

Extras 191

Chapter 191 Alone Together

"Alright, Sir Ralyks. I'll make sure we start working on it as fast as we can!"

The enthusiasm in Asher's face made Ralyks feel a bit guilty, but he swallowed it in.

'He's acting a bit too young now. I wonder if this is his real appearance.'

If Rey had to guess, then Asher seemed more like a younger man than someone in his thirties.

'He's in Level 99, which is pretty impressive. I would think he was older, but that Exclusive Skill of his makes me think he Levels Up faster than others.'

Of course, Rey knew this was all arbitrary, so he didn't give it much thought.

'From the looks of his Stats, it seems like he's stuck in Level 99.'

Based on what he read in the Royal Library, humans had something called 'Level Caps'

It meant that at a certain point, they couldn't get any stronger—or smarter.

They would reach a limit that was impossible to overcome, thus preventing the humans of H'Trae to grow beyond their limits.

'That's one of the reasons why people eventually rely on Enchanted Items and seek out more Skills.'

These were ways in which people could improve their abilities without relying on Levels and Stats.

'But, there's a way to overcome the Level Cap. I'm sure he knows that too...' Rey felt his smile widen.

The solution was simple.

—A higher Class!

A Commoner's Level Cap was usually Level 30, and each Tier of Classes had their limits.

From what he heard about Brutus and Lucielle, they were both in Level 150, so he had to guess that the limits of B-Tier Classes were at that point.

'C-Tier Classes seem to have a cap of 100, or should I say 99? Pretty much, I guess...'

Unfortunately for the people of H'Trae, changing Classes was a very difficult thing to do—especially past the C-Tier.

Rey was sure that even if the 'Heir' Class changed into 'Obsidian Councilor', it would still be a C-Tier Class.

The effects would change, sure, but the Class' Tier would remain the same.

It was very rare for people have B-Tier Classes.

'But that's enough about Asher. I should get to the serious matters.' Rey sighed silently as he glanced at the girl that stood at the corner.

"I'd like to have a private chat with her. Could you excuse us?"

Asher rose to his feet without question, nodding as he did so.

"Understood. I will be taking my leave now."

True to his word, Asher left the couch and left the room in a jiffy—almost as if he was in a hurry even,

Once he was gone, only Rey and Esme remained in the lounge.

'Well... this is a little awkward.'

Rey pulled himself together and decided to fully immerse himself in his Ralyks persona.

"You can sit down now. I've confirmed the seat won't harm you in any way. I've also cast Sound Magic, and taken other defensive measures to ensure you'll be safe, undetected, and unharmed."

Rey said this mechanically, almost as if he too was an unfeeling machine.

As he gazed at her, he maintained his posture.

'What will you do now...?' His thoughts trailed as a few seconds of silence passed.

Much to his relief, she finally moved from her position and collapsed on the couch.

Her body slightly bounced as she did so, and once again, her face twitched.

'Is it uncomfortable?' Rey couldn't tell since her expression returned to the stoic kind in no time at all.

'I can't get a read on her at all.'

It felt like a chore to get through this, especially considering how she looked his age.

'I mean, Alicia is also a girl and I get along perfectly well with her. What's causing so much friction here?'

Rey seemed to be ignoring the fact that he was currently Ralyks, and he had an imposing aura around him.

The girl before him was also far prettier than Alicia, though her proportions were a bit lacking.

If Trisha was on the high side, and Alicia was on the medium, well proportioned side... then Esme—the Half-Elf before him— could be said to be on the low end.

She wasn't flash as a washboard, but she also wasn't particularly endowed with the curves that his two female classmates had.

... Not that it diminished her beauty in any way. freewe bnovel .com

"A-ahem! In any case, I just want to tell you that I have no intentions of hurting you. You're safe here, I can assure you of that."

Even though this was technically the Black Market, and the people here were cold-blooded killers, he could guarantee that no harm would come to her.

Rey didn't know if that would be enough, and she could take his words for it.

Fortunately for him, he didn't have to wonder for too long.

"I believe you."

Her sonorous voice was like music to his ears, causing his tense body to relax.

Her bright blue eyes glowed, and a small smile spread across her cute face.

This was the first time he was seeing her smile, and his heart neatly skipped a beat—maybe two, or three.

'S-she looks even... prettier!'

Rey never thought that was even possible, but apparently... it was!

'She's using her [Absolute Appraisal] Skill on me, huh?'

He laughed a little awkwardly, feeling a little too exposed as she did so.

He practically felt naked.

'It's uncomfortable, but it can't be helped. If it helps her trust me, then okay. Besides, she already knows my identity, so...'

It wasn't like he didn't do the same to her anyway, so there was no use getting caught up in that.

"You're a good person." Her words shocked Rey as her melodious voice danced in the air.

Rey felt his heart race as he looked at her smile once again; this time even brighter than before.

As her moist lips opened to form even more words, Rey found his eyes focusing on them.

"To see such a strong, yet good person here... I'm relieved."

*

Chapter 192 Good And Evil [Pt 1]

"I couldn't speak to them because... they were scary. Bad people... they were all bad people."

As Rey heard Esme mutter those words, he began to understand a little more about her.

'She must have seen their Alignments and noticed the Evil attached.'

Rey wasn't so sure if 'Alignments' properly made a person Good or Bad.

He remembered feeling frustrated after seeing that Billy had a 'Good' Alignment, thinking it had to be a farce.

But, in actuality, Alignments were based on the personal values of an individual and how they interacted with the world around them.

To Billy, his actions were good, but he did them in evil ways, which made him have the [Chaotic Good] Alignment.

It was his own subjective definition of 'good' mixed in with the actions of the opposite proportions.

'I think men like Asher know what kind of actions they engage in. Still, they indulge in it because it's the only path they can take or desire to take to get to their goals.'

For Asher and many members of the KariBlanc Group, Rey assumed they operated on self-interest, and they would do anything to gain profit... as long as it was in accordance with their code.

'That's why... I don't think there's any good or bad people here.'

Rey could never proclaim himself as a good person.

And he could never completely label Asher as a bad person.

In the end, they were just performing good or bad deeds using their own subjective motivations and interpretations to guide them.

'I can't tell her any of that, though.' Rey sighed internally and nodded slowly at her words.

"I understand." He could only mutter.

"I trust you because you're Neutral Good. You also saved me, so..."

As her voice trailed, he found his gaze wandering.

'Is she worried about the other slaves?' Once he had this thought, he tried to comfort her a little.

"Don't worry. I saved everyone. They were taken to the Royal Estate, so they should all be with their families shortly."

Rey knew life wasn't as simple as that, but for the sake of the innocent-looking girl in front of him, he had to make it seem so.

"A-ah... that's a relief." Esme smiled, though her gaze still seemed distracted.

"That isn't it? Then why is she looking like that? Come to think of it... I know nothing about her!"

Even though the System said she was a Half-Elf, she looked pretty human to him.

She didn't even have pointy ears or blond hair that Elves were known for.

She just looked like a really, REALLY pretty girl. Perhaps even a princess of some faraway kingdom or something.

'But her Stats don't lie. She's definitely special.' With that in mind, Rey proceeded with his question.

"Could you tell me your story? How did you end up where I found you?"

There were a bunch of things he was curious about, that was the first and foremost.

'I can at least get a glimpse into her background and figure out her origins. Maybe even learn more about Elves...'

"My story, huh? To be honest, it's nothing too special." As Esme spoke, her gaze seemed to be on something far away.

Her emotionless face made it seem like a statue was speaking.

"I never knew my real parents. I was found and raised by the Orphanage where I grew up. Many times, families would want to adopt me, but I refused each one."

"Why? Because they were bad?"

Esme nodded with some hidden enthusiasm the moment Rey asked the question.

It felt a little endearing seeing her, with her stoic face, display so much energy.

"I told the Orphanage of my gift, and I aided them in properly appraising anyone who wanted to adopt a child. I became indispensable to them, to the point that they finally agreed to let me remain there."

Her small smile showed Rey that she indeed enjoyed her time in the Orphanage. They were probably the only family she wanted.

As such, it was a mutually beneficial arrangement for both sides.

"Once I became an adult, I took on more important roles in the Orphanage and took care of the kids there. Most of the people I grew up with had gone, but a few of us remained."

Esme went on to explain some mundane activities that they did in the Orphanage and how it was managed.

Rey thought she would go on forever, but he didn't stop her.

He couldn't.

"I... was happy then."

The fond eyes she used to look into the distance, and the sweet smile that radiated from her face as she recollected the good times... Rey took all of them in.

However, all of those were soon discarded as soon as she continued her story.

A dark cloud came over her bright face, and her eyes darkened almost instantly.

As she explained the horrors that came next, even Rey felt his chest tighten.

"Our town was pillaged by Bandits. They called themselves members of the Mercenary Gang."

Rey recognized the name.

They were rumored to be the strongest force in the Criminal Underworld, and were often hired by top players—including the Obsidian Council.

Rey didn't think they would be mere pillagers.

"They slaughtered so many people before my very eyes. The men were mercilessly executed on the spot, and the women were... were... violated."

Rey could see Esme tremble as she shared the story.

It seemed she was trying her hardest to control her emotions, and despite how pained she looked, not a single tear fell from her moist eyes.

Her tone also seemed clear despite how many times it trailed.

She was so hard to hold herself together.

'Should I do something? No...' Rey decided to just watch.

'I really am no good at these things.'

"I was separated from my friends as we tried to escape. Unfortunately for us, we were caught and taken as slaves—just as all the viable young adults and children."

Rey didn't know why he felt relieved that Esme didn't experience the 'violation' that the other women encountered.

She was plenty attractive, and any man would desire her body the moment they laid eyes on her.

Despite all of this, she remained untouched.

Rey could already guess why.

'They probably thought she looked too pure and didn't want to sully the goods. I can only imagine how much she was going to be sold for.'

Considering her looks, and the fact that Evals Redart could see the potential of the slaves he wanted to sell, it was probably going to be at an astronomical level.

"I remember thinking: why are they doing this? What did we do wrong? We were just living our simple lives when they chose to ruin our lives..."

As Esme spoke once again, Rey narrowed his eyes.

'If I had to guess, the Mercenary Gang was hired by Evals to obtain a whole bunch of slaves from their insignificant settlement while disguising it as a raid or pillage.'

It was done for profit—nothing more, nothing less.

"That was when I looked at their Stats and found the true reason. It's because they're evil. Good people would never do such things!"

Rey didn't know what to tell her. He knew he personally wouldn't engage in such atrocities, but...

'No one is truly innocent. Not even the good ones.'

*

Chapter 193 Good And Evil [Pt 2]

Rey knew there were good people in the world.

He considered Alicia a good person, and to an extent... he thought he wasn't too bad either.

Perhaps he had a few gray areas in his life, but he knew for sure that people like Alicia would not stand for evil actions.

Still...

'When push comes to shove, we sometimes have to make certain decisions that could be considered evil.'

There were quite a number of people in the world he came from who argued for the rights of animals, especially appealing to the fact that some were highly intelligent and sentient.

This group of people proved that animals indeed felt emotions and pain; and in fact, we're capable of feelings like love and attachment.

They were highly complex beings.

Yet... people killed them every day. They did so for various reasons—like sustenance, enjoyment, or dietary requirements.

Genuinely nice and downright pleasant people would consume the very animals that were said to be sentient.

Rey didn't know which path was right or wrong.

He only knew one thing.

'This is just the way life is.'

And so, as he looked at the girl before him, truly empathizing with her for the horrors she suffered, he couldn't help but feel a little numbness inside him.

'I don't think I would ever go that far with humans, but...'

If intelligent Monsters were happily living in their territory—without bothering anyone—he wouldn't hesitate to kill them.

His reason for doing so would be justifiably simple.

—EXP!

Just as people consumed animals to survive, Rey didn't mind killing Monsters to get stronger.

It was unfair on the Monsters who—if left alone—would have lived out their lives in relative peace.

However, Rey didn't care.

'The same Monsters would do the same under similar or certain circumstances.'

As he looked at the girl before him talking about Good and Bad people, he wondered what it would take for her to take a life or torture someone.

It was a terrible thought to have—especially when looking at Esme's adorable face.

But he couldn't help but wonder.

"... I don't know what became of the others, but that's how I found myself in there."

As Rey watched her stop talking, he realized he had to say something soon.

"You don't think they were among the batch of slaves I saved?"

"No." She slowly shook her head. "They took them to a different Warehouse."

"I see..."

As Rey rubbed his chin, he felt a slight pinching sensation in his chest.

'If that's the case, it's probably already too late for them. They would have already been sold as slaves. Or...'

If Rey assumed that the schedule for their sale was the same as Esme's, then by capturing Evals Redart, it was possible that the sale was delayed.

In that case, there was a chance they were still at the Warehouse.

'I just have to get the addresses and connect the dots.'

Rey was sure he could just ask the Royal Council for the information they had gotten from Evals, and it would be good to go.

'I don't even know why I am thinking of going so far for her. Maybe it's because of the System...?'

"What do you want now?" He blurted out, staring straight into her eyes.

For a few seconds, she kept quiet.

It seemed like the question caught her off guard, so she was taking her time to properly articulate her thoughts.

Then—

"I just want a proper home. To be with my family."

—She gave her response.

'Her family, huh? I'm guessing she means the Orphanage members.'

Rey already suspected she would say such a thing, so he recognized that aiding her with this task would make the System satisfied.

'And then I should get whatever rewards are waiting for me once it's done.'

"Don't get me wrong. The people here have treated me kindly, and they've done everything to make me comfortable. Even though I don't speak to them, they always seem to know exactly what I need."

Rey felt a smile tugging at his lips as he imagined Asher ordering all of Esme's attendants to do their jobs perfectly.

'That guy...'

"This place also looks amazing. I've never seen such luxury in all my life. But... I don't feel comfortable here."

Rey felt his smile build up as he saw her honest face speak to him without hints of fear or nervousness.

Throughout their conversation, she hadn't shown even the slightest hint of intimidation.

'Is it because she's convinced I'm trustworthy?' He mused.

"I feel uneasy here. I want to reunite with my friends and family that were separated from me. I want to rebuild that orphanage and live there with them. That... is what I want."

It was a simple task; not too ambitious.

'That doesn't mean it'll be easy. The tough part is finding her friends.'

Rey wasn't sure about finding all of them, but if he could get most of them—maybe half—then that would be fine.

Maybe they would mourn the loss of the rest of their friends and move on.

'Unfortunately, don't think I can half ass this.'

He had a feeling that unless Esme was satisfied, he wouldn't be successful.

'I'll just have to find all of them. Hopefully it won't be too much of a hassle...'

It wasn't like he was a cold-hearted monster or anything, but Rey had learned a long time ago never to be optimistic.

He genuinely hoped he could find all her friends, but there was always the possibility of tragedy.

'... And it would be dangerous if I set my hopes too high.'

"I'll try my best to find them." The moment he said this, Esme's face brightened up.

"You just have to be a little patient, but I'll definitely try my best."

"I trust you." She smiled at him and nodded.

For a few seconds, none of them said anything. They only stared into each other's eyes.

Crimson... reflecting Azure.

It felt as if the world held its breath as the two of them remained still.

"I should probably excuse myself. You want to continue your conversation with that man, don't you?"

"Yes, thank you."

Esme rose to her feet, bowing slightly to Rey, who kept his position.

"Thank you for saving me, Rey. And thank you for choosing to help me."

Rey felt his heart skip a beat as she called him by name. He remembered the first time he saw her; as she called for him weakly.

The girl back then was so different from the one who stood in front of him.

"I don't know why you are interacting with these people, but I trust and know you're a good person."

Rey wanted to tell her she wasn't completely right, but he kept his mouth shut and watched her walk to the door.

"Please be careful. Don't... don't be like them."

Rey slowly nodded upon hearing those words.

He didn't know an ominous feeling rose from within him, but he somehow felt her words went beyond mere advice.

It was a warning.

Esme gave him one more smile as she left the room, causing Rey to be only one there.

He inhaled deeply and closed his eyes, thinking about everything that just happened.

... All he had just heard.

And after mulling over them, only one word could come out of his mouth in a croaky whisper.

"Fuck..."

*

Chapter 194 Meeting Rebal

A few seconds after Esme left, Rey felt the presence of two people approaching the door.

One of them was clearly Asher, but the second was an unfamiliar force.

He remained steady in his position while waiting for the doorknob to teist, and the man behind the door to reveal himself.

And then...

'Hm?'

... The both of them finally entered.

Asher was the first to come in. He had his usual smiling demeanor about him, however, it seemed he was a bit uneasy.

And it wasn't difficult to see why once the second man came in.

A buff figure who could easily be 6'10 in height walked in right behind Asher, his trimmed bearded face showing nothing but the direct contrast to Asher's smiling face.

The man had an air of authority around him, and he reeked of danger. Even Rey, in his seat, could tell that this man was something else.

Still, he hardly reacted as he watched the two men enter the room.

Asher allowed the man to sit, while he stood behind his couch.

Before the former could completely settle on his seat, however, Rey already resorted to [Absolute Appraisal].

The result—

[STATUS WINDOW]

- Name: Rebal Blanc

- Race: Human

- Class: Merchant (C-Tier)

- Level: 99 (99.99% EXP)

- Life Force: 10 (100) [200]

- Mana Level: 41/41 [200]

- Combat Ability: 60 [200]

- Stat Points: 0

- Skills (Exclusive):

- Skills (Non-Exclusive): [Bargaining]. [Combat Application]. [Weapon Mastery]. [Warrior's Aura].

- Alignment: Lawful Evil

[Additional Information]

Head of the KariBlanc Group, and one of the Councilors in the Obsidian Council.

[End Of Information]

'Ahh...'

Once Rey saw this, his entire outlook changed.

'I always suspected that this place had a wide array of connections, but even then... the Obsidian Council?'

Everything all made sense to him now.

The Obsidian Council was said to be the governing force of the Black Market. They made the Unwritten Laws, and they ensured there was order in the commercial sphere of the Criminal Underworld.

Apparently, they were also a part of some Triumvirate, but Rey didn't have too many details about the entire structure.

No one really did in this place.

'And now one of their Councilors is seated right in front of me.'

Rey pondered on the reason, and he considered many possibilities as the man made himself comfortable on his seat.

He was very buff—probably on par with the competitive bodybuilders back in Rey's original world.

His height also made him appear more intimidating.

He had rings on all his fingers, and unlike Asher, he wore a full-on suit.

It made him appear both professional and dangerous.

Rey couldn't say he disliked that.

"Sir Ralyks. I have heard so much about you. It's a pleasure to meet you."

As Rey listened to the words of the man before him, he nodded slowly and watched from their distance.

They were separated by the center table, and while they shared a considerable distance apart, the man's huge build almost made it seem like they were much closer than they actually were.

Rey glanced at Asher, who stood like a statue with a smile on his face.

'How do I go about this? Play dumb or just call them out for their Bs?'

Right now, it was clear that the two were trying some form of tactics to get some high ground when it came to bargaining.

Or perhaps this was just how things were done in the Black Market and he had no idea.

In the end, there was only one way he saw the current situation being tutored directly in his favor.

And that was—

"And I've also heard quite a bit about you, Sir Rebal Blanc."

The moment Rey said this, the man's body and face froze up.

Even Asher had an expression of shock written on his face.

'Should I go a step further...?' Rey smiled underneath the mask, enjoying how the entire atmosphere was changing.

"It's not often that a Councilor appears in the open like this. Am I right, Asher?"

Rey darted his gaze to the flustered standing man who appeared even more flustered.

He had a look of confusion on his face, even as his father looked at him from where he sat. The two exchanged quizzical looks, and Rey simply sat back and watched.

'I'm sure I've disrupted everything they had in mind until now. Let's see how they'll take things from here...'

Even though they hadn't told him anything yet, Rey was already sure of one thing.

'They want something from me!'

It was most likely a favor; and considering how much the KariBlanc Group had done for him, it would be a bit unfair for him not to come to their aid.

'I'm sure that is what they want me to think!'

That was one of the reasons why he did what he did. At the very least, he would be able to prop himself up as someone who wasn't a pushover.

That way, he wouldn't appear weak in the course of bargaining.

'I don't want to be doing these people any favors, but I can't just walk out now...'

Esme was living here for free, and he still didn't have any other way to properly take care of her.

Since he was also going to be very busy with the upcoming Raid, it was better for her if she remained with the Blancs.

Of course, he knew he'd have to be on good terms with them for that to happen.

'Hopefully, whatever negotiation that happens with them ends well...'

Rey swallowed his saliva and waited for the response of the older male who sat before him.

"I guess there's no use hiding the truth from someone of your caliber."

The man leaked out a smile and rose to his feet, his entire build seeming like an imposing mountain that would crash upon Rey's smaller build.

As he watched him rise, Rey kept his normal position and simply raised his head to maintain eye contact.

"You are right. My name is Rebal Blanc, and I am a Member of the Obsidian Council."

Then, the man did the unthinkable.

Rebal bowed his head to Rey, absolutely shocking him to the very core.

"Sir Ralyks, the entire KariBlanc Group needs your help. Please hear me out!"

*

Chapter 195 The Current Imbalance [Pt 1]

An uncomfortable silence hung in the air.

The unnatural sight of a grown, massive man bowing to the much smaller man in darkness made the entire scenario all the more tense.

No one could afford to speak in this heavy atmosphere, and for a few seconds, they could only watch each other.

Then—

"What's the use of a bow? I hope you do not intend on convincing me with cheap emotional appeals."

As Rey said this, he felt the man's big build tremble a little.

"O-of course not!" Rebal Blanc responded, a big smile on his face.

He looked nothing like Asher, but it seemed like they both liked to smile in situations like this.

Rey took a sip out of the tea that had been placed on the table since he arrived.

The tea never got cold thanks to the Enchanted Cup that it was poured into; as such, Rey didn't need to gulp down the whole thing.

Instead, he preferred to systematically take his time.

This situation was no different.

"Hmm." After taking a small sip of the sweet liquid, he cast his gaze on the two men before him.

It seemed they were completely at his mercy.

"Sit down and get straight to the point. I prefer things being done that way."

In response to his words, the KariBlanc Boss actually obeyed very seamlessly.

'Wow! They must be really desperate...'

He decided not to comment on anything until they were done telling him whatever favor they desired of him.

'If it's something doable, then there's nothing stopping me from assisting them. From the looks on their faces, it seems like they'd be grateful for the help.'

Of course, Rey remembered his decision to stay away from the Black Market and Criminal Underworld as a whole.

However, Esme was here, and he still had his uses for these people.

Their relationship was a necessary evil.

"Very well, Sir Ralyks. I'll get straight to the point with you."

'Okay. Here it comes...'

Rey prepared himself for whatever big news would come.

"As you already know, the Royal Council has been the necessary aiding force in the Black Market and other facets of the Criminal Underworld."

As Rebal started with this, Rey nodded... though his thoughts played things differently.

'I still can't believe this actually happened. It seems like everyone knew about this except me!'

If the Royal Council hadn't said anything about their corrupt members, he would still be in the dark about the whole thing.

Rey wondered how he would have reacted to the news if he heard it from Rebal's mouth first.

"Well, ever since their confirmed demise following the Dragon Invasion, the Black Market—no, the Criminal Underworld—has been in an imbalance."

Rey's ears perked up the moment he heard this.

He leaned closer, his shoulders arched as he legs were spread apart while maintaining eye contact with Rebal.

The words that came out of his mouth were simple.

"Tell me more."

'U-unbelievable!'

Rey couldn't believe all he had just heard. He never thought that so much lore could be behind the entire situation.

Apparently, there was a body called the Underworld Triumvirate; and it consisted of—

The Black Market

The Slave Union

The Mercenary Gang.

These three bodies were under the direct supervision of their benefactors, who also served as their overlords.

These benefactors were the three deceased Royal Council.

With them gone, a lot of changes quickly began to occur within the entire sphere hidden in darkness.

Apparently, Scylla, one of the two remaining leaders of the Slave Trade killed the second one and took over his entire territory.

With so much power and influence; practically running a monopoly on slave trade, her influence skyrocketed.

Rebal didn't know all of the details, but the woman managed to convince half of the Obsidian Council to support her uprising.

"She's practically taken over everything beyond the southern area of the Underworld." Rebal had said.

He also retorted that while the Mercenary Gang was a neutral party who merely provided muscle for the other factions, the lady in question now had a lot of their forces on her side.

In essence, she was a force to be reckoned with.

During the course of Rebal's exposition, he mentioned how the Mercenary Gang engaged in pillaging and providing security services to gain wealth.

In a way, they were merely leeches who sold their strength to the highest bidder.

Just glorified bandits—at least according to Rey.

In any case, Scylla was making a grand uprising in the Criminal Underworld, and that proved detrimental to their business.

Rey had multiple thoughts on the issue.

'To think I set this all off by accidentally causing the Dragon to crush them.'

In a way, it was his responsibility.

No... that wasn't right.

'It's their fault for meeting in secret anyway. Besides... good riddance.'

He really couldn't see any reason to help the KariBlanc Group on such matters.

Wasn't this the way of the underworld?

Was he missing something here?

"Sir Ralyks... I will reveal something to you that I have yet to tell any other person who isn't directly involved in the trade, but..."

Rebal appeared hesitant to share the information, but after a few seconds, his face tightened with hardened resolve.

"All those Monster Cores we got for you were used to make a lot of weapons and Enchanted Items. However, it was never for the use of humans..."

Once Rey heard this, his eyes twitched a little.

Truly, he had given very little thought about what the KariBlanc Group was up to with the Items he made from what he sold to them.

Now he was getting close to it,

The only question was: if they weren't being sold to humans... who was their buyer?

"The Elves to the East. They're our biggest buyers at the moment; and they're the ones we made so many Items for."

'E-ehh—?!'

Before Rey could complete his thoughts, Rebal revealed even more.

"Unfortunately, with the territories being under Scylla's control, we can't reach them at all."

In essence, they were experiencing a crisis.

*

Chapter 196 The Current Imbalance [Pt 2]

'A-ahh... I understand now'

As Rey looked at Rebal and Asher, both of them having eyes that pleaded for myth, he had a considerable grasp of the situation.

'They invested a lot of capital on producing the items, but they can't deliver it to the Elves in time.'

This meant they couldn't recoup the resources they poured into the production, which meant less liquid cash for them.

However, that wasn't all.

'In business, punctuality is key. If they don't keep their end of the bargain soon, it's possible that the Elves could go to another Company, which would be bad for business for the KariBlanc Group,'

Not only would they never recoup their profit, but it would take an extremely long time to dispose of the items in their stock.

Ultimately, this was the major issue that was ensuing.

"The Eastern Continent is quite a long distance away. Do you know why the Elves are interacting with humans now? Why are they seeking so many Enchanted Items in the first place?"

"They didn't tell us. But I suspect it's because the war with the Dragons has made them desperate."

The moment Rebal said this, Rey nodded in agreement,

That was his first guess too.

'Elves aren't technologically advanced and have no clue about industrialization. They are even often depicted as nature-loving entities who live apart from the corruption of beings like humans.'

To see that Elves were going as far as dealing with Rebal—a Black Market leader—made him suspect that the difficulty had been cranked up in their domain,

"I suspect we are being intentionally sabotaged by the other three Obsidian Council members who joined Scylla's side. We've lost contact with the warehouse located in the East, and our packages delivered through any route outside the Southern Territories immediately become unaccounted for."

If this continued, their loss would be unbearable.

'They're in quite the pickle.' Rey thought to himself as he listened to Rebal go on.

'I can't say I blame them for being desperate. No matter how much capital a company has, profit is the lifeblood.'

And profit was gotten through sales.

Rey doubted the KariBlanc Group could make a lot of money just from exploiting the Southern territories.

A company whose scope of business was suddenly reduced to one-third of their usual commercial domain was bound to experience massive loss.

'Add that to the many Items unaccounted for, and the whole Elf situation...'

It was inevitable that the company would sink.

'So that's why they need my help.' Rey could feel a small smile forming on his face.

Even if he wanted the Black Market to collapse, there was no way he wanted KariBlanc to be the first to go down.

This was the only place he had formed proper connections with.

'If they fall, the Black Market might still exist, but I lose all my current benefits.'

Rey could clearly see the appeal in helping KariBlanc. However, he also knew to be cautious.

'If I get caught up in a scheme that I do not understand, then it would be my total loss.'

Rey knew he wasn't very smart. He wasn't that great of a manipulator either.

He was still very inexperienced and only knew very little about how the world worked.

'I could be getting used by the KariBlanc Group for a much larger scheme.'

That wasn't how it seemed at the moment, but Rey knew he couldn't really trust the current circumstances alone.

If he was to support them, he would be taking a risk.

"The worst part about all of this is that it had to happen now. Right when we were about to begin our expansion plan..."

As Rey heard this, he couldn't help but blurt out his next statement.

"Expansion?"

Rebal looked up and smiled a little sadly.

"Yes. We were planning on going more mainstream once we had enough capital. This might seem a bit strange coming from me, but... the Black Market is a really terrible place."

Rey was surprised to hear all of this indeed. He genuinely couldn't believe what Rebal was saying despite being one of the major beneficiaries not the place.

"This place is dangerous and violent. It isn't a sustainable place to conduct business."

Once Rebal revealed more about what he meant, Rey could understand the man's sentiments.

Both from a logical and purely business perspective, it was much better to perpetuate trade in a more structured and orderly society.

Black Market Trade was more profitable, sure, but it was also incredibly risky and highly volatile.

Any mistake could cost you everything.

"We made a few auxiliary branches in mainstream to test out the market, and after a few years of doing our proper research, we were ready to fully transition."

Then, this unfortunate incident had to occur.

'If they plan on moving to the mainstream, then it makes more sense to help them.'

Rey now had a second incentive for acting.

However...

"I am curious about one thing."

"What is it, Sir Ralyks?" As soon as Rey asked this, Rebal replied.

It almost felt like the man was ready to be completely bare with him, making it difficult to distrust any of the things that were being said.

"Why do you not join Scylla's side?"

"..."

Rebal did not answer immediately, so Rey decided to elaborate.

"If you joined her side, I'm sure your business would be protected and all the harassment would stop."

The other three Obsidian Council Members probably figured this out a long time ago and folded.

If KariBlanc did the same, surely things would end well for them.

"Scylla is known as a very selfish and cruel person. Even among the three leaders of the Slave Union, she was always said to be the most ruthless. She's unprincipled, and I would never be able to work with her."

As Rey listened to this, he sensed arbitrary emotion taking over logic.

He never expected such an experienced businessman like Rebal Blanc to have such a stance.

"Besides, I reckon it's a little too late for an alliance. Not only did I not get an invitation, but it's most likely that the three who joined her wish to get rid of me and the other two so they can have more territory and power."

Rey could understand that.

"The fewer people there are in charge... the bigger the profit that goes around becomes."

The three Obsidian Councilors wanted their territory and profit to at least double, while Scylla wanted to rule everything.

It made sense why the KariBlanc Group was never going to be able to join their side.

'But why didn't he just say that from the get-go?'

Rebal had first of all displayed his emotional reasons before going into the logical domain.

Rey only had one guess.

'He wants to show me that he's a man of emotion and sentiment, eh?'

Rebal Blanc was a man of principles and rules. It wasn't a surprise that both he and Asher had the same Alignment.

'I like that!' Rey grinned widely as he looked at the two of them.

'There's a lot that can benefit me here, especially in the Elf department. I also want to have an actual company in the mainstream on my side. There's also the fact that they've helped me in the past. Finally, by helping them, I can stop the actions of the other criminals involved in this.'

There were probably other benefits he wasn't seeing at the moment, but Rey already had his mind made up.

'I'll join their side—at least, for now.'

If things ever got awry, or the KariBlanc Group acted suspiciously, he could always leave,

"Fine..." Rey spoke, a heavy sigh escaping his lips.

"... I'm in."

*

Chapter 197 Ralyks Accepts

Rebal Blanc's heart was racing.

As he stared at the man known as Ralyks, he felt a sensation he hadn't gotten in the longest time.

—Sheer Intimidation!

Rebal was genuinely anxious as he sat on his seat while staring at Ralyks.

After the man had deciphered his identity after just one meeting, Rebal knew he was the real deal.

'How long has he known Aldred's real name? Since the very first day too? Damn it, I messed up!'

Those were his initial thoughts when he mulled over the meaning behind Ralyks stating both their names so casually.

Now that he had calmed down, Rebal could tell that it was just a show of power.

Thankfully, Ralyks wasn't offended that they had kept Asher's identity a secret.

The reason he was currently was because he was waiting for Ralyks' answer.

Right now, the KariBlanc Group needed a miracle.

He and his son had been strategizing different routes to take in their plans, but they always ended up coming up short due to their current lack of enough resources.

If they were to turn the situation around, they needed help—a lot of it.

"Fine... I'm in."

The moment Rebal heard those words from Ralyks' lips, his heart nearly skipped a beat.

He knew he was a little emotional a short moment ago, but he couldn't help it. He had thought that it would turn the man off, but thankfully that wasn't the case.

"Thank you, Sir Ralyks." Once again, Rebal bowed.

Asher, who stood beside him, also bowed as well.

He hadn't spoken a single word since the start of the meeting, as was the customs of people of their standing.

"I trust you. Besides, since our relationship runs deep, there's no need to go as far as bowing, right?"

Rebal found his heart lighting up as soon as Ralyks said these words.

'Is he just saying this, or does he actually mean it?' Rebal knew he would never have the answer to that.

So he did the reasonable thing and chose not to doubt the only chance they had at survival.

"You are correct. Thank you, Sir Ralyks."

This time, Rebal did not bow.

"Come up with a decent plan that involves me in it. Since I'll be in the equation, feel free to ask for the favors you require. As long as it's not dirty work, and it borrows my strength, then I will remain by your side."

Those words sounded like music to Rebal's ears.

"U-understood!"

"I'll see you after a few days after making some preparations on my end."

Ralyks slowly rose to his feet, and Rebal took this as his queue to stand as well.

"As for rewards... those can be discussed later. Once the job is done."

Rebal found that absolutely fair—if not downright charitable.

Since the KariBlanc Group was barely floating, this wasn't the time to splurge their resources.

'Though, even if he asked for a reward now, I'd probably give him everything I can.'

"Then... I look forward to working with you, Sir Ralyks." Rebal moved closer and stretched out his hand towards Ralyks.

He had a warm smile on his face, reflecting the current state of his heart.

It was contrasted by the ominously dark mask that Ralyks donned. He honestly looked like a demon, with his crimson eyes and Cale-like hooded cape.

As they shook hands, Rebal felt relieved that the deal was sealed... even it appeared to be nothing short of a deal with the Devil.

"Then, I'll be taking my leave."

A distortion of space surrounded Ralyks, and just as he dislodged his hand from the man's grasp, he vanished from sight.

Not even a trace of his presence was left.

"Haaa... Haaa...!"

Asher was the first to let out heavy breaths as soon as the man left the room.

Beads of sweat were already falling down his face as he nervously approached his father.

"We did it, boy!" He and Asher hugged, the latter squeaking a little thanks to being squeezed by his giant father.

"Time out! Time out, father!"

His father didn't listen, carrying Asher up as if the boy was still a kid.

It felt awkward—a man in his early thirties being carried by another who seemed to be in his forties.

However, Rebal didn't care.

He was laughing, smiling intensely as he expressed genuine joy that he, his son, and his empire, would not have to crumble.

"Father... you'll interfere with the Item too much!"

As Asher said this, it was already too late for him. The current thirty-or-so year old man began to fade away under the grasp of his father.

It felt like a mist was being cleared, and a soft whooshing sound of wind enveloped the man known as Aldred as he reverted to his original form.

The first thing that was displayed was his gray hair and sparkling green eyes. He had clear skin, and a perfectly handsome face.

Some would say he looked more attractive than his previous form—or perhaps 'cuter' was the word.

In any case, these weren't the only things that changed.

His height was also different.

He looked much smaller than his purported age would make anyone believe.

What this boy appeared to be was a teenager.

Probably one who was just venturing into prime adulthood,

And the reason for that was simple.

Asher Blanc was actually a young man who was nineteen years old

The only reason he took up such an aged disguise was so he could look mature and capable in his job.

As Aldred, he needed to rack up as many accomplishments and build up a good repute—enough to win everyone's respect and loyalty.

But now, alone with his father, he showed his true colors.

"We should probably get started on making the preparations."

"Yeah.. we should."

As the father and son duo ceased play and focused on business, their faces were filled with nothing short of determination.

They only hope things won't worsen before the preparations are complete.

'We're counting on you... Sir Ralyks!'

*

Chapter 198 The Dungeon Raid Discourse [Pt 1]

'Haaa...'

As Rey lay on his bed, he heaved a heavy sigh and went through everything that had just happened.

It was hard to believe that after everything, it was still morning.

'Things got a lot more complicated than I expected.'

The whole thing with Esme was one thing, and now the KariBlanc Group was another.

'I also have to handle the Raid.'

With all of these factors culminating in his mind, Rey began to wonder if he wasn't doing too much at once.

However, he quickly tried to defend his actions.

'The KariBlanc situation and the Esme matter aren't totally unrelated. There are overlaps.'

In the process of taking down the cancer that was the Criminal Underworld, he could look for her friends and help them,

Besides, the main enemy was a Slave Trader who had killed and consumed the territories of her competitor.

'There's the possibility that she already took over Redarts' domain.'

If that happened, then the chances of the slaves being sold already was an option.

'Or maybe... their sale has been postponed.'

With the way the market was a bit unstable, it was probably better to wait things out and not take too many financial risks.

Since that was the crux of the matter, he didn't think doing both was going to be an issue.

'The problem is how to balance Raiding with them.'

The Raid was his initial commitment, and since he needed the Otherworlders to grow very strong, it had the most priority.

There was no way he could put that on the back burner.

'I just have to find a way to make it work.'

Rey looked around his room and realized it was a bit messy.

He sighed a little as he took his eyes away and continued his line of thought.

'I can do the Raid stuff in the morning, and do the KariBlanc stuff at night.'

It was at times like this that Rey wished he had a Cloning Skill.

Unfortunately, life wasn't as simple as that.

'I can use [Phantom Projection] to fool everyone that Ralyks and Rey are present at the same time, but that only works if I'm close to my targets.'

[Phantom Projection] was a new Skill he got after combining [Projection], [False Pain], and a few other neurological Skills.

If allowed him to manifest anything that would look and even feel real.

However, it would all be a mere illusion he made.

'It'll be very useful in the Raid since I have to make sure I'm present as two people.'

As for his engagement with KariBlanc, he would just have to alternate between responsibilities. Thankfully, he had Spatial Magic now.

"It sucks that I can't sell all those 99th Floor Monster Cores yet..."

Rey grumbled within himself before grunting a little.

Sales had to be put on hold for now.

"I'll have to go and investigate the Royal Dungeon in my spare time to make sure there's nothing too crazy down there."

He could also prepare a proper schedule and navigate the most optimal path for them to take so that the whole thing could be smooth sailing.

For him, not them.

'They'll have to work very hard, I'm sure. Grinding for Levels could be fun, but it was also a chore.

In the end, though, they would see the rewards.

"I should probably get ready to head to the library."

There was a bunch of stuff he had to catch up on—both concerning business and monsters.

As Ralyks, the mysterious and incredible Adventurer, he couldn't be caught lacking.

'Let's do this!'

[A Few Days Later]

The days passed in the blink of an eye, and the two members of the Royal Council were currently seated in a massive lounge.

Even Adonis was present.

Even though he initially wanted to stand, he was convinced to sit with the members of the Royal Council.

All three of them were faced by a single man who watched them in silence.

He was Ralyks, the Dark Adventurer.

Just as agreed, they were to meet and discuss the future of the United Human Alliance, particularly regarding the Raid that was to take place soon.

He had no entourage with him—as expected—but even the Royal Council and Adonis had no guards.

Lucielle and Brutus had returned to the battlefield, and all the competent soldiers had been drafted with them, or were busy with other responsibilities.

Frankly speaking, they were pretty understaffed.

However, they hoped Ralyks wouldn't see it that way. Instead, this was meant to look like a kind gesture to show how comfortable they were with him.

Since he didn't comment on that at all, they could only hope that he got the message.

"Before we start this meeting, I just want to say a big thank you to you, Sir Ralyks." Adonis swiftly spoke up—just a second before Conrad was about to part his lips.

"Hm?"

"I never got to thank you back then... when you saved me and my friends."

Adonis was referring to the Royal Dungeon Incident. Back then, he was too stunned and injured to mutter proper words of thanks.

Everything happened too fast, and before he knew it... the man called Ralyks had vanished.

No, that wasn't quite right.

He and his friends had vanished away from him—away from the Dungeon and into the Royal Estate.

The next he saw of him was from a distance where he saw how he easily handled the Dragon in its true form and dealt with it with relative ease.

And now, here he was—Ralyks himself—right in front of Adonis.

He had to air out his thoughts.

"It was no problem. I was only doing what I had to do. You did well holding out for that long, though."

As Adonis heard this, something about his previously bright expression changed.

It darkened a little as he whispered.

"No... I really didn't... do anything..."

His voice was barely audible, so it was difficult to even get a grasp of what he said.

Eventually, Adonis' gratitude was shoved into the background, and the pertinent issue rose to the surface.

"About the Royal Dungeon Raid..." Conrad said with a smile on his face.

His face was oozing with resolve—same as Vida's.

"... Please take charge of it. We will accept all your conditions."

*

Chapter 199 The Dungeon Raid Discourse [Pt 2]

"Understood."

Once the Royal Council made their intentions clear from the start, everything else flowed seamlessly.

Ralyks began the briefing as curtly as he could, and everyone fell silent and listened.

"I spent the last few days exploring the Dungeon in order to understand what path to take and how long the entire Raid will last."

The curious eyes of his audience were enough to do the asking for them.

"It'll take several weeks. Probably two to three months."

Taking into account the time needed for rest, journeying, and the overall clearing of the Floors—including mining—it would take approximately three months.

"Of course, that period could dwindle or increase, depending on how capable the team I'm leading is. I have no doubt they'll be formidable, though, considering the fact that they held their own against a Dragon Commander."

The Royal Council Members and Adonis gave Ralyks their smiles, but it was still obvious that they had some troubled thoughts.

"It seems there is an issue. You can mention what it is."

"N-no, it's not really an issue that has to do with your plan or anything. It's just..." Conrad retorted quickly.

His flustered expression made it obvious that he genuinely did not want to offend their benefactor.

"We need the resources in the 99th Floor as soon as possible." In Conrad's place, Vida sharply spoke up.

Unlike him, she showed no sign of nervousness.

Instead, her face only showed worry.

"We're running out of our last reserves, and the resources in that Floor are our lifesavers. Without them... things could get really bad for us."

After she said this, there was silence.

Everyone had their eyes on Ralyks, probably hoping for a solution from him.

Thankfully, he did not fail to deliver.

"That is a simple matter. I can help you directly obtain the resources from the 99th Floor."

"Really? You would do that for us?" Conrad's eyes beamed shamelessly, as if he wasn't already expecting something from the Dark Adventurer.

It was no use trying to act surprised at this point.

"Yes. Perhaps we should go to the site for a demonstration."

"Demonstra...?"

Before anyone in the room could even react, a warbling surge of purplish blue energy covered Ralyks and the three seated ones.

Space warped, and they found themselves instantly transported to a place gleaming with crystal-like wonder.

The very ground was made up of Magic Crystals, and the high ceilings had loads of them hanging above.

From the walls, to the massive chunks that littered the ground; everything was Mana Crystals.

Massive piles of Monster Cores also filled a particular section of the expanse, and at this point it was already clear what was happening.

What this place was.

"Welcome to the 99th Floor." Ralyks spoke up, his tone as calm as possible.

The two Royal Council Members appeared a little shaken—probably because this was their first time in a Dungeon.

Or maybe they just hadn't gone this deep into one.

Adonis remained calm through it all, though he kept his gaze on Ralyks who surprised him with that move.

Not even he could sense anything before being transpired.

'How fast is he, really?!' His face seemed to say.

"I don't want to waste too much time, so let us begin quickly."

Ralyks' echoing voice caused the trio to take their gazes away from the distractions and focus on him.

The next thing he did was equally surprising.

"[Greater Summoning Magic]."

A bright blue light formed around Ralyks, with sparks of orange energy dancing around him.

Multiple Magic Circles appeared a few inches from where he stood, and from their hidden depths emerged... creatures.

"UUUU..."

They leaked out heavy breaths as they appeared; massive monsters who had dark green skin, muscular bodies, and bald heads.

The lights around them reflected on their naked bodies as they grunted.

"Summoning Magic? You can use Summoning Magic too?" The whispers from Adonis was the first human sound to emerge after the beasts appeared.

The other two in the room were too stunned to speak.

The Hero stepped forward as he stared at the creatures in disbelief.

These were Ogres!

'How can he use high-level Summoning Magic? I thought he was focused on powerful offensive abilities.'

It was strange enough that he had Spatial Magic, which was rare, but adding Summoning Magic to the mix was just too absurd.

Adonis couldn't believe what he was seeing.

His thoughts were broken abruptly when he noticed the Ogres moving.

That was when he remembered something.

"Y-you're summoning Monsters? But if you're not a Tamer, you can't control—!"

"Don't worry."

As Ralyks' reassuring voice echoed, items began to manifest out of thin air in front of the monsters.

First were shovels, then pickaxes, and then hammers.

"They're already under my control. They'll be the ones responsible for mining your resources."

Adonis was stunned by what he was seeing.

He wasn't the only one.

Conrad and Vida were shocked to their bones, to the point that their eyes nearly popped out of their sockets.

The man before them was amazing.

"I'll systematically open a portal so they can bring out whatever they've mined for the day. That way, you can quickly begin to process them."

Everything was already so amazing—beyond natural expectations.

"I understand you are understaffed. Perhaps they could help fill that void."

Three Ogres were definitely formidable.

Ogres were C-Tier Monsters, and a single one could do the job of ten men, and so three of them could make up for thirty.

However, the kind of large-scale production and mining that they needed in order not to be in serious trouble far outweighed the current manpower being displayed before them.

Three Ogres were plenty, but...

'... They're not enough.'

The moment the three audience members thought this, they were greeted with something that shattered those thoughts.

~FSHUUU~

One after the other...

~ZZUUUU~

... More Magic Circles began to form.

And from the circles emerged more Ogres.

Over a dozen.

Over a hundred.

Three hundred of them appeared before the Circle stopped spitting out any more.

As the group gawked in shock and wonder, Ralyks stepped forward and asked a question that made all their hearts jump.

"Will these be enough?"

*

Chapter 200 Finalization Of Plans

[Greater Summoning Magic] was a B-Tier Skill that Rey got thanks to his [Merger].

He combined the effects of [Summoning Magic] that he learned back when he and his classmates were training in the colosseum.

Back then, the Summoners used [Summon], which was a C-Tier Skill—albeit rare.

The Monsters they could summon at a time were weaker, and their numbers weren't too impressive.

'Then, a few days ago, when Lucielle and Brutus were leaving for the battlefield, she used [Summoning Magic] to summon a giant flying creature that resembled a massive bird.'

Since Rey and his classmates saw them off, he was also able to mimic her Skill.

Afterward, he merged the both of them together to birth this new Skill of his.

'Hehehe...!'

Rey was grinning like an idiot under his mask as he stared at his enamored audience.

They were all stunned beyond compare that he had summoned such a small army of C-Tier Monsters that it took all of his willpower to stop himself from bursting out in laughter.

'Even though this is pretty much my limit, I made it sound like I could casually do more.'

As Ralyks, his repute would only skyrocket after this incident—he was sure.

'Let's just hope they don't get too greedy and ask me to make more...'

Judging from their expression alone, Rey was convinced that they would do no such thing.

300 Ogres were more than enough.

His Skill, [Greater Summoning Magic], allowed him to achieve this much, but he had reached his 'summon limit.'

That was fine, though.

'As long as I can use my [Absolute Mental Control] Skill on them, they'll do everything I say—even when I'm not around.'

[Absolute Mental Control] was a fusion of Belle's [Grand Charm], and a bunch of other lower-tier Skills.

It basically gave him a more heightened version of [Grand Charm], and he could control his targets without them having to look into his eyes or hear his voice.

The moment Rey summoned them, he had already placed them under his command by imbuing his Mana into them.

'These grunts will slave away until they're done mining this place.'

The issue was what to do with them after they were done.

'I doubt they'll give me any meaningful EXP, but it's still better than nothing... I guess.'

Not only were these C-Tier Monsters, but they were Summoned as well.

Summoned Monsters didn't have valuable Monster Cores, and they gave very little EXP.

Even though these things looked strong, they were practically fodder to him.

'Maybe it'll be better to give them to Adonis so he can get stronger.' Rey considered his options well.

Three hundred was a considerable number, so it was bound to make the Hero advance quite a bit.

'Well...' He glanced at his awe-stricken audience, still maintaining his smile.

'... I can decide that later.'

Right now, they still had to conclude their meeting.

"Let us return to the lounge."

After Ralyks returned the three to their initial meeting point, the meeting was pretty much over.

There was practically no need for further deliberations—especially after seeing all he could do.

They were certain he could handle the situation with their Otherworlders, and so they put their full trust on Ralyks and his decisions.

Of course, they also made sure to tell him how amazed they were at his power, to which he responded;

"It's not a big deal."

Thinking logically about his words, he wasn't wrong.

This was a man who had defeated a Dragon Commander before their very eyes. Compared to that feat, using a B-Tier Skill wasn't very compelling.

Still...

... Ralyks' power could only make one more amazed the more he displayed facets of it.

This reality caused everyone to have a single thought.

'Just how deep does his power run?'

No one could ever know!

"You can meet the Raid Team tomorrow, and we leave all the details to you—including when you want to begin the Raid and the model you want to utilize.'

In the end, Ralyks had to make the final call when it came to who was qualified to come with him on the raid.

He would test their performance and decide for himself.

"Agreed." He responded.

Afterwards, both sides rose to their feet and the Dark Adventurer shook the hand of Grandmaster Conrad, Lady Vida, and Hero Adonis.

They all exchanged goodwill, and afterwards.. Ralyks vanished into the depths of his dark portal.

No one knew where he went.

"Haaa! That went well!"

Rey plopped to his bed and smiled gleefully.

He had pulled off things on his side so seamlessly—almost to the point that he was impressed with himself.

'It's a lot more difficult acting when you're in front of so many familiar faces.'

There were a lot of times that he wondered if they could see through his disguise.

Fortunately, he was able to quickly dismiss it as paranoia.

Despite all this, though, there was one thing that couldn't escape his mind.

It was Adonis.

'I noticed it. He was acting a little off around me.'

Rey realized that Adonis probably felt too inadequate in the presence of Ralyks.

After all, he was the one supposed to be the Hero.

'But, if Adonis truly has the heart of a hero, then he should have no problems with me. As long as we can help the people here... that should be all that matters.'

He wasn't particularly interested in getting close to Adonis as Ralyks, but he hoped they could get along.

"Now that I've settled the whole arrangement with the Raid, I can focus on the KariBlanc situation.'

He had spent his past few days wisely, so he was a bit more confident in his ability to comprehend and appropriately act in the dealings of the Criminal Underworld.

'I'm happy I get to use my discretion in this Raid. It'll give me more flexibility to alternate between both sides.'

Leveling Up in the Royal Dungeon Raid, and helping out his business pals at the same time...

'I can't wait!'

