

Darkness 61

Chapter 61: Finding the Culprit

Kahn got up on his feet, trying to get away from these things that were pretending to be his family. For reasons unknown, he could not think straight and with a rational mindset. His state was completely different from his usual calm and confident demeanor.

In his previous life as Elric, his family had a huge impact on his personality. Not because they were always there for him and uplifted him when he was down in spirit; but because they were simply there but never actually with him.

The constant feeling of not being enough and not being special originated because of them in the first place. Normally, people would do their best to raise their children to be a better person and someone who should strive for better things and higher goals in their lives.

Eric's parents indeed acted like good parents.. Just not for him but his elder brother David and sister Synthia. Jonas, his father was always there to support his brother who was in school's baseball team while Sarah, his mother always took the side of her daughter and wanted to see her achieve something in the world of fashion and entertainment.

Elric, on the other hand received the least of their attention as he never showed any kind of promise in any sector even if was related to education. He was simply average at everything throughout his childhood days and weak when it came to physical sports and exercises. So they never thought highly of him.

Unlike how many parents treat their children, his brother was the pearl of their eyes while his sister was their princess. He on the other hand was more like the unplanned child they never really wanted. He was nothing but a liability to them ever since he could remember.

And now.. That same family was insulting him and throwing slanders at him.

Suddenly, the system's sound rang in his mind.

[System detects that the host is being influenced by an external presence and the body is affected by some form of hallucinogen. The host is advised to sever the source of these chemicals to recover from this state.] system informed Kahn about the actual reason why he was feeling this way.

"Hallucinogen? When did I come in contact with it?" he asked himself and tried to recount the incidents since he entered inside this floor.

He hadn't made any contact with anyone or anything for that matter. So there truly wasn't any other way he could be spiked with hallucinogens.

He didn't even eat or drink anything when he met Arkham & Solomon this morning.

So how was it possible that he was dosed with the hallucinogen. Kahn thought in his mind, trying to focus on his own consciousness rather than giving into the voices he was hearing.

"The fog!" shouted Kahn as he finally came to a realization. It was the air he breathed since he came here was the main culprit. Now he understood why his body was unaffected throughout the day and started feeling slower when he reached the innermost parts of this floor where the fog was far denser.

[Omega! Blackwall! Armin!] he called out the 3 subordinates and was quickly surrounded by them.

Armin, the Priest started casting debuff cleansing and healing spells at him. Just in a couple of minutes, Kahn finally regained his sanity and noticed his senses coming back to functioning properly again.

"I see.. So that's why not many lived after coming to this floor." spoke Kahn as he finally got the gist of why barely anybody made out alive from here. Because they were either affected in their minds or scared to death before they were hunted down by whatever creatures that lied on this floor.

He quickly called Ceril out and both started throwing wind magic spells around their surroundings and cleared out the dense fog that was surrounding them all this time.

Swoosh!

Kahn sensed something on his left and Blackwall took a guard in the front, Kahn took the left while Omega took the right.

Ceril and Armin took the center and quickly set up a team formation. Because in such moments, any enemy could flank them from an opening. Kahn didn't summon the others because he wanted to see the face of the enemy first.

Creak! Flutter!

He heard the sound of something passing from the surrounding trees and the sound of small leaves and branches breaking. Whatever it was.. It was big.

If not for his heightened senses after becoming a Grandmaster.. Kahn's mind probably would've given in a long time before the system even warned him. He was lucky that he didn't come to this floor before he broke through the Grandmaster rank.

He then switched to his Hunter's Intent again and found a trace of body heat among the woods. His team slowly following the tracks without causing too much noise. Even the giant bodies of Omega and Blackwall trod softly in this area.

After passing through the trees and following the tracks.. Kahn's senses finally picked up a huge and long figure at the end of the tree lines. He quickly pulled everyone back in his shadow and activated Shadow Walk.

After walking through the shadow of these thick and broad tree lines, he saw a monstrous figure.. For the first time, Kahn was horrified for a bit after watching any creature in front of him.

He gazed at this figure from the shadows and felt lucky that he didn't see it when he was affected by the hallucinogens. Because the ghastly, creepy and outright terrifying figure would've given a heart attack to anyone with a weak mind.

The upper body of this giant and long monster had 8 hands with claws so big that they could cut a man's head in a single sweep. Its nose was that of those Kahn saw on the Snakekin Assassin, the body complete pale white.

But that wasn't the creepiest part.. What gave Kahn an eerie feeling is the lower half of this creature's body.. It was completely that of a giant scaly snake.

At this moment, Kahn spoke to himself..

[Aight! Imma head out!]

Chapter 62: Overestimated

Just by looking at the floor boss that was slithering in between the trees, Kahn felt like something was crawling under his skin.

One thing he knew for sure.. He could not fight this floor boss head-on. Because after suffering through the effects of those hallucinations and reuniting with his family again.. He had no will to endure that trauma once more.

[How do I kill it?] asked Kahn to himself because there were truly few options if he wanted to kill this floor boss. Because after the recent experience, it became a personal grudge for him. He was going to kill the damn monster no matter what.

Kahn thought of possible plans such as putting the monster in a corner or surrounding it from all the sides and ambushing it. But after some time of thinking, he thought of it as a naive choice because other than the information of the fog, he had no clue about the different abilities and skills of this floor boss at all. Planning anything prematurely could spell disaster for him.

This opponent was indeed really strong based on the aura he felt around it. And most importantly.. Despite being 8 meters tall and nearly 30 meters long, the creature was extremely well versed in hiding as if it was part of the environment itself. Because even Kahn, who was now a Grandmaster level fighter had a hard time to sense and track it down.

"I guess I have no other choice." said Kahn and went a kilometer away and deactivated shadow walk. He let out 2 minotaurs & 10 nymphs from his shadow and went back into hiding again. He was going to use these subordinates as a sacrificial lamb so he could learn about the skills of this boss and prepare accordingly.

When Kahn was 500 meters away from the boss, he found that the boss could sense the incoming enemies from a mile away. Means it had extremely well hearing.. Or maybe smell given how it was letting out its tongue more often.

If not for Kahn's Shadow Walk which completely hid his presence, aura and heat signatures; he would have been found a long time ago.

But unexpectedly, the boss didn't choose to fight them head on.. It slithered across the woods and kept releasing a fog from the various outlet-like openings on its body, trying to scare its prey and then attack them when they were in turmoil because of this hallucinogenic chemical that was mixed into the fog.

A small battle erupted between his subordinates and the floor boss. Little did the boss know that these subordinates he used as fodders didn't possess any free will of their own. They only acted as per his command.

So the boss ended up revealing more of its fighting skills when it felt like it was playing with food.

Kahn understood one thing that the floor boss had the advantage in speed and quick reflexes but other than the fog that was coming out from its secretory glands from outlets on its body. The boss had only one offensive ability. And that was the long tendrils that were coming from its back which also had hard spear-like pointy ends.

And during the fight, it used these flexible and agile tendrils as long-range weapons and attacked multiple opponents at the same time.

Even the tough-skinned Minotaurs fell against this ability. Kahn too possessed the Extension skill that was similar to this skill but it had a very short range and the pikes that were thrown from his bodies were detached as soon as they came out of his hands and he couldn't take them back inside him.

These tendrils on the other hand would still be connected to the monster boss and some of these tendrils had hook-like ends.

"Is that it? And this fucker scared the shit out of me.." said Kahn as he was stupefied how this floor boss left him witless but in reality, it had the combat strength similar to the Nymph floor boss. Even the Minotaur floor boss he previously fought on the earlier floor had more combat skills and innate abilities than this one.

If you left the advantage of the hallucinogenic fog it could create, there really wasn't much this boss could do. Other than the tendrils, it had no offensive skills that could be used in a long & arduous battle.

The most commendable trait it had was the speed and reflexes during the fight. Plus the sensing ability through hearing and smell was indeed very useful even for someone like Kahn whose hearing had a range of 30 meters at best if he wanted to hear whispers and talks from a distance.

"Ah.. Fuck it!" spoke Kahn as he left the shadows of the tree.

[Grab its attention and keep it busy.] ordered Kahn to his subordinates and his small army left his shadow in seconds.

He used shadow walk again as he disappeared while his army under the lead of Omega attacked and surrounded the floor boss. And since the fog didn't work on his subordinates.. The floor boss was forced into a corner.

Blackwall taunted the boss with his skills, forcing it to focus and attack him while Omega and Jugram dealt a lot of damage. Ceril played a vital role as he kept shooting highly damaging magic spells and Armin provided many attack buffs to the other generals.

In half an hour, the floor boss was excessively bleeding from various places but it couldn't even run away because the enemies had one strong fighter in all directions and had extremely well-timed attacking coordination. With the advantage of using the fog being turned useless, the floor boss turned into a disappointing opponent.

After having its complete attention on the enemies it was facing, it failed to sense a black shadow coming its way.

When it was fighting against the onslaught, it felt a swift pain.

Kacha!

The floor boss's head was pierced through by a longsword. Before it could sense what was happening.. The head was split into two and the giant slithering body dropped on the ground.

A human figure that was holding the pierced sword in his hand and was currently standing on the back of the floor boss where those tendrils came from sighed in disappointment.

He easily finished this boss by bullying it with numbers while losing only a few of his subordinates and landed the killing blow when it was completely exhausted and distracted.

"My disappointment is immeasurable and my day ruined." spoke Kahn with a dejected face.

"I hope at least the abilities are useful." said Kahn and put his hand on the corpse.

"Absorb!"

Chapter 63: All in One

After spending nearly 30 minutes, Kahn was finally done with absorbing the skills of this hybrid-like creature.

Through the system, he learned the name of this species.. The Pethralls. A variant species that originated from Lamias and Humans. As for how did it come into existence.. He had no idea. But the plus point was that the monster was Lord rank. If not for his advantage in numbers, he would've had some hard time killing it and the monsters could've also escaped if Kahn fought it by himself.

"System, show me the new skills."

[The host has acquired the following abilities & skills :

Hallucinogenic Toxin (B Rank) (Active) :

Allows the host to secrete hallucination toxin inside the host's body and spread it from any body part by creating an outlet.

Mist Cloud :

Allows the host to create a gaseous mist.

Tendrils (B Rank) (Active) :

Allow the host to create long-range extensions from the body.

Sonar Hearing (B Rank) (Passive) :

Allows the host to have an acute hearing range of 200 meters.

Cold Body :

Allows the host to completely decrease the body temperature to zero and the host will also be unaffected by extreme cold environment.

Note : Some of these abilities can be merged and some can be mixed under different synthesized abilities and skills.] the system listed the new abilities and also told him that they could be used furthermore.

"Show me the merged skills." ordered Kahn and the system gave only 3 abilities. But instead of feeling dejected, he was rejoiced after seeing the possible results.

"Merge them all!" exclaimed Kahn as he was very happy with the possible outcomes.

[Synthesis complete.] replied the system.

"Show me the details."

[The host has synthesized and acquired the following abilities and skills :

Grappling Extension :

Allows the host to create black fleshly extensions from any body parts and control them at his will in any distance, direction and length. The ends of these extensions can also change shapes as per the host's will and will be made from hard and metallic pikes from the Nymph host has previously absorbed abilities from.

Current Range : 30 meters

Toxin Mist :

Allows the host to mix the hallucinogenic toxins and release them in the form of mist or fog.

Current Range : 20 meters

Sonar Hearing has been merged under Hunter's Intent to raise its efficiency. However, the exclusive ability can still be used individually.] replied the system as it gave details of his new skills.

[[Author : Mentioned the last part because some of the readers have been misunderstanding that once the abilities & skills are merged, the original one disappears. Remember, he isn't using physical bodies to create these skills like he has to while creating subordinates where the original bodies will disappear. The merged skills have the combined effects of both the skills in a single skill/ability while the original ones can still be used.]]

"Bingo!" shouted Kahn in joy.

He put his hand on the back of the Pethrall and gently caressed it.

"I'm sorry I called you ugly and terrifying. Thank you for the skills." spoke Kahn.

"System, name the Toxin Mist as Fear Toxin." he commanded.

He went for the short and simple name. As for the resultant skills he got.. They were simply useful.

He could use this fear toxin mist or a fog to hunt down people in groups as he jumps right in the center and this hallucinogenic toxin would scare the shit out of his enemies and completely break down their battle formation.

And if he put his subordinates in the equation.. Since they were unaffected by this skill, it'd be a one-sided slaughter.

And the Grappling Extension was also simply amazing.. He could use it to reach heights and even swing through long distances when he shot these extensions from his hands.

This could work as his grappling gun belonging to a certain black caped guy who had pointy bat ears on his mask.

Sonar Hearing was, without doubt his best hearing skill. And now being merged under Hunter's intent.. The skill turned no different than the Detective Mode of the Caped Crusader.

But there was one more advantage.. He could use these extensions as weapons as well. To be put in simple words.. He could fight a dozen of people at once and when someone was at the farthest distance from him, he could simply use these extensions to kill that enemy, or even pull it closer to Kahn.

When someone tried to attack him from behind, these extensions with sharp pointy ends could simply kill the enemy. These extensions were more like his extra arms now.

After being content with the results. Kahn let out a satisfied smile. But he didn't touch the core of the Pethrall to eat it. Rather, he had some other plans.

"Ronin!" he called out the Rogue subordinate.

Kahn had a suitable candidate to merge with this floor boss. Because eventually, his Generals were going to play a vital role for him in the future. Quality was sometimes far important than quantity.

Ronin was going to lead Kahn's army of assassins one day if Kahn decided so. And the subordinate had proved itself useful from time to time. So it was about time it got the reward it deserved.

Kahn used the Synthesis Divine Ability and used 20 A-Rank monster cores to mix the floor boss's body with over 10 nymphs to create a subordinate that had Evolution skill unlocked. And to bridge the gap between species rank since Ronin was of Rare rank while the floor boss was of Lord rank, he used another 15 A-Rank cores for better results.

After spending 2 hours.. The Evolution was finally done!

A black mist surrounded the newly upgraded Ronin and his face turned similar to the monster boss but his eyes had turned completely green. He retained his humanoid appearance but is now 3 meters tall. There were multiple black whip-like extensions coming from his back.

Kahn quickly took out two epic rank daggers and gave a set of black leather light armor, a coat, shoes and accessories that fitted the new body perfectly.

After this evolution, Ronin was now a Lord rank subordinate just like Omega, Blackwall & Oliver. But after inheriting the hallucinogenic toxin and fog skill along with the extensions.. He was far more lethal

as an Assassin class fighter. He could now take on dozens of people just by himself very efficiently if he wanted.

As for what's next.. Kahn already had decided that he'd test the new skills tonight. Not as himself.. But as Azrael.

Chapter 64: The Assassin

Kahn returned to his bungalow after clearing out the 12th floor. He was inwardly excited to test out his newly gained skills and abilities. And what best would serve as a target practice other than the scum of the society who had their hands bloodied with innocent lives.

It had been quite some time since the angel of death made his appearance to the public because Kahn had been busy with various things lately and he also had no need to keep up the act of this warrior of justice any longer.

After having his dinner at night, Kahn returned to his temporary bedroom and took a small book out of his space ring. It was one of the intel books the snakekin had given him and Kahn had been using these criminals to create a reputation for his other persona while he used it as the cover to eliminate the people mentioned in his contract.

But since the contract was now nulled, his other identity no longer proved useful. But because of these new abilities he gained today, he required live targets in order to get familiar with them.

Kahn checked through the list of the names, by now.. Around ninety percent of them were crossed from the list. Around 50 names had been crossed from the list and nearly a dozen were left.

"Well, I'll at least get to finish one book out of the three." he said and started reading the leftover names and their details mentioned in the book. He planned to clear out this book first before giving his other persona a full-time rest.

As the midnight moon shone brightly in the sky, Kahn left his place under the soothing light.

He was now accustomed to using the best and shortest ways to reach the different parts of the city. He was now wearing a dark grey attire with a hood and high quality chest armor, pauldrons, gauntlets and a metallic belt that covered his entire waist; just to give himself a look of a legendary assassin named Ezio Auditore da Firenze.

During his travel, he saw multiple places where the city guards were patrolling the streets in groups.

[Idiots. They still haven't learned that they should be protecting all the criminals they left roaming free if they want to catch me.] spoke Kahn to himself as he swiftly passed through various streets.

Kahn climbed on top of a tall tower using the new extensions as his own grappling gun. Gazing at the city filled with lamplights and magical street lights. He stood solemnly as the wind fluttered his robes as the white moon behind him appeared to be enlarged like a full moon.

Kahn let out a sophisticated sigh as he looked at the city life that was going about their way in hurdles. He finally spoke in response to the glimmering nightlife.

"We work in the dark to serve the light.."

[[Author : You're all men of culture, you know the rest.]]

"Nothing is true; everything is permitted." said Kahn and jumped down with his head and upper body facing towards the ground, taking a Leap of Faith.

Before his body could touch the ground, he disappeared using Shadow Walk and chose one of the streets to mix into and go for his first target.

In a tavern full of bustling crowd and waiters bringing everyone their ordered foods, many people were drinking and eating to their heart's content. Amongst one of such groups, a strong and muscular elf gulped down the entire glass in one go.

Unlike the stories Kahn read on earth, although Elves had a high affinity to magic; they were not averse to using other professions and fighting trades. The majority of the elves he had come to see so far were actually physical class fighters and had physique as per their fields required them to be. They weren't some weak and frail humans with pointy ears like depicted in almost all the mangas and novels he read in his previous life.

"Damanael, your appetite for booze will even give the Dwarves a sense of competitiveness. Haha" laughed a demonkin and ordered for more.

"Only if I could get a nice woman in my arms for the night, it would be worth it." said the elf as he licked his lips.

At this response, the demonkin's face turned somber.

"Don't cause trouble, you're still under suspicion by the law enforcement hall. Don't give them a chance to catch you red-handed. We can't always pay our way through." said the demonkin.

"Yeah, yeah. I'll be careful. I'm off to sleep. See you tomorrow." said Damanael and left the tavern.

But unbeknownst to him, there was a dark figure watching and hearing his every word from a distance far away.

The elf walked across streets from streets and wandered around as if looking for something.

Just then, the muscular elf went behind a dark alley, chasing after a human girl who seemed to be exhausted after a day's work.

A few seconds later, there was a muffled scream.

"Ah! Who are you? Let me go!" shouted the girl but her voice was quickly subdued as the elf put his hand on her mouth and since no one was present there, her pleas for help didn't reach anyone.

"Don't make a noise if you still want to live." said the Elf as he put a knife on the girl's throat.

"I'm not asking for much.. I only want to have some good time." he said and licked the girl's neck and grabbed her bosom.

The girl shuddered in fear and tried to struggle by flexing her arms, trying to push her assaulter. But to no avail, her frail body could not put any resistance to the muscular elf.

"Don't worry.. I'll be gentle." whispered the elf with a lecherous and creepy look in his eyes; he pushed the girl against a wall started pulling her clothes, trying to tear them out.

Suddenly, a ghostly and grim voice resounded as a dark hooded figure appeared behind the elf who was trying to r**e the girl.

"Damanael Olstrinvach.. You have failed this city!"

Chapter 65: The Adjudicator

The Elven man opened his eyes, a sudden pain hit his senses as he felt a big bump on his head. He couldn't make sense of what was happening.. And most importantly, he felt like his legs were tied by something and as soon as his vision became clear.. He screamed loudly in fear.

Because at this moment, he was indeed hanging upside down... On top of a tower.

"Arhhhhh!!! Let me down!" he shouted in fear, his body flailing around in the air.

"Very poor choice of words." a grim voice came from his back and quickly the rope-like thing that had tied his legs loosened its grip.

"No!!!" screamed the elven man as his body was thrown down from a nearly 80 meter tall tower, ready to be swatted in the ground. But at the same time, another hooded figure, clad in grey robes had jumped down with him and was descending down albeit more organized and in proper form.

"Save me!" shouted the elven man from the top of his lungs.

"So dramatic.." said the hooded figure and 4 black extensions came from behind his back, 2 of them quickly grabbed and rounded up the elf while the other 2 quickly stabbed themselves in the building's walls.

The elf who was nearly swatted to the ground found his body suspended in the air again and the figure who bound him was hanging in between these 4 extensions. He raised his hands upwards and they too turned into similar extension, pulling both the bodies upwards.

When they finally reached the top of the tower again.. The fear-stricken elf finally had a clear view of this ghostly figure.

"Tensile strength is great, ductility and malleability are also high. I wouldn't have any problem even when blocking arrows using this." spoke the hooded man as he folded his hands and looked to be thinking about something.

"The extensions are strong enough.. I can hold his entire body in the air while standing on my two feet without losing any balance. So useful.." spoke Kahn as he felt satisfied with the newly gained ability.

"Now let's test the fear toxin." said Kahn and a spray of white fog came from his hands and reached the elf's face who was muffling under the grasp of these fleshy extensions.

Just a dozen seconds later, he saw Azrael's face again. But this time.. The face appeared inhuman with nothing but a black skull with brightly burning red eyes as if they were on fire.. The entire body of the

hooded man in front of him felt like it was turning bigger and grimmer as the seconds passed by and all the elf saw was a dark demonic figure looking down on him as if looking at an insignificant being.

"You.. Who are you?" asked the elf who was tied up by these extensions, his face full of horrors.

"4 knows cases of sexual assault on females including demonkin, elves, humans and beastkins.. And who knows many more off-record victims. I wonder how you're not inside the prison yet.." spoke the hooded figure.

"Let me go! I don't want to die! I'll do anything you want!" pleaded the muscular elf.

"Alcina Cikom.. The name rings any bells?" asked the hooded figure..

"You.. How do you know that?" asked the elf with an ashen expression on his face.

"You r*ped that 13 year old girl and when she refused to keep quiet about it.. You killed her and threw her body in the gutter. Well, that's only one of your victims that I've come to know. I'm sure there are many innocent women you've killed and destroyed the lives of." said the hooded figure in a judgmental tone.

"Don't tell me.. You're Azrael?" asked the elf in a ghastly tone.

"Yes. Now tell me.. How do you wish to die?" spoke the hooded man.. Azrael.

"I'm giving you three options. One, get your limbs torn in pieces.. Two, getting skinned alive and three, I put holes in your body one by one till you die from excessive bleeding. I'm in a good mood today, so I'll let you choose." said Kahn in his Batman.. In his Azrael voice.

"No! Let me go! I'll pay you with all the money I have. I promise I won't do it again!" shouted the elf in a fearful tone.

"Third it is.." said Kahn

Stab!

The elf's shoulder was stabbed by the spear-like ends of the fleshly extension that were coming out of Kahn's back.

"Arhhhhhhhg!!!" wailed the man in pain as blood started pouring down from the wound.

"You like using that thing to show your supremacy on innocent women & young girls, don't you?" asked Azrael as a small pike came out from his palm and he quickly stabbed the man in the crotch!

"Mrahaaaa!!!" cried the elf in pain as he lost his ability to reproduce in this life. But Kahn didn't just stop there. One by one, he stabbed the elven male in his arms, his thighs, then his abdomen using the tendril like extensions. He twisted them inside the elf's body to give him even more horrendous experience as if the decree of the heavens was punishing the elf for all his sins.

Multiple wounds inside the elf's body bled buckets of blood and the elf lost his consciousness after suffering through the immeasurable pain.

"Ugh.. So disappointing. How am I going to test these abilities if these bastards keep passing out so soon." spoke Kahn in a dejected tone.

"Well, it's a good thing that this city has no lack of lowlives." declared Kahn and tore the elf's body from limbs and hung it on top of the tower.

"Well, this is my last night as Azrael so let's clean up this city as much as I can." spoke Kahn as he jumped from the top of the tower and disappeared in the darkness of the night.

Tonight, there was going to be another massacre in the city that would make the name of Azrael put fear in the hearts of all the criminals.

Tonight.. He would gain a new title.

Azrael.. The Adjudicator.

Chapter 66: The Missing Enemy

Once again, the Flavot city awoke in the morning filled with terrified screams as multiple streets were now crowded with masses throughout the entire perimeter. All the 4 gates of the city that had thousands of people exit and enter through were now in shambles because suddenly, the influx in people that were leaving the city for good had risen.

And the reason being none other than Azrael.. The Adjudicator.

Because last night, he had displayed such ruthlessness that even the most experienced fighters who had been through many wars would find it scary and no different than an actual battlefield.

Unlike what Azrael had done before, where he only put a pike through the bodies of the criminals and pin them on a wall.. This time, the display of cruelty had put fear in even those who supported his actions and called him a hero.

Because the criminals that were now pinned on the street walls were no longer hung there in a single piece.. Rather their body parts were spread out throughout the city while blood leaked out of them and the reeking atmosphere left many onlookers shuddering in fear.

If one street had the head of one of Azrael's victims, the other street walls would have his legs or arms, another will have his fingers while the last one would host the splattered and torn up intestines. The mangled body parts covered in blood were spread throughout the city and not a single populated zone was left an exception to it.

This was by far, Azrael's biggest declaration of war on the criminals and corrupted that lived in the city.

All of these streets had blood-painted walls with words written in blood that were the main cause why anyone who ever committed a heinous crime would feel like looking the death in its eyes.

I SEE ALL. I OBSERVE ALL. AND I KNOW ALL YOUR CRIMES.

NO EVIL SHALL GO UNPUNISHED BECAUSE I, AZRAEL; THE ADJUDICATOR IS ALWAYS WATCHING.

He was no longer a hero of justice or someone who fought for the little guy. No, he was basically declaring himself to be the law itself.

The reason why he went to such extreme measures was because he knew that people would easily forget no matter how many criminals he killed and punished for their crimes. And eventually, the majority of the populace who only heard the name of Azrael only in gossips and rumors would come to even deny his existence.

Sooner or later, he was going to leave this place and his name and deeds would fade in history.. People would still commit crimes in the dark alleys, innocents would be thrashed and trampled upon by the rich and powerful and all the efforts he put in creating his persona of Azrael would have no meaning left to it.

If he wanted to leave a mark in the history of this city.. He had to not only kill these criminals, but also make the masses fear him. Otherwise, the same cycle would repeat and that would make no difference.

For Kahn, it was no longer about using these killings as a means to kill the people in his contract, but rather about the legacy he would leave.

Because a fearful man followed rules far better than one with freedom. Even though no one served any religion or any God in Rakos Empire.. Azrael had put the fear of god in all the citizens of this city.

yawn

Kahn, the main culprit of this chaos woke up merrily in the noon after yesterday's hectic work and simply enjoyed the view outside of his house.

He was now done playing the role of a warrior of justice and the Judge, Jury and Executioner. His short career was now over because he had to focus his time and energy on various things. He wasn't going to be complacent and enjoy whatever little reputation and strength he had in his hands.

Complacency breeds pestilence that stops your growth and will eventually cause your downfall.

He took a bath and had Jerome bring his lunch.

"Sir, these are your letters for today. I think you should respond to at least a few of them. Some even come from noble clans who wish to have you join their ranks." said Jerome as he unloaded a whole bag of letters on the table.

These were all the letters and invitations Kahn was receiving ever since his popularity rose with the incidents with the minotaur bodies and later it reached its peak with him beating the noble heirs at the banquet.

Kahn, who barely had any time to spare these days didn't want to waste it on entertaining these self-proclaimed high class people and their useless notions. He had no need or the will the join hands with any of the forces. If it was some one-time deal, he would do it but making any commitment and joining any factions wasn't something he wanted to get entangled in. He had no interest in playing a futile politics game in this small place that was on the edge of the empire.

"Tell them I'm unavailable for few days and won't be able to reply." replied Kahn as he enjoyed his fulfilling meal.

It was about time he hunted the next floor boss.

Kahn visited the Bromnir dungeon again.. Simply because it was the closest one to the city and apparently, had the highest number of dungeon floors. Just that the people who came here were too many so there were not many monsters to hunt on upper floors. Only if you could fight and survive on the lower floors, then it'd be worth it.

Kahn reached the 13th floor this time and entered through the gates. His senses were all on alert as he searched for the enemies on this floor but couldn't find any living thing other than the trees and plants on this dense and rocky valley.

Even his hunter's intent hadn't picked up any heat signature or a trail of any living soul.

Kahn couldn't help but think in puzzlement..

"Has this floor been abandoned?"

Chapter 67: The Shapeshifter

Kahn wandered around the entire 13th floor of this dungeon but still failed to find any enemies or the floor boss despite spending a few hours with all his abilities activated.

"Where the hell is it?!" shouted Kahn in an annoyed tone because no way that the floor boss could leave the floor. If it did, there would be a mayhem outside of the dungeon and maybe the city would be at war because the higher the floors, the stronger the bosses were.

He looked around the trees and rocky valleys from time to time but still couldn't find anything that would look like a monster or any being that would appear to be an inhabitant of this floor.

"I guess that leaves me no choice. Everyone, out!" commanded Kahn all of his subordinates jumped out from his shadow one by one.

"Legion, go look for enemies. Generals, attack anything you find suspicious and Omega.. Smash!" said Kahn as he pointed his forefinger at Omega.

Omega let out a smirk and ran in the opposite direction.

What ensued very soon was multiple places on this dungeon floor getting blown up, caved in, giants peaks and boulders getting shattered while the dense treelines put on fires while the smoke from the burnt wood spread on this floor which nearly had a perimeter of 10 kilometers.

Kahn was literally smoking the floor boss out of its hiding.

After he too joined the shindig, the property damage raised significantly because he had the highest mana and attack range whether it was sword or magic spells.

After half an hour, suddenly Omega engaged in a battle and Kahn was quickly notified via Hive Mind skill.

He finally saw the floor boss through the shared vision as he and the rest of the subordinates were running towards the ongoing battle.

Kahn was stupefied after looking at the boss. Omega who was fighting it was having a hard time to even land a proper blow at it whether it was melee and ranged attacks.

And the main reason being that the floor boss had no proper body form. Sometimes it turned into the shape of a boulder and the next second it turned into limb-like structures that avoided the attacks extremely well. It was like a jelly that was changing its size and shapes without any problems.

As Kahn reached the midway to the battleground.. He faltered in his footsteps after he saw something that made him drop his jaw on the ground.

The floor boss had turned into... Omega.

Kahn couldn't believe his eyes as he saw a black Lycan who looked identical to Omega in every aspect. Whether it was the height, the fur or the claws. There wasn't a difference in any way.

If Kahn didn't have the mind connection with his commander.. He too would've failed to differentiate between the real Omega and the fake one.

Omega was enraged to the core after he saw the floor boss imitating him in every way. It had a smug grin on its expression as it evaded his attacks from time to time and made mocking gestures.

[It has high sentience and it knows how to goad an enemy into exhausting themselves by provoking them.] Kahn thought and ordered all of his subordinates to stop their charge towards the battleground. The floor boss clearly didn't know how many enemies were surrounding it.

[Keep it busy.] he ordered Omega as a viable plan hatched in his mind.

After watching the floor boss via Omega, Kahn quickly understood why he failed to find the floor boss till now despite spending hours wandering around the floor like an idiot.

Because this floor boss could Shapeshift into objects and even living beings. And to make it even more deadly, it could also completely mask its presence so well that even his Survival Instinct and Hunter's Intent that were already twice more effective than before ever since he broke into the Grandmaster rank couldn't find it.

No wonder it had completely mixed into the environment without leaving a trace. And if not for Kahn getting pissed off and ordering his subordinates to destroy the places on this floor, he would've never found it in the first place.

If this was Kahn before he faced the floor boss from the 12th floor and absorbed its abilities; he wasn't confident that he would even be able to fight this floor boss.

The opponent was indeed very smart and tactful from what Kahn saw.

He ordered his Legion and Six Generals to surround the battlefield from corners without coming in sight. He exclusively ordered Oliver to take the high ground and be ready to attack if the shapeshifting floor boss decided to take the form of something that could fly in order to run away from the battle.

At this moment however, Omega was being pushed back by the monster with the same physical attacks as the former and mimicking his attack pattern. A true nightmare for those who hunted alone and in groups. Because no matter what, this floor boss could take the shape of a random object and you wouldn't even notice. If in groups, it could take the appearance of your allies and then kill you when you weren't looking.

Kahn trembled in amazement after he noticed how horrifyingly strong this floor boss was. It was one thing if you could copy someone's appearance.. But it was another thing if you could fight the opponent using the same attacks and fighting style as them.

[The 12th-floor boss only looked terrifying.. But this guy is the actual bastard you should be afraid of.] spoke Kahn to himself as he finally prepared a plan to take down this floor boss.

Since its biggest advantage in a fight was to shapeshift into the enemy and copy their fighting style in time.. Kahn was certain that the monster was a highly intelligent being to adapt so quickly in a battle.

But what if the boss lost its ability to think properly and had too many enemies that it couldn't even copy enough of them?

Because soon, the floor boss was going live inside a nightmare.

And that nightmare would be none other Kahn.

Chapter 68: Living a Nightmare

Omega faced off against the floor boss by himself as Kahn entered in stealth. Thankfully, the fight was happening in an area with long and broad trees so there was no lack of shadows for him to hide inside using shadow walk.

Even though Omega was currently being defensive and was pushed back by the floor boss who had taken the same form as him, he still adhered to Kahn's instructions and kept the boss engaged.

Kahn on the other hand started shifting from one place to another and took a cover behind tree trunks and released the fear toxin from his hands. But he didn't stop at just one place, he didn't want to give the floor boss any escape route so he filled various places with his toxin mist and covered the entire area out of the battlefield in a circle.

And in this encircled area, he placed his lower tier subordinates as the six generals hid in the inner areas not far from the ongoing battle.

After completely filling this middle area with the fog, Kahn finally decided that it was about time the floor boss understood what true fear looked like.

Using the shadow walk, he appeared behind the boss and released his fear toxin at full capacity as if a cloud had descended straight from the sky on this battleground.

Only then did the floor boss finally noticed that something was amiss and looked around its surrounding. Only to find a visible white fog and somehow feeling its senses becoming dull.

When it looked back on its opponent, it was surprised to see how its enemy had completely disappeared from the sight without even making a sound. It quickly changed its form and transformed into a blue and large winged creature that resembled a lot to the Pterosaurs (the flying bird-like dinosaurs), but with feathers and a long tail.

The floor boss was now 5 meters in height and quickly spanned its wings to take off and look at the surrounding.

Shoot!

Just as the newly transformed boss took off and flew 15 meters above the ground, a metal-like pike pierced its right wing and soon another one was shot at the boss.

KRAAAA!!

The boss fell on the ground and screeched in agony as the wings started to bleed. It quickly changed its form into a 4 legged creature with scaly skin on its body. Its head resembling imps and legs similar to clawed wolves.

Just then, another burst of the white smog came to its face and the boss inhaled a big breath of this fog.

Swoosh!

The floor boss heard a voice and quickly turned its back, looking for the source of the noise. Then suddenly, a black figure passed behind its back and disappeared before the boss could even turn around.

It transformed into a horned snake and slithered across the trees after getting a sense of fear from the surrounding noises.

Just then, it saw a group of giant monsters walking towards it.. Each figure was as tall as a 20-meter house.. Their eyes burning red and the biggest of them was a 40 meter tall humanoid monster with a giant shield and axe in its hand.

THUD! THUD! THUD!

The floor boss whose senses were weakening as time passed shuddered in fear for the first time in its life. It quickly ran away from the giant monsters and took the left side.. Only to find an army of spider-like creatures swarming in the group of hundreds.. Their eyes prying at the boss as if they wanted to dissect it alive.

When it slithered in the other direction, it saw a giant hooded figure with a black staff in its hand.. And a ginormous fireball that looked like a miniature sun was hovering around this hooded figure. The floor boss felt like it was nothing but a tiny being and ran for its life!

It transformed into a bird-like creature again but before it could even take off, its wings were shot and pinned to the ground from a long and 8 legged figure with its bright yellow eyes staring back at it. The sight terrified the boss and it transformed into a 2 legged ape-like creature who jumped extremely fast among the trees.

Only to face its previous enemy.. Omega!

But unlike the previous encounter, Omega was now 50 meters tall, various parts on his body appeared to be covered in fiery patterns and the eyes felt like they were would burn anything to the ground. His claws now looked far longer and sharper that could cut down the boss in a single swing.

The boss was completely horrified and lost the balance of its body on the spot. The fog had almost blurred its sight and its body was feeling numb from the fear alone.

KYARGH!

ROAR!

SCREECH!

Multiple blood-curling noises resounded in this tree line as the enemies had surrounded the floor boss from all the sides.

The boss screeched and roared in a deafening voice as if trying to warn the enemies.. But to no avail, the hundreds of gigantic figures kept walking towards it.

After being scared witless, the floor boss finally took its real form for the first time.

A dark grey scaled 4 legged creature with a mouth made of a tortoise beak with teeth as sharp as a crocodile. The back was hunched but covered in stone-like skin. The entire figure was around 5 meters tall.. Much smaller than any of the forms it had taken before..

Now covering in fear, it had left down all its defenses, hoping that the nightmare in front of it would stop.

Before its eyes, another black figure emerged from the shadows. And the density of this fog increased twice than before. The floor boss could no longer think anything rationally and wailed in fear.

The new figure seemed to be humanoid and walked towards the creature that was lying on the ground, trembling in fear. The size of the figure rose by dozens of meters with every step it took. In his hands, was a gigantic sword that could cut a tall peak in half with a single swing.

As this new figure stopped right in front of the boss, the monster let out a whimper, begging to be spared in its own way. But the gigantic figure didn't show any hint of mercy on his face and pierced his sword right through the floor boss's head.

In its final moments.. The floor boss finally saw the truth behind its death. Because there were no gigantic creatures.. There was no army of hundreds and thousands surrounding it. Rather, it was only a dozen of small-time monsters that it could easily kill by itself. But the most shocking sight was the true form of the one that had killed it. It was the shortest, most threatless looking human.

The floor boss finally closed its eyes in disbelief as the horrifying nightmare finally ended.

Chapter 69: Seeking Copper but finding Gold

Kahn put his hands on the dead body of the floor boss. He felt like patting himself on the shoulders for how tactfully he took out this floor boss.

If not for his extremely well thought planning such as closing all escape routes, removing the option to fly and then simply scaring down the boss to a state where even he appeared as an immense threat to the monster and simply stood rooted to the spot as Kahn ended its life.

It was no different than the highly intelligent and experienced boss allowing itself to be killed. Kahn thanked the previous floor boss in his head again for giving such a useful skill. Because even with all of

his strength, his small army and even his Lord-rank subordinates; he really wouldn't have been able to kill the boss so efficiently.

The fear toxin was by far one of his most effective skills just like the Somir scales, poison acid & extensions.. Truly worth investing in. If he could find monsters and skills that could improve its potency and effectiveness, it'd be worth going through the trouble.

He was done absorbing the skills and bloodline of this floor boss in 40 minutes. Unlike many of the monsters he had absorbed the bloodlines of, this time the whole body and blood was completely absorbed by Kahn. Leaving nothing but an empty husk of bones under the skin.

DING!

[Congratulations to the host for finding an S Rank Metamorphosis bloodline!

Current bloodline purity : 68%

The host must eat & absorb the core of the Uthraquiris to complete this bloodline.] a sudden notification sounded in his head informing him about the monster boss.

"What? A Metamorphosis bloodline?" Kahn was gobsmacked after the notification. Because never in his wildest dream did he think of finding the almost rare and unique metamorphosis bloodline inside this dungeon.

From his knowledge, only dopplers who were a rare type of demihumans had this type of bloodline from the books about different inhabitants and species of this empire he read in his free time.

But even those had a very low purity in bloodline and at best, they could take the form of another humanoid species after going through the arduous trouble of shedding their skin and having their bones cracked to match the shape of their targets.

If Kahn wanted that bloodline, he'd have to kill at least 200 dopplers that were already hard to find. But even then, he'd get a B rank bloodline at best.. Not the S Rank bloodline that this floor boss had just gifted him.

Kahn bowed in respect to the deceased Uthraquiris.

"Thank you for your sacrifice." he said and pulled out the blue core from the now dried-out heart.

"So it was a Lord rank boss as well." spoke Kahn as monsters who were of Lord rank and comparable to Grandmaster humanoid species fighters had blue cores unlike the latter who had golden cores.

Kahn gulped down the big lemon-sized core and sat on the ground in his usual Lotus Buddha position whenever he absorbed high-grade monster cores. He always found his mind calm and able to comprehend the surge in strength in that position.

DING!

[Bloodline Absorption complete.

Current bloodline purity : 100%

The host has acquired the following abilities & skills :

Metamorphosis :

Allows the host to transform into beings and creatures the host has a complete bloodline of without any delay or harm done to the original body.

However, the host must learn to function and move in these different forms by himself.

Bloodline Merge :

Allows the host to mix different physical and magical traits of different bloodlines the host is already in possession of.

The host must possess a significant portion of bloodlines and physical skills for them to merge together.

Note : Since the different physical & magical traits of the different bloodlines will put a huge strain on the host's body after using them to merge; the activation span of this skill is short.

Current time limit : 15 minutes.

The host is advised to absorb even higher rank Metamorphosis bloodlines to overcome these restrictions.] replied the system in its usual robotic voice.

Kahn was elated after hearing this message. Because this was no different than giving himself the biggest advantage he had whether it came to fighting, if he had to hide himself, doing a recon or even infiltrate inside a place.

As long as he had met the conditions of 100% Bloodline purity, he could transform himself into any creature he wanted. This ability clearly had opened many doors for him. Because if he were to travel into a place inhabited by a particular race or species, he would have no problem mixing in with them let it be Elves, Dwarves and maybe even Seafolks.

This was far better than any Shapeshifting ability where you'd be restricted by many things such as the types of shapes your body allowed you to take or have physical traits that would restrict the kind of species you could imitate.

And the biggest advantage was that if he obtained the full bloodline of some type of rare monster or even a Dragon for example; he would be able to transform himself into them. Although he would need a higher bloodline like a Mythical rank metamorphosis bloodline for it to be successful.. This was still a gate that opened hundreds of possibilities for him.

And the Bloodline Merge was also another handy and useful ability even though it had a short time of 15 minutes only. He could select the best traits of the bloodlines he had and take a form that would be an amalgamation of these OP physical and magical traits and skills.

To put the cherry on top, Kahn also noticed that his level went by 5 levels and now he was level 70. This was indeed an immensely fortunate harvest.

"Muhaha.. Hahaha hahaha!!!" Kahn did his usual Joker laugh as he stared at the sky with nothing but joy and happiness in his eyes.

[Has master gone senile again?] asked Ronin to his fellow subordinates.

[What do you mean?] questioned Omega.

[I'm usually on the lookout when master is doing something important. So whenever he gets something useful or precious.. He always laughs like this.] replied Ronin.

Unbeknownst to Kahn, all the subordinates that had reached the Lord rank after the Evolution had formed their own consciousness and will. Although they were still programmed to follow Kahn's every order, they could think by themselves and even converse with each other with the same Hive Mind skill that he used to talk with them.

"So the sayings are true. When you search for the copper, you might as well find Gold." said Kahn and decided to leave the dungeon after today's extremely rewarding Hunt.

Now he was going to spend some time practicing and experimenting with this Metamorphosis ability for some time. This was definitely one of his biggest hauls ever.

Little did Kahn knew that one day.. this ability would change his life.

Chapter 70: The Unexpected Incident

The next morning after Kahn awoke from his sleep, he started his weapons training again. Recently, he didn't have enough time to practice but it clearly hadn't skipped his mind.

No matter how the blessings from the War Deity helped him raise his mastery and perfect his techniques easily, he'd still get rusty if he didn't practice with them in routines. Only a fool would get complacent with their cheat codes and forget to even train the basics of the fighting skills.

He wasn't inside some fictional story where once you learn a skill, you don't have to work hard to perfect it or take it to a new level for your entire life. His only advantage was that the blessings allowed him to quickly comprehend the various battle techniques and skills far faster than anyone else. But that didn't mean that he'd always stay proficient in them without performing them for a long time. Because even Grandmaster rank fighters still trained themselves with their weapons in order to reach new heights and break into a higher rank. That was exactly what made them so different & exceptional from millions of people.

After his morning training session ended, he followed his usual routine of breakfast, ignoring the letters from rich businessmen and nobles alike, then spending his time reading a few informative books related to the demographics and geography of the world he was now living in.

He wasn't going to be an ignorant idiot like some childish protagonist of a book who randomly traveled to places without even gathering enough information about that place such as its natives, the culture they follow and what's the most important thing to know about that region.

And because he didn't have a know it all guide or a companion with him, he had to learn these things by himself so he wouldn't wander off in a wrong place or lose the track of where he was.

During the noon when he was finally alone, he started practicing the new Metamorphosis ability. He took off all of his clothes and started to change his form from one species to another. In the beginning,

he stumbled in his footsteps as he wasn't used to walking on hind legs of a kobold or a minotaur and nor did he have any experience in walking on 3 legs like a nymph.

After spending hours practicing from one form to another and getting used to them.. Kahn finally heaved a sigh of relief.

And then he shifted to bloodline merge skill. Initially, Kahn only thought that he couldn't use skills that were bloodline exclusive but to his surprise; the abilities he already had learned without a 100% pure bloodline were also available. To summarize, Metamorphosis allowed him to change only in the creatures he had absorbed the 100% pure bloodline of while Bloodline Merge allowed him to mix in skills and physical traits he already had acquired even if he didn't have the hundred percent purity in those respective species and bloodlines.

In the first few tries, he could only merge two to three bloodline skills at best and his highest activation time was 4 minutes. This skill indeed needed a lot of practice and experiments done with it. Otherwise, it'd be nothing but a forgotten book on the shelf.

Somewhere at this same moment, a fight occurred inside a huge merchant shop.

"Give them back! These are ours, you thieves! Or no one is leaving this building alive!" shouted a man.

A group of 20 adventurers were causing a commotion inside a well-established shop that sold weapons, equipments and even some rare materials harvested from the monsters.

These adventurers had broken few tables and glassed shelves that held the different products.

A group of men walked from inside of the building to confront these hooligans that were doing the property damage. But even they felt a sense of fear because the guards that were protecting them were few in numbers compared to these people.

"What's the meaning of this?!" asked an elderly old man who had a long and white beard.

The elderly was very familiar to Kahn.. It was none other than the old merchant association president, Nikola. And the huge and well-established settlement was none other than the same?Black Griffin merchant shop where Kahn had previously bought all his gear and equipment from.

"President! These people claim that the goods we're selling actually belong to them and want them back. They're even threatening to burn down our shop if we don't comply!" shouted the demonkin manager.. The one who previously escorted Kahn during his shopping after Kahn handed down a letter written by Elanev.

While all this commotion happened, Kahn was busy experimenting with his new skills and he finally stopped after the sunset was on the way.

He thought about taking a small stroll across the city and visit his favorite restaurant where they sold that aromatic herbal tea. He kind of missed that exquisite and soul-soothing tea.

But when he left his bungalow and walked nearly half a mile, he heard a commotion coming from the nearby street. Kahn, whose senses and eyesight was far keener than any other normal human being

because of his Hunter's Intent.. He quickly found the cause of this noise and moved towards the direction.

But as soon as he gazed at the center of the commotion.. He faltered in his steps and stood rooted on the spot.

Just a half-mile away from him.. There was a big oak-like tree on the side of the street.. And on that tree, a body was hanged.

Kahn quickly ran towards the location with all his might and at his full speed!

"Get out of the way!!!" roared Kahn towards the people that were encircling this tree, standing as bystanders. As soon as his loud roar reached their ears, some people started making a way for him.. It wasn't a request but more like an order.

Kahn jumped and leaped across the crowd for nearly 10 meters and landed right beneath the tree.. He looked at the slim and lifeless body that was hung from the tree branches.

"No... This can't be happening.." said Kahn with a ghastly and ashen face. He quickly took out a dagger from his space ring and cut down the rope.. Slowly taking down the body.

Kahn held the slim body in his arms and gazed at the fear-stricken and pale face of the corpse.

It was someone Kahn knew very well ever since he came out of the forest.

The body he held in his arms belonged to a young woman with long red hair.. She appeared no older than himself.

The deceased young woman was none other than.. Jessica.