

Liam groaned as he slowly pushed himself off the ground, his body aching from the brutal strike Jamak had landed on him. Blood dripped from his lips as he took in a sharp breath, his vision momentarily blurring. He blinked hard, forcing his eyes to focus, and tried to analyze Jamak from a distance.

In his mind, he thought about how fast and strong Jamak was. *Speed... Power...* The words echoed in Liam's mind. *I can't keep up with him head-on. He's too fast. If I get in close, he'll just overpower me again.* He clenched his jaw, weighing his options.

I'll have to fight him from a distance. Use my flames and shadows to slow him down. If I can create enough space—

Before Liam could finish his thought, Jamak disappeared from his sight. A split second later, a shadow loomed over him. Instinctively, Liam's eyes widened as Jamak's massive fist came hurtling toward his face, the air around it distorting from the sheer speed. *No!*

Jamak's fist connected cleanly, sending Liam flying once again. His body tore through trees, their thick trunks splintering on impact, as if they were mere twigs. The crushing force against his ribs made Liam gasp for breath, pain radiating through every inch of his body.

Yet Jamak wasn't done. While Liam was still airborne, hurtling backward through the forest, Jamak appeared again, this time with his colossal sword in hand. The creature swung his blade with terrifying precision. Liam, barely regaining his senses, managed to avoid the first strike, twisting midair, but the second slash grazed his side, the impact tearing through his armor and flesh alike.

Liam hit the ground, rolled, and staggered to his feet, barely in time to deflect another strike with his daggers. But each time he blocked or deflected, Jamak's raw power sent him reeling, his arms growing numb under the strain. The onslaught didn't stop—Jamak's attacks were relentless, each one heavier and faster than the last.

Every time Liam thought he could create distance, Jamak was there, closing the gap and attacking with no mercy.

With a final powerful kick, Jamak sent Liam crashing into a massive stone, the impact shattering it into pieces. Liam's body crumpled to the ground, motionless. Dust and debris swirled around the battlefield, casting an eerie silence over the scene.

Jamak halted his assault, standing over Liam with a disdainful expression. "This is the one who said he would kill me?" His voice was cold, deep, and mocking. "And yet, here you are, broken at my feet. How pathetic." Jamak paused, shaking his head as if disappointed. "You're nothing but a disgrace to anyone who ever believed in you, boy. A complete failure."

Liam, who looked as though he was on the verge of death, stirred. His fingers twitched, then his hand pressed against the ground. Slowly, agonizingly, Liam began to rise, blood pouring from his wounds, his body trembling from the sheer effort.

Through gritted teeth, he spat out a weak laugh. "You sure... like to talk, huh? You sound more human than I thought." He wiped the blood from his mouth and glared at Jamak with defiance in his eyes. "You know nothing about me. So how about you shut up...

and keep fighting."

Jamak's eyes narrowed, and for the first time, a flicker of something that resembled respect flashed across his face. The creature crossed his arms, watching as Liam forced himself to stand upright, gripping his daggers tightly.

Liam's breaths were ragged, his chest heaving. He could feel the fractured bones in his face, the sharp pain of broken ribs, and the blood seeping through the deep gashes in his skin. Every part of his body screamed at him to stop, to rest. But the last thing on his mind was giving up.

Jamak grinned, his sharp teeth glinting in the faint light of the forest. "You're resilient, I'll give you that," he said, his tone almost amused.

Liam's eyes flared with a burning intensity. Suddenly, flames erupted from his hands, engulfing his daggers in a brilliant red blaze. Without warning, he launched himself at Jamak with blinding speed, moving faster than he had before. The flames roared around him as he slashed at Jamak, each strike carrying the full weight of his determination.

Jamak managed to block the attacks, but he struggled to keep up with Liam's newfound speed. Sparks flew as their weapons clashed, the sound of metal on metal reverberating through the forest. Liam's strikes were relentless, faster and more precise with each passing second.

Then, in a quick feint, Liam swung wide, making Jamak misstep. Before the demon could recover, Liam twisted his body mid-air and delivered a powerful kick to Jamak's side, the force sending shockwaves through the air. The impact staggered Jamak, causing him to stumble.

But Jamak wasn't so easily caught off guard. He retaliated immediately, his fist swinging toward Liam, who barely managed to block it with his dagger. Even with the block, the sheer force of the blow sent Liam skidding backward, his feet digging into the earth to stop his momentum.

Panting, Liam slowly stood up again, wiping the sweat and blood from his brow. His body was aching, but his spirit hadn't dimmed. As he looked ahead, his heart skipped a beat—Jamak was already there, standing a few feet in front of him.

"You're fast," Liam muttered, both shocked and impressed. But deep inside, he was starting to accept just how powerful Jamak was.

Jamak's eyes gleamed. "Among all those who have come to challenge me, you are certainly the most stubborn," he said with a toothy grin. "But enough playing around. It's time to end this."

Liam chuckled darkly, a menacing grin spreading across his face. "End this? You think we're done here?" His voice dropped to a low growl. "I haven't even started."

With that, Liam raised one hand, and his shadow army returned, rising from the darkness around him. The shadows of fallen creatures he had claimed earlier merged into his own, their dark forms seeping into the ground beneath him. As they fused with his essence, Liam's body began to heal—some of his wounds closing, his strength slowly returning.

Jamak's grin faded as he watched Liam recover, his eyes narrowing in recognition of the power at play.

Liam stood tall once more, rolling his shoulders as if preparing for round two. He twirled his daggers in his hands, the flames dancing along their edges. "Now, let's finish this properly."

With a determined gaze, Liam got into his fighting stance, his flames intensifying. He signaled to Jamak, daring him to come forward.

Jamak, his expression serious, clenched his fists and took a step forward. The forest trembled around them as the final battle between the two was about to begin.

