

## Legion lich 241

### Chapter 241 Fortress project

“...” The two stared at each other in silence for a few seconds, before Athos sat up and coughed a few times.

“So what? You came here because you need something?” Athos asked with his best poker face, ignoring what just happened.

“In truth no. You are alone at the edge of the army and so absorbed in your task that you have ignored everything in your surroundings, so the generals and I have taken turns watching over you.” Treevor replied as he did the same.

They stared at each other silently for a while longer before getting up and heading back to the center of the army. No words were spoken and there was only silence between the two men, but the story was different in the mental link.

‘Hahahahahaha, what the hell was that? I can’t believe a murderous psychopath like you would scream like that just to be scared.’ Treevor laughed and sneered at Athos in the mind-link only between them, so the others couldn’t hear him.

‘Shut up, you just took me by surprise, that’s all!’ Athos replied with embarrassment. ‘Besides, you’re not much better than me. I clearly remember a certain skeleton that screamed the same way as it fell from the sky of a wyvern.’ Athos counterattacked, causing Treevor to gasp in surprise, though that was impossible.

‘How did you know about that?’ Treevor asked shocked.

‘You fell in the midst of the army, while the battle was in progress. Almost the entire army heard his disgraceful performance, just avoided mentioning it because of his position. But Emilia happily shared it with me when I asked for a battle report.’ Athos spoke with a sly smile, making the surrounding black skeletons who were unaware of the conversation wonder why he suddenly burst out laughing.

‘This and that are completely different situations. Besides, comparing our scares is ridiculous. My voice just sounded higher because I was falling at high speed, while your scream was so high that only dogs could hear it.’ Now it was Treevor’s turn to strike back.

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‘Let’s fly in Simogo and take the test. I’m sure Simogo would love to help you overcome your fear of heights.’ With no way to defend himself, Athos began to play dirty.

‘I don’t think we need to use such extreme measures. Let’s just pretend nothing happened and move on.’ If skeletons could pale, Treevor would be almost gray by now, realizing how serious Athos was.

Before they knew it, they were in the middle of the camp, the dead earth beneath their feet being replaced by black stone bricks. The dwarves had regained their mana thanks to the rhinos’ crystals and were already working again.

"I'll take some time to meditate and recover my mana , so just interrupt me if something happens."

Athos spoke as he entered one of the empty carriages they had brought from the fortress of the platinum fist.

The dwarves had not yet constructed any buildings other than the meeting building, so Athos could only have privacy inside the empty carriages.

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Days passed quickly as the busy skeletons worked day and night tirelessly, stopping only to regain their mana.

The stone floor was finished in less than two days and construction began on the first of three walls they planned to build around the fortress.

According to the blueprints created by the dwarves and reviewed by Dwarvin, the new fortress would have its first wall within a extensive of 1 kilometer and be 15 meters high, while the second wall would be within a extensive of 10 kilometers and would be 13 meters, the The last and most extensive wall would be 20 kilometers long and only 10 meters high.

The walls were the dwarves' priority and they were using as much mana as possible on the blackstone bricks so that mages could later runesmithing. Each wall would have different enchantments and despite Athos' expectations, their effects would not be shared.

According to Dwarvin, there would be wards on every wall, but minor enchantments would be different for each one. He wanted to build it this way to save energy from detection spells, which would consume a colossal amount of mana if they were to cover 20 kilometers in length.

The inner space of the first wall is where the fortress would be built, or as Dwarvin tried and failed to name it, the skelly castle. The fortress would be almost 500 meters long and almost 100 meters high, surpassing even the royal castle in the capital of Mirkor in size, but Dwarvin refused to reduce the size of the construction, saying that this was the minimum for his master.

A project of this magnitude would normally require a huge budget and months of hard work even with the use of magic, but the dwarves could build it in a few weeks at most. The fortress would also only be made of black stone reinforced by the dwarves' racial ability, so it wouldn't require materials that the undead currently lack.

Skeletons wouldn't even need to find a quarry to obtain raw materials, just using earth magic to compress earth and create bricks out of stone was enough. This also caused a huge gap of land around the stronghold area, but the dwarves also planned to make use of this in the future.

The intermediate area between the first and second walls would be occupied by forges, warehouses, barracks and various stone buildings for different purposes. The buildings would also be constructed similar to a maze, with several streets ending in dead ends.

Its purpose was to delay the enemies if the two walls were invaded, allowing the skeletons to retreat with all important resources into the fortress.

The outermost area would be a huge forest of corrupted trees that the dwarves planned to plant in the future. It was currently just a wasteland and all the skeletons had done was flatten the land.

Athos found the idea of ??planting trees a strange idea and a waste of so much space, but then he remembered the spirits he had killed and were currently unconscious, understanding Dwarvin's idea.

The spirits were powerful and if a corrupted forest was created, they could act as a new line of defense. The skeletons had moved the trees that were the real bodies of the spirits to the outside area, replanting them in all twelve directions like clockwork.

The land around the spirits was slowly being corrupted, but according to Treevor, the land still held its nutrients, just naturally corrupted by the presence of the spirits. This discovery made the plan to create a corrupted forest actually viable, as the spirits still nourished the land, albeit in a different way that only allowed corrupted trees to grow.

While the dwarves were busy working and human skeletons that possessed greater dexterity helped with manual work, the demihumans spent their time between training and hunting.

The monsters refused to approach the undead now, so they had to go farther and farther away to hunt and maintain their pace of development. During these days, the undead even encountered nomadic demi-human tribes thanks to birds and flying undead, slowly increasing their numbers.

Athos also didn't sit still and trained almost without rest, only stopping when he ran out of mana. His control of darkness has increased immensely and he has even developed some simple spells.

Now, Athos could also move around while using darkness spells, although it would still be doubtful if he would be able to hold his own in a real-time battle. Another discovery that Athos made was that his magic organ's control of magic depended on his own understanding of magic, so as he practiced magic, his magic organ's control also improved.

After learning this, Athos had an idea and began to practice magic with his mind and magic organ, finding that his control of magic also increased as the magic organ practiced. The experience that his magic organ gained from training was passed on to him and vice versa, as if it were a second brain.

Training along with his magic organ also made Athos realize that he wasn't tapping into his full potential. He always cast incomplete spells or abilities and let the magic organ complete it and doubled its effects using spells of his own, but that was inefficient.

What he discovered by chance while practicing magic was that his magic organ could offer support to the spells or abilities that Athos cast, adding the energy of the magic organ itself to increase them to another level and assisting in spells that would be impossible for his level current.

Its effects would be even stronger than if he just duplicated a skill, as it was akin to two mages working together to cast a spell. His training pace only increased with this discovery, making even the most loyal of skeletons feel a touch of Athos envy, though the latter said that he planned to research a way to develop magical organs for all of them when he had time and a suitable laboratory.

Lastly, the skeletons of hive hawks also began to gather clouds in the sky and electrically charge them, starting to form a small storm cloud above the camp. Mages with an affinity for air and water also helped the hawks gather storm clouds, quickly increasing the size of the clouds.

## Chapter 242 The eve of war

Athos still clearly remembered the power the storm cloud had during the battle in the fortress and wanted to add it to his defenses.

“Once this fortress is completed, it’s going to take a full-grown dragon to bring down all those defenses.” It was Athos’ honest opinion after confirming all the layers of defenses the dwarves planned to create.

In addition to all defenses, the dwarves would build an underground shelter, but those would be plans for the future. The most that they would work underground in the near future would be the underground mine that was in the inner area of ??the first wall, behind where the fortress would be located in the future.

The cave built by the spirits and demihumans was still standing, but the dwarves had plans to further strengthen the cave walls and build support pillars to expand the tunnels even further.

Amidst so many ongoing projects, most of the skeletons were busy at the moment, unaware of the imminent invasion that would take place in just a few days.

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In the port city of de Nuatro in the kingdom of Mikor, a few days later.

The port city, once a prosperous place with hundreds of fishing vessels transporting materials between the mainland and the nearest islands, was now almost completely uninhabited, all citizens having been evacuated from the city, leaving the city empty.

The only ones left behind were the kingdom’s regular army and court mages, in addition to the mages sent by the order of magic. The church was absent in this particular city, although its presence was stronger elsewhere.

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The church and order had divided their strength and had tacitly avoided sending support to the same city, lest they over-fortify a single location and leave others unprotected. Both organizations were powerful, but employed different tactics to battle that would not always work well together, so they preferred to work separately.

Dozens of magic cannons were deployed on the pier and aimed towards the horizon, just waiting for the evolved demihumans to appear on the horizon. The order had also brought magic items that would generate barriers once the battle started, as the city itself had no walls or large-scale spells.

Magic items capable of generating barriers with the same power as a large-scale spell were extremely expensive, but the order of magic had opened their coffers on account of the emergency situation.

The mages and soldiers encamped in the city were tense and nervous about the battle to come, but they were working diligently to fortify the city. The soldiers were more or less used to it after spending almost a month camped in the city, but the mages had just arrived and weren’t used to the war climate.

It didn't help that many mages had little battle experience and had never witnessed a battle on such a scale before. Many order mages came from famous magical bloodlines and were privileged for most of their lives.

Mages coming from humbler backgrounds would not have such a privilege, but neither would they have the necessary resources to advance quickly and lack confidence in their own strength to deal with an evolved demihuman.

Most of them were praying internally that everything was just a dream or that they could leave everything behind and run away, even if they had to leave everything they built behind.

Similar situations were happening in all the cities and forts built by the order of magic, the morale was so low that it looked like a defeated army returning, instead of waiting for the battle.

Not surprisingly, the situation was the complete opposite in places protected by the church. Morale among the paladins and priests was so high that for a moment the regular soldiers feared that church members would throw themselves into the sea to swim to the demihumans.

Church members were always indoctrinated with the idea that they were heroes of justice and that their duty was to protect humanity from a great evil, but until recently that great evil was something vague and distant, like the half-human empire in the south. or the beast people in the west.

Yet they weren't major threats to humanity, just nuisances in humanity's path. Evolved demi-humans invading the human realms on a continental scale on the other hand, was a real threat and the great evil they trained their whole lives to face.

The church forces could hardly wait for the battle to begin as they held a huge feast organized by the church itself. It was a tradition that church members would have a hearty meal before a big battle, commonly called the last supper.

The adventurers were the only forces not present in any of the port cities or strongholds built by the order. Now that most of the Three Kingdoms' troops were focused on defending themselves against enemies, adventurers were needed more than ever in cities to keep monster populations in check.

It would be a big problem if the three kingdoms focused all their efforts on dealing with the evolved demihumans, only to suffer monster outbreaks due to neglecting their own territories.

Kian Avant, the supreme master and founder of the adventurer's guild didn't like this setup very much, but he didn't openly complain. Someone had to stay behind and keep things in order, and even he had to admit that compared to the other two organizations, the adventurer's guild had little war potential, even though its members were individually strong and had good teamwork.

Adventurers lacked experience in warfare, even compared to arrogant mages. Fighting monsters was completely different from fighting a demihuman and hordes of monsters couldn't even be compared to a real army.

There wasn't enough information to know how organized the evolved demihumans were, but if they had the minimum organization of an army, it would be almost impossible for adventurers to fight with all their might.

There were only a few hours left before the start of the invasion and information that the islands closest to the continent were occupied by evolved semi-humans reached all commanders in the field and stationed forces in case reinforcements were necessary, increasing tension even among the most stoic soldiers.

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In Eishin's Divine Palace, above the capital of El Dorado.

Eishin was sitting on his throne watching several different holograms scattered throughout the throne room. The holograms tracked in real time all locations protected by church forces.

He was coldly watching the paladins and priests finishing their last supper and preparing for battle. Eishin had been standing in the same position for almost an entire day, just waiting for the half-human ships to appear on the horizon.

From time to time, he had the illusion of giants looming over the horizon and he would squeeze the throne's arms until they broke, belatedly realizing that it was just his mind and unresolved trauma playing tricks on his mind.

The cherubim guarding the throne room were all tense, feeling Eishin's emotions fluctuate wildly and with it the floating palace.

Suddenly, a knock on the door got everyone's attention and the angel outside announced that the God Canan was trying to get in touch, but Eishin ignored it.

"Say I'm busy and don't want any distractions right now." Eishin responded to the messenger angel, but the latter seemed hesitant to obey his orders, something that would be considered sacrilege in normal times.

"...some problem?" Eishin asked as he looked at the throne room doors with questioning eyes, clearly seeing the hesitant angel behind them.

"My lord, is it really wise to continue ignoring communication with the empire and god Canan? They are our greatest allies and I believe they will not be happy to be ignored for so long." The angel gathered all his courage and explained his fear, surprising all the cherubs.

"Someone grew balls to challenge our lord like that." One of the younger cherubs on guard muttered, receiving an elbow from his colleague beside him to keep quiet.

"The little angel is right, Eisin. It's rude to continue ignoring an old friend like that." Canan's voice sounded outside the palace and reverberated through all the palace corridors until it reached the throne room, making Eishin sigh.

"Listening to other people's conversations too." Eishin responded as the ceiling of the throne room opened so Canan could enter.

"I'm not spying on anyone. It just happened to be my good ears picking up the conversation as I approached. Since you always ignore my calls, I decided to come here myself." Canan descended into the throne room as he spoke.

“Your concealment skills also seem to have improved, as you managed to approach the capital without me noticing.” Unlike the last meeting they had, Eishin did not get up from the throne, but remained seated on his throne looking at Canan from above.

“You shouldn’t be here. You should be in your empire, watching over the strongholds and cities the order is protecting.” Eshin kept looking at Canan with the same cold eyes he looked at his enemies, making the tension in the room skyrocket.

#### Chapter 243 Fortress D

“I will ignore your past and current rudeness, as you are not thinking rationally out of anger.” Canan spoke while crossing his arms, squinting at Eishin.

“Haah. I’m sorry about that, I’m not on my best days.” Eishin’s gaze softened and he rose, descending the throne stairs to meet Canan toe-to-toe. Eishin was still looking at the holograms anxiously, but he wasn’t acting arrogant anymore.

“No problem. We all have personal problems and ghosts from the past that haunt us to this day. I probably would have done the same thing in your place.” Canan also softened his tone and looked pityingly at his old friend.

“Now, do you mind explaining why you’ve turned down all my calls up until now? Eirin and I were worried you’d do something stupid.” Canan asked after the weather had improved enough.

“Working on my personal projects. I can’t reveal details, but I assure you it’s nothing that could affect our agreement with the other Gods, that much I can guarantee.” Eishin kept his grand ascension plan to himself and the seraphim only, keeping it a secret even from Canan and the cherubim.

“I won’t lie and say that answered anything, but I’m going to trust you.” Canan replied before turning to the holograms. “Is everything okay on your side?”

“As good as it could be.” Eishin replied indifferently. “And on your side? If you’re here, who’s watching the strongholds?”

“I have trusted servants to do that. Focusing on watching holograms with nothing going on won’t change anything, so I preferred to come here and visit him. They’ll call me as soon as the battles start, so I won’t miss anything.” Canan replied with a despondent shrug.

“Order mages are not weak and their technology is the best that currently exists, but morals couldn’t be lower. They are arrogant, spoiled and cowardly, acting arrogantly and bragging about their powers, only to cower when they are really needed.” Canan began to vent about how useless the order mages were, making Eirin cringe in the corner of her mind.

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“I couldn’t agree more. The order is a disgrace to humanity, a place where degenerates and criminals gather, committing inhumane crimes in the open and can pay to escape their punishment.” Eishin spoke with disgust and Canan didn’t say anything to correct him as he was of the same opinion.

The guarding cherubs all nodded in disgust, feeling disgusted just thinking about the order of magic. Unlike the three kingdoms, where the order of magic was seen as an organization that gathered the

most talented and trained them to develop their talents, in the Makima empire they were seen as a place that gathered the ambitious and disloyal mages, a dangerous place where the most strong reigned and the weak were trampled underfoot.

Most of the Caria empire's mages or young talents joined the army or imperial mages, leaving only the rotten apples for the order.

"So we can only wait and hope the cowards of the order do their job. There's nothing more we can do now." Eishin concluded with a defeated sigh, feeling frustrated that he couldn't do anything.

'Even after ordering Samael to advance the ascension plans, it will still be a few decades before we purify the energy of the world enough for our plans. Can the continent of Caprio hold out for that long? Eishin questioned himself, the defeat of the human kingdoms was already a sure thing in his mind.

It wasn't just the trauma that made him pessimistic, it was the harsh reality of someone who lived during the age of chaos, someone who experienced the terror of giants firsthand. Even if the evolved demihumans only had a fraction of that power, it would be enough to level the three countries even with the help of the order and the church.

The rest of the continent would also fall in a few years and the Adula continent would be next. The Nytrer continent was on the other side of the world and if the evolved demihumans wanted to attack them, they could just travel east and invade them.

The dimensional storage ring on Canan's finger began to glow, interrupting Eishin's thoughts and drawing everyone's attention. This only happened when the ring's wielder injected mana or someone tried to interact with an item within the dimensional ring, causing the teleportation crystal in the ring to glow.

"Looks like we were the first, lucky for us." Canan muttered with a wry smile, taking a communication cube from his ring. A hologram immediately appeared on top of the cube, revealing the face of one of Canan's royal guards.

"Sir, the demihumans have become visible on the horizon of D fortress." The guard reported right away, but his voice was sour and he seemed to be bothered by something. The order hadn't bothered to name all the fortresses they had to build, they just used letters to designate them.

"Damn it, why of all places did it have to start with him?" Canan clicked his tongue in annoyance.

"What's wrong with this fortress? The defenses weren't completed in time?" Eishin asked doubtfully and Canan shook his head in denial.

"That's not the problem. The problem is who is left to defend the fortress." Canan complained. "We leave the defense of the fortress to former Elder Louis Zahara and his undead army."

"The one responsible for destroying the portal tower and so many other crimes? Did you let this guy live?" Eishin asked shocked, doubting Canan's sanity. "How could you leave a bastard like him alive and in charge of an entire fortress?"

The news that the black elder was judged and lost his position spread throughout the empire and beyond, reaching Eishin's ears.



“Alive yes, in command never. We allowed Louis to live because of the emergency we are in, but he became a war slave and will only live as long as the war lasts. He was also forced to share all his knowledge with the order.” Canan explained his motives, but Eishin laughed.

“Like I said, paying to get away with it. Want to bet me he’ll get away before the end of this war?” Eishin scoffed at the idea and waggered with the guarding cherubs.

“You’ll probably bite your tongue when you find out what that bastard was researching. That motherfucker was a sick genius, but a genius nonetheless.” Canan spoke, but refused to share any details and Eishin didn’t insist much.

He climbed the stairs again and sat on his throne, but there was no arrogance in his posture this time. The Divine Palace also changed shape and created a second seat next to him and Eishin waved his hand for Canan to sit next to him.

“Let’s watch the battle then. I’m curious to know how strong this dark elder is for you to have spared him even with so many crimes.” Eishin spoke as Canan sat down.

Canan ordered the guard on the other side to transmit the images from Fortress D to his cube and zoomed in on the hologram above them so that the angels below could see it as well.

“It really is a big army for a single necromancer. He must be as talented as he is disgusting.” Eishin spoke with disgust, looking at the undead gathered inside the fortress.

There were over 10,000 zombies and 5000 skeletons, mostly human and having full armor and equipment. In the middle of the zombie army, a death knight was riding a zombie horse, carrying a spear bigger than him in his right hand and a tower shield in his left hand.

Its armor covered its entire body and it was impossible to distinguish its original race, but it appeared to be a human or elf by its size.

500 liches were waiting behind them, wearing tattered cloaks and carrying long black wooden staffs. A lich wearing a black cloak with dark green embroidery, which the human Gods recognized as an elf by the pointed bones where his ears should have been, was standing in front of the mages.

Louis was waiting just behind the army, but he wasn’t alone. Standing like a statue just to his right was a Zombie Drake, a lesser dragons like the wyverns or hydras.

The Zombie drake was almost 15 meters long from head to tail, its tail alone measuring 5 meters. His scales were originally orange, but turned darker after becoming a zombie.

Two masters of magic were standing some distance away from the former elder, following Louis like a shadow.

Louis himself was dressed in his finest gear, wearing a simple black robe with suffering white faces appearing and disappearing randomly on its surface. He carried a bone staff in his left hand, with the skull of an unknown deer monster.

He wore silver armor under the cloak, but there was no important detail, just looking like a plate of divine mithril.

Eishin found it odd that a mage wearing such a gaudy cloak and staff would be wearing such plain armor underneath, but Canan seemed to understand what was going on, so he decided there was a reason behind it.

#### Chapter 244 Beginning of war

There were no other people inside the fortress other than these three, but it was still one of the most well-defended fortresses on the continent. The order of magic also had barrier-generating magic items and left magic cannons that the undead could operate, so the order was also supporting Louis, not just sending him to his death.

"I'm amazed that this necromancer is able to maintain control of so many dead without fainting from the effort. Even though all undead are newborns, it's a great achievement to be able to control so many." Eishin sincerely praised, although he hated necromancy to the core.

"It's thanks to the tombstones of the dead and that staff." Canan began to explain the secret behind Louis' army. "Tombstones are magical items that keep the undead in a state of hibernation, and he can take them out whenever he wants."

Canan took some papers from his dimensional ring with Louis' personal information and a list of his undead was included and passed to Eishin. The death knight, lich elf, Zombie Drake and even the zombie and skeleton army have been listed.

Eishin briefly flipped through the information before handing it back to Canan. "Is his research not here?"

"Obviously not." Canan looked at Eishin as if he had lost his mind. "We are allies, but that's not enough to share military secrets between us. Just as you have your secrets, I have mine."

"Fair." Eishin didn't insist anymore and returned to the previous matter. "And that stick? Do you know what it is?"

"Believe it or not, this staff is made from the spine and skull of a death deer." Canan spoke and sympathized with his surprise.

Death deer were extremely rare and equally dangerous creatures. They were natural necromancers, capable of turning corpses into the undead and controlling them, making them threats to all living things.

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They were also capable of transforming into a ghost-like spirit form. Louis got his hands on the staff by accident over two centuries ago, before he even became an elder, and it has become his best weapon ever since, despite the technology that created it being outdated.

"Looks like it's about to start." Eishin muttered, seeing the ships of evolved demihumans getting closer and closer. He tried to distract himself by asking questions about the elder, but it was no longer possible.

Canan also stopped talking and concentrated on the hologram in front of him, swearing to himself that he would kill Louis with his own hands if he didn't live up to expectations or prove himself to be replaceable.

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At the same time, in the fortress D.

"It will start soon, go to your positions." Louis ordered, noticing that the evolved demihumans were getting closer. The skeletons were the first to move, reaching for the magic cannons and aiming for the ships, just waiting for the ships to come into range.

The zombies were next taking up a Phalanx formation in front of the fortress' gates. The fortress itself was small, standing less than 50 meters tall and made entirely of earth magic.

Louis knew he couldn't rely too much on these stone walls and that the true defense would be the barrier-generating magic items, so he ordered the zombie army to position itself in front of the gates, staying behind the walls along with the liches and the zombie drake.

"Activate the barriers." Louis ordered the masters of magic, as they would not allow him to get his hands on controlling the barrier devices. The masters of magic didn't immediately respond, but looked at the approaching demihuman ships and nodded.

One of them walked away from the elder and took the magic item from his dimensional ring. The item looked like a floating mithril sphere, with circular mithril shields floating in the four directions. As soon as the mage activated the item, the sphere flew high and the circular shields spread out until it covered the fortress and the undead army, a membrane of mana connecting the shields.

The mana membrane was made of pure energy and ignored all buildings and undead, becoming a solid barrier only when the masters of magic wanted it to. The barriers would become membranes of mana and allow any attack from the inside out, but block attacks coming from the outside.

"They're almost in range, so be prepared. And don't even think about doing anything, because it won't end well for you." The master of magic left behind ordered Louis, who could only gnash his teeth and obey like a dog on a leash. The mage was holding a communication cube and probably recording since the battle was going to start soon, so he could only smile and wave.

Louis had been completely healed and even received potions that helped clear his mind so he wouldn't act like a madman like he did on judgment day, but his pride remained wounded and Louis was unable to accept what happened to him.

'These bastards dare to order me around like I'm a dog. I am an elder of the order, a mage much more powerful than those two pathetic mages, but through Thersec's fault I have been reduced to this pathetic state.' Louis thought as he internally wished that the Zombie Drake would tear him to pieces, but he stopped himself.

He knew that even if he killed the master of magic here, it would do nothing to improve his situation and would just give his enemies the excuse they needed to get rid of him at once. Despite all the shame and humiliation he went through, Louis still considered his survival more important than revenge.

As long as he could live one more day, there would always be a chance to get revenge, while his life was but one.

‘For now, all I can do is fight with everything I’ve got so they can’t kill me, at least not while we’re at war. I need to think of a way to get rid of this tracking spell and regain my position as a dark elder.’ Louis used mana vision to look at the core itself, feeling disgusted at the sight of the tracking spell surrounding his core.

Unfortunately, there was nothing he could do to affect the tracking spell. He had already tried all of his best spells and abilities only to find them useless, his mana passing through the layer with no effect.

The tracking spell didn’t offer any resistance to his mana, but it wasn’t affected by his magic either. It was a marvel of magic that could track him wherever he went, but it wouldn’t affect his fighting ability.

‘They’ve already invaded my lab and forced me to share all my knowledge, so the only way to recover everything I’ve lost is an achievement so great that it overshadows all my previous crimes and discoveries, but first I must focus on these bastards in front of me.’ Louis stopped thinking about his plan and focused on the battle ahead.

The ships of the evolved demihumans were rapidly approaching and in a few seconds they would come into range of the magic cannons.

“Prepare to fire on my signal. Lichs, start casting.” Louis ordered loudly so that the people watching the battle could hear and started to cast his own spells. He needed to put on a show for whoever was watching and mental orders were effective but not at all flashy.

“Fire!” He yelled as the ships came into range, firing all the dozen guns at once. The cannons’ ammunition was iron bullets enchanted to explode on contact and filled with alchemical powder, increasing the explosive power of each shot.

The cannons were also enchanted to speed up the explosions and increase the range of the projectiles, allowing the skeletons to hit ships while they were nearly 10 kilometers from shore.

Giant explosions hit the front lines of the demihuman ships, some hitting the ships and others missing the target by a large margin, the flames and smoke obscuring Louis’ vision and preventing him from confirming how much damage was done.

“Reload and fire as soon as you’re ready.” Louis wasted no time confirming the result and ordered the skeletons to prepare for the next barrage of fire.

Furious roars came from the direction of the explosions and the smoke was swept away by a gust of wind, allowing Louis to visualize the evolved demihumans. Many of the vanguard ships were burning and bodies could be seen floating in the water, but the dead were a minority.

Several demihumans were standing on the remains of the ship or on pieces of ice floating in the ocean and growing larger with each passing second. 20 meter giants made of rock-hard white ice around them rose amidst the explosions, their feet touching the sea floor and half their bodies above the water.

They were evolved ogres activating gigantification, its size after growing up being twice that of a normal ogre. Normal ogres also had the limitation that they could only absorb two abundant elements, while their evolved version could absorb three.

The evolved demihumans advanced even with the loss of ships, the larger ones swimming directly while the smaller ones climbed onto the shoulders of the 20 meter ogres.

#### Chapter 245 Evolved Skills

Two horns sounded in the rear line and the ships that came in the rear turned left and right, advancing while avoiding coming into gun range.

‘Tch. They have a commander and are organized. It would be so much simpler if they just went forward like the barbarians they are.’ Louis thought irritably. The skeletons continued firing at the swimming demihumans, but the evolved ogres blocked the blasts with their fists, detonating the projectiles in the air.

The ogres used defensive abilities to generate shockwaves upon impact, the shockwaves blocking the blasts and protecting the demihumans below.

‘Lichs, cast your spells as soon as the demihumans get close enough. Skeletons, keep shooting at the demihumans.’ Louis ordered the undead, but the demihumans were faster.

The evolved demihumans on the ogres’ shoulders carried teleportation crystals and had been carrying them since the first shots. Once loaded, the evolved demi-humans jumped and disappeared in purple spheres, appearing in the middle of the formation of skeletons and cannons.

The evolved demihumans didn’t know what cannons were, but they realized the attacks came from them and aimed at them first. Those small demihumans were evolved goblins, their size slightly larger than the average human being and possessing a small horn in the middle of their foreheads, but their power could not be different.

Ordinary goblins didn’t have racial abilities and that truth didn’t change even after they started to evolve, but their brute strength was much stronger than their size would suggest.

The instant they appeared, they split left and right, hacking or smashing the skeletons to pieces with their axes or maces. The teleportation spheres cut skeletons to pieces or teleported them whole, throwing them back to their previous position among the evolved demihumans, where they were almost immediately destroyed.

The skeletons tried to block the goblins’ onslaught, but they were much stronger and attacked suicidally, using only offensive abilities to tear the undead apart.

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Unfortunately for the goblins, the skeletons fought just as aggressively and had the overwhelming numerical advantage, so there was little they could do to overcome them.

The goblins quickly fell, festering wounds piling up all over their bodies. So when the Lichs’ spells fell on them, there was nothing they could do to reverse the situation.

Louis had ordered the liches to cast their spells as soon as they came into range, and that's exactly what they did. Darkness spells were naturally slow, but the undead modified the spell, sacrificing power for increased speed.

One of the last living goblins who narrowly escaped one of the liches' spells and decided to go all-or-nothing, leaping into the air and hurling his ax at one of the cannons.

The ax hit the cannon and sliced it in half like butter, the ammo inside the cannon exploding and destroying nearby skeletons.

The cannons were far from each other so the explosion did not affect other cannons, but it did hit the ordnance that was left nearby to reload and generated several small subsequent explosions and destroyed hundreds of other skeletons.

A single cannon wouldn't have made much difference in the battle, but it was a huge blow to Louis, who had hoped for a perfect victory.

"It was only a few dozen evolved goblins, but almost 1000 skeletons were destroyed. I think we need to prepare to call for reinforcements and retreat." One of the masters of magic scoffed and Louis just gritted his teeth in response.

'The use of teleportation crystals was unexpected. I don't have any magic items that interfere or force teleportation, so I have no means to stop them from teleporting. I can only hope that the only ones who have crystal are the small evolved goblins.' Louis thought irritably, ordering the liches to prepare the next batch of spells.

Liches were undead-turned mages who retained knowledge of all the spells they knew in life, but still had their intelligence limited and could only act on Louis's orders, to prevent them from getting out of control.

The evolved demihumans swimming finally reached the beach while being bombarded by the cannons, but the ogres protected them until the end.

"Destroy them all!" Shouted an evolved orc, 7 meters tall, with blood red skin and a pair of short, black horns. He was the captain of the first unit of demihumans and was furious that his soldiers had been killed by what he considered cowardly tactics.

Many of the generals and important positions in the army were occupied by the evolved orcs, as the important positions in the army were chosen through brute force in duels.

A soldier could challenge his superior to duels and take his position if he won the fight and the evolved orcs were best for direct fights like this. They didn't have to worry about controlling their mana and they fought with everything they had, becoming unstoppable.

The evolved demihumans responded with equally furious screams, but Louis could only make out snippets or single words. Louis knew the demihuman language, but the demihumans on the Doravon continent spoke a different dialect and several words had changed meaning over time, so it was almost a different language now.

‘Even if I don’t understand your words, it doesn’t take a genius to understand your simple plan.’ Louis thought, noticing that the gigantified Ogres were advancing in front and acting as shields.

The cannons continued to fire and the liches cast their best spells against them, but the ogres used elemental abilities that were similar to spells in response.

They were still few in number and their power could not match the barrage of darkness that fell upon them, but the ogres used their bodies to defend those who came after them and allow them to catch up with the army.

When they finally reached the line of skeletons, most of the ogres were dead or badly injured, their giant bodies falling apart with several black spots from the spells of darkness, but they did their job.

The evolved orcs roared as they broke out of the ogres’ protection and cut through the line of skeletons, only to be blocked by the barrier. They grew enraged at being blocked so close to their enemies and attacked with ever-increasing ferocity, their attacks generating shock waves that swept across the land and raised clouds of dust.

The battle spirit racial skill had changed along with them, evolving into negative Karma. Now, his skill reacted not only to anger and hatred, but any negative feelings like envy or remorse would also increase his physical power.

Even though there were only a few dozen, each strike was equivalent to twenty orcs at full strength, so the barrier began to shake under the barrage of attacks, although it was resisting. It was an artifact created by powerful archmages, so it wouldn’t break easily.

The skeletons were protected by the barrier and fired their cannons at close range, sending the evolved orcs flying. The cannonballs exploded outside the barrier, so even the explosion was unable to affect them.

‘The strength of these orcs surprised me for a moment, but they won’t last long. Their bodies are powerful and have managed to survive a cannonball above the speed of sound point blank, but they won’t be able to fight under these conditions. The problem is the others.’ Louis looked at the ships that had split left and right and began to advance again, as the guns were busy.

The time they lost dealing with the first demihumans was enough for the ships to safely board the beach. When the last of the orcs were finally killed, the rest of the invaders were already halfway to the barriers.

They made use of the same tactic, using evolved ogres as shields, but this time the trolls joined them as well. Evolved trolls stood nearly 10 meters tall when standing upright, but their bone structure changed along with evolution and now walked hunched over using their arms for support, much like gorillas.

Its long arms reached the ground even when upright, and now it had brown fur all over its body, while orange fangs rose from its lower jaw.

The cannons could only fire a single barrage of shots before the evolved demihumans reached them, but even that barrage was useless. The explosions ripped out huge and caused deep wounds to the trolls, but their wounds started to heal the moment they were made.

His body began to thin as its nutrients were drained to regenerate its wounds, but it quickly returned to normal. The earth the trolls trod on drained and absorbed into their bodies to replace what was lost, but Louis mistook this for just the deep footprints of the giant trolls.

Evolved trolls were not only able to regenerate at high speed, but also absorb earth to regain lost mass, so they were nearly immortal while in contact with the ground.

“Destroy this annoying shield and kill all the cowards hiding behind it!!” The orc general leading the troops shouted, smashing his warhammer against the barrier, his single blow making the entire barrier shake, showing that he was much stronger than the others.

#### Chapter 246 Field of darkness

The trolls sunk their fists into the ground and yanked all at once, the earth melting around their fists until they resembled maces and hardened to rock. Along with using skills to further increase the destructive power, each hit had the power to destroy one wall.

The ogres were next, each of their blows hitting with the same force as a tri-elemental spell. Their simple attacks didn’t have as much power as trolls or orcs because of giganticization elements, but they made up for it with sheer brute strength and their sheer size.

“Skeletons with cannons, retreat while the others buy you time. Zombies, prepare to cover them. Liches, cast the area spell on my signal.” Louis ordered, confusing the masters of magic.

“The barrier will hold for some time yet. Its surface is shaking, but only because it’s enchanted to disperse part of the impact in waves. Isn’t it better to take advantage now and rain attacks on a safe position?” One of them commented while looking at Louis as if he was stupid, but the former elder just looked at him annoyed.

“Stop asking stupid questions and just lower the barrier while there’s still energy left. We’ll need to activate the barriers quickly after that, so heed my orders.” Louis ordered cryptically, irritating the two masters of magic.

They were about to say something, when Eirin’s voice rang over the communication cube.

“Obey.” It was a single word, but the two masters of magic stopped complaining and deactivated the barrier.

The evolved demihumans were taken aback by the barrier suddenly ceasing to offer resistance and they stumbled forward in the midst of an attack, but their confusion only lasted half a second.

“ROAR!! The little cowards have finally decided to fight, so crush them all!” The orc commander shouted, leaping in front of the army and landing in the middle of the skeleton formation and smashing it with his warhammer.

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The blow crushed dozens of skeletons, the shock wave shattered hundreds, and the small-scale earthquake that followed knocked thousands to their knees.



The evolved demihumans followed suit, crushing the small undead using their weapons, fists, or underfoot. Their bodies were enough to crush the undead and without magic, it was almost impossible to cause real damage to demihumans evolved.

The skeletons tried to cut off the demihumans' legs or even scale them to attack, but to no avail. Their attacks were too weak to cause deep wounds and a single slap was enough to destroy a skeleton trying to climb them.

Ordinary skeletons were unable to use abilities and could only circulate mana at full power, so there wasn't much else they could do.

"And there go the last skeletons." One of the masters of magic muttered.

The demihumans continued advancing to crush the zombies that had remained standing in formation until now and Louis decided it was time to fight back.

"Liches, darken everything. Idiots, raise the barriers again." Louis ordered and despite the reluctance of the masters of magic, they obeyed.

A wave of darkness spread from the lichs' position and surrounded the entire undead army, the fortress and a large portion of the evolved demihumans. At the same time, the barrier became solid again, blocking the slower demihumans and dividing the invading army.

"Field of Darkness?" The masters of magic frowned as they felt the abundant darkness prick their skin and their surroundings darkened as if it were night, and activated the barrier of their cloaks to block the effects.

Unlike Treevor's field of the dead, the field of darkness didn't block the effect of items or corrupt world energy, it just broke the balance like an elemental storm of darkness.

The undead would be healed passively while the living would be weakened continuously.

The demihumans found themselves isolated from their fellows and had their strength slowly drained, but they did nothing to stop them. At least until the thousands of bones on the ground simultaneously exploded, covering them in a thick fog of darkness.

'Corpse explosion is always a good weapon and can reverse any battle, just gather enough destroyed undead.' Louis thought with a smile.

The fog of darkness instantly killed all of the evolved goblins, while the others took heavy damage and began to rot alive, but they never stopped advancing.

The evolved demihumans stomped and crushed the zombies in phalanx formation, or at least they tried to. The death knight moved at the same time as the demihumans, raising his shield above his head, all the zombies following his movements perfectly.

All undead gear was made of black lead, a metal with a high affinity for darkness, and enchanted to be usable by artificial undead.

The shields' enchantments generated a second protective layer made of mana and darkness twice the length of the shield itself. Its edges overlapped each other after being activated, forming a gigantic shield that surrounded the entire phalanx.

When the demihumans' fists, feet or weapons landed under the phalanx, the multiple overlapping shields blocked the attack, the pressure of the giant blows being shared and allowing the zombies to resist.

The powerful attacks still generated a sonic boom as if there was an explosion and the zombies in the front rows were forced to crouch, but that was it.

"How did you/they withstand these attacks?!" The orc general and the masters of magic asked in unison, albeit in different languages.

"Push them back!" Louis screamed and all the zombies moved simultaneously.

They shifted from their crouched position and pushed with their shields as they rose, pushing the evolved demihumans back. The zombies simultaneously activated their knockback and shield bash skills, their combined strength was enough to push them back, even knocking back those who tried to squash the zombies.

Zombie soldiers were warriors who were turned into zombies and could use all the skills they knew in life. All of them were at least in the third tier of life when they died, and Louis has worked on all of them personally to keep all of their abilities, even improving some.

Evolved demihumans were stunned for only a second, but that time was enough. The fog of darkness was constantly causing damage and the evolved orcs had already started to fall, their bodies weakening each time despite the negative karma strengthening them.

Their bodies were visibly withering and rotting and they fell one by one. Ogres could resist thanks to their gigantic size and the element of light they absorbed from the world's energy by resisting darkness, while trolls regenerated faster than darkness could corrode them.

The death knight saw this as an opportunity and ordered the zombies forward while maintaining their formation. They aimed their spears at the fallen orcs and impaled them to death.

"Not so easy!" The orc general, one of the few who were still able to move shouted in rage, refusing to die so pathetically. He smashed the zombies with a low blow using the warhammer, turning the zombies to fleshy paste and hustling the pieces against the back ranks.

The zombies' shields were only able to withstand the blows of the evolved demi-humans by sharing the burden of attacks among themselves, so the front rank would have no means to defend a warhammer bigger than them.

"Stop attacking from above and strike from below. These worms are weak on their own!" The orc general screamed with the last of his strength, before a black spear impaled his throat and silenced him.

The death knight advanced along with the zombies and took advantage of the moment when the orc destroyed the front line of zombies to throw the spear and kill the only enemy that seemed to be shouting orders.

The orc general didn't die right away and tried to touch the spear, but the last one released a blast of darkness that exploded the orc's head. The spear flew back after killing its target and the death knight grabbed it in the air as it passed through the falling orc's body.

The zombie horse neighed as it ran past the evolved demihumans' feet and the death knight pierced the demihumans' ankles or calves.

Their attacks were just a mosquito bite to the demihumans, but the burst of darkness that followed each attack threw them off balance and inflicted a curse that temporarily disrupted mana circulation, preventing the trolls from regenerating and causing the ogres' legs to begin to come undone.

"Smash this little irritant while the rest keep attacking!" The trolls closest to the death knight roared as they turned on the knight and the rest continued to slaughter the zombies now that they knew how to get past his defenses.

The death knight quickly found himself surrounded by trolls and fists bigger than him hit him from above and from all sides, but he just raised his shield above his head and activated it.

The enchantments on his shield were much stronger than those of the zombie soldiers, but the stone fists hit him like a meteor and the weight of the attacks forced the death knight to the ground, the ground giving way and opening a crater under the weight, at the same time raising a cloud of dust and obscuring the vision of the evolved Trolls.

Mocking smirks appeared on the faces of the trolls imagining they had crushed the death knight, only for a purplish black orb to encircle their fists and slash them, sucking in the air and nearly pulling their entire arms off.

#### Chapter 247 Death knight

The Death knight appeared above the head of one of the trolls before the last one could understand what happened and pierced one of its eyes with the black spear. A blast of darkness was released inside the troll's skull along with a curse and the zombie horse kicked its face away, stone fists descending on the troll a second later.

Inside the death knight's ribcage, there was a teleportation crystal big enough to almost occupy his entire interior and he had been carrying the crystal since he started advancing, just waiting for the proper moment to teleport.

The evolved trolls were almost immortal as long as they were in contact with the ground and even having the brain destroyed would not be a fatal wound, but the curse that prevented the circulation of mana prevented regeneration and with half of the brain rotted, the troll dropped dead.

The death knight moved on to the next target before the troll's body started to fall, but those around had already recovered from the shock and his hands were already starting to regenerate, although it would still take a few seconds for it to fully recover.

"Die!" The troll that was attacked threw its body back to get out of the death knight's reach, at the same time using its still regenerating arm as a club to try to crush it.

The zombie horse leapt in mid-air, surprising the troll and dodging the blow by inches before kicking out the arm and propelling itself towards the troll's head. There were enchanted horseshoes on the zombie horse's hooves that conjured platforms of mana so it could move through the air.

The death knight lunged with his shield and slammed it into the troll's face, the impact knocking the troll off balance to the ground.

Before he could recover, the death knight hurled the spear hard through the troll's nose, ripping it all the way to the brain and killing the troll with the same method as before. The death knight had already understood that the only way to kill the trolls was to destroy the vital points with his spear and activate the curse to inhibit regeneration.

The death knight fell to the ground along with the troll as he reached out to draw the spear back, but a stone club hit him from above as he grabbed the spear. The zombie horse jumped up to hurriedly dodge, but the fist still crushed half of its body together with its hind legs, knocking the death knight down.

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Such an injury wouldn't be enough to kill a zombie, but the horse wouldn't be able to fight in its current condition.

The death knight rolled as he fell to mitigate the impact and scrambled to his feet, blocking a second blow from the troll with his shield. The two remaining trolls surrounded the death knight and kept hitting him to try to crush him.

Each strike was strong enough to create a crater in the ground and although the undead successfully parried, its boots sank into the ground with each strike. The death knight waited for an opportunity and attacked in the brief interval between the trolls' attacks, throwing his shield aside and firing as fast as possible with his spear.

He ran across the legs of the evolved troll, which was too slow to react to his movements and tried to stomp the undead, but the latter was faster and slashed both ankles in a side slash with his spear.

The troll fell forward with his arms on the ground and the death knight jumped on the troll's back and impaled him in the back of the head. He used his maximum drilling skill and thrust the spear as far as he could into the troll's neck and twisted before pulling, shattering the neck vertebrae and paralyzing him from the neck down.

The death knight tried to impale him again to finish the troll, but noticed that the last troll had finished regenerating and punched his own companion with all his might in an attempt to kill him.

He leapt as high as he could and the fist connected with the paralyzed troll's face a second later, the force behind the punch great enough to decapitate him in one blow. The death knight did a somersault in the air to regain his balance and position himself in the air, hurling the black spear into the face of the last remaining troll.

The evolved troll normally wouldn't have felt threat from such a small weapon, but after seeing three other trolls as strong as him die in a single blow, he didn't dare take the attack head-on and turned his face to the side at the last second, the black spear missing his face and hitting his shoulder muscles.

The spear sank a third into the troll's shoulder and did barely any damage, but the death knight didn't care. He pointed his hand at the spear and activated the ability to draw it in, but the spear was stuck inside the flesh and refused to come out.

Instead of pulling the spear, he was drawn to the spear and flew towards the troll. The troll tried to smack it with the opposite arm to drop it like a fly, but the death knight drew his spare sword that he carried at his waist with his free hand and cut off the troll's hand using the weapon break skill.

The sword exploded against the open palm in a shower of lead, darkness, and muddy blood. The explosion also slightly pushed it off course, but the death knight still managed to grab the spear shaft with one hand for balance and kicked out with both feet, pushing the spear shaft into the troll's back the blade as remained trapped in the flesh.

The death knight stepped on the shaft of the spear and used his weight to bring it down, tearing into troll flesh. The blade left a deep cut from the troll's right shoulder to his waist, muddy blood spurting out like a waterfall.

Despite the severe wound in the back, the troll still tried to turn around to squash the death knight, but the latter was faster, circling the troll to continue after him.

He destroyed the troll's tendon with a swift thrust, knocking the already off-balance troll. With a swift leap, the death knight reached the falling troll's head and impaled the back of its head, before leaping away and letting gravity do the rest of the work.

As the troll fell, the spear was driven deep into the skull and impaled its brain.

After confirming the death of the evolved troll and that there were no more enemies nearby, the death knight turned towards the zombie army, but the battle was already over as well.

Many zombies had been destroyed after the demihumans discovered the weakness of the zombies' formation, but that only lasted until the liches finished casting their spells.

A circle of darkness surrounded the zombies and evolved demihumans, raising a pillar of darkness that turned the demihumans to ash and healed all zombies that were not yet completely destroyed.

The death knight realized that the last demi-evolved humans fighting the army were about to die and decided he didn't need to interfere, preferring to retrieve his weapons.

Despite being an undead slave of Louis, he had a certain ability to think and make decisions on his own, as long as he did not interfere with the orders he received from Louis.

Unlike undead like Drake and Simogo, who were mindless and used only their brute strength, undead like death knight and elf lich had commanding roles and needed to be able to think and make use of every skill they had. In life, so Louis allowed them a little more freedom compared to the mindless zombies.

"Looks like we finished just in time." Louis muttered, looking away from the demihumans being turned into mummified corpses and looking at the barrier.

The other half of the invading army that had been blocked off was fiercely attacking the barriers even now, their fury and intensity only increasing upon seeing the demihumans on the side inside being killed.

The barrier had gilded by now and despite being covered in cracks that only grew in size, it would still last for a few more minutes.

“Lower the barrier, it’s not like it’s going to last long anyway.” Louis ordered the masters of magic while snapping his fingers in anticipation.

“We can still buy the barrier some time for the army to reorganize. Many zombies were destroyed and those who were healed still need to retrieve their weapons and resume formation.” One of the masters of magic suggested it, but Louis denied it.

“No need. My zombies have already taken a lot of damage and the liches are starting to run out of mana, so they won’t be able to handle a second round. This guy and I will handle it.” Louis pointed at himself and the adult drake that had remained still until now.

#### Chapter 248 First win

Louis jumped onto the back of the zombie drake and they charged towards the front lines, the zombies and liches splitting left and right to clear a path.

The masters of magic glared at each other in a confused second, but nodded and deactivated the barrier.

The evolved demihumans stormed in as soon as the barrier fell, but the drake had already reached the front of the zombie army and was taking deep breaths, accumulating world energy in his lungs.

Drakes possessed dragon breath and their power was second only to true dragons.

When the drake released the dragon breath, the black flames grew until they were almost the same size as the drake and the drake swung its neck like a fan, spreading the breath against all the demihumans.

The first demihumans were completely destroyed no matter what they did, while only the strongest behind survived.

Goblins were vaporized without a chance to resist and the orcs were left with only charred corpses. Trolls and ogres managed to survive, but there were rotten burns all over their bodies.

The ogres also expended all the light element in their bodies to survive, shrinking to a size of 50 feet with the loss of energy. Without the light element, they would be unable to regenerate and would have no light to defend against the effects of dark magic.

The trolls began absorbing the earth below to regenerate, but Louis didn’t allow it.

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“You seem to be able to infinitely regenerate while touching the earth, but what happens if I inject my mana into the earth?” Louis spoke with a cruel smile, casting his grounddeath spell.

Black-orange light spilled out from his staff and spread across the ground, painting the land black as if it spilled black ink across miles of darkness.

The trolls that were starting to regenerate suddenly screamed in unison in pain, the black earth fusing with their bodies and the darkness the elder creeping over their flesh and rotting their entire body.

To make matters worse, there was nothing the trolls could do but circulate mana to maximum and clench their teeth to endure the pain. Their regeneration was as natural and uncontrollable as their heartbeats and they were unable to control it.

“Hold the lizard and kill the weak human first!” One of the ogres screamed and tried to punch the drake in the face, but the last one just opened its jaws and bit down on the ogre’s arm, taking the limb off at the elbow.

The drake broken at the ogre’s right knee with one paw and slashed at his shoulder with the other claw and knocked him to the ground, biting his throat to kill him.

The remaining ogres and trolls surrounded the drake and grabbed its body, using their brute strength to knock it to the ground and seal its movements. The drake tried to fight off the annoying demihumans, but there were just too many to get rid of.

“Stay away, annoying things.” Louis said in disgust, seeing the demihumans try to smash him from the drake’s back and cast his second diamond spear spell.

Stone spikes rose from the ground, impaling the demihumans or pushing them away. The spears were hardened by Louis’s mana and the darkness from his previous spell mixed into the stone spears, further weakening the evolved demihumans.

“Dark firefly.” Louis cast his third spell, hundreds of tiny sparks of darkness appearing around him. Each spark was no more than an inch long, but it contained a darkness so dense that it distorted the light around it.

“Fire.” Louis ordered and all hundreds of sparks of darkness shot out in all directions, hitting all the evolved demihumans around them. The sparks of darkness hit their targets in less than a second, giving the demihumans no time to react.

The sparks pierced the demihumans’ bodies and exploded, tearing large chunks of flesh and spreading darkness into the wounds. Louis mixed pure mana with darkness, giving tangibility and accelerating the spell’s speed.

“Finish killing them now.” Louis ordered the drake, who went into a rage now that he was freed and began to slaughter seriously injured demihumans.

Despite the fact that defeat was already a given, no demi-human backed down or even hesitated for a second to continue fighting, preferring death to the shame of running from a fight.

The giant blood flowing through their veins screamed for them to fight to the death and they all fought to the bitter end.

Louis kept his guard up until the last of the demihumans fell dead to the ground and only then did he allow himself to pant with exhaustion. Louis needed to command the entire army and the only way to do that is to use his mana to transmit his orders.

His spells also cost a lot of mana and although his core wasn't completely empty yet, it was close to being so.

"I think I overdid it trying to show off, controlling so many zombies and liches at the same time is too exhausting. Ending the battle by fighting in person and casting so many powerful spells in a row didn't help either." Louis muttered between gasps.

He took a deep breath to regain his composure and ordered the drake back. Louis would love to add some of these evolved demihumans to his army, but the order would never allow him to get his hands on corpses, not while he was a prisoner of war.

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"It seems that the first battle was a victory for mankind." Canan spoke in celebration of the victory and all the angels joined in the celebration, with the exception of Eishin, who remained silent from beginning to end.

"I know you hate them and have their traumas, but can't you even crack a smile when you see them dying so horribly?" Canan asked to try to get a reaction from Eishin, but the latter just sighed.

"I would have if we had eliminated powerful enemies, but I don't see the fun in seeing the weak ones get killed." Eishin looked despondent and unimpressed with the battle they saw.

"What are you talking about? We've all seen the strength of the evolved demihumans and even though they weren't on the same level as our champions yet, they were still powerful as an army and a threat to the human realms." Eirin spoke through Canan's mouth, but Eishin shook his head.

"That's not even close to the power level of a giant and these demihumans were just the trash of the continent. None of them had much fighting skill or were used to fighting with their new bodies and their power was very low." Eishin said, pointing out all the oddities he noticed.

"Eirin, order the mages on the battlefield to investigate the corpses of the demihumans to find out what layer of life they're in. We can get a good idea of ??whether these enemies really are the enemy vanguard or just the junk they sent to test our defenses and responses."

Eirin did as suggested and ordered the mages to investigate the corpses, receiving a response in less than five minutes. It was possible to find out which life layer a fresh corpse was in by measuring how concentrated the body's remaining mana was.

Even though a demihuman had a much larger core than an ordinary human, the layers were the same for all species.

"Supreme Elder, most of these corpses are between the second and fourth tier, while a few were in the fifth tier. We'll keep looking, but I think it's hard for us to find anyone who has broken through the first barrier of development." The master of magic replied with a pale face, sensing his superiors' concern.



“Understood. I’ll send some mages out soon to collect the corpses, so just wait for now. And stay alert with the prisoner, we don’t know what he might do if he thinks he has a chance to escape.” Eirin ordered, unaware that Louis planned to regain his position as dark elder.

“Looks like I’m right. These demihumans are just the scum of the Doravon continent, none of them had even crossed the first barrier of progression and even so an elder giving the order spent a lot of energy and resources to be able to kill them.” Eishin looked pessimistic and all the excitement for the first victory disappeared from the room and everyone became despondent as if they had lost the battle.

“If we’re going to use the strength of this invading army as a measure, what are the chances that the cities the church defends can successfully resist?” Canan asked with a mixture of concern and curiosity, wondering about the order’s own chances of withstanding the attack.

“I would say that cities defended by saints of the church can withstand the battle with the help of priests and paladins, but strongholds without saints will probably fall and even if they win, they will still suffer heavy losses.” Eishin replied after thinking for some time.

The saints of the church were its best warriors, priests or magicians who helped to develop research related to the light element and expand its boundaries.

#### Chapter 249 Ancestral bloodlines

There were only five in total, but each of them had strength comparable to an order elder. All of them were at least above the fifteenth layer of life and possessed numerous battle or academic achievements.

They were known as Saints because of their half-angel, half-human build. They rejected their full ascension so that they could continue helping the three realms where they were born, while most of the angels served Eishin in the Adula empire.

“And you? What are the chances of the order’s cowardly mages fighting properly and resisting the invaders?” Eishin asked back, but he clearly didn’t have much hope of success.

“Elders will definitely be successful in defense, but the chances of the other strongholds being successfully defended are not that low.” Eirin spoke after a while of thinking, surprising Eishin.

“Wait, what makes you think that bunch of arrogant mages have any chance against the evolved demihumans? Up until half an hour ago, you were the one who was calling them incompetent and cowardly, saying they wanted to flee before the battle even started.” Eishin was confused by Canan’s change of heart.

“And they really are incompetent and cowardly, but no, battles are not decided by mages alone. Fortress D received less support because it had an elder to defend it, but the other cities received more than just cannons and mobile barriers as reinforcements.” Eirin explained proudly and Eishin waved her on.

“We send out warslaves and demihumans as expendable troops, as well as open up our arsenals to share powerful artifacts with mages and increase their powers.”

“We also buried alchemical items on the beaches to buy time and eliminate the weakest and shared potions of different effects to aid them, including spells that inhibited fear and increased mental clarity to ensure they didn’t run away.”

“We’ve done all that too and what makes you think they’ll succeed?” Eishin remained doubtful of her strange confidence.

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“The construction of our own crystal arch has already been completed in the capital Makima and another one in the order’s headquarters. There are masters of magic, elders and various troops on standby just waiting for one of the strongholds to call for reinforcements.” Eirin reinforced the fact that they alone possessed the portal technology, glaring at Eishin.

She was irritated having to constantly hear insults about the organization she had created, even though it was true.

“Well, that should be more than enough to eliminate those weak demihumans, just be careful that none of them try to teleport in the direction of the portal and cause another anomaly. It would be a shame to lose another portal arch right after building it.” Eishin noted Eirin’s offended tone and teased her, enjoying her reactions.

“It doesn’t look like another battle is going to start anytime soon, so I think it’s a good time to ask something I’ve been curious about for a while. Can you share what you know about the giants that spawned these demihumans? It might be useful to find out for what they are evolving.” Canan took control of the body to prevent Eirin from responding and starting an argument.

“We can use this information to assess how far they are from catching up with their original lineages.” Canan explained his reasons, as he himself had not witnessed the terror of the giants.

Despite having lived during the era of chaos, Canan and Eirin were born after the fall of the giants and lived safely on the Nytrer continent until they decided to leave and join Eishin with the ideal of human supremacy.

By the time they made that decision, all the giants had already been wiped out and only the demihumans were left, the weak and flawed kin that Eishin couldn’t eliminate because of Illum’s interference, so Canan and Eirin saw no reason to delve search about them.

“I can remember species similar to trolls, orcs and ogres, but goblins are a complete mystery to me. I’ve never seen or heard of any species that small, giants were called that for a reason.” Eishin agreed that sharing information was a good idea, and went out of his way to try to recognize demihuman-like giants.

“Start with the ogres, they were the strongest during the previous battle and I’m curious to know how strong they are when they reach their full potential.” Canan directly asked what was most interested.

“The ogres are descendants of the Jotun. They were a race that could reach up to 20 meters in height and had the racial ability Balance.” Eishin started to explain, but almost spit out every word.

“They were known to have a fanatical belief in the balance of the world and their ability reflected this. Jotuns were capable of absorbing excess elemental energy into world energy to make them perfectly balanced and they mortally hated any species that got in their way.”

“This included all species capable of using magic, monsters capable of absorbing specific elements, undead for their corrupted mana and angels for their holy mana.” Eishin’s expression twitched as if he was chewing on insects.

“I can only imagine how big they would become after using gigantization, I mean, balance. Maybe they would get as big as Kalesi?” Canan muttered mostly to himself, but Eishin denied it.

“Balance is not like gigantization. Gigantification absorbs the surrounding excess elements to increase the size of the ogres, but balance concentrated the elemental energy in its body, the concentrated energy increasing the power of the jotuns several times over.”

“Their powers also didn’t have the same limitations as ogres and could absorb continuously elemental energy for hours without tiring.” Eishin explained the differences between ogres and jotuns, but there was something odd he noticed. “But there’s something strange about these evolved ogres.”

“Jotuns only have one pair of arms and a single head like humans, but these ogres have multiple limbs. I don’t know if it’s a mutation or some kind of unique evolution, but something is different about the ogres.” Eishin explained his doubts to Canan after trying and failing to remember a jotun with multiple members.

“We’re going to collect the corpses and analyze them thoroughly, so we can find out what happened.” Canan assured him. “What about the orcs and trolls?”

“Trolls resemble an ancient species called wukong. They were like gorillas or stone apes standing nearly 100 feet tall when fully standing. Their bodies were made of flesh and earth and could absorb earth endlessly to regenerate.”

“They could also absorb the earth to gain extra mass and grow beyond their limits, although this was temporary. The wukong were the quietest giants and had the habit of sleeping for decades, often being mistaken for small mountains, but they were extremely violent when awake, becoming walking natural disasters.”

“The orcs are descended from the ancient Asuras, the more powerful warriors among the giants. They were 15 meter giants with red skin, four arms and black horns. Their racial skill Karma was extremely powerful and allowed them to strengthen their bodies whenever they felt any strong emotion.”

“It’s really scary to imagine all these giants walking around the world.” Eirin spoke and while not really a threat to someone on her level, it was definitely a catastrophe for all species.

“It’s beyond frightening. They were naturally stronger than all races except dragons, they were able to develop quickly thanks to their battle-focused lifestyle.” Eishin agreed with her opinion, having himself witnessed the terror of the giants.

“There were other races of giants and not all of them were humanoid, some looked like animals like the wukong and others like horrible creatures, but they all shared the desire for battle and hatred against

the other races.” Eishin gripped the arm of the throne tightly, needing sheer willpower to contain his aura.

“The only saving grace was that the giants were few in number compared to other species and their inability to use magic greatly limited them.”

“Wait, I know demihumans are incapable of using magic, but there were several goblins or orcs using clearly enchanted weapons. How is that possible?” Canan asked doubtfully.

“They perhaps stole or forced spirits that lived on the continent to runesmithing. I also remember a species capable of a technique similar to runesmithing-” Before Eishin could finish speaking, an alarm started to sound, indicating that a new Invading fleet was sighted, this time, on an island in the kingdom of Belaster defended by the church.

The demihuman armies didn’t have any communication with each other, so the attacks happened at different times, instead of coordinated attacks. It also meant that the two could observe the different battles to leverage the information to form a response against attacks.

The divine palace deactivated the alarm and the different holograms on the ceiling, with the exception of one. The remaining hologram increased in size and occupied almost the entire ceiling, showing the view of a tropical island with hundreds of huts or buildings made of wood extracted from the island itself and dyed in different colors.

There was an army of paladins and crusaders stationed on the edge of the island, frantically watching the ships on the horizon.

#### Chapter 250 Second invasion

A unit of nearly 500 priests was right behind the army and they were concentrating on casting large-scale spells to serve as backup.

A little further away from the army, knights in white armor mounted on pegasus just waiting for a signal to fly. It was the church’s Sky knight unit, their version of the tamers.

They created monsters with an affinity for light as pets and weakened them before using the binding spell on them to make them familiar. The church did not allow its members to have monsters with any affinity other than light, considering it blasphemous.

There were pouches strapped to either side of the pegasus’ cell, filled with glass bottles of alchemical items that the knights planned to bomb on the demihuman ships. It was the strategy the church formed to face the demihumans who were unable to use magic and had almost no means of attacking something in the sky.

Shields with a hexagram pattern made of white platinum were floating around the island, just waiting for the bishop in charge of defense to activate them to surround the entire island with shields made of light.

Light cannons made of white platinum were placed on either side of the crusader formation, pointed towards the horizon. Everyone was waiting anxiously for the armies of demihumans to get close enough to start attacking.

The kingdom of Belaster had abandoned the smallest islands, deeming them impossible to defend, so the church's troops were the only ones to defend them. The realm had even recommended that the order and church abandon these small islands and concentrate their forces on the larger islands where it was almost impossible to evacuate all the villagers without overwhelming other places, but Eirin and Eishin knew that was a bad idea.

Leaving small empty islands for the evolved demi-humans to conquer would allow them to settle down and put down roots on the Caprio continent, something that had to be stopped at all costs.

Canan and Eirin had already seen from their moon base that the second wave of demihumans coming from Doravon was much larger than the first and they left some behind on each island they passed, exploiting the resources that previously belonged to the order.

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"What are the chances of winning?" Canan asked doubtfully, not seeing anyone notable among the church's army. Their numbers were more or less equal to Louis's undead, but Canan couldn't judge their actual strength based on appearance alone.

"Unfortunately, the chances of victory are slim and it's almost impossible to send reinforcements to the island. We don't have portals of our own and the church has few teleportation crystals, so we can't send a lot of support at once." Eishin explained with dismay.

"Can't you send the saints or individually powerful warriors as support?" Canan asked doubtfully, wondering the reason for the church's lack of support. He expected Eishin to deploy all of the church's forces in the cities and fortresses they protect, but he seemed uninterested.

"Only three of the saints are in the field and the other two are on hold at church headquarters, but none of them have visited these small islands, so it's impossible to teleport there." Eishin explained, before suddenly becoming furious.

"It would be possible to send support quickly if angels used the crystals, but because of that bastard Illum and the undead invasions, everyone has their hands full and cannot interfere in this damn war!"

'Should we throw it in his face that this whole situation is his fault and his impulsiveness?' Eirin mentally suggested, but Canan just ignored her.

"Why didn't you order your saints to visit the islands if you knew they would be attacked?" Canan asked doubtfully.

"Do you know how many islands, cities and fortresses exist and are being created? It is almost impossible to visit all the fortresses and you know that it is necessary to at least take a look around to be able to remember the place and teleport safely." Eishin spoke wryly.

"Don't forget what happens when someone tries to teleport without a clear picture of where they want to go." Eishin reminded him of some of the tests they had done in the past.

The mage who tried to teleport to a place he had never visited before disappeared into a purple orb and has never been found.

“The battle will start soon, so let’s focus on the hologram.” Canan understood Eishin’s point and changed the subject.

The evolved demi-human ships had gotten close enough to the island and the light cannons fired beams of superheated concentrated light, piercing and igniting the massive ships.

Unlike the order’s normal magic cannons, the light cannons continuously fired beams of superheated light, absorbing the mana of whoever was operating the cannons.

The beams of light hit with the force of a freight train and burned through the wood of ships or the skin and flesh of demihumans, exploding those weaker ones like goblins.

The ships began to sink after the beams of light did enough damage to the ships’ hulls, forcing the evolved demihumans to jump off the ships and swim the rest of the way.

They used the same tactics as the invading army at Fortress D, the giants activating giganticization while the rest tried to swim. It was the demihuman army’s standard strategy as well as the only one they knew.

“Move to the next ships and ignore the demihumans in the sea! Sky knight units, bombarding!” The bishop in command shouted orders and the light cannons switched targets to hit the ships farthest behind, while the pegasus took to the skies to attack the evolved demihumans.

The Sky knights dropped the bottles with alchemical items on the demihumans, but it was a futile attack. The demihumans in the middle of the sea easily noticed the pegasus and at the moment they dropped unknown objects on top of the demihumans, the latter responded aggressively and used aura skills to hit the bottles still in the air, exploding harmlessly.

Not all of them were intercepted in time and hit the swimming demihumans or missed the target and hit the sea, but most exploded above the evolved demihumans, releasing a burst of light and flame that blinded all of the evolved demihumans.

The alchemical items created by the church’s alchemists were mixed with the element of light and other elements, their alchemical items causing a flash along with the explosions.

“Keep firing! Our enemies can’t see us and won’t be able to intercept this time!” The bishop shouted into the communicator as he shielded his eyes from the intense light, causing all the Sky knights to continue the bombardment, even if they couldn’t see the demihumans below.

His pegasus also absorbed his mana and conjured bullets of light and rained down on the demihumans. Not all Sky knights had a talent for magic, but pegasus had a natural affinity with air and light, being able to cast spells as long as their masters gave them mana.

Unfortunately for the humans, the demihumans didn’t just sit around waiting to be attacked without fighting back. Dozens of purple spheres appeared around the pegasus formation and the goblins came out, slashing at the nearest pegasus or rider.

Those too far away just hurled their weapons at the knights, their blows cut the pegasus in half and the knights were heavily injured, surviving only because of the second layer of protective light on their armor and the self-healing enchantments.

Evolved goblins began to fall after attacking while grappling with falling knights to finish them off and ensure they didn't heal again. The other Sky knights fired spells at the goblins, sacrificing their comrades to eliminate the enemies.

"I will raise the barriers, priests, prepare to attack while the demihumans are busy trying to break through!" The bishop shouted orders and activated the shields, raising a hexagonal barrier that surrounded the entire island for an instant, before the shields focused in the direction the demihumans were approaching.

He could freely control the shields and scatter them again if the demihumans scattered.

The priests nodded, finishing casting their large-scale spells and just waiting for them to get close enough.

A purple orb much larger than the others appeared in the midst of the priests' formation, engulfing dozens of priests and interrupting half of the large-scale spells.

Two demihumans emerged from the purple sphere, and both vaguely resembled minotaurs, but had so many different characteristics that the priests were slow to recognize them.

Both were 12 meters long and could move both as bipeds and quadrupeds. Its hind legs ended in bull-like hooves and it had a long tail that ended in a mace of bones, while its front legs ended in four claws, one being opposite the rest like a thumb.

Long, curved horns rose from the sides of its head while a short one grew from the top of its head. Its eyes were elongated like a goat's and its jaw long like a carnivore's, white fangs visible every time it opened its mouth.

One was white while the other was black, indicating that it was a female and a male respectively.