

Darkness 691

Chapter 691 The Value

It hadn't been even 5 minutes and Argos Belmont already found out about his situation regarding the forceful bloodline transformation he used to get out of the Flamer Killer formation and kill the Pope along with the Holy Champions.

But now, he was suddenly talking about becoming allies with Havi and the Vulcan empire out of nowhere.

"You... how did you know that?" asked Havi, his mind even more alarmed and cautious of the vampire in front of him.

"Hey, I'm a vampire. We rise in our ranks using blood and world energy.

And even among the 4 Sovereigns...

I'm the most experienced and knowledgeable when it comes to bloodlines and characteristics of different species and monsters." replied the 9th stage saint while rolling his eyes as if he was tired of answering the same question again and again.

"Do you know why a fireborne like you doesn't live more than 200 years even if you become an 8th stage saint?

By logic, your kin should live longer than a thousand years at that rank compared to humans and many other species in the world.

But you people use your bloodline to advance too quickly in ranks.

Do you really think there wouldn't be a price to pay for this shortcut?" he stated as if he was a certified person of authority on this matter.

"Tell me honestly... How many decades did it take for you to become an 8th stage saint?"

Havi on the other end had been taken aback...

"Nearly 40 years." he replied.

This was indeed the case. Because of the situation and his eagerness for revenge, Havi greatly depended on his Imperial Fireborne bloodline to ascend in ranks and become strong enough to protect the Vulcan empire.

"Do you think that's easy to do? Even I took close to 250 years to become a 9th stage saint despite my unparalleled talent.

Even someone like the 8th Hero of Darkness took 150 years to become a 9th stage saint.

In the history of the world, people like the 6th Hero of Space, the 6th Heroine of Lightning needed more than 200 years to reach the pinnacle of their strength.

Compared to them...

You've already wasted your lifespan. And that backlash of forcefully using your bloodline has reduced your life by three times." he said, striking the nerve of the emperor.

Havi couldn't even respond because of the revelation because it was the ultimate truth.

"Even your descendants won't be able to rise high in rank in the next 2 decades. So your empire is already doomed when other Emperors and Empresses find out about your situation.

What do you think will happen to the Vulcan empire after your death?" he questioned, gripping Havi into another complicated situation.

But even so, Havi did not waver.

"Still... I won't give him up even if you blackmail me.

Because I really don't know where he is now." spoke Havi with a firm voice, his domineering stature seemingly unwavering.

"My my... only if others were just as honorable as you. Well, you won't give up to provocations or blackmail...

That's why..." said Argos and let out an evil grin.

"I'm going to make you an offer you can't refuse."

Argos Belmont, one of the 4 sovereigns who was also titled Revenant Sovereign presented a proposition in front of Havi, the emperor of the Vulcan empire.

"Do you promise? That you'll look after my empire until my daughter becomes strong enough to become the Empress and protect it?" asked Havi with a cautious gaze.

"Want to make a Soul-Oath with me? Even a Peak Saint can't break or bypass it." said Argos nonchalantly as if it wasn't a big deal.

"No empire would dare touch this one as long as I declare my open support to your daughter.

Because many are still afraid since the past 50 years that I can just destroy or take over their own empire if they piss me off.

Do you know how hard it is just to contain myself in a small kingdom?

Provoking me would be just the very thing even my neighboring empires don't want to do." spoke Argos as his clothes fluttered.

"However... you have to include the Hero of Darkness in this deal as well.

You cover up for him and I will search for him using my own methods. You will also give me every detail about his minions and whatever there is to know about him.

I can manage the rest." he said in a stern voice.

"I have a condition..." responded Havi with a conflicted expression.

"After you find him... you're not allowed to harm, torture, imprison or kill him." he stated his terms.

"What the hell does that have to do with you? Why do you even care about the guy who put a target on your empire?" asked the vampire king.

Havi then told him the truth about the whole situation and what Kahn did to save Venessa despite having a choice to abandon her. And what kind of abilities and skills he used to fight against Axel.

"So what? He has a few exceptional skills that shouldn't be possible for someone of his rank; it doesn't make a difference.

He is already a lost cause because of the divine abilities he chose. I'm not sparing him just because you see him in a different light." retorted Argos.

The following moment, Havi told him the real reason why he felt like Kahn was worth protecting.

"That guy... he may not look like it, but he has potential. He even survived against a divine weapon and a deity despite being a 1st stage saint.

No summoned hero has been able to do that in the past 3000 years. Not even the 8th Hero of Darkness achieved that feat at that level of strength.

Besides... you may not know this.

But he has the Half-soul bound to his own via a soul-oath." iterated Havi, trying to add a plus point for why Kahn should be spared.

"You talk as if it's something new or important.

Many powerful beings in the past have left a remnant soul behind." replied the vampire, showing no interest.

"It's not about the soul... but the one it belonged to." said Havi.

"Who the hell that could be? Even if it's a chosen Hero from the past... it won't change my decision." declined Argos again.

"The one..." said Havi as he insinuated with a coy smile.

"Who stood at the pinnacle of strength."

Chapter 692 The Strongest

The vampire king had a confused reaction to this information. Only ten seconds after did he show a completely befuddled expression as his eyes widened.

"He has Rathnaar Whitlock's soul?!" clamored Argos in disbelief.

Havi didn't hurry and basked in the vampire sovereign's dumbfounded expression.

"Yes. I figured it out the moment I met him.

Although they tried to hide it, I managed to sense it because our empire had great enmity with the Rakos Empire before the imperial family was overthrown. We know the Whitlock Family's soul signature.

Even as a half-soul... a Peak Saint's soul is on a different level.

And the only Peak Saint in the world in the past 2 thousand years was their founding emperor, Rathnaar Whitlock.

A chosen Hero with 2 Divine Keys who also has a Peak Saint's soul bound to him.

Don't you think that makes him more precious than any other hero of this generation?" asked Havi with a slight smirk.

Even the 9th stage saint was left speechless for a few minutes.

"If he has Rathnaar Whitlock's half-soul bound to him... it means he has the rumored Tablet of Arcana. The legends say it's one of the 6 creations left by Demi-Gods.

Rathnaar Whitlock used it to become a Peak Saint and now, he may be able to become one too.

This... this changes things.

There is still hope for him." said Argos and took a deep breath.

"Although Rathnaar Whitlock died during his attempt, he certainly knew about the conditions to even call for the Tribulation of Ascension.

You're a 9th stage saint yourself but even you can't become a Peak Saint in your entire lifetime.

I'm sure someone like him wouldn't just die without making sure that he returns to the world of the living.

So it's highly possible that there's another half-soul which holds that secret to becoming a Demi-God." revealed Havi, giving Argos another reason to protect Kahn.

But the next moment...

"Ha ha ha!! Ha ha ha!!

This is amazing!" shouted and laughed Argos maniacally.

"Alright then, I should still give it a try. It's better than having useless hope." said Argos as he was fully convinced by Havi.

[Sorry, kid. But this is all I can do for you right now. Rest is up to your fate.] thought Havi.

Instead of getting threatened or being forced to give up on Kahn, not only did Havi protect his own empire but also got a powerful backer for Venessa since he was going to die soon and the Vulcan empire would be unprotected.

He also managed to avert the Revenant Sovereign's decision to kill Kahn and turned him on the latter's side instead.

Soon, both the parties made a soul-oath, similar to how Kahn and Rathnaar made the pact back in the Verlassen fiefdom.

All the conditions of their agreement were mutually beneficial to them. And if either party breaks the oath, they'd die on the spot as their souls would explode.

There was no room for loopholes such as ordering someone else to do the job or purposely orchestrating things to go back on their deal.

Havi then shared a few of his memories and everything he knew about Kahn.

"So he goes by Kahn Salvatore... his subordinates are also unique.

Especially that variant Basilisk and the variant Fenrir with Gravity Law.

Alright... let's take care of things here first.

We have to send your forces away. This battlefield needs to be increased to an even bigger scale.

As for the Hero of Fire's divine key... only that member of the Fireborne imperial clan will have a way to track him.

But it won't work unless he's at least 1 thousand kilometers close to Kahn." said Argos.

"What member?" asked Havi as it was the first time he heard about it.

"Your Grandmother's uncle, the 2nd prince of that time.

He was there when the 8th Hero of Darkness killed the 7th Heroine of Fire.

Based on my information... They were lovers." revealed the vampire saint.

"What nonsense is that? I would've known about it if one of my ancestors was part of that group." said Havi, completely doubtful of this claim by Argos.

"After her death, he swore vengeance on the 8th Hero of Darkness.

But after finding that the 8th Hero died, he joined that group to kill the new chosen one.

Unlike the rest of your family, he chose to not utilize his bloodline to rise in ranks. He left the Vulcan empire and soon, news of his death spread among all the empires." explained the vampire king as he let out a deep sigh.

"That entire group is made of people who were involved with the previous generation of summoned heroes one way or another.

Some were emotionally attached, some were the members of the Hero's Party of those heroes back then while some owed those chosen heroes a life and death debt.

All in all, majority of them are the survivors of that great battle and all of them have deep hatred and vendetta against the both 8th Hero and God of Darkness.

All of them also took part in the destruction of the Abyss Empire back then.

This Kahn Salvatore... he's just a victim of the war and ancient rivalry he played no part in." said Argos as he revealed another inside information.

"Soon, all the empires will reveal his existence and God of Darkness. Your Vulcan Empire has to be the first to do it.

All empires afflicted with God's will vilify him and that group must have been brought together again.

If I'm not wrong, they'll arrive in 2 days." stated the vampire king.

"How do you know all of this? Their identities and abilities have been kept secret from the past 300 years. Is your source even trustworthy?" asked Havi with a skeptical gaze.

"That's what I do. I drink and I know things." joked Argos, trying to change the topic.

Havi then told Argos about the treason by the Church of Hetrax and what narrative they had to prepare.

"Arshhh... why can't these Churches and Cults be satisfied? This has happened too many times in history already. Sometimes it's the Heroes who betrayed the empires and led these coups themselves." said Argos in annoyance.

Soon, both of them discussed a meticulous plan that would completely erase Kahn's tracks.

"You have to spread the news to all the empires.

That the new Hero of Darkness has two 7th stage saints as his powerful supporters.

They're the ones who killed the Pope as well." commended the vampire king.

"And where would I get those two individuals? If you can track someone's auras and bloodlines... they will be able to do so too." queried Havi.

"And that's where I come in.

I can create world energy signatures with a particular element that will resemble two 7th stage saints.

And given the nature of that element... even those people will be under the impression that Kahn has supporters from the ancient Cult of Darkborne.

"The Darkborne? Weren't they wiped out of existence during the fall of the Abyss Empire?" questioned Havi with a somber voice.

"Ha ha! Let's not share all the secrets in our first meeting." chuckled Argos.

"But even so... can you really do that?" queried Havi again.

"Of course, I can. After all..." responded Argos casually.

SHING!!

The next second, the entire 50 kilometers radius intently froze and everything including trees, smoke and crumbling sand stopped moving under a pitch black aura that spread and covered everything like the water of the deep sea.

This pressure was so terrifying even made Havi, an 8th stage saint shudder in fear as he sensed the element of reality used by Argos while the latter continued with a devilish smirk.

"I'm the strongest Darkness element user in the world."

Chapter 693 The Destiny

Argos revealed one of his secrets to Havi to display his strength and capabilities in front of the latter.

The Darkness element was forbidden in the world and anyone who practiced it was to be killed on sight in all the empires associated with the gods. However, Argos Belmont himself turned out to be a Darkness elemental user.

This was a secret that no one knew until this moment. So even Havi was gobsmacked.

Then right in front of Havi, Argos created two entities. One of whom was of the normal-sized humanoid species individual while the other was a 5 meter tall demonic creature who had hundreds of red bleeding eyes spread across its pitch-black body. And both of their saint pressures resembled that of a 7th stage saint.

[Just how strong is his control over the Darkness element? Even I can't do something like that.] wondered Havi.

7th Stage Saints stood at the peak in Rakos Empire. Yet, Argos created such beings within a minute.

"Get to work." ordered Argos.

In a few moments, these two new creations started causing wanton destruction to nearby regions while Havi ordered all his troops to evacuate 100 kilometers of the region.

Argos then turned to Havi and spoke.

"This will help you justify how a 6th stage saint like the Pope was killed. These 2 will also go in different directions to create a diversion.

This will also bide me more time." stated Argos with a thoughtful expression.

"Bide time for what?" asked Havi.

"Once I find him. I have to train and prepare him...

For the Conclave of Heroes." revealed the revenant sovereign.

And as soon as he revealed his intentions...

"Then count me in as well." spoke Havi hastily.

Even Argos had a shocked countenance after hearing this.

"Why? Wouldn't that be troublesome for you? Our deal protects your empire and your daughter.

But if you show up for the Conclave of Heroes after what happened... this will put you at risk." he asked.

"Our Hero of Fire is already dead.

Hetrax will probably abandon us soon if we don't elect a new Pope.

But given how the Church defected... even electing a proxy Pope would be too risky.

And I don't want to give them any power to do potential harm in the future." responded Havi.

"Even with the situation due to the church's treason... you're still risking your empire's fate just for the guy who saved your daughter.

Or is it because you're aiming for the Tablet of Arcana?" Said Argos teasingly.

"What other choice do we have?

Even if we continued to serve Hetrax... we have no Hero to represent or back up for the claim on that place during the Conclave of Heroes. And Kahn has even a bigger claim after he killed Axel because of the 2 Divine Keys." iterated Havi with a solemn voice.

"Well, it's your decision. Let's add this to our pact as well.

You must keep your promise. You will show up for the conclave regardless of the consequences to yourself or your empire.

Otherwise, I cannot trust you." spoke Argos in a serious tone, his face showing conflict that arose in his mind.

Havi nodded and both added new terms to their oath.

After they were done, Argos pulled a big blood-red hexagonal crystal out of a wormhole and handed it to Havi.

"This is one of my creations.

Take this. It will help you cure the backlash of the bloodline.

You will need 5 years to heal. You won't regress in rank or die either.

But you will never be able to rise to a higher rank and at best... you will live for another 50 years. That's all I can help you with." he said.

"You son of a... You could've given me this before." said Havi, surprised but yet also feeling wronged.

To his words, Argos winked playfully and replied with a smug grin.

"Ha ha!

It's because we weren't allied a few minutes ago and I had no reason to trust you."

The vampire sovereign had pulled one over Havi.

Havi took the artifact with a sense of relief. 50 years was much better than just 15 years to live. This would also help him pave the path for Venessa in the long run.

"Tell me something... why are you even doing this?"

You know too much for someone who wasn't directly involved in the events of the massacre 300 years ago.

You even know about the members of that group. Even my imperial clan doesn't have that much information on them." queried Havi since they were now bound to help each other.

Argos then finally decided to tell Havi now that they're bound by the soul-oath and both couldn't betray each other. No one could force out his information from them by using any means either.

"Because the 8th Hero of Darkness told me himself. After all, he was..." revealed Argos why he was involved in this matter greatly and was eagerly looking for Kahn.

"My adoptive Father."

A silence ensued and even Havi took a few minutes to absorb this sudden revelation.

It explained a lot of things about how Argos had extensive knowledge about the matter of Heroes and Gods. He probably searched and gathered a lot of information in the past 250 years to know all the secrets as well.

Argos then told Havi some superficial information about his history with the 8th Hero of Darkness.

"I was an orphan of war and would've died in the street.

He saved my life when he was on the run after the massacre of other Heroes and the destruction of the Abyss Empire.

He raised me till I turned 30. In all my time with my father...

There was something he wanted to do desperately. But in the end, his human body had reached its limits and he died while attempting to become a Peak Saint 20 years later." revealed Argos.

This meant that the 8th Hero of Darkness died 250 years ago right when he was about to reach his peak strength.

"Before his death, he had already prepared for the worst and paved the way for me to become what I'm today.

My father also knew that once the new Hero is summoned... the world would hunt him or her.

During his last days, he gave me a mission that in case he died, I was to complete a mission no matter what it took or how many years it needed." he explained in a heavy tone.

Argos then told Havi about the objectives of the tasks as part of his mission and what he was going to do other than grooming Kahn.

"This... I understand. So the 8th Hero did what was absolutely necessary even if it meant committing the biggest sin.

I don't think anyone without a resolve as strong as him could do that." spoke Havi.

He too was now affirmed that he made the right choice by sparing Kahn's life.

"With you and me..."

It'd be good if Kahn had two powerful backers during the conclave." said Argos in a stern voice.

"Agreed." spoke Havi and nodded in affirmation.

The reason behind the 8th Hero of Darkness' actions was way bigger than him or his empire.

"Besides, when the time comes... he may need us to become his main force for the final war since no Empire is backing him." iterated Argos in a cryptic tone.

"Why? Don't we have like 90 more years?" asked Havi with a puzzled expression.

"Not anymore. Because the Demon God..."

Has already reached the final stage." he revealed with a sigh.

"Impossible! How can it happen so early?!" exclaimed Havi in disbelief.

"Because those 4 idiot empires are still at war with the Demon Empire despite my warning. They're fueling the fire with more oil.

More than 8 billion lives have been lost in just 5 years." replied Argos, clenching his fist as he revealed an exasperated face.

"I also contacted the Elder Dragon Baltaraaz as well as the remaining 3 Archangels.

Their response is the same as in the past 3 thousand years.

The Elder Dragon is still stuck on the Ancient Prophecy. Waiting for the 'One' to show up in the world.

And because of his orders, the Dragon Emperor won't be helping us either.

As for the 3 Archangels... they wouldn't even help their new Hero of Light.

All 4 of these powerhouses won't interfere in this war or help kill the Demon God even if it meant the destruction of the world." said Argos and sighed helplessly.

It was Havi who then spoke with an exhausted face.

"There was a time when all the empires worked together and the Demon God was hunted by all the Heroes who joined hands.

Yet none ever succeeded."

Argos then spoke his own opinion.

"It wouldn't have come to any of this if the 5th generation of heroes, their empires and churches hadn't messed with the Rakos Empire.

Rathnaar Whitlock would have managed to kill the Demon God because he was the only Peak Saint in the world back then.

That man could kill the chosen Heroes, Royal Dragons and Godbeasts like slaughtering cattle despite being a normal human with no powerful bloodline or divine abilities." spoke Argos in a stoic voice.

"That's why the 8th Hero chose to do what he did. But even someone as strong as him failed.

And now because of his actions... we're in a situation where everyone is looking for their own gains and heroes as well as their empires aren't working together anymore." said Havi as he also expressed his honest opinion because he too had a similar stand.

But after hearing the truth from Argos, even he had a guilty expression.

"That's why... I need to find Kahn within the next 5 years. I need time to train him properly and see if he is indeed worthy of placing all our hopes on.

Because in the next 20 years... The Demon God will reach the Demi-God rank.

And after that... no Hero or Heroine would be able to stop him." said Argos.

Unbeknownst to Kahn... at this moment, he had gained 2 of the most powerful saints as his allies.

First was one of the 4 Sovereigns while the second was one of the 14 Emperors in Vantrea.

"So what do you plan to do first once you find him?" asked Havi their time to part was coming near.

"I will take him there." replied the vampire king with a lifeless expression.

"That place? Even a 9th stage saint like you would die there." said Havi with a constricted face as he felt a great threat just by imagining the place Argos was talking about.

"What choice do I have? It's one of the 3 main objectives my father gave me in that mission.

Since I'm the only one in the world who can awaken his Divine Key.

And I'm the one who has..." spoke the vampire, looking towards the cloudy sky as he revealed the biggest part he had to play in Kahn's story...

"Kahn's Divine Weapon."

Chapter 694 Arc 4 Epilogue

Narnia Empire : Original name of the Vulcan empire before the Firebornes took over. Reference to the Narnia movies. (Only 90s kids will remember it.)

Nidavellir : In Norse Mythology, Nidavellir is one of the 9 Realms and home of the Dwarven race that specialized in Blacksmithing.

Nick and Judy : Characters from the animated movie Zootopia.

Throk Oakenshield : Reference to Thorin Oakenshield, the Dwarf King from The Hobbit books.

Arkansan : Reference to Arkenstone from The Hobbit books and movies.

Alex, Morty and Gloria : I like to move it, move it!

Dvalin : This is the city where the Dwarven Council has its main headquarters in the empire. Dvalin is the name of one of the first four Dwarfs to exist in Norse Mythology. Mainly associated with lore related to Yggdrasil aka the World Tree.

Master Ivaldi : Ivaldi was one of the most renowned and ancient Dwarven Blacksmiths in Norse mythology.

Master Fili : Another character from the Hobbit (one of the nephews of Thorin Oakenshield.).

Demiurge Val Arhlem : The name Demiurge means a subordinate of a God or the Creator.

In this arc, Demiurge Val Arhlem is the Pope, a spokesperson of God Hetrax; one of the 13 Supreme Beings of the world of Vantrea. That's why I decided on that name.

Blacksmithing Deities Brokk and Eitri :

In Norse mythology, Brokk and Eitri/Sindri are renowned Dwarven Blacksmith brothers and they're also the creators of Thor's hammer Mjolnir.

Demi-God Jotnar : Jotnar is how the Giants in Norse mythology are addressed as a race.

Thamur Colosseum : Thamur was one of the giants of Jotunheim who played a big part during the war between the Aesir Gods and the Jotnar race.

Trial of Verdr : Norse word for Worthy.

Kahn was being tested to see if he is worthy to become the Apostle of the Blacksmithing Deities.

Mimir's Eyes : This is one of the gifts Kahn received from the Blacksmithing Deities.

In Norse mythology, Mimir is renowned for being the wisest and having exceptional wisdom among the Aesir Gods.

Prometheus' Foresight : In Greek mythology, Prometheus is a Titan god of fire.

Prometheus is also known for defying Zeus by stealing fire from Olympian Gods and giving it to Humanity.

Havi Hos Sigfreed : In Norse mythology, Havi (High One) is one of the names of Odin himself. Havi also uses a spear as his main weapon similar to Odin.

In Arc 4, Havi also loses his left eye. A reference to the lore about Odin sacrificing his eye to gain Wisdom and Knowledge from the World Tree.

Freyja : Havi's wife and Venessa's mother.

Freyja is the Nordic Goddess of fertility, beauty and war. She is also the wife of Odin and mother of Baldur.

Leonardo, Raphael & Donatello : The 3 Holy Champions and 7th stage saints. Reference to Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle characters.

Pandora's Box : Pandora's box is an artifact in greek mythology. After being opened, it released physical and emotional curses upon mankind.

Simurgh : One of the 3 Primordial Creatures in the novel story.

Simurgh is portrayed as a benevolent, mythical bird in Persian mythology and literature.

Armors and Weapons references :

Kojin : Omega's new Katana forged by Throk Oakenshield.

Kojin, also known as Sambō-Kōjin or Sanbō-Kōjin, is the Japanese God of Fire. He is associated with Hearth and Kitchen fire, siding more with prosperity.

Atlan : The legendary Trident made by Throk Oakenshield.

Reference to DC character Aquaman. The first Atlantean king is named Atlan whose trident is now wielded by Aquaman.

Gungnir : Kahn's new spear. This is the spear wielded by Odin.

Beowulf : Kahn's new set of Gauntlets, Greaves and Shoulder Pads.

Beowulf is the title of the earliest existing Anglo-Saxon epic. It tells the story of Beowulf, a Norse hero and warrior who fought and conquered several monsters that terrorized Denmark and Sweden.

Balrog : Jugram's Armor. It's a reference to Lord of the Rings. Balrog is a strong demonic creature associated with Hellfire, same as Jugram in this novel.

Ares : Jugram's Giantsword is named after the Greek God of War, Ares.

Shinigami Armor : Ronin's armor set translates to Death Reaper in Japanese.

Erebus Daggers : In greek religion, Erebus is the god of a dark region of the underworld and the personification of darkness. Ronin often travels and finishes his missions using shadows and darkness so this name fits perfectly.

Hades Set : Ceril's mage armor set. Hades is the Greek God of the Underworld and the ruler of the dead.

Anubis Scepter : Anubis is the Egyptian god of the dead who judges souls after their death and guides lost souls into the afterlife.

Atlas Armor : Blackwall's Armor set is named after Atlas, a greek mythology Titan condemned to hold up the heavens or sky over his shoulders for eternity.

Aegis Shield : The Aegis shield is carried primarily by Zeus in greek mythology, which he sometimes lent to Athena.

Heracles Battleaxe : Heracles was a divine hero in greek mythology, the son of Zeus and Alcmene.

Note : Greeks called him Heracles while Romans called him Hercules.

Nirvana Set : Armin's armor set is a reference to the Buddhist term Nirvana.

Nirvana is referred to as a state where one has let go of all the desires of life and transcends to a higher realm of existence.

Hermes Staff : Hermes is considered the herald of the Olympian gods. He is also considered the protector of human heralds.

Shu Armor : Oliver's armor is a reference to Shu, the Egyptian God of Air and Wind. Who is also one of the Primordial Gods in Egyptian mythology.

Neith Bow : Reference to Egyptian Goddess Neith who is the goddess of war, hunt, wisdom and creation.

Armor & Weapon Set Effects references :

The Twelve Labors effect for Blackwall : Reference to the 12 Labors of Hercules.

The Eminence in Shadow : Ronin's Shinigami Armor set effects.

Reference to a popular Japanese novel and manga The Eminence in Shadow.

No Time to Die : The new James Bond movie.

Feather of Maat : One of Ceril's Armor and Scepter effects.

Reference to the Egyptian goddess Maat who is the personification of truth, justice, the cosmic order and also is the daughter of the sun god Ra.

Ammit's Judgement : In ancient Egyptian religion and mythology, Ammit was a beast (some depict her as a god) associated with the time of judgment and she punishes/devours evil.

One for All : Armin's Hermes Staff effect. Reference to All Might from My Hero Academia.

Don't Fly Too Close To The Sun : Oliver's set effects.

Reference to the famous story of Icarus in Greek mythology.

Pendragon Formation : Reference to King Arthur Pendragon and the Round Table.

Kagutsuchi : Japanese God of Fire, also called Homusabi. Unlike Kojin, Kagutsuchi is associated with destructive fire in the Japanese culture.

Shura Mode : Kahn's new battle mode is named after the Buddhism Demi-God of War, Shura.

Amaterasu : Axel's Divine Weapon, the Eternal Flame.

Amaterasu is the Goddess of the Sun and Queen of all the gods since she is the strongest of them all in Japanese mythology.

Argos Belmont : The 9th stage saint and one of the most vital characters in upcoming arcs of the novel. He is a Vampire named Belmont.

Reference to the Castlevania franchise since Belmonts are the ones who usually hunt and kill the Vampires.

I'm also trying to improve and reinvent my writing as well as restructure the narration style after this arc. Changes will become visible with time.

No more politics or mind games. There won't be extra explaining behind someone's mindset or hidden motives since everyone hates that part itself and prefers quick progression.

You'll see more about the history of events from 300 years ago, the story behind 8th Hero of Darkness and his actions. Characters who were present in those times and other Heroes from the current generation as well as the impact of the previous different generations of heroes on Vantrea.

There are important characters to be introduced such as the Mysterious Group coming after Kahn and 3 major characters that are to play a much bigger and more important part in the core story of the novel will soon appear.

From now on, new and different species, their abilities and fan arts will be introduced in upcoming arcs. So you should look forward to it.

See you later and take care of yourself and your loved ones.

Chapter 695 The Ambush

1 YEAR LATER.

Under the blanket of bright moonlight and chilly breeze that gave a sense of serenity...

Crackle!

Crackle!

A densely forested region had thousands of trees caught on fire while the surrounding 45 kilometers region was either getting destroyed at dozens of places by attacks from the entities fighting in the air or the warships that were shooting hundreds of magic cannons at the gigantic monstrosities flinging elemental attacks at the army of 50 thousand soldiers in white and green armors.

Over this region, was an impenetrable white and blue intangible dome that had isolated this entire space from the outside world.

If one looked at it from outside this dome, this region had nothing else but lush greenery and a tranquil environment while the wild monsters and animals made small noises.

Inside the dome however, the army was desperately fighting against these powerful enemies who ambushed them out of nowhere.

This army consisted of Elves, Humans, Demi-Humans, Hybrids and many people of different species that no one had ever seen in the Rakos or Vulcan empire.

MRAAAA!!

A massive blue flying monster with two heads similar to a shoebill stork in appearance that carried hundreds of soldiers mounted on its back bellowed and fell on the ground after a 50 meters long massive trident made of world energy and hot red magma stabbed through its neck.

"No!!!" screamed one of the elven soldiers in terror as their group fell amid tall trees and long vines.

The large tree trunks shattered from the impact and the majority of the group was either stabbed or poked through by large splinters.

Among the now dead hundreds of bodies, only a handful survived. But before any of the lucky people could rejoice in being alive...

THUD!!

A massive foot of a titanic figure as big as a mountain stepped on this group, instantly flattening all of them including the flying monster into meat paste.

Similar scenes of brutal massacre occurred across this battlefield. But as the fight between these gigantic figures, and warships continued, few new members arrived.

BANG!!

Hundreds of lightning bolts struck a white and yellow colored warship that sized 200 meters in width as a masked archer in black, blue and yellow armor floated 3 kilometers high in the air. The clouds in the sky turned dark as hundreds of lightning strikes were summoned by this saint archer.

This masked archer comparable to a 2nd stage saint charged his bow and just in a couple of seconds, a massive 100 meter tall phantom of a white and golden bow appeared above this gigantic warship.

"No!! This can't be! We're all going to die!" shouted one of the members of the piloting crew inside the cockpit of this warship as they saw this terrifyingly powerful bow amassing all the lightning bolts in the sky into one.

Shoot!!

The sound barrier broke twice as the archer launched his killer move and a 10 meter wide and 80 meter long destructive and terrifying lightning bolt shot itself towards the gigantic warship.

BOOM!!

Blast!!

The massive lightning bolt shot and blasted the entire warship carrying over 10 thousand people and soldiers, tearing it apart from the inside and exploding everything in its way as it completely destroyed the entire warship in seconds.

Thud!

BANG!

Thousands of pieces of debris and charred corpses that were cut into dozens of pieces dropped from the sky while the flesh and bones of the soldiers were ground to dust because of the explosion.

While the masked archer took down a warship by himself, a swordsman covered in stark-white armor from head to toe appeared 20 kilometers away.

In front of this being with bright blue eyes, another warship with hundreds of magic cannons and thousands of people manning it appeared 5 kilometers away in the sky.

"Attack!!" ordered the captain of the warship and all the cannons charged themselves to attack and pulverize this warrior who seemed to be a legitimate 4th stage saint.

But before the warship could launch their magic cannon beams made of different elements... this swordsman quickly unsheathed one of his swords.

Slash!!

He grabbed the hilt with both hands and made a vertical slashing attack using the curved sword that had blue lightning running its blade.

However, nothing appeared out of this blade and no attack was released yet the swordsman slowly put it back in its sheath.

Kaching!

The moment he finished sheathing his sword...

Snip!

The entire warship was cut open in half even from this far distance and both parts fell apart.

Thousands of people screamed in fear as the warship started falling on the ground.

BOOM!!

BOOM!!

Both sides exploded after dropping on the ground as the charged mana cannons malfunctioned at the same time... killing more than 10 thousand soldiers and warship personnel.

There was no sense of empathy or regret in this swordsman's eyes instead, he felt relieved that he finished the job in a single swing.

Swoosh!

Swoosh!

Swoosh!

On the western end of the battlefield, three new figures appeared in the sky.

A white-haired figure in a black and blue longcoat and battle gear with a pitch-black greatsword on his back stood in the center.

"I have taken care of everything. No one can send a distress signal outside of this dome or even get out of here." spoke a mage in white and blue robes with a black and golden scepter that had a blue dragon coiling around it.

This mage stood with a proud expression on the former figure's right side.

The white-haired figure in the middle then looked to his left.

"Are you sure you want to do this?" he asked a tall hooded individual in white and green robes.

"As hard as it may be... I have to do it." responded the hooded figure on the left whose appearance wasn't revealed in the slightest.

Schwoah!

Just then, a man with shoulder-length black hair and green eyes suddenly appeared out of thin air and bowed towards the three figures.

"We found her and also killed all of her saint-ranked guards." reported this assassin.

The three figures nodded in response and all of them flew as they followed the assassin.

Meanwhile at another scene of battle and a broken down warship...

"Ha ha ha ha!! Haha haha hahahaha!!

This will be the first time I get to experiment on someone of your standing. Haha haha!!"

And at the center, was a mage clad in black robes and a yellow scepter. He and hundreds of undead monsters were now surrounding a female figure whose body was riddled with wounds and her clothes were sprayed with blood.

She was completely terrified of the undead monsters surrounding her as she cried for help and begged to be spared to the mage who was laughing like a maniac.

Swoosh!

The white-haired figure along with the mage and the assassins appeared on the devastated battlefield that was filled with undeads who were tearing through the corpses of soldiers.

The girl had her eyes wide open in disbelief as soon as she looked at the white-haired person in the middle.

"You... Why are you doing this? Aren't you afraid of the consequences?!" she shouted in a tone filled with anger.

"If anything happens to me... They will all come for you.

He will find and kill you himself!" she threatened this group of saints in front of her.

But the next moment, her countenance changed as she realized that her spiteful words could make the situation very dire instead.

"You people work for money, right?"

"I will give you 5 times whatever they're giving you. Just spare my life." she proposed and pleaded at the same time.

"Ha ha ha! Do you think I'm doing this for money?"

"You haven't even realized who you fucked with yet." said the white-haired person in black and blue attire as he released his immense killing intent at the female in front of him.

"What did I even do for you to go this far?"

"We aren't even enemies or had any conflict with each other." asked the female with incredulous eyes as she pressed on an open wound on her left shoulder, trying to stop the bleeding.

"It's not what you did that angers me so.

It's who you did it to." responded this figure in a jarring voice.

Just then...

Swoosh!!

The final figure also appeared behind the four individuals.

It was none other than the figure in white and green robes who previously stood with them.

And right before this bleeding and terrified female, he removed the hood and revealed his face.

"Impossible! How are you still alive?" asked the girl with a horrified expression as if she had seen a ghost.

Her entire body was shivering in shock and she revealed her relationship with this mysterious figure.

"Brother."

Chapter 696 The Wwar Cry

4 MONTHS AGO

In a massive city filled with the crowd of millions of people from dozen of different species and parts of society, having varying jobs, professions and ways of making a living flooded across the stoned paved streets of this 150 kilometers wide city, going about their daily lives.

At the southern end of this enormously wide city filled with lush plant life that had perfect ensembled within the architecture and topography was a particular estate that spanned 10 kilometers in the perimeter.

However, the atmosphere around this estate was that of a merry celebration as thousands of people adorning weapons and armor along with their families including the young children had gathered in the widespread open spaces as if there was some cultural festival.

There were no guards or soldiers to maintain peace, rather it was the people amassed here who were the ones in charge of making sure that no one caused any form of trouble since everyone present thought of this occasion as a life-turning event.

Among the crowd, were people from different races and species similar to Rakos and Vulcan empire. However, there were many that had never been seen before.

The only familiar amongst the distinctive group were species such as Lamias whose upper body was similar to humans with white and bluish-hued skin. All of them had snake-like tongues and even the iris in their eyes differed. Some Lamias were 5 meters in length since their lower half was nothing but snake tail as they slithered like a cobra.

There were yellow, blue, green and black lamias. And among them, the females had their upper body exposed, even their torsos were covered only with their long hair while the back was without any clothing.

Yet no one looked at these females with lecherous eyes or treated them differently than the rest of the crowd since this was a normal occurrence.

Aside from this group, there were some new Demi-Human species mixed in the crowd.

Many green-bodied Dryads and tall Leshens wearing attires made of green vines and leaves were also present. Just their presence alone reinvigorated the surroundings as people felt a breath of fresh air.

There was also another group of warriors with a body with crocodile-like gray skin but their head was similar to a chameleon with spikey teeth. These individuals with spears in hand resembled a group of tribal men who lived and thrived in deep and muddy forests.

There were over a dozen of such new species including those who had heads of a buffalo but had 6 to 8 horns protruding from their heads and shoulders while some people were made of nothing but white mist.

Thud!

Thud!

Tall and monstrous creatures with horns and different colors of furs also trode among this crowd.

Some even resembled giant tigers while some looked like enormous felines as they carried their respective owner on their backs.

SCHRAAA!!

Over 50 Pterodactyl-like flying monsters having bodies full of scales and spikes with 4 wings and beak akin to a hawk flew high in the air as they flapped their fleshy wings without any feathers.

This mixed group was enough to let anyone know that these people present here didn't originate from a single place or shared anything in common. Yet all of them had their eyes glued towards the tall tower at the end of this open place that was surrounded by dozens of 4 to 5 floored buildings.

In reality, these were just the main administration buildings while there were plenty of housing and business settlements such as ration stores, restaurants, trade posts and even fighting colosseums spread in the 10 kilometers region.

Tap!

Tap!

Just then, the main tower surrounded by various buildings had a platform extended forward towards the crowd below.

A group of people walked on this platform, adorning different armors and weapons of their own.

A white-haired hybrid, a mage, an assassin, a berserker, an archer, a healer, a tank and finally, a trident warrior appeared at the top of this platform and the crowd turned silent.

Just from their auras alone... everyone could sense that all these 8 individuals were strong Saints.

But soon, all 8 of them parted ways and divided into 2 groups of 4, standing quietly on opposite sides.

Step!

Step!

Finally, a short white-haired humanoid figure came out of the top of the tall tower and walked forth towards the end of this platform.

After he reached the end of this long platform and gazed down at the crowd of 30 thousand people, the majority of whom were warrior and magic class fighters... the surrounding froze and no one even dared to breathe loudly given the prestige of this person.

"Welcome to my humble settlement." said this young person who looked like he just entered his 30s.

"Kya!! He's so handsome. I'm going to marry him!" spoke a white-furred foxkin woman with a bodacious body.

"You bet! He's mine!" rebuked a yellow lamia girl as her snake tongue swirled around her lips as she salivated in lust after looking at this person standing on the platform.

Just then, someone hushed them and signaled to not make a sound.

The white-haired individual then continued in an authoritative tone.

"Free education for your children. Free living quarters allocated to each of you and your families.

We have already built practicing grounds to hone and perfect your battle skills and spells for each class and profession.

Soon, there will be multiple hospitals built and free medical care will be provided to everyone who is registered as part of our organization.

After we are officially open, there will be work for everyone who can't use magic including women and the elderly based on their experience and capabilities in the businesses in the settlements we're to establish.

For those who can use magic or invoked any particular skills... we will provide them with resources and training facilities to increase their strengths and mastery of their skills." declared this person with long ears.

All the people who heard these words spoken by this saint in the 5 kilometers vicinity had an excited as well as worshipping expression towards the individual who had given them a new life and provided a haven for their families.

"So tell me, Misthos..." spoke this prestigious and domineering figure as his eyes gazed from one end of the crowd to the other.

"What is your profession?!"

AHOO!!

AHOO!!

AHOO!!

Suddenly, the entirety of the crowd chanted together.

Everyone belonging to a fighting profession class started banging their weapons on shields or with other weapons. The mages, enchanters and summoners stomped their staves and scepters on the ground.

While the archers on flying monsters shot their arrows high in the sky that exploded loudly, releasing different elements and colors similar to grand displays of fireworks.

"This isn't just some settlement of hooligans and a ragtag bunch of outlaws. You're no longer without a place you belong to." said the white-haired individual as he raised his right fist high in the air.

Everyone present here looked towards this enigmatic yet oddly reliable figure with vehement eyes as if they were gazing at their life savior.

"This is your sanctuary! This is your new home!" he roared like a lion, his voice reverberating and sending goosebumps to everyone present.

"This is Sparta!"

AHOO!!

AHOO!!

AHOO!!

Chanted more than 30 thousand people collectively spread across the 3 kilometers wide open grounds as they released their War Cry.

Those without weapons and fighting professions started stomping their feet. Even the ground trembled from the vibrations and loud cheers.

"All hail our mighty leader." screamed thousands of people in joy and excitement as all of them praised their ultimate leader to whom they had pledged their loyalty.

"The Mercenary King!!"

Chapter 697 The New Empire

1 YEAR AGO

A man sat inside a quiet diner and slowly enjoyed the delicious food of this new place he had come to. He sipped a fragrant and vibrant herbal tea concocted using different flowers and leaves that grew in this empire.

Exactly one month had passed ever since Kahn left the Vulcan Empire and entered this enemy empire of the former called as Zivot Empire also known as...

The Elven Empire.

There was a reason why Kahn decided to come to the empire which served the God of Life instead of running far away from the Vulcan empire and No Man's Land.

The Eastern Grasslands was a region that bordered 2 adjacent empires, one of whom was an ally of the Fire Empire while the other was an enemy just like the Zivot Empire.

But due to the location... the Mysterious Group that would come looking after Kahn would be conflicted and choose to either investigate one of the two empires or split themselves into 2 groups since those two were the closest escape routes and after Kahn supposedly 'ambushed' and killed the Hero of Fire, they'd be in a hurry to run away.

On top of it, was very less likely for them to realize that Kahn actually came back to No Man's Land which was on the other side of the Vulcan empire and went to their enemy empire.

Kahn also used this opportunity to cover his tracks because after the incident with Axel...

Because from now on... even those who hunted him would be looking for a 'Human' Hero of Darkness.

The last time when he came to Vulcan empire, Kahn had no choice but to stick to his original appearance because of the Legendary rank weapons and armors he wanted to be made by Throk.

Previously, Kahn didn't have the Dwarven bloodline to turn into a dwarf and neither did he plan to kill innocent people for it.

However this time...

Kahn planned to use his shape-shifting ability to the full extent.

His ability to morph into different species as long as he had their complete bloodline was a secret nobody aside from his subordinates including Rathnaar knew about.

Paired with his new Mythical Rank Metamorphosis bloodline he got from the legendary rank monster Jatvuarym back in Vulcan empire... not even a 7th stage saint would be able to see through it at this point.

So even if someone later forced Havi to give up on him... no one would be able to find Kahn unless he intentionally exposed himself as the Hero of Darkness.

Besides, Kahn didn't wish to make the same mistakes as he did in the past.

After silently infiltrating the Zivot Empire, Kahn made no stop at any major city or appeared in crowded places.

He only stopped at small villages and inns for a single night to get the general idea of the empire.

10 Days Later.

Kahn and the group stopped at a small town that had an adventurer's guild where they managed to create fake identities for themselves by bribing some people with a lot of gold, diamonds and jewels.

And to create a record to cement the background of these identities, their group masked themselves as Master Rank individuals and accepted a few dungeon hunting jobs and killed a few monsters as part of commissions.

This was the first step to creating a trail of their citizenship of this empire as Adventurers were often the people who had lax rules for registration since their profession risked their lives daily.

During this time, they made no commotion or created any enemies. After a few days, Kahn finally gathered all the important information he needed about the Zivot Empire.

After learning everything to know about the topography, religious aspects, social structure, laws, economy, different species and lifestyles of the people throughout various parts of the empire, Kahn finally had the general idea of how they could blend into this new home of theirs without attracting unnecessary attention.

The Zivot Empire served the God of Life named Gyvenimas. It was nearly 8 thousand years old and was one of the 3 ancient empires that still existed to this date.

Unlike Rakos and Vulcan... Zivot Empire was under the rule of a symbiotic Theocracy.

The Imperial Clan controlled both the Empire and the Monasteries who worshipped their god, unlike Vulcan where Imperial Clan, Fireborne Clans and the Church were separate entities.

The current Abbot was the younger brother of the emperor. The Emperor was an 8th stage Magician while the Abbot was a 7th stage Summoner saint.

As for the religious practices among the populace...

The people of the Elven empire believed in Monotheism. That their God of Life was the one true God who created the world and the rest were the False Gods.

They looked down upon other gods and those empires who served them.

Thanks to the All Languages Known to the War Deity blessing by Kravel, Kahn and the Group could read, speak and understand the ancient Elven language named Elashor.

Here, no coin system was used as the currency was Itikar, a form of the paper denomination which was marked with elven runes. The base material was the same but the runes rose the value of the currency.

Similar to how Dollars and Pound worked on Earth where the number on the note rose its value.

As for the social structure in this empire...

Here, the Elves stood at the pinnacle. Their distinction was mainly as High Elves and Elves.

High Elves were those who were the direct descendants of the first generation of people who founded the Zivot Empire.

This group of the TOP 1% included the Imperial clan and the High Nobles.

However, there were also ranks among the High Elves.

The one at the top known as the Imperial Family was the Elven Emperor class.

Below them was a group that directly served the Imperial family called High Kings.

Elven High-Kings were comparable to Dukes in the monarchy system.

They often held positions of power such as Leaders in the Military, Governors, Magistrate and many influential positions.

Below them were the High Nobles. These were composed of only elven clans with more than 2 thousand years of history.

No other species in the history of this empire had managed to overthrow the elves and that was because of the way they reigned over this ancient empire. And that was...

Endogamy.

Chapter 698 The Culture

The ruling class of the Zivot Empire, called High Elves, practiced Endogamy in their culture.

They preserved their bloodlines and did not allow the males and females of their families and clans to marry anyone outside or below their social standing; not even with the normal elves of the empire.

Premarital sex and post-marital affairs for the High Elves were taboo as per the laws.

The punishment for these 3 crimes was straight-up execution of the culprit and the person they married to or had an affair with.

But this was also the most effective and viable practice that maintained their bloodline purity and elite standing in the empire above everyone else.

After the High Elves, the highest standing regardless of their origins were the normal Elves.

No matter whichever field it was, Elves were in the highest position of basically everything. Even if someone from another species was better than an elf or more fit for a position of authority... they would never receive that no matter what because of the Reservation System.

However, compared to the Vulcan empire, Kahn found this place much better to live because of the 2nd most influential species in the Zivot Empire. And those were none other than...

Humans.

After the High Elves and Elves, the most widely acknowledged and favored species in the elven empire was Humans.

Due to their abilities to use magic and various classes and professions related to it... humans were 2nd only to elves.

Although Humans were not the masters in Magic, didn't have towering strength or defense like Demi-Human, and weren't as fast as even wild animals... But because of their large numbers and higher birth rate, they were spread basically everywhere.

Out of 100, at least 30 humans could use magic and invoke fighting classes, making them the best commodity to use for the Elven species that had a much lesser population and fertility rate.

Hence, the Elven Empire and its laws gave Humans preferential treatment compared to all the other species, unlike the Vulcan empire where humans stood at the bottom of the social structure.

Even among the Nobility Class of the empire, there were two groups.

One was the High Nobles which was part of the High Elves group composed of only Elven nobles of rich history and standing in the empire.

While the Human Nobles were addressed as Exalted Nobles.

These were the ones who gained the title through great service to the empire through either economic or military achievement. Even the human clans and their people were given many favors such as tax exemptions, favored rise in ranks of government and military as well.

This setting led humans to become the most reliable force who greatly aided Elves in maintaining the rule.

And finally, below the Humans were the Demi-Humans, Lukion, Tolorus and Enasios.

The last three were the species that Kahn hadn't come across in his new life so far.

As for the species such as Vampires, Demonkin and Dwarves... they were non-existent here at this point because of the cultural differences and also the enmity with the Vulcan empire where Dwarves were among the top of the order.

There were fights over architectural history, weapon crafting and many things because Dwarves were among the people where the majority of the species couldn't use magic to a great degree unlike humans and other Demi-Human species.

As for the Vampires who lived on blood... the Elven religious customs addressed them as heathens and blood devils just because their existence did not fit well with their perception of culture and ethnic beliefs.

Demonkins on the other hand were actually the descendants of True Demon but only with 5% of their original bloodline. Thus, their situation was no different than Vampires.

Both these special social standing was the same as that of humans in the Vulcan empire before Kahn solved the issue.

Thus, Vampires and Demonkins had moved to Rakos Empire when Rathnaar founded it over a thousand years ago and 90% of the native dwarves went to the Vulcan empire after the Firebornes assumed command.

So Kahn had two choices now before he decided to settle here for good.

He already had the Elven Bloodline at 100% purity ever since his time in Rakos Empire and now, Kahn could utilize it if it was favorable.

However, Kahn decided to wait patiently before he made a decision. And that was because the religion and social customs weren't exactly unified as one would expect.

In the end, although everyone worshipped God of Life in the empire... their customs and ways to pray to their god differed greatly.

Although the elven monasteries were the main authority of the religious institutions, some species and regions of the empire didn't join or serve under any cult and had rituals of their own.

And after extensive research, Kahn finally found out the main cause of this difference in customs. The main reason why there existed different ways to worship the same god was...

The 4th Hero of Life.

Kahn learned about the events that changed the history of the Elven Empire and created new branches of customs and practices to worship the God of Life, Gyvenimas was the 4th Hero of Life.

The 4th Hero was summoned 1800 years ago and led the Elven empire against enemies who either attacked them and even helped the imperial clan expand their borders to a great degree.

The most peculiar fact was that he established a lot of his own world's cultural customs in the empire and given the huge influence he had which even dwarfed the elven emperor of that time, hundreds of millions of people regardless of their species and origin had accepted his cultural and religious doctrine.

And given his identity, strength and importance, the Monasteries and Emperor had no choice but to acknowledge it because at the end of the day, he was still worshipping their god.

Kahn had a surprised expression when he finally came across the information about the 4th Hero of Life who left a mark in this ancient empire's history that was still standing strong.

There were 2 key factors that made Kahn drop his jaw in shock.

The first reason was that the 4th Hero of Life was also from Earth.

And the second reason being the fact that this chosen Hero was...

A Viking.

Chapter 699 The Influence

Kahn was astonished after finding out that the 4th Hero of Life was also from the Earth just like him. And he was a Viking at that.

Kahn himself had seen some people during his time in Flavot City that had appearances influenced by Viking culture.

The first person that came into Kahn's mind was Stragabor Sigurd. A Grandmaster Rank individual who had tried to kill Kahn in the name of avenging his brother named Illya who tried to ambush and kill Kahn back when he had just entered the world of Vantrea.

Their entire clan looked like they were descendants of vikings based on their appearance and tattoos.

[[Author : See how far I had planned even a year and a half ago when I started this novel? This is how you connect all dots in a homogeneous world-building. *pats myself on the shoulder shamelessly*]]

Later, Kahn killed Stragabor and ate his core to become a Grandmaster himself.

So Kahn was already aware of the existence of Viking culture in Vantrea. But to find that the supposed viking was actually a summoned Hero of Life in the Elven Empire...

Somehow, this summoned Hero's influence reached even to Rakos Empire a thousand years later.

Later, Kahn then checked the records and finally found out the name of this figure who even made the long-living and tenacious elves give up.

The Viking hero was someone even Kahn in his previous life as Elric had heard of. Because it was one of the most famous viking kings in the history of the earth. The 4th Hero of Life was...

Bjorn Ironside

Kahn grasped his forehead as he still found out the name.

Although as Elric, Kahn hadn't used his Eidetic Memory for making an exceptional life for himself... he had spent his time acquiring a lot of knowledge for his hobbies.

Other than being a geek, a weeb, a novel reader, a gamer and an otaku... Elric also learned 11 Languages and studied many mythologies varying from country to country.

So he knew a lot more about historic events, wars, kings and emperors as well as religion and gods of plenty of dominant and renowned cultures. So obviously, he also knew about the Vikings and their famous leaders.

Who didn't know about the legendary Bjorn Ironside?

He was the son of King Ragnar Lothbrok who earned the moniker and was renowned as Bjorn Ironside.

He was the one who led the attack on England in the 9th century along with his brothers and was also an explorer who sailed to the Mediterranean and raided their lands.

But the biggest highlight being he was also a Norse Chieftain, well respected and also appreciated for his Leadership qualities and his capabilities as a fearless Warrior who also became the first King of Sweden.

Just like his father, Bjorn Ironside was a true king in his own right.

"Wait... did it happen after he died?"

Did the God of Life revive him from the dead after summoning him in Vantrea just like God of Darkness reincarnated me?" wondered Kahn.

Because that would explain why the dead viking king would be alive and kicking ass as a chosen Hero in this world.

"But the timeline doesn't fit. Does that mean the Gods can summon any world's people from different times?"

Wouldn't that mean there could be or could've been a summoned hero from the earth who lived in my future era?" he kept asking himself.

But then, Kahn decided to push those Conspiracy Theorist thoughts aside and paid attention to the matter at hand.

He then did some deep study about why Bjorn Ironside became a colossal figure that even other Heroes and Heroines of Life could not achieve in the past 3 thousand years.

Unlike the Elves who were proficient in using magic and correlated jobs... Bjorn Ironside had created his own army of fearless warriors who would rather die than run for their lives during a battle.

These melee and long-range forces were personally trained and managed by him. And during the 400 years of his life in this empire, there had been many times when he personally led the charge and destroyed the empire's enemies when even the emperor of that time failed to protect their borders.

Bjorn Ironside was a war chief with both wisdom and courage at his side and lived a life of war and bloodshed during his time on earth. Thus, he was far more experienced when it came to war even than the high elves who lived for centuries.

This made him a hero to all the people in the empire, not only in name but also in their hearts.

However, being a hero who wasn't an Elf... he was not allowed to become royalty, get a major position of power in the empire or marry someone from the imperial family because of Endogamy practices.

Bjorn Ironside on the other end had greatly influenced people so he also started spreading his cultural beliefs and their customs, rituals, his language and many more things.

Throughout his life here, he had been with more than hundred females including elves, humans and demi-human, as well as many species Kahn heard about for the first time.

The 4th Hero of Life spread his genes extensively and now, at least 10% of the entire population of the Elven Empire were the descendants of the viking king in one way or another.

However, this phenomenon led to great fear among the High Elves whose only merit was that they were the descendants of the people who founded this empire.

But after a battle with the Demon God back then, Bjorn Ironside was gravely injured and died a couple of years later.

The details of that battle were hidden by the imperial family and nothing was ever revealed about what exactly happened.

"He didn't die due to injuries. They assassinated him to preserve their power and authority." spoke Kahn.

He himself was a sovereign albeit for a short time. He knew how big of a threat a different ruler was to an already established power structure. Kahn had also been conspired against many times already so he knew that the 4th Hero had the chance to survive but was betrayed and killed by the High Elves in the end.

"May you drink ale from the curved horns and battle amongst great warriors and gods in the glorious halls of Valhalla." said Kahn as he paid respect to Bjorn Ironside.

As for the impact on the Elven Empire left by the 4th Hero's death...

Kahn was going to exploit it for his own benefit.

Chapter 700 New Identity

The influence Bjorn Ironside aka the 4th Hero of Life had on the people of Zivot Empire and the tales of bravery and heroism he earned didn't die even after his death since elves lived far longer and even the imperial clan couldn't silence the people because of their own laws and beliefs.

Subjugating or oppressing the people for personal gains was against the Elven Laws. Even the Emperor would not be spared from the punishment.

Thus, the cultural influence Bjorn Ironside left never vanished and his bloodline only expanded over the past 1400 years even if it wasn't exactly how he taught them.

Even to this day, there were still different clans varying from different species and family trees but identified themselves as the 4th Hero's direct descendant.

As per the information Kahn collected, the 4th Hero's descendants called themselves 'The Ironborn'.

In Zivot empire... even a pureblood elf could actually be a descendant of the 4th Hero and have a trace of his bloodline.

Thus, the culture in some parts of the elven empire itself evolved and now, a symbiotic culture with Viking and Elven customs existed that prayed to the God of Life.

In these parts of the empire and clans, people used their own methods of worshipping their God.

Some people sacrificed farm animals while some planted more trees as the God of Life represented life given and taken to the world.

Kahn then weighed a few pros and cons in his mind.

Even a weak elf lived up to 150 years. A powerful elf above the 6th stage saint would live at least up to 700 years. This was the case for the current Emperor who was an 8th stage saint and was 658 years old as of now.

However, there were no free coupons for the buffet. The long life and immense control over the mana Elven race had come with a price...

Not only did they age slower than other people, but their ranks as saints also rose 2 to 3 times slower as most of the mana and world energy they absorbed was directly used to increase their longevity. Thus their progression was much stagnating sometimes than other species and races of Vantrea.

This also led to low fertility and birth rate and hence, only 30% of the population was Elves while all the others belonged to different races and species.

However, this also gave Kahn a few alluring ideas of his own and he finally decided on the most important decision he was conflicted about.

His New Identity.

Being a High Elf was out of the equation and the normal Elves would often have names and family trees known to each other. There was a risk of him getting exposed.

On the other end... There were so many branches and family trees among the Ironborns that at this point, no one cared to look into them.

Thus, it made a perfect cover for Kahn if he used the Metamorphosis bloodline to turn into an Elf who stood at the highest hierarchy in the social system without the risk of exposing himself as the 'Human' hero of darkness.

Finally, after completing his deep study of the Zivot Empire, Kahn and the group chose to depart for a particular location.

This time, Kahn chose to avoid the capital of the empire or anything close to the noble factions, imperial clans or any authority since he wanted no trouble knocking at his doorsteps.

And after changing many modes of transportation while hiding their identities as Saints, they finally reached the far northern end of the Zivot Empire.

Their new residence was going to be one of the most important places of the empire where they were going to make a living by doing what they were extremely good at.

After 12 days of travel and making a few stops, they finally reached their main destination.

After getting out of a magic flying hotel made of pure wood and water, the group saw the entrance of their new home.

A grand entrance made of two massive trees as tall as Burj Khalifa on both sides that spanned 500 meters in width alone had a 1 kilometer wide pathway where thousands of people passed through using their vehicles, ships, flying beasts and on foot.

The group used their fake Adventurers IDs to enter the place and as the night came, they rented a nice suite with the money they made so far in this empire.

Even the buildings and architecture were assimilated and blended perfectly with plenty of enormously spread trees as if Kahn had come to live amongst tree spirits.

Kahn looked outside the window and saw that the first two gigantic trees that welcomed the people weren't even the tallest ones.

There were dozens of ginormous trees that thousands of people carved houses in and lived comfortably given the size of these unending and terrifying trees.

"Feels like I'm at the feet of the World Tree." spoke Kahn.

Thus began the first day of the life of Kahn and The Boys in the region filled with the highest number of Dungeons in the whole Elven empire called...

Alfheim

Kahn then decided to discard his previous appearance and race as a human for the first time since he came to Vantrea.

With the help of the Elven Bloodline and the mythical rank Metamorphosis bloodline, Kahn now morphed into a different being.

His hair turned stark-white while his ear stretched and elongated upwards.

The iris in his eyes turned red and his figure turned a bit skinnier but even fairer than before.

The slightly wide masculine and chiseled jaw turned into a sharp and pointy one while Kahn's height was also shortened by 3 inches, making him only 6 feet tall now.

And now, a much leaner and fairer skinned Elf stood in front of everyone.

"My Geek senses are tingling." said Kahn as he took up a new persona that would be his fresh start in the Zivot Empire.

"I'm in an empire of Elves and I'm going to use Bjorn Ironside's lineage as a cover.

Since I'm changing appearance, I should also create a fake identity with a new name as well." he declared.

"The name should be Elven while the surname should be that of a Viking.

I guess it's decided then.

From now on, I should be called..." spoke Kahn as he was laughing maniacally in his mind and he chose the most fitting name that would satisfy the geek inside him...

"Legolas Ragnarsson."