

## Undead 161

### Chapter 161: Bolstering The Base! (1)

Skullius locked eyes with a woman who had a rather bountiful chest.

She wore a red dress, decorated with white specks all over.

The neck was low, revealing an ample portion of the light skin on her cleavage as the large bumps underneath it shook with her movement.

Her overall figure was chubby but one couldn't dismiss that there was a certain charm that oozed from her pretty face which was powdered up delicately to vividly pronounce her small blue eyes and high cheekbones.

Her ideal lips were fun to look at as a deep red smeared over them to give them an appetising image.

Her amber hair was tied into a side pony, with the silky tufts draping over her shoulder.

"Those..." Skullius muttered as he tore away his gaze from this woman's eyes, his own lowering to optically ravage the most outstanding part of her body.

Unconsciously, Skullius walked forward with his eyes never losing sight of the prize.

This wasn't the first time he was seeing the protruding shape on a woman's chest but... a cleavage? This was his first time.

The women he had met so far had been wearing armour and when he had been roaming the city, his mind had been too preoccupied to spare any effort towards ogling such a feature.

The female had always been an odd phenomenon to him ever since his first meeting with one.

Denille.

A horrible example but a woman nonetheless.

"Unfortunately, I'm not on the menu, love," an enticing and mature voice escaped from the woman's lips as she addressed Skullius who immediately raised his head to look back at the woman's eyes.

He felt a weird emotion for some reason as he stared at the calm and vivid eyes of the woman behind the counter.

Embarrassment.

"Finally found your way back to my face, eh? Did you like what you saw?"

Skullius couldn't find the words to reply. Deep within him, he knew he was in the wrong and kept his cosmetic eyes in check.

"Regardless of your answer though, you better make sure you don't get yourself killed."

"Huh?" Skullius was confused. What did that mean?

PKAA!

The sound of breaking glass assaulted Skullius' eyes and he turned to see that most of the men who were dining in this floor of the tall building were glaring at him with reddened eyes!

One of them had even broken a glass and was holding it threateningly at Skullius.

The Discount Human hadn't even realised that the noise in this place had died down when the men saw someone 'bothering' their beloved view.

Somehow, Skullius understood the situation.

'I shouldn't do that again. I was right after all. Females are sacred!'

"Now. If you're someone who's here to stay, I welcome you to my humble Inn. I'm Betsy as you might have guessed from what the sign outside says. If you're a passer-by, I encourage you to not waste any more of my time," the woman whose name was Betsy said with a half serious expression on her face as if baiting Skullius.

Skullius forced himself to focus on the objective at hand.

The bountiful view on this woman's chest had almost made him forget about the ongoing trend of UNCoddled.

Luckily, this woman before him didn't seem to be the overly kind and caring sort.

Just as he had learned, those who sold services were the best to hang out with.

"I'd like to get somewhere to stay for the next five days please," Skullius said promptly.

Betsy wore a slight smile as leaned over the counter.

"That would be ten silvers."

CLNK!

Skullius immediately paid the amount.

From behind him, he heard the seats and tables adjusting as the men who settled on them went back to eating and drinking merrily.

Betsy took the coins and snapped her fingers thrice.

She was the owner of Inn and had a few other ladies who helped out in dealing with the issue like cooking, cleaning and administration.

A young lady rushed from the door behind the counter, answering the proprietor's summon.

"Please show our new guest to his room."

The young lady bowed and asked for Skullius to follow her.

The two walked to the stairs at the end of the space, going from the ground floor and to the first floor under the sharp gaze of Betsy who couldn't help but remark to herself, "He's a rather... odd fellow. Face and all."

There was just something off about that young man.

Betsy had met with plenty of men to know all about them and their linguistic as well as gestural preferences and their hidden meanings.

Yet this one man, gave her the feeling that he was quite... extraordinary.

Skullius was shown his room, with his escort rushing away after unlocking the door and giving him the key to the room.

Skullius didn't think much of it as his lingering thoughts on the round and swaying objects he had seen on Betsy fading when he saw his room.

A small space with a bed, a window and a desk.

Annoyingly, the loud noises from below were very much audible from within this room.

At first Skullius was irritated by this, but then he realised that he could make the most of it.

At least the noise could mask whatever he was doing. Not that he planned to do anything excessive.

The Discount Human locked his door and sat on the bed.

He activated [Advanced Mana Manipulation] and searched to see if there was anything strange within the room but ultimately found nothing.

The people around didn't have much in the way of mana cores, which made sense as Skullius surmised that all the mercenaries were probably living in better conditions than this.

Skullius pulled out the items which he intended to work with; the mana band and the shield along with the other items he had taken later for the purpose of 'cheating'!

There was an exquisite knife with a slender blade which had the skill, [Quick Strike], an agility based skill that allowed the user to gain additional speed and dexterity when attacking with the knife.

There was a brown and black leather armour, its design evidently made for the more lean combatants as it held the passive skill [Great Rush], which augmented the user's movement speed, along with their reactions by 10%.

Skullius had been shocked when he learned that the armour was rare type equipment.

Analysing the armour taught him that it was probably because of this skill that it gave.

The word 'Great' in the skill made Skullius wonder if his own skill, [Greater Communication] and this one were somehow linked, after all, it was the only skill he had come across so far with such a prefix.

The last item he had gotten, was a grey coloured glove made with a semi-metallic material. It held the skill, [Brawn], which increased the force and power that Skullius could deal with blunt attacks.

"Alright," Skullius said.

He was about to extract these skills from the items before him.

However, this was something that could only be done passively with his class as the Vehement Bone Nullmancer, which unravelled the concepts of the world before him.

And for that, he had some time to kill as [Flesh It Like You Mean It] had almost timed out.

Skullius couldn't wait.

Strengthening on his base as opposed to focusing on his Insurgent Magnus for the moment wasn't a bad idea.

## Chapter 162: Bolstering The Base! (2)

"Finally," Skullius said as the cosmetic flesh receded, giving way for his tall, dark blue skeletal Penetrator form to show.

Due to the density of his bones and his overall height, Skullius had to remove himself from the bed and sit on the floor instead, fearing that he would break something.

Furthermore, the tiny sparks that constantly ran along the surface of his bones could burn down the room and the Fulgorant Bone Penetrator was forced to wear the Null Devil's Aegis of Damnation.

"It's good to feel strong again," Skullius said to himself. His presence would always be null in this form, which made him feel even more secure when it came to what he was about to do.

"I haven't used this form in combat in a while. I should at least use it in Clusters in the future."

With that, Skullius didn't waste anymore time as he gazed at the items before him.

He would have loved to upgrade the shield, the Keep, immediately but he was a few Null Life Essence points shy from the 1000 he needed to use [Permanent Random Upgrade].

Therefore, he moved onto the next task.

Extracting the skills from the three items he had.

If there was something that Skullius was thankful for, it was the fact that he could share normal skills between his two bodies. The only ones that were restricted were the racial, class and wield skills whose origin he still wasn't familiar with like [Pseudo Evil Veneration].

'I probably should have asked about that from Frock but... oh well. Now.'

Skullius grabbed the knife first.

Unlike what had happened with the sword [Demion's Dance], Skullius was sure his upgraded mana manipulation skill's effect on his Null Life Essence was enough to extract such a simple skill which he was going to spam while he still had a lot of mana.

"Here we go "

The Fulgorant Bone Penetrator focused on the Null Life Essence he had and began to direct it into the knife.

The bluish light that represented Null Life Essence streamed from his armoured hands and coiled as it gracefully entered the knife.

Soon, Skullius felt like his consciousness was sinking into the knife, a complicated network of glowing lines entering his view.

It was this familiar scene again.

All he had to do, was push through his Null Life Essence until it covered all of these lines!

Surely, these networks looked more intricate than the ones that he had seen on the staves that held [Flame Shot] and [Mana Bolt].

WHOOSH!

Null Life Essence gushed into the glowing lines speedily, tracing through them as it hurried.

Skullius lost himself in the feeling of passing through as he followed the Essence that raced through these networks.

Soon, a familiar notification popped in his view.

[You have mastered the skill 'Quick Strike' from the cool bandit knife. Your understanding of the compounds of the world and mana increases]

"Kek..." Skullius cackled in a way he hadn't in a while.

He didn't stop though, as he went on to grab the leather armour that held the skill [Great Rush].

The Penetrator immediately pushed himself to accomplish the task that he needed to do.

But...

"The hell...!"

As his consciousness sank into the inner workings of the mana-based effect in the armour, he saw a very complex network of glowing lines that was beautiful yet... terrifying.

It looked like the pattern for [Quick Strike], except interwoven three times!

When extracting skills, Skullius had noted that it was particularly hard to push his Null Life Essence through intersections on the network.

These kinds of intersections were abundant here.

'Is it because of this 'Great' thing?' Skullius wondered.

Still, he couldn't afford to give up before he gave it a try.

At least he wasn't getting the notification that his current mastery of mana was insufficient to learn this.

And so, the Penetrator began his work as bursts of essence raced through the glowing networks of lines only to be halted by the complex turning and spinning he could see all over.



Each part of the patterns that needed his focus taxed his mind and the longer he went on, the harder it got.

Skullius was too scared to stop as he had a feeling that he would have to start all over which was a rather terrifying thought.

He wouldn't allow it. He had to push through.

He devoted the next hour to this task as even though he succeeded in the end, his mind was strained for energy.

The skill [Great Rush] was added to his arsenal, to which Skullius was glad.

Was this skill going to be worth all this trouble though?

As far as he knew it, it was just a normal skill right?

Still, there was a lot to explore as he levelled up these skills.

Once more, Skullius held off on reading the descriptions to his skills until he was done with the last item.

Even though his mind felt like it was being pulled into itself, he pushed himself to work, the acquisition of the skill [Brawl] being far easier after having been tortured for a full hour with the complex patterns of [Great Rush].

As soon as he finished, Skullius leaned against the bed lightly.

Even though he didn't feel physical fatigue in this form, his mental state after enduring this torture was quite unsettled.

The sun was turning orange on the horizon as Skullius looked out the window.

This different sun that shone during the day and rested at night was slowly becoming his true reminder that life was far different elsewhere.

An elsewhere he had come from.

"Well... no need to rest! Let's level up these skills! Good thing they don't use a lot of mana."

And the Penetrator went about his task, taking advantage of his infinite endurance and abundant mana.

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Next day.

Skullius came down the steps from the first floor and onto the ground floor.

He wore a dark shirt and brown pants that made him look a bit too ordinary, especially when coupled with his face.

He found the scenery to actually be the same within this lobby slash hall, as even with a few different folks being served drinks and food, the chatter and loud cheer was still vibrant.

Behind the counter was Betsy who only gave Skullius a glance before continuing to speak with the people in front of her.

'Did he spend the entire night without eating anything at all or did he sneak away while I wasn't looking?' she asked herself.

Her intrigue with this young man was far from over and she intended to maximise it.

Unfortunately for her, the answer to her question didn't come and the man in question merely walked straight out the door to the Inn as he was in a good mood.

Yet, even with his mood, he still felt the need to use his time wisely as it was time to tackle a problem of his that had been detrimental to his overall power.

Fighting Technique.

Chapter 163: Old Man At The Gate

The City lord.

A title given to one who lorded over a city. A city that wasn't considered a major one, that is.

It was given to create a gulf between one who ruled a small city and the one who ruled over a large one, the latter being called a Governor.

A city lord's duty wasn't only to oversee activity within a city but within the area that was supported by the city; the people that interacted with the city, the region's vegetation, animals and threats.

Multiple small cities existed to carry the work delegated by larger cities which was just a bigger version of what the smaller cities did.

The situation wasn't different in Inhone City.

It was considered one of the better cities as the City lord was a man with a good head on his shoulders.

He was often compared with the City lord of Eofel, who played by his own rules, a luxury afforded to him due to the lax nature of the Royal Family's management.

At this moment, a rather lean man was slowly pacing about in a luxurious hall while listening to the latest accounts of issues that needed his ear.

He wore formal garb, his hair and beard which were a mix of black and aging white giving him a wise and reliable visage.

This man was the City Lord, Erkus Savont.

"We have also observed that many Clusters are opening up around the region, with a lot of them being lower level ones but their sheer quantity is rather concerning. This has caused the recent surge in the number of people coming to live in the city.

Civil unrest is something that's slowly building up and many are coming into the city while detailing accounts of how terrible monsters destroyed their villages," a young man reported with a worried expression on his face.

"The city won't be able to hold out if this keeps going on. We need an effective plan to solve this, City Lord."

Erkus slowed his steps as he looked to be deep in thought.

"Have you liaised the Guilds Association?" he asked.

"Not yet, sir. I wanted to have that discussion with them after you had made a decision. We can't afford to put all our hopes on them."

"Hmmm. Where are the Clusters mostly prevalent? Which jurisdictions?"

The young man giving the report quickly flipped through his library of notes before showing the City lord a page that depicted the areas mostly populated with the Clusters.

"Hmm...I was hoping this was just a situation created by the sudden disappearance of Eobald and his group. His reliability and willingness to act as an agent for the City over the Guilds Association had probably made me relax. I half expected him to walk in here with this report instead," Erkus said as he sighed, the young man opposite him being struck with dejection, yet he didn't show it.

The City lord was mindful of what he had just said but he didn't show empathy, instead going on with what he had to say.

"Alright. In this instance, I feel that it's necessary to take down the jurisdiction breach clause. If we are to handle this, the Guilds will have to help each other in dealing with Clusters and that means encroaching in territories that aren't theirs. Let's first make this proposal to the Guilds Association."

The young man collected himself and started writing furiously onto his note book.

The jurisdiction clause was a part of the Guilds Association's extensive law system which allowed Guilds that had achieved a certain rank to partially control certain aspects of designated sections of the region.

Besides dealing with threats and monsters that spawned from the regions, the Guilds given the authority would also have rights to gather limited resources.

Naturally, this didn't mean they had the right to live in these places and say they owned them, as for most commonfolk, they had to issue a formal request to the Guilds if something went wrong.

The jurisdiction breach clause prevented other Guilds from entering the areas assigned to certain Guilds and this was a cause for the disbanding of a Guild should it be found out that this crime was on their hands.

"Hmph! While we have our hands full with masses of monsters, Eofel, Seprean and Dijhal refuse to adopt the Guilds system and they don't get punished for it. How rotten!" Erkus bellowed before gazing at the young man.

"Deliver my statement to the Guilds Association. Let's have a back and forth that starts from there."

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Skullius excitedly looked at the large and clean compound with several buildings and fields outside that while torched by the sun truly felt like they held a purpose.

'This is it...' Skullius thought.

The early morning sun was still being kind and this was the time he had decided to walk around and search for the so-called Colleges that Frock had told him about.

In this instance, he truly wished that Elita's map had some other magical function that showed him the location of important places in Cities but no such miracle was in place for his convenience.

After extracting the skills from the items he had bought or rather those he had intended to, the Discount Human had spammed [Quick Strike] and [Brawn] throughout the night.

[Great Rush] was terribly hard to level up as it required his movement so he had put it off to the side on account of where he was.

He wouldn't want his heavy frame making loud noises or worse...

Midway through his session, he had tried to somehow extract the connection that allowed the mana band to store mana outside a core but he had found that it was impossible to do so and he didn't know why, much to his disappointment.

When morning came, he had used [Flesh It Like You Mean It], checked up on Red Rage who had two more days until his Null Life Essence ran out and given him some more reassurance.

His trip around town had given him rather pleasing results in accordance to his mission.

There were three Colleges within the City, each with their own designated purpose.

The College of Battle Arts, the Inhone Standard and the College of the Esteemed.

At the moment, Skullius stood before the entrance to the College of Battle Arts where even from the outside, he could see many people practising various forms and stances.

He walked up to the barred gate only to be stopped by an old man who had white hair that had begun moonwalking on his scalp, a hunched back and a single eye open as he gazed at Skullius intently.

Skullius sighed in relief when he saw the unfriendly gaze he was receiving.

"State your business," the old man said.

"I would like to enter the College. I want to lear—"

"Do you have deep enough pockets to afford it?"

"Huh?! Of course I do!"

"Heh! Not with that face you don't!"

"Bro!"

"Now get out of here! We only need serious people to teach!"

Skullius frowned.

What was with this guy?!

Chapter 164: Enrolling

"Hey, bro! Let me in!" Skullius yelled at the old man who had already begun to turn and walk away.

"Shut it! You foolish sprouts rush here to learn how to fight only to get killed and then who gets all the blame, huh?!" the old barked as he turned back to Skullius.

Thickets of mana gathered around his body as he preached, making Skullius take a few steps back.

"Let me make a fine guess! You don't even know your Direction do you?! You're one of those fools that stand in line all day at the Temple waiting to complete the First Task and rush over here to learn to fight as if it's all a fluffy dream out there, aren't you?!"

"Well..." Skullius stammered.

'Not exactly.'

The old man's eyes sparked as his terrifying presence died down.

"Do yourself a favour. Go home and sleep that adrenaline off before you get killed."

Skullius looked at the old man.

His words gave him the impression that he had said this to a great many others like Skullius. At first with care in mind and as time went on, in a perfunctory way that only showed rage and detest towards youthful impulsiveness.

The Discount didn't back down.

"Hey, I said let me in! Whether I die or not after this is my own problem! You can find my body then and laugh all you want, but I'm getting into this College!"

The old man's scrunched up.

His old yellow teeth gnashed against each other as pent up fury seethed within.

He had tried.

He had tried time and time again to help the young ones not make the same mistake he did.

The Deities are passive!

They are only tools for the world to prosper!

The Deities were never objects of reverence!

Direction? Ha! How can a statue tell me what to do?!

He remembered saying something like this as a hot-blooded youth but he paid for it in the end. Nomatter what he had told himself, it had all gone wrong.

In his regret, he had tried to warn those like him, giving them warnings forged from care and sympathy but...



As he grew older, the rage built up at seeing the nonchalance of the weak. The ignorance of fools.

As he looked at Skullius now, he couldn't help but emit a low growl.

"Stubborn!"

"Do I need to give you coin or not?!" Skullius asked.

The old gave Skullius one last look before grunting and turning aside.

"You only need coin inside. I am... but a gardener..." he begrudgingly said as he walked away.

Skullius' gaze lingered on the old man as he disappeared into the thick of greenery around the premises.

He shook his head and walked through the open gates.

No one but him was entering at the time and as he paced forward, he began appreciating the place.

A stretch of paved road lead to a small booth-like structure that preceded the more elegant and tall buildings, housing a middle-aged man who was reading a book.

When Skullius reached this structure, the man within gave him a casual glance before speaking.

"Are you here to enrol?"

"Uh...yes."

"To which side? Ordinary or Extraordinary?"

"Uh... I want to be a mercenary."

"Extraordinary it is. That will be 30 gold coins."

'That's quite a lot,' Skullius said to himself.

His pocket had finally bottomed out as only 5 gold and 10 silvers remained after this payment.

Since the dead cores had value, he would have to use them. Or rather sell them.

After paying, Skullius was directed on where to go after being given a small wooden token, a few minutes passing before he entered a building with a thick girth where several men and women were walking up and down briskly on the well garnished stone floors.

Some were heading to the open fields that could be seen outside, Skullius watching as they selected weapons to use.

Some looked amateurish while others had an experience air, giving guidance to the former.

"Hello there," a short lady greeted him with an affable smile.

The Discount Human turned to the lady who was approaching from his right.

She had light ash blonde hair made into a fishtail and big black and round eyes that startled Skullius a little. Her round face made her smile more pronounced which would have drawn a polite remark from most men.

Men that weren't genuine yet soon-to-resign eunuchs like Skullius.

The lady had an athletic body covered by a slim, dull red leather armour that accentuated her figure nicely.

Unconsciously, Skullius eyes took a quick visual jab at her chest only for him to feel... disappointed.

The lady didn't miss this subtle detail as her bubbly mood instantly dipped, her face turning less friendly.

'So he's one of those?'

"How can I help you?"

Skullius didn't give a verbal answer, merely extending his hand and giving the woman his wooden token.

"Oh, Extraordinary? Well, come this way," she said as she turned, her face no longer showing the affable smile but a devilish grin that was hidden from Skullius when her back was facing him.

'Safe again,' Skullius sighed inwardly, unaware that he had dug quite the pit for himself.

He was lead him to a certain room where Skullius was registered for a month of training under the short lady who kept giving him a 'tender' smile while repeating his name over and over again.

Festos Dawn. Festos Dawn.

Afterwards, the Discount Human was taken through a long corridor that lead from the current building to another, the windows on the sides showing the sparring sessions going on outside in the area which was called the Ordinary.

This was reserved for those who wanted to train in order to hunt. A simple profession mostly done for sustenance.

It was a far cry from mercenary work as one didn't need to be of an obscenely high level to partake in the practise.

Any combat art for basic offense and defensive could be learnt in this place.

As the two reached the other side of the corridor, Skullius was amazed by the expansive space he saw which infinitely more beautiful than the one he'd seen prior.

Even the decor differed and the sounds of heavy grunts and clashing weapons blasted against his ears, from behind the row of doors at the far end of his vision.

This building was an administration to the Extraordinary area where advanced arts were taught.

It turned out that the fields he had seen outside were merely the ones belonging to the Ordinary, which made sense as when he and the woman exited the building through one of the doors ahead, Skullius saw a large number of people clashing skilfully under the guidance of many mentors.

The short lady had pulled Skullius through one of the doors that led to a section of the vast fields where she felt her was 'most suited' and had the equipment required.

"I'm Oliviana. Let's have a good time together," she said while squinting her large eyed and grinning from ear to ear.

#### Chapter 165: Basic Mana Application

The divisions to the fields, allocating different groups who were practising different techniques with different mentors, were elaborate barriers that were produced by large box-shaped rocks with green rocks which had runic etchings all over them.

One could be found between each of the sections, creating a watery, effect that rose into the sky, obscuring vision and sound while someone was in the field.

With how high the barrier rose though, Skullius was confused on how this thing actually wasn't visible from the front gate to the College but he threw this thought aside as he gazed at Oliviana.

"So, what do you want to learn. Hand to hand combat? Weapon mastery?" she asked with a dangerous glint visible in her eye as she looked up at Skullius who was taller than her.

"All of it, actually. I want to learn it all," Skullius replied with a look of determination on his face.

Oliviana raised a brow.

"All of it? What class do you have?"

Skullius had anticipated this question being asked and his reply was simple.

"Swordsman."

"A swordsman wants to learn to everything instead of focusing on the sword?"

"Yes."

Oliviana was amused. In her eyes, the man before her had proven his depths with just the subtle action he had pulled before. Behind this facade was someone who only cared for her looks and as he had passed judgement onto her, she would do the same.

Her height had been a detriment to her for so long and so was her lack of developed feminine features which she was constantly reminded of by the looks of greedy men.

Frankly, the greedy ones were much better but the pedophiles were a whole other breed.

For someone who was close to turning 30, having a body that resembled that of a 12 year old didn't do her any favours.

"What class do you have?" Skullius asked. He was quite curious on what this woman could teach him. What she was actually good at.

"I'm an Assassin. I specialise in daggers, and swords of different lengths but I do also know things outside of weaponry. However, cast those thoughts aside. You paid to be taught on how to fight, presumably to be a mercenary. That's what you'll get from me, only after you've mastered the basics. And be warned, I won't pull my punches."

Oliviana began circling around Skullius.

From the way he was standing alone, she could tell that he was an amateur. He didn't have much in the way of technique.

Stance.

Position.

Awareness.

These were aspects that were lost to Skullius.

In contrast, as she grew up, these were the things she had to master if she wanted to stay alive and undefiled.

Being ogled and judged because of her body made her very sensitive to any attention that was brought onto her.

She usually had to make sure that her position in crowds didn't attract attention, as that would only make it easier for people to point at her.

As for stance, many jerks had paid dearly for belittling her due to her looks.

As a result of all this, even though she was a mentor in this College, she was never friendly to men unless they proved themselves to be anything other than ball brains.

"Have you ever been in a Cluster?" she inquired from Skullius.

"Uh...no," Skullius said. He figured it would be easier to pretend to not have experience so as to avoid the flood of unnecessary questions that would follow if he affirmed.

This was something he had learned when he first met Benzard and his group in the Tremur Forest. Some things were just too suspicious.

'A level 1 human in a dangerous forest...heh..'

"Do you know anything about them in depth?"

"Not really. I just know they are formed when the energy from the Deities clash."

"That's true. The way you say it makes me understand that you have no idea what you're in for," Oliviana said as her large black eyes remained glued to Skullius.

There was a large rack with many different weapons attached to the walls of the administration building for each section of practise.

From this rack, Oliviana grabbed a sword and traced her finger along its sharp edge.

"There a huge difference between regular beasts and creatures that come from the Clusters. Since they are born from residual energy that floods and clashes from the Deities' bodies; earth, wind and water, they are unique. Their abilities are usually always powerful. Some of them akin to blessings. This is true even for low level Clusters."

"These weapons alone can't cut down such monsters without augmentation. You'll find that getting access to unique weaponry right after finishing your course here won't happen. You'll start with standard weapons like this. To make them strong enough for use, you'll need this...."

A surge of mana breezed from Oliviana as a coating of white surrounded her figure and the sword.

"Concise control of your mana for both offensive and defensive purposes. This is basic but essentially what other high level concepts build up on."

As she said this, Oliviana couldn't help but feel her brain turn numb from saying this for the umpteenth time.

Everyone from the Extraordinary area had to be warned of what they were getting themselves into beforehand. This College, although it didn't look like one, was a Capital structure controlled by the city and by extension, the nation meaning it actually gave a crap about its students, particularly aspiring Knights.

The Guilds Association would do a verification of combat ability but nothing like the nurturing offered by the College of Battle Arts.

The woman threw the sword at the rack, her body continuing to be covered by the thin film of mana.

"Try it. Coat your body with mana."

Skullius nodded.

His mind instantly took him back to one of his first fights in this world.

The fight with Aikil when the goblin had blown his arm off with a skill.

It was in that fight that he had learned to use mana to augment his basic attacks.

'Were those goblins prodigies or something?' he thought before he began to focus.

His core churned out mana, Skullius' previous experience kicking in as a layer of mana surrounded his body, much to Oliviana's surprise.

While the Discount Human had managed this feat so casually though, the perfect distribution of mana around his mentor couldn't be seen on his own application.

WHOOSH!

The short figure of Oliviana quickly appeared right front of Skullius and threw two quick jabs at his chest and abdomen!

Skullius saw nothing, in the next moment his body jerking backward as the punch to his belly was the one that had any significant effect on him.

He staggered and looked at Oliviana in shock and confusion.

"You see that? The punch I threw to your chest was defended perfectly but the one to your stomach pushed you back despite me putting the same amount of strength in each punch. Why is that?"

The Discount Human looked at the coating of mana around him, analysing the white, squirming element that was his mana.



It looked so unrefined, more parts of it swirling around certain areas than others.

He figured it out.

"Why don't you try to fix that?" Oliviana said as she took a step towards Skullius.

"Wait? What!" Skullius backed away. "Aren't you supposed to be teaching me?"

"I am. They say experience is the best teacher, after all."

With that the short mentor burst towards Skullius and threw a hook punch towards his head, this time, at a speed that Skullius could follow somewhat!

Skullius' hand zipped through the air to block the attack, successfully guarding against Oliviana's hand in time yet...

BAM!

Even with his great timing, the woman's punch overpowered his arm and still smacked him in the face!

Skullius rolled on the ground and hurriedly stood, looking to Oliviana who was rushing towards him again.

'What's her deal? Is she angry with me?' he thought while at the same time being pleased that his new skill [Great Rush] was showing some great effects!

~~~

[Great Rush (Passive) | Lv.1]

A passive skill that constantly keeps your body alert, increasing its unconscious reaction chances and basic movement speed by 12%.

...

~~~

'It really was given a boost!'

A small smile leaked on Skullius' face for but a moment, but Oliviana didn't miss it.

'Is he also a masochist? <Sigh>. I just had to walk up to him of all people!'

The short lady's figure blurred for a moment and appeared behind Skullius as she delivered a stronger punch that actually lifted him off the ground only to unpleasantly crush him down.

"Your mana control is terrible! Monsters with high intelligence will be able to sense the weak points on you and attack right there!"

Skullius had barely finished his flight when Oliviana was upon him again, smacking his left side with her shoulder which caused Skullius to spin and see the world in a circular light before hitting the ground!

His mana raged as a large quantity of it covered him protectively.

BAM! BAM! BAM!

Three powerful punches knocked against leg, left side and head from behind, causing Skullius to kneel as the mana he had protecting those three points didn't do jack!

"Increasing your output doesn't mean you're safe. It's about layering mana perfectly so that damage is distributed. Your mana should be uniform and your control able to determine how much strength is required."

The Discount Human listened as he actually felt...excited.

He was grasping what Oliviana was saying bit by bit.

Slowly, he was turning into a warrior...

Chapter 166: Racing Through Objectives

FWOOSH! BAM!

These were the sounds that anyone watching would hear over the next six hours as a certain Discount Human was flung this way and that, tumbling and rolling after eating solid punches from Oliviana who wasn't getting quite the kick out of it as she had imagined.

She gave snippets of instruction for Skullius every once in a while, smacking him at different parts of his body that she saw her student's defence to be weak!

Naturally, the coating of mana around Skullius guaranteed that he wasn't taking much damage but what Oliviana didn't know was that the man before her felt no pain!

He was slowly grasping the technique, even making attempts at slugging her every so often.

'Such terrifying tenacity. I'm half anticipating to see this man get turned on at this point. Is he learning or is he trying to get me to hit him harder?' Oliviana shuddered while taking a quick glance at Skullius' crotch and breathing a sigh of relief when she did not see a bulge.

On the other hand, Skullius had been making his own inferences.

'I thought [Advanced Mana Manipulation] would help me with this stuff but I guess manipulation and application are two different things. Now that I think about it, I never focused on using mana to protect and enhance my attacks since the goblin village. I've only been relying on skills...'

Skullius dodged a punch.

At this current point, Oliviana had told him to try to enhance his physical attributes by applying mana.

He was able to do this casually, but it was unstable.

Little by little, Skullius began to understand that skills were a form of mana application that he had been taking lightly.

The Voice of Worlds gave him an advantage.

He could understand what a skill was and what it could do, along with acquiring powerful skills from repeating the same simple actions like running away or condensing mana but reality was different for those that did not have the Voice of Worlds.

All other living things had to repeat specific complicated motions to comprehend a skill which took quite a long time but for Skullius, it was simpler.

He had an array of choices. To depend on the guidance field or to simply learn like the others.

He couldn't forget the boost to strength he had gotten after reaching level 2 with five additional stat points to all his stats except luck.

Each point was extremely significant and Skullius appreciated how great he had it.

But then again, he didn't even know much about the Voice of Worlds, but that was something to ponder another time.

'Heh... how easily I have forgotten the struggle to gain [Boneman of Steel] back in Deadmanland.'

As if to emphasize the scope of how he had it easy, Skullius received a notification that made him grin.

[Due to the repetition of the action 'mana coating', you have learned the skill 'Mana Shroud']

After reading the description of the skill, Skullius couldn't help but kek inwardly.

'Yes! Now I don't have to suffer all day like this!' Skullius thought.

However, he didn't activate the skill and remained actively trying to coat his body in mana on his own. Raising suspicion wasn't wise.

The training exercise went on for another hour over the other six prior, Oliviana stopping the exercise thereafter.

Skullius was drenched in sweat (water) after this. Besides the issue of being pummelled, he also had the scorching sun to deal with but fortunately, the boons of civilization came in clutch.

Water was afforded for him to drink for the whole day along with short breaks.

Apparently, the thirty gold he had paid covered a full month of lessons, with seven hours of daily training from the mentor that had found him.

"We'll have a few more days of this to fine tune your ability to protect yourself with mana and move on to actual combat techniques. Any problems with that?" Oliviana asked.

"No, but I won't be coming tomorrow. I have some things to deal with," Skullius replied nonchalantly

"...sure."

Oliviana watched as Skullius rushed to the administration building with a thoughtful look on her face.

The Discount Human was instructed on the privilege of baths that could be provided after training sessions and led to get himself washed even though he only leaked water from his body.

After cleaning himself, which was a rather strange experience, Skullius exited the College, going towards another destination that he wanted to reach before the day was done.

The College of the Esteemed.

Due to the time of day it was, Skullius was greeted by multitudes of people going in and out of the massive compound of the College.

While he could definitely attest to the College of Battle Arts being larger in size, this College of the Esteemed was much more refined.

The smoothly cut lawn and strategic arrangement of building that oozed of class along with the masterful statues of thoughtful experts of the past that were erected about to depict great men who lead the movement for collecting knowledge, as was the purpose of this College, were riveting!

It wasn't that hard to find out what the niche of each College was as when Skullius had heard about it, he had become interested immediately.

The College was a monopoly for information as even the most prominent book shops were under the College, projecting steep prices for buying books (of low value) as well as enrolling.

Skullius' purpose here wasn't to enrol as he wanted to find out how much he could gain from this visit.

His mission to gather information wasn't limited to combat as he also wanted to know more about other aspects of Aigas.

Who best could offer this information? Or rather who could offer him this information without melting into a puddle?

Paid service of course!

Skullius hadn't missed Frock's remark about him being scammed even with his lack of reaction to it.

This was a very essential clue as now, he didn't need to continue to talk to Frock for knowledge.

Upon entering, Skullius saw many entrants going to specific areas from the intersection that split in four ways.

Naturally, a fee for entry was required if one hadn't enrolled, Skullius finding this place to be far more strict than the College of Battle Arts.

Furthermore, it looked more like a College, though Skullius wouldn't know.

With closer observation to his surroundings, Skullius found a reception from where he was directed towards a specific section of College that was away from the larger structures that were classes.

What appeared before Skullius upon entering the building was a smaller than normal library with an immense amount of books.

Numerous people were walking about or sitting down as they read the books while several organised stall were fitted to the corners, this evidently being where one could buy books.

Most people in this place had whether they were entering or leaving had a scholarly air about them.

Skullius looked in marvel at all the things around before being approached by a well dressed man who gave him a gaze that implied that he was not happy with Skullius' presence at all.

Perhaps he did not seem cultured enough, like a random bum who had waltzed into a castle.

"How can I help you, sir?" the man inquired sternly.

As Skullius was about to answer, something he didn't expected greeted him after a rather long hiatus.

[The Doom Factor 'Disowned' has caught up]

[You have failed to-]

"NOOOOO!" Skullius screamed.

Chapter 167: Two Sisters

A familiar dark-skinned woman was sitting on quite the luxurious bed with clean sheets and a warm blanket atop of it.

She was within a small room which was supposed to serve as the jail for her indefinite detainment until a new verdict had been reached on whether her dismissal as a Paladin Champion was the last punishment she would receive or not.

From the open arched window, a soft breeze blew in and rustled her hair, the view of a beautiful city reflecting in her hazel eyes as she then breathed out a sigh and slumped onto the bed.

'What now? I worked so hard to get this far and yet, it seems like this is where it ends. What will become after this? A Stray Knight? For someone who's supposed to have a Peerless Spirit, my faith is quickly dwindling,' Elita thought to herself.

Knock, knock.

There was a knock on the door to her room to which she responded to with a reluctant 'Come in.'

From the entrance, a young woman entered, donning the same kind of armour that Elita had worn before; shining golden white armour with a three point star at the chest.

This woman had a similar physique to Elita but her overall presence was livid of vitality as she was visibly younger, flowing silver hair draping over her armour and cape that extended down her back, sharp grey eyes and a smile that would make even the best heathens turn to the revelation of the Deities, plastering over the lower part of her face.

As she saw Elita, her smile grew wider and she flashed towards her to deliver a big hug, the bed shaking from the weight of two superimposed females.

"Sister! I'm so glad you're alright. I came as soon as I heard the news!" the young woman said as she embraced Elita tightly.

"Alright, alright, you'll squeeze me to death at this rate, Revia! Have you forgotten just how much stronger you are compared to me?!" Elita said as she slapped the young woman's armour continuously.

Soon, Revia let go and sat beside the bed, taking a deeper look at Elita who, behind her aloof facade, was actually torn within.



Revia knew how Elita could be. She was a Paladin Champion through and through, having the boldness and heart required for such a heavy duty.

She was an expert at even deluding herself that she was fine when she wasn't.

"It's been a while, Revia. I thought you had travelled to Emeradis on a mission? How are you back so early?"

Revia didn't reply as she simply gave Elita a knowing look to which the dark-skinned woman slapped her own face.

"Right! It's been so long that I almost forgot that there's a reason they call you 'She who can't be caught'."

Revia giggled.

"I don't want high praise from you, sister. The difference in our skills shouldn't be something we focus on. I would gladly be downgraded to your level in that case. I owe you so much, after all," Revia said with an intense gaze on Elita who scoffed. Not at Revia's words but at herself.

"You'd still be proud of that after hearing what they are saying about me?"

"Who cares?!" Revia replied, her voice showing the agitation she felt. "Sister, my trip through the three nations has taught me a great deal. The declining faith isn't at all unwarranted. Besides the fact that the people doubt the Deities, few in the Purity actually deserve to be called pure. I'd trust in your judgement than that of those High Order Priests any day.

Acting as their guards as they fumble everywhere sickens me!"

Elita laughed.

"Oh yeah? How was your trip to Emeradis anyway?"

"Oh, you wouldn't believe it! Sister, the men! I had to fan my face a couple of times in the capital of Emeradis. I don't know what the Deities were thinking when they sculpted such handsome men! It

was rich with dashing potential suitors! I can't forget their gazes when they saw me pretending to be all serious, walking beside the priests protectively!

Kyaaa! The atmosphere was amazing, the communities welcoming! You wouldn't believe..."

Revia began chattering nonstop about everything she saw while Elita listened to her vivacious account.

To think that this was the same girl from that time, now going crazy for random young men of her age.

Elita was proud.

She had met Revia some years ago while in the service of the Purity. Back then, Elita had been but a simple Purity Knight without renown while Revia was an astonishing prodigy who awakened an advanced class at the age of 17, becoming someone whom the Highest Order in the Purity could not ignore.

Even with all this power though, she was a hollow shell because of her dark past.

She was aimless.

She only sought for purpose as in her dull eyes, no colour or happiness could be detected.

What her hollow self could only work towards was what her body urged her to do. To run.

She was the fastest person that Elita knew.

Elita had befriended her after seeing that she was extremely devoted to becoming stronger but that path didn't lead anywhere if one didn't have a goal in mind. And she knew that so very well.

Elita did what she could to help.

The best way to save someone who only looked forward in such a crude way while ignoring their surroundings was to be subtle.

Elita appealed to Revia's feminine nature. Starting up conversations that only girls could relate to. Things she experienced on a daily basis.

Emotions, physicality, preferences.

She wasn't an expert but someone had done the same to her way back when, and this trick worked with Revia to.

The broken girl whose history Elita struggled to even inquire more about.

Revia learned the beauty of her surroundings with time, Elita becoming her guiding light through the world until she eventually joined the Paladin Champions, her position initially being ranked as the 7th.

It rose after a few years, with Revia becoming the 5th.

The top 5 Paladin Champions each had a title as their power was far beyond the norm. Compared to the others, they were in a different league and Revia was among them.

"Hah~. But will you be okay, sister? I can get you out of here before anyone finds out, you know?" Revia asked, her expression telling of how serious she was.

"No, no! I'm fine for now. The Purity won't do anything bad to me. What I'm more concerned about is whether they are acting on what I informed them. Those necromancers are up to something. I can feel it," replied Elita.

"Yeah. Things have been getting serious actually. Besides being here to see you, I actually have another duty to attend to. I've been assigned to protect the priests in the Grand Temples of Isise, just in case something happens. That region is where most of the recent Evenfall activity is brewing. The Highest Order has also deployed quite a lot of Knights to various other places.

Even the other Paladin Champions are being deployed."

Elita sighed in relief.

As long as the Purity was responding in kind, she couldn't complain.

"Was the undead you fought really that scary? It's become a huge topic," Revia inquired.

"Ha. I wish it was that simple. It's beyond scary. Don't grow overconfident just because you're stronger than most people out there. Keep your mind open at all times, you hear? Stay safe."

Elita tenderly held Revia's chin, the youthful Champion feeling a brimming joy from the caring words of someone she considered her guiding light.

"Of course I will. Don't worry. If you're not out by the time I return, then I'll whisk you out forcefully, okay?. No objections."

"Fine, fine." Elita said as she shook her head. In her head, the image of a certain Discount man and a Knight in a golden cape appeared.

"If worse comes to worst I have someone who'll be quite the interesting company."

Chapter 168: How To Get Away With Murder And Theft (1)

"WHAT THE HELL BRO?!" Skullius screeched as he scrambled, startling the cultured man at his side who had inquired the purpose of his visit as if it wasn't painfully obvious from their venue.

The others who were also going about their business were also bewildered as the atmosphere in the library was usually quiet but the outburst by Skullius clearly meant something was wrong.

Some showed annoyance, others were unsettled and for others, this scene was a welcome interlude.

For Skullius, he was terrified out of his mind.

'Has three days already passed?! Wait, this doesn't seem right! Did I forget?! Gaaaah! What do I do?!

Mana.

He needed mana!

Skullius' mind raced as he realised that his own mana, which was over 400 with the Mana Band equipped, was not enough to stall his demise at all!

Visible droplets of sweat trickled down Skullius' brow as he gulped.

The voice of the man by his side who had his face scrunched up with a brow raised in fury along with the image next notifications to his face increased the tension for him.

"How uncultured! Have you no respect for sacredness of knowledge you lowly fool?! You can either learn to be quiet or leave!"

[You have failed to sustain your own existence with mana]

[Attempting mana red-

Skullius tore his attention from the notification and shoved the man beside him a distance.

He inserted mana into his storage ring, summoning his best bet for survival!

The Null Devil's Aegis of Damnation!

THUD!

The large armour fell onto the stone tiled floor with a thud, its dark image and creepy design causing panic.

The man who had been shoved away by Skullius turned pale and backed away, his feet slipping across the floor multiple times before he managed to stand and create some distance with this uncultured bum, terror livid in his eyes!

'Damn it! I can't remove Red Rage from the armour...' Skullius thought. His Apostle was nesting within the Null Devil's Aegis of Damnation, delaying his end!

[Mana insufficient...]

[You shall now meet your end]

"NO, I WON'T!" Skill roared as he squeezed himself into the armour while asking Red Rage for forgiveness.

His own stature was smaller than Red Rage's bone remains and after a few short moments of struggle, Skullius barely fit into the armour with a puzzled grey skeleton that mentally gave him a mental confused 'WTBF'.

"What is that?!"

"Dear Suzamete! Call the guards! Some strange cultist has invaded the College!"

"Is it a member of the Evenfall?!"

"EEEK! Such distasteful armour! Take it away!"

The speculations drove some to run away.

Skullius heard the noise outside as the people grew restless.

Most left the library while the more curious ones began to gather around, leaving a gap of more than four meters between them and Skullius.

Unbeknownst to them, they had safely evaded a rather troublesome skill of the armour that would have left nothing of them behind.

All this wasn't Skullius' immediate concern, however, as he found out that by virtue of him being in the armour, it prioritised giving its effects to him rather than Red Rage as he was the owner!

"Damn it!"

Sensing the large amount of mana that was now provided, Doom Factor 1 no longer threatened to end Skullius as a familiar notification popped up instead.

[Your mana reserves have vastly increased. Doom Factor 1 demands a total of 2000 Mana Points for a three day exemption period]

"I don't have that much, you sockethole!" Skullius screamed at the guidance field.

This notification had popped up in his vision back when he first evolved to Tier 1 and when he had paid the 2000 Mana Point fee, he had gained three days off from the constant harassment that the Doom Factor had to offer.

Now though, in his Discount Human form, Skullius didn't have that much mana on him and in his attempt to save himself, he tried to offer less than the required amount.

"Can't I just give less mana to buy myself a few more hours?!"

[Doom Factor 1 demands a minimum of 1000 Mana Points for 'Discount Human LV2' and 'Fulgurant Bone Penetrator LV1']

"Fine, fine! Just take it!" Skullius yelled and in the next moment, he felt more than half of his supply of mana being consumed.

[Doom Factor 1 is temporarily cured. Resuming pursuit in 36 hours]

The noise Skullius was making as he unsteadily squirmed within the armour caused unease. There was something about seeing the large armour tumble on the floor that was both of amusing and terrifying.

What was this man doing within that armour?!

What obscene treachery was he up to?!

Those that remained to see this freak show were counting on the guards that were coming to solve the problem and wanted to see how this nutjob would be dealt with.

Skullius unconsciously breathed a sigh of relief as the immediate issue of concern had been dealt with.

Now, it was on to the next problem.

Some of the people here had seen his face and this effectively guaranteed that he was screwed.

Furthermore, he felt the terrifying energy signatures that were coming from a distance away, responding to the disturbance.

The fact that the Capital Knights from this City were no joke made Skullius curse in bone expletives as he quickly made two decisions that went against his overt objective but not his character as one who wanted to survive.

He didn't have any other choice anyway.

Skullius' head popped out of the armour's neck which wasn't equipping the hideous helmet as he scouted, attracting the attention of the few who remained behind.

He had to kill the witnesses!

But before that...

"Go!" he ordered.

The Chains of Damnation rushed from the armour as they headed to where Skullius had directed.

The shelves and stall of books that were positioned all around and in the corners of the library!



Skullius only made sure to grab the smaller shelves of books that were in his immediate surroundings, wrapping and pulling them over with the chains!

The droves of people, some of which were still exiting, ran out while those that had been surrounding him dashed away as they screamed!

As the shelves approached Skullius, he immediately stored them within the storage space of the armour!

Unfortunately for him, after only one shelf and a single stall, the storage space was already full as while inserting new objects to be stored, Skullius had removed the chest that was within the storage, putting it into his own spatial storage ring!

The room that was created wasn't much but he couldn't complain.

From within the masses, Skullius sensed a few strong individuals rushing to his position as they saw that he was stealing the precious property of the College!

They had probably been among those reading when he had abruptly caused the hubbub.

Skullius turned to see the man who had been telling him to shut up run away as he headed for a separate exit for the library staff.

'That guy should also die with the rest...' he thought as he stretched his hands as far as he could through the openings within the armour designated for the arms.

Naturally they couldn't fit all through.

However, the Discount Human couldn't waste time exiting the armour to cast a single spell.

That side though, he had faith in the fact that this spell would reach many of the witnesses if not all and also deal some damage to the guards that had finally reached the entrance to the library, shuttling in.

Mana gathered and condensed as Skullius used a certain skill for the first time.

He had more than enough mana to cast it now and his non-existent heart burned with anticipation.

It had failed to impress him when he had initially got it due to its performance but after it evolved, he held high hopes for it.

A hellish crimson hue dyed the entire library and flooded all the windows and doors as it leaked outside, followed by a searing heat that left nothing untouched.

Skullius bellowed the name of the skill that had begun to form above the Null Devil's Aegis of Damnation!

"Revenant Flames of Ecstasy!"

Chapter 169: How To Get Away With Murder And Theft (2)

300 Mana Points were consumed to make the scene that was currently happening possible.

Eleven Knights decked in sparkling silver armour dashed into the library with their weapons drawn while protectively covering themselves with mana.

The bloody red hue shaded them in a terrible foreshadowing as the impending heat bloomed from the reddish orange sphere that had manifested atop the Null Devil's Aegis of Damnation as each of them halted, condensing their mana as they each locked onto Skullius!

The Discount Human felt the absurd pressure that thundered onto him like a hundred fold increase in gravity but...

It was too little too late for any form of intervention as Skullius released the deadly skill which exploded to bring forth surprise after surprise!

A deafening whistle along with a frightful shockwave exploded outwards in a ring, followed by a torrent of flames that flooded like a bright red wave in every direction from the source, Skullius!

The Knights were alarmed as they found the brightness of the flames as well as their speed to far outclass their ability to fall back, the best they could do in this instance being to cover themselves with mana while those that could in time, activated their Full Body Auras!

BOOOM!

The explosive flood of flames rocket the entire four story building as the blazing heat was nothing short of ridiculous, melting the floor and eviscerating anything that stood in its path mercilessly!

Unfortunately, this included the Knights that had thought that slapping all of their mana around themselves protectively would be more than enough, as shockingly, before they could blink, their mana and armour were devoured wholly with no resistance!

Skullius who was peeking through the neck of the dark armour wore a look of incredulity!

He had vastly underestimated this skill!

The reddish orange flames that coiled around themselves every chance they could get, licked everything clean as what stopped them from obliterating the entire library was the faint sparkle of runes on the wall that kept them contained and yet failed to stop them from blasting from the open doors!

As a result, those who had been leisurely walking away from the library were burnt to ash even when the flames didn't reach them!

Those that had left the building earlier could only watch in marvel as the atrocity they had barely escaped from claimed hundreds of lives that were a distance away from them!

In the building, everything within a meter radius of Skullius was unaffected by the flames, a white tiled floor being seen as the Null Devil's Aegis of Damnation lay on it!

Skullius had noticed this and in the next moment, he infused mana into his spatial storage ring and collected the armour, leaving only him standing amidst the raging flames.

Before anything else, he focused on the three powerful presences that registered from his senses, releasing different coloured lights that rose and surrounded them with bright glows.

Three of the Knights had used Full Body Aura which managed to ward off the [Revenant Flames of Ecstasy]!

'I should have expected that some of them would survive, I guess,' Skullius thought as he prepared to use another heavy hitter of his to defend himself.

Unfortunately for him, a palpable blue tint illuminated him from above as shockingly, one of the remaining Knights had already blitzed through the flames while being covered in a thick blue Aura that pressed Skullius down violently!

The Knight's sword came down onto Skullius immediately after with jagged edges of mana around it, to eliminate Skullius!

The Discount Human couldn't even think as the strength of this Knight was absurd along with his speed, registering vividly in his senses!

KWANG!

"Ahh~ that won't do, Bull!"

A masculine moan of pleasure rang out as another figure covered in an intense white coat of mana intercepted the sword of the Knight that had been about to slice up Skullius!

A Knight whose armour was burning incessantly with reddish orange flames that warped the air appeared!

His sword was red from the heat, his armour broken and glowing under the fire as billows of smoke rose from his body with the smell of burning flesh detectable in the air!

Dark markings ran along his sword with shapes akin to numbers as he swatted away the sword of his companion!

The other Knights who had survived rushed towards the one decked in the blue aura to support him.

"Rinon! What...what's happening to you?!"

The Knight with the blue Full Body Aura, Bull, said through the helmet in a bewildered voice while looking at his fellow Knight who was on fire, guarding the culprit!

Before an answer could come, four more of the fellow Knight guards they had been standing on duty with a few minutes ago burst from the flames as they surrounded Skullius!

'It really works!' Skullius thought joyfully as he re-read the description for the [Revenant Flames of Ecstasy]!

A flame that burns its targets horribly while giving them an erotic sensation that drove them to be his servants until they burnt out!

The current limit was five as the rest had burnt away instantly!

"Ah~ come hither, Bull, Torin, Yumi! Let me deliver thee to my profound mettle!"

Another one of the Knights moaned as his helmet cracked and fell, revealing a half charred face that was lost to pure enjoyment as he drooled!

He still held onto his spear firmly as he whirled it and darted forward, the others doing the same!

The three Knights were terrified.

"B-bull! What is this?!"

"I don't know! For now, let's defend and kill that man they're protecting!" Bull declared while referring to Skullius.

A thunderous clash of steel echoed as the three Knights were assaulted by the five!

To make matters worse, the five burning Knights' bodies burst with Full Body Auras as they attacked savagely, the whole library rocking and shuddering under the force of the blows!

Skullius watched on with a grin.

He had to make sure that these Knights were killed off too as they had seen him and make a quick escape afterwards or at to least create a convincing scenario where he wasn't pinned as the suspect!

From the way the fight was going, the burning thralls of his still retaining their profound skill sets and powers, Skullius knew victory was assured as long nothing unexpected happened.

As for a way to get out of this...

"Kek..." he cackled

### Chapter 170: How To Get Away With Murder And Theft (3)

The immense heat from the library was horrendous, burning the well kept lawns and melting the carefully made pavements such that only flowing magma that oozed with an atrocious heat could be seen, obscuring the once steady vision of the masses that had begun to look in shock!

Such a thing had happened at the College?!

The few who had escaped before it was too late were already beginning to give accounts of what they thought was the cause.

"A behemoth this tall waltzed into public library and started eating people left and right! To think it could also conjure flames!"

"Dear, I couldn't believe my eyes! A beheaded Knight suddenly appeared in the library! These flames are probably born from his wrath!"

"Evil! Evil, I say! The Deities are punishing us for our unbelief!"

Those who were enrolled at the College started making obscene comments that almost started a fight among the masses, claiming that outsiders who couldn't pay for enrolment weren't deserving of the service afforded by the College.

The library that had been burned had been a smaller version where the public, those who hadn't paid for the full services of the College came to read or buy books.

It wasn't really a bad loss to the College when one thought about it, but the fact that made the whole incident tragic, was the death toll.

Many conspiracies were told as the multitudes raged and looked ahead, with more Knights rushing to scene from other sections of the College.

Unfortunately, they couldn't do a thing as the heat threatened to eat them alive.

Furthermore, who in their right minds would rush into such a place where a dreadful red hue was dominant, itching to devour them too?

Who was left to be saved?!

Whatever had happened here could be investigated later, right? Right?!

Suddenly, gasps were heard as people saw something odd. From within the library, something started to build up with a low flash of colour!

It sparked white with a tinge of blue multiple times before a loud noise was heard, a streak of light barrelling its way from scene in a shocking fashion!

The civilians couldn't see what it was, as to them, it was akin to a shooting star that stormed its way from the library doorway, raising up dust and magma as it left a trail through, covering a large distance before falling and rolling across the normal ground.

The Knights on standby immediately moved forward while the crowds drew back in fear!

Two figures tumbled from the bright flash, one of them being on fire!

<Cough>, <cough>! He-heeeeeelp!"

The other figure coughed and screamed vehemently, the grotesque sound as if he would actually vomit his intestines!

The Knights had been on guard, ready to cut down any threat but...

...!

The man before them garnered their pity after they verified that he was merely civilian with barely any strength in his stages progression.

Furthermore, his body was covered in soot and ash, his hand gone with charred matter at the stump!

Part of his face had blisters from the heat and his clothes were mostly gone, only covering his sensitive areas.

The Knights rushed to pick him up while they also inspected the other figure.

It was one of their own, burnt beyond recognition as molten steel and skin became bound, thick billows of smoke rising from his body as the reddish orange flames on him died down.

Skullius was carefully handled as those with the means to treat him rushed his way.

Along the way, he turned to the charred Knight whose Full Body Aura had finally died down and screamed.

"He...he saved me! He risked...<sniff>... his life for me! Thank you, sir Knight! Th... <cough> th...thank you!"

The 'emotional' yelling with a broken voice from Skullius dragged out pity from the masses as silence prevailed for a while.

Some of the Knights gritted their teeth as they looked aside.

One of them had saved a life from the horrendous scene ahead of them, giving his life in the process but they... they had just stood there, waiting for the fire to die down.



Their decision was logical but still...

As Skullius was taken away, his face depicting emotion but with no tears to be seen, a sombre atmosphere reigned.

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An hour later.

The library stood tall, surrounded by crusts that still produced heat, glowing with flames amidst their cracked appearances.

The outside of the two story structure was intact but inside, where the two people adorned in lavish robes, along with a few other individuals in different clothes sets looked to, was a complete mess.

Of the two donning robes, one of them was old man with a unique pair of red, close set eyes that constantly searched for traces of unique mana signatures. For instance, a powerful mana that belonged to a strong mage, or energy belonging to specific infamous groups but nothing registered.

An intense clash had happened inside without a doubt, but he couldn't find anything out of the ordinary.

"This is getting us nowhere. I thought I could pin this to some powerful foe or natural treasure but it seems nothing of that sort was here. All the mana signatures are from Arma Users," the old man said.

As an experienced mage, he was an expert at reading the intricate difference between the mana of difference classes.

He turned to the person behind him, a middle-aged woman with short blonde hair whose eyes at the moment were wide, surrounded by a foggy light of mana.

"<Sigh>. I'd say it's not that simple," she said while in this state. "All I can see is that this was definitely caused by an Energy Former but the problem is... I can only see a screen of darkness with barely discernible movements. After a certain point it just cuts off entirely. Whoever did this..."

The woman paused as her once white eyes developed a light brown and focused on the building ahead as her expression showed a deep sense of exasperation.

"... they might be well beyond what we're capable of dealing with."