

Zompiewolf 251

Chapter 251 Training (3)

"His highness is going to use the Soul Sword?"

"Wow... Incredible. I can't believe I'm here witnessing this! How long has it been?"

"It's said that the last time he used the sword like this was to fight the humans."

"First time in a century? I'm lucky indeed!"

Everyone was excited to see the soul sword in action. After all, it had been about a century since Alucard last used the sword as it was intended to use.

The soldiers failed to hold their excitement within themselves, but they weren't alone who felt like that. Even Griffin couldn't help but turn his gaze towards them and everyone there knew, it wasn't an easy task to distract Griffin while he was on duty.

"These people..." Alucard shook his head as if they were embarrassing him, "They like to make a big deal about inconsequential things. Now that they are so hyped up, we should put a good show for them, don't you think?"

"I was already planning to." Ashton jumped backwards preparing to launch an attack on Alucard once again.

"Let's make a bet then." Suddenly, Alucard pointed three fingers at him, interrupting him, "Three attacks. If you managed to remain unscathed after three attacks, I'd allow you to take an item from the treasury. However, if you lose, you will have to get engaged to my daughters tonight."

"What?" Ashton was a bit surprised, "I already told you. Until and unless I find-"

"You said you can't marry them until I handover those Conundrum brats to you. There was never an agreement between us that prevented you from getting engaged." Alucard corrected Ashton, "What's it gonna be?"

Alucard was confident despite having higher stats than him, Ashton was still a bit immature when it came to fighting. Thus, he was planning to use his experience to land a blow on him, which would be a relatively easy task.

Also, the only reason Alucard was so dead set on getting them engaged was all because of the recent discovery about the undead. After all, one of them managed to infiltrate the capital, who knows how many of them would be hiding in the shadows?

He needed someone capable to be by his daughters' side. That was also the reason why he decided to train Ashton. because if something were to happen to him, Ashton would ascend his throne and protect Transylvania.

Also, a lot of nobles in their society were already expressing their displeasure that Alucard had decided to 'corrupt' the royal bloodline by offering the hands of his daughters to an outsider.

Regardless of how many achievements Ashton garnered, there would always be people who will view him as an outsider and hence he wouldn't be fully accepted in their society.

However, if he managed to survive Alucard's attacks, he would definitely gain some recognition from everyone. No one would be able to refute his skills, no matter what.

Thus, regardless of what was the end result of their duel/test, Alucard would reap some kind of benefit.

"I accept," Ashton said with a smile, "Don't forget about your promise though. If I win, I'll take an item from your treasury."

"Who do you think I am? I'm the son of Dracula, the progenitor of vampires. Going back on our word is a sin. I'll try not to kill you."

As soon as Alucard said those words, the ground beneath him shattered. A cloak of blood materialised out of nowhere and enveloped itself around him. Alucard's physique got visibly leaner and skin turned black, as well as his previously white soul sword turned crimson. This was his 'True form'.

Born from a human before she was turned into a vampire, Alucard had the privilege and the power to shapeshift, which he used to hide his true form. A demonic form of a vampire that only those with Dracula's bloodline could master.

"I guess we are using abilities now." Ashton mumbled before ripping the cuff off, "Fine by me."

[He's a tad bit more powerful than you now.]

"I know. That's why I agreed to his conditions."

Alucard lept at him with ferocity Ashton had never seen him use before. In a blink of an eye, Alucard broke the sound barrier. Everyone who had been spectating them couldn't even see where Alucard disappeared to.

However, Ashton could see him clearly. Every action Alucard did, created an aftershock of sound, it almost felt as if the sounds were chasing after him, trying to reunite with the source that created them. Only to fail over and over again.

[Look out!]

Ashton was so focused on Alucard, that he completely forgot about his sword. He dove sideways instinctively, only to see a small crater had taken his place. If it hadn't been for Astaroth's warning, Ashton would have lost a bit more than his limbs.

'I'll try not to kill you, my ass!'

"Strike one!" Alucard bellowed before popping up in front of Ashton and throwing a punch at him.

Ashton grabbed onto his hand, pulling Alucard towards him while simultaneously turning his back towards him. He then proceeded to sweep the vampire's feet away in the hopes of slamming him down.

But to Ashton's surprise, Alucard changed his manoeuvre midway, and Ashton was the one who got thrown away. Thankfully, Ashton managed to land on his feet or else it would have been game over for him.

"Oh, you're still standing. Good." Alucard said with a smile, "It would have been a shame if you couldn't even last till the final attack."

"You praise me and then proceed to underestimate me. It feels a bit weird, your highness."

Ashton got up and ran towards Alucard, at the same time the soul sword chased him. It was pretty obvious what Ashton was trying to do, sadly it wouldn't work.

"So you accept your defeat?" Alucard mumbled and hurled a punch at him.

However, the following moment Ashton disappeared from Alucard's sight, only to reappear behind him. In the end, Alucard's fist ended up colliding against his sword, sending a shockwave throughout the palace. Even Ashton got blown away by the sudden shockwave.

With a single move, the beautiful garden was blown away. Even a single blade of grass was nowhere to be found near Alucard and only a barren piece of land could be found under his feet.

"Looks like I went a bit overboard..." Alucard scratched the back of his head while looking around at the destruction he caused, "Either way, it looks like you won using that mask of yours Ashton."

Chapter 252 Secret Of The Dagger (1)

"That mask of yours is a pain to handle." Alucard laughed before patting Ashton's back, "If I hadn't evolved a while ago, I might have lost my arm today!"

'I'm not sure if that's something you should laugh about...' Ashton kept his thought to himself.

The 'test' was over and thus both of them were receiving treatment in the infirmary. Ashton only had a few scratches in the name of injury, which baffled the healers as they had expected him to have at least a couple of broken bones, but he was more or less fine.

Alucard, on the other hand, had the bones in his right hand shattered. Soul sword had certainly roughened him up a bit. Other than the healers, Verina, Irina and Griffin were also present there and for some reason, it felt as if the princesses were a bit upset with Ashton.

He was wondering what he could have possibly done to piss them off, and then he remembered something he could have done to make them sulk a bit...

'It's related to the bet, isn't it?'

[Damn, I'm gonna miss the fool you once were.]

'I'm already missing the time my head was a bit on the quiet side.'

[Hehe, cheeky. I like it. Wanna know what I'd like more? Getting something off of his treasury. Last time the Arch Lich gave us quite some useful things. I hope this Alucard guy will also have some stuff worth taking.]

'Greedy bastard.'

[We're one and the same.]

'True...'

"That should take care of it, your highness." The healer replied as she wrapped a bandage around Alucard's arm, "You should refrain from moving it for a bit until your healing factor--"

"I got it. Thanks for your concern." Alucard replied and immediately began throwing punches in the air despite the healer telling him not to, "Aah, it already feels as good as new. Not on to the important topic. Ashton if you'll follow me, I'll take you to the treasury."

Ashton got up and left after him without saying a word, however, Griffin interrupted them before bowing in front of Ashton. Everyone was confused by it, but Alucard just smiled. He knew exactly what was going on inside his second-in-command's head.

"I would like to apologise for my arrogance when we first met, Lord Ashton. My hate for werewolves didn't allow me to look past your appearance and see the talent you possessed."

"It's fine. Also, before bowing in front of random people, you should know you're the second most important person in Transylvania." Ashton accepted the apology and urged the warrior to raise his head, "And I might not be the kind of man you'd want to apologise to."

[Look at you, acting so mature. Turning 17 turned you for the better, didn't it?]

Ashton ignored Astaroth and left for the treasury. Just like the Xyran had said, he was hoping to find something unique in there. Who knows, maybe he would even end with another piece of Grim Reaper's set.

He only had two of them so far and he was already overpowered for someone his level. If he managed to get his hand on more of them, he might not need to fear anyone on the planet.

Alucard led Ashton back to his chambers, proving Ashton's suspicion to be correct. The room was indeed a treasury of some sort. Alucard then proceeded to whisper something in the ears of a bat-shaped statue and at the following moment, the wall in front of them disappeared into thin air.

"Here we are. My treasury and armoury." Alucard opened a secret door in his chambers that led to another room, filled with weapons, armours and money, "But you can't take anything from here as they are a bit... personal. You know, they have emotional value attached to them."

[Should have known that much. Stingy bastard.]

Although Ashton did not call Alucard stingy, after all, he didn't do anything to make Ashton call him that. But he somewhat knew the items they were crossing were pretty awesome. Some of them even belonged to [Legendary] grade and seeing them but not getting them was paining him a bit.

"Here we are. This used to be my father's collection at least till the day he just up and left without any word or reason." Alucard shrugged his shoulders, "Feel free to take whatever you like from here. I'm sure you'll find something. I'll be waiting for you outside."

[Of course, we will find something.]

'This does not look good...'

[No shit.]

While the weapons they saw before had been placed inside beautiful containers and protected by a variety of enchantments, Dracula's stuff was just... thrown away in a pile. Alucard wasn't even trying to hide his hatred towards his father.

Thanks to the rough conditions they were in and how none of them had received any sort of maintenance, it did not come as a surprise that most of the items had been broken and hence were more or less useless.

Despite all that, Ashton was determined to find something useful from there, and maybe his luck wasn't all that bad.

[Wait a minute. Open your inventory.]

'Why?'

[Can't you hear that humming noise? Just open your inventory, and you'll understand what I'm saying.]

Ashton did as he was told, and the moment he did, a black broken blade fell out of it. It was the same blade Ashton had won the night he met Baiter in the black market.

Once out of the inventory, even Ashton could hear the humming noise Astaroth was referring to. It wasn't loud or anything, but it was clear that the blade was looking for something.

"Wait, could this be a-

[Soul weapon. That's what I'm thinking. There must be something inside this heap of crap that's making the blade act like this.]

That was all the motivation Ashton needed to jump headfirst into sorting the mess out. It wasn't an easy task and almost took an hour, but finally, everything was separated and arranged into neat rows.

He then picked up the blade and brought it closer to everything that was there. The humming got louder and louder till it reached a specific piece, a broken hilt.

As soon as Ashton brought the blade close to the hilt, the blade freed itself before latching on to the hilt. The room got bathed in a blinding light and as soon as it faded away, a new dagger was waiting in front of them.

—

Item: Reformed Dagger of Venom

Type: Weapon

> Damage: Unknown [Feed the blade to unlock this information]

> Stats bonus: Unknown [Feed the blade to unlock this information]

> Rarity: Legendary

Description:

Once the beloved dagger of Dracula, now has found a new owner who wouldn't abandon it like its previous owner. Not much is known about this dagger apart from the fact that it is a Soul Weapon that was created by <Unknown> in a time of dire need.

Chapter 253 Secret Of The Dagger (2)

Ashton stared at the raven coloured dagger in front of him. He was hopeful he would get something better than his current equipment from there, but he had never even dreamt about getting his hands on a legendary grade weapon.

—

The Dagger is eyeing the <Blades of soaring winds>, Would you like to feed the blades to the dagger?

Yes/No

—

"Say what now?"

[Who knows how long it has been since the dagger was dismantled? It's obvious it would be hungry. Go on, feed it, it'll be a good way to test it out as well.]

"Are you out of your mind?" Ashton immediately refuted Astaroth's idea, "Did you read? Once I feed a weapon to it, the weapon is gone forever."

[You have a legendary weapon in your hands, why the heck are you arguing about losing a rare weapon on it?]

'... that's true.'

As far as Ashton did not want to lose the blades that had served him so well, they were no longer a suitable weapon for him. He had noticed it during the sparring session with Alucard, the blades weren't as strong as they felt before.

In other words, Ashton was in a different league after his evolution and the blades could no longer synergise with him. The dagger of venom, however, could fill that void considering it was a legendary weapon.

With that thought in his mind, Ashton took out the blades of soaring winds from the inventory and placed them in front of the reformed blade. As soon as he did that, the dagger split open in half, as if it was opening its mouth and gobbled up the blades in one go.

<The blade is happy with the quality of food provided to it.>

<The blade trusts its owner a bit more and reveals its details to the owner.>

Item: ???

Type: Weapon

Damage: 439-569 HP per strike

Stats bonus:

> Strength: +60 while equipped for use.

> Agility: +30 While equipped for use.

> Abilities related to the [Blood Mage] class/ Vampire genes are buffed while the blade is equipped.

> Deal bonus damage to the targets of its choosing.

Rarity: Legendary

Trust level: 8%

Description:

Once the beloved dagger of Dracula, now has found a new owner who wouldn't abandon it like its previous owner. Created by the master creationist <Lycaon>, the blade will aid its user, however, the user will have to earn its trust first. The trust can be increased by feeding it and using it in fights. But the Dagger can also lose trust in its user if it is not taken care of properly.

Effect(s):

Cannibalism: This weapon can devour weapons of the same type to absorb their stats and make them, its own.

Please note: Once it devours a weapon, that weapon is lost forever and can not be recreated.

Attacking enemies using this weapon exposes them to Haemorrhage, making them lose 4% of their HP for the next 10 seconds. This ability has a cooldown period of 10 seconds (Ineffective on Elite beasts. Can only be triggered once. The attack will not ignore [Haemorrhage resistance]).

(Weapon's ability was upgraded. Effect duration increased from 5 seconds --> 10 seconds. Damage increased from 2% --> 4%)

Bloodthirst: Attacking enemies would make the dagger feed on their blood, which the dagger with use to heal the user. The ability has a cooldown of 5 seconds, and the maximum HP that can be restored is capped at 200 per strike.

—

"Isn't this a bit too much?" Ashton scratched the back of his head while reading the details of his new weapon.

As far as Ashton remembered, the highest damage the blades of soaring winds could do was limited to 183 hp per strike. But the least amount of damage the dagger can do is twice that number. Did the power of the dagger amplify or something?

[Looks like your wish was granted. Cheers to another broken addition to your arsenal.]

<The dagger would like you to provide it with a name.>

"This is a first..."

[All soul weapons need to be named by their owner. It helps further the connection between them. But be careful, if it doesn't like the name you give it, the familiarity could also drop.]

"That makes sense... I wouldn't be like to be called stupid names either. Let's see, what should I name it then? How about, Balmond?"

[That's a bit-]

<The dagger acknowledges its new name. Trust increased to 10%.>

"Well, I'm glad you liked the name, Balmond." Ashton laughed before putting the blade back inside the inventory, "Now let's get going. I need to unravel the mystery behind Mera's clones."

At the same time, somewhere in the galaxy.

"Hm... weird," Dracula mumbled.

"You felt it too huh?" Lycaon joined in.

Aamon stared at the two of them, clearly confused as to what they were mumbling about. After all, it wasn't common for them to space out in the middle of training. It either had to be something extremely important or extremely stupid.

"What are you two on about?" He asked them before shooting another Xyran's hologram.

"I guess our little buddy found one of the souvenirs we left behind." Dracula replied with the widest smile Aamon had ever seen on his face, "He might not be as hopeless as we thought after all."

"What souvenir?"

"A dagger I made right before the humans left the planet." Lycaon replied, "It's a shame you told us to not bring any of our beloved weapons when we left the planet for good. Having that dagger with us would have proven to be very useful."

"Better than having plasma swords?" Aamon scoffed.

Lycaon might be one of the greatest creationists to have ever been born. But Aamon refused to believe he could have created a weapon that exceeded the Xyran weapons, especially on such a primitive planet.

"Maybe." Lycaon shrugged his shoulders.

Aamon shook his head and decided to change the subject before he made anyone upset with his remarks.

"What about the kid? Did Frank mention anything?"

"Oh, he has evolved alright." Dracula chimed in, "At least that's what his spies told him. But no one knows what species he chose for his evolution."

"For his sake, I hope he didn't choose anything related to the Xyran race..."

Chapter 254 To Protect You

If there was one person who could tell Ashton about cloning, it had to be his mother. Judging from what she revealed the last time they had a chat, Ashton himself is supposed to be something like a clone or has a bit of artificial origin.

Even though it was incredibly hard to come to terms with that information, Ashton had made his peace with it. He was a living being and that was all that mattered to him. How he was conceived all those years ago, wasn't of his concern.

As he once again walked into the makeshift lab, he saw Avalina pacing up and down, packing everything up. It was already time for her to leave.

"Leaving already?" Ashton casually asked.

"Well, I don't have anything else to do here either way." Avalina smiled wanly, "I have places to be and things to do..."

"Don't we all?" Ashton said and began helping her, "There was something I've been wanting to ask you about."

"You always have something you want to talk about." She smiled, "Go ahead."

"Are you the one who helped clone Mera?"

The silence in the room spoke for itself. But it was what Ashton had expected to begin with. After all, there weren't many people who possessed the knowledge of cloning in the first place and it was highly unlike Mera to not use the resources that were available to her.

"Was there any particular reason for it? I mean for Mera to want to get herself cloned?"

"You are aware of her ambitions, aren't you? She was afraid she might die before she could fulfil those, that's why she created replacements to carry on her will and also to wage psychological war with her enemies."

Ashton's confused look told Avalina that he didn't understand what she was referring to.

"She wanted to be unkillable. Just like... Austin."

Everything clicked in place then. She wanted to trick everyone into thinking she was unkillable, while also learning from her mistakes and preparing to attack her targets again. Her enemies would think she was dead and hence would not expect to get attacked by her again, only to be surprised.

A genius plan indeed. It was probably what she wanted to do with him as well. But her plan failed because Ashton knew he was attacked by a clone and not the real Mera.

Ashton shook every thought out of his head, "Can you at least tell me if there are more clones of her or not?"

"Three... I cloned her three times. One of which died before the final procedure could take place, but the other two were completely functional on their own." Avalina replied, "They even developed a personality of their own and began having arguments with her, which is why she kept them frozen until she found a reason to use them."

Ashton's expression turned cold. But he held nothing against his mother. Why would he? She was his mother after all. Also, he felt his understanding of his mother had increased a lot, therefore he knew she must have had a reason to do what she did.

Whether she wanted to tell him about it or not was her choice. But Ashton had gotten the information he wanted. That being said, he could keep his hostile emotions for Mera aside for a moment, and focus on the most important thing. But Avalina had other plans.

"You didn't ask why I did it..." Avalina choked up a bit, expecting him to rightfully get angry at her. But he didn't.

"I didn't ask, because I know you probably have a good reason for doing what you did." He reassured her, "and I don't care why you did it, it wouldn't change anything between us. You'll still care for me and I'll keep on caring for you."

Ashton had no idea, but his words meant the world to Avalina.

"I-I did it to protect you."

"What?"

"I cloned her to protect you." Avalina reiterated, "When I got to know about what they were planning to do with me and your father, I made a deal with her. I'll help her in cloning herself, and in return, she will protect your secret and you till you got strong enough to fend for yourself."

Ashton made a weird expression, one that couldn't be described with words. It appeared as if he was confused, angry and in pain at the same time. The truth he learned was a bit too absurd even to his taste.

Mera wanted to protect him? Someone who wanted nothing but to use him as a tool to take over Lycania? But the more Ashton thought about it, the more it made sense. She was a heartless bitch, there was no point denying that, however, at times she did protect him.

Also, in hindsight, she even wanted to hide his identity as the 'weapon' from the world. The only point she got hostile towards him was when he began walking out of his shadow. In other words, when he started to fend for himself. This revelation was a bit frustrating.

'No point thinking about it now.'

[I agree. It would be for the best to find and kill her.]

Ashton silently agreed with Astaroth. No matter what deal the two of them had made, Mera had to die.

"Oh and before I forget, Alucard wanted me to tell you, there's no reason for you to leave."

"What? But the research-"

"He's already in the process of bringing everything you need here, to the castle." Ashton shrugged his shoulders, "After what happened regarding that undead, he doesn't feel it would be safe to let you go out of his territory and I agree."

Avalina nodded, after all, Ashton was going to stay there frequently and therefore, she'll be able to see him more often.

"Also, you have an excellent subject to continuing your research on." Ashton pointed at himself, "If you could figure out how I am unaffected by the undead blood in my body, your research would be complete and you would be able to come and live with me."

Chapter 255 A Gorillan Trouble (1)

A month passed since Ashton came to Transylvania. During the entirety of the month, Ashton only had to do two things, train his weapons skills and help Avalina with her research. While his training was going on successfully, the research on the other hand was still stuck at the same point.

Well, technically it wasn't. Avalina did realise what was the reason behind the harmony of genes within Ashton. The Xyran organs that were transplanted into him were suppressing their side effects while enhancing their positive attributes at the same time.

However, she couldn't reveal Ashton's secret like that. After all, everyone had barely managed to digest the fact that he was a tribrid, dropping another nuke on them might make everyone lose their crap altogether.

"Looks like there's not much we can do now," Avalina finally gave up, "We have been trying to look for auxiliary solutions but nothing comes to the mind."

Ashton sighed and got up from the surgical bed. As much as he wanted her to succeed, there wasn't much he could have done. He wasn't a medical genius like his mother. All he knew was to fight, level up and keep repeating it.

"Don't worry, I'm sure we'll figure something out," Ashton reassured her before covering his bare body, "Also I have to go back so there's that."

"Hm... I understand."

Although Ashton could sense the disappointment in her voice, he had to leave. After all, he had been neglecting his duties towards Livan, and after a month, he could not ignore it any longer. The time to say farewell had already arrived at the doorstep.

"My Lord!" A servant came rushing in, "We have a message from your territory."

"What is it?"

The servant immediately passed over a holographic tablet to him.

"Sorry to disturb you again, Ashton." Virgil spoke through the device, "But we kinda need your help here. Remember the Monklin dungeon we took part in?"

"Yeah, what about it?"

"Well, every creature in it has reappeared."

Ashton got a bit confused. Not because the monklins resurfaced a year earlier than it was expected, but because he was trying to think, why was it any of his concerns? It wasn't like Livan was close to the monklin forest or anything.

"Why are you telling me this? Shouldn't the guild handle it as it always had?"

"That's the problem. They sent a team bigger and stronger than before but all of them were... killed." Virgil informed him with a troubled look, "They believe it's the work of another gorillan. One that's far stronger than the one before."

The Monklin forest Ashton had 'cleared' before was once again raising trouble. But this time, the forest was more hostile than ever.

Even though the guild expected it to happen since one gorillan remained in the area and on top of that an entire squad of elites was killed there so they weren't taking any chances and only sent the best people. But the end result remained the same... total annihilation.

"Let me guess, since I killed the gorillan the last time, they want my help to sort this mess out as well?"

"Well, yes and no." Virgil sighed and Ashton knew he was about to say something that he knew would upset Ashton, "They are blaming us for this situation."

"Wait, what? That's absurd."

"Yeah but they don't think so. The statement the guild issued clearly blamed you for the situation of the forest. In their words, you killed the gorillan that angered his mate and as a result the female gorillan and the monklins are killing everyone who dares to step foot in the forest."

Ashton had heard enough. First these bastards give half-assed information regarding the dungeon, and when he saves his life they start blaming him for the problem? These fuckers have a death wish or what?

Ashton really wanted to visit a guild branch and beat some sense into the managers there. But first he wanted to know what were they planning to do if he didn't agree to their demands.

"You're not going to like this." Virgil replied as soon as Ashton asked the question, "They said they would gather every warrior under them and launch an attack on Livan and every place that you rule. The king has said he won't defend you."

"These bastards sure have some balls." Ashton smiled, but it wasn't one of those calm smiles, "As for the king, I just might have to give him a visit as well."

"N-Now... now... let's not hurry-" Virgil was well acquainted with the look on Ashton's face and tried to diffuse the situation but Ashton had already made up his mind.

"No. We should hurry. In fact I'm coming back right now. Also, tell Baiter to prepare the weapons I told him to."

This was the reason why Ashton didn't want to rest up. Because he disappeared after massacring the Morgan's army, these fools were thinking he was hiding somewhere till the chaos calmed down a bit. Little did they know Ashton wasn't afraid of Jonathan, let alone the guild.

[Oi, listen to me first. This could be a great opportunity to gain a subclass not to mention the treasures those primitive beasts might have gathered in their breeding grounds.]

'What do you want me to do? Let them know I'm scared of them?'

[I never said that. You go about doing what you want to. Kill them, destroy their bloodline, I couldn't care less. But think about it. They are so scared that none of them would dare to look for the treasure but you could. You get what I'm saying?]

Ashton took a deep breath to calm down. Astaroth was correct, moreover, a Gorillan would make a fine opponent to test his strength on and measure his growth. After all, the last time he fought one, he almost ended up dying.

Not to mention the rare rewards he might get for killing them and clearing the dungeon once and for all. In the end, he had nothing to lose but a lot to gain.

"Virgil, tell them I accept their 'request'. I'll take care of the Gorillan and then I'll teach them a thing or two about mutual respect."

"Got it."

Chapter 256 A Gorillan Trouble (2)

"This place is just as horrible as I remember." Ashton sighed as he found himself back on the top of a familiar hill.

"Are you sure you don't want any of us to accompany you?" Virgil asked him a final time, "Fighting them alone wouldn't be a-"

Ashton was strong. Anyone who doubted that or said otherwise was nothing but a fool. However, hundreds of adventurers had died in the monklin forest in just the last week and Ashton had decided to head into such a place by himself.

"Who said I'll be alone?" Ashton smiled and headed off, "Take care of the territory while I'm gone and tell baiter to have those explosives ready. Who knows what those fuckers would do while I'm here."

Virgil nodded and disappeared into the portal, leaving Ashton behind, "Good luck."

According to the reports the monklins had become really aggressive. They no longer waited to trap the invaders and then hunt them down. Instead, they viciously attacked them the moment anyone stepped foot in their territory.

But it had been a couple of minutes since Ashton entered the forest but nothing happened. Neither did he sense anyone around him through his [High-Grade Perception]. Nevertheless, that wasn't the only thing he found a bit odd.

"Isn't this a bit too hot in here? It almost feels like I'm walking over a volcano."

Being a tribrid had its advantages. One of which was the resistance to extreme temperatures. He wasn't immune and thus could feel the difference in temperatures, but even water-boiling temperature could only make him sweat a bit.

"Hunting them down by myself would take a lot of unnecessary time." Ashton shook his head, "Come out now."

Sven and Celeste crawled out of his shadow, paying him respect. Their appearance had changed quite a bit since Ashton had evolved and his intelligence was increased. Sven had grown horn extending from his helmet and he looked a lot tougher now.

While Celeste on the other hand had gotten a bit slimmer, her outfit remained just as provocative as it had been before. But more importantly, her magic had grown by quite a lot. Also, both of them had their levels in the forties, which made sense as their 'evolution' was linked to Ashton's.

Sven had evolved into a Death Baron, while Celeste had evolved into Death Mage. Ashton had no idea regarding the extent of their new powers since he couldn't find a proper situation to test their new abilities.

But he knew one thing for sure. Both of them now had dominion over death. In other words, both of them could control dead creatures to some extent. Much like Ashton, Celeste could summon skeletons to do her bidding, but unlike him, she didn't need a medium to summon them.

She could simply pull them out of the 'underworld', or so she says. While Sven could also control skeletons. But in his case, Ashton had to provide him with skeletons in order for him to control them.

"Alright Celeste, summon as many skeletons as you can and instruct them to look for anything alive in the forest."

"As you wish master." Celeste acknowledged the command and her eyes turned black as if they had been swallowed by death itself.

The next moment, the ground around her burst open in numerous places, and through each aperture, a couple of 3-4 feet tall human skeletons crawled out. No matter how many times Ashton saw this scene unfold, he could never get used to it.

The skeletons surrounded her like a bunch of lost children looking for their mother. As soon as she gave them their instructions, all of them happily ran in various directions as if they wanted Celeste to feel proud of them.

[This is why I urged you to master the dungeons you own. You could have used those sturdy wolves to hunt these primates easily.]

'I would have if you hadn't slipped up and said it would endanger everyone around me as the wolves might attack them.'

[Might. MIGHT! But yeah, I'm almost certain they would have...]

While the two of them were busy chatting, it looked like the skeletons already found something, well, it was quite the opposite because something else might have found them instead. The ground began shaking along with the thunderous footsteps of a gigantic creature.

Suddenly, countless trees were uprooted as the gorillan charged straight towards Ashton and company. Ashton stared at the massive creature and immediately realised this gorillan was much bigger than the previous one, about twice in height.

However, the Gorillan wasn't alone. Along with her were hundreds if not a thousand Monklins. In their hands were the broken bones of the skellies Celeste had summoned.

"You should not have pissed her off..." Ashton shook his head thinking what Celeste would do to them for 'killing' her 'babies', "Sven, I'll leave these Monklins to both of you."

Sven nodded and unsheathed his greatsword, "Hack and slash..."

"As for you, I'll take you on myself."

Ashton rushed in to attack her but stopped at the last moment. It was the right decision to make considering the Gorillan spat out a ball of fire in his direction.

"How can you control elemental magic?"

Night creatures that were capable of controlling elements were rare, so rare that only two of them had ever been encountered by the mutants. On top of that, no one knew how or why these creatures that shouldn't possess enough intelligence to manipulate mana could use elemental spells.

'At least now I know why those adventurers got wiped out. It would take a fucking army of those adventurers to take someone like this crazy bitch down.'

[Broken planet-]

'Yeah yeah, I know. I can't do much to stop her, it'll take time to summon Bone Goliath.'

Unlike his summons, Ashton could not just call a goliath out of nowhere. He had to make preparations to do so and since he intended on summoning the bone goliath, he would need a lot of bones. Bones that Sven and Celeste were farming.

"I guess you're up, Balmond."

Chapter 257 A Gorillan Trouble (3)

The gorillan brought down her massive feet on Ashton, who jumped sideways to dodge the attack. Ashton was safe, but the gorillan had left quite an impact on the forest floor.

'She has much more skills and abilities in her arsenal than the other gorillan. Hm... maybe I have found another great addition to my army.' Ashton smirked and stabbed the gorillan's feet.

<The dagger, Balmond, has absorbed 126 HP and 45 mana from the target.>

<The user's HP is full. Converting the excess HP to deal additional damage to the target.>

'Isn't this a bit too much?'

Stealing the enemy's HP and mana was a different thing, but turning it into additional damage? It was an endless cycle of pain.

It was no wonder the humans lost against weapons like these. Even Ashton wouldn't want to face off against such an absurd weapon.

Despite that, there was one thing Ashton had no clue about. The Gorillan Queen's one and only passive ability. To put it simply, it was a passive that made her a masochist. The damage she took, the stronger she got... endlessly.

Therefore, using Balmond against someone like her was the worst possible match for him. On top of that, she had an absurd amount of HP which was about five times more than the amount Ashton possessed.

It meant it would roughly take Balmond anywhere from 50 to 100 attacks to bring her HP down to zero. In the meantime, as a result of all those attacks, she would get at least ten times stronger than she already was.

The best way to take her down was to one-shot her. However, Ashton currently wasn't capable of doing that.

[Oi, don't feed the blade too much or it'll come back to bite your ass.]

'Why?'

,m [... You didn't use Detection on that ugly bitch?]

'my bad...'

[You should thank me fucker. You would have died like a dozen times if it wasn't for me.]

'And you wouldn't be alive to help me out if it wasn't for my body.'

Ashton ignored him and focused on the gorillan. After using [Detection] on her, he realised what Astaroth meant. Had he not reminded him to check the stats, Ashton would have definitely fucked up. But there was something else that caught his attention.

"Astaroth, you reading this?"

[Already did. Grade D, level 69. Technically, stronger than you. One hit from her should be enough to cut your HP down by 30%. I know what you're going to ask next and the answer is yes. You can resurrect her.]

Ashton nodded and got ready to face off against her. It was a bummer he couldn't use Balmond against her, but it was fine, after all, he needed to test the strength of his abilities as well.

But before he could, she attacked her again and this time, Ashton couldn't dodge her in time. The gorillan's attack was stronger than the last time. A gigantic hole was created where Ashton had been standing.

However, the Gorillan wasn't done yet. Not wanting to give Ashton an opportunity to strike back, she bombarded the hole with fire until the hole itself was on fire. No one could have possibly walked out of the hell hole, but Ashton wasn't just some nobody.

The gorillan, however, thought her job was done and turned her attention towards Sven who had been killing her babies left and right. The gorillan was about to spit fire at him when something jumped out of the hole, hitting her in the face.

"I don't remember giving you permission to focus on someone else?" Ashton snarled at her.

His condition did not appear to be good. A fraction of his face had been burnt away, while his armour had been tattered. His ash white skin had become crisp with numerous burns covering him from the head to the toe.

Nevertheless, the next moment, all of those wounds healed themselves up. This was the combined effect of the [Revenge], [Aggravate], [Blood Armour] and the [Regeneration] skill.

Even though it was too late for him to dodge the Gorillan's attack, he had activated the [Revenge] skill to negate the initial attack. What he had not prepared for was the follow-up, and hence he got injured by the fire.

Even after activating the [Blood Armour] skill, the flames still managed to put him into such a miserable state. But the [Regeneration] Skill had got him covered.

"Fucking hell, it hurt like a bitch. I'll make sure to return the favour."

—

You have received 159% Exp by dealing 14345 HP worth of damage to <Lvl 69> Gorillan.

Skill: [Aggravate] is in effect. <Lvl 69> Gorillan is losing 1478 HP per minute.

Current werewolf Exp: 59%

Current werewolf level: 31

Current vampire Exp: 19%

Current vampire level: 30

Skill: [Revenge] is now in cooldown.

Skill: [Regeneration] is now in cooldown.

—

The mere punch was enough to topple her down. But it was now Ashton's turn to inflict pain on her.

<Your [Fire Resistance] has been upgraded to level 18.>

<Your body won't get burned easily. Even if it does, the burns would heal quickly.>

The Gorillan shot another flaming ball in his direction, despite being in pain herself. Maybe it was a move to buy some time but if it was then it failed hilariously. Rather than dodging the attack, Ashton slashed the fireball in half using Balmond.

<Your [Fire Resistance] successfully nullified the heat.>

The attack that hurt Ashton so much, couldn't even burn a single strand of his hair anymore. In mere seconds, Ashton had obtained the strength to overpower the gorillan.

The night creature kept spewing more fire in his path while struggling to get back on her feet. Still, Ashton managed to carve a path for him within moments, he stood in front of her.

The gorillan tried to kill the one who was responsible for killing her mate, but she had lost too much HP because of the [Aggravate] skill.

With her last remaining bit of strength, she was about to shoot another fireball, but Ashton shut her mouth close at the last moment. The fireball couldn't find a way out of her body and as a result, burned her up from the inside.

Chapter 258 Seraph's Flames

The burns on Ashton's body were healing, but the affect-effects, mainly the tiredness, of using the [Regeneration] knocked him out. By the time he woke up, hours had passed and Sven and Celeste had already finished taking care of the remaining Monklins.

[Rise and shine princess.]

'Astaroth, I'm not in the mood right now.'

[That's specifically the reason I teased you.]

Ashton shook his head in dismay before forcing him back on his feet. His body still felt a bit sore but it wasn't something that required his immediate attention.

'At least now I have a better understanding of how [Regeneration] works.' He thought, 'The more grievous the injury is, the more stamina it takes out of me.'

But that wasn't the thing that bothered him too much. His real concern was how close he had come to dying and if it hadn't been for the [Regeneration] and [Blood Armour] skills, he would have definitely died right then and there.

The gorillan served as a reminder to him, that no matter how strong he became there would always be someone stronger than him waiting ahead. It was a necessary reality check that he needed in order to reevaluate his strength.

Sven and Celeste immediately walked up to Ashton as soon as he was back on his feet. Both of them appeared to be equally worried about his well-being. But Ashton shrugged their worries off and headed towards the corpse of the gorillan.

<Unique Skill: Resurrect has been activated.>

<Level 69 Gorillan has been selected as the target.>

<Caution: The host's level is lower than the target's. Resurrection has only a 63.34% chance of success.>

<The user possesses more than needed intelligence and mana to tame the beast. Proceed as planned?>

"Yes."

As usual, a magic circle filled with the power of death and darkness devoured the corpse, only to reform it and spit out a new and stronger form. The gorillan once again rose to her feet, her renewed soul had no enmity towards Ashton but it had no loyalty towards him either.

The gorillan's head was swallowed with black flames and only her skull was visible above her shoulders. It was an appearance that would strike fear in the hearts of even the bravest warriors on the planet.

Her size was altered as well. The gorillan wasn't half as tall as she had been before, but her strength more or less remained the same.

Ashton did not know what to expect as the resurrection of every creature was different and so were their actions. Judging by the way the gorillan was thrashing everything around her in her confused state, it didn't look like it would be easy to control her.

The resurrection had given birth to a strong, yet confused beast of demise. However, Ashton already knew such a possibility could arise and hence had already prepared to beat the creature into submission if he had to.

"Master, allow me."

To his surprise, Sven stepped in front of him and slammed his sword deep into the ground. He then mumbled something and the following moment his sword changed into a heavy metal whip.

Sven used the whip to wrap around the Gorillan's neck and proceeded to force it onto the ground to kneel in front of them. Ashton was speechless. He thought it would take an absurd amount of time to tame the beast and yet Sven managed to do it in mere moments.

"What was that?"

"My class ability, master." Sven replied, "It's called Death whip. It helps in controlling and calming a fleeting soul. But it's only effective in taming Death Beasts and nothing else."

"Are you hiding some other skill of yours?" Ashton inquired because he genuinely wanted to have such an ability himself, but he knew it wasn't going to happen, not just at least.

Sven shook his head. He had only been given two skills upon evolving into Death Baron.

"Next time, tell me about such skills the moment you get them."

"As you wish, master."

Sven replied and his whip changed back into being a sword. However, the whip had left something behind on the Gorillan's neck. It appeared to be some kind of a collar but it was made up of darkness, just like Celeste's cloak.

"What's that?"

[It's a collar that'll keep the beast in check and also force it to obey your commands. It's a wonderful object.]

'So it'll obey my every command?'

[As long as it is a possible request, then yes.]

"That saves a ton of time."

Half an hour later...

The four of them found themselves in a secluded part of the forest. A section that no cartographer had ever mapped before, hell, even Ashton wouldn't have known such a place even existed if the Gorillan had not guided them to it.

There were a few thousand eggs scattered all over the hidden place under the ground. The eggs would hatch in a timely manner, hence providing a continuous supply of Monklins to defend the forest and chase and kill the intruders.

"Destroy them." Ashton commanded and the Gorillan immediately spewed out black flames, destroying her eggs without a second thought, "This [Hellfire] ability is quite strong."

Once the eggs had been taken care of, Ashton headed towards the real treasure of the Gorillans. The thing which made a normal night creature like the Gorillan turn into a fire breathing monstrosity.

It was a massive piece of black stone sitting in the middle, giving out an ominous aura. Just being around it, made Ashton rethink his decision claiming it, but Astaroth had other plans.

[So here it is... I was wondering why no one found it yet.]

"You know what this is?"

[Of course, I do. After all, I'm the one who brought it here. Go ahead, touch it. It shouldn't bite you.]

"Shouldn't?"

[Well, it wouldn't bite me, and since you and I are one unit, it shouldn't bite you either.]

Ashton sighed and cautiously touched the stone and... nothing happened.

"Are you sure- argh!"

Suddenly the stone began glowing at the same time Ashton's body temperature shot up. His insides were on fire. His blood vessels, muscles, bones, and every part of his body were being burned alive.

[Angel's blood is flowing without your body. It'll hurt, but you won't die as you possess my organs. They'll nullify your pain a bit. Do not let go of the crystal. Bite your lip and cling on to it.]

Ashton fell to the ground but didn't let go of the crystal. Even as he squirmed he held on to it as if his life depended on it. Sven and Celeste tried to assist him but the moment they took a step toward him a wall of fire surrounded their master as if it was trying to protect Ashton.

Had it not been for his fire resistance, his skin might just have melted and slid off of his bones. The pain he was experiencing now was much worse than he had experienced before.

Why? Because back then it was an essential evolution and hence the pain was limited. But right now Astaroth was forcing Ashton's body to evolve even though his body was clearly not prepared for the burden it was experiencing.

After an hour of flailing in pain, the crystal was fully assimilated and became one with Ashton.

—

You have tamed the [Seraph's Flames].

You have obtained the legendary skill: [Heaven's Downfall].

[Seraph's Flames] has evolved [Fire Resistance lvl 18] to [Fire Immunity].

Chapter 259 Heaven's Downfall

—

[Heaven's Downfall]: A legendary skill born as a by-product of the angel Seraph's flames. Also well-known by the higher civilizations for its destructive power. Upon usage, summons a field of inextinguishable flames that will only obey the command of its summoner. The size and heat generated in the field will depend on the user's power.

Grade: Legendary

Proficiency: 0.00%

Cooldown: <The user needs to increase the proficiency of the kill by hunting creatures to unlock the skill to use.>

Cost: <The user needs to increase the proficiency of the kill by hunting creatures to unlock the skill to use.>

Can be used: <The user needs to increase the proficiency of the kill by hunting creatures to unlock the skill to use.>

Condition to upgrade the skill: A legendary skill can't be upgraded without being mastered (Obtaining 100% proficiency) first.

—

'A weird skill... well, it's a legendary skill so it's bound to be abnormal.' Ashton thought as soon as he was greeted by the skill's useless description, 'Astaroth should explain about this in detail later. For now, I just wanna go home and sleep...'

Ashton had no doubt if someone else were to get their hands on a legendary skill, they would have lost their shit over it. But Ashton wasn't all that impressed, mainly because there wasn't much information given to him to be excited about it.

But the more he thought about it, the more uses he could think of the skill. Since he had gained immunity from any kind of fire damage, he could use the skill both offensive and defensively. And a multi-purpose skill could never be useless.

'I'll wonder about the skill later. First I need to look around a bit more and go back to Livan.'

He slowly got back to his feet, all the heat and pain he was experiencing vanished as soon as he 'tamed' [Seraph's Flames]. He stared at the hand that was holding the crystal, only to see the crystal had embedded itself in the palm of his hand.

Along with it, a black tattoo of flames appeared to be appearing out of the crystal encircled around his right hand. As for the rock that the crystal was once a part of, it was nowhere to be found. It was almost as if Ashton had absorbed it as well.

"It won't bite me huh..." Ashton taunted his administrator who so graciously screwed him over, "I guess you were telling the truth, after all, it burned me instead."

[Oh don't be a baby, you'll get over it. I had to make sure you get your hands on this first before anyone else.]

"You knew this... crystal or whatever it is, was here?"

[Nope. But when I saw that Gorillan creature use fire such fierce fire, I knew it had to be somewhere close.]

"I should stop listening to you blindly..."

[Brat you're alive because of me. Also, you have no idea what kind of power you have obtained. Hmm... we should think of a way to conceal it. If a Xyran happens to come across you now, it wouldn't end up good for us.]

"Yeah yeah, I'll ask baiter to make a glove or something to hide it." Ashton sighed and went deeper into the underground city the gorillan had built, "Aah, I never gave you a name, did I? Gokung... that should be good enough I think."

The gorillan seemed receptive to her new name, but since she was essentially a slave, she couldn't express herself.

Sadly, there wasn't much to look for in the breeding grounds of the Gorillan. Without the crystal and all the eggs scattered around, the cave-like place seemed a bit empty.

Ashton was hoping he would be able to replace the Nemean armour he lost to the flames, but it didn't seem like that was going to be the case.

"Tsk, it was a great armour. Looks like I'll have to start using the armour that Mera gave me last year. That is, till Baiter makes me a new armour."

[Someone'e here.]

"Must be those guild bastards. Fuckers might have left some spies around to watch me."

He wasn't sure whether that was the case or not, but he was sure the guild must have been keeping an eye on him as he had already sensed their presence, even though they were trying their best to suppress their presence.

Ashton was hoping they would do something like that so they'll get to know exactly who they have threatened.

But he never thought they would actually have the guts to approach him even after seeing how he took care of the Gorillan. It was possible they were thinking he was weak from all that fighting and thus was an easier target to bully or negotiate with? Only time would tell what they wanted.

[Don't you want to recall your summons?]

"What's the point? If they were following me, then they must already be aware of them. As things stand, I might as well make a welcoming committee for them."

[Right. Maybe you could kill them and increase the proficiency of the skill a bit?]

"We'll see."

A few seconds later, around a hundred men entered the underground cave. All of them had equipped the best gear they could afford, not to mention, that about a third of their party consisted of 'Tanks' who could take a high amount of damage.

Half of the remaining team seemed to have been filled by healers and mages, the rest were a variety of other classes of warriors. All in all, it didn't seem like they were there to talk.

'No, taking harsh action here without thinking things through might cause me unnecessary trouble.' Ashton threw out the thought of killing them... for now, "What are you people doing here?"

"We're the backup the guild master sent to help you in case you needed it." A man with wavy red hair donning a silver armour was the one to speak, "Guess you didn't need it, after all."

"Yeah, it got over faster than I expect." Ashton replied sheathing Balmond, "Since you're here, I'll leave the clean up you if it's not much trouble?"

"It wouldn't be a problem." The man replied before extending his arm in Ashton's direction, "The name's Cecil Swan from the noble house of Swan."

Ashton was about to ignore the man but when he told him his name, Ashton decided to shake his hand, "Swan? Hm, are you related to Anna somehow?"

"Oh, you know her? She happens to be my talented half-sister." Cecil enthusiastically replied.

,m "Yeah, we happened to share a few months back when I was attending the academy. I'll take my leave now if you don't mind."

"Please do, and thank you for your hard work."

Ashton nodded and left the cave. As soon as he was out of sight, Cecil's second-in-command grabbed Cecil by the shoulder.

"What was that? We were supposed to get rid of him!"

"Didn't you see?" Cecil replied.

"See what? The guild master will annihilate us for not doing as he asked!"

Cecil simply shook his head while smiling. It didn't matter why their guild master had deemed Ashton to be a threat, but their plan of killing him wouldn't have worked. No matter even if the entire guild was there to fight him.

"He isn't someone any of us can kill." Cecil replied, "Not even the guild master."

Chapter 260 On The Move (1)

[You're getting soft.]

"Do you want me to kill everyone that comes in my sights or something?" Ashton was getting a bit annoyed by Astaroth's remarks, "Sorry to disappoint you but if intimidation works then I have no reason to kill anyone."

Astaroth was reprimanding him for not killing those hundred werewolves, even though it was pretty sure they were there to get rid of him. The bloodlust leaking from them was enough proof for that.

Ashton had felt it too and yet he decided to let them go and for some reason, Astaroth could not seem to understand the motive behind doing so.

"Motive... hmm, you still haven't figured it out and you keep making fun of my intelligence?" Ashton laughed as he crossed the portal, "The reason is pretty obvious. Maybe you're too worked up to think about it yourself."

[Brat, just tell me already.]

"Fine, listen up. I let them go to find out the identity of the person who sent them."

[The person who sent them?]

"You don't really think those fuckers came up with the plan to attack me, do you?" Ashton smiled, "Even if they did, do you think someone among them would be able to gather 100 adventurers between levels 25 to 30 to do something like that?"

He continued, "Someone from within the guild must have gathered them up. If I had to guess it was the mysterious guild leader sending small fries to take care of me. I'll get rid of the Gorillan and they'll get rid of me. It would be the perfect end result for them."

"But since they did not attack me, let alone kill me, the person would not be happy and do something. When it happens, I'll find out why they did what they did and handle the situation accordingly. Simple."

Astaroth seemed to have calmed down a bit. He was still a bit sore since it was a great opportunity to gain some proficiency points for the legendary skill. But Ashton's approach seemed logical.

There were quite a few enemies of his who had gone into hiding because of his hasty action. Thus it was a better option to hide his cards and play them at a more suitable time.

[Fine. Do what you want to.]

"Come on, swallow your pride and accept your defeat for once."

It was Ashton's turn to mock the tenant giving inside his head. But since Astaroth stopped responding Ashton had to stop as well. Either way, he was already at Deja's branch of the adventurer's guild and Ashton wanted to handle some business there.

"Lord Ashton, please come in, the manager has been waiting for you." The receptionist said in the politest tone possible and led him to Marco's office.

The branch manager had a genuine smile on his face as soon as he saw Ashton. He practically threw his hand in front of Ashton, but the latter did not acknowledge him or his hand and took a seat on the sofa.

It was clear as day what Marco was trying to do. He wanted to sort out the mess the so-called guild master had created, but Ashton had no intention of acting buddy-buddy with anyone of them.

"I never thought you would be able to resolve such a big issue so easily... haha," Marco said with a smile and took a seat right across from Ashton, "It was a pleasant surprise when I heard the news."

"But I never informed anyone about defeating the gorillan. How did you get to know about it before I told anyone?" Ashton knew exactly how but he wanted to hear it from Marco.

"Ah... you see we appointed a few observers to watch over the situation as you know it was a really important matter for us to handle."

"You mean you sent over some spies to keep an eye on me."

Ashton had successfully pushed Marco into a corner and both of them knew about it. As much as Ashton had respected Marco when they first met, all of that respect went straight into the drain as soon as the guild thought they could threaten him and get away with it.

Now it was Ashton's turn to threaten them and he had no intention of backing down. But unlike them, he wasn't going to give them a direct threat.

"Well, it's a good thing you know what happened to me there." Ashton leaned back on the sofa while placing his feet on the table, "Now you'll be able to compensate me properly."

"Compensate...? I don't understand-"

,m "What's there to understand? I'm an adventurer who put his life on the line to protect the citizen of this kingdom. I think I should be compensated for nearly dying in the process, don't you agree?"

Marco turned his gaze away. Never in his life, he had thought a kid who wasn't even an adult yet would not only back him into a corner but would also keep on attacking him verbally. But he knew the guild master messed up so there wasn't much he could have done either way.

"I assume you have something in mind? As long as we are able to fulfil the request, I'll be more than happy to do so." Marco sighed.

"Excellent. Then how about a trade deal?"

"A trade?"

Ashton nodded politely before putting up a few pieces of equipment and weapons in front of Marco. The weapons ranged from melee weapons like swords and gauntlets to modern weapons like Hand cannons and explosives.

These were the weapons Ashton had asked Baiter to produce and keep ready. From the beginning, Ashton had never intended on using these weapons to take care of the gorillan, but to sell them to the guild at an absurdly high price, obviously.

"I think you're already aware of the havoc these weapons can unleash?" Ashton smirked, "So that's why I would like to sign a contract with the guild."

"Could I know the terms and conditions-"

"Of course, the guild branch of Lycania would buy weapons exclusively from me for five years at a non-negotiable price. Obviously, I would only supply high-end weapons to you. Also, if any unconquerable dungeon appears, I'll help you out with it, for a price of course."

Marco's bullshit meter was running in overdrive. But even then, getting his hands on weapons that were capable of obliterating night creatures was only for the best. The only thing he was worried about was the 'non-negotiable' price clause.

Ashton could very well rip them off and they wouldn't be able to do anything about it. Also, judging by what the spies informed him, stopping Ashton would require the entire guild spread across the lands of werewolves and vampires to come together.

Therefore, he could not afford to upset the kid any further or he would get fucked over by him.

"I-I accept."

"Great," Ashton enthusiastically replied, "Then, I'll leave these weapons here to serve as samples. Hope we can have a great relationship going ahead."

Saying so, Ashton got up and was about to leave but turned around at the last moment, "Since we now have a business relationship, allow me to give you some advice. Tell that guild master of yours to threaten people whom he can take care of. Not everyone is as tolerant as me."