

Undead 71

Chapter 71: Less Immoral, More Bizarre!

Reon's body quivered as he saw the beyond frightening scene before his eyes. The sound of chewing, bones cracking under the mastication of large teeth belonging to the giant of a man before him was indeed horrific!

The giant was sitting down with its legs tucked in, knees facing up like a child. Most of its body was hidden by the squirming darkness. Its body was full of taut and well toned muscles, its sandy skin revealing strange red veins that ran amok along its entirety.

What made all of this worse was the fact that this giant's peculiar red eyes never left Reon as it slowly devoured the body of the old man who was supposed to be Reon's first opponent!

That gaze alone told Reon that there was no escape.

Soon, the giant finished its meal and smiled widely at Reon, its hands resting on its knees.

"It's been a while. You challengers have been especially hard to find all these years,ahaha. I underestimated how big this place is. Come closer and let me have a good look at you," the giant said in a boisterous, yet childish voice.

Reon found himself walking over slowly, even as he tried to hold himself back!

The thought of attacking the first thing he saw had already left his mind as all that remained was a deep-set fear of what was to happen next.

What was this giant?

Was he meant to fight it?

Ridiculous!

Though he couldn't ascertain how strong it was, it still gave off a rather chilling pressure.

As Reon reached within five meters of this giant, it suddenly puffed up its cheeks, taking in some air and blew hard at the surroundings!

The unmovable darkness that surrounded them was immediately blown back and erased under the twister-like force of wind that was released!

Reon was even more shaken!

The unrelenting force brought about by the wind left no traces of the darkness as what remained were the clear walls, floor and ceiling, where a small spot of light illuminated everything!

"There we go," the giant said. "I haven't had a decent conversation with someone in a long time. I've forgotten how it goes. Oh! That's right! It's common courtesy to introduce oneself first, aha ha!

My name is Sause. What's yours?"

Reon didn't want to respond, yet...

"Reon..."

"Ah... a lovely name, aha ha! Nice to meet you, Reon. I have proposal for you. Would you like to hear it and agree to whatever it is because you have no choice in the matter whatsoever?"

"Gladly..."

"Brilliant! I like you already! You see, the idiot who created this place locked me up in its bowels right before he died. I managed to escape a few years ago, but this place is just so darn huge that I can't seem to find an exit! Would you happen to have a way to get out?"

"No, but my friends do..."

"Oh, there's more of you? Great! Where are they?"

"I don't know, we were split up when we came in..."

"Oh, that's a shame. But hey, there's a quick fix aha ha! Come closer..."

Reon walked up to the giant whose name was Sause, and the man leaned in to give him a big whiff!

A moment later, the giant's eyes brightened, as he wore a content smile.

"Aha ha! No problem! I'll find them," Sause said and snapped his fingers, causing make three long, ethereal threads that swam in different directions to appear.

One was blue, the second was red and the last... was colourless, barely visible.

"Would you look at that? You have some interesting friends. I can't wait to meet them. If we end up getting to be such good chums, I wouldn't mind taking them for a bite. Aha ha!"

Reon had been answering Sause's questions nonstop, but his face depicted the absolute horror that he felt inside.

'What is this monster?! This feels so wrong! My body won't respond! We shouldn't have come here! I can't control my body! It knows where the others are?!

Can we even survive this?' Reon's mind spat out hysterical thought after hysterical thought as he gazed at the innocently grinning figure before him.

The giant stood up, but it's full height was limited in the enclosure which was not designed to house its size. Still, the giant reached almost four meters in this state and it went on to grab Reon by his torso.

"Let's go and find your friends. Make sure to tell them that I'm a good acquaintance of yours."

Sause turned into a blur in the next moment. He shuttled with god-like speed into the wall which exploded, making way for his charge.

The double doors screeched open and a burst of chatter and laughter assaulted Skullius' ears immediately!

...!

A magnificent yet horrifying scene appeared before him beyond the doors.

A massive space that was littered with luxurious tables and chairs appeared.

Multiple chandeliers made of precious gems lit up the vast enclosure, giving it a bright, bountiful feel.

The setup of the entire room, if it could even be called one, was incredibly beautiful. An exquisite red and gold tapestry laid on the floor with glorious paintings and sculptures on or near the walls.

Hundreds of men and women who were sharply or curiously dressed were conversing with each other animatedly while sipping on expensive looking drinks and eating premium quality food.

Their laughter from time to time would have made one feel as though they were back to the normal embrace of civil society, but Skullius, who had opened the doors felt otherwise.

His affinity to [Evil Darkness] and [Just Light] drew him to things that most wouldn't be able to notice.

Spots of light flew around like fireflies in this hall, unhindered by any physical object; they simply passed through.

Soft wisps of dark mist rolled around close to the floor, which was rather... unnerving.

The icing on the cake was the fact that all the people in this place emitted these wisps of darkness too from their bodies while above their heads, a curious golden white halo could be seen.

"Dear me! We have a guest!" a burly man cried and rushed towards Skullius with a big smile intending to give him a big bear hug.

He had combed back brown hair and blue eyes that expounded a vivacity so rare and chilling that Skullius was compelled to dodge his embrace warily.

"What's going on here?" Skullius asked with a dark, frightened look.

"Oh, dear friend. We're celebrating Fulgardt's death. Always and forever. It feels like yesterday when he passed, but it's probably been thousands of years now," the man answered.

"You're celebrating?"

"Why, of course!" A cheerful smile bloomed on the man's face as he explained. "Each and every one of us is someone who has aided Fulgardt in some way. Giving potions, lessons, doing him favours - many little odd things. Fulgardt sought us all out and gathered us for one last banquet before his death. He said that it was the duty of a man's acquaintances to celebrate his death... eternally.

So that's what we do. We celebrate... for eternity."

"...?" Skullius stared blankly at the man. A closer look told him that he (the burly man) was struggling to keep his smile up. His eyes were squinted into crescents, marking the sheer effort he was putting into securing this forced facade afloat.

Skullius saw the same thing etched upon the faces of everyone he gazed at. Some of the men and women in this place were actually leaking tears from their eyes as this torture wasn't something they could do anything against.

The burly man before Skullius oozed of the darkness that resonated with his keen affinity. Skullius confirmed that it indeed was [Evil Darkness]. The halo above him also resonated with [Just Light].

Did Fulgardt combine these two elements to somehow keep everyone here alive?!

Skullius couldn't fully wrap his mind around it.

This was bizarre as flesh!

"What am I supposed to do here?" Skullius thought aloud.

"How about you join us? We haven't had another guest in years! Surely you'd want to celebrate Fulgardt's demise with us!"

The enthusiasm packed within the sentence made Skullius grimace as he thought carefully.

GRRRRR!

GWAGWGWAGWA!

"...."

The sound came from Skullius belly. It was a ravenous growl unbecfitting of any human stomach!

"You must be hungry. Please, come and eat!" the burly man said, gesturing towards a table.

Skullius was led to a seat after he reluctantly gave in to this discount version of his hunger.

He found bountiful foods that did nothing to catch his carnal attention - as he couldn't smell - presented before him.

All the Discount Human wanted to do was eat and get rid of the literal gnawing sensation coming from his stomach.

Thus, Skullius picked one of each of the crisply roasted, majestically baked and masterfully refined goodies and placed them in his pristine white plate.

'Hmmm. What on earth am I doing? This actually feels.... vaguely familiar,' Skullius thought as the scene and his movements made him reminisce of a time he didn't remember.

Skullius grabbed some meat first.

The moment he did, a grand silence appeared as everyone in the room suddenly turned to him, paying extreme attention to his movements.

Even the burly man who had invited him merely looked at him with a daring gaze, his smile faded.

"Dear guest. Please eat. This celebration is in honour of a great man after all. So please..." he urged.

Skullius was freaked out by the sudden change.

Why were these people behaving so strangely all of a sudden?

Chapter 72: We'll Hand It Over

The intense gazes of the men and women in the room made Skullius hold back his intent to eat.

What the flesh was this?!

The determination hidden in those freaky eyes was too great for him to ignore, thus Skullius decided to ask what exactly was going on before doing anything else.

"What are you all looking at?"

The burly man hurriedly fixed his visage, donning a delightful smile once again. It had suddenly dawned on him that his disposition wasn't exactly subtle.

"Ahem... forgive me, dear guest. We are just a bit... anxious is all. Please... eat."

"Uhm... no. You really expect me to eat when everyone is looking at me like that?" Skullius gestured at one particular woman whose face was distorted; her eyes were bulging almost inhumanely and her lips were curled in a dark, unpleasant arc.

The moment Skullius pointed at her, she immediately wore a charming smile.

"Let me be honest, dear guest. We haven't had someone like you here in a very long time. Only one other has been able to come here before you. The only ones who can come to this grand hall are those who have been seen as worthy to carry both [Just Light] and [Evil Darkness]. So, we are rather... excited."

Skullius didn't buy that the reason behind the creeps was that simple. Most of the people in here had pretended as though he didn't exist initially only to suddenly react with nightmarish attention when he sat at the table.

It didn't take a genius to guess that all these people wanted something from Skullius. From the hint, it was likely that they needed him to use his two elements to assist them.

But what could they want?

"Please guest. Have your meal first," the burly man reiterated strongly.

Skullius cautiously eyed the well-served, fat plates of food before him.

'Is there something wrong with the food? It can't be something deadly, could it? They would need me alive,' Skullius thought.

Skullius promptly used his guidance field to check if he could see the details of the food on the table and it turned out that it was indeed possible!

The names of the foods were revealed to him, such as bluntly fried chicken, juicy raisin sparkle, almondite greens and many others.

There was no mention of poison, which made Skullius less doubtful of the possible danger he could face.

Skullius held a succulent piece of meat and ripped into it with his teeth.

He couldn't taste it, but he imagined that its flavour was bombastic.

The piece of meat he tore off rushed down his throat and was assimilated into his body just like everything else.

Skullius might not have been able to taste it, but he felt a slight change in his body the moment the food began breaking down.

A surge of a peculiar essence began to permeate through his body. It was like mana but a little different, making his cosmetic flesh a little less weak.

[Your body has been strengthened. +2 Health]

"Oh... eating this actually gives me some benefits. Is this the reward that the guidance system was talking about?"

The crowd surrounding him gulped as they waited. While they had their own personal agenda, they couldn't interfere with Skullius' journey.

That was part of the rules they had follow.

No move could be made until the guest was done dining.

Skullius grabbed everything he could see and began shoving it down his word-hole!

Drinks, meat, bread, fruit, vegetables!

[Your body has been strengthened. +1 health]

[Your body has been strengthened. +3 strength]

[Your body has been strengthened. +3 endurance]

[Your body has been....]

All things were downed!

Skullius felt his body getting more... noticeable. His arms grew a little thick, transcending the pathetic initial state they had been in when he first used the skill [Flesh It Like You Mean It].

"This is ridiculous! So only people like me get to enjoy this?! My stats are increasing so much just from this!"

"What is this?" one of the men in the crowd muttered as he gawked at the black hole that was Skullius, practically inhaling the food that was within the lavish plates!

"Is he even human?"

"Where is all that food going?"

"I thought only humans could enter this place to challenge for Fulgardt's legacy?"

Skullius ignored the chatter around him which had begun to echo within the room as he continued to eat.

The quantity of food here was ridiculous.

'Does he plan to eat everything here? How strong will he get?' the burly man grimaced. 'What a voracious appetite!'

When he had first been trapped here, eating this delicious food that never ran out had been a pastime for him.

For someone who was already powerful to begin with like him, he didn't get quite as many benefits from eating all this food. Of course, the burly man also had a very limited appetite.

Yet... this man before him whose mouth wanted to expand some more to increase the intake didn't seem to have something known as restraint!

A few minutes later, Skullius suddenly felt a strange sensation that ran through his chest to his belly!

"What now?" he mumbled in annoyance.

His body was having a reaction again and he didn't know which one.

Suddenly, his urge to eat vanished and something in his throat got clogged up.

"Huh?!"

Skullius tried to swallow the food he had in his mouth but he felt something block the pathway the food was supposed to descend.

He tried to forcefully swallow but ended up having to spit out the food in his mouth with a frown on his face.

Well, damn. This was his limit.

What he had gained wasn't insignificant though.

With all the plates that he had eaten, Skullius had gained 20 points in strength, 15 points in the Endurance and 19 in health. Not every meal had given points, unfortunately.

Strangely, the Discount Human hadn't managed to salvage anything for other attributes.

A few moments after Skullius' appetite fled, the burly man rushed up to him with a bright smile.

"Excuse me, dear guest. Can I ask for a small favour?" he said humbly.

"You want me to set you free right?" Skullius said.

While eating, he had come to the conclusion that this was the only thing these people could ask of him. Based on the burly man's narration before, they didn't particularly enjoy eternal merriment.

The burly man's smile grew wider.

"Indeed. You're quite smart. If you help us with this, we will help you get something in return."

"Oh? What is that?"

"We'll hand over the legacy of Fulgardt to you."

Chapter 73: You Fool!

"Huh?" Skullius raised a brow in surprise. Had he heard that right?

These guys would give him the legacy of Fulgardt? How was that even possible?

"What do you mean? How would you have the legacy of Fulgardt when you were locked in here the whole time?" Skullius asked.

"Please trust us. As long as you release us, we'll give it to you. We won't say anything else until you agree," the burly man said determinedly.

Time had licked away these peoples' egos. They were now left desperate to go to the outside world to experience life again or better yet, death.

Within the large crowd, many were already insane or getting close to it, which made the scene a bit more chaotic.

Skullius took some moments to think.

"You said someone else came through here. He was just like me, right?" he asked. "Why didn't you have him help you?"

"That is true but you don't seem to understand the uniqueness of being able to comprehend [Just Light] and [Evil Darkness]. In reality, most people aren't pure or evil, which would immediately qualify them to bear these elements."

"[Just Light] and [Evil Darkness] search the immediate intent of the target. If their immediate goals are deemed righteous or pure, then [Evil Darkness] will settle in them and if they are meant to harm indiscriminately, then [Just Light] will be granted to them. The last person to reach this place was a carrier of both but unfortunately... Anyway, please make your choice."

'Unique huh?'

Skullius remembered how he had experienced it when he was granted the two powers. The notifications that came claimed that he had neither evil nor righteousness which seemed different from what the burly man was saying.

Skullius could imagine the various scenarios that could emerge when one entered this place with the intent to find Fulgardt's legacy.

Some came with goals of attaining wealth, riches, protecting their country and so on. It wouldn't be rare to find someone who wanted to get both after they attained Fulgardt's legacy, but there was always an agenda that took precedence in the minds of all humans.

What about him though? What were his goals? Well, he wanted to survive and that was basically it.

The Doom Factors were an objective that were imposed on him but they couldn't overshadow Skullius' desire to keep existing.

'Do I really want the legacy?' Skullius asked himself.

Thinking back, he had never considered acquiring the legacy of Fulgardt in the first place. His one goal had been to survive, which is why he had taken matters into his own hands.

Now, he began considering. Would he even be able to get it?

He had been hoping to find something else to allow himself to leave this place but he had been ignoring the obvious choice because he felt he never stood a chance of getting it.

It would be useful though; with the legacy, he would probably have the ability to take down the people that had dragged him here.

"So? Do you agree?" the burly man asked with an expectant light in his eyes.

"Hmm... this is something that Fulgardt himself did to you. How am I supposed to help?" Skullius asked.

"We'll help you get through it. We know how Fulgardt used his powers to bind us. We can teach you to replicate his skill! It may take years but afterwards, not only would you have gained a great proficiency in the two elements, you'll also have all of us as your allies!"

'Hmm...' Skullius thought. 'HELL NO!'

Of course, Skullius' answer was a resounding no.

Why would he agree to this?

Why would he start trusting the prisoners in the Labyrinth now when he had been abused by Dezrael earlier, made to toil on the yoke for hours?!

Why should he believe that these people had Fulgardt's legacy when they were prisoners to his powers even after he had died?

Also, even if these people indeed could teach him how Fulgardt wove [Evil Darkness] and [Just Light] so profoundly, Skullius didn't have years to learn all that skill. He had Doom Factor 2 hot on his trail!

Worse yet, even if he could believe that one of the powerfup people could help him get rid of the Doom Factors, how would he get them to understand what he was in the first place?

Eventually, when [Flesh It Like You Mean It] timed out, his true form would be revealed and would he get enough of a chance to explain himself before being killed for being an 'undead'?

No,no,no! This wouldn't fly.

Skullius' optimism didn't transcend into the realm of stupidity, and stupidity is exactly what collaborating with these people would call for without understanding a lot about this place than he did now.

Although he barked his 'Hell no!' in his mind, Skullius couldn't help but wonder if it was wise to say it aloud.

Skullius was already beginning to piece together what happened to the last person who came here. He was probably faced with the same choice and declined.

...The poor bastard was likely killed for it.

Would Skullius be willing to make that same choice openly and get himself murdered?

What could he possibly do when surrounded by these overpowered people?

He couldn't use the biggest offensive asset he had on command - [Pseudo Evil Veneration] - which made him feel infinitely less confident.

Unfortunately, the burly man noticed Skullius' hesitation at once. From that, he discerned the young Discount Human's decision.

His amiable smile turned into a discontent, savage one.

The same could be said for the hundreds of people that were within this place as they glared at Skullius with malicious intent.

'Hmph! He's just like the other one - stubborn and short sighted! If they help us, they would gain a decent comprehension in their elements. We might not have been able to make a move on you earlier, dear guest, but now we can!' the burly man sneered.

The reason they had buttered up Skullius and told him to eat at first was because the rules created by Fulgardt stipulated that a challenger who had reached this place had to 'celebrate'. The wisps of darkness and halo around the captives in the hall commanded it.

Their agendas could only be carried out afterwards.

A suffocating wave of mana thundered down on Skullius as the full power of the individuals in the hall poured out!

Skullius dropped to the ground.

He began to vomit blood while being pressed hard to floor. He couldn't stand.

"You fool! You should have accepted! If not for the small grace that we can't compel you - as we could have if not the damned rules of this place - we wouldn't even be having this conversation, yet you're so hellbent on defying reason!"

Skullius' face smashed into the floor.

The intense energy that assaulted him didn't wane.

'Damn! These socketholes are strong!' Skullius thought while barely containing his wits.

His encounters with strong beings had caused him to become a bit desensitised to tanking powerful energy signatures with his body, but this experience was chilling still.

"How am I... going to get out of this one?" Skullius asked himself while grinding his teeth under the immense pressure exerted upon him.

The lone figure of Benzard held onto a chipped sword, heaving deep breaths as blood oozed from its body.

His armour was on its last legs, torn, broken and shredded to a pathetic state. His body had numerous wounds that poured blood, the ripped flesh on it adorned in swells that shone.

'Is it... truly worth it?' he asked himself while looking at the disembodied head of a humanoid creature bound to a yoke.

On his sword, wisps of darkness danced lazily.

The power he had discovered hours ago had grown, but not in proportion to the severe gaps in strength between his opponents.

Benzard was about to take a step forward when he suddenly turned.

CRACK!

The wall hidden under the darkness behind him shifted as a large crack on the wall appeared, dust flying as the thing that sought to come through exerted more force!

CRACK!

Chips fell, and a large, red eye appeared from the crack, locking onto Benzard sharply!

...!

Chapter 74: Another Class?

The Labyrinth of the Yoke.

It was an ancient structure built by Fulgardt many years prior to his death. It held countless treasures that he had found in his lifetime.

It also held his prime legacy, the power of the Insurgent Magnus. The power to wield both purity through [Just Light] and evil through [Evil Darkness].

This was as much as most who challenged this dreadful place knew. The Labyrinth was to them a place where they could party up and obtain riches and power while exercising some manner of caution.

Of course, the majority of people who hunted these legacies were reckless or desperate warriors. Their deaths were guaranteed.

The layout and mechanics within the Labyrinth were vastly different to expectations.

The Labyrinth was larger than most would even know. It was incredibly vast and filled with many stages and rooms that held specific purposes beyond the thoughts and dreams of mortals.

Even the purpose of the brutal and seemingly unending killing spree that all challengers were subjected to was unknown, as no one had been able to reach the legacy of Fulgardt. This prompted many to feel discouraged, their yearning for his treasure waning with time.

Many didn't know anything about this man and his machinations save for a handful of beings, but Fulgardt wouldn't have made such a about of them.

One of these beings happened to be a bald giant that was peeking at Benzard with terrifying red eyes that bound the poor soul's will to fight.

Sause crawled into the dark space where a beheaded humanoid creature lay silently in a pool of blood.

Benzard shook.

The sight of the giant that held Reon in its hand reaching in and its cheeks puffing up to blow away the darkness within the space was paralysing.

Soon, the room was clear, and Benzard saw the already mortifying picture of the enemy more clearly; he dropped his sword, trembling.

'What is this?! What is it doing with Reon?! Is it another opponent?!' Benzard bombarded himself with a barrage of questions he couldn't answer.

He had slaughtered four opponents from four different paths that he had chosen in a span of several hours.

It had been a rough trip.

Ever since he had discovered that he could manipulate the thick darkness around him, defeating the man-beast - his first opponent - had been easy.

After defeating it, he found his comprehension of the darkness to grow drastically. He could sense it with greater accuracy than before, which prompted him to spend a few hours familiarising himself with it and incorporating it into his fighting style with the sword.

This was the essence of a swordsman.

A Truebright Swordsman, as was Benzard's Advanced class.

Light and lightning made up the core of his arsenal and wielding their combination in conjunction with his sword was supposed to be a top tier package, yet...

He had been failing to accommodate light into his attacks and maximising the core of his class.

If he used it, it was usually a fluke.

Him using darkness and finding it easier to use than light made him think that perhaps he may have acquired a class that wasn't suited for him.

He relished in the feeling, gaining more confidence about his ability to cut down enemies now that he found out that using darkness was extremely effective.

Unfortunately, even with that... even with his opponents' handicapped, he hadn't been able to win so easily.

"Interesting. So you're the one with the blue thread, ahaha," Sause said. "Why don't you introduce us, Reon?"

Reon who was within the giant's grasp still wore a pale face. The speed with which the giant had been travelling had left him utterly speechless and almost soulless.

He could barely see anything even when the giant took a momentary pause.

Hours had felt like seconds just from when he saw the surroundings warping by like an endless stroke of dark colours. The giant would sometimes easily slaughter a ridiculously powerful opponent bound by a yoke for no reason and Reon had had a front seat to the carnage, barely comprehending it.

Even with all this - even while frozen in terror - when Sause gave a command, Reon still answered.

"Don't worry, Benzard. Sause here is a good acquaintance of mine."

'What?!' Benzard exclaimed internally. 'Acquaintance my ass!'

"Indeed we are," Sause said, giving Benzard his full attention. "Reon told me lots of things on our way here. Do you happen to have a Key?"

Benzard was going to avoid giving an answer until he fully understood the situation but...

"Yes I do."

...!

His mouth moved on its own!

"I see. So the other Key is with that other one, right? Aha ha! He's rather far from this side of the Labyrinth, unfortunately. You two seem to have already been in the same quadrant of this enclosure, which is why it was so much easier to find you. However, this one might be a bit harder to get to," Sause said with a carefree expression.

He used Reon as some kind of tool to emphasise his points.

The giant's large frame sat down with its knees facing the ceiling.

Sause's private parts had been dangling ever since his appearance, but his unsettling pressure was even more terrifying than the picture of his huge private goods.

"Hmmm. You have quite the able body. Potential is practically leaking out from you like a river. It'd be waste to kill you. You're more refined than this friend of yours. Tell me, why are you here?"

Benzard's mouth opened wide and he rendered an answer that he did not wish to speak of.

"My town was destroyed by bandits who wanted to escape from a nobleman they had offended. They were many of them, but my people, my friends and family fought against them to protect themselves, yet it wasn't enough. The bandits set fire to my town, aiming to distract their pursuers long enough for them to escape; the town was in the nobleman's domain, after all. Everyone died except me.

I was picked up by Knights under that nobleman. I was tempered to become strong, but I never forgot the helplessness I felt that day."

"Unreasonable criminals and fiends only need the sword to be put down. I need adequate power to stop such people from doing whatever they want with precious lives."

Indeed, this was Benzard's motivation. This was why the Ideal Ark had been a cause he was more than willing to join.

Once again, a group of criminals without a care for the value of life had risen, and he wanted strength. He wanted the strength to vanquish the Green Neolists!

Sause shifted in excitement.

"This was a lengthier explanation than I expected but very efficient. You want strength? Good. I can see it from that tenacious body and spirit," Sause gazed at Benzard's wounds.

Benzard's heart sank when he blurted out his background like some exhibitionist protagonist.

Reon looked at him with surprise, wondering in his mind if this was what truly drove Benzard.

"Let me make you an offer. I'd simply compel you to agree but that doesn't work when I need a rock solid answer fashioned from your own resolve," Sause said with a grin.

Benzard's breaths hastened.

An offer?

"Since all you need is power, how about giving up on Fulgardt's Class and letting me impart you with a very powerful one of my own, aha ha?" Sause said with a grin.

Chapter 75: A Chance At True Strength

"A Class?" asked Benzard in surprise.

He felt the powerful hold that had been restraining him get lifted, his ability to answer per his own accord restored.

"Exactly!" Sause exclaimed. "For a seeker of strength like yourself, attaining power beyond that of those that you know should be sufficient, right? I can grant you that, aha ha. What do you say?"

Benzard didn't know if what this giant said was to be believed.

Power.

Strength.

He did yearn for those, but...

Benzard focused his senses and discovered that he couldn't fathom the kind of power that this giant held, regardless of the amount of concentration he invested into the task.

There was no doubt...

This creature was strong.

This alone limited Benzard's options. Quite frankly, he might have only had one option.

From the looks of it, there was a 100% guarantee that this creature wanted something from him and Sause didn't make much of an effort to hide it.

"I refuse."

Reon sighed in relief (in spirit).

'His head is still in the right place at least,' he thought and urged on Benzard. 'Don't listen to this bastard!'

Benzard's response didn't garner any expression of disappointment from Sause, surprisingly. The giant merely kept smiling cheerfully.

"Profound. Despite the burning desire I sense from you, you're not irrational. These qualities make me even more interested in reeling you in," Sause said.

"I'm not interested."

"Why? It's a great deal."

"I don't know anything about you. I wouldn't hand myself over just for pretty words. I'd rather die trying to get a legacy that's guaranteed."

"Oh. Is that right? Are you sure it's guaranteed? Have you yet started to wonder why you're still having to fight all these enemies that are bound by yokes? They are practically spoon-fed to you? Doesn't it all seem strange?

A long journey of collecting cumulative mana after every kill and getting the slightest bit of elevation in the element you were given for free. Does it all... feel right?"

Benzard's heart skipped a beat as he heard this.

It was indeed something that had crossed his mind. What was the point of this? Why were the enemies he had to face bound? Why could they only be defeated by the strange darkness that felt alive?

His faith in this mission was put to the test. Even though he had said that he would gladly die trying to gain the power that Fulgardt left behind, a seed of doubt began to bloom.

This was enough for Sause who grinned even more disgustingly.

Getting a class above 'Advanced' instead of battling who knew how many enemies seemed pretty tempting to Benzard now.

'That does seem... a lot better than this. Should I...?' Benzard thought.

"I still refuse. I'd rather work with something I know more about. I still have strength to spare. I won't die so easily," Benzard said with a stern expression. He didn't believe a word he said. He would probably die quickly against this giant.

Sause's cheerful grin didn't vanish. His eyes merely lost some of their lustful sparkle.

"That's too bad. I really thought you were a perfect candidate. How unfortunate. Well... Reon here told me that unlike the Key that the other one possesses, yours' ownership can be changed by simply killing you. So... thank you for the meal."

Right then, Sause's face stretched as he opened his mouth astonishingly wide to reveal the large molars, incisors and canines that decorated the space within!

Saliva dripped from his mouth as he lunged forward to devour Benzard in one fell swoop!

His movement was too swift.

Benzard panicked. His body wouldn't move.

For some reason, he hadn't thought that giant would simply resort to killing him if it that much interest in him.

He had thought it wouldn't take no for an answer.

Had he placed too much hope in the idea that it saw something that would make it spare his life?

After the blow that was Eobald's true identity and goals making him feel like all that he had done for the past few years was nothing, Benzard had felt hollow.

What would one do after finding out that an investment they made to build a lavish house for years turned out to be only have been for a pigsty?

Perhaps that wasn't the best analogy, but the point still stood that Benzard truly felt the need to have strength he could believe in.

Dying here right after learning that all he had done was for a ridiculous cause made his soul scream.

Not yet. Not yet

NOT YET!

"WAIT!"

Sause stopped. His eyes turned into crescents.

"Hmmm?"

The glow in Benzard's eyes made Sause excited.

A bonfire was lit in those eyes now. A careless one.

Sause withdrew his head, his face returning to normal. Suddenly, he looked like a large, affable grandpa.

"Fine. I will do it," Benzard said with a sickened frown.

Despite his resolve, he couldn't help but feel disgusted with himself. He felt like he was selling his soul to the devil, or worse, to the likes of the Traitorous Deity of the Under.

"Now that wasn't so hard was it, aha ha?" Sause said cheerfully.

He rose and chuckled loudly. The whole room quaked terribly.

Reon who was at the side couldn't help but be shocked. He would have loved to walk over and punch Benzard for making such a decision, but he couldn't.

Sause stretched his large hand over Benzard as his body suddenly started to explode with a ridiculous amount of mana that overpowered the space around them, distorting it and bringing forth a radiant glow to his large body.

Sause's large palm reached Benzard and he touched the man's forehead with the tip of his forefinger, a thick and concentrated light of mana shooting into Benzard!

"Perfect," Sause murmured. "After this, you'll help me steal away that other one too. Can't have Fulgardt getting his way after screwing me over now can we? Aha ha."

Chapter 76: Bullying Is Wrong! (1)

POW!

Skullius flew across the room after receiving the punch of his discount life!

There was a terrible flash after the blow, and the next thing he knew, he had blasted into the solid wall!

The burly man who had been so 'kind' to him at first was now donning a fierce visage as he glared at the Discount Human. He had been the one to throw the punch just now and when he saw Skullius attempting to rise from the ground stubbornly, he was surprised.

"Hmm? You're still alive after that? The one who came before you was already half dead after a single hit. You seem more capable but you're too stubborn and foolish to recognise a point of mutual interest!" the burly man barked.

He really wished that he had the authority to force this idiot to do his bidding, but the harmony of [Evil Darkness] and [Just Light] around him disallowed that.

Skullius rose, watching the people in the hall close in on him and his attempts at maintaining his composure were immediately broken.

'Okay... this is reaaallly bad! This is the worst situation I've been in so far! There's too many of them and my skills probably won't do any damage. They are not bound like the others!' Skullius' mind churned frustration after frustration as he tried to figure out how to escape this predicament.

There had to be a way, right?

As he expected a dramatic procession before he was beaten to death-ish, a foot pounded against his shoulder making him drop to the ground again, a deep crater boring itself on the floor under Skullius' face!

Skullius coughed, a red substance coming from his mouth!

The substance released a fizzy sound as it splashed onto the ground, white bubble-like froth forming around it. (It might have been soda, in another world.)

Before he could fully comprehend the level of damage the previous attack would have caused, another horrendous attack blasted against him from a distance.

A torrent of flames like a tornado surged against the furniture and ceiling, leaving molten and charred remains in its wake. It mercilessly attempted to roast Skullius alive when it reached him.

For a few moments, Skullius disappeared under the brilliant eminence of the flame.

One wouldn't have believed he could come out of it alive.

As the fire died down, an old man who was adorned in an expensive-looking red robe smirked at the sight of the destruction.

"Heh! Pathetic. Youngsters from the generation of the outside world must have grown ten times more foolish. Pride and arrogance is all I see from this filth," he said.

"Indeed," a curvaceous woman at the side with long, leather black hair that brushed against her short and dark revealing dress spoke. "Perhaps we should have tried appealing to his lustful desires instead."

The smoke cleared, revealing the full extent of damage.

"You socketholes are crazy!" a voice boomed.

The figure of a young man in a broken golden red armour appeared.

A magnificent looking helmet was perched on his head, bearing two crimson wings on either side, glittering with spots of mana. It spotted a looped, star-shaped visor that faintly projected a blue radiance, a beautiful ruby-like gem visible above it.

Skullius had, in the heat of the moment (no pun intended), remembered that his new (though broken) armour could store things like he had seen with the magical rings that Benzard and friends had.

Donning the helmet had helped him, warding away some of the damage that he felt even on spots that didn't have the coverage of the armour!

~~~

[ArchLight Generational Keeper]

An armour forged by ten of the royal blacksmiths of E'kald. It is made with extremely rare materials and carved with countless runes and mythic circles so as to hold the power of at least a 100

Incandescent Stage experts. It can store mana through a pocket core built into it, and can also store items within the subspace it was forged with.

-Defense-

2400

-Durability-

10/3500

-Special Effects-

- Can store pieces of the armour set

Currently stored – (None)

- Can store mana from willing participants

Current mana limit – (34,466/21,000,000)

- Can reflect 50% elemental and physical damage

~~~

'My luck still wants me to live!' Skullius was touched. Perhaps the streak of bad events that spontaneously occurred from time to time would finally cease.

"Of course you're still alive," the old man in the red robes scoffed. Hints of mirth registered on his old, wrinkled face. Mana surged with a thicker ooze of mana. "You ought not to die so easily. I intend for you to suffer a little more."

Skullius' survival didn't seem to shake any of the beings in the hall at all, much to his own surprise.

"His armour is quite powerful. He suffered even less damage than I imagined," one of them commented.

"Perhaps he has some unique qualities too? He did qualify to reach this place."

"Look at him. The only unique quality he has is his negative charm. How can you be born with a face like that and choose to live on?"

"You're right. Fulgardt's screening must be lax."

Skullius grew nervous.

Gaining the interest and attention of these people wasn't something he was particularly happy about. They were dissecting him like some crude play.

He was particularly unnerved by how they noticed that his armour had offset some of the damage from the fire.

How long before they discovered it was supplying him with mana he desperately needed?

"I hope, for your sake, that you do not think you will survive for much longer, though," the old man with a robe said and waved his hand, prompting for a large influx of mana to gather, forming something grand. "As you are a fresh audience, I'm compelled to show off. Watch what kind of magic a frustrated old man can pull out."

A massive double wheel, like a runic circle of some kind, appeared right before the old man.

It had 14 segments that each held a different coloured sigil within them, burning with an ethereal light.

Skullius felt the air change the moment this magical construct appeared.

The old man's eyes flashed with frightening light, and then he spoke.

"Deconstruct."

HUM!

One of the sigils on the wheel produced a deep hum. It shot off a staggering radiance, and then something phenomenal happened to Skullius!

Thick red chains appeared from thin air and began to wrap around his body. Small white runes could be seen over the surfaces of the chains, seeming to enhance their binding powers.

However, this wasn't all.

The chains started to sink into Skullius' flesh as if they were assimilating into him.

They also dug into his armour, moving along its steel body as if it was a liquid instead!

Skullius felt something go wrong within him immediately.

Something important deep inside the very core of his being began to unravel, unable to handle whatever effect the chains were imposing.

It was then that Skullius saw a few disturbing notifications!

[The Absolute Magic spell 'Archemperal Wheel: Bind' has begun to interfere with all active skills]

['ArchLight Generation Keeper' is being deconstructed]

[Your skill 'Flesh It Like You Mean It' is being deconstructed]

[Your mana is being deconstructed--]

[The Doom Factor, 'Disowned' has caught up]

Chapter 77: Bullying Is Wrong! (2)

'Hold up, bro! This isn't fair at all!' Skullius panicked as the flood of bad news reflected on the screen of the guidance field registered.

[Flesh It Like You Mean It] was being deconstructed? His armour was too?

What did that mean?

The answer didn't take long to reach Skullius as in the next moment, he saw and felt changes that genuinely made him feel mortified!

The ArchLight Generation Keeper started to disintegrate!

The breastplate began fragmenting, changing into small particles of hot iron that were laced with mana!

Skullius slowly felt the protection that he had enjoyed for a short while already begin to vanish under the ridiculous spell of the old man!

To make matters worse, Skullius saw the cosmetic flesh that covered him begin to shift, turning into balls of veiny meat, leaving only the bone underneath!

It started from his arm and quickly climbed to his face where the flesh began to recede!

The old man sensed Skullius' fear from the trembling of his mana and with a look of disdain and satisfaction, he chuckled.

It had been a while since he had felt a sensation other than his belly being full of premium quality food and wine.

It had been a while since he felt exhilarated. Having forced conversations that left his throat sore and muscles aching from pretending to be merry for centuries grew extremely tedious.

All this false merriment was because he had helped that insolent fool, Fulgardt!

His past personality and values had all but been destroyed. All that was left was a yearning to feel something else even at the expense of another life!

His past self would be disgusted by the current him but who cared?!

He had fallen so far, yet... what could he do about it? The loving and adventurous side of him was erased by this cramped space and the eternal interactions with a singular company every hour, day and year!

Seeing Skullius' whose disposition shook, the despair for his impending doom crippling him pathetically, was like a breath of fresh air to the old man!

He, however, wasn't the only person to feel this way!

The many within the crowd rushed up to Skullius. Beating him to death was the only form of stimulation they could endure without being held back by the [Evil Darkness] and [Just Light] that kept them from perishing.

[You have failed to grab a hold of your own fate within the time that was given by the benevolent Voice of Worlds]

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

[Attempting mana reduction...]

"No!"

Skullius saw the notifications and knew what would come next!

He wouldn't allow it!

The armour wasn't supplying him mana anymore which caused the approaching of the Doom Factor!

Skullius' mana quickly bottomed out after Doom Factor 1 caught up to him.

It was an attempt at using his mana to try to sustain him, but...

[Mana insufficient]

Skullius hurriedly tried to activate [Basic Mana Manipulation] just before the last strands of his mana were drawn away.

He sensed the vast amount of mana within the armour and tried pulling on it.

As soon as he made the conscious effort to pull the vast mass of power into his body, the ArchLight Generation Keeper responded vigorously, disjointed spots of mana hurtling into Skullius' core!

The stream of mana continuously got thinner at a rapid pace which kept Skullius anxious as he knew it could all go terribly wrong at any moment!

[The Doom Factor, 'Disowned' has been averted]

"Phew—"

BOOOM!

A fist smashed into Skullius' chest while he was bound by the red chains!

A grinning man with long dark hair had punched him and caused his chest to cave in but fortunately, the ArchLight Generation Keeper was still protecting him!

The man flung his fist towards Skullius' face which was covered by the helmet and the Discount Human could have sworn that on impact, he felt as if his core exploded!

The amount of power within such a punch which the owner didn't put that much effort into, caused multiple ripples of force that instantly shattered the helmet, leaving Skullius' face exposed!

The Discount Human would have screamed.

His head was still intact, but that was likely because the man with long hair was holding back. He wouldn't want him to die quickly.

But Skullius counted his blessings. At least the ArchLight Generation Keeper was still whole.

Kind of.

~~~

[ArchLight Generation Keeper]

-Durability-

8/3500

~~~

There was no cause for celebration though as the current predicament was far from over.

From Skullius' arm to the right side of his face, only bones were left as [Flesh It Like You Mean It] was being deconstructed.

The white bone began to change colour, transitioning into a foggy grey, and when Skullius' eye disappeared, a weak blue flame began to come from his socket!

On top of all this, some rather enthusiastic men and women rushed towards him and began throwing attack after attack at his downed body!

'GAAAAAAAHH! If they see my real form I'll be in even more trouble! This is seriously bad news! What do I do?!' Skullius thought as three shrieking balls of blue flames blasted against his body, the explosion that ensued, melting the floor and ceiling.

The hall was being wrecked, everything burning while the eyes of hundreds looked on either without much care or with a severe yearning to join in on the short-lived fun!

Quite the number of dignified-looking figures remained seated in the hall while watching a single Foundation Stage weakling try to survive an onslaught by immensely stronger beings.

One of them who was adorned in a simple-looking loose shirt and pants sighed. His gaze turned to the old man who had summoned the double wheel with sigils and a look of disdain flashed within his eyes momentarily.

"I can't believe even Remos Kamil would succumb to depravity. Is this what a great pioneer of a powerful magic art form should be doing?" he asked.

"An obsession is an obsession no matter how great a future it leads to. It's only when one is locked up with a similar flock of psychopaths that the true depths of their obsession begins to shine," a woman with navy blue hair sitting adjacent to the man who had spoken previously, responded.

She drank from an immaculately designed goblet holding a purple-coloured drink.

"I suppose. He really is enjoying himself..."

The unveiled amusement of the old man known as Remos radiated freely as he watched Skullius who was bound fly and get knocked against several clusters of furniture.

'I'll savour every moment. No need to rush,' he thought.

Skullius rolled on the floor only to be stopped by a table leg when his momentum had died down.

The same man with long, black hair rushed towards him with insane speed while cocking his arm back.

'This can't go on! I have to fight back somehow! Will [Pseudo Evil Veneration] work? I can't tell. It's not like I can just be as angry as I was that time and unleash that kind of power. Even if I'm successful, I doubt I can take care on hundreds of these guys at once!

Damn it! But I still have to fight!"

Skullius churned his mana as from his open palm, a bright flash of pure mana coalesced before he activated a skill he hoped would do some damage.

[Bitter-Sweet Hell's Inferno!]

A purplish orange flame bloomed into existence and went on to grow in size, wild wisps of heat rotating around it.

This indeed was no ordinary flame, but would it fare well against the monsters in this room?

The flame left Skullius' hand and shot towards the Discount Human's target!

The man with black hair didn't bother to dodge.

When the two met - a crazed man and an eager flame - heat roared and flames spewed onto the surroundings as everyone watched!

The bright glint of orange that resulted died down soon after... and the black-haired man's figure dashed out of the remnants of the fire with a mocking smirk!

The Inferno had done squat!

The dark-haired mana kicked Skullius in the face.

The poor false man flew once again and knocked against more of the lavish furniture while rolling. When his body settled, he gazed in disbelief at the black-haired man, 'blood' seeping from his orifices as the fragmenting armour was losing its ability to completely protect him.

'I can't believe it didn't do any damage! I thought it would at least... wait...' Skullius thought.

He recalled a notification he had received from the guidance field some time ago.

All creatures in here could only be damaged by [Evil Darkness] and [Just Light]!

'Right! Since they didn't have yokes on them, I assumed they were different from the others! But still...!'

Just as Skullius was looking at the black-haired man, the man was also looking at Skullius intently, a strange expression on his face.

"Hey... What's the meaning of this?" he said, and he came to halt.

It wasn't only him, as everyone in the hall looked at Skullius confusedly, others with wrath and the rest with disbelief scribbled over their faces.

"What's an undead doing here?!"

Chapter 78: Bullying Is Wrong! (3)

"Uh?" Skullius uttered in confusion before he looked at his own hands. "Oh..."

Foggy grey bones appeared in his vision, a sensation he hadn't felt in hours beginning to overtake him.

The powerful yet tranquil feeling of Null Life was slowly leaking into his body!

Only his right arm was fully bonified as of yet, his left still mostly fleshful.

His face, however, already spotted hollow sockets with a dark blue flame that burned incessantly.

The rest of his body was still experiencing deconstruction, blobs of cosmetic flesh disappearing little by little.

[The skill 'Flesh It Like You Mean It' is being forcibly subdued]

[The deactivation of the skill is imminent]

There was an earpiercing silence in the hall now.

"You... You... You're an undead minion?!" Remos cried in disbelief.

The man and woman who had been conversing before shot up from their seats.

"What's this?! Was it an undead disguised as a human all along?!" the man in the simple shirt said with a frown. "How did we not sense it?"

"I couldn't either. Has the world outside been conquered by the undead? After merely a few millenia?!" the woman said.

Skullius wanted to gulp so bad, swallowing a bit of his fear, but he couldn't. Such a convenience was already lost to him at this point.

'I'm fleshed! Unless I can figure out what to do with [Evil Darkness], there's no escaping this!'

As he looked ahead of him, Skullius noticed the flames and damage within the room begin to vanish.

The tables disappeared and reappeared with their full integrity and decor intact. The food which had spilled from the violence that had pervaded moments ago became piping hot meals that sat on top of these tables again.

A thin mist of darkness still floated within the room, which made the sudden phenomenon occurring even more unnerving.

Skullius didn't have the luxury of pondering over this as in the next instant, he felt the dark-haired man towering over him.

The man gripped him by the neck, his eyes burning with a furious light.

"What's a filthy undead doing here?" he said.

A storm of mana assaulted Skullius, attempting to burn his being.

'Gah! He's as strong as that Wing bro! I can't be sure if it's the same but I can hardly stand in his presence!' Skullius thought as he trembled.

Several figures began to advance, while others chatted amongst themselves about the odd situation.

"Bring it here, I'll pry all that it knows," Remos said to the black-haired man who withdrew his gaze from Skullius and began walking with him over to Remos.

Skullius gaped.

If there was ever a time to act, it was now, but he didn't know what exactly to do!

His vision roamed around the room as it sought for something to cling to!

Something!

Anything!

Wasn't there something?!

...!

Something Skullius had noticed before when he came here appeared in his view.

Dark wisps were on the bodies of every one of these people as well as halos of bright light!

Something clicked within the Discount Human's head!

Maybe he was overthinking it but there was no time to be reserved with ideas!

With this idea as the basis, Skullius decided to try it out with the closest specimen he had: the black-haired man who was holding him by the neck!

He moved his flesh arm and placed his hand on the man's chest.

The man frowned and glared at Skullius.

"What are you doing?"

Skullius didn't respond.

What followed staggered everyone in the hall!

The dark mist in the hall was drawn towards Skullius' hand, gathering at his palm which touched the black-haired man's chest.

Skullius felt his vision running through his arm and joining the trail of darkness as it entered the black-haired man's body through his hand.

There was brief period of nothing but pitch darkness and then... Skullius saw it; a literal wall of complicated embroidery appeared in his vision!

The weavings were made of darkness with borders of light that made each weave visible in this strange, dark place!

Skullius had never seen something so complex!

It was too intricate to even describe as it looked like it was made by something beyond the borders of normalcy.

[Evil Darkness] was woven into such a structure that looked to be within the black-haired man's body.

The Boneman couldn't help but try to touch it, connecting with it even though he didn't have hands in this state.

The moment he did, Skullius felt to a very limited extent the purpose of this entire wall of woven darkness. He also understood just a little bit about how it was woven.

'So it's like that...!'

This beautiful construct was actually something like this?!

This felt like the moment when he had connected to the writing on the wall of the Labyrinth and learned [Pseudo Evil Veneration]!

A revelation was revealed to him but it felt like a chip off a gigantic block!

[Your high affinity with 'Evil Darkness' has allowed you to comprehend a smidgen of the cluster of intricate applications of this element before you]

[You have learnt the skill 'Basic Evil Weaving']

[You have learnt the skill 'Basic Evil Invasion']

[You have learnt the Special Skill, 'Evil Sanction']

[Pre-existing conditions have been set for you beforehand. You have taken a leap of faith that has allowed you to reach this moment. Would you like to take advantage of these conditions?]

The barrage of notifications left Skullius a little flustered.

However, the Boneman knew he was in quite the dangerous situation and time was running out.

Whatever these conditions were couldn't be bad, right?

"Yes, I would," Skullius gave his answer immediately.

The wall of intricately woven darkness suddenly vanished, the pitch black energy rustling as Skullius felt it burst into him!

A strange state, as if he was suspended in air followed, and without delay, Skullius found the lights coming from the chandeliers and spots of [Just Light] around him prick his vision.

'Hmm?'

Something didn't feel right.

The entire sensation of his body felt different. He felt... powerful and... free.

As his eyes adjusted, Skullius noticed a weird abnormality to his height. His senses picked up every single thing from the surroundings with extreme detail.

There was something in his hand, tightly gripped with strength that felt foreign to him.

When he saw it, his eyes almost jumped out of his sockets!

A bald skull attached to a human body was at the mercy of his powerful hand. Its sockets still blazed with a dark blue flame but it looked to be without will.

At this moment, Skullius understood. At least a tiny bit.

"Kek..."

Chapter 79: Nameless Invader (1)

"Kek..." Skullius cackled.

This situation was something else.

At this point, even he could tell that he was probably being led on. Getting powered up through the souls, the enhancement to the two elements, getting [Pseudo Evil Veneration] and now this?

The idea he had gotten was that the darkness and light halos that showed over everyone in the hall was a way to show him that these people were at the mercy of [Evil Darkness] and [Just Light]!

They were like a substitute of the yokes in a way, Skullius imagined.

Though he had thought about it before, it was becoming more apparent. Even though all this wasn't given to him on a silver platter, him simply giving it a hard try landed him great benefits.

The question still held though. To what end?

[Pre-existing conditions have allowed for the activation of the skill 'Basic Evil Invasion']

[Pre-existing conditions are allowing the challenger a chance to use 'Basic Evil Invasion' on a vastly stronger opponent for a limited amount of time]

[Time left until deactivation of skill... 59 seconds]

Skullius' mind spun at these notifications.

Limited time...

This was definitely a perk. A limited one.

He had invaded the body of the man with the long, black hair, and the sensation he felt right now was like no other he had experienced before.

The rushing of blood in his veins...

The twitching responses of his muscles when he willed them to move...

It was all foreign but... vaguely familiar.

One thing was for certain though.

This Labyrinth really wanted him to advance but only when he made a conscious effort to discover and pry for answers!

Skullius looked at his real body that was in his grip and quickly turned to gaze upon the hundreds in the hall, looking over in his direction warily.

'Calm down! You don't have time to be shocked! Think!' Skullius told himself. 'I have no time to waste. My skills and armour are currently being deconstructed... whatever that means...

So...'

Skullius focused his vision on Remos.

'I have to deal with him first but... status!'

He checked his stats in the stolen body.

~~~

[ Name : Eldris Traven (Nameless Discount Human) ]

[ Level : 58 ]

[ Class : Heroic Warrior ]

[ Race : Human ]

[ Inv. Status : Cursed (Uncoddled) ]

-----

[ Stats ]

[ STRENGTH (III) : 70 ]

[ AGILITY (III) : 47 ]

[ INTELLIGENCE (III) : 36 ]

[ ENDURANCE (III) : 55 ]

[ LUCK : 45 ]

-----

[ HEALTH : 10527/10527 ]

-----

[ MANA (III) : 120/120 ]

-----

[Skills]

[Breaking Wind Demon Arts | Lv.60]

[Unhindered Fist | Lv.25]

[Storm Dash | Lv.15]

[Broken Physique | Lv.71]

[Emperor Dragon Mimicking Art | Lv.32]

[Tyranny | Lv.24]

....

~~~

"Oh my..." Skullius muttered as he looked at his status.

This was ridiculous. With one scroll, he couldn't see the end of all the skills in this body!

But...

'Those stats... What the hell?'

He understood that it must have been something to do with the quality of mana. He had seen the indication (II), but (III)?!

"Hey... Eldris... is everything alright?" Remos asked with a frown, his eyes glowing with a thunderous light.

Skullius felt Remos' mana output beginning to increase. The old man's wheel began to turn; there was a large influx of mana powering it up!

'He already knows, doesn't he?' Skullius thought and he gulped down saliva unconsciously. 'I've already wasted 10 seconds! Here goes nothing!'

Skullius dropped his real body to the floor under the gazes of the many who watched on. It seemed like all of them had already figured out that the man with the black hair, Eldris, wasn't himself anymore, which confused Skullius, but only for a moment.

To all those that glared at him, they saw thick darkness with movements like flame leaking from Eldris' eyes!

They were shocked by this sudden development as it hadn't happened before and they hadn't expected such a thing to happen after the revelation that this new challenger was actually an undead!

FWOOOSH!

Skullius in Eldris' body leaned ahead and then stormed forward with all his might!

He felt a ridiculous surge of mana building up from the horrendously powerful core within him!

His simple lunge caused the air in the hall to thrum.

Skullius' one step covered the nearly 100 meter distance between him and Remos in an instant!

He was shocked to see himself before the old man so suddenly.

Remos was uncluttered. He kept up with Skullius' movement!

'This is...'

Time seemed to be moving slowly around Skullius, but even then, he spotted several figures that seemed equally as capable in the art of speed, bolting towards him with expressions of calm.

Two of these individuals were the man and woman who had been talking about Remos earlier.

Skullius adjusted his mind-set to the task, scrolling through his long list of skills and activating one he thought to be offensive from its name!

His thoughts were clear and very fast, transcending the norm when it came to time.

"[Breaking Wind Demon Arts]!"

As soon as the skill was cast, Skullius felt a powerful reaction from his body!

His muscles tensed up, veins protruding from his skin with a tinge of crimson running within them. He clenched his fist and breathed out hot air that made the air dance.

His body knew!

This body knew what to do!

Skullius' thick right arm cocked backwards while his left pushed forward. Dark crimson energies with a jagged edge spiked from his body eagerly.

Remos frowned.

One of the sigils on his double wheel shone brightly as he activated another spell.

"Absolute Magic, Level Field," he muttered.

Skullius threw his fist at the same time Remos cast his spell and for a moment, a fierce red light as well as a dominant blue one clashed to create a blinding flash of purple!

Half of the people in the hall were struck by a horrendous force that pushed them against the floor without mercy!

This was the remnants of the power of [Level Field] which was cast by Remos, a grand ability that would increase the gravitational force on a specific area!

Due to the clash, it only managed to affect the area outside his and Skullius' radius!

The individuals who had been rushing to attack Skullius weren't affected that much.

The first between them to arrive near the vicinity of the exchange, was the curvaceous woman with navy blue hair.

The light resulting from the confrontation vanished.

A bright shield with countless dancing runes could be seen coating Remos protectively while Skullius was still in his striking pose, his arm releasing waves of devastating red energy!

'Damn this old bro. He's quick! I need something with more power. Also...'

Skullius took a quick glance at the woman with navy blue hair. She had already reached him, her mana bubbling from her body and leaking out like a stream that went on to form a solid shape!

GRRRRRRRAARR!

A massive tiger appeared from the solidifying mana, growling with raucous intensity!

Skullius' eyes wondered to the figure of this creature with careful eyes, but he was not afraid!

Chapter 80: Nameless Invader (2)

Powerful men and women were gathered in this hall, having different classes of power. The variety was vast as each had a story to tell.

One of them was the woman who wore a blank expression as her mana boiled like hot water as it rose from her body and manifested a large creature that released a voracious wave of energy!

GRAAAAARRR!

This summoned creature possessed rather thick tufts of white fur with dark blue stripes over it. It stood at almost 5 meters, its powerful body with swollen muscles protruding from even under the fur, vibrating with a crackle of sparking and hot energy.

It lunged towards Skullius who, when feeling a surge of experience and power as if he had always had such a combination, unintentionally grinned!

'This kind of power...! I can get used to it!' Skullius mused in his mind.

As the giant tiger leapt towards him with a swipe of its clawed paw that became encased with bright orange flames, Skullius lowered his body and unleashed a skill that made his body's muscles tense up even more!

[Unhindered Fist]!

A surge of mana responded to the cast of this skill as a rage filled energy built up within Skullius' fist.

Skullius balled his hand into a fist and launched it up in a dangerous uppercut while his body muscles bulged to support the action!

His fist shot upwards with bright blue rings running along his skin!

Right when the tiger's body appeared over him, it met with Skullius fist that smashed into its jaw before its paw could land on him!

BAAAM!

A powerful shockwave with a blue tint exploded outwards, the figure of the large tiger flying up at top speed and smashing into the ceiling with an earthshattering impact!

A chandeliers was demolished in the process, falling to the floor with a loud crash!

The woman with blue didn't look to be fazed by Skullius' performance. She continued to expel her mana with a languid expression before saying, "You're definitely not Eldris, that's for sure. Such a lack of tact against multiple opponents shows that you're just a lowly scrub, though quite intelligent for an undead."

Skullius became vigilant but unfortunately, he only realised what the woman meant when a table knife had pierced his back!

TCHT!

A wave of pain caught Skullius by surprise as he felt the sharp blade of the knife break into his flesh!

Behind him, the man in the simple shirt was holding the handle of the knife which was coated with an expertly sharpened coat of mana!

"Urghhhh!" Skullius grunted as this was his first experience with pain of this degree.

It was quite excruciating!

He felt sharpened mana dig into his body and begin to wreck his organs!

"ARRRRRGHHHH!" the pain made Skullius scream out loud but he didn't allow himself to remain stationary in this situation!

He swung his fist at the man behind him but his powerful arm hit nothing but a human-shaped smoke remnant of his assailant!

The man in the simple shirt appeared beside Remos a distance away as if he was a fleeting ghost and swiped away the blood on the knife he had used to stab Skullius.

"Hmmm... perhaps we should have been a bit more cautious with someone who can wield both these disgusting powers. I can't believe they can be used this way. Damn that Fulgardt! What kind of an undead are you to be able to do these things?" Remos inquired while squinting his eyes.

Skullius didn't answer. He merely looked at the three people whom he was currently facing and grimaced. They were wearing calm expressions and more were beginning to draw closer to the fight, either to watch or to participate.

He then stole a glance at his body which was still changing back from his human form to his Boneman form.

'How do I get out of this? There doesn't seem to be an exit from here...'

The invader ran his eyes around the room until he saw the door that he had come in from.

Would it work if he used the same door to try and exit?

Honestly Skullius didn't think that it was a given that such a convenience would just be lying there for him to take advantage of.

His experience with this Labyrinth had taught him that going back where one came wasn't a trend that was entertained.

There was never a way to go back.

However, this seemed like his only option at the moment as he really needed to escape this place before it was too late.

OOOOM!

Remos' body oozed of energy as he prepared another spell.

"It seems you're not interested in chatting. Well... we weren't hoping for that much anyway. We'll know what you are either way."

Skullius clenched his fists as he prepared another stance.

He was going to lose at this point. There were too many enemies. What he needed was something that could give him a huge advantage even for a short time so that he could take out Remos and escape.

Did he have such a thing?

There wasn't much time left. He couldn't just up and start scrolling through his skill list. It also seemed possible to access the memories of Eldris but he didn't have enough time for that either.

His body thrummed with pride as something that he was supposed to know as the 'owner' was revealed when he questioned himself.

This body that was itching to continue to let loose provided him with an answer!

'Heh! So these guys have it too, huh,' Skullius thought, a bright smile blooming on his face.

He only had 20 seconds left for the use of [Basic Evil Invasion] and this... was perfect.

Remos' double wheel flashed as another sigil shone, a spell being prepared while the other two also vigilantly began to advance over to Skullius.

The nameless invader grinned as he uttered two words that made his eager body churn out all his mana while making everyone in the hall grimace or wear worried expressions!

"Majestic Territory!"