

Darkness 151

Chapter 151: The Why

Outside of the innermost area of Rathna, two men were secretly escorted by over a dozen of Grandmaster rank warriors and mages. Even some assassins were in the mix.

This group of vampires did not dare to be disrespectful to the two humans they were ordered to safely get out of the residential lands of the various noble factions and powerful fighters. Just being offered the position of the clan leader's disciple had made them acknowledge Kahn as someone they should treat with respect.

After passing through various underground tunnels and a few magic vehicles, the duo successfully left the 500 kilometers radius of the inner circle of noble faction territories under 6 hours.

When the duo finally reached one of the districts from the middle areas of Rathna, called Njori district, both of them went into a luxurious restaurant and ordered overpriced and quality food. The main point wasn't the food but the environment they needed for a proper discussion.

"What do you think? Still not angry about it, right?" asked Kahn to Albestros, the grandmaster rank blacksmith.

"Look, kid.. I can't say that I'm not angry.. But I understand. You aimed for the best opportunity and possibly saved us years of time just by getting the backing of a powerful force and connections that would save us a lot of struggle. But what I don't understand is why would you take such a risk?

Those people could've just forced us to work for them or add some incorrigible terms that would not go in our favor at all. Besides, you know that the number of enemies we might make by having them back us up." said Albestros.

"We're already caught in the crossfires since the moment I save his life. Even though I would like to stay out of the radar and not get involved in any of the faction wars.. Doing a direct deal with his father far outweighs the risks. If trouble comes.. I'll have to face it head on." replied Kahn.

"But you can't deny that it would save us years of hard work and hassle that we would have to face if we started from the scratch and without any support from a powerful force. This is the capital.. Newcomers like us would be chewed out by the top sharks in the business world.

And just with the name of their clan backing us or by hanging their banner on the shop would be enough to deter the small-time rivals from creating any trouble for us. I only wanted to avoid going through those ordeals and establish ourselves in a matter of half a year." spoke Kahn as he tasted the delicious meat of an aquatic monster that was grilled perfectly.

"But we don't have enough capital to start a big enough enterprise that would turn out profitable. Even I have only 20 thousand gold coins on me at most." spoke the old man as he let out a defeated sigh.

"You don't have to worry about that.. I got it covered." smirked Kahn and took out over a dozen space rings from his pockets and gave them to the old man.

"How about 12 million gold coins.. That enough to start a big business?" he said coyly.

"Nonsense! How do you have so much money? Don't tell me you're also some chosen heir of some big faction.." asked Albestros in disbelief.

"Hey.. Did you forget what kind of people I killed when I was avenging your kids? Did you really think I would leave their belongings and wealth behind?" He explained.

A sudden realization struck the old blacksmith and he found it reasonable for Kahn to have this much money if he looted those clan heirs and even their leaders.

"But tell me one thing? Why did you decline that offer? You could've lived a life of no worries and probably even become one of them." spoke Albestros.

This was something he too found intriguing.

"Too many reasons. Just me saving Szayel and then uncovering his sister to be one of the conspirators who planned his death already put a target on me. For now, only a few know about my part in all of this. But if I stayed.. My life would be hell." he replied.

"How?"

"The clan itself is solely made of vampires.. I alone will strike as a thorn in their eyes. By being the clan leader's disciple, the attention and hatred I would garner will be very troublesome.

Plus, don't forget their entire clan itself runs on extremist beliefs. I would be targeted and possibly conspired against from time to time just because I'm a human.

Even the clan leader won't be able to appease his kin and have them accept me as their own. And my presence would also bring attention to the deeds of the daughter and her fellow traitors in the clan. Something that I can't afford to get mixed into.

No matter what, I would not have a peaceful life." explained the young swordsman.

Although what Kahn said was indeed true.. These were only half of the reasons in actuality.

One of the main reasons was that he'd always be under watchful eyes. And unlike the rest.. His rank and levels rose by eating cores of high rank monsters & mana ores. Something that would arise suspicion because generally, swordsmen didn't need those types of resources. Although they too used monster cores to raise their levels.. Their skills and strength came from the actual training of their battle arts.

Even someone studying magic would not be able to absorb so many cores and rise in levels that quickly. That would make him an oddity and he would soon be found out as one of the Heroes sent by the Gods. Something he couldn't afford to get revealed.

Plus his training by the 4th stage saint rank swordsman would not help him in acquiring other abilities or improve his mastery in other weapons. Kahn knew that he had to raise his levels in other weapons as well. He couldn't solely rely on swordsmanship alone.

So far, only his sword, daggers and battleaxe Weapon Mastery were at Grandmaster rank. The rest were still below it. So soon, he wanted to raise his rank for all the other weapons as well.

By becoming the disciple of the vampire lord or getting mixed in the Vandereich clan.. Kahn would knowingly halt his progress and have no freedom whatsoever.

So becoming self-dependent and creating his own sources of income and resources was the most effective and acceptable approach for him.

After they both finished their meals.. The duo left the restaurant.

"So where are we going next?" asked Kahn.

To his question, Albestros replied.

"To visit my old friend."

Chapter 152: The Old Friend

Kithira District.. One of the most well-known districts of the capital, Rathna. Out of the 87 districts, this was one of the exclusively famous areas of the capital because this entire district played a vital role in the commerce related to medicinal herbs, ingredients required for potion crafting, alchemy and various pharmaceutical sectors.

Although it wasn't the main hub, the market spread around this district was already four times bigger than what Flavot city could offer.

Two men, one young while the other one old, treaded from the crowded streets that were bustling with nearly 10 thousand people buying, selling and exchanging money and resources for whatever they wanted at different shops and vendors.

"Excuse me, do you know where the headquarters of Darvin Alchemy Enterprise is?" asked Albestros to a passing Mithrans.

"Sorry, never heard of it. You can ask the nearby shopkeepers. They should know better." replied the mithrans telepathically.

To Kahn, it felt odd talking with someone other than himself or his subordinates telepathically. And that too when the person next to him didn't even have eyes, ears or a mouth. The pale white skin also made it look like a monster a ghostly creature.

There was always a time for a first.

[I should hunt for their kind and absorb their abilities.. Maybe I could upgrade Hive Mind and Hunter's Intent to the next level.] thought Kahn.

Luckily, the Mithran couldn't hear his thoughts or Kahn would be charged with attempted murder.

The old man went to a nearby shop and talked with the owner. But when he returned.. His expression turned grim.

"What happened?" asked Kahn.

"The Darvin Alchemy Enterprise no longer exists. They say it was shut down a couple of years ago." explained Albestros.

"Then what do we do? Do you know where he lives?" asked Kahn.

Technically, they didn't need to rely on anyone. But what Kahn intended to do was make a good connection with this friend of the old man.

Because he learned from Albestros that this friend of his was actually a Grandmaster Alchemist.

And naturally, a Grandmaster Alchemist would have a big reputation and connections in every place. Befriending such a person would only help him in the long term if he ever decided to deal in the pharmaceutical business after setting up their Blacksmithing Enterprise first.

Because at the end of the day.. Those who make weapons to hurt you.. And then also make the medicine to cure you earn the most. It's a neverending loop and a good business strategy for the type of world Vantrea was.

And to someone like Kahn.. It was like a goose that would lay the golden eggs for him.

"I do. I don't know if he still lives there but we should at least check it out." spoke Albestros and both the men went to the nearest flying ship hub.

Although the fares were 8 times of what they'd have to pay for traveling via a magic train, the flight was just as comfortable and saved them hours of traveling time.

After they finally reached a different district named Rukon, the duo finally visited a high-class society residential area. There was not a single small house in this area.. Only luxurious bungalows and villas. Kahn felt like they were indeed going to meet a bigshot given how the estates in this area looked like.

But when both the men finally reached the destination.. Their eyes were filled with shock.

They now stood in front of a mansion.. But compared to the other housings they had seen so far.. This place looked more like a ruin.

Weeds and trees growing out of shape, the road leading towards the main estate was hardly looked after, plenty of overgrown grass and hardly managed garden.

Kahn was instantly reminded of the old blacksmith's house was when he first met the man.

"Are you sure it is the right place?" asked Kahn to the old blacksmith.

"Yes.. But the last time I came here.. It looked more pristine and well managed. But now.. It looks like it is abandoned." replied Albestros.

"Let's see if someone still lives here." he said and both of them crossed the rusted gate and walked towards the main door.

Ting! Ting!

They knocked on the doorbell.

"Coming.." a hoarse and weary voice came from the inside.

A sound of loud footsteps was heard from the inside and the 4 meter tall wooden door was finally opened.

Kahn was a little surprised after looking at the figure that opened the door.

The one who stood in front of them was a humanoid figure with wooden arms and legs and looked like a completely withered... Tree.

"Huh.. Is that you, Alby?" asked the tree person.

"Long time no see, Prithvi. You look... wait, what happened to you?!" exclaimed the old man.

The current appearance of this Grandmaster Alchemist looked like a plant that hadn't been watered for weeks and was about to die.

This 4 meter tall figure was walking using a stick and had a hunched back.

"Please come inside first. We can talk after that." spoke the tree man.

The disheveled figure of this person was even worse than Albestros when they first met.

Unlike the former, this person's house at least had enough furniture for them to sit on.

After taking a seat.. Albestros asked Prithvi..

"What happened to you? The last time I saw you all those years ago.. You looked full of life. And now you look more like..." before he could finish, Prithvi spoke.

"Like dried timber."

"I didn't mean it like that.." spoke the old man.

"Who is this young man? He can't be Gerald. He was far younger if I remember correctly." asked Prithvi.

"I am groot."

"I mean, I am Kahn." he quickly replied again.

"This is someone who has helped me greatly. I wouldn't even be able to meet you after all those years if not for him."

"But first.. Tell me exactly what happened to you?"

"There's no point in hiding the truth from you, my old friend. The truth is..."

Prithvi's face turned somber and full of pain as he delivered his words.

"I'm going to die soon."

Chapter 153: The Treachery

A grim silence filled the hall as soon as Prithvi announced his current situation to them.

Albestros, who was his old-time friend, was rooted on the spot. Both he and Kahn hadn't imagined that the person they had come to meet was at death's door.

"What? How's that possible? Don't all Leshens live for at least two centuries? You're not even a hundred years old yet." asked the old blacksmith.

"To be honest.. I too was surprised when I found out 3 years ago. But the reason for my dwindling health is an incurable disease. And the cause is also something ironic." spoke Prithvi.

"What do you mean?"

"You know how I used to study & experiment with various alchemy potions, poisons and medicines back in the day, right?"

"Yes. We used to warn you a lot to stop trying to make new types of medicines & potions because of the harmful manufacturing procedures." replied Albestros.

"Well.. Recently I found that due to various of my research that helped me become a Grandmaster Alchemist also affected my body adversely over the decades. And their toxicity has reduced my life force by hundred folds. Now I am barely able to walk on my feet. The blood in my body keeps destroying itself after some months and recently.. My body also stopped creating new blood." revealed Prithvi.

"I... I'm sorry to hear that. And I'm sorry I couldn't be there for you." spoke Albestros in a saddened tone.

"But.. Where are your children? And why are you left alone like this? Why isn't anyone here to look after you?" He asked next.

To his query, the leshen only gave a light smile and explained.

"After the diagnosis of my disease, I had a breakdown. And I could no longer work knowing that I was about to die. It affected my reputation and my company. I used all the resources and money I made over the decades to look for a cure, hire Saint Rank Healers and even used every connection I had to get rare materials to concoct a cure myself."

The next second, his expression turned full of grief..

"But when it became clear that I would not live for more than two more years.. The first one to give up on me was my own family.

Both of my sons said that they lost too much money on herbs and resources that I ordered, and there was no point in looking for any other way. That I should accept my fate and make peace with it.

They even conspired to remove me from the very company I created with my sweat and blood.. All the board members felt like the company itself was a sinking ship and wanted to sell it off. But because of my opposition.. In the end, I was voted against by the majority.

I worked to the bone to give my family a good life and a stable future. Yet...

Everything I earned was snatched away right in front of my eyes by those same people. And from the past one year.. I have been living by myself.

This house and the old building of my company is all I have left to my name."

Heavy tears dropped from his eyes as he expressed his suffering.

Both Kahn & Albestros felt sad for the old leshen.

Albestros was someone who saw his world crumble to dust in a single week when his children were brutally murdered years ago.

And Kahn was someone who was shunned by his own family in his previous life.

Although their circumstances weren't identical to the old leshen, it had a form of relevance to both of them.

"Those selfish bastards.. To condemn their own father to a fate of suffering and death.." spoke Albestros as his fist clenched tightly.

Suddenly, Kahn spoke.

"How long do you have if I may ask, sir?"

Prithvi replied with a somber voice..

"At this rate.. I barely have a week left. I don't think I'll survive more than that."

The next second, Albestros glanced at Kahn and softly spoke.

"Kid.."

Kahn gave him a nod as a form of understanding what the old man wanted to say.

"If you don't mind sir Prithvi.. We would like to stay with you till that time comes." replied Kahn before the old man could make a suggestion. Both of them understood the gravity of the situation.

The Grandmaster Alchemist was already on his last straw. And to leave someone like him who had suffered too much betrayal, backstabbing and treachery by his own people and family.. They were not that type of heartless people.

So both of them made a decision on the spot to at least have leshen pass peacefully. And not like someone who died alone in a dilapidated house while having no one by their side during their last moments.

"Th.. Thank you. I don't know how to repay you." more tears fell off Prithvi's eyes as if a dam was finally broken.

Albestros grabbed his hand and the shoulder.

All three of them were men. They knew that grown men don't usually cry unless it's something they had been suffering from for far too long.

To Kahn, this moment was no different than the night when he cried for several hours on that roof before he committed suicide.

Although he came here hoping to make beneficial connections and gain the support of someone influential.. After hearing the tragic story of the pitiful leshen, he felt like the old Alchemist at least deserved a peaceful passing.

Because there was so much a single person could endure before it breaks them completely. He had lived through it once so a sense of obligation formed in his mind.

As the night came, a conversation between long-time friends arose between Prithvi and Albestros.

And eventually.. The topic shifted to his children.

Prithvi, who was already waiting for his inevitable death, felt like he had wronged Albestros by not looking for him or trying to help his children get justice from all these years.

Albestros explained the whole ordeal and how the noble clans had smothered the incident and put him and everyone related to him under surveillance.

Kahn willingly revealed his identity as Azrael and told him how they avenged Gerald and Synthia.

That night.. Three grown men had long conversation from heart to heart.

Each of them having suffered by the hand they've been dealt by Fate.

Chapter 154: A Second Chance

Six days passed by in a blink of an eye.

Kahn and Albestros had made this mansion of the Leshen as their temporary residence after the day of their visit.

Both of them acted as his caretakers in a sense. Kahn hired professionals to clear out the mansion of all the grime and dirt that accumulated over the years.

And the garden that was full with longgrass and unkempt bushes was finally taken care of.

So far, the ruined estate was half renovated. But it was still in an acceptable state for normal living standards.

Kahn did it because this was the only place the dying alchemist had left. So he wanted it to at least be presentable before the leshen passed away.

Inside the master bedroom, Prithvi was in the bed, his countenance had turned like a defeated person. His body looked even more dried up and even his arms and legs had small cracks all over them. Beside him, Albestros was sitting on a chair.

In the past few days, his body had stopped responding to his mind and he could no longer even get out of the bed. Even breathing had become a chore for him and his appearance looked similar to a dried husk.

"Tell me, old friend.. What do you wish to do after this? Do you plan to settle down in the capital?" asked Prithvi in a hoarse tone.

"Don't talk.. You need to rest properly." replied Albestros.

"Who.. Are.. We.. Kidding. I can see myself embracing the afterlife soon. Answer me.."

"Well, I and the kid did plan to do so. After my children were avenged.. I finally felt like it was time to move on and start anew. As a matter of fact, we came to meet you thinking you could help us a bit. But your situation was.. Unexpected." spoke the old man.

"You know, Alby.. The only regret I have at this point is that I never truly lived for myself. I always lived to meet someone else's expectations of me. Although I don't regret all those years I spent studying and performing alchemy.. I still haven't been able to make peace with my fate.." said Prithvi and a small tear droplet fell from his completely black eyes.

Tap! Tap! Tap!

Kahn entered the room, he was dressed in a white shirt and brown trousers.

"Sir Prithvi.. I have informed your family a couple of days ago about your current health. But.." before he could complete his words, the grandmaster alchemist spoke.

"But none of them came. I see.. So they would not even come for my passing rite.." spoke Prithvi with a heavy heart.

"I will leave you two alone." said Kahn and left the room.

"Alby.. There's something I want you to do for me." spoke Prithvi and discussed about an important matter.

The next day at the time of evening..

Prithvi passed away.

Despite informing about his current state to several people he knew in past.. There were only Kahn, Albestros & the Druids who carried the funeral procedure present at this moment.

As the sunset happened and only the two men who performed the passage rite instead of someone from Prithvi's next of kin stood at the corner of the garden, where they buried the pitiful old Leshen, Albestros spoke with a heavy heart..

"You know.. I never truly had many people whom I could call a friend in 70 years of my life. And it was the same for him. But the bond between us was like brothers.

He and I started as apprentices at the same time in the capital in shops next to each other. And since we both were full of passion.. We would talk over various things about our respective professions.

I didn't understand anything he was saying & neither did he about what I said. But he was the kind to value friendship and ethics.

He was a very quick learner and his mind was always looking for new information and possibilities like a researcher. There was even a time when he almost burned his house trying to make a new kind of potion.

I'm sure if he knew about what happened to me, he would've done everything in his power to help me.

He.. He deserved better." spoke the old man with a heavy heart and eyes full of tears as he stood in front of his old friend's grave.

"First it was Jessica.. And now him. Maybe I am a curse; everyone I know & have any relationship to ends up dying." he said.

Kahn put a hand on the old man's shoulder.

"It's not your fault. Life hasn't been kind to many of us. Everyone suffers in their own ways." spoke Kahn, trying to console the old man.

"He died with nothing but regret. He wanted to live more.. He wanted to finally live for himself at least once." said Albestros.

The next second, he took out a set of deeds from his space ring.

"What are those?" asked Kahn with a curious expression.

"The ownership deed of this mansion & the old building of his company. The only two things he owned till the last days of his life. I refused but he passed on their ownership to me yesterday." explained Albestros.

"Wait.. Doesn't it look like we took advantage of sir Prithvi and goaded into him giving you this deed as his last will? Wouldn't his family come for the mansion & that building?" asked Kahn.

This was indeed a reasonable question as many people did take advantage of dying people and used the fake care & love they gave them in their last moments to get properties and something in the final will.

"Let those bastards come! I'm going to remind them of what they did and why their father passed it to me." spoke the old man in an angered tone.

Kahn sighed but looked at the grave once more. He too felt very sad for the old alchemist.

Because dying alone and with regrets was the worst kind of death in his opinion as he too once suffered through the same fate.

At this moment, Kahn touched the grave with his hand and his eyes were filled with a form of resolution.

After the midnight finally came, the bright moonlight and chilling breeze gave the night a serene and tranquil feeling.

At this moment, in front of the grave of the deceased Prithvi, stood 3 figures clad in black.

On the other end, inside the mansion.. A mage suddenly appeared out of the shadows in Albestros's bedroom and cast a Silence Barrier.

In the garden, the 3 figures started digging out the grave of the deceased leshen.

A fourth figure suddenly appeared behind them.

"Do it carefully. His body shouldn't be damaged in any way." spoke the fourth person.

It was none other than Kahn who was standing behind them with both his arms folded behind the back.

The 3 figures digging the grave and the mage inside Albestros's room were the new members of Legion. The ones he created from the battlefield where he saved Szayel.

When the body was carefully dug out of the ground, Kahn noticed the pained and regretful expression on Prithvi's face. Even in his last moments, the grandmaster alchemist died without peace.

"I know what I'm doing is called desecrating the dead.. But I want to give you another chance and a way to live." spoke Kahn and placed his hand on Prithvi's body.

"Absorb." commanded Kahn.

After 30 minutes, he was done absorbing the body of the deceased leshen. But this wasn't the end..

"Armin.." spoke Kahn and suddenly, the Priest subordinate who was resurrected over a week ago jumped out of his shadow.

He looked at this subordinate who was made from the bodies of Healers & Druids. Just like everyone from the Six Generals, he too was a Variant but Kahn never had a proper body to upgrade him.

"System, impart Metamorphosis bloodline to him. And merge him with Prithvi." ordered Kahn.

[Command accepted. Synthesis procedure initiated.]

After one full hour, the synthesis procedure was finally done and Armin, who had already reached 100% Loyalty took a human form.

Prithvi was a Level 120 Peak Grandmaster Rank individual. So Armin straight up met the conditions and rose to High Lord rank since Prithvi's core was also used in this procedure.

A brown-haired young man, who had green aura and archaic tattoos over his forehead & forearms came to be.

Kahn passed him a set of white regal clothes made for Healer class that he found in one of the space rings he looted recently.

At this moment, Armin who was always the silent kind, spoke to his master.

"Master.. There is a remnant will of this person. It wants to merge with my consciousness. It wants to.. Keep living." he revealed.

"I see. Accept it. It won't make you a different person or control your mind. But it will give you some personality traits of the owner of that will." replied Kahn.

He already had seen the effects of being affected by someone's remnant will like he had with the deceased mother Somir.

"Yes, master" spoke Armin and the next second.. A green halo formed around his head and his entire body released a burst of aura.

The next moment, however.. The system gave Kahn a notification in his head.

[Congratulations to the host for upgrading the subordinate named Armin to a new profession.

The subordinate has unlocked a Legendary rank class...

Chapter 155: The Pathfinder

Kahn looked at Armin in disbelief after hearing the message from the system. His entire body was rooted on the spot.

His shocked & stunned countenance was clearly visible to all his subordinates.

"System, show me Armin's real stats & skills." ordered Kahn.

[Following are the Statistics, abilities & skills for the subordinate named Armin :

Name : Armin

Species : Heshen (Variant Hermit)

Job : The Pathfinder (Legendary Class)

Rank : High Lord

Level : 87

Strength : 1175

Agility : 690

Dexterity : 2503

Defense : 1276

Mana : 3280

Following are the Physical abilities & skills :

Flora & Fauna (A Rank) (Passive) :

Allows the subordinate to make an innate telepathic connection with Plant & Animal lifeforms. The subordinate can command such lifeforms through his will.

Following are the Magical abilities & skills :

Atonement (S Rank) (Active) :

The subordinate can remove 3 status ailments & debuffs at once from allies present in 500 meter radius. The range of the ability will risk with an increase in levels and rank.

Restoration (SS Rank) (Active) :

Allows the subordinate to heal allies to their previous physical state one minute ago.

Note : This skill does not work on deceased allies.

Guardian Spectre (S Rank) (Active) :

The subordinate can grant 2 times physical attack and defense buff to all the allies in a 500 meter radius using mana threads.

Chain Heal (S Rank) (Active) :

The subordinate can heal up to 18 allies at once in 300 meter radius.

Elixir of Life (SSS Rank) (Active) :

Allows the subordinates to instantly regenerate 80% of a single ally's health and physical wounds.

Brewing (S Rank) (Passive) :

The subordinate has received an innate sense of understanding the effects of herbs and medicines.

This ability may help in fastening the Alchemy procedure.

Infusion (S Rank) (Passive) :

Allows the subordinate to mix different elements in Potions and Medicines, giving the special elemental attributes.

Cell Control (SS Rank) (Active) :

The subordinate can control the bodies of any plant life or monsters.

Resurrection (SAINT RANK) (Active) :

Allows the subordinates to bring back any ally or individual after the short time of their death.

Note : The Host is an exclusion to this ability as all the subordinates will die after the host has died.

The Resurrection procedure will require 10,000 A Rank mana cores or ores to successfully resurrect an ally in their peak state.

Soul Reformation (LEGENDARY RANK) (Active) :

The subordinate can heal the damage done to anyone's soul over time and even make it stronger by two times.] replied the system.

Kahn was shocked, stunned and flabbergasted. Based on the abilities alone, Armin had become a Legendary rank subordinate. Because some of his abilities had exceeded any Grandmaster rank healer, druid and even alchemist alchemists could gain.

And as per his information.. Elixir of Life, Resurrection & Soul Reformation were the type of abilities that even Saint Rank Healers didn't have.

If Kahn was right as per the books he read, then Resurrection was an ability only the Pope & Priestess of Churches & Religious cults had. So Armin was already comparable to them even though he wasn't even on their level yet.

And as his rank & levels rose, his abilities & skills would rise to a whole different level. On the same rank, those people couldn't even touch his shadow.

But the biggest & most unbelievable ability was the Soul Reformation.

God of Darkness had already made it clear that the more Divine Abilities one had, the more consumption of Soul Essence will be as you rose higher in Rank & Levels. And that's why Kahn only chose 3 Divine Abilities at max because more would adversely affect him later.

But with Armin's Legendary ability.. Maybe in the future, he could handle more? And there's also the effect of making your soul twice stronger & curing the damage done to it.

Although he might not be able to yield the most benefits of these abilities in his current state. But if he ever rose to the rank of a Demi-God, he'd be a Leviathan amongst other Heroes with Armin's help.

Of all his Subordinates.. Armin by far had the most OP abilities. And he would definitely play a pivotal role in Kahn's future.

"System, how did he suddenly unlock the Pathfinder Class?" asked Kahn out of curiosity.

[The Pathfinder class is one of the most ancient and rarest class, only found in those who study and belong to Healer, Druids and Alchemy classes. The subordinate name Armin had only met the two conditions previously but after the subordinate was merged with the individual named Prithvi Aranya, the subordinate gained all the prerequisite abilities and met the requirements to invoke this class.

The host is advised to upgrade the subordinate to at least Mythical Rank to see the complete and maximum effects of this Legendary Class.]

"That I will." spoke Kahn and nodded in approval.

All Kahn wanted to do was give Prithvi, the Grandmaster Alchemist another chance and a way to keep on living as the pitiful leshen died with nothing but regret and sadness.

His act of kindness towards a person who suffered the same fate as him, yielded an unexpected outcome.

Sometimes, being kind can also turn out to your benefit.

Although, Kahn tended to be a more cynical type of person in this new life.. His own sense of humanity & moral code yielded a reward that he would forever be grateful for.

At this moment, Armin spoke to Kahn.

"Master, the body you merged with me has too much toxicity. I will need some weeks to detox and purify it so I can function at the best of my capabilities."

"I see. Take your time. I will call upon you when there's a need for you." replied Kahn.

Armin merged in his shadow and the other subordinates filled the grave to the state it was before.

Kahn looked at the brightly shining moon which appeared pure and pristine. The sense of achieving something for the better out of kindness was a first for him.

Kahn felt a form of peace at this moment and spoke.

"Maybe it doesn't hurt being a good guy once in a while.."

Chapter 156: The Business Plan

Kahn woke up the next morning with calm and fresh mind. The first thought in his mind was about something they were going to do today. Because this day would mark a significant change in his life.

Since he could no longer do dungeon hunting or killing people to get strong and raise his levels, he had planned to open a new business along with Albestros.

This way, he would gain money and resources and won't have to resort to violence for some time. And it was also about time when he finally used his experience as an accountant from his previous life.

Kahn took a cold bath, got freshened up and went downstairs to the kitchen where Albestros was already preparing breakfast for both of them.

"Kid, you're awake." spoke the old man.

"Yeah.. I feel very refreshed and also excited." he replied.

"So what's going to be our plan? I only have the experience of running a small company. But the type of business we're trying to set up would require us to have thousands of workers, long-term consignments and rich consumers. Otherwise, we're no different than a vegetable vendor." spoke Albestros.

"You should leave that to me. Although I'm new to this as well, I already know the most important basics of starting a big and stable business." spoke Kahn.

"Enlighten me.."

"The first.. Assess the market before opening your doors. Understand the industry you wish to enter, as well as its major players and your future competitors.

If we can't offer something better and at a cheaper price, then we might as well leave this thought. Because our competition would be an established enterprise and we're basically trying to steal their food; right in their territory.

In the beginning, there will be many losses that we will have to go through. The organization itself won't be in harmony. And people we hire won't be loyal either. That's why many big businesses value their employees who can go for a long ride with them. Rest are there just for the money and easily expandable.

And naturally, we will have to create an environment suitable for the workers in a way that the company feels like a second home for them.

Once they're working as one unit, the efficiency & production will increase. For the first month itself, we should focus on covering the marginal cost rather than gaining profits.

Thus, the amount of starting capital needs to be decided before we even start. Because we will have to spend most of it on resources, supplies and distributors. Otherwise, we will never be able to expand quickly." he explained.

"I see. What's the second?" asked the blacksmith.

"The second is.. Know your audience. A defined and targeted market will help us gain a better and repeating customer base.

We need those people who would be our long-time consumers and completely rely on us for the service we're offering. The one time customers can only offer a chummy change even if they bring more people. There's a limit on how much a small number of customers can do. So we will need to aim for the big sharks first, the prawns can be prioritized upon later.

And this is where the Vandereich clan comes in." he elaborated.

"You mean their connections, right?" asked the old man.

"Yes. But no."

"The best customer is always the big organizations until we become a household name.

After our deal, the Vandereich clan would be doing direct business with us as far as weapons & armors are concerned. Unlike the other Grandmaster Blacksmiths who also work independently.. We need this clan's support even if we get branded as part of their faction.

Because those who critique you don't pay your bills. The business should be structured to meet the demands, expectations and emotions of the people who come to buy things from you.

Once the word spreads, not just their single clan; but other clans from their faction would also be more inclined to do business with us.

The direct jump we will be making in the first few months alone would save us years of struggle in gaining the rich customer base that we normally wouldn't get in the beginning phases.

And since the clan is also getting a cut, they would also be spreading the word about our company from the shadows."

"Wait, doesn't that mean we're completely relying on them for our business to flourish?" asked Albestros.

"In a way, yes. But in the long term, they won't have a true hold on us because of various reasons.

One reason being that they're not the investors and don't own any shares in our company in any way. The second would be that we're not dependent on them for the long term.

Of course, they might try to affect our business and even ward off our customers with their connections if the relationship between us sours.. But that will only happen if we're also relying on them for the manpower, security and management.

And that's why we will have to be independent of them as soon as we can. And I have some plans for that as well.

All we have to do is not make deals with people from their opponent's side and we will have their backing on the surface. That should be more than enough to avoid unnecessary trouble from the small fries.

Only those with big backing would dare to mess around with us." Kahn explained his foresight.

"I see. I presume there's a third?.." asked the blacksmith.

"Definitely. The third is.. Understand when, how and to whom you pay taxes and fees.

The bigger the company and more jobs we create.. the government will give us a subsidy or tax exemption accordingly. It can also increase our profits on an annual basis and the business will easily cover our initial losses from the beginning months.

Since both of us don't have any credibility to our name and the money I have came from unknown sources, no established bank would give us a loan. So if the business bombs.. It will be us taking a complete loss, nobody else."

Kahn sighed and continued again..

"The fourth is.. decide on the story or emotions you're selling through marketing, advertising and word of mouth." he said.

"What? Isn't your work and craftsmanship makes the biggest difference?" asked the old man.

Because that's how Albestros had run his previous company years ago.

"Yes, it does.. But you're forgetting that we're not selling paintings or any art. We're selling weapons and armors.

The swiftly your weapon kills, the happier your customer is. And you can always make it look elegant and artistic anyway. That would even sell for a higher price." spoke Kahn as he ate the breakfast.

Albestros on the other hand looked at Kahn with angered eyes as if Kahn had greatly disrespected their craft.

"Now let me explain.. Even if your work is the best in the world, it will never sell for a reasonable price unless there's a story and brand value of the maker attached to it.

In our case.. You are our poster boy. And the story is that the work was done by a Grandmaster Blacksmith.

That fact alone will be enough to sell our product. And the more reputation and popularity you gain over time.. The more money we make." spoke Kahn and gave a slightly sinister smirk.

As if a greedy and heartless business tycoon was looking at a goldmine.

Even Albestros felt a shiver in his bones after looking at the young man next to him.

"I get it. What's next?" he asked.

Kahn's face turned serious the next moment. As the next topic played a very important part in their plans.

"Next.. Let's visit the company building."

Chapter 157: Starting Anew

South-West area of Rukon District, this part was just as bustling as with people, similar to the areas when Kahn & Albestros came from when they first came here.

But Kahn was surprised after realizing that compared to other areas, this side of the district didn't have any big smithy or alchemy enterprise.

The commerce here was done mostly on agriculture & clothing. For a moment, he even felt like they traveled in a different city by mistake.

After enquiring about the location of the site for nearly 2 hours and changing three different modes of transportation, the duo finally reached in front of the previous headquarters of the Darvin Alchemy Enterprise. The 4 kilometers long and two kilometer wide company headquarter was currently sealed with magical arrays & formations.

Although the majority of them weren't as effective as before & the protection barriers had visible cracks in them, Kahn could feel that Prithvi had paid quite a sum to have this area sealed & had a deathly entrapment formation protecting the building from invaders.

There were multiple rusted warning boards in all four sides of this vicinity. So unless someone knowingly wanted to die.. They wouldn't dare invade inside this private property.

The duo now stood in front of the old and rusted gate that was 20 meters wide.

Albestros took and the deed to the site and activated a seal placed on it in front of the gates.

The gates suddenly opened, their screeching noise already gave Kahn a hint on how he should be prepared just to renovate the building. As soon as the gate was fully opened and he saw what was inside.. Kahn felt a sudden pain in his chest.

"Given the sight.. I may have to spend a million just to make this place habitable." spoke Kahn.

The main company headquarters was a 3 stories building big enough to function as a manufacturing factory. Based on his assumption, it could easily house at least four thousand workers at once. And there were a lot of areas for storage & to even use as an open training ground for soldiers.

Just like the mansion, this area too was festered with weed and trees. And this was just the entrance, they hadn't even opened the main door of the building. Who knew what kind of plant life had marked it as their territory.

After spending two hours and inspecting the entire place, deciding what kind of renovations & rebuilding they'd require in order to start off their blacksmithing enterprise.

"This place isn't so bad. We can do well here as we're new. Don't you think?" asked Kahn.

"Yes. But I'm worried about the customer base we make here. Unlike the other areas, this part of the district doesn't have many weapon shops, not big enough to be enough threat to us.

But what I don't understand is why hasn't anyone created their own company here?" asked Albestros out of curiosity.

"It's called Market getting saturated. I think a majority of those people think that the main trading happens in a particular area and having a shop there is most profitable for them. And because of this assumption, majority of the shops have been opened in the same part of the district since the entire market itself functions economically through the commerce happening in that area." replied Kahn.

"Wait, doesn't that mean we are at a disadvantage here?"

"Not really. Here.. We don't have any big competitors to begin with. And we can peacefully start our company without much problem. Plus I think it's for the better." spoke Kahn and gave a slight grin.

"What do you mean?" asked the old blacksmith.

"Rather than opening a shop where most of the wolves are fighting in a turf war.. I say we create our own turf instead.

Even though it doesn't have the economical advantage in terms of customers and commerce influx, it can be the exclusive thing for the people living in this area.

Plus, we don't want to start with a bang.. But with a whistle, until we are big enough to play with the big boys." he explained.

"Makes sense. Although the majority of the building will be used for manufacturing goods, the front side can be used for setting the management team and conducting business." spoke Albestros.

"That's what I thought. It may not be the most idealistic location to start off a big business as per the consumer base we require.. But it's also not a bad place to begin." nodded Kahn.

"Once we set up all the required facilities, we can register and get a license for our business. All of it will be in your name." he said.

"Kid.. Are you sure? You're the real owner after all. I will just be the face of it. Although my part will be no different than doing half of the work like crafting weapons, having my name on the company.. It's still too much for you to not own it on your name." replied Albestros.

"Trust me, old man. I know what I'm doing. Besides, if I ever get into trouble that could drag down others with me, this business won't be targeted and your life won't be put in jeopardy. I'd rather count the profits from behind the desk than have my face on the banner.

I can also act as your main bodyguard or the right-hand man for the public eyes and manage everything from the shadows. This way, no one would suspect me of being the real owner." explained Kahn.

"Why? Do you trust me that much?" asked Albestros.

"Oh.. Are you planning to betray me or something?" asked Kahn mischievously.

Although he appeared too trustworthy to the Grandmaster Blacksmith.. Kahn had already learned his lesson of not trusting anyone blindly after his fight with Arkham and Solomon. So he was going to play the act of a partner in crime on the surface while having means to keep an eye on the old man.

"Anyways. Are you finally ready.." asked Kahn as he spoke again in an exhilarated tone.

Chapter 158: The Setup

Two weeks later, the company building was finally cleared of its trash, webs, dilapidated parts and anything that had cracks on it.

Kahn hired a reputed renovation & interior designing company. They were given a deadline of 4 weeks until the opening.

Meanwhile, Kahn was in touch with Szayel. He knew how hard it was for someone without powerful connections to get a business license and permit to start a manufacturing company.

Although he had all the documentation and necessary proof required to prove it was a legit business, Kahn knew that he could also get the permit by bribing the people in charge with a hefty sum. But why waste extra cash when you can ask your powerful backer for help?

And as he expected, the Vandereich clan had some of their people working in this sector of government too. All it took was a word from Szayel and in just two weeks, Kahn had the permit and all the documented certificates to officially open their business.

Meanwhile, they had used various worker hiring companies who acted as a the medium to help you hire skilled laborers based on the type of work experience and skillsets you need. The one in charge to inspect and personally conducting these interviews was Albestros himself.

Kahn did not dare to meddle in the interviews because some things should be left to the real experts.

His part was to conduct interviews and approve candidates they'd need for logistics and management. And so far, things had been going in their favor. In the span of two weeks alone, they had successfully hired 800 workers.

Five hundred of them were normal laborers they'd require for transportation of goods, processing of the products and aid the main apprentices and normal blacksmiths in forging procedure. Since the tools related to forging weapons and armors were advanced from the standard methods Kahn had read in novels and even watched the videos on the internet, he was not worried about the inefficiency of production.

Out of the remaining workers, hundred and thirty were the forgers varying from normal to intermediate rank. Albestros had personally handpicked them after scouring from over 2 thousand candidates.

Our of the rest, Kahn chose nearly hundred peoifor security and the remaining 70 were trained & experienced people for logistics, management and maintenance.

All of their employees various from different species and races so he wasn't worried about a certain group dominating the work environment later.

Currently, Kahn was the head of Logistics and Security in the name.

Although they could've easily hired more than two thousand employees.. The business hadn't even started and he didn't want to rely on the Vandereich clan for the manpower.

It would be no different than planting someone's spies in your own ranks.

The best thing Kahn found during the interviews was that the contract system was not only documented but also had magic playing a big part in it. If you sign a contract for working for someone for a certain amount of time and agree on the terms of payment.. The employer could also choose a Blood-Bind contract.

This contract cost him over 200 Gold coins for each of the employees and normally, it would be seen as foolish for a starting business to go through this type of agreement. But Kahn was more interested in the benefits that came with this type of contract.

The employee can not divulge any form of inside information related to their work to anyone outside or someone from the competition. Whatever type of work they do should not leave the company. No form of treason to the employer was allowed after signing this contract. If the employee broke any of the terms mentioned in the contract, they would lose a working body part as punishment through the magic seal that was placed upon their body.

To Kahn, who had already learned to be cautious and prepare for backstabbing at any moment, this was like a godsend help conditioned to meet his requirements.

Because he'd rather have troublemaker employees who'd be loyal to him than having abiding and sweet-talking snakes.

The former could be disciplined but the latter was always a threat.

When he revealed the contract during the final stages of recruitment, out of the three hundred candidates he chose, only seventy remained as soon as they heard that it was a Blood-Bind contract. That had segregated the people that actually needed the job and threw out all the possible spies from their competition who would certainly keep an eye on their rising rival.

The remaining matter was setting the working environment, equipment and machinery they required for production, processing and storage.

That single aspect took the vast majority of his capital. And Kahn almost felt like starting the business at this scale was a mistake.

But from his previous life's experience, he knew the most fundamental rule of gaining wealth.

TO MAKE MONEY, YOU HAVE TO SPEND MONEY.

If he backs out now, everything will go in vain.

As for the material and resources suppliers and the distributors who would sell their product to small-time shops at the manufacturing cost, he again asked the help from the vampire clan heir as they could provide him a deal using their name. And as a result, the people Kahn made deals with offered him discounts one wouldn't get without creating strong connections in high places.

Kahn had basically jumped ropes and all the struggles one would normally face before opening a business of this scale.

His decision to save Szayel that day, risking getting mixed in their faction wars and even face the clan leader of the vampires in a duel had turned out extremely fruitful and saved him a lot of time and trouble.

And all of this was just the beginning phase.

Later, he would have to hire more than two thousand employees, hire more professionals and security, purchase materials in bigger bulks along with paying for taxes, advertisements and various means to make their enterprise famous through word of mouth.

So far, out of the 21 million gold coins he had by robbing the Dead such as Dormammu, Arkham, Solomon, the people who attacked Szayel.. Kahn had to spend more than 15 million just for setting up the groundwork.

All of this was nothing but foundational work for a successful business. He knew that the main struggle would start after they officially opened.

But he had enough confidence in himself and he was no longer afraid of taking big risks like his previous life.

And as for the company name.. Both Kahn and Albestros agreed upon a decent and subtle name..

Chapter 159: The Visitors

Another week had passed by as the preparation for launching their smithing enterprise, BLOODBORNE came close.

The reasoning Kahn gave Albestros when suggesting this name was that the name implied creating something precious with your hard work and sweat & blood.

It signifies Rebirth and Perseverance.

But in reality.. It was just because he loved the Bloodborne video game as he was once Dark Souls player during his gaming days of the youth.

But since he couldn't just name the shop as Dark Souls or Sekiro : Shadows Die Twice.. Which would give a grim feeling to the business itself, he had to choose Bloodborne. And once he spread fake stories about what the name signifies, people would be more curious about the shop.

And those who needed weapons & armor because of their professions will naturally love the ring to the name of the company. Just the word 'Blood' would subconsciously make them feel attached to the brand. Because those who handled weapons had a kinship to blood and battle in a way. And that was Kahn's targeted audience.

And once the news spread, Kahn would also tangle Albestros who is a Peak Grandmaster Rank Blacksmith and his story about how this was his Redemption. The number of customers they'd get in the future will be in the thousands.

In the early stages, he was relentlessly working and creating connections with people and even looking for the best ways to make advertisements in the district. He had to plan it all and hence, Kahn was currently extremely busy.

Every new place or someone related to their deals had to be personally visited by him on behalf of the Grandmaster Blacksmith who was supposedly busy with making high-end weapons and armors. His attire was no different than that of a young heir of some noble clan. That way, he made a good impression on the people he met.

Kahn was careful not to reveal his identity as the true owner to anyone.

On the opposite end of Rukon district, Albestros had returned to their mansion after the exhausting work of training noobs on how to do their job properly.

In the past two weeks, they had the mansion completely renovated and it had become their home in every way. New plants and elegant-looking trees were planted. A tombstone was added on Prithvi's supposed grave and over a dozen servants were hired to cook, clean, manage gardens and security.

Since Kahn's subordinates didn't actually look like normal people, he had to go for real folks to look after the mansion.

Albestros had freshened up and was now enjoying his aromatic black tea brought by one of their new maids.

"Heidi, this tea is very refreshing. Good job." spoke the old man.

"Thank you, sir. Let me know if you need anything else." said the Elven maid with brown hair & green eyes as she nodded and left the old man alone.

The quiet & peaceful surroundings of the area they lived in, made the old man remember about the time when he was at the peak of his popularity back in the day.

He sipped the fragrant tea and reveled in the taste. But just then, he heard of a commotion outside of the mansion. The shouting and quarreling was so loud that it could be heard even inside his room.

Boom!!

A loud boom resounded at the entrance of the mansion. The two master rank guards that Kahn hired were flung 20 meters in the air as the iron gate itself was broken in two.

Albestros who heard the commotion quickly ran out of the mansion and saw the two guards lying on the ground.

"Simon, Howie.. What happened?" asked Albestros to the guards.

Simon, one of the guards who was a blue wolfkin pointed at the gate that was still covered under a cloud of dust as if an explosion had happened.

"Well well.. Aren't you having a merry life after duping a dying person." a sharp and mocking voice came as the dust settled and revealed three tall figures.

As the voice fell on his ears, Albestros instantly recognized the voice and his face turned enraged.

Two of these figures were 4 meter tall leshens with green humanoid bodies and clothes that revealed some of the tree leaves coming out of them. One of them was fat and bulky in appearance while the other was slim and nimble based on looks.

"Rimuru and Velodora, what the hell do you think you're doing here?" asked Albestros after recognizing the Visitors.

They were none other than Rimuru & Velodora, the two sons of Prithvi, the Grandmaster Alchemist.

The selfish and heartless sons who left the ill leshen at the hands of fate and even backstabbed their own father because of greed. They didn't even bother coming to his funeral to carry the rite of passage.

"We're here to take what is rightfully ours, uncle Albestros." spoke Velodora, the fat son.

"Rightfully yours you say.. I'm sure even the clothes you're wearing came because of the money you got by backstabbing your father. To think that you two have the gall to come here and claim his last remaining memory. Don't you know what this place meant to him?" spoke Albestros in an angered tone. He then pointed towards the tombstone placed on the far end of the garden.

"That's where your father is buried. Rather than going there to first see his tomb, you're here to cause a scene and ask for the mansion. Can the two of you be any more shameless?!" shouted the old man.

"You think you can fool us, old man?! We're sure you scammed him into giving the house and the company building. We also heard how you're opening your shop there. You think we're idiots to not see through your lies?" argued back Rimuru, the slim one from the two sons.

Albestros quickly took out the deed to the mansion and the building from his space ring and showed them from a distance.

"Look at it, you scoundrels. It's a Blood-Bind deed. It doesn't work if someone is forced into passing their belongings to someone. Besides, I didn't even want this place. It was your father who willingly gave it to me.

And he had me promise him that I will look after this mansion.. His last remnant. So no way in seven hells I'm going to give it to you and break the promise I made to my old friend." declared Albestros.

His eyes were full of anger and his fist was clenched tight. He wanted nothing but to beat the shit out of these two unfilial sons who left their father for dead.

"Hah.. We knew you would say something like that. And that's why we have brought sir Ranga with us!" spoke Rimuru in a condescending tone.

Then, the 3rd figure who was standing behind them walked in front. It was a 5 meter tall and muscular humanoid figure whose entire body was covered in white bone-like exoskeleton armor. Only the portion from his waist was covered in clothes and the rest of the body was filled with spiky bones.

This warrior who had a long boney scythe in his hand was a Botir. One of the new species Kahn had seen in Rathna when they were touring through the capital..

"Listen, old human. I don't care what problem is there between you and them. But I have been paid already so I'll give you one final chance." spoke the Botir in a ghastly tone that was enough to give children nightmares.

"Pass on the ownership to my employers and I'll let you go. Refuse and I'll cut you down limb from limb. And while doing so.. I'm gonna enjoy it!" threatened the Botir with a skull-like face.

"Dream on!" spoke Albestros with a resolute face.

BOOM!!

The very next second, a loud burst of aura was released from the Botir and filled the entire area of this entrance and the garden. And a yellow aura full of bloodlust was released on the old man. Even the master rank guards caved in under this horrifying pressure.

This was the aura of a Peak Grandmaster Rank warrior!

Albestros was forced to drop on his knees and he barely managed to lift his head under this aura of the botir. His countenance was full of pain but the old man was trying to resist this pressure with all of his strength.

Even though he himself was a Grandmaster Rank Blacksmith.. His strength was only enough for his profession and his physical build wasn't enough to fight someone. And neither was he wasn't trained to fight.

"So you've chosen death." declared the Botir and his heavy footsteps filled the surrounding.

There was a 20 meter distance between them, but the aura this Botir warrior displayed was more than enough to suppress all three individuals that stood in front of him.

He brandished his scythe as a shrill noise came out of it. Ready to reap the life of the old man.

But before he could even reach halfway..

Stab!

An epic rank dagger was thrown in front of him at the ground.

Boom!!

The very next second, a loud and enormous burst of black and green aura came from behind Albestros and completely threw off the aura pressure of the botir warrior.

A slim figure clad in completely black hunting gear suddenly appeared from behind Albestros. This slim human picked up the kneeling grandmaster blacksmith.

Next, he looked at the botir warrior and the two leshens that came here to cause trouble. They even went as far as drawing their weapon on the old man who was trying to keep a promise he made to a deceased friend.

This young and handsome man who had the left side of his face covered in a black mask stood in between the Botir & Albestros.

The next second, he stared at the 3 individuals that came here with an expression as if he was looking at three dead bodies.

His grim and ghastly voice along with his dark green eyes were full of bloodlust as he spoke.

"Let me see if you have the ability to do so."

This person was none other than Kahn's left hand man..

RONIN!

Chapter 160: The Warrior & The Assassin

Ronin, who had been hiding in Albestros's shadow all this time finally showed up as soon as the old man's life was a stake.

Kahn who always thought of a backup plan when it came to doing something or keeping an eye on someone, had ordered Ronin to safeguard the old man by hiding in shadow in case he wasn't around.

Albestros had a very important part to play in their business enterprise and in a way, he was the surface owner. It was his name and skills they'd need to use in order to run their shop. So no way Kahn wouldn't take measures to safeguard the old grandmaster blacksmith.

He didn't trust any of the external help and they were all part of the security on the name only. The real security was Ronin who also had the ability to perfectly merge inside a shadow.

And ever since Kahn unlocked the Impartation Skill after Omega & Six Generals were revived, Ronin had received all Kahn's Assassin skills including the merged abilities he created.

"Go inside, I'll handle this." spoke Ronin in his sharp and soul-shuddering grim voice that contradicted his gentle and calm-looking appearance.

Albestros nodded and left with the two guards to hide inside the mansion. He knew about the strength of this servant of Kahn who worked for him since they met in Flavot city. So he understood the situation.

"And who allowed you to leave?" suddenly, the Botir warrior spoke in a ghastly tone.

His aura rose again as he looked at Ronin with contempt.

"I am a warrior and you're an assassin. Without the element of surprise, you've already lost all the advantage you had. Do you really think you can fight against me on even terms?" declared Arsen.

As soon as Albestros and the two guards ran towards the mansion entrance, Ronin didn't waste any time on a chitchat and quickly threw four fear toxin bombs towards the trio.

And in just 3 seconds, the surrounding area was completely filled with a dense white fog. The countenance of the warrior became serious because normally, smoke bombs didn't spread around this quickly.

Ronin who quickly disappeared inside the fog that was surrounding Arsen, Mongel & Tivos completely hid his aura and started releasing the fear toxin to the best of his ability.

"Your petty tricks don't work on me you damn assassin!" shouted the botir and another burst of his aura was released to throw off the fog around them.

But the next moment, the peak grandmaster warrior was surprised as the fog hadn't waned in the slightest.

Swoosh!

A black shadow suddenly passed from behind Arsen and even his keen senses had failed to detect Ronin.

[How.. How did I not sense him?] he asked himself and quickly took a defensive stand.

"Sir Arsen, please protect us.." spoke Mongel who was cowering in fear at this point. They hadn't expected another peak grandmaster protecting the old man.

"Shut the fuck up! You're by yourself!" replied Arsen.

He didn't care about his employer's life at this point. He had been paid already and had to kill this opponent if he wanted to get out of here.. alive.

But before he could detect Ronin again, a black extension with a spear-like tip suddenly came from his left and stabbed in the small gaps of the exoskeleton armor on his right leg.

The tendons on his right foot were stabbed and cut out by the extension and they disappeared into the fog in the next moment.

"Ar!" grunted the Arsen. The biggest advantage he had over Ronin was that his body was completely covered in bone-like armor. Which was no less sturdy than metal alloy armor.

So Ronin didn't have many openings to attack the scythe user. Plus the scythe itself was a long-range weapon that could cut him in half if he made a wrong move.

Arsen started swinging his aura-infused attacks randomly, not even caring if they hit Mongel or Tivos by accident. Just that single attack alone made him take Ronin seriously because somehow, his senses were dulling.

Stab!

His left thigh was stabbed as he was moving randomly inside the fog. He charged in one direction to get outside of the fog only to find that the entire garden itself was covered in this mist. At this point, he couldn't even see or sense his employers.

To Mongel & Tivos who were not even master rank warriors, this whole grim and deathly surrounding had scared them to death.

After the fear toxin started showing its effect, the duo was horrified so much that their legs stopped moving.

"Ahhh!!" another shrill cry filled with pain resounded in the surrounding. But the next moment, both the brothers felt like something was thrown in front of them.

Tivos barely gathered the strength to move and see what it was. But as soon as he saw the thing that was thrown in front of them, his face turned ashen and he fell on the ground with fear in his eyes.

The thing next to them was an entire arm.. Arsen's arm.

"No..!!!" another agonizing scream filled the surroundings and horrified the brothers.

One by one, a few more body parts were thrown in front of them as the battle.. No, the butchering inside the fog continued.

After the fear toxin had completely affected Ranga, his senses were dulled and for Ronin, it was no different than hunting a chicken that was trapped in a cage.

From time to time, he used Subterfuge skills and Shadow Strike to attack the botir warrior from different openings and straight-up cut open his arm, then his leg with his extremely sharp and thin epic rank daggers.

He even used the Doppelganger skill to divert the attention of this warrior who was also on the same level as him.

Just with fear toxin alone, he had closed off the advantage this long-range attack class opponent had over him and with Grappling Extension skills, he attacked from various angles.

By using subterfuge skill, he messed the opponent's sense of direction and attacked his vital organs from the openings in the exoskeleton armor.

"No! Let me go! I promise I will never look for trouble with you again. I'll even kill those bastards if you want. Just let me go.." pleaded the mighty botir warrior who was just boasting about his strength 10 minutes ago.

He couldn't even run away at this point because Ronin cut out his legs and right arm.

Stab! Stab! Stab!

Three extensions stabbed deep inside his shoulder, torso and the remaining leg, completely rendering him unable to move.

The source of this attack walked in front of him with the extensions coming out of his back.

But before he could beg for mercy, another dagger stabbed his neck from the back. The figure that was stabbing him & the one who just ended his life were both Ronin.

The one in the front dispersed into a black fog as the real Ronin cut off Arsen's head.

The brothers on the other end were scared shitless and couldn't even move from the spot.

Suddenly, they heard a thud in front of them and saw the head of Ranga thrown right at their feet. A black and green gigantic figure started walking towards them.

This Demonic being started at both the brothers with eyes full of wrath.

"Time for you to.." but before Ronin could complete his words. A voice interjected him.

"Don't kill them!" spoke Albestros from afar. He couldn't bear to see the only descendants of his friend getting killed right in front of him despite them trying to take his life.

Ronin gave an understanding gaze and looked at the duo as he finally spoke.

"I will leave you alive for now. But if you ever come back or try to create problems for us in any way.. I'm going to personally visit you both.

And I'm going to cut you down limb from limb. And while doing so.. I'm gonna enjoy it!"

Threatened Ronin in the exact manner Arsen did to Albestros.

"Now get out before I change my mind!" shouted Ronin.

Both the brothers ran away like sacred cats, trying to run away as fast as they could.

When Kahn returned at late night and he was informed about the whole incident, he felt like it was a good decision to leave Ronin in charge of the old man's security.

When he returned to his master bedroom, Ronin appeared again.

"So, did you finish the job?" asked Kahn.

"Yes, master." replied Ronin as he threw two round objects on the floor.

Kahn nodded in approval and leaned on the bed as he embraced the goodnight sleep.

The two round objects were none other than two heads. Belonging to..

Mongel & Tivos.