

## **New Eden 941**

Chapter 941 Higher Concepts Of Magic

Alex looked at him, his face filling with angst.

"You don't look surprised that I say this," David said, looking at him, a tinge of sadness flashing in his gaze.

"I can't say that I am... To be honest, I've been feeling it for a while..." Alex replied, leaning on a crate behind him.

"I had a feeling you did. The interaction with the hitman in the hotel was what confirmed it to me."

Alex nodded.

"But he wasn't the only one. Killing has become too easy. I don't feel anything from doing it anymore. Not fear, not sadness, let alone guilt after the fact... It... scares me," Alex said, looking at his hands.

David sighed.

He had figured this conversation would happen eventually, but not in this fashion. He had thought he would be the one in Alex's shoes, with himself getting reprimanded—not the other way around.

"I know that you don't kill for the fun of it, so that is already a reassuring fact. But you shouldn't be doing the killing at all, Alex. Let me handle that. I've been preparing myself mentally for it all along. Be the saviour we all think you to be," David said, trying to cheer him up.

But it had the opposite effect.

With a scoff, Alex looked at him and shook his head.

"I don't think that I can... Not after what happened with Solomon recently..."

David frowned.

"Something happened with Solomon? Is it that bad? You haven't said anything about it all this time; it shouldn't be too bad, right?"

Alex looked at him and winced.

"Oh boy..." David said, seeing his face.

Alex wanted to joke about it, tell him that 'oh boy' was an understatement, and hope he would laugh. But this was a serious issue.

He explained what had happened, skipping no detail, with David listening to him, seeming perplexed about his story.

Once he was done, Alex looked at David, expecting him to fly off the handle. But his face seemed calm.

"Why aren't you getting angry? I may be the one who unleashed the Demon Lord upon ourselves..."

David looked at him and scratched his chin.

"There are two reasons I am not getting mad," he finally dropped.

Alex looked at him, confused.

"The first one is because the closer I get to my power over death, the less my emotions have a hold over me. It's a double-edged knife to me, but it also means I won't always be the explosive asshole that you like," he smirked.

Alex grimaced.

"Who said I liked you?" he joked.

David winked at him.

"A bro's intuition," he mocked.

"But that isn't the only reason. Like I said, there are two. And the second might put your mind at ease."

Alex frowned.

"Care to elaborate?" he asked.

"Sure. I don't think you can be blamed for Solomon getting thrust back in time. I think that was bound to happen, regardless of your actions..."

Alex became even more confused.

"How? If I hadn't found the ring, it would have slept in that cave forever, no?"

David shook his head.

"I said this to Kary before, but you were unconscious. The ring found a user, even in my timeline. Hell, it found more than one. All of them died, without reaching even remotely as long as you have worn it, but the ring wasn't owner-less."

This barely shed light on why he thought it wasn't Alex's fault, though.

"I don't understand. I don't think Solomon would have been sent back in time without my actions. Why are you so sure it isn't my fault?"

David smiled at him.

"Because there was always a Demon Lord. You didn't change this fact. You didn't create a new threat. If I understood what you explained correctly, Zagan had been planning this for a while and was already amassing the power to cast the spell.

"I think your actions only hastened the time of the activation," David said, looking pensive.

"Doesn't that make things worse?" Alex asked, still convinced he had made a colossal blunder.

But David shook his head.

"Not necessarily. Spells of that magnitude require an insane amount of power. Zagan was probably the reason all the ring owners in my timeline died so fast. He must have been siphoning power from them covertly.

"I think he couldn't do the same with you, given that you were leagues above the other ring owners, in terms of raw power. So this could mean a plethora of things," he explained, getting up from his seat.

He walked over to a table, where their mission briefing was already displayed, and Alex pursed his lips, impressed at the tech available for an aircraft this old.

"Let me paint you a picture," David said, sending the briefing to a file, to reopen later.

"Please do."

David opened up an app, where he drew up a two-sided graph.

On the bottom, he wrote up nine numbers, along with the title 'Circles of power.'

And then, on the left side, he wrote down numbers, ranging in exponents of ten, from ten, all the way to the billions.

He then copied that chart four times and raised his face to look at Alex.

"I can hear the confusion in your head, but it'll be clear in a second," he said, chuckling.

"So!" he exclaimed, zooming in on one of the four graphs.

"Zagan did something which I can only assume was a ninth-circle spell. Crossing through time, although not always in the realm of the gods, is, at the minimum, a seventh-circle spell. Hell, just seeing through time is already at least a fifth-circle spell or ability.

"But I digress. If he had pulled it off perfectly, which I assume he did in the past timeline, then he would have needed at least billions of mana points. Of course, those can be substituted with souls, which tend to give a lot, and exponentially more, depending on the strength of the soul.

"I presume that is why he was killing the ring users the last time. He was most likely consuming the souls to power his spell. I'm actually surprised Solomon hadn't detected it the last time. Or maybe he was too lax in his surveillance of his demons, as they appeared tame to him. Who knows?

"But again, a ninth-circle spell would require an ungodly amount of power," he explained, tracing a line on his chart.

The line curved slowly at first, becoming steeper for every circle further down the chart, but Alex remained confused.

"David..."

"Hm?" David hummed.

"What the hell is a ninth-circle spell?"

David looked at him, dumbstruck, before slapping his forehead.

"I forgot you weren't trained in the Mage's Guild... Your master didn't bother explaining the proper levels of magic to you..."

"What?" Alex asked, confused.

Aberon had been quite thorough in his training, he thought. But he had never talked about levels of magic.

"There is so much more theory to magic than what you were taught, Alex. Let me give you a crash course."

## Chapter 942 Crash Course In Spell Levels

"It's hardly the appropriate time for that," Alex complained.

"It isn't, but you won't understand jack shit of what I'm explaining if you don't understand at least the basis of magic levels. So we are doing this," David replied, smirking.

He waited to hear Alex's whiny response, but there came none, so he nodded.

"Alright. First things first. The first-circle level," he said, sliding the charts aside to write directly on the table with his finger.

"As you would think, first-level spells or abilities are the ones that cost the least amount of mana, but usually give out the least amount of power in exchange. Spells like the four basic elemental spells, and the first psychic abilities fit in that category," he said, writing that down.

Already, Alex was confused.

"I have some of those basic spells, and they require a lot of mana, and give out enough power, though..."

David clicked his tongue in disappointment.

"That is why you shouldn't interrupt people when they are explaining something," David said, waving his finger at him.

"First-circle spells are the basis. But they are not locked in place. A good magic user can bump them into second, and sometimes even third-circle spells if he has a good grasp of them. Take, for example, our game system—the Mastery points.

"With enough ingenuity, and a good grasp of the basics, we can master some of the weakest spells or skills, and boost their power tenfold, and sometimes more. At that point, they can become second or third-circle spells.

"But that is only the tip of the iceberg," David said, writing all of this down.

"David, I don't think I need to learn this," Alex grumbled.

"Shut up. Class is in session!" David snapped.

He went on to explain all the levels of power, giving examples along the way, like how Kary's avatar of flames was a fifth-circle spell at its first tier but how it reached sixth-circle when she went into her regalia or blue fire form.

Alex was already getting tired of listening to all this theory, and David didn't seem ready to end just yet.

After explaining all the circles, all the way to eighth-circle spells, he finally grinned.

"This brings us to the last level, and the one I suspect the spell Zagan cast to be a part of, the ninth-circle spell level."

"Urgh... Finally..." Alex complained.

"Hey, this knowledge is essential in the long run. Being able to distinguish the level of a spell also means it is much easier to counter it or completely overpower it. The higher the spell circle cast, the more power it carries.

"Sometimes, countering with a lower-level spell of a counter element is a good way to save mana. Other times, you just need to overpower it, regardless of the element, with a more powerful spell. This is magic duel 101."

Alex had fought other mages before, and he always found that closing the gap and slicing into them with his weapon was the more straightforward strategy. But that was probably because he wasn't as much of a mage as he claimed to be.

"The ninth-circle spells are in a different realm altogether," David resumed his explanation, interrupting Alex's train of thought.

"Even though eight-circle spells already require millions of mana points to cast, or an exorbitant amount of Aether, in most cases, they pale in comparison to ninth-circle spells. Those spells are almost always domain spells, and you wouldn't see a mortal casting one, at least alone," David said, pulling back his first chart and drawing the last line.

That line was so steep, covering multiple exponents of ten, until it reached the billions of mana points.

"Even gods have to channel those for a while, unless it was prepared in advance with a medium, like Zagan did. Infusing the medium with mana over a long period can drastically reduce the casting time, but is a double-edged sword."

"Wait, why is it a double-edged sword?" Alex interrupted him again.

David sighed, but explained anyway.

"Because infusing the mana in advance into a medium means locking the spell's shape and function ahead of time. Runes will form, and eventually, the spell can't be altered. Once that point is reached, any deviation to the spell, whatever it is, will cause it to have side effects," David explained.

"What kind of side effects?"

That's when David grinned.

"I'm hoping bad ones."

His grin was almost sadistic, and Alex felt a shiver run down his spine.

Pulling up a second chart, David drew a line that didn't quite reach the ninth circle.

"In this case, he had to cast the spell earlier. So, I'm guessing he wasn't quite fully charged yet. This means his spell didn't have the kick it needed to send him back whole, like I'm sure he wanted originally," David said, smiling.

"But there are also a few twists," he added, shifting the chart up, so he could write under it.

"I think his spell originally intended for him to be sent, along with all the other demons, so they could return to their time and rule as they were intended to. But a few things changed here, and his spell would have been affected."

Alex frowned.

"What changed?"

David grinned at him, pointing at him.

"You. You changed his spell for him."

"Huh?" Alex asked, confused.

"You changed his spell, even though it was unwittingly. By linking the demon kings to your soul, you took away some of the recipients of his soul. Since they were attached to you, and you weren't part of the spell, he wasn't able to bring them along.

"Now, that would usually only reduce the amount of mana required for the spell to function, given it is reducing the burden that time has to bear. But the spell was shaped to bring them all back, at least I imagine.

"Pulling some of the most powerful figures out of the spell would have erased some of the runes from it, changing the nature of it entirely."

Alex was still confused by his enthusiasm.

"I still don't understand why you look so happy about this... I sent back through time a demon that most likely became the Demon Lord. How can any of this be good?"

"Because you changed the nature of his spell. It didn't send them through time. It sent only one person. Whoever ended up the leading mind was left changed entirely. Coming back from a change like that takes time. Time that would play against them in the long run.

"Whatever landed through time, wasn't the Demon Lord we were faced with in my last life. He has to be weaker. I'm sure of it."

#### Chapter 943 Horrific Realization

Alex looked at David with a perplexed expression.

Even if by logic of time travel, the weaker demon lord would make sense, however sense they could make from actual time travel, he remained unconvinced.

"How can we be sure about this?"

David's brow furrowed in a deep frown as he stared back at Alex.

"What do you mean? It's simple logic. His spell wasn't complete, and too many things about it were forced out of place for it to work properly. Even though the demon lord is bound to have appeared again, it won't be the same, and he will be weaker."

Alex shook his head, his mind looking at the problem differently.

"What if what we sent in time, sorry, what I sent in time, was weaker at first but poses a much greater threat?"

David was confused.

"How could something weaker pose more of a threat?" he asked, his eyebrows furrowing deeper yet again.

"If the first time Zagan traversed time, he came out as himself, but stronger, he would have strived to become a demon lord that rules over everything. One that invades worlds to rule over bigger lands. But what about someone who isn't Zagan?"

David realized he had indeed said that it was a possibility that Zagan's mind hadn't come out on top during this spell misfire.

"The other demons in the ring were all weaker than Zagan. What difference would it make?" he asked, shrugging.

"I'm not afraid of them. I'm afraid of the single other being that Zagan dragged with him. One that was not bound by their ideologies. One that had much grander ambitions in life, that were only crushed by his mortality.

"A mortality that a demon body would have nipped in the bud..." Alex said, his voice quivering.

David thought about it for a second and realized who he meant.

His face darkened.

"Even if it is him that controls the demon body they now share, would he truly be a danger to us?" he asked.

David had never met Solomon. Even if the legends about him depicted him as a mighty mage, and an all-knowing sage, time would have assuredly withered that strength away.

Then a thought occurred to him.

Time. The one element that this spell had given to the transferee.

"Would Solomon even let the demons invade the realms? That seems out of character from an old man who strived to protect the people from the demons in the first place, millennia ago, no?" David asked, his hands getting damp.

"Solomon always held a deep hatred for Gaius. My fear isn't that he is invading worlds for the thrill of it. I think he knows more about demons than most. Solomon might be aware of who created them..." Alex said, his face turning serious.

David frowned at that statement.

"Created them? What are you talking about?"

"So you weren't aware..." Alex said, sighing.

"Aware of what?"

"The demons. They didn't just appear out of thin air."

"I know that, dumbass. Demons are corrupted souls. Evil people, who, upon death, let their impure thoughts take over, and demonized. At least, that is what history tells us," David said, looking at him like he was speaking nonsense.

Alex shook his head.

"That might be true for the demons that appear now. But the first demon wasn't like that. I saw something when the soul remnant of Psyche kept me alive. I think they were memories. And one of them was a memory of Gaius, before he became so bitter..."

"A memory of something he tried creating, to impress Psyche. To show her he could be like her."

David's face scrunched up in disbelief.

"Alex, you are saying a lot of things that make no sense. The soul remnant of Psyche kept you alive? You say that like it was inside you... I know she took you under her wing, but that is going too far. You are saying you shared a soul with a goddess..."

Alex huffed lightly.

"Believe what you want. I know what I saw. Gaius created the first demon soul. He was attempting to create a soul, to impress Psyche, and failed. I don't think demons would have ever existed without his intervention."

David shrugged, his face almost mocking.

"So? Even if what you say is true, what does that change? I'm sure that only means the demons can't do shit to him. What does that have to do with Solomon and his return to the past with a demon body?"

Alex looked at him intently.

"That is exactly it. What if Solomon is in control of the demon body? Doesn't that mean he isn't under that rule? What if Solomon is as weak as you think, but is invading other worlds to change that? What if his plan reaches another level entirely?"

David frowned.

"Like what? Kill Gaius? That would give us a favour. And even if that is true, only gods can kill gods. Unless they have god-killing weapons, which, you guessed it, come from gods as well," he said, smirking.

But his smirk vanished as he said those words, and his face paled.

Alex looked at him, knowing he had reached the same conclusion as he already had.

"If Solomon wants to become a god, he wouldn't just need power. He would need followers, and a lot of them. But that still wouldn't make him strong enough to confront Gaius. Unless..."

"Unless he weakens Gaius' power by killing his followers in droves. It would dilute his power enough to make him killable, even from a newborn god..." David interrupted him in realization.

"And, if we believe how Gaius likes to be called, judging from our little knowledge of him, where does he have the most followers?" Alex asked, giving David the last push.

David remembered a conversation he had with Chronos in his last life, when they discussed the gods together. The Chronos of that timeline had a good understanding of how Gaius operated, as he had encountered him once or twice.

Dabbling with time had a tendency to call unwanted attention, after all.

But the words Chronos had told him still resounded in his head.

"Gaius is an arrogant god. He thinks he is stronger and better than all the other gods. Which is why he insists they call him God. He also likes to create worlds where he forces worship of himself onto the masses, giving himself more power. Just like Earth."



David looked at Alex in horror.

"Here. Gaius has the most followers here, on Earth..."

#### Chapter 944 Setting His Mind At Ease

This was a horrific realization, but not one that was definite.

"This isn't certain, though. We can't go thinking like this," David said, trying to rid his mind of that thought.

"Yeah, I've been telling myself that for the last few days. But my mind just won't let the matter rest. I'm scared I may have made things so much worse for humanity simply by being forceful..."

David shook his head.

"C'mon, wolfy. Even if you have, it's not like humanity is already better off in terms of strength. I'm so much stronger now than I was last time, and you are leagues above what you ended like. That is, without counting all the others awakened that follow you,

"If you really did create the worst monster in existence, then at least you can say you redeem yourself by being a beacon of strength that can protect the people, no?" David said, trying to give him a silver lining.

Alex scoffed lightly, unsure he deserved a silver lining. If he had really sent a bitter Solomon through time, and given him the tools to go after Gaius, even if it meant sacrificing a few worlds on the way, wouldn't he bear all those deaths on his shoulders?

The thought alone was enough to make his body slump forward a bit.

Looking at the table, David erased the charts, knowing there was no point in explaining magic circles anymore. Alex wouldn't be a good audience, and all the information would land on deaf ears.

He brought back the briefing notes that he had out earlier and looked at the downtrodden Alex with a tired smile.

"Go get some rest. Korea is on an inverted clock from ours, and we will probably get there early morning tomorrow for them. Right now is probably our only chance to catch a few Zs."

Alex nodded, his mind heavy with the possibility of what he had done. As he was leaving, though, David's voice reached out to him.

"And Alex."

He turned his head halfway, barely enough to see David in the corner of his eye.

"The reason I didn't reach out to them is because I don't need them. I died a year into the final invasion, which is about a year and a half from now, by the original timeline. And even at that point, those powerhouses were only scratching the ceiling of power you already wield.

"Even with the knowledge I have now, I wouldn't have made them as strong as you or me. The moment you displayed powers on this side of the veil, I knew they were not a part of this equation."

Without responding, Alex continued back to the front of the plane, where the passenger area was, but his mind felt slightly lighter.

In most cases, David might not be the nicest person in the world or the best speaker. But today, he had proven he could at least still be a good friend.

Reaching his seat again, his morose air had vanished, and he looked relaxed. He may not be at peace, but he was at least no longer troubled by his thoughts of inadequacy.

Kary could tell the difference the moment he walked back into the passenger cabin. She smiled at him as he stopped next to her.

"He still has some uses as a person, even though he reeks of death," she commented, talking about David.

Alex chuckled in response.

"Did you get an estimated time of arrival from the pilot?" he asked.

Kary shook her head.

"I haven't gone back to the cabin since we lifted off. It actually surprises me she hasn't sent the kids back here already. I guess they must be behaving enough for her to tolerate them."

Alex snort-laughed, imagining Violette and Jonathan could behave. But he felt like Cory was much more impressionable.

"I'll go ask her. I think a bit of rest might be a good plan before we make it there, and I wouldn't want the young ones to feel exhausted if we go into battle," he said, walking further forward.

Alex assumed the worst already, in case they needed to act as soon as they landed. It was better to be prepared than to get there and be caught with their pants down.

Reaching the cabin door, Alex gave two light knocks before the door opened, and he saw inside the cockpit.

The amount of buttons, knobs, levers, and indicators was mind-numbing, as he stepped in slowly, taking in the sights of the clear blue sky above the clouds.

"Major. Do you have an estimated time of arrival in local time and trip duration for me?" he asked, keeping it professional.

"I do, sir. It'll take us a bit an estimated three hours to reach London, where we are picking up a few more people, as well as refuelling, before leaving for China, to pick up our last passenger before making our way to Jeju.

"After refuelling, we will be in London for about an hour before making our way to Wuhan, which will take us another approximately five hours. After another quick refuel stop, we pick up our last passenger, and then we're en route to Jeju.

"The last leg of the trip should take about an hour, since we will be practically here already. So, in total, with our two one-hour stops, we will be there in approximately eleven hours.

"Calculating that Korea is thirteen hours later than Montreal, where we left from, and that we left around ten o'clock, we should get to Jeju at around the same time tomorrow, sir."

Alex was a bit frazzled by the amount of stops they had to take, but then again, he wouldn't have expected the plane to hold enough fuel for the entire trip, either.

"Would we have been able to do the trip in a single flight if we didn't have to stop anywhere?" he asked, out of curiosity.

But the pilot shook her head.

"Sadly, this plane doesn't hold enough fuel for that. But we could have limited our stops to one, or taken a mid-flight refuel, as this plane is capable of such. In the latter case, we wouldn't have to land at all, and taking the shortest route, the entire trip would have taken about six hours," she claimed.

Alex was impressed by how much shorter this could have been. But they needed to make those stops, regardless.

"Then I will go get some rest. If something happens, have someone wake me up," Alex said, before turning on his heels.

"Yes, sir," the pilot replied, thinking, 'As if there was anything you could do...'

Returning to his seat, Alex repeated what he had been told, and tilted the seat back to take a nap. He wasn't particularly tired, but he figured a quick nap would distract his mind from the negative thoughts.

Boy, was he mistaken.

#### Chapter 945 Reaching London

The moment his body finally let him fall asleep, his subconscious immediately brought back images of himself, as a demon, where he killed his friends and loved ones, standing atop a mountain made with their corpses.

The nightmares devolved into a bloody battle between him and Khalor, whose army was barely a challenge for him, as the death knight already lay shattered on the ground at his feet.

The necro-drake was entangled with the black dragon Astaroth controlled, and even his other high-level undead were kept at bay by his own summons, as he battled the helpless Khalor.

Calling it a battle wasn't an accurate term, as Astaroth's combat prowess, in this demonic form, far surpassed Khalor's battle ability, and it was over in minutes, as droves of undead lay on the surrounding ground, either shattered, turned to paste or dust, or completely obliterated.

His restless sleep ended as he started fighting Phoenix, when Kary shook him awake as they landed in London.

"Hey, wake up," she whispered, her face showing worry.

"Hmm? Are we there already?"

"No, but we have arrived in London. Are you ok? You were mumbling and tensing in your sleep..." she asked, looking at him with worry.

The images flashed in his mind, but he shook them away.

"Just a nightmare. I'm fine," he said, smiling at her.

He wasn't about to let a bad dream drag his mood down. But he told himself it might be better to stay awake for the rest of the trip.

As the plane taxied its way off the tarmac and to the hangar areas, Alex looked out the window and saw a hangar where a few cars were parked, seemingly waiting for something.

Stopping before that very hangar, the plane shut off as a tanker truck started approaching them from the main airport.

Alex looked out the window.

Outside, he could see three people climb out of the cars before looking at each other with curious gazes.

"Did they get here and wait in the cars without talking to each other?" Alex mumbled to himself.

The Major walked out of her cabin, with Violette, Jonathan, and Cory in front of her, herding them along as she walked toward Alex.

"I'll take a second to do a few checks while we are getting refuelled. You can stay on the plane or take a walk, but don't stray too far. Once the plane is refuelled, I want to take it to the sky again as soon as possible."

"Very well, Major. I'll go greet our next passengers, then."

She nodded at him, disembarking first, before she lifted her gaze to the underside of the plane's hull, looking for any scratch or missing bolt.

She was confident in her first inspection, but sometimes, people missed things, and minor mistakes could lead to catastrophic failures. It was better to be cautious when flying a new aircraft.

Alex and Kary followed soon after her. The other four passengers stayed on board, doing their own thing, while the former two walked over to the three people, silently observing each other.

Alex extended his arms, smiling warmly, as he gave his best politician smile. Jack had told him it was best if he practiced those in the prevision of his heroic role in the future.

"It's a pleasure to meet all of you face to face for real, finally," he said, looking at each of them in turn.

He instantly recognized Killi, or rather, Killian Owens, who was a bigshot in the E-sports scene for ten years now, as well as Winston, whose frail body belied the strength he could wield.

Alex frowned for a second, realizing the two of them had the same surname. And seeing how they eyed each other, it seemed they already knew each other.

"Winston, I'm glad I can meet you, and outside your home, at that. How are you?" Kary said, interrupting his thoughts.

Winston smiled at her, his smile reaching from ear to ear.

"I'm doing good! I never thought the outside air could smell so bad and yet, so good, at the same time," he said, giggling.

Alex chuckled, remembering he had been sheltered all his life because of his disease.

But he locked his gaze on Killian, who was eying Winston strangely.

"Killian. I'm honoured to meet one of my childhood idols finally. It's a bit underwhelming, though, to be fair," Alex said, his tone a bit sarcastic.

"Well, I am just a man. But your words still make me happy. It is a pleasure to meet you as well, face to face," Killian said, extending his hand toward Alex.

Meanwhile, the last person looked at them in silence, almost awkwardly.

But Kary fixed that.

"Simo, right?" she said, walking to him with a smile and extended hand.

"Yes, ma'am. The name is Aapo. Aapo Mäkinen," he said, in a most broken English.

But Kary didn't mind.

She shook his hand, gazing at him inquisitively.

"Pleasure to meet you, Aapo. Please, drop the ma'am. From what I see, we are about the same age," she said, still smiling.

The man nodded, staying silent.

He turned his head to look at Alex, and his eyes flashed with both excitement and a tinge of fear, which didn't escape Kary's discerning gaze.

She giggled lightly, releasing the man's hand.

"You are either quite perceptive, or your instincts are very sharp. You can tell, right?"

The man looked at her, confused.

"Pardon?"

Kary's smile dropped, becoming severe.

"You were wondering how strong he was. But you felt it, didn't you? Alex isn't very good at hiding his strength. I'm sure it was instinct, mostly. But you felt it. How dangerous he is."

Kary released some of her mana, directing it mainly toward the Finnish man, and he paled a bit. This confirmed her thoughts.

His instincts were indeed sharp, considering he wasn't a mage class.

"In any case, welcome to the team," Kary said, retracting her mana entirely, as her smile returned, like it had never gone away.

The man slightly shivered, realizing what he had signed up to join.

'With so many powerful players here, what are we truly going to do?'

Chapter 946 Family Issue

While she was introducing herself to the new guy, Winston went next to Alex and Killian and talked with them.

"So, what are we really amassing for?" he asked, deciding turning around the pot was too tedious.

Alex and Killian both looked at him, the former with amusement, and the latter with slight annoyance, before Alex replied.

"We are going to hunt monsters. That much you already know. We will explain the rest once everyone is on board and present. Or else, we'll have to re-explain it to everyone when we get the next passenger, and again once in Korea."

Killian eyed Alex with reticence, annoyed he was withholding information, but understanding why. He also wouldn't want to repeat himself three times.

"You seem overly excited for someone who could barely walk out of your home without a vacuum suit not too long ago, kid," Killian commented.

Winston glared at him, mad that he would bring that up.

"Well, I've gotten better. What does it matter, anyway, if I'm excited? If I die, doesn't that suit your needs better?" Winston almost spat.

Alex frowned at their interaction.

"Woah, did we step on a landmine by putting you together?" he asked with a chuckle, trying to defuse the situation.

"I can act my station, Alexander. I don't know about the child, though. He shouldn't be here," Killian said, his face reflecting displeasure.

"Where I go doesn't concern you. I don't remember having to explain myself to the family for my actions," Winston replied, grimacing.

Alex raised his hands, interrupting their argument.

"Stop. Either you tell me what this is about, or the discussion stops now. I don't want any infighting before we go hunting. It's dangerous as it is; I don't want to add a risk factor."

Winston lifted his nose at Killian, who grunted in response.

"Winston is the heir apparent to the Owens family. But his sickness has always set him aside for succession, as he is the only son of the main branch. But now that he is better, he should act his station and ensure he stays alive and safe," Killian said.

Alex frowned, confused.

"What does that have to do with you?"

"He's mad that he lost his position since I got better," Winston quipped, pulling his tongue to Killian.

"On the contrary, you child. I was happy to hear you took your succession back. Politics is the last thing I want to be burdened with. Which is why I think you should go home and get stronger in a safe environment," Killian groaned, obviously annoyed by Winston's childish reactions.

"Yeah?! Well, I don't care! I won't let some old fogeys tell me what to do. This isn't the fifteen hundreds anymore! I should get to pick my path on my own!" Winston snapped.

"The problem isn't that, you little idiot," Killian finally snapped.

"You lied to your parents, saying you were visiting Korea with friends, and that you would be safe. If you get hurt, they'll have my head. And I very much like my head attached to my shoulders!" he growled.

Alex stopped them again as the heat rose.

"Alright, calm down, both of you. Killian, you can't expect him to tell his parents he's going to hunt monsters. They wouldn't have let him come. As for you, Winston, try considering the position you are putting him in..."

Winston looked at Alex with a disappointed look.

"You are taking his side?" he asked, choking on the last word.

"Hell no," Alex said, chuckling and ruffling his hair.

"I agree that you should set your own path. But you should have at least made it clear that anything that happened to you wouldn't be his fault. Have some compassion for the guy. He is your family, after all."

"His uncle, to be exact. His father is my older brother. But I doubt my father would care about the words of a child. I would still take the fall for him getting harmed or, worse, dying."

Alex clicked his tongue, finding this situation a bit complicated.

Should he send one of them home? He could hardly force Killian to go home, given he had a solid reason to want to join them. But he also didn't want to send Winston home.

The kid hadn't been outside his house in over a decade. He would be heartbroken if his trip suddenly stopped at the airport.

"Alright, let's do things this way. If he gets hurt, I'll take full responsibility. You can tell your old man I was the one who hurt him. I couldn't care less what happens if an old codger in England hates my guts.

"This way, you keep your head, and he gets to come without issue. But I doubt anything will happen to him. Winston is going to be the toughest nut to crack in the group, aside from me, the way I see it," Alex said, putting his hands on his hips, proud of his solution.

Killian and Winston looked at him before looking at each other and back at him.

"Yeah... I don't think you want my grandfather to hold a grudge against you..." Winston said, his face paling a bit.

"Hmm? Who cares if I'm halfway across the globe?" Alex said, mockingly.

Killian shook his head.

"I don't think he cares about anything. Let's not bother explaining now, Winston," Killian said, sounding exhausted.

Alex looked at the two of them, wondering what kind of old man they had. But he couldn't care less if they didn't want to share.

"Alright then. It's settled. The others are already on board, so if you want to climb up on the plane, you can go right ahead. I'll introduce myself to the last man, and then we can talk inside together," Alex said, clapping his hands together.

Killian nodded, putting the matter aside for now.

Winston looked at Alex with amusement. He was just as fearless in this world as in New Eden, and it was refreshing.

'If he knew who my grandfather is, he probably wouldn't be this easy-going. But it won't matter as long as I don't get hurt. So let's not say anything for now,' he thought, climbing the stairs to the plane behind his uncle.

'All that matters for now is that I get to leave home and see the world.'

## Chapter 947 Getting Caught

Alex walked over to Simo and Kary, introducing himself to the man, who didn't look much older than twenty-one. They proceeded aboard the aircraft, and a crew of four men loaded their luggage into the back of the plane, where David was still working.

The crew gave him strange looks as he worked tirelessly on the table, but he ignored them. He was expecting such gazes, given his skin was slowly turning deathly pale.

In time, he expected to look just as white as his death knight, and knew this would attract attention. He hardly cared about it, though. People could look all they wanted.

His job wasn't to be the face of salvation. Only to save them.

There wasn't much to load, and so the crew quickly left the cargo area, leaving David isolated with his thoughts. The other passengers of the plane were up front, engaging in small talk, getting to know each other, for those who had never met.

Simo, or rather, Aapo, was bombarded with questions by the younger members of the team, whom he had met for the first time. His mind was in shock that children were brought for what had been advertised to be a dangerous mission.

He felt like this wasn't the most responsible thing to do, but he wasn't in a position to question the guild leaders. That became especially true when he learned that the three youngest people here were all officers in the guild.

He had seldom met the officers, and only knew of Kary and Alexander's characters, Phoenix and Astaroth. The only other person he knew on this plane, he hadn't seen a hair of, and that was David, or as he knew him, Khalor.

Aapo quickly realized that aside from himself and Killian, these were all upper echelons of Paragons. His nerves suddenly tensed, as some performance anxiety built up in his mind.

'If any of them are as strong as they are inside the game, why am I even useful to this expedition?' he wondered.

He kept his questions to himself, not wanting to step on anyone's feet or ruffle any feathers, while he did his best to answer all their questions. Luckily for him, they were all questions about his provenance, and how he chose his character's name.

In the meantime, Kary, Alex, and Killian sat at the front of the plane, nearest the pilot's cockpit, and started discussing seriously the implications of Killian's presence aboard.

"From my understanding, you want to be present mostly to film this encounter, so your players believe you when you say monsters are appearing," Alex started, putting the cards on the table.



"Yes. That is correct. Although I will help with the fighting, if necessary, I would much rather stay out of it and capture the entire encounter from a safe distance. I don't think it is my time to fight yet," Killian replied, clenching his fist.

He still didn't think he was strong enough to face monsters on this side of reality.

Truth be told, even though he called himself an awakened, Killian could barely hold that title. His talents in mana did not come from New Eden, and he had trouble assimilating his skills from the game because of it.

Yes, his swordsmanship and his archery skills may be top-notch, but they were a far cry away from being called masterful. Oftentimes, the choice to wield multiple weapons came with the cost of never mastering either.

As for his use of mana, well, that was an entire problem in itself.

Due to his upbringing, Killian had known how to harness mana for a long time, but he wasn't at liberty to discuss it with these people, even if they were friends. The issue lay in his ineptitude to wield the mana that didn't come from this world.

Contrary to what everyone around the world thought, the energy known as mana, or Qi, or whatever the locals called it around the world, had never been a myth, and it had never entirely vanished.

Certainly, it had diminished over the millennia of Earth's existence, but it had never extinguished entirely. Many organizations existed across the globe that had learned to harness it.

And his family was part of one of those organizations.

Killian raised his gaze over at Winston, who seemed carefree in this situation, and envy flashed in his eyes.

The child had never been through the training their family all went through, because of his illness, and it seemed to have been a blessing in disguise in this situation.

Even from here, Killian could feel the mana flowing through the kid, a stream of much purer energy than his own, and he sighed inwardly.

These thoughts flashing through his mind, Killian locked eyes with Alexander.

"I know it is unreasonable of me to ask to be present and not fight, but I think it is in everyone's best interest if we don't add a weak link in your battle plan."

Kary frowned at his words.

She could feel the mana inside him, and knew of his combat prowess. Wouldn't that alone make him an asset?

But Alex shook his head, like he knew something she didn't.

"I can understand why you would think like this, Killian. You never really awakened, after all," Alex said, his gaze locking into Killian's.

Killian felt a shiver run down his spine, feeling the pressure inside Alex's gaze. Then his mind registered the words he had just said, and his heart skipped a beat.

Even Kary was looking at Alex with a strange look.

"What do you mean he hasn't awakened? I can feel the mana inside him," she asked, confused.

"Yes, there is mana inside him. But it's not the same that we use. Can't you sense how weak it is? And how familiar?"

Kary, focusing her senses on Killian, quickly found out what he meant.

Her eyes went wide.

"It's almost the same as the Qi inside Gu Fang!" she whisper-shouted, trying to keep their conversation out of reach for the younger ones.

"You're from a hidden organization, aren't you?" Alex asked him.

Killian immediately became guarded, as this information was supposed to be a secret.

"Whatever do you mean?" he asked, feigning ignorance.

"Cut the crap. We have met others before you. Does the Zhong Kui ring a bell? I'm sure you aren't from that one, since you aren't using qi. Which brings me to the question: which organization do you come from?"

Killian's eyes became cold as he started rising from his seat.

"I don't want to come anymore. I feel unwelcome."

But an immense wave of mana slammed into him, forcing him back down, as cold sweats started dripping all over his body.

"Sit down. You aren't going anywhere."

Sorry for the late chapter. A friend called me in for some help at work, and I didn't get time to write. Regardless, there will be a chapter at 6 PM today.

Chapter 948 The Soul Snare

Killian's eyes trailed back to Alexander, who suddenly appeared to him like a predator, as his icy gaze rippled with mana.

Every mana-sensitive person on the plane was instantly jolted into a state of high alert, their senses tingling with the overwhelming presence of power.

David ran out of the Cargo area, wondering if they were under attack, before he saw the scene.

The passenger cabin was eerily quiet, as everyone was either struggling to resist Alexander's mana pressure or wondering what suddenly set him off like this.

Even Kary was confused about his sudden hostility. If Killian didn't want to come, why would he suddenly force him?

"Alexander, please release me. You have no idea what kind of hornet's nest you are kicking, if you start holding me against my will," Killian said, his voice quaking in fear.

"Don't try threats. It's pointless. I already have one organization to deal with. Adding another doesn't bother me. Tell me why you asked to be here. The real reason, this time," Alex replied coldly.

Killian could tell Alexander was not kidding. His calm demeanour was all too obvious.

"I really only came to film this for my guild members, Alexander. I don't have a hidden agenda. What I do have is a private life, with matters that don't concern you. And if you suddenly start prying into those, it's no wonder I don't feel welcome."

Alex glared at him.

He could feel the fluctuating mana inside him.

"You're lying. Killian, although I respect you and admire your E-sports career, this isn't a case of a prying fan. If you don't tell me your true motives, it won't be a case of anger and stalking. You won't leave this plane."

The threat was all too real, and David knew now was the time to butt in.

"Your father told you to spy on us, right? He wants to know how strong the awakened are. Am I wrong?" he asked, walking up to the trio.

The kids were still looking at the situation with alert, Violette the least affected, but the most worried.

She didn't want them to start fighting. Not now, when they needed to stand united.

But Winston was looking at Killian, not with worry, but with a frown.

"Grandfather wouldn't ask you to spy on us, would he? He would never stoop that low, right?" he asked, appalled.

Killian looked at Winston and smirked.

"Your naivety is astounding, nephew," he said, before turning to look at David.

"What would you know about my father? Do not talk without knowledge of whose name you would drag in the mud, undead," he growled.

David grinned at him.

"Howard Owens the third, thirty-fifth Exarch of the Merlineans. I know much more about him than you think I do. I also know he has led your organization way past his prime, since his first son, your elder brother, is mana-less."

Hearing David's words, Killian nervously swallowed.

"How do you know such information? Who told you this?" he asked.

But Alex interrupted him by raising a hand.

"I don't care about your organization or family right now. I want to know your motives. Is David right? Were you sent to spy on us?"

Killian remained mum, as Winston looked at him with a hopeful gaze, which slowly faded away, realizing Killian wasn't refuting the claim.

"Why?" the kid asked.

Killian ignored him, keeping his eyes on Alex.

"If this is how it's going to be, I don't see why we should cooperate any longer," he declared.

But Alex wasn't letting him go.

"You aren't going anywhere until you answer my question, Killian. You broke my trust and tried using this trip as an excuse to gather information about us. You have to know I can't let you go."

Killian scoffed.

"Even if you don't let me go, do you think this will slide? Although I thought we were friends, I don't answer to you, Alexander. I am bound by oath to obey the commands of my Exarch. Do you think I want to sell you away to him?" Killian asked, his face showing a bit of pain.

"If you don't want to, then tell me why you were really sent here, and we can work this out," Alex said.

David looked at Killian, and his pained expression made him understand something.

"He has your soul-snared, doesn't he?"

Killian's eyes went wide, his eyes turning to David.

"How did you..."

But David didn't let him finish.

"I know what it is. Wouldn't wish it on my worst enemy. But I also know of a way to break it."

Sitting next to Killian, David locked gaze with Alex.

"But I need his help."

Alex looked at him, slightly confused, but keeping his expression icy.

"Alex, listen to me. If he's soul-snared, he can't go against the command unless it puts at risk his original oath to the organization. For now, he hasn't told us anything about his mission, or his organization, and he still isn't in breach.

"But if he walks away from here, there is a big chance the snare will kick in, and he could die. He's not doing this of his own volition."

Killian looked at David, his eyes almost pleading.

The accuracy of his statement was remarkable, but it also painted a grim picture of his future.

But Alex wasn't convinced.

He peered deep inside Killian, doing what he considered the biggest breach of privacy, and looked directly at his soul.

And right there, bared naked to his eyes, he saw it.

Wrapped around Killian's soul, under a runic circle that looked very much like a soul oath, a bright blue bramble, with thorns almost in contact with the flames of his soul.

He could feel the power in the brambles and knew this wasn't something a person would normally achieve on their own.

"You willingly submitted to this snare?" he asked Killian, confused.

"We all did. It was the Exarch's command."

As he answered, the brambles inched ever closer to his soul, and the expression of pain became a bit more obvious.

Alex understood the position he was in immediately.

"How do we break this?" he asked, looking at David.

"It's not going to be hard, but it will certainly be painful..."

Chapter 949 Promises And Doubts

Killian looked at David, his face showing doubt.

"This can't be undone by anyone else than the person that cast it. I've already spoken too much, and my soul has to pay a price. If you try to remove it, you'll only be hurting me more, all in a futile attempt to save me from myself. Give up."

David smirked in response.

"If anyone can do something about a soul snare, it would be Alexander. I'm almost certain he can break one already. I'm just uncertain how efficiently, or how painlessly he can do it."

Alex was completely in the dark about what a soul snare was, except for the fact that it was a grave threat. His confusion and hesitation were palpable, etched on his face.

Scoffing a bit, Killian opened his mouth again.

"He barely seems to know what we are talking about. How do you expect him to break it? Give up, already."

But David's smirk didn't waver.

"Because I know how. All I need to do is guide him through it," he replied, his confidence oozing from his words.

Alex looked at David, a frown appearing on his face, as his eyebrows almost connected together.

"How would you know that? Have you ever broken one?" he asked.

David shook his head no, but his confidence stayed etched on his face.

"I haven't, but I've had one broken on me. And I vividly remember that memory of my past life. It's one of the most painful memories from it, and my mind won't let me forget it even if I wanted to."

The question of why he had one at all on him burned inside Alex's and Killian's minds, but they stayed silent. If he wanted to share, he would have already.

"In any case, I remember the steps that were taken, and I can guide you through the process. How precise you are and how much you overpower the caster will be the deciding factors on how painful or long this takes. But I am confident you can accomplish it."

Alex had no further reason to doubt himself. If David was certain he could break the snare, then he would trust in him.

"Then how do I do this?"

As Alex said this, he noticed that everyone else aboard the airplane was watching with rapt attention. They had quickly become the center of attention.

11:37

David saw that as well and coughed lightly.

"I'll show you how, but we aren't doing this here. Even if I am sure everyone is curious, it's a gruesome sight, and it would be better if the younger ones didn't see this. But we will need Cody—

"It's Cory, man. Get his name right," Alex cut him.

"Right... Cory. We will need his help, so he can come with us in the back. Killian, Alex, me, and Cory. If anyone else butts in, I'll punish them myself."

Kary raised an eyebrow at him.

"Oh? You would try to punish me for watching?"

David felt a cold chill run up his spine, and he swallowed nervously.

"Of course, you are welcome to watch. But I would rather you watch the kids so they don't try to pry?" he said, questioningly.

Kary chuckled lightly and nodded.

"I can do that, although I will be asking about the soul snare once this is done, though. I am curious about something," she said, before glancing over at the younger ones.

"As for you, little ducklings; no peaking," she said, sternly.

A glint of a spark flashed in her eyes, and the kids knew she wasn't joking. All of them might be awakened, and Violette was almost sure she was an even match for her, but they weren't foolish enough to try her patience.

After all, even if they could battle her, they were about to take off soon, and battling in an airplane, at thirty thousand feet above the ground, was not an ideal scenario.

In any case, they wouldn't want to battle the pyromantic woman. They were all friends here.

But Aapo felt tension build inside him as he realized some of them were considering whether a battle to appease their curiosity was worthwhile.

'Monsters... All of them...'

At this moment, as silence lingered in the passenger cabin, Major Schrute climbed back aboard the aircraft, making her way through the passenger cabin toward her pilot cabin. She stopped as she entered the passenger area and felt the awkwardness in the air.

"Did you all fight already? Be warned, I don't want people to start being prissy in my aircraft at thirty thousand feet. If you feel you can't tolerate each other, get off now. I don't want any battling or arguing aboard. You don't pay me enough to act as a nanny."

Her words defused the lingering awkwardness, as most of them realized she had no idea that if a fight were to break out, the entire plane would most likely cease to exist mid-flight.

A wave of light laughter spread out, as the kids felt like they weren't the ones being oblivious, for once in their lives, with adults present.

"Nothing of the sort, Major," Kary interjected, giggling softly.

"Just a slight divergence in standpoints. It's already been cleared. We were just contemplating how to act now. But I think we can safely assume that everything will go back to normal."

The Major nodded her head once, glad that she wouldn't have to act as a middleman in any argument, for now.

"Good. Keep it this way, at least until I drop you all off. A smooth flight is a pleasant flight," the woman said, resuming her walk.

As she reached the piloting cabin's door, she spun around and looked at Alex.

"I finished my checkups, and the tanker is unhooking as we speak. All of you should get strapped in. We should be taking off at a moment's notice."

Alex nodded at her, before she spun back forward and closed the door behind her, a distinct click resounding as she locked it.

David looked at Alex and Killian before sighing loudly.

"We'll need as much stability as we can get for this, so I guess we'll wait until we are airborne. Once the plane has stabilized, come to the back, both of you, and we can get this over with. Can you hold on until then?" he asked, looking at Killian's pained expression.

When the Major boarded, the man had hidden his pain, but cold sweats were already dripping from his forehead.

"I can manage. For now, it's only a searing pain. As long as you don't keep questioning me, I should be fine."

"Good. Then I'll see you in a bit."

I am sorry about the last few days without chapters. I hit another bump on this burnout, and my motivation tanked to nothing. It feels a bit better today, so the chapters should resume at a normal pace for a while.

Thank you for your understanding.

## Chapter 950 Ritual Prepared

As the Major had said, it didn't take long for the airplane to be cleared for takeoff, and after a short taxi onto the tarmac, and a last tower confirmation, she pushed the engine into full thrust and shot forward like an arrow.

The supersonic capable turbines on the plane whirred to life like four angry banshees, pushing the plane forward with enormous force. It wasn't long before the aircraft reached takeoff speeds, and Major Schrute pulled on her yoke, taking to the skies.

Inside the cabin, the passengers were already strapped into their seats, bracing themselves for the imminent acceleration. The force was so strong that it pushed them back into their seats, a testament to the plane's power.

If anyone had been standing then, they would have been propelled into the cargo hold. In mere minutes, the plane was already at its cruise altitude and levelled off, lowering the engine to cruise levels, before the Major pressed the button to signal the passengers could unbuckle.

Alex looked at Killian, who was grimacing in pain, and nodded.

"Alright, let's go."

Killian nodded in response and forced himself up. He followed Alex to the back of the plane, where they rejoined David, who was already preparing things for this ritual to work.

Alex looked at the ground, where a runic circle had been drawn, and frowned.

"The hell is that? Are you trying to summon a demon?" he joked.

He recognized a few of the runes, having seen them before, inside Solomon's ring, and wondered what their purpose was.

"No, you idiot. It's a channelling circle. It'll allow more power to be channelled into Killian's soul, breaking that snare more easily. You should learn this shit, instead of always acting like a blockhead," David said, giving him a stern gaze.

"Sure. Maybe later," Alex lied, brushing the matter away.

David shook his head in disappointment, but ignored Alex's refusal to take him seriously, at least for now.

"Sit," he told Killian, pointing to the center of the runic circle.

Killian also recognized a few of these runes, although not the ones Alex had recognized.

"How will binding runes help channel any kind of power? This is all drawn wrong," he complained, the pain making him irritable.

But David only scoffed.

"Your organization doesn't hold the only truth on runes, Owens. Sit and shut up, unless you want me to let that pain devour you until you go mad?"

Killian groaned as a pang of pain shot through his chest, making its way toward his head.

"Fine..."

Alex looked at their interaction and chuckled.

"It's almost like you're friends," he mocked.

"Shut up," they both replied, almost in sync.

This made Alex chuckle again as the two others groaned in displeasure.

It wasn't that Killian hated David, or vice versa. But they both didn't like the shroud that surrounded each other.

In both cases, too much information was unknown, and for two men who liked to know everything before it happened and everything about anyone in their proximity, this was quite the annoyance factor.

As Killian sat in the center of the circle, David closed his eyes and started infusing a bit of his mana into it. The runes suddenly lit up in a dark blue, almost sinister sheen.

"What an eerie mana colour," Killian commented.



"You try dabbling in necromancy without changing the colour of your essence," David replied, focusing on his infusion.

The runic circle needed enough mana to start working, but not enough to activate already. If he activated the runes completely, he would need to perform the ritual himself, and he wasn't yet confident in his ability to do so, at least safely.

Once he was sure the runes had become energized, and the binding magic kicked in, making Killian slightly nervous, David reopened his eyes and looked at Alex.

"The rest I will guide you through. Sit in front of Killian, outside the runic circle," he ordered, as Alex nodded.

Once he was seated, Alex could feel the runes calling out to him, and was almost excited to do this.

It wasn't every day that someone suddenly delved into a magic ritual, especially since most people would call them insane for even saying magic was real.

"First, I want you to close your eyes, and take conscience of every rune on the circle through your mana senses. Feel them as individual runes, then as phrases, and finally as a whole. Once you've grasped the essence of the runic circle and its function, we can proceed."

Alex nodded, closing his eyes and reached out with his unnatural senses, feeling each rune, as they almost chanted their meaning into his ears. It was like each rune was telling him what it could do, and how it could be used.

The information load was immense, considering each rune held at least hundreds of different uses, even though they all meant one thing. Once Alex had internalized all this, he started linking them together in order, forming phrases.

This was easy, at first, as the outer ring of the runic circle was set up like a single, long phrase. But it got more complicated next, when he realized that each rune was also connected to others through a network of lines, forming out-of-order phrases as well.

His mind took a minute to process each rune and set them into place correctly, but he stayed focused, and the process trudged along.

Once he was confident he had grasped every phrase and its essence, he expanded once again, forming a whole as the ritual formed a chant in his mind.

David could see on Alex's face when this happened exactly, as his face expressed awe.

"Who wrote this runic circle..." Alex whispered.

Killian also felt concerned, as he had followed the same steps as Alex, although he wasn't done forming the whole yet.

Although his knowledge of runes was assuredly more profound than that of the Canadian, it seemed the latter's senses were sharper, which accelerated his comprehension of the spell.

But, from the phrases alone, Killian was already worried.

'This is a powerful runic circle, albeit a crude one... Whoever designed this was pressed for time, and didn't research it enough. Will it work?'