

Beast Master 1321

Chapter 1321 Reborn Of Mist And Bone

Karl lay perfectly still as his body began to reform out of the mist. Any attempt to move only slowed the process, but interestingly, he could still use skills and channel mana.

Just as long as they didn't affect his body.

He wasn't, as he was already low on mana. But when he sensed that one of the others was in danger, he would renew a buff on them, or grant them an [Eternal Lightning] barrier for a few moments.

The time to regenerate an entire body was agonizingly slow, and Karl wondered if part of the issue was that his draconic body was so large.

If it were just his usual form, would he have already coalesced? He had surely regenerated more than a demon body worth of dragon flesh so far.

But thinking was about all that he could do, other than casually looking out for the Golems, and making sure that Cara and Hawk didn't get themselves into too much trouble.

However, one thing was clear. They were going to need a new Academy. And possibly new Cadets.

Karl didn't know how secure those panic rooms were, but the scattered lightning and the impacts of the skills used in the admittedly brief battle between him and Oobleck had destroyed every tree for a hundred kilometres, only one building was still standing, and he had no way of telling if any of the teachers were still alive.

There had been a barrier on them at the time of impact, he was reasonably certain. But that didn't mean much when it was raining Divine Lightning and Mythic Ranked attacks.

Karl had almost forgotten that everything in the Dragon Isles was made of incredibly durable materials, so casual attacks didn't cause much damage, and the backlash of larger attacks only took out a building or two.

Even the trees and grass were more durable there. The standard lumber axe of the Golden Dragon Nation wouldn't even put a scratch on most of the trees in the Dragon Isles. Commander Rank lumberjacks with warrior class skills for cutting were the norm there.

Even in Drodh, which was on the low side of the power spectrum for the Dragon Isles, the battle hadn't completely levelled the city.

Not even the sprawl.

The same could not be said of the Golden Divine Academy. It had been built with nonmagical materials by human craftsmen decades ago, and then repurposed into the academy for the Elites when the program started.

Karl finally felt his scales and blood vessels reform while the last of the black mist solidified, allowing him to slowly get to his feet.

He tried to step gently, as he had crushed a building when he landed, but the battlefield didn't look as bad as he had expected.

Not entirely because of his own team's skills, though.

The Divine Lightning hadn't cared about friend or foe, and the majority of the crabs had been scorched to death when it landed. Rae had managed to dodge the strikes easily enough, and Hawk had simply flown away when the storm started, so he wasn't directly under the clouds.

Black clouds meant rain, and he was not about to willingly subject himself to that.

Karl shook out his wings, getting rid of the lingering tingle of regeneration as he surveyed the destruction.

[Everyone check in.]

[One Remi, intact and healthy.]

[I'm out of crabs. Turns out they don't actually make good mounts.] Rae added.

[I'm good.] Hawk agreed.

[That hurt.] Cara complained as she finally got close enough to return to her space.

[What happened to you? Remi, come heal your sister.] Karl asked, beginning to panic as he saw the still bleeding wounds on the Chaos Badger.

[It won't heal. Give it time and I will regenerate. That Demigod Cat's claws have the Fundamental Rule of Order imbued into them. ORDER. If I'd have known that, I wouldn't have stuck around so long.] Cara complained.

That actually explained a lot. Order was anathema to a Chaos Badger, and the Demigod had hit her with a targeted strike intended to be something that she could not easily recover from.

Healing magic wouldn't fix it because it was intended to be an injury, and that was the proper order of things.

Likewise, Cara's enhanced healing would not simply remove the lingering

power from her body. Nothing that a Myth could do would remove the power of a Demigod so quickly.

But when she had patched herself up, she could go see Matilda, and the dragon would help her along.

The old lady was just a bit busy at the moment.

[It's not a total loss, though. We won.] Karl consoled her.

[And now I know what Demigods taste like.] Cara agreed weakly.

Karl focused on Cara's space and wrapped her in bandages, stopping the bleeding without magic, but leaving the badger looking like a mummy. "Alright, if the targets are gone, let's check for survivors." Karl instructed. The Haint Claw rattled in his mind. A strike of Divine Lightning had damaged the living weapon, sending it back into his mental space. But now that his mind was whole again, the Haint Claw was refreshed, and ready to come back out.

Karl thought hard about the places that the students should be hiding, and then realized that only half these buildings had existed when he had gone to school here.

The changes from the upgraded awakening method had brought such a large influx of students that they had needed to massively increase the size of the

Academy compound.

Fortunately, Soul Sight had no problem finding all the buried safe rooms. Someone had been stationed near the top of the stairs, and they were like a beacon, marking the survivors in the rubble.

[The teachers are in the trial grounds. They ran inside to hide when the cat attacked. It might be a bit before they come out.] Rae explained.

That was either brilliant or incredibly lucky.

Nobody really knew what would happen if the trial ground was forcibly destroyed. They might simply be ejected, they could be obliterated along with

it, or even tossed between the planes as [Chaotic Zone] imploded, and the instance went inactive.

Fortunately, they didn't have to learn today.

[If they're in the trial, they're fine. Check the areas that aren't safe rooms for survivors first. Remi, scatter the healing totems. We will need all that we can

get.]

Chapter 1322 Impact Craters

Karl pulled rubble away from the first of the safe rooms, and realized that these areas had previously been guarded by a Totem Rank barrier, the best that the Golden Dragon Nation could provide.

They were truly impressive bastions of security by local standards, but the aftermath of the battle had shattered all the barriers, except the final layer inside the bunkers themselves.

It had been just enough to keep them intact, so Karl opted not to force the door open. Instead, he simply tapped the rhythm of the national anthem on the door until the guard inside opened it.

The door opened, and Karl found himself facing Overlord Johann, a paladin from the GDN military who he had met more than once before, just not at the Academy.

"Overlord, it's good to see you safe. The battle is over, but you will want to steel your stomach before seeing the aftermath." Karl greeted him quietly.

"How much survived?" The Paladin replied.

"At least some of the bunkers, and the trial tower. The Overlords who were on yard duty ran into the tower for safety at the end.

It got bad.

But if your people are alright, they can come outside. Or you can leave them there for safety and just unlock the door, so they don't suffocate with the barriers down." Karl suggested.

The Paladin gave him a grim smile. "That final hit knocked out all the life support systems. They're buried under the academy, but it's possible that the blast blew out a transformer.

I have some skills in that department, so I will call for a replacement and check the situation. If we can get power back online, then they're fine in the bunkers for weeks if needed."

Karl shook his head. "Come out and you'll understand."

A replacement was called for, and the Paladin came out of the bunker to stand atop the pile of rubble that used to be a dorm building.

"Gods, what happened?" Johann gasped as he took in the scene.

He could see it, but it was not an easy thing to accept. However, saving students came first. He would worry about the rest of the details later.

"First, I will check the power relays. Perhaps the other bunkers still have power."

But when he began walking, his expression only got more concerned.

"This crater, it's over the access tunnels for the backup generator. I can't imagine that they survived that. Hopefully, the generator itself wasn't hit." Karl followed him through the rubble, then helped pull the remains of a small building off a metal hatch.

Inside, the generator room was scorched and blackened, but as the Paladin started flipping switches, he began to smile.

"The air feed and exhaust were crushed, so the diesel generator stalled. That's the soot you see inside the room. If we clear the rubble, it should start again. It also looks like the attack blew every circuit breaker, but I've reset them again, and they're not tripping, so the charge should be gone.

Do you know what sort of attack hit this area?" Johann asked.

"Indirect strike from Divine Lightning, similar to Tribulation Lightning. The crater over there was a deflected attack, probably from one of my Golems. Sorry about that. The Academy wasn't built for a Mythic Rank fist fight." Johann sighed. "Nothing on this continent is. What happened?"

"A concerted effort to get around Supreme Lady Matilda's defence of the planet. A group from the Immortal Realms broke through in multiple spots to cause chaos. It looks like we've got it back under control, but multiple locations suffered heavy damages.

I don't know how they're all doing. Other Myths from the Dragon Isles went to most of the fights to collect bounties on the edible beasts." Karl explained. "That's brilliant. Even one of these crabs could cause dozens of breakthroughs once refined into potions." Johann realized.

"Oh, good point. I've gotten so used to thinking at the higher ranks that I forgot for a moment that they're also medicinal, and not just tasty!" Karl joked.

The Paladin chuckled. "I can only imagine what Mythic Rank crab legs must taste like. Unfortunately, I doubt I'll make enough in my entire life to afford such a thing."

Karl laughed. "I will make some before I go. It will do wonders for the Overlords with its dense nutrients and high energy content. But I've got the generator's vents cleared now, go ahead and try to restart the power."

Johann flipped the switch, then hit the starter button, and nothing.

"Manual start it is. Where is the crank handle? Ah, here." He muttered.

The starter battery had exploded when the system overloaded, but once he started to crank the motor over with the strength of an Overlord, the generator came right to life.

The light in the generator room was still out, exploded by the residual charge, but Karl could hear the hum of machinery powering up, and the gentle rush of air from the other side of the mostly blocked access tunnel.

"It looks like it didn't completely collapse. There is still air circulation, and I can hear the climate control systems powering up. The bunkers are active again, so we don't need to worry too much about everyone suffocating, as long as we can get to them.

Do you want me to use Earth Manipulation to clear the tunnel, and we can just walk to them and check?" Karl offered.

"If you can, that would be perfect. There are actually underground classrooms and other facilities here, a whole backup Academy, in case of attack. However, nobody really expected the complex to take this level of damage.

How far does the destruction extend above ground?" Johann asked.

Karl patted him gently on the shoulder, and the Paladin sighed.

"That bad, is it?"

Karl nodded. "I would say that there isn't a tree standing within fifty kilometres, but there might be a few lucky ones. The railroad tracks are certainly out of commission, and I seem to recall that the river took a direct hit, so you've likely got a new lake in the region."

"They really didn't want the Academy to survive."

Karl shook his head. "They weren't even aiming at the Academy. That's just the aftermath of the battle. Missed attacks, deflected skills, and my impact with the

ground.

If they had actually been aiming to destroy the academy, there wouldn't be

survivors."

Chapter 1323 Clear The Tunnels

Karl used [Earth Manipulation] to clear the tunnel and rebuild the damaged wall sections where Oathbreaker had detonated an explosive skill under a crab, and led the way through the tunnels.

With the lights back on, it was easy to tell how bad of shape the tunnel was in, so he continued reinforcing the walls as they went.

It was made of the same concrete as the Golden Dragon Nation's military bunkers, but that had only kept it marginally intact after the attacks.

However, the sections closer to the bunkers were deeper so that the students had somewhere to escape to in the event of a gas attack, as the toxins would either rise or settle.

"The first few bunkers are down here. There is a central hub leading to classrooms on much lower levels." Johann explained.

Karl listened for movement, and then nodded. "Nobody seems to be in the classrooms, unless they're soundproofed. I hear people in the other tunnels."

"Your cars are that good?"

Karl laughed. "I can hear your heart beating. It's a beast thing."

"The beast master path really worked out well for you. But I hear that your wife is also a powerful woman." Johann noted, then stopped at one of the doors and tapped the same national anthem rhythm that Karl had used.

The door opened, and an unfamiliar teacher poked their head out.

"Oh, Johann, it's you. Is the attack over? Or are you coming to update us on the situation? The power just came back online." He asked.

"We came to see if the power was back on in all the bunkers. The attack is nearly over, but the situation is not good on the surface. How bad is the condition of the bunker?"

The teacher shrugged, "Some cracks in the ceiling, but otherwise solid. Everything is working again now that the power is on."

"Alright, we will keep moving. Keep the students safe and in the bunkers for

now."

The teacher frowned. "How long will it be before they can go back to their dorms? The bunkers are a bit crowded."

"There are no dorms. The surface level of the academy is completely annihilated. It was pure luck that the backup generator survived. We will stop and see if we can get main power back online, but I believe that some of the power lines are above ground, so we've likely got nothing coming from the grid." Johann explained.

"Oh."

"Exactly. Just keep them in place, and we will come up with something"

Karl went to the next bunker entrance, but this time there was tapping from inside the door, the National Anthem, the same as before. But just to mess with the teacher on the other side, he answered with a random song.

The door swung open, and Sergeant Rita, no, now she was Major Rita, and Royal Ranked, stomped out.

"Do you think that I don't know it's you? And why did you answer the test rhythm with 'La Vida Loca'? Did you forget everything that you were taught?" She demanded.

Karl shrugged. "It seemed like it would be more fun this way. Is everyone alright in your bunker? We got the power back on, and ventilation, but the Academy is totalled, so the students will be in there for a while."

"We're good. The mages shored up the bunker when it started to crumble. It's as good as new again. Now tell me, what did you do that made someone so mad?"

Karl laughed. "It's good to see you, too."

But what I did is a long story, and I have more bunkers to check. If yours is good, I will go check on the others first, then we can catch up."

Rita let her drill instructor facade slip and smiled at Karl. "You'll have to tell me how married life is treating you as well. I want all the details."

Karl winked. "I will bring Dana over once she's finished her fight. She's got half the team with her, but they had a bigger mess to clean up than we did." While Rita and Karl joked, Johann moved along the tunnels toward the other bunkers.

The lights were on the whole way, so the buried utilities hadn't been destroyed from the battle. Anything above ground hadn't fared as well, but the shockwaves mostly compacted the earth and dispersed, causing minimal damage to buried cables, but more to buried bunkers.

"Karl, we need you over here. We've got a warped door." Johann called.

"Be right there. Sorry, Rita, it's time for me to run away. Keep the door closed for now, we don't need curious kids running around while we're not sure if all the attackers are gone." Karl replied.

"Are you sure? I suspect that there is at least one random little girl running around." Rita replied.

She had gone looking for Sybil, but hadn't found her. However, she had sensed Rae's aura in the rogue's room.

"Actually, Sybil is not running amok. We put her in a separate space under the tender mercies of the Red Dragon Orphanage Matrons until the crisis is over." Rita smirked. "Serves her right. Now, go help the Paladin. I assume you have a skill for opening doors."

Karl was still laughing when he made it to Johann, who was giving him a strange look.

"Rita was my advisor when I first arrived at the Academy a few years back. But she said that I must have a talent for opening doors, and it made me laugh." Karl

explained.

Johann smirked. "Well, she wasn't totally wrong. The roof has caved in just enough that the door won't open. There is a secondary hatch, but it's in the

ceiling, and needs to be dug out for them to use it."

Karl gave a dramatic wave, and the roof rearranged itself back into shape, then the locks on the door disengaged, and it swung open to reveal a shocked

teacher.

"That was locked." He stammered.

"I know, I unlocked it. How is everyone in your bunker? Is the power and life support back online properly?" Karl asked.

"Yes, everything is back online. Are you an Earth Mage sent in to help?" The teacher asked.

"Not really. I have some Earth Mage type skills, but I am not a mage. I was sent here to help, though. You know, Elites need to stick together in times of

trouble.""

[Karl broke the teacher again.]

Chapter 1324 No New Portals

While Karl and Johann finished clearing bunkers and repairing tunnels, Dana

and the Mythic Black Dragon finished clearing out the frogs from the Beast God Temple.

{That skill of yours, Auto Parry, is absolutely brilliant.} The Black Dragon congratulated Dana as she took a quick break to have a drink.

"Thanks. Mages are underrated as melee combatants, but against these evil frogs, having blade skills really saves the day. But the fact that the Golems get it as well makes the most difference." Dana agreed.

{Would you consider staying on as a teacher here? The children are quite taken with you, and that fighting style would help them immensely when they try to mimic beastkin to blend in with the other species.}

Dana laughed. "As much fun as that sounds, it simply wouldn't be practical. Being Soul Bonded to Karl means that there is never a slow moment in our lives, and the power level difference is too large for me to show them most of the requisite skills for my fighting style.

Many of them can't even be used below Royal or Overlord Rank.

However, I have given copies of the best ones to the Blue Dragons, so if you ask nicely, they should be able to send you copies for your students."

That wasn't the greatest concern. The skills would be obtained by those who needed them now that they were in the hands of the blue dragons. What mattered was that the children were going to cry when the 'pretty fox lady', as they were calling her, went away.

Even after all these years, it didn't get easier to listen to young beasts crying when a new friend went away on a work assignment.

"Tian, Opal, leave some of the frogs for the temple residents, they're hungry too." Dana warned.

Tian gave Dana his best puppy eyes, and the Mythic Black Dragon began to laugh at her.

{He knows the true way of the beasts.} The dragon joked.

"That's not going to work on me. Don't you see all these adorable pouting expressions? Even if we're just mixing in a bit of frog with the regular meals for the young ones, they still worked hard to defend their home today." Dana countered.

Tian relented, and motioned with a paw for the others to come out and start collecting the last of the frogs that hadn't made it to the Temple's defensive lines.

That gave everyone plenty of work to do, as most of the youngsters at the Temple didn't know how to transform yet, so they had to do all the dragging in beast form.

It was actually quite entertaining for Tian to see so many beasts his own size working together to drag frogs ten times their size across the trampled ground to pile them for processing.

"Do you have a lot of frogs?" One of the young clerics asked Tian as he used Earth Manipulation to help them stack bodies.

Tian nodded happily, then yipped. Then he cleared his throat and tried again.

{This is our third set of frogs. We've been collecting lots of them for the restaurant.} He tried.

"You don't speak out loud much, do you? That's alright. I know that Divine Foxes can speak when they practice. But three invasions worth of frogs is a lot. Are you sure that people won't get sick of them?" The cleric replied.

Tian shook his head. {No, we will sell them to different people most of the time. The Guild runs a stadium sized arena with restaurants and vendor stands.} That took a moment for the cleric to wrap his head around.

The Darklight Host Guild operated a fighting arena. That part was simple. But it was one that served Mythic Rank meat as what? A concession snack? Were they expanded into the Immortal Realm?

Honestly, most of it would not go to the arena, but to the Tiny World, so that they could feed the baby dragons well when they started hatching.

Small ones needed lots of nutrition to grow up big and strong, and Button was eager to be a big sister.

Or to have underlings to play with.

Rae had given her a most wonderful underling today, a Rogue who was incredible at hide and seek. But once the dragon eggs hatched, they would have so many more people to play with.

While they were enjoying the aftermath of their battles, the other Myths who had gathered in Drodh for the "bounty event of the century" were rapidly stressing Tessa to her breaking point.

Thor and the others had stepped up to help her deal with the paperwork, but once the city of Drodh was cleared, the Myths completely stopped taking the situation seriously, and treated the whole thing as a chance to stock their respective Alliance's freezers.

The attackers weren't all frogs, but they were almost all wild beasts at the Mythic Rank, and that had proven to be the perfect opportunity for others to pick their options.

So, they didn't stay to finish the job, they popped in and out, switching when they heard of something else that might be tasty.

But worse than that, after the attack at the Golden Divine Academy had ended, Remi had sent back a bunch of Mythic Demons that Karl had recruited from somewhere, and they knew nothing about this world.

So, they wanted answers to everything, and they kept flirting with Thor.

The only upside to the whole thing was that if people weren't turning in the invading beasts for bounties, the Darklight Host didn't have to pay them. That was the deal, edible beasts for bounties.

They had taken some beastkin and Demons in, slaves who hadn't intended to end up here. Hopefully, that was where the group that Remi had just sent back

came from as well.

But most of the bounties were for food.

"Take a break and I will handle the bounties for a while." Thor offered gently

when he noticed that Tessa was getting frustrated.

"No, I can finish out the bounties. We haven't seen a new portal opening update from Cara or Matilda in fifteen minutes, so the problem should be nearly handled for the day." She countered, watching a group of Mythic Warriors who were getting increasingly drunk every time that they came back looking for an update on new beasts to hunt.

"No new invasion locations in fifteen minutes. It looks like Matilda has things under control for a moment. Everyone, pick a portal and finish out the day. This might be your last chance for bounties and loot." Tessa shouted over the noise of the crowd.

That sent the drunks running for a portal, along with most of the others who

were taking a break between fights.

Finally, some peace and quiet.

Chapter 1325 Missed Target

All over the world, the aftermath of the portals from the Immortal Realms had left nations in chaos, and cities razed.

Only one portal had not started in or near a nation's capital, the attack that had targeted the Academy.

Mistakenly, Oobleck had thought that the dense population of more powerful beings had meant that it was something akin to a Royal Palace, a compound where the elites of this mortal world gathered, while the Capital itself had barely registered.

Common Rank humans had no detectable presence to an Immortal.

Though there were a million people in the city, to the Immortals, that felt no different from a colony of ants, which were also technically a million common rank lives.

The level of destruction was not as bad in the dragon isles as it was elsewhere, but they had suffered the vast majority of the attacks, as the invaders had sought to weaken the planet's defences by eliminating what they thought were the young and promising breeding stock, while their strongest leaders dealt with the planet's few powerful defenders.

To say that Azov was in a bad mood was an understatement.

He had been sleeping when the attacks began, and Matilda had roused him from bed with a foghorn, only seconds before he was attacked by an Immortal Rank octopus in his own home.

His mansion was demolished, Sholaha was a mess, and while there were more than enough Mythic Rank warriors to defend the city from the invaders, the attack had been comprised of a form of Thunder Eels, so the entire city smelled like fish guts at the moment.

Not that he was still there.

Khizdila, the capital of Nulnalgat had also suffered an attack led by an Immortal, and he had left immediately after his battle to reinforce them.

The Darklight Host had sent teams to assist, but most of the ones who showed up were either drunk or intent on filling their fridge, and only gave the slightest consideration to not tearing down the city around them as they fought.

At least that one had been frogs.

Lord Bomgon had been rescued by the Dwarves of Zararag, who surprisingly honoured an ancient agreement with the Undead Lord when he called for aid.

They had also prevailed, but the battle there had been against cockroaches, and even Lord Bomgon had been so disgusted by the aftermath that he had declined to use them to expand his army any more than was necessary to ensure his own capital's security.

Undead Cockroaches were a plague that not even he wanted to unleash on the world.

The only ones who didn't seem to be upset about the invasion were the Dark Elves and Priestesses of Es'Zoxhi, who had been invaded by spiders.

The irony was not lost on anyone that the largest city in Nerud, home to half a million of the Spider Goddess's followers, had been invaded by an octopus leading an army of spiders.

The beasts had immediately turned on their former masters when the beloved of the Spider Goddess beseeched them to know their true allies. That had left the invading Immortal helpless before the might of their own army, and restrained from leaving by one of the Dragon Isles' few Immortals.

The Dark Elves were happy to see so many new species join their city, and with the assistance of the High Priestesses, the slave collars of the beastkin officers leading the assault were quickly destroyed after they had been rendered ineffective using the same technique that Remi had.

Only, they used a bit of arachnid flair to accomplish the task. Steel Silk Spiders at the Mythic Rank had quickly woven cloth to protect the wearers neck joint, and then the collars had been disenchanting by the Priestesses.

The needles couldn't puncture the silk, and the collars were easily removed with brute force after the enchantments were gone.

While the direct damage done by the attack from the Immortal Realm was severe, and the targeted locations would need extensive rebuilding to call themselves intact cities again, that was not the largest, or most lasting damage done by the invasion.

When a portal was opened between two Realms, the Natural Laws immediately tried to balance the two sides.

Like water under pressure, high density mana tried to force its way through into the lower density side. More mana was always a welcome addition to the world, but the mana of the Immortal Realm and the Mortal Realm were not the

same.

There were fundamental differences, beyond the density.

The mana of the Immortal Realms carried a hint of divinity, and the mana itself was of an entirely different nature.

While the mana of the mortal realms often carried a touch of Elemental Affinity lingering from past spell effects, the Mana of the Immortal Realm carried the aftereffects of Fundamental Rules.

As Karl understood it, knowledge of a Fundamental Rule to an acceptable degree was a necessary condition of reaching Immortality. It was the difference between the creatures like Oobleck, who were Immortal Beasts, and the frogs, who were nominally only one step beneath him in rank, but worlds

apart in power.

There was something else as well, but it was something that Karl simply couldn't put his finger on. A power that he was either totally incompatible with, or simply lacked any ability to identify.

And that was a rare thing, given all the sensory upgrades that he had received

along the way.

But the mana of the Immortal Realm was insidious. It didn't just dissipate into the atmosphere, it soaked into everything that it touched. Karl could feel it in his own body, trying to reform him, he could feel it in the plants, altering their structure from common foliage into magical resources.

The level of change was small, with the limited Immortal Realm mana available, but the altered plants also gave off hints of Immortal Realm mana now, permanently changing the atmosphere of the Golden Dragon Nation. At first, Karl didn't notice, or mind. But after he saw the first lower rank students coming out of the trial tower, he realized that this was going to be an

issue.

Their bodies were not able to process that mana. It was poison to their system.

A poison that the demons and others he recruited had needed to take medicine

to adapt to.

Chapter 1326 Shots In Bulk

Poison meant that this was Remi's time to shine.

She had been working on analyzing and recreating the potion, hoping that it would contain the answers to advancing others to the Mythic Rank more quickly.

Without understanding a Fundamental Rule, and a large dose of Immortal Realm or Divine Energy, that was where they would remain, but in this mortal world, nobody could complain about being Mythic Ranked and standing near the peak.

[I've got enough to make an antidote to the mana poisoning. It will push them slowly upward, so warn the teachers that Royal Rank students will be regular events now. But it might also make some of the Overlords advance.]

The Overlords were doing fine handling the change on their own, Karl didn't sense any poisoning from them. But the effects on the Awakened Rank students who had been in the trial tower were immediate, and the children were too traumatized by the destruction of the Academy to do much about it on their own.

Half of them still thought that they were in the trial because they had come out, and everything they expected to see was gone.

"I have an antidote coming for the mana poisoning. Someone will have to give the recipe to all the other targets on this continent that were attacked, but it should prevent any secondary casualties.

Technically, the mana poisoning is unlikely to actually kill them, but it's not going to be pleasant. Especially for the humans. Most species can adapt easily enough and gain a Rank, but the humans can't do that without help." Karl explained to Johann.

Remi quickly finished a whole batch of the mana adaptation potion, and then sent a memo to her Acolytes to make a lot more of it.

The ingredients were abundant in the Tiny World and her own space, so they had them on hand. But the potion would seem more like a snake oil scam to the vast majority of users. It wasn't an immediate advancement, only an increase in your ability to adapt to higher mana levels.

So, it would cure the mana sickness of the Common and Awakened Rank students, while having only a slow but cumulative effect on everyone else.

Karl handed the bulk potion to Johann and gestured to the students. "Give each of them a single spoonful of the potion, and they should start to adapt to the mana in the area.

It will fade with time, I believe, but for now, they're going to need treatment, as the plants are inundated with Immortal Realm mana."

The Paladin nodded. "So, it's similar to radiation poisoning? It lingers in the plants and soil, and those who cannot stand the radiation get sick, while those with stronger regeneration are fine?"

Karl nodded. "That's exactly it, but I don't quite understand how your mind went there."

Johann chuckled. "We came across a highly radioactive area with Trolls living in it. Anything else that came close began to blister from the radiation, but the Trolls were fine, they just healed like humans.

It was their perfect safe space, but the problem was that they were still radioactive when they went out to forage for food."

Karl nodded. "And a radioactive troll in a water supply is bad news!"

Johann paused for a moment as he decided the best way to solve this issue, then took out a small chemistry class beaker from his inventory.

"All students, please line up. We have medicine for the treatment of the aftereffects of the attack. The invaders left a mild toxin on the area, and we are working to inoculate you all against it.

It's a bit of a rush job, but I will get through you all as fast as I can." He explained.

The students laughed as he dipped the beaker into the cauldron and used it like a shot glass for the students, but nobody said anything to the Paladin, they were already starting to feel the effects of the mana, making them dizzy and

nauseous.

Karl didn't know if that would pass as they adapted, but he assumed it would, with how low the levels of Immortal Realm mana were.

"Teachers, you should be fine without it, but I will give you a dose anyhow. Once you have it, please bring the separated portions and a shot glass to each bunker. The students there will be affected, though not as quickly as those on the surface." Karl instructed, as he made a collection of stone cauldrons and shot glasses.

He could have made buckets, but it was an Alchemy potion, it just wouldn't be right to package it up like leftover soup, and the regular potion bottles were a terrible size for the purpose.

"Not even a lid?" One of the teachers complained as Karl filled the cauldrons.

"Just put it in your inventory. No risk of spillage that way. But I suppose I could make a lid for the cauldrons."

The teacher waved his hand dismissively and put away the cauldron. "No worries, whatever is left over I will bring back. Should I just give it to certain

ranks?"

Karl shook his head. "Give it to everyone. Even if it doesn't help much, it won't hurt."

The teacher laughed. Karl had a good point. Preventative medicine was a very valid theory, and if this one wasn't difficult to make, they could just give it to

everyone.

What he couldn't know was that it was actually intended to help their growth rate when they were exposed to higher quality mana, and that Remi intended to give it to all sorts of people, just to see what happened.

The Alchemists at the Guild House were already mixing it in drinks included with relief supplies, so that the residents of Drodh that lived outside the walls, those lowest on the power charts, got treated without making a scene.

were

The medicinal juice was going out to everyone in town, but special efforts we made to make sure it made it outside the walls, as those people couldn't easily come to the Guild House.

The wall was damaged, and the gates were blocked.

Chapter 1327 Build Back Better

Karl looked around the ruins of the Academy as the teachers rushed off to get medicine to the bunkers.

"Well, I suppose that I should likely get to work. A good portion of this can be rebuilt, but we will need some of the other Elites to come back and add spells to make it what it was." He decided.

[Make a water mage punishment course.] Hawk suggested.

[Don't worry, we will have training courses for everyone. The new mages will all do well to learn to work around your defences.] Karl laughed.

But the training courses were only a small part of the whole Academy.

The classrooms were going to be easy, as they were largely nonmagical to start with. Even if he just waved a hand and rebuilt a building, it would be halfway to functional. Once someone came along and put in the rest of the little details like lights and furniture, it would be up and running.

However, it wouldn't take much to make the Academy better than ever, even if Opal was off with Dana, helping with the defence of the Beast God Temple.

"You have a look on your face that says you're planning to do something that is either a war crime, or an epic practical joke." Rita's voice declared from behind Karl as he was mentally planning the new layout for the Academy.

"A little bit of column A, a little bit of Column B." Karl agreed.

"What is it that you're thinking of?" She asked curiously.

"I have the magic to rebuild the Academy, at least to a somewhat decent standard. Like I did with the Trial Tower, but for the whole Academy.

It might take some time, but I should be able to reconstruct the Academy to a standard high enough to train students. With the teachers that we have here, I should also be able to work in the essential spells to make it self-supporting.

Mostly, it's just the nutrition part that I have zero compatibility with." Karl explained.

[Food? I can make food. Seaweed is delicious.] Leo announced in his slow drawl.

That was right, he was Gravity and Nature Element.

But when Karl focused on the skills that the turtle had, there was nothing like [Plant Growth] or [Ocean Feast]. It was just a simple spell [Create Seaweed], which could create a dozen different varieties.

The turtle waved a flipper. [It's fine. Just ask one of the clerics for some spices, and I'm sure humans will like it too.]

Thor thought that the turtle had a point. The seaweed looked pretty good. But maybe if you wrapped it around rice and beans, like those cakes that they fed to the horses at the Temple. That could be even better.

[Dried, so it's crunchy.] Leo agreed.

Now, it actually sounded like something that humans would eat.

"You seriously think that you can fully rebuild the Academy?" Rita verified.

"Of course. You don't get to Mythic Rank without having a few tricks up your sleeves, but I also have a crafting related trade skill. Making things is my specialty.

Plus, I can call Tian and Opal back here so that they can assist with their Earth Manipulation and Illusionary Domain abilities.

When you build those spells into a building, you can do wonderful things." Karl agreed.

"Like the storage closet next to your old room. It's an Illusionary Domain, and nearly a full acre of space inside. Though, that one was designed as a large field, so it wasn't for anyone.

This year, there was actually someone in it, because of the lack of space. A druid girl ended up with it because she stopped to play with the Earth Mice, so she was the last to arrive!" Rita replied, while trying not to laugh.

That girl would have made a good nature cleric. Hopefully, she wasn't in her room ignoring the alarm and ditching class during the attack.

"Alright, I will check on the others, and then we can design a new academy. Perhaps something cool." Karl suggested.

Rae appeared beside them, carrying Sybil on her hip like a toddler. The 'baby rogue' had never grown much, and still stood under a hundred and fifty centimetres tall. So, compared to Rae's tall and lanky form, she really did look like the child that she was.

"Did I hear we're making something cool? I'm all about that. Let me design some of the rooms." She insisted.

Sybil nodded happily. "The real rogues need some better training courses. I spend as much time as possible in the trial tower, but it's not a specialty training area just for my class."

Rita gave her a suspicious look. "Why does it sound like you did find a specialized training course? And why are you out of the bunkers?"

Sybil shrugged. "Rae has one in Karl's Tiny World. But I was moved there for safety when the fight started, so there was no need to go to the bunker."

Rita motioned for an explanation, so Karl opened the world, with the destination being the top of the nap platform in the mountains.

It was currently occupied by a sleepy blue dragon, who smiled up at them

when Karl led the former drill instructor through.

"Good morning. This fine lady was my first tutor after I gained access to the system." He explained.

The dragon transformed into a young man with shockingly blue eyes. "You can

call me Librarian Ike. I am here to teach the baby dragons who are about to hatch, and to make a recording of everything that happens during their

childhood years."

Rita nodded politely, and shook the dragon's hand. "Major Rita, of the Golden Dragon Nation. I would say of the Golden Divine Academy, but it's currently in

ruins."

The dragon nodded. "So I hear. The Karl will do well enough as a repair man, though. He made all of this, the entire Tiny World is his work. Except the living

things, that is."

Rita stood near the edge of the cliff and stared in wonder at the scene beneath

her.

If Karl could do all of this, what was a measly academy? Even if he didn't know how to make their training equipment, what he did know how to make would probably do a better job of it.

But why were so many of the people naked?

Chapter 1328 Supply Crunch

The teacher glared at Karl, who turned his attention to where she was watching.

"Oh, those ladies are off-duty today. The beach is the common gathering point for the resident druids and nature clerics. If you've ever tried keeping clothes on a nature cleric, you will know that it's a lost cause, so I don't try.

The only ones who do try are the male dragons." He explained.

Ike laughed and nodded. "The ladies are refreshingly honest, but we are seriously outnumbered in here. I would never get all my work done if I indulged all their whims.

We've already lost Oban!"

Karl chuckled at the blue dragon's description of the situation. "Speaking of duties, can I get a [create food] spell from you? I recently bonded with a False Island Flying Turtle, and he's got compatibility with the nature element."

The blue dragon nodded, and handed Karl a thin book.

[Create Food] was the most common grade of the food creation spells, and only made rice and beans or oatmeal. It was far from perfect, but it was only three pages as a skill book, so every blue dragon carried around a stack of them.

Just in case they found potential cleric recruits.

Karl learned the skill, and Leo cheered from his space. Now, he could make side dishes to go with his seaweed.

"Thank you. He greatly appreciates it. It will also help with my rebuilding efforts. The Golden Divine Academy needs some renovations once Opal and Tian return, so I planned to build some food creation spells directly into the new kitchen," he explained.

"Oh, that's a great idea. You should ask the Druids at the Drodh Guild House, though. They've got better versions already carved into nature stones. A most curious thing, that. You don't see many Orcish Druids." Ike suggested.

"Right, I forgot that they could make those."

The dragon gave a full throated laugh. "They sell them at the Guild Store. A few dozen a week."

Karl shrugged. He hardly paid attention to the inventory at the store these days. There was just so much else going on that the store mattered more to the residents of Drodh than it did to him.

Especially today, after the attacks.

Karl mentally checked the Guild Store, and poached two Royal Ranked [Advanced Food Creation] stones, then checked in with the Guild.

[How are things in Drodh? We're almost done with the attacks here, and now it's all aftermath.] Karl asked Mick, as the vampire was the least likely to be swamped with work at the moment.

[We're doing alright. Almost all of the crafters are out right now. They are mostly from classes with healing skills, so they're on rescue teams. The Dwarves from Bara have come to offer assistance in rebuilding the city, and we've got them housed in the crafting cavern, near the forges where they're comfortable.

Uhm, other than that, we're just short on all sorts of potions, but the Alchemists are busy with the mana poisoning potion. Making a hundred thousand doses is a lot.

We've sold out of everything that was on the shelves, and we've got a huge list of orders for necessities when we can make them.

That will make the crafters happy, except that all the Myths realized the Darklight Host has an actual store here, so they've been bothering Sapphire for the good stuff. I think that the old lady is going to eat someone soon.

You know how it is when Myths suddenly come into money. They immediately buy a shiny new toy.] She explained.

Yes, that sounded like exactly what they would do, especially as they had been drinking all day as they fought. Drunken impulse buys when you had a pocket full of cash in a lower cost city were nearly irresistible.

[How is the Guild doing for money?] Karl asked.

[We're alright. The Mythic beasts didn't have any special attributes, so they weren't individually expensive. With the money that we've paid out for the meat, we lost over a month of revenue, but we're still doing alright.] Mick replied happily.

The Mythic Rank visitors had already started to barbecue the frogs out in front of the Guild House, ones that they hadn't sold to the Darklight Host, and she had managed to sneak a shredded frog barbecue sandwich earlier.

The energy levels in the food were crazy, and she could feel her body's innate power level improving, even after she had taken the potion to avoid mana

poisoning.

It wasn't common knowledge that the potion actually increased your affinity for new mana, instead of blocking it to prevent poisoning, so the situation was completely unexpected to Mick, and many others.

[Anything else important happen?] Karl asked.

[They learned about the crafting cave. It's pretty busy in there now, but we've got it under control. The Guild Alliance leaders are holding a meeting at the tavern in the cavern, and I think they'll be spending the night, but the rest mostly just went in to make custom orders with one of the Master craftsmen. The market is pretty empty as well, even the spices sold out.

Thor sent over some new spices and veggies from either his space or the Tiny World, but stock is going as fast as they can set it out.]

That made sense. Who could tell what flavours of Mythic Frog would be best?

[Sounds like you have it under control. You are welcome to break out the good Dwarven Ale for the day's more important visitors. The stuff that the Inn usually keeps out front is good, but not Guild Leader good, if you know what I

mean.

I'm not sure if the constructs will do it on their own.] Karl added.

[Oh, that's no problem. They listen to Nachtia, and she's been keeping order in here since the fighting stopped. The death energy made her dizzy, so she couldn't do much but yell at people and absorb it.]

From the sound of it, they were going to have a bunch of Totem Ranked members soon.

So, Karl targeted others with his Guild Message. [Deve, Raj, Hugo, we need Overlords to Drodh City. Tell them to get a shot of the mana poisoning potion

and then help with the cleanup.

The lingering Immortal Realm mana will help push them toward Totem Rank.

The Myths won't really notice it, but if we have Overlords near the bottleneck, they might advance with just a few days of recovery work in the city. I will ask the Darklight Host to put them up overnight, so they don't have to take the

portal home.]

Then, he relayed the information to Mick, Tessa and Nachtia, who should all be around the Guild House.

[Got it. We have room for them in the Crafting Cavern. Most of the others are bunking with locals in the Stone Chapel district, so we're not too crowded. Nobody seems to be rushing to get back to Zilaz today.] Tessa replied. If Karl's guess was right, Ophelia and Lotus should be in the Redwood Sprawl

right now, doing the healing tree routine and making dinner for the homeless. That was their usual disaster response, and the Sprawl would be intense with Immortal Realm mana.

It was no loss for them to remain across town.

Chapter 1329 Formal Approval

Once he was finished talking to the Guild, Karl pocketed the two stones he had recovered, and then focused on Rita, who was holding up a map of the

Academy in front of him.

"You aren't going to make all the students learn new routes to class, are you?" She asked.

"One hundred percent, yes he is." Rae replied before Karl could speak.

She didn't like the current design. It looked like someone was coffee drunk when they spun their web. It definitely needed fixing.

Rita sighed. "Why did I even think that you could make things easy and rebuild the old academy the way it was?"

Rae used her free hand to pat her on the head. "It's alright, we all make mistakes."

"Are you going to put my student down?"

"No."

Rae was using Karl's trick for transferring mana to flood Sybil with Immortal Realm enhanced mana, trying to force her to advance again before she had to leave.

Technically, the Rogue should be able to graduate, but she had entered the Academy early, and she was honestly still too young to be sent out on her own into the world. She was powerful, and an incredibly skilled assassin, but the Inquisition had marked her for recruitment once she was a little more grown.

They recognized her skill, but the Elders of the Church had decided it would be exploitative to recruit a child so young.

Even if Karl and Dana had only been two years older when they left the Academy.

Rae blamed Sybil's size.

Nobody took her seriously when she was so small. It was an advantage in infiltration missions, but when she was trying to convince others to send her on those missions, it was only a hindrance.

However, Rae had a plan for that. She would work with Sybil on regeneration and disguise skills so that she could more easily play the role of the Orphaned Waif, the Flustered Student and the Trainee Servant with no sense of direction.

All most excellent ways to blend in with her surroundings on urban missions for the Inquisition. And by the time that Sybil realized that she had stopped aging, her role would already be set.

The only other one that they had who could potentially do stealth infiltration in that manner was...

Never mind. Neither Cara nor Tian would be any good at infiltration. Cara would end up robbing everyone just to see what they had, and Tian was too adorable to be unobtrusive.

Rae reached into her space and set out a map, with a whole campus complex built around a central structure.

Originally, it was designed to be around a Spider Goddess Temple, but putting it around the trial tower in the same spiderweb pattern would work just as well.

The Goddess approved of the tower.

"This is my plan for the new Academy. See, there are open air training grounds, indoor training areas, classrooms, and dorms. I even left specific spots for torturing water mages and disassembling armoured cars." Rae announced proudly.

"Why those two things in particular?" Rita sighed.

"They're our favourite training methods."

Rita nodded slowly. "We will have to bring this to the Headmaster and the others before you get started. They will have the final say on whether or not the design gets approved."

Rae gave her a sly smile. "Or... I could just have the Karl start building it, then ask for forgiveness later. A wise person told me it's easier to get forgiveness than permission."

Rita glared at Karl, who shrugged. "That's probably not my fault."

Her expression didn't change, but Karl couldn't blame her. Telling her that he didn't bother waiting for apologies and just left someone else to deal with the aftermath once he was finished doing what he needed to do most likely wouldn't help his case.

Rita took out her phone, then frowned when she realized that it was completely dead.

"EMP from the Divine Lightning attacks. The Generator needed to be reset as well." Johann informed her as he strolled over with an empty cauldron.

"Damn. Alright, I need to go find the Headmaster. Karl has plans to rebuild the Academy in a new layout, and I'm not letting my name be anywhere on that paperwork." She insisted.

"I will help you find him."

Rae and Karl laughed as the two Elites took off, running from any chance of responsibility. But they had left so fast that they hadn't even waited for him to say that he could see the Headmaster over by the tower.

So, when Karl simply opened a portal and stepped through with Rae, the two Elites arrived to find that Karl was already with the Headmaster.

"Dammit. How did you even get here?" Rita asked.

"Portal. But I can run faster than you can as well. You should have gone to look for him somewhere that he wasn't."

The Headmaster shook his head in dismay. "If this is how you treat your friends, I wouldn't want to be your enemy. Now, what was it that everyone needed to tell me?"

"We have plans to remake the Academy in a more organized pattern. All we need is your approval, and I can get started on the reconstruction." Karl

suggested.

"Let me see the plans. If it's suitable, I don't have any objections to letting you redesign the Academy's layout. The Trial Tower is a wonder, and the students would surely appreciate more of your special flair in their Academy life."

Rae smiled at Sybil. "You hear that? He's going to let us add all the good things to the new Academy design. Oh, this will be so much fun. I've got big plans for

the Rogue training grounds."

She was going to have a wonderful time designing new training programs. Whether the Rogues could survive Rae's trials without a safety mechanism and healing spells was a completely different issue.

Karl handed over Rae's design to the Headmaster, who glanced at them, then immediately turned his attention to Rae.

"You do know that this is the Golden Dragon Nation, not the Spider Goddess Nation, right?" He asked.

Rae nodded. "It's no problem. Your Dragon Gods and my Spider Goddess get along just fine. I'm sure that they won't mind that the spider web is more efficient than your randomly placed clusters of buildings."

Chapter 1330 Room To Expand

More administrators came over, and began making copies of Rae's design, while adding markings and notations.

Originally, Rae had decided what went where entirely in her head. There were no notes on the blueprint. But now, there were marks for what went in each classroom, which dorm held what students, and then pages and pages of side notes on what the Academy staff would like to see added to the various facilities.

It was definitely not a short list, either.

Part of it was that they wanted to keep the different sorts of dorm rooms intact, along with the unique advantages and drawbacks, so that students could choose and learn the value of compromise.

Some of the drawbacks were only a major issue if your neighbours were obnoxious, like the walls that transmitted the sound of training. But others were a constant annoyance, which could be mitigated with a change in behaviour.

To the Academy, both sorts were a test of mental fortitude and character, a measure of how well the trainee Elites could handle stress and overcome adversity.

Similarly, the "rewards" were a test of discretion.

One that Karl had failed brilliantly.

All of the supposedly hidden features of the room had been quickly revealed not just to his tutor, but also to Dana, who spent more nights in his room than her own. Sybil had at least attempted to keep the curtains closed and pretend that the garden outside didn't exist when the teachers came in to speak with her.

But Sybil also didn't have a Dana equivalent 'friend' that all the teachers suspected was actually a friend with benefits.

Karl had no idea that his reputation was so thoroughly unwholesome back at the Academy, or that he was considered a living legend among the boys of the current generation.

The one who had been the fastest ever to advance to Commander Rank, who had graduated early to work on the most classified of projects before saving the nation in public fashion.

And who had done it all with the campus beauty at his side.

It was so utterly unfair that the new generation of Elites in training could only dream of being him.

The number of small changes that the teachers were making continued to increase until finally Rae decided that she had enough. They were losing track of her vision, wanting to move buildings into unsuitable spots, and it was time to put an end to their nonsense.

"Alright, I see what you want out of the buildings. We will make it all work. Don't worry too much about it, even if it doesn't look like it will fit where I put it, it will." She insisted.

Everyone turned to Karl for an explanation, as it was clear that Rae was not about to give one.

"We can use [Illusionary Domain] and [Reality Warp] to create expanded study areas and altered room geometry. It's a bit challenging to describe until you have seen it in action, but I assure you that Rae is correct. This design will work with your requests." He offered.

That wasn't totally convincing, but he was the one that had all the power, so if he was going to rebuild them an Academy to replace the one they lost, then they would shut up and accept it.

If it wasn't enough, they would expand upon the initial design later.

That part was probably inevitable. The population of the Golden Dragon Nation was growing, and an increasing number of students were coming to the Academy every year.

So, unless they built a second facility, they would eventually need an even larger capacity school.

[We should make lots of extra dorms. One huge pack is stronger than two small ones.] Thor suggested.

[Oh, a high-rise condo, like we had in the Capital.] Remi agreed.

[Like coconuts on a palm tree?] Leo asked, unfamiliar with the concept.

[No, there are people all the way up, not just at the top.]

[Hmm, that could be fun. Like stacking rocks really high.]

Rae quickly altered a few things in her plan, then nodded. [We can make it work with up to ten stories of dorm rooms. Or we can do more, and use illusions for the levels, so the outside only looks like ten.]

The beasts did the mental calculations, and then realized that all the existing buildings here were four stories or shorter.

Well, they had been before Karl squished them.

But that meant going to ten stories would already double capacity, even

without adding any new dorm buildings.

But Rae's plan also had many more buildings than the old layout, and they were much more efficiently designed, with connecting walkways to complete the

spiderweb pattern.

This would be much more efficient, but it was also a security measure, as they could lock down the walkways with [Illusionary Domain] and make intruders fight their way through ever increasingly creative scenarios to move between

buildings.

It was going to be so much fun.

"Where do we start?" Rita asked, ignoring the disturbing feeling that she got when she saw Rae silently plotting her next move.

"The first steps are to clean up, and then I suppose that we can work our way out from the tower. Rae, do all the bunker entrances line up with a building?"

Karl replied.

Rae shook her head. "No, some of them are in silly spots. But once we clean up, we can fix them. Having the bunkers not be directly under the buildings will make it easier for some of them to get back out again if they have another

incident."

Rita nodded in agreement. With so many of the bunkers buried under rubble today, it would have actually been better if some of them hadn't been directly under the buildings, and the exits were more easily accessible from an open

area.

The only reason that it had been so easy to find them all was because Karl could repair the tunnels after they got the power back online.

But it wasn't wise to count on that being true the second time.

The Headmaster smirked as he watched Rita's expressions cycle from concern to horror, and finally to acceptance.

"Alright, we will trust the Lady Rae to design a safe and efficient layout."