

## DEMONS 1181

### [Chapter 1181 Endurance Match](#)

Blue and Burgandy vs Carl and Marigold

Score: 1-0

Gareth POV chapter

In the end, the next point, and the point that quickly followed after, were lost not because of a major mistake or a dramatic moment, but a slow steady decline that was somewhat inevitable. A great number of factors all came together for things to end this way... but it wasn't exactly thrilling how things shook out. Perhaps if the others had realised how long this was going to take, they would've opted to go do some wood chopping.

Alas, it was not to be. After around an hour things weren't going so well. Burgandy had abandoned her poorly formed sandcastle and was just sleeping at this point. Carl was bored. It was rude to say, especially while Marigold was doing so much work, but he was. He only had to cover a small area, and while that was nice for his physical fatigue, the fact he still had to stay focused the whole time just in case the ball did head his way meant the mental toll was adding up. Blue wasn't doing all that well either, her mind felt like putty and the constant drain on her mana was starting to ache somewhat, even if her reserves weren't empty.

And Marigold... poor Marigold was struggling with a number of factors. The first is that she too was getting bored. She could only hurl herself around the field for so long with an intense focus that had started to flake away. Her body was starting to slow down, requiring MORE effort to keep up with the ball not less and her mana reserves were just about empty.

While Gareth didn't know to ask, Marigold's choice to heal her fatigue was catching up to her. Especially because of how she did it. Marigold kept a constant, extremely small amount of mana healing her just be default. It helped prevent disease and minor issues that can crop up over a lifetime. It was an exceptionally good practice to get into if you planned to live for a long time, and as an elf that was already a guarantee.

The problem with this method, was that the 'best' way to heal yourself when using it was to simply use more mana to heal the whole body instead of focusing too much on a specific area. On top of that, healing fatigue is really not what regeneration magic is for. It works sure, but it isn't exactly mana efficient. Perhaps if Marigold new more ways to use her power, or if she hadn't been keeping up the constant repairs and instead healed herself every ten or so minutes to stay in top shape things would've been better for her...

But by the time this became apparent it was much too late. Her mana was mostly out, and her body was running low on energy. Constantly healing herself either took a lot more mana... or taking in nutrients to offset the cost. At least when you weren't a demon like Kat, where their bodies made minimal sense, and their demonic fire laughed at the limitations of mana. Alas, Marigold was not a demon, and she

hadn't anticipated the need for more food. The snacks she'd had earlier helped, but they just weren't enough.

That's not to say Marigold was exhausted, far from it. Her body was trained exceptionally well, and if this had been a more normal volleyball game she could've outlasted everyone by a huge margin. The issue was, she'd been taking over a lot of Carl's work, and she was slowing down. Just a bit... but that little bit was adding up. Blue sent her running around the area, over and over, keeping the elf on the move. Marigold had returned the ball thousands of times at this point. It was a monumental effort... but it just wasn't enough.

Marigold had just smacked the ball back slamming it down with as much force as she could manage. She was right at the front of the net and that slam would give her a bit of time. As she was running back to the centre, Blue shifted the ball and shot it out towards the other side of the court at the front. Marigold's feet dug deeply into the sand as she turned and rushed towards the ball, desperate to get there in time... but she was just too slow.

Marigold dived for the ball, fingertips just barely brushing the side of the ball... and pushing it off and out of the court instead of upwards. "2-0 to Blue and Burgandy!" said Thyme.

Marigold clicked her tongue but stood up, not able to properly enjoy just how irritating the sand was on her skin. The taste of failure bitter on her tongue. She wanted to plan, to discuss things properly with Carl and come up with a real solution to her problem. Alas, Burgandy wasn't going to be so kind. She'd been woken by the announcement and was serving as soon as she could. I think you should take a look at [pandanusnovel.com](http://pandanusnovel.com)

Carl spared a concerned look for Marigold who grimaced back. Marigold ran for the ball, knocking it back as she thought of a solution. "I can't cover most of the court, you'll have to take half now," said Marigold after barely returning the next three balls. The admittance not one she wanted to make. Despite that though, Carl didn't complain he just got to work, covering his half of the court as best he could.

Which was sadly a step down from Marigold. Despite having a much reduced area to cover his mind was largely spent and his body while less exhausted, was simply not trained to the insane levels of someone with Marigold's passion for training and affinity for regeneration. Blue was able to quickly see that he was the weak link and got him started on running from the front of the court to the back.

Marigold cursed herself. She couldn't even run over to help him properly because she knew that if she did Blue would send the ball her way and take her out. Of course, if Marigold thought about it for more than a few seconds she'd realise that Blue wasn't paying enough attention for that. Blue had her eyes closed and was focused on keeping her spell going through one method or another. She only occasionally took a look at the field and Marigold could help for at least a bit as long as Blue didn't open her eyes.

In the end though, Carl just couldn't quite keep up. When ball was sent straight up above him, his mind wasn't quite working as it should be. He looked straight up at the ball... and the blazing hot sun. Causing him to close his eyes and wince. Which wasn't a great thing to do when a ball was heading towards you. "CARL!" Marigold shouted, trying her best to get him to... react or open his eyes or something.

Carl opened his eyes, but they were filled with tears and he couldn't really see. His arms flailed out towards the ball and they HIT but it sent the ball not over the net, but into it. "The round goes to Burgandy and Blue!" shouted Thyme.

"The final match will be Gareth and Blue against Burgandy and Marigold, with Carl taking a break. Though, I have to ask. Do the teams want me to provide mana restoratives for the final round?" asked Thyme.

Blue collapsed backwards letting the water fall down. Most of it went into that bowl Burgandy had made, but a good deal of it splashed over Blue as well. She didn't even blink. "Urgh I don't want to do this for another hour. I can, and I will but I REALLY don't want to," said Blue.

Marigold let herself fall back onto her ass, hitting the sand with more force than strictly necessary which improved her mood a bit. "I somewhat agree. It's really not the good kind of torture it's just boring. If I could risk running out of mana completely or really shredding my muscles it'd be more interesting but I can't run fast enough like that. So... urgh... I don't know. Burgandy?" grumbled Marigold.

Burgandy had sat back down after serving, and she was still at the back of court. Turning to Marigold she shrugged and said, "I just slept through the last match so... I certainly could make the attempt as is. I'm not too confident we could win, but even if I DID win it wouldn't matter because you'd get second, and it feels like a massive slog for nothing on my part. Gareth?"

"Can you girls stop putting these kinds of big decisions on me? It makes me feel like I'm going to be the bad guy. However... I should probably just give me vote to Blue. She's the one that would be carrying me to victor for this last round if it happens, so I think I'll just pass the buck on to her," said Gareth.

Blue groaned. "I could forfeit you know? Horrible sportsmanship but I could do it. Marigold would be tied with me for first but I'm not sure I care enough to go through this whole song and dance again,"

Thyme rubbed their chin a few times before saying. "I can see everyone is a bit underwhelmed with the idea of an extra match, even if it is FAIR to have one more. Give me a moment to think on things,"

## [Chapter 1182 The Stages](#)

### Bargaining

#### Gareth POV chapter

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"Ok, while Thyme's working out whatever they think is a fair way to do this... sell me on it Gareth. What can you offer me as an incentive here?" asked Blue. "I'm not asking for money, or future points... nothing that tough. I'm not going to bleed you dry just for me to have a proper attempt at this... but what will you offer?"

"I'll have sex with you," said Marigold before Gareth even had a chance to think what he might offer.

Blue used a bit of her mana to shoot a ball of salt water at Marigold's face. Marigold, being the crazed masochist that she was, opened her eyes as wide as possible to get the salt in. "Ooh yeah! Already starting with the foreplay I see. I'm loving it! The fact I don't really have the mana to heal it properly just means I get to experience the burn longer!" said Marigold with a manic grin.

"No! Buzz off! Your offer isn't worth anything because I'm nearly certain you'd sleep with me anyway," retorted Blue. Who paused, and then went bright red. "Not that I want you to sleep with me. That's what I meant. It's worth nothing because I'm not interested in sleeping with you at all,"

"I think the lady doth protest too much," said Marigold with her best attempt at serene look. It was made somewhat more difficult by her constantly twitching eyelids. Letting them get hit by salt water was not a great idea. Especially since it'd just come from slightly compacted ground and probably had dirt along with it. Marigold was lucky she had regeneration as an affinity. Or perhaps she wouldn't have been so bad without it?

παΠδαςNovel.com And while this was happening, Gareth was using the time Marigold provided to figure out what to offer. \*So... food is off the table. Not only does my land not provide anything particularly notable in that area I can't cook all that well and certainly not better than Thyme. Jewellery... would probably send the wrong message and she did say she wasn't after money. What skills do I have?

Hmm... Green regularly uses me as a pillow but that's probably not something Blue would WANT. Hmm... what else... I don't think she'd need training to use a shield... or move in heavy armour. I suppose she might like to know how to care for that sort of equipment? No that's silly. Hmm... hmm... well actually...?

I wonder how good I am at massages? Green will beg for them occasionally, and even if I know she hasn't really hurt her back sleeping in all those odd positions, she does still seem to enjoy the sessions... but is that because I'm GOOD at massages or is because I'm her boyfriend and she likes the feeling of my hands? Because those are two very different things that would, once again, send very different messages.

Actually would Green get mad at me for offering to give Blue a massage? It's not exactly sexual... but it's also not like I've made the offer to anyone other than Green and my mother that one time... hmm...\*

Blue growled, "Not everyone is willing to drop their pants on the first date,"

"Honey, you insult me, I'm not wearing any pants," said Marigold with a salacious grin. The effect was enhanced now that her eyes were healed up. Well, that and the fact she turned her ass to Blue and pulled back the sarong to show her swimwear riding up. Carl, not wanting to get in the middle of this started walking off to the opposite side of the course that Gareth was on.

"You know what I meant!" hissed Blue. "It was a saying dammit. Just because you feel the need to show off doesn't mean you're an idiot. Don't disrespect MY intelligence by insinuating I haven't noticed." Of course, Marigold obviously wasn't doing that, but Blue was a tad distracted by Marigold's backside. So her poor comeback could be forgiven.

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Marigold nodded slowly, "Well, if we're here to respect your intelligence then I'll instead talk about just how wonderful this night I'm offering you could be. See, we'll start off slow with some candle wax..."

While Marigold was describing horribly lewd things. Gareth was still debating the merits of his offer. Then he realised that nothing was stopping him just asking Green. So he slid off the chair while nobody was paying attention. Thyme watched Gareth go. Carl gave him a nod of understanding and Burgandy glared in his direction. So nobody was paying attention when he whispered to Green. "I'm thinking the best thing to offer might be a message? Are you ok with that?"

Green nodded and said, "That's fine with me. Heck, I don't mind helping out! I've been practicing my massages to try and return the favour one day but I don't know if I'm any good yet. Blue would be an excellent first test subject. I can probably convince Nixilei and Kress to test it out later if I'm any good,"

Nixilei just pinched her nose while shaking her head. She wasn't going to get involved with that just yet. Kress was making plans for the secret contest later today. He was convinced he had the right idea regarding what it was, and he felt like he needed a real showstopper for it. Lily was sleeping and Kat was playing around with her demonic fire. It made the other teams keep their distance. I think you should take a look at [pandasnovel.com](http://pandasnovel.com)

Gareth nodded before turning around so Green couldn't see his slightly unsure expression. Not that he didn't trust Green... but how exactly had she been practicing? \*I've not seen her try to massage the servants... or Nixilei I don't think... and she's almost always with me. I'm almost certain she's lying about having practice... maybe she thinks I wouldn't let her help if she said she was trying this for the first time?\*

Gareth walked back, tuning out Marigold's illicit ramblings as she did so, "... and if things go well up to that point I can start with the bringing out the duller knives..." yeah Gareth knew that he didn't want to pay ANY more attention to that then he already had so he walked past until he was standing next to Blue.

"Hey Blue, would you try to win for a massage?" asked Gareth.

"YES!" shouted Blue instantly. Then she looked over at Gareth and tried to work out what she'd just agreed to as payment. Marigold HAD stopped talking though. So even as Blue failed to puzzle out what exactly she'd agree to, she couldn't exactly bring herself to care. At this point, she just wanted to beat the smug out of Marigold. Not that it was likely to have any negative effect on the elf, but it would make Blue feel better at least.

"Thyme. I'd like that regen potion please," said Blue firmly.

Thyme nodded and tossed one over to Blue which she caught. Thyme then tossed one over to Marigold before looking at Burgandy who just shrugged. Thyme nodded and put the third one back into hammerspace. "Carl who did you want to serve?" asked Thyme.

"Um... Blue and Gareth I guess? Not sure Marigold's team deserve it after... whatever that was," said Carl.

Burgandy glared at Carl and said, "I am heart and betrayed by this indignity,"

"You could've stopped her," retorted Carl.

"I very much doubt that," snorted Burgandy. "What could I have done? Force would've egged her on more and I certainly don't want to put my hand over her mouth. She's liable to lick it,"

"I'm not taking my decision back. Marigold really doesn't deserve the bonus after subjecting us to her kinks," said Carl.

"Bah, that was barely scratching the surface," said Marigold. Gareth intentionally looked away. Even what little he heard was enough to know that he didn't want to see the honesty in Marigold's eyes when she said that, because he was certainly betting that's what he'd see.

Blue was of course downing the mana potion, grimacing at the taste and the feeling of her mana forcefully being refilled. "Urgh... that stuff is always nasty. Overpriced and nasty," mumbled Blue.

"Is it really?" asked Gareth, just to get them off Marigold as a topic.

Blue nodded, "Yeah... it's not cheap and the shelf life is AWFUL unless you've got some really fancy enchantments for it. The problem with mana potions is that they're concentrated mana, and they'd really like to NOT be so concentrated so they tend to disperse pretty quickly after the brewing process is finished. You need either a really good box, for a few of them, or you accept that they lose effectiveness in like a day,"

"I know THAT much, but I was asking about the taste," pointed out Gareth.

Blue blushed. "Oh... right yes. The taste. Yeah no... I don't have any idea why it tastes bad... or perhaps not necessarily bad? It's like swallowing liquid sand. It's got a lot of grit in it most of the time and I know that's necessary... but it feels horrible in the mouth and the aftertaste is just... urgh..." Blue shivered as she stopped talking.

#### [Chapter 1183 1183 Gareth Chair Master](#)

Burgandy and Marigold vs Gareth and Blue

Gareth POV chapter

The final round was under way. Gareth served as soon as the water was in position and then he got started working on a little project. Instead of focusing on the match, Gareth was designing... a chair! Which, as silly as it might seem, was the best way he could think of to ensure victory. It would give Blue a good way to rest without simply sitting down on the ground and if he lifted the structure upwards so it was closer to the water, it might even help save mana.

So first things first, he created a basic throne. A raised rectangle for the base, then three thin rectangles for the two armrests and the backrest. Next, Gareth focused on merging the four stone pieces into one so that he wouldn't be required to hold it together continually with mana. It wasn't long before that step was complete so Gareth moved onto the next, and much harder step. Figuring out how to make it comfortable.

While he was doing that, Marigold and Burgandy were getting into things. This time, Marigold had taken a smaller chunk of the court, even if she was still covering a bit more than half of it. Marigold was taking

the back, and Burgandy was taking the front. Using the time it took Blue to set up, they'd even managed to dig out an extra line to mark where each section ended.

It was also worth noting, that Burgandy didn't bother to solidify the floor at all. If it was going to help, and she wasn't sure it would, the mana drain likely wouldn't be worth it long term. Sure mana levels and body fatigue weren't directly linked, but push it too far and you'd be tired all the same. Additionally, there might be some strange tactic that needed mana to clinch out the win. Neither woman had figured it out yet, if it existed at all but it was currently their best hope.

Back with Gareth and his chair construction, things were going well. He'd decided to hollow out the seating area and create some superfine sand to fill the hole. In theory, making a cushion of some sort, perhaps with air pockets and somewhat flexible layers of dirt would be better. Alas, Gareth wasn't an earth mage or an engineer and had no idea how he'd even approach making something like that. So he didn't try. Instead, he focused on grinding the sand down as finely as possible before it was deposited into the hollow. Hopefully it would help.

Once that was done, Gareth worked on carving out a smooth indent so that Blue could lean back somewhat, when he paused. \*Hmm... should I make this chair one that can recline back? Probably if I can... but can I? Probably not. Bother. Then what angle should I set the backrest at? Should I ask Blue? I'm not sure I want to distract her with a question like that. I'm not sure how much concentration she needs... but I don't want to cause problems. Or Thyme forbid, startle her into dropping the spell.\*

Gareth thought it over for a moment, thinking of all the ways he could try to make the chair recline, but he was failing to find any that would operate without the use of earth magic, so they were useless for the moment. So he got back to carving the back to be more comfortable as he pondered.

While Gareth was pondering Marigold and Burgandy were running themselves ragged. Marigold was doing pretty well, her mana restored and with it her stamina. Burgandy, not so much. Despite basically doing nothing but resting the previous round, if anything, it'd just made things worse. Her legs were sore, her mind felt sluggish and she could really use a big hearty lunch right now. Sadly, she needed to get through this match first, and was really regretting the fact she hadn't cared enough to try and stop it from happening. Then again... getting in between Marigold and a chance to flirt might be even worse for her health.

Blue was sweating a bit. Her mana was full, but she'd been casting for hours at this point. Even with the small breaks it was wearing on her mana channels. They really were not trained for this sort of nonsense. Though Blue did make a note to do so in the future. Blue was certain that she'd need to hold a spell for a long time later in her career. It would be terribly annoying to train properly though. She'd need to figure something out that wasn't so boring.

Back with Gareth and the chair was done... at least to a basic level. He still really wanted to make it a recliner but it just wasn't looking likely. Part of him also wanted to find a way to soften up the back rest, but that also wasn't really in the cards. He'd need a real spell to do the second, and a lot more knowledge to do the first. \*So is it good enough to distract Blue? If it is... then I should let her know somehow. Without startling her. Probably walking slowly in front of her and asking her to step back into the chair. Then raising it up somewhat. Then... I could ask her if she wants it to recline?! I think you should take a look at [pandanusnovel.com](http://pandanusnovel.com)

What should I do about the footrest if she says yes? I could probably get away with a stool... but could I lift up that much earth? Not quickly... and maybe not while keeping the chair intact? Hmm... I could just set a bit of Earth to pop out of the chair... but that's probably worse. Best to stick with making the platform slightly larger than the chair, and adding a stool if Blue wants one.\*

"Hey Blue, I made a chair for you. If you take a step back you'll be able to sit in it. Let me know how it feels," said Gareth.

Blue, confused, looked behind her once the ball had landed in the water. She focused on keeping it there for a bit as she looked back. "Huh... so you did..." mumbled Blue. She sat down on the chair and sent the ball off as she got used to it. The sand was a bit of a strange choice to her but it wasn't too bad. Leaning back was decently comfortable as well. Sure the backrest was made out of stone, but it fit her back well. Blue nodded and started to launch the ball back once again.

"Would you like me to recline this for you before I move it up?" asked Gareth.

Blue instantly realised why he'd move the chair up, but was confused about the reclining. "This chair can recline?" asked Blue.

παΠdasNovel.com "Not really..." admitted Gareth. "I can sort of fudge it with my earth affinity. Not quickly, and perhaps not smoothly but I CAN manage it. If that's something you want. Oh and a footrest but that part will be a bit harder,"

"Hmm..." Blue thought the offer over, sending the ball back twice more before reaching a decision. "If you can just recline it a little bit then I think that will be perfect," decided Blue. Gareth nodded and did so, adjusting the back just a tad. Blue shifted a bit till she was comfortable then nodded.

Gareth nodded back and started to raise the ground underneath it. It wasn't too fast, but that was fine, Gareth didn't need to go far. Once the top of the chair was just a touch below the bottom of the water Gareth stopped and nodded, before patting himself on the back for doing a good job. Then he made his way off to the side a bit and smoothed the sand out into a wavy chair that mostly fit the shape of his body. It was good enough to his mind.

"Thanks for this Gareth," said Blue with a smile. "This might not be the greatest chair ever, but with something to sit on? I feel like I'm getting a second wind. I bet I can keep this water defending for hours. Just sit back and relax, I got this." Of course, Blue not having looked behind her didn't see that Gareth had already done so.

Gareth shot back a thumbs up as he started to relax. Already there were cracks showing in Marigold's and Burgandy's teamwork. With Blue smiling and ready for battle, the win was basically in the bag. Or well, the win for her. Gareth would happily take a tie for second place.

\*Yup. That chair was an awesome idea. I'm glad I took the time to make it well. It also makes me a bit glad this is the last match. Not sure I could've come up with it until I saw Blue meditating on the ground. Nor would I want for anyone to steal this idea to use after I've shown it off. Even if Burgandy is the only other person who could. Well... Marigold would probably accept Blue using HER as a chair, but best not to dwell on that particular idea.\*

[Chapter 1184 1184 Volleyball Out. Lumberjacks In](#)



Back with Kat.

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Thyme had passed out cards for an impromptu poker tournament after the thirty minute mark passed and all the volleyball players were still going strong. Thirty minutes after THAT Thyme pulled every to the side again. "Right... so I know it's getting rather late and you've already technically missed lunch but I wanted to make the offer again. Do you want to take the chance to start the wood chopping contest? It's much simpler and only going to take forty-five minutes maximum. Fifteen for the setup, and the judging at the end, with thirty minutes for the activity itself,"

Everyone sort of looked over at everyone else and just shrugged. The poker tournament had turned into a mess because most people didn't actually know how to play poker, Thyme's deck had a bunch of extra cards in it, not just to Kat but to everyone, and it had turned into something fairly fun. The extra cards were all weird things like 'you win this round if you successfully do a handstand for the entire following round' or 'you lose immediately unless you manage to score lower then a six out of ten in a dance contest'.

All, very weird, but quite fun with they appeared. Kat was actually pretty curious as to why a poker tournament with these amusing cards wasn't part of the main contest. Perhaps it would be, but Kat doubted it. Oh, and it was worth mentioning that Thyme provided chips for everyone to play with. Though they weren't actually worth anything. They weren't even worth the same amount as others of the same colour.

Green chips could be worth anything from one all the way to fifty, except for one chip that Kat had managed to sneakily pass off to Romilda that had negative two hundred points on it. Red and purple weren't much better, though purple chips only seemed to have prime numbers on them.

All of this was to say that, passing the time had become rather amusing and giving that up for a rather simple sounding woodchopping event wasn't everyone's favourite idea... but it did need to be done. Blue seemed to be going strong, and Marigold was getting into the groove of things. She'd adjusted her healing a bit and was keeping herself from making the same mistakes as last round. Burgandy was doing her best, and Gareth was doing his best to nap.

In the end though, it was Vanya that stepped up. "I say we go through with it. Marigold will be sad to have missed out on a bunch of sweaty people chopping wood, but honestly after the she riled up Blue enough to force a final round happening for real, I'm not feeling like rewarding her,"

Thyme looked around but once again he got a round of shrugs. Thyme seemed to deflate a bit at that. Thyme had managed to create an interesting, and entertaining party game. They hadn't played more than a few rounds, so nothing too silly had happened yet but it was at least interesting. Still, Thyme was the one running the tournament, and the plans for it had already been submitted for approval. Thyme knew they couldn't just start an unsanctioned gambling operation mid-tournament. Especially not INSTEAD of an official event. "Right, well seeing as everyone is, if not in agreement, at least apathetic enough not to complain, we're going to do the wood-chopping contest now. I just need the

contestants... but honestly? I don't think I can muster up the enthusiasm to care if anyone else comes along,"

pandasNovel.com The group that would be chopping all stepped forward. Kat stepped forward alongside March, Mauve, Nabras and Asteodia. Kat looked at her competition, and rather quickly dismissed Nabras and Asteodia.

\*They just aren't that scary. Nell seems strong then Nabras, who is more in line with Kress as a fighter then March and Marigold. Mauve at least I understand considering she had an axe on her when she arrived, so she probably knows her way around an axe better than most. And March... well... I'm strong, very strong, and very fast but March is March so I'm not going to count her out just yet.\*

Nixilei stepped up to go as well, while Green said, "I'm going to stay here with Gareth. Even if he's not doing anything important or interesting I should still cheer for him!"

"And I'll stay as well," said Kress. "Because we all know that Green is going to fall asleep no more than five minutes after you've all left and while I trust Thyme to take keep her safe while she does... I am a bodyguard technically, and it's not really Thyme's job to watch over sleepy fae." "I think you should take a look at pandasnovel.com

This of course caused Stan to decide on staying, which tipped the scales quite a bit. Pretty much everyone else decided they didn't want to be anywhere near Stan while he was flirting. The only people sticking around were Carl, Ellenell and Burnice, who had accepted Vanya's job of keeping Marigold out of the worst of trouble for the time being.

With that Thyme snapped their fingers and stepped away to reveal they were on the opposite side of the island just off the beach. The sea was behind them, and in front of them was five stumps, and then behind them was a massive stack of logs about two-thirds of Kat's arm in length. Off to the side was a variety of axes in different styles. Hand-axes, double side axes, a normal looking axe with a reasonably long handle and an axe head designed for cutting wood instead of people.

"I would've made everyone walk, but as I said, I understand that everyone is ready to wrap things up and have lunch. I'll be moving back the final event as well so that you all have time to actually eat instead of just smelling the food before time is up. Now, rules are super basic. You'll have thirty minutes to cut as many logs as you can manage into four even pieces. No magic allowed.

"That's basically the all the rules. You can use your hands, one of the axes, heck if you think you can get away with staring at the logs until they split you can try that as well. The four pieces all have to be no more, or less than two percent off a quarter of the log. So be careful how you're cutting things. Little splinters are fine, but same as before. The logs have to be within one percent of a quarter, including missing splinters. The only other thing that you might find difficult is this final matter...

"The stump you are using to cut wood must remain in one piece. Some cuts and light damage is fine, but if the stump separates into two pieces then you're automatically eliminated. Now, that's all the rules. Oh, and Mauve you CAN use your own axe if you want... but I wouldn't recommend it. That seems like a good way to dull a nice blade. I won't stop you so you can, if you want, but yeah I wouldn't recommend it. Oh wait! One final thing. You are not allowed to attack your competitors or try to sabotage their log piles,"

Kat nodded, but Lily frowned mentally and pointed out. [Thyme didn't say anything about attacking other people's stumps. This game is going to boil down to not just how many logs can you chop, but if you can do it while keeping your chopping station in one piece.]

\*So what are you saying? Should I try to take out everyone's stumps instead of focusing on chopping wood?\*

[Hmm... no probably not. You've got a good chance of at least coming second I think. It might be worth sabotaging March or Mauve, right before the timer ends. Just go for whoever is doing better. If you tried to go after anyone early, they'd all just gang up on you then perhaps fight it out. Though because you aren't supposed to fight each other... or sabotage the log piles you'll need to be careful.]

[Hmm... that might be something worth looking into. Perhaps you should start by building up a log wall around your stump? Make it hard to get to your stump, or interfere with you by making sure that to get to either they'd need to 'sabotage' your log pile?]

\*Not necessarily a bad idea... but I feel like I'd need quite a lot of wood for that and I'm not entirely sure I'd have the time. Well, no I do have the time thirty minutes is a while but I think I'd fall too far behind everyone else. I'll also need to work out what the best way to chop everything in four is. I can't just keep swinging, I'll need to stop and pick up all my halves at some point...\*

[If you're really good maybe you can cut the wood almost all the way in half then in half again while it's still held together at the bottom?]

\*Seems... unrealistic but I can give it a shot?\*

#### [Chapter 1185 1185 Need To Axe Any Questions?](#)

March wasted no time at all grabbing the largest and deadliest looking axe on offer. It was double sided and nearly as tall as Kat. \*It's not like I wanted that one anyway, so I suppose that's...\* Kat's internal thanks were cut off when a second, identical axe appeared in the spot March had just grabbed an axe from. \*Or we get infinite copies. I still don't want that one though... I don't think? The weight isn't necessary and the fact its double sided isn't going to help me... right? Then why did March pick it?\*

While Kat was deliberating on what to choose, Mauve went a head and grabbed the set of twin axes. Kat once again frowned at the choice, even as a new set appeared in their place. \*Surely that can't be right either? Hmm... well Mauve seemed to use an axe and shield to fight... so maybe she has good enough coordination with both hands to get away with it... but that still doesn't seem like a good idea.\*

Nabras stepped up while Kat was continuing to criticise her opponents 'weapon' choices. Nabras wavered between the more normal axes and the oversized double headed axe that March had chosen. After a few moments of indecision he was going to reach for the oversized one when Bonas yelled, "What are you doing?" from the side. Nabras glared back at his twin, before ignoring her advice and picking the oversized axe. Bonas was groaning, face in hands as Nell gently rubbed circles on her back.

\*Ok... that's... well that's a thing I suppose. Still, regardless of if that weapon is the RIGHT choice for me... it's definitely not for Nabras. He's too short and... well... no I don't see him winning with this choice. Just... just why would he go for that?\*

[He's trying to show off. I'm not exactly sure WHO he wants to show off to... but that's gotta be why. He probably didn't want March to have a bigger axe than him.]

\*But what does it matter? I'm pretty sure that even if you're as tall and buff as March it's STILL the wrong axe choice. And heck, why does he want to pick the same axe as March anyway? She's got muscles on her muscles! Her biceps are larger than my head if you don't count my horns. Sure, I'm probably stronger than her, but I use demon bullshit for that. Surely most people would lose in a contest of strength against March if they're both the same rank. Wait... I just realised another problem. How heavy is Nabras compared to the axe? Because I'm betting the answer is unfavourable...\*

[Look, I don't know who he's showing off to, but it's just a thing men do sometimes. I mean... women do it too, just in different ways. I'm just... not sure who he's trying to show off to? I mean, it didn't seem to be directed at anyone in particular... unless it's March maybe? But that seems wrong...]

\*I don't think I've seen anyone do anything this silly before... well... not outside of clip shows on TV but those barely count as real life.\*

pandasNovel.com [Agreed]

While kat and Lily were chatting mentally Asteodia went up to all the axes and looked at them. Then she bent down and grabbed a handful of the longer grass stems that were around. From there she proceeded to carefully... wave the grass over the blade. Trying to see which one was the sharpest. Through her testing she determined they were all about the same sharpness... with the dual axes possibly edging things out by just a tiny amount. Asteodia frowned at this, wavering between picking them and the more normal axes before deciding to pick the doubles.

\*Well at least she tested those. I think I'm just going to go with the normal axe. Unless... you have some reason for me not to?\*

**N**Ove**l**next.**C**om

[No I can't think of anything.]

Kat nodded and then started to close down the link. Strategizing before the round with Lily was found but now things were starting for real Kat wasn't going to risk it. Reaching over, Kat grabbed the normal axe and spun it around in her hands a few times before giving it a few fake practice swings. \*Feels like basically nothing in my hands it's that light. Maybe I should've picked the bigger one? It might've helped me moderate my strength a bit more.\* I think you should take a look at pandasnovel.com

"Approach your stations!" said Thyme in a firm voice. As they did so, a little Chibi cutout of everyone participating in the round appeared behind one of the stumps. Kat's was the second from the left so she went over to that one. Asteodia was on her left, March was in the middle, Nabras was next to March and the Mauve was on the far right. It didn't really matter because the pile of logs was massive and stretched further left and right than the stumps did. Not to mention further back. There was clearly a few rows of wood there.

Thyme had given everyone a decent amount of space between them and their nearest competitors. It was about fifty metres, which really was quite a lot. Kat wasn't sure that she would've been able to see Mauve much at all with her old human eyes. Still, this did show that the game was more about chopping wood than anything else, which did make sense.

Once everyone was lined up Thyme disappeared only to reappear between the stumps and all the logs, drawing Kat's attention to said logs. The logs themselves were stacked in columns. These columns were all the same height, and each log was exactly the same size. \*It seems Thyme went out of their way to standardise this challenge. No uneven logs. They're all perfect circles and exactly the same size from what I can tell. That's going to make getting four even pieces a lot easier. Not that I was too worried before... but with this? I should be able to find the right spot on the first log and then repeat the sequence forever.\*

Thyme was dressed in classic lumberjack fashion... for the most part. They had a small hand axe resting over their shoulder, a big bushy beard... that was obviously fake. Not just for the fact that it was hair instead of hair like leaves, but because Kat could quite clearly see the glue keeping it in Thyme's face. The plaid flannel shirt was a mix of red black and blue and fit well... but it didn't stop there and was really more of a flannel robe, or dress going down to Thyme's knees. At least the boots were normal. Thick leather things that went up past Thyme's ankles.

"Ok. When I vanish from this spot the timer will start. You can at any point look behind you to see a giant clock counting down if you want an accurate measure of how much time you have left. You know the rules. You all have your axes. Do you have any final questions?" said Thyme.

"Um, yeah," said Asteodia waving a hand. She had one of her axes just on the ground while the other was held securely in her hand. "Are we able to change axes if we find they aren't working for us?"

Thyme shrugged and said, "The axe stand will be disappearing once the clock starts. I can give you one last moment to pick a different set if you want. Alternatively you'll need to trade your axes for one of your competitors' if you really need a replacement after the round starts. I suppose you could use your hands to cut logs... but I wouldn't recommend it. And remember no magic..."

Asteodia didn't seem overly surprised with the answer. Even if she just as obviously wasn't pleased with it. She quickly tried using her one handed axe with two hands out found that while not particularly comfortable her hands were small enough to fit together on the handle with minimal issues. She then made a few practice swings and frowned at the thing again. "I... I think I'll keep the ones I have?" she said, sounding unsure.

Thyme shrugged, "You have this one last chance, are you sure you want to keep them?"

"Not exactly... but I think it's what I'm going to go with. I tested them. They're the sharpest... I think. I'm betting that extra sharpness is going to make up for the slight awkwardness using them," explained Asteodia, partially as a way to convince herself.

Thyme just shrugged again and looked over everyone before saying, "With that settled, I ask for a final time... are you all ready? Are your questions answered? Does the timber in front of you quake with fear?"

Kat wanted to wave that last one off but she did happen to glance at the wood that seemed to be shivering when she looked at it. \*Huh... that's... that's actually happening. And it can't be an illusion... so... what the fuck does that mean?\* Kat didn't know, and it was gone quickly. Kat thought it was probably best not to ask.

[Chapter 1186 1186 I Thought This Was A Log Chopping Contest...](#)

"GO!" shouted Thyme as they vanished.

Everyone took off in one motion, leaving their axes behind. Kat quickly found herself drawing ahead of the pack, and March was getting slightly ahead, but not really breaking away like Kat was. Kat looked over the log stacks. Each stack was a bit taller than she was, and the best way to carry them wasn't entirely obvious. Or rather, how many you could carry while moving at top speed wasn't obvious. [noVelnext.com](http://noVelnext.com)

Kat had some ideas flash through her mind but quickly decided on what she thought was the best one. Kat swiftly grabbed a stack wincing as her fingers dug into the soft wood. \*Let's ignore that. I'll just throw away the bottom log because I'm pretty sure it won't count.\* Kat snaked her tail around so that it ran along the side of the log nearest to her body, and she took off with full speed. The stack did wobble slightly, but Kat was running in a straight line and her tail kept it all together.

Kat dumped the logs onto the ground and ignored them as they immediately fell over. \*Might need to level the ground around here a bit but for now... not my problem.\* As Kat ran back she looked over to see how the other competitors were doing. For most... the answer was 'not well'. Asteodia was sprinting with three logs balanced into a triangle which was much slower than Kat's stack of six, but good enough...

Nabras was not doing well at all though. He'd clearly taken off with a full stack of six like Kat. Unlike Kat, his path back was littered with fallen logs that didn't make the journey. He managed to keep two of them, but part of that might've just been luck. Though Mauve was having similar issues. Mauve had clearly done the same thing as Nabras, but unlike him, she'd pivoted to using Asteodia's method. It did put her a bit behind both Nabras and Asteodia but she wasn't too far behind, and the slight time loss was probably worth it. Plus, with three taken in her first run, she was probably better off than Nabras, even if it was slower.

March was the real outlier here. Instead of trying and failing to run back with a stack, March was hurling the logs back towards her stump with shocking accuracy. Sure some of them rolled a bit, but if not for that they would be spot on. March's place on the middle stump perhaps hampering her more than if she'd gone for the edges. Kat compared the method to her own, even as she picked up her next stack and found... she might be falling behind.

March was slowing down when it came to the top logs because she couldn't reach up and grab them by themselves... and while Kat had managed to grab the bottom log without breaking it she DID break it the first time. Currently, March was halfway through her second stack, and only seemed to be getting faster. \*Shit that might just be the way to do it. I'm not sure if I could be that accurate throwing logs though. Dammit, if the ground was perfectly flat my method would probably be better... but I know that it's not. Shit... what should I do?\*

Kat didn't let her thinking stop her moving. She put the logs down as quickly as she could and growled as she fell again. \*Ok. I can see a few ways to do this. First, I keep up with the running and ignore it. Second, I start throwing logs like March. Third, I dig a trench and then start throwing logs. I might not be as accurate as March but if I make it a decently big target, but one right near me stump then I might be able to pull ahead. Hmmm...\*

Kat picked up her third stack and sprinted back. \*I'm not sure how sturdy this axe is but it could make a half decent shovel if I really need it to. The worry would be snapping it but I doubt Thyme would make them so flimsy and then not mention it. But is it really worth tacking the time to dig it out? I could try to stomp it all flat... but I just don't have a great way of doing that right now.\*

Kat dropped off another load of logs... and this one stayed upright! Kat was mentally cheering until she glanced over and saw that March was already making a start on her fourth pile. \*Dammit. So throwing them really is faster. I mean, it makes some sense, but I'd hoped with my six stack method I'd be able to make it work. Dammit. So do I throw the logs or dig and then throw?\*I think you should take a look at [pandasnovel.com](http://pandasnovel.com)

Kat reached the pile and grabbed another set of six logs, watching the other competitors as she thought. Technically she was losing time doing this, but it was good enough for now. It would certainly be less efficient to start throwing logs then take a break partway through to dig a hole.

As for the other competitors... Nabras had tried and failed to send the logs flying as far as March and quickly given up on the idea. Mauve had seen March succeed, and Nabras fail and took a middle approach. She had quickly dug a groove into the earth about halfway down the trail and was throwing logs at that. They'd hit the groove, most of the time and lose all of their momentum. She was actually throwing the logs faster than March... but it was clear she'd need to throw them a second time, so she wasn't really saving much, if any time over Kat's current method.

[pandasnovel.com](http://pandasnovel.com) Asteodia was doing something interesting. She was casting fire spells to burn away all the grass between her and the logs. Kat wasn't entirely sure why that was just yet, but perhaps it would work out for her. \*Right, ok so throwing them is the way forward and it seems at least one other person thought digging was the right choice.\*

With that confirmed, Kat dropped off one more set of six logs and then got to work digging away at the ground. She picked up her axe and used it to cut deep grooves into the ground. Treating the dirt a bit like she imagined she would the logs. Once she'd cut out a big chunk, Kat threw it over her stump and towards the crowd. Not too close obviously, but somewhat close. Part of her wanted to start messing with the others... but that might've counted as messing with their log piles, and as such it really wasn't worth the risk.

Kat's digging was... slow going. She wasn't happy with the speed at all. March was dashing ahead, even though her logs were all over the place at this point. They were bouncing in all sorts of directions once they hit other logs. Some clearly entering other contestants' 'play areas' a few flying past the stump she'd be assigned and towards the crowd. Honestly it was a mess, but it was still a LOT of logs. Kat could also see that there were more rows of logs behind the first, so at least they weren't going to run out.

Mauve's plan was... not going all that well. The groove she made had filled up with logs and now they were just sort of going everywhere. She was a bit more accurate than March but there just wasn't that much space to fill with logs unless she wanted to start reducing the distance she threw them. Her twenty-five metres either side were quickly filling up due to this. Sure there were big holes where logs might fit... but Mauve wasn't quite that accurate.

Nabras was actually doing well in comparison. He'd kept up a steady stream of three logs at this point and he was making a good pile right next to his stump. Sure it wasn't anywhere near the amount of logs

Mauve or March had moved, but his were all right next to his stump. It was a great position to get started. Perhaps he would soon start chopping and then get more logs later?

Asteodia's plan had finally become clear... and honestly? Kat thought it was pretty awesome. Time consuming, and probably worse than March's... but perhaps better than Kat's own. She'd burnt away all the extra grass and now she was using her strength and two logs as rollers to flatten down the area between her stump and the log stacks. Kat was all but certain that once it was done Asteodia would start rolling logs down the 'road' she was making. If they got all, or even most of the way back... well that might just be the best strategy. Kat almost wanted to try it herself... but surely, she could throw the logs the hole way. Right? Kat was certainly hoping so.

Occasionally missing content, please report errors in time.

#### [Chapter 1187 1187 Chop Away At My Heart](#)

Kat had finished with the digging and was sprinting back to start tossing logs. About five minutes had passed since the start of the round and March was just starting on chopping up what she'd thrown, and it was a large amount. However, the big holdup would be just how scattered everything was. Kat wasn't feeling great about the fact she was just starting to throw now, but she was almost certain she'd make up for the time lost.

Nabras was still moving his sets of three and doing quite well. He had a nice pile on either side of his stump. It was way less than March, but it was something. Mauve had moved up to start throwing her logs the rest of the way quite some time ago, but she was only through about half of her pile, which, now Kat was looking again, was probably only about a two third's the size of March's AND she was just now starting on them.

Asteodia looked rather casual, despite the fact her movements were swift. She had worked out a great system while Kat was digging through the dirt. Asteodia would grab the second log in a pile, then kick the bottom one down the ramp she'd made. Once it left her foot, she'd drop the next one, and keep repeating until the entire stack was done. It was a swift method that did have a bit of a delay built into it while the logs started to move, but it was efficient, and her logs were all ending up in a nice line right behind her stump.

Kat could see that Asteodia had actually chopped some of her logs up already. It seemed that Asteodia was sending down just a few logs at a time and then chopping them up. This way, she didn't have a long line of logs that was costing her time just to grab... even if she was losing time in the running. Still, she had a nice pile of halves going already. They weren't in quarters yet, but Kat was sure that would be dealt with in time.

So Kat got started on the log throws while thinking of ways to further optimise things. Her throws were... mostly accurate. The large target she'd made for herself certainly helped with things, and she got better over time. Of course, logs weren't all that aerodynamic so quite a few were near misses... but the size of the hole compensated for that as Kat dialled her aim in.

\*Right. So this part is pretty good. Asteodia and March have started chopping but I'm not too worried about my progress just yet. Nabras... he's going to fall behind, I think. Actually he's almost certainly



behind ALREADY. He doesn't have that many more logs than I do and I took a massive break to dig that hole so I think he's out of the race. Mauve... she's probably going to have the best axe technique so perhaps she'll make up some time there.

Is there anything I can do to improve MY axe technique though? It's going to be a pain to chop things into quarters... which I guess is sort of the point. Is there any way I can work around that though? Like... would cutting them into halves one way then halves again another speed things up? *novelnext.com*

Probably? Thyme didn't say anything about the shape, just that the pieces have to be equal so if I made a line of halves then sliced them all down the centre that could work... except my axe isn't large enough. March's IS though. Perhaps that's the real benefit of having just a large axe? It lets her cut more than one log at a time. I'm not sure you could keep them in even halves, even with all the logs being the same... not if you were keeping your stump mostly intact. So that's not going to work out. Any other wise ideas?\*

Kat looked over her competitors looking for any neat ideas to steal but nobody seemed to be doing anything particularly crazy just yet. Well, Asteodia's ramp was an amazing idea, but Kat didn't feel like it was much better than her hole considering she could throw the logs far enough. Other than that though, nobody was doing anything that stood out to Kat, especially when it came to optimising the chopping part.

*pandasNovel.com* Kat ended up spending two and a half minutes throwing logs... roughly. She'd waited for the clock at the back to show that seven and a half minutes had elapsed so it was close enough. The hole was getting decently filled as well. So she sprinted back down and got to work chopping. With the first log, she took a bit of extra time to make sure that the cut was good. Then she started speeding up. Third, fourth, fifth log. The wood would split pretty much right down the middle and the two sides would fly off to the left and right. I think you should take a look at *pandasnovel.com*

\*Damn maybe I should build a little wall close to the stump to catch those and then cut them into four in like, two motions. Wait... do I even need a wall?\* Kat moved her free hand off to the side and leaned over so that the wood should hit that hand once the log was cut. Kat then moved her tail off to the opposite side and sliced down. The wood would split, hit her tail and hand. Kat tried, and failed to manoeuvre them into a good spot... but she could correct that with practice. A few moments of messing around to get the log halves in a good spot then cut sliced them both and they vanished.

\*What?\* Kat looked around confused, she knew she was wasting time but she needed to find out what had just happened. If they vanished because she'd cut them wrong or something she needed to know. Kat couldn't see anything as she looked left or right so she turned to check how much time she'd used... when she saw four small pieces of wood directly behind her, if a ways back, just in front of the clock.

\*Wait... ARE THOSE THE WOOD PILES! Thyme you misleading little shit!\*

Kat quickly got to work slicing the halves nearby in a few quick motions before she started to move the logs from the hole to within grabbing range of the stump. With no need to leave space around it for the halves, she could just reach over and grab each new log after the previous one vanished into thin air. Part of her wanted to go attacking the other players wood stockpiles... but not only was that rude, Kat was confident in her new method. Plus, she knew she could check out the other piles to see how close she was to winning once more time had passed.

While Kat was chopping quickly, the others were making progress. Nabras had finally started chopping up his logs, and he was using the method Kat had discarded. He'd built up little walls around his stump allowing him to collect the halves and stop them rolling too far away. Sadly for him, he hadn't quite optimised it to Kat's level, instead chopping the logs into halves for later rather than clearing it all at once. March was getting through her logs... but if Kat was watching she would be concerned for the splinters.

March was good at regulating her power most of the time... but the weight of the axe was causing her a bit of trouble. Instead of neatly splitting the logs March was closer to smashing them into halves. This sent a lot of splinters flying. Even if her technique was fast, the excess wood she was losing might mean her portions were too lopsided and wouldn't pass muster. Still, she had the most halves around her by far, so perhaps it wouldn't matter.

Mauve was just starting to work on her logs. She'd piled them up behind her for easy reach. Just by turning around and grabbing she could get a hold on a log without too many issues. It was a decent system, but would it be enough?

Asteodia though... she was looking at Kat. Being the closest to Kat, or at least, the one of two that was actually paying attention to her competitors... could see that Kat's logs were vanishing. She'd seen Kat's frantic glances around, and Kat had seemingly not noticed that attention. Asteddia could now see the slowly growing pile of quarters in the background and was wondering how she could make use of that information.

Nothing had come to her just yet. Unlike Kat she didn't have a tail to make use of. She DID however have a second axe. Asteddia wasn't sure what she could use it for. It was a bit too small to dig into the ground beside the stump and use as a backstop. Part of her wanted to put in the stump... but that might be too much damage. Asteddia decided she'd need to think on this.

Occasionally missing content, please report errors in time.

[Chapter 1188 1188 Viable Plans Are Hard To Find](#)

Twenty minutes into the round Kat was going back for more logs again. Depending on how you counted it could be the third such trip, or something closer to the seventh if you included her first few runs as well. It turned out that once you got the rhythm down? Things could be done exceptionally fast which was great. On the other hand... Thyme was obfuscating who was in the lead. You see, as soon as they filled up the first row of wood... you couldn't view any further progress. If Kat really strained her hearing she could tell the wood was being stacked up behind the first row... but it was annoying.

March had actually tried to check. She'd run over to get an idea of how well she was doing... cursed aloud and then ran back to get back to work. Kat might've been more worried about March's frantic pace if she hadn't heard that it was THYME March was cursing. It made Kat about 90% sure that Thyme was obscuring the results with magic and not just by hiding them behind the logs. Part of Kat wanted to see if her eyes would be able to get through whatever countermeasures Thyme had up... but that seemed a little rude.

παΠδαςNovel.com At the other stations, Mauve was really going at it. She was nearly as fast as March and was comparable to Kat's own speed... but that was just for the chopping. Kat's setup let her quickly go from log, to halves, to quarters but Mauve was just chopping things into halves, and then coming back later which was slowing her down overall. Despite that, her technique was flawless. Kat couldn't be certain that they were all perfect, but they certainly seemed that way. It was better than what Kat suspected her own record to be.

Kat wasn't ashamed to admit that she probably bungled one in every forty or so cuts. Which wasn't ideal, but those one in forty were usually still pretty close. Kat was hoping that meant that the wood that failed to pass Thyme's rules was closer to one in one hundred and twenty or more... but that might just be wishful thinking. Kat did have a few logs just... implode on her for seemingly no reason so Kat knew she didn't have a perfect record. Mauve however... just might.

Asteodia had decided not to risk using her axe as a backstop... but she came up with something that might be better. If Kat didn't have a tail, she could only hope that she would've figured out such an elegant solution. Astodia had raised her right leg up onto the stump and was using that and her left hand as a way to catch the sliced logs. It wasn't the best for her chopping form, but it was good enough, and that's what mattered. Her speed was good, she quickly got down to quarters and was doing quite well overall. She needed to make more trips back to the logs than anyone else, but she also got through her piles quicker, and with less fuss so perhaps that cancelled out. *Novelnext.COM*

March's progress was good. She chopped through wood the quickest, eclipsing even Kat in speed. It was an impressive site to behold... if it wasn't riddled with issues. The first is that she spent quite a bit of time going around and picking up the logs near her stump. Sure March was quick, but they were horribly ordered and just all over the place. Some of the logs March went out of her way to grab were probably best forgotten about in favour of fresh ones. The next problem went alongside her speed of chopping. One of the reason Kat wasn't just going as fast as possible was to make sure the cuts in her logs were smooth. Straight from top to bottom with no splinters.

March, did not subscribe to that idea. She practically smashed the logs to pieces. A clean split was not what March was searching for. She used overwhelming strength to get an overwhelming speed of chopping through wood and damn all the splinters it was throwing out. March was lucky if she managed to get half of her splits into a perfect state... only made worse by the fact that she had to chop them twice to get quarters, leading to it being closer to one in four.

Though, it could be argued that not all the splinters would cause the wood to fail to meet Thyme's criteria, possibly not even most as despite March's speed she is quite accurate... it just didn't seem like a good strategy long term. Consistency seemed to be king here. Thirty minutes was a surprisingly long time to chop logs, as it turned out. It made the volleyball matches played earlier feel even longer.

Sadly, despite consistency being king... it was about the only thing Nabras had going for him and it just wasn't working out well. He could clearly tell, if his nervous glances towards his pile indicated anything. Sure they might hide who is winning now but Nabras had continually checked them as the first row of logs piled up and he was far behind. Even at the twenty minute mark, he'd only just now finished his first pile. Which was not a good thing. Not a good thing at all. He was now trying to work out how he could come back from that. Perhaps not to win, but second place? Though, his real wonder is if the pile behind him included failed quarters. If it did... March's dominance might not be so clean.

Kat for her part, had decided not to really bother with any extra sneaking tactics. Mostly because it was really unclear who she'd even use them on, except Nabras. \*I'd only get one shot at SOMEONE before the end, and it might even get me in trouble with Thyme... but I can't really tell who is winning so I don't see the point.\*I think you should take a look at [pandanusnovel.com](http://pandanusnovel.com)

Nabras however, DID see the point because everyone was ahead of him. He just needed to figure out how. Of course, he quickly deduced that wrecking someone else's stump would likely be the best way to get them out... he just wasn't certain that he COULD do that. Mauve was surely deadly with an axe considering it was her weapon of choice... and March... well Nabras didn't feel like getting snapped in half.

Realistically though, both kat and Asteodia were just too far away from him. So he'd need to be sneaky if he wanted to grab one of the first two, as the time ticked down. The best idea he could come up with was to wait for March or Mauve to head off to get more logs then sprint over. The question was one of timing... and if he even had the strength to split one of his enemies' stumps.

In between swings, he checked his own... and found it was barely damaged. Sure he'd been actively trying not to destroy it... but he was chopping logs on the damned thing for crying out loud. Nabras frowned, and then, after checking to see if anyone was watching him, sliced down at one of the roots on his log. Into of going clean through, his axe was stuck halfway in.

Nabras cursed under his breath as he ran to get more logs. "The damned axe didn't even get through one of the roots! How am I getting through the whole thing?" Perhaps if he could use some magic he could tip the scales... but Thyme said no magic. Nabras paused. "Wait... didn't Asteodia use magic to clear out that path? Thyme didn't stop her... does that mean she's already out?"

Nabras nearly stumbled as he came to that realisation but he didn't say anything else. Not wanting to clue anyone in. Nabras did wonder why Thyme hadn't called her on. Perhaps they were just trying to let the contest run and make judgements at the end?

As Nabras plotted, and failed to find ways to execute them, everyone else was chopping away. Trying to secure the lead position as best they could. As the deadline approached, Kat, March and Mauve all grew confident they were in the lead, that they were winning. Asteodia was less certain. She started to get her own thoughts of how to sabotage the other teams but she didn't want to waist much brain space on plotting when there was logs to chop.

So that's what everyone did. They cut, and cut and cut. Nabras tried to spot an opening to get a leg up... but couldn't commit to it in the end. March furiously sliced through logs. Mauve perfectly cut up wood. Asteodia's system remained efficient, if perhaps not perfect and Kat felt that perhaps, she could've done more. Her energy reserves were full... but there was that rule about magic.

"TIME IS UP!" shouted Thyme. As they did, all the logs vanished, even the ones that were halfway being cut like in the case of March and Mauve. The stumps themselves glimmered for a moment, and all those who were mid-swing felt like they'd hit titanium as their momentum was fed back into their arms. It was time to find out who won.

Occasionally missing content, please report errors in time.

[Chapter 1189 1189 I Am Really Sick But The Got Done](#)

The ground rumbled as a platform for everyone to stand up rose from the ground. Thyme made big waving gestures to get everyone who'd been competing to come over. It was just a short walk so that didn't take long. Once everyone was up on the platform Thyme asked. "Right, so, before we get to the judgement we need to decide if Asteodia is disqualified or not. The rule was NO MAGIC, not 'no magic used to cut the wood'. So even though Asteodia probably stood by the spirit of the rules, the letter of them were broken,"

\*Oh. I didn't even realise that was a thing.\* Kat just shrugged, "I think it's fine. She could've gotten ninety percent of the way there without magic and I think I'd rather have her not be disqualified," explained Kat.

Asteodia shook her head and said, "No thanks. I think if I really messed up something so simple I deserve to be disqualified. There wasn't many rules to begin with,"

"I'm with her on this one," said Nabras pointing to Asteodia. "It was a simple rule," and for Nabras it would also increase his chances of not coming last. Which was a big win.

March waved Nabras and Asteodia off. "I would not be so dishonourable to force someone out of the competition for such a small mistake. It was a great use of magic, and it was barely against the rules. There was no intentional slighting of them, I say she stays in,"

Mauve looked over everyone slowly and said, "I don't like that I seem to be the one with the deciding vote... but I suppose if I say that I want Asteodia thrown out what it really means is that I wasn't confident in my strategy. So... fine Asteodia can stay,"

Thyme clapped their hands together, pulling everyone's attention back to the. "Great, in that case we can go over how well everyone did one by one. The person who cut the most logs was... March, followed by Kat, with Asteodia in third, Mauve in fourth finally Nabras with the least amount of logs chopped,"

παΠδαςNovel.com Kat's eyes narrowed. \*I feel like these aren't the final results.\* Kat stared at Thyme for a few seconds, as the quiet stretched on. Everyone else seemed to realise that something funny was going on as well. "I see you've all caught on. While that order is indeed correct... it's counting all of the logs that don't meet my criteria. So perhaps you'll be interested to know that....

"If we're going by ratio, Mauve had the best ratio of perfectly cut logs to duds, with Asteodia behind her, Kat in third and Nabras in fourth. Then, sadly, we had March in fifth. Quite the reversal 'ain't it?" explained Thyme. "So with that in mind... coming in last we have... Nabras. While your ratio was quite good, you really struggled to chop enough wood for the contest.

"In fourth, we have March. You cut by far the most amount of logs, but you just weren't careful enough with them. Your ratio of duds to successes was so bad that you nearly ended up in last place with Nabras only loosing out to you by a few logs," March looked somewhat chagrined. She knew it was a risk when she decided on her strategy, but didn't think it was so inefficient. Still, she knew going for clean cuts would've slowed her down too much for the win. Perhaps second place was on the table, but not first. Not with a 'proper' strategy.

"Then we have Asteodia in third. It means that the inclusion or exclusion of her based on breaking the rules didn't really matter. Which is a shame, because I thought it was a great strategy. Ultimately though, it just took up a bit too much time. Kat was faster when she dug that hole, and that was more efficient than the ramp. Perhaps if you all had an hour or longer Asteodia could've pulled ahead,"

Thyme sad with an overly dramatic frown on their face. "Truly, so close yet so far... because all of the top three contestants were really close. Within fifty successful logs in fact. With Mauve and Kat only sixteen off each other. Now though... who has won? Who has lost? The answer... is... Kat's the winner!"

A smile bloomed on Kat's face, even as Mauve kicked at the ground half-heartedly. "It really was close there at the end. Kat had a much better system for chopping logs quickly and managed to get the lead mostly through that. Mauve though, you only had a small handful of dud logs. This let you catch up to your competitors with consistency and simply not making mistakes. Still, good job everyone. I'll be taking you all over to the volleyball match... which still isn't finished I'm afraid.

"Hopefully that won't take too long. Once we're done, I'll give everyone two hours for food and then we can get on to the final game for the day. It'll run long, sadly, but it will need a good chunk of time and I'm not willing to compromise on that," said Thyme. I think you should take a look at [pandasnovel.com](http://pandasnovel.com)

Kat shrugged as Lily sprinted over and hopped up into her arms. Not long after that, Thyme was clicking their fingers and sending everyone back to the volleyball court. When they got there, it was to see the people who stayed behind playing cards again, which wasn't really a surprise. Kat moved over to join in with the match as she looked over at the volleyball game.

Burgandy was the one most feeling the exhaustion. Marigold was covering for two thirds of the court now, and while Burgandy was doing her best, she was sweating a fair bit. Marigold looked... mostly ok despite the extra ground she needed to cover. So she likely figured out a better way to keep herself in the match. Gareth and Blue though... they were looking fine.

Gareth had made two sunshades, one for him and one for Blue, and was currently relaxing on the ground with his eyes closed. Blue was looking fine, despite the mana cost for moving the water for so long. It looked rather obvious who was going to win. Especially when Kat looked over at the score and saw that Blue and Gareth already had one point.

Which is indeed what happened in the end. After ANOTHER thirty minutes Marigold slipped on the ground, giving away another point. This was quickly followed by concerned looks from both members of that team. They still tried of course... but ten minutes later it was Burgandy on the ground, losing them that final point. "And we have a WINNER! With Blue in first place, that means Gareth and Marigold are in second. They'll each be awarded half a point," shouted Thyme.

\*Honestly? That took way too long. I'm pretty sure nobody thought each match would take so long. I wondering where the extra time all came from. The use of magic, the extra large courts, heck maybe the courts were too small. It's just very unclear what caused the delay. I suppose using magic was at least partially responsible... but maybe if they could use magic on both sides of the net they could punch through Blue's wall properly? What do you think Lily?\*

[It's got to be a bit of everything. Blue clearly dragged the games on long, but Marigold would've likely kept things going almost as long if she was allowed to use her magic on herself. Which... just based on

how Thyme has ruled that sort of thing before... I'm guessing she could. You don't ever get in trouble for speeding yourself up with demonic energy after all.]

"Right, with that out of the way, everyone has two hours for lunch, then you can all come back here for the third and final game of the day. The food has been in stasis for a bit, but that should be no problem, I'm pretty good with those enchantments. So eat, drink, and be merry for the next two hours. The big mystery game will be revealed then! I'm very excited for it," said Thyme.

With that done, everyone started to make their way back the inn so they could stock up on food. Kat wasn't terribly hungry even despite the later time but she also knew that dinner would be late. This meant she was going to eat now, and skip dinner... probably. Lily was looking forward to some food of her own. Normally it wouldn't be overly necessary but with her internal clock a bit of a mess because they'd had to wait so long for a chance to eat. Making Lily think it was closer to dinner time.

Of course, while Kat and Lily were thinking about food, Gareth and Green were thinking about their promise to Blue. They'd both sidled up beside her, and Green asked, "So when do you want your massage?"

"What?" asked Blue.

"Your massage," said Gareth.

"WHAT?" shouted Blue.

#### [Chapter 1190 1190 THE WORLD REVOLVING](#)

As soon as they got to the cafeteria Kress went and grabbed some food and then ran off to his room. Kat had to assume it was to plan the final task. \*I still don't know how he can be so confident in his knowledge of what the task is. Even I'm starting to think he knows what it is. Though... I wonder what makes him excited to participate in it. Knowing the answer is just one half of the equation.\*

Gareth was standing off to the side while Green tormented a blushing Blue with Nixilei helping occasionally. Kat of course, decided she didn't want anything to do with that nonsense. Stan had picked up his food and wandered off, possibly to sulk, possibly just to emulate Kress. Both were equally likely in Kat's mind.

Vanya was berating Marigold for riling Blue up enough to win that final match instead of failing part way through or, even better, just having them take the loss. This... seemed to be completely ineffective. If anything Marigold was enjoying the current punishment. Vanya using her as a chair did seem a bit extreme... but yeah... with a smile on Marigold's face it was hard to argue it was a real punishment. She didn't even seem to mind the fact she had to eat off the floor. Well, the plate that was on the floor. Marigold was a masochist not an idiot, and getting dirt in your food is not tasty.

pandαsnovel.com Midnight and Mauve were just... casually eating on the other side of the table. They seemed to treat the whole thing those two were doing as completely normal... which does raise some questions. \*Wait... is Marigold trying to win at all? Or is she just looking for creative reasons to get punished. If this is so common that Midnight and Mauve are just... treating this as normal, and Marigold is clearly enjoying this 'punishment' does that mean something like this is a common occurrence.\*

[I don't like the fact I think you're on the right track. Sure Marigold is trying her hardest to win... but seemingly only when it suits her. She probably tries properly to win because not doing so isn't something Vanya would punish her for. Heck, Vanya would probably try to coddle Marigold, perhaps thinking something was wrong, or perhaps as a real punishment. Which... is just weird to think about.]

Over at another table, Nabras was being bullied, mostly by Nell and Bonas about his poor performance in the log splitting event. Ellenell would chime in occasionally to add fuel to the fire, but seemed pretty content to munch on what looked to be a salad rather than directly bully Nabras himself. Kat wasn't sure if this was fairly typical sibling stuff, or if they were actually annoyed with him... probably a mix of both. Probably why Ellenell was mostly staying on the edge of the conversation.

Stan being missing didn't seem to affect the dynamic of his group much. They'd all grabbed a table together and were eating without problems. They certainly weren't bullying March like Nabras' team was bullying him. Kat herself was somewhat tempted to go over and hang out, what with everyone from her own team being busy... but Burnice was standing around as well, so getting a table with her was probably more interesting. Perhaps inviting Mint over as well would be good.

Romilda's team was packed away in the back corner. Kat could hear them if she wanted, but considering they were leaned in close whispering to each other in the far back corner of the room they probably wanted whatever they were saying to remain a secret. Sure it would be nearly impossible for Kat to be caught... but realistically? If the information was actually sensitive, they could've gone up to one of their rooms. They were magically soundproofed after all. Eavesdropping prevention back by Thyme. Seemed like the safest method to Kat.

Whatever the case, Kat took one of the spare tables after waving over Burnice and Mint. Kat decided to go for the salad like Ellenell, because he seemed to be really enjoying it. Lily picked a chunk of meat. Possibly not the healthiest thing for a normal human, but Lily wasn't anymore so it was probably fine. Burnice grabbed a salad of her own, though it was a different one to Kat's. Mint made her way over and sat down.

Kat held her questions until everyone had gotten a bit of food in them. She knew that she'd be fine despite the late meal, but not everyone would be so lucky. So Kat kept her silence for the first fifteen minutes. Burnice tore through that salad and then went back for a second one. \*Right... everyone is hungry. Perhaps the salad isn't THAT good... it's just that everyone is starving.\*

Kat had been wondering if it was just an elf thing, but she found the salad a bit bland. Sure she'd not realised there should be dressing on it, but that was hardly her fault right? Mint, not knowing much about food, didn't say anything. Lily obviously didn't know, and Burnice just assumed Kat didn't want dressing for whatever reason. The elf had quite a few weird preferences when it came to food, and leaving the dressing off a salad probably didn't even crack top ten, so it wasn't commented on. Thus, Kat had a bland salad, and decided to pick something else next time. I think you should take a look at [pandasnovel.com](http://pandasnovel.com)

Once Burnice started to slow down a bit with her eating, Kat felt the need to ask, "So... what did you think of the volleyball matches?"

Burnice finished off a mouthful of not-lettuce that was orange instead of green before saying, "It was... boring. Well, no, that's a bit rude of me to say. It started out interesting, and that first round without



Blue in it was super tense. Once Blue got going though... it got real dull real fast. True Gareth and Burgandy nearly managed to snatch a win from Blue but I didn't think they could do it till right at the end, so there was like... five minutes of excitement there max.

"I think Thyme should've ruled that you can't touch the ball with magic for more than a few seconds. Which might've been fine? I do understand why Thyme was so restrictive about using the ground, because if they weren't I could see things getting really silly really quickly. Like, imagine if they just set a big wall to bounce the ball back. Basically what Blue did, but packed stone would be a lot harder to get through, plus the harder you hit the harder it hits back.

"Though if they were earth mages they could lift the wall and then have a face off against Blue, but that would've been rather mana intensive. If it was just a wall attached to the ground you could set and forget it. At least Blue had to concentrate for her strategy. Though... ultimately I'm just not sure the ruleset was right for the game. I think a time limit on spells would've really helped,"

"I'll bring it up with Thyme later," said Mint. "These games, at least in their current form, are very unrefined. Thyme is hoping to find some standouts to become main attractions at the resorts here to encourage more people to have fun... but it was mostly tested by Thyme in a bunch of different bodies trying to work out the kinks. So... sometimes we have major issues like water mages destroying the balance that can get missed. Though I promise the games have come a long way,"

"Oh? In what ways?" asked Burnice.

Mint frowned for a few moments then nodded before saying, "So I can't tell you some of the really funny moments because some of them involve games that you guys haven't seen yet, but there are quite a few notable moments for the Volleyball matches. The first one that comes to mind is court sizes. Originally they were much smaller but the issue was... a single 'person' could cover the entire court no problem. Defending was ridiculously easy. So Thyme doubled the size of the court... then increased it some more.

"Um what else... originally there was actually a no magic rule, but Thyme felt like that would be really unfun for the mages, and Thyme had some high hopes for the game to be played by a wide variety of people, unlike say the log chopping which is meant to be a test of strength and dexterity not magic. Um... there was a version that Thyme tested of only magic... but it got messy really quickly.

"The optimal strategy for that version was not to focus on the ball but to try to disrupt your opponents casting which Thyme felt went against the spirit of what they were trying to do. Hmm... what else... oh right at the start there wasn't a rule stopping you from casting spells on your opponent's side. That had similar problems. The best strategy there was to create pit traps that you would then close up to keep your opponents from moving. Bit nasty that iteration,"

Occasionally missing content, please report errors in time.