

Hero of Darkness #Chapter 541 - Second Meeting - Read Hero of Darkness Chapter 541 - Second Meeting Online -

Chapter 541 - Second Meeting

Five days later at the time of evening, a fort that was protected by military soldiers on the southern border had an invader entering through their defensive formations and barriers using the true dimension.

Similar to how they hijacked the place with Hector, Kahn and the group used the same method and got a face-to-face confrontation with Venessa Hos Sigfreed, the third princess of the Vulcan empire.

But unlike before... they latter was expecting them.

Everyone including Kahn kneeled in front of Venessa after they had successfully taken control of the situation and knocked out all of her people.

"It's an honor to finally meet you, your highness." spoke who had the voice of a middle-aged man this time and their group was covered in green robes, a white mask with a sigil of a particular empire.

"You... are you from there?" asked Venessa.

"Yes, your highness. I apologize for showing up after so many years.

There was a time when we served your mother. But ever since our princess... I mean the third queen's death... things had been unstable in the motherland." said Kahn.

This time, their story was that of people who supported Venessa but were from her mother's empire.

Kahn had found out that because of her mother being an outsider... she didn't have many loyal retainers in this empire and even those who supported her back in the day had changed sides a long time ago.

However, even without any clan's support... Venessa was a tenacious woman who had achieved her current power and influence with her own strength and capabilities even though she was only 30 years old.

Unlike the other two princes, who relied on the support from the other clans and the nobles... Venessa had support from many military houses and commanders because of her achievements.

"You are a fifth stage saint, aren't you? I can't even feel your saint pressure properly.

Yet you make it look like you're on the same stage as me." spoke Venessa after she noticed the domain.

"Why did you suddenly show up if you served my mother?" she asked in a suspicious tone.

Kahn then pitched in the same plan as he did with Hector and perfectly aligned his story.

"This seems like a ploy to take me down instead. If I intentionally spread these rumors throughout the empire with no real proof... it will be me facing the imperial justice and not that psycho.

Said Venessa, clearly not falling for the trap.

"You highness... the first prince is already making his moves." spoke Kahn.

And to make her believe them, they exposed two of the traitors in her ranks. Both of whom were sent by the clan of the first prince's mother.

However, this time... Kahn used a different approach to make Venessa, who he was meeting for the second time, believe their lie.

Kahn then revealed a piece of key information that shook Venessa to her core.

"We finally found out how the third queen died." he said.

"What nonsense is this?! Everyone knows that my mother died because of a terminal illness when I was only five years old!" exclaimed Venessa in an enraged tone.

To her words, Kahn only shook his head and then pulled out two books from his space ring and presented them to her.

On both of these books, were different crests of clans. Obviously, belonging to the two clans who supported the other two prince.

One of the books recipes of untraceable slow poisons and other book had the records of shady payments done to those who looked after the third queen as her medical attendants.

Thud!

Venessa fell back on her chair after seeing the proof.

That her mother didn't die due to terminal illness but because she was strategically drugged over years and then at one point... her body broke down from the inside as she died a slow and painful death.

This was what Kahn and Ronin found when they sent his spies to the headquarters of the clan of the first and second prince's mother's side.

Using Dimensional Law and sending his Trojan horses... Kahn was already an unfathomably terrifying enemy when it came to infiltration and go undetected.

And he went deep inside their old archives and gathered the information to reel in Venessa on their side. The same way he did with Hector.

This new revelation ended up riling Venessa for good.

"Your highness... there's another fact that you should know." spoke Kahn and then revealed another fact that turned Venessa's world upside down.

"You're lying!!" shouted Venessa who now had an ashen expression.

"It's true... The Emperor knew about this. But he didn't do anything despite knowing the truth.

Just to keep his reign intact... he didn't punish those who killed the 3rd queen." spoke Kahn as if he too was grieving.

[Hahaha!! You should've been an actor, boy!

Even I was moved by your words!] laughed Rathnaar.

[Shut up! We're not done yet.] said Kahn.

"Princess, you should know that you still have people who have loyalty towards your mother.

But they won't show up with full support unless you show them that you're worthy." he revealed.

"How do you want me to prove my worth?" asked Venessa as her eyes were burning with vengeance.

"You must become the crown princess first." informed Kahn and then told the next move.

It was the same strategy he told Hector.

And just as he expected... Venessa agreed to take down the second prince first.

Now, she only had two goals in her mind.

To become the empress and destroy those two clans who killed her mother.

Kahn then set up dates and plans with Venessa and how they were going to strategically execute everything.

But it had to be her doing without anyone finding about their involvement.

In a way, it was their test to see Venessa prove her worth. And their support will carry on only if she showed that she had what it took to gain their recognition and loyalty.

And after everything was taken care of... Kahn and the gang returned to Nidavellir after a few days.

After dealing with both Hector and Venessa, Kahn and the crew had only one target left that they had to deal with. Namely...

The Second Prince.

Hero of Darkness #Chapter 542 - The Agony - Read Hero of Darkness Chapter 542 - The Agony Online -

Chapter 542 - The Agony

Kahn along with his group of ruffians returned to Nidavellir after setting things in motion. Unlike their past experiences in Rakos Empire, they were no longer new at this kind of work so everything was thoroughly planned out and arranged in a way that nothing could be tracked to them even if things went south.

3 days later, there was an event held in between some nobles from the Firebornes clans and a few influential people from both church and dwarven race. It was explicitly organized for the males of different species for some reason.

But there was one peculiar thing about this banquet... that all the servants and waiters were humans for some reason.

A merry mood was detectable in the atmosphere and at one end of this massive hall of a castle, were some of the top brass of the Vulcan empire dressed in lavish attires and were seated. And at the center of this arrangement, was a fireborne male dressed in a red suit.

"Your highness, all of the guests have arrived." spoke one of the human announcers.

Soon, Rogis Hos Sigfreed, the second prince of Vulcan welcomed his guests and raised a toast to his allies and wished to maintain their prosperous relationship.

"Tonight... I have some gifts for you." spoke Rogis and signaled one of his people to speak.

"All the human servants and waiters, gather up!" said the fireborne in a threatening tone as he released his saint pressure.

Under a frightened state of mind... many men varying from their 30s, to middle-age and old age gathered in the center of this hall.

Rogis then walked in front of this group and ordered...

"Kneel!"

The 50 or so humans who were suddenly brought in the middle followed the command of the imperial prince and kneeled on both of their knees.

Rogis then walked close to an elderly man with gray hair who looked like he was in his 70s and had a frail build.

"You're the most experienced among them, aren't you?" asked Rogis.

"Yes, your highness." replied the elderly man.

"And what is your profession?" asked the second prince.

"I'm a bartender, your lordship." spoke the old man.

"Then you must know a lot about wine and several types of drinks, right?" asked Rogis.

"Yes, my lord."

"Then can you tell me which wine am I holding in my hands?" he asked again and pointed out towards a glass in his right hand with a green-colored wine.

"It's the hundred year old Samsara wine, your highness. The best among them all." replied the old man zealously.

"Then have you ever drank it?" queried the prince.

To his query, the old man instantly shook his head and replied...

"No, my lordship. Your servant does not deserve to drink something so precious." said the elderly bartender and bowed his head.

"My my... you make it look like we don't treat humans well in our empire.

Well, I'm a very kind and magnanimous prince. So I'll let you drink it." spoke the Rogis with a grin and the very next second...

Pour!

Pour!

He poured the wine over this old man's head in front of more than a hundred guests.

The green wine drizzled from the old and frail man's hair and spread over his face and the work uniform he was wearing.

"This is the closest thing to drinking such a delicacy you'll get to." spoke Rogis in an insidious tone.

"Thank you... your highness." spoke the old man without retorting back for such humiliation.

The other men who knelt on the floor and had their heads down clenched their fists tightly.

This elderly man was the oldest member of their company and many looked up to him. But now... they were all helpless to say a word as a single word against the member of the imperial clan was enough to get their entire family executed.

As for the guests of this event... instead of feeling shocked or distraught after seeing such behavior from the second prince; all of them had contemptuous smiles on their faces.

"Oh, you seem to like it." said Rogis then poured the remaining wine on the carpet and spoke with a look of disgust towards this old human.

"Drink!"

He ordered as a haughty expression appeared on his face.

The old man already had a sullen expression but now... he was frozen on the spot.

"What?! You don't like my kind gesture? Should I make them drink instead?" asked Rogis in a threatening tone.

The old man looked at his sideways and his back. And all he saw was men gritting their teeth in anger with their heads down while clenching their fists.

He knew how hard it was for a human to make a living in this empire. And if he refused... not only will all of them lose their jobs but their lives will also be made miserable in many unimaginable ways.

And thinking about the consequences others will have to suffer if he denied... the old man made his decision.

Soon, he bowed his head down and put his tongue out.

Tears of grief fell from his eyes as his dignity and pride were being trampled on but he had no other choice but to accept it and degrade himself further.

And right in front of everyone present... he licked the wine that was soaked in the carpet.

"Ha haha! Serves these human scums right!

They should appreciate our kindness. That we're even allowing them to live in this empire after what their ancestors did." said one of the dwarf guests who was wearing a jacket made completely out of gold.

If Kahn was here... he would recognize this dwarf from the day of the bidding at the auction house from Oslo city. This dwarf nobleman seemed to be one of Rogis' supporters.

"Hey hey! You're not drinking it properly. I want the carpet cleaned out the wine." said Rogis with a wicked smile and stepped on the old man's right palm.

"Hrrrmph!" groaned the old man but held out his wail as the second prince kept forcefully squashing his palm under his feet.

At this moment... he was suffering both mentally and physically but for the sake of the other's lives and the future of their families...

The carried on with the biggest humiliation of his life.

Hero of Darkness #Chapter 543 - The Cruelty - Read Hero of Darkness Chapter 543 - The Cruelty Online -

Chapter 543 - The Cruelty

Many of the men behind this old man had tears welled up in their eyes. Hatred, anger, agony... all these emotions were evoked in their minds but no one could muster up the courage to speak and do anything.

All of them were normal people, not someone with magic skills and a fighting class. So just a single slap from these powerful people around them was enough to kill them instantly.

"Arrhh!!" wailed the old man as his palm and fingers were disfigured by the prince's foot.

"You dare shout in front of me?! Looks like you human dumpsters don't deserve any form of kindness from us." declared Rogis as he kept pressuring the old man's hand.

"Everyone... how about we teach these ungrateful bastards some manners?" asked Rogis as he gave an insidious smile towards the group of hundred guests.

Step!

Step!

Soon, dozens of demi-human guards entered this vast hall, in their hands... hundreds of wooden blunt weapons were revealed to the guests.

"Since we're the ones who run this place... it's natural that we should be the ones who maintain the order and show these trashes what it means to live off on someone's generosity." declared Rogis.

Soon, the soldiers surrounded the group of these men and some of them handed out weapons that included maces, rods and bats to all the guests.

The old man's who had been enduring all this humiliation and pain then understood one thing. That even if he had declined... what was about to happen, was going to happen.

In the following moments, the soldiers pulled up the humans from the group and then threw them towards the guest.

"Ah!!!" wailed a man as a dwarf hit his kneecaps with a mace.

But before he could adjust himself, a fireborne nobleman hit his left ribcage with a wooden bat.

"Argh!" blood gushed out of his mouth. But instead of stopping, more people joined in and started beating up the man.

"No! Your highness, please let us go. We have done nothing wrong." pleaded the old man as he saw other men being dragged out and then get surrounded by these guests with weapons.

Soon, multiple wails and screams echoed in the hall as all the human servants were assaulted with blunt weapons and thoroughly beaten down by these elites of the empire.

But instead of feeling sorry for these people, all of these people who were mercilessly thrashing them had an elated expression as their bodies were getting covered in blood splatters coming out of their victims.

Bones cracked, Jaws were dislocated, shoulders and collarbones shattered. Many of these helpless humans begged to be spared of this torture while their assailants, the ones who displayed decorum and aesthetics to the outside world showed their true monstrous side and kept beating these unarmed people senseless.

The old man then grabbed Rogis' leg and pleaded with tears in his eyes...

"Please... your majesty. Please show us some mercy." spoke the old man as he begged in front of the second prince.

"Majesty... I like the sound of that." spoke Rogis and then squatted in front of the old man.

At the present moment, the entire hall was filled with agonizing screams of all these humans so nobody could hear everything properly.

Rogis then spoke in a hushed tone that was audible only to the old man.

"You know what... there will come a time when I'll get rid of my siblings and become the Crown Prince.

And when I finally take over the throne and become the emperor...

The first thing I'll do is massacre every single human in this empire.

After that, I'll get rid of these church bastards and that Hero of Fire as well. They are the people who should be serving us firebornes as loyal servants and not act like they're our equals.

And later... I'll put these midgets called dwarves under shackles. The only thing these barbarians are good at is making weapons.

One by one... I will get rid of everyone and then be the sole ruler of this empire." he revealed.

His words then terrified the old man... because of the way things were going on...

It seemed like none of them were getting out of here alive. Otherwise the second prince wouldn't be so carefree to reveal his plan to someone like him.

BOOM!!

A loud noise filled the surroundings and shook the floor as a mana bomb explosion suddenly happened in front of the main entrance of this castle.

"Your highness, we're under attack!" shouted the saint fireborne.

"Get everyone out of here!" ordered Rogis.

"My lord, what about these humans?!" he queried hurriedly.

Rogis then looked at the half-dead humans spread across the hall who seemed to be on counting their last breaths.

"Get rid of them! Bury them alive for all I care!" commanded Rogis and soon, all of the guests along with the prince were safely escorted out of the castle.

As for the human punching bags, all of whom were at death's door at this point...

They were gathered like dead bodies and thrown into multiple carriages used to carry prisoners.

Some mages suddenly entered the room and started cleaning off the site since a scandal like this could not be revealed to anyone.

There would be dire consequences even to the second prince's name and reputation if this cruel onslaught was revealed to the masses even if humans were the bottom feeders in their empire.

30 minutes later, in a densely forested region...

After the whole site was cleared off, these carriages with dying and screaming humans were running using desolate streets and hidden pathways. As if this wasn't the first time when something like this happened.

However... suddenly a void crack opened in front of these speeding carriages and one figure clad in a black cloak and hood appeared in front of them.

Swoosh!

Seven figures jumped out of the shadows of this newly arrived person, all clad in the same clothes.

As for the man who stood in the way of these vehicles... he looked at these soldiers and released his aura and all the soldiers fainted on the spot.

Kahn then gave his orders to the subordinates...

"Make sure that nobody dies."

Hero of Darkness #Chapter 544 - The Reasoning - Read Hero of Darkness Chapter 544 - The Reasoning Online -

Chapter 544 - The Reasoning

After the carriages were hijacked, the subordinates quickly opened the doors that were magically sealed off with their brute force alone.

Soon, dozens of assassins clad in proper gear exited the carriages and in their hands, were the half-dead human servants and waiters from the recent onslaught.

These assassins were actually part of his legion who had been hiding in the shadows of these people from days after they were commissioned to work at the event held by the second prince.

"Armin!" spoke Kahn and without further orders, Armin took out a crate filled with high-grade health and stamina recovery potions.

Many more assassins jumped out of Kahn's shadow and started tending to the victims as they poured down these potions into their mouths of these victims.

Armin on the other end cast his chain healing spells and now that he was a legendary rank creature himself... all his spells and abilities were many times more effective than before.

Vines appeared from the ground and wrapped themselves around the broken bones and dislocated body parts.

What he was trying to do here was heal them all at once even if it meant giving them instantaneous pain before the potions and his skills healed them.

"Arrrrhhh!!"

"My arm!!"

Wounds started closing, bleedings stopped and the shattered bones were forcefully pulled to their original positions by these vines and the assassins who followed Armin's commands through their telepathy link.

An hour passed and most of the victims were out of danger. Armin's skills were so unique to the point that even the teeth that fell off regrew themselves in half an hour.

However, mending bones and growing their teeth back were extremely and excruciatingly painful at the same time so the majority of them had passed out during the procedure.

Luckily... no one had died and Kahn heaved a sigh of relief.

[What the hell was that, boy?! You were too careless!

If these people had died, it would be our fault!] shouted Rathnaar at Kahn.

"What the hell was I supposed to do then? Interfere and fuck up everything?!

I was simply sticking to the plan you created.

But how the hell was I supposed to know that sadist bastard liked to torture and kill humans in such gathering?" he retorted.

"We were only there to monitor things and find something incriminating. Not play some savior or a revolutionary.

And you're the one to talk. You have the blood of millions of people on your hands as well. So why are you trying to patronize me?" he complained.

[In a war, it's killed or be killed. Everybody understands that.

But these people aren't soldiers, they're just normal people trying to make a living.

They don't deserve this.] replied Rathnaar in a discontent voice.

[If you don't do something, I will forcefully take control. And you won't be able to stop me.] warned Rathnaar.

Although Kahn wanted to talk back... there was nothing he could say.

Back then, they could've interfered before the whole beating session started. But Kahn stopped because he didn't have any incriminating evidence against the second prince or something that they could use in their favor.

So he made a hard choice, the one he wasn't proud of but he felt necessary at that time.

None of these people would've been on the verge of death but Kahn told himself that it was a necessary sacrifice. But he was aware that even that reasoning was just a lie to justify his actions.

"If we directly interfered, they would've been killed on site as first priority.

The bomb explosion put them in disarray and made evacuation as the first thing they focused on and thus, we could save them before they all died." clarified Kahn.

"And if we killed the second prince, the whole empire would be after us and all these people would be treated as accomplices.

Forget our plan working... Rogis would've been turned into a glorified martyr by the imperial family." said Kahn and walked towards the old bartender who suffered a lot of humiliation in his futile attempt to protect the others.

He looked at the soundly sleeping old man who had passed out because of the immense pain but now he was stable.

The assassins who previously hid inside this man's shadow gave him a recording artifact that had the whole footage that showed the true intentions of the second prince that he carelessly revealed to the old man thinking that they were all going to die anyway.

"Your sacrifice won't go in vain, old man." spoke Kahn.

"What about them?" asked Omega who had gathered the soldiers who fainted after Kahn released his saint pressure on them.

"We will have to hand over the victims and their families to Venessa. They will be safe since she's a half-human.

As for these guards... it's better that she interrogates them and acts accordingly. I'm certain she has the means to make them talk." revealed Kahn.

"As for that Rogis..." spoke Kahn and continued in a grim voice.

"It's time we started phase two."

In the next two days, the soldiers, as well as the human victims along with their families, had absconded into thin air and there wasn't a single clue left behind by Kahn's group.

Kahn then took his getup of Red Hood and met Hector again inside the same villa and gave him the new recording.

He then took changed his identity to Green Hood and met Venessa who had arrived in the capital.

Kahn brought all the victims and their families to Venessa and also the soldiers that she was supposed to interrogate using an underworld organization that illegally transported people.

However, both Hector and Venessa had the same train of thought. That using the footage was more worth it than spreading the news about Throk Oakenshield and his plight.

In reality, that was indeed the truth but it would adversely affect Kahn's own plans.

But Kahn then said that although it looked like it wouldn't affect their end goal by much...

The Expert named Rathnaar Whitlock, aka the First Emperor of Rakos Empire already predicted this response.

So Kahn offered them an explanation and as soon as he was done... both Hector and Venessa had the same response in their meetings.

"Let's do it!"

Hero of Darkness #Chapter 545 - Phase Two - Read Hero of Darkness Chapter 545 - Phase Two Online -

Chapter 545 - Phase Two

Kahn explained his reasoning to both Hector and Venessa in their respective meetings on why his plan was detrimental to their end goal.

That no matter what happened... nobody in this empire would stand up for humans even if they were brutally slaughtered since they didn't make up even 5% of the empire's population.

But if they started off with Oakenshield's route, they would be able to thoroughly smear the name of the second prince first and everyone will be against him.

And after this cruel act of his was revealed... they would make the biggest impact as the one to voice for the helpless would appear as a savior of the weak and the public opinion as well as the support from other clans who wanted to look good and righteous on the surface would obviously take their side.

Eventually, it would end up helping the said party to solidify their claim to the throne.

This was just a blatant lie but Kahn made it sound like the most logical and intelligent approach towards the whole issue.

This was just the 2nd phase of his schemes. After hearing the plans for the 4th phase... both of them instantly agreed after Kahn gave them a glimpse of the aftereffects.

Rathnaar, who planned it all was laughing at both these two borrowed knives as he was effectively using these issues in the imperial family to their advantage one by one.

And, there was the next move that was going to need both the first prince and the third princess to act like impatient brats.

This was the beginning of... Phase Two.

3 DAYS LATER

Out of nowhere... news spread across the entire Vulcan empire like a wildfire.

It was so sudden that even the imperial clan didn't see it coming and had no countermeasures ready because without holding back, both the first and third children of the emperor had used their connections, followers from local market to noble clans and spread a piece of hot news.

It contained a rumor about the second prince intentionally insulting Throk Oakenshield, one of the most prestigious, renowned and accomplished in the empire.

That because of his tantrums and unstable mental issues... he had developed an inferiority complex in the past few years. And he liked to intentionally oppress other people so he could feel good about himself. That could feel like he was above everyone else.

And he had been doing it for years but always buried the matter because no one would dare stand up against an imperial prince.

This had raised many questions among the population and even the imperial clans were alerted since spreading a rumor on this scale was something only someone with a lot of power and authority could do.

On the following day, another rumor spread that the second prince Rogis hates both the Church and the Dwarven race.

That's why he targeted Throk in the banquet because he was both a devotee of the Church of Hetrax and a dwarf. So that was the main reason why he intentionally insulted the old dwarf saint blacksmith in a banquet arranged by himself.

But since Throk wasn't a nobility... no one came to help him. And the prince put him on a blacklist in the arms and weapons business. Because of which, the once thriving company of his lost suppliers, dealers and distributors with each passing day.

And eventually, all of his friends including his pupils that he had been training and grooming for the past 3 decades left his side because they didn't want to get into any trouble by siding with the poor old dwarf.

And to put the cherry on top... a footage of Throk sitting on the unkempt and dusty stairs of his company building's main door was released and spread everywhere.

In the recording, the once brightly glimmering building now looked like a dilapidated ruin. Along with this scenery...

A crestfallen look of master Oakenshield who had a defeated expression on his face as if he was going through a rough patch was also revealed.

Now, one of the top blacksmiths of the Vulcan empire was scrutinized just for standing up against a moody brat who disrespected the church, the god he worshiped, his race and the profession of blacksmithing.

This caused a lot of public outrage because among all the demi-human species in the Vulcan empire... dwarves were the biggest majority.

On top of it... the blacksmithing profession was considered sacred for their race as it was the very reason why their ancestors managed to help in rebuilding the empire after the Firebornes defeated their previous oppressors.

And since the Church of Hetrax, the main religious institution of the empire was also mentioned... many followers and devotees were enraged to their core.

This news also reached the ears of the pope and he too ordered the Paladins, the church's mightiest force to look into the matter.

The rumors depicted that the only crime Throk Oakenshield was guilty of was that he couldn't stand this humiliation and talked back because he was an honest person and his loyalty towards his religion, his race and profession was unquestionable.

In reality, none of this was true but people believed in rumors and lies when enough people said them than the real truth.

Soon, both the imperial clan and the church of hetrax launched their separate investigations and found this incident with the saint blacksmith to be true.

And since half of the rumor was true... people across the whole empire automatically started to believe the other half as well.

This was the main purpose of phase two of the plan.

To first raise enough traction towards the matter of the second prince's reputation and publicly smear his name.

Both Hector and Venessa rejoiced as the plan they pulled off was working twice more effectively than they had imagined... without knowing the fact that the other one was doing the same.

Soon, the issue got out of hand and the second prince himself was forced to show up for questioning because of pressure from the church and the dwarven race.

But just when Rogis thought that the issue was close to an end...

Kahn, Venessa and Hector pulled the biggest card in their hand. And thus began...

Phase Three.

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A crestfallen look of master Oakenshield who had a defeated expression on his face as if he was going through a rough patch was also revealed.

Now, one of the top blacksmiths of the Vulcan empire was scrutinized just for standing up against a moody brat who disrespected the church, the god he worshiped, his race and the profession of blacksmithing.

This caused a lot of public outrage because among all the demi-human species in the Vulcan empire... dwarves were the biggest majority.

On top of it... the blacksmithing profession was considered sacred for their race as it was the very reason why their ancestors managed to help in rebuilding the empire after the Firebornes defeated their previous oppressors.

And since the Church of Hetrax, the main religious institution of the empire was also mentioned... many followers and devotees were enraged to their core.

This news also reached the ears of the pope and he too ordered the Paladins, the church's mightiest force to look into the matter.

The rumors depicted that the only crime Throk Oakenshield was guilty of was that he couldn't stand this humiliation and talked back because he was an honest person and his loyalty towards his religion, his race and profession was unquestionable.

In reality, none of this was true but people believed in rumors and lies when enough people said them than the real truth.

Soon, both the imperial clan and the church of hetrax launched their separate investigations and found this incident with the saint blacksmith to be true.

And since half of the rumor was true... people across the whole empire automatically started to believe the other half as well.

This was the main purpose of phase two of the plan.

To first raise enough traction towards the matter of the second prince's reputation and publicly smear his name.

Both Hector and Venessa rejoiced as the plan they pulled off was working twice more effectively than they had imagined... without knowing the fact that the other one was doing the same.

Soon, the issue got out of hand and the second prince himself was forced to show up for questioning because of pressure from the church and the dwarven race.

But just when Rogis thought that the issue was close to an end...

Kahn, Venessa and Hector pulled the biggest card in their hand. And thus began...

Phase Three.

Hero of Darkness #Chapter 546 - Phase Three - Read Hero of Darkness Chapter 546 - Phase Three Online -

Chapter 546 - Phase Three

As part of phase three... Hector and Venessa were trying their best to go all out and take the second prince Rogis out of the race for good.

Kahn had already handed them the recordings of the incident with human victims and now that the second prince was interrogated for the issue Throk Oakenshield.

And how he misused his authority to ruin the life of an honest man, which the old dwarf clearly wasn't. Since the church and the dwarven race itself were involved, the imperial clan was having a headache with burying the issue unlike other matters.

But at the beginning of the next week... the recording of how the second prince, some dwarven nobles, and the elites of the society who belonged to multiple demi-human races, some members of the church... was spread across the whole empire through the people working for both the first prince and the third princess...

How Rogis humiliated the old man and his supporters beat up the defenseless and powerless humans to death just for fun and to feel superior about themselves was released...

On top of it... his conversation with the old man where he talked about conspiring to kill his siblings, then get rid of the church and finally, enslaving the dwarven race was heard by every single citizen through these recordings.

Nothing but chaos spread across the entirety of the Vulcan empire.

The whole social structure of the empire was shaken to its core. And that very day, the second prince was arrested under the orders of the emperor himself.

As for the shaken population who were taken aback by this scandal... they had their own priorities.

The Vulcan empire was indeed filled with racists who treated humans harshly and oppressed them for whatever reasons they wanted because of the deeds of their ancestors.

The imperial decree by the current emperor which restricted their rights and what they could achieve in society to deter the same cycle of bloodshed like the past was just an excuse for them to release their anger on the human race.

It didn't matter what skin color they had or what facial structure one had... a human was already condemned to a life of agony and injustice in the Vulcan empire for the past 3 decades.

But now that the elites of their society, consisting of many demi-human races, dwarves and fireborne, and even some people from church were shown to be nothing but monsters... the whole population took a U-turn on how they treated humans in just a matter of days.

Because at the end of the day, no racist liked to be called out. And after someone did... the first thing they'd do is to appear like they weren't racists to begin with.

And when the entire empire was trying to avoid their guilty conscience, to not get associated with people like the second prince and those influential figures of the empire...

The treatment of the human race changed dramatically as if there was no oppression or any form of partiality in the first place.

The so-called 'No Humans Allowed' sign boards disappeared overnight and humans who worked their asses off to make ends meet started receiving equal pay in their respective jobs and professions as days passed.

Soon, the entire populace that was vilified and was actually guilty of the crime wanted to retcon themselves and act like saints even if they still hated the humans.

In just a week, even the imperial family changed the way they treated humans to maintain their facade of honorable rulers.

And the Church of Hetrax that had barred humans from entering their buildings and monasteries of deities suddenly lifted off the ban as well.

Because of this event, even the emperor was having a hard time maintaining his previous stance and wanted to find a way out and not appear like a monstrous tyrant just like his second son.

Meanwhile, Hector and Venessa were rejoicing as both of them thought that it was solely their work to take out one of the competitors with the help of those secret followers who suddenly appeared one night.

So even if Kahn didn't originally intend to... this plan by Rathnaar had impacted the fate of the human species of the Vulcan empire.

Even he had no choice but to acknowledge this impressive strategy because this plan was far more meticulous than what he pulled off in Rakos empire.

At the end of the day... someone was going to question who sent those recordings about Celine killing Ezekiel inside the forbidden region or her getting the tablet.

And how did both Kahn's recordings about his death and the previous two coincidentally being revealed at the same time.

There was this only one clue that Kahn had left as he had no other choice. One day, it was going to expose his plan to the three noble factions.

And even then, they wouldn't be able to reclaim the Verlassen fiefdom as people already believed that it was one of them who killed Kahn and they already knew that the one to call his death a facade was the one behind his death.

But here... Rathnaar didn't leave a single stone unturned.

He even went as far as to use the history of the imperial family and used everything to their advantage. Hector being a needy man who wanted to make his mother happy by becoming the emperor...

Venessa being the abandoned princess whose mother died in suspicious circumstances... and her father, the emperor himself not doing anything despite knowing the truth...

He used everything in order to make these two pawns not only believe their side but completely trust them.

One wanted to prove himself while the other wanted revenge for her mother's death. It was no different than the game of chess...

But no matter whether it was the black or the white side who won the game. In the end...

They would be the ultimate winner.

Weeks passed and soon, an empire-wide announcement was made by the imperial authorities that shook the populace, the noble clans as well as the church.

Meanwhile, Kahn and the subordinates who had taken over the Oakenshield company as part of their deal were delighted as soon as they heard the announcement.

Because this was going to be the last part of phase three. And now, in front of the whole Vulcan empire...

Rogis HoS Sigfreed, the second imperial prince who liked to torture and kill humans for fun was going to face...

The Imperial Justice.

Hero of Darkness #Chapter 547 - Imperial Justice - Read Hero of Darkness Chapter 547 - Imperial Justice Online -

Chapter 547 - Imperial Justice

The whole empire was suddenly shaken as soon as the news of the second prince, Rogis Hos Sigfreed's trial in the Imperial Court of the Vulcan Empire was declared by the authorities. And the one to judge the trial was going to be the Emperor himself.

This was going to be the first time in the history of the empire that an imperial prince was facing Imperial Justice and that too when the whole empire was going to witness it.

Unlike the Rakos empire, the people in the Empire of Fire didn't have any access to information networks or anyone had any rights to publicly broadcast anything. The only way they received such information was through the official spokespersons of the imperial administration who mandated what kind of information spread among the masses.

If not for the first prince and third princess themselves being the ones who used their influence, connections and supporters throughout the empire... the imperial family would've buried the matter and killed everyone including the victims and their families just to smother the incident. Something that they had done in the past very effectively.

And this was the main reason why Rathnaar told Kahn to join hands with the prince and princess themselves as it was the only way for them to accomplish the task efficiently without having to use their personal resources or risk being caught.

And now, the imperial authorities themselves had no choice but to acknowledge the crime and with church and the entire dwarven race that was also riled up because of the first rumor about Throk Oakenshield being a victim of the second prince just because he was a devotee of the church of hetrax and a dwarf, there was no way they could bury the matter.

If they had only leaked the recording of the cruelty faced by the humans in this empire, people who didn't care in the first place wouldn't have bothered to find any faults with the second prince. Rather, he would've become a hero to most of the people of this empire who abhorred the human race.

The Cause and Effect were perfectly planned by Rathnaar and Kahn acted solely based on his instincts that the plan was the best approach they could do.

Plus him having a Domain of his own thanks to Dimensional Law divine ability also played a big part since only a 5th stage saint and above could have a domain. This made both Hector and Venessa think that Kahn was indeed a powerful ally who sided with them.

But the biggest damage was done by Rogis himself who was so full of himself that he revealed his plans to kill his two siblings and then get rid of the church and enslave the dwarven race. So there was no other way to escape being impeached at this point.

And now... it was finally the time for the last part of phase three...

The Imperial Justice.

Massive holographic orbs were spread throughout all the main cities and towns of the empire as the image of the imperial court was revealed to the population for the first time in the history of this empire.

Thousands of people that included all the important people from the imperial authorities, Fireborne clans, church and the dwarven race were seated in this vast imperial court's hall that was 2 kilometers in length alone.

Thud!

Thud!

Over a dozen semi-saint royal guards in red armor brought in Rogis and escorted him to a stand of the defendant in front of the emperor and his 4 advisers who were seated on the first platform while the emperor sat on his throne at the 3rd one.

"Rogis Hos Sigfreed, you are brought here for questioning for the charges against you.

Namely for planning the murder of the imperial prince & princess as well as having the intentions to destroy the Church of Hetrax, our God and having the notions of enslaving the entire race.

"Do you accept your crimes and admit that you are guilty?" stated one of the Fireborne advisors.

"No! All the charges against me are false and I have been framed for the crimes I didn't commit." spoke Rogis.

"Lying to the imperial court and that too in the presence of the emperor himself is a grave crime. It will only be added to your sentence." spoke another female advisor who was also a fireborne just like the rest.

"How do you explain this then?" asked the 3rd advisor and signaled their people to run the recording.

The whole empire was reminded of the cruelty and his evil plans again as it was broadcasted.

"These are all forged! It's a ploy to besmirch my name.

Those people aren't even real. No one has even found them since this recording was spread. I'm sure they used someone to imitate my appearance or used some sort of illusion spell." spoke Rogis as he denied it openly with an expression of someone who was wrongly accused.

"So are you certain that those people aren't real or they're using something to create this whole illusion?" asked the last elderly advisor.

"Yes! I'm innocent. All the evidence against me is forged!" spoke Rogis with a righteous expression.

"If that's the case... Then how do you explain this?" asked the old fireborne and another clip started.

A room full of blood and wooden blunt weapons suddenly appeared on this screen.

This was the exact hall in the castle where the whole thing took place in the first place.

"This is from your castle that we found during our investigation. There are a total of 53 different types of human blood samples that also match the number of people in the recording.

How do you plan to explain that?"

Rogis was taken aback but did not show the surprise on his face. Because he clearly remembered that he ordered his people to clear the site after they evacuated because of the explosion.

"That could be the blood of any human that was planted in my castle. If I was truly guilty, I wouldn't have left any trace behind." spoke Rogis with a sarcastic tone.

Because without any witnesses, there was no way to prove that it wasn't a staged crime site.

Just then, in a section for the imperial family that also included Rogis' mother and the second queen... a tall and well-toned figure of a woman stood up and walked forth.

Stood in front of the advisors and the emperor, catching many of them by surprise.

Kahn, who was watching this broadcast in Nidavellir spoke...

"And here comes the biggest bomb."

"What is the meaning of this?" asked the Emperor in a grim tone.

"Since Rogis claims that the humans in the recording aren't real and some random human's blood... I would like to offer the imperial court some key evidence." said Venessa.

"What kind of evidence?" asked the emperor.

To his question, Venessa clapped twice and her voice resounded in the entire court.

"Bring them in." she ordered.

Step!

Step!

Step!

Soon, more than a dozen guards appeared in the court and escorted a group of people towards the main stand.

Gasp!

Gasp!

Not just the people in court but also those watching throughout the empire gasped collectively.

Because the group that was brought were the victims they saw in the recording.

Suddenly, Rogis had an ashen expression as he was caught off guard.

"The imperial authorities can check if the blood samples from the crime site belong to these victims or not." spoke Venessa.

Kahn had a smirk on his face as remembered the night of the incident. Because this was his doing all along.

When they rescued the victims and healed their bodies, each of the assassins that were in charge of tending to the injured also had an additional task of collecting their blood in vials while treating them.

Because it was obvious that the crime site would be wiped clean by the guilty party.

This move was also explained to Venessa when Kahn handed over all the victims and their families to her. And this was going to be an ace up in the sleeve.

So they waited for the recording to spread first and then poured down the blood samples in the empty hall that was already cleaned by the second prince's people.

Because of that reason and the victims that were supposed to be taken care of, he had been carefree and said that the footage was forged.

But this wasn't the end to the second prince's surprise.

Venessa clapped again as more people were brought in.

"Who are these people?" asked the female advisor.

"These are the soldiers under the servitude of the second prince. And also the ones who were tasked with carrying the victims to a certain location." explained Venessa.

"What location?" asked the emperor himself with a curious voice.

Soon, Venessa signaled her people and in front of the whole empire that was watching...

Dozens of big crates were brought in by over a hundred soldiers.

"Take them out." she commanded.

Soon, the crates were turned around and the soldiers unloaded the content inside them.

This time... even the emperor himself was shocked as he saw what was spread across over 100 meters in the middle of the imperial court.

Rogis was frozen on the spot as he saw the key evidence that was going to spell his doom for certain.

The evidence that shook the whole Vulcan empire at this moment was...

Thousands of human skeletons.

Hero of Darkness #Chapter 548 - The Proof - Read Hero of Darkness Chapter 548 - The Proof Online -

Chapter 548 - The Proof

After Venessa brought all the victims of the incident to the imperial court... many of the witnesses and the top figures of the empire present in the hall were already certain that the recording wasn't fake in any way.

And she confidently told the investigation team to check their blood with the ones they found at the site of the act. So everyone could feel that it was indeed the second prince who was guilty of organizing the event where he and his supporters intentionally tortured those humans for fun.

But... with all these skeletons that were thrown from over 30 massive and rectangular crates gave the whole case a completely different turn.

Because before, he was only a sadist prince who was way over his head and had an inferiority complex... but now, these thousands of skeletons also meant that people were murdered by him.

"Your majesty... the truth is that I heard the news of the second prince's heinous acts very recently.

And it was me who saved all these victims from certain death on that night.

And the soldiers that worked under my stepbrother were also captured at the same time.

After the footage was spread across the empire, I became certain of his cruel nature and interrogated these people. And through them, I managed to find a secret burial site for the humans that he killed." declared Venessa, taking credit for harboring the victims and finding the biggest incriminating evidence against Rogis.

[This fucking human bitch!! So that explosion to distract me was her doing!] cursed Rogis in his mind as he linked Venessa to the attack on his castle which caused the whole mess in the first place.

[Damn it! Why the hell did no one tell me anything about the victims still being alive!

Now she has taken all the credit.] cursed Hector as he regretted missing this great opportunity.

As for Kahn and Rathnaar who were watching the broadcast in the middle of Nidavellir, they had a reason to be biased towards Venessa.

Kahn gave them to her because she was half-human and instead of pressuring or oppressing them like Hector would've since he was a fireborne and didn't care about human lives anyway... Venessa was the perfect candidate who could make them feel safe and gave them the courage to give their testimony as witnesses in the imperial court without worrying.

Soon after, the officers leading the investigation team reported to the court that the blood indeed matched with the samples they acquired from the crime site. Affirming the entire empire that these people were indeed present on the scene.

One by one, all the victims took a stand in groups and gave their testimony in front of imperial authorities and what exactly happened. Each one describing where they were hit and who hit them mercilessly until their bones were broken and they almost died on the spot with tears and pain from the suffering of that experience.

Regardless of the race and species, the entire population was suddenly riled up because of the surge in their emotions even if they didn't previously care about humans.

Why? Because the base instincts always made you relate to anyone who was oppressed and suffered even if they weren't your people or family.

After their testimony, it was time for the soldiers to give their statements.

The soldiers who were allotted to serve and protect Rogis, who was only a semi-saint...

Said that they were threatened by his personal people from her mother's clan that if they did not do what they were told and do the work of burying the bodies, the prince would have them and their families killed.

To ensure their survival and their loved ones... they had no other option but to partake in this crime because who would dare to go against a prince.

Just then... the emperor himself had a grim expression and asked in an overbearing tone.

"How long has this been going on?"

To his question... the soldiers replied in a fearful tone.

"More than 5 years, your majesty."

BOOM!!

Not just the emperor but many of the attendees of the court lost their control and ended up releasing a bit of their saint pressure.

[Ha! Look at these bastards... they're acting like they care.] said Rathnaar.

The soldiers then explained that every time he held such a banquet... there would obviously be something similar occurrence like this. Only the last time, the Throk Oakenshield incident happened and that's why it got canceled.

"Your majesty and the imperial advisors, if I may..." spoke Venessa as she stood up from her seat again.

[What the hell is she trying to pull now?] thought Rogis who was cornered in every possible way.

After gaining permission to come to the stand... Venessa took out over 3 ledgers and presented them to the authorities.

These ledgers contain the list of all the guests who attended the parties and the number of humans that were hired each time.

And later, she handed out another ledger that revealed how Rogis would use the companies under someone else's name, hire humans from around the empire, bring them to work through companies by promising a big payout and then slaughter them mercilessly in his parties.

That's how he has been establishing his connections and gaining support from a lot of influential people from business enterprises and noble clans.

Those who enjoyed these barbaric acts felt a sense of power and exhilaration after killing the victims and how they liked to be on the second prince's side if they could enjoy such events often.

"And the total body count is 4637 so far.

The number of guests who partook in these slaughters in the past 5 years alone is 8601... Officially that is." revealed Venessa after handing out the proof.

This time... not even the emperor could hide his surprise and looked at Rogis.

Losing millions in the war was acceptable but normal citizens being killed in thousands while being under the protection of imperial rule was not. Because this completely made him look like a fool and his reign over the empire as nothing but a joke.

And now... the whole empire was watching it.

[Good. He's cornered now. He can't run away from acknowledging the severity of the act because if he doesn't take drastic measures... he will become the biggest joke in the history of the empire.] said Rathnaar gleefully.

"Let's hope the final hit lands as we wanted. Then we're done with phase three." spoke Kahn as he folded his arms.

While the empire was shaken by this revelation... The people from the recent party were brought to court. These were the very assailants who partook in the beating with a smile on their faces.

And during their testimony, everyone started saying that the second prince tempted them and forced them to do those things. That they'd be killed if they didn't play a part in his act of massacre.

Now that things were hard, everyone started pointing their fingers and putting all the blame on Rogis to save their own skin.

[Now, even the Imperial clan will have to fairly judge this case. There's no room for any leeway or some exemptions.] said Rathnaar as he chuckled.

Because there was no way the imperial clan would allow the second prince to be found guilty of all the allegations made against him.

Whether it was the Throk Oakenshield incident or the genocide of humans. No rules applied in front of the imperial family members and they originally planned to throw away those rumors to clear the second prince's name in front of the whole empire through this broadcast.

Forget executing the prince, they never had any intentions to let him be found guilty of the charges since he was imperial blood.

But Venessa bringing the legitimate proof in front of the whole empire thwarted their original plans and now forced their hand to lawfully judge the incident.

At this moment... Hector was fuming with rage because of the way things looked... it could've been him standing in place of Venessa and getting the limelight in front of the entire population of the empire.

Unlike her, he only had the support of two of the six Fireborne clans. But there was no support from military commanders and local authorities that included other vital noble clans and people from the church.

And now... Venessa was going to be an obvious choice for them to choose as the next crown princess because they would greatly benefit by allying themselves with her to increase their own reputation and public image since it helped greatly in gaining money and influence.

As for the four advisors and the emperor... they were discussing things telepathically and had headaches of their own.

[How did she get all of this... was it someone powerful who helped her?] said the female fireborne advisor.

[No. I'm certain it was the first prince who spread the rumors in the beginning. My intel is accurate.] spoke the first fireborne advisor.

[We have no other choice left, your majesty.

If we want to protect the pride of imperial family and the sanctity of your reigns... we must pass a severe punishment.] spoke the elderly and the 4th advisor.

After a while, the Emperor finally spoke in a tyrannical voice and the whole empire went silent.

"It is time... for the Imperial Punishment."

Hero of Darkness #Chapter 549 - Imperial Punishment - Read Hero of Darkness Chapter 549 - Imperial Punishment Online -

Chapter 549 - Imperial Punishment

The emperor declared that it was going to be the time for the Imperial Punishment in front of the whole empire and the people present in the imperial court after all the proofs and testimonies were presented one by one regarding the second prince's crimes.

Initially, they had different plans with the hearing and saving Rogis since everything was only rumored before the grand trial.

But now... No way could they let such a cruel mass murderer stay as the prince or the emperor, the imperial clan, the firebornes and the entire imperial rule would become nothing but a joke.

And since the church and the dwarven race themselves were against them on this topic... there couldn't just bury the matter no matter what they did.

In a way... even the strongest person in the empire was now helpless.

[Look carefully, boy. The emperor has no other way to get out of this situation. And if he tried some twisted reasoning to save Rogis, he will be forever known as an incompetent ruler.

But if he indeed decides to punish the second prince...

It will set a precedence.] said Rathnaar.

"What kind of precedence?" asked Kahn with a curious expression.

[That even the imperial family is not above the laws of the empire or they can do whatever the hell they want.

They will no longer be averse to imperial punishment or will be able to massacre people on a whim.

And after this... they will not be the untouchable figures in the empire. This is going to place my restrictions on the current as well as future generations of the imperial family.] explained the peak saint.

"Well, let's see what the emperor says."

[They need a sacrifice to keep his reign intact. Rogis is now a disposable chess piece because he has been compromised.] replied Rathnaar.

Finally, the emperor decided to give his final verdict.

"35 years ago when I became the emperor of our great empire... I placed those restrictions on the human race to deter what happened in the past. In those times, there were simply too many people who died and had to prevent another such slaughter from happening again.

But those restrictions were only placed to avoid history repeating itself again and not to slaughter them like animals!

Looks like many people of our empire misunderstood my intentions back then and used that as an excuse to flame the cycle of hatred and take out their anger on innocents who had nothing to do with what their ancestors did." explained the emperor in a righteous tone.

[Hmph! What a hypocrite bastard. He abandoned his daughter after the third empress' death because she was half-human.

And now he's talking about fairness and unjust hatred towards humans?] thought the pope of the church of Hetrax.

"The recent incidents have brought our attention to how greatly this has deranged the mentality of many people including the second prince.

And now, if we do not punish such heinous criminals... will we be ever able to raise our future generations with moral values that our great god Hetrax has instilled in us?" iterated the emperor as he turned to topic more about moral integrity instead of him being a failure as a father.

"So as the power and rights that I have as the reigning emperor of the Vulcan empire...

I hereby declare the Imperial Punishment." spoke the emperor in a serious tone.

"All the people associated with these acts, from the recent incident and even the ones that have happened in the past 5 years shall be arrested and brought for their trials.

All of them, regardless of their origins and race, will face imperial punishment when found guilty. And the punishment shall be in the form of execution." declared the emperor.

Gasp!

Billions of people were shocked after hearing this verdict. Because although it looked like it was the right decision... the parties involved were some of the top influential figures from across the empire.

Even the noble clans and the people from the church were too stunned to speak because it also involved the members of their elite groups and church.

If it was just these hundred or so people... they could accept the loss... but if the imperial punishment involved those who attended the parties in the past... the count was above 8 thousand.

In a way, the emperor was not only cutting his feet but also theirs.

[Ha! What a crafty bastard! He's not a fool at all.] spoke Rathnaar in an approving tone.

"What do you mean? Doesn't it look like he's destroying his own support as well?" asked Kahn in a suspicious tone.

[Yes. Because of Rogis, the imperial clan will be on the backfoot for some time. The church and the nobles from fireborne and dwarven races will get a chance to oppress the imperial clan for quite some time as well.

But although it looks like he is burning his own house... he is actually taking down everyone else with him and bringing them on the same level.

So at the end, he will still have an upper hand and more power than the other two.

That's what you call turning adversity into an opportunity.] praised Rathnaar.

"I see. He's intentionally increasing the losses to maintain his hierarchy till the end." said Kahn as he got the gist of everything.

[That's not all. Later, he will brand those criminals with several crimes they didn't even do and different ways to get rid of his own or the imperial clan's wrongdoings and use these idiots as a scapegoat.

One who is declared as a murderer can also be used to blame for the deaths of thousands he didn't kill.

And this empire is his playground... who is going to question him?] spoke Rathnaar.

"That son of bitch... he is truly farsighted." spoke Kahn as he understood the whole thing.

The emperor's eyes then settled on Rogis who was rooted on the spot as the punishment was just separately given to his allies... his own fate was yet to be decided upon.

"From now on, Rogis Hos Sigfreed has lost his position as part of the imperial family and the imperial clan.

Even if the entire imperial family were to die tomorrow, he will still have no claim to the throne.

He shall be jailed for the rest of his life in prison for his crimes.

Anyone aiding him in any way will be seen as committing high treason and will be publicly executed." declared the emperor in a tyrannical voice that trembled the entire court.

While the population of the empire was shocked, Kahn who was watching the broadcast had a troubled expression.

"Why the hell didn't he order the prince to be executed like the rest..." he said.

[Like hell they'll execute an imperial prince. If they did... means the imperial family will no longer be above everyone else in the empire.

This is as far as he will go.] explained Rathnaar.

"If not for the imperial blood running through your veins, you'd be dead too." spoke the emperor to Rogis in a threatening manner.

"But your majesty!" suddenly, an old and bald fireborne spoke and stood up from his seat among the ones from the fireborne clans.

This figure was actually the grandfather of Rogis from his mother's side. And beside him, was the second prince's mother who was weeping after the punishment was declared.

"The second prince is young and naive. There's no need to go as far as shunning him from the imperial clan." spoke the old man.

In reality, he had placed all his bets on Rogis becoming the crown prince and the next emperor. But with imperial punishment... his decades of plans were to go in vain in a single moment.

BOOM!!

The emperor released his saint pressure and instantly put this 6th stage saint fireborne ground.

"I refuse to believe that the Yorknaar Clan didn't have any hand in the second prince's crimes. Half of his entourage includes some of the members of your clan.

Do you want me to investigate?" asked the emperor in a tyrannical voice and instantly let the old man understand that if he tried to make a scene... he was coming for the entire clan.

"I declare that this case will be further investigated and all the guilty people will face the imperial punishment.

After seeing the severity of the situation... I am lifting all the restrictions and bans on the human race. They shall not be shunned no more." gave the emperor his decree.

Gasp!

Shock!

The entire empire was left flabbergasted after the new imperial decree was announced.

Because this just changed the fate of the entire human race out of a sudden.

[Ha ha ha!! What a smart guy.

He just stopped an uprising by all the humans in the empire.] said Rathnaar.

"Agreed. Unlike his children... the emperor is simply too crafty.

He already foresaw what was going to happen after the hearing ended.

Even if humans couldn't do anything in this empire even if they all joined hands... still, killing them in the name of purging the uprising would make the imperial rule just as cruel as Rogis.

In one sentence, he created a safe future for his reign. And now, no one can question his verdict." said Kahn as he understood what kind of aftermath was avoided by the emperor.

The emperor continued in a somber tone.

"The second prince will be sent into Pits of Gulag and spend the rest of his life in imprisonment." he gave his last punishment and this, the imperial trial officially ended.

"What now, master?" asked Ronin.

Kahn replied in a thoughtful voice as he looked at Hector and Venessa's faces on the broadcast screen.

"Now... we begin Phase Four."

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Chapter 550 - Phase Four

ONE WEEK LATER.

Inside a hidden castle outside of capital Arkensan, a fireborne male was drinking a glass of exquisite samsara wine while contemplating things on his end with a furious expression.

Schwoomm!!

Suddenly, the entire room turned dark and the red-headed man felt his body weakening.

Flap!

Flap!

With multiple flaps of their hoods and cloaks, 8 people suddenly appeared and knelt in front of this man.

"Weren't you going to show up after I became the Crown Prince?

What kind of shoddy job did you do?" asked Hector as he expected this group of secret helpers to appear sometime soon.

"I'm sorry, my prince. We did not expect the princess to also have access to that information.

And she saved those victims by creating a distraction and used them as her trump card during the trial." explained Kahn in his changed voice.

"And whose fault is that?!

Now she has reached the peak height of popularity as the princess who helped bring justice to the victims in the eyes of the whole empire.

And me... I'm just a standby who didn't do anything at all.

People don't even care if it was me who actually spread the rumors. There was nothing I could do to claim the credit while that halfbreed ransacked the fruits of my efforts!" spoke Hector in an enraged tone and threw away the wine as he raged.

As for Kahn who was kneeling on the floor...

He did not provide Hector with those details intentionally for many reasons. And also because he wanted Hector to be on the backfoot after the fourth phase.

"There is still a way, my lord." spoke Kahn in a respectful tone while hiding behind his red mask.

"What is it? It better be worth it." said Hector.

"The whole trial will be forgotten in a month or so and her momentum will be gone soon.

But there's a way for you to keep gaining support and popularity throughout the year and increase your chances to become the crown prince." replied Kahn and spoke the name of their strategy.

"Phase Four... Throk Oakenshield." he said in a serious tone.

"What the hell is that midget dwarf gonna do?" asked Hector as he could not see the clear picture.

He was notified about the situation and plan for phase four already but now that Venessa had taken all credit... phase four was useless to him.

"Think about it, my lord. With the new imperial decree, humans are no longer third-rate citizens.

The whole trial will be buried by the imperial clan soon but by helping the dwarf... you have so much to gain in the upcoming year." he explained.

"What do you mean?" asked the fireborne with eyes full of curiosity.

Kahn then told him about the challenge between Throk and the other dwarven saint blacksmith Tawerik.

And how a human named Kahn Salvatore was going to be trained by him for a face-off.

"How does that affect me?"

"Think about it, my prince. If the news of you helping the dwarf spreads and since humans are in a limelight... it has many ways to help you.

Because of the second prince, no one has still helped their company even now.

If you step in... You will look like a hero to both the church and dwarven race as you are helping an oppressed individual who belonged to both their sides." explained Kahn again.

"But how can a human win against a dwarf in blacksmithing? That is just absurd to even imagine." rebuked Hector.

"It doesn't even matter if the human wins or not.

It will greatly help the public image and regardless of the result of what happens next year in the faceoff... you will be seen as a just and kind prince to the whole empire.

This will greatly outdo the current momentum the princess has."

"So what's there left to do? Bring him some contracts and help in their business?" asked Hector.

"No. It will make it look like you're only pretending." spoke Kahn.

"Then what?" asked the first prince.

To his question... Kahn gave a very resolute answer.

"Become his... sponsor."

The next day, Kahn showed up in front of Venessa just like their previous meeting.

"Well done. Your plan worked and I'm getting plenty of invites and many people want to officially support me from now on. It includes two of the most prestigious fireborne clans as well." said Venessa with a smile and a content expression.

But after her statement... Kahn told what Hector was trying to do.

"If he succeeds, what you have gained will be nothing compared to what he will gain a year and a half later. His face will be in the spotlight in front of the entire population as they will try to make it a historical match.

We cannot miss this opportunity. You should also step in and sponsor Throk Oakenshield and his company.

Plus his pupil is a human. That's also very good for your image. "

Venessa had a complicated expression on her face. Because this was an unnecessary effort in her eyes. But if her Well-wisher was right, Hector would be able to surpass her in the near future. So she made a final decision of her own.

"Alright... I agree."

The following day... in front of a dilapidated and rundown building that hadn't been cleaned off or even visited by anyone in the past one month...

Two overly crowded entourages arrived in warships and their respective leaders then stood in front of each other as they exchanged pleasantries.

"Aren't you too shameless? Shouldn't getting all that attention from the trial be enough for you?" asked Hector with a smile.

"What are you trying to imply? I'm only here to help a victim in need. Don't you know kindhearted and magnanimous I am?" said Venessa with an upright expression as she flicked her long black hair.

Sparks suddenly appeared in between the first prince and the third princess as if they were fighting with their battle intent already.

Throk, who had come to greet them had a concerned expression.

Tap!

Tap!

Suddenly, a figure walked behind him. And as soon as Venessa saw him... she pointed her fingers at this new arrival and asked in a high-pitched tone.

"You... What the hell are you doing here?!"