(Nathan POV)

The war was finally over. The absurd plan that I had suggested, succeeded. We had successfully destroyed the Noriganian army without much losses on our side. The water was still raging down and would probably take a lot of time to calm down. The dead bodies of the Noriganian soldiers were already starting to float. There were countless bodies. The army had been completely wiped out of existence. This was an outcome the Noriganians were not expecting.

"Capture any who is alive. Kill any who tries to run away." I ordered.

\*VUP\*

I heard a sound. Before I could turn towards the sound, something hit me in the back and then coiled around my neck.

"WE WON. WE REALLY WON." I heard Cecilia shouting joyfully.

"Just quiet down. Are you trying to damage my eardrums?" I pushed her aside.

"Eardrums?????? What are those?" She tilted her head towards one side.

(Oh shit. These are medieval periods. How the hell would she know what an eardrum is.)

"Okay. We need to move now. Get away from the river and set a base camp. Send a message to the army on the other side by any means and tell them to join us. We will move now." I changed the subject of the talk.

My orders were immediately followed and we moved. After a while we were inside our new base camp.

"So, what are the casualties? I asked one of the commanders.

"Not many your highness. The total amount has not been calculated but according to an estimate, about a hundred."

"That is still a lot...…. Commander."

"Not as much if we compare it to the deaths of the other side."

"Hmmm. Well.... Nothing that we can do now."

He got up and left.

"So now you wanna discuss it with me." I heard Cecilia.

"Discuss what?"

"Your behavior in Haanza forest." She said furiously.

"My behavior????? What about it?" I tilted my head to a side.

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN WHAT ABOUT IT." She shouted. "I told you that I would never forgive you if you put your own life in danger because of me."

(AHH that...….. totally forgot that part)

"But you did it again. First in the castle you almost died. If not for Rena you would have died. Then in the Haanze forest. You tried to play the hero again. And why did you charge into the enemy army like that. You could have died. Even though you promised me that..." She kept on saying. I was dumbfoundedly listening to her with my mouth half-open. I knew she was angry but I was not expecting an outburst like this. Something came over me and I got up. In the next moment I walked over to Cecilia and simply hugged her. There were dozens of thoughts in my head. But the word that came out of my mouth was

"Thanks"

(For as long as I can remember, nobody has ever cared for my life. They all just wanted to use the so-called red-eyed cursed child)

We stood there without mouthing another word. Me, lost in thoughts of the past and Cecilia probably out of embarrassment.

\*AHEM\*

In a second, we separated from each other.

"Your highness, the commanders would like to meet you." It was Rena. She was here to inform me about the commanders.

"Ahem, yes. Send them in." I quickly composed myself. Cecilia was not as proficient as me. She was still beet red when the commanders came in.

"Yes?" I looked at them.

They all seemed nervous due to some reason. They looked at one another as if urging the other to start. Then one of them came forward.

"Yes, Commander Earl. What can I do for you?" I mocked him a bit. A king was not supposed to say anything like that.

Earl came forward and kneeled. One of his knees touched the ground while the other was upright. His right hand was on his heart and left on the hilt of his sword which was tied to his waist.

"MY KING KIZEN VON GAZELL ARCADIA. I pledge my undying loyalty to you." He shouted. Following his example, the others did as well. Now I was like hell confused.

"What are you doing? Your undying loyalty? Did you already not take this vow before?" I was not able to understand their perspective.

"We all apologize your highness but the truth is that none of us ever believed in you from the start. But seeing how you handled the situation and the plan that you devised, we have no option but to reconsider our actions. We will all be willing to accept any punishment that you give us." One of them said.

(Ah! So that's it. Well too bad for you but I do not care. I hope this shitty test comes to an end soon. Now that the war is over, I do not know what to do. I can't rule a country. I don't know how.)

"If you are willing, will you come out for a moment please?" Earl asked.

"Commander Earl!!!! Are you asking the king to come out? How insolent can you be? During the war, you insulted the king and now you dare order...…"

"Calm down Derris." I ordered my butler. "What is it that you want Earl?" I turned my face towards him.

"The soldiers would like to have a word with you." He answered.

(I don't get how this stuff works and I am tired and annoyed. Let's just go)

"Lead the way." I stood up.

As I walked outside of my tent, with Rena, Cecilia, and all the three commanders accompanying me, I was surprised. All the soldiers who had survived were now standing in front of me.

"What is this? Explain." I asked the commanders. Instead of answering me the commanders turned towards the soldiers.

"Soldiers, Show the king your loyalty." Earl shouted.

Upon hearing this all the soldiers placed their right hands on their hearts and kneeled. Then all shouted with a single voice.

"We PLEDGE OUR UNDYING LOYALTY TOWARDS THE KING. WE SHALL DIE AND LIVE FOR YOUR SAKE. LONG LIVE KING KIZEN." They repeated it over and over again. I was only able to stand there and look at them in a daze.

"Looks like someone is popular." I heard a teasing voice.

"Yeah. I did not expect this to happen." I replied.

"Now you will have to work even harder my brother." Cecilia teased me a bit.

"Yeah, I kno....."

\*DUB DUB\*

Suddenly I felt a squeezing feeling in my chest. And then a blinding pain invaded my head.

"UGH" With a sound, I fell to the ground.

"BROTHER"

"YOUR HIGHNESS."

"SOMEONE CALL A DOCTOR."

"MOVE QUICKLY."

There were many sounds around me but I could not distinguish any of them. My vision had blacked out and I was losing consciousness.

"BROTHER...…. BROTHER." The last feeling that I felt was something wet falling on my face.

(Damn Cecilia is crying again. I should do something.)

"It's okay. You have done enough already Nathan." I opened my eyes and there was a man in front of me.

"You have done enough...…. No more than enough. Seems like it is your time to go back. We might never be able to meet ever again but I shall always remember you. You are my benefactor. If we ever meet again, I shall try my utmost best to repay this debt. As the king of Arcadia, Kizen Von Gazell, this is my promise to you, Nathaniel Morningstar." I blinked several times. His figure started to fade away.

"I wish you a happy life." These last words were only whispers and then he vanished. Once again, I was left alone in the darkness.

(Now what?)

"Congratulations to you master. You have passed the test."

I turned around to look at the source of sound and saw a gigantic creature in front of me. It was simply humongous and emitted some aura that dispelled the darkness. Its head was like that of an eagle or in magical terms, similar to a hippogriff. It had three pairs of wings and feathers shimmering with cloud-like patterns. Simply saying, in front of me was a thunderbird.

"We congratulate you." The odd thing was that the voice was not coming from it. There was another presence. A second presence, and that was the owner of the voice.

That was just a shadow. Actually, calling it a construct of light would be more appropriate. Under the bird stood a person who was now talking to me. He had no facial features...… or any other features of that sort. It was just a white wisp of light.

"You have passed the test and gained the right to be our master."

"Wait a minute. What are you? I get the bird but why are you here. And what the hell was this test about anyway." I asked her. I had assumed that she was a girl because of her voice.

"The test was about trust." Okay. According to my knowledge, the armaments were not supposed to be sentient so I never expected her to give me an answer. This should not have happened like this.

"The test was about trust. And as for what am I.... That I cannot tell you." I was not expecting that but I simply went with the flow.

"Why can you not tell me and what do you mean by trust."

"When we came in contact with you...…. We immediately knew that you would be perfect to become our master. You who possess one of the strongest soul power ever seen would obviously become someone formidable. But the only problem was your personality."

A tik mark appeared on my forehead.

"What do you mean by that, please elaborate." I contained myself

"You never trusted anyone. This test was designed for that purpose. To teach you to trust others and let others trust you." She replied

(WHAT)

"THAT IS THE MOST RUBBISH THING I HAVE HEARD IN MY LIFE" I could not hold it in anymore. "I FOUGHT A DAMN WAR SO THAT I COULD LEARN TO TRUST. ARE YOU PLAYING WITH ME?" I shouted in outrage

"That was something I could not control." She replied. "Now please finish the ritual and give it a name." She pointed towards the thunder bird behind her.

"NO! YOU HAVE NOT ANSWERED MY QUESTIONS...."

"We have no time. I am fading and if that happens this ritual may fail. You will never be able to recover the cores if that happens. So, I suggest that you hasten up and form a bond. Now!!!!!"

(DAMN ITT)

"Fine then let me think for a moment."

I thought about it for a moment. Although I had trained for some while using dual swords but I had never thought of any names for them. I thought for a moment. Sure there was only a single bird but the swords were two. The core contained by both the wands were from the same thunderbird. And if I had to guess, standing in front of me was the same thunder bird.

"Vespera. Aurora. For two of my swords."

"We accept..... my master." This time it was the bird that replied.

"NOW ANSWER MY QUESTION ABOUT...…"

"I apologize but my power is fading quickly and we have run out of time. You shall get all the answers someday. But not today. When I recover my power, I shall answer your questions. For now, it is farewell, my master." She spoke very softly. And then with a blinding light, everything disappeared.

"Ugh" I opened my eyes. I was back in the room. My body felt like shit.

"How long has it been." I stood up. But in the next moment, I fell back down.

"The hell. I have barely any energy in my body and my stomach feels as if I have not eaten in days."

Then it hit me.

(Is it possible that each day in that place was a day in this place as well)

I forced myself to stand. And moved out of the room. Vespera and Aurora were in my hands. The word vespera was written on the blade of the right-handed blade while aurora on the other. Slowly I walked through the corridor to sisters' office.

"Are you, their sis?" I pushed the door. With a creaking sound, the door opened.

"I am up sis. And I am ....." I could never finish my sentence.

My pupils grew wide and my blood started to boil. I clenched Vespera and Aurora so hard that my fists turned white.

"WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU ARE DOING" I charged inside as fast as I could.

In the center of the room there stood two people. Sister was held by a man, her neck exposed. His fangs digging into her white skin.

A vampire was sucking Ana's blood.