

# Hero of Darkness

## *Chapter 16: First Dispute*

Kahn stared at the two old men standing in front of him.

"These bastards attacking you and me finally finding them at the same time is just a coincidence. Nothing more." Kahn said as he got up on his feet.

The next moment, the elderly took out a pouch full of coins that were bulging out of it." He said,

"Lad, take this as a gratitude for saving our lives. I don't have any other way to thank you at the moment. So please accept this." the elderly man pushed forward the pouch full of coins.

"Keep it. I don't want your money." Kahn declined.

This raised the opinion of him in the eyes of both the men in front of him. Not only did he came in the last moment and saved their lives, even though he did it to avenge his comrades; it was still an unforgettable deed. And then he declined the money as well.

In their line of work, just hiring a bodyguard demanded an exorbitant price and many merchants won't do it unless the profits were extremely well paying. But when faced with life and death situation, many of these hired experts often chose to run instead of honoring their deal to protect the employer.

Kahn's gesture made it sure that he didn't appear in the last second just to fork out more money from them as a form of compensation.

The middle-aged man nodded at his conduct.

"Tell me lad, what's your name ?" the middle-aged man asked.

"Kahn." replied Kahn with no other emotions on his face. This helped him maintain his image of someone grieving but trying to control it on the surface.

"I'm Markus. Leader of the Diamond Adventurer team. Well.. What's left of it anyway." the middle-aged man.. Markus gazed back at the dead bodies of his fallen comrades, his eyes were wavering with grief but he was maintaining a calm and patient look on his face.. Like a true leader who must be able to control himself in any situation.

His comrades however shedding tears at the bodies of their dead friends and team members.

"I... I'm sorry for your loss. Maybe if I reached here any sooner, some of your comrades could've survived." Kahn said with an empathizing tone as if he too understood the loss.

"Not your fault. You've already helped us enough." said Markus.

The elderly man decided to introduce himself as well, "My name is Nikola. Leader of Black Griffin merchant enterprise." he reached his hand to shake.

Kahn shook his hand and nodded.

"Do you have a place to go? Why not come with us?" Nikola asked.

"Where's the nearest town from here? I have been in this forest for weeks now." said Kaun candidly.

"To survive in this dense forest for weeks on your own.. No wonder you're so strong and good at killing." Markus said. He already had judged Kahn to be a trustworthy person and he gave a side glance to the elderly man.

"If you don't mind. You can come with us. I can help you get back to your home." said the old merchant.

"I... I don't have a home. Not anymore." said Kahn with a crestfallen look as if remembering his fallen family again.

"Accompany us. Then decide what you want to do next. Staying here is not safe." Nikola said with a caring voice. If not for Kahn, none of them would be breathing now. He wanted to repay this favor in any way he could. And they too had their fair share of people to mourn.

Kahn nodded and joined the team.

After clearing the battlefield and putting all their dead colleagues and comrades in different carts, the team of remaining survivors finally left off.

For the next two days, they traveled without a problem. Kahn kept it to himself and didn't converse with anyone much including the old man Nikola, maintaining his image of someone grieving.

The whole mood of the caravan was of loss and suffering, everyone grieving in their own ways except this guy who was just keeping up an act.

Finally, after they reached well-paved stone roads and saw a giant city gate, only then did Kahn's eyes showed some interest.

As he looked towards the giant city gates full of people going in & out, many Demihumans & the type of people he didn't even read about in any fantasy-related novel or story among them, Kahn got curious.

There were three things on his priority list now.

Kahn spoke to himself.

"Money. Information. Authority."

The giant gates of the city were full of the crowd running to and fro, going in and out without stopping. A huge plaque was nailed on the top of the city gates.

The first city Kahn came to see in Vantrea ever since he entered was called 'Flavot'.

"Stop! Identification first." said the guard on duty who was donned in a well fit armor suitable for a gatekeeper.

"Let me handle this." said the elderly merchant Nikola. He went and talked with the gate guard, pointing his finger towards Kahn who was still half-naked in the wolf hide.

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The guard gave an understanding look to Nikola and the old man secretly passed a small pouch of coins to the guard.

"You may pass." said the guard and their caravan moved along. The other guards didn't say or stopped them either as they entered the city.

It looked as if all of them had a share in bribes.

Civilization.. finally Kahn saw well-made buildings and houses, entire streets full of people of different races, facial structures and many unrecognizable species Kahn hadn't seen or heard of before.

There were some among the crowd that didn't walk, rather crawled on the stone-paved road while some more than 2 to 3 legs.

Kahn could see that the buildings didn't follow any set type of architecture or design either. Some were made from hard stones while some were made of lustrous woods and aesthetically pleasing to look at.

Even though Kahn did not know or understand any of the words or the language written on the top of these buildings and shops, his brain was registering and telling him their meanings thanks to the All Languages Knowledge blessing he received from Kravel, the War Deity.

He too realized that when he was speaking with others, his mouth movements spilled very different words in languages he didn't even know. Just that the mind connection was telling him that he spoke was something he too understood.

He had broken the language barrier he'd have to surpass if he wanted to mix inside this new world. Kahn thanked Kravel again in his mind.

After going through a long-distance and crossing various streets, finally their group stopped around a large building with multiple doors and people coming and going out of the building. Which was as big as a complete football ground and had gates in all 4 directions.

The Adventurer's Association.

Markus went inside the building and later came back with over a dozen of people who looked like the staff of the organization.

They started unloading the bodies of the deceased that died in the bandit ambush. Just then, Nikola along with a young man who was of the same age as Kahn walked behind him.

"By the way this is my son, Elanev." said Nikola.

The young man beside Nikola finally spoke.

"Thank you for saving our lives that day. I didn't get to thank you properly because it was my first time watching something... So.."

To this, Kahn stopped him midway with a hand gesture and spoke.

"Understood. Nobody can digest it the first time."

"Kahn, what will you do from here? You said you don't have a home or a place to go a couple of days ago." asked Nikola.

"No idea. I've only lived a life as a mercenary since childhood. The only thing I'm good at is killing people and monsters alike." Kahn said in a worn-out manner.

He was faking his background right on the spot which would also justify how he was really good and organized while killing those bandits one by one.

"Why don't you come with us for now. I can offer you a place to stay and get used to this place. I still haven't repaid you for saving our lives." Nikola reminded again about his previous proposal.

"Thank you. I really appreciate it." nodded Kahn. This was what he needed the most right now. A place to stay and make his future plans.

"Great. This way, we'll get to know each other better as well." said Elanev.

He too was very thankful to Kahn and wanted to help him out after hearing from his father that Kahn was alone and lost all his friends and family to the bandit attack.

"By the way, what does your Merchant Enterprise sell?" Kahn asked as the dozen of carts they rode until now were big enough to carry a lot of goods and apart from the two they used for the dead bodies, the rest were completely full.

"We dabble in all of them. Food, Weapons, Medicine and Rations. We even have our own Blacksmith shops in the city. The carts have resources and even weapons we bought from small villages which we'll sell in our shops later." replied Nikola with a proud expression.

"Wow.. That must have taken years to build and solidify your enterprise." Kahn said in admiration.

He was an Accountant in his previous life. He knew how hard it was to open a business and keeping it afloat, let alone making profits out of it. And to manage all these different sectors in the business, one had to work very hard and very efficiently. Just one wrong move was enough to ruin it all.

"We have to bring some people to carry the carts back to our warehouses. So it will take some time. Why don't you take a look around the Adventurer's Association till then?" said Elanev.

"I was already planning to do that. I have some monster cores to sell. I'll make some money there as well. Clothes can come later." said Kahn.

"Okay, we'll see you later." said Nikola and left with his son.

Kahn entered through the giant door and surprisingly nobody stopped him. As soon as he entered the inside of the Adventurer's Association, he looked towards the crowd sitting inside the huge hall. At the end of it were receptionists engaged with various adventurers.

Amongst the crowd, Kahn saw some Werewolf beastmen, Elves, some who looked like Lizardmen and even a guy with nothing but a giant eye in the middle of his face, like a cyclops.

Kahn walked towards one of the vacant counters, where there was an old man around his 60s.

"I have some monster cores to sell. What's the procedure?" Asked Kahn.

The old man looked at Kahn and his attire, surprised.

"Sorry. But we only deal with registered adventurers." said the old man who resembled Alfred from Batman movies a lot.

"How do I sign up?" asked Kahn.

"Identification and you'll have to go through our assessment first. If you pass, you'll be officially registered as part of Adventurer's Association." replied the man with no expression on his face. As if he had uttered the same line millions of times.

"I don't have any. Never needed it before. Is there any other way?" asked Kahn.

"Umm.. That's a bit of a problem." said the old man.

Just then, a voice rang from behind Kahn.

"Oi, get out of the way. I'm in a hurry!"

Kahn turned his head to his back and saw a blonde girl clad in full body armor resembling that of a Knight.

"Can't you see I'm talking here? Besides I came here first." Kahn replied and turned his head back toward the old man.

"What important things a barbarian like you have to do? Just do them later after I'm done you disgusting caveman!" said the girl again.

Kahn rolled his eyes and didn't mind the banter as he continued to talk with the receptionist.

However, their little argument brought the attention of the nearby people. Some looking pitifully at Kahn as if he was going to suffer dire consequences for rebuking the girl.

"Another one." sighed a bald man who was sitting on a bench across the room.

"Hey, are you ignoring me you fucking imbecile?!" roared the girl.

Kahn got pissed at this point and turned his head towards the girl.

"Hey princess, don't you know the basic manners? You get in line and wait for your turn." Kahn said with an annoyed expression on his face.

Suddenly, the entire hall went silent. Even the receptionists working on other counters stopped their tasks.

"You.. What did you just call me?!" the girl pulled the sword out of the sheath that was hanging on her waist.

"Princess.. What, you don't like compliments? Or should I call you gorgeous instead?" replied Kahn with a solemn expression.

"You bastard! I'm a man!" said the girl.. the man.

Author : It's a trap!

"What? You're joking, right? You're too pretty to be a man." Kahn said with a surprised tone.

Fumes of rage came across the face of the girl who was claiming to be a man.

At this, suddenly the crowd burst into laughter!

"Hahaha. Too pretty to be a man. That's a new one! HAHAHA!"

Many amongst the crowd started laughing at the blonde who was pointing the sword tip at Kahn at this point.

The old receptionist behind the counter sighed.

"Don't make trouble. It's just a misunderstanding." he said to the blonde pretty boy.

"What did you say? Don't you know who I am? Do you want to get your bones broken by our Adventurer's team you old bastard?"

The blonde guy shouted and trembled with rage as if he was going to jump on the old receptionist the next second.

Kahn had enough of it already. He asked the old man,

"Is it allowed to beat someone inside the association building?"

The old man was stunned but quickly replied.

"No... Not as long as it injures anyone gravely."

"I see." said Kahn said candidly.

"You think you can beat me, you fucker!" the blonde shouted.

SLAP!

A loud noise of a crisp slap sounded in the hall.

Many people having their mouths open and some rooted on the spot.

In front of Kahn, lied the blonde guy who was cursing him for no reason. The blonde guy's left cheek was full of red finger marks and he fell on the floor with just a single bitchslap.

"Get out of here before I get angry."