

Undead 21

Chapter 21: Close Shaves

One thing that bothered Skullius was the issue of the outrageous stats he had seen on some of the goblins.

He was merely a Tier 0 Boneman and knew that getting the Lifeless Package had granted him a big lead with his overall strength that allowed him to fight monsters a Tier above him. He had only been fighting goblins, but he still believed he had an edge over most creatures of the first Tier as well.

One of the examples of the goblins with stats that shocked him was the Shaman Shmeija.

Even while taking into account the boosts that a class gave, he did not believe that the goblin should have 300 points of mana.

Something was afoot.

The goblin with the red paint on its face that he was currently facing was another one of these peculiar individuals. He found it hard to believe that merely being a Swordsman would grant so much mana.

From his experience in Deadmanland, classes like that did not have much in the way of mana as the Death Knights he saw that had similar classes exuded powerful death energy but not mana. Perhaps there was a distinction there to account for?

Skullius was extremely wary of the goblin before him. His appearance had finally been caught by all the other goblins, and unlike the goblin with red paint, they looked a bit flustered.

"An undead! I-I'll go report this immediately!" one of the goblins backtracked even as Red Rage advanced and bolted towards the goblin settlement.

The others would have loved to show him their disdain at his unveiled fear but they did not dare let their guards down. The remaining goblins were a mix of strong and weak ones.

Three of them had daggers and swords while one of them had a bow and arrows.

The goblin with red paint on its face suddenly zoomed towards Skullius!

Its movement was swift, making the air dance as it nimbly shot forward!

A chill assaulted Skullius as the goblin, whose name was Aikil, approached, sending his double-edged sword piercing towards Skullius who was momentarily dazed!

The chill he felt was dense mana that converged towards him, pouring abundantly from the sword!

Before he could react, Skullius felt a detonation on his body when the sword poked at his chest!

With a bright flash and a crackle of white mana, Skullius shockingly found that the left side of his chest had instantly been obliterated!

"Ah.."

The animal skins he had donned lit up with an orange flame - burnt away rapidly - and Skullius staggered as smoke rose from the fractures of his bones!

[You have been assaulted by 'Piercing Rage'. Damage has been reduced by 50%]

'That was half the damage?!' Skullius screamed in his mind as he backed away. This was insane.

Red Rage saw his master injured and tried to rush to his side but was caught by the other goblins who immediately dashed to intercept despite their apprehension!

The goblin with the bow turned to Skullius and nocked an arrow, releasing it after a short draw!

The arrow sped through the air, heading for Skullius' skull.

The Boneman saw the danger approaching and instantly turned his head to the side, narrowly dodging the attack!

Right after that, Aikil advanced again with his sword beginning to glow with white mana that encased its surface!

'Not again!' Skullius panicked as he grabbed a hold of his sword tightly.

As soon as Aikil swiped his sword with immense strength, aiming to decapitate him, Skullius clumsily hurried to meet it with his own!

CLANG!

Aikil didn't relent, slashing again with a downward motion as the mana brimmed on his sword. Skullius jumped desperately out of the way to save his bones.

'Gah! I wish I knew how to fight! I had gotten overconfident after fighting those weaklings!' he thought, regretting the fact that he took this too lightly.

Aikil was very skilled. He barely gave him any time to recover. Even now, as Skullius drew back from him, he was still pursuing with the intent to kill.

'If that goblin brings reinforcements before we finish these guys off, we'll be doomed. Think! Think! What do I do? If I face even one of those flashy attacks again, I'll be done for.'

Skullius pulled up his guidance field as he searched for something that would deliver him from this precarious situation.

He scrolled through his skill list and saw something that might actually help!

Actually, when he saw it, he wanted to beat himself up for forgetting about it.

It was something he had relied on from the very beginning, after all!

It was the [Basic Mana Manipulation] skill which was formerly [Mana Sense]!

Aikil was using mana to encase his sword and as Skullius looked at this skill of his, he couldn't help but think he could do the same.

He had devoted himself to the path of mana and this was his chance to learn how to apply it consciously as he had wished to be able to do back in Deadmanland!

As he wielded his rusty short sword, Skullius concentrated on the chill he felt from Aikil and his sword.

There it was.

With the mana sense he had, which was a step away from evolution before, he had been aware of the mana within a hundred meters, so sensing it around Aikil who was close to him was easy.

It was intense and mesmerising.

Skullius used [Basic Mana Manipulation], the mana from his core pouring out, travelling through his hand and wrapping around the sword!

This action wasn't difficult for him at all and he regretted not practicing it sooner.

A soft light wrapped around his sword and he finally stopped fleeing and faced Aikil.

The goblin frowned as it saw its enemy suddenly stop backing away.

Skullius waited for Aikil to strike instead of taking the initiative as he knew how garbage he was when confronted by a truly worthy opponent; it was character growth, acknowledging such fraudulence. If he made a mistake, he would be killed.

Aikil stopped hesitating and once again charged. The fact that his enemy was no longer retreating meant he had something up his sleeve. However, he wouldn't allow his enemy to have a chance to use it.

He attacked at full strength, using his sword skill, [Piercing Rage]!

This time, he aimed for the head, accelerating towards Skullius with a thick intent to kill.

As his sword approached the target, the Boneman also used his full strength and speed to swing his sword for a parry!

This time, he clearly felt the mana from Aikil burst and rush into his sword as he activated the skill, therefore he knew it was coming!

His sword clashed with Aikil's and...

Shattered fragments of Skullius' sword fell to the ground!

Aikil's sword had been shifted from its course, missing Skullius head as it passed over his shoulder!

Skullius had been perturbed when his sword broke, but as he saw that he was alive, he didn't dare dally. He had managed to save himself, though not in the way he had imaged.

He had visualised an epic clash with the goblin but what had actually happened was quite anticlimactic.

Aikil was surprised that he had failed when he thought for sure that he would be able to kill Skillius.

Skullius saw this and decisively flung his fist towards the goblin's face!

Aikil withdrew quickly, creating an adequate distance between him and the supposed undead.

The Boneman cursed at the missed opportunity, throwing away the hilt of the sword he had been using!

He pulled out a rusty dagger and encased in mana.

As he wielded it, he knew for sure that the result would be the same as from his exchange with Aikil just now. And that was a best case.

Worst case scenario, well...

'Even with my mana manipulation I can't seem to be able to block his powerful attacks. My weapon is also a problem. If only I could...' Skullius paused as he realised that he had another card up his sleeve.

One that could easily spawn something useless - given his luck - but a card nonetheless!