

Legion lich 191

Chapter 191 Learning from defeats

Two weeks later, at the skeletons' temporary camp.

During the past two weeks, the skeletons had suffered dozens of attacks from hordes of monsters, but were able to withstand all of them with only a few thousand dead.

The skeletons had learned from all the previous battles and now left most of the fighting to the monster skeletons and using the mages and alchemical items as support. The alchemical items that Athos created were all of the earth element, generating earthquakes, pools of quicksand or earth spears that came out of the ground, depending on the ingredients used.

Despite losing a few thousand soldiers, their gains were even greater and the army finally began to increase its numbers. The biggest gains were the hordes of flying monsters that attacked them.

Flying monsters were rare in the desert, so having the aerial advantage was crucial. They managed to hunt approximately 500 flying monsters, more than doubling their air force.

They also encountered their first clan since entering the desert, a kobold clan. It was a small clan with just over 1000 individuals and they were in the middle of the migration when some skeleton birds found them.

Kobolds weren't really demihumans or descendants of giants and looked more like a bipedal monster species, but possessed intelligence on par with other demihumans. Vanilla personally led a team to attack them, killing over half the clan.

Unlike the monsters that seemed to have a strong hatred of the undead and would fight until they died, the kobolds were smart and while the stronger ones bought time, the weaker ones scattered in several directions and fled.

They even managed to gain a few hundred more undead and most importantly, reliable guides through the desert. These Kobolds knew distant areas that Treevor and Vanilla did not, so they would be better suited as guides.

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Inside the camp, Athos was heading towards the forges accompanied by Treevor and Emilia. Dwarvin had called Athos excitedly, saying that he had completed his new equipment.

Athos really thought it took a while compared to all the other weapons made, but Treevor and Emília insisted that for custom equipment that long was normal.

Dwarvin had called Athos a few times over the two weeks to take his measurements and consult with him on what spells and enchantments he was most likely to use, but he never let Athos get a glimpse of the armor in preparation, so it would come as a surprise to him as well.

"Why are you two following me?" Athos asked his unwanted companions as they entered the forge.

They saw hundreds of shared curses being carried out of the forge by skeletons, as well as several carrying debris of concrete laced with divine mithril. Athos took advantage of the fact that they would stay a few more weeks and decided to turn all the wreckage they had into metal and lighten the load they would have to carry in the carriage.

All skeleton mages with an affinity for air were brought into the forges and helped to separate divine mithril from pure concrete. The amount of divine mithril obtained was meager, however.

Maybe it's because of the high energy conduction that the divine mithril had, but the amount obtained after melting several tons of concrete was only 2 and a half ingots. There were only a few more tons of concrete left and it was likely that they could barely complete the third ingot.

"I came as a runesmith. Those damn dwarves said my weapons are only half decent, so I want to see what this arrogant dwarf calls real weapons." Treevor spoke to his wounded pride.

"I came back from the hunt half an hour ago and I'm totally out of mana, so I'm taking a break and decided to accompany you and make a request to the chief blacksmith." Emilia spoke with a shrug.

'I also want custom gear for myself. Astrus, Malti and Ruy have decent gear, while myself and Vanilla are lacking in comparison. My armor too weak and needs an emergency upgrade, while Vanilla doesn't even have armor.' Emilia thought.

"Master, you're finally here! I must say this is by far my best work. Was the level of materials and ingredients I had so much better than anything I've worked on before, so it took a lot of trial and error until I get runsmithing everything." Dwarvin welcomed them as soon as Athos and company entered his personal laboratory.

His personal forge was set apart from the rest so that none of the dwarven skeletons working outside would disturb him.

"Trial and error? How much material did you lose" Athos asked as his pocket suddenly bled. Dwarvin had used monster bones as materials and those were easily replaceable, but metals and dragon parts were irreplaceable.

Dragon bones and fangs could still be obtained, but scales were limited. The dark fog that surrounded Simogo's bones was solid, but it faded as soon as it moved away from the body, so it couldn't be used as material.

"Don't worry, master. Our material losses were minimal. I used death iron to test different materials and how they interacted with each other and then melted everything down again to test new combinations." Dwarvin quickly reassured Athos.

"I only spent a single scale and an adamant nugget just to know how they would react to each other and how many enchantments I could use in the final product." He finished and arrived next to a human-sized mannequin.

It was leaning against the wall and covered with cloth that left no visible part, but everyone could feel an aura of power coming from it, even without using death vision.

“Take a good look master. This set is my masterpiece!” Dwarvin couldn’t stall anymore and removed the cloth covering the armor.

What lay beneath the curtain was a life-size earthen dummy of Athos, clad in armor of gleaming black scales, with a black sword and round shield hanging from brackets on the wall.

The armor was made of dragon scales mixed with corrupted adamant, giving the black scales a metallic sheen. Corrupted adamant was almost entirely black like other metals, but had a unique luster, unlike other corrupt metals which were matte.

His helmet had intricate details on the sides and back, perfectly covering the dummy’s head, with a crown of straight horns on top. The horns were made of pure corrupted adamant and had a black crystal in the middle.

There were four horns in total, two of them just above the temple and another two on the back of the helmet. The front part of the helmet had a T shape and could open and close to the sides according to the wearer’s will, showing the mannequin’s face.

The edge of the scales on the armor overlapped each other slightly, ensuring flexibility without compromising defense. The overlapping scales also helped mitigate impacts even without activating enchantments.

There were finger-sized black crystals embedded in the chest, shoulders and sides of the abdomen. The armor’s shoulders resembled human skulls, while sharp spikes protruded from its elbows.

Metallic spikes protruded from the knuckles of the gauntlets, while small claws get from all fingers.

The inner part of the armor was covered with thick leather, preventing the hard scales from damaging the wearer’s skin.

The black shield next to the armor was just as impressive. Dwarvin did not use scales for the shield, but bones from Simogo. The surface of the shield was rough and had a toothed saw slightly curved around the edge, at the request of Athos.

He was used to using his shield for both defense and offense, so having a way to attack using his shield was essential.

Two crystals were embedded in the shield, one in the center and one on the opposite side.

The sword was the best crafted. Its blade was almost a meter long and slightly curved, just like a dragon’s fang. There were three crystals arranged in the middle of the blade, at the base of the sword and on the pommel.

The hilt of the sword resembled skeletons with arms outstretched on either side of the blade, with spaces between the ribs that perfectly fit the fingers of the gauntlet.

“And then master? What do you think?” Dwarvin asked haughtily, extremely proud of his work.

“Is perfect.” Was all Athos managed to say, his hands shaking with emotion as a smile threatened to break across his face. He still didn’t even know what enchantments it had or how strong it was, but the energy it emanated and the armor’s design were enough to win his favor.

The armor screamed Death Knight and Athos loved it.

"Damn it." Treevor muttered in defeat, feeling defeated after seeing the masterpiece in front of him. 'He was only able to create something so powerful because of the materials at his disposal. I could have done the same with so much.' He thought for comfort.

'Good luck Commander.' Dwarvin replied smugly.

Treevor unwittingly sent his thoughts through the mind link, so every skeleton in the camp had heard his muttering.

'I want armor like that, or at least something similar.' Emilia thought as her orbits burned with greed. His thoughts were also transmitted through the mind link, but unlike Treevor it was on purpose.

Chapter 192 Set names

"I used up all the adamant and I'm not allowed to use leftover dragon scales for anything other than the master, but if you don't mind something made with death iron and monster bones to improve its quality, I can have your equipment ready in a few days.' Dwarvin informed her with a respectful nod.

Emília had been respectful, unlike Treevor who discredited her work and put all the credit on the materials used, so Dwarvin was honored to create her personal equipment.

"If you're done talking, I want to test my equipment soon." Athos spoke and didn't wait another second, removing the mannequin's armor and putting it on. As expected from a custom-made outfit, it fit like a glove.

"How I am?" Athos asked after putting on his armor, opening his visor to see perfectly. The T-shaped visor made peripheral vision a little difficult, but that was the only problem Athos found with the armor. His armor was unusually light, despite adamant being a heavy metal.

"You look just like the mannequin, only whiter." Treevor said with a shrug and turned to Dwarvin. "What is your masterpiece capable of doing?"

"In addition to barrier enchantments and kinetic energy absorption, I've also added magic dispersion to cover weakness to magic and an enchantment that lowers armor weight as passive enchantments. Adamant is a heavy metal, after all." Dwarvin explained.

"I also runesmith the leather on the inside, master. Try to activate the enchantments into the leather, I'm sure it will be a pleasant surprise." Dwarvin spoke cryptically.

"Okay, I'll-" Athos spoke and activated the enchantments on the leather, gasping in shock at the result. Suddenly he was able to feel all of his surroundings perfectly and his mind was clear, his thoughts much faster than usual.

"Is this the sensory field and cold mind?" Athos asked in shock, realizing that his signature abilities were imbued in the armor.

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“Exactly! Do you remember the first time I called you to consult and asked about the skills and spells the master usually uses? So I turned some of your skills into enchantments and runesmithing. Not bad, isn’t it?” Dwarvin explained his trick, but Treevor cut him off in shock.

“Wait, how did you do that? Figuring out the right runes to turn a skill into an enchantment must take days of work to find the right combination. How do you do that in such a short amount of time?” Treevor asked in disbelief, unable to understand the dwarf’s technique.

“Please, we dwarves aren’t called the father of the runesmith for nothing. We don’t need to waste time trying out so many runes until we find the right patterns. Dwarves have an innate understanding of runesmithing and we can figure out the runes needed for a spell or skill just with a look.” Dwarvin pointed to his own empty sockets to emphasize his point.

“Is a single look enough? It really is an amazing skill.” Unlike Treevor, Athos didn’t feel jealous of the skill and focused on the equipment. “What are those encrusted crystals?”

“I’m glad you asked! Those are crystal horn rhinoceros horns. We don’t have magic stones, so I used them as a substitute to increase the amount of energy in the metals and power the passive enchantments. The master may not know this, But rhinoceros horns store large amounts of world energy and are very similar to magic stones.”

“I’ve only managed to runesmithing so many enchantments thanks to these crystals.” Dwarvin scratched the back of his head in embarrassment, blaming himself for his lack of skill.

“If horns are similar to magic stones, then we have an infinite magic stone farm?” Emilia asked hopefully, but Dwarvin laughed at the idea.

“It’s not that simple. It takes years for crystals to form, so the venture won’t be that profitable. Of course it’s still better than waiting decades for them to form naturally in magic stone mines, so some villages create them as cattle.”

“You guys are losing focus again.” Athos spoke to get their attention again. “I already understand the armor enchantments, but what about the shield and sword?” He picked up the weapons and realized they were light as was the armor.

“Both have weight decrease enchantments, but the shield also absorbs kinetic energy and so does your meteor charge skill. I have to say that this skill was the hardest to runesmithing, master.” Dwarvin began to complain.

“This ability is incredibly complex. It mixes not only abilities with magic, it also uses two different elements. I wanted to add other enchantments, but the most I could add was return, which returns the shield to your hand.

“You need to feed the return enchantment before casting the shield for it to work, don’t forget that.” Dwarvin instructed before moving on to the sword.

“This sword was made with dragon fangs and saber-toothed tigers, so its blade can cut magic just like a dragon’s fangs, in addition to vibrating at high speed to improve cutting and being able to release blades of black aura.”

“Dragon fangs can cut spells?” Athos asked in doubt.

“No, but all parts of a dragon are filled with mana and energy can affect energy. Normally you would have to empower the sword with your mana, but this sword cuts energy without that need.” Dwarvin said.

Athos fed the sword with mana and touched the sword’s blade, feeling it vibrate slightly. He swung the sword a few times to test the weapon’s weight and balance, before smiling in satisfaction.

‘So my ancient sword was enchanted with saber-toothed tiger fangs.’ A sudden thought crossed his mind, remembering the first enchanted weapon he received from Khali.

“The weapon is incredible. I can’t wait to test its power on any group of monsters that try to invade the camp. Incredible work, Dwarvin.” Athos spoke and thanked Dwarvin for the excellent equipment.

“Don’t thank me, master. Everything we own belongs to you, don’t forget that.” Dwarvin was glad of the thanks, but kept his composure.

“Master, one last thing. The different enchantments on weapons are connected and you can get different effects from it, but you need to activate several enchantments at the same time to do that.” Dwarvin explained seriously to avoid future mistakes.

“I created your weapons so that the shield and sword are connected to the armor and you can mix effects from all of them, but you need to have them on hand.” Dwarvin explained, but Athos’ mind was already elsewhere.

‘If what he says is true, then the possibilities are even greater than I thought. Not only was the power of the entire set much greater, but I should be able to further increase its power using my shared blessing spell and with the correct potions.’ Athos thought as his smile only grew.

Athos remembered the spell that allowed him to share the effect of potions or skills with other objects or artifacts, in exchange for a reduction in duration time or increase in mana consumption respectively.

If he added his own abilities and those of his magic organ, Athos could achieve absurdities effects.

“Have you named this set yet?” Athos asked.

“I haven’t decided yet. I was hoping the master could do the honors.” Dwarvin shook his head and asked Athos to name it.

“Hmm...” Athos began to think seriously, feeling that his weapons deserved a mighty name befitting their power. Athos felt jealous of Dwarvin who was able to think of a shared curse quickly.

He discarded several names that sounded simple or shameful like skely sword.

“I think the sword could be called dragontusk, while bonesaw for shield.” Athos muttered aloud, but the armor was the problem. He had no idea what a suitable name for an armor would be, so he asked for help.

“Any suggestions for armor?” He asked Treevor and Emilia, as Dwarvin didn’t intend to get involved.

“Just add Death or corrupted like you did with metals.” Treevor spoke disinterestedly, but Athos rejected the idea immediately.

“No creativity. Emília, you’re next.” Athos passed the turn to Emília.

“Well, you chose dragontusk and bonesaw for the materials used in the weapon, right? So how about scaledrako?” Emília suggested, but the skeletons didn’t seem very convinced.

“The name isn’t bad, but it doesn’t feel right. A reference to scales isn’t bad, but drako sounds weird. I think we can keep the scale and choose another word to complement it.” Athos spoke.

“How about Skullscale? You know, like your skull-shaped shoulder pads?” Treevor started taking the name choice seriously all of a sudden.

“You little punks, deathscale gets so much better.” Dwarvin was unable to stand still hearing bad names and got involved.

“We’ve already named a lot of things death and corrupted. Necroscale also goes together.” Athos made a suggestion of his own, causing the skeletons to nod.

“Ohhh!” They clapped and finally agreed on a name.

An alert started ringing in the heads of all the skeletons, alerting that a group of Sun lions were attacking, making Athos smile.

“Perfectly timed. They’ll be a good test for me.” Athos spoke and warned the watchmen on the wall to buy time until he arrived.

Chapter 193 Lineage oath

In the Mirkor kingdom, in the capital of the kingdom.

Tens of thousands of commoners were gathered in front of the royal castle. The royal castle was made almost entirely of white marble, with the kingdom’s gigantic flag flying atop the castle.

A 20 meter wall separated the inner area of the castle from the rest of the capital and dozens of magic cannons were installed on top of the wall.

The royal capital was divided into three sections separated by walls. The outermost and largest area of these was where commoners lived, the middle area is where nobility, mages, military officers and rich merchants could live, while the last and smallest area was the castle where only the royal family and their servants could live.

Many nobles had homes or businesses in the royal capital, so even if their territories were far from the capital, everyone had at least one property in the noble district.

Today, however, the middle gates have been opened and let in anyone who wanted to witness the fall of a noble house. Today was the day that House Mifar would lose its noble title and all who carried the family’s blood would be executed.

In front of the inner wall gate, a podium had been built and people were gathered around them, trying to get a better view of the execution about to take place.

The royal guards kept the commoners from getting too close, keeping the area around the podium empty. The nobles and important figures were not mingled with the crowd, but sat in luxurious chairs on top of the wall, watching the crowd from above.

All the major figures in the kingdom were here, but the mood was tense as if they were about to kill each other. They had already decided in advance how the Mifar territory would be divided and not everyone was satisfied with the division.

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Those who were given new territories or had allies who would benefit were watching the execution eagerly, certain their pockets would be full once heads started to roll.

On the other hand, those who received little or no territory were frustrated and wanted the execution to be as long as possible to take out their frustrations on the remaining members of the Mifar family.

But the one who got the most furious was Commander Ragnar. Everyone knew that a second fortress had been attacked and all communication lost, a shadow dragon appeared seemingly out of nowhere and attacked the fortress, decimating all the soldiers.

They sent court mages with teleportation crystals a day later and found only ruins, no living soldiers or corpses left behind.

The shadow dragon had apparently turned the corpses into undead as well and stolen the mithril plates and left for the platinum fist fortress, making the nobles of the kingdom suspect that the dragon was working together with the undead, but they didn't see any sign of a dragon during any of the battles, so it was more of a mystery surrounding this new undead.

Court mages also used teleportation crystals to approach the platinum fist fortress and investigate, only to find the situation even more tragic. No building was left intact and several parts had sunk into the sewer.

The mages saw countless footprints towards the semi-human empire, so they concluded that the undead had departed from the realm, but no one was happy about it. Although the immediate threat was gone, they would now have to be extremely vigilant and fortify the borders for possible invasion.

The kingdom would still have a huge loss to rebuild the destroyed strongholds, but the worst was all the mithril plates that were lost. Magic metals were incredibly expensive and the number of mithril mines in the realm could be counted on one hand.

Adamant was a less rare magical metal and had more mines throughout the territory, but its low mana conductivity made it unsuitable for large-scale spells. The kingdom still had unenchanted mithril in the royal vaults, but the amount was not enough for two fortresses.

They would have to buy whatever was missing from the order of magic, which seemed to have an almost infinite supply of magical resources. The order avoided selling large amounts of materials in order to keep the rarity of the materials and their prices high, but whenever an emergency happened the order had all the materials they needed.

Despite all the damage and dark times the kingdom would have to face, the nobles were more interested in sharing the territory than dealing with the consequences.

The imbecile nobles who saw only immediate profit might not have realized it, but by annexing the Mifar family's territories, they would be even closer to the exposed territory and would have to invest money out of their own pockets to increase the region's defenses.

'This is all this woman's fault.' Commander Ragnar thought as he looked at a woman sitting in the distance watching the assembled population.

Ragnar was sitting next to the royal family, as well as the head of the court magicians.

The king sat just above the gate while sweating profusely from the sun, but his royal robe was enchanted to cool the wearer and be self-cleaning.

'If that damn woman hadn't opened her mouth, the situation would be very different. The nobles would have remembered only when the meeting was over and between the appearance of a dragon and the threat of the undead. the kingdom would have placed the region under its rule as a state of emergency.' Ragnar thought in frustration.

Florence, on the other hand, was calmly watching the event unfold, even ordering drinks from the servants around the wall. The dissolution of House Mifar was already certain and many of the nobles who got new territories were her allies or were on her payroll, so it was a great political victory for her.

Even if the new territories didn't become profitable for the nobles, as long as she got what she wanted, the rest was not her problem.

'Less than 15 minutes left until it starts.' She thought as she checked the time on her wristwatch. A mysterious smile spread across her face for an instant, before she corrected her expression.

Time quickly passed and at noon, the king rose with some difficulty and greeted the people, before giving a short speech on why they had gathered here today. House Mifar had been accused of failing in two military operations and causing the death of over 30,000 soldiers, as well as merchants and their subordinates.

They also revealed the existence of the undead to the general population, assuring that they were already preparing preventive measures to ensure that the people did not panic. King Balfas toned down the power of the undead by hiding things like the undead spirit, bone abominations, and the storm cloud.

Balfas ended the speech by assuring the population that the army was already moving to eradicate the undead and quickly gave a signal for the condemned to be called, to divert the population's attention.

As soon as the signal was given, the inner gate opened and a dozen royal guards came out, surrounding a small group of criminals. The remnants of the Mifar family were wearing orange jumpsuits shouting to the nobles and the crowd for help and begging for mercy, but their pleas fell on deaf ears.

The remnants of the Mifar family were elderly people who had already retired or young people in their early twenties who were just beginning their noble careers.

None of the nobles moved a single muscle to help them, while the commoners cursed and hurled rocks or rotten fruit at them. The mob blamed the deaths on the Mifar as if they were responsible for the death, rather than the leaders of the house.

No matter how much the Mifar tried to shout, their voices could never match the angry crowd and the royal guards would not allow them to stop walking and forcibly dragged away those who did not walk fast enough.

They were dragged to the top of the podium, where the guards forced everyone to their knees. Commander Ragnar rose at that moment and floated to land softly on the podium.

Ragnar had requested to be the one to act as executioner, using the excuse that the Mifar family had always been a military house and that they had failed in a military operation. None of the nobles cared about this and their request was easily accepted.

“Sorry about that.” He whispered low to the elderly gentleman kneeling beside him, who just smiled wryly. The young people kept screaming for help, but the old man had already accepted his fate.

Ragnar raised his arm and activated his dimensional ring, making a two meter spear appear in his hand. The spear was made of enchanted steel and had the flag of House Mifar on the end.

The royal guard behind the old man forced the old man to bend down until his forehead touched the ground and the latter did not resist, knowing it was useless.

“By Mirkor.” Ragnar screamed before impaling the old man through the heart from behind. Blood seeped from the old man’s lips as his eyes widened for an instant, but they soon closed and his body went limp.

Chapter 194 Guild master

Ragnar moved on to the next as a second spear appeared in his hand, making the youths blanch with fear. They screamed even more desperately, some even pissing themselves in fear, but the guards still forced everyone to bow down.

He impaled them one by one, making sure to kill the oldmans quickly. Tradition held that he should pierce them in non-vital areas and let them bleed to death, but Ragnar was not cruel enough for that.

With the exception of the annoying youths, he pierced the spine and left them to agonize for a while.

Ragnar took a step back after impaling all the remnants of the Mifar. He used mana vision to ensure everyone was truly dead and snapped his fingers, the guards behind the bodies touching the spears and activating their enchantments..

The spears caught fire, igniting the corpses and flags of House Mifar, marking the end of all bloodline. The flames quickly consumed the corpses, but the flags did not disappear.

His pennant was bathed in flames and the moment they extinguished, the banner of the kingdom replaced that of the former house Mifar.

The watching commoners cheered with each impaled Mifar, but let out an even louder scream as the flames burned the corpses and the flags changed.

‘What a cheap trick.’ Florence thought as she clapped her hands along with the other nobles and the crowd. Unlike the commoners who seemed entranced by the little show, Florence was barely able to keep from yawning in boredom.

‘Come on, get it over with so I can leave.’ She wished as she watched the event unfold and prayed for a meteor to fall in the middle of the castle and end her suffering.

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Unfortunately for her, the royal family even made a speech promising to bring justice to the people and then introduce the new nobles who would rule the empty territories. Introducing the new rulers here would hardly be helpful, as commoners were not in the habit of traveling and spent most of their lives in the cities they were born in.

The only exceptions are adventurers, mercenaries or traders, who needed to move for work. Nobles who received new territories would have to perform again when they returned to their territories, but none of that mattered to Florence who had already achieved her goals here.

Once the speeches were over and the crowd began to disperse, Florence rose and took leave of the king, saying that she had work to do in the guild.

King Balfas answered the beckon and hurriedly dispatched the other nobles and headed back to the royal castle, where he could finally relax. The royal castle had its temperature regulated at all times, so it was always cool and kept him from getting drenched in sweat.

Florence went straight to the capital’s guild headquarters, which was in the outermost area of the capital, where the commoners lived. The overwhelming majority of adventurers were commoners and with rare exceptions like today, they weren’t allowed to enter the noble area.

The capital’s Guild Headquarters was a nearly 6-story building and was the tallest building in the outer area. The building had a purposefully rustic appearance and appeared to be made entirely of wood, although there were other materials used in construction.

The first floor of the guild was a pub and meeting place for adventurers, where adventurers could look for quests. The second floor was the butcher shop as it was popularly called by adventurers, where materials and monster corpses would be brought in to be evaluated or dissected.

The third floor was divided into several evaluation rooms, where adventurers who gathered enough achievements would be tested and promoted. Power wasn’t everything for an adventurer, but there were certain requirements to be promoted to higher ranks.

The fourth and fifth floors were reserved for guild officials and the sixth was where important information was kept, in addition to being Florence’s personal office.

“Hey, the guild master is here! Finally that little noble show is over!” A random adventurer shouted as Florence entered the guild, drawing the attention of everyone else.

“Yo, guild master! You’ve been stuck at that concert since ten in the morning until now? I feel sorry for you.” A second random adventurer spoke with mock regret, before starting to laugh at her suffering.

"A drink to the guild master for having to put up with those slime brains so far!" A third random adventurer spoke in a slurred voice as he joined the conversation, lifting a mug of beer.

A waitress brought a mug of beer to Florence, who downed the entire mug in one go before belching loudly.

"*blorp* Don't even remind me. They made me sit in the sun all morning and we couldn't eat anything because of the nobles' image or some bullshit like that. I'm so hungry I'd kill someone for a steak." Florence began to complain as she sat next to the adventurers at the counter and ordered lunch.

The surrounding adventurers laughed aloud at his suffering, offering drinks or telling how the execution went. A few adventurers were in the crowd when Ragnar was executing the condemned, but they left as soon as the king began introducing the nobles.

They laughed at the difference between the Florence of now, who was greedily devouring a chicken leg and drinking beer, and the Florence who sat there with a mysterious smile the whole time.

None of the adventurers cared about the different positions between them and Florence, as Florence treated them as equals and demanded the same treatment.

She had an image of a mysterious and scheming woman to nobles, but adventurers only saw her as a drinking partner. Florence was indeed a scheming woman, but she worked for the good of the guild and the adventurers, so they didn't care about that.

"Guild master, this is for you." An employee approached and handed a pendant with a teleportation crystal to her. It was a communication item.

Florence received the magic item and walked away from the bar for a few seconds, before sighing.

"Haah... I gotta go guys, duty calls." She spoke as she walked back to the bar.

"What? You just got back from the execution and you barely had time to eat! Don't guild officials even get a lunch break?" One of the adventurers complained, but Florence just shook her head.

"It's important and once I'm done, I'm free for the rest of the day. You guys can keep drinking without me. One round on me." Florence spoke and the adventurers shouted their thanks in unison.

She left them behind and took the stairs to the sixth floor, where her personal office was. His office had two bookshelves filled with books on either side of the room and a mahogany desk at the far end. Two small sofas were arranged in the middle of the room, with a small table between them.

Florence entered and closed the door behind her before picking up the pendant again.

"You can talk, I'm already alone." She spoke seriously.

"I'm sorry to disturb your meal with your friends, but I have urgent news." A man spoke from the other side of the magic item, the urgency in his voice alarming Florence.

"What happened? Has the war between Tivan and Brumia gotten worse?" Florence started to ask worriedly, but the man cut her off.

"I wish it were something so simple. The situation is urgent, but it's not safe to speak for magic items. I want to speak with you personally, so come to the city-state." The unknown man spoke.

"When?" Florence didn't question him, just asked when he would be available.

"NOW. I need to talk to you now." The man ended the call without hearing a response.

Florence wasted no time and called one of the guild officials, instructing him not to allow anyone to enter the office until further notice.

She quickly locked the office, activating the countermeasures before walking over to her desk and opening the bottom drawer. There was a high purity teleportation crystal at the bottom and Florence picked it up, before conjuring a platform of mana in the air and sitting on top.

The teleport would form around her and cut the floor otherwise.

A purple orb quickly surrounded her and in the next moment, Florence found herself on an open plain with a city wall in the distance. The city's large-scale spells moved her teleport to the outside of the city, where she would be an easy target for the magic cannons on top of the wall.

Florence descended from the mana platform and in the next second, a spearhead appeared right at her throat.

A soldier wearing golden armor and holding a spear became visible in front of her, glaring at Florence.

"You have a lot of nerve to show up here after what happened last time. I warned you that if I saw your face again, I would kill you." He spoke furiously, snarling every word.

"And I warned you that if you threatened me again, I would hit you so hard your teeth would end up in your ass." Florence responded with the same violent tone, an angry aura emanating from her body.

Chapter 195 Avant

The two stared at each other for a while, until the armored man started to shake, unable to contain his laughter.

"Pfft, hahaha! I can't be serious when you make that expression, Aunt." The man started laughing as he hugged her.

"You have to grow a lot to reach my level." Florence also hugged him while ruffling his hair, as if he were still a child instead of an adult.

The man in front of her was actually her nephew, a young man barely in his 16s. The two had an inside joke that whenever they met, they would insult each other and the first one to laugh would buy the other a drink.

Until now, Florence was undefeated.

His nephew worked as a guard in the city-state across from him, as did several of the young men who were born here. The city offered training to young warriors and mages free of charge, on the condition that they worked as soldiers and city guards for a period equal to their training time.

Many of the young mana users in the city participated in the project, not only could they receive free training, but they would also be guaranteed jobs after it ended. Furthermore, if they decided to join the guild after finishing their mandatory work, they would receive advantages compared to other normal adventurers.

The city-state in front of them was called the Avant, or as it was better known, the birthplace of adventurers. It was the only self-governing human city and was on the border of the three kingdoms, close to the mountain range in the center of the continent.

Avant was governed by the adventurers' guild, or more precisely by the guild's founder, Kian Avant. He was the guild's supreme master and Florence's direct superior, as well as the man who spoke on the call with her moments ago.

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"What brings you to town, Aunt? Work?" Her nephew asked as he broke away from the hug and escorted her into town. He was working on patrol when the alarms detected the teleport and he went to investigate what it was.

"Work, but I can't go into detail as I don't even know what it is. I just know it's urgent, so I won't be able to say hi to the family right now. But I promise I'll when I'm free." Florence spoke and said goodbye to him as soon as they reached the gate.

Florence headed towards the guild headquarters where Kian Avant should now be, watching the city as he walked. All the people she passed carried weapons or wands at their waists, as expected in a city of adventurers.

There were more than one guild building within the city, as a single building was not enough for the number of adventurers in the city. The guild in the center of town, served more as a government building than an actual guild.

Florence walked quickly to the main guild, easily passing the guards and entering the building. She greeted the employees as she passed and went straight up to her boss's office.

A secretary tried to run in front of her to warn the supreme master of Florence's arrival, but her steps couldn't match a twelfth layer warrior like her.

Florence didn't even knock on the door, she just barged into the guild's supreme master's room as if she owned the place.

"I'm already here, Kian. Now tell me what's so urgent that you made me teleport here." Florence sat on a sofa in the middle of the room as she looked at the man behind the desk at the end of the room, who didn't even react to her entrance and continued reviewing the documents on his desk.

He was a 1.93 meter tall man with short brown hair and green eyes. His skin was tanned from years of exposure to the sun and his body was covered in muscle that his clothes had been unable to hide.

Kian had a huge scar that started just above his left eye and went down to his neck, a scar he refused to fully heal. It was an old scar that he refused to tell how he acquired it, so its origins are a mystery even to those closest to him.

His actual age was unknown, but his appearance was that of a 40-year-old man. The adventurer's guild was formed centuries ago and like its founder, he was at least a few centuries older than any human being should live.

Rumors said that he had reached the maximum limit of his core and achieved immortality, others said that he had bathed in so much enemy blood that his body had absorbed the life force in the blood and become immortal, but no one knew the truth.

"Sir, I'm sorry I didn't notify you of Miss Florence's arrival, but she moved too quickly for me to keep up." The secretary came soon after and apologized, but neither Florence nor Kian was bothered by this.

"You don't have to worry about that. I'm used to her attitude, so you can leave. Tell the other two they can come in as soon as they arrive." Kian continued reviewing the documents and dismissed the secretary, who bowed in thanks and closed the door on her way out.

"You're not going to say anything and just stand there being mysterious?" Florence asked as soon as the doors closed, looking over at Kian.

"The situation is serious, but I will wait for the other two to arrive before explaining the situation we find ourselves in." Kian looked at her for a second before turning back to the documents on his desk.

"Tch, attacks my anxiety." Florence clicked her tongue. "But thanks for letting me see my nephew on the way here."

"I do not know what you're talking about." Kian feigned ignorance, but Florence didn't fall for her act.

"Please don't try to deceive me. My nephew was out on patrol alone when you called me. Is what you're about to tell me so serious that you wanted me to have a family moment to calm my nerves before listening?" Florence questioned him and Kian nodded in the affirmative.

"I'll take advantage of the fact that the other two are taking their time and make my report. The destruction of House Mifar was a success and the territories were annexed to nobles who agreed to laws that favored adventurers." Florence started to report, but Kian cut her off.

"It doesn't matter anymore. Small disputes like this are irrelevant in the current situation." He was serious but refused to explain anything until everyone had arrived.

The door opened without warning and two people entered, interrupting the conversation.

One was a 1.80 meters man with fair skin and straight shoulder-length black hair. His eyes were the color of honey and his body had a leaner build compared to Kian's despite still being muscular.

He was wearing a black mage robe with gold embroidery and light armor underneath. He was Zulu, the guildmaster in charge of the kingdom of Belaster.

The other was a black woman with curly hair and dark almond eyes. She was approximately 1.70 meters tall and her body was covered in strange tattoos and symbols.

She was wearing short shorts and a sleeveless T-shirt. The woman's name was Elish, the guild master of the Belaster kingdom. Half of the territory in the Belaster kingdom was made up of several islands, and the climate on the islands varied greatly depending on the island.

Spring was almost here, but the weather had already warmed up in the northwest islands.

“Was Florence the first to arrive? I think it really is an emergency for all of us to be brought together.” Zulu spoke as he sat down on the sofa across from Florence.

“Close the doors to start the meeting.” Kian spoke to Elish who was still standing by the door.

As soon as the doors closed, Kian pressed a button under his desk, isolating the entire room and preventing anyone from entering, before placing a communication cube on top of his desk and activating it.

The communication cube conjured a hologram above itself, showing the shoreline of a beach and the ocean. The hologram was not real-time, but a recording made by the order of magic.

“The scenery is beautiful, but I don’t think you’d gather us here just for that.” Florence spoke and Kian nodded.

“As you may know, apart from the five main continents, there are several islands scattered throughout Elbon.” Kian explained and everyone nodded, already aware of the information. “Many islands are uninhabited or inhabited only by monsters and small tribes of intelligent species, but the order initiated a colonization project and occupied several of these islands to exploit their natural resources.”

“We already know all this, Kian. Cut to the chase.” Zulu spoke.

“Exactly 15 hours and 46 minutes ago, this recording was made on the island of Mawala, which is in the middle of the ocean between Caprio and Doravon.” Kian stopped talking and looked closely at the recording.

Chapter 196 Harbinger of war

Mawala Island was less than 10 kilometers long and most of it was used as a farm for trees and magic plants, so there were few buildings on the whole island. This was a resource colony and being in the middle of the ocean, there weren’t many enemies that could threaten them and the island’s defenses were minimal.

Only a few dozen mages were on the island, with a few hundred slaves of different species for the manual labor needed to maintain the crops.

The guild masters continued to watch the landscape for a few minutes, before some shadows could be seen approaching on the horizon. The shadows quickly became visible and they realized they were ships, but they were a strange model.

The ships were extraordinarily large, nearly two hundred meters long each. The ships had no sails and were not enchanted, relying on the strength of the crew to sail. Even so, they were moving so fast that they seemed to be flying.

There were dozens of evolved Demihumans on each ship, using oars or their own limbs to move the ships. Each time their oars touched the water, they generated an explosion of water that propelled the ships forward, sometimes even sending the ship flying before slamming into the sea again.

Their movements were perfectly synchronized, further increasing the speed of the ships.

The mages on the island noticed the approaching ships and panicked, sounding an alarm and contacting the order to request reinforcements, but to no avail. They hadn't yet been informed of the destruction of the portals, so they abandoned the small island the moment they learned they couldn't get reinforcements fast enough.

They used the few teleportation crystals they had for emergencies and evacuated the island, leaving all the slaves behind. They were a small tribe of dark elves numbering less than a few hundred and they had no weapons, so when the demihumans boarded the island the dark elves were defenseless.

The evolved demihumans massacred all the dark elves and took over the island, before destroying the order of magic buildings. An evolved ogre hit the recording device with a club, ending the recording.

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Even after the recording ended, none of those present moved or said anything, their minds unable to comprehend what they had just witnessed. There wasn't a big fight or a display of power, but the identity of the creatures was what shocked them.

"Those Demihumans... what happened to them? Why were they so powerful and their bodies so different?" Florence asked as she looked at the last scene of the ogre destroying the recording device.

The ogre appeared to be 8 meters tall even before gigantification, in addition to having three heads and three pairs of arms. It was much more powerful than a normal ogre, but he wasn't the only one different.

Orcs with horns and red skin, Trolls over 50 feet tall, and goblins larger than humans. All demihumans seemed to have evolved in some way and their increased power reached new heights.

"The order calls them evolved demihumans. We still don't know how, but the demihumans on the Doravon continent have evolved, mutated, or call it what you will. What matters is that they are stronger and they want war." Kian spoke and changed the recording.

"It wasn't just one island that was attacked. This is a recording of Nila Island." The following recording showed a similar scene, but it was a slightly larger island with a small mountain in the center.

It was an island with a magic stone mine, a much rarer resource than magic wood and unlike Mawala Island. This island had large-scale spells and over a hundred mages, in addition to hundreds of undead.

The undead weren't really combatants, just workers to dig the magic stones in the mines, as it would be too dangerous to let slaves take care of it. A single pickaxe strike with enough force could destroy a magic stone, causing it to detonate and generating a chain explosion that would detonate the island, so they couldn't leave the slaves who hated them in such a vital position.

Unfortunately, all defenses were useless against the attacks of the evolved demihumans. Barriers have been broken, magic cannons smashed, undead destroyed, and all mages slain.

"This is a recording from Tamam Island," Kian changed the recording again, but it was the same result as the previous raids.

"This is a recording-" He tried to continue, but Florence cut him off.

“We already understand your point. This is a full-scale invasion and we’re about to go to war. Do you know which route the enemy is plotting?” She summed up the situation, but Kian disagreed.

“No, you still don’t get my point. This is not a simple invasion.” Kian turned off the holograms and put the communication cube away before picking up a huge map and laying it out on the table.

It was a map of the continent of Caprio and all nearby seas. The continent of Caprio was divided into nine different regions with a different kingdom controlling each.

West, northwest, north were the human kingdoms Mirkor, Belaster and Tivan respectively. The northeast was the country of the Brumia beasts and the east was the nation of the Evergreen elves, while the extreme southeast was an uncharted sea of black forests.

The southwest was Savannah and the south was huge desert and both were demihuman territories. Lastly, the mountain ranges in the center of the continent that were marked as forbidden territory. It wasn’t marked on the map, but everyone knew that a hidden kingdom of dwarves lay among those mountains.

It was a secret that the order of magic and the church shared with the adventurers’ guild after they expanded their influence across all three kingdoms and tried to launch an expedition to the center of the continent.

“This is our mainland. And this is Mawala Island.” Kian spoke and marked a red X on a distant island, almost at the edge of the map. It was far from the mainland, but if they continued advancing in a straight line they would overrun Belaster in the northwest.

“So I’m the one on the invasion line. Bad luck.” Elish clicked her tongue at misfortune, but Kian kept talking.

“This is Nila Island.” He marked another X on a second island and this one was in the middle of the map, in a straight line towards the realm of Mirkor.

“And this is Tamam Island.” Kian marked a third island, but that island was at the end of the map towards the demi-human empire.

“Wait, they’re attacking from three routes that are so far apart? Why would they divide their forces that much? Their forces would be isolated from each other and it’s likely that communication between them would be almost non-existent.” Zulu asked confused by the enemy strategy.

“That would be true if the enemies were attacking in an organized way. These are all the islands that the order colonized that were attacked.” Kian started marking almost all the islands on the edge of the map, scaring everyone present.

“What is it?” Elish asked when Kian had finished marking all the islands and had formed an almost perfect line around the mainland. The few islands that weren’t marked were islands that hadn’t been colonized by the order, so they didn’t have information.

“The order sent me recordings of all these islands being destroyed by the evolved Demihumans. The Evolved Demihumans have not formed an attack route or strategy. They plan to invade us with a wave tactic on a continental scale.” With those words, the others finally understood the approaching danger.

“They have enough numbers to attack three sides of the continent at once, plus even greater power and somehow obtained enchanted weapons, despite the demihumans’ ineptitude for magic.” The three guild masters were already starting to despair, but the bad news continued.

“To make matters worse, these invading forces are just a vanguard force to conquer small islands and not the actual army. I was informed that an even larger army of evolved Demihumans was gathering off the coast of Doravon.” Kain explained and sighed tiredly.

The war that was approaching was far bigger than anything he had ever seen and he had no idea how he could win. Kian was confident in his own strength and had done his best to train his adventurers, but the adventurers weren’t nearly strong enough for what lay ahead.

The three kingdoms would also be defenseless against invasion. Most of the armies were common people unable to use mana, while their magic technology is still underdeveloped compared to the empires of the Adula continent.

If the realms were left as they are, they would be slaughtered without mercy. The biggest cities might hold out for a while, but the power of the demihumans and their sheer numbers would eventually overcome them. The demihumans also possessed enchanted weapons, so there were also mages on the enemy side that have yet to be seen.

Kian also suspected that the demihumans in the demihuman empire might end up allying with the invaders because of their similarities or to receive evolution like the other, further increasing the enemies’ power.

Kian knew that the church and the order of magic would offer as much support as they could, as the human Gods created both organizations to aid humanity, but it would still be a difficult war.

Chapter 197 Past hate

The order and the church possessed a lot of power, but they could not move many forces to the continent without compromising the defense of the adula continent, which was constantly at war against the Setlan continent and to defend against the constant invasions of Nytrér.

The war had been in the humans’ favor for the last few decades, and deploying too many troops to Caprio would open a rift in their forces that the Fae alliance would definitely exploit, destroying decades of war and hard work.

“How long do we have before the enemy vanguard catches up with us?” Florence was the first to recover from the shock and asked apprehensively.

“According to the order that gave us the information, just over a month and a half ago. They have already started evacuating all the colonized islands between the continents and self-destructing the installations when attacked, to try to cause damage and delay the advance of the Semi- humans, but it’s questionable how effective it will be.” Kian spoke and the guild masters grumbled.

Detonating the large-scale spells would do enough damage to destroy part of the island and kill several of the evolved demihumans, but their numbers were simply massive. The order of magic would also deploy dozens of alchemical items on islands to maximize damage.

After more than a month with the portal tower destroyed, the order had temporarily stabilized and reusing the methods they used before the creation of the portals.

They gave mages teleportation crystals and handed out dimensional rings with items they needed to transport quickly. This method was flawed because the amount of items that could fit inside a ring was small, averaging 4 to 5 cubic meters for storage, but it was the best they could do until they managed to rebuild the tower.

“Then we have less than two months to prepare for war.” Elish summed up the situation and immediately started getting headaches. Half of Belaster’s territory was made up of islands not much larger than she’d seen on the tapes, and her defenses weren’t much better.

Belaster has always been protected from attacks by intruders thanks to its geographically advantageous position. The other two kingdoms protected Belaster from any land attacks and the ocean defended the rest.

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The biggest threat on Belaster was sea monsters and the need to use boats to move between islands, but the adventurers solved the security problem. They regulated monster numbers and worked as guards for trade ships, making the kingdom relax your security.

They still had large-scale spells on the main islands, but many would be defenseless against an invasion of this scale and would need to evacuate the entire population to lessen the loss of life, but this would allow the enemies to settle on the mainland and set up bases with nothing to stop them.

“How are we going to notify the realms of this? We’re going to need everyone’s cooperation if we’re to survive the coming storm.” Zulu asked, more concerned with how to help the allied kingdoms than the nation itself.

The only way their kingdom would be threatened would be Belaster’s annihilation and they had to avoid that at all costs. Tivan would act as support for the battle to come, sending troops and supplies to aid them in the battle, but they couldn’t help with all they had, as they were also at war with Brumia, the realm of beasts and their ancient enemy.

The war against Brumia had been at an impasse for decades, with both sides fighting each other tooth and nail. The beast realm would definitely sense its weakness if it relaxed its borders and would attack with all its might.

“The order will contact the kingdoms and report on the mass invasion and they will organize a suitable defense. My biggest concern is the church’s reaction.” Kian seemed to be nervous for some reason, but the guild masters didn’t understand his concern.

“I don’t think the church will be a problem. They are fanatics who would give their lives without hesitation if it were for justice. In my view, they will be the first to take up arms to fight.” Florence spoke and the other two nodded in agreement.

“My concern is when the news reaches Eishin. You may not know it, but before he was called the God of Light, Eishin was known as a giant killer. He has a deep hatred for the giant races and was responsible

for exterminating all the giants in the past.” Kian’s hands trembled slightly at the thought of Eishin’s fury.

“If Eishin got to know that the demihumans, the descendants of the giants were increasing his power, I don’t know what he could do.”

“Aren’t the human Gods restricted by the non-intervention agreement?” Elish asked confused.

“That’s my fear. If Eishin acts impulsively in a moment of anger and attacks the invading armies, the enemy Gods will definitely act and if Eishin attacks them in a moment of anger, the war between the gods will start again and this invasion will be the least of our problems.”

“It’s no use worrying about it. It’s impossible to stop the information from leaking to the church, as they will be involved in the defense and Deus Eishin would be informed anyway.” Zulu spoke and Kian realized it was useless to think of a solution.

No matter what he did, Eishin would find out about the evolved demihumans.

“Would God Eishin really break the non-intervention agreement just because of his hatred of demihumans? I mean, it’s true that demihumans are descendants of giants, but God Eishin hates them to that extent?” Florence asked, but Kian was interrupted before he could answer.

The office suddenly started to get dark, even though it was mid-afternoon. The living room lights were off, so the office was pitch black.

All four of them looked out the only window in the office and saw that the entire city was dark as well.

“What the fuck?” Florence pointed to the sky in shock, quickly followed by the other guild masters.

The sun that was shining until a few seconds ago, completely darkened like it was a solar eclipse, except that the moon was nowhere to be seen.

“Haah... looks like he found out and he doesn’t like it at all.” Kian muttered, drawing everyone’s attention.

“Did Eishin do this? Why would he do this?” Elish asked terrified.

“It’s because he’s fighting something right now.” Kian spoke and a burst of light happened on the horizon, confirming his suspicions. “Let’s pray the fight isn’t too serious and they can keep the peace afterwards.”

“What if they not keep the peace?” Florence asked worriedly, looking at bursts of light on the horizon.

“Then we would go back to the age of chaos and have wars of proportions none of us ever imagined.” Kian stared at the horizon, as if he could see what was happening.

In the capital El Dorado of the holy empire of Caria, in Eishin’s Divine Palace, a few minutes ago.

Eirin, Emperor Makima's younger sister was walking through the palace corridors towards the throne room, where Eishin was waiting for her. There were guardian angels on both sides of the corridor, but none of them dared look at her and they bowed their heads in respect.

All the angels knew that she was a being on the same level as their God and one of their greatest allies, so they were extremely respectful towards her.

Despite the respectful looks she was receiving, Eirin's expression was strained, as if she were heading to the battlefield rather than meeting with a old friend.

'Are you sure you want to tell Eishin about the Demihumans retrieving the blood of giants? You know he's going to freak out when he hears about this.' Canan spoke in her mind, still dubious about her idea to share with Eishin about the evolved demihumans.

Canan and Eirin recognized the giants' features at a single glance and realized the danger this posed.

Giants were extremely powerful warrior races and posed a great threat not only to humanity, but to all races. They were arrogant and violent, considering all species as inferior and treating them like slaves.

'That's why we were the ones who came to bring the information, instead of sending a messenger or just calling him directly, as we would normally do. We are the only ones who can stop him if he goes on a rampage.' Eirin answered when she finally arrived in front of the throne room door.

The angels opened the door for her and Eirin stepped forward as if she owned the place.

"For you to leave your lab and come here in person, I think the subject is really important." Eishin spoke as soon as he saw Eirin enter the throne room.

He descended from his throne and met her at the bottom of the stairs, welcoming her like a friend. They were equal and respected each other, so they didn't dare belittle each other.

Eishin conjured a light table and two chairs with a thought and the two sat down before he gave the signal for her to continue.

"You're right, this is a serious matter. Check this out." Eirin spoke and pulled out a recording device from her dimensional ring, displaying the recording of the attack on Mawala Island.

Chapter 198 Human gods

Eishin's expression looked disinterested at first, but his eyes widened when he saw the demi-human ships. When he noticed the special features of demi-humans, his body involuntarily froze.

He clenched his fists tightly as his eyes narrowed into two slits of light. His body started to shake and along with it the entire divine palace.

The divine palace's enchantments were created to complement Eishin's abilities and responded to his thoughts.

The citizens of the capital were startled to see the palace shake and knelt on the ground, fearing that Eishin's wrath would fall on them.

"Are they back? Answer me Eirin, THEY are back?" Eishin asked as everything around him shook. His voice was calm and his posture unchanged, but it was obvious he was struggling to maintain control.

"We don't know. These demi-humans are nowhere near the level of ancient giants, but it is undeniable that they are recovering their ancient bloodlines. I don't know whether or not it is possible to fully restore the bloodline, but I cannot deny the possibility that giants can come back." Eirin spoke slowly, watching Eishin's expression.

"How is it possible? I've made sure to kill every giant in the past and the giant blood in demihumans is extremely weak, how is it possible for them to regain their old bloodlines??" Eishin clenched his teeth, snarling every word.

"That's not what matters right now. It's a fact that the demi-humans are getting their bloodline back and I came here to assure you that you wouldn't do anything." Eirin spoke and stood up, putting herself between Eishin and the door as if that would stop him.

"How dare you tell me that? You know what they did to me in the past and the danger they pose to humanity. And you dare tell me to stand by and do nothing?" Eishin spoke as if she were a traitor.

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He released a white aura that forced all surrounding angels to their knees, but Eirin continued to glare at him. The angels entered the throne room after the palace began to shake, but they were unable to do anything to contain Eishin's fury.

"I know what you've been through, but that doesn't mean you can break our non-intervention agreement. If you get involved and try to wipe out the evolved demi-humans, Illum and Kalesi will definitely get involved as well." Eirin spoke in a cold voice, releasing an aura of her own to counter the light aura.

Unlike Eishin's aura, Eirin's aura was multicolored like a rainbow, but her power was equal to Eishin's.

The colliding auras caused the floor and walls to crack, pushing all the angels against the walls.

"Those two know the danger the giants pose and will not oppose the extermination of the giants!" Eishin screamed furiously, his body turning into a mass of light and turning back to flesh.

Eishin was a being made of light and could change shape at will.

"We both know that's not true. Unlike us who care about humanity, they care about the balance of all races. Illum believes that all races are important while Kalesi believes that the filthy undead can coexist with the living." Eirin felt disgusted at the thought of seeing humans walking alongside the undead.

She knew this was possible and it was a reality on the Sytrer continent by the infiltrators they managed to capture, but she couldn't accept it. Most species had racial abilities, greater affinity for magic, or physical prowess, while humans lacked racial abilities or any redeeming characteristics.

The unique characteristic of humans was that they lacked the limitations of other species. Humans could use all elements of magic, runsmithing, use skills and fight physically. They weren't the best, but they could do anything and exploit other races' weaknesses to win.

But that would change when other species competed with them. No matter how hard they tried, humans could never use magic like elves, runesmith like dwarves, fight like demi-humans, or have the physical abilities of beast people.

Humans would lose their place at the top of the world and become the slaves or servants of those most powerful. And that was something Eirin and Canan could not allow. Unlike Eishin, they harbored no hatred for other species, but they could not accept the world Kalesi and Illum craved.

‘But if we want a future where humanity reigns, we need time to develop. Unlike long-lived species, shorter-lived humans are always working to develop.’ Canan spoke in his mind.

‘I know. If the Gods start fighting, all the effort we put into development will be lost. We know it, Eishin knows it, but anger is making him blind. We need to make him realize the truth.’ Eirin agreed with him.

Unfortunately, Eishin was thinking of something else.

“If they fail to recognize the danger the giants pose, then that’s their problem. I will exterminate these giants and anyone who tries to stop me will die along with them!” Eishin yelled in rage, a teleportation crystal flying swiftly into his hand as the palace changed shape and formed a corridor straight outside.

“Do not you dare!” Eirin stepped in the way and conjured a hexa elemental barrier around the two of them to stop him from leaving, but it was to no avail.

The large-scale enchantments of the divine palace activated and attacked the barrier from the outside, while Eishin attacked from the inside. Small cracks appeared across the barrier, but that was enough for Eishin.

Its body was made of light and it split into several small sparks of light that flowed through the cracks, before passing through the cracks and returning to normal outside.

With a thought, he charged the teleportation crystal and stepped forward, disappearing in a flash of light and a sonic boom.

Eishin didn’t know where the island was where the evolved demihumans attacked, but that didn’t matter. Eishin was targeting the Doravon continent, where he knew the source of the evolved demi-humans was and the culprit behind it all.

“Shit! Why does this guy have to be so stubborn?” Eirin complained, deactivating the barrier and flying through the passage Eishin left.

The angels pressed against the walls recovered within seconds and followed close behind Eirin.

“Tch! He’s already far away, let’s go after him before it’s too late.” Canan spoke through Eirin’s mouth.

“Yes, I’ll leave it to you.” Eirin spoke and ceded control to Canan, causing her body to change shape. Luckily, she was wearing leather pants and a shirt, so he wouldn’t have to waste time changing clothes or embarrass himself by chasing after him in a skirt.

“...” He took a deep breath, focusing on himself. Her rainbow aura started to change as the light outshined the other elements, his body starting to glow like a light bulb.

He guided the excess light and quickly fed the crystal his newfound holy mana. Canan quickly disappeared in a flash of light, the sonic boom knocking over the angels who had just recovered.

Canan quickly returned to normal, his core quickly returning to normal.

Eishin left the continent's border within seconds and continued heading towards the Doravon continent for a few seconds, before suddenly stopping. The teleportation crystal he was using wasn't able to cross the distance between continents and stopped midway.

He tried to power the crystal again, but a purple orb appeared a few hundred meters away, interrupting him.

"Tch. They found me faster than I expected." Eishin clucked his tongue in annoyance and gave up on the idea of advancing. Unlike Eirin, the person who was approaching would not only try to stop him, but would seriously attack him and kill him if he lowered his guard.

"What do you think you are doing, Eishin? You are not allowed to leave your territory." Illum spoke as soon as the purple light disappeared, looking coldly at Eishin. Unlike his descendants, he was able to travel the entire world with his avatar, although he couldn't use the mana of his core being so far away, only the amber energy he accumulated over the millennia.

Illum had his eye on the Adula continent ever since his spies confirmed the evolved demihumans. He knew that Eishin would fly into a rage and try to kill him with his bare hands, so he was prepared to intervene as soon as necessary.

"Stay out of it, stick. You know what those things are and that they need to be killed. These things pose a danger to humanity, the lesser races you defend, and even the filthy undead that lizard protects." Eishin spoke while glaring at him angrily.

"Do not impose your fears on me, coward. It is true that in the past the giants were unrivaled tyrants and warriors, but times have changed. The races have grown a lot since then and are not as defenseless as they were." Illum mocked the expression of anger and hatred on Eishin's face.

"Furthermore, the evolved demihumans possess only a small fraction of the power that the ancient giants possessed." Illum kept talking, but Eishin didn't back down.

Chapter 199 Clash of gods

"That's all the more reason to kill them now, when they don't pose a serious threat! These demihumans found a way to get their blood back and they won't stop until they become true giants." Eishin roared.

"Even if become giants, you are not allowed to act. Don't forget the agreement we all have and that it is the only thing that protects the sandcastle you call an empire." Illum seriously threatened seeing that Eishin didn't intend to back down, but his intentions were different.

'I really hope that the evolved demihumans are capable of becoming giants. In the past, I agreed with the extermination of the giants because they were tyrants and posed a danger to all races and I don't

regret that decision, but today I realize that I lacked vision at the time.' Illum thought as he reminisced about the past.

Illum still believed that exterminating the giants was the right decision for the time, but he should have saved a few children from each different race of giants and preserved the species. If he raised them from a young age and taught them to coexist with other races, it might be possible to change the giants' aggressive mentality.

At the time, he believed that the innate nature of giants could not be corrected and that killing them was the only way for other species to prosper, but it was Kalesi who changed his mindset.

She was able to overcome the killer instincts of the undead and change the mindset of other undead species, which until then were mortal enemies of all living beings.

These evolved demihumans were their chance to correct their past mistakes and restore the giants. Bringing the giants to their side would not only atone for their wrongdoings, but also ensure mighty warriors when war against the human empires eventually broke out.

The war against humans was already a matter of when, rather than if.

"I'm going to kill them and you're not going to stop me, now get out of my way." Eishin spoke coldly, casting his best spells and preparing to fight.

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"Why don't you try to get me out?" Illum teased him as he did the same but on a much grander scale. The world's energy several kilometers across was sucked in and pooled in the spells Illum was casting, raising his level.

He was using his racial ability, mana authority to power up his spells. The skill allowed him to absorb the world's energy in large quantities, needing to add minimal amounts of amber energy for it to carry his energy signature.

All of a sudden, all the spells Eishin was preparing lost their strength, all the energy that hadn't yet been mixed with his holy mana being sucked up by Illum.

Illum didn't give Eishin time to think of a countermeasure and unleashed his spell, hollow meteor. A hundreds of meters black meteor pierced the clouds just above them and flew swiftly toward Eishin.

The meteor was infused with earth to give the spell mass, fire to increase the temperature, and darkness to harm Eishin. Eishin's body was made of pure light and darkness was the only element that could cause him real harm.

"Do you think a slow spell like that will hit me??" Eishin shouted in mockery, cutting the distance between him and Illum in less than a second. Hollow meteor was an incredibly destructive spell, but it was slow despite its size.

Eishin punched Illum in the face and stomach as soon as he reached him, releasing a burst of white flames and a storm of white lightning respectively. They were incomplete spells that Eishin was unable to finish casting, and he used his own mana to forcefully complete the spells.

The ensuing explosion temporarily blinded his senses and Eishin tried to back away to avoid a counterattack, but an amber hand grabbed his wrist before he could pull away.

“That’s it?” Unfortunately for Eishin, the smoke dispersed with a gust of wind and Illum was unharmed, glaring at him mockingly. A paper-thin amber energy barrier covered his body.

‘Tch. I should have expected half-baked spells wouldn’t break this bastard’s defense. I need to fight seriously if I want to win.’ Eishin thought and tried to dissolve his body in light to gain distance, but Illum acted faster.

The amber barrier that covered Illum’s body slipped through his arm and surrounded Eishin’s body like a human-sized statue, sealing him away. The barrier was just a lump of amber energy and Illum could shape it into whatever shape he preferred.

‘The hardest part of fighting this guy is his speed and his ability to transform into light to get away. Take that away from him and defense is no big deal. Illum thought as he felt Eishin struggle within the barrier.

Eishin transformed into light and attacked the barrier from all sides, releasing the incomplete spells he had held ready, but it was ineffective. The barrier withstood Eishin’s desperate attacks and the shockwaves of his spells hit him, damaging himself.

Magic couldn’t affect its own caster, but its secondary effects did.

Cracks appeared in the barrier from Eishin’s constant efforts and he used them to try to escape, but the hollow meteor hit him. The hollow meteor broke through the barrier and hit Eishin while he was transformed into light and pushed him into the ocean below.

“Argh!” Eishin screamed in pain as he felt the darkness corrode his body and the high temperature burn him and released a laser of light that pierced the meteor until it crossed it, but the colossal size of the meteor was too big for a laser conjured only with its own manna.

The Hollow meteor crashed into the ocean, generating tidal waves that could destroy a city if they were near the shores of the mainland and a steam explosion, but Illum cast a second spell, dark zero.

A wave of blue-black energy shot out of his body and moved into the ocean below, instantly freezing him. The steam explosion, the tidal waves and all the sea water from the ocean’s surface to the bottom turned into a black ice, attacking Eishin from all directions.

As the World Tree avatar, Illum could use all six elements of magic, though he could not use opposing elements at the same time.

‘If I could use all six elements like Eirin and Canan, I wouldn’t have to worry about this non-intervention agreement and killing the human gods, putting a quick end to this madness.’ Illum thought and with perfect timing, a flash of light appeared a few hundred meters away, followed by a sonic boom.

“I’m late?” Canan asked as soon as he saw Illum standing unconcernedly in mid-air.

“No, I haven’t even started to sweat yet. Your friend on the other hand.” Illum replied as he pointed his chin towards the ocean, causing Canan to snap out his tongue in frustration and fly to stand between the ocean and Illum.

"I appreciate you stopping him, but your job is done. I'll take over from here." Canan spoke in an aggressive tone, casting a spell on each of the fingers of his hand. All twenty.

Canan knew he couldn't face Illum alone, so Eirin joined the fray, instead of just leaving control to him as she usually does. His body shape-shifted and grew to nearly 10 feet, while a second pair of female arms grew just below his armpits.

Her face warped as a pair of eyes grew from her forehead, a new mouth grew from her chin, and her hair grew down to her waist. His clothes ripped in the transformation, revealing that his body had no male or female characteristics, being completely genderless.

It was the form Canan and Eirin assumed when their bodies synchronized perfectly.

The world energy vacuum that Illum caused was quickly being filled and Canan/Eirin quickly cast their best spells, freely using all the elements. It was a unique Canan/Eirin ability that even Illum envied.

"I'm sorry, but this boy doesn't look like he's going to back down anytime soon and you already broke my trust once when you betrayed me to join him, so I don't intend to back down here." Illum spoke dismissively and Canan/Eirin flinched for an instant at those words, but quickly recovered.

Canan/Eirin were old acquaintances of Illum and former apprentices to him, but they left when they realized that they did not agree with Illum's ideal and joined Eishin. They still respected their former master, but Illum despised them and blamed them for the current state of the world.

If they hadn't betrayed him and joined Eishin, it would have been three Gods against one and Eishin would have been easily killed and the world would have achieved peace, or at least would be in a better state than it currently is.

"I'm sorry professor, but this is not a request. Stand back now or your fight will now be with me." Canan/Eirin spoke, their voices synchronized and sounding neither male nor female.

The entire world suddenly began to darken, interrupting the discussion. Both looked up at the sky and noticed the solar eclipse, but something was wrong.

Chapter 200 Disgraceful retreat

Despite the darkness surrounding them, the surrounding light element concentration was rapidly increasing.

The frozen ocean below began to glow as the darkness dispersed, unable to maintain itself because of the overwhelming amount of light at the bottom. The ice started to glow as its surface cracked, the pressure Eishin was exerting was enough to destroy it.

The ice exploded as a pillar of light rose, slicing through the space between Illum and Canan/Eirin, forcing them both back to avoid being hit.

Eishin stood on top of the pillar, glaring at Illum from above. He was in his true form, no longer daring to underestimate Illum.

His body now measured approximately 40 meters in height and was made of pure light element, shining like a lighthouse. Three pairs of white feathered wings rose from its back, while a white halo floated on top of its head.

He was wearing full armor that was actually part of his body. In his haste, Eishin had forgotten his equipment in the divine palace, so he was completely unarmed.

His helmet was completely closed and had only two slits for his eyes, with two white flames coming out of the slits.

The eclipse was behind him and contrasted with his glowing body, making his view even more impressive.

He wasn't holding back any longer and decided to go all out, activating his Sun Ruler racial ability. The ability allowed him to convert all sunlight into elemental energy that would be absorbed by the halo floating on his head, maintaining a constant source of energy as long as it was daylight.

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"Finally tired of being beaten and decided to fight for real?" Illum was unimpressed with his transformation and scoffed.

"You will pay for your words. I will not let my guard down anymore." Eishin spoke arrogantly and raised his arm, conjuring a ring of white lightning, but he was stopped.

"Eishin, enough of this. We must not fight him, not here and not now." Canan/Eirin spoke as she stood in front of Eishin's face.

"Get out of the way. I'm going to kill that man and then the giants he's protecting." Eishin spoke and as he waved Canan/Eirin out of the way.

"You, kill me? I think I hit you so hard it gave you a concussion. You're suffering from hallucinations." Illum chuckled at him as he crossed his arms, earning an evil look from Canan/Eirin.

Eishin was about to resume the attack but was forced to stop.

A gigantic purplish-black orb appeared right behind Illum, interrupting him. An approximately 50 meter black dragon appeared, roaring furiously towards Eishin.

The dragon had two pairs of wings with more holes than a sieve and spikes of bone at the ends. Its black scales had a diamond pattern and ended in sharp spikes, forming a natural spiked armor in addition to the dragon's natural protective scales.

A row of sharp bones started at the back of its head and ran to the base of its tail, which looked like a bony whip, ending in a black stinger.

Its head had five horns that formed a crown and its eyes were golden, but the strangest part was its jaw. The lower part of the dragon's jaw was split left and right, with a tongue forked in the middle.

It was Kalesi, the death lord and only dragon lich in the world.

She glared at the titan of light as it flew, each beat of its wings generating black lightning that connected the clouds above and the ocean below. Kalesi wasted no time talking and tried to move forward, but Illum stopped her.

“Wait. Let’s give them one last chance. If you agree to back off now, I’m willing to overlook your breach of agreement, on the condition that you don’t act directly until the end of the war to come.” Illum spoke seriously, but got only a mocking response from Eishin.

“And why should I accept your deal? That would be an ultimatum for the human realms and without our interference, the giants would butcher countless innocent lives!” Eishin shouted and this time Canan/Eirin had to agree.

“I’m sorry master, but Eishin is right. We cannot accept such absurd terms.” They spoke while keeping one set of eyes on Kalesi and the other on Illum, ready to react to any attack.

“I said you are forbidden to act directly, but I didn’t say you are forbidden to help. You are free to help through the order or the church, as long as you don’t act personally.” Illum spoke and this time Canan/Eirin stopped to think seriously, much to Eishin’s chagrin.

He felt confident to defeat Illum while he was alone, but if Kalesi got involved it would be a different story. Despite Illum’s arrogant bravado, Eishin knew his power was limited away from the yggdrasil and every spell he cast consumed amber energy that would take years to recover.

“I accept your offer. I will retreat here and assist in the war just by order, without getting directly involved. That’s enough for you, right?” Canan/Eirin spoke and retreated a few meters, showing that they did not intend to continue hostilities here.

Alone, Eishin had no choice but to retreat. If he chooses to fight and is killed, Canan and Eirin would be next and humanity would be doomed to live in a world ruled by inhuman Gods. He shrunk back to human size and reverted to his human appearance, before departing back to the Carian empire without saying a single word.

Eishin had recovered all the damage suffered under the sun ruler, but his pride was still bruised from being forced to flee with his tail between his legs and his hatred for the giants burned brighter than ever. He was already thinking of a way to stop the attacking demihumans, as well as a way to get revenge on Illum for today’s humiliation.

“Farewell, master.” Canan/Eirin said and disappeared in a purple orb, leaving Kalesi and Illum alone.

“Did you really have to kick them out now that I got here? Couldn’t you have at least let me hit that bastard a few times?” Kalesi asked in frustration. She was late for the attack because Illum had moved without warning her, and it took her a few minutes to find a crystal large enough for her size.

“I stopped the fight just because you arrived. Eishin was impatient and wasn’t thinking straight, so it was easy for me to take him down. But unlike me, you wouldn’t be able to control yourself once you started fighting and it would just end when one of the two runs out of mana or dies.” Illum shook his head, thinking of all the destruction that would ensue if they both fought.

“At that point, my former disciples would get involved to try to save him and I would be forced to fight as well, destroying all our efforts to delay the war. Don’t forget that our objective is not only to defeat

them, but also to prevent the world be destroyed by the aftermath of battle.” Illum spoke and he conjured a red wave and shot it into the ocean below to prove his point.

A few seconds later, several withered corpses of sea monsters began to float on the surface of the sea, showing that even a quick confrontation like that was enough to take a few thousand lives.

“You’re right, I’m sorry about that. I admit I wouldn’t be able to contain myself if we started fighting seriously.” Kalesi took a deep breath to calm himself, causing a small typhoon and used shapeshifting magic to return to human form. She admitted he was right, but from the icy steam that rose from her nostrils every time she took a breath, she was still irritated.

“Let’s get back to Nytrer before you decide to de-stress against the environment.” Illum grabbed her arm before she could react and teleported them back to the Nytrer continent.

They appeared at the top of the yggdrasil, on one of the branches of the world tree. A few dozen meters away was a small wooden hut where Illum lived. Unlike other Gods or royal families, Illum felt no need for luxury and a cozy little cabin was all he needed when he felt tired from work.

Here, Illum would have fantastic eyesight, not that he needed eyes to see when he was near the yggdrasil. His mystical senses were so strong that he could sense every living and undead being hundreds of miles away, but he usually suppressed this ability for the sake of his own mental health.

He would eventually forget his duty as the guardian of life and become arrogant, forgetting the value of life. Illum created this small hut instead of a massive castle or palace to always remember what’s important.

“You didn’t need to drag myself around like a child like that. I wasn’t going to destroy an already destroyed environment.” Kalesi spoke as he let go of her arm and walked towards the hut.

Despite being a humble one-story hut, it was made of yggdrasil wood and possessed defensive enchantments that would put a royal palace to shame. It was something he had created just for fun, as the world tree itself possessed much more power.

They entered the small hut and Kalesi sat down on one of the sofas, before finally asking the question that had been bothering her.