

The Afterlife

"... I'm sorry, what?!"

"You have been assigned to help division 14 of soul reapers. If you manage to help raise their soul purification rate, I'll let you go back to your world."

As I stand there frozen in shock, I reminisce what just happened 10 minutes ago. I swear I was just a normal 17 year old girl, who was off to school and bam! I ended up in another world. Only after was I informed my own parents handed me off for money. You see, this world is what we call the afterlife. Reapers have to purify souls so they can be reincarnated. However, this can't be forced. Reapers must sympathize and make a soul agree to being purified. Or well... That's how things should be done. There are many divisions of reapers, with division 14 having the worst rates of soul purification. The one in charge of all the divisions thought this might be because the reapers were having difficulty with people. As such, he thought it'd go better if the reapers were to interact with a human. He put up an ad. A very suspicious one that offered a huge amount of salary if anyone was willing to go to another world for one year. After realizing I had not agreed to this, administration offered to send me back to the world of the living, but there's one problem. The portal between our worlds only opens once every year. In other words, I have to wait one year before I can go back to the world of the living. As such, the head of the division thought I might as well do my job since I'll be here for one year anyway. So, here I am, forced to become the manager of division 14 of soul reapers. There are 15 soul reapers in division 14, and I'm in charge of all of them. There are a total of 3 groups, each consisting of 5 students. It doesn't mean much though. I was told it just dictates where they live. Oh, and soul reapers go to school for them to train and better learn how to do their job, which is why I called them students. The school they go to is a boarding school and there are 3 buildings designated as living quarters. Which group you're in dictates which of the 3 living quarters you will live in. All 3 buildings supposedly have different names or values or whatever, but I was told it didn't matter and that's what I'll believe until I am told otherwise.

"Hello, sir! What did you call me fo- Ah!"

Suddenly, a boy with silver eyes and silky golden blond hair comes rushing in and trips over his own feet in the process. I, who was standing right in front of him, quickly caught him and helped him regain his balance.

"Woah! Careful there. I can't have you fall and accidentally hurt yourself!"

"There you are, Lux."

"Oh, is Lux his name?"

The headmaster of the school nodded.

"This is Lux. You can think of him as the class representative for division 14. Lux, this is your new manager, a guest of ours from the otherworld. She'll be in charge of you and the rest of division 14 for 1 year."

Lux suddenly bows to me, which I quickly assure him there's no need to do.

"Anyway, why don't you introduce yourself to Lux, miss manager?"

"Ah, yes! My name is Soraya Dalil, but you can also call me Raya for short. It's nice to meet you and I hope we'll get along well."

Soraya Dalil ↓



Long light blond hair

Eye color orange- gold(kind of like a flame)

Pretty but not astronomically beautiful

Wearing school uniform

"Miss Raya, I need to introduce you to everyone, so this is your first task. Gather everyone in division 14 in the auditorium in... 30 minutes."

"What?!"

"Did I not make myself clear enough?"

"Y- Yes, sir! I'll do my best!"

Lux leads me outside the school to go to the dorms. The school is really beautiful by the way. It looks like a palace.

The school ↓



"So... Lux, can I ask you something?"

"Sure, miss manager!"

"You can just call me Raya, but... Whatever floats your boat. How does one become a soul reaper? Do all people just... Die and become one? Are there any requirements to be one or is it just randomized?"

"Oh! Well, not all people become one. All soul reapers were once people, hence our appearance. All reapers have a wish."

"A... Wish?"

"Yes. A wish they couldn't fulfill while they were alive. If reapers can purify a certain number of souls, they will be allowed a second chance at life to try and fulfill their wish. I heard that in the otherworld, there are 2 types of people when they die. People who are satisfied with their life and those that wanted more time to live. All soul reapers are of the latter type."

"What do you mean by purify souls?"

"We have a magic tool we use to purify human souls. When we purify a soul, it essentially means we wipe their memories. All the good and the bad get washed away so they can be reincarnated. It's this kaleidoscope looking thing."

"So... What about soul reapers?"

"Soul reapers have such a great wish that they physically can't forget the life they've lived until now. Using the magic purification tool doesn't work. That's why

they're given a second chance at life in their original bodies if they can purify a certain number of souls."

"Don't they live in different time periods?"

"I also don't know the full details of how that could work... This is what I was told."

"I see... Can soul reapers get hurt or die?"

"... Death isn't the right word... In the afterlife, you don't age or anything. You can get hurt, but it heals very quickly. Because of this, for a soul reaper to die, they must lose their will to live. Their want to live is their life force. For most of us, getting our wish granted is why we want to live on and continue our job."

"Can a soul reaper's wish be granted in the afterlife?"

"I've never heard of it, but I guess so. In which case the soul reaper would live on for eternity in the afterlife? We can't die in the afterlife, so I believe that is what would happen in that situation."

"Oh, okay. Anyway... You said something about the purification thing being low?"

"Most divisions just purify wayward souls. However, true soul reapers must make the soul accept purification by ridding the soul of their sorrows and bitterness, safely guiding our charges to the afterlife and helping them reincarnate. That takes more time, which leads to less purifications."

"But...! What's the point if it's not proper purification? If you're going to do our job, at least do it properly! Hasn't anyone in the afterlife heard of quality over quantity?"

"Haha, so you're our new manager that was coming today? If that's your attitude, well... I gotta say, you seem promising."

A boy with long dark blond hair and red eyes suddenly appears in front of me.

"Ahhh! You scared me, uhhh... What's your name? I assume you're another reaper...?"

"Right, my name. Callisto, at your service. Nice to meet ya, miss manager."

"Ca- Callisto! Wai-*cough cough* Wait!"

Another guy with ash blond hair and blue-gray eyes is following behind him while coughing violently.

"Oh, there you are, Narin. Come meet our new manager."

... Can soul reapers be sick? Lux notices my confused expression.

"Narin was always weak and delicate, so he's kind of perpetually ill. Him coughing like that is a normal occurrence for us."

"Ah. That explains it..."

"New... Manager? Is it her?"

"O- Oh, yes! It's nice to meet you!"

"I'm Narin... It's a pleasure to *cough* meet you, my lady."

"I wonder where the other 2 are..."

"You mean Zain and Caspian? Those 2 went for a walk and should be back any second, there they are."

"Hey, guys! And... My, my. What a lovely young lady we have here..."

Another boy shows up and... Immediately starts flirting with me?! This one has long red hair tied up high and gold eyes.

"Zain. Cut it out."

Oh, I guess the flirt's name is Zain.

"You're such a buzzkill. I was just having a little fun with her."

"Well, stop. She's going to be the one to save division 14. Do you really want to work with division 13? If not, then quit it. Sorry about him, miss manager. I'm, as you may have already heard, Caspian."

Caspian has black hair and dark blue eyes under black wire framed glasses.

"Okay, that's the first house done! Guys, go to the auditorium. We need to get everyone in our division there in... 20 minutes. We wasted 10 finding you all. Miss manager, let's go to the second."

"R- Right!"

I find an unbelievably beautiful boy with long silver hair tied into a braid swept to the side and periwinkle eyes waiting.

"Miss manager, right?"

"Oh... You already know who I am?"

"Of course. The headmaster said a new person would come today to help us purify wayward souls. I'm Elatha."

"N- Nice to meet you."

"Likewise. The rest are either in the dorms or outside. Would you like me to call them or would you prefer to get them yourself?"

Not only is Elatha beautiful, his speech and mannerisms are also so elegant...

"Hey!"

A new voice calls out.

"Zedekian? I didn't expect you to be here."

"You know I hate my full name!"

"Fine, I'll call you Kian. Meet our new manager... What was your name?"

"Soraya! But Raya is fine too."

Zedekian, or Kian, as he seems to prefer being called by, has shoulder length black hair worn loose with red eyes.

"Zede- I mean Kian, where is Eirwen? He was with you, was he not?"

"Oh, he should be back any second. He said he wanted to make a quick stop to buy something and told me to go ahead. Oh, look! There he is now!"

I look to where Kian is pointing to see a boy with short white hair and icy blue eyes. He's also holding a gift. He had a bit of a cold air, but when he notices me, he smiles, his eyes creasing as he does so. It makes him look so warm and friendly

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"Miss manager! I'm sorry for making you wait, I didn't realize you'd already be here."

He holds out the gift to me.

"Here, consider it my apology for making you wait as well as a welcome gift to the afterlife. I hope you like it!"

"O- Oh, thank you..."

I open it up to find a gold necklace with a pendant in the shape of a heart and an infinity symbol mixed together. It seems to be really high quality and expensive..

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"Umm, sorry, but I can't accept this. It looks to be much too expensive."

"Aw, don't be like that and just accept it! Please? I bought it especially for you, and the seller told me I can't get a refund."

"I... Alright. I don't want you to have wasted your money. Thank you very much for the gift... Eirwen, was it?"

"Yes, yes! That's my name!"

"The two that were outside are back. Miss manager, why don't you go and get the ones still in their rooms? Or one of the others could do it if you prefer?"

"I don't mind!"

"Eirwen, wait! I can do it- And he's already gone... That was quick..."

"Hey! Eir! Geez! Don't drag me, I can walk by myself!"

... That was loud...

Soon, Eirwen comes out, dragging one by the wrist and another is walking beside them while holding a book.

"Keep it down."

"Both of you, introduce yourselves. This is our brand new manager~!"

I wave shyly. The one with the book looks up. He has dark blue hair and eyes with a beauty mark under his right eye. I instinctively shiver when his eyes meet mine. They're ice cold and apathetic as can be. Completely different from Eirwen, who gave me a sunshine like smile. The cold air was just because of his hair and eye color, and his personality was the entire opposite of his wintry color scheme. He sighs as if this whole thing is bothersome and gives a cursory intro.

"Hi. I'm Yukio."

Yeah. That was it. Nothing else. Eirwen and Elatha both turn their heads toward him, basically cussing him out and reprimanding him with their eyes, respectively. Yukio rolls his eyes, making it clear he doesn't care at all.

"I apologize, miss manager."

"I- It's okay, Elatha. Don't worry about it."

I quickly forced a smile on my face. I should get it together. It is my first time seeing someone have such a hostile attitude, but... It's going to be okay.

"I'm... Callan."

It's the same format of introduction as Yukio, but the vibe it gives off is totally different. With Yukio, it was cold. However, with Callan, it seems he's shy. Callan has brown hair and blue eyes. Perhaps because of they know he's shy, Elatha and Eirwen don't react like they did with Yukio. They're much gentler with Callan.

"Callan, are you glad to see her?"

Callan's face grows red and he starts arguing that no, he's not. Elatha sighed.

"The auditorium?"

It takes me a minute to realize he's talking to me. I nod. He walks off, leaving the rest behind. Hmm... Elatha's surprisingly cold at times like this. I and Lux get the others to go too, and we finally get to the third dormitory to get the rest of division 14.

"This is the last one- Oh, Chevalier!"

I look up to see a guy who seems to be some kind of general? He's wearing a uniform that makes him look like one... He has long purple hair and blue eyes. I guess his name is Chevalier...?

"Greetings. I am Chevalier Faris Donovan."

Okay...

"Chevalier, where are the rest?"

"In their dorms."

"Can you go get them?"

Chevalier suddenly blows a whistle. Was that some weird signal? 4 people come out at the sound of the whistle.

"What now, Val?"

The first one to come out is a guy who has long black hair and purple eyes. He has a very oriental kind of beauty.

"Say hello. That's our new manager."

The new guy looks me up and down.

"Are you sure? She's like... 15. A kid."

I sighed. He is going to be difficult.

"Firstly, I'm 17, not 15."

He rolls his eyes.

"Oh, my! What a truly unforgivable crime for guessing your age to be 2 years younger than you actually are! Clearly 17 and 15 show much more difference in maturity even though both ages are in the adolescent range! I am so sorry!"

His voice is dripping of sarcasm. I ignore it and continue talking.

"Secondly, it doesn't really matter if I'm a kid or not. Regardless, you're stuck with me for a year, so I think it'd be in your best interest for you to just accept it instead of protesting until I can go back home. It's perfectly fine if you don't like me. It's understandable really, and I know I can't force you to do like me, but let's at least try to be civil. But don't worry, I will be gone after one year and you'll never have to see me again unless you're assigned to be my guide to the afterlife when I die."

He seems a little surprised. But anyway...

"However, I am still currently your manager for a year and I'd still like to know your name. Unless you want me to call you black haired and purple eyed guy."

"... Alexandrite."

"Alexandrite, got it. Cool name."

... Why is he looking so scared? I complimented him because I felt bad.

For Alexandrite, it went a little something more like this: "Alexandrite, the guy who insulted me for no reason. I'll remember you for sure. You better watch your back." However, this wasn't Soraya's intention.

The next is a boy with hair length that is just above his shoulders. I think his hair is called a secret two tone or something? It's silver on the top, but it's blue beneath the initial layer of hair. I only know because he tied his hair up into a small ponytail, exposing the blue. One of his eyes are covered by his bangs, but the one I can see is blue, but lighter than his hair. I think he has the most interesting appearance.

"I'm Cerulean. Nice to meet you."

"Hi, nice to meet you too. As you probably already know, I'm your new manager. My name's Soraya, but you can call me Raya."

I feel a light tap on my shoulder and turn around.

"Yes?"

A boy with white hair and red eyes is standing there. I guess he tapped me.

"Umm... My name's Camelian..."

"Hi, it's nice to meet you."

"L- Likewise..."

Hmm... It may be just me, but he seems really shy. He never looked at me in the eyes once. His gaze was on the floor the whole time we were greeting each other. I noticed his eyes were red, but that was it.

The last has white hair that fades to a black at the sides and back and gray eyes behind glasses. His skin is also really pale. It's practically white, so it kind of looks like he's in an achromatic color scheme. He's holding a small notebook and a pencil.

"My name's Damaris."

"Okay! Now that we're done with introductions, everyone please make your way to the auditorium!"

I'm a little late because the meetings and introductions of each took much longer than I thought. The headmaster scolds me for it, but he seems to forgive me once I sincerely apologize and promise it won't happen again.

"Okay! So... I thought it'd be best to get to know you all a little better before I start training you guys. As such, I want each of you to write a paragraph about yourselves on a piece of paper and give them to me once you're done! I will read through them and official classes will start tomorrow.

Some get to writing while others complain a little, but eventually everyone does end up writing a paragraph about themselves. I collect them all and walk to my assigned dorm room to read through them and get a general grasp of their personalities, morals, and openness/trust in others. How can I know all this from one paragraph? Well, you can actually find out a lot if you learn to read between the lines through this simple exercise. Rather than focus on what's written in that paragraph, you need to focus on what's not there.

Lux. He's the division representative and a cheerful and upbeat person—Uhh... Soul reaper, I guess? He also seems to be used to helping others, maybe because of his role as rep. This is my main impression of him from meeting and talking to him. Let me read his introductory paragraph. Hmm... There's nothing about him. It's all about the others and what they're like. It's all things like "Callisto is" and "I think Narin is". He talks about each of division 14 with detail, but there's nothing about him. All I found out was that he's class leader. Well... I think he values friendship and puts others above himself. He also doesn't seem to like talking about himself or he doesn't know what to talk or write about himself. He would rather talk about his friends.

Callisto. Friendly and outgoing. The one who popped up out of nowhere. Appearance, I already know that... There's nothing about his past life or anything about his likes or dislikes. All about what happened in the afterlife. Also very friendly and relationship centered, but it's less than Lux.

Narin. The perpetually ill reaper. Uhhh... His personality is a bit... Twisted? His self confidence is very low, since he wrote one line and one line alone, that one line being

"I'm useless anyway, so just ignore me." In other words, no need for me to get to know him. Unfortunately, that practically means he's single-handedly preventing me from doing my job. It goes against my work ethic to just ignore him as well, even if he specifically requests me to. Okay... I need to find a way to break down his walls first. Speaking of breaking down walls... Where is it...? Ah!

Elatha. Very calm and collected, but there's a certain distance I feel. A line he never lets anyone cross. He was perfectly kind and polite to me, but I felt like he was keeping a certain distance from me. He wrote what would be called a generic paragraph. Nothing is particularly wrong with it, he wrote everything you'd see in an introductory paragraph. But even so... Something feels... Off. It's like he's not telling me the whole story. Because of that, I can't exactly deduce anything, because even if I do, how true will it be?

Zain. The shameless flirt. Oh? It seems he was an idol when he was alive. Finally someone is talking about their life! Good at singing and dancing, and... Charming girls? You have got to be kidding me. What person puts charming girls as part of their special skill set?! Whatever... Despite that, his wish doesn't seem to have much to do with love... There's no mention of girlfriends or anything. The rest is afterlife this and afterlife that. I like to sing, although I'm terrible at dance, so maybe I can connect through singing?

Caspian. He's... Surprisingly arrogant. He describes himself as a genius- Nevermind. Scratch what I said about him being arrogant. He's just very aware of his capabilities. Chemistry, physics, psychology, biology, you name it, he's a master at it. Well, in science or math anyway. He says language or literature isn't his strong point. That's actually the exact opposite of how I am, so I hope we can work through it and help each other.

Next, Zedekian. Or Kian, since he seems to dislike his full name, though I can't figure out the life of me figure out why. I think it's cool. But whatever, Kian is also fine. Black hair, red eyes. What he hates the most... Rules, control, social etiquette... I guess that means he values freedom a lot. This could be difficult... I guess I should just try and give him as much freedom as possible while still making sure he engages in my classes about people.

Then we have Eirwen. Perfectly nice guy. Very friendly and outgoing. Also gave me a very beautiful gift. Just all around great. But the thing is... He's kind of... Overly nice? I don't really know how to describe it, but it's like he feels a need to overcompensate for no reason. We just met, what did you even do to wrong me? Yo

u could argue he's just being friendly, but... Who spends over 100 dollars on a gift for someone you just met?!