

Paragon 201

Chapter 201 - 201: Sending A Distress Signal [Bonus]

While the world was in shock over the images Klaus posted, the main instigator was still seated somewhere in the Demon's Abode. He sat on a stone tablet in the fire region, specifically in the territory of the Fox Devil he had killed.

The diagram he used to temper his body in the second region was still active, baking his body in a process that seemed incredibly painful. He had been enduring it for the past five days, with no sign of it stopping anytime soon.

But despite the intense heat, Klaus never made a sound as he let the flames temper his body. After another half day, the fire's effect started to fade. Feeling it wasn't working on him anymore, he stood up and began walking around the fire region, hoping to get lucky again like he did when he found the fire tulip.

"I need to find a pack of wolves soon. In a few hours, the blood moon will rise, and they'll be at their strongest. That'll give me the perfect opportunity to train more effectively," he muttered to himself.

After six hours of searching and finding nothing, Klaus left the fire region. He then fed a core to the Dragon, which became several times stronger after absorbing it.

Klaus wasn't sure how many fire cores he would need to unlock a skill from the Dragon, so for now, he could only rely on his next tribulation. He hoped the Fire Dragon might also absorb the core runes of lightning when the time came unlocking at least one additional skill.

After coming back to a new hideout in a much calmer and serene environment, a stark contrast to the fire region, he began to mediate for the next few hours. He stayed seated in meditation for a while before leaving, headed toward a region he'd picked from the map.

His goal was to reach at least level 10 before returning. The requirement for the Union Trial was to be at the bottleneck of the Master stage, and he needed to make sure he was ready.

Aoi Hiroshi had already told him that after the Union Trial, they would be given a new form of Mountain Dew, one that has an even stronger effect than the version they received for the City and Regional Trials.

Even though Klaus didn't really need the Dew, he still wanted to try it. Maybe it would have some effect on him. At first, he has only been thinking about helping his mom with the dew, but not anymore.

After he woke up from his coma, the woman he knew as his mother had become much more beautiful and younger, and her assets were more pronounced. Klaus was happy about the change and figured he wouldn't need to force the Dew on her again.

She has also started to level up, which was something he was incredibly happy about.

He stumbled upon a horde of Human-Faced Spider Demons, and without waiting for an invitation, he began another slaughter. It lasted for two whole hours, but by the end, he'd managed to secure over 60% of the experience points needed for his next level-up.

Feeling satisfied, Klaus went back to rest for a while before preparing for his next hunt. It would be in about four hours when the blood moon would finally appear.

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Far from Klaus, within the territory of the Darkblood Demon Zombies, ten thousand Tier 6 Zombie Generals each standing three meters tall, their twisted, rotten, and jagged physiques making them look grotesque casting an ominous look across the region. Beside them also stood a thousand Tier 7 Zombie Kings, each one resembling a nightmare brought to life.

They stood surrounding a large platform where seven other zombies could be seen standing atop massive pillars.

Suddenly, the heavens began to turn red as the moon revealed its gaze. The moment it appeared, the pillars showed signs of awakening.

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Back in Klaus's resting area, he opened his eyes and smiled as the heavens began to change color. He stepped out of the cave, ready to head to the location he had marked for the wolves when something caught his attention—a series of red beams shooting into the sky, illuminating the area.

Though he was several miles away, he could see the beams clearly. Soon after, he noticed streams of red energy rising from all over the forest, heading toward the Seven Pillars of Light.

"Senior, what is happening?" Klaus asked curiosity and concern in his voice.

"A blood moon ritual. How interesting. Who would have thought a world like yours would have such a ritual? Brat, it's best if you leave this forest within the next hour," the senior replied, causing Klaus to frown.

"Senior, please tell me what's going on," he pressed again, seeking more information.

"Brat, this is a forbidden ritual, a very sinister one used to create forbidden beings," the senior said. "If I'm not mistaken—and of course, I never am—this ritual is meant to create a dangerous variant of zombies. By the time it's over, every monster in this forest will be dead, and judging by those red lights, seven powerful zombies will emerge.

By then, it'll be too late for you to leave."

Klaus felt a shudder run down his spine at the thought. All monsters would be dead, who would be crazy enough to come up with something this twisted and sinister?

"But why am I not being affected?" he asked. He could sense every monster around him losing their life force, yet he remained unharmed.

"That's because you don't have Spiritual Qi running through you. Once again, your Star Qi has saved you. But you need to leave now and call for the immediate extermination of this region before the ritual finishes."

"How much time do I have?" Klaus asked urgency in his voice.

The senior's voice was grave as he responded, "You have less than an hour. Once the ritual reaches its peak, it'll be impossible to stop. Those seven zombies will be unlike anything you've faced before."

"Then it's a good thing I'm here," Klaus said with a smirk. He took out his phone and dialed a number. Shortly after, Hanna's face appeared on the screen.

"Klaus, are you okay?" Hanna asked, concern clear in her voice.

"All good," Klaus replied casually. "By the way, you wouldn't happen to know how to send a distress signal using the tracking watch, would you?"

"There is a way, but why do you ask?" Hanna's curiosity grew.

"Let's just say something bad is happening in the Demon's Abode, and if I don't address it quickly, Arcadian City's gonna be in some serious trouble again," Klaus said, his tone more serious.

"Pull up the info system on the watch. There should be a button to send a distress signal. It'll be received by all warriors in the cities in the Eastern Region," Hanna explained without further questions, seeing the urgency in Klaus's expression.

"Thanks, big sister. I'll catch you later." Klaus hung up and immediately accessed the info system. Within moments, the distress signal process appeared on the screen.

"Severity? Hmm, let's go with 'very dangerous,'" Klaus muttered as he selected the option and sent the signal.

"Brat, what are you doing?" the senior asked as Klaus began moving quickly toward the ritual site.

"Well, Senior, someone has to stop them before the ritual reaches its peak," Klaus said without slowing down. He was already speeding toward the danger. Soon, his phone rang again, and he answered it.

"Klaus, what's happening? I just received your distress signal," the War Goddess, Miriam, asked, her voice laced with concern.

"Big sister Miriam, how long will it take for reinforcements to reach the Demon's Abode?" Klaus asked in return.

"Forty-five minutes, tops, if they're coming from Arcadian City," she answered.

"Then you'd better hurry. Some dangerous shit is going down with these zombies, and I don't think I can handle it alone," Klaus said, his usual confidence wavering slightly.

"Klaus, don't do anything reckless," Miriam warned, sensing the madness in his eyes.

"Don't worry, my love. Nothing dangerous will happen," Klaus replied with a wink, though the War Goddess was too concerned to notice how he called her.

"I'll get there as fast as I can," she promised.

Klaus kept moving, and within ten minutes, the scene of the ritual came into view.

"Now, that is just nasty," he muttered, disgust clear on his face. Thousands of hearts were laid at the base of each pillar, creating a gruesome display that made him want to vomit. All around the area, dangerous zombies stood guard, each holding menacing weapons, or their arms twisted into weapons, their eyes fixed on one of the pillars.

At the top of that particular pillar stood a figure—a woman, though clearly a zombie, she looked more human than the grotesque creatures surrounding her. With just one glance, Klaus recognized her cultivation level.

"A Zombie Emperor," he whispered, his eyes narrowing.

Chapter 202 - 202: The Red Moon Ritual [Bonus]

"Overlord, there's a Category Three distress signal from the Demon's Abode," a voice announced suddenly. Inside the meeting room, where the eight Overlords had held their awkward meeting a few days ago, the Cold Lady was sitting comfortably. Her calm was quickly interrupted when a holographic projection of a woman appeared before her.

"Who issued it?" she asked, her voice sharp.

"Klaus Hanson," the woman replied, causing a flicker of emotion to pass across the Cold Lady's face.

"Which of the Protectors is nearby?" she asked urgently.

"War Goddess Miriam. She's already on her way," the woman informed her, prompting the Cold Lady to let out a relieved sigh.

"Keep me updated on any further developments," she instructed. "And direct the satellite to monitor the Demon's Abode. Don't share the footage outside of this room," she added firmly.

The projected lady bowed, and shortly after, the large screen in the room lit up, displaying the live situation inside the Demon's Abode.

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Back inside the Demon's Abode, Klaus stood still as the zombie lady began to speak. "Everyone, I won't say much, but after the ritual, we march toward the city that the Volttox idiots failed to conquer. We will take it, and show the Empress we are worthy to join her immediate army.

Fear not, the DarkBlood Demon Zombie is about to dominate the world alongside the Zombie Empress!"

Klaus shuddered. He knew all too well that this wasn't going to end well. He had fought during the Invasion at Arcadian City, and he had seen the countless lives lost. Hearing this plan, he realized just how catastrophic things could get if the ritual succeeded.

"Senior, how do I stop the ritual?" Klaus asked, his voice tense.

"It's already started, and from the look of things, these pillars have generated some kind of forcefield. You'll need to destroy the dome first, then the pillars, all within the next 20 minutes," the senior replied, making Klaus frown deeply.

"That's impossible. There are thousands of Zombie Generals and Kings. How am I supposed to get past them all?" Klaus asked, frustration creeping into his tone.

"That's your problem, brat. If you don't destroy the pillars within the next 20 minutes, there won't be another chance. Unless, of course, you have the power to take on mutated Zombies," the senior added, making Klaus frown even harder.

"I'll still have to try. If they succeed, with this army, they'll use Arcadian City as a stepping stone to impress this mysterious Zombie Empress," Klaus muttered, not bothering to dwell too much on the mention of the Empress.

His task was clear: destroy the pillars. But first, he had to break through the forcefield. And to do that, he'd have to get past the thousands of zombies guarding the area.

"For the first time, I'm really at my last leg," Klaus admitted to himself. He didn't have a plan, and even his trump cards wouldn't do much in this situation. He is also too weak to compare to the danger the senior was on about about this ritual.

"Still, I have to do something," he whispered, clenching his fists. No matter how grim it looked, he wasn't going to stand back and let the world fall.

"Well, these are experience points waiting to be harvested," Klaus chuckled, surveying the line of Zombies standing on the battlefield, ready to be taken down.

He moved discreetly toward the ritual ground. As he got closer, he noticed some monsters already on their last legs, their bodies evaporating as they were drained by whatever dark magic the Zombies were using. The sight fueled his determination.

Using his senses, he examined the ritual ground and spotted various symbols drawn into the dirt, glowing ominously. "How is this even possible? They're Zombies for fuck's sake," he muttered, disbelief lacing his tone as he took in the gruesome setup that was siphoning the life force from the creatures in the Demon's Abode.

"I have to end this as quickly as I can," Klaus said to himself, moving closer. He still had some distance to cover if he wanted his attack to maximize damage. He could feel the tension building within him, a fire that urged him to act.

"Senior, if I detonate the Dragon, will its energy drop?" Klaus asked, his mind racing with possibilities.

"No, it will only drop if it's killed. However, detonating it will drain your Star Qi," the senior replied, a hint of reassurance in their tone. Klaus smiled, a plan forming in his mind.

With his first strategy in place, Klaus felt a surge of confidence. He would detonate the Dragon near the Zombie Kings, hoping to take out a few of them in the blast.

Then, for the Zombie Generals, he would use the Ice Lotus, knowing they wouldn't be able to counter much. After that, he planned to unleash the Void Piercing Needle, taking out as many as he could before engaging in close combat.

After the detonation, Klaus knew there would be enough residue of ice and fire essence in the air to help him move faster. With his talent as a Celestial Elemental Overlord, he could use even the tiniest bits of ice or fire essence to boost his speed.

"I just hope these two detonations will help me level up. I need those 400 points," Klaus muttered, aware he was walking a fine line here.

"Senior, karma aside, what kind of zombies will come out of this ritual?" He had to know.

The senior sighed, knowing this would bite him in the ass during Klaus's next tribulation. But he had to tell him. "They're called Blood Princes. They're zombies born from blood under the red moon."

"Cool name. What about their powers? Care to give me a heads-up?" Klaus asked.

"They'll be at least ten times stronger than the five devils you've already killed." Klaus shuddered at that thought.

He gulped, imagining the chaos ahead. He had used decisive methods to kill the fire devils, but he knew that wouldn't work here. There were thousands of zombies he had to deal with first. If his instincts were right, he'd be up against six Blood Princes and probably a Blood Queen too. The thought made his stomach churn.

"Miriam, please hurry up!" Klaus clenched his fist, urgency flooding through him as he moved toward the point where the two attacks would be unleashed. Time felt like it was slipping away, and he needed to be ready.

"Brat, make sure you don't bite off more than you can chew. These zombies aren't like the ones you faced before," the senior warned, his tone firm. Klaus nodded, knowing the truth in those words. He had survived before, but this felt different. The stakes were higher, and he couldn't afford to make mistakes.

"This better work," Klaus muttered. He sighed as a dragon and an Ice Lotus appeared in the air. At the same time, he felt his Star Qi being drained. The lotus absorbed some energy, while the dragon took its share as well.

"Go!" He pointed forward. The Zombie generals and kings around him sensed the new presence. They all growled, watching the dragon and the Ice Lotus approach them.

"This better work," Klaus muttered again, watching the two attacks get closer. This time, he didn't smile. Instead, a serious expression crossed his face as he snapped his fingers.

"Explode!"

On one side, a blinding flash of crimson fire erupted, its wave washing over everything. On the other side, the Ice Lotus detonated, freezing everything in its path.

"Now!" Klaus shouted as the Void Piercing Needle shot forward. The next moment was chaos—ice shattered, and blood sprayed everywhere as the Zombies howled in pain from the burns of fire and ice.

"Nice one, brat!"

Chapter 203 - 203: Killing With Lethal Precision

The plan was simple: use the Ice Lotus Bloom to attack the Tier 6 Zombies, a method Klaus had already tested and proven effective. After that, the Chaotic Nirvana Flame, flowing through the Dragon, would be unleashed to deal with the more powerful Tier 7 Zombies.

Klaus had bet everything on this one massive explosion. Now, standing amidst the destruction, he felt a wave of satisfaction. The explosion wiped out over 40% of the Zombies on both sides, instantly allowing Klaus to level up to Level 7.

Without hesitation, he allocated the 400 points he had earned straight to his Agility. Klaus knew speed would be his greatest asset. He needed to move quickly to keep the remaining Zombies at bay until reinforcements arrived.

"Human, you dare!" The voice of the Lady Zombie standing atop one of the pillars echoed across the battlefield. After the explosion, Klaus had begun systematically taking down Zombies with his Void Piercing Needle. The Lady Zombie, still glaring at him from the top of her pillar started to shout furiously.

Klaus on the other had just smirked. He knew she couldn't leave the pillar until her ritual was complete, so her threats were empty for now. He didn't bother replying, focusing instead on thinning out the horde. The Void Piercing Needle required little Star Qi, which made it the perfect weapon for this moment. All he needed was mental strength, something he had been honing throughout his battles.

With every flicker of his mind, the needle darted through the air, piercing the heads of Zombies. Some had already died in the explosion, but those farther away had managed to survive. However, many of them weren't quick enough to escape the reach of the needle.

The explosion had been more powerful than Klaus had expected, giving him a significant advantage. He pushed his mental strength to the limit, focusing on the Tier 6 Zombies first. They had less awareness of their surroundings, making them easier targets. The needle effortlessly tore through them, one after another.

"Human, I will skin you alive!" the Lady Zombie screeched again, her voice filled with fury as she watched her subordinates get slaughtered one by one. Her eyes blazed with anger, but she was powerless to act, still bound to her ritual on the pillar.

In response, Klaus merely raised his middle finger, a smirk tugging at his lips. He didn't waste time with words. Instead, he focused on the task at hand, continuing to kill as quickly as he could.

"You guys should stay at bay now," Klaus muttered under his breath. With a flick of his wrist, the Bellof Harrows appeared before him, its chime echoing across the battlefield. The sound was more than just noise—it carried a powerful sonic wave, combined with a soul attack, aimed directly at the Tier 7 Zombies. He needed to hold them back just long enough to finish off the weaker ones.

Every five seconds, the Bell rang out, each toll sending a wave of force that kept the Zombie Kings at bay. It gave Klaus the time he needed, making the slaughter of the Tier 6 Zombies far more efficient.

Blood splattered across the ground, staining the ice left behind by the explosion. The battlefield was a gruesome sight, littered with bodies. Within two minutes, 70% of the Tier 6 Zombies had been wiped out, leaving only a small percentage still standing.

"Not fast enough," Klaus muttered to himself, frustration creeping into his voice. His sword materialized in his hand, gleaming in the dim light. Without hesitation, he moved. In one swift, fluid motion, several heads flew into the air, severed cleanly by his blade.

His sword flashed through the air, moving faster than the eye could follow. Each strike was lethal, each swing precise. Heads continued to roll as the Void Piercing Needle continued its deadly work alongside his blade, darting through the battlefield and finishing off any Zombies left standing.

Klaus's movements were a blur, a dance of death as he carved his way through the remaining Zombies. The combination of his sword and needle made him unstoppable, his attacks relentless. He didn't give

the Zombies a chance to recover or regroup. Every time one moved, it was met with a swift, merciless end.

The battlefield had become a slaughterhouse, with blood pooling on the frozen ground. Klaus showed no sign of slowing down, his determination burning brighter with each kill. The Tier 6 Zombies, though numerous, were no match for his speed and skill.

Above him, the Lady Zombie watched helplessly, her anger turning to desperation. She could only scream and shout from her pillar, unable to stop the massacre happening before her eyes.

Klaus didn't care about her threats. His mind was focused solely on clearing the battlefield. The faster he could eliminate these Zombies, the sooner he could turn his attention to the real challenge: the Tier 7 Zombies, who were still waiting, held back by the Bell of Harrow's sonic waves.

"Human, stop what you are doing! Do you want to offend the Zombie Empress? Let me tell you, your so-called Overlords are no match for her!" the Lady Zombie shouted again, her voice filled with arrogance and desperation.

Klaus couldn't help but smirk at her words. "Keep running your mouth. After I'm done with these idiots, I'll make sure to wipe that smug look off your face," he muttered under his breath, his tone calm and unwavering as he continued to cut through the hordes of Zombies.

He showed no mercy. Every swing of his sword and flick of the Void Piercing Needle resulted in another kill. The battlefield was chaotic, but Klaus thrived in the madness. His movements were swift and calculated, his attacks leaving no room for the Zombies to fight back. He knew adding the 400 points to agility was the right move.

"Just a few more," The senior who had been against the idea of him entering this fight this time still didn't let the moment slide without praising him and encouraging him to keep on.

Klaus's lips curled into a slight smile at the sound of his senior's voice. Right now, he couldn't care less about some unknown Zombie Empress. He knew that, sooner or later, he would face her. But at this moment, his focus was on staying alive long enough to deal with the 540 Tier 7 Zombies he was keeping at bay.

"If I manage to pull this off, I'm definitely taking a vacation," Klaus muttered to himself. The reality of the situation was grim—500-plus Tier 7 Zombies were far too many for someone like him, a mere Tier 3 human. By all logic, he should have been crushed under such overwhelming odds.

But Klaus was anything but normal. In many ways, he was an anomaly, a fighter who always rose to the occasion. To him, this was just another challenge to overcome. Looking at the staggering odds, Klaus knew he'd have to fight harder than ever, but there wasn't an ounce of fear in him.

"I need to level up faster if I'm going to break through this force field," he muttered, slashing his way through the bloody battlefield. His sword cut through Zombie after Zombie, each kill bringing him closer to his goal.

"Brat, if you survive this and break through to the Grandmaster stage, your strength, and Star Qi will increase greatly," his senior's voice echoed in his mind. "These Zombies have a unique aura that will enhance your Star Qi if you absorb it properly."

"Now that's what I like to hear," Klaus said with a grin, feeling a surge of motivation.

"You just have to survive this battle," his senior added a subtle tone of care in his voice. Klaus's smile widened. He knew the senior wasn't just giving him advice—he was showing concern in his own way, reminding Klaus that this was hard, but not impossible.

The battlefield around him was a gruesome sight. Blood painted the ice and dirt, and bodies of fallen Zombies piled high.

"And it's a wrap" Klaus smirked as the Void Piercing Arrow pierces the last Zombie General. He has some blood on him, but he wasn't injured, they are the blood of the zombies. Next, the Zombie Kings...

Chapter 204 - 204: Surrounded By Zombie Kings

"Explode"

The Ice Lotus exploded once more, freezing the entire region where the Tier 7 Zombies stood. The frost spread like wildfire, encasing everything in a sheet of glistening ice. Klaus watched for a split second, taking in the devastation, but he couldn't let his guard down.

The Bell had already drained 20 percent of his Star Qi just to keep the Zombies at bay, and now, detonating the Ice Lotus had cost him another 10 percent. His Star Qi reserves were dwindling, and he knew he couldn't afford to waste any more energy.

"I need all the help I can get," Klaus muttered under his breath. In an instant, the Dragon appeared in the sky above him. Its massive form coiled in the air before it slashed its tail, sending sharp arcs of fire toward the frozen Zombies.

The flames cut through them like a blade through butter, turning many into nothing more than charred remains.

Klaus smirked as he looked up at the Lady Zombie, still perched on her pillar, helpless. "You see this? This is how I decimate your precious army that you're counting on to invade my human cities." His voice was cold and confident, mocking her as her forces crumbled before him.

But there was no time to savor the moment. Klaus moved swiftly, activating the Lotus Flower again, its icy petals blooming around him, and simultaneously activating the Absolute Ice Domain. The domain spread out in a flash, covering the battlefield in an aura of freezing energy.

Inside the domain, Klaus felt his body lighten. His movements became faster, his reflexes sharper. This was his advantage—speed. He needed it to keep the Zombies at bay while conserving what little Star Qi he had left.

The Bell continued to toll, its deep chime echoing across the frozen battlefield. The sound waves, combined with the Dragon's fiery attacks, were holding the Tier 7 Zombies back, but Klaus knew he couldn't rely on them forever. He had to take the offensive.

With his sword in hand, Klaus darted through the battlefield, his blade cutting down any Zombie that crossed his path. Heads rolled, bodies collapsed, and blood stained the ice below.

All around him, Klaus was surrounded by Zombies, each one aiming to take his life. Their eyes glowed with hunger, and their decayed hands reached out to tear him apart. But he wasn't alone. His summoned Dragon was doing more than just holding them back.

"It seems I really underestimated the Chaotic Nirvana Flame," Klaus muttered, watching as the Dragon unleashed arcs of fire, reducing the Zombies to ash.

The intense heat from its flames lit up the battlefield, sending smoke and embers swirling into the air. The Dragon moved swiftly, its fiery attacks obliterating any Zombie that got too close.

Though the Dragon was helping, Klaus wasn't having an easy time. His heart raced, and his body ached from the constant swinging and slashing. It was nerve-wracking to be surrounded by so many enemies, each several Tiers above him. A Tier 3 human against hundreds of Tier 7 Zombies, that was just ridiculous.

He clenched his sword tightly, determined to keep going. His plan was simple: hold on for as long as he could, no matter what.

"At this rate, I'll run out of Star Qi," Klaus muttered again, his eyes darting to the Dragon, the Ice Lotus, and the Bell of Harrows. These powerful skills were draining his energy faster than he had anticipated. He could feel his Star Qi dwindling with every moment, like sand slipping through his fingers.

He knew he had to act fast. If he could hold on just a little longer, he might be able to level up to level 8. That would restore his Star Qi and strengthen his other stats.

But that was a big "if." Before that could happen, he first had to kill more Tier 7 Zombies to gain the experience points needed. Time was running out, and the pressure was mounting.

Convincing himself he could kill all the Zombie Kings before the ritual ended was easier said than done. The Zombies kept coming, relentless and fierce. He was surrounded, and the odds were stacked against him. But Klaus had made up his mind. He wasn't going to back down. Not now.

He glanced at the red sky above. The ritual had already begun, and he could feel the sinister energy swirling in the air, thick and oppressive.

The Zombie Kings were gathering, and Klaus knew he had to finish them before the ritual was complete, or the consequences would be dire. That was the plan—end them before it was too late.

"The idiots are endless," Klaus muttered as he continued killing, but there were just too many Zombies coming. Thankfully, inside his Absolute Ice Domain, his speed was boosted, and he became much stronger. Yet, the question lingered—how long could he hold on?

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It had already been ten minutes since the battle started between Klaus and the Zombies in the Demon's Abode Forbidden Zone. The Zombies kept coming in waves, relentless and tireless. Klaus knew he was strong, but even his strength had limits.

Meanwhile, warriors and the military were mobilizing in Arcadian City and other nearby cities. Their destination? The Demon's Abode.

Klaus's distress signal had been sent out to all the warriors with tracking watches, something they received when they first entered a forbidden zone as part of a team. Now, they were all heading toward the forbidden zone to help him.

The journey would take a little over forty minutes, but they were moving as fast as they could. Every second counted. They knew Klaus was strong, but no one could fight forever, not even him.

Dave Arcadian, the leader of Arcadian City, was at the front of the charge, as always. He understood the stakes. His city, still under defensive construction, couldn't withstand another attack, especially if the battle spilled over from the forbidden zone. That's why he was racing toward the danger, his mind focused on both saving Klaus and protecting the city.

Alongside Dave, other Sages and powerful warriors moved with him. They knew the weight of what was happening. This wasn't just about Klaus. The entire Eastern Region could be affected if they didn't stop whatever was happening in the Demon's Abode.

Across the region, warriors from various cities were heading toward the Forbidden Zone. Some were moving in armored vehicles, while others flew in combat helicopters. Those in the air had a clear advantage and would reach the Zone faster.

But not everyone needed a vehicle. Some individuals were faster than jets, and one such person was the War Goddess Miriam.

Far from the Demon's Abode, she soared through the sky, moving faster than the wind could carry her. Her long black hair flowed behind her as she sped toward the Zone. She was coming from Ross City, which is very far from the Demon's Abode Forbidden Zone. But as soon as she received Klaus's distress signal, she didn't hesitate—she rushed out, determined to reach him.

"Klaus, hold on. Big Sister is coming," she muttered as she flew. Her mind drifted back to a painful memory—the Arcadian Mine Invasion. Back then, Klaus had died in front of her, and she couldn't save him in time. That moment had shattered her, leaving her filled with guilt and regret.

Klaus had been out for seventy-two days, and like everyone else, she had cried for him. It was strange for someone like her, known for being cold, ruthless, and emotionless. Yet, when Klaus died, tears had fallen from her eyes. It was a rare sight, one that left everyone in shock, but no one judged or dare teased her.

Now, as she sped toward Klaus, she was determined not to let history repeat itself. She couldn't bear to lose him again. Her heart wouldn't survive another moment of failure, no matter how hard she tried to remain unmoved by Klaus's grins and shameless remarks. Deep down, he had found a way into her guarded heart.

Klaus had entered the deepest part of her heart. So she knew she wouldn't be able to shake off the feeling of seeing him dead again in her arms.

"Just hold on, Klaus," she muttered again, pushing herself to fly even faster. She had to reach him in time this time around.

Chapter 205 - 205: Hard Pressed

Inside the meeting room for the Overlords, the Cold Expressionly Lady watched the screen displaying Klaus's battle with the Zombie Kings. Her usual icy demeanor had softened, showing hints of shock, respect, and something else that couldn't be pointed out.

"This kid is something else," she muttered to herself.

Suddenly, the door opened, and a redhead with a fiery gaze entered the room. Her eyes immediately locked on the screen—or more precisely, on Klaus, who was fighting within his ice domain.

"What are you doing here, Nari? Shouldn't you be off exploring the Ancient Ruin?" the Cold Lady asked her tone a mix of curiosity and slight annoyance.

"Tsk, I can't just leave without saying goodbye," Nari said with a teasing smirk. "But hey, who would've thought the mighty leader of the Overlords would turn out to be a stalker?"

"Who's a stalker? I just wanted to keep track of things," the Cold Lady replied, her voice firm, though the faintest hint of a smile touched her lips.

Nari's grin widened. "Uh-huh, 'keeping track' looks a lot like watching Klaus's every move."

The Cold Lady shook her head. "He's in the middle of an important battle. It's natural to monitor the situation."

"Sure, sure," Nari teased, crossing her arms. "But still, you have to admit, Klaus is holding his own out there. He's growing stronger every day."

The Cold Lady nodded slightly, her gaze still fixed on the screen. "He is. But the enemies he's facing aren't ordinary either. This battle could be his breaking point."

"Or it could be what pushes him to the next level," Nari added. "He's not the type to back down, not after everything he's been through." Nari in her attempt to be a perfect wingman has researched a lot on Klaus instead of doing her duty as an Overlord. They both are stalkers in a way

The Cold Lady remained silent, her thoughts drifting. She had watched Klaus from a distance for a while now, and though she wouldn't admit it out loud, there was something about him that intrigued her.

His determination, his strength, the way he faced impossible odds, and well, his handsomeness. There is just something about him she couldn't quite place her finger on.

"Anyway, I'm heading out soon," Nari said, breaking the silence. "But before I go, you should probably admit it."

"Admit what?" the Cold Lady asked, her voice cool.

"That you care about the kid," Nari said with a wink.

The Cold Lady's expression hardened, but she said nothing. Nari laughed and vanished from the room, leaving the Cold Lady to sigh in relief. She turned her attention back to the screen, where Klaus was still fighting, hard-pressed but relentless in his killing.

"Amazing," she muttered, watching him push forward despite the overwhelming odds.

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Back in the Demon's Abode, Klaus was doing everything he could to hold the Zombies at bay, but it was easier said than done. The waves of undead seemed endless, and he was beginning to feel the weight of the battle pressing down on him.

If not for the Dragon, which was tearing through Zombies on its own, Klaus knew he would have been forced to retreat long ago. The sight of the Dragon's raw power made him wonder just how strong it could become if he poured more of his Star Qi into it.

But he hesitated. He needed to be calculated in this fight. If he recklessly used his energy without restraint, he knew he'd regret it later. Every second, he could feel his Star Qi being drained, and the battle was far from over.

"At this rate, I won't make it until the ritual is over," Klaus muttered under his breath. He could feel exhaustion creeping in, his body beginning to tire from the constant fighting. His only hope was that Miriam would arrive before he ran out of energy entirely.

The Zombies pressed down on him from all sides, their sheer numbers threatening to overwhelm him. Yet Klaus held firm, his sword cutting through them with precision. He had to survive. There was no other option.

Meanwhile, inside the force field atop the Seven Pillars, the Zombie Kings and the Zombie Lady continue to watch the battle. Their gazes were locked on Klaus, their fists clenched in frustration. Despite sending wave after wave of soldiers at him, Klaus continued to fight, killing their forces with terrifying efficiency.

The Zombie Lady's eyes narrowed, her murderous intent clear. "He's more resilient than I thought," she muttered.

One of the Zombie Kings grunted in agreement. "But even he has limits. The ritual will complete soon, and when it does, he'll be finished."

They all held that wicked, dangerous, and Bloodthirsty look in their eyes as they watched the battle with no hope of joining anytime soon. But they knew they would soon be finished, and once that time came, not even the gods could save Klaus.

The red energy coming from all over the forest was being poured into the pillars and then absorbed into the bodies of the Zombies atop the Pillars. By the seconds, one could tell some changes were appearing in the Zombies, but for now, until the ritual was over, all they could do was watch.

They all knew Klaus couldn't keep up this pace forever. But Klaus, exhausted as he was, still fought with everything he had, hoping that his allies would arrive in time.

Suddenly, a Zombie King managed to sneak into Klaus's blind spot, aiming to sever his head. But before it could strike, Klaus swiftly directed the Void Piercing Needle, piercing the Zombie's skull and spraying blood everywhere.

"I'm losing too much Star Qi," Klaus muttered, feeling the strain of the battle.

He had activated three powerful skills: Ice Lotus Bloom, the Fire Dragon Spirit, and the Bell of Harrows. These were the only things holding the Zombies back for now.

The Ice Lotus served as his shield, a defensive barrier that also enhanced his speed and strike power. Inside the icy domain created by the Lotus, Klaus moved like a god.

While he was physically weaker and slower than the Zombie Kings, within the domain, he had the advantage of manipulating the elemental essence in the air. His Elemental Overlord Talent had made him highly attuned to these elements, allowing him to thrive in the chaos.

The Bell of Harrows, on the other hand, was his secret weapon. Each ring sent out sonic and soul attacks, momentarily severing the Zombies' connection to their defense. This brief lapse in their defenses gave Klaus just enough time to land fatal blows.

But even with this edge, Klaus could feel his energy slipping away. The constant drain on his Star Qi was becoming more noticeable with each passing second. While he was able to recover some of it, the rate at which he was spending it far outpaced his recovery.

The Fire Dragon was doing its part, its tail slashing through the air and sending out waves of fiery arcs. Each strike obliterated groups of Zombies, but like the Ice Lotus and the Bell of Harrows, the Dragon was draining Klaus's Star Qi reserves at an alarming rate.

He gritted his teeth, pushing through the exhaustion. Klaus knew he couldn't sustain this much longer, but he had to hold out. The battle was far from over, and he needed to conserve whatever energy he had left.

Suddenly, a wave of Zombie Kings broke through the ice domain, using some strange ability that Klaus had never seen before. They surged toward him with terrifying speed. His heart turned cold as he counted them—ten Zombie Kings, all with weapons drawn, eyes gleaming with hunger for his blood.

Klaus gripped his sword tighter, knowing this could be it. The Zombie Kings approaching him were far more powerful than the regular Kings for some unknown reason. If they got too close, the odds would turn against him fast. His mind raced, calculating his next move, but before he could act, a sudden heat burst through the cold.

Just when the Zombie Kings were about to reach him, a massive wave of fire exploded in front of him, engulfing the undead in a blazing inferno. Klaus blinked in shock, feeling the searing heat even within his icy domain.

He quickly turned to the source of the fire and saw his Flame Dragon Spirit in action, hovering above the battlefield, spraying fire from its mouth. The flames roared like a living thing, consuming everything in their path, including the Zombie Kings who had dared to come close.

"The fuck?" Klaus muttered, half in relief and half in disbelief

Chapter 206 - 206: Dragons Breath

"The fuck?" Klaus muttered, half in relief and half in disbelief. His Flame Dragon Spirit had just saved his life, but the sheer power it unleashed left him momentarily stunned.

The Zombie Kings, appearing hungry for blood and danger, were now burning, their bodies twisted in agony as they tried to escape the firestorm. Klaus couldn't help but grin, though it was a tired grin. He'd forgotten for a moment just how powerful his Dragon Spirit was or more precisely, how lethal his Chaotic Nirvana Flame is.

But there was no time to rest. More enemies were coming, and his Star Qi was still draining fast. He needed to think ahead, conserve energy, and keep the battle from spiraling out of control again.

However, before Klaus could come up with a plan, he noticed something strange. The fire particles that had engulfed the Zombie Kings were now being absorbed back into the dragon. In the next moment, like a raging torrent, another breath of flame gushed out, turning the already burning Zombies into nothing but ash.

"The fuck is going on?" Klaus shouted in shock, his eyes wide as he watched the scene unfold.

"Congratulations, brat, your Fire Dragon Spirit has awakened its second ability," a familiar senior voice echoed in his mind. Klaus smiled but was still shocked.

"Well, that's great, then!" Klaus replied, feeling a surge of excitement. Even though chaos surrounded him, he couldn't help but feel a wave of happiness wash over him. But alongside that joy, a sense of concern crept in. The sudden change in his Dragon Spirit's behavior wasn't something he expected.

"Senior, I'm not the one doing that. So how is the Dragon acting on its own? It just saved me from getting ganged up on. Does that mean it knows when I'm in danger? How does that make any sense?" Klaus asked, clearly confused.

"Brat, you should know by now that your fire element isn't the same as it was a few days ago," the senior replied, his tone steady.

"It's not just a regular flame anymore—it's a flame spirit. A spirit can sense when you're in danger because it's now connected to your soul. No matter how calm you appear on the outside, your flame spirit will always know when something threatens you."

Klaus processed the information, his mind racing. It strangely made sense. His connection to the Flame Dragon Spirit wasn't just about control anymore—it was deeper, something instinctual. The Dragon had acted on its own, sensing his situation, even if he hadn't consciously felt it.

"That's... something," Klaus muttered, feeling both impressed and a bit unnerved.

"Don't overthink it," the senior's voice advised. "Your spirit and soul are intertwined now. You've become stronger because of it. Trust the bond."

Klaus nodded to himself, feeling the weight of his exhaustion but also a new sense of security. His Flame Dragon Spirit was more than just a weapon—it was part of him.

With that in mind, Klaus continued his relentless slaughter, though he kept a closer eye on the Dragon Spirit. It was either slashing its fiery tail, releasing arcs of flame, or unleashing another torrent of fire with its breath. The battlefield was a chaotic dance of ice and fire, with Zombies falling left and right.

"Dragon Breath, not bad," Klaus muttered as he cleaved through more Zombies, dodging attacks and fighting with as much focus as he could muster.

He tried to stay optimistic. "If I finish these idiots off, I'll reach level 8, and that'll restore my stats and Star Qi," he reminded himself. But despite his best efforts to stay positive, things were going downhill.

The more he killed, the more Zombies seemed to pour in. He and his Dragon Spirit had already taken down over a hundred, yet there were still hundreds more coming at them.

Bang!

Klaus barely registered the impact before he was sent flying through the air. He coughed, spitting out blood. "Fuck," he growled, his vision swimming for a moment.

His efficiency was dropping fast, and with it, his ability to kill at the same rapid pace. The Zombies were starting to press him harder now, and fatigue was creeping into his body, making every movement feel slower, heavier.

"Die, idiot!" Klaus shouted, forcing himself back up. He stabbed his sword into the head of the Zombie that had struck him with a massive club. At the same time, his Void Piercing Needle shot forward, taking out another Zombie charging at him with hunger in its dead eyes.

But Klaus could feel it—his strength was dropping fast. Every swing of his sword was getting harder, and the fatigue was setting in deeper with every passing second. He was running out of time and energy, and the Zombies were still coming.

High above, the Six Zombie Kings and the Lady Zombie began to hover atop the pillars, their eyes shut now as a swirling mist of red energy wrapped around them like a cocoon. Klaus could sense something was wrong—something was changing.

Looking closely, he saw that their bodies were mutating. On each of their foreheads, a pair of horns started to appear, twisting upward. Strange markings etched themselves across their faces and bodies, glowing faintly with the same red energy. Their grotesque forms were evolving, becoming more demonic-human-like, but still terrifying.

Their heights shot up to around 3.5 meters, their skin shifting from dark and decayed to a metallic, dark-gold sheen, giving their bodies the appearance of living metal. Four of the Zombie Kings sprouted wings—grotesque, bony, and dark—gradually unfolding from their backs. Despite all these changes, one thing remained constant: their eyes, still glowing with a deep, menacing crimson.

Klaus narrowed his eyes, watching the transformation in disgust and disbelief. The red mist around them grew thicker, swirling faster, causing even more monstrous features to emerge. The more they changed, the stronger they looked.

Looking away from the grotesque transformations happening on the pillars, Klaus refocused on the battle at hand. The Zombies swarmed at him with terrifying swords and unyielding ferocity, each one a threat he had to take seriously. Time was running out—he had to end this in the next 15 minutes and level up.

If not, he knew he'd be finished or worse, do something he never knew he would ever do, retreat and run away.

The monstrous changes taking place atop the pillars were anything but normal, even for someone as crazy as him. He needed every ounce of strength he could muster, but first, he had to cut down the smaller Zombies, who were far from simple fodder.

Klaus knew if the ritual atop the pillars finished and the six Zombie Kings along with the Lady Zombie joined the fight, his chances of surviving would plummet. Even with all his abilities, he wasn't sure he could escape at that point. So, for now, he focused on holding on, battling furiously to keep the tide of undead at bay.

He could've escaped and then called for reinforcements. But deep down, Klaus knew that would only be sending soldiers to their deaths. Most of them wouldn't make it, and even if they could turn the tide eventually, the cost would be too high. And there was another reason he stayed—one he didn't fully understand himself.

A part of him wanted to fight. It wasn't just about survival; it was about standing his ground in the face of overwhelming odds. Running wasn't in his nature. If he had the audacity to insult a whole dark organization with unknown power, then, by his own reckless logic, he was crazy enough to take on an entire race of Zombies.

"Luckily, these Zombies don't have the same evolutions as humans," Klaus muttered under his breath, gripping his sword tighter. "Otherwise, I'd be dead by now."

He slashed through another wave, sweat pouring down his face, fatigue gnawing at his limbs. But he wasn't done yet. Not by a long shot.

"Get away from me, you idiot!" Klaus growled, slashing his sword in a sharp arc, severing the clawed hand of a Zombie lunging at him. The creature's dark blood sprayed into the air as it screeched in pain, stumbling back.

"Die!" Klaus roared, his blade flashing again as he drove it through the Zombie's chest, pinning it to the ground. Without wasting a second, he yanked his sword free and spun around, ready for the next wave of Zombies.

Chapter 207 - 207: Eye Of Despair

"Fuck, fuck, fuck!" Klaus kept cursing as the Zombie Kings began gaining the upper hand in the battle. His killing speed had dropped considerably, so much so that the Void Piercing Needle was now doing most of the killing for him.

He still hadn't leveled up yet, and the fatigue weighed heavily on him, making it harder to keep swinging his sword. The retreat was an option, but it would feel like giving up, and Klaus's pride—or maybe his ego—wouldn't allow that.

"After this battle, I'm going on vacation. Battles suck," Klaus muttered, forcing a smile despite the chaos around him.

"Brat, you should focus on staying alive before thinking about ladies," The senior said in a mocking tone.

"Fuck, Senior! Are you reading my mind or something?" Klaus cursed again, annoyed but somehow relieved by the familiar voice.

"Tsk, who needs to read your mind to know what you're thinking?" The senior's tone dripped with sarcasm, but Klaus couldn't help but smile. That little bit of banter gave him the energy to behead two Zombies in quick succession.

"Senior, you wouldn't happen to have anything that could help me hold on until reinforcements arrive, would you?" Klaus asked, half-joking, though his desperation was real.

"Well, I do, but you'd be dead before you could use it," the senior replied, making Klaus frown.

"Great, just great," Klaus muttered under his breath. His arms felt heavier with each swing, but he wasn't about to quit. The senior was right about one thing: he needed to focus on surviving first.

Despite his bravado, Klaus knew he was running out of time. His Star Qi reserves were nearly depleted, and every move felt like a monumental effort. Yet, in the back of his mind, the thought of the War Goddess on her way coming kept fueling his resolve.

For now, all he could do was fight, curse, and try to stay alive.

BOOM!!!

Suddenly, the seven pillars trembled, and Klaus sensed a surge of overwhelming power from the seven Zombies hovering above them. His heart sank, especially as his gaze fell on the pillar where the Zombie Lady stood. A swirling, chaotic red energy surrounded her, pulsing with a deadly intensity.

"Senior, what's happening?" Klaus asked, feeling the creeping edge of mortal danger.

"They've entered the final phase of the ritual," the senior's voice echoed in his mind. "In ten minutes, it'll be too late to stop it."

"Fuck!" Klaus cursed, his mind racing. "That means in ten minutes, seven abominations will be born, and I don't have what it takes to stop them. Fuck!"

He could feel the weight of the situation pressing down on him. The Zombies' transformations were nearing completion, and when they finished, they wouldn't be the same grotesque creatures he had been fighting. They'd be something far worse, something he had no power to defeat in his current state.

Klaus clenched his fists, trying to think of a plan, but nothing came. Time was running out, and his energy was dangerously low. He was already pushing his limits just keeping the endless waves of regular Zombies at bay. The thought of facing seven fully transformed monsters made his stomach churn.

"Do I even have ten minutes left in me?" Klaus muttered bitterly. His eyes scanned the battlefield. The Zombies were relentless, and though he was still cutting them down, it was like trying to hold back the tide with a sword.

"Senior, isn't there anything I can do to disrupt the ritual?" Klaus asked, desperation leaking into his voice.

"There's nothing you can do to stop it alone, kid," the senior replied bluntly. "Your best shot is to survive long enough for the reinforcements to get here, but even that might not be enough."

Klaus swallowed hard, knowing that his options were limited. Retreating was starting to sound more reasonable, but his pride kept him rooted in place. He'd never run before, and he wasn't about to start now, even if it meant facing the impossible.

His mind raced. He had ten minutes, maybe less. If the ritual succeeded, it would unleash seven creatures more powerful than anything he had ever faced. It wasn't just his life on the line—it was the lives of the reinforcement coming.

Klaus gritted his teeth, his exhaustion mounting with every swing of his sword. He had already fought for what felt like an eternity, but the Zombie hordes were still coming. Worse, the ritual inside the force field was nearing completion, and he could feel the power of the Zombie Kings intensifying with each passing moment.

"Damn it," he growled, slicing through another wave of the undead. His body was on the edge of collapse, but he refused to back down. "If I can't stop them, I'll at least make sure they don't take me down without a fight."

Klaus muttered a few words under his breath, and suddenly, his dull, tired eyes ignited into a vibrant crimson hue. At the same time, the sky overhead darkened briefly before the entire area was bathed in a deep red glow. The oppressive energy seemed to pulse around him, charging the air with tension.

"Brat, what are you doing?" The senior's voice rang out sharply in his mind.

"You know," Klaus said, his voice strained but determined, "I'm not sure this force field has any defenses against soul attacks. So why not take out the big guns first?"

He glanced at the fire dragon that was still fighting at his side, breathing torrents of flame onto the Zombie Kings, who were relentless in their attacks. It had been a good distraction so far, keeping some of the stronger Zombies occupied while Klaus handled the rest.

"But you don't have enough Star Qi left to use the Eye of Despair," the senior warned. "At best, you can only use it once, and that means you can only target one of them for maximum effect."

Klaus knew the senior was right. The Eye of Despair was a powerful technique, capable of devastating even the strongest opponents, but it drained an enormous amount of energy. In his current state, he barely had enough left to pull it off once. He'd have to make that one-shot count.

"Then I'll make sure I hit the right target," Klaus muttered, his eyes locking onto the Zombie Lady. She was the center of the ritual, her red chaotic energy swirling around her with terrifying intensity. If he could take her out, it might just buy him enough time.

The battlefield around him was still chaos, with Zombies attacking from every direction. Klaus continued cutting them down, though his movements were becoming slower with each strike. Every muscle in his body screamed for rest, but he couldn't stop now. Not when the ritual was so close to completion.

He focused his gaze on the Zombie Lady atop the pillar, her surprisingly beautiful yet grotesque form radiating with dark energy. "I only get one shot at this," Klaus muttered, tightening his grip on his sword.

Summoning every last ounce of his strength, Klaus prepared to unleash the Eye of Despair. If he could disrupt the ritual by taking out the Lady, it might prevent the abominations from being born—or at least weaken them enough for the reinforcements to stand a chance.

"Here goes nothing," he muttered. Up in the air, the Eye of Despair snapped open and a beam of Red Light shot out aimed at the Zombie Lady.

BOOM!!!

Chapter 208 - 208: Unexpected but Welcomed [Bonus]

"Here goes nothing," Klaus muttered and the Eye of Despair snapped open above him. A beam of red light shot out from it, targeting the Zombie Lady atop the pillar. The light was powerful, and Klaus hoped it would break through the force field.

BOOM

The red beam struck the barrier, and the ground trembled violently. The pillars shook, and for a moment, Klaus thought he had succeeded. But then, as he feared, the force field held strong, blocking the attack entirely.

"Fuck," Klaus cursed, feeling his strength drop to dangerously low levels. He had put everything into that attack, but somehow, the force field had repelled it. His Lotus flower was draining the last of his energy reserves, and his fire dragon's light was dimming.

"Brat, what are you cursing about? Look around you," the senior's voice echoed in his mind.

Klaus, struggling to keep his eyes open, looked up. What he saw stunned him. Over 90% of the Zombies were on the ground, growling, screaming, or writhing in pain. Whatever they were doing, it was clear that they were suffering.

Klaus's eyes widened. "What?"

"Your attack failed to pass through the force field, but it didn't fail completely," the senior explained. "The force field seems to have repelled the soul attack, but instead of bouncing back harmlessly, it spread out and hit the Zombies. That's what you're seeing."

A smile crept onto Klaus's face. He hadn't expected this outcome, but it was a welcome surprise. Without wasting another second, he hurled the Ice Lotus flower forward, aiming for the center of the mass of Zombies.

Though the flower contained little to no star qi, it was still stronger regardless. It moved with cold energy and exploded silently, however its icy force froze everything in its path.

"This is my chance," Klaus thought as he saw hundreds of Zombies immobilized by the explosion. Many were instantly killed by the ice, while others were still hanging on, barely moving.

"My chance to get the upper hand," he muttered to himself, forcing his body to move. He surged forward, using every last bit of his strength to finish off as many Zombies as he could.

The battlefield was in chaos. Some of the Zombies lay dead, while others struggled to stay alive. Klaus gritted his teeth, knowing that if he managed to kill this last group, he would have reduced their numbers to just 50. The thought of getting the upper hand gave him a burst of adrenaline.

He glanced at his fire dragon, still roaring and fighting against the remaining Zombie Kings. "At least it doesn't look like it's dying anytime soon," Klaus muttered. With the dragon holding off some of the threats, Klaus could focus on cleaning up the rest.

Klaus was doing his best, but he could see the fire dragon starting to fade, its flames flickering weakly. His Star Qi wasn't regenerating fast enough, and it was draining faster than he could handle.

"Just a few more kills and I'll level up," he muttered, shattering and beheading frozen Zombies as they rushed him. Each kill took more out of him, leaving him more exhausted with every swing. But he held on, refusing to collapse under the pressure.

Then, it happened. "Oh no," Klaus muttered, watching as the flame dragon disappeared completely. At the same time, he was done cutting down the remaining frozen Zombies. His primary sources of power—the dragon, the Ice Lotus, and the Bell of Harrows—were gone.

"I guess it's down to whether I can fight without depending on Star Qi," he sighed. He could still regenerate Star Qi, but it was so slow, barely enough to keep him going in a prolonged battle like this. His reserves were down to the last 5 percent.

"Wait, this could work," Klaus thought suddenly as another wave of Zombies approached. There were about 30 of them, but he noticed something—they weren't as aggressive as before. The dragon's chaotic flames must have left an impact. It wasn't much, but it was enough for Klaus to think of a new strategy.

"Maybe I should try it," Klaus muttered, now fighting without the support of his previous abilities. He moved with pure physical strength, dodging and countering as best he could, relying on instinct rather than Star Qi.

Bang! Cough!

A powerful kick landed on his back, sending him flying across the battlefield. The Zombies were closing in, taking advantage of his weakened state. They were ganging up on him, and he could feel himself slipping.

But Klaus didn't let them gain the upper hand for long. "Not yet," he muttered, a determined glint in his eyes. Out of nowhere, small red needles appeared in the air around him. He had stopped using his Void Piercing Needle earlier, as the mental fatigue was becoming unbearable, but now he summoned the Ten Thousand Soul Needles.

This technique drained less Star Qi and was far more sustainable. Though weaker, it was just what Klaus needed. He didn't fully activate the Eye of Malevolence to conserve energy, so the attack power was low. But it was enough for his plan.

"Eat this, suckers," Klaus grinned, sending the soul needles toward ten of the Zombies. They tried to slash at the needles with their weapons, but the attack didn't aim to harm their bodies. Instead, the needles pierced their souls.

The Zombies faltered, disoriented, and Klaus smirked. "Die now," he whispered, rushing forward with renewed strength, ready to finish them off while they were weakened.

Klaus managed to cut down the ten Zombies, but the remaining twenty didn't give him a moment to breathe. They descended on him like a swarm, their sheer numbers overwhelming him.

"Five more minutes," Klaus muttered, keeping track of the time before the ritual would be completed. The pressure was mounting, and his body was already beyond its limits.

"Just a few more kills for the EXP," he added, swinging his sword with whatever strength he had left. Each slash came with a cost—his muscles screamed, and blood splattered from his mouth as the Zombies pummeled him. He could feel the heavy toll on his body, but he couldn't afford to stop.

"I can use it again," Klaus muttered after catching his breath for just a few seconds. He wasn't using his Star Qi to channel the Moon Slash because he needed it for something more strategic—the Ten Thousand Soul Needles.

Ten more red needles materialized in the air, and he sent them toward ten of the remaining Zombies. The attack worked, giving him a brief opening, but his exhaustion held him back. Klaus managed to kill only three of them before the others surrounded him again.

"Come on!" Klaus gritted his teeth as he summoned the Void Piercing Needle once more. The needles shot through the remaining Zombies, punching holes in them. He barely managed to kill the ten Zombies, but before he could regain his balance, one of the last Zombie Kings sent him flying with a brutal strike.

"Fuck!" Klaus cursed as he crashed into the ground, his body aching and his Star Qi nearly depleted. His vision blurred for a moment, but he forced himself back up. There were still ten more Zombie Kings left, and the clock was ticking. He couldn't afford to stop now.

"Three more minutes," Klaus muttered under his breath, narrowing his gaze and tightening his grip on his sword. His body was battered and broken, but his mind was sharp. He focused on defense, waiting for the right moment to strike with the Void Piercing Needles again. Every second was precious.

"Two minutes," he repeated, gritting his teeth as the Zombie Kings pressed their assault. It wasn't easy—every attack came dangerously close to finishing him. But suddenly, the Void Piercing Needle flashed out, punching holes in five of the Zombie Kings he had baited into coming closer.

Klaus had deliberately let them get near, using his own body as a shield to draw their attention to the sneak attack.

He was trading injury for kills, and it worked. The needle pierced through their heads, killing them instantly. But the cost was high. His left arm hung limp, broken. His ribs were shattered, and his body was bruised and bloodied from the brutal strikes he had endured.

"Die!" Klaus roared, channeling the last bits of his Star Qi into his sword. He swung it with all his remaining strength, slicing through the neck of a Zombie that charged at him from the side.

Before he could catch his breath, something unexpected happened. "What the fuck?" Klaus gasped, leaping backward just as a dark arrow shot through the air. He wasn't fast enough—it pierced his left shoulder, the force of the blow sending him flying.

"An assassin?" Klaus hissed through clenched teeth his gaze cold,

"The Dark Order"

Chapter 209 - 209: The Dark Order Served some Exp Points [Bonus]

Inside the meeting room, the Cold Lady, known as 'The Overlord,' sat with her eyes glued to the screen, watching Klaus battle against impossible odds. The sheer number of Zombies seemed endless, and many were far stronger than him. A Tier 3 warrior, battling thousands of Tier 7 Zombies? It was insane. Yet, there Klaus was, holding his ground.

Her usually cold expression flickered—shock, awe, and other emotions crossed her face, some unreadable. What Klaus was doing was beyond extraordinary. Genius? No. Monster? Not even that.

Klaus didn't fit into any simple category. He was something else entirely, in a realm all his own.

The strength he was displaying on the battlefield was astounding, even for her. She kept her eyes fixed on him, analyzing every movement, trying to understand the depths of his power. But then something shifted in her mood.

"They dare," she muttered, slamming her hand down on the arm of her chair, cracking the handle. Her icy gaze darkened as she watched Klaus get sent flying by a black arrow.

Without missing a beat, she pressed a button on her desk. "Prepare the Hawk Hunter," she commanded. "On my mark, launch five missiles." The other end of the line remained silent, but far above the Earth, a satellite moved into position, ready to unleash its devastating payload.

But before she could give the order, she noticed something on the screen—Klaus, despite being knocked down, was smirking. Then, unexpectedly, he started laughing. The Cold Lady paused, her finger hovering over the button, sensing something was about to change.

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Back on the battlefield, Klaus gritted his teeth and forced himself to stand. His body ached, and his energy was nearly depleted, but he wasn't done yet.

Summoning the last ounce of his mental strength, he used the Void Piercing Needle to finish off the last four Zombies. He didn't even bother to glance at the Assassin lurking nearby.

"That's more like it," Klaus muttered, taking in a cold breath. He still looked exhausted, but then he burst into a painful laugh, filled with all his anger. Klaus was furious.

"You couldn't handle your failure, so you sent more after me," he said, glaring at the assassin in dark clothes.

"You will die, Klaus. Your time ends today," the assassin replied coldly.

"And what power are you going to use to kill me?" Klaus sneered. He could sense the ritual was almost over, but right now, that didn't matter. What mattered was his anger—once again, he'd been caught off guard by the Dark Order.

"You think just five of you are enough to take me down?" Klaus smirked, scanning the area. Suddenly, four more figures in dark clothes appeared.

"You shouldn't have angered the Dark Order. Now it's personal," one of the assassins said. They only took contracts to kill people, Klaus was just a contract, however, after they failed and Klaus came back to life and insulted them, they took it personally.

Now, everything they are doing is their own decision, not a contract, but vengeance. Klaus has destroyed their reputation and they wanted nothing to do but kill him. However what they didn't know was Klaus also had the same plan, to kill every last one of them.

"Oh, it's personal, alright," Klaus replied coldly. "I wouldn't have already destroyed your safe house and killed all your operators in the eastern region if it wasn't personal. Now, I'll kill you five, then the next batch, and keep killing until every last one of you is dead. So, are you going to attack, or what? I need a couple of Exp Points and you idiots showed up just in time"

"Kill him!" the first assassin ordered. But before they could move, the space darkened. Then from the top of the seven pillars, a terrifying pressure descended. The pressure was so heavy that the Assassins instantly fell on their knees.

"Well, we're all screwed now," Klaus muttered with a smirk. However, when he turned toward the assassins, he noticed they were on their knees making him smile wickedly. Assassins aren't known for their physical strength, and the pressure was too much for them. Klaus, though exhausted, was still standing.

Just his physical strength and unyielding personality were enough to keep him standing.

"I'm not usually one to take advantage of people," Klaus said, "but today's different. I need 100,000 EXP to level up, and the Dark Order seems generous enough to send you Sages. Don't worry, you won't be alone in hell."

Before the assassins could react, a needle shot forward, piercing through their skulls in a flash. Their heads exploded, killing them instantly. At the same moment, Klaus felt his strength return—his Star Qi was fully restored, and his body surged with energy.

His wounds began to heal as well, making him narrow his gaze at the ritual that was nearly complete. He considered stopping it, but before he could act, something caught his attention. He quickly sidestepped as a spear whizzed past him, striking the ground behind him.

"A Great Sage," Klaus muttered. Despite the heavy pressure, he didn't seem concerned. In fact, he looked eager to face whoever had appeared. As expected, the spear flew back from the ground and stopped when it landed firmly in the grip of the masked figure.

"A lady," Klaus muttered again, eyeing the figure. She had an hourglass figure, a heavy chest, slender legs, and a flat stomach. His eyes narrowed as he assessed her.

"You don't want to do this," Klaus said coldly. But deep inside, he couldn't help but wonder, 'What kind of assassin uses a spear'

The masked woman didn't respond. Instead, she tilted her head slightly, her grip tightening on the spear. Klaus could feel the weight of her gaze behind the mask, cold and calculating. The air between them was thick with tension.

Klaus clenched his fists. "I'm not in the mood for games," he said, his voice low and dangerous. "But if you insist on fighting, I'll make it quick."

Without warning, the woman launched forward, her spear slicing through the air with deadly precision. Klaus dodged to the side, feeling the wind whip past his face as the spear narrowly missed him again. Her speed was impressive—much faster than the assassins he'd just killed.

"Great Sage, huh? You're fast," Klaus said, smirking as he stepped back, putting some distance between them. "But speed won't be enough to stop me."

The woman said nothing, her silence unnerving. She attacked again, her movements fluid and relentless. Each strike of her spear was precise, forcing Klaus to keep moving, his mind calculating each dodge. He could feel her strength and knew this wouldn't be an easy fight.

Suddenly, the ground beneath them began to shake, and Klaus glanced toward the seven pillars. The ritual was almost complete. Time was running out.

"You're really starting to get on my nerves," Klaus muttered, his smirk fading. He raised his hand, summoning the Void Piercing Needle once more. The needle glowed faintly, vibrating with power as it hovered in the air between them. "You should have walked away when you had the chance."

The woman didn't flinch, her spear still poised to strike. But Klaus wasn't waiting any longer. With a flick of his wrist, the needle shot forward, aiming straight for her heart.

BOOM!

The needle whizzed through the air, aimed directly at her heart. But just as it was about to strike, the seven pillars exploded, sending shockwaves across the battlefield. The force knocked the woman off balance saving her from the Needle. Suddenly a suffocating pressure descended from the sky like a crushing weight.

Klaus felt it immediately. The overwhelming force slammed into him, making his knees weaken, yet he never relented to kneel down. It was as if the heavens themselves were pressing down on the forest, and even with his renewed strength, Klaus could barely breathe.

"What... is this?" Klaus muttered, his teeth gritted as he fought to stay conscious. His body trembled under the immense pressure, every movement feeling impossibly heavy.

He looked up through the haze and saw the masked woman struggling to stand as well, her spear digging into the ground for support. Despite the chaos, she locked eyes with Klaus, her expression unreadable behind the mask.

'This crazy woman, she still wants to kill me despite the danger we are in' Fruity said inwardly

Klaus's mind raced. Whatever had just been unleashed was beyond anything he had expected. The very air felt hostile, thick with the weight of some ancient, terrifying power.

"I... have to move," Klaus groaned, forcing himself to move, though his legs felt like they were made of lead. The ritual was over—he could feel it deep in his bones, an ominous chill that sent shivers through his entire body.

He tried to stand, but before he could fully get on his feet, he sensed something closing in fast. Dangerous. Lethal.

"Fuck"

Chapter 210 - 210: Unexpected Team-up

"Are you kidding me?" Klaus cursed as he rolled sideways, narrowly evading another spear attack from the assassin lady, who somehow managed to shake off the overwhelming pressure of the seven Zombies breaking free from their cocoons.

With each passing moment, the pressure from the zombies weighed heavier on him. He didn't need anyone to tell him—they wanted him dead. He had wiped out their entire army and killed every last zombie in sight. Of course, they were out for revenge.

"Listen to me, lady," Klaus snapped, eyes darting between her and the approaching dangers. "Either you scam, or take a good look around. I hope you're not blind enough to see we're in serious danger here!"

He cursed her under his breath for being such an idiot. Sure, she was here to kill him, but couldn't she see the situation had changed? The weather itself seemed to shift with the ominous energy from the Zombie Kings, and instead of revising her plan, she was still attacking him.

'Seriously? Taking advantage of me like I did with those first five zombies?' Klaus thought bitterly. He couldn't help but smirk inwardly. 'Karma really is a bitch dressed in black.'

He cursed again as he blocked another attack from her, barely managing to dodge the deadly precision of her spear. But just as he regained his footing, something shifted. His body was locked in place, stiff as a board, and his heart sank.

From up ahead, a pair of blazing red eyes stared him down—one of the Zombie Kings who managed to get out of its cocoon had locked onto him, its gaze burning with rage.

"Fuck, fuck, fuck!" Klaus cursed out loud, struggling against the invisible force holding him down. The red eyes narrowed, and Klaus knew things were about to get a lot worse.

Suddenly, a burning sensation ignited on Klaus's back, snapping him out of the pressure holding him down. His eyes turned red, and his expression shifted coldly as he locked onto the Assassin lady, who was preparing to strike again.

"Die!" he shouted, his voice icy, as he dashed forward, aiming his sword at her heart. But just as his blade came within 20 inches, he sensed a terrifying attack closing in. There was no time to dodge—he had been so focused on killing the Assassin that he momentarily ignored the danger ahead.

Before he could make any attempt to react, a powerful kick slammed into his face, sending him flying backward. The incoming attack then landed on the Assassin lady's shoulder instead, hurling her through the air. She has saved Klaus, the same person she was trying to kill life.

Klaus crashed to the ground, rolling several times before coming to a stop. He quickly looked up and saw one of the evolved Zombie Kings, now evolved into something even more sinister than a death daemon. Its once-red eyes now burned brighter, and crimson, bone-like wings flapped menacingly behind it.

"Human, die," the creature growled. But Klaus ignored it, his gaze shifting to the Assassin lady lying meters away. Confusion washed over him—she had just saved his life. But why?

Klaus shook his head, trying to focus. He didn't have time to figure out the Assassin lady's motives. The evolved Zombie King was still up ahead, and it was a much bigger threat. However, he still couldn't understand why the Assassin lady had chosen to save him at the cost of injuring herself.

"You don't have what it takes to kill me" Klaus muttered, wiping the blood from his mouth as he gazed at the Zombie ahead. He staggered to his feet, gripping his sword tightly. The exhaustion weighed heavy on his body, but his mind was sharper than ever.

The Zombie King's wings spread wide, and it lunged forward, faster than Klaus expected. He barely managed to sidestep, the creature's claws swiping past him, tearing into the ground where he'd just stood. Klaus swung his sword in response, but the blade barely scratched the creature's tough, metallic skin.

"Damn it," Klaus cursed under his breath, realizing how tough this battle would be. He has leveled up, but he hasn't distributed the points yet. Now, he knew where to put it. But he needed time to do that, seeing another Zombie King breaking free from the Cocoon that had appeared around them at some point.

The Zombie King didn't give him any more time to think, attacking again, this time with both claws extended. Klaus braced himself, ready to take the hit, but just before impact, a shadow darted in between them.

It was the Assassin lady. She blocked the Zombie King's strike with her daggers, gritting her teeth as the force of the attack pushed her back. Klaus stared, stunned.

"Why are you helping me?" Klaus asked again, his voice low and hoarse.

She didn't look at him, her focus fixed on the creature ahead. "Ask me later—if we survive, or if I don't kill you before then."

Klaus didn't bother responding. Whatever her reasons, they shared a common goal for now. He nodded slightly and adjusted his stance, preparing for the next strike. Still, trust wasn't something Klaus gave easily. He activated his Spirit Eye, linked with the Eye of Malevolence, to keep a watchful eye on her movements.

Quickly, he allocated 400 points to his strength and readied the Void Piercing Needle. There was no need to worry about breaking the force field anymore. He was already in the thick of danger, and killing the Zombie King before the next threat showed up seemed like the best option.

"You attack, I'll defend," Klaus said as he activated his Ice Lotus Flower and unleashed the Absolute Ice Domain. The freezing aura spread out, creating a cold, controlled battlefield around him.

In response, the Assassin Lady melted into a shadow. When she reappeared in another shadow moments later, now holding a spear instead of her daggers.

"Weird, but who cares," Klaus thought with a smirk.

The Zombie King let out a thunderous roar, its eyes burning with rage. Without hesitation, they charged together, ready to take it down.

Klaus swung his sword, unleashing a blazing arc of fire that cut through the air toward the Zombie King. At the same moment, the Assassin Lady slashed diagonally with her spear, her attack aimed at the creature's chest.

But the Zombie King responded with a deafening roar. A surge of energy exploded from its body, obliterating both of their attacks in an instant and sending shockwaves rippling through the air.

"What?!" Klaus shouted as the force hit him, flinging him backward. He tumbled across the ground, struggling to regain control.

The Assassin Lady disappeared into a shadow, reappearing behind the Zombie King with deadly precision. She thrust her spear at its back, but the Zombie King reacted quickly, deflecting the blow with a loud clang. Seeing the creature focused on her, Klaus seized the opportunity and unleashed the Void Piercing Needle.

The needle tore through the air, aimed right at the Zombie King's head. But just as it was about to strike, a laser beam shot out of nowhere, disintegrating the needle into ash.

"What?!" Klaus shouted, truly shocked this time. His eyes shot upward, and he spotted another Zombie King, flying toward him.

"Looks like we're going to have to split up, lady," Klaus said, quickly sending his Ice Lotus toward the new threat.

"Explode!" he commanded, and the lotus shattered mid-air, freezing the Zombie King in place for a moment. The creature hung frozen in the air, unable to move as it began to fall.

"Die!" Klaus roared, unleashing another arc of fire from his sword, aiming to obliterate the Zombie King for good. But before the attack could land, a powerful blow exploded the fire arc, saving the falling creature. Another figure stepped into view.

"The third one..." Klaus groaned, feeling the weight of the situation intensify. A third Zombie King—no, Zombie Prince—had arrived. 'Great, just what I needed', he thought, sarcastically.

While the Assassin Lady was barely managing to hold her own against one, he was now facing two Zombie Princes.

And worse, the Zombie Queen might make her entrance soon. Klaus could feel her rage ever since he had been slaughtering her soldiers earlier. He knew he had no choice now—he'd have to use everything he had. The Fire Dragon, the Bell of Harrows, and the Eye of Despair—all of his trump cards.

He wasn't aiming to kill them, just hold them off until Miriam arrived. She would be the one to take them down. "Ten more minutes," he muttered to himself, calculating how long until her arrival.

Boom!

Suddenly, just as Klaus was preparing to unleash his full strength, an explosion rocked the ritual ground. The force field dropped, and Klaus felt a suffocating pressure descend on him. But before he could react, he felt something stir deep within his soul sea.

A strange energy awakened inside him.