long ago, what was it..."*

Self-destructive behaviour: even with an immortal body, one's soul will still wither. One's heart will lose consciousness more and more, becoming defenseless and making careless decisions. That is practically suicide in a non-traditional form. If Beatrice is worried about such self-destructive behaviour, the symptoms Rusalka exhibits now are surely of similar nature. Does she really intend to live on, having forgotten her true aspirations?

*"Shouldn't you..."*

...take some time to try and remember that, then? Beatrice wanted finish what she said, but time would not allow that.

*"There he is!"*

The target had arrived, and Rusalka approached the window.

*"Finally, it's today's mystery time! The target is set, and the hints are all over the place... Let's make this last for the future generations, the world's greatest mystery starts here!"*

Rusalka could not quite hide her excitement, and Beatrice approached the window to watch the spectacle.

*"Anyway, Valkyrie. Don't you think it's best to worry about that after we get the big prize? It's better to look at what's in front of us first. "*

That is nothing more than running away from your problems. Beatrice could not speak her mind. Having forgotten why, but still chasing after your dream of immortality? How very sad, this must be what an unblessed witch looks like.

Even if her own soul is reduced to nothingness, she would never forget about her vow, even if that road is dangerous and foolish. The maiden of war reaffirmed her vow to herself, and took pity on the witch who taught her such a valuable lesson.



In a desolate office, Alfred Der Vogelweide watched the live broadcast that shook the world.

*"Could the Obsidian Round Table be behind this...?"*

*"He never did stop fighting against them, even when everybody around him begged him to give up. He must've been torn about Marilyn Monroe's death, surely. Perhaps somebody close to him who was no longer comfortable having him around had a hand in this... But we'll find out soon enough either way."*

*"How can you tell?"*

*"If we look at the motive and execution rationally, all signs would point towards an old fashioned assassination. However, there are simply too many mysteries here, and if we were to make the obvious guess, it would be Obsidian Round Table. I believe it is the latter."*

The owner of the office, watching the broadcast with Alfred, answered calmly. For the man who rounded up countless governments and organizations to execute the Cuba operation from last year, he is awfully calm. But that is partly because of the decline in this man's energy and political power ever since then.

*President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, slain in broad daylight*

It was not just the American people, but everyone in the world witnessed the sight of the American president's assassination. Reports of a serious wound had been coming in, but having been shot in the head, he can no longer be saved.

*"With this, the world must've completely lost all will to resist the Longinus Dreizehn Orden... After all, even the president was murdered, no matter what kind of military or political power one may have, nobody is safe anymore. "*

*"I am not giving up."*

Alfred said bravely. There have to still be people left who would never give up, even if their peers all turn their backs on them.

*"What a promising answer. Then I take it you're going?"*

*"Yes, back to Doppeladler."*

This is the Eastern Orthodox Church's special division, better known as the Double-headed Eagle. <sup>doppeladler</sup> Functioning as one of the members of its undercover division is Alfred, who swore to destroy Karl Krafft and his followers for using heretic magic. The church did not publically want anything to do involving disgusting witches, so they sent Alfred for support.

*"Thank you, it is with your help that she was able to fight the Maiden of War."*

*"I only taught her what I know. It was by her own strength that she was able to make it this far."*

Alfred is a first-rate knight, and Beatrice's fellow student in the past. As he is well aware of Beatrice's technique and bad habits, he taught the eyepatched woman how to fight against her. But in the end Beatrice cut her down.

*"But I have learned something important from this. It is that I can no longer teach her anything."*

Alfred taught and raised the eyepatched woman as a knight, despite her being a witch. By clashing with Beatrice, she had gained a certain purity only to be gained by communicating with her, but Beatrice tossed her aside as a display of her power. She is no longer the maiden he once yearned for, she is now a demon who walks the path of carnage, wearing the skin of a girl.

*“I understand, but don't rush it. Use our intel and wait for the right time to strike. They will weaken more and more, wait for the right opportunity and get them in one strike. ”*

Data about Ahnenerbe lying in wait all over the world and people who are capable of standing up to the Longinus Dreizehn Orden, all had been transferred to the jurisdiction of Doppeladler through Alfred, as they are the only people left in the world who can make use of it.

Taking his advice to heart, Alfred raised his hand, and the owner of the office shook it firmly.

*“You say wait, but I grow older by the day. ”*

*“So keep training. So that you can shove that sword of yours down their throat, even in your older years, even on your deathbed.”*

*“I understand. Let us await the right time, until the end of our lives. ”*

Alfred said his goodbyes and stood up to leave the office, and all he could feel was grief. When he first set foot in this office, it was a place of vigour, now it is empty. This void felt like all of mankind had just surrendered to but thirteen people, and it was depressing. But he himself had not given up yet, he would use what he had learned at Cuba, and use it to defeat the Obsidian Round Table and Beatrice for once and for all, when the time is right.

A demon's strength does not change, but people's strength grows greater as they come together. Alfred paid his respects to those who came before him and began walking his own path.



After he had cleaned up the office, he went home. At the office he was strong and stood on top of the world, but at home he had nothing. And this is not about belongings, he had no family either. Ever since *that day*, his life had revolved around the destruction of the Longinus Dreizehn Orden, and he gave everything he had to that cause. He had participated in the invasion of Omaha Beach that Rusalka had drenched in blood as a new recruit, and he had seen hell. His comrades and superiors were cruelly murdered one after the other, and when even he himself was about to be taken by the Iron Maiden, his superior who would face the same end as him kicked him out and saved his life. And to top off his luck, even Schreiber, dashing across the beach, did not take note of him.



He was one of the few survivors of the Omaha Beach massacre, and when he was finally saved by a rescue party and had come to realize that he survived, what awakened inside of him was neither resignation nor fear, but a newfound will to fight back. As someone who had faced the Obsidian Round Table head on with his brothers in arms, he established business connections, returned to his family that had a wonderful turn to wealth, and used it all up to fund his operations.

In his frantic endeavour, he eventually came to realize he now stood in a position where he was able to prepare counter strategies against the Longinus Dreizehn Orden. This strategy of his involved the simple idea of fighting fire with fire; collecting whatever the Obsidian Round Table left behind, creating witches and taking a gamble. Knowing very well that he may end up creating monsters even worse than them, he took the risk and gambled...

...and the only logical result is that he would lose everything. This entire year since the Cuban Missile Crisis has been to pass the torch to the next contenders. He had passed everything he had to someone else. Well, almost everything. The man unwrapped a package he had obtained from the Ahnenerbe institute, but there was no holy relic inside, just belongings of the deceased. There was a classic male army uniform, a collection of documents and a picture. It was a group photo taken at the institute. Next to the original owner of these items stood a somewhat flustered yet blooming lady resembling Rusalka. This seems to be the real Rusalka the way she looked back then, quite the difference from her almost childlike appearance today.

He tossed these belongings into his fireplace. He heard from his contacts that this man possessed something very valuable to Rusalka, and that besides Ahnenerbe, she had also been tracking down these very belongings. If so, the only right thing to do here is burn them, let her feel what it is like to have things taken from you. As he burned Rusalka's memories, he apologized to the original owner of the belongings, *Lotus Reichhart*. After all, he had done nothing wrong.

After the belongings had completely burned up, he sat down onto his couch and relaxed. After the failure of such a huge undertaking and the assassination of the president of the United States, he is the only person who should be taking responsibility. He had already prepared a loaded handgun sitting beside him.

For him to have witnessed the Longinus Dreizehn Orden on a large raised platform with their big victory prize in their hands, and the surrender of the world around him that had been so passionate about stopping them, Alfred's unbreakable will yet gave him firm confidence that there are still people out there who will not give up. They ought to all band together, but simply them being around is enough to give him hope. And even if Doppeladler is destroyed, they will simply pass on the torch once more, and eventually man will surpass the demons.

The man would die here, without showing himself to the Longinus Dreizehn Orden, and without appearing in the history books. The Obsidian Round Table's weakness is that they are so powerful they can no longer see their own feet. In that case, if he dies here, they will never be able to comprehend the scope of those who still resist. That day on Omaha Beach, he had come to understand their overconfidence and lack of caution. That is why he can die in peace now, as a nameless man.

The man took a bottle of whisky before the act. He could no longer taste the alcohol that he had last drunk ten years ago. The last time must have been during dinner before the invasion of Normandy that he had participated in. After surviving Omaha Beach, he had even given up the taste of alcohol, and he had no regrets about that lifestyle.

*Are you watching, damned witch? And you, wretched demons? A lowly human has condemned you all to oblivion.*

The nameless man put down the glass, pressed the tip of his gun onto his forehead and pulled the trigger.

*The end ~*



# Dies irae

THE  
~Song to the Witch~

Fujii Sanda

Original & supervision  
Takashi Masada (Greenwood)

Cover illustration  
Gyuusuke (Greenwood)





# Dies irae

## ~Song to the Witch~

////  
Dies irae~Song to the Witch~  
presented by Sanda Fujii  
original & supervision / Takashi Masada(Greenwood)  
cover illustration / Gyuusuke(Greenwood)  
////

