

The Primordial Record

Chapter 91: Eyes Wide Shut

The voice of Lamia was like a siren call through the silence, drawing Rowan's focus to her words, "The chains that bind you are connected deeply with your soul, for it is the only way you can truly be controlled. As do I" Lamia bared her teeth in anger, and she brought her hands up as she attempted to touch the spikes in her hair, but she ended up flailing around like a discombobulated bird.

Rowan watched in mute fascination as she seemed to strain and argue mentally with herself the closer she got to the spikes in her hair, it was like a mental barrier preventing her from performing a minor task of ripping away the series of spikes in her hair.

Watching her strain to reach what was within her grasp, he wondered to himself, if that was what he was doing previously, yet he did not think it was that hard for him, the barrier was just in his mind, Lamia seemed to be physically repelled from touching the spikes.

Checking the status of his fourth heart, the Ouroboros Serpent was not yet out, but judging by its increased activity, it should be born in the next hour or less.

The rest of three Ouroboros Serpents were still breathing the red fluid onto the fourth heart, which seemed to serve as a source of nourishment for it. Which meant at the present time, he was devoid of his most capable allies.

"There would be something of yours, inside the facility below. It would hold your heart—Something you hold dear to your soul, but you must rip it out, or our torments would never cease."

Rowan nodded, and gestured around him, "we are in an Alchemy facility known as a Nexus, and one feature of this facility is the presence of a Guardian. I suspect that the Sigils would be near it. I would need your help to destroy it."

"My help you shall receive, for we are locked on the same boat, we shall sink or swim across this sea of death together, yet I am locked inside this lake. My champion cannot be far from my side."

Rowan swept his sight through the lake and the facility below, "I would lure the Guardian close to your lake, be ready for it. I suspect we are quickly running out of time."

He was about to jump into the pit, when he stopped, "Lamia, what is this red flame."

He had noticed her sneaking glances at the flame he held, after noticing she did not call attention to the flame, he decided to ask her about it.

"That is a Flesh Light." She answered, with a trace of astonishment in her voice, "It is unique to my race, it is among one of the most powerful flames in the world."

"Can I wield it?"

"I am surprised that the kindling have not gone out by now. I do not know for how long that flame can burn in your hands, but without our bloodline, the flames would soon go out. Yet, it could be utilized in the coming battle, although it would need to be fed" Lamia spoke to the white haired man without looking at him, "Give him one of your arms."

There was no expression on his face, as he nodded and jumped to the shore of the lake, Rowan noticed the three pairs of eyes on the face of the man, and unlike every other thing he had sensed, this Champion of the Abomination Core Lamia, had no presence.

He was like an empty void in his senses and he could only perceive him visually, Rowan guessed he should be more like an assassin, as his ability to avoid detection even with Rowan Spatial Sight was impressive, seeing this new ability type increased his vigilance as he began brainstorming ways to counter the invisibility of this Champion.

Although they might be working together, they were still enemies, and for no single moment did he forget that fact. He should be vigilant, while keeping his cards close to his chest, who knows what sort of hidden monster she had spawned that was hidden from him.

Rowan watched as the Champion grasped his left arm just above the shoulders and applied pressure.

His fingers dug into his flesh and he pulled, detaching the left hand from his body, the left hand seemed to have a mind of its own, as it opened and closed its fist.

The Champion looked at the detached limb with a sort of weird fascination, before he simply threw the limb at Rowan.

With their ease of interaction, it would be easy to forget that they were separated by quite a distance, precisely twelve acres, nearly ten football fields wide.

The throw appeared effortless, yet the limb crossed the stretch at a sharp velocity, alerting Rowan that although it might be an Assassin, it was still strong.

Rowan sensed the Flesh Light in his hand beginning to throb, he raised his hand and caught the thrown limb, the red flames flared up, and in less than three seconds the arm had melted like wax, and the red flames absorbed the arm.

The Flesh Light grew bigger, covering his entire palm until it reached his elbows, it began to draw more intensively on his Vitality, but he could easily handle the strain.

"That flame should last for at least five more hours. Since there is no way for it to take root inside your body. But that should be enough time to either succeed or fail."

Rowan nodded, and without wasting a moment, jumped into the pit, as he was falling, he unconsciously pushed Essence into Envy, there was a slight pause, before she accepted the flood of vitality.

Envy began to hum as the vibration coming from the weapon increased tenfold. Leading with the weapon, Rowan slammed into the ground.

The impact created by Envy was not exaggerated, the Axe head was buried a few feet in the ground, and the performance seemed very unimpressive. That was until a circular pit, around twenty feet across, appeared in front of Rowan.

The ground in front of Rowan disintegrated as the vibration from Envy seemed to atomize every soil and rock in its path, until the vibrational pulse reached the metallic structure far below, where it shaved off a sizable portion of it.

Rowan smiled at the lethality of the weapon, the vibrational effect it had was stupendous, and Rowan did not mind digging deeper into its usage, meanwhile he smiled at a new notification inside about a new active skill he just received.

Flesh Light (Level 0)

It was at this moment that he also noticed another skill he had previously gained, but in the heat of battle he had not checked what it was.

Bone Fire (Level 0)

Rowan triggered it and a tiny green flame appeared on his index finger, he dispersed it, and leaped down until he landed on the facility with a metallic clang.

His landing did not dent the metal a single bit, despite he had fallen for well over three hundred feet. Yet, the vibrational wave emitted by Envy had shaved off more than five inches of the metal.

His senses flared around him, and he could now properly see what he stood upon. It was Davross, a metal that was well-known for its hardness, non malleability, and its very annoying properties of negating magic.

Rowan saw the reason Envy could not cut through. Not only was it hard and resistant to magic and physical forces, they had used quite an inordinate amount of it.

His Spatial Sight could only penetrate slowly through this metal, as if it were an ant wading through wet concrete. Judging by the density of the metal, it would take an extremely long time to penetrate it with his sight.

The metal must be at least three feet across, this was literally insane. Davross was ridiculously expensive, and it was a very rare metal, for it to be used only as a sort of wall over the Control Hub was mind-numbing.

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The Control Hub must be beyond three thousand feet across, to use only Davross for the walls spoke to Rowan about the length these people had made in creating this place

This would require resources from an entire Noble family, and not just any minor families, from the big seven themselves.

Nevertheless, regardless of what they built here, he would gladly destroy it. Rowan set his feet and braced himself, he lifted Envy with both hands and breathed deeply.

The hum from Envy increased until the vibration passed through his body to the metal below, making it ring out like a bell placed underwater.

He stamped his feet, and he made a dent in the metal, and he swung the Axe downward

" Boom!!!"

Like a meteor, the Great Axe impacted on the metal below. Envy sliced through a foot of metal, while the vibrational energy left a circular crater more than two feet deep and fifteen across.

Amazingly, he had not managed to cut through the metal, but the second blow with the weapon allowed him to understand more of its capabilities, and using his experience wielding the previous green flame, he knew he had to wrap the vibrational energy around the weapon, so it does not disperse, thereby increasing its lethality in a smaller region.

He did not need to destroy the metal fifteen feet across and only dig two feet deep, when he could make a smaller opening of five feet and tear his way through at once.

But Rowan knew it was not an easy thing to accomplish, his Constitution and Strength was what made it capable for him to even use the weapon, talkless of expertly wielding it.

Envy hummed in displeasure. The weapon had a temper and disliked being blocked by a hunk of metal, it was also, not surprisingly, annoyed at Rowan's incapability of effectively utilizing it.

Jeez, tough crowd eeh.

On the next blow, Rowan managed to reduce the width of the vibrational energy to fourteen feet, and that was because he had previous experience working with energy from the Axe.

But this blow finally destroyed the remaining metal, and he had an opening into the facility. Around the edge of the circular opening were thin strips of metal shavings.

Rowan picked up a thin strip of the metal, and attempted to bend it, curious about a metal that could block multiple blows from Envy.

He balanced the metal at the center of his palm, placing his thumb at the edge, and he pressed. The metal only made a slight creak but it did not even bend under the pressure.

Davross was hard, but not this hard. Clearly this was an alloy. There must be other metal smelted alongside it, that did not diminish the properties of Davross, but enhanced it instead. Rowan dismissed his musing and focused on the bluish glow emanating from the hole he made.

Rowan looked through the opening, but could only spot walls that shone with a bluish glimmer. He let himself inside the hole slowly. His sight sweeping through the room below, holding himself up by his fingertips, he looked down.

The floor was at least twenty feet below, a harmless drop for him, and from what he could see, there were countless thick cables crisscrossing the floor. The room was empty, and he spotted a doorway at the end.

Having felt he had viewed enough, he let go and dropped the twenty feet like a stone. His knees didn't bend even a little, as he absorbed the momentum from the fall, and he looked around.

He found himself in a metallic room, the walls of the room appeared to be exuding light, and there was a circular opening at the end of the room that led to another similar room. The ground was uneven because of the thick cables that ran through the floor.

Rowan bent down and tried picking one of the cables, it was very heavy, and he felt a slight vibration running through the cable. It almost felt like electricity was flowing through it.

Rowan tried squeezing the cable, it gave a little, but it was still pretty compact. He was tempted to cut the cable and see what was inside, but he would rather not hamper any operation that was taking place, and cause unnecessary problems that would delay his search for the other end of the Sigil.

There were three strands of Sigils bounding , and of the three, only one led into this facility, the other two disappeared into the horizon into unknown locations.

Taking in a long breath, he smelled the air and almost sneezed. He was amazed that, with his Constitution, he had assumed that he long disregarded that particular frailty of the flesh.

The air had a thick musky smell, which was overshadowed by a strong smell of decay and rot. The air appeared clear, but it felt suffocating. He guessed he should have broken into a sealed facility.

He saw that the Sigil strand penetrated below the ground, but it was slanted to the side, meaning it was not directly below him, coincidentally the doorway in front of him corresponds with the direction of the Sigil.

Furthermore, he expected to be swarmed with enemies, for he made a lot of commotion when he burst through the roof, but this place seemed like it was a graveyard, and the smell did not help matters.

There was a weight behind the silence of this place that was haunting, as Rowan was so far below the ground that looking through the opening he made, he could only see a tiny hint of light.

Pushing through the gloom of this place, Rowan stepped through the circular doorway, his footsteps making a soft tapping sound on the metallic floors. This room should be the exact replica of the previous one if not for the slight protrusions on the floor. There were three such bumps on the floor.

Rowan came closer and peered at the protrusions from the floor, they compared to a series of metal bars with different heights welded seamlessly together. They resembled black spikes that had been meshed, creating a sort of bizarre port?

Rowan saw that the cables that ran throughout the ground were linked to those protrusions. Rowan's curiosity was beginning to slowly tick upwards, he gingerly extended his hand to touch the metal bars.

He felt a cool tingle enter his arm, and Rowan knew what he was sensing was electricity. "So these were really electrified cables." he muttered to himself. For him to feel a tingle in his body, despite the robustness of his Constitution, meant they must have been pumping out an impressive amount of charge.

There was still another doorway ahead, and he stood up, the blue lights from the wall were enough lighting for him to see clearly, as his Spatial Sight was still sluggish in penetrating the walls and even using it inside this facility was strenuous.

There was most likely a dampening device inside this place that restricted spatial and energy transference to an astonishing degree.

The rooms were not wide, but their length was impressive, almost a hundred feet lengthwise, and as Rowan reached the next door, he was aware that he must be heading towards the lake.

Another observation was that the floor was slightly descending. It was not obvious, but Rowan had a great sense of balance, and he had felt the slight downward tilt of elevation as he walked across the room.

The facility was extending deeper into the ground! Rowan walked across a series of identical rooms until he reached this particular room that added something new.

All these while there had been minor details that were rubbing Rowan in a familiar manner, it was the way the room was separated, the exact spacing in between the protrusions on the floor and a growing suspicion when he saw slight scratches near the ports. What he saw now, cemented that picture in his mind.

This facility was an exact replica of his Alchemy Laboratory.

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The area he just stepped into contained dozens of Vestibulary. A necessary Alchemical tool used in growing and preserving delicate or dangerous living substances, which was not to be confused with a Nexus.

Everything nurtured inside a Vestibulary were usually very insubstantial and would not survive outside of it.

Rowan recalled he had a similar device in his laboratory, although it was far smaller than the one before him. He had used it to culture part of a Barbarian cell culture he was lucky to pick up.

The Vestibulary he owned was around a foot long, and he had only five of those, they were placed at the far end of his laboratory, and directly across was the Warding Room.

If he used his laboratory as a blueprint, then heading north would take him to the warding room, if there would be any place where he would find what held the other end of the Sigil, it would be there, and the Guardian would not be far.

His Vestibulary was empty, for he needed to be able to wield Aether in order to effectively use it, but this one was not.

The Vestibulary was a huge growth medium that resembled a giant test tube. Inside was a bubbling transparent fluid, and floating in that fluid was an arm.

The arm appeared to be that of a male, decently muscular, and it had a clean surgical cut by the shoulders. The arm had a peculiar characteristic of spurting out tiny bursts of flames that stayed burning in the liquid for a few seconds.

He wryly noticed that the fingernails were red. This was a telltale sign of the kuranes family bloodline. There was an open secret in the family about how the depth of the color of their nails affected the growth of their bloodline power.

Rowan was not privy to the details of that hidden measurement used to determine the potency of their bloodline. But the fingernail on this arm was bright Scarlet and seemed to glow with a pearly luster.

There was a strange attachment to the arm that resembled a rib bone that had been grafted to the side of the arm. The bone was gray and appeared to be ancient, a sharp contrast to the arm floating inside the Vestibulary.

At once, Rowan felt a gush of familiarity, he stepped closer to the Vestibulary where he felt an intense heat emanating from it. He placed the Axe by his side and spread his right hand and placed it on the Vestibulary. The heat emanating from it penetrated his hand, and it brought a strange pain that disregarded his constitution, for this pain was felt only inside his soul.

The floating hand seemed to move with an unseen current and drifted over, until its open palm aligned with Rowan, the only thing separating the two palms from touching was the Vestibulary.

The heat that he felt increased, and his hand began to slowly release smoke. It hurt, but somehow the pain felt less than what he was feeling inside his heart.

From the glabrous skin of the palm, to the deeper metacarpal bones, his eyes traced every single part of his arm, and he found them to be an exact copy of his, except it was smaller.

"This hand is mine, and this strange heat that it is giving out is coming from this bone merged with it."

Although he was now an Empyrean, his physical body closely mimicked his previous mortal body, except he was now bigger, his family and friends would still recognize him, and of course, he would also be able to recognize his body features if he saw it.

What he was looking at, was his body, or at least part of it, it did not take long for him to remember where he once saw something like this.

Putting his Spirit to work, he began murmuring to himself, "The lights were not the best when he had transmigrated, as he could not properly see all the bodies, nevertheless he could see various parts. So let's see what we have here...."

"If I take a hand here, and a leg from there, part of the nose, a pair of open eyes filled with pain, a closed mouth set in determination..."

If he placed all these body parts together. Then the person who would emerge from that was him. Rowan Kuranos.

I awoke in a slaughterhouse, but the people who were butchered were all me?

Rowan remembered his first memory, it was of a cry for help. It was a plea to his assaulter to stop killing him. His mind had been in a daze. It was broken and until now those memories still eluded his grasp.

That memory of his cries was not borne out of pain or a desperate flight of fancy from a brain that had been stretched to a breaking point. He was getting killed. Multiple times and in various horrifying ways.

Rowan knew Ouroboros resurrected him when he died, but he did not think it discarded the bodies before that, at least the two times he does that he was aware of, his dead body was not discarded.

Rowan's knowledge of mysticism had large gaps. It was as if he knew enough to be aware of his situation. But not to understand them.

It was maddening. If he escaped this place, he was raiding the largest library in the capital!

If he had to make a wild guess, there must have been at least fifty bodies inside that room on that day. What had they done to him? Rowan wondered if he ever wanted to remember such a memory.

For the sake of understanding... He knew he would have to.

The mysteries of his Transmigration continued getting deeper, every door he opened lead to new closed doors.

In his past life, there was a saying that when you have eliminated all the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.

So, what was the truth he was seeing now?

The hand that he placed inside the Vestibulary caught on fire, burning with a bright yellow flame. He did not know if it was because of his presence that triggered it, but compared to the flames burning on his left hand, this one was milder and reminded him of Soul Flame.

His own unique Soul burned with a flame like that, and he recognized now that it was that flame inside it soul that called to this one.

The arm burned to ash, and the rib bone that was grafted to it, continued burning until only the flame was left, before slowly drifting towards him, he quickly crushed the covering of the Vestibulary and accepted the Soul flame.

Rowan felt a warm wave of Soul flame flowed into him, as if it were a river finally merging into the sea, this Soul flame was different from any other that he absorbed before.

This one felt like it was a lost part of him that was finally returning. The flame carried warmth and soothed an ache deep inside of him that he did not know he had.

His soul felt more... Complete. It was as if he were a wall filled with missing bricks, and this soul flame finished off parts of that missing wall.

The flame seemed like a part of him, yet it was not, and he gladly accepted it into his soul, for it felt right.

With the flame, came brief flashes of memory. It was of a woman, but the woman was also him. After a brief flash of confusion, he understood that this memory belongs to this woman.

This was part of her Soul, and he could feel a connection with his. That connection teased his senses, it was something familiar that they both shared. What was it?

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Dispersing his question, he let himself fade into her memory, where she stood inside a field he had never seen before. She wore a red flowing robe and her eyes were closed.

At once, Rowan sensed that he was in a different time, somewhere far back in the past, the air felt different, it was almost alive.

His attention went back to the woman, Rowan observed her features, which could not be necessarily called beautiful in the conventional sense, if he were to describe it, he would call it heroic. She possessed a valiant aura that resembled a warrior.

Her body structure reminded him of Maeve, even under the flowing robe, it was not hard to catch a glimpse of the lithe figure she had. It was a physique that hid shocking power.

Far down the field was a village that seemed eerily similar to Calcutta. The farmers held their hoes and Sickles as they discussed merrily among themselves, for the harvest was bountiful.

He could distantly hear the glorious laughter of children and the upbeat sounds of a village as they began a new day, the sun had begun rising over the horizon and the twittering of birds flying across the skies was like music to the ears.

Opening her eyes, her pupils were blood-red, but they glowed like gemstones. She was in a field of barley, and she slowly walked through the field, letting her fingers run through the grains. The wind blew against his waist length hair and the corner of her mouth turned as she gave a crooked grin.

He shared this moment with her, it was of peace and tranquility. It was a unique part of her that he got to understand, after all, his ability to absorb and understand the souls of others was related to his bloodline, a power that was not supposed to be seen in the material universe.

A hand came to rest on her shoulders and a cheerful voice entered her ears, "My Grand Knight. Such a great view. "

"I know." She answered, the hands on her shoulders seemed familiar to her, and she did not shy away from the touch.

"Now." The voice seemed to take great pleasure in its next words, "Burn it all"

"What?"

But he saw her hands rising, sparks blossomed between her fingers, and her unwilling scream heralded the flames that exploded from her body like an erupting volcano, the field turned to a Purgatory as a flaming vortex appeared on her chest, it opened up and let out thick gout of Magma.

She cried in shock because the flames coming from her body refused her commands, and they spread to the village below. The magma spread down to the village like a flood.

Ashes fell like rain, and the sky darkened as the smoke that rose painted the skies black, the flames painted the cloud red. The world became a nightmare.

Rowan cried out in shock and anger, willing everything inside of him to hold the flames back, he strived to help her bar the floodgates to hell that had opened within her body.

That hand had never left her shoulders even through all the eruptions of flames, squeezed her shoulders in a painfully familiar manner

"My loyal knight. Now crush them!"

What replied was a quake. Her body began to suck in an incredible amount of Aether, it was so much Aether that space began to crack open, and the red flames pouring out from her turned blue, but she kept taking more Aether, and something worse emerged.

The earth beginning from her feet began to split apart, and from the sundered ground, Magma golems in their hundreds emerged, and they poured on the remnants of the people that still lived.

The cries from her were not only for the people she just killed, but also for the trust that was lost, when that hand used her devotion against her.

She hardly reacted when two blade points emerged from her chest. And as her mind dimmed, it was replaced by fury.

This was the moment Rowan took control of the memory. He froze the scene and tried to pull as many details as he could.

This should be a Dominator who had walked on the Path of The Adept, and wielded the power of flame, this woman should be a member of the Kuranés family, was that the source of the familiarity he felt as her soul merged with his?

The power she commanded was remarkable, if he did not have the Omnipotent Records, no doubt he would have walked this path.

He frowned, he recalled the moment when that voice commanded her to kill, her body was unwilling, but the power inside her obeyed that command. It seemed to bypass his authority and seized control over his Path.

Was it possible for Dominators higher up in a Pathway to seize control of those below them. He did not think it was possible or if it was, it would be very uncommon.

Then he remembered the Sigils that were branded into his body that binds , and he felt he knew the reason as to how she was controlled and the source of the familiarity that evaded his senses.

It was !

He had felt its presence inside the woman's body, and It was an easy thing to miss because it had always been inside his soul, and he had recognised that familiarity when he inhabited the memory of the woman's soul, it took some time for him to realize that he was feeling was the same, but it was not his own.

This was not particularly shocking to him, as it did not originally belong to him, and its presence was known by his father and others, and if they knew he could merge with it, then it stands to reason that there must have been similar occurrences in the past, and it was most likely that he was the first host of this Record.

One particular detail also stood out to him. The pair of blades that stabbed through his chest was a shear. He could see the blood pooling in the etching of the blade in the shape of a corkscrew, the symbol read: Five.

The Shears he lost in the battle previously had a similar symbol, but it was Six that was on the blades. He had once wondered what the symbol meant, and now he had more questions than answers.

But he did not feel despair because the answers felt so close to him, if he were to ever know the semblance of the truth, it would be here. Inside this facility, he would get the answers he craved, and if he could not, at least he would fight for his freedom and slowly search for his truths.

The final piece in this vision was before him, it was the voice that commanded this previous holder to destroy what she loved before she was killed.

His perception slowly traced the arm on her shoulder, before he noticed something strange, the arm was constantly changing its shape.

It was a thick hand of a man, then it was the dainty arm of a woman, then a child's, then it was covered in scales, before changing to fur, It was constantly in flux.

The rest of its appearance was the same, but its face was always turned away from him, but there was a constant feature about this face, and that was its smile.

It was a wide and demented grin that stretched its mouth until it nearly reached the ears, whether it was a child or woman or man, that grin never left their faces.

Rowan suddenly felt an itch inside his spirit and the face that was turned away from him, slowly began to turn towards him.

The vision suddenly ended, and he returned to himself before suddenly all the illumination coming from the walls went off, and he was plunged into deep darkness.

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The darkness was broken by the red flames surrounding his left arm, painting the surroundings with the color of blood. The surrounding darkness fled away from the flame with a weird sigh.

Rowan looked at his hand that was still burning, and fed more vitality to the flames, making it brighten and spread its lights to encompass the entire room, since his Spatial Sight was hampered inside this facility, he had to use his senses more often.

He activated his Energy sight and immediately began picking spots of latent energy, and noticed that the power flowing through the cables had been cut off.

Picking up the Axe, he proceeded to the next room. It was more of the same, empty ports, and silent halls, and the Vestibularies he saw had no more body parts.

That ended when he saw a broken Vestibulary, where the smoldering body of a person beside it. The person was clutching a melted piece of metal that Rowan assumed they used to break open the Vestibulary.

Strangely, the armor worn by this person should be made of bones, for he saw that there was no metallic component among the ashes he left behind.

Hovering inside the broken Vestibulary was a heart that was impaled with a rib bone. The heart was black like marble with red streaks running through it, every now, and then it would spew out red flames like an erupting volcano, and without the shielding of the Vestibulary, the air around was shimmering, and the floor was turning red.

This whole facility was built with Davross alloy, which should be extremely heat-resistant. Yet, the heat was beginning to melt the floor.

This heart that hovered before him, which appeared to be made up of flames and black rock, was attuned towards energy. Rowan could not help but compare it to his present heart before it was transformed into a void.

He still sensed the familiarity with this heart also, and as he got closer to the heart, the flames that it spewed transformed into a golden Soul flame.

There was no conscious thought that made him open his burning hand and stretched it forth. The burning heart came to rest on his palm, and the flames that were burning in his hand turned golden, this was surprising, as he did not know that the Flesh Light of the Abomination could mimic Soul Flame.

Although there were slight differences, this was indeed Soul Flame, and he discovered that this flame was pure, without any fluctuations within, and even though it lacked destructive capabilities, this sort of flame may have many hidden uses.

The heart slowly turned to ash in his palm, and without any soul flame to mimic, the Flesh Light returned to its red form as Rowan braced himself for the wave of Soul Energy and the memories it would bring.

As Rowan sank into the darkness, he heard a voice, and he soon became aware of what was taking place.

"What do you think of this painting?"

He was inside the body of a short-haired man, the hands of the man were wrapped in chains and heavy manacles that clasped tight over his wrist and legs.

The chains gave out a faint silver glow that increased its weight, making each link in the chain easily weigh above a thousand tons.

The chains were very restrictive, and he could barely move, the man stood by a dark green painting that depicted a young boy being eaten by his shadow.

The countenance of the wailing boy was a picture of fear and despair, the mouth of his shadow eating him contained long fangs, and it had seized the hair of the boy with such force that part of his scalp was bleeding, tufts of his blond hair were falling like rain.

The short-haired man brought his fingers to trace the lines of fear in the boy's face, he lingered around the mouth of the boy, as if he was listening to the sounds of his screams. The painting's description of a doomed soul was so vivid it resembled a portal to another reality. A still moment of madness.

The voice behind the man began speaking again, after not getting any response.

"I believe It could mean many things. But this picture explains itself with a rather singular narrative. You should be very familiar with this image, don't you, Vorsher the Fallen." The voice had a flavor of mockery coloring its tone.

The voice seemed to trigger the chained man, and he turned away from the painting,

"Fallen?" He chuckled and shifted his position. He adjusted his hand, the manacles holding them were heavy and whenever he lifted his hands they dragged at him.

"Your people were beset by monsters on all sides, and I took it upon myself to stand before your destruction. And paying with my blood, I saved you all from a sure death. I ask for nothing from you, but you intend to kill me."

"Kill you? Surely, you jest Vorsher. Whatever gave you that idea that we would kill you?"

"Oh, I don't know." Vorsher growled, "maybe it's because you have me chained for weeks while draining my blood, or the lust for my power that I see in the eyes of your people."

The voice was quiet for a while, before replying in a wry tone, "Nothing gets over your head, does it?"

"Ehhh, This one is pretty obvious. But still, I hold nothing against you. I know the value of my bloodline. Even though you won't be able to replicate our Pathway, it would boost your own to an enormous degree."

"Important things are said twice. I don't hold this matter against you. This world is hard enough and everyone struggles to survive in whichever ways they can. Even killing your savior."

Vorsher sighed, his words grew in strength, "But I cannot die now, I have given too much for you to take my life. My mother is in pain. I did what I had to do to save her. I have to rescue her from her torture and I implore you, to let me leave, and I promise you on my name, that I would not come back for revenge."

"Oh Vorsher, Champion of Myrrah. This world does not deserve you. Don't you know what the gods call your people now... Abominations"

A black hand holding a pair of shears came to his vision. The arm ruthlessly pushed the blade into his stomach, and began to aggressively stab, again and again.

The voice began to giggle, "I love my work!"

Rowan focused on the painting again, the ruby blood from the scalp of the doomed boy reflected the face of Vorsher. He was not flinching in pain, instead he was mouthing words: "Do not forget. This world betrayed her first."

Rowan's grip on this lost memory was weakening, his heart was in chaos. All these memories were pointing to a terrifying possibility. He noticed that the shears that killed Vorsher were etched with the symbol, Three.

Also, it appeared that Vorsher was not human, but the champion of an Abomination Core, Myrrah. It was laughable that Rowan had never thought would have reached non-human hands, but that should not be such a strange thing, after all, the hint was in the name of the black book—Primordial.

It must have existed for an extremely long time. Rowan wanted to view the figure behind Vorsher once more, although his instinct was screaming against it, he decided to risk the attempt.

He pushed his perception to see behind Vorsher, straining to catch what was behind him, barely seeing a shadow before he was expelled from the vision.

Opening his eyes, he saw that the darkness had deepened, and now it was bringing with it, a chill that made his breath form mist in front of him, reminding him that he had barely any clothes on his body.

Rowan gritted his teeth and pushed more vitality into the Flesh Light, the flames rose, banishing the darkness and there was a sizzling sound in the air and there was a smell of burning flesh as if the darkness were alive.

Chapter 96: Eyes Wide Shut (final)

Looking at the red flames, Rowan had an idea and began pushing his will into the flames, it began to pulse and he created a ball of flame which hovered near him, he pushed it forward and the flames went ahead of him, in the same manner he created six more of the fireballs and let them revolve around him.

He was able to manipulate the flames better because he had noticed an increase in the tenacity of his Spirit and he checked his Record and was surprised at the upgrades to his Spirit.

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Name: Rowan Kuranos

Age: 11/33,000

Strength : 1767

Agility : 1716

Constitution : 2750

Spirit : 435.6

Class: None

Title: Plane walker, Chaos Blood

Aspect : Spatial Sight (Tier 3)

Berserker (Tier 1)

Skills:

Enrage (Level 10— Mortal State Completed) Vortex (Level 10— Mortal State Completed) Bash (Level 10— Mortal State Completed) Dash (Level 10— Mortal State Completed) Smash (Level 10— Mortal State Completed) Combo Attack (Level 10— Mortal State Completed)

Passive : Decipher language (complete), Ice–Fire soul (level 6)

Records:

FOUR [CHAOS BLOOD]- level 2 [5,000/15,000]

REAVER – level 0 [0/5000]

Legendary Skill : Chaos World Engine [3/3]

Chaos World Engine [Minor]

Engine One – 985,225/1,000,000,000

Engine Two – 897,645/1,000,000,000

Engine Three–1,001,876/1,000,000,000

Rift Rule: Absolute Body [Locked]

Incarnation Path Unlocked

Path: Chaos Territory Creation [Locked]

Path Skill Gained :

World Soul Manipulation [Locked]

World Recreation [Locked]

World Merging [Locked]

Active Skill Gained: Flesh Light [(level 0) Spirit +100. Constitution +50. Strength +30]

Active Skill Gained: Bone Fire[(level 0) Spirit +50. Constitution +100]

Soul Point :7,190.2311

There were two important details that stood out to him, it was the growth in his Spirit and the increasing number of Soul points he had harvested since he came into the Control Hub.

He had checked when he killed the four faced Abomination and gained around two hundred Soul points, he had barely spent ten minutes inside this facility and he had already gathered more than ninety Soul points.

This was not the world with the Red Moon, where he could harvest a seemingly unlimited amount of souls. The only reason why so many soul fragments would remain in this place was that a massive amount of people had been killed here, possibly hundreds of thousands.

Lamia had been able to create so many Abomination spawn by being fed tens of thousands of people, and echoes of their soul still lingered heavily in this place.

He heard something farther down. His ears perked up, as he heard another crash far ahead. Rowan paused and listened, and soon he heard another sound like a heavy thump and a faint curse.

Rowan picked up the pace and began to jog, he wished to go faster, but he did not want to miss any particular detail, for even with the spinning balls of flames around him, the darkness was still heavy. His light jog however, was faster than an all out sprint from a mortal

The passed through a series of rooms with shattered Vestibularies and destroyed workstations, he paused to run his hand over the battered workstation and discovered something bizarre, it was dust.

This destruction was not recent, it could have happened nearly a week ago! Which should not make sense. There was no way he was placed inside a Nexus where the Control Hub had been sabotaged.

Something was seriously wrong here, and Rowan began feeling a sense of apprehension. What he was seeing down here should not be possible, he could excuse the lack of any living person up till now, as the true core of this facility should be in the Warding Room. But the signs of destruction that he saw here were not recent.

The Control Hub of the Nexus had been undermined not too long after he arrived and something told him whatever happened here was not going according to the laid out plan.

Was there a hidden third party involved in this mess?

Rowan finally left the enclosed rooms with the Vestibularies and arrived in a large hall which had a pool of greenish water that contained tiny octopuses the size of a baby's

hand, they were in their hundreds and all floated in the water, tentacles splayed out, and they were all dead.

By the side of the pool was a leaking giant vat, it contained a greenish solution. Rowan bent and examined it, he dipped a finger into the thick liquid and sniffed it. It smelled like peppermint.

This should be Herrofoot. An unpleasant poison that causes muscle paralysis and massive internal hemorrhage.

He quickly moved ahead, his destination now fully fixed on getting to the Warding room. The new changes here were alarming.

He began noticing signs of battle, the pool had a massive crack by the side, and there were slashes on the ground and walls that should originate from blades.

Scorch marks and broken walls began to be prevalent as he went deeper, that was until he reached a massive closed door.

He set a flaming ball closer to the ground and saw a thick layer of dried blood underneath the door. The entrance was a pair of mechanical doors that slid shut in the middle.

Rowan pushed his fingers between the crease in the middle of the door. It was a thick metallic door, and it took a few seconds for his fingers to dig into it, before he could find a suitable purchase on the doors.

He strained as he began pushing his hands wide open. With a sharp creak and the crash of breaking mechanisms the door began to open.

The smell of decay and blood flooded Rowan senses and he had to jerk his head to shake away the foul odour from his nose, he sent six balls of flame ahead of him and his frown deepened at what he saw.

It was a massive room, the biggest he had seen inside this facility, a single large pillar was erected at the center of it, and massive coils of wires were connected to the pillar.

On the floor of the room were mounds of bodies that were piled into careless heaps, he walked through the doorway, his feet pressing into three inches of dried blood.

There were more than three thousand dead bodies down here, and as he could see from their outfits, these were most likely the workers inside the Control Hub.

They had all been butchered and from the smell and the state of decomposition on these bodies, it was most likely a week ago that this happened.

Passing through the mounds of bodies, he saw that their deaths were extremely miserable, whoever had killed them had made sure that the blows were lethal but would not lead to an instant death.

They must have been a particularly sick individual for he noticed that the amount of blood was clearly far more excessive even with the amount of bodies down here.

Then he smelled a hint of peppermint in the blood, and he remembered the Herrofoot he saw a while back, this material could create massive bleeding inside a body and if there were any opening on the body, every single drop of blood would be drained out, leaving an empty husk.

He heard another crash ahead, and a faint curse, that was not too far from his position, just hidden behind a particularly large body pile.

Rowan silently crossed the pile of bodies and saw a massive silver werewolf on its knees. The eyes of the werewolf had been gouged out and both of its hands had been cut off, it had been pierced with more than twenty bars of metal, and the skin around the chest and stomach had been flayed open and long needles were pierced into its major organs.

Every now and then it shook in pain, which caused the metal bar impaled in its body to rub against the ground, causing the crashing sound he heard.

Rowan paused in contemplation, for before him was the Guardian of the Nexus.

The werewolf sniffed the air, "Little chick, is that you?"

Chapter 97: Bloodlust

The Werewolf continued sniffing the air, his empty eye socket began bleeding, "Even though your scent has changed, your Aura remains the same little chick."

Rowan was silent, he looked at the tortured werewolf as he remembered the last time he had seen this individual, but at that time he was not a wolf but a man.

The pain from where that man held his shoulders, and he freezes him, remained inside his head.

The pain remained, so also was his fury.

"Boris? Is that you?"

The blind Werewolf grinned, his serrated teeth that resemble a shark glinted in the flames cast by the red light, "In the flesh, little chick or what's left of it."

"Who did to you, Boris?" Rowan said as he looked around, "They really did a number on you, you are more spikes than wolf at this point."

"Truthfully, I think I'm doing better than you the first time we met, little chick, and that's saying something. Since you are here, then that bastard must have won, he killed the last of the Supervisors did he not? "

Rowan walked up to the Werewolf, he really appreciated the amount of damage this creature suffered when he was up close to him. The needles pierced into his organs were not just to torture him, but to serve as an intravenous drip, pumping Herrofoot into his system.

Boris had bled from every organ, and had been drained dry, his powerful vitality kept him alive, as his bones created more blood that was shed in the next moment, and judging from the thick clumps of blood that covered the ground, he had suffered here for at least a week.

"Tell me who did this to you, and I shall free you from your torment."

"Free me?" The Werewolf burst into pained laughter, that was cut short when the movements of his body triggered the spikes and metal bars pierced through him.

He began to cough as a fresh wave of blood poured down from his body, the contraction of his stomach tore something inside of him and his guts began falling out of their cavities.

Rowan stepped back as the internal organs of the Werewolf splashed all over his feet. But whatever state of change this Werewolf was, he had truly surpassed many limitations of the flesh, for he kept talking.

"You are a child in chains, waiting for the butchers knife. Your flesh might have changed, but your essence remains the same. You think your fate would be any lesser than my own?" Boris The Werewolf words came out in slow and pained gasps.

"Take my advice, little chick. The only thing you should do, is to kill yourself, it's the only freedom you shall have, for he would take your Light from you, and he shall hold you at the gates of death for all eternity!"

If that is the case. If everything he struggles for amounts to only being the plaything of the powerful, at their whims and mercy, then he was doing his bloodline a great disservice.

At this moment, the fourth Ouroboros Serpent in his heart was born, and it rapidly began consuming what was left of his heart, leaving only a void in its place.

The moment the fourth void appeared inside his heart, his body began to change very subtly, the change was so slight it would take billions of year's for it to progress towards one percent completion, nevertheless that change had begun.

His bloodline began to boil over, as he finally let himself accept that he had evolved, he was no longer a miner inside a cave digging through rocks, he was an Emyrean in a world of monsters, and he had allowed himself to be a human for long enough.

The fate of this Werewolf and the memories he had witnessed inside this place has shown him the fate of the weak.

He was not going to beg for mercy or understanding, he was going to kill them. He would kill all of them.

The change in his thought process was very subtle that even Rowan missed it.

Sigh. "I am so tired of this sh*t. You are mistaking something Boris," Rowan cracked his neck, and went closer to the Werewolf, it was a massive beast standing more than thirteen feet tall, "This is not a discussion, nor am I asking for your fu*King understanding, this is an interrogation, and you are going to sing for me like the puppy you are."

Rowan brought a ball of Flesh Light that was hovering near him towards the werewolf, and the beast sniffed, and it reared back. "Get that thing away from me!"

"Do you know what this flame does to a body?" Rowan gestured, and the flames entered the guts of the Werewolf, its impressive vitality had already begun regrowing the lost organs.

When the flames touched the Werewolf, it didn't burn the flesh, it melded into his torso and began liquefying the organs, the Werewolf went still for a short while as if his senses were trying to process the pain, then Boris went mad with pain.

Rowan's body was unique, although his outside appearance resembled a human, and his skin was fair with no blemish, it would be a mistake to consider him a being of flesh and blood.

Although he had those, his flesh was now closer to metal and his blood magma. When the Abomination had attacked him with the Flesh Light, his unique Constitution and incredible healing capabilities had shielded him from the worst of its effect.

Yet, he had felt the pain of his flesh melting away, while still keeping its cells alive, it was an unusual form of pain, that few may never get to experience.

The Werewolf's crazy howl of pain was long and sorrowful. Rowan stopped its whine by grabbing its jaws and pulling its face down to his.

"You crazy mongrel, I do not care for your opinions, I am only going to ask and you shall answer me. That was only in your guts, the next shall cover your entire body and trust me, I will make it last. Nod once if you understand me."

The Werewolf shuddered and after two seconds it's nodded, and Rowan freed his mouth, he quietly paused as his dislocated shoulders and torn muscles slid into place.

Even in the battered state of this creature, its strength still overpowered him, even grabbing just the mouth and holding it down was enough to tear his muscles. Although, he could now begin upgrading his bloodline once more.

This Werewolf was powerful, What bloodline did it have and what State of change was it in? Most importantly, what could tear apart a beast like this that could guard a Nexus, with an Abomination Core within?

"Who did this to you, Boris?"

The Werewolf shuddered, the pain from its melted guts still stayed with him, "It is... it is..."

"It is I, Rowan." A voice with a deep bass sounded behind Rowan, his Spatial Sight was still sluggish, yet he had detected the moment the man came behind him.

His surrounding was empty, and suddenly, it was not, Rowan slowly turned his head and saw General Augustus Tiberius appear behind him.

Although he was now different and appeared far younger than he was, his hair was jet black and his eyes were no longer two golden orbs, the right eye was golden while the left eyes were red.

The Armor he wore was made of bone with many spikes jutting out from the elbows, knuckles and shoulders, it looked like a terrifying art piece, and its color was blood-red.

He smiled and placed his hand on Rowan's shoulder.

His eyes widened, when Rowan turned and held his hand in a vice-like grip and returned his smile.

"My children are hungry, Augustus, what took you so long."

Rowan eyes exploded as two Ouroboros Serpents crawled out of them, all the while the smile never left his mouth.

Chapter 98: Bloodlust (2)

A Spectral missive burned in front of Elias Tiberius, and he held a hand up to stop be the charge of the Runethors. Reading the message on the missive, he gestured to the Corporal by his side, and gave him a quiet message, the soldier nodded, and the horde was split into two.

Elias Tiberius went towards the left circling the mountain away from the lake, while the rest stopped just outside the town, and they galloped towards the dense forest.

The Corporal whose name was Alec Rhine led the rest of the horde, and he was suddenly startled by a weird feeling from the moonlight above, his uneasiness passed as he laughed when his Runethor screamed at the moon.

The Runethor below him must have sensed his uneasiness directed towards the moon, and it had challenged the moon for him, he pressed his hands against her neck as he felt the sheer powers in her muscles as the ground rumbled at their passage, and he felt calm in his spirit. It was moments like these that gave him a profound love of his calling.

The heat from the Runethor he rode fused into his blood, it was deeply comforting and made him feel guilty of his laughter over his partner's attempt to ease his distress, he ran his hand gently over her flowing mane—A feature she was very proud of. Most Runethors lost their mane after a few decades. A Runethor lifespan was measured in the centuries, and after the mane had fallen off, it would not regrow, making it a source of pride for those that kept their mane.

He bent and whispered into her ears, "Almond, it's all good." Whilst he used his legendary Ability – Strengthening. Using his Legendary Ability on the Runethor made her visibly grow a few inches and poured Aether into her blood.

He would have been severely reprimanded for wasting his powers before any oncoming engagement, but his Ability was able to last for an extended duration, and so he expected a light punishment, but Almond was his partner in battle, it was a little price to pay.

Strengthening was a Legendary Ability that falls under body modification type in regard to legendary abilities. He was a legendary state Dominator, so he could not control Aether, but that did not mean that he was unable to utilize it.

In the legendary state, his body could passively collect and store small pockets of Aether in his spine. Depending on your Pathway, you could have as little as three pockets of Aether storage or up to seven, with Pathways that focused on Spirit have more pockets of Aether and those that focused on either Strength, Agility, or Constitution having less pockets.

His Path was a lesser pathway under the Domain of the Tiberius family, which should peak at the Rift state, called Bone Army Pathway. This pathway focused on the group rather than the individual.

Like the Runethors they rode, the Pathway strengthened their cooperation, and they could share their collective strength and Abilities among themselves, even injuries in a limited manner can be shared and borne by the group, enhancing their lethality and survivability in the fields of battle.

Alec pulled back his hand sharply, Almond had bitten him, he swore aloud, drawing stares from his battle brothers, who after assessing the situation burst into laughter. Almond was a little too proud, he almost always forgot that fact.

"Keep your head straight, Alec." The cherry voice of his battle sister spoke beside him, "That place might look peaceful, but you know we could be facing hell at any single moment." Sophia appeared beside him, fierce and regal inside her armor, a trick only she could pull off.

Or maybe it might just be because her Bone Armour was blue, while the rest of them were black, all except for the Captain Elias, whose Armour was pale white. It was a result of their collective Pathway —The Bone Army Pathway. For their Armour was not made, but grown from their bones.

"Where is that hell?ha ha... Give 'em to me, from here I see only a sleepy village." The large voice of the resident Berserker of the battle brothers rang out, Orlando was a mini giant that wielded a Heavy Hammer the size of his torso, he was a blood lusted maniac, but a dependable buddy in a fight.

"Ignore his rantings, Sophia, that is the only thing he is good at." Alec smiled at his battle sister.

"Ugh, brothers look at the little Pushkin, making kissing faces." Orlando burst out laughing, while Sophia rolled her eyes.

"Zip it, before I grow a spike inside your head." Sophia gestured with a zipping motion. The big oaf—Orlando laughed, "Try it little witch, you won't hit anything."

"Why am I not surprised." Sophia muttered, "You are dumber than two rocks rubbing together. No spark up there. It would be a waste of good bone."

The jeers and small conversations followed the soldiers as they finally entered the forest. Alec felt the muscles under Almond skin tighten the moment they crossed into the shades of the trees. Even with the threat of losing his digits, he began stroking her mane, unaware of the deep frown that covered his face underneath his bony helm.

"Do you feel that." Orlando said, "That odd feeling when you are pissing inside a thunderstorm, and the lightning about to hit, but you know it just coming after your weiner."

"Wait...what?"

"Oh, you know, they get jealous.... The clouds." Seeing the confused and amused faces around him, Orlando tried to make his point, "They got no weiner, so they spray everything everywhere with no rhyme or direction, you get me?"

"It's like... A hose without a pipe, just spraying..."

"That doesn't make any sense, big guy." Sophia frowned.

"Yes, that my point exactly, it makes no sense. It's the same thing I am getting here. There is no weiner and sh*t is spraying everywhere. It's just.... just." Orlando began snapping his fingers, apparently looking for the correct words.

"Chaos?" Alec said.

"Exactly... chaos. Ooohhh, this trip is gonna be sweet, I just know it."

"The last time you said that, we lost half the company, and you lost your right leg." A worried soldier called out.

"Yeah... I know. Sweet right? The way I figure it, the scales have fallen far from my side, right? So, I just have to balance it a little."

"Yeah, you do need the balance, cripple, you're stumbling every morning for your prosthetics is pathetic, a legendary Dominator should have more grace than a bull."

"Yeah? Just you wait until I become a Rift, I shall not regrow only my leg, but increase my weiner size another ten inch, and I'm coming to your home Velcuis. I heard you hid a pretty little thing from the coast. Give her a taste of a real Dominator, I would."

Their words were sometimes cruel and the humor was dark, but these men and women used this strategy to pull their mental state out of the quagmire of fear that had begun to settle on their spirit. It worked to an extent, nevertheless these were all hardened warriors, and they had fought under severe conditions before.

The fog that appeared around them was a surprise, but with their training, they organized themselves easily enough, and soon the screaming arose from the town. Men, women, and children, even the animals, were all screaming in terror.

They all gathered and watched in apprehension as a piece of hell covered the entire town.

"By the gods, I did not sign up for this." Corporal Alec Rhine whispered.

The surrounding forest began rustling as Abominations began appearing around them.

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Elias Tiberius was swallowed by the fog, and he released his Aether in a series of short bursts, his white Bone Armor shimmered, and his body merged with the fog, he quietly passed howling Abominations and screaming villagers as the dance of violence and madness happened around him.

He reached the house where the weapon was supposed to lie, and found it empty of any occupants except for the destroyed body of an Abomination Spawn. He tore through the house and could not find the Axe.

A pair of Spectral Eyes appeared above the ground, and it burned with fury, it released a series of fluctuations and the face of Elias Tiberius went white, he stiffly nodded and closed the doors and the windows of the house.

It was a simple affair to create a barrier around the house to deter any Abominations from entering inside the house, and he began to clear the ground until he had a sizable space free from any clutter.

Chapter 99: Bloodlust (3)

Elias Tiberius began taking out various ritualistic items and placing them in a pentagram around him, he seemed to be taking orders from the golden eyes floating above him, as he paused for a second before he made any action.

These items had been cleverly disguised, so their true purpose was hidden, as he had to take apart various different items to combine before using them for the ritual.

Although he was following instructions, he still acted quickly and when he understood the pattern to assemble the ritual items, he blitzed through the process.

When everything was done in a manner that satisfied him, he began to chant in Medan. It was an Arcane intonation that resounded in the air and made the house begin to visibly tremble. The air inside the house were all forced out with a whoosh, and only a vacuum was left.

With a final harsh sound, a visible dome of purple force field covered the entirety of the house before it went invisible, and with the chaos from the Abomination attack nobody noticed. With this ritualistic method Elias Tiberius had isolated this area from the influence of the Nexus.

Elias Tiberius discarded the sounds of chaos outside and focused on the upcoming ceremony. He knelt on the floor as he cast off all the pieces of his white bone armor, his eyes held a distant look as sweat beaded his forehead, the pain from taking off the Bone Armor was intense, it was as if he was pulling out his own bones and tendons from his body

He severed his Spirit connection to the Armor, for if he was distracted or in peril, it would snap back to him... His trusty armor.

Elias ran his hands through minor cracks and blemishes on the Armor, that he never repaired, it was testament that his armor had served him well, although he had never appreciated that service, always dreaming of what he could not have, while ignoring what was beside him.

He gave a small laugh. Shame how we always ignore what is dear to us until the moment we are about to lose them.

How many fights, and near death situations had he survived and triumphed, with just the help of his Armour? Yet he had always neglected its importance, cursing its weakness and disregarding its strengths.

He ran his hands through the rigid plates, and whispered his parting. He steered his spirit through his body once more, making sure there were no pieces of Armour left inside him. He had made a habit of supporting his bones with the Armour, it was not recommended but he did it anyway.

At the Rift state the Bone armour could be withdrawn into the body to be nurtured by his massive blood essence, it was all to transform the bones to a Red Shrike. If he could achieve that, he would transcend the Rift state.

This would only be possible because of his Tiberius bloodline that forcefully enhanced this Pathway, any other bloodline would have their path ended at the Rift state when walking the Bone Army Pathway.

He closed his eyes and whispered prayers to their Ancestor Tiberius. He prayed for him to keep his spirit safe, even as he performed his duties.

The light from the floating eyes flashed more rapidly, and Elias appeared to finally make up his mind, as he drew a dagger he had kept by his side.

The dagger was thin, almost like a Shiv, but the glinting by the edge showed it was eerily sharp. Elias never liked pain and a sharp dagger made cuts a little less painless.

He made three quick horizontal lacerations to his chest, the wound did not bleed and Elias made a gesture with his left fingers in the shape of an eye, and the cut began to bleed rapidly, in a short while, his blood had pooled around him.

Elias slowly brought the dagger to his eyes, the tip of the knife shaking, before he steadied himself and carefully began slicing off his eyelids.

During the ritual he must not blink, Elias did not trust his resolve and he did what was advised by the family annals.

He brought the dagger to his mouth, and began slicing off his tongue. He must not speak any words aloud during the ritual, and understanding that he hated Augustus, a man who inspired no loyalty, and whose greed for power was all consuming, so cursing this man that was about to take his body was natural, so he did what was necessary.

The reason he was here now, about to die, was also his fault. He lacked talents in the Pathway Of Flesh, and his bloodline potency was weak. So he switched to an easier wasted Pathway, one that his bloodline could easily enhance, which would grant him an easy Breakthrough in the State of Change.

With this lesser Pathway, he would never be able to surpass the First Great Circle in his lifetime, but as an Incarnation, he would be able to live for a thousand years at the least, and at the latter part of his life he would be able to settle and create a family of his own.

With that change to a lesser Pathway, he progressed quickly through the earlier State of change. Becoming a Rift State Dominator in less than twenty years. Yet he had languished in this State for three centuries and his lifespan was running out.

Nevertheless there was still hope, his choice proved to be correct, for he knew in a decade or two, his Bone Army Pathway would transcend its State. But regrets would be his only recourse, for he was still too slow.

With his Tiberius bloodline, he should have lived for much longer, but as a side effect of boosting a wasted Path, his lifespan had slowly been devoured.

Now, with all his struggles and expectations, this was the final result, the end of his path. Every power comes with its price. And the price for the ease of breakthrough was that he would be called upon if a direct line of Tiberius required his body for resurrection.

This was not an everyday occurrence, and the probability of this happening was quite low, so he had felt it was a manageable risk. Clearly he was wrong and the trash of a Lord he served needed his body for resurrection.

His Path has come to an end, he should go out with the dignity of a Tiberius. He brought the daggers to his ears, he must not be distracted by anything, two quick stabs and the world fell into silence.

Suppressing his body healing capabilities he began to chant in Medan, even without his tongue, words still bubbled out of his mouth.

The Medan language was based on intent. It served as a normal means for communication among the elites. Medan was also a bridge to the Spirit. This was knowledge only utilized by Dominators at the Rift state and above.

Although it appears as if the words he spoke came from his mouth, that would be wrong. It came from his Spirit.

Elias continued his chants. His voice was sometimes low and sometimes high, his words were like quicksilver, shooting from his lips without any barrier and sometimes they were heavier than mountain, and he strained to speak.

The blood flowing from his chest increased in intensity and he went pale, but he did not stop chanting, in a while the blood flow stopped. He had been bled dry.

Elias suppressed his marrow from making new blood and he raised both hands in a supplication pose—Two hands outstretched as if he was a begging for alms and his head fell on his chest as if he was asleep, his part was done. Now it was for Augustus to finish his.

Chapter 100: Bloodlust (final)

The floating eyes above him glowed with delight, and suddenly, one of the eyeballs exploded, creating a portal made of blood in midair.

A hand devoid of skin emerged from the portal. The hand clenched its fist and the blood that Elias shed on the floor began to bubble, and like iron filings drawn to a magnet, they shot into the limb, fashioning it a skin made of blood, and inflating the muscles, granting the arm strength.

The red arm opened its palm and a drop of blood flew from it and embedded itself in the forehead of Elias, who gasped as his skin began to writhe, and his bones cracked, his body looked like it was consuming itself, as fresh blood fell from his chest, but this was thicker and appeared more black than red.

The last thought of Elias Tiberius was of acceptance. The moment the blood of Augustus entered his body, he saw the difference between their talents, and even though he hated the man. He could not deny the sheer power in his blood.

As his body tore itself apart, he incarnated. He should have used decades to get to this step, but a drop of Augustus blood achieved it in mere moments. His Incarnation extended his suffering as the depth of his being increased. Augustus had more to feed upon.

He did not shame Tiberius. He did not shame his God. Not only that, but he did his duty. Elias Tiberius was no more.

A second hand emerged from the bloody vortex, and rapidly absorbed the last of the blood from the husk left behind. With this blood, it had gained all the power it needed.

The hand seized both sides of the vortex and began pulling it apart, a bloody head appeared that had no eyes, the rest of a male body followed.

General Augustus Tiberius slid out of the vortex, and once more he breathes air again, his empty eyes were like a window to an unfathomable abyss, he took a few seconds to breathe deeply before he began laughing.

He spent the next three minutes cracking up while inspecting his new body, which was at the peak of the Incarnation State, making sure the restriction curse did not affect this new body if his, after a few moments, his laughter stopped and he frowned deeply.

The body he used for his reawakening would not be his preferred choice, but he was careful not to draw any attention to his fail-safes. If he had used a member of his family with a better foundation as a pawn inside the Nexus, he would not be surprised if those bastards had thought it might be his backup.

Moreover, this body used a Wasted Pathway, no-one would believe it was nothing else but fodder to be used at his leisure, but Augustus had planted a seed of Origin inside his mind, and no matter how the carrier had loathed him, he would perform his duties when he needed to.

This body would restrict his path, and it would no longer be able to exceed the Incarnation State, but he had other plans. His skin was still red with blood, but it was soon absorbed into his body and he took his remaining eye floating in the air, and placed it into his eye socket.

Still having a few drops of his blood left inside his eye, he unflinchingly sacrificed half of it, to boost his bloodline to the peak of Incarnation, until the First Great Circle was completed...

He gasped in irritation as spikes began erupting from his skin and an armor of red bones was forged around his body.

The color of his bone armor deepened until it was nearly black, and he consciously made it lighten up to red.

You don't live up to two thousand years in a world in a constant state of war without knowing how to always hide your cards. Anyone that judges his armor at the early Incarnation State was in for a nasty surprise.

The ground began to tremble intensely, and he cast his gaze outside, the limitation of the senses of an Incarnation frustrated him, but he would slowly build it back up, nevertheless, his gaze covered the entire Nexus, and he saw a pleasant sight.

He was inside the Nexus, and judging by the activities he was witnessing, the Origin Treasure had brought him back in time by a week, although he would have wished for at least two weeks, he would have to make do with what he had.

His body was truly dead, and there was no way for him to change the destiny of his main body, who was going to die a week from now. It would be extremely foolish to try, as this travesty would be detected by the Justice Council, and he would burn for an eternity.

The Justice Council controls the fate of every living being on the planet under the grace of the God King, and preserving the stability of his rule was their solemn purpose.

He was a copy of Augustus that had been given all his memories and a few drops of his Source blood because that was all the broken Origin Treasure could handle.

That copy was flung down in time to an Anchor he placed inside the Nexus—Elias Tiberius, and it was his last backup, in the event that he was betrayed, or he failed. He had also placed another Anchor somewhere else, but he doubted he would have the power to shift his Spirit towards that place.

The battle between the mortals ahead was of no concern to him, he would have to take control of the Nexus and make minor inauspicious changes to its working processes.

He had to be as discrete as possible, until the moment his main body perishes and the threads of destiny returned to this copy.

His eyes lit up as he saw the test subject began creating multiple phantasmal images with the Axe, while using a powerful vitality that left Augustus in awe.

He had placed this weapon here to draw the eyes of the Third Prince away from his true intentions, it was seized from a Principal Demon from the Abyss by the God of War himself, and over millennia, they had been trying to break open its secrets. It was said this weapon was not even created by the Principal Demon but was discovered by him in the void outside of space and time.

Having failed to uncover the secrets of this weapon, it was used as a container to carry the family's bloodline battle technique.

Augustus began to laugh. "It is mine. Everything here is mine."

Making sure his sight was discrete as possible, he saw that the soldiers he placed in the forest were beginning to attract attention from the supervisors of this place, and three of them were already dead.

He waited for them to cause damage and draw more firepower towards their position, as he knew the Guardian of the Nexus would not allow such a volatile aspect to remain for long.

His sight was fixed on the extremely hidden opening of the Control Hub. He licked his lips as he began crafting thousands of red bone spikes with the hardness of diamonds and placing them inside the Red Shrike Incarnation.

After those were done, he began creating swords, shields, hammers, and all the myriad instruments of war he had learned to wield over his two thousand years of life.

"Open the door. You know you want to, Boris."

The soldiers he brought with him began to fall, although he still needed them for the next part of his plans, he only needed ten to live, the rest were insurance, he kept his eyes fixed on that opening and when it opened for an instant.

General Augustus Tiberius Grinned and appeared inside the control hub.

"I have won!"