

## Evolution 91

Chapter 91: The High Bishop.

The Shadow Realm...

Inside the top floor of the Inverse Sanctum, a suspended fortress from the ceiling of an endless obsidian chasm, a dignified man sat alone on a floating throne made out of thousands of harrowing bones.

Besides him and the throne, everything was affixed upside down, defying gravity and reason.

With color being nonexistent in the Shadow Dimension, the walls appeared duller than darkness, and the furniture bleaker than our future.

It seemed like the fortress was a living entity, as the walls breathed subtly, like old stone remembering pain.

As the dignified man cloaked in a darkness veil sat in silence, a sudden silhouette blinked next to his right side out of nowhere.

He was also covered with a darkness cape, hiding his figure and identity.

"High Bishop."

"Hmm."

"The Assembly has concluded in Heliodor's region."

"How did it go? Anything interesting?"

The High Bishop's voice was low and smooth, like oil sliding over stone. In contrast, his tone was deliberate and rhythmic...like each word was chosen not to communicate, but to control.

The hovering silhouette paused for a moment, and then he shared with a tint of dismay.

"The descendant has signed a contract and came first."

"Hmm?"

Although the High Bishop's expression couldn't be seen, his subordinate could tell that he was confused.

"How?"

"You have to see for yourself."

The shadowy silhouette went in front of his master with his head lowered. The High Bishop reached out with a finger and tapped him gently on the forehead.

The moment contact was made, all the information and scenes of the assembly flooded the Bishop's mind.

A second later, a soft crackle was emitted from his hidden lips.

"How fascinating..."

The silhouette kept his ears perked up in focus, believing that he would be ordered to take care of him. To his surprise, the High Bishop skipped over the subject and moved on like it meant nothing to him.

"How's Feng Ling's investigation going? Are you still in his line of sight?"

"He is still sniffing around our people, and it's starting to make the atmosphere tense in the agency." The silhouette reported.

"It's expected. You had the closest contact with the Harrowing Forest compared to the other agencies." The High Bishop nodded, unfazed.

"Do we do something to slow down his investigation or at least point his sword somewhere else?" The silhouette's eyes gleamed dangerously. "How about we release The Hound?"

"No, Feng Ling is powerful; The Hound won't be able to handle him alone," the High Bishop added coldly. "Plus, we have no time to deal with him... The Silent Convergence is upon us at last, and you are the only Pawn to have failed to deliver your full allocation of Refined Daywalkers' blood."

"Do you want to embarrass your master in the meeting?"

The mysterious silhouette felt a chill course down his spine at the Bishop's question. He realized that the Harrowing Forest's failure was much more serious than he thought.

The Bishop hadn't told him about any specific date... Now, he was pushing for one?

Too sloppy, too disorganized...

The mysterious silhouette wasn't too fond of how his master managed his side of the Organization... But, he kept those thoughts to himself, for he knew... he was nothing but a pawn in the Duskbound Order.

"Master, I will get you the refined blood." The mysterious silhouette's eyes gleamed icily. "Even if it means sacrificing my agency to make it happen."

"This is why you are one of my fondest pawns... Nothing is too much for you."

The tense atmosphere died out, and the High Bishop's pleased voice resounded in the Inverse Sanctum.

"I will start the preparations right away." The silhouette bowed his head.

"Good. It will be better if you pick a date matching the Morningstars' major expedition." The master informed.

"Consider it done."

Understanding what he implied, the silhouette nodded one last time and then disappeared as silently as he had appeared.

After he left, the dignified man gazed at the chandelier that had been flipped underneath him. It was crafted to perfection with black skulls and bones of many peculiar creatures and races. There were even some peculiar shimmering limbs floating in the middle of it.

Yet, a singular human skull took the crown as it was situated at the tip of the chandelier. Its eyes were glowing with an intense light that was strong enough to light up the entire chamber dimly.

"Even without his eyes, he still shines... The Radian blood runs deep, a hard thing to break. The Black Veil will love it for sure... She has been requesting high-quality eyes for over a millennium." The High Bishop's creepy smile widened. "I have saved this treasure for over a decade, awaiting this very moment..."

The High Bishop understood that the Silent Convergence was the only place and time where The Black Veil and all key members of the Duskbound Order gathered. It was also the only place where he could hand over the treasured eyes straight to the Black Veil, ensuring that all the credit goes to him.

In The Duskbound Order...Accomplishments were everything...Yet, at the same time, no one honored them.

The hierarchy was strict, and loyalty to anyone but the Black Veil was a rumor...From a Pawn to Bishops, Knights, or even Rooks.

Everyone desired to climb the organization's ladder, and the only way to do so was to steal accomplishments from below and mess with peers' major ploys from the shadows.

That's why the moment a Tier 7 monster was known to have interfered with their forest's massacre, the High Bishop assumed that it must be another High Bishop.

He knew exactly who...But he refrained from saying or doing anything. The Silent Convergence was near, and a united front must be presented to the Black Veil.

Still...

"Va'ren

... this debt of yours will be paid once I secure my promotion," the High Bishop intoned in a voice as cold as ice. His rise was all but assured...provided he delivered the treasured eyes, the other prized relics of flesh, and above all, the purified blood of Daywalkers...

The flesh and bone could be excused, but the blood was non-negotiable. Any disruption to his quota at such a pivotal moment could unravel everything he'd spent the last decade preparing...

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An hour later...

Levi and the rest of his friends were seated on a private rooftop of a restaurant in the central area of the capital.

The restaurant was one of the most exclusive in the entire region, with access granted only to high-ranking Daywalkers and other authoritative figures.

If it hadn't been owned by the Morningstars, Shia would have had a difficult time securing the rooftop, as it was reserved solely for them and their closest allies.

At that moment, Levi and the others were chatting and laughing around a long, carved wooden table piled with all sorts of food and drink. While everyone else talked about the assembly and their newly contracted nightcrawlers, Levi spoke directly to his.

"Kha'zun, I am very pleased that you have contracted with my little brother."

Levi smiled as he gazed at the obsidian-colored rhino. It was the same nightcrawler he had met many days ago, asking him for directions.

He hadn't expected to meet him again so soon... especially when he learned that Kha'zun was a Tier 5 nightcrawler of a Unique Specialization, focused mostly on physical strength.

He was the best option for Arthur to exceed his limitations and harness his full physical potential.

"The pleasure is mine, little one," Kha'zun replied gently. "I've been on the lookout for many years for someone who's cut out for my fighting style and powers."

"Oh, and Arthur fits it? You haven't seen much of his fights, though."

"What he demonstrated was enough, but I made up my mind mostly due to his weapon choice," Kha'zun said.

"The shield? You wanted a Daywalker with a shield?" Vash'Karul raised an eyebrow in surprise.

He was Rayan's contracted nightcrawler, a blend of wolf and hyena. His mouth was wide and filled with razor-sharp teeth, and his skin was striped with scarlet lines that ran down to his short, furless tail.

Aside from the scarlet fur around his neck...resembling a short mane...his frame was little more than skin and protruding bones; he was extremely lean.

"Yes, the shield is the only weapon that can harness my powers to their peak potential. Unfortunately, it is a very niche choice, making it extremely difficult for me to find a candidate who wields one while also specializing in enhancement."

"Then you sure have lucked out big time," Lir'Shaveth muttered, her voice as soft as falling snow on a quiet field.

She was Melissa's chosen nightcrawler, and she fit Melissa's gothic style to an uncanny degree. Her appearance was that of a small doll stitched with hundreds of colored patches of skin. Even her hair was thin and sparse, each strand stitched on individually. As for her eyes... they were brown shirt buttons with a faint, hazy glow.

While her hideous appearance made her resemble Frankenstein's monster, her antics and persona were the complete opposite.

Before Kha'zun could answer, a humanoid gray-furred mountain goat wearing a brown robe and wooden beads around his neck spoke calmly, "Luck is nothing but a façade... an illusion we whisper to comfort ourselves. In truth, fate and destiny govern all. They are the silent architects, threading every

motion, every failure, and every triumph through an unseen loom. We do not choose the moment our blade strikes true, nor the second we fall. The stars decided that long before we drew breath."

Hearing this, the silent and bored Ash'Kral couldn't help but scoff under his breath.

"What a shitty belief."