

## Darkness 431

### Chapter 431 - Pulling Strings

After Kahn called out Armin and asked if this Legendary rank creature named Ashokvatika would be suitable for him for a new rank-up.

The reason he thought Armin would be the best candidate here was that during his previous evolution to High Lord rank...

Armin was mixed with Grandmaster Alchemist Prithvi. The one Kahn and Albestros carried the Passage Rites for after they went to the capital Rathna and had nowhere else to go.

After his pitiful death, Kahn decided to use his body and upgraded Armin. But while doing so, Armin had unlocked a legendary Class named The Pathfinder.

According to the system, Armin had met the conditions to acquire this class because he had both skills of a Healer and by getting mixed with an Alchemist and acquiring his skill... he met the prerequisite conditions.

But this wasn't the biggest factor. But rather the species of the Ashokvatika.

Because Prithvi Aranya was a Leshen, a wood elemental species inhabiting this empire. And the creature in front of Kahn was the same albeit a very high-ranked bloodline.

This was the best specimen Kahn could ask for. So naturally, he thought of Armin to receive his new rank-up.

"Merge." commanded Kahn.

The next second, the Synthesis divine ability started its work and both Armin and this gigantic creature were covered under a pitch-black shadow and the procedure began.

Kahn let out a deep sigh and finally felt like he could absorb the shock he received from absorbing all those amazing abilities from Ashokvatika.

Telepathy Link, the skill that allowed Kahn to telepathically communicate with all the subordinates within a 100 kilometers radius was actually a godsend ability.

Because even now, the limitations of Kahn's Hive Mind link despite getting ranked up twice was only limited to 10 kilometers radius around him.

Although the name sounded simple and nothing noteworthy... the effects were ten times more than the Hive Mind skill.

Although they had epic rank communication artifacts that even transmitted voice messages to 500 kilometers... they needed to speak the message for it.

There was no mind-to-mind connection. And Kahn had found this very inconvenient because if he wanted to relay orders to a general or subordinate who was at a longer distance during their day-to-day life or even in a battle... he had to go through the risk of someone being able to hear his orders.

So Kahn was thoroughly impressed. And he also understood that this was the main reason why the legendary Ashokvatika could control so many minions from even 50 kilometers away.

Life Force Restoration, the skill which allowed Kahn to restore the physical state of any subordinate using World Energy by converting it into Life Force would be his first legitimate skill related to the healing class that actually made a difference.

He could even Revive a dead subordinate if he had enough world energy.

Even though he couldn't use it without becoming a saint first... this was undoubtedly another cheat code ability that would be extremely helpful in the future.

Nature Control skill on the other hand.... Allowed Kahn to telepathically control low-ranked monsters and wood elemental creatures within 30 kilometers radius who would become part of his personal army.

This was by far his biggest crowd control skill. Because apart from his subordinates, he had no control over other creatures.

Although the range of applications was limited, he could use this skill to even turn the enemy side and make them fight for himself if they were low leveled than himself or belonged to the wood elemental species.

Him being unable to move while using this skill was a logical constraint because his mind would be under great pressure while controlling the other creatures. So Kahn had no problems with it.

King of the Forest ability was already on the OP abilities list because of the uses it had.

Kahn could simply sense or even attack an enemy force using plants and trees since he could control them in a 20 kilometers region.

It was like leading an enemy into a battlefield that was already made to help you win the war.

Roots of Nature ability basically turned Kahn into Poison Ivy.

Because he could control and change the shapes of roots buried in the ground to create constructs and even weapons as per his will in a 10 kilometers radius.

Means, even nature itself was his weapon. He could create a wall, a shield, and even a sword using these gigantic roots if he wanted. And in a large-scale battle in a forested region, he basically had the battlefield acting as a trap that would appear right from the ground and finish off his enemies.

Even if Kahn couldn't use any of these skills as of now because they needed huge reserves of World Energy... he was certain that they'd definitely become one of his top aces after he broke through.

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While Kahn was lost in his thoughts, Blackwall spoke to him.

"Master... I sense the same aura from this monster which I and Oliver did when we fought against the Caladrius." he said in a solemn tone.

Shocked!

Kahn was dumbfounded as soon as he heard Blackwall's words.

"Means this legendary rank creature was also mind-controlled into attacking the border just like Caladrius was.

What the hell is going on...." spoke Kahn with a flabbergasted expression.

Not just one but two Legendary rank monsters were forced to attack the borders of the monster tide hotspot location.

And the only thing he could conclude was that both these legendary rank monsters were just small pawns in the big game.

And regardless of their reasons... It was Kahn who had to deal with the aftermath since he was the Sovereign of this fiefdom.

He had no choice but to find the truth behind these two monster attacks on the borders. Because whoever was pulling the strings from behind the shadows... Kahn knew one thing for certain.

"Whoever or whatever is controlling these legendary rank monsters..." said Kahn with a serious expression.

"Is something we can't afford to mess with."

Chapter 432 - New Monarch

Not only Kahn but all the other generals and Omega had a somber expression at this moment. Because if Kahn's assumptions were right... they were fighting against someone they didn't know anything about even at this stage when the entire Verlassen fiefdom was controlled by them.

And that too after Kahn took care of 3 of the legendary rank monsters himself.

As if a high-ranked being or a creature that was many times stronger than even the legendary rank monster or even legitimate saints was intentionally targeting these regions by controlling them.

Nevertheless, the fact remained that they were sitting ducks while someone was aiming to cause a bloodbath across the fiefdom.

Since the legendary monsters were always the cause of the annual monster tide... Kahn getting rid of them one by one must have thwarted someone's plans so bad that they were forced to act and hence sent these creatures to invade and massacre millions of inhabitants of Verlassen.

"This won't do. We need to be ready and alert all the time. If there's another attack like this... then we won't be able to counterattack in time.

We don't even know who our enemy is." said Kahn as he gazed at all the subordinates.

"Master... I think we may have a lead." spoke Omega who had been silent till now.

"What... how?" asked Kahn.

"These two monsters were controlled into attacking the borders only after we got rid of the three legendary rank regional bosses.

I think the being controlling them detected their demise and only after that did the enemy start controlling the others and sent two of them to attack." spoke Omega with a serious expression.

"What I mean is... that all of them have one common factor.

They all belong to regions of the monster tide hotspots. So naturally... if there were to be another attack of a legendary monster after today..." said Omega.

But before he could continue, everyone else had a surprised expression as they came to understand what he was implying.

"Means the next attack will be done on the 6th hotspot. The final remaining region!" exclaimed Kahn.

Omega nodded in affirmation as he implied the possibility of their next clue's location.

For the next 1 hour, Kahn and the crew had a heated discussion amongst themselves as they decided on the next counter-strategy.

"Fine then. I agree. But remember... don't do anything unnecessary.

I too need some time to even fight properly.

For now, we should focus only on protecting our side rather than provoking that being." said Kahn as he confirmed their stand.

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Five hours later... the synthesis procedure finally finished and the afternoon suns in the sky had brightened the whole dilapidated forest region.

**BOOM!!**

A terrifyingly heavy aura spread across the 10 kilometers region as if a birth of a godly being had finally finished.

Even someone like Blackwall & Ceril who were at legendary rank felt this pressure restricting their movement.

Thud! Thud!

A loud noise of footsteps spread across 2 kilometers of forested region resounded as a 150 meter tall gigantic green creature with four legs and two arms came to be.

The body was mainly divided into two sections. One that had the four legs similar to a horse and the other being the upper body region with two giant arms.

Armin in his new Legendary Rank form had evolved into a completely new being.

Large and brightly illuminating light-blue colored vines ran across his wooden body while his chest had dozens of massive roots moving slowly like blood vessels.

His head was completely different than any creature Kahn had seen so far and the six eyes shone light blue.

This figure of Armin released a green aura that spread across the whole region and right before Kahn's eyes...

All the broken and shattered trees in the forested region were covered under this aura.

But before they could say anything...

Wheeze!

Wheeze!

All the trees started returning to their previous state and the green aura restored their physical state as if the entire forest was being recreated and reborn.

"System. Give me all of his details." commanded Kahn.

[Following are the statistics, abilities & skills of the subordinate named Armin :

Name : Armin

Species : Erdtree (Variant Yggdrasil)

Job : The Pathfinder (Legendary Class)

Rank : Legendary Rank

Level : 248

Strength : 4920

Agility : 3289

Dexterity : 10379

Defense : 4811

Mana : 18480

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Following are the newly acquired abilities :

Telepathy Link (SSS Rank)

Life Force Restoration (SSS Rank)

Roots of Nature (SSS Rank)

Nature Control (SSS Rank)

Monarch of the Forest (SAINT RANK) :

Allows the subordinate to control all plant life and wood elemental monsters, species and creatures telepathically as their supreme monarch.

Armin will have absolute control over their mind and physical bodies. He can even create new life forms and species belonging to wood elements based on his will.

Transmuting different life forms by using life force, and changing their physiological structure and functions can now be done by the subordinate named Armin.

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Following are the upgraded abilities & skills :

Flora & Fauna (SSS Rank) (Passive) :

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

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Atonement (SSS Rank) (Active) :

The subordinate can remove 10 status ailments & debuffs at once from allies present within 3 kilometers meter radius.

The range of the ability will rise with an increase in levels and rank.

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Restoration (SSS Rank) (Active) :

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

Note : This skill does not work on deceased allies.

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Guardian Spectre (SSS Rank) (Active) :

The subordinate can grant 4 times physical attack and defense buff to all the allies in a 2 kilometers radius using mana threads.

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Chain Heal (SSS Rank) (Active) :

The subordinate can heal up to 80 allies at once within a 5 kilometers radius.

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Elixir of Life (SAINT RANK) (Active) :

Allows the subordinates to instantly regenerate 90% of a single ally's health and physical wounds.

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Brewing (SSS Rank) (Passive) :

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

Subordinate can now change the inner structure and properties of the plants and herbs. Providing a desirable effect during Alchemy.

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Infusion (SSS Rank) (Passive) :

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

The potency of the final product will be doubled.

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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 1000 SS Rank mana cores or ores to successfully resurrect an ally in their peak state.

The higher ranked the target is, the more and higher-ranked source of mana will be needed.

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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.] reported the system.

Kahn only stood frozen on the spot... unable to believe the results.

Armin was no longer just a Healer or an Alchemist with no fighting skills. Rather he was...

The personification of Nature itself!

Chapter 433 - The Caretaker

As Kahn and the subordinates stood a few hundred meters away from the gigantic wood elemental general aka Armin in his Erdtree form... the green wave of aura washed over their bodies and all of them instantly felt a soothing and relaxing surge of energy running through their bodies.

Kahn felt like all the exhaustion he was going through because of the weakened state was slowly fading bit by bit.

Other than Ceril, who was an undead and basically repelled this wave of Life Force that was released by Armin... everyone else had an elated expression as if they received a damn good massage.

Rustle!

Rustle!

Crack!

But before any of them could react... the broken plants, splintered trees as well as the torn off roots started reattaching themselves to their split parts as if a form of suction force was pulling them back together.

And soon, a mild green aura ran across them while completely rejuvenating the branches, leaves and trunks.

Even the flowers started blooming again till the point the scenery of this battlefield changed into that of a tourist spot where multicolored and varieties of plant life had given a serene appearance to the whole region.

In just a minute, the two kilometers area was completely restored to its former state as if this wasn't a former battlefield but a picnic spot.

Although Kahn knew nothing about Life Force since he was neither a Healer nor an Alchemist... he could tell that an abundance of world energy was part of this life force.

Just that Armin's abilities allowed it to convert it into Life Force while other professions used it to either fight or create spells and formation.

Thud!

Thud!

The gigantic figure of Armin moved across the open places and he kept gazing around the 10 kilometer radius battlefield that was destroyed during the battle. Given his height, he saw nothing but absolute destruction made by Ceril during his battle with Ashokvatika.

He gazed downwards and looked at Ceril who stood along with the rest a few hundred meters away.

The next second, an archaic and domineering voice resounded in the two kilometers of area.

"Did you really have to destroy everything here? They too have lives and sentience." said Armin in a disapproving manner.

"Tch! What are you complaining about? I killed this thing and you're the one who benefited." replied Ceril as if he didn't feel anything.

"How careless. This entire region is filled with Dark Magic and Darkness element. It's very...." spoke Armin and continued in an exasperated voice

"Suffocating." he said.

"What?! What did you say, you overgrown tree?..." spoke Ceril in an angered voice.

"I'm just saying... if the traces aren't removed, this region will turn into barren land. And many mages and healers will be able to sense the presence as well.

You didn't do a thorough job." said Armin in his Erdtree form without any hesitation.



But before Ceril gave a comeback, Kahn interjected.

"Alright alright.. Stop it.

Let him do it. It's better this way." he said.

Because Dark Magic was forbidden in this Empire and the monster wave consisted of wood elemental creatures.

So leaving traces of dark magic and darkness element in this worn-down battlefield would raise unnecessary questions.

On top of it... Kahn had already merged the body with Armin so there was no trace left of the Ashokvatika either.

So if there was a battlefield filled with Dark magic and a wood elemental legendary rank monster was behind the attack at the border...

Wouldn't it mean that there were two legendary rank monsters who played a part in it?

Plus the massive 10 kilometer radius battlefield would confirm the fact that there was indeed a battle that was on a completely different scale.

So Kahn also felt the need to hide the happenings of this battle.

Soon, under Kahn's orders... Armin and Blackwall used their respective abilities related to controlling plant life and terrain manipulation to restore the whole 50 kilometers of region and Kahn in the meantime created new members of the legion.

By the evening, Kahn now had 500 thousand new subordinates as part of the legion, many of which were tree sentinels and those giants that were 50 meters in height alone. Compared to before... Kahn was now a complete powerhouse whose army was capable to fight against a million soldiers if he were to release all the subordinates from the Legion in an all-out war.

Meanwhile, Ceril had been flying around the region and absorbed all traces of dark magic spread across the battlefield.

And with all three of their collective efforts... the whole 50 kilometers region was restored to its former state; if not more lavish and tranquil. All the traces of the battle between two legendary monsters were cleansed to the point where one wouldn't even dare imagine that this region was attacked by a monster tide.

"Alright. Let's leave." spoke Kahn and their two warships returned to the main military headquarters of the Berawaa region.

Even now, the bloodied battlefield was yet to be cleared and thousands of dead bodies were still being collected by soldiers.

More than 30 thousand people had died this time and even the numbers were lesser than the Caladrius attack, the fact remained that there was a huge loss of life.

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The next day, the families of the martyrs were informed about the battle and how their family members who fought valiantly fought on the battlefield had sacrificed themselves for the motherland.

In the evening, Kahn held another announcement across the entire Verlassen fiefdom.

Everything about the battle was revealed to the masses. However, this time the narrative was different and so were the results.

Because Kahn declared that the main cause of this attack, a wood elemental legendary rank monster that could control wood elemental creatures ran away before they could even get there.

The military's response was quick this time and many lives were protected because of their bravery.

And it was the military of the Berawaa region who repelled the entire monster tide by themselves.

This way, Kahn didn't mention any of his involvement or the reinforcements he sent from the capital. And he also praised Commander Chetak and Victor Apopis who played a big part in fending off the enemy monsters.

This was a win that only the military needed and he didn't want any credit for it at all. So he told a white lie to the masses.

Kahn then returned to Aesir the next morning and lay down in his bed.

Armin, who reverted into his human form now had more archaic green tattoo-like runes spread across his body compared to before after his evolution.

"Start the Soul Reformation procedure. Heal my soul as quickly as you can. Because we don't have much time. We have to be ready..." spoke Kahn with a somber expression.

A determined expression appeared on his face as Kahn revealed the main target of his worries...

"To face an enemy we can't even see."

#### Chapter 434 - Long Awaited

For the next 2 weeks, a new routine for Kahn and the Generals started.

Unlike before, those areas that didn't have a semi-saint guardian such as the Hirvano region which was protected by the Starrk brothers after Kahn killed Commander Aswala.

Ceril was now the official commander of this region as he broke through to legendary rank and could control his aura to appear that of a semi-saint. Both Starrk brothers who were loyal to Kahn kept aiding him to the best of their abilities.

Blackwall was already the appointed guardian of the Kaldris region after Cassandra left for the capital. Under his strong leadership, this area was fortified and even a legendary rank monster wouldn't be able to do anything here again.

Jugram maintained the law enforcement and development sectors as the main figurehead. Whether it was constructing roads in a city or a village... building facilities for the needy as well as maintaining public order was his responsibility.

Omega handled the military chain of command as the second-highest authority after Kahn himself and even the other semi-saints commanders themselves had to make weekly reports to him.

Ronin as usual handled the information and defense ministry. He now had millions of people within the Verlassen fiefdom and thousand spread across the rest of the Rakos Empire under shell corporations and legit businesses. If he wanted any information or had to spread it... he now had enough manpower and resources to do this job swiftly.

Oliver who returned a few days ago and now seemed even stronger and domineering was left in charge of the air force of the fiefdom and he also handled the transportation department done by flying ships.

Armin handled all the matters related to provisions, medical and pharmaceutical companies under his management as the chairman of the Hippocrates association.

Albestros, as usual, was the main figurehead of the weaponry, artillery and industrial development sector. Without his approval of quality checking, no new product or even a new company in this field would get to start a business as he was the head of the Hephaestus association.

Sirius oversaw all the monetary and assets department of Seven Deadly Sins as the representative of Zeus himself and had become the main treasurer.

As for Kahn himself, he controlled the Finance Ministry, Education Ministry, Public Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture, and Trading sectors such as the imports and exports departments.

All of these sectors greatly affected the economy and living standards of the population. He established new systems and departments such as the regarding the families of the soldiers, the one he promised during his speech a couple of weeks ago.

The reason why he let all the generals take charge of different sectors was because this was also going to be their learning experience if they were to serve Kahn in the long term.

Because not all battles were fought with fists and weapons. Some were done using your mind and money.

Given their capabilities... he was certain that no one would disappoint him either because they inherited some of his qualities.

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During the day, Armin would deal with the affairs related to Hippocrates and his personal Ayurveda company and at night, with now upgraded stats and rank, he began Kahn's healing every night when he was sleeping.

The Soul Reformation skill needed Kahn to be in statist so Armin could slowly recover the damage done to his soul after Kahn offered 10% of it in order to save Cassandra Mikealson.

Their new routine and lifestyle carried on for 3 weeks.

But the very next week, all of them were gathered in the main throne hall as if there was a grand ceremony.

Albestros and Sirius finally arrived in the throne hall and following them... were hundreds of Covenant soldiers. All of them pushed and carried big caches and huge chests filled with heavy objects.

"They're ready." spoke Albestros who had been working on a particular task given by Kahn a month ago.

Soon, the covenant soldiers started taking the objects out of them as Kahn and the gang finally received their new gears.

Katanas, Swords, Bows, Scepters, Maces, Daggers, Axes, Giantswords... one by one, a plethora of weapons were revealed to them.

But this wasn't the end.

Soon, everyone received custom-made armors, clothes and accessories perfectly fitting their bodies, and appearance which were also very convenient in case they were to engage in a fight.

All the armors and new weapons available were made from none other than the body of the legendary rank Invimarak monster, the very first legendary rank monster they hunted.

Even the weapons were forged using the extremely strong bones of the creature that Kahn and his forces barely managed to kill by using distractions, surprise attacks and a mythical rank rope named Rudra.

Kahn himself received his new black longcoat with gray outlines and patterns over the sleeves. The inner coat, shirt and pants were designed to suit royalty while the black boots were sound free.

This entire set was crafted by using the skin of the Invimarak which had natural magical and physical damage resistance.

Kahn now looked like a strong, reliable and extremely handsome prince of an empire while subliminally asserting his mysterious and domineering personality.

Based on the appearance... All Kahn needed was an authentic katana and he'd look like a certain Son of Sparda who was always motivated and wanted more power.

The generals on the other end had clothing suitable to their appearance as well as armor and weapons that were made from the bones of the ginormous Invimarak.

Even a small dagger made from it was stronger than a Mythril sword. And on top of it, Albestros had used his skills as an Artificer to be able to have elemental affinity and attack skills that were suitable for every single one of them.

For the next few hours, Albestros performed the Blood-bind ritual for all of them just like he once did with Kahn when he created Lucifer and Drakos Armor for him back in Flavot City.

"What do you think?... Satisfied?" asked the peak grandmaster blacksmith Albestros.

"Yes. But I kind of expected more." spoke Kahn honestly.

"Tch! Looking down on me, are you?"

Well... let me show why I'm the number one blacksmith of the entire Rakos Empire." he said with a devilish smirk and gave a command.

"Activate Pendragon Formation!"

Chapter 435 - The Formation

As soon as Albestros Winston, the current most popular and respected peak grandmaster blacksmith of the Rakos Empire gave his command, Kahn and all the subordinates present in the room felt incorporeal energy binding their bodies and mind together.

RUSTLE!

BOOM!

A sonic boom released from all of their bodies and at the same time, various multicolored archaic runes and magical formations were activated all of a sudden.

Each one of them had their armors and new weapons equipped that were customized to fit their body build, weight and physical convenience when fighting.

But now... they all felt a sudden surge of energy emitting out of their armors and weapons as if it was their own strength which they didn't even know about.

All of them including Kahn could sense that their physical attributes were raised by at least twice while the runes on the weapons released tangible blue threads that connected to the other party's.

[System, scan the clothes and weapons.] commanded Kahn.

[Scanning in progress. Please wait for 5 minutes.] replied the system.

"What is this? I feel like all my physical attributes have almost tripled." spoke Jugram.

After Kahn, he had the highest attack buff skills so he could instantly notice the changes.

"Not only that. But I feel my mana increasing by twice as well." spoke Ceril.

"I feel a sense of inkling in between all of us. As if we're bound by something." said Armin.

"I can feel it. It's not us... but the armors and weapons we're using that are binding us." said Oliver, the most perceptive of them all.

Albestros then nodded in affirmation and spoke in a cheerful tone.

"This is my latest and also my greatest creation so far.

It was something I had been working on for years but never had suitable materials or enough quantity to successfully forge these many pieces in order to actually make it possible."

"If not for that legendary monster Invimarak's massive body you brought me... none of this would've been possible." he said.

"What do you mean?" asked Kahn with a curious gaze.

"This is an ancient artificer formation that connects all the armors, clothes and weapons you're wearing and shares the user's physical and magical attributes and mana.

The number of targets can be up to 10 at maximum. And there is one main condition. I think you can guess." replied Albestros.

"It must require the same base ingredient or material." suddenly, Omega spoke with a thoughtful expression on his face.

"Correct! You need something made of the same material and elemental affinity.

And the hide which I used to make your clothes as well as the bones and various body parts I used to make the armors and weapons are the main constituents that are channeling your strength and mana and sharing it with each other.

And this conduction is being carried through various archaic runes and artifacts that are part of your clothes, accessories and weapons.

I have used various techniques and best of my skills to achieve this effect." revealed the old man.

"But there's more... right?" asked Ronin.

"Yes. Not only will it greatly enhance your physical and magical attributes, but also reduce the damage you receive given the properties of the Invimarak.

That creature could absorb physical and magical damage and convert it into a form of energy that enabled it to become stronger the more damage it received." said Albestros.

"Wait... doesn't that mean we will have too many buffs and protection at the same time?" asked Kahn.

Albestros nodded with gave another smug expression.

"It's just not that." he said.

The next second, he touched Ceril's mage robes and put a hole in it using his personal damascus knife.

"What is this?! Why did you damage my..."

But before he could even continue...

The ripped part restored itself in front of his eyes.

"All of these clothes and armors will use your mana and world energy to repair themselves and restore their material state in case they're damaged." he said. But this wasn't the end of his showing-off session.

"Close your eyes. And think about changing the size and colors of your armors." he commended.

Under his instructions, all of them closed their eyes and did exactly as they were told.

Omega's armor turned from gray to silver color while Blackwall's turned from yellow to brown.

Armin's light armor changed from blue to green and Ceril's white mage robes turned to purple.

The same occurred to Oliver, Jugram, and Ronin whose clothes changed to sky blue, scarlet red and pitch black respectively.

Not only that, but they could also increase their size as per will in order to get more comfortable.

"What the hell is this?! How is that possible?" asked Kahn with a baffled expression.

Albestros on the other end was just basking in the gazes full of surprise as he displayed his unparalleled talent as a blacksmith.

Just then, the system informed Kahn.

[Scanning complete.

Pendragon Formation detected.

All the targets sharing the linking runes and artifacts through the clothes, armors and weapons will get a buff of additional physical stats by 3 times and magical effectiveness by 2 times.

At least 5 of the targets should be present for this formation to become active.

The current range of this formation is only 20 kilometers radius.

The range shall increase based on the levels and ranks of all the targets.

The mean average of the levels and ranks for the targets will increase the range and buff effects under this Archaic Formation.] reported the system.

[Damn! I need to learn Blacksmithing and Artificing as well.

I don't understand a single thing about how he does it but it will definitely turn out very useful in the future.] said Kahn to himself as a sense of urgency arose in his mind.

Because whatever Albestros did to make such magnificent sets of clothes, armors and weapons; all of which were many times better than even epic rank gear sets, was something he never thought of even in his wildest dreams.

Pendragon formation was basically enough to turn a first stage saint comparable to a second stage saint in terms of physical attributes and mana stats.

And with their own skillset and abilities, one would be able to fight an enemy that was a rank above their own.

And the potential to buff effects grow as all of their individual strengths grew together was an incredible skill effect.

"Now think about summoning your clothes and letting go of your armors." spoke Albestros in a coy tone.

But no one dared to question the old man and followed his orders.

In the next second, the armors from their bodies turned ethereal and soon, they were replaced by the new set of clothes in an instant. As if there was no longer a need to change clothes at all.

Kahn looked at Albestros and asked.

"Where's my armor? And you didn't make me greatsword either."

"Tch! Ignorant fool!

Lucifer and Drakos Armor are already comparable to legendary rank set together. You don't need this. Just the clothes should be fine.

Besides, they'll get stronger just like these sets after you breakthrough to higher ranks.

Don't trade a diamond for shiny pieces of glass." reprimanded the old man.

"Alright. But then what about the extra sets?" he asked.

"Yeah, yeah. I made extra pairs of all the armors and weapons based on your physique.

But you're a swordsman, why do you need these belonging to other professions?" he queried.

"Just to be safe. They can be useful as a great cover or when I'm in disguise." quickly replied Kahn.

The main reason he asked for each set based on different jobs and weapons was because in the future, he was going to get all of his weaponry and combat techniques to higher ranks.

At that time, he'd need appropriate gears so he took the opportunity and overworked the old man a bit for more gains.

However, everyone present in the room came to acknowledge that Albestros was indeed worthy of the title of No. 1 blacksmith.

Because achieving such a feat was extremely hard.

Even if there were certain conditions they met... creating such well-crafted weapons and armors which were twice effective than an epic rank set was indeed praiseworthy.

He had outdone himself and everyone was left in awe of his mastery as a craftsman.

And soon, Albestros explained that all clothes and weapons had abilities that can be upgraded. And all it needed was world energy and mana as a source to increase efficiency and range.

Some weapons could even be transformed into higher ranks with the right forging materials of high quality if they had them on hand.

Currently, Albestros was restricted because of his own ranks and couldn't create a Legendary Armor and Weapon set because he was restricted on the amount of mana and world energy he could infuse into them. Otherwise, the effects would be even better.

But no one had any complaints as this was already an unbelievable feat.

Kahn also understood that even without using his skills, Kahn's longcoat was already better than most of the epic rank armor sets.



And it was extremely flexible and could get stronger if Kahn broke through and provided more world energy to it. Plus the ability to change color and size was helpful because it'd help in a perfect disguise as well.

Thanks to the incredible work of Albestros...

Kahn, Omega and the Generals became...

Unkillable!

Chapter 436 - Even After Death

Another week passed after Albestros gave a tremendously overwhelming gift in the form of weapons, clothes and armors that were topped with the Pendragon Formation, the archaic artificing formation that gave them the biggest buff as a team in large-scale battles.

At the time of the morning in the Kaldris region, which was now under the command of Blackwall as the highest authority; Kahn and his warship arrived at the main burial site for the military soldiers.

This was the official graveyard for all the fallen soldiers who fought in the battle against the legendary Caladrius monster.

And more than a hundred thousand bodies were buried here, each with a proper tomb of their own.

This gravesite spread across 30 kilometers and was divided into four sections that could be accessed from different entrances. Facilities such as magic vehicles and carriages were provided free of cost to the family members of the martyrs who would often come to visit their members of the family who sacrificed themselves to protect their motherland.

This time, Kahn had come with over three hundred thousand covenant soldiers to act as his gatekeepers. And under Blackwall's command, the Burial Site was closed off for a few days in the name of maintenance and improvements.

Thousands of normal guards were replaced by the covenant soldiers who were equipped with high-quality armors and weapons and a few hundred flying ships also roamed in the sky in order to keep a lookout so no one would know what was happening inside.

Finally, the sealed vast gravesite that had over a hundred thousand dead soldiers buried in the thirty-kilometer wide region... Kahn commanded the covenant soldiers who were spread across the gravesite in all four sections.

"Start digging. And gather the bodies in the transportation vehicles." spoke Kahn as he relayed his commands through a transmission artifact.

Soon, the massive region was filled with sounds of ground getting dug in using various equipment and then hundreds of vehicles carrying the bodies towards Kahn's location.

As for the place where he resided, no one other than Ronin and his squad of thousands of assassin subordinates dressed as normal living people were allowed.

As hours passed by, they kept bringing thousands of bodies in each batch and placed them within one kilometer radius around Kahn who was still in a weakened state.

"Awaken." spoke Kahn and used the King of the Dead skill to begin synthesis divine ability and created new subordinates.

And finally, when the two suns set in the evening, Kahn had successfully created more than 50 thousand new subordinates.

But unlike most of the time, these weren't just some monsters but actual soldiers from different fighter classes and professions, belonging to different races and species.

As for why was Kahn acting like a hypocrite who gave a moving speech for the deceased soldiers and now desecrating the dead soldiers who died to protect the normal citizens of the fiefdom... only he knew the reason.

"Even in death, they will serve me and their motherland." spoke Kahn after he was finally done.

After that, under Ronin's guidance, all the members of the assassins squad spread across this vast gravesite and used the epic rank Restoration Artifacts.

These were the same artifacts that Ceril once used during his grave robbing days as Loki when Kahn and the company still lived in Rukon District of the capital Rathna.

And after they used the restoration artifacts, the whole site was restored to its former state in just a couple of hours. So in case the families of the dead were to come to visit them, no one could find that there were no bodies inside the tombs.

The next day, Kahn visited the burial site of the Berawaa region where more than 30 thousand soldiers died during the battle against the forces of the legendary Ashokvatika that was killed by Ceril in the end and helped Armin to become a legendary rank general.

Kahn then followed the same procedure and ended up making 15 thousand new soldiers as part of the legion and got rid of all the traces.

On their way back to the capital Aesir, only Kahn and Ronin were in the main cockpit of the warship.

"Master... may I ask why are you doing this?"

Isn't that risky?" asked Ronin with a curious countenance.

"They're the contingency plan." replied Kahn who was donned in his new and comfortable black and gray attire which had a white shirt, a black tie and an undercoat. The longcoat itself had two coattails. And the fingerless black gloves gave him a look of a seasoned warrior who was ready to fight at any given moment.

His appearance looked like royalty who was on official business.

The main reason why Kahn waited for the first 3 weeks was because the matter had to be settled after the attacks of both legendary creatures and the families of the Dead would visit the gravesites in thousands for the first few weeks.

So using the dead bodies to create new subordinates wasn't a good idea back then when everyone was on alert.

But he had to act within this time range because unlike Ceril, he couldn't awaken the completely decomposed bodies or something that was nothing but bones.

Luckily, the bodies in the world of Vantrea started fully decaying after 4 weeks since it took some time for the mana that basically made the bodies of all living beings in this world to break down on its own and completely dissipate.

So this was the best window for Kahn to act.

And as for the main reason why he was desecrating the dead again... because he had big plans for them.

Something he couldn't reveal already before it was time.

Kahn and his entourage reached the capital without any worries or complications after he successfully completed the main objective.

However....

The very next morning, Ronin received a transmission.

"We have got a problem!" spoke Ronin as he telepathically communicated with Kahn who was still sleeping in his bedroom.

"What is it?" asked Kahn as he was annoyed to death and cuddled his pillow like an adult who did not want to go their job.

But what Ronin said completely woke him from the half-asleep state in seconds.

"A massacre!"

Chapter 437 - Spreading Rumors

After Ronin informed Kahn about the matter at hand, the latter was left baffled. It felt like there was no end to troubles coming their way and he would not even have a single day of rest.

"What the hell happened now?" asked Kahn as he got out of the bed and quickly entered the bathroom to freshen up. Given the sound of matter at hand, he felt like soon he'd not even get a moment of rest.

"It's the Berawaa region again. And this time... the site in discussion is the border itself.

Just 20 kilometers close to the place where Ceril killed the Ashokvatika, there was another battle last night.

And a squadron of 20 thousand soldiers was ambushed by more than 50 thousand forest monsters.

However... all of them were killed until the other squadrons came to look for them." reported Ronin.

Kahn had his eyes wide open after hearing the report.

"What the fuck?! How's that possible? They were too close to the military outposts and I'm sure they must have had the tools to ask for reinforcements as well.

Are those dumbfucks sleeping instead of guarding the border?!" exclaimed Kahn in an enraged tone.

Just yesterday, he was there to visit... more like harvest bodies in a different part of this region. But that very night after he had returned to Aesir, was another battle that led to 20 thousand more deaths.

To Kahn... this was going to be a detrimental issue because not too long ago, over 30 thousand soldiers had already died on the same border. And with this new death count, the number added to 50 thousand in total.

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After 4 hours... Kahn, Ronin and Jugram arrived at the main military headquarters close to the outposts. Since this matter involved military affairs, the Hell Berserker general who controlled this sector as the main figurehead also tagged along.

Commander Chetak, the semi-saint centaur knight who guarded this region met Kahn after his arrival.

"What the fuck were you doing? This massacre happened within the 50 kilometers range of your borders.

How the hell am I going to explain this to people?!" shouted Kahn as he released his deathly aura on the semi-saint.

The latter had goosebumps all over his body and shivered in fear. Yet he mustered up the courage and spoke.

"My Lord, As I reported to sir Ronin already... more than 50 thousand monsters suddenly attacked a squadron of soldiers who were guarding the entrance of the hotspot at night through the forested region as you ordered us back then.

Apart from a few hundred... rest of the twenty thousand armed and well-equipped soldiers still died in this ambush.

But the most disturbing part is that we didn't even receive a distress signal or any sort of message at all despite having all the equipment and artifacts needed for it." iterated the commander.

"But surprisingly... I just received word that the news of this attack, which isn't even known to other outposts, is spreading too fast in our main cities and towns.

It's like we have a mole in our ranks." he said in a jittery tone.

"Bloody hell..." cursed Kahn.

After that, Kahn and Ronin went to the battlefield that was surrounded by thousands of soldiers.

Too many dead bodies spread across the region and there were also the same types of monster species who attacked during the battle against Ashokvatika.

Kahn had a confused expression on his face at the moment.

[Ceril already killed the legendary rank monster so these many numbers suddenly gathering and attacking the soldiers patrolling the border shouldn't be possible.] thought Kahn.

Because all these monsters who died during the battle with the squadron belong to different species and no way would they be able to communicate with each other unless controlled by something or someone like in the previous battle.

Kahn then quickly activated Hunter's Intent and all of his newly gained skills that could help him in detecting the clues, examining the terrain, and finding any oddities.

After spending an hour exploring the various sections of this wide battlefield... Kahn noticed that there was indeed a clash on a big scale.

But there was one odd thing.

That all of the monster groups didn't come from a single direction. Rather, they came from three different directions based on the footprints away from the battlefield.

Kahn then gave Ronin a look.

The next moment Ronin disappeared from the spot.

"Seal the area. No one is allowed to come here without my permission. No one!" commanded Kahn.

Commander Chetak then followed the orders and soon, the military sealed all entrances and access paths to this region.

Kahn returned to the main military headquarters situated in the closest city.

But by the evening, Omega sent him a message.

"Master, the news of the recent attack and the death of soldiers has spread across the entire fiefdom.

Some say that our entire security was a joke.

That it's your incompetence that led to the monster getting away last time.

And now, all these soldiers dying despite you having promised to take necessary measures is also your fault.

Even with the underworld in our control... we were not able to smother the news.

From what I gathered using our people from Seven Deadly Sins...

Those who spread this information in all the main cities and towns of the fiefdom do not originate from here.

And most of them are from the capital." he reported.

"But for the incident that should be secret even to many military soldiers and the government... it's as if... " he said but before he could continue, Kahn interjected.

"It's as if they already knew what was going to happen. Because by no means would anyone be ready to spread such news among more than two hundred million people so quickly." spoke Kahn with a shocked expression.

"It's as if this whole massacre of the soldiers itself..." said Kahn as he spoke in a grim tone.

"All of it was planned!"

#### Chapter 438 - Pre-planned Massacre

The next day, news about the massacre spread like wildfire across not just the Verlassen fiefdom, but the entire Rakos Empire. And many rumors about Kahn's incompetent management as well as hollow promises become the topic of everyone's attention.

And as a consequence of the public outrage, many cities and towns had public causing a riot while demanding answers from the officials.

Even the Covenant soldiers who maintained law enforcement had to step in and use violence against the crowd to stop them from destroying public properties and burning goods and transport vehicles under the pretext of this revolt.

Kahn, who still resided in the main military headquarters of the Berawaa region since yesterday was receiving reports after reports about these incidents throughout the Verlassen fiefdom.

Despite having absolute control over the fiefdom in every aspect... he had failed to predict and even control the situation and things got out of hand before he could come up with a proper strategy.

Even the riots that were consequently happening seemed like well-organized and pre-planned incidents given how suddenly hundreds of thousands of citizens gathered together and were causing chaos.

Something like that could not be done on a fluke and needed a lot of money and resources to carry on effectively. It was as if the massacre of the soldiers was already set into motion from weeks ahead.

But if Kahn decided to put the crowd creating the disturbances behind the bars to maintain the public order... he was certain that even doing it would only add fuel to the fire and will be blown out of proportion.

His hidden enemies were already 10 steps ahead and properly had contingency plans of their own. And if Kahn reacted impulsively... his entire rule would fall apart as he would soon be labeled as nothing but a merciless tyrant.

Swaying the opinion of the public was as easy as making a toddler believe that Santa was real.

So Kahn was currently walking on the thin edge of the sword. One wrong move and he'd bleed to death.

And the worst part of it all was that he had no strategy to counterattack the situation at hand either.

Finally, at the time of the noon...

"Master, I'm done on my end." spoke Ronin after he suddenly appeared in the main office where Kahn was seated across a large table.

The following moment, he pointed his fist towards the vacant space in the middle of the large room and released something out of his space rings.

Thud!

Clang!

One after another, big blocks of metallic boxes came out of the space ring and soon, a heap of these objects formed in front of the duo.

"These are..."

"Yes, master. All of these are rare rank isolation artifacts. And most importantly...

They're part of a massive formation." spoke Ronin as he started at hundreds of isolation artifacts placed in the middle.

"And not only that... these are used by adventurers and professional hunters to trap large groups of monsters." explained the rogue general.

"What else did you find?" asked Kahn.

"Thousands of the assassins from my group searched the inner regions of the forest. And we know one thing for sure.

All of the monster groups were attacked by someone very strong and then led toward the squadron stationed in that area.

But even so... what I don't understand is that this should've been done by at least a thousand people to successfully lure in so many monsters from different directions.

But there are no traces of prior attacks. As if all of them were lured at the same time.

And in all three directions, we found a similar type of destruction caused by exactly the same patterns of attack skills left on trees, ground and some boulders." revealed Ronin.

Kahn then gave a thoughtful expression and after a minute of thinking, he spoke again.

"It is possible if the instigator used teleportation scrolls that have a range of a few hundred kilometers.

Since the distance between these monster groups is less than a hundred kilometers, it's possible to quickly teleport back to back and lead them by the nose at the same time.

And as you said... it is the work of a single individual. Because to successfully lead them to a designated location, the big group would only become a liability." he said after his own analysis.

"But master... to do that..." said Ronin but he was stopped by Kahn midway.

"Let's not jump to conclusions. We can't blame anyone without a thorough investigation.

As things stand... any false accusation would only bring more trouble for me." he iterated.

"And as for these isolation artifacts... it explains why the more than 20 thousand soldiers couldn't even send a distress signal or ask for reinforcements.

They were already isolated from the outside world before the monsters even attacked.

Hence, they couldn't inform anyone and no one also heard the noises from the battlefield.

Someone meticulously led them to their deaths." said Kahn as he clasped his palms and placed his chin on them.

"Still, the monsters were most likely to fight among themselves first given how they're driven by instincts.

So it is most likely that someone else attacked the military ranks first and broke their formations in order to let the monster hordes who came later invade the formation and then kill the soldiers.

And given the situation... it would seem that it was done by multiple strong enemies who should be at least Peak Grandmasters. And they'd need a dozen of them." said Ronin from his inspection of the battlefield.

"You're right. But all the peak grandmasters in the fiefdom are all accounted for. And we didn't have any visitors from outside of the fiefdom either.

Otherwise, we would've found it out one way or another since this is our turf.

So the attacker must be someone who was already present here and then acted at the right time." spoke Kahn as he hypothesized.

"I agree. Besides, given how the spread of the news and the reaction of the citizens is oddly extreme... I feel like there is a big force behind this incident.

And resourceful as well as experienced enough to execute it right under our noses." said Ronin as he too was now familiar with politics and espionage tactics because of the books he often read in free time.

"I thought so as well. But it doesn't change the fact that whoever is behind all of this...

Those fuckers killed so many innocent people just to besmirch my name as the Sovereign." replied Kahn.

"Given how we have the control over the biggest harvesting region of the mana cores, ores and monster resources... we simply have too many enemies.

And I can't even trust any of our supposed allies either.

Everyone and their stance towards me are questionable at this point." spoke Kahn since he wasn't a fool to jump to conclusions.

"Yet... there is one big clue they've left behind." he said.

"What is it?" asked Ronin with a surprised expression.

Kahn then told him the only possible lead they had and how to use it to find the main culprit as well as the force backing them.

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ONE WEEK LATER.

The situation regarding the happenings of the massacre of soldiers had worsened in the past few days.

The number of people who were voicing their opinions against Kahn and his entire management from all the sectors of the government and military kept rising by millions with each passing day.



The once savior and the benevolent sovereign had become the most hated person throughout the Verlassen fiefdom and the rest of the Rakos Empire.

Public opinion about Kahn had plummeted drastically and almost the whole situation became the hot topic of everyone's day-to-day life.

A barrage of rumors spread among the masses and somehow, new incidents of Kahn exploiting his position and authority as the ruler were brought to the ears of all the citizens, military personnel, and government officials throughout the empire.

Yet Kahn, the center of everyone's hatred hadn't released any official statement as if he was indeed guilty of all the crimes that came to light recently.

On the 9th day, Kahn finally released an official announcement throughout the fiefdom.

He declared that there'd be a memorial ceremony at night. And all the fallen soldiers would be given an honorable farewell. And the whole ceremony will be broadcasted throughout the fiefdom in real-time.

This announcement got everyone's attention real quick as those who wanted answers felt like Kahn would address the issue by himself.

When the night finally came, in front of thousands of people related to the families of soldiers who were either crying, cursing and wallowing in pain for losing their family... Kahn's figure appeared.

But throughout the ceremony, Kahn did nothing but stand with a dejected face in front of people and the whole fiefdom who was watching.

But unbeknownst to millions of people watching this whole scenario from their respective cities and towns....

**BOOM!!**

A loud explosion filled the surroundings of a devastated battlefield that was filled with blistering heat. And as the smoke from the burning trees dispersed...

A figure of a disheveled and bleeding man was revealed.

Tap!

Tap!

"I finally found you... you fucking bastard."

Another man clad in a black and gray longcoat who slowly walked towards the former spoke with a domineering voice as his murderous aura spread across the whole battlefield...

"I'm not going to kill you." spoke the latter and continued in a grim voice...

"But I'm gonna make you wish that you were dead."

Chapter 439 - Catching The Culprit

In the burning battlefield which had hundreds of crevices and ground that looked like a stream of magma ran through it... stood a three-meter tall human berserker warrior in red armor and a giantsword in his right hand.

But on the other end of the 5-kilometer-wide forested region which was thoroughly destroyed at this point since a life and death battle ended just a minute ago; lay a man amongst the broken tree trunks while his entire body was heavily injured.

Despite being a warrior of a higher rank, this man was completely beaten to a pulp by the peak grandmaster warrior in front of him.

Tap!

Tap!

"I finally found you... you fucking bastard."

Another man clad in a black and gray longcoat who slowly walked towards the former spoke with a domineering voice as his murderous aura spread across the whole battlefield...

"I'm not going to kill you." spoke the latter and continued in a grim voice...

"But I'm gonna make you wish that you were dead."

Declared the man. But the expression on the face of the former was nothing but full of surprises.

"How... How are you here? I saw you at the center of the memorial ceremony just a few minutes ago." he said while wiping off blood from his mouth with whatever strength he had left in his body.

The man in black and gray longcoat aka Kahn Salvatore looked at the culprit of the incident regarding the massacre of twenty thousand soldiers... there was nothing but dread and contempt in his eyes.

Yet, he didn't seem to be bothered by the question of the main instigator.

At this moment, Kahn recalled what happened eight days ago and how everything led to this moment.

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\*FLASHBACK\*

8 DAYS AGO.

While Kahn and Ronin were discussing, Jugram was in charge of dealing with the aftermath of the massacre and had thousands of people under him sort out the dead bodies and carry them to the mortuary.

Meanwhile, Kahn was brainstorming to catch the real culprit.

And after he deduced the only clue they had at hand... he made a plan with Ronin.

There weren't any clues left behind, to begin with. Even the isolation artifacts didn't help because Ronin could track down their origin within the whole fiefdom.

However, the one possible clue had answers to all of his questions. And thus Kahn placed all his bets on it.

He explained to Ronin why he came to this conclusion...

Reason no. 1....

To kill so many people and properly lure out monsters... one needed to know not only the whereabouts of the monster hordes situated in the forested region but also the location of the military squadron.

And the squadron of twenty thousand soldiers was stationed there right after Ceril killed Ashokvatika and Kahn ordered Commander Chetak to post soldiers in the inner region in case the monsters attacked the border again.

So that way, they'd be prepared this time and the squadron would stall for time till all of their forces gathered.

So if someone already didn't know the schedule, they would not be able to plan the whole ambush at all since they'd have to set these traps before the military even formed their encampment there.

So other than the top military officers in command, no one would actually know where the forces were scheduled to be stationed.

Reason no. 2...

Given the situation about how a powerful force was backing the culprit and how quickly the news and rumors spread across the Rakos Empire...

Kahn knew for sure that it was one of the top 3 noble factions that were responsible.

And here too, he had his suspicions.

Pureblood factions no longer had any enmity with him because Allister Mor Vandereich, the faction leader himself had given his word that he will not interfere in Kahn's rule via Ezekiel Nabi who came to visit him a couple of months ago.

Neutral Faction on the other hand had actually benefited after the incident with Cassandra's heroic deeds during the battle with the legendary Caladrius that helped them as well as the Mikealson Clan gain a lot of respect among the masses of the empire.

And that's why Kahn got the first clue about where to look.

"Could it be them?" asked Kahn as he shortlisted the candidates.

"Most likely so." said Ronin.

"We cannot declare that it was their faction. They will simply shirk away the responsibility like last time when they put the whole blame on someone else acting on their own accord.

And any direct accusation would turn into an open challenge.

They have bigger forces, more manpower and before I can even do anything... they'd bury the matter or even say that I'm blaming them because of my personal grudge.

I'm completely outperformed and outmatched in every aspect." spoke Kahn with a somber expression.

"Means the only way we can prove it is by catching the culprit first and then make them talk.

Otherwise, we won't even have a chance to resolve this mess and people will keep blaming you.

With that... the public support will be gone in a few weeks. And your reign might come in danger." said Ronin as he thought of the possible outcomes.

"And that's why... we need to set a bait.

A bait the main culprit can't afford to ignore." spoke Kahn and for the following hours... they came up with an easy yet very effective plan.

-----

On the morning of the present day...

Kahn and the Generals announced the whole thing about the memorial ceremony for the victims of the massacre.

However... They also spread a rumor among the military ranks and normal population that Kahn had found something suspicious about the massacre and was going to reveal it during the ceremony that was to be broadcasted to the entire fiefdom.

Kahn then quickly returned to the present moment as he spoke to the main culprit who lured those monsters and trapped the soldiers using the isolation artifacts.

"If you lot wanted me out of the way... you should've tried to kill me directly." he said.

"Do the lives of common people really not matter to your noble factions to the point where you won't even bother killing thousands of innocent people just to defame me?" asked Kahn in an exasperated tone.

"Anyways... you fuckers have crossed the line.

So I'll give everyone a grand show. One that would make your entire faction weep tears of blood.

And you'll help me do that. Won't you..." spoke Kahn and put his hands on the bleeding shoulder of the culprit.

He gave a benign smile and revealed the name of the murderer who killed thousands of innocent soldiers...

"Victor."

Chapter 440 - Falling into the Trap

1 HOUR AGO.

As the public broadcast started in the central city of the Berawaa region where the memorial ceremony was being carried out. Thousands of people marched with a somber expressions while carrying big candles and torches in their hands.

On the memorial site, Kahn, Omega, Blackwall, Oliver and Ceril had gathered along with the other government officials and military officers to give their respect to the fallen.

After an hour, the ceremony ended while the broadcast continued where Kahn and the others were still carrying out their duties.

Just then... Victor Apopsis, the halfbreed demonkin semi-saint scythe warrior left the ceremony saying that he was done with his part.

-----

50 kilometers away from the central city of the Berawaa region, over a dozen warriors belonging to different professions and ranks were gathered in a deep and silent jungle.

Swoosh!

"You're here, Lord Victor." spoke a Mithrans spear warrior. Soon, all the others among this group bowed toward the demonkin who just arrived with respect.

"Yeah... I just left using a transportation scroll. I thought that Salvatore had gathered something incriminating against us.

But that fool seems too timid. Haha!" spoke Victor with an elated expression.

"Why, yes. Of course!

He is probably still shaken by the fact that he couldn't find any clue about the massacre.

Maybe he doesn't even know that the massacre was actually a planned one. Haha!" said an elven woman who seemed to be a master rank halberd warrior.

"Still, none of us could've done it without your help, lord Victor.

Although we successfully operated the isolation artifacts from a distance... if not for you leading those monster hordes towards the garrisons... none of this would be possible." spoke an old thrall archer.

"Hey, hey! Don't forget that it was also lord Victor who successfully attacked and broke through the line of defense in all four directions.

Otherwise, those mindless monsters wouldn't have been able to break through their formations easily. It would have taken a lot of time and maybe they would have managed to send a distress signal.

It is all thanks to our powerful lord Victor that we successfully managed to carry out the operation." said a wolfkin mage amongst the group as he was doing a great job at bootlicking.

Victor on the other hand had a prideful expression on his face as if this was something praiseworthy.

"Hah! That lowlife commoner bastard was acting all tough and mighty because he won the competition.

He dared to disrespect me on several occasions.

This shall teach him a lesson." said Victor with a tone full of disdain.

"That peasants like them live only to serve the powerful.

After this incident gets blown out of proportion... it won't even take a month before the government from the capital calls for official impeachment." he said with a smile.

"Yes, Lord Victor. With Kahn Salvatore gone and all of our people who already infiltrated government and military, it won't even take long before Verlassen fiefdom becomes our domain.

In a way, him taking over as the Sovereign has greatly helped us. He took out all of our enemies during his reign and now we will reap the rewards." said the mage again.

"The Pureblood and Neutral faction hit their own feet with an axe by allying themselves with him.

The faction council and lord faction leader are indeed foresighted. They used his Savior of the Commoners act against himself.

This will be the perfect revenge against him for killing commander Aswala and defaming our Demi-Human faction." spoke Victor as he reveled in his achievement.

But unbeknownst to all these people celebrating their victory... a black shadow suddenly escaped from Victor's own shadow.

[Master, I'm done.] spoke Ronin.

The rogue general had been hiding under Victor's shadow since the ceremony started.

And under Kahn's orders... the subordinate with the best assassination skills was recording the whole conversation.

BOOM!!

A frightening aura spread across this forested land and suddenly, Kahn exited out of the True Dimension.

Thud!

Jugram jumped out of Kahn's shadow.

"Alright... All the rats have gathered.

Time to play Cat & Mouse."

-----

Kahn had planned this simple yet effective move to confirm Victor as the main perpetrator of the incident.

And the one present at the memorial ceremony wasn't Kahn but his doppelganger.

Although Kahn was certain that only Victor fit all the criteria...

Rather than arresting him and forcing a confession out of him... Kahn wanted the truth to come out of Victor's mouth voluntarily.

So they deliberately spread the news that Kahn had a clue.

Because of this rumor, Victor and all of his hidden allies were forced to gather. That's why Kahn held the memorial ceremony where his doppelganger with SS Rank mana cores to sustain himself took Kahn's place.

Because his future plans also needed him to have a perfect alibi.

And he sent Ronin in Victor's shadow to gather the evidence. By using the Telepathy Link he gained from Ashokvatika, Kahn quickly found out their location and traveled to this place using the Dimensional Void.

So when they spoke about their actions without any pressure and with happy faces... they had already given Kahn the much-needed proof.

But before giving anyone a chance to react, Kahn quickly used the Dimensional Domain skill that surrounded, entrapped and weakened all the members present here.

After that, he used the Dimensional Domain and under the weakened state in his domain. The Semi-saint Victor was on par with Jugram.

Kahn did not fight back and only watched as Jugram in his human form beat Victor to a pulp given his skills.

Hundreds of assassin subordinates appeared out of his shadow and incapacitated the other members of the group who seemed like the chain of command sent by the Demi-Human faction to carry out the operation.

Kahn then walked from behind Jugram, who was donned in red armor.

He finally had the main perpetrator who carried out the massacre.

Kahn looked at the defeated figure of Victor.

The man who killed thousands of his fellow countrymen without a second thought in the name of following orders.

To Kahn... just a simple form of vengeance wasn't going to cut it anymore.

Kahn spoke with a sinister tone as he was going to make his enemies shed tears of blood for crossing the limit.

"Now let the show begin."