

Chrysalis 351

[Chrysalis](#)

Chapter 351: The final stretch begins

After exiting the Dungeon I was able to see that the evacuation of the forward HQ had already begun. Hundreds of ants, perhaps as many as a thousand, were rushing this way and that, digging, lifting and generally getting things done everywhere he looked. A long trail had already been established and soldiers as well as workers were vanishing into the distance as they marched back towards the nest and home.

They were very different ants from those who had started this fight. Thousands of Biomass had been consumed over the last five days, not to mention the experience and levels that had been gained. Mutations were evident everywhere I looked, Soldiers with glittering carapace, even a few diamond looking ones, long flowing antennae, thicker, more powerful legs.

For those who had survived, the battles had been a forge in which their strength had been tempered. They had emerged bigger and badder than before, ready to put their lives on the line in the defence of their colony and Queen in the final battle to come.

I spotted a dense cluster of ants communing near the main entrance and made my way over. Sure enough, the leadership was grouped there, giving out instructions and consulting on last minute changes in strategy.

"Hey, Victor! Wills! Mendant! How's things going?"

The three members of the twenty turned at my call and watched silently as I approached.

Find authorized novels in Webnovel, faster updates, better experience, Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

'Well, ever since the er, lightning incident, things have been tense," Victor admitted.

Yeah, I kind of had feeling that might be the case.

"Any more casualties?" I asked, nervous.

"No, Eldest," Mendant answered me gently, "we have simply been reluctant to engage with the horde with such an unstable element at play."

"I can understand that. I may be able to help even."

Wills perked up at my words.

"You've come up with a way to attack the Kaarmodo? That'll be incredible."

"Ah, no. Nothing that grand. I still need two more levels before I can evolve right? Which means I'm going to have to go back in. I'll join up with the humans and try to hit the horde from behind, which should attract the attention of our friend the wizard lizard, since it's me that they're after."

"Meaning the colony will be able to operate with far less risk from the front," Victor mused.

"You're taking a lot of risk onto yourself Eldest," Mendant worried, "isn't there a better way that we could approach this?"

I shook my antennae in refusal.

"I won't have members of the family sacrificing themselves so I can farm experience peacefully," I said firmly, "I refuse. This is the way it's going to be. It'll also work to minimise the risks to the greatest number of us."

I gave Mendant a friendly pat on the head with an antenna.

"Not to worry, I'm not easy to kill. Enough monsters have tried, but I'm still here."

The healer shifted uncomfortably under my antennae as an embarrassed teenager might as they suffered the affection of a parent.

"How long until you move out, Eldest?" Victor asked.

I shrugged.

"No time like the present I suppose. The humans should already be waiting close to where I left them. I'll need an hour to circle around and meet up with them, then another hour to get into position behind the enemy. I get the feeling you might notice once I get their attention."

Victor nodded. If the sky starting sprouting lightning bolts again then it would be hard not to notice.

"How goes the evacuation?" I asked, shifting the topic.

"Quickly and efficiently," Victor stated proudly.

As if it could be anything else. You're ants for goodness sake.

"Fair enough. I'd better get moving, the sooner I get to fighting the sooner I can evolve."

"Be careful out there, Eldest," Wills warned me, "we're going to need you by the end."

"Miss out on the final showdown? Me?!" I protested, "you must be crazy."

With a final few words to the council members present I turned to run only to find many of the surrounding soldiers and workers frozen in place, watching me.

Uhhh... what's happening people?

The air itself seemed to be still, so perfectly motionless was every ant present. I twitched my antennae nervously, uncomfortable under the attention of so many of my siblings. What are they waiting for? Do they want me to say something? Since when did they need me to tell them what to do?

Ah! Come on Anthony! Think! Say something inspirational. Something moving. Something with meaning!

"Ah.... " I stuttered. Nice start!

"Ahem. Uh... Work hard! Er... For the colony?" I mumbled.

There was a moment of silence before:

"FOR THE COLONY" roared a thousand ants in unison.

Then, just like that, they went back to working, even faster than before. Confused, I turned to Mendant who had quietly approached my side.

Seeing the query in my eyes she answered me.

"They look up to you. They seek guidance from you on how to be a proper Formica Sapiens."

I goggled at her.

"You are all far better ants than I'll ever be" I told her honestly.

The ants who heard me fell silent for some reason, but I paid them no mind, it was time to get moving.

[Let's go Tiny.]

With my pet ape in tow and Crinis on my back, I sped off away from the ants and into the open space. The horde wouldn't be far away from this place so I made sure to keep my head down and avoid getting too close as we cast a wide circle around them.

Lightning bolts falling on my head wasn't something I was in a rush to experience again.

Eventually we looped around far enough and we managed to find the humans camped in a copse of trees, sensibly concealed from prying eyes.

[Seems like things are coming to a head,] Isaac observed as I brought him up to speed.

[What you think?] I asked him, [Do you want to stick around and take a few more jabs? Or do you want to head back to town?]

Isaac rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

[I think me an' the gang are up for some more action. I'd say Enid has things arranged back at the village.]

[... and Morrelia will still be in the Dungeon.]

The man deflated before my eyes.

[That's true too,] he muttered.

This man was sure going to die soon. If not to the horde, then to an angry berserker.

[Chrysalis](#)

Chapter 352: Tempting fate

Isaac and his squad packed their stuff and we began to mosey our way to the back of the horde. It takes an hour of careful movement, creeping where we can and trying to prevent the monsters from seeing us. The entire time I kept an eye on the sky, worried that any second a dark cloud would form and I'd be forced to start dancing the dance of life.

Thankfully, it didn't happen. Whatever the Kaarmodo was doing, it didn't appear to be scrying for my location, or at least it wasn't actively throwing at spells at me. I understand that I volunteered to draw

the Wizard Lizard's attention to me in order to relieve the burden from the rest of the colony, but I didn't want to take that heat before I'd even started to engage the horde in combat!

So we crept, crawled and sashayed towards the rear of the horde and once we were there, we grouped up to hatch a plan.

[So you want to draw the attention, and lightning, of the Kaarmodo onto your head?] Isaac asked.

[That's right,] I confirmed.

[I love it,] he told me, [I won't stand next to you, but I love it. What do you want from me and my team?]

[We'll split up into two teams and engage separately. I'm assuming that once the Kaarmodo notices me, the fireworks might begin, so I'll try and be cautious but it makes sense that you stay a reasonable distance from me. When the lightning slash fire slash doom begins to rain on me, I want you guys to keep an eye out for the mage slaves.]

Isaac nodded as he rubbed his chin with one hand.

[You want us to try and find a chance to jump 'em,] he observed.

[Nothing fancy,] I warned him, [try and take a few pot shots. Chances are you won't be able to actually take one of them down, but if you can distract them, that'll help me a ton. Just remember, if you actually manage to take one of them down, you'll need to high-tail it out of here.]

The former town guard didn't hesitate to nod with vigour.

[I don't plan on letting me or my crew get cooked,] he laughed, [we'll tag along with you on this one. Give me a chance to talk with my people and we'll be in position soon.]

[You do that,] I told him, [we'll go get started.]

As Isaac gathered his team, who were still keeping a respectful distance from me, Tiny, Crinis and I made our way towards the horde.

It was stressful creeping up on the business end of the mass of monsters, half expecting magical death at any moment, but surprisingly, we continued to evade notice and it wasn't long until we'd managed to sneak close enough that the back end of the monsters marching away from us came into view.

Yes, even Tiny had managed to sneak up to this point, that's how little attention they were paying us.

It was almost a letdown. Here we were, hugging the ground, shoving our faces into the dirt, even Crinis is off my back and crawling tentacle by tentacle in order to lower my profile. Tiny is crawling also! His massive shoulders dig troughs into the dirt as he pushes forward with his butt too high in the air. We're really trying here but it feels as if the horde isn't giving us the proper respect!

We'll show them!

I grit my mandibles to contain my indignation and we crawl even closer, until the vast field of monsters is only twenty metres in front of us. So close I can smell them and sense the heat rising from the densely packed beasts into the sky.

Then I start weaving a spell.

Not the gravity bomb this time, I'm concerned that the Kaarmodo might sense the potent mana build up before I'm ready to release.

No, this time I'm aiming for the condensed water cannon. At this range I'll be able to slice through the closest ranks of monsters like a hot knife through a soft and meltable spread of some sort.

[Tiny, prepare to charge lightning,] I instructed my battle hungry ape friend and got a devilish bat grin in return.

[What about me, Master?] Crinis asked, eager for direction.

[You know what to do Crinis. Make them afraid,] I told my pet horror ball.

[Understood,] she purred.

As she continued to creep forward on her short, permanent tentacles the shadow beneath her body darkened to an impossible black and she began to extend tentacles into it. It wouldn't be long before she was ready to bring them up directly underneath the monsters before us.

As I directed my sub-brains to do the heavy lifting on the spell I was working on, I activated my mana sense. This Skill had been coming in handy lately and I honestly don't know why I don't have it on all the time. It does make more material things harder to perceive but when my number one threat is death by Wizard Lizard, keeping an eye on the flow of mana around me makes a lot more sense.

As my vision transformed, becoming coloured with the density and flow of mana around me, I grew shocked at what I saw. A vast confluence of mana was forming in the middle of the horde. It rotated slowly, like a tornado gathering speed and was beginning to pull the mana from the surrounding air into the centre.

Even the mana around me, on the outside of the horde, was starting to move, to flow toward that grand working that even as I watched continued to extend further into the sky and rotate faster.

What the heck is going on!?!?!?

"GOOOOAAAARRRRRRRRRR," a voice growled.

So deep had that utterance been that the ground beneath my feet trembled, the air itself battering into my ears. Garralosh! It had to be! What the heck is going on in there!

My heart began to speed up as the cyclone of mana grew stronger each second. What's happening?! Are they working a grand spell that'll annihilate the colony from here?! No way right? We're still two days travel away! What could they possibly need all this energy for?

Find authorized novels in Webnovel, faster updates, better experience, Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

It was then that I saw a figure stand up in the centre of the horde.

Garralosh stood tall, raising her massive body up onto her rear legs for the first time in my sight. She was huge. It wasn't easy to see at this distance but some things I didn't need the details for. Even from this

far away the giant momma croc glowed to my mana sense, a testament to the mana packed into her body and core.

I switched off my mana sense so that I could better see her physical body and I could only swallow my shock. How the heck is she so massive?! Over ten metres tall, Tiny standing up wouldn't even come up to her waist. Even more intimidating than her size was her bulk. Garralosh rippled with barely contained strength, each of her arms thicker than Tiny's legs, and the ape never skipped leg day. Heck, her arms might be thicker than my freakin' body! The torso those arms attached to was equally huge, her entire body seemed to exude its own gravity, so densely packed was the muscle mass on that creature.

Holy smokes!

When she evolved she must have pumped points into muscle density rather than size at a crazy ratio to end up like that! It was less efficient than getting larger in terms of raw stats, but it did allow her to pack an incredible amount of power into a smaller frame.

The gigantic monster threw her head back and opened her jaws wide, exposing the absurdly long croc teeth held within. In order to blur my sight of those teeth, I flicked my mana sense back on and was treated to the sight of the mana cyclone inverting itself.

Instead of rising into the sky, the conflux turned and began to shrink, still pulling in the mana from the air towards the centre. All of that mana continued to flood forward and sink toward the hulking croc looming in the middle.

They're feeding mana to Garralosh! Trying to keep her core topped off!

In which case, now might be the perfect time to attack...

[Chrysalis](#)

Chapter 353: Go Time

With the Wizard Lizard and its collection of friendly mage slaves occupied with drenching the gigantic croc in their midst with mana, now seems like the perfect time to rip into the horde. Claws crossed they won't be able to divert their attention towards us whilst engaged in this sort of activity.

Find authorized novels in Webnovel, faster updates, better experience, Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

[Let's hit 'em hard!] I roared at my pets and opened up the condensed water cannon I'd been working on.

The super dense beam of water blasted out and drilled into the back of a particularly annoying looking giant centipede before I turned the spell to the side and begin scything through the ranks of monsters before me. With an excited grin on his face, Tiny climbed to his feet and thrust his hands forward, unleashing his lightning to the limit.

At the same time, Crinis unleashed her tentacles, allowing the curled limbs to emerge from the very shadows of the monsters before us, grasping them tightly and beginning to rend them apart before they even realised they were under attack.

Gweheheheh!

Yesssssss. Feel our power! Behold our might! Surprise attack right in the commercial district! How you like them apples? Huh!?! Bet you don't like it much! You'll regret attacking my colony!

Cackling to myself I continued to play the concentrated beam of water on the monsters before me, sweeping it back and forth in slow arcs that scythe down the monsters in front of us. Spray fountained into the air, covering monsters as far as fifty metres away in droplets of water that left them vulnerable to the oncoming lightning onslaught.

There was something cathartic about unleashing this level of mayhem against an enemy so much larger and more powerful than myself. I couldn't say it was, but a part of me rejoiced in this risk taking behaviour. Exposing myself to danger was becoming habit forming.

At least Tiny was happy...

And he was. As much as the giant bat-faced ape loved to get his fists on the enemy, he also enjoyed a good roasting from time to time. It wasn't quite as satisfying for him, but nevertheless he gained a great deal of joy from it. For her part, Crinis was eerily silent, almost quivering with barely concealed rage as she unleashed her dark arts upon the hapless foes. So numerous were her tentacles that I was forced to try and avoid severing them with my water cannon and direct the spray away.

Our onslaught was so rapid and overwhelming the monsters didn't know how to respond at first, milling about in confusion, turning this way and that, seemingly devoid of direction. And perhaps they were! If the big croc and the Kaarmodo are busy doing the mana thing, then regardless which of them is responsible for voodoo'ing these monsters into line, they aren't getting directions from either of them right now!

This is the time to strike!

[Let's go loud! Tiny, once you're out of electricity, get your fists in there. Try to cover us Crinis, I'm going in!]

Tiny's grin grew so wide every one of his fangs was revealed as he doubled his efforts to output his lightning mana as fast as possible. We might be able to harvest some serious xp if the response is going to be this slow!

I started to step forward whilst maintaining my concentration on the spell. The effective range on the water cannon wasn't as much as I'd like and if I wanted to keep cutting through the monsters then I needed to close the distance. The first targets of our assault were already beyond saving, we need to press forward, deeper into the belly of the beast in order to find more victims.

And that's exactly what we did, with Crinis staying slightly behind to position for our escape, we stepped into the mass of monsters until a wide semi-circle of carnage had been created before us. The notifications of the bushy bearded one rang constantly in my mind and I pushed them to one side. No need to get distracted by that miscellaneous noise, I'll check my status after we get out.

At this point the monsters began to turn and push back into us. The lethargy was gradually falling away from them and being replaced with the more customary aggression and rage as the light returned to their eyes. Growls and roars began to fill the air along with the clicking of mandibles and stomping of feet.

I noticed the change immediately and snapped my mana sense back on. It still seems as if the Kaarmodo is still performing its grand working, the mana continues to flood toward the centre of the horde. The area around here is going to be dead mana-wise after this is done.

I took a moment to consider my options. The monsters are beginning to fight back, which is bad, but the Kaarmodo is still distracted, which is good, the further we push forward the more vulnerable we'll be, which is bad, but the more we push in the more damage we can inflict, which is good.

Gah!

[Keep swinging Tiny! We'll hit 'em for two more minutes and then skedaddle!] I hollered to my pets.

Tiny roared and started throwing his fists around with wild abandon, fresh out of electricity with which to aim at his opponents. Bellowing with anger, the monsters around him turned to engage, trying to bite, claw and beat the giant ape into submission. Reluctantly I let my spell fade in order to relieve the pressure on my sub-brains. After maintaining the water water mana construct and pumping out condensed mana for so long they were reaching their limits.

I did get them to keep the water mana construct formed, just in case.

With the jet of piercing water no longer holding them back, the monsters before us started to collapse towards me, baring their fangs at Crinis and I. Settle down monsters, you're about to catch these (face) hands.

Receive the Severing Bite of my Justice!

CHOMP!

We were in deep now, and getting deeper. More and more monsters were responding to our aggression and piling into the melee that had developed. Crinis did her best to keep us from being surrounded, but as time went on she was forced to dedicate more tentacles to defending herself as foes swarmed around her.

Things were getting dicey. As an evolved rabbit attempted to kick my head in, sending shockwaves through my carapace that were absorbed by my inner plating, I thought that perhaps we were in a little too deep. I twisted my body to avoid the claws of Dragon Wolf hound and severed the rabbit's legs, I decided it was time to enact our exit strategy.

[Tiny! Scream!] I shouted.

Immediately the giant ape through his head back and unleashed his sonic scream. The mind numbing blast of sound exploded outwards, stunning everything within earshot and making my head ring.

[Break free! Time to get out of here!]

Following my own advice, I stumbled only a little due to the stun before I managed to shake off both the effects and the monsters hanging onto me. Satisfied with the havoc caused and the damage inflicted, Tiny and I began to run for the hills.

That's when the magic fence popped up.

Chrysalis

Chapter 354: Timely Intervention

I'm not a fan of magic fences at the best of times, but when I'm trying to break out of an encircling horde of thousands of monsters I really don't want to see one. So my first thought when I saw a wall of golden light appear in front of me was 'oh plops'.

Because it didn't take a genius to realise who was responsible for this sudden and inconvenient impediment. Sure enough, to either side of me, two Setsulah mage servants had appeared, seemingly from thin air.

Aren't you guys supposed to be somewhere else right now?! Why the heck are you here?!

My feet scrambled to halt my momentum as I tumbled forwards but ultimately I failed to stop in time.

BAM!

I slammed into the barrier of flowing light, the shock of the impact reverberating throughout my exoskeleton. That frickin' hurt! But they stuffed up this time, the two mages are much closer than they were last time. I brushed off the impact and focused my eyes on the two of them. Robed and hooded as always, there was very little I could make out of their bodies, but they were close. Each not even ten metres from me.

I don't know if this is a trap or if they're just taking advantage of the situation, but I'll happily take another one of these guys down, even if it means having to ride the lightning again.

Dash!

Activating my dash skill I streak forward at high speed, my mandibles open wide, ready to rend and tear at the mage to my right. Before I chomp down a tingle from my antennae warns me something is coming. I slam on the brakes, my legs scrabbling to halt my momentum just as another barrier sprung into existence, shielding my target behind a protective wall of golden light.

Dammit!

What the heck is going on?!

Out the corner of my eyes I can see that two more of the mage slaves have appeared, their barriers joining together with the first just in front of the first two mages, protecting them from my wrath. I don't like this. Not one bit!

Indecision and uneasiness struck me in that moment. What should I do? Dig under? Run back? What if more of them are coming, or are already there? Will my acid break through?

GRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR!

Once again the air around me rumbled at the power of that voice and, in the back of my mind, I noted that the suffocating aura that rolled off Momma Croc grew stronger, ever so slightly. And then again.

She's coming!

Oh nonononononoNONONONO.

I'm NOT going down here like this!

I refuse to end my second life as Croca plops. Refuse! I'd rather be fed to a nest of claw-centipedes. I'd rather be melted down and eaten by an acid slug. Heck, I'd prefer to be chewed up by a stupid thorn lizard than get eaten by Garralosh!

I spun in place, expertly presenting my business district towards the first barrier.

POW! POW! POW! POW!

As I spun I unleashed my acid of perpetual prosperity which splashed into the barrier and adhered to it, sizzling as it began to eat away at the mana.

[Tiny! Get over here buddy!]

Unfortunately Tiny had been caught inside the barrier with me, so I called him to join me.

[Crisis! Any chance you can tenderise any of these mage slaves?!]

Find authorized novels in [Webnovel](http://www.webnovel.com), faster updates, better experience, Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Since she'd been hanging back, Crisis hadn't been trapped with us, but she still had plenty of monsters to deal with, even if they were temporarily stunned for a moment.

[I'm trying, Master!] she cried. [There is something blocking me!]

I cursed. They must have planned ahead after seeing how Crisis operated in order to prevent her getting a tentacle on these mages. Makes sense, I don't think the big lizard wants to risk any more of them and wouldn't send them out if he thought they'd be separated into bite size chunks.

My acid is still bubbling away at the barrier but it's taking its sweet time. Were they able to counter the effects of the acid in some way?

I'm not a fan of this, not a fan at all.

With a flash another barrier was formed behind me, completing the encirclement. Most frustrating of all, every one of the six Setsulah used to create the cage of light walls was on the outside of it. Cowards! How dare they entrap me like this?! What did I ever do to them?! Other than kill one of them that time...

What's happening now?

To my shock and surprise, the combined barriers began to slowly extend upwards. Looks like they are intent on creating a complete cage! I checked on the progress of my acid, but it wasn't working fast enough for my taste. They must have done something to resist its effects, the crafty sods.

However, they didn't count on one thing.

[Tiny! Grab me and jump out of here!]

[Raaaaah!]

Not needing to be told twice, Tiny grabbed me up in his arms and threw me onto his back where I clung with all the strength my claws could manage. As the barrier continued to close overhead and the oppressive aura of Garralosh pressed down on us, Tiny took two running steps and exploded forth.

He pushed every fibre of his bunched leg muscles to the limit and burst into the air.

Holy smokes!

The air whistled over my carapace, pushing my antennae back against my head and driving the micro hairs on my face nuts.

I knew Tiny had some jumping power, I'd seen him leap high often enough, but being carried by him was a very different experience!

We soared through the air and out of the still forming cage, the light barrier melding shut beneath Tiny's feet.

THUD!

We slammed into the ground and only my grip skill kept me from falling flat on my face. Haha! Stupid mages! You think you can trap us that easy?

Oh snap!

No sooner did we soar out of the barrier and land heavily than fire began erupting around us! The Setsulah Mage servants had dropped the light barrier the moment we'd escaped and now attempted to BBQ what they had failed to contain.

BOOM!

Yeeouch! That was close! Fireballs began flying through the air accompanied by jets of flame and arcing balls of flaming death that rained down from above.

Isn't this a little excessive?!

I clung onto Tiny for dear life as he began to shift and sway, displaying the full extent of his fancy feet. With a grace that belied his size, he shimmied here, spun there and navigated the maze of destruction by the thinnest of margins. But by gosh it was close!

The sharp sound of arrows whistling through the air pierced through the roar of flames, lifting my heart. Isaac had turned up! Right on time!

[Chrysalis](#)

Chapter 355: Lightning Crashes

On a nearby rise to the side of the road, Isaac and his archers had appeared, each one bending their bows and taking aim at the mage slaves. As the arrows sped through the air, the mages were forced to split their attention, raising barriers to defend themselves from the barrage whilst maintaining their own offensive.

Some of the mages turned their attention to disrupting Isaac and his hunting party, flinging spells at them that seared the air. But at this range, it was hard for them to be accurate and deadly enough. The

archers were able to scramble out of the danger zone in time that they were able to avoid injury, but the mages succeeded in scattering the archers which was their aim.

All this time, Tiny continued to weave his way through danger. He was doing remarkably well, enough that I was convinced we were going to get into the clear.

Then the lightning started falling...

Damn Wizard Lizard! This may be a bit unreasonable, but I wish you'd let me kill off your servants without exacting vengeance!

With my mana sense flipped on, I could tell that the great working was finished now. Garralosh had topped off her core and was heading this way, and the Kaarmodo had enough free attention to weave together another lightning storm. Which is something we did not need!

[I'm jumping off, Tiny!] I shouted and leapt clear of the big ape the moment I saw a chance.

Crinis was frantically waddling through the grass to the side of the road, her basketball sized body supported on her small, stubby permanent tentacles. It would have been adorable in a situation that less fraught with mortal peril.

[Crinis, reach out to me!] I bellowed.

As she wiggled and wobbled her way forward, Crinis extended a long limb from her main body out towards me.

DASH!

I activated the skill and my stamina infused my body, sending me hurtling forward with vital energy. Bursts of flame erupted around me, singeing my carapace as lightning began to rain down from above.

I focused my sub-brains to their limits, using them to analyse the information from my antennae, the heat I sensed from the fire and the blurred lines of the future that were whispered to me through my antennae. By juking left and right I did everything I could to throw off the aim of my tormentors as I made my way to Crinis.

[Grab hold!] I yelled.

My charge took me close enough that Crinis was able to latch hold of my carapace and begin to haul herself toward me.

[Don't let go, Crinis!]

[I never will, Master!]

That ... didn't sound right. Never mind it now, we need to get the hell out of here! Once again, time to dash!

BOOM! BOOM!

The rolling thunder sounded more like an explosion to me as the strikes landed just metres away. Tiny leapt close and was struck multiple times, shrugging it off as best he could as he tanked the lightning magic for me.

I could see Isaac on the hill, hopping from one foot to the other and shouting at me. I can't understand, you moron! I'm not about to create a mind bridge in the middle of this fiasco! His fellow archers are still dodging the odd fireball and unleashing arrows when they can. It'd be nice if their leader would bother to help out.

With every second that passed we put another metre between the horde, the mages and us and it began to tell, becoming easier to dodge and avoid the spells coming our way, with the obvious exception of the lightning strikes from above.

With my mana sense on, I kept tabs on the roiling mana overhead. It really is impressive how much mana there is packed into that spell. All of that energy just for little old me? The Kaarmodo must be more than slightly attached to the slave attendants. I'd feel bad for the Lizard Wizard if they weren't marching a giant monster along with a giant army towards my home.

No mercy for invaders!

Find authorized novels in [Webnovel](http://www.webnovel.com), faster updates, better experience, Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

But for now, run to the hills!

Run for your lives!

CRACKLE!

The dark cloud that hung low overhead began to spark and ripple with electricity. The lightning bolts ceased for a beat and I could see in my mana sense that the power in the spell was condensing towards a central point.

Deep within the cloud a light began to glow. It grew brighter by the second until it became a near blinding radiance that pierced my eyes. Something big is coming! I'm not a big fan of this!

DAAAAAAAAASH!

With a plop, Crinis hauled herself onto my back after reeling herself in using the tentacle she'd stuck to me and now she clung on for dear life as I sprinted, my legs a blur to my eyes as I covered the ground at high speed.

[Watch out above Tiny! Get clear of me!]

The bat-faced ape shook his head and growled angrily but was forced to obey my direct command and leapt to one side, putting some distance between us. Overhead, the cloud shrank in on itself as the remaining mana within concentrated down to a single point.

Isaac had collected himself, I could see him now with a spear in hand. As a javelin thrower might, he ran forward and with a mighty roar launched the spear into a high arc that seemed to be heading right towards me.

Wait a sec, it IS heading right toward me! What the heck!

HAH!

At the last second I threw myself to one side, my legs tripping over each other and I fell towards the ground as several things happened at once.

The spear punched into the ground right where I'd been running with a reverberating thud, the metal hafted weapon pushed deep into the ground as the momentum pushed the butt forward until the weapon stood vertically.

Then the lightning came.

BOOOOOOOOM!

Like a lance from the heavens, it fell. My sight became filled with light in an instant and, not for the first time, I wished I had eyelids. This is going to give me some serious retina burn! The impact pierced the ground and sent a shower of earth into the air. So fierce was the force, it rippled through the air and smashed into me as I fell, burning me and sending me tumbling end over end, squashing Crinis into my back.

I've been cooked! Also, I can't see!

Not only that, my ears are ringing as if I were a bell that was struck! What the hell was that?! Am I alive? It's all white!?

[Are you alright, Crinis?]

[I... I think so!]

[Tiny?]

[Raaaah!]

Ok, that's good.

[Uh, Crinis?]

[Yes, Master?]

[Any chance you can let me know which way is forward?]

[I-I'll try!]

And we were off once more! Standing still is death! Using her ability to sense mana, Crinis pointed us away from the horde and we ran into the distance.

[Chrysalis](#)

Chapter 356: Dangerous Games

Blinded and frantic, I ran as fast as I could away from the horde (I hoped) whilst Tiny bounded alongside. As I stumbled and tripped over what felt like every obstacle, bump and uneven patch of ground on my path, I tried to lunge left and right to avoid the fireballs and other spells that continued to be flung my

way. The odd explosion actually landed quite close but thanks to Crinis latching onto my mandibles with a tentacle each, she was able to steer me away from the spells that she detected by literally steering me.

It was undignified but I was much more interested in survival than my pride.

I was confused as to what had occurred in that strange confluence of events, but I didn't have to ponder over it until the very real mortal peril I found myself in had subsided, so I persisted in running as far and as fast as I could.

THWACK!

Ouch! I'm under attack! Still blinded and bewildered, my forward momentum was suddenly and forcefully brought to a halt by something blocking my path. An enemy? Feel my wrath!

Shattering Bite!

Crunch!

My jaws flooded with energy as the active skill took effect and snapped them shut on whatever was barring my way. I felt whatever it was splinter and shatter beneath the force of my bite, followed by a vague tingling sensation from my antennae. What is this thing in front of me? I don't detect any heat from it, so it shouldn't be a monster. My antennae are telling me something is leaning over this way?

OOF!

A crunch of a different sort rang out as the tree I had just felled landed squarely on my carapace, the weight and force of the impact flattening me in an instant and putting several hairline cracks in my exoskeleton. At least those'll heal up fast.

[Are you alright, Crinis? I think I just dropped a tree on us.]

[I'm alright, Master. A little flat, but otherwise fine.]

I felt her shift about on my back for a moment before another downward spike in pressure forced the wind out of me again.

OOF!

Crinis extended a few tentacles and succeeded in lifting the tree off of us before she threw it to one side.

The two of us lay on the ground in a battered daze for a minute or two, neither of us sensing any danger and neither of us willing to move without a motivating force.

[Are you here, Tiny?]

[Hmm] came the grunted reply.

Fantastic, the gang's all here.

As I lay in a daze, waiting, the white gradually began to fade as my normal vision returned. Blessed light! The power of eyeballs in all their glory! After spending so much time obsessing over my vision in my early days on Pangera, it was more than a little disconcerting to have that sense removed, even

temporarily. That lightning had surely been something special. I'd never seen anything like it. The force, the power, the sheer destructive impact of it. I'm not sure even Tiny could have survived such a thing hitting him directly.

So how did I survive?

At that moment, I saw Isaac and his crew approaching.

My weary and still somewhat scattered minds put together the necessary mind mana and I reached out to the former guard captain.

[Well, if it isn't speary mcspearface.]

He halted his step.

[What the heck does that mean?] he asked.

Find authorized novels in Webnovel, faster updates, better experience, Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

[Nothing,] I harrumphed, [I was just a little miffed when you threw that spear at my head!]

[If I hadn't done that the lightnin' bolt would 'ave turned you into a crispy husk of yer former self!] Isaac protested, [I was expectin' thanks, to be honest!]

I hesitated.

[You mean to say that you threw that in order to make it act as a lightning rod to save me?]

He nodded vigorously.

[Of course! Why would I try 'an kill ya?]

[I've no idea, I just didn't think you'd be smart enough to think of something like that.]

Isaac stared at me for a moment before he muttered something out loud to himself. Then he laughed.

[Well, perhaps I've a little more goin' on upstairs than you give me credit for.]

I could only nod in agreement, still exhausted from my misadventure.

[Thanks Isaac] I told him, [you really pulled my portfolio out of the bear market.]

[You're ... welcome?]

[That was one heck of a throw though. I don't think I've ever seen someone with an arm like that.]

Isaac thought for a moment and shrugged.

[Where would you have seen someone throw? I don't think you ants have quite the physiology for it.]

He wasn't wrong, but he wasn't quite getting at what I was saying either. I was speaking of my experience on Earth. Obviously there are tons of fantastical and insane things that are possible in this world that simply weren't on Earth, but the different levels of ability between humans is the one that

keeps surprising me. He must have thrown that heavy spear over a hundred metres! An unspeakable feat of strength on my old world

The man in question smiled as he pictured the scene in his mind.

[I wasn't sure I'd get there, to be honest,] he admitted, [I saw the lightnin' buildin' in the cloud over ya head and figured you'd be toast if that hit ya. My throwin' skill isn't the best, so I was a bit worried I might skewer ya but I couldn't think of another way to divert that lightnin'.]

The more he concentrated on the image in his mind, the more his rustic accent came to the fore. It was one of the more interesting things I'd noted about direct mind to mind communication is that a person still tended to think messages in much the same way they spoke them, accents and all.

[Well, let's say I owe you and leave it at that, Isaac.]

[As you say, Anthony.]

The two of us sat in silent contemplation for a time.

[So what's the play now?] Isaac broke the peace first.

[I'm not exactly sure,] I confessed, [we need to keep killing stuff but it's going to get more dangerous the longer this goes on.]

Isaac grinned.

[Danger, I can handle. As for the rest o' my people here, they seem mighty devoted to keepin' your shiny shell in one piece. I think they'll stick around.]

[It's not a shell. It's a ... never mind. The first thing we need to do is change our position and wait for the heat to die down. We'll have to be extra vigilant at all times. The Kaarmodo could be scrying us at any time and those mage servants have a habit of appearing rather suddenly in awkward places.]

[We should stay spread out as well] Isaac pointed out. [If they try to spring another cage on us and we all get caught inside, things'll get ugly.]

[Right you are,] I agreed.

With the basics of our next steps planned out, we shuffled off with Isaac and his group to find somewhere to recuperate not far from the horde, but far enough to be comfortable. I desperately need that XP and I'm going to have to keep taking risks in order to get it.

[Chrysalis](#)

Chapter 357: Council Councils

"How'd it go Tungstant?" Cobalt asked.

The carver ant slumped into the council chamber, exhausted but with a glimmer in her eye that suggested she was more energetic than she appeared.

"Well enough I suppose" The small ant replied, dragging her tired front claws across her antennae.

"Will she be able to move more freely now?" Antionette asked, her concern for her mother bleeding through.

"Should be fine now", Tungstant replied, "we had to be a little careful in places seeing as the structure is more complicated than it was before, but with a bit of care we were able to widen the main shaft and strengthen the walls to bear her weight. She should be able to move vertically within the nest without too many issues."

Each of the ants relaxed slightly upon receiving this news. The evolution of the Queen had been a major event in the life of the colony and one that required several adjustments the moment the Queen had awoken in her new form. For one, she'd needed to retreat slightly lower in the Dungeon, meaning that a new chamber had to be prepared and more soldiers placed on guard to ensure no harm came to the Queen or to the brood.

Secondly, the carvers had needed to make several adjustments to the main body of the nest to ensure that the main pathways within the nest were able to accommodate the Queen's new size. The main shaft in the nest had been dug just large enough for the Queen to move through before she had evolved, as she was by far the largest ant in the colony, but her new size had necessitated some careful work to ensure the widening project didn't collapse or disturb any other chambers.

"The newly discovered 'Architecture' skill seems to already be paying dividends to the carver caste," Cobalt observed, "along with 'Engineering' our ability to make precise structural changes is vastly improved."

"I agree, sister," Tungsstant responded with building enthusiasm, "but you know I think we also need to investigate the possibilities behind the utilisation of Earth magic in nest construction."

"You aren't worried about the increased Skill training load?"

"Well I think that the Brood Tenders may be able to offset that."

"With the education Skills?"

"Exactly!"

"It may be worthwhile even without. It feels that there is sure to be a skill unlock in there somewhere."

"I quite agree."

"Do you two want to save that conversation until after the council is finished?" Coolant asked, amused.

"Apologies."

"Sorry about that, sisters."

The twenty took a moment to clean their antennae and settle into their spots as they prepared for perhaps the most important council meeting of the colony's history. It wouldn't be long until the horde arrived at the nest and the family would engage in a battle for its very survival. To make matters more complicated, the Eldest was still engaged in levelling up and had yet to return, meaning the twenty would be forced to make the final preparations on their own.

They were arrayed in a circle in a similarly shaped room that sloped down slightly towards the centre. Each of the council members had their own place, including two spare positions for the Eldest and for Vibrant, should either choose to attend.

For the time being, Vibrant had chosen to attend to the Queen, ensuring her safety and providing food to pick up the pace of egg production. One of the things to come out of the Queen's evolution was an increase in her daily maximum egg production from two hundred to three hundred. Not a massive increase, since the Queen had emphasised other aspects of her form with her chosen evolution path, but it would make a difference over time.

Every member of the council knew that casualties were going to be inevitable in the upcoming battle, perhaps as much as half of the colony would be destroyed, maybe even more. By ensuring a healthy amount of brood was prepared in advance, the colony would be able to ensure that they would regenerate as fast as possible.

"How far from evolving are you two?" Mendant leant over and whispered to the two Juvenile Queens to her side, Antionette and Victoriant.

"Still quite a ways, I'm afraid," Antionette whispered back. "The jump for tier three to four is large, even the Eldest hasn't reached it yet."

"Yes, but the Eldest hasn't had the colony force feeding experience down their throat" Mendant pointed out.

"Due to the oncoming conflict, we've asked that the combat castes and members of the colony be given priority over our own growth," Victoriant chimed in. "Every advantage must be seized in order to achieve victory, and even if we were to evolve before the battle, which we couldn't, our eggs wouldn't have hatched by the time we had to fight."

Mendant nodded.

It was a fair enough stance. The colony had placed great importance on evolving these two Queens into an egg laying state, but even with the support of the colony during the wave, reaching level forty was no easy feat. Once the threat had been dealt with, then the family would return to funnelling resources into the two young Queens.

"I believe our preparations are almost complete on the construction side of things?" Sloan spoke out to get the discussion rolling.

"Absolutely" Tungstant agreed. "The traps are done, the ambush tunnels are ready, the wall and moat have been prepared. Without any brilliant ideas popping up, I'm not sure what else we'll be able to do."

"Great work. Our gratitude goes to the carver caste," Sloan dipped her antennae in a show of respect, a gesture which the two carvers reciprocated.

"The academy has been running on schedule. We should have our final class of graduates ready twelve hours before the horde arrives," Florence chipped in.

Grant the soldier nodded her head.

"We've got as many troops as possible battling and strengthening themselves in the Dungeon. Every skill level counts at this point."

"How many are down there?" Sloan inquired.

"A touch over four hundred at last count."

"Combined with the harassing forces we have in the field, we've committed a lot of soldiers outside the nest. Is the Queen secure?"

"Of course!" Grant huffed, her antennae twitching in irritation. "Do you think we'd leave Mother in any way vulnerable?"

Sloan raised her own antennae in a mollifying gesture.

"I apologise. Of course you wouldn't. How goes the preparations of the mage caste?"

Coolant raised her head, as if she hadn't been paying attention and only tuned in once her name was spoken.

"What's that?" the mage ant asked.

Sloan bit back a curse. Damn mages, always had their heads in a cloud.

"How are the preparations going for the mage caste?"

"Oh! Right as rain. We need a ton of Skill levels before we can be truly useful, so the new mage ants are in the Dungeon, assigned to teams with the soldiers. We're hoping to have one hundred combat ready mage ants in time for the battle."

All the members of the council waved their antennae in approval at this. It had been a risk to produce so many Mage Ants this close to the arrival of the horde but with recent breakthroughs in the academy program, as well as Coolant and Propellant nailing down their desired skill progression path had meant the time to develop a new mage ant had been drastically reduced. With the numerous Skills required to be effective, the mage ants were still a long term investment for the colony, but their help would be invaluable in distracting the enemy mages.

"We project our project should be completed in fourteen hours," Bella the core shaper chipped in.

"That's cutting it close," Advant the soldier frowned.

"Modifying cores is exhausting and difficult work," Bella defended her caste. "Not to mention there aren't that many of us." The second statement was a little cutting, since the core shapers had been neglected in favour of other castes.

"Considering the number of Shadow Beast cores we've handed over, the results had better be worth it," Advant muttered.

Ellie bristled.

"You needn't be concerned. Our early field tests have been extremely promising. The first Shaper teams with their modified beast pets will be deployed to the Dungeon in the next two hours. We think you'll be impressed at their effectiveness."

The council nodded soothingly toward the grumpy member. It was well known that the shapers had a near perpetual headache due to spending every spare moment modifying cores in order to raise their skills. Elligant and Bella had been desperate to prove the worth of their caste and the Shadow Beast pet initiative had been their best chance to date.

"Has there been any word from the Eldest?" Victor turned to the two scout leaders to ask.

Burke and Wills both shook their heads.

"Not a peep. We've got scouts keeping an eye on the Eldest, obviously, but it's been difficult to get close. Lightning storms, fireballs, even boulders and ice spears seem to be filling the air around the Eldest almost constantly."

The council shifted uncomfortably at that. None wanted to see the Eldest fall.

"From last report the Eldest is still alive, and battling the Mage Servants to try and gain the experience required for evolution. No need to worry."

"By distracting the mages, the Eldest has ensured our advance force has been able to operate in much safer conditions," Victor affirmed. "Casualties have dropped massively and the damage inflicted on the horde has risen accordingly."

The twenty fell into silent appreciation at the risks the Eldest was taking on behalf of the family, all except one Soldier, who, when considering the glorious, almost suicidal fight their senior was embroiled in, couldn't help but curse softly.

"Lucky bastard."

[Chrysalis](#)

Chapter 358: At least stamina is levelling up.

Damn this horde, damn it to its monstrous, scaly core. I've been at this for hours now, engaged in an endless tug of war with Setsulah mage servants, and to a lesser extent, their hidden master who remains tucked somewhere in the centre of the slowly moving monster mass.

Thankfully Garralosh hasn't reared her ugly head again. When I felt that aura pressure mounting on me my heart nearly leapt out of my mouth and into my loving face hands. I am not ready nor willing to go face to face with that giant mega-monster yet. Hopefully after I've evolved I'll have some chance of dealing with it, though I've no idea how. I'll be evolving into a tier four creature and although I've been told that Garralosh may not be as highly evolved as I think, she must be tier six or seven. I refuse to believe she's tier five, refuse!

Given that's the case, however, I do have hope. I think the Queen was tier five, which means that she'll have advanced to tier six, with the aid of the rare core no less. Although a lot of her evolutionary energy has been spend on her reproductive capacity, I'm hopefully that between the two of us we'll be able to hold off the big Croc and the Kaarmodo from devastating our family members.

Claws crossed.

But to get to that point I need to defeat some monsters and that is proving difficult!

Oh snap! Lighting!

BOOM!

I threw myself to the side at the last moment as a jagged lance of light stabbed down from above, sending a burst of soil into the air in the place I had been standing. Stupid Kaarmodo! Annoyed, I pick myself up and wave one claw at the sky.

I know you're watching you stupid Wizard Lizard! Too bad I don't have any fingers, otherwise I'd give you something to look at!

I generally don't like to be rude, but this Lizard is really getting on my nerves. Every time I take a rest anywhere close to the horde, the pot shots come out. To say that it's getting irritating would be an understatement. Without my future sense antennae, I'd have been thoroughly cooked by now.

At least I've managed to gain a few skill levels, but getting raw XP is getting harder and harder the closer the horde gets to the nest. I can't afford to wait much longer!

Currently my status looks like this:

Name: Anthony

Level: 39 (Special core)

Might: 41

Toughness: 29

Cunning: 44

Will: 35

HP: 58/58

Find authorized novels in Webnovel, faster updates, better experience, Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

MP: 176/230

Skills: Expert Excavation (III) Level 5; Deadly Acid Shot (III) Level 7; Advanced Grip (II) Level 6; Shattering Bite (IV) Level 15; Advanced Stealth (II) Level 9; Splintering Chomp (IV) Level 2; Tunnel Map (II) Level 6; Mana Transformation (III) Level 13; Condensed Mana (III) Level 7; Finer External Mana Manipulation (III) Level 8; Empowered Mana Sensing (II) Level 9; Core Surgery (III) Level 6; Expert Exo-Skeleton Defence (III) level 14; Distant Pet Communication (II) Level 5; Flicker Dash (III) Level 2; Expert Water Magic Affinity (III) Level 3; Expert Stamina (III) Level 5; Pet Growth Speed (I) Level 1; Mana Coveter (III) Level 1; Expert Cerebral Endurance (III) Level 19; Profound Meditation (III) Level 10; Advanced Precise Shooting (II) Level 8; Severing Bite (III) Level 18; Enhanced Mind Magic Affinity (II) level 7;

Mutations: Perimeter Eyes +15, Future Sight Infrared Antennae +15, Mana Binding Acid +15, Rapid Absorption Legs +15, Empowered Mandibles +15, True Diamond Carapace +15, Regrowth Regeneration Gland +15, Loquacious Pheromone Gland +15, Bottomless Gravity Magic Gland +15, Adaptable Coordination Cortex +15, Supportive Inner Carapace Plating +15;

Species: Dispersed Mind Ant (Formica Sapiens)

Skill points: 18

Biomass: 7

All of my goals are currently within reach! Just two more levels in severing bite and I'll be able to prompt the System for the skill fusion. And ONE. MORE. LEVEL.

Just one!

I'm so damn stressed! Just let me fight some stupid monsters already! I need to evolve!

Wait...

HAP!

BOOM!

Missed again you stupid Lizard! Shove off already! I threw myself onto my back and wiggled aggressively at the sky. Scry THAT you reptile!

Whoops!

BOOM!

Haha! Getting mad are you?! Not liking my dominance display? I've got plenty more where that came from!

Oh boy, the clouds are starting to gather, think it's time to move on. I gathered myself and moved around the horde toward the location I sensed Tiny and Crinis were operating. I'd asked them to fight away from me in the hopes that we could split up the Mage Servants but it hadn't worked. The horde was seemingly happy to absorb the massive losses that my two pets were able to inflict, so long as I was kept at arm's length.

Which meant that the two of them were getting some great experience and raising their skill levels, which was great, just a shame it didn't help me to do the same. Gah! I'm tired of trying to go around these stupid mages to get at the horde. With their very own eye in the sky, I just haven't been able to get a hold of them. It's starting to fall to night time now, and the horde is expected to reach the colony sometime tomorrow. I'm running out of time!

Wait a second. Maybe I'm thinking about this situation all wrong. What if I didn't try and avoid the servants to get to the horde, but avoided the horde and tried to get at the servants? After all, the servants are perfectly prepared to step forward and fight me, I don't have any trouble at all getting into a scrap with them. It's not an easy fight by any means, but with the exception of that one time, I haven't actually been trying to fight them, just keep away from them.

If you won't let me get experience from the horde, then I'll just have to take it from your servants, Mr Kaarmodo. I can hardly be blamed that's it come to this.

Gweheheheheh.

But how am I going to do it? I'll need help, that's for sure. Tiny and Crinis will have to group up with me, maybe even Isaac and his group as well. They might be able to provide some ranged fire support. It's risky though. The second the Lizard Wizard realises what I'm doing, they are going to come down on me hard. Even harder than they have before.

And I'll need to be quick. If the fight drags on, there is a good chance Garralosh will wander over and that's not something I'm prepared to deal with right now.

One last roll of the dice to level up. Let's see how this goes.

[Chrysalis](#)

Chapter 359: Get 'EM

My pets and I strolled brazenly toward the horde, as if we didn't have a care in the world. It was a façade, of course. I was sweating blood on the inside. Not knowing when some ancient mage might choose to drop a thunderstorm on my shiny carapace is a stress inducing state of mind, to say the least. The outward appearance of confidence is what we were searching for in this instance.

Before we got too close, the three of us split up, Tiny and Crinis hung back and moved to either side of me but at a distance. We didn't want another cage scenario to play out with more than one of us in the cage. Since they seemed to be either invisible when they chose, it was possible that the mages were already around us, so we were on high alert.

My every sense was tuned to the maximum. I detected no heat signatures I couldn't explain from nearby, nor did I perceive any ripples from the future. The vast horde was arrayed in front of us, walking towards the location of the village and the colony as they had done for six days already. I knew that on the other side of the mass of creatures the soldiers of the colony were at work, inflicting whatever damage they could. I hope they've been safer since I've been causing havoc back here. I now casualties are inevitable, I know it, but it still hurts know it's happening.

Hopefully after this fight I'll be able to retreat back to the colony along with the rest of my siblings and finalise our preparations.

When I was within twenty metres of the closest monster, I turned to present my business district to my foes and showered them with my justice!

POW! POW! POW! POW!

Four rapid blasts of acid that blasted high into the air before they arced down, scattering in the air and falling across a wide area.

"Roaaaar!"

As soon as it landed, many monsters howled in pain and rage at the sudden attack, and they began to thrash about as they searched for the source of their woe. In this instance, the merciless and mindless nature of the horde came to the fore. Without food to sustain them, the monsters had been forced to

rely on consuming each other to gain energy on the long march. For the most part, this meant picking over the Biomass that the colony left behind after raiding and fighting, or picking it out of the spike traps that the workers had left behind.

But ultimately it didn't take much for the horde to turn on a wounded member, almost nothing really. After six days of solid marching, with no human cities or towns to feast on, the monsters were ravenous. So the poor and unfortunate victims of my acid were rather rapidly set upon by their starved neighbours and a quick but violent feeding frenzy commenced.

I'd used this method a few times before, as had the rest of the colony. The damage inflicted on the enemy was high, but no experience was gained since I didn't actually last hit anything. All I wanted to do was draw out my Lizard friends without expending my magic.

The faint tingle that's coming to me from my antennae seems to indicate that they have taken the bait. They're craft these slave mages, always trying to catch me off guard, distracted or otherwise occupied.

HAH!

Suddenly activating my rank three dash, my body flickered for a moment as I ran forward at almost supernatural speed! Once you get to this rank, the active skills really take on a life of their own!

Severing Bite!

Along with my future sense, the sudden flickering of heat revealed the location of the mage just as they were about to appear. Hoping to get the jump on them for a change I leapt out for the surprise

bite attack!

WHAM!

Stupid light barrier! I really want to learn how to cast this thing. At the last possible moment, the barrier sprung into existence around the freshly appeared and very startled Setsulah slave mage. This version of the spell was less of a wall and more of a cocoon that surrounded the mage in protective sphere. I was willing to bet it even went through the ground beneath their feet. As the mage stumbled back and fell onto their backside, I realised it likely wasn't even them who cast that barrier.

Perhaps the great Kaarmodo is still looking out for their servants?

If I'm going to get my mandibles onto one of these punks, I'm going to have to pull something out of the hat that I haven't showed them yet. Thankfully, I've got just the thing.

More and more mages appeared around me, their spells already prepared. Tongues of flame lashed towards me but I was already moving, throwing myself to one side and dashing toward another target.

Severing Bite!

CRUNCH!

As the jaws of light that extended from my mandibles sliced down towards my target I was foiled once again by the barrier spell. The blade like bite skill I used connected with the glowing light and attempted to slice through but failed.

Fortunately, we have more than one way to hit a barrier.

From the ground around the mage, tentacles began to emerge and wrap themselves around the light barrier, squeezing it tight. Rather than try and get inside the wall of light, which Crinis had tried and failed to do, this time she was going to try and smash the barrier from the outside.

A dozen tentacles wrapped around the mage, almost completely hiding them from view. The limbs pulsed and flexed as Crinis began to try to rip and tear her way through, the teeth on the inside of her tentacles sawing away at the magic.

Find authorized novels in Webnovel, faster updates, better experience, Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

I'll leave that one for Crinis! I dashed toward another mage, moving so fast my legs vanished.

CRUNCH!

Another powerful bite slammed down on the mage as fire spells continued to fell in my wake. Another barrier prevented my mandibles from closing down, but I wasn't deterred. Without waiting I rolled to one side and sped away just as Tiny arrived.

Falling from the sky like a collapsing meteor, the giant ape hammered both hands down onto the wall of light that surrounded the startled mage.

BOOM!

The impact was thunderous and fractures spider webbed through the shield instantly. Thankfully for the mage, the spell held and didn't break down, but with the ten foot tall monster staring down at him, I don't think the mage felt particularly secure.

We hadn't run at them like this before and I could tell they were rattled. The spells they cast were erratic and the mages couldn't seem to decide whether to continue the barrage on me or try to protect their fellow slaves.

Not to worry, things are only going to get worse for you!

[Chrysalis](#)

Chapter 360: C'MERE

Putting the servants on the defensive was only phase one of the plan, but it appears to have worked. There are six of them here at the moment, and possibly more still in hiding, but so long as we're careful we should be fine. It's rare that every mage comes when I turn up, in fact the one time they did we just turned around and ran off. However, it seems that the Lizard Wizard can't spare them and that remains the only time I've seen all of them in the field at once, luckily for us.

[Don't let yourselves get roasted,] I warned my pets.

I wouldn't put it past either of them to go too far and try to tank a few spells in order to try and help me. It's a wonderful spirit but I'm not willing to risk the health of my pets for something as small as this. If this attempt doesn't succeed, then we'll just try again until either we succeed or die trying.

[I'm being careful, Master] Crinis assured me.

[Grrrrr] Tiny grunted.

Time to put more pressure on these mages!

I continued to blitz around with my dash skill, which rapidly drained my stamina but I didn't have a choice, what with the fireballs and infernos that were being conjured around me. Even so, I managed to find the time to squeeze off a cheeky shot from the business district. A bit of guerrilla marketing, if you will.

POW! POW! POW!

All three shots hammered home onto the hastily raised shield of one mage who had the enjoyable experience of their line of sight being covered with a sticky, adhesive acid that began to bubble and hiss as it ate away the magical protection that surrounded them. Nasty!

Another mage hampered, another step closer to the ultimate victory. Now for the next one. Rolling underneath a jet of flame one of the mages unleashed at me, nearly catching my own antennae on fire, I spun expertly and fired once again!

POW! POW! POW!

Three more blasts of acid, one more inconvenienced mage!

The mage servants are having a hard time maintaining their barrage, what with the imminent threats to their lives, so the pressure has begun to ease off wonderfully, allowing me to fire my last three shots comfortably.

POW! POW! POW!

With three mages now tied down by acid and with Tiny and Crinis occupying one each, (Crisis has extended even more tentacles, completely covering her victim from view) that left me with just one mage with an unobstructed view of the fight. Let's call that mage, Biomass A. Even with the hood up and full body robes preventing me from seeing them directly, I can tell that Biomass A is feeling nervous as I alter the angle of my run and begin to close in on them.

My antennae tingled and I jumped high just in time for another jet of flame to pass underneath me. Close, but no cigar! I wonder why these mages rely on fire magic so much in fights like this. They clearly have other options but fire seems to be their go to. A question I'll never get answered I suppose. Ah well.

Once I get close enough I put my two sub-brains to work. Filled with malicious intent, my two smaller minds begin to activate the external mana manipulation skill they have become so familiar with over the last week or so, and begin to try and drain away the mana that sustains the barrier around my friend Biomass A.

The body language of my target became even more frantic as the mage felt what I was doing, desperately trying to fend off my physical body as well as the intruding tendrils of my sub-brains that were busy trying to deconstruct their spell.

Gweheheheh. Yessss. Struggle all you want, but it won't help my dear friend, Biomass A. I shall taste the sweet, sweet experience that is contained within you nest attacking slaves soon enough!

I mean, I kind of feel sorry for the Setsulah on one level. They don't really have a choice in what they get up to, magically bound slaves that they are. Ultimately though, what does it matter? Willing or not, they've been doing their darned best to kill me and I'm certain they'll do the same to the colony when they get there. Heck, they already did it to Liria and all of its people!

Uh oh. Here we go, then. Big daddy (or mommy, I shouldn't assume) lizard wizard is getting mad now that I'm attacking its servants directly. The storm overhead is brewing again and it's looking like a big one!

CRACKLE

Powered by magic, the dark clouds began to form out of thin air at a ridiculous speed. It won't be long before the lightning starts to fall like rain around here. Fortunately, this time I came prepared.

Rushing from their hiding places come Isaac and his crew, each wielding the metal spears they have diligently been practicing throwing for the last few hours. Like a hunting party of angry tribesmen, they lofted the spears over their shoulders as they ran and hurled them high into the air with a mighty roar. The weapons arced gracefully through the sky before they thudded into the dirt, standing tall and upright as convenient lightning rods.

The storm churned overhead and I could almost feel the Kaarmodo's agitation as it stared down at a small field of newly sprouted metal poles. At this sort of distance, you can't control the lightning too precisely, can you Mr Lizard? No, no, you have to use this big overhead mess of a spell at this sort of range and although you might get through to me eventually, how much time do you think you have?!

My pets continued to aggressively posture and batter at their respective targets but it was me who drew the ire of the lightning. By circling and tormenting my target, Biomass A, I appeared to have angered the Wizard Lizard deeply, which meant that Tiny and Crinis were able to torment their own victims in lightning-free peace.

BOOM!* *BOOM!

Lightning stabbed down from the sky but thanks to the spears, things were made more difficult for the Kaarmodo. Sometimes the lightning would fall close to me, but other times it would jag towards the spears and discharge all that energy straight into the ground.

I continued to run circles around the mage, ripping and tearing at its barrier with my minds and even chomping down on it to test its strength. The entire engagement had only taken a minute up to this point but things were rapidly coming to a head.

This was a smash and grab tactic, we were here for a good time, not a long time.

C'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon!

Target me! Fire at me!

It's only a matter of time!

Another five seconds passed before suddenly Crinis' voice rang in my mind.

[Master!]

Nice!

I turned instantly and sprinted away from the fight, the lightning bolts falling around me as I dashed. Jump left! Roll right! Stop for a second! My concentration was pushed to the limit as I avoided the furious barrage from the skies whilst trying to put distance between myself and the fight.

After all, I was the distraction in this fight, and it appeared that my plan had worked perfectly!

[Are you ready, Crinis?] I yelled back to my pet.

[Ready!] she declared, holding her prize high, wrapped in her tentacles.

Gravity mana flooded into my mandibles from my Gravitational mana gland and caused them to glow with purple energy.

[Now, Crinis!]

On my signal, Crinis opened her tentacles to reveal the Setsulah mage servant she had successfully dug out of the ground, still encased in its light shield. We'd suspected, and later confirmed that the shield rooted the mages to the ground somehow, but with sufficient arm, or in this case, tentacle power, we figured they could be dug up, we just hadn't tried it yet.

And now that they were airborne, they could be pulled.

YOINK!

Focusing on my gravity mandibles, I reached out with the energy, latched onto the shield and pulled.

COME HERE!