

Darkness 211

Chapter 211: Elemental Knowledge

Mana manipulation, the most important form of practice required for casting effective and powerful spells was something Kahn currently needed to master.

In the past week after he started his magic training, what he did was understand the composition of various elements such as water, wind, fire, stone and lightning.

The main reason was that he had most of the offensive skills & spells which involved these 4 elements.

Even the Dark Lightning Strike consisted of the lightning element which was half of the force behind the attack. And since Kahn had no sources available to read and study about dark magic in his current situation, he had to at least improve his mastery over this element.

In his hands, were two things that he had been studying since yesterday. One was soil and the other was a burning lamp.

He started studying different elements by trying to feel the connection between him and the mana which was part of these things. But now, it was more about feeling and mastering the use of the basic ingredients of the dish he was going to cook instead of learning the recipe.

Casting these elemental spells was something he could already do but while holding the samples in his hands, he sensed that his summoned elemental spells are nothing but a poor imitation and aren't dense or strong enough to give the maximum output in front of the real deal.

The past week since he started, went into nothing but him trying to establish a proper connection with the mana present in these things and then trying to recreate them from scratch using mana restructuring.

Although his affinity was increasing each day, the progress was extremely small. Kahn also realized that if not for his levels and rank, he wouldn't even be able to reach this stage in such a short time and maybe would need to spend months for the progress he made in just a week.

Being a reincarnator in another world while given divine abilities and blessings from the gods had its perks & hacks.

What Kahn was trying to do now was push past his current limits and exceed his understanding of mana. Although his photographic memory helped him read and remember everything.. The physical and mental limitations of one's body couldn't be surpassed automatically when it came to mana.

[Maybe the other Heroes have top-grade instructors teaching them these things and mapped out their path already.

That damn predecessor of mine had to go for the most radical way and kill off all the heroes, just to create more trouble for me.] he thought.

Kahn already felt that other summoned heroes must have everything they needed in order to become strong or capable, let it be their fighting techniques or magical skills.

At this moment, Kahn felt jealous of the others who were summoned just like him because how easily they already had the road paved out for them. In his case, he was the one constructing the road by himself.

Let it be knowledge, resources, guidance and facilities... Kahn was certain he was already the weakest among the bunch.

But there was no point in crying over the spilled milk. So he had no choice but to carry on with his use methods and available options.

One thing he learned from the experience was that by controlling the flow of mana present in any substance, he could forcefully change their forms easily.

While practicing fire spells, he increased the friction of mana and created fire, and with more practice, the intensity of the fire he conjured increased little by little and so did his understanding and control over that element.

For wind spells, Kahn increased the speed of the mana in gaseous form, while he increased density to create ground spells and extremely volatile movements of mana to create lightning spells.

Although not perfect, he was making steady progress with each passing day. On a few occasions, Kahn was so immersed in practicing his skills that he even forgot to eat. Only when Alfred personally came to inform him about the time for dinner, did he come back to reality.

He learned how to recreate and command various elements, then how to adjust their density and speed.. He was learning new things everyday.

And slowly as he tried to manipulate the mana and give it a similar structure and form the matter & physical state, the force behind the magic spells he created started increasing at a noticeable rate. The current progress was already 5% more than what he could do previously.

But after another week passed by.. Kahn felt like he hit a plateau and reached the maximum extent of his ability. He now reached a level where he felt like his own body was his shackles that stopped him from becoming stronger and improving. As if he was now jailed inside a prison of his own making.

But instead of feeling disheartened or giving up, he knew that all of this was part of the procedure. Just like how he had to steadily progress in his weapons mastery and combat techniques previously.

To him, it was all worth it to learn and start from scratch because if he couldn't even master mana, how would he master World Energy?

If he broke through to Saint rank without proper understanding and use of mana, he would have a lot of trouble in sensing and utilizing the world energy. Kahn didn't want to become the weakest of saints when he finally broke through.

All of this was the foundational work for the future and he had to make sure that he did it perfectly instead of suffering through the consequences of being hasty.

Two more weeks passed by as Kahn continued his days studying and practicing magic spells in a routine and one day when he was in a trance while handling and manipulating two different elemental spells, the system finally spoke after a month of silence...

[Congratulations to the host for becoming a Beginner Rank Magician.]

Chapter 212: Remembering the Skills

As soon as the system informed Kahn, he was brought back from his trance and noticed a change in his body. His eyes opened wide quickly and he felt like something inside of him was trying to break.

Crack! Crack!

A sudden crackling noise came inside from his body and as if some form of restriction inside him was loosening up, a strong pressure was released.

Boom!!

A loud boom resounded in the facility and a blue aura made from mana erupted from Kahn's body.

As soon as the burst of mana subsided, he felt like the constraint on him regarding inner space which held mana inside him expanded for the first time.

This was a breakthrough!

Unlike before when he rose in ranks for weapon mastery and physical strength... This time, he felt like the surrounding area around him was now more vibrant and his senses became more acute despite being a semi-saint rank person already.

Kahn could sense small granules of condensed mana spread in the air, his vision and mind even clearer than before. The newfound understanding was something he hadn't experienced in his new life so far.

But instead of getting excited or happy, the first thing he did was try to establish a connection to the mana that he could finally see when focused properly.

Kahn waved his hands and summoned the mana particles towards him, trying to coalesce them together and form a big orb. And once the orb was saturated, he tried to change the structure of the mana and turned the orb into a fireball spell.

Compared to before he broke through, the now cast fireball spell felt twice more efficient, hotter and the density was multiple by many times.

"So that's how those magicians became so overwhelmingly powerful. Not only do they use their inner reserves of mana but they can borrow it from the environment around them as well.

No wonder the difference between damage and area of effect they can do is many times bigger than any physical class jobs. These guys have a free supply of power already." said Kahn after being enlightened with this fact.

"System, show me my current stats. And tell me what improvements happened to my body after breaking through to a beginner rank magician." he commanded.

[Following are the Statistics of the host :

Name : Kahn (Host)

Species : Human

Job : All for One

Rank : Semi-Saint Rank

Level : 138

Strength : 6638

Agility : 5097

Dexterity : 6247

Defense : 5617

Mana : 7380

The host has increased the mana pool and storage capacity by 500 Stat points after breaking through to the Beginning Rank magician. With each rank up in this class, the host will gain an additional 1000 stats for mana. The higher the rank and levels, the more mana capacity shall increase.] revealed the system.

"This... does put a smile on my face." said Kahn after hearing the response.

The 3 weeks of arduous and consistent training that was putting a lot of mental stress on him finally paid off.

Breaking through physical ranks was one thing, he could do it with training and weapons mastery. But for magic, it was his own mind and understanding of mana and spells that could help him rise in ranks.

currently, he didn't have any ability that could increase his comprehensive performance in studying magic. Even his eidetic memory couldn't help him as this was a completely new field. Only through improving his knowledge and experience, would he be able to reach higher ranks.

Kahn was no natural-born genius and even his divine abilities & blessings could get him so far. Without putting in the effort, he won't achieve anything. And if he ignored it... only a regretful death will await him in the future if his identity was ever revealed as the entire world would hunt him because he was the Hero of Darkness.

"Baby steps buddy, baby steps." said Kahn as he patted himself on the shoulder.

[I guess I should start mastering the other elements as soon as I'm done with these two. Maybe they'll help raise my rank and comprehension even more.] he thought.

"Wait.. How can I forget this..." a sudden realization struck him. Despite having an eidetic memory.. He had completely forgotten about one of the key sets of skills he already had but because he was only using weapons skills ever since he came to Rathna, he ended up ignoring these skills.

"Show me all the skills and abilities I have from absorbing Solomon & eating his core." commanded Kahn.

The semi-saint magician was someone extremely well versed being in magic and Kahn finally had a reason to use the skills he got from the Elven mage.

[Following are the skills & abilities the host acquired from the individual named Solomon Elfenheim :

Elemental Fusion (A Rank) (PASSIVE) :

Allows the host to create elemental mana orbs and use them as a source for Elemental spells and long-range attacks.

Light Barrier (A Rank) (ACTIVE) :

Allows the host to create a defensive barrier made from Light element.

Elemental Transformation (S Rank) (PASSIVE) :

Allows the host to transform the form of the elemental spells to another element.

Casting time for magic spells reduced by 35%

Space Haste (A Rank) (ACTIVE) :

Allows the host to use space magic to travel to 1 kilometer space in any direction.

The host is required to study and comprehend this ability.] replied the system.

"That's it! Elemental Fusion & Elemental Transformation is what I need the most now." said Kahn as a joyous smile appeared on his face.

The former ability was exactly what Solomon used to cast those elemental orbs and attack Kahn from a long distance, obliterating everything where they hit. And all of those spells had completely different elements such as wind and fire ingrained in them, giving all a different effect of damage output and variations.

The latter ability was something even more powerful. Because not only it would help him cast spells much faster and efficiently but also allow him to change the mana structure of his spells and change the elements of his attacks at a fast pace.

At this moment, only one thought came to his mind as he asked himself...

"Should I go and hunt some more Elven mages?"

Chapter 213: Asking for Permission

The most absurd idea came to Kahn's mind as soon as he saw the merits of having the innate abilities of the Elven race. This race already had a high affinity towards magic and traits that helped them be more sensitive and efficient in using it.

[These are only A Rank and yet so useful. If I can raise them to Saint Rank... maybe I'll be able to have many offensive skills and also master different elemental spells very quickly.

These people are so gifted with magic... It's quite unfair to other species.] he thought.

Because if not for Solomon being an elf.. Kahn didn't think he would've gotten these two amazing passive abilities from some other mage. These were the specific traits of the Elven race and that too of a semi-saint mage, the crème de la crème.

Never would the 200 years old mage have ever imagined that one day, his centuries of hard work along with the abilities he developed and mastered would benefit his enemy instead.

Kahn then started casting various fire and water spells, the two elements he was currently proficient in since they were much easier to control and the mana density was manageable in his current state compared to wind, earth and lightning elements.

He also came to a realization that the higher your rank was as a mage, the more mana you would be able to manipulate and harness from the surroundings. He could sense the mana molecules present in a 10 meter radius for now.

"Just studying magic won't cut it. I need to restart my combat and weapons practice as well. So that I can use the mana more efficiently and increase the output of my aura swords and attacks.

It will also help me form that mind-body connection to reach the peak in both fields. If I manage to master and incorporate all of my weapons skills and magical abilities together.. I will have a bigger advantage over the other saints of this world." murmured Kahn to himself.

Because of the immense potential he could achieve in the future in case he managed to reach the pinnacle in physical strength and magical abilities, was something that would make him a leviathan with basically no disadvantages.

While facing others of different classes and expertise, he would know how best to counter them as well as have many advantages that his enemies didn't.

And also there was always an element of surprise that he could use as a trump card at the last moment.

Because becoming a full-fledged saint who was already well versed in both weapons and magic was not even possible for the majority of the inhabitants of this world. Only variants of different species, legendary class/job individuals, maybe godbeasts, dragons and the chosen heroes like him had this advantage.

Kahn slapped himself on the face again to bring back his attention to the present moment. Overthinking never changes the outcome, only actions can.

The next day, Kahn restarted his weapons and combat techniques training after almost 5 months of break ever since he left Flavot city and came to the capital of the empire.

Focusing on one aspect while leaving out the other just because his priorities were different would come to bite him back later.

Since there were some books & records left in this underground facility about various training regimes and combat techniques, Kahn found this moment as the best opportunity to restart from the basics and polish his rusty skills again.

If his body & form wasn't in peak condition, then he wouldn't be able to fight at his best either. So being ignorant was no longer an option.

Because Kahn was no longer playing games with small gully thugs where you could act like smarty pants & a badass protagonist in front of a bunch of weaklings. His playing field was completely different compared to the main characters of the novels and mangas he used to read.

There were plenty of people who could kill him with a slap and even use him for their personal gains like how the vampire lord of the Vandereich clan did.

No matter how big of a smart, calculative & intelligent person he was, he couldn't always foresee the future or know the true intentions of others. This was a harsh lesson he learned recently.

Because the biggest threat wasn't the person who was in control. But the one who let that person think that they were in control.

The business was all set up, now what he needed was to invest time in training himself & increase his levels by eating those high rank cores on a daily basis since he didn't have any skill or ability that helped him directly absorb the mana & energy in them.

So staying true to a course was the only thing he could do now. As there always won't be a sudden spike of levels & ranks just because he ate a strong being's core or absorbed their abilities.

The Beginner's Luck period was already gone so now it was time to climb mount Everest slowly and steadily.

Tap! Tap!

A set of footsteps were heard when Kahn had just finished his workout and basic weapons practice. He wasn't using any of his skills and senses as a semi-saint but practicing with the strength of a normal person and hence, he was sweating heavily.

"What is it?" asked Kahn to a subordinate dressed in white and purple mage robes who also wore glasses like a scholar.

It was none other than Ceril, the undead Necromancer.

Recently, Ceril was left in charge of handling the business as Kahn's proxy because he was the most intelligent one of all the subordinates.

Although Jugram was the most hardworking one, Ceril was more suitable to take Kahn's place because he inherited Kahn's eidetic memory and his calculative nature.

"Master, I need your permission for something." said Ceril in a mature and soft tone.

"For what?" asked Kahn curiously. Ceril could always talk with Kahn telepathically but if he came to talk in person, means it was something of importance.

In response, Ceril replied with a kind and gentle smile on his face.

"Nothing much. I just wanted to commit a..."

Genocide."

Chapter 214: Granting Permission

Kahn stood rooted on the spot as soon as he heard the undead subordinate's request. He wanted to commit a... genocide?

What kind of request was that? It took Kahn completely off guard as he hadn't expected the Necromancer to make such a request.

"Are you out of your goddamn mind?!" asked Kahn loudly in response to the unusual request.

"Master, there's a reason. I can't repress my urge to kill anymore. So a teeny tiny bit of mass murder will help me greatly." replied Ceril with a benign smile. His tone was completely gentle as if he was doing the world a favor.

Kahn raised his eyebrow after the explanation as if the subordinate didn't think of the consequences. From his understanding of Ceril, he was much smarter than making such impulsive decisions.

"Why is that? Weren't the bodies I gave you not enough to study for your research?"

"They were. But they are high-grade specimens. I don't wish to waste or destroy them during the basic trials and experiments.

Besides, I am a Necromancer. I will grow weaker with time if I don't have my own army of undead and skeleton soldiers. All of them were destroyed in that dungeon before my demise. Since then, I have been barely holding back.

I need many more bodies and skeletons to use as fodders. My research demands more of them with every step." explained Ceril as he pushed up his glasses with a forefinger.

"So you're going to kill people just for a fresh stock?" asked Kahn with squinted eyes.

"Yes."

"Are you an idiot? Wouldn't that create unnecessary trouble if you go around killing people? And I thought you were smart." said Kahn with a helpless expression.

"What if I'm never caught?" said Ceril coyly.

Kahn folded his arms and rolled his eyes in disappointment like RDJr.

"Let me tell you.. No matter how much you plan.. There's always some kind of trail left behind for the capable people to find the truth."

"Then how about I use a method that can't be tracked?" spoke Ceril and then elaborated the plan he had in mind.

Kahn carefully listened to the strategy and then weighed the pros and cons in his mind.

The plan Ceril came up with was indeed very efficient and wouldn't cause them unnecessary trouble.

"Fine. Do what you want. Just make sure you hide your identity and nobody should know your real face. And do it only at night.

I still need you to hold command in my absence. I had my first breakthrough yesterday so I can't lose the momentum now." ordered Kahn as he gave Ceril the permission.

"I shall obey, Master. Please leave everything to me. I will handle things properly." he said and left the training facility.

At the time of midnight, inside a desolate open ground that spanned for 3 kilometers and had more than a thousand tombs, dozens of guards were on a patrol.

A black centaur and a yellow-skinned mixblood human were on a patrol at one section of this cemetery.

Tap! Tap! Tap!

"I hate it when they give me the night shift. Who the hell is going to come here and rob the dead skeletons. This is not even a burial site for the rich but the poorest of the poor." complained the centaur as his hooves made loud tapping noise in this silent and eerie surrounding.

"Stop being so grumpy. Job is job, you're new so you'll get used to it soon." said the human in a bored tone.

The night was cold and chaotic, yet the protectors of the dead had to perform their duty despite the shivering breeze passing by.

Both the guards kept walking while chatting between themselves as complaining wouldn't help in their job at all.

Swoosh!

A sudden sound of something passing by was heard by the human.

"Hey, you heard that? I think something just passed from here." he spoke.

"Ugh.. Are you sure that it's not just wind? We're in an open and silent cemetery.. The sound is always amplified." replied the centaur.

"No, I'm sure I heard something. My gut feeling says there's someone here." said the human.

"Heh.. Aren't you the experienced one here? Why do I feel like you're just acting delusional... Or could it be that you're scared?" asked the centaur coyly.

Swoosh!

A whirl of wind suddenly hit the guards from the dark corners between the tombs.

"This.. It's getting too cold so suddenly. Let's leave." said the centaur as he rubbed his arms off.

"Whaarr.."

A sudden hoarse whisper landed on their ears and both of them got goosebumps on their body.

"Grrr..." another ghastly voice landed on their ears from a direction they couldn't decide.

The centaur who had a halberd and a small wooden shield in his hand felt like something was amiss.

"Who's there! Show yourself!" he shouted while mustering courage.

"This.. This can't be. So it's true.." said the human while stuttering.

"What the hell are you talking about?! Don't try to scare me." reprimanded the centaur as he gave a deathly stare to the human guard.

But rather than speaking.. The human pointed his fingers towards their left.

The next moment however, both of them were rooted on the spot.

Clang! Crang! Crack!

"Warhhh..."

A ghastly groan resounded as a figure of dozens of walking corpses was revealed to both of the guards and they both froze on the spot with immense fear as if they got paralyzed.

The human mustered all his courage and jumped on the back of the centaur who half of the body was of a horse.

Rather than trying to face the incoming undead they just saw... the human guard yelled at the centaur with all his might.

"Run, Forrest, run!"

Chapter 215: Robbing the Dead

As soon as the guards ran with the fear for their lives, the rotten-bodied undead who were charging at them stopped in movements. And as if heeding a form of command, they returned towards their previous direction.

With steady steps, the dozen of zombie-like undeads headed towards a quiet section of this huge cemetery that looked completely unattended.

There was no light, no sound or anything but the undeads kept walking as if they were heading towards some sort of beacon.

Step! Step!

The dried leaves rustled after being stepped upon as these undeads gathered around a dark dome which was hard to notice under the blanket of this dark night.

Just when they entered inside this dome, a completely different surrounding came to be.

Over 40 graves were dug up and the skeletons and the rotten corpses inside the tombs were now being pulled up as a man dressed in black mage robes with a scepter that had a green orb shining brightly at the top. His silver hair were his striking part of the appearance and this mage himself was using dark-colored mana to forcefully take off the heavy stone slabs above the grounds.

This 300 meters area was completely encapsulated inside this dark dome which also prohibited any form of noise or light leaking outside.

"Those damn wrenches! Now I don't have a lot of time before they show up with more people. If the master hadn't prohibited me from killing, I would've had more time." cursed this mage who was using dark magic to rob the graves.

On the other side, was a big heap of dead bodies and skeletons that had dried a long time ago. And a dark green aura was encircling this tall heap of bones and rotten corpses.

"At least scaring them away gave me some more time to hide everything that happened here and cover my tracks." he said.

This was Ceril in his new getup after changing his appearance just like Kahn had instructed him this morning.

He too now had a metamorphosis bloodline imparted by Kahn after he achieved the 100% loyalty. So taking a different human form was within his reach.

Since he didn't have any other bloodlines like Kahn, he had to opt out for changing facial structures and hair of his human form to avoid suspicion in case he was caught.

Whatever happened during his night strolls shouldn't affect his other identity and the company. So he too found it reasonable to get a different persona just like his master often did in the form of Azrael and recently as Zeus.

After he was done robbing all the dead bodies and leaving their worldly belongings such as their clothes and ornaments in their graves, he pulled all the new stock in his personal space ring.

This morning, he too gained one of the space rings that once belonged to the rich members of the chamber of commerce who were robbed by Kahn. And since the inner space was as big as a warehouse, it was very useful for him.

"Now, I hope this restoration artifact is worth the 2 million gold I paid." he said and put his mana inside a star-shaped orange magic artifact.

A thin film of yellow aura was released from this artifact and it was spread across all the directions in the surrounding area.

One by one.. All the shaken and pulled-out tombstones, the cracked ground and broken grass on the ground started relocating themselves and the soil itself got back to the place it once belonged to.

In just a minute, the entire area under this black isolation barrier was replaced by a tranquil and peaceful ground, no longer looking like the destroyed property after Ceril took out dead bodies by ripping off the resting site of all these people belonging to different races and species.

"Good enough for the first haul." said Ceril and the next second, the dark barrier completely disappeared in the dark of the night along with the figure of the necromancer.

Step! Step! Step!

"I'm telling you! We both saw those dead bodies and skeletons walking right from here!" spoke the centaur.

Both of them returned with nearly 20 more guards that were stationed here for protecting the gravesite.

"Really? Then why do I not see or sense anything here? Don't tell me you're just making an excuse to pass time. I don't like this type of joke." alone a red master rank snakeskin spearman.

He could sense heat signatures and different kinds of scents as part of his innate skills. But now, he didn't find anything as if even the air was unaffected in this area.

He berated the duo for slacking off and went off his way to continue his duty.

The next morning, when Kahn had just started his weapons and magic training after a light breakfast, Ceril entered the facility and told Kahn that he needs a section of it to use as a research facility since he can't study the bodies openly and in a congested place.

Since this entire training facility itself spanned for 2 kilometers and had multiple places to train and study magic and do research as well, Kahn gave him the keys to unlock a section on the far east where he could peacefully do his research.

Kahn himself didn't feel bad now about how Ceril was desecrating the dead. After the recent experience with the first rank mage, the clan leader of the Vandereich clan and the chamber of commerce.. Kahn realized a major flaw in his behavior.

That he paid too much attention to his moral code and things he didn't wish to cross a line with.

It was one thing if this was earth where his upbringing and sense of judgment made him the man he was... but now, this entire world was different and so was he.

And to strive towards the path of strength.. There were many things he needed to abolish.. Including his sense of moral code and honor.

He needed time to come to terms with them slowly and then make the necessary changes in his thought process. Or one day, he would die because of his morality from the past life.

Ceril on the other hand had an excited expression on his face.

He was finally getting the resources and a facility he needed for quite some time.

Just after looking at his ecstatic expression, Kahn remembered Ajak, the undead summoner whose body and core were mixed with Ceril.

This trait of Ceril's personality definitely came from the undead who killed Kahn in the Bromnir dungeon once.

As soon as Ceril set up his new research facility after making some arrangements in a few hours, he started maniacally without holding back.

"Hahaha hahaha ha hahaha hahaha haha!!

Finally... I will create my own army and become my liege's favorite and most powerful subordinate!"

Chapter 216: God of Mischief

Inside the underground facility below the Wayne Manor, a black-haired mage was carrying different variations of magic spells and trying to mix the different specimens of corpses and bones.

Unlike Kahn, Ceril had an inherent understanding of his abilities & magical skills that were passed down to him from the memories of the undead summoner. Just that he too needed to practice and get experienced so he could make his own body compatible with the skills first.

At this moment, he was still in his human form and hence, his attributes were reduced by 20 levels. But to diligent researchers like him, this was also an opportunity to test his limits and improve upon them.

In front of him were 14 dried dead bodies. Each of them belonging to different species such as humans, demi-humans, centaurs, botirs and thralls.

Many cut-down limbs and torsos were now placed in a wide and long wooden table that could hold a feast in a certain magic school that had a principal who always gave all the points to Gryffindor.

Ceril was writing down the log of the experiments after trying to attach different body parts together and then summon that specimen as his undead.

"Day 5, Log 73.

The new specimen shows signs of synergy between body parts I added but yet it hasn't been able to react to all the mana output.

Even the undead summoning magic failed to keep this specimen intact for more than 5 minutes before the body itself broke down and in some cases, it crumbled down and turned into dust." spoke Ceril as he wrote in the book at the same time.

From the past 5 days, he was visiting and robbing new graveyards at night. And in the new facility he redesigned to meet his needs, he started studying and creating new undead and skeletal soldiers using the dead bodies.

He cut, molded and sewed limbs from different species and attached them together. Ceril had been trying to summon these creatures as his undead but for reasons unknown, the new resultant specimens were not sustainable.

This problem didn't happen when he created undead soldiers from a single intact body.

The majority of the experiments crumbled and broke down after a short time of the summoning, rendering his efforts useless.

"Day 5, Log 74.

I'm making steady progress but the difference in mana structure present in these test subjects is prohibiting a result that is compatible and possesses all of their abilities. At this rate, the supply will not meet the demand. I need more bodies for further research." said Ceril aka Dr. Frankenstein.

Given the number of trials and errors he had to go through, Ceril noticed that it wasn't effective & the quantity was very lacking for the long term.

To improve his skills and efficiency as a Necromancer, he needed more resources.

Since his master was in closed room studies of magic, he couldn't ask for help either as he knew how hard it was for anyone to comprehend & master the ins and outs of magic.

"Hmm... I guess I have no choice but to shake some trees." he said and left the facility to do his daily daytime job as one of the people running the Bloodborne company.

Baltimore Cemetery

One of the largest cemeteries that spanned for 5 kilometers long and held the graves of over 10,000 deceased people in Rukon District.

Even getting a couple of meters of space for your burial site cost a lot. It was manageable for humans but for the other species who normally sized much bigger in height and width, it was an exorbitant amount.

So only the rich and powerful who wanted a well-mandated and sizable tomb as their resting place would come to buy out the plot here.

There were even master rank guards left in charge of the security measures.

What the rich feared the most was that someone desecrating their resting place or rob their belongings that would be buried with them. For the upper class of the society, they wanted to die as someone rich while being buried with money and costly ornaments.

And hence, many opted for such highly secured cemeteries that ensured the safety of their tombs.

During the night, inside the main office building of this cemetery management that was placed at the far left, a blue demonkin knocked on a door.

"Sir, there's someone to see you." said the attendee.

"Let them in." ordered a yellow 3 meter tall Wolfkin who emitted the aura of a peak master rank individual.

Step! Step!

A set of footsteps were heard as a mage dressed in black robes who held a black scepter in his hands walked in.

The Lionkin gestured the mage to sit on the seat across his table and spoke.

"How may I help you?" he asked.

"Greetings, mister Logan."

Said the mage and passed out a space ring over the table.

"What's this?" asked Logan, the wolfkin.

"Check the contents and you might get an idea why I am here." said the shoulder-length silver-haired human mage.

As soon as Logan checked what was inside, he was left frozen on the spot.

He looked at the mage with eyes full of disbelief and asked with a curious tone.

"The ring has 10 million gold coins.. This much amount.. What do you want?" he asked.

"I assume you're fully aware of what could someone like me with money to spend need from someone like you who manages and runs this vast graveyard that houses so many deceased people." said the mage in black in a benign tone. Completely unaffected by this query.

Logan gave him an understanding gaze as if this wasn't his first time facing such a situation.

He took out an isolation artifact and sealed the room.

"At least tell me your name first before we get to business." he said in a stern tone.

To his question, the mage didn't reply with words but instead, he quickly released his aura extremely dense and domineering aura that instantly filled the entire room.

[A Peak Grandmaster!] thought Logan with an aghast expression.

"Oh, where are my manners.. I apologize for the late introductions. I have had many names but these days, people call me..."

He took a pause and then continued in a mischievous tone.

"Loki."

Chapter 217: Figuring it Out

The wolfkin named Logan who had yellow fur and razor-sharp claws now stood up and looked at Loki, the mage adorned in black robes. The human in front of him was a peak grandmaster mage!

Peak Grandmasters were existences that could kill one thousand people with their strength and capabilities. And the one in front of him was actually a mage as well. They had many offensive skills that could kill hundreds of enemies with a single spell.

Before the mage revealed his aura, Logan hadn't even managed to sense it.

He quickly bowed in respect towards the mage and asked in an obedient tone. Offending this powerhouse with improper behavior would spell his ultimate death.

"May I ask what exactly do you want, sir? I don't think anyone of your grand stature would pay this hefty amount for having just one or two tombs of top powerful figures ransacked." he said, trying to see the silver-haired mage's reaction.

"I see that I came to meet the right person. And I presume I'm not the only one you've made such deals with." replied Loki in his calm yet eerie tone that would give shivers to anyone who heard it.

"What I want isn't to rob the belongings or any wealth buried in the tombs.. But a steady supply of recently buried bodies and old skeletons. If you can provide me with that.. The 10 million are yours." said Loki.

"Really?.. You're not joking, right? I mean sir.." asked the wolfkin hurriedly.

"You deliver, I pay. Simple as that. And I don't think I need to remind you if you decide to leak any info or try to scam me." spoke Loki with a benign smile.

"Yes sir! I understand! How many do you need?" asked the fear-stricken wolf after the subtle warning from the mage.

"Five hundred a week. Plus I want fresh corpses that were recently buried as well. Can you do that?"

"Five hundred.. That's just too much. It will attract too much attention." replied Logan.

"Oh please. I know how much you earn annually. Even if you were to bribe all the other guards and people who work this second job for you, you would still make more than a hundred times what you earn normally.

If you can't even manage that much, then maybe I should go somewhere else." said Loki and pulled back the space ring that was on the table.

"No, wait! I'll do it! Just give me some time before I get the first batch of hundred bodies ready." said Logan haphazardly.

This was like a goose laying golden eggs for him. Even normally, he would get a million at best from the top forces who had peculiar tastes and things to do with dead bodies.

Some wanted them for research while some people wanted to harvest the cores left in them. And some even had weird and inexplicable fetishes with corpses.

So this wasn't something new to him after working for a decade in this job.

"Good. I will come two days later at the same time." said Loki and discussed a few more details and plans about the means of transport and how to quietly get the job done.

Neither party wanted any trouble and attention towards their deal so everything was to be thought out before they even began.

Loki stood up after their discussion and decided to leave. But just as he was close to the door..

He quickly released and directed all of his aura at Logan again as he spoke with a deathly voice.

"Do not disappoint me. Because I don't like failures and neither do I show any mercy. Do you understand me?" warned Loki.

Logan, whose body was frozen under this heavy and insurmountable aura filled with bloodlust barely managed to muster all his strength and nodded in response.

Instead of bothering to reply, Loki's figure suddenly disappeared as if the mage was never present here in the first place.

Logan dropped on his knees, breathing heavily. The opportunity he got just now also came with a big risk. But the rewards were 100 times more than he could ever imagine.

So he had no thoughts of scamming the mage.

Little did the wolfkin know, that at this very moment, there were dozens of Kahn's assassin subordinates hidden in his shadow.

Loki had already taken precautions before coming here and left his fellow subordinates who were ordered to kill Logan in case he reveals this deal to anyone he shouldn't have or tried to betray him.

He was just as cautious as Kahn after knowing the recent happenings in the past couple of months when he was still absorbing the cores.

TEN DAYS LATER

Ceril was doing his daily conduct of experiments on the rotten and bloodied corpse while creating more undead soldiers in the meantime.

Recently, he was making many improvements in his skills and now, he could easily summon more than a hundred undeads with a single attempt.

And because of his unique class as a Necromancer, he was getting more stronger and powerful with the increase in the numbers of his own soldiers.

And in just 10 days of tiresome experimentation and mixing suitable bodies together, he now possessed hundred beginner rank skeleton soldiers.

This small army was more than enough to kill 2 peak master ranks beings.

"Day 17, Log 32.

I have finally figured it out! After experimenting with over 800 bodies, I have finally found a way to create stronger and variant versions of undeads even with different species and bloodlines.

Thanks to all the samples I received recently, I noticed that the most important factor to mix different species and their body parts together isn't just the mana structure.

But also their respective body's affinity with elements.

The reason why previous attempts failed was because I was mixing them without considering this aspect of their physical compatibility.

Now I have finally found a way to create my own warriors... my own version of.." wrote Ceril and took a pause as he spoke the final words with a sinister and maniacal smile on his face.

"Grandmasters!"

Chapter 218: The Racket

Ceril was currently surrounded by rotten corpses & obnoxious stench but this didn't bother the undead subordinate in the slightest as if he was completely unaffected by the grimy scene in front of him.

Currently, the Necromancer subordinate was completely engrossed in performing his magical ritual and creating a new batch of soldiers.

Each day, he could feel his mana capacity and efficiency increasing with each new batch of bodies he was getting.

The deal with Logan was paying off and he was making significant improvements. Just yesterday, he mixed a Centaur & a Mithrans body to create a peak master rank undead warrior which had 4 legs and 4 arms with the boney and meaty snake-like extensions coming out of its body, having the structure of both the species.

[Good. As soon as I break through to Legendary Rank and gain more specimens of higher ranks, I will be able to create grandmaster rank soldiers.

Only if Master could take us back to hunting monsters.. I would get plenty of new species as stock for my research. He he he!]

"Awaken." said Ceril and more than 100 corpses and skeletons in front of him started merging after being submerged inside a black shadow.

He too could use the King of the Dead ability after Kahn imparted the skill. So he too didn't need to worry about performing the summoning ritual one by one in a 500 meter radius.

30 new summons now stood in front of him, each taller and bigger than previous specimens. 3 bodies for each case to create a variant that possessed different physical traits.

These amalgamations ranked from common to elite rank while the humanoid specimens ranged from beginners to intermediate rank.

"Trash!" he exclaimed as a look of disappointment appeared on his face.

"I guess low tier bodies can never make up for good results even if I use high-grade cores or increase the numbers." he spoke.

"I need to meet him again." he said with a somber expression.

When the night came, a mage sat under a big purple tree at a park that was filled with hundreds of people having a good time as the merry surrounding was bustling with various vendors selling foods and beverages to the customers.

On one of these benches, Loki was waiting for someone. Just then he saw a foxkin woman and a demonkin male couple kissing in public. Both having no regard for the place and crowd they were standing amongst.

"Eww... Go to horny jail."

He said and cast a small fire spell behind the foxkin's long tails and an ailment spell on the demonkin.

"Arrh!" screamed the woman in a high-pitched voice.

Blergh!!

The demonkin retched in the middle of the street.

[He he he he!] chuckled Loki inwardly as he enjoyed the scene in front of him where the woman was screaming for help, trying to put off the fire on her fur of the tails while the demonkin was vomiting continuously.

"Enjoying the view, are you?" spoke a yellow wolfkin and sat on his side.

"I am indeed." said Loki to Logan, the wolfkin.

"Why have you called me, sir?" asked Logan.

"I have some requirements. I hope you can provide me double the numbers and with higher rank bodies if they're available. And don't worry, you'll be rewarded heftily." said Loki, still rejoicing as the scene in front of him was turning worse and the woman was almost lighting up like a torch and many people were trying to put off the fire.

The demonkin on the other hand was almost wriggling on the ground while vomiting blood.

"How much are we talking about here?" asked Logan curiously, completely unaffected by the fiasco.

"Five thousand per week and at least 30 intermediate to master rank specimens." said Loki in a carefree tone.

"That much?! I'm sorry.. But that's too much. And even if you gave us half a month, we still won't manage this big number without alerting the others or getting implicated. Someone is bound to notice." said Logan in a helpless tone.

"Then you're saying that you're incapable?" asked Loki as he stared at the wolfkin in angered eyes and slightly released his aura on the wolfkin.

"No.. Please, let me finish." said Logan as he shuddered in fear. The deathly glare from the mage felt like a knife stabbed in his heart.

"Just one branch isn't enough to meet your demands. I have some connections and people who can get what you want.

There's an entire network of underground racket." said Logan as he spilled the beans, completely afraid of angering the mage and then facing a fate far worse than these two individuals in the middle of the street were facing.

If the peak grandmaster mage could mortally harm these people just for fun, this powerhouse wouldn't mind torturing him either.

Loki had already warned him that he didn't like incompetence so the wolfkin had to offer an alternative to save his own skin.

At the late night, he guided Loki to a secret and completely secluded building at the west end of the city. The castle-like building looked like a rundown and abandoned place from where both of them stood.

"Oh... Well done. Nobody can even see through place if they're not a grandmaster mage." said Loki in an approving tone.

Logan then took out an 'X' shaped pendant and put it on the display towards the rusted gate.

"We are with and without honor." he spoke the secret code.

Crang!

The gate suddenly moved and a leshen halberd user suddenly appeared out of nowhere.

The next moment, over a dozen guards dressed in armors and various weapons, started emerging out of the invisible barriers.

The sight in front of them flickered as Loki noticed an isolation barrier.

[They must be using some sort of artifacts to hide this property from everyone.] he thought.

"State your business." asked the green leshen in a grim tone.

Logan took a deep breath and spoke in a calm tone.

"I'm here to meet the leader of the Nords.." he said in a respectful tone before speaking the name of this leader..

"Lord Odin."

Chapter 219: Dealing Dead

As soon as Logan spoke the name, all the guards at the entrance took an offensive stand and pointed their weapons at the duo of the wolfkin and the mage.

"You dare speak our lord's name out in the open?!" said the Leshen as he too pointed his halberd at them.

BOOM!

But the next second, an immensely heavy and chaotic black aura was released in the surrounding area and all of the guards were pushed down on the ground.

Forget kneeling, they all were so weak compared to this domineering and majestic aura that none of them could even lift their heads.

"My my.. Is that how you greet your customers? Pointing your weapons at them for absolutely no proper reason? So unprofessional." a grim and solemn voice landed on their ears.

"I don't like when someone tries to threaten me." spoke Loki with an emotionless voice.

"And ignorant fools who don't know their place deserve only one type of punishment." said Loki as his eyes filled with bloodlust.

The next second, he waved his scepter and conjured a dozen of lightning and fire spells.

"Sir Loki, no!!" shouted Logan.

"Haha ha haha ha! Die you insects!" exclaimed Loki and attacked all the guards who couldn't even muster the strength to move an inch.

Boom! Crack! Bang!

"Aaaaaa!!!"

"Mercy!!!"

"Help!!!"

Terrified and wailing screams of the guards who were just doing their job filled the surrounding area as the echoes of their pleas resounded in this abandoned section of the small city they were in.

Despite the wolfkin's request.. Loki killed all the guards right at the entrance of their headquarters.

"You.. What have you done? Why did you kill them?" asked Logan as his footsteps staggered.

"My hands were itching.." said Loki in a mischievous tone.

[What the fuck is this guy's problem?! How am I going to explain this to boss Odin?! He will kill me for sure!] cursed Logan.

He noticed one thing.. That the mage in front of him was an absolute psychopath who liked torturing and killing people for fun and took pleasure from it.

"Now lead me to this Odin you speak of." commanded Loki.

Logan had no choice but to comply so he entered inside the barriers and soon, a scenery completely contradictory to the dilapidated building they saw previously came to be.

A large 3 stories building and hundreds of guards who were coming out of the main door were revealed to the duo.

"Wait! I know Lord Odin. He will settle the matters. Just take us to him." said Logan as he held both of his hands up.

"Logan, what the hell!! We just saw this human kill our soldiers at the left entrance. Even if you're my cousin, how am I going to explain this to lord Odin?" asked a blue wolfkin archer.

"Just take us there! This sir behind me doesn't like waiting." He said and signaled the leader of this small squad, his cousin, that this man wasn't to be messed with.

At the highest floor and the innermost section of this warehouse-like building that was full of hundreds of people carrying things such as caskets and carts where bodies were covered under sheets and isolation barriers to prevent the smell from leaking out.. Sat a giant and burly middle-aged blue thrall.

This figure leaked an aura of a peak grandmaster brawler warrior who sat on a throne-like chair at the end of a highly decorated room. His blonde and wavy shoulder length hair, the upper half of the body that was covered in lightweight armor and his ripped abs and muscular shoulders were easy to see.

And besides the chair of Odin, were two 2 meter tall hounds, one white while the other black.

An attendee opened the door and let the duo of Logan & Loki enter inside the main office.

A gray aura was released from this thrall as he stared at Loki with eyes filled with absolute anger.

But instead of cowering or trying to reason, Loki revealed his own dark aura filled with dominance in front of the thrall.

Putting everyone except the two of them in a frozen state.

"Who are you, and why did you kill my people?" asked the thrall, unaffected by the sudden reveal of a peak grandmaster as if he already sensed it when Loki was at the entrance.

"Eh.. Because they were being disrespectful." spoke Loki in a casual tone as if he hadn't killed people but some mosquitoes.

This even left the blue thrall named Odin speechless. This was the first time he saw someone kill people for so little.

"This better be worth it. This is the first time someone has challenged my authority on my turf. So tell me why have you come here? And why shouldn't I kill you?" asked the tall and muscular thrall.

"Why else do you think? To do business. And as for the last part.." spoke Loki and gave a sadistic grin.

"You don't have what it takes."

[What the hell is wrong with this human?! Why is he trying to pick a fight instead of smoothening things out?] thought Logan.

If things went wrong, it would be his head for bringing this freak here.

"Huh.. Is that so? Well, let's talk about this deal you propose. If it isn't worth it, you might as well not leave out of here alive." spoke Odin, his gaze targeted at the black mage.

Loki walked and sat on the sofa next to the blue thrall, acting carefree.

"I am called Loki. And I am in need of your services since Logan here says you can provide me with what I want." said Loki.

"How many do you want?" asked Odin without wasting time on beating around the bush.

"15 thousand a week. And I want 5 thousand of them above intermediate and master rank. You can at least provide me that much, right?"

Gasp!

Even Odin gasped in surprise and asked Loki with a curious voice..

"And how much will you pay?"

"Given my current budget, how about... 50 million?" replied Loki.

The next second, despite their previous qualms, Odin replied quickly as soon as he heard the amount.

"Deal!!"

Chapter 220: Terms of Contract

Regardless of how their encounter started, the blonde-haired thrall quickly shifted the topic as soon as the exorbitant amount of money was mentioned by the mage in black robes. No longer showing hostile appearance or body language.

"Are you sure? Because I don't accept any delays. I want everything on time." said Loki.

Normally if someone was on the same level as you in terms of strength, one would be worried about a sudden attack and feel a sense of competition. But to Loki, he wasn't even bothered about angering Odin.

Because if push came to shove and they fought here... the one to lose the most here would be the thrall.

Since he was a mage and the warrior in front of him was a close combat brawler, he had the advantage in terms of range of attacks, skills, area of effect and damage output during a fight.

And as a result, this whole building itself would be reduced to ruins. Because of that very reason, Odin didn't attack him either and hence, Loki initiated their conversation in a carefree manner.

"You don't have to worry about that. Our network has been spread across the entire district for over a decade and no one has found out anything yet.

There are 57 big cemeteries holding more than 5 million corpses as we speak. Managing your requirements won't be a problem. We have people everywhere.

We also have some of the top clans of the empire using our services as well. So you may rest assured." explained Odin like how one would try to sate the curiosity of their top client.

"And what about the 5 thousand high-rank bodies?" asked Loki in a solemn tone while his expression, indicating that he was content with the answer from the thrall.

"Manageable. But may I ask why do you need so many bodies? This number is simply too big no matter what your purpose is." asked Odin.

"Do you always ask these types of questions to all your clients?" retorted Loki with an irritated expression.

"Fair enough. Let's discuss the further details then. I can't deliver without a down payment first."

To this, Loki took out a space ring and threw it towards the thrall.

Odin then checked the contents as soon as he caught the ring. He nodded and kept the ring in his pocket.

"What about the lives of my guards you killed?" asked Odin.

"About that.. Pack them up for me.

Count them as part of the deal too." said Loki in a sinister voice.

As if this was something he planned to do from the very beginning when he killed the guards out of the blue.

Afterwards, both the parties decided the arrangements regarding how and where they would deliver the goods.

As he left, the meeting room had only 3 people who now decided to address some issues.

"Logan.. Where did you find that freak?" asked Odin as he released half of his aura on the wolfkin.

"He.. He was a big customer from a couple of weeks, I couldn't meet the demand so I thought it would be best to introduce him to you, boss Odin.

Only if I knew he was such a nutjob.. I wouldn't have brought him here. Those guards were the ones who provoked him without checking who they were dealing with.

Please.. It's not my fault." explained Logan.

"Fine. Normally, we would receive 40 million at best for a job of this scale. You did bring in a fat sheep so you're forgiven.

You'll receive your 10% cut." said Odin.

"Boss, how could you let him go? He killed our people for no good reason." spoke the blue wolfkin in an angered tone.

"Hank, I've fought other peak grandmasters before.. But this guy doesn't even feel like a human from his aura.

From him.. I can sense a completely different energy. Something I haven't felt even from the Saints I've met so far."

"What kind of energy you're talking about, boss?" asked Hank, Logan's cousin.

"You both might not have sensed it because you're too weak. But when I was talking to him.. I was getting an extremely horrifying feeling as if I was staring at death itself." elaborated Odin with an aghast expression on why he didn't stress on the part about the dead people on his end.

"This guy is not simple. He paid with Orichalclum plates. It's something only the top business enterprises in the capital or the prestigious noble clans use.

And that sheer amount of bodies.. I feel like he isn't alone. Either he is backed up by a force we can't afford to mess with or there must be a new player in the game just like those clans. We need to know who we are dealing with first." said Odin with a somber expression.

The reason why Odin had this feeling was because from the start to the end of their conversation, Loki didn't even show a slight sense of being wary about him trying to scam him or even threaten him.

This type of confidence only came in two situations. One, you are extremely powerful than the opposition. Two, when you have a tyrannical force backing you up.

And since Loki was a peak grandmaster just like him, there was a bigger chance of the second scenario to be the main reason.

"Hank.. You know what to do." said Odin.

Hank, the blue peak master rank archer nodded in response and left the room.

When Loki was strolling through the streets of a populated zone, thinking about the ways of killing the thousands of people that were going about their lives in the busy streets without getting caught, he heard a warning in his head.

Just like Kahn had advised, he was cautious enough to not leave a trace behind. And hence, he had dozens of assassins who were given to him by his master and kept a lookout for him in case anyone tried to follow him.

He already left a few assassins in the building where he made the deal with Odin. Even the peak grandmaster didn't realize that unbeknownst to him, 3 assassins were hiding inside his shadow.

"Hehe... I reckon I'm getting more than what we agreed on." spoke Loki with malicious intent after hearing that he was being followed by the people from Odin's side.

His eyes glowed red the next second as he spoke in a grim tone.

"Let me show these people why they say that sometimes... Death is a Mercy."