

Darkness 91

Chapter 91: The Final Boss

For the next 5 days, Kahn spent his time hunting inside the neighboring dungeons on the floors he thought would give him the best results and give him subordinates that'd be worth keeping and investing in.

During this hunting spree, he went from various dungeons and chose peculiar specimens to hunt.

He and his army of 550 soldiers now hunted hordes of ogres, orcs and goblins.

[[Goblin Slayer : Did someone say Goblins!?!]]

After acquiring their bloodlines and even upgrading many of them by merging and evolving, Kahn had more than 350 new subordinates after painstaking efforts and spending almost all his time in these dungeons. He'd return home only to eat & sleep. And his hard work had shown rewarding effects as well.

The ogres gave him many vitality and regeneration skills that were merged and mixed with his other regeneration and defense skills. Although the goblins didn't offer him any noteworthy skills, he still got plenty of subordinates useful to aid and work under Ronin & Oliver as some were evolved to Assassins & Archer class goblins.

The Hobgoblins and High Ogres were under the command of Jugram, the Berserker subordinate from the Six Generals because all of them were physical attack classes and had buff effects when they fought together as a team. And Jugram had the skills to give them even more attack and defense buff from his skills as he was made from Warrior and Swordsman class.

Ceril now controlled more than 600 undead and had few high 2 half lord rank monsters in his skeleton army after Kahn merged them using Synthesis and imparted black magic and darkness element to them.

Kahn didn't bother hunting Kobolds as there were better options than them. The only one who didn't get to lead a group so far was Armin. Kahn didn't find a single suitable species that could work as his Healer Brigade so the Priest subordinate was on his own for now.

Out of the 350+ new subordinates, 250 were melee attack classes such as High Ogres, Hobogoblins & High Orcs, 50 were assassin class while 30 long-range archer class and the remaining were mage class. Now Kahn's army had a pretty good team formation except for the Healers part.

But even after all these days spent on looking for strong enemies, Kahn didn't even get to fight a single Lord rank floor boss even on the final floors. All of them were simply weak and didn't give him any rewarding or game-changer abilities like his hunts from the past. So he only focused on creating new subordinates.

The most useful ability during these raids was none other than the King of the Dead ability that allowed him to directly create subordinates without him having to touch them in 500 meters radius. All he had to do was wait for his army to ambush and massacre the enemies and for him to step inside the middle of the battlefield.

This saved him a lot of time as he could now create more than 50 subordinates in one go as long as the corpses were inside half a mile radius from his location. Otherwise, he'd have to spend 3 hours just to create 10 new subordinates.

The ones he found not worth making as part of his army were eaten and their cores distributed among the older subordinates as they were the main guys.. Their seniors in a sense.

As Kahn finally felt content with his tiresome grind.. He took a day off just to cool down his mind.

Because the day after that, he was going after the main reason why he felt the need to increase the numbers in the first place.

The next day he spent in his house and carrying on the research by reading books.

As the morning sun came the day afterwards, Kahn had his breakfast and quickly left to meet his other half.. His true love. The girlfriend he never had in his previous life and always gave him skills and abilities unconditionally. The bond Kahn shared with his girlfriend transcended beyond human understanding. And the name of his soulmate was none other than..

The Bromnir Dungeon!

Using a Pass, Kahn finally entered and traveled to the 15th and the final floor of this dungeon.

Not a single group in the past 50 years had cleared this Dungeon floor. Nobody even got past the 14th floor boss to be exact. The Lich had killed them all and probably the army of 500 skeleton soldiers he had could actually be those adventurers. So there weren't any records of this floor boss for Kahn to research just like the previous.

But unlike the last time, he wanted to be careful and not fall into the trap of overestimating himself and getting killed by the enemy instead. He didn't want to find out if getting stabbed in the chest again would give him another title or some power boost.

As Kahn finally entered inside the floor entrance.. Suddenly the doorway that led him inside closed with some sort of mechanism and before he could even dash out.. His only escape route was already closed. This gave him a foreboding and a replay of the undead Lich again.

Kahn's gaze then shifted to the environment in front of him..

A completely black desolate land where nothing but black boulders could be seen. But unlike the previous floor, there weren't some dead trees but the entire floor seemed like Kahn had entered inside a close range of an active volcano.

Because this nearly 10 Kilometer wide floor had tons of big cracks on the ground where red and sizzling hot lava was leaking out of the ground and some places even had small fountains of the erupting magma.

Now even if he didn't want to.. Kahn would be forced to play the game called 'The Floor is Lava'.

He treaded carefully from these crevices and boulders and since the heat was already too high. He had no choice but to activate his Somir scales and cast few water spells to drown himself under them just to keep moving forward.

During this period, he kept all his senses alert. Only when he reached towards a rocky and mountainous area in the center of this floor, did his Survival Instinct started ringing in his head.

[System warning! The host is being targeted by the murderous intent of a high-grade species. It is advisable to be cautious.] the sudden alert from the system came. And it was the very first time the system itself warned Kahn.

"Means it's even a stronger opponent than the Lich.." spoke Kahn and quickly put his darkness barrier on work and prepared to attack with the darkblade as soon as he saw the enemy..

THUD! THUD! THUD!

The ear-deafening thuds of some giant creature stepping were heard followed by the sizzling sound of ground being burnt reached his ears.

Kahn's mouth couldn't even gasp given the look of the enemy that was standing a kilometer away from him.

A gigantic 25-meter tall figure with skin covered in the black and scaly hide with 4 legs that could tear through anything with the sharp and strong claws. The belly of this creature appeared to be emitting burning red glow as if it had the magma inside it. It so had long tail that could swat Kahn to a disc and the most prominent and noticeable thing was its head.

The monster that stood in front of him made the undead Lich look like a random henchman.

"Fuck.. This time, I'm definitely gonna die." spoke Kahn as he couldn't believe his eyes when he again gazed at the gigantic Dungeon Boss.

It had two giant horns on its head, the jaw and skull that completely matched the description of a certain species that was deemed supreme in any fictional story.

Although it didn't have wings.. Kahn knew exactly what it was..

The species stood in front of him with nothing but a look of a superior being looking down upon the ants.

It was a Drake!

More accurately.. It was a Magma Drake!

Chapter 92: The Magma Drake

Kahn stood rooted on the spot and forgot how to even breathe in front of this ginormous figure that appeared to be a descendant species of the mighty Dragon race.

As per the knowledge he gained from the books he read recently, Drakes were the lowest level of creatures that possessed the Draconian bloodline compared to other monsters such as Wyrms and Wyverns. But even then, they were nothing to be looked down upon because even a single drake was more than big enough to wipe out at least a thousand enemies by itself.

And one of these creatures was standing right in front of him. Its 25 meters tall body and 10 meters breadth had filled a huge portion of this surrounding area.

The red aura this drake emitted was far stronger and more visible and dense, it made the undead Lich's aura appear not even worth comparing with this gigantic beast. Kahn who felt a similar aura coming from only 2 people he met so far. And those were none other than President of the Adventurer Association, Solomon Elfenheim and the commander Straze Boltomir from the Military.

In a way, it's aura had even more regality and dominance compared to them.

"A High Lord!" shouted Kahn in disbelief as his Hunter's Intent sensed the aura from the majestic and dreadful monster.

A high lord monster was comparable to a Semi-Saint rank fighter.. But given the draconian bloodline, the enemy in front of was no different than a first stage Saint rank enemy.

"Hmm.. A weakling dares to enter my abode?" a tyrannical and domineering voice filled the entire floor.. Kahn shuddered in fear and there were goosebumps all over his body after hearing the dreadful voice of the Drake.

"Apologies, o mighty Drake. I've mistakenly entered inside this place without knowing that a superior and magnanimous being such as yourself lives inside the place." spoke Kahn and bowed in front of this gigantic monster.

Its claws alone were more than enough to squash 5 Kahn's with a single attack and even if 10 Kahn stood on top of each other, it'd still be dwarfed by the Drake's height.

"You.. How can a lowly creature like you can speak our language?" asked the Drake as it tilted its head forwards and took a good look at Kahn.

Flabbergasted!

Kahn had forgotten that because of the All Languages Knowledge gift given to him by Kravel, he could speak even the most ancient languages in this world.. And that included the Draconian language.

"I have been under the awe of the supreme race your Highness belongs to. So I have spent years studying the Draconian language. But to see it finally proving useful and meeting your grand figure here made me forget my manners." replied Kahn quickly.. He had no choice but to butter up this drake or Kahn would be barbecued by this monster.

He was no different than Bilbo Baggins trying to sweet-talk Smaug from The Hobbit movie so that the dragon wouldn't eat him.

"Interesting. So tell me.. Why have you come to this place? Do you seek to conquer this dungeon or do you wish to slay me?" asked the Drake with a curious expression.

Thud! Thud!

It started walking towards Kahn and small tremors could be felt on these grounds that were made from cooled-down lava. Kahn jittered in fear.. He didn't even dare to make a run for it because he had no skills that could outrun this Drake if it chased him.

And where could he even go? Half of this floor was magma while the only safe place was the ground that was the territory of this drake. Even the exit was already closed. Kahn didn't want to be the mouse who was hunted by a cat.

"No, your greatness. I've mistakenly entered inside your territory. Had I known before that your grand persona resided here.. I would not have dared to disturb you." spoke Kahn hurriedly to keep the dungeon boss calm.

"Lies! The proof that you've come here means that you managed to kill Ajak. To think that pathetic skeleton would be defeated by someone like you.. What a disappointment.." rebuked the drake and tilted his head down, almost trying to sniff the scent down from Kahn.

"How surprising.. You now possess his aura and powers as if you've absorbed him inside you." spoke the drake.

"It was a fortunate encounter o great high lord. I barely managed to live. If you would allow me to leave.. I promise never to disturb and take your time again." replied Kahn as beads of sweat dripped from his head.

Because as soon as the drake came 100 meters close to Kahn.. His darkness barrier, the skill which protected the undead Lich from Kahn and his subordinates without getting a scratch had already started waning under the extremely high temperature that came from the drake's stomach and neck.

"Do you think of me as a fool, lowly creature? Do you think I do not know why the likes of you come inside this dungeon?.. You're after the Dungeon Core that runs this place, aren't you?" asked the Drake.

"The dungeon core? What is that if I may ask?" asked Kahn politely.

"Huh.. You outsiders dare to invade our home for our most precious treasure and then put up an act of being oblivious about what you seek? What a deceitful species indeed." scoffed the drake at Kahn.

[Nah dude, I don't know what the fuck you're talking about.] spoke Kahn to himself.

"As the Guardian of this dungeon. I shall grant you a painful death, you pitiful thief!" shouted the drake and ripples of sonic booms filled the entire floor as the drake raged at Kahn.

Suddenly, the drake's stomach even grew more fiery red and something started amassing in its mouth. Kahn's Survival Instinct rang like a siren and quickly told him to run away.

Side Hopper!

Kahn quickly used the skill and appeared 50 meters behind his previous location. Just then, the drake spat out a giant blob of red hot magma and the darkness barrier that surrounded Kahn before was shattered like a mirror hit by a stone.

As soon as Kahn saw this, he dashed away in the opposite direction of the drake.. And only one thought came into his mind..

[Run bitch! Run!]

Chapter 93: Return of the King

Kahn ran through the rocky terrain of the final floor and dodged the jet stream attacks from the Dungeon Boss.

"You're misunderstanding me! I'm not here to steal anything. I only came to find who lived on this floor!" shouted Kahn as he kept running and used Side Hopper skill from time to time just when the blistering hot magma was about to hit him.

THUD!

BANG!

"Do not think of me as a dumb monster you lowly creature. That's what every thief says when caught red-handed!" growled the dungeon boss and chased after Kahn. Every step and jump it made shook the rocky ground and formed cracks as the ginormous creature was the biggest and largest monster Kahn had ever seen in this new life.

So far, Kahn hadn't even tried to summon any of his subordinates because there simply wasn't any suitable place for him to summon his army and even fight properly.

The only place that could hold a large-scale battle in front of the Magma Drake was the place where he met the dungeon boss for the first time.

Kahn knew he alone couldn't do anything against this boss. But if he released the subordinates here, half of them would be burnt alive in the magma that was erupting from the ground.

Kahn thought of a plan, he started citing an incantation as he kept dodging the giant claws by running & jumping from time to time. He let the drake spit another stream of magma at him but just as the attack was about to hit his body, he released the Void Realm dark magic spell.

Swoosh!

Everything in his 50 meter proximity quickly stopped moving including the gigantic drake as if the time itself stopped running in this place. Kahn dashed by its left side to quickly get past it. The spell currently worked only for 5 seconds so he didn't have any time to waste.

When the spell finally ended, the Drake regained control of its body, it shifted its gaze at Kahn again and spoke, "It's Ajak's skill! You really did steal his powers."

The magma drake's expression turned to that of rage as if Kahn had committed some sort of taboo; it charged at him with full speed and with more fervor this time. Everywhere the drake passed, small cracks were formed on the solid ground.

After running for a couple of minutes, Kahn finally reached the center of the grounds where the drake previously stood.

"Everyone, out!" commanded Kahn and one by one, hundreds of black figures jumped out of his shadow and quickly started getting in a defensive formation without wasting a single second.

His side now consisted of more than 850 subordinates and many being above Level 40. And since he had spent considerable resources on equipping them with proper gears and weapons, it was comparable to a battalion of well-equipped soldiers.

The first line of defense was Blackwall and the Minotaurs, followed by High Ogres, Hobgoblins, High Orcs and the Undead warriors under the lead of Jugram and Ceril. Ronin took the left flank with the goblin assassins & Oliver took the right with archer subordinates and the Nymphs.

Armin took the center while Omega & Kahn were in the back. This sudden emergence of these creatures even surprised the Drake Dungeon Boss and it stopped his charge.

"What kind of magic is this? They're neither undead and nor are summoned creatures.." spoke the drake in confusion.

At this moment, Kahn didn't waste time answering their attacker. He and Ronin released the fear toxin from their hands at full capacity and started filling the surrounding with the fear toxin.

"You dare to fight back you pathetic vermin!" shouted the drake and charged at the Kahn's army!

A barrage of water & frost spells landed on the body of the ginormous drake and a volley of arrows fell on it.

Blackwall taunted the drake to attack him and put his new shield in the front after activating all of his defensive skills. Ceril on the other hand started launching the Shadow Blades at the dungeon boss that had so much destructive power.

Omega, whose job was to protect Kahn at this moment stood in between him and the enemy.

ROAR!!

The drake roared in anger after surviving through the barrage of attacks. But amongst all of them, only the shadow blades did some actual damage as the scaly hide was simply too strong and fortified to break through. Even the water & frost spells and attack only managed to push it back a little but soon they evaporated from the extremely high temperature coming from the gigantic monster's body.

"Die you insects!" bellowed the drake and stormed in front of the defensive formation. With a single swipe of its giant claws, it broke through the first line of defense and even flung many of the minotaurs and Ogres right inside the lava. Their wails reached Kahn's ears as one by one, the subordinates were melting and burned alive helplessly inside the pool of magma that was coming out of the ground.

The drake roared and sonic booms from its mighty war cry shook the surroundings and many of the subordinates lost their footing. It jumped right in the middle of the formation and started attacking the hundreds of enemies without any care of being hurt. It was extremely agile and strong, opposite of what one would expect from such a ginormous figure.

The magma drake swung its tail and swatted dozens of subordinates in the ground and broke many skeleton soldiers into pieces.. Just in the matter of a minute, Kahn had already lost more than a hundred subordinates by either getting killed under the attacks from the gigantic drake or getting burned alive from the magma pools surrounding the battlefield.

It didn't even take 10 minutes before only 10% of Kahn's original army remained. Kahn himself saw the dungeon boss decimating Ceril, Jugram and Blackwall in the ground and killing them on the spot with magma that it spit out of its mouth.

Omega charged and attacked the drake with shredder claws but they couldn't even go past its defenses while the toxin fog didn't do anything because it got evaporated from the bodily heat before even reaching the dungeon boss.

Kahn who was attacking with darkblade did some minor damage but it wasn't enough. He'd need to attack the same place over few dozen times before his attacks even made a significant damage. His darkness barrier, the biggest protective spell shattered in seconds from the magma attacks of this gigantic beast while his Somir scales were already cracking from the tail swipe attacks he barely managed to survive from.

Little by little, everyone including Omega died by the hands of the drake as it cut and ripped their bodies apart.. Kahn on the other hand wasn't faring any better.

All of his subordinates were defeated.. All his attack skills including the darkblade, fear toxin and poison acid proved useless in front of the dungeon boss.

He thought that he had prepared for the unexpected.. But greatly failed in front of it anyway.

BERSERK GOD MODE!

He activated his life-saving skill and attacked the drake with all his might using his sword and launched dark magic spells and attacks one by one.. But even they didn't cut down the Magma drake and only made it bleed with bright yellow blood that appeared no different than the blistering magma.

THWACK!

Kahn was yeeted away by the tail swipe attack and his body was thrown 200 meters away despite defending against the attack.

His Somir scales started crumbling one by one.. If not for them, he would've been roasted alive.

Just before he could get up, his body gave up and he dropped on the ground with his face & torso bleeding profusely. The effect of the Berserk God Mode had finished and now he was suffering from the aftermath. He had entered a weakened state and didn't even have the strength to lift his head.

"Is this my true end.." thought Kahn. He cursed himself for thinking that he would be able to fight whatever that was thrown in front of him just because he had an army of nearly a thousand soldiers. But the Saint rank monster was in a completely different league.

THUD! THUD! THUD!

The dungeon boss that was standing 200 meters away started walking towards Kahn's fallen body with a bored expression as if Kahn didn't even meet its expectations and gave a good fight.

Kahn's body started giving up and his consciousness started fading.

But suddenly, an alarming sound came from his mind!

[System is unable to control the subordinate! The host must maintain his consciousness!] alarmed the system.

The next second however.. A giant burst of black smoke was released from his body and completely filled the surrounding 100 meters in just seconds. Even the magma drake faltered in its footsteps as it felt a dangerous aura coming out of this seemingly weak creature.

A ground-shattering and terrifying screech was released from inside of Kahn's body as a visible black aura soon filled the entire battlefield.

Kahn heard an Ancient and Domineering voice in his head for the first time. This voice was unknown to him since he never heard it before. The majestic and tyrannical voice spoke to him.

[You're still so weak and pathetic, human!]

BOOM!

BOOM!

The entire battlefield shook as if a bolt of lightning was dropped in the middle of it.

A gigantic and extremely long black creature suddenly appeared in front of Kahn's unconscious body.. And the figure was something that hadn't appeared ever since Kahn left the forest.

The figure had two long and pointy horns.. Its eyes were burning yellow and two giant fangs came out of its mouth. This black creature was even longer than the magma drake and its height was no lesser than the dungeon boss.

SCREECH!!!

An ear-deafening and shrill war cry was heard and even the drake, who was a descendent of the mighty dragon race felt an immense threat coming from the creature that stood in front of it.

A ginormous figure of a Basilisk stood in the middle of the battlefield and stared at the dungeon boss as if it was looking at a weak prey. And the figure being none other than..

RUDRA!

Chapter 94: The Archenemy

Two ginormous figures.. Each one of them belonging to a superior species in the existence of this world. Both figures filled half of this battleground among the mangled, burnt flesh and broken bones of Kahn's subordinates.

All of them were dead.. whether it was Omega, Blackwall, Ronin, Ceril & Oliver. Not a single one of them survived and were brutally killed by this magma drake. Those who were the most loyal to him had already done their best to fight by his side and gave their lives to protect him.

But now, the only being who stood in between him and the inevitable death was this gigantic Basilisk who hadn't even acknowledged Kahn as its master.

HISSSS!!!

Rudra, the Variant Basilisk that Kahn had created using the dead body of the mother Somir & her eggs to repent for taking their lives had finally reappeared after staying silent for too long. It had already been more than a month ever since the tyrannical and majestic creature had a chance to make an entrance.

Although Kahn had to rely on Rudra for few days inside the forest when they had to build up their strengths and increase their levels. But when Kahn came to Flavot city, he couldn't take out this subordinate because it was simply too big and there weren't many occasions he required help from this basilisk who didn't even have any loyalty towards its creator.

But as things stood now, it was the only thing that prevented his confirmed death as Kahn still laid on the ground unconscious and completely oblivious to what was happening.

"What kind of foul scented creature are you?" spoke the magma drake as he felt some sort of unexplainable hatred towards the basilisk that was about as same height as itself.

"Silence! An inferior beast dares to insult me?!" bellowed Rudra. There existed no language barrier as if these creatures were talking to each other telepathically and shared some sort of understanding towards each other.

"Get out of my way! I must kill that invader." roared the drake and stared at Rudra.

"You dare command me?! A weakling wishes to provoke my wrath?!" screeched Rudra at the drake and his eyes glimmered yellow again.

"My life is bound to this weak human. So if you want to kill him, I'll have to see whether you're worthy of killing me first." declared Rudra.

Even if Rudra had an advantage in terms of Rank & Bloodline purity and even had the same size as the dungeon boss, he still had to be wary of the drake because he was currently level 62 while the drake as per Kahn's standards would be around level 82.

The difference between rank and bloodline was made up with the difference in levels and attributes. In terms of physical strength, both of them were at equal stats because Drake was only a low level descendant of the Dragons while Rudra had 50% pure Basilisk bloodline.

But this didn't make Rudra feel fearful of the opposition in any way.

Although none of these ginormous figures were some mindless beasts but intelligent and sentient beings belonging to noble species of this world, they still felt an enmity as which strong creature didn't want to fight someone as strong as them and set their dominance.

For some unknown reason, both these creatures felt a sense of rivalry and inborn hatred towards each other.

If Kahn was to be still conscious, he'd understand the reason why. Because from the various books he read about different monsters and species in the world so far, he had come to know a little bit of information about the Godbeasts that were nothing but myths at this point.

According to the folklores and ancient historical archives, the Basilisks that were one of the five ancient godbeasts and the mighty dragon race were actually lifelong enemies and had fought wars with each

other for thousands of years before both sides greatly diminished their numbers. Which also paved a way for many other species to evolve and get stronger with time.

So killing or protecting Kahn was just an excuse. Because one way or another, these creatures were going to fight against each other sooner or later.

"Prepare for your death, obnoxious beast!" declared Rudra and dashed towards the drake as he slithered extremely quickly.

Thud! Thud!

Crack! Crack!

The magma drake ran and charged towards to face the enemy head-on and several cracks were formed on the ground.

BOOM!!!

Two ginormous figures collided against each other and a loud sonic boom of their grand and sturdy bodies banging against each other shook the entire floor.

SCREECH!!!

An ear-deafening screech from Rudra created ripples of waves and the basilisk bared and bit with its fangs. He bit the highly defensive and burning hide of the magma drake that was leaking magma from small outlets.. The wounds that were previously made by Kahn.

The drake quickly swung its giant and sharp claws against Rudra's black and fortified layer of the scales. It even tried to bite Rudra's skin but soon, both sides realized that their enemy was extremely strong and had a very tough body that was hard to penetrate through just physical attacks.

The drake quickly gathered the magma in its mouth spew it on Rudra's body.

HISS!

Rudra hissed loudly and jerked his body, when he looked back at the scales that were attacked with this spray of magma, he saw that his lustrous black and impenetrable scales were slightly damaged.

Rudra released his Dominator's Aura and a pitch-black yet very heavy pressure was exerted in the 200 meters surrounding, making it hard for the drake to swiftly move.

"You'll pay for this!" he bellowed and suddenly, spat a spray of dark green liquid at the magma drake!

Corrosive Acid!

It was Rudra's innate skill that was an evolved version of Somir's poison acid.. Far more destructive and lethal.

Sizzle! Sizzle!

ROAR!!

The drake roared in anger as the Corrosive Acid almost took out a outermost layer of its hide that was extremely hard to even make a scratch on.

The next second, both the sides took a step back and the interaction of gauging their enemy's strength was done.

But unlike what one would expect, Rudra didn't wait up for a chance and frantically charged at the drake again and encircled its entire body with his own and this time, he threw up more corrosive acid on the drake's head and neck!

WRRAAAHHH!!!

Wailed the gigantic drake and haphazardly swung its claws and tail to beat Rudra.

Clang! Thud! Bang!

The clashing noises of the two dangerous and terrifying creatures filled the entire floor as their massive bodies hit each other again and again.

Rudra wasn't even afraid of getting hurt, more likely.. The basilisk was enjoying the battle despite getting injured and a part of his body getting burnt and receiving deep wounds.

Unlike Kahn, who prioritized on defending from and attacking an enemy at the same time, Rudra used his body and tail to straight-up swat and whip the drake without caring for the injuries he was receiving from the volcanic body that was leaking magma and was extremely hot to burn trees just by passing close to them.

"HA HAH AHA HA! More!!!" a devious and menacing laugh came from the basilisk as if a sadist was looking at his target and getting exhilarated by imagining how he would torture them.

The groundbreaking and brutal battle carried on for the next half an hour. Both the ginormous creatures were glaring at it each other with murderous intent, their eyes filled with anger. Both of them were wounded and bleeding profusely from many openings on the body as their respective skills and attack were like bane to each other.

Rudra was bleeding mainly from the lower part of his body where the area was exposed and wasn't covered with the scales, while the drake dungeon boss was leaking yellow hot blood that was sizzling & evaporating with time from various wounds on its back and legs. It had already lost an eye because of Rudra's Corrosive Acid.

But the basilisk on the other hand was getting even more fierce and excited as the battle went on.. Giving no room for breathing.

For the first time in its life, the magma drake fought an enemy it couldn't kill with a single attack or trample over it effortlessly.

On the other side of the battlefield, a body of a human finally showed signs of moving after feeling the tremors and noises coming from the ongoing battle that shook the ground and created shockwaves.

"Ugh.. What's happening?" asked Kahn to himself and tried to get up. Since he was in a weakened state, he barely had the strength to get up.

Kahn quickly took out a high-grade health & stamina recovery potion and gulped down the entire bottle in a single go. Only when he felt like regaining some strength in his body, his eyes landed on the ongoing battle.

Kahn lied against the nearby boulder and looked at the battle of the kings.

[So he finally decided to show up.] spoke Kahn to himself.

After another ten minutes of intense battle, both sides came to halt and maintained a distance.

"Finally, I've fought a worthy opponent." spoke the drake.

"I cannot say the same." replied Rudra and suddenly, his pupils and iris enlarged as he looked right in the remaining eye of the magma drake.

"What?!" spoke the drake but suddenly, everything around it turned into a blur and darkness surrounded the dungeon boss.

Kahn who was far away from this battleground quickly recognized what was happening.

The magma drake could no longer see anything other than the pitch-black surrounding and the light that was fading away each second. Its body started going numb and the ginormous monster stopped moving as if it had lost all the control over its nerves.

But soon, it felt like something was slowly wounding over its body and the grip it exerted was increasing little by little. The drake wanted to move but it couldn't.. His own body wasn't listening to the mind and let go of all the struggle to even retaliate against this extremely clenched & tight hold on its body.

Soon, the body fell on the ground but the choking on its neck was increasing at an extremely fast pace.. It could no longer breathe properly.

A dark and grim black aura covered its body and the only thing he saw next was two gigantic yellow snake-like eyes staring right through it as if an unparalleled tyrant was looking at a weak subject.

HISSS!!!

The drake heard a loud hiss and finally came to its senses and noticed that his entire body was coiled over by the gigantic basilisk and unable to even move its legs.

Kahn knew what actually happened.. It was one of the gigantic basilisk's innate skills that he had seen before when they hunted many creatures inside the Abyss forest. The ability that made even their enemies willingly surrender and put down their guard..

The Hypnosis Gaze!

Unlike Kahn's Executioner's Gaze, the Hypnosis Gaze didn't paralyze the enemy on the spot but completely broke the mind and body connection of the enemies and blinded them as if they were inside a completely different world. Making them confused and unable to see the approaching enemy.

The drake had finally fallen for Rudra's Hypnosis Gaze ability. And before it could even speak another word.

RIP!!!

Rudra bit and ripped the dungeon boss's head off of the body. Its ginormous figure had slumped down after the Magma Drake lost its life.

And thus, the victor of this battle was decided.

Chapter 95: Consolation

A war of the Kings for supremacy was finally over. Rudra, despite being weaker in terms of levels and attributes, still came out on top. Living up to the name of the Godbeast Basilisk.

Kahn looked at the gigantic figure that was still coiling around the corpse of the magma drake that was now cooling down little by little. Kahn was now recovering and had enough strength to get up and walk thanks to the high-grade health & stamina recovery potion.

He picked up his sword and started using it like a walking stick as he slowly walked towards the battlefield. His bleeding wounds were slowly getting closed since the aftermath of Berserk God Mode was over and now he had 30% of his strength and health regeneration abilities, albeit working at a slow pace.

"So you've finally decided to show up, your Majesty." said Kahn sarcastically.

"It's because you're still too weak, human. You couldn't even kill this inferior beast while I defeated it despite being far weaker than it." replied Rudra as he looked at Kahn with condescending eyes.

"Since when have you been able to speak?" asked Kahn out of curiosity.

"The mighty me have developed speech after watching you converse with so many creatures. I can see everything from the inside." replied the basilisk.

"Then why didn't you come out before when I asked you to?" asked Kahn as he glared at the serpent.

"I wanted to see how you'd fare against this lizard. But to think that you'd lose so miserably.. Well, I didn't have any big expectations anyway." spoke Rudra as he started unwinding himself from the body of the now-dead dungeon boss.

"Then why didn't you come out when the Lich nearly killed me?" asked Kahn.

"Its dark magic had greatly restricted me and also, the cave was too small for me to appear." replied Rudra.

"If you had come before, everyone else would be still alive!" raged Kahn at the basilisk. Because he indeed had asked Rudra to come out but the basilisk was somehow able to maintain staying inside his shadow despite Kahn's orders.

He was like a tenant who won't get out of the house even after the landlord banging on the door too many times.

"And how is that my problem? Their lives have no importance to me." rebuked Rudra. If not for its life being bound to Kahn, it wouldn't have shown up even now.

Rudra was a subordinate made up of 50% Basilisk bloodline and was at Mythical rank. Even under the restrictions placed by the Synthesis divine ability, the difference in species & rank made it unwilling to submit to Kahn.. Mainly because the Kahn back then & even now was still far weaker than it.

Kahn threw his hands in the air, there was no point in quarreling with this rogue and oddball subordinate. He'd need to reach a level far above it and beat the shit out of this basilisk one day to make him submit.

"System, is there any way I can get them back?" asked Kahn just for the sake of it. His losses were simply too big in this hunt. And he was only alive because of this giant basilisk, his biggest trump card showing up in the last moment. Otherwise, he'd be squashed in the molten ground by the dungeon boss.

One thing Kahn understood very seriously that your Rank and Species really had too much importance to them. Rudra managed to kill the drake and made up for their difference in strength solely because of that. If he was the same level as the dungeon boss, the drake would've died miserably in the beginning because Rudra would be far stronger and have an immense difference in attributes and strength.

Even though Kahn didn't like relying on anyone else, even his subordinates; he still had to be thankful to this moody teenager of a snake.

[Yes. The System holds all the data regarding the species, bloodlines and even the consciousness of the subordinates created by the host. So as long as the host is alive, the subordinates can be revived. But the host will have to provide monster cores and mana ores for the reconstruction of their bodies from scratch.] replied the system as it explained the procedure.

Kahn let out a sigh of relief and asked again.

"How much?"

[Given the current amount of resources, the host can only resurrect 4 subordinates after using all the A Rank & B rank cores. Low-grade resources are unsuitable for this procedure.] replied the system.

"I see. Resurrect Omega, Ronin, Ceril & Blackwall for now. Take all the resources you need." ordered Kahn.

[Resurrection procedure initiated. The subordinates will be revived with a newly constructed body with the same skills, bloodlines and memories in 12 days.] informed the system in its usual lifeless robotic voice.

Kahn currently had 60 A rank & 1200 B rank cores on him.

Kahn found this procedure reasonable because no way could a dead entity could be resurrected this quickly after being reconstructed from the scratch.

"If you don't mind.." said Kahn and walked towards the corpse of the magma drake.

"MINE!! Its body is mine to eat!!" shouted Rudra and glared at Kahn.

"What? Thought you didn't like eating weaklings." responded Kahn in surprise.

"Although this beast is weaker in front of me.. I sense an archaic bloodline from it. Even though it's in very small amount, it can still be beneficial for me." declared Rudra.

"Huh.. Aren't you a Basilisk? Isn't this guy supposed to be your enemy?" asked Kahn with a baffled expression.

"I am. But you're forgetting that I'm what you call a Variant. I can absorb its bloodline and acquire its traits and powers for myself." said Rudra.

"Holy fuck!!!"

A sudden realization struck Kahn. If what Rudra said was possible.. Wouldn't that mean that Rudra would be able to absorb both Basilisk & Draconic bloodline in the future? And have powers of both the species?

He'd be an anomaly that had never existed.. An entity that shouldn't even be possible to exist. Because normally, two noble bloodlines would repel & counteract each other.

But in the case of Rudra who was created using Kahn's Synthesis divine ability.. It was possible as it had no restrictions on any bloodlines in the first place.

"So you mean you can become an amalgamation of both Basilisk & Dragon? You gotta be shitting me!!!" yelled Kahn in disbelief.

In response, Rudra only gave a cunning smile to Kahn.

"I will transcend beyond these Basilisks and Dragons you speak of. I will trample upon them.. I shall sit atop of all the creations in this world! I will dominate this entire world!" declared Rudra.

"Yeah, yeah whatever. Just let me absorb its skills and bloodline and you can have the body and the core, okay?" said Kahn and put his hands on the now cooled-off body.

Kahn hadn't used the Mana Bombs on this magma drake because he figured out that they wouldn't have damaged the dungeon boss up by much. After all, the heat only compliments heat. His dark magic was far more useful compared to those bombs.

And now that most of the body had cooled off after the boss died, he could finally put his hands on it. And since Kahn didn't have any sacrificial pawns, he couldn't even create a new subordinate out of it.

He put his hands on the body and gave the command.

"Absorb!"

For the next half an hour, Kahn spent his time absorbing the skills and bloodline. And when he was finally done, the system notified him about the new skills abilities.

[Congratulations to the host for acquiring the Draconic Bloodline!

Current Bloodline purity : 5%

The host has acquired the following abilities & skills :

Thermal Body (S Rank) (Grandmaster Rank) (PASSIVE) :

Allows the host to maintain body temperature and immunity to heat up to 2000 degrees celcius.

Drake Scales (ACTIVE) :

Creates a sturdy & protective layer of Magma Drake's scales around the entire body of the host.

Drake Claws (ACTIVE) :

The host can now use the sharp and unbreakable claws of the magma drake with extreme heat and destructive power.

Note : The exclusive bloodline abilities of the drake are unsuitable to be merged with other skills & abilities the host is currently in possession of. The host is advised to obtain more Draconic bloodline for Synthesis.] the system gave the report card.

"Holy shit!" exclaimed Kahn in joy.

This was indeed a worthy reward. And as soon he gained the Thermal Body, Kahn's body no longer felt the jarring heat that came from the surrounding. To him, he felt like sitting in front of an AC instead.

The Drake Scales and Drake Claws would definitely be a worthwhile ability in many circumstances for sure.

After he was done, Rudra started tearing the body of the drake with his giant fangs and ingested the torn body parts one by one.

Kahn who was already content with the results had no intentions to watch the butchering procedure

Just then, Kahn suddenly remembered something that the Dungeon Boss had spoken to him.

He took a look around the battlefield and tried to sense the surroundings.. But since all his abilities were restricted for the next 24 Hrs.. His reach wasn't that far.

"Now where is it?" asked Kahn and finally he noticed a small bright light that was coming out of a small peak on the other end of this floor. It was the exact place where the dungeon boss first came out of.

A greedy expression appeared on his face. Because he would still get some consolation despite losing the fight. Because what Kahn was looking for was the most precious thing in this entire dungeon...

The Dungeon Core!

Chapter 96: The Successor

After Kahn finally noticed the shiny bright light coming from the other end of this final floor. His countenance turned delighted as he slowly kept walking and carefully avoid the lava.

In just 10 minutes, he finally stood at the foot of a tall peak. Even though his senses had weakened, he was still able to find the immense and fluctuating mana coming from a tunnel in the middle of this peak.

Whatever that was inside, undoubtedly it was incredibly powerful because the mana and pressure it was leaking was far more potent and intense than any of the monster cores & mana ores he had seen so far. Even the violet monster core Kahn had eaten failed in comparison.

Step by step, Kahn finally managed to climb to the entrance of the small tunnel. Kahn's black longcoat started fluttering in the air from the waves of mana the was coming out of the innermost part of this tunnel.

Kahn felt like that he wasn't being targeted by the source of this mana or he would've been flung backward just based on the intensity of the waves. It's as if the source of this dense mana was allowing Kahn to enter the tunnel willingly.

As soon as he walked a dozen meters inside the inner part.. Kahn was blinded by an incredibly bright white light and he covered his eyes with his left hand. He couldn't see what was in front of him.

But sooner, the intensity of this light decreased little by little and Kahn finally saw the insides of this tunnel.

A solid floor made up of the hard black ground, similar to the one outside.. But in the middle of this small enclosed space that was of the size of 2 living rooms was an altar and above it, lied a bright and glowing white orb that was of the same size of a car.

This giant orb was pulsating like a heart of a creature and ripples of tangible mana permeated the entire space. But before Kahn could even come closer to this orb, the space was filled with white fog and a phantom started forming above this white orb.

A 10 meter white and wraith-like figure was formed above this dungeon core and a face of an elderly human came to be.

A domineering & majestic pressure was exuded from this phantom and the being opened its eyes.

It gazed around the room and finally looked at Kahn.

"So someone has finally conquered this place. Tell me, who are you?" asked the phantom as he stared at Kahn intently.

"I'm Kahn, a citizen of the Rakos Empire." replied Kahn without any worries. Because he felt no killing intent coming from this phantom.

"So our empire still lives? Our great Emperor would be delighted to know this from the afterlife." said the phantom with a worshipping look as it looked in a random direction for no reason.

[Dude, stop trying to act so mysterious & cool. Just tell me what the hell are you.] cursed Kahn in his head.

"May I ask who you are?" asked Kahn.

"I'm called Lerzon, the first Sage of the Rakos Empire." replied the phantom.

"Young man.. Have you defeated the guardian of this core?" asked the phantom to Kahn.

"Yes, I have. Do you think I would be able to stand here without killing it." he responded.

"This giant orb you see is our Empire's most prized possession. 800 years ago, I hid it at the border of our Empire. If I'm not wrong, there should be few dungeons formed around this place by now." spoke the first sage.

"Yes, there are more than 11 dungeons in 50 kilometers formed around it." explained Kahn.

"Listen to me, young man. I'm nothing but a soul remnant of my old self. A fraction of my soul was bound to this core before I departed the world." explained the sage.

"I do not know what you would do with this core. But as part of the instructions that were given to me by our great Emperor, whoever passes the trial and reaches this place; shall be named as his successor and become the rightful heir to the throne. This decree was already given to the Imperial family. And from now on.. You are the rightful emperor of Rakos Empire!" declared the phantom in a grand gesture.

[But there is no Imperial family anymore.. They were massacred after a coup hundred years ago. Nobody knows about the Emperor or his decree anymore.] spoke Kahn to himself.

"So tell me, young man. Do you accept it as your life's mission to rule and bring prosperity to our Empire? To make it the greatest and undefeatable force in the entire world?" asked the sage's soul remnant.

Whatever gibberish this phantom was speaking, it was something definitely worth knowing. Besides, the word 'successor' sounded cool. As normally, something like this would be counted as a fortunate encounter in a Cultivation novel which helps MC become very OP or gives him powers that'll become his trump cards.

Kahn knelt on one knee and replied with the aura of heroism and responsibility.

"I, Kahn. Swear that from this day forth, I shall make it my life's mission to serve and protect the Rakos Empire with all of my being. And I promise to make it the biggest and most powerful force in this world in my lifetime!" shouted Kahn as he looked at the phantom with the expression of righteousness on his face.

[Like fuck I'm gonna do that! Just give me the goddamn thing you dumbass ghost!] he spoke to himself as he maintained the upright expression.

"Then I, Lerzon the First Sage and the most trusted aide of the great Emperor shall name you as the True Successor and grant you the core of our Emperor, Rathnaar the Conquerer. Who was once a peak Saint Rank Swordsman before he passed away. In his name, I bind this core's ownership to you. I hope that you find a way to utilize it and lead our Empire to greatness." said the phantom.

[What kind of loosely written plotline is this? He isn't even inquiring about my background or testing my true intentions.] spoke Kahn to himself.

Suddenly, hundreds of white threats came out of the core and entered Kahn's body.

[Let 'em freebies come in. My body is ready!]

Soon, the phantom faded and the giant orb started shrinking its size. In just 10 seconds, it turned into a normal orb that was of the size of a football (soccer ball) but it still maintained the white glow.

Kahn placed his right hand on this core as if he had a sense of familiarity with it. He knew touching it won't harm him in any way.

"System, scan it." he ordered.

[Scanning Complete.

Congratulations to the host for acquiring a peak saint's core.

This core can be used as a source of vast mana or can be absorbed to break through the Saint Rank levels when the host is at least a 4th stage Saint himself.] replied the system.

"Heh.. So I can't use it now? Why?" he asked.

[Because the host's body is currently too weak to absorb or sustain any energy from inside this core. With the host's current rank, the host can only use it as a supplementary source of mana. Trying to absorb the core through any method would result in the host getting exploded or reduced to dust.] explained the system.

"What if I cut it into small pieces?" asked Kahn.

[Sure.. If the host wishes to die.] replied the system in a sarcastic tone.

Kahn felt embarrassed after the system's remark and he took a separate space ring that had space big enough to hold this core inside. He put the core in it and returned to Rudra, who was done tearing through, then eating the body & the core of the magma drake.

"Human.. I'm done. But from now on, I will need some time to completely absorb its bloodline and abilities. So do not call me out for another month. Because I will be under a sleeping state from now." spoke Rudra.

"Then what about that? Why didn't you eat it as well?" asked Kahn and pointed his fingers towards a heap of dark and scaly armor-like body parts of the drake.

"Even I can't digest them. So I left them as it is." said Rudra and quickly entered Kahn's shadow.

[Do not wake me up. I won't be able to come out anyway.] said Rudra in Kahn's mind.

"This.. I should make good use of this." said Kahn as he looked at the heap of this scaly and extremely durable body parts of the drake.

These were exactly the places where Kahn's Darkbade attacks failed to penetrate and damage the dungeon boss.

Kahn took this entire heap inside his main space ring and departed from the dungeon. This time, he didn't want anyone to see him in this weakened state so he covered himself under the black cloak.

After spending two hours and finally exiting the dungeon, he reached the city gates.

But suddenly, heaven shaking and ground shattering voice filled the sky and the entire Bromnir dungeon shook.

"THE BROMNIR DUNGEON HAS BEEN CONQUERED."

A loud announcement came from the dungeon and filled the entire sky, it shook the entire Flavot City and the area in nearby 50 Kilometers. No matter where one was, they'd hear it very clearly.

Kahn who nearly fell on the ground after hearing this announcement, cursed inside his mind as he recognized this voice.

[Fuck you first sage! Why don't you declare my name as well!]

Chapter 97: The Chaos

As soon as the announcement regarding the Bromnir dungeon being conquered filled the sky and reached the ears of everyone under it, the entire city and all the inhabitants living in it stopped whatever they were doing at that moment.

None of them believing what they heard just now. The Bromnir dungeon was very famous in this entire city. Although it was low on resources and only suitable for small groups of adventurers, it was still the closest and most convenient to many newcomer adventurers and people who dealt in the businesses related to monster harvest and product dealings.

And on top of it, it was the closest one to the city so many people knew about this one far better than other dungeons. But to suddenly hear it had been conquered put all the populace that heard the announcement in disbelief.

Because not even once in the past 60 years ever since Flavot city was created, had any of them heard about a dungeon being conquered. So people didn't know what to believe or how to take this information in the first place.

At this moment, over hundreds of magical formations that were varying in sizes, from a single person to even dozens of people in a group were being teleported outside of the dungeon premises and in just a few seconds, more than two thousand people had been transported out of the dungeon whether they were simply traveling inside the dungeon or were engaged in a battle.

Everyone who wasn't an inhabitant of this dungeon or was an outsider was simply thrown out of it.

"What the hell is happening?!" shouted a female elf.

"I was just about to kill that giant bat." spoke an elven swordsman.

Soon, all the people that were thrown out of the dungeon started a heated discussion amongst themselves.

"Silence!! Everyone listen! Just a few minutes ago, a loud voice declared that the Bromnir dungeon has been conquered. Everyone outside of the dungeon had heard it." announced a dungeon entrance guard who was using a magical artifact that amplified his voice like a loudspeaker.

"What kind of nonsense is this?!" shouted an adventurer group leader and soon, many others followed.

And for no reason, soon a fight broke out in between these groups and the guards were forced to intervene.

The squadron of the military that was stationed close to this dungeon had already charged towards this dungeon as the first response team.

But this wasn't the only place where the mood of people was overwhelmed or confused. Some people already imagining that since the dungeon was conquered, it would close sometime soon.

And the professions and the market would be hugely affected. And that very assumption had put the majority of the population in panic. And hence, every person in the government, the military & the adventurer association was on alert mode. This was hugely going to affect many things in this city, let it be the economy, the resources and even normal citizens in one way or another.

Kahn who was the main culprit of all this chaos was walking very covertly from the streets in the city. He was also aware of the consequences of this announcement and soon, there would be a big fiasco whether anyone wanted it or not. Just with this thunderous announcement alone, the first sage had put the entire city in shambles.

But he didn't have any will to get tangled with it or take any responsibility. He just wanted to go home and take a longass nap first because he was already tired as it is.

After an hour or so, he finally reached inside his home and ordered Jerome to bring him something to eat. He laid on his sofa and fell asleep due to exhaustion from today's battle & the aftermath of the Berserk God Mode.

At this same time inside the Magistrate's office.. The old Lionkin ordered a city-wide lockdown to all the officers who were in charge of the city's security.

On the other end of the city, an elven mage tore a page from a record book inside the Adventurer Association.

Outside of the city where a grand fort existed that served as the headquarters of the military garrison, a 4 meter tall blue tigerkin ordered his people to get ready to surround and create a defensive encirclement around the Bromnir dungeon. Hundreds of foot soldiers and cavalries departed towards the direction of the now conquered dungeon.

Normal people didn't know about the consequences of a dungeon being cleared but these 3 people did.

Because unlike what people thought, the dungeon that was once cleared doesn't simply gets closed.. But before it gets closed for good..

It releases all the monsters inside it after a few days.

And that is why, even the strongest fighters and powers that possessed the manpower & resources to clear a dungeon preferred not to do it. Although none of them knew about the core of the first Emperor, the founder of the Rakos Empire being hidden inside the Bromnir dungeon, the normal knowledge about the cleared dungeons that only the top people in power were aware of; had forced their hand to react as quickly as they could.

Otherwise, soon there would be a bloodbath if the monster breakout that was going to happen very soon was ignored or poorly prepared against. So they had to be quick to react and station all their forces on the borders of this dungeon.

Their only advantage was that the guardian of the dungeon would not be released like the other monsters.

At this moment, millions of people at different corners of the city asked themselves...

"Who the hell was it?!"

Whoever had cleared the dungeon, whether it was a single person, a group or even a guild; was going to receive both fame, reputation from the masses. While at the same time, they'll also receive the wrath of many people from the government, the military & the business federation.

So soon, many people hungry for fame would spread their lies about how they cleared the dungeon with their strength and many fights for the title of the conqueror were bound to happen.

But unbeknownst to all people that lived in this city, the root of the cause was dead asleep in his house and had no worries or care about the consequences.

Little did he Kahn knew that his actions were going to make a historical change to the Flavot city.

Chapter 98: The Blacksmith

The next day when Kahn was finally awake, he heard the news of skirmishes and mayhem that was caused by yesterday's announcement.

But unlike the newbie him, he no longer felt like taking some sort of responsibility. It would only bring him unnecessary trouble. He had no intentions of being persecuted in front of a judge and a jury.

Today, he had no intentions of checking up on new updates related to mayhem. So contradictory to what he previously said, he'd spent this day as a couch potato until he fully recovered strength. There were still a few hours left till he fully recovered and the Berserk God Mode's weakening state ended.

After taking a long hot bath, he dressed in new clothes and waited for his delicious food. He thought about giving a reward to the chef given how exquisite and mouth-watering food he was eating recently.

After spending the entire morning & noon in bed, he finally recovered his strength and all the wounds were completely healed. But unlike his initial plans for the day, he thought it'd be best to use the remaining day to look for someone who could make something for him from his harvest on the final floor.

Kahn was thinking about the Magma Drake's armor-like body parts. And since he had an entire heap of it, he might as well have something useful that could be handy in a battle. But since the material was extremely rare, he couldn't afford to let it go waste by the hands of some unskilled craftsman.

Kahn had already heard that there were 3 Grandmaster rank Blacksmiths in the Flavot city. And all of them were the renowned figure who had a lot of prestige and standing in the city as numerous nobles, government officials and military officers would often ask for their services and build them some top-quality weapons and armors.

"Jerome, do you know who's the best Blacksmith in the city who can make a top grade armor? The Grandmaster rank I mean." asked Kahn to Jerome, his housekeeper.

"Yes sir. There is master Rostof, master Brualt, master Latver and..." suddenly Jerome stopped in his words as if he was afraid of speaking the last name.

"And?.." asked Kahn.

"Nothing, sir. These three are the ones you should contact. Forget I said anything." said Jerome hurriedly as he tried to retract his words.

"Who's the fourth? And why are you acting all worked up?" asked Kahn out of curiosity. The usually calm and collected servant was flustered for some reason as soon as he nearly mentioned the fourth blacksmith's name.

"Well, the last person can no longer be called a Grandmaster Blacksmith. So only the first three are better choices. But they're usually busy with high price commissions and people with a high reputation & social standing." replied Jerome.

"Well, that's a bit problematic. I wanted to have something made soon." said Kahn and inquired more about the 3 Grandmaster Blacksmiths.

As per Jerome's knowledge, all of them were highly sought after and even if Kahn were to pay a lot of money, he'd still have to wait for 3 to 4 months before his commission was finished.

"What about the 4th one? What happened to him?" asked Kahn.

"He no longer takes any commissions. More likely.. No one goes to him for having any armors or weapons made." replied Jerome.

"And why is that?" asked Kahn in a confused expression.

"It's better if you don't get mixed up with that man, sir. He's been in a way.. Blacklisted by the entire city." explained Jerome with a saddened expression.

This piqued Kahn's curiosity even more as he found it completely unreasonable for a Grandmaster rank Blacksmith to get banned from making any weapons or anything.

"What did he do?" asked Kahn again.

"Well, sir.. His story is a tragic one. But it's not something normal people or even many powerful people can interfere with. Doing any business deals with him can get you killed by some of the most powerful noble clans." said Jerome.

"Tell me the full story." ordered Kahn as he could no longer hold back from the curiosity after this much build-up.

Jerome spent the next 20 minutes about who the Grandmaster Blacksmith was and how it came to a situation where nobody in the city wanted to hire him or have him make them any form of weapons or armors.

But when Kahn finally listened to the past of this person.. He clenched his fists in rage and even leaked his deathly aura after failing to control his emotions.

Even for someone like Kahn whose mind was extremely calm and didn't give impulsive reactions to whatever happened around him.. The story of this man had thoroughly enraged him to the core.

"Do you know where he lives?" asked Kahn to Jerome.

"Sir, I don't think it's a good idea to have any connections with this man. It'll not only affect you but anyone who's even remotely related to you. So please reconsider." said Jerome with a bewildered expression.

"Don't worry. I won't meet him under public eyes. Just tell me the address." commanded Kahn and soon, he departed from the house.

Kahn had to spend a lot of time exchanging carriages and traveling dozens of kilometers until he finally reached in front of a small mansion that appeared to be unlooked after.

There were overgrown plants, trees and grass in the garden, a rusted gate and a ghastly look to the entire property that made it look like a ruined estate.

Kahn carefully treaded from the paved footholds and knocked on the main door.

Thuck! Thuck! Thuck!

"Who is it?!" a grim and sore voice of an elderly man came from the inside of this house.

"My name is Kahn, mister Albestros. If you have time, I would like to talk with you about some business." replied Kahn from the entrance.

"Return, boy. I don't make any weapons anymore. Haven't you heard?" asked the old man.

"And I'm still here after knowing about it. Please at least see what I've brought and then decide if you want to accept the commission or not." spoke Kahn as he kept banging on the door.

Clink!

The door was opened from the inside and suddenly a figure of an elderly man with short hair and a long grizzly beard came in front of Kahn.

"It's you!" shouted the old man as he stared at Kahn in disbelief.

Kahn on the other hand wasn't baffled. Because he had seen this old man once before. Although he hadn't spoken to him, Kahn had a vivid memory of this man since he appeared on one of the most memorable days in his new life.

The last time he had seen this old man was on..

Jessica's funeral.

Chapter 99: The Return

Kahn stood in front of the old man with a firm stance and expectant eyes.

"What are you doing here?! You can't be seen with me or you'll be killed!" shouted the old man and quickly pulled Kahn inside the house and shut the door.

"I see that you remember me, master Albestros." replied Kahn and glanced at the living room. To meet his expectations, it was just as he thought. Barely enough furniture for one man and not a single piece of decoration inside the entire living room.

"Are you stupid, boy! I heard that you were some talented swordsman but don't you know what happens to those who are seen having any connection with me?!" raged the old blacksmith.

"Even if they were to find out, I couldn't care less. I've come to seek your expertise. Besides, I don't think anyone else in this entire city will be able to forge what I want." replied Kahn nonchalantly.

"Are you out of your goddamn mind, boy?! Didn't I tell you that I don't make any weapons anymore? So why are you pestering me?" asked the old man in a baffled tone.

"Let me show you this first." said Kahn and took out all the scaly body parts of the drake dungeon boss that were left by Rudra.

Clang! Clang!

The heap of the scaly hide and fortified armor-like body parts were put on the display. The old Grandmaster rank blacksmith gasped in surprise after looking at the contents that suddenly appeared in front of him.

"What?.. Where did you get these?" asked Albestros as he hurriedly picked up the scales and started inspecting them carefully as if he was holding a treasure.

"Can you make something useful out of it?" asked Kahn.

"Something useful? I can make a lot many things out of this much quantity. A full body armor.. Even a weap.." just then, the old stopped in his words and glanced at the sword hung on Kahn's back.

"Show me that sword." said the old man.

"Huh? This?" asked Kahn and gave his longsword to the old man.

"You.. What have you done to this sword? What were you fighting against? Boulders?!" said the blacksmith in an enraged tone.

"Do you know how hard it was for me to make this Mythril sword? Do you know how many days I spent back then just to make it perfect?!" shouted the man at Kahn.

"Wait! You made my sword? I bought it from the Black Griffin weapon shop. I thought one of their blacksmiths made it." replied Kahn after recovering from his initial surprise.

"Yes.. But I secretly sold it a few years ago to them. I was in need of money so I had to sell one of my finest works to them. Since I didn't leave my mark on it, no one could've known it was me who made it." replied the old man as he started checking the sharpness and edges of the sword.

"Shame.. I don't do this work anymore. Even if this is something as rare as Drake's scales, you can't goad me into accepting the job. No matter how much money you pay me, I still won't accept this commission." replied the old blacksmith as he folded his arms together.

"I know that. That's why, I'm not offering you any money.. But what I'm offering you holds far more importance to you than any treasure in this world." spoke Kahn

"And what is that?" asked the old blacksmith.

For the next 10 minutes, Kahn and the old man discussed the terms of exchange.

Thud!

The old man dropped on the knees, crying without holding back and looking at a hooded figure that stood in front of him like a grim reaper. There was a black aura leaking from this hooded figure.

"I'll do it!" bellowed the grandmaster blacksmith.

"I'll do anything you want. I'll give you my soul in exchange if you want as long as you keep your promise." said Albestros.

In just ten minutes, the whole direction of the conversation had shifted to an entirely different topic and the mood inside of this hall had turned to that of sorrow.

"No need. Just deliver upon our deal. I shall deliver upon my promise as well." replied the hooded figure in a grim voice.

"I can remake the sword as well.. Into something far stronger that not even an epic rank sword can face off against." spoke Albestros again.

"Fine. Take as many days as you need. And you'll keep hearing some news about our deal from the public." declared the hooded figure and the next second, it completely disappeared from the sight of this old man.

The old blacksmith on the other hand kept weeping tears of pain and suffering as if a dam of grief inside him had broken and all the sadness that he had been holding back had finally found an outlet.

"Finally.. He'll make them pay.. He will make them all pay!" screamed Albestros in joy as he started wiping off his tears.

For the first time in the past 4 years, the once most talented and famous Grandmaster Blacksmith of Flavot city smiled again.

When the night finally came and dark clouds filled the sky, giving the entire city a touch of an eerie and terrifying feeling like a bad omen.

The chilly breeze had forced a lot of people to get inside their houses earlier than their usual time. Even the night businesses and entertainment establishments were hugely affected by this sudden change in the climate.

Soon, the dark clouds poured a dense rainfall on the city and the sound of thunders with flashes of lightning had covered the entire city under them.

Many people felt a foreboding that something sinister and chaotic was going to happen very soon.

Because in the dark rainy clouds of this night.. A hooded figure stood on one of the tallest towers of this city. Its clothes fluttered in this heavy rain and suddenly a bolt of lightning flashed in the sky just right behind this figure.

On this ghastly and stormy night.. Reappeared the Judge, the Jury & the Executioner.

Because on this very night.. Azrael had returned.

Chapter 100: The Injustice

Kahn stood as Azrael on the edge of a tall tower as he looked at the downpour covering the entire city. The lightning struck few times and the populace was forced to hide under their houses or take cover under this stormy weather.

As for what happened this evening.. Kahn had agreed on few terms to have the Grandmaster Blacksmith, Albestros Winston make him full body armor & even upgrade his sword. But to make him accept the commission, he had even revealed his secret identity as Azrael.

Kahn who was very careful and always did his best to completely remove any tracks of killings and his other identity, willingly revealed it to the old man. Not only because he was emotionally moved after his tragic story.. But also because he wanted to do something for the old man on his own accords.

When Jerome had told the old man's history, Kahn was thoroughly enraged but also understood why not even the Snakekin had dared to put some names in the small books of criminal names he once gave to Kahn. Because the background of those people was something nobody could dare to offend.

As for the old man's tragic story.. It was something that would make even the most heartless people feel empathetic towards the man and boil their blood in rage.

Kahn had already decided that he won't be a warrior of justice and only use Azrael as means to achieve goals that would benefit him. But today, he was going to contradict his own words.. And he revealed himself as Azrael to Albestros in order to make the old man feel certain that Kahn would keep his promise.

Albestros Winston was once the most famous and talented Blacksmith in the entire Flavot city, dozens of noble clans, government officials and powerful people used to have their weapons and armors made from him. Hundreds of people lined in front of his shop and a few hundred people worked under his brand.

The most notable thing about the Grandmaster rank blacksmith was that unlike the other blacksmiths of the same rank, he was both a blacksmith and an artificer. He could do jobs of both different professions as he had spent many years gaining the knowledge of magic formations and runes; he was considered a total behemoth when it came to his craft.

His name was renowned around many cities and he was ranked as the 11th best blacksmith in the entire Rakos Empire. Just his prestige alone was enough to make anyone before him bow in respect.

Over the decade when he rose to fame, people would even wait for an entire year to have him make their weapons & equipments as his work results were far superior than the other three.

He and his family lived inside the very mansion Kahn had visited this evening & there'd always be people lined up in front of the gates.

But everything changed one day...

Albestros had a daughter & a son. The daughter was 21 and the son was 18 years old. His wife had passed away a few years ago because of terminal illness and he only had his children to live for.

Albestros was on a business trip and had to meet some influential people in a city close to the capital. So he was out for a week; during those days a heart-wrenching scene that shook the entire city happened.

Albestros's daughter, Cynthia was seen as one of the most beautiful young maidens even among the daughters of the noble clans. Many had proposed marriage to her including some of the most powerful and big noble clans, but respecting her wishes and given how he cared for his children; Albestros had turned down many of the proposals politely.

During the week he was gone, 4 young heirs of the noble clans who were going to be the next leaders of their respective clans had kidnapped Cynthia right from their mansion and even killed the people guarding it.

Saying that she should've made her decision and declining their proposals had disrespected and embarrassed their powerful clans. And at the end of the day, her father was nothing but a lowly craftsman.

And for the crime of offending these clans, she would have to go through severe punishment.

What happened after that had sent shivers to Kahn when he heard to story.

Cynthia was publicly rap*d by these noble heirs one by one in an open square, right in the middle of the city. They did in front of thousands of onlookers and brutally tortured the young naked girl saying that those who look down on the nobles should meet the same fate.

Given their background and their own small army of soldiers that were present there, even the city guards and officials didn't intervene. The normal public who couldn't tolerate this heinous act retaliated but what could a normal person with no weapons or training do in front of seasoned warriors? Dozens of men & women who tried to stop this act were killed in that square and this deterred the onlookers.

Gerald, the son of the blacksmith was training to be a knight in a military school. When the news reached his ears, he ran towards the square hurriedly and lost his mind after he saw what was happening to his loving & caring elder sister.

Without the care of his life, he stormed into their formation and even killed 4 people.. But in front of hundreds of experienced soldiers, what could a newbie like him do.

To make this already cruel scene more gruesome and unable to watch.. The soldiers tied Gerald on a platform and made him watch as the sons of the 4 clans rap*d his sister in front of his own eyes.

Cynthia's gut-wrenching cries for help were heard by thousands of people but not a single one of them dared to help them after watching the fate of the others who tried to. Her pleads for mercy and screams for help fell only on deaf ears.

Gerald's enraged roars and curses made no difference.. No God or a Savior came that day to protect a girl's honor. The soul-shuddering scene kept on for a couple of hours and finally.. Cynthia bit her tongue out and committed suicide by choking on her own blood.

Gerald on the other hand, swore to kill every single one of the heirs and their entire clans to avenge his sister. But the cruel and inhumane heirs didn't give him a chance to live another day. They cut open his

belly, then his legs and hand one by one. To put it on a display for the entire city to watch and learn about the consequences of not following the will of the truly powerful.

But even till his last breath.. Gerald did not plead for any mercy or beg out of fear. He swore that even if he had to return from the dead or make a deal with the devil.. One day, he would spell the doom for their entire clans and everyone who carried their blood.

After both the sister & the brother died.. Their bodies were hung right in the same square. A cut-down and lifeless body of Gerald was hung on a rope while a completely naked and bruised up body of Cynthia was hanging beside it.

The noble clan heirs declared that anyone who tried to take down these bodies would become their enemy and them along with their entire family will be killed.

That day, the entire city saw how little did law and justice matter in this world. How their protectors who preached about safety and order, who swore to protect them only watched this heinous crime from a distance.

Two days later when Albestros returned and heard about how his children, the only reason why he still lived for were brutally murdered and put on a display for the public.. Something inside the old man died.

He was a man with no will to live anymore. But he still had to get justice for his children. The blacksmith went to the City Law Enforcements, his connections and even military officials who once owed him favors.. But none of them dared to help him.

It was one thing if it were to be a single person or a single noble clan. Others would've teamed up against them in the name of justice and the criminals would've met a thorough punishment. But when the four strongest noble clans and their future leaders were put into the equation.. No power or law authority dared to go against them.

Even people like the Magistrate and Commander Straze did not heed to the old man's pleas.

Instead, new fabricated cases and defaming stories about his daughter and son were spread by these clans and their people saying that the daughter had illegitimate relationships with many young men of the noble clans and tried to rope in the heirs one by one until she was finally caught. The son had allegedly killed someone and asked the noble clans heirs to bury the incident in exchange for having his sister spend a night with them.

Even in death, Albestros's daughter and son were left with no respect or honor to their name.

The majority of the populace knew about how these stories were nothing but lies. But what could they do instead of keeping their mouths shut?

The tales of heroism and serving justice only happened in fictional stories but not in the real world where only strength and power mattered.

The Law didn't have any hold over the strong and it only existed to shackle the weak.

A week later, another unofficial decree from the noble clans came from.. That from now on, anyone who did any business or kept any connection to the old man would incur their wrath. They even banned

the old man to leave the city and put a big reward in case anyone informed them about his escape. Just to keep the matters buried in the ground.

To set up an example.. They killed 9 people who had stood on the old Blacksmith's side and voiced their opinions. Jessica's father, who was the former lieutenant in the city security being one of them.

Jessica and Cynthia were childhood friends and because of that, even when the entire city had banished the old man in a way, she looked after the old man from time to time while avoiding the spies of the noble clans. That's why the old man came to her funeral that day while barely managing to hold back his tears.

Markus was also Gerald's sword instructor back in the day so he too felt bad for the old man and helped him smuggle things to sell so the old man won't die out of hunger over the years.

The once most sought-after Blacksmith of the city was now avoided like a plague by the masses.

But despite everyone knowing the truth.. Nobody helped the man who lost his only reason to stay alive.

At the current moment, Kahn looked at the dark clouds as he was basking in the cold rain.

The reason why he chose to pick the old man wasn't just because he wanted to get something out of him.. But because the old man had truly gained his respect.

Because unlike Kahn, who committed suicide after losing his will to live.. The old man still endured it all. Carrying on living with just a glimmer of hope that one day, his children would get the justice they deserved.

Even if someone were to say that Kahn was acting like a hypocrite.. He wouldn't care. There were some things that you could not look away from no matter what. The whole commission thing was just a reason he needed to convince himself for his future actions.

Because in his core.. He was still a man with a moral code.

Kahn spoke in a grim tone as he looked in a certain direction.

"If the Gods won't deliver judgment upon them.. If the law won't punish them.. Then I'll be the blade that cuts them down myself!"