

Gods Daily 93

Chapter 93: The Various Factions

A vast number of Emperor Points dissolved into pure, surging energy.

Normally, such raw energy was something extremely difficult for an awakener to directly absorb. For most, it was like trying to drink molten iron—too much, too volatile, too destructive.

But for Aurek, the situation was different. Entirely different.

As the tide of energy poured into him, he could clearly feel his strength steadily rising. This was no flimsy, unstable surge either—it was a solid, incremental strengthening, the kind that built an unshakable foundation.

By now, Aurek had already come to understand deeply that his path of advancement bore no resemblance to that of ordinary awakeners.

For a normal awakener, once their internal energy exceeded the minimum threshold of their rank, they would immediately ascend, grasping eagerly at the chance for power. But Aurek had never followed that impatient road.

Instead, he would accumulate energy all the way to the maximum threshold of a rank, waiting until he absolutely could not suppress the breakthrough any longer. Only then would he ascend.

This difference was enormous. The gap between a level's lower limit and upper limit was not small—sometimes it could be several times greater. And yet Aurek chose this "foolish" path, the most energy-consuming, the slowest, the most punishing.

The only reason he could afford it was because he had access to Emperor Points, which could be directly transformed into usable energy. Without them, he might have never reached Expert Rank in this lifetime, let alone progressed further.

And now, with wave after wave of Emperor Points pouring into him, his power surged.

In a single leap, Aurek reached Expert Rank Lv.9, his aura thick and unshakable. Already, his essence was beginning to hammer against the threshold of Hero Rank!

Meanwhile, far away in Eryndor City, along the bustling Maple Leaf Avenue, shadows stirred.

A hurried figure darted into a narrow alley, breathless, his face pale.

"Master, something major has happened!"

His voice trembled as he delivered the news:

"According to our latest intelligence, Manhattan City, along with the Manhattan Legion, has been completely destroyed!"

"All the mercenaries—every single one of them—were slaughtered overnight. Even the first Chairman himself was killed, his body left amid the smoking ruins of Manhattan City!"

The messenger's eyes burned with dread as he added, "From what we've gathered, the culprits were a group of black-armored soldiers, numbering in the hundreds. They carried with them an aura of destruction... eerily similar to the black soldiers who annihilated the Hyrule War Academy only days ago."

It did not take long for other factions to receive word of the Manhattan Legion's downfall.

Their reactions were remarkably consistent: shock, fear, silence.

Yet despite the enormity of the news, these factions kept it confined to limited circles. Whether intentionally or instinctively, they all chose to maintain a temporary secrecy.

But behind closed doors, their minds churned with unease.

The question gnawed at them: just how terrifying were these black-armored soldiers?

They all remembered the destruction of the Hyrule War Academy. Many faction leaders had personally witnessed that devastation with their own eyes. And that had been the work of ten black soldiers.

Now imagine hundreds.

The thought alone made these leaders toss and turn through sleepless nights. It was like a Damocles' sword, suspended above their necks, ready to fall without warning.

No one knew when it might be their head on the chopping block.

Whispers spread: "Truly, His Majesty Aurek is terrifying. Though still so young, his methods conceal the sky itself and deceive all who watch."

"We thought he struck the War Academy in a fit of impulse... but in reality, his true target was the Manhattan Legion all along!"

The realization made the older faction heads tremble. Compared to Aurek's cunning and boldness, they felt like mere fledgling youths.

Aurek had staged the War Academy assault as a dazzling distraction, a spectacle to fix every pair of eyes upon him.

Then, in the shadows, he unleashed his true weapon, erasing one of the Empire's greatest powers without leaving so much as a whisper.

The strike was not only decisive—it was ruthless. And the timing? Flawless.

"No wonder," one leader muttered, "this Aurek cannot be lumped in with those useless puppet emperors we've seen before."

In the days that followed, the waves of consequence spread.

The mighty Sapphire Bank quietly retreated, shifting its entire Eryndor City business into the hands of Josephine.

Natasha of the Black Dagger assassins held private talks with Josephine, after which she recalled nearly every assassin from Eryndor City.

The Kazek Family and the Clover Auction House, however, chose to remain firm, unmoved for now. Yet even here, subtle changes were stirring. Chairman Kafka's arrangements regarding Vivian seemed to be shifting in unexpected ways.

The Tarrith School of Magic proved less cautious. Under the guise of "academic exchanges," they continued sending scholars and mages into Eryndor City, trying to expand their foothold.

Meanwhile, the Unicorn Trading Guild, after suffering humiliation in earlier events, took a shockingly rare stance—they turned a blind eye altogether and fully withdrew from the Crossbridge Empire. Their abrupt retreat immediately drew the attention of many watchers.

Of course, when one force departs, another will inevitably arrive.

The influence of Duke Frostborne had already begun to stretch its fingers into Eryndor City. From the Blue Lake Province, Count Maha and the House of Ister dispatched agents to probe for information.

And from farther lands still, envoys came trickling in—the Swordsmen's Alliance, the frigid halls of the Frost Valley, even the shadowed envoys of Black Dragon City.

All sought to test the winds, to glimpse what tide was rising within the Crossbridge Empire.

Within mere days, the full horror of Manhattan City's ruin spread across the continent.

The great factions trembled. None had ever imagined such a powerful city could be erased so completely, so silently.

To those who had once bared fangs at Aurek, unease settled like a lead weight in their chests.

The Killer Guild in particular felt their hearts quake. They had already been marked—Aurek himself had declared that their annihilation was only a matter of time.

Now, with the Manhattan Legion and its Leap Mercenary Corps wiped out, with Manhattan City itself reduced to rubble, what hope could the Killer Guild truly cling to?

Within their halls, unease boiled over. Endless meetings were convened, their high-ranking members hurling questions back and forth:

"Where did Aurek obtain those black-armored soldiers?"

"Which great faction is secretly backing him? Someone must be pulling strings in the dark!"

But no one offered an answer. Silence stretched across the chamber.

Then, from the corner of the room, a man who had gone unnoticed until then spoke calmly, his words like daggers.

"Actually... none of that matters. Whether it is black soldiers or hidden assassins, these things are not worth our worry."

The room turned toward him, frowns deepening.

"Because this time... Elder Bloodblade intends to personally take action."

The atmosphere shifted instantly.

The Killer Guild's upper echelon broke into smiles, relief washing over them like a sudden dawn. The shadows clouding their expressions vanished in an instant.

For Elder Bloodblade was no ordinary figure.

He was not part of the Guild's current ruling council. He was their hidden trump card, their silent blade sheathed in darkness.

For fifty long years, Elder Bloodblade had not shown his face. Many had even whispered that he had died in seclusion.

But now, because of Aurek, he would re-emerge.

And fifty years ago, Elder Bloodblade had already reached half-step Master Rank.

Which begged the question—after half a century of hidden cultivation, just how far had his strength risen?