

Vile 621

Chapter 621 Orc Leader vs. Orc Lord

Baran's tribe.

A battle ring could be seen, located in the middle of the tribe ground.

"Which tribe did you belong to before joining us?"

Baran asked an Orc Leader who seemed to be just a step away from evolving into an Orc Lord. This Orc Leader looked young. But he also looked like he had strayed a bit from his evolution path. A mutant.

The Orc Leader didn't reply to Baran's question. He was standing in the ring looking at Orc Lord Baran with a cold gaze, who by the way observed him from outside the ring.

Baran frowned when he didn't receive anything from the challenger. He was about to attack him then and there but soon heard his go-to subordinate Raadoo's voice.

"Chieftain, it seems he is mute. And his name is Varhan. He has written his name in front of me so that we can call him that."

Baran nodded to seemingly nobody when he received the news. Then he spoke with the challenger he believed would be an asset to his tribe. After all, Varhan had defeated all the other Orc Leaders.

He needed to cultivate assets like him if he wanted his tribe to grow. In the end, he decided to address the guy's troubles rather than kill him.

"Listen, Varhan. We can have our duel whenever we want. But the outcome of this duel is already clear. So I hope that you don't leave the tribe after getting defeated.

We need individuals like you. You are strong and able-bodied. I'm sure we can find a place for you at the hunters' party. Prove your worth there and you'd be made captain of your party. How's that?"

Baran guessed that Varhan must have gained his clarity from the way he was behaving. He was not surrounded by a wild aura. Only controlled chaos.

His progression in the element also seemed too significant for him to not receive one. He offered him all the perks he could think of to get a positive response from him.

Baran wasn't expecting any verbal reply from Varhan. But fate had decided to shock him yet again.

"No, Baran. You got it all wrong. I hope YOU don't leave the tribe after getting defeated by me. That is if I spare your life after defeating you."

Varhan spoke in an orc tongue. Although his speech was a bit funny, his meaning had been conveyed effortlessly. The butcher was slowly progressing in his attempt to learn a foreign tongue.

Varhan's speech was delivered in a cold tone, which surprised everyone.

First, the audience was shocked that Varhan could speak when he had remained silent for a few days since he was integrated into the tribe. Then it was left aghast by the words Varhan had used to address Baran. Even with his regressed powers and aged appearance, Baran was still an Orc Lord.

Baran didn't have to be a genius to know that Varhan was mocking him using his own words. Hearing this, the Orc Lord wanted to beat this young orc lord and put some sense into him.

The battle ring was their platform to prove who was qualified to lead the ever-growing tribe. Varhan smiled wickedly when he saw Baran enter the ring.

Demon Beast Transformation

Sedated Perception

Stunning Speed

Total Control

Wind-Fire Wings

The butcher was here to dominate.

Using the most potent spells he had at his disposal, he began.

Baran had just summoned his quicksilver element into existence when he saw Varhan being all out after an exchange of a few moves. The Monster Lord was stupefied, to say the least.

'Is... he... also blessed?'

Baran thought to himself and his gaze intensified. He wondered if the guy was sent here by Kilaba. The same young Orc Lord who had defeated him. That would explain why he wanted to challenge him and take his position.

"You... tell your boss that I'm not afraid of him."

Baran yelled before manifesting arrows made of quicksilver above his head and aligning them up in an arc format. He raised his hands and sent those arrows flying towards Varhan while he created some more quicksilver to defend himself with.

Swoosh!

The arrows flew at breakneck speeds and aimed at various parts of Varhan's body all at once. Yet, Varhan didn't fear them at all as he saw them zeroing in on him. His right hand sported a Shamshir known as Rigor Mortis while his left hand was gripping a fire-element sword.

The butcher could have dodged the arrows just fine. But he wanted to break Baran's reliance on his arrows. So he decided to withstand his attack using his elemental fusion.

Flap!

The Wind Fire Wings spread out before covering his entire body like an egg's outer shell. He also had his weapons positioned defensively in front of him, to protect his vitals.

Zoom!

The arrows collided with Wind-Fire Wings and a distinct mana pulse was released in the surrounding area. A mana manifested spell of Ace-rank collided with something similar to one of Adept-rank.

And yet, the Adept-like spell couldn't completely outclass the Ace-ranked spell. The elemental fusion had allowed the Wind-Fire wings to incinerate the majority of the arrows while eating away their vector force.

Clang!

The few arrows that did pass through the wings clashed with the butcher's weapons and stopped completely in their tracks. The Wind-Fire wings were more powerful than the butcher had imagined. And this was when the spell wasn't meant to be used as an offensive or defensive spell but only as a support spell.

'Wings and projectiles. This Orc Lord Baran has given me a wonderful idea for using my Wind-Fire Wings in the future. Hehe. I must thank him.'

The butcher thought and opened his wings wide, revealing his unscathed orc form for Baran and his entire tribe to see that had gathered there to watch the battle.

An Orc Leader had managed to block the attacks of an Orc lord. The audience couldn't decide if Varhan was more talented or Baran was just too old to pose him any threat.

Baran saw with anger and fear as Varhan smiled at him after revealing himself. He watched with trepidation as the latter took a flight in the air using his wings. A huge wind force would be generated whenever he flapped his wings, along with a mana pulse which told onlookers that what they were seeing wasn't a normal spell.

Varhan stopped a few meters away from Baran and looked down from his position to address him.

"I don't have any boss you speak of, Baran. But I don't mind being one myself. Now... let's see if you can survive my attacks."

Varhan said as he summoned fireballs into the space above him. A bunch of wind blades also formed around each of the fireballs, giving them an additional layer of lethality.

The butcher always wanted to spam spells like this from the sky on his victims. The feeling was akin to lording over his opponents. And he loved it.

As Baran looked up and focused his gaze, his eyes reflected the light of so many fireballs that had appeared in the sky above him. He gulped empty air as he prepared his quicksilver to be used as a shield. A futile attempt to lessen the damage.

Even Baran knew that the match was settled at the time. What he didn't know till now was the fact that the one flying above his head like a calamity was the same human male he had seen a few months back.

Chapter 622 Lost in Translation

"Breeeeergh!"

An orc shrill resounded in the battle ring. Baran had various sword wounds on his body. Some of his skin had been burnt. Others had been electrocuted and still had lightning streaks coming out of them.

Baran's body was being invaded by foreign mana. Mana's rank was lower than his body could handle. Therefore, the damage wasn't something he couldn't deal with at all.

But the way the elements were used in those attacks made it possible for the foreign mana to stay inside his body and deal damage over time. Now Baran had slowly festering wounds on his body.

"Breeeeeeeeeeeeeeee! Skelaoh Shesh..."

Eren in his Varhan form had stress lines on his forehead as he listened to Baran saying something to him angrily in orc tongue. He found it difficult to keep up with the monster's tongue even though he could understand it. Especially now, since Baran was seen rambling about endlessly.

'You want me to translate?'

Alephee asked Eren before chuckling a bit. The latter sighed and responded.

'Naah. I'm good. Let the guy speak. I'm too tired to decipher the whole thing. But this old monster is saying how life is unfair to him.'

Varhan had come down from his flight. With this elemental fusion, he reached new heights in fire and wind elemental attainments.

Wind-Fire Wings was a powerful spell. But it turned out that it was way too powerful for his current level. His mana storage couldn't keep up with such a potent spell for a long time.

There was a reason rankers and monsters progressed further in the way of their elements as they progressed further in their respective paths to power. Having regular attainment in the element wasn't necessarily a bad thing. Because it supported the entity's existing capabilities.

It would appear that the butcher had surpassed his rank when it came to the ways of fire and wind. So now he had to use the spell sparingly if he wanted to keep on fighting for longer.

Varhan wasn't unscathed in his fight against Baran either. He had various puncture wounds on his body. But they were all on non-critical spots.

The butcher was back to experimenting with his spells once again. A lot of the wounds he had received were due to the wrong combination of spells he had chosen to employ at the time. And yet, he wasn't bothered.

Baran didn't pose him any threat. This was the right time to experiment. Against someone who could take his spells head-on.

Varhan realized that Baran wasn't about to shut up anytime soon. As he cleared his throat, he spoke carefully in orcish.

"Yo, my man, Baran. I think there's a bit of misunderstanding. What untouched treasure are you worried about?"

I'm not trying to steal your treasure. At least not unless it's something too significant. I am even fine with keeping you alive.

Anyway. Let's finish this first."

Varhan said and cast his movement spell. Alephee wanted to correct Eren's misunderstanding of the foreign language. Baran didn't mean ranking resources when he said the word "treasure." He was referring to something else.

But she figured out that Eren would come to know what Baran was talking about eventually. So she kept quiet and let Eren handle all the matters.

Varhan approached Baran with two swords in his hands. He had taken out the Rigor Mortis set this time.

He had a high level of attainment in the elements of wind and fire. However, he could still improve his lightning element attainment. This was the case even when he had digested the gains of his former army colleague.

'I need a new lightning element snack.'

When the butcher considered digesting another entity that possessed lightning element affinity, he licked his lips and showed signs of greed. He did this while approaching Baran. The latter got spooked by his opponent's facial expressions and started screaming again.

"De... de... devil. I... I'm fine with you taking my treasure. Just don't make me your treasure. I don't want to be any guy's treasure.

Just... just kill me. I am old enough to accept my death at this point. Fuck. Life is so unfair."

Baran dropped to his knees and canceled his quicksilver manifestation just when the butcher reached him. He arched his eyebrows in confusion before asking his opponent.

"What is the meaning of this? Why did you stop?"

Baran took a long breath and shook his head in denial before replying. His nails were digging into his palms.

"Just... just kill me."

Baran said and stretched his neck. The butcher retreated into a distance just in case the Orc Lord was up to something. Then he lowered his weapon before speaking up.

"Why do you want to be killed? Didn't I say that I could keep you alive?"

The butcher meant what he said to Baran. Originally, he had planned to kill Baran or any other orc monster he saw that was up to his mark.

But he changed his plans after seeing Baran could be managed by him into helping him. The guy had regressed into his powers. This was good news for the butcher as he could exert his dominance on Baran without worrying about any mutiny from him anytime soon.

The butcher was going to enter the Oni dungeon soon. But before that, he needed to refine his Blood Seed that was associated with the orc monster race. He could do that by targeting high-ranked orc monsters and using his bloodline powers on them.

Alephee had noted that Eren needed to be careful in using his spells when he was in his Orc form. That's because their spell signatures weren't quite monster-like. Refining the Blood Seed was the remedy he had found for that problem.

So after settling his affairs with his guild, Eren entered the Badlands in his Varhan form. He was killing orcs by targeting lone orcs from various orc tribes and refining his Blood Seed while staying within them. That was when he saw the tribe getting attacked by Baran. The butcher recognized Baran instantly.

As a result, he mixed himself into the chaos and came to Baran's newly built tribe grounds after the latter took over the attacked tribe.

The Orc Lord who had the power to kill Eren a few months ago was now on his knees begging to kill him. Due to this scene, he couldn't help but smile after noticing his progress.

Chapter 623 An Orc's Treasure

Baran's tribe grounds. Midnight.

A shabby but large one-story house made of earth-element walls and wood-element detailing— serving as a chieftain's house.

A spacious hall that had yooperlite stones attached to its ceiling. But the hall didn't need any extra light source as one side of the hall opened up to a big garden. Rather, it was wild vegetation that looked like a garden.

The moonlight coming from the garden area of the hall was bright. The yooperlite stones just added to the ambiance. One had to say that Baran was very particular about the aesthetics of his living space even while being a monster.

A book should not be judged by its cover. A monster shouldn't be judged by his circumstances.

There was an orc sitting leisurely on a shoddily crafted chair. His legs stretched over the nearest wooden structure, which served as a poor excuse for a work desk.

This orc had won over Baran in front of his tribe. That too, while being an Orc Leader. His position as a chieftain was assured at this point. He just needed to take care of the former chieftain his way.

That former chieftain was still on his knees. Two Orc Leaders were standing beside him, acting as the guards that served the new boss.

There was also another orc in the hall. An Orc named Raadoo. He was standing behind everyone else. He was Baran's subordinate and wanted to see the fate of someone who had saved him. If possible, he wanted to return the favor to Baran by pleading for his life.

"What are you guys doing here? Disperse. I don't need you."

The butcher swatted his hands and told the guards as well as Raadoo to leave. The guards looked at each other before nodding at their newly appointed boss and exiting the hall. They stepped outside and waited by the gate that served as a welcome passage for the chieftain's house entrance.

"Chieftain Varhan, could you spare Baran?"

Raadoo bowed his head in front of Varhan after the guards left and asked him. Before departing from here, he needed to know what would happen to his savior.

"Hmm? Why do you guys assume that I'm planning to kill him? At this rate. I really might just go with it."

Raadoo was tense after hearing Varhan's statement. Varhan responded with a chuckle.

"Haha. Don't worry. I'll not kill him."

Varhan scratched his chin as he looked down at Baran. He decided to experiment with his recently learned monster tongue and added on.

"He is going to be my "treasure" after all."

Raadoo opened his eyes in shock when he heard Eren's statement. He then looked at Baran as if taking pity on him.

"De... devil. Just kill me. I don't want to become your treasure."

Baran tried to drag himself away from the monster who had defeated him. His frightened face and his body language told the butcher that he was fearing something even more sinister than death.

"What the fuck is wrong with you old man? I just said I'll not kill you. And you are still so scared of me. Look, the night is beautiful. This wind is soothing. Relax a bit, won't you? Why talk of death when we can talk about treasures?"

Raadoo shivered when he heard the butcher's statement. He suddenly felt like he should let the former and new chieftains have their privacy.

"Chieftain Varhan, I... I shall take my leave."

Raadoo bowed once again and stumbled in front of the butcher. Baran looked back at his previous henchman and shouted at him.

"You.... Raadoo. You backstabbing bastard. Don't leave me in the hands of this vile orc. I fucking saved your ass, damn it. Help... help me."

Varhan lost it when he saw the two orcs behaving like some sort of maniac. He started walking towards Baran with his arms wide open.

"Old man Baran, see I don't have anything in my hand. Just cool down, will you? What is going on here? I think there's some kind of miscommunication between us."

Baran still had his guard up against Varhan. He raised his hands in front of him and made a big old "stop" gesture before responding.

"Varhan... you devil. I'm an old man. And my preferences are not like yours. I... I don't want to judge you. But please keep me the fuck out of this, you bastard.

Talk... talk from a distance. Not one step towards me. Otherwise, I'd commit suicide."

Varhan stopped in his tracks when he saw Baran's extreme reaction. He then looked at Raadoo who was also looking at him warily. The guy was undecided on whether he should leave or listen to his former chieftain and savior.

'Alephee, what is going on?'

Eren had come to realize that his orc tongue wasn't as polished as he thought it was. At least not to the level where he could understand its nuances. So he figured out that there was a chance these guys got spooked because of something he had said.

Alephee laughed in his head. It took a while for her to control her laughter and answer him.

'Hehehe! An orc's treasure is different from what you are thinking it to be. It is not wealth, a resource, or artifact.'

The butcher's face turned dark when he thought of a possibility. Then he replayed Baran's statements in his head and found them to be identical to the ones he had heard before. The incidents in which his "preferences" were misunderstood.

"Baran, Raadoo. What do you guys mean by the word treasure?"

Varhan asked with stress lines on his forehead. They just looked at each other confusedly before returning their gazes to Varhan with even more confusion written on their faces. They couldn't believe an orc wasn't aware of the usage of this word.

'Just spill the beans, would you?'

The butcher said to Alephee frustratedly. The latter kept on laughing in his head before answering.

'Hehehe. This will be the third time this has happened to you, Eren. You'd have to forgive me for finding this funny and entertaining. Of course, I'd want it to drag on even though I wasn't planning on it at first.

Anyway, I'll tell you. What orcs consider treasures are their partners. Or to be precise, partners they mate with. Do you understand what I'm trying to say? Hehehe!'

Chapter 624 Realization and Revelation

"Old man. Cough. I now understand what is going on. Don't worry. You are not my treasure. You will never become my treasure. I assure you."

The butcher said while resuming his seated position. Then he coughed and cleared some more air around him.

"Only ladies are my treasures. So you guys don't have to worry. It was just confusion on my part. Umm... Just forget about it."

Baran and Raadoo both looked at the new chieftain with suspicion written on their faces. The butcher furrowed his brows looking at their faces and replied.

"Don't look at me like that. I mean why would I lie to you? I'm your chieftain after all. You guys should be ready to become my treasures if that's what I wanted from you."

Alephee started laughing some more. Eren ignored her and looked at Baran before continuing.

'So, that's what you were talking about. Where are these treasures you speak of?'

Eren spread his mana sense around him and found out that there were 25 orcinas occupying another large hall on the first floor. That hall that looked like a bedroom also had minimal furniture. It featured a very spacious bed that could accommodate around 12 people at the same time.

The butcher looked at Baran as if he was seeing him for the first time. He couldn't help commenting.

"Old man Baran, do you even have this much life left in you to do it with all of them at once?"

Instead of replying to the question, Baran looked at Varhan angrily before commenting.

"You said you'd not steal my treasures. Are you turning back on your words?"

Varhan was left speechless after seeing that this old monster was ready to lose his life but not his "treasures". He clapped his hands in appreciation before commenting.

"I must say, Baran. You have your priorities figured out. I respect that. But there's something you are forgetting. I had said I wouldn't steal it if it wasn't too significant.

Sadly, I like this treasure. It is significant for me as well. Plus, those pretty ladies stopped being your treasures the moment you lost the duel with me."

Varhan smiled after remembering one more detail that Baran had said to him during the heat of the battle.

"You had said something about untouched treasure. Old man Baran, did you say that correctly or did I hear it wrong?"

Varhan had a playful smirk on his face as he asked the former chieftain. The latter knew that the rascal was going to find out soon anyway. So he sighed before commenting in a sad voice.

"That's right. Your timing to challenge me was impeccable, damn it. I wouldn't have minded losing to you, leaving the tribe, or even dying as much as I did now, had I done the deed with my treasures before our duel.

Those 25 treasures are untouched. They have also received their clarity. Their talent as orcs is going to shine even more as they keep on evolving."

Varhan couldn't help smiling from ear to ear when he heard Baran clear the doubt he had. He looked at Raadoo before ordering him.

"Your name is Raadoo right? Could you go upstairs and ask the Orcinas on the top floor to come? They must be aware of the change in chieftain. But they would be worried about their safety, I guess.

Inform them of the latest developments. Assure them of their security. And guide them downstairs."

Varhan said nonchalantly to Raadoo. The latter was just relieved that his newly appointed chieftain didn't have "designs" on Baran or him. He quickly made his way upstairs, leaving Baran and Varhan alone.

"Why didn't you kill me?"

Baran asked Varhan after taking a long breath as they waited for the 25 Orcinas to come down. The former was sure that a budding chieftain like Varhan wouldn't like leaving loose ends like Baran behind. And yet, he was still alive.

Varhan looked at Baran while narrowing his eyes before flashing a cunning smile. He chuckled before continuing.

"I may have some use for you with the way you inspire loyalty in your tribe. Why would I lose a capable commander when I will soon have an army of my own?"

Baran got confused after hearing Varhan's words. He had a lot of questions in his head. So he decided to ask the most pertinent ones first.

"Were you sent here by Kilaba?"

The butcher shook his head in denial before answering honestly.

"Who the fuck is that guy? I had come here in the vicinity to kill some orcs and just happened to find you here. I thought I should check out your progress since I hadn't seen you for a long time. So I came here."

Baran nodded at Varhan after listening to him. He then asked to confirm.

"You were not after the chieftain's position?"

The butcher scratched his chin and decided to light his smoke. He took out his Sativa stick and lit it up.

"Haaah!"

The butcher took a long puff off of his Sativa stick and kept the smoke in his lungs for a while. The stick made crackling noises as the force of suction increased. He then released all the smoke in one go before answering.

"Not really. I mean, I could always add more numbers to my upcoming army. Why waste useful resources, right? But I would be fine with or without this tribe.

I'll be honest here, Baran. I had come here to kill you. But after seeing the way you manage your tribe, I changed my mind.

Do you have anything else you want to ask?"

Varhan said while narrowing his eyes on Baran. The latter looked at the new chieftain and sighed before shaking his head in denial.

"No. Since you. Have defeated me, I accept your position as this tribe's leader. My tribe can prosper if you don't mistreat its members.

I also accept whatever you decide to do with me. I'll be your subordinate if you want me to be. You can banish me if you want. Or... or you can kill me. I'd only ask for painless death in case it's the third option you go for.'

Baran quickly made peace with his changed reality when he calmed down a bit. The butcher smiled when he got Baran where he wanted him to be on a psychological level.

By this time, the sounds of footsteps echoed through the hall. There was a group of monsters coming in the former and new chieftains' direction.

It wasn't long before the Orcinas stood in front of Varhan with Raadoo leading them. He had done his job well for the new chieftain. He was hoping for a prestigious position for a job well done. Raadoo was bored of serving as a messenger for chieftains and the rest of their subordinates.

Varhan looked at each of the Orcinas and couldn't help but make a lowkey whistling sound. He then admired the "treasures" chosen by Orc Lord Baran. They all had shapely figures. It was as if Baran had cherry-picked monster girls for him.

Orc Lord Baran knew that look. A smile appeared on his face as he adjusted his almost burnt and destroyed armor outfit before commenting.

"These treasures are selected from all the tribes I managed to win over after my defeat. When I was defeated by those vile humans..."

Varhan stopped in his tracks as he remembered something. His face darkened as he started connecting the dots in his head.

'This smell. The way this Varhan smokes.

And wait. What did he mean when he said he hadn't seen me for a long while?'

Baran replayed the butcher's statements in his head. The Orc Lord felt like a mini-explosion had been detonated in his head as he looked at Varhan with a look of disbelief and confusion. There was a tinge of horror mixed in those emotions as well.

"You....."

Chapter 625 Acceptance

'Hmm. Virgin orcs. They'd have to be rarer than mythical beasts.'

The butcher looked at the Orcinas he was surrounded by and commented. He stopped paying attention to Baran, who was having a stroke not too far away from him.

'I'd have to say they are all beautiful though. Damn. This old monster sure knows how to pick them.'

The butcher looked at all the Orcinas and smiled. His smile was gracious and comforting. At least comforting for orcs. The ladies also felt a bit relaxed when they saw their newly appointed chieftain smile at them. It was a form of assurance that they won't be mistreated.

The butcher was just beginning his conversation with some of the beauties when he heard Baran's dread-filled voice.

"You.... Are you that Eren Idril? A human?"

Varhan smiled wickedly when he heard Baran's answer.

"What took you so long to figure out?"

The guy had finally caught up with the hints he had thrown at him.

The butcher never wanted to hide the fact that he was Eren when he thought of making Baran one of his monster army handlers. He needed monster handlers he could count on. And for that, he'd have to let those subordinates in on one of his plans. And that wasn't possible unless they knew what he was doing.

Raadoo and the Orcinas surrounding their ex and current chieftains didn't understand what the talk was about. But in the next moment, they felt like they had been pulled into a different space. A space where only the anger in their hearts and minds existed.

Mark of the Seven Sins: Domain of Wrath

The butcher had pierced his heart with the space-element dagger as soon as he finished conversing with Baran. He wasn't planning on using his ability on anyone here. He only used it as a deterrent.

Since the butcher's rank and elemental attainments have risen, his Sin Series abilities have also increased in their potency. Even he was unaware that his Domain of Wrath had become more dreadful than before.

The butcher had cast the domain to create psychological pressure on his witnesses before he showed them what he was about to do. He controlled his bloodline powers and shapeshifted into his human appearance.

"You... I knew it. I refuse to believe it. But I knew it.

But wait. Are you the same Eren Idril I met with when the humans attacked me?"

Baran said before taking a few steps back from Eren. He recognized Eren from his facial features. But since the butcher had white hair and blue eyes, the rest of the appearance didn't match Baran's memory of Eren.

The Orcinas as well as Raadoo looked even more shocked than Baran. Some of them had thought of attacking Eren. Some had thought of fleeing the scene. And some had the idea of gathering the rest of the tribe to help them process who their new chieftain was.

And yet, they couldn't move. They subconsciously felt like something bad would happen if they tried to flee from this place while the Domain of Wrath was active. One had to say their monster instincts were on point.

The butcher ignored everyone except Baran. He fixed his gaze on him as he walked toward him once again.

This time, Baran couldn't backtrack from his stance even when he wanted to. He felt like he had regressed into his evolution and became an Orc Leader again.

"Yes, I'm the same Eren who you thought of squashing like an ant a few months back. But I'd have to correct you when it comes to my race as a human. I'm no longer that. At least not completely anyway."

The butcher's voice was deeper than usual when he was in his white-haired transformation while the domain of Wrath was active. His voice alone carried a distinct mana signature that didn't belong to this world.

Since the butcher was only wearing a sleeveless jacket made of animal skin, his tribal tattoos were out for everyone to see. His wild and dominant visage created a deep impact on his onlookers' minds.

Eren stopped walking only when he was standing a meter away from Baran. The latter, who had just stood from his kneeling position, was forced to take a knee again.

"Even when we met, I was this Eren Idril. Anyone who has seen this form of mine has not lived to tell the tale.

I'd like you and the others present to be an exception to that unwritten rule. But I guess it all depends upon the choices you make.

Baran, do you remember the three options you said I had in dealing with you? Do you still believe I can take either of those options?"

Eren's voice sounded like the voice of those entities who Baran knew were supposed to either bless or curse people. He then remembered what he had said to Eren previously and understood what he was saying.

For some reason, Baran was at peace when he saw that Eren wasn't a complete human. He took a moment to process his thoughts, clenched his fists, and bowed his head in front of Eren before speaking up with a voice coated in determination.

"I understand what you mean. Since you have shown me this form of yours, I don't think you'd spare any of us if we decided to leave the tribe.

Therefore, I'm ready to serve you or die right here. The choice is yours."

Eren was pleased with Baran's decisiveness. But he still wanted to probe the guy a bit. So he raised his eyebrows at Baran and asked in a doubtful tone.

"You are ready to serve me even though you know I'm not an orc?"

Baran looked up after he heard the butcher's question and nodded before responding to his statement verbally.

"My liege, since you can shapeshift into an orc, there's an orc in you. This orc was talented enough to defeat an orc who was more evolved than him.

I'd feel no shame in serving the orc that's within you. That is if you allow me to do so."

Chapter 626 Squashing the Rebellion

"I'd feel no shame in serving the orc that's within you. That is if you allow me to do so."

Baran said with a serious expression on his face. He had already forfeited his life when he had lost. There was no future for him if he kept falling off his grace. He didn't have the strength or courage left in him to start a new tribe.

So it was okay to call it quits for him. He had also given up his hopes of evolving any further than an Orc Lord. He was in any way the weakest Orc Lord there was due to his repeated injuries. With thoughts like these running through his head, death seemed like a peaceful solution for Baran for all his miseries.

But then he saw Eren shapeshifting-- bringing forth powers that didn't belong to this world. This was the same guy who was not even worth his time a few months back. That meant the progress he had achieved in this short time was tremendous.

Baran started having hopes of a better future if he got to serve someone like Eren. He didn't mind serving someone more powerful than him.

Might make right. This philosophy was ingrained into Baran's very existence. So he meant what he had said to Eren.

'Sweet.'

The butcher thought to himself and chuckled. His snickers were like the snickers of the devil inside the Domain of Wrath.

"Very well. I accept your allegiance, Baran."

Butcher then intensified the summoning of foreign mana inside the domain of wrath and asked for his next question.

"What about you?"

Eren asked, blankly looking in front of him. But Raadoo and all the Orcinas realized that the question was meant for all of them.

"I agree with whatever Baran has said. I'm ready to serve you as my chieftain if you allow me to."

Raadoo replied quickly. He had already thought of following Baran. So this decision came easily to him.

The majority of the Orcinas were on their knees after the Domain of Wrath had become active. They had found logic in whatever Baran had said. And they were about to follow suit. But then 6 Orcinas stood up, came forward, and objected to the butcher.

"You... you are no orc. We don't even know what you are. It would be better if you leave this tribe and..."

The leader Orcina of the faction that had decided to oppose Eren acting as their chieftain tried to put her opinions forward firmly even when there was a certain vibration in her voice. As if speaking those words was taking everything she had.

Apparently, her "clarity" was working against her. That's because the butcher raised his arm in her direction before even looking at her and swiped his hand.

In the next moment, the Orcina started changing. Since she didn't have as much anger because of her dominant emotion of fear, her transformation into the creature of wrath wasn't as menacing as it could be.

The butcher wasn't particularly interested in digesting the Orcina's gains. She was an Orc leader who couldn't offer anything worthy to Eren who was close to breaking into the D-Rank.

This time, Eren just wanted to make a statement with his move. So he didn't care about refining the monster's attainment and concentrated on expediting the Orcina's transformation.

The creature of wrath that the rebel Orcina had turned into soon started producing wailing sounds. Her skin ruptured and her beautiful form turned hideous, sending shivers through the Orcinas' spines.

Snap.

The creature of wrath's body imploded shortly after. But the butcher had already cast a mana barrier using his wind element just before the implosion. He didn't want the mess to spread in his temporary home. The butcher was a clean freak in his own way.

A small flame of wrath appeared where the Orcina had stood previously. The butcher raised his arm, beckoning for the flame of wrath to float towards him. He realized that attainment was related to the way of water. Plus, this Orcina was very handy with hammers as her choice of weapon.

The butcher digested those gains and found them to be surprisingly substantial than he had first estimated them to be. His ability to wrest his victims from their attainments had also improved.

He digested his victim's gains less messily than he had done in all of his other instances. And yet, the remaining 5 Orcinas that had decided to rebel quickly changed their rebellious minds.

Now all of the Orcina were kneeling. While they had awakened to "clarity", the rebel Orcinas were not foolish enough to rebel against their survival instincts.

The butcher made the wind mana layer disappear into thin air. He then burned the residual flesh of the Orcina that had tried to oppose Eren using hatchlings of the flame. The fire snake ate her bone and flesh with its mouth and gulped it down before dispersing into thin air. There was no trace of the rebel anymore.

Eren smiled as he looked around him once again. The hall grew quiet as a mouse. Eren had basically isolated the hall from the rest of the tribe grounds when he had activated the domain of Wrath. So nobody came forward to approach the chieftain's house.

Eren returned his gaze as he dispersed the domain. His appearance changed back to his black hair and green eyes as a human. The same one that Baran had remembered him as.

Eren still had his smoke remaining in his hands. While commanding his Orc Lord subordinate, he took a slight drag.

"You'd act as a chieftain-in-charge in my absence, Baran. Everything would remain as it is. You'd just have to follow any additional commands from me if and when they are known to you. Is that clear?"

Baran was overjoyed by the fact that he would still get to act like a leader in Eren's absence. He couldn't hide that joy from the butcher as he saw the old monster smiling in a controlled manner.

"Yes, my liege. Is there any order you have in mind right now?"

Chapter 627 Discovery of New Worlds

"Yes, my liege. Is there any effective order you have in mind?"

The butcher scratched his chin as he thought of the dilemma he had. He wanted to hunt an Orc Lord and refine his Blood Seed. But since he had spared Baran, he was lacking a target.

"Is there any nearby Orc Lord you know of? I need to kill them for my use."

Eren talked about killing an Orc Lord as effortlessly as someone asks for dessert after dinner. Baran had stress lines on his forehead at first. But then an electric jolt ran through his spine as he thought of a name. He chuckled heartily before responding to his chieftain.

"My liege, there's indeed an Orc Lord not too far away from here. He is currently residing on the very first tribal ground I had. His name is Kilaba."

Eren understood that speaking Kilaba's name was also a way to settle a personal grudge he had against the Orc Lord. He had heard the guy talk about Kilaba in his ramblings after all.

The butcher didn't care that he was helping Baran by targeting Kilaba. He only asked the following.

"How strong is he compared to you? I mean the previous you, before any of your injuries. Not the current you."

Baran bowed his head and sighed in sadness when he heard the question. He spoke the truth soon after.

"Very, my liege. He was able to take care of me when I was at my peak. And he did it quite effortlessly. He did not kill me immediately because he did not want other Orc Leaders to rebel against him.

But that was back then. He also seems to have pretty effective leadership qualities. By now, he must have turned every Orc Leader to his side. What I meant to say is that he works well in groups. And his individual powers aren't to be underestimated either."

Baran spoke and looked at Eren again. He was comparing his new master to the man who had kicked him off of a high pedestal first. The butcher recognized the gaze so he asked him.

"If I and Kilaba fight, who would come out as the winner?"

Baran didn't take long to answer.

"Kilaba, my liege. You are strong. But Kilaba is stronger. Plus he has been blessed. You won't be able to deal with something like that using normal means. Not unless you use your otherworldly powers. And even then, he might come out as the winner."

Eren heard a very interesting term from Baran so he couldn't help asking.

"What do you mean by blessed?"

Baran glanced at Eren curiously at first. Then he realized that being an orc was only a part of his powers. He was formerly a human from this world. So he might not have known some things because of his lower rank.

Baran took some time gathering his thoughts before slowly telling Eren.

"My liege, blessing works like that weird power you have. It has foreign origins that don't belong to this continent.

Its powers depend upon what kind of blessing it is. The one Kilaba has can boost his physical prowess twofold, making him exert greater power than he is normally capable of for a short time. I think this would be the simplest blessing that there is.

Yet, its powers aren't to be underestimated. By combining his enhanced physical prowess with his spells, Kilaba was able to win over me even when he was weaker than me."

Eren found that the world of monsters that he had previously seen in his previous life was just the tip of the iceberg. He didn't know about these things before. But the more he learned, the more questions arose in his head.

"Baran, first of all, tell me what is clarity? What happens when monsters receive their clarity?"

Eren started pacing around the empty hall with his hands locked behind his back. He also started thinking about various things in his head. There was a chance that the Oni dungeon shared these peculiarities called blessing and clarity.

By now, Baran had come to accept that Eren wasn't aware of the most closely kept secret of monsters. The monsters who hadn't received their clarity weren't capable of talking about it. And the monsters who did prefer to keep their mouths shut even when they were interrogated by most humans.

The establishments of various regions also maintained silence on these things. That was if they knew about these things at all. As if talking about these things might lead to questions they didn't want to answer.

Baran thought that it was appropriate to stand up on his feet since Eren had walked towards the garden that was at the further end of the open hall. The Orc Lord also followed his new master's lead and walked towards him with the rest of the Orcinas and Raadoo in tow.

He stopped a few meters away from the butcher and resumed his talk.

"My liege, which humans call a monster, is said to gain clarity when the inherited memories in their blood come to them again. These memories are related to a different continent.

Having these memories allows the monsters to not act like savages. They start to behave like the original inhabitants of the monster continent they once belonged to when they receive their clarity.

Some monsters acquire the ability to manufacture weapons. Some gain the clarity of array making.

The knowledge that comes with these memories is based on the monster continent. So they would come across as something different than what the humans living on this continent have developed."

This time, it was Eren's turn to have a mini explosion in his head. He suddenly started to see why the monsters in the Oni dungeon were so advanced and why they had such a well-structured society.

Blood memories.

Monster continent.

A continent that was different from Anfang.

A brand new world with different possibilities.

The butcher flashed a cunning smile when he processed what Baran had to say. He couldn't help getting excited after he realized there was indeed a vast world out there just as Alephee had suggested.

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AN: Anfang means the beginning in German. ;)

Chapter 628 A Monster's Clarity

Eren needed more information like this. He needed to know more about these things so that he could tread carefully in the future. The more he knew, the better it would be for his path as a ranker.

The butcher also realized that he was being made aware of these things by Baran because he had won over him as an orc. He wouldn't have divulged what the monster had been treating as an open secret to him otherwise.

"So what do you remember about the monster continent when you receive this clarity? And do all monsters get their clarity as they walk the path of their evolution? Or is there any special condition that needs to be met?"

Eren asked while looking at the bright moon outside. He could see the waning crescent moon but his mind was trying to picture something else. Something unknown that he hadn't seen yet. There was something in the butcher's mind that was waiting for the information from Baran to come through.

Baran looked behind him and saw the faces of Orcinas and Raadoo. He only got blank stares in response. These orcs also didn't know what they were supposed to do when such questions were asked by their new chieftain, who wasn't exactly one of them.

"My liege, everyone awakens a different part of these memories. But before you understand when the clarity hits monsters, you need to understand why it isn't present from the moment of the monsters' birth.

This continent is called the land of the faithless. It is isolated from the rest of the continents by something that even we don't know.

What you call monsters are in fact the denizens of different continents. And yet the denizens of the other continents are seen occupying the Badlands. Some of them are born on this continent. But some denizens come here from their mother continent. Do you realize what it means?"

Baran decided to trust his future with his new monster. He had decided to provide as much information as he knew to his new master.

A sudden realization dawned on the butcher as he understood what Baran was trying to say.

"If this continent is isolated, and there are instances of new monsters from different continents appearing, then it can only be that the other side is using some kind of back door to send their denizens to this place.

Am I correct?"

Baran nodded before verbally affirming Eren's conjecture.

"That's right. Even though most of us are born here on this continent, there are cases of original denizens of that continent appearing here. If my guess is correct, Kilaba is one of them.

When the original inhabitants of the continent enter this isolated continent, they are robbed of most of their memories and sanity. They turn to their primitive instincts and act as the monsters that you know of.

Gaining clarity grants us monsters these realizations.

The most easily available cure to getting these blood memories and gaining clarity is walking steadfastly on our evolutionary path. It is available to all monsters, of any race, of any kind.

With each evolution, we unlock more memories of the continent we originated from, whether we were born here or traveled here. With progress in evolution, we gain more clarity. Our way of the elements gets enhanced because of it. And with each evolution, we stray further from the image of the so-called monsters humans often see us as."

Eren raised his eyebrows when he heard Baran's explanation up to this point. There was something about the Oni dungeon that bugged him. So he couldn't help but ask.

"You know the stages humans use to categorize monster evolutions, right? When do you guys start getting clarity normally? What is the earliest evolutionary rank for it according to you?

And is evolution the only way to receive clarity?"

Baran didn't take long to answer.

"There's no one size fits all for this thing. Ultimately it all boils down to the aptitude of the so-called "monster". Some monsters can gain their clarity when they evolve into a Monster Lord. Some gain them when they become Monster Overlord.

The earliest time for most monsters would be when they become Monster Leaders. These Orcinas have all received their clarity. The monsters who receive their clarity when they are Monster Leaders are considered to be prodigies among us.

But evolution isn't the only way to get clarity back. There are other factors such as life and death struggles, emotional highs, or the external influence of artifacts or potions that may bring clarity to the denizens of the different continents.

Those born here have it easy, since even without their clarity, they can work as tribe members for the monsters who have already received theirs.

But I believe that the original denizens of the monster continent who use the back door and enter the land of the faithless get the biggest backlash for doing so. To the point that they turn savage and become berserk as soon as they take their first step here."

Baran said while sorting through his thoughts in his head. He knew that only a few humans with deep backgrounds would be privy to such information.

That's because he had captured a lot of human rankers and had interrogated them when he had received his clarity. None of them knew of something like this.

'Hmm. So the Oni dungeon has something that can give clarity to almost all the monsters it houses. Almost all of the monsters behaved uncharacteristically for monsters.

If this clarity is as difficult to get as Baran claims to be, then the population of the Oni dungeon doesn't follow the norm. Too bad I couldn't interrogate Sharog or those Orcs twins much because of the restrictions placed on them by "that" entity. Otherwise, I would have been privy to this knowledge much sooner.'

Eren thought to himself and turned back. A smile on his face. Onlookers couldn't figure out whether the kind of smile they saw was good or bad for them.

"Baran, you still didn't tell me about the memories you had gained of the monster continent.

How can all the monsters have inherited memories?

And why are the denizens of that continent sending their populace here where they would be robbed of their memories and a lot more?

I want to know everything."

Chapter 629 Backlash

"I want to know everything."

Eren said with anticipation in his eyes. Baran nodded and opened his mouth to speak.

"My liege, I don't know how we can have blood memories. In addition, I am not aware of why the original denizens of the monster continent keep on coming here through the back door. But my blood memories tell me that this continent was not always like this.

Something happened to this continent and it was shut off from the rest of the worlds that are out there. When we gain clarity, we not only gain information related to the monster continent and various professions but we also receive these emotions that we can't describe with words."

Eren looked at Baran with a blank expression when he heard the guy speak. The latter knew that he was asking for more explanation. So he continued after taking a short breath.

"The thing I told you right now was conveyed to me through those emotions. These emotions can sometimes influence us to do certain things. Like our calling.

Sometimes that calling affects us in a certain way. Like, pestering us to attack human settlements. So this is the downside of having clarity. So you can say that if the monster horde attack is initiated by monsters, it would be related to the monster in charge receiving clarity."

Eren didn't care about monsters attacking human settlements. Or humans attacking creatures living in the Badlands. He was on either side. He was on his own side.

So he just nodded at Baran— encouraging him to speak further.

"For the most part, gaining clarity is beneficial for all the monsters. Even monsters that have lost themselves to savagery have a primal instinct to gain that clarity.

That's why all monsters are desperate to go through their evolution process. It is ingrained in our genes."

Baran took a long pause and looked at Eren intently. He had a feeling he shouldn't say anything about the monster continent to him any further than he already has because he was an outsider. This feeling was part of that calling.

However, he decided it wouldn't hurt to go all the way since he had already decided to rest his future in Eren's hands.

"As for my memories related to the monster continent, I only have them in bits and pieces. But they tell me that the continent there is ruled by..."

Suddenly, he felt a strange mana pulse around him. It was as if the ground itself was causing this phenomenon. Freewebnovel.com.

In the next moment, he felt like puking as his mana circuits became overburdened with the inflow of mana that he had not initiated. As if he were on hyperdrive without casting any spells. Baran felt like gravity had turned upside down for him and crashed onto the ground unable to shout or ask for help.

Raadooo immediately grabbed Baran. He dragged him to the side and proceeded to give him a healing potion concocted by the tribe. The messenger for chieftains sighed when he saw Baran's situation. As if he knew this was bound to happen. The Orcinas present at the scene acted in the same way.

Eren looked at Baran confusedly. But then he also felt that something was happening inside his body. Due to the sudden inflow of mana and his blocked mana points, he felt like the mana points would be burnt off due to overload. The same symptoms as Baran.

And yet, the butcher's slime half-blood constitution allowed him to not be in a similar situation as Baran even when he had received the same kind of backlash. Instead, he just had a killer headache.

"This..."

Eren felt a subtle dread when the backlash of something which he couldn't explain hit him. It was as if this backlash was only a warning. Things would get a lot uglier if he kept on pushing his luck.

He was shocked to discover that he was only an Ace rank ant. It was as if he was made aware that he was nothing compared to higher existences that he wasn't even aware of yet.

Eren grabbed his head with both hands and stepped outside the hall to take fresh air. He sat down on the ground with his legs folded before taking out Sativa Stick. The butcher wanted to get high to forget about his backlash-induced migraine.

Alephee sighed in Eren's head before continuing.

'That's why I was being vague about a few things, Eren. Let's just say that this entire continent is covered by one colossal array. It would not be in your favor to know about these things at this point.

It autonomously works toward causing backlash whenever someone talks about something that should not be discussed within the continent. So in a way, not only do the establishments on the continent not want to let you know of these things but the continent itself is set against it.

To have this conversation or to say it to someone else or to ask for their opinion, you'd need to take special countermeasures. Asking these things to a monster while inside Badlands was a wise move.

Frankly, I'm surprised that you could learn this much from Baran without the backlash hitting you much sooner. It could only mean that...'

Alephee said and pondered for a bit before speaking further.

'For now, you are not ready to hear or know about these things. You are far too weak to make use of any of those opportunities that you could gain from leaving the continent of Anfang.

Focus on increasing your rank to at least that of a B-Rank. Only then can I tell you about these things.'

Alephee didn't continue and stopped talking. Eren, who was fighting off migraine at that point, listened to Alephee's statement in his head and clenched his fists in helplessness.

Alephee understood what he was struggling through in his head and spoke to him in a consoling voice.

'Eren, when I said you need to stop comparing yourself to the rest of the rankers in the pool, I only wanted you to expedite your ranking journey. I didn't mean for you to change the pool itself.

Therefore, don't get discouraged when you see that the peak is too far. Concentrate on stepping one foot in front of the other.

Hehe. And even these five planes are nothing in the grand scheme of things. I'd say that there's always a wider sky.'

Chapter 630 Soul Sense Awakening

Eren kept on listening to Alephee's words as he smoked. He chuckled when he felt Alephee's voice had become softer while explaining things to him. He knew the reason.

'Don't worry, Alephee. I'm not down or anything after learning that I'm not qualified enough to understand these things. It was just that I felt anticipatory tiredness after learning that I had to be in the B-Rank.

My advantages from my previous timelines almost stopped working in my favor after I entered D-Rank. I was at a solid stage in that rank, just a step away from entering C-Rank.

So the maximum I can push my luck of having an expedited ranking journey would be when I reach C-Rank. And even that is going to be a while.'

Eren said and sighed. He then lay on the green ground on his back and stretched his arms and legs before bridging his right hand closer to his mouth. He took a short drag out of his smoke and kept it inside his lungs.

The crescent moon in front of his vision got blurred a bit when he slowly released the smoke from his nostrils. The butcher suddenly felt refreshed. He started seeing this goal as something he should look forward to.

So he gathered his thoughts before commenting to Alephee in a calm voice.

'I have too many things to do here. I'll settle those first. Also, thanks for trying to cheer me up. Don't worry. Eren Idril is not someone that would break under pressure. At least not the one on this timeline. Hehe.

Maybe my way of looking at this thing is at fault here. I might benefit from not having any experience beyond the D-Rank. I would be able to start with a fresh perspective that way. So now, I'm looking forward to entering the Master rank and beyond.'

Eren felt like his past timeline's experiences had indeed helped him. But they were also turning into an old skin he eventually needed to shed. To completely come out of their shadow of influence and have a fresh outlook.

The butcher's headache vanished eventually as he continued smoking. He returned to normal soon after.

Eren remained to lie on the ground. He found comfort in being close to the elements. The moon right above his head and the sky itself serving as a roof over his head was a comfortable feeling for him.

Eren closed his eyes by instinct and let his mind wander off to wherever it wanted. He let go of all his worries and embraced the excitement he felt after understanding the scope of the growth he could achieve.

The excitement he would feel as he progressed in his ranking journey. The excitement he'd feel after learning about something that was considered taboo here. And the excitement of an adventure that he would be able to partake in when he leaves the continent of Anfang.

Suddenly, a similar sensation returned to him. His strong desire to overcome the limitations set on him intensified. It was as if the butcher's soul was trying to rebel against the restrictions placed on him.

Ohmmm.

White noise was heard within the butcher's mind as he felt helpless once more. The mind that was trying to learn and think about various things at once began to learn things around him.

Soul Sense Awakening.

At this point, the butcher fully awakened his soul sense. He felt like it worked much like the mana sense, only many times more detailed and intuitive.

It was as if Eren could interact with the world around him in a different way than before. He could feel the consciousness of the world that the mana carried and its flow. His soul sense also strengthened his mana sense— making it have a large field of view while enhancing the feedback it sent to him.

Butcher had awakened his soul sense as a result of the backlash from the world. He also felt that gaining the knowledge of a bigger picture that was out there had allowed him to feel exhilaration and intrigue. And that in turn had helped him awaken his soul sense.

Baran and others weren't aware that Eren's soul sense had been awakened. As his soul sense spread around when they were in proximity, they felt that an overwhelming, ambitious, and extremely dangerous entity was checking them out. They became aware of their surroundings as a result.

'This is great, Eren. You have completely awakened your soul sense. Hehe. I must say that your ambitions are growing faster than either of us thought they'd grow.'

Alephee said with a chuckle. Eren also flashed a cunning smile when he heard her. The signs of soul awakening have been appearing for a while now. They just needed a trigger. And it was finally provided to him at this point.

"My liege, are... are you alright? What... What was that?"

While grabbing his head, Baran stepped outside. The rest of the Orcs followed him. He asked in part confusion and part dread as he kept on looking around him.

Eren chuckled before answering.

"Hehe! Don't worry. It was me. And thanks for trying to answer all my questions even when it looked like you were working against your instincts. I'm not sure when or what. But I'll try to come up with an appropriate reward for this dedication of yours in the future."

Baran felt amazed by the butcher yet again when he heard the strange phenomenon was caused by him. He felt like he had taken the right decision by accepting Eren as his master. He just wished that he doesn't question anymore regarding this topic.

Eren looked at Baran and spoke up to relieve him of his troubles.

"Baran, I'll not ask you about the monster continent. The backlash was less because we were in the Badlands. But we shouldn't push our luck too far.

Whatever I gained from learning till her about how monsters originate from you is enough for me."

Only now did the butcher realize why Badlands was known for such erratic behavior from monsters. The historians' spells didn't work properly in Badlands because they carried traces of foreign mana.

This was also the reason why the establishments couldn't get rid of the monsters no matter how many cullings they initiated. The Badlands served as the summoning grounds for monsters from the monster continent.