

D. of Pride 241

Chapter 241: Night Assault

Adalinda was sitting on top of a branch munching on some snacks that he had given her, Simon was seated on a branch next to her. What were they doing? Obviously, they were acting as sentries.

Simon's group was one of the many people that were assigned as night guards for tonight.

"Hehehe... cough..cough... hehehe" the little girl while almost choking on her snack, was laughing gleefully. Naturally, it attracted the attention of Simon who was caressing a small azure crystal that Irene had given him before their departure.

Putting the thing in his inventory, he locked his brows and asked curiously "What are you laughing at all alone?".

Her laughter that had a trace of excitement and anticipation, kept ringing out for a while.

"Hehe, I was right this trip is not going to be as boring as I initially thought. I get it now, you are the type of person who invites trouble wherever they go" her eyes stared at the demon who was currently masquerading as a human.

When being stared at by such bright crystal like eyes, Simon felt giddy and every strand of hair on his body stood on end. A premonition struck him and he vaguely felt that Adalinda was pointing out something.

He narrowed his eyes trying to figure out the hidden meaning behind her words when suddenly a loud noise that came from the opposite end of the campsite rang out.

BOOOM... ROAAAARRR...

It was late at night and other the people acting as night guards, most of the individuals of this convoy, were peacefully sleeping. However, this peace was disturbed when all of a sudden thunderous roars of monsters rang out coming from the forest.

Before these people even had a chance to come out of their camp, they could hear multiple hurried footsteps of humans rushing in from the forest.

"Everyone on your guard, there is a group of monsters heading towards our campsite" one of the adventurer bellowed nervously and quickly notified the sleeping individuals of this campsite.

As if this was the ember that lit a fire, the entire place started humming with noise and every person rose up from their beds with quick succession.

BANG... one of the particular tall trees behind the adventurer that ran to notify the campsite, was felled in one swoop by one of the monsters that had caught up to him.

The tree made cracking noises before falling down towards the blanked out adventurer who seemed to be too nervous to move at this moment.

SPLAT...

the heavy tree that was more than thirty meters in height, fell down on the pitiful adventurer and buried him underneath. The scene that happened need not be mentioned as the insides of the man was splattered everywhere making the scene quite gory.

It was also at this moment that the inhabitants of the campsite saw the appearance of the monster and the nearby trees igniting in fire.

People that were acting as sentries, were running towards the campsite with bloodied bodies and missing limbs. Their expression was covered with terror and fear as they tried their best to run away from the entity chasing them.

In the darkness of the night, the spreading fire became even more glaring and illuminated the dozens or so figures encircling their camps.

A furry body more than five meters tall and packed with fat muscles came into view. The being was standing on its hind legs, eyes masked in crimson madness and drool continuously dropping down from their wide-open jaws.

A bunch of sharp incisive teeth were covered with the blood of the being that they have just eaten. Its entire body that easily dwarfed the humans, was releasing a fierce aura.

With the spreading of the fire, more and more of these beings came into view. At a glance, there were more than ten of them. The scene caused the entire campsite to descend into complete stillness as an eerie silence gripped everybody's heart.

"B-Battle Bears" the tranquillity was shattered by the sudden scream of one of the adventurers. The scream was the trigger that suddenly woke these people out of their daze.

Adventurers and guards hurriedly donned their equipment and the non-combatants swiftly fell back. Although the guards and adventurers were caught off guard, they were veteran warriors that have seen many bloodsheds.

"Miss you must retreat back. Guards form a perimeter around and allow none to pass through. Adventurers I'm counting on you all to finish these monsters" Alvara the guard commander rose up to her name and regained her composure before handing out orders.

The adventurer smiled bitterly as they saw the dozen or so Battle Bears encircling the camp. The command to eliminate them was easier said than done, each of these monsters was individually very strong and although the guild classified them as normal monsters, they were the strongest monsters in this category.

ROOAARRR...

A loud roar that contained enough force to even extinguish the wildly spreading fire, came from the darkness behind the Battle Bears.

The roar seems to instigate the battle bears as they hurriedly charged towards the adventurers and silver armoured guards making a formation around Cynthia.

At this moment, each and every one of them suddenly recalled the words of the young provisional adventurer and couldn't help but bitterly curse in their heart for not listening to his advice. The campsite was indeed the lair of the Battle Bears and have not been deserted as they had thought initially.

When their train of thought arrived till this point, they also glared at Bignosio who at this moment had quite the amusing face and cussed him internally for spreading misinformation.

Bignosio who had become quite the celebrity in the hearts of these individuals, had a green face and a tongue-tied expression. When he felt the piercing stares from all around him, his eyes twitched and he had a sudden urge to wring the neck of the fellow that had told him about this information.

Because of that guy, he had to take the blame for all of this.

"Hold your ground" the adventurer leaders cried out loud and the warrior classes in the front swiftly raised their shields.

CLANG... intense sparks generated when the claws of the Battle bears collided with the shields and forced the [Sword Knights] and [Sword Masters] a couple of steps.

The assassin classes such as the [Killer Assassins] and [Night Assassins] threw their short swords and arrows from tricky directions to slow down these monsters and provide adequate time for the mages in the back lines to conjure their magic.

Spells bombarded the battle bears that were charging forward and dealt them quite a bit of damage; nonetheless, their speed remained unabated.

The scene around the campground quickly became one where blood was spilled everywhere and the fight came to a standstill after a while. Neither the humans nor the Battle bears could gain an edge over the other.

ROOOAARRR...

Just when everybody was taking a breath to stabilise their condition, a thunderous roar that came from within the dark forest, rang out. The roar was so heavy and brutal that it had the effect of immediately immobilising a weak-hearted person.

After that beastly roar, to their surprise, the adventurers and silver guards saw that the battle bears had stopped attacking and were instead spreading out... No, it would be right to describe their behaviour as making way for someone or something.

As these people looked on with dazed gazes, out from the corner of the forest, came out a towering presence that was even bigger than the Battle Bears.

Its front paws were so wide that they could chop a tree with one swing. Its furry body was laden with numerous battle scars and it had a thick mane that ran down its spine.

The appearance of this battle bear instantly caused these adventurers to open their mouths in wide disbelief, the hand with which they were holding their weapons, also trembled for an instant. Their reaction was as if they couldn't believe that such an existence was amongst the Battle Bears.

Battle Bears were a kind of monster that was born with a strong physique that allowed them to reign supreme in the Normal category. However, that assessment was a little faulty since it only classified those Battle Bears that liked to hunt alone.

Those that formed packs, were clearly more powerful and high-levelled and their ability even had the potential to reach the Strong category. If the monsters they were facing was only in the normal category, these adventurers wouldn't have a hard time disposing them.

But the Battle Bears in front of them were each at the peak of Normal category not to mention the one that had shown itself just now was a cut above.

"B-Battle Grizzly?" one of the adventurer who seemed to be a little cowardly, cried out with fear in his eyes.

The other adventurers weren't like they were unaffected, their faces were pale and devoid of any colour.

"A battle grizzly? But that's absurd? It should be deep inside the forest. Why would it come out here?" the adventurers crazily bickered.

Hearing their commotion, the silver guards of the blue Moon merchant guild that were unaware of the race of this monster, cried out in surprise.

"Battle Grizzly? Do you mean the one that is one rank above the Battle Bears and is classified as a strong monster by the guild?".

The warriors making a round formation to protect those in the rearguard, showed a dismayed expression as they looked at this being that was clearly the leader of this pack.

"Do not falter!! Brave your heart and prepare for the enemy. No matter the cost, don't let it break the formation" Alvara shouted out loud, immediately dispersing the gloomy feeling that had crept up to everybody's heart.

Ranks given to monsters by the Guild

level Class

100 Normal

200 Strong

300 Elite

400 Super

500 Disaster

600 Calamity

700 Catastrophe

800+ ???

Chapter 242: Unexpected Turn

Hearing her shout, the silver guards and the adventurers quickly regained their footing. Although the enemy was a Battle Grizzly and dozens of Battle Bears, they too were veteran warriors and their number currently surpassed their enemies.

When it seemed that everybody had steeled their heart to duke it out with the Battle bears, the Battle Grizzly tossed out something which it was holding in its paws.

The object skidded the ground after it was tossed and appeared in front of them. Immediately everybody inhaled a cold breath of air as they stared at the thing that was flung casually by the Battle Grizzly.

The thing in front of them was not any object but a human with a wide gaping hole in his chest. On a closer look, the person was none other than an adventurer who was one of the many people who were assigned the task of night guard.

The bloody condition of the adventurer immediately dispersed any thoughts of backup these people were expecting from those sentries and nightguards that were outside.

ROOAARRR... the battle grizzly bellowed and the battle bears immediately started their charge once again.

Alvara who refused to move from Cynthia's side, tightly gripped the sleek long sword in her waist and bit her lips. No matter how she saw it, the situation looked quite dire for them. They have just entered the forest and already met such a troublesome enemy, if they suffered heavy casualty here, their future journey would be even more troublesome.

There was no guarantee that they wouldn't be attacked in their journey ahead. Alvara who was tightly gripping her sword ready to act at any moment, saw the indifferent face of her Miss and sighed internally in her heart.

She made a silent decision and committed herself to protect the Miss no matter the cost.

The adventurers and silver guards did their best to stop the advance of the battle bears but even if they did, their mind was clearly more cautious of the Battle Grizzly that was not showing any signs of advancing forward.

Due to them not being able to pay their full attention to the enemy, they made more mistakes which would have been otherwise fatal if not for their level being much higher than their enemies.

The Battle Grizzly remained unmoving after that display of power, its crimson eyes that had a slight tinge of intelligence, surveyed the formation made by the humans relying upon which they were able to stop its tribe.

Its eyes focused on a few high levelled adventurers and its beastly instincts emitted a low growl. When the fire had spread to one of the corner of the campground, the low neigh of the horses attracted its attention and its eyes promptly darted to where the Bane Moose were resting.

An intelligent light flashed in his eyes and it once again bellowed with a heavy voice. The Battle bears that were having difficulty breaking through the defence of the humans, disengaged and gazed towards a particular direction.

The adventurers that were suddenly given a moment of respite, followed the gaze of the battle bears before widening their eyes to their limit.

Alvara cursed incessantly in her heart when she saw the direction in which the battle bears were gazing, her pearly white teeth, couldn't help but grind against each other. That was because the attention of the battle bears, after the roar, was suddenly shifted towards the Bane Moose who had been taking a rest after a day of weary travel.

Seeing the battle bears shifting their attention to a different prey, Alvara's pretty face was drained of all colour. The Bane Moose although stronger than some weak monsters, were no match for a battle bear.

If the Bane Moose were to be killed, they would have no means to travel to the capital and they would be stranded here in this forest.

"Silver guards, adventurers, form another formation around the Bane Moose. Do not let these battle bears kill them" she hurriedly cried out.

Her level was the highest amongst all the silver guards at around 349. However, she was duty-bound to protect the miss and couldn't leave her position no matter the situation. She could only pray that these people would be able to somehow stop these battle bears.

Some of the adventurers and silver guards ran up to the charging battle bears and hacked at them with all their strength. Although they were able to spill some blood, the defence of the enemy was clearly very thick, these people weren't able to cut the momentum of the battle bears.

Some of the people hurriedly tried to leave their position and provide support to those who went to save the Bane Moose but were suddenly stopped in their tracks when they felt a strong burst of wind and sharp cries of pain from the vanguard of their formation.

The [Sword Knights] and the [Sword Master] that were able to somehow stop the battle bears were struggling and no match against even a single attack from the Battle Grizzly.

A ridiculous force was currently generating in those powerful paws of the battle grizzly as it looked with savage eyes at the thinning formation of the humans.

"This is bad" Alvara hurriedly cried out, being stopped by the Battle Grizzly, she could already foresee the ending of the Bane Moose. In this situation, even the indifferent face of Cynthia, crumbled.

However, at this moment when everybody thought that the situation had gone from bad to worse, a small party rushed to the campsite from within the forest and stood in between the Battle bears and Bane Moose.

The adventurer's team that had arrived, was none other than Chuck and his teammates who were positioned as a sentry not far away. When they heard the savage roars of the monsters and the hurriedly spreading fire around the campsite, they quickly rushed here only to see that the situation had already advanced this fast.

Taking the state of his surrounding in his eyes, Chuck inhaled a deep breath of air before taking out his shield from his space ring and positioned himself like a boulder between the charging Battle Bears and Bane Moose.

His two teammates quickly spread apart and covered each other's blind spot. From their swiftness, one could see that they were very accustomed to fighting in a team.

An atmosphere like that, one cannot bring it if the other party was not very familiar with each other.

The arrival of chuck's team instantly sparked wild cries of joy from the adventurer and their mood instantly lightened up. There was no need for these adventurers to doubt the prowess of Chuck and his team since they were all aware of his great exploits and feats.

When one of the battle bears approached the adventurer in greyish black armour giving off a golden glint, a great shield with a momentum of a charging bull was smashed onto its face.

Chuck activated his Superior Normal skill [Great Shield Bash] and instantly stopped its charge and pushed it far back.

The battle bear that was smashed with a great shield that had a black bull carved in it, growled in pain towards its assailant. One move, just one move was enough to stop the momentum of these battle bears.

The scene instantly caused hurried gasps of awes from the adventurers and silver guards who had themselves experienced how hard it was to deal with a battle bear.

"Focus on the enemy in your front" Alvara the guard commander swiftly shouted and unsheathed the long sword in her hands. The moment when the Battle Grizzly was about to release another burst of that devastating attack, a dense sword shadow accompanied with howling gale pierced its paws thus redirecting the force of the attack.

BANG... the attack charged towards the trees and cleaved them in half. The attack had enough force and incision that dozens of thick sturdy trees were just like a twig getting smashed in an instant.

GULP... the scene caused the people on the frontlines to hurriedly gulp down a mouthful of saliva as cold perspiration ran down their bodies. They no longer dared to distract themselves and focused all of their attention on the battle grizzly in the front.

Wind rustled and engulfed the sleek long sword as Alvara took a battle stance from beside Cynthia. That attack that pierced the paws of the battle grizzly earlier was something that she dished out.

Although she was not in the frontlines, the distance was enough for her to send flying attacks.

The battle grizzly wailed in irritation when it was attacked and immediately commanded the dozen or so battle bears to split up and charge towards the pesky humans fiercely. In its anger, it also activated some its skill and its fur immediately became the colour of crimson.

The battle bears from its pack also displayed behaviours of getting buffed.

Clearly, the leader Battle grizzly possessed some skills that strengthened those subordinates under him.

Seeing this change, the members of this convoy made bitter faces, even after the arrival of Chuck and his team, the situation was not looking any better.

ROAARRR... the battle grizzly snarled in a frenzied manner, the battle bears too became somewhat berserk and charged towards the human's formation without any care for their life.

Skills met with skills, sword met with claws and magic devastated everywhere. These Battle bears were a species that were a cut above normal monsters and thus they were able to use a few skills like [Battle Charge] and [Wind Claws].

Even without any skill, their physique was so that they could easily tank some of the weak novice tier magic such as the [Fire ball], [Electro bolt], [Earth Spikes] etc.

Chapter 243: Unexpected Turn (2)

The Battle grizzly being a [D] tier and an evolution of battle bears, could use a few more skills than an average battle bear. Thus when an all-out battle started, the situation quickly developed where both the parties were taking sufficient damage.

Even with the intervention of Alvara, these people weren't able to deal a fatal blow to their enemies and a stalemate of a kind was established.

On the other battleground, Chuck and his two teammates were dealing with quite a few battle bears and had difficulty pushing forward while also protecting the Bane Moose behind them. They could only take this slowly and chip away at the battle bears one at a time.

Meanwhile, on top of a tall tree not from the campsite, two people, one man and one little girl were standing on top of a branch overlooking the scene of battle. The two were none other than Simon and Adalinda.

"Hehe, the situation doesn't look good for these humans. If they suffer so many casualties now, it would be no fun later" the little girl commented as her eyes swept every corner of the battlefield.

"That might not be the case, there are still some individuals that are hiding their strength. If they decided to take action, wrapping up that level 259 Battle grizzly wouldn't be a problem" Simon said as his eyes darted towards Cynthia, Alvara and that butler.

His eyes also stopped at Chuck who was fulfilling his duty as an adventurer by stopping all of the battle bears from approaching the Bane Moose.

From what he could see, the man gave a friendly and strong atmosphere to those surrounding him. He also possessed a strong leadership aura that attracted others to him and along with that willpower he had shown back at the Ghastly Winding Forest, the man was quite something.

Without following his gaze Adalinda was naturally aware of who these individuals were, she showed a crafty smile and a bizarre light flashed in her deep pupils for a while.

"Ah! That reminds me, all of the hired adventurers are doing their best to fulfil their duty. Hehe, shouldn't you also be there fighting along with them? If you keep on dilly-dallying, they might think you are dead or have been hiding due to fear".

Her words immediately woke Simon up from his thought process and he immediately realised that he was currently acting as a human adventurer and needs to be there with them. If he acted after all of this was over, the members of the convoy wouldn't look at him favourably.

Although Simon did not care about their opinion, he still needed them to navigate a way to the capital for him. Plus he didn't like the idea of others looking down on him. Thus he needed to at least show his usefulness.

On that note, this little girl too was currently masquerading as a human adventurer and ought to help out. However, since he knew about her personality after a couple of days of travelling together, it was impossible to make this little grandaunt to move even a finger of her for others.

That is to say, he has to make up for the contribution for the both of them by himself.

The battle immediately became heated after one of the battle bears had fallen in the hands of Chuck and his team. The member of the convoy rejoiced and immediately started putting more efforts on dealing with their side of the enemy.

The Battle Grizzly was also no longer stationary as it repeatedly attacked enemies with claws and skills, injuring quite a few of them in the process. If not for Alvara providing timely support from the backlines these people might have even lost their life.

However, a single person could only do so much, the other strong individuals, were currently had their hands full dealing with the surrounding battle bears. Additionally, she also had the duty to protect the mistress of the blue moon merchant guild at all times and couldn't move away from her position.

If not for that, she would have already engaged with the enemy. But looking at how the others failed at locking down the Battle Grizzly, it did not seem like they would be able to defeat their enemy anytime soon.

Seeing the internal struggle within Alvara, Cynthia who maintained a calm face all this while, gently pushed her back.

"Miss?" the guard commander widened her eyes when she saw Cynthia nodding her head and gently pushing her forward.

"Do what you must to allow the convoy safely travel through the Northern Outlaw Forest. We cannot lose these soldiers at this point in time" Cynthia said, her violet eyes were like two tranquil lakes without any ripples.

"But if I move from your side and if something happens to you I cannot redeem myself even with my death" Alvara hesitated. Her first and foremost task was to guarantee the safety of her miss.

Cynthia gently smiled and held the hands of the guard commander who was also her closest friend.

"Do not worry about me; it's not so easy to take away this life of mine. No matter what other plans my elder brothers have set up, if push comes to shove I'll use that thing" Cynthia reminded.

Alvara finally nodded her head, turned around and focused her eyes on the Battle Grizzly that was acting rampantly on the front lines. She took a step forward, strong yet gentle wind stealthily surrounded her body and the next second she was already in the frontlines.

Intense sparks generated and the surrounding air burst apart when her sword met with the wide claws of the Battle Grizzly.

ROOARR... the force of the attacks colliding forced both the party to take a couple of steps back and disengage.

The Battle Grizzly who had gone on a frenzy, stared furiously at the woman that had interrupted its attacks. Its wide claws were wrapped with a dense amount of wind as it slashed its paws towards her.

The attack that the Battle Grizzly used, was a skill called [Wind Slash] that harnessed the attribute of wind to deal a devastating cut on anything that it connects with.

Ordinarily, the skill was just a Normal base tier skill but due to the incredible arm strength of the Battle grizzly and it being in the frenzy state which further increased its strength, the power the skill could display was on the level of the Normal Superior skill.

Alvara did not slight the attack of her enemy and swiftly used her Gale magic to wrap around the edge of her sleek long sword. The sword was quickly covered in a greenish hue and started vibrating intensely.

Just when the momentum of the pulsating energy in her sword reached its peak, she took a stance and made a clean thrust motion.

Whoosh...

Like a bullet fire from a gun, the Gale magic swiftly took the form of the long sword and sped towards the oncoming attack with an insane speed.

Two attacks of the same attribute collided and the force that was generated out of it created a large shockwave that sent the weak individuals airborne. Looking at the attacks negating one another, it seemed that the attacks of both the parties were on the same level.

However, Alvara who had yet to use the multitudes of her skill bestowed by her class was superior when it came to technique.

Seeing the Guard commander engage the leader of the battle bears and even managing to contain it, the adventurers and guards immediately gave a signal to the reaguards to provide support.

Mana convulsed and different kinds of spells came raining towards the Battle Grizzly who was finally locked in a place.

Meanwhile, at the centre of the formation where Cynthia was, the eyes of the old butler shined mysteriously when he saw the guard commander finally leave her post and leave the mistress of the Serene Palace Merchant Guild unguarded.

His eyes kept on staring at the purple-robed woman and nobody knew what he was thinking.

A painful howl was emitted from one corner of the battlefield and everybody saw another battle bear kicking the bucket with delight in their eyes.

There was no need to mention as to who the person was to take down another battle bear in a short amount of time. Who else could achieve such a feat other than Chuck's party?

As if his actions had lit a fire in everybody, they redoubled their efforts and engaged with the enemy with a similar fervour.

Alvara's pretty face revealed a smile when she saw the mood around the convoy lighting up and stopped diverting her focus on the other parts of the battlefield. She straightened her body like the sword in her hand and placed it in between her chest, her fingers gently swept over the beautiful blade of the sword.

Immediately, fierce howling wind engulfed her and her eyes swiftly took an emerald tinge. Looking at her at this moment, one could see that her whole body of was wrapped in sharp howling winds and the blade she held, was emitting a sharp blade aura.

Tap...

With a simple step, her toes pressed on the ground and her body immediately disappeared in front of the countless number of gazes. The next moment she appeared, she was already in front of the Battle Grizzly.

However, at this moment a peculiar event happened, the Battle Grizzly that had gone into a frenzy, came back to its senses as a peculiar greyish light enveloped its previous crimson eyes.

Even after sensing the approaching Alvara and the threatening power behind her sword, it did not dodge and only moved its paws allowing the blade to cleanly penetrate through.

PIERCE...

Chapter 244: One Move To Awe The Crowd

PIERCE...

This scene immediately caused wild shouts of joy from the onlookers, but the person in question who had dealt the blow knitted her delicate brows and felt something was wrong.

This act of the Battle Grizzly was completely unlike its previously unintelligent behaviour. Alavar felt something was out of place, however, the Battle Grizzly did not give her time to think over it and immediately pulled its outstretched paws.

The Guard commander was surprised, from its action she could guess that the battle bear was intending on snatching her long sword which was currently inserted in its paws.

She acted swiftly but she was still a moment too late, the battle grizzly swept its other paw and forced Alvara to jump back without being able to retrieve her sword.

'This cannot be, the Battle Grizzly was acting in an extremely intelligent manner as if it was a human with tons of battle experience' she thought internally but the next moment the action of the battle grizzly immediately dissipated all the colours from her face.

The moment the Guard commander stepped back, the battle grizzly suddenly tore his attention from her and focused its attention on the centre of the formation, more accurately on the purple dressed woman.

Its paws were once again engulfed in a threatening amount of wind force that could cleave even a huge boulder apart. The battle Grizzly once again used its skill [Wind Slash] and swept its paws in a huge arc but unlike the previous time where it was focused on Alvara, the [Wind Slash] this time flew towards the centre of formation at a rapid speed. '

'No' the guard commander cried out loud in her heart and ran towards her Miss. But how could her speed be compared to the attack which already upon its target?

Cynthia narrowed her and the hem of her dress rustled from the wind of the incoming attack. her finger touched the jade white space ring in her hand and a peculiar glow was starting to emit from it.

Just when everybody could only watch with wide-open mouth as the attack approached near their client, a sharp whistling sound like that of air being torn apart, rang out and a crimson spear covered in flames appeared in front of the [Wind Slash] as if teleporting.

BOOOM...

When the two attacks confronted each other, the space was immediately brightened followed by a burst of heat that was powerful enough to gouge out the land and scorch it black. A violent hot air forced all the people at the centre of the formation back.

Cynthia took hurried steps back and looked on with a surprised face at the attack that had arrived to block the one intending to take her life. Maybe it was due to the intense heat generated by that spear, but her beguiling face at this moment had a smear of faint red making her even more beautiful.

"Miss are you alright?" Alvara swiftly approached her and asked in concern.

Cynthia who was momentarily surprised, finally regained her bearing and nodded her head "Un, I'm alright but that attack just now...?".

The Guard commander too was pleasantly surprised when that [Wind Slash] was negated and her eyes searched for the person that had helped them in times of need.

It was not only them, but even the adventurers and guards were looking around for the person who could deflect and attack from a level 259 Battle Grizzly. It must be said that even they who portrayed themselves as strong adventurers dare not take one of its head-on.

Not to mention them, even their entire convoy only had a few people that could match the Battle grizzly in terms of strength. Naturally, these people were quite curious to find out who this person was and why did they never heard his/her name.

While such thoughts ran in the heads of these adventurers, another crimson arrow swiftly pierced through the air and assaulted the Battle Grizzly.

BOOMM... the ground trembled and the air around the monster was immediately lightened up followed by a heatwave that hit everyone that was close to the battle grizzly.

These people coughed dryly for a couple of times before focusing their attention on the leader of the battle bears who at this moment appeared to have a large burnt wound on its chest.

Immediately hurried gasps of surprise rang out amidst the convoy as they feverishly searched the person throwing out such attacks. To be able to hurt such a monster with only one attack, what kind of person was he?.

"It's him" one of the people who seemed to be a mage holding a staff, cried out. At that instant, all the eyes on the battlefield focused on one part of the campsite where multiple tall trees were located.

A black figure quickly jumped down from the branch and appeared in front of many heated gazes.

A young man donned in casual black clothes, nonchalantly walked out and scanned the entire battlefield. His eyes which were dull grey would sometimes flicker with a crimson glint and his face that could only be described as devilishly handsome was unconcerned when these many gazes were fixated on him.

The moment the person revealed their appearance, the members of the convoy felt their jaws immediately hitting the floor. The young man who had injured the battle grizzly with a single attack was none other than the provisional adventurer which they all thought was already dead.

The newbie that they had slighted and looked down upon, at this moment shined the brightest as he displayed his frightening strength.

In one corner of the battlefield where the Bane Moose were located, Chuck's team which had already disposed three battle bears, glanced at the young man who became the centre of attention with only a single attack.

"Hahaha, I knew that crafty old man would never send a person with no potential for this mission. As I thought so, that young man had hidden his strength quite deeply" Chuck's loud laughter and his high assessment of that person naturally attracted the eyes of two of his teammates.

Similar to the feverish gazes that everybody was throwing onto the new entrant, Cynthia's violet eyes and Alvara's dark eyes also seem to be assessing the man at this moment.

Two pairs of alluring eyes that could make any man go crazy with excitement, was at this moment fixated on the tall and lean figure of the young man.

"Miss was right, one shouldn't judge a person just by their appearance" Alvara bit her lips and commented.

She remembered the time when she met the young man at the branch office of their back in the city of Mountmend. At that time after he had left, she had even criticized him saying that he was weak and unsuitable for this mission.

She even doubted the eyes of the old man from the adventurer's guild for providing such a useless person. However, it appeared that the one who was short-sighted was her, the man that she deemed weak, turned out to be strong enough to even injure a Battle Grizzly with a single attack.

"Un" Cynthia simply nodded her head and did not comment further, her violet eyes that looked like pair of stars, was glimmering with an unusual light. The white light that was emitting off of her jade ring, also died down at this moment.

While some gazes were filled with surprise and excitement, naturally there were some filled with hatred and disbelief.

Bignosio who was having difficulty even defeating a single battle bear looked at Simon who had suddenly appeared and snatched all the limelight with naked animosity.

Simon obviously did not care about any of the gazes thrown towards him, his goal behind appearing in front of everyone was just to accumulate enough contribution so that he wouldn't be seen as a burden to the convoy.

Plus if he did not intervene now, it was likely that the battle would soon end with them suffering great casualties. There was still a long way to get to the capital, Simon did not want to see the convoy already losing most of its strength.

Hence he intervened when he saw the battle was about to take a turn for the worst. Of course, he was not an idiot to display his full strength. He did not activate [Mana lines] nor any skills, even the

mana behind the flame spears was much less than usual, however, it was enough for the likes of Battle Grizzly who had already been exhausted down by the group of adventurers.

Simon stretched his hand and immediately, three more flame spears started condensing and taking shape in the air above him.

Each of these flame spears were more than six feet long and burned crimson with a golden tinge in the mix. His mastery over the Flame Magic was starting to reach the peak and if he felt like he could change the shape of the attack from spears to something else.

The flame spears that were conjured by him looked more materialistic than what it was before a few months ago and even the amount of flame that could be condensed within one had increased drastically.

Smiling in satisfaction in his growth, Simon lifted his hand and pointed with his index finger towards the Battle Grizzly who seemed to be howling in pain right now.

Immediately, the three flame spears obeyed his command and swiftly flew over one after the other.

STAB...

STAB...

STAB...

ROAARRR...

the Battle Grizzly screamed miserable when the scorching flame spears stabbed its abdomen, chest and neck respectively.. The stabbing pain it felt when the attack connected made it lose its mind in pain but that was just the beginning of its misery.

Chapter 245: Bandits

After the flame spear inserted themselves within the Battle Grizzly, the temperature around them started increasing and all of the condensed flame within the spears started erupting out in an explosion.

BOOOOMM... a thundering noise reverberated across this forest enshrouded by the darkness of the night.

A few dozen meters of land around the monster was immediately gouged out by the fiery explosion and engulfed the area with its bright light.

The temperature around the battleground at this moment began to rise as everybody's gaze was focused on the figure in between the flames. Even the battle bears stopped their attacks when they felt the frightening might behind the flame spears.

After the fiery glow of the explosion dissipated, a burnt corpse with its upper body missing, slowly came into view and even its remaining lower body was slowly being incinerated by the fire.

The scene of the Battle grizzly being blasted into smithereens caused a deathly silence to descend onto the place, everyone whether they were adventurers or guards, combatants or non-combatants, humans or monsters stared at the remains of the Battle grizzly with wide-open eyes.

What kind of mastery over fire attribute should one reach to deal that kind of damage? These people did not know but what they did know was that the fire magic of this young man did not belong to the novice tier.

The death of their leader sparked a series of terrified growls from the battle bears and after a moment, they turned around and fled back towards the darkness of the forest. The onlookers who came to their senses saw this scene, wanted to give chase but was quickly stopped by a voice that carried authority and prestige.

"Everyone stop! The battle is over, there is no reason for us to give chase, it is unlikely that they will come back again. There are still a few couple of hours for the sun to rise across the horizon. Use the remaining time to recover and mend to the injured".

Cynthia who had been silent up until now, opened her mouth to hurriedly give commands.

Everybody obeyed her orders and started cleaning up the mess. The fire that was raging around the forest was quickly put down and only then did the members of the convoy sat themselves and took a rest.

In one corner of the forest, in a slight elevation not far from the campsite, a group of people wearing different kinds of garbs and a black cloth covering their face, could be seen looking at the devastation around the campsite.

"Boss, what do we do now? The battle grizzly was defeated and the battle bears ran away" a person with a huge scar on one side of his face said.

The person that this man was calling boss, had an impressive muscular build and was using monster hides and bones as armour.

The boss was silent for a while and spoke after he seemed to have seen enough of the campsite where the convoy was.

"Snort, although the battle grizzly being defeated so soon wasn't within my expectation, these monsters have done plenty by exhausting and reducing their number by a little. It would have been easier for us had they suffered a little more casualty, nevertheless, this northern outlaw forest is our territory. They cannot get away from us".

The lackey with the scarface repeatedly nodded his head before suddenly remembering something.

"But boss the brigand master had asked us to make sure that the convoy loses most of its strength. Looking at them, it seems that they still retain most of their manpower".

The boss of this group simply snorted at those words and mockingly replied "So what do you suggest? There are some individuals with incredible strength protecting that convoy. Unless the brigand master decides to act himself, it is impossible for us to bring that convoy down. We can only use this technique of luring monsters and slowly chip away their numbers".

When he saw that nobody was complaining after those words, he waved his hand and issued an order to the scar-faced lackey.

"Go and report to the brigand master that we can handle them and there is no need to send reinforcement. Otherwise, he might send those fellows and we would have to share our achievement with them".

The scar-faced lackey nodded his head, there was no need for him to ask who these fellows his boss was talking about were.

Their brigand was divided into four parts namely the east, west, north and the south; each region of this huge northern outlaw forest was managed by a brigand leader who was only second to the Brigand master who oversaw all of the brigand leaders.

Needless to ask, the power of the brigand master was the strongest of them all which made him reign supreme and order the powerful brigand leaders around.

Just like his boss, there were three other brigand leaders who were continuously fighting amongst each other for dominance and recognition. If not for the presence of the brigand master, they might have even started killing one another.

And now they were all viewing their mission with the eyes of a tiger, ready to step in and take all of the achievement. The scar-faced lackey did not want this and hence started running towards the depth of the forest when a sudden feminine voice rang out and made him halt his steps.

"You are not going to call the others? That is so boring, the fun had only just started and you all decided to dampen it. Hmm, if you are not going to call reinforcements then I cannot allow you to move away from here".

The group of bandits which consists of ten people immediately became alert and looked around their surroundings.

They frowned their brows when they were unable to find any presence near them. Never did they imagine that while they were watching over the convoy, they too were being observed by someone.

Many thoughts ran in their heads and they soon realised that the person sneaking upon them, should be someone from the convoy.

The brigand leader made a solemn face when he realised that all their previous talks had been overheard and a dangerous glint filled with killing intent flashed in his eyes. He nodded towards his group and the group apparently understanding the meaning behind his gaze, nodded back.

They spread apart and immediately started searching for the person that had eavesdropped on their conversation.

"Hmph, I don't know who you are but it is better for you to come out or else I'll make it so that when I find you, I'll torture you first until you beg for death" the brigand leader threatened.

His words that were filled with killing intent, evoked a small laugh from the person.

"Hehe, you are the first person that I have met in a long while who is foolish enough to say something like that to me. Alright, since you are all so desperate to see me, I shall fulfil this last wish of yours".

A tone that had a deep childishness hidden rang out and by the time words ended, this group of brutish men felt a sudden presence appear right behind them.

A figure wrapped in a golden dress and had an exquisite figure, appeared in front of them. At a glance, the little girl with doll like face did not even seem to be fourteen years old, was standing unafraid and her hands folded behind her back.

These men who were accustomed to ruthlessness and treachery, were looking with dumbstruck gazes at the delicate figure of this girl who seem to appear just like a marigold shining in the darkness of the night.

After their initial astonishment, these brutish men suddenly revealed a ferocious smile as they observed the delicate figure and licked their lips.

"Hehe, who knew that we were up for some treat? I suppose today is our lucky day" the Brigand leader said looking at the figure of the girl lecherously.

Adalinda knitted her brows when she felt the inappropriate gazes of these men and chilliness flashed in her eyes.

"Little girl, I don't know how you managed to get here, but consider yourself unlucky for meeting us. If you obediently surrender we won't hurt that pretty face of yours" the brigand leader took a step forward and then... stopped.

Seeing that their boss was the first one to take action, the men behind him revealed foolish smiles, rubbing their hands as they said

"Hehe, boss after you are done playing with the girl, don't forget about us brothers".

The group laughed merrily, however, their laughter was cut short when they saw that their boss was still unmoving after that initial step.

"Boss... brigand leader what's wrong?" the men behind them asked, an eerie silence suddenly descended onto the place.

The cold wind of the night blew over and the unmoving body of the man in front suddenly moved, however, instead of moving forward it listlessly fell down. There was no action after that and the man just seemed like a corpse devoid of any life.

"D-Don't joke around boss... w-what's going on?" the scar-faced lackey asked in a somewhat tense manner.

"Your boss is dead, he will no longer move again" the eerie silence was suddenly broken when the words of the little girl sounded out.

However, instead of giving one a pleasant feeling, the voice was bereft of any emotions and felt like the sound of a grim reaper.

When these bandits tore their eyes away from the fallen body of their boss and gaze at the girl again, for some reason all of their bodies shuddered intensely at the same moment and a feeling of being near death swept over.

Chapter 246: Increased Reputation

At this moment, Adalinda eyes were glowing a mysterious golden and her pupils had become completely vertical. The childishness that was previously there, could no longer be seen and was replaced with a dead serious face.

When the golden glow in her eyes reached a sudden intensity, they suddenly dimmed down followed by multiple sounds of something hitting the ground.

One by one, the bodies of these bandits silently fell down on the grassy floor and from their unmoving bodies, it was not hard to guess that they were no longer alive.

The chill wind of the night blew over and brushed past the delicate body of the little girl, rustling her hair in the process. After settling the matter, her face became jovial once again.

She puffed her chest and spoke haughtily "Hmph, that's what you get for messing with me. Hehe, judging from their words it's going to be more interesting soon. This boring trip will soon become heated".

Adalinda smiled cheekily before disappearing from the place leaving behind a slowly mending space distortion.

The bright rays of the sun shone down onto the forest from the horizon, dissolving the darkness. Sounds of numerous footsteps and the churning of wheels could be heard early in the morning.

With the first rays of the sun, life sprang into action and the convoy of wagons after a few hours of rest started marching forward. At this moment, in one of the wagons at the forefront, a young man with black robes could be seen sitting languidly on his seat. Seated beside him was a little girl with doll-like beauty and exquisite features.

Simon unhurriedly moved his eyes towards the little girl beside him as he curiously asked "Where did you disappear to at night?".

After his intervention, the Battle grizzly was swiftly defeated and the remaining battle bears swiftly fled. Although his intention was only to gain enough contribution, he ended up impressing these rough tough adventurers and guards of the Serene Palace Merchant Guild.

Afterwards, he was surrounded and bombarded with questions and praises for his prowess that was able to take down a battle grizzly. Was it not for the client and Alvara dispersing the group, Simon surmised that their excitement wouldn't have died down even until the morning.

When he finally had the room to breathe, he noticed that Adalinda was nowhere to be found around the campsite. This little grand aunt who was hell-bent on finding her disciple wouldn't have left him alone if she did not have something else on her mind.

Hearing Simon becoming suddenly inquisitive, she acted innocent and dodged his question. Her current self was too focused on savouring the chicken drumstick that he had purchased for her from the shop.

Of course, he made it seem like he had stored the food in that emerald ring of his. Needless to ask, the contents of the emerald ring, the Forest Spring Spirit orbs was stored in his inventory and the ring only had a few low tier weapons, money and ration provided by the convoy.

At this moment, whether it be guards riding on Bane Moose or the adventurers, they would all look at him with fawning expressions and greet him cordially whenever they passed by. That was how much of an effect, he had created with some simple flame spears of his.

Naturally, there were some gazes that held ill intent but since he was currently the crowd favourite, they did not dare to do anything rash.

After the big fight yesterday, the rest of the journey went pretty smoothly and when the sun showed signs of setting, the group hurriedly dispersed to search for a good place to camp.

The time was of dusk and the sky was coloured in the crimson hue of the sun. Around a large table groups of adventurers and guards alike were discussing something while looking at the map strewn over.

"Our team discovered a small pond around a large clearance not far away from here. Perhaps if we move now it is possible that we can reach there by night and use the place as our campsite" one of the adventurer leaders whose class seemed more suitable for scouting, reported.

The other members contemplated the option discussed it over with one another. Bignosio who was aware that he had lost his standing after the misinformation he had provided, decided to take up this chance and provide some useful information.

"I say using the area around the campsite would be quite dangerous. We do not know how many monsters use that pond as their water source therefore if we set up a camp around there, we risk monsters attacking us at night".

His tone was a little conceited, nonetheless, his words held some truth. The other members around the table thought over it and felt the reasoning was quite plausible.

All the eyes focused on the purple-robed woman who was also the person in charge of this convoy.

Cynthia arched her crescent brows and thought over her options, suddenly, her eyes drifted over a direction where a certain adventurer was. Everybody noticed her shifting her gaze and the direction where she was looking at, was the place where Simon was standing.

Noticing everyone's gaze suddenly focusing on him waiting for his input, the young man sighed internally before asking a bizarre question to the man who reported his discovery.

"Did you see any signs of monsters around or inhabiting that place?"

The adventurer blanked out when faced with such an abrupt question, nonetheless, he answered it appropriately.

"Me and my team searched that area for a long time but did not discover any signs of monsters coming near the pond. Hence we thought that the place might be ideal as a campsite".

His words made them consider the viability, they did not want to experience the same thing they did yesterday and get ambushed at midnight once again.

The faint rays of the sunlight was beginning to fade away and the darkness of the night started descending, everybody was waiting for Simon's input. After the events yesterday where he correctly predicted the race of the monsters and even defeated the Battle grizzly solo, his words clearly had more sway.

The young man nodded and stared back at all the expectant eyes before sharing out his knowledge.

"In that case, we shouldn't head towards the pond. No sign of activity doesn't mean that the water source is not being used by any monsters. Normally, you would find no such occurrences where the water source is not visited by any monster".

"This pond not having any signs of activity around it could either mean that the pond is contaminated or is already occupied by something or someone already. And that someone is strong enough to intimidate all the surrounding monsters. Our convoy has already suffered casualties after the attack last night by the battle bears. It would be in our best interest to avoid any fight that we could, especially when we know that the monster in that area is quite strong".

The members around the table became silent after those words, their faces seemed like they were digesting the information.

Many sounds of exclamation and approval came from the adventurers and guards alike. Avoiding monsters where they can, was the best choice they could make and hence everybody unanimously nodded their head.

"Mister Simon is not only strong but is quite knowledgeable when it comes to surviving in this kind of environment. I also believe that we should avoid that pond" the adventurer, who had discovered the pond, said convincingly.

Seeing that there was no disagreement, Cynthia nodded her head and stated "Alright then we shall avoid the area around the pond and set our camps here. Although the place is not as wide as our previous campsite, it is all as long as we don't meet monsters at night".

After the discussion was over, Cynthia dispersed the meeting and went over to her wagon. However, instead of dispersing, these people instead crowded around Simon.

"Haha, young man you have my thanks, because of you we can now avoid getting involved in another trouble" one of the senior guards said showing his appreciation.

"As long as we have Mister Simon with us, travel this forest will be like a walk in the park" one the adventurer who had become Simon's admirer said in a fawning manner.

"Haha, true... if not for sir Simon sharing his vast knowledge with us, who knew what might have happened?" another adventurer said.

While all of these people were laughing, one guy namely Bignosio had an ashen face when he heard those last few words of the adventurers. He had also given the same information and told everybody to avoid the pond, however, his voice was drowned out by the young provisional adventurer.

What made his mood sour even more was that the reasoning that the young man had provided was the same as him. Nonetheless, all of the praises were directed at that provisional adventurer while he was being ignored.

Even those people who were up until now giving him a bootlicking smile, were completely ignoring him or throwing some piercing glares. Bignosio's face was green due to all of the pent up frustration and he had the urge to strangle the neck of the fellow who gave him all that information.

Unfortunately, that person was already dead, squashed by the weight of an enormous tree. Remorse? There was no such thing within Bignosio, at this time all he felt was hatred and jealousy for Simon stealing his spotlight.

However, the current situation was so that the young adventurer, who was supposed to be beneath him, clearly had more influence than him. Snorting in contempt, Bignosio furiously glared at Simon and the people surrounding him before reluctantly stomping out of there.

When he went back to the wagon where his party was waiting, he simply slumped himself in his seat and shut his eyes. Naturally, the ones attracted by Bignosio and formed a team, were people just like him.

As they say birds of similar feather flock together. These people did not need to think hard to understand the source of their leader's foul mood.

One of his teammates glanced at where a group of adventurers and guards surrounded a tall young man in the middle and narrowed his eyes. He then sat beside Bignosio before speaking in a somewhat suggestive manner.

"Don't tell me leader that you are just going to give your position to some newcomer who hasn't been in this profession for long just like that? All that provisional adventurer did was say some few words of advice which might not even have been his own knowledge.. How can he be compared to you leader?".

Chapter 247: Framed

Bignosio suddenly opened his eyes and lazily stared at his teammate "What are you suggesting? That young man right now is at the peak of his popularity and besides that, he is also strong enough to beat a battle grizzly alone".

Although it left a bad aftertaste in his mouth to admit, but young man as an adventurer was better than him.

"That's where you are wrong leader" the astute looking teammate pointed.

"A Battle Grizzly is an existence classified as a Strong class and it is not unusual for some of them to even reach the Elite class. How can that newbie defeat it so easily? Not to mention accurately guessing the place as the lair of battle bears. Doesn't all that seem too much of a coincidence?".

The words of his teammate caused an unusual emotion to flicker in his eyes, he turned his head and asked curiously "What do you mean?".

The shrewd looking teammate shrugged his shoulders and replied "Don't tell me leader that you don't suspect it? The young man appeared after the campsite had already developed into a chaotic battleground. Where was he before this? Don't tell me that he wasn't able to spot the fire around the campsite and the sounds of battle?".

Bignosio finally straightened his back and his face looked like he had solved some puzzle.

"Do you mean that he purposefully lured the battle bears deep within the forest to our campsite?".

"Yes, and he did that so as make his story more convincing. As for taking out the Battle Grizzly, I assume that it was already quite tired and injured after being repeatedly attacked by the guard commander and all of us. He only came in afterwards to sweep all of the rewards"

The astute looking man smiled derisively.

CRACK... due to clenching his hands so tight, the aura around Bignosio became wild and caused his seat to crack in some places.

"Bastard... so that's how it was... no wonder. Tch, you will regret trying to make a fool out of me" a fury surged with his heart.

Seeing that his leader has finally decided to make a move, the shrewd man whispered something to his ears. Bignosio smiled after listening to it for a while.

By now, the sun had already set, the area inside the forest was completely dark, hidden by the canopy of the tall trees. A perimeter was formed with the guards and adventurers as sentries around the camp.

A line-up of wagons was parked in one corner of the area and in the middle was a large fireplace surrounded by many erected tents. Bustling sounds of the people could be heard as they crowded over the fireplace and basked at its warmth.

Food was prepared and swiftly passed over to all the members of the convoy. At the seat of honour, sat Cynthia surrounded by her guards and Alvara beside. Sounds of activity rang out continuously and everyone present except those assigned with the task to monitor the surrounding area was present.

Simon however, did not partake in such activities and quietly lied down on his seat and looked at the canopy of trees that did not allow even a little bit of moonlight to penetrate through.

Adalinda beside him was chewing on the tip of her thumb and brooding over something. She muttered in a voice that only she could hear "What's taking them so long? Those bodies should have been found out by others now".

While the both of them were minding their own business, suddenly they heard approaching footsteps and turned their head only to find a familiar adventurer.

"Haha, what's with this silent and gloomy atmosphere here? The talk of everyone's discussion is quietly sitting here all alone, why don't you two join us there?" the adventurer that approached them was none other than Chuck.

Simon simply shook his head throwing some excuse in the mix.

"I'm not used to it and besides I'm quite enjoying this peace and silence".

Adalinda as usual ignored everyone's existence.

"Haha, in that case let me enjoy this peace and quiet along with you" Chuck said as he passed over one of the mugs containing ale in his hands.

"Don't tell me that as a man you don't drink?".

Simon glanced at the outstretched hand containing the mug and the silly smile of Chuck. This time he did not reject the offer and took the mug containing the ale before gulping down a mouthful of it.

Simon was quite curious about the alcohol of this world and how they fared against the ones from his world. The taste that he got was a little crude and unlike the mellow taste he was used to;

nonetheless, the alcohol of this world, more appropriately the alcohol brewed by the humans of this world had a different taste altogether.

It might be because the process of brewing was different or maybe the ingredients used were unlike anything he had seen. All in all, the ale was pretty good in his opinion.

Just like his previous self, the current Simon who was a demon noble was also not completely unaffected by the intoxication of the alcohol. A slight reddish hue appeared above his cheeks.

"That's more like it" Chuck loudly proclaimed and gulped down the ale in his mug.

"Where is mine?" just when they finished drinking their alcohol from their mugs, a soft voice came from beside Simon.

Adalinda looked at the two people who were merrily drinking, her unhappy voice sounded.

Chuck seemed as if he was lost for words, no matter how he saw it, Adalinda looked just like a little girl no less than fourteen years old. Even if she was a provisional adventurer, how can a little girl demand to drink alcohol at such a young age? Little did he know that her real age was something he wouldn't even be able to imagine.

"Why don't you munch on this chicken drumstick?" Simon said pretending to take out a chicken drumstick from his space ring.

"Do you think I'm some little girl who will be happy with just some food?" Adalinda folded her hand and stared back.

"How about a cola along with it?" Simon nonchalantly added.

"Cola? What's that?" The little girl immediately became interested and her unhappy mood dissolved like it was never there. After being given food, this little grandaunt who acted like a mighty being high above all others, silently munched on it.

Meanwhile, at the centre of the camp where the large fireplace was located, a commotion had suddenly erupted.

Simon arched his brows as he detected multiple presences silently approaching his way. By now, he was quite familiar with everyone and knew that the ones who had approached him, were the members of the convoy.

The wagon where the three of them were seated was suddenly surrounded by seven adventurers wearing mocking smiles on their faces.

"Aren't you the provisional adventurer Simon that everybody has been talking about lately?" one of the adventurers surrounding their wagon came up to them and asked.

Seeing their peculiar behaviour and the sadistic look in their eyes, Simon immediately understood that something was going on. He nodded his head and questioned, "That's right, is something wrong?".

Chuck too scanned the area and narrowed his eyes, with his relationship with the adventurers, he could easily identify who these adventurers were. This group of people belonged to the same team as Bignosio.

What are they here for? While he was thinking that, the adventurer who was addressing Simon, licked his lips and smiled "Nothing it's just that our leader is looking for you. Come with us to the fireplace where everybody is".

His tone sounded more like an order than a request.

Eyeing the centre of the campsite where the commotion had erupted, a crimson glow surreptitiously flashed in his eyes. Simon sighed in exasperation and lazily got up from his seat.

"Sounds interesting I'll come too...hehe" Adalinda unceremoniously decided to tag along.

Seeing that the provisional adventurer was coming with them without making any fuss, the sadistic smiles on the faces of these seven or so adventurers deepened.

"In that case, I shall come along too" Chuck smacked his hand on his thighs and got up. The adventurers revealed an ugly but they did not dare to stop him.

At the centre of the camp, near a big fireplace multiple groups of people were currently seated together as they merrily conversed with one another and enjoyed their meal when suddenly a loud laugh sounded out.

The mood around the campsite was instantly broken. Bignosio wearing his armour made of Whitesilver and carrying his weapon, approached them.

Alvara the guard commander who was as usual seated beside Cynthia, immediately placed her hands on her weapon and inquired apprehensively "Shouldn't you be acting as the sentry tonight? Why have you left your post?".

Bignosio smiled when he felt all the eyes focus on him "The Guard Commander need not worry, I have asked someone to replace me for some time".

His words made everybody curious... what important matter did he have to leave his post and place a replacement to come here?

"Is that so then may I know what matter compels you to leave your post so abruptly?" Alvara asked while still maintaining her caution. With her keen eyes, she could naturally tell that the man was anything but good, even the way he looked at her Miss and herself, was lascivious.

Bignosio ran his gaze at the body of the guard commander and the extreme beauty beside her and smiled delightfully. "Of course, I have some important matter to discuss with everyone hence I ask you all to please listen to me.. Yesterday after the attack at our campsite by the battle bears, I did some investigation."

Chapter 248: Framed (2)

When he brought the matter of yesterday night, many people couldn't help but scowl at him. It was obvious that they still remembered the contradictory words of his and blamed much of it on his head.

Bignosio maintained his composure even while the corner of his mouth twitched.

"After the investigation around the campsite, to my surprise, I found some interesting discoveries that can lead us to the mastermind behind yesterday's attack".

These few simple words were enough to spark gasps of exclamation from everybody. They all stood up from their seat and looked at him sceptically.

Bignosio did not shy away from those gazes, he further commented to solidify his words.

"It was indeed my fault to not have recognised that the place was a lair of battle bears. However, given that the place was empty, the monsters were out hunting. Normally, the battle bears are too lazy to hunt but when they do, they stock up food for multiple days worth. For a pack that large, it would take multiple days for them to finish their hunt. However, they just had to rush back as soon as we set our camp there".

Finally someone who couldn't take his long and winding explanation impatiently spoke up.

"So what are you suggesting, get to the point".

The sickening smile at the corner of his face deepened; Bignosio said in an exaggerated manner.

"Isn't all this too much of a coincidence? After the battle, I found out that the battle bears were lured to our campsite. The question is who could have done it and for what purpose?".

He inwardly laughed, there was no such thing as tracks and most of the things he had spun was a lie to get the situation rolling. At this moment, multiple footsteps of people approaching came from the direction of the wagon and everybody could see Simon and Chuck being among them.

Bignosio when he spotted his group bringing over the provisional adventurer, he gave them sneaky nod before all of them spread around and encircled the three people of Simon, Adalinda and Chuck in the centre.

Naturally, all of this was observed by the other members of the convoy and they couldn't help but tilt their heads in confusion as to what was happening.

"I believe that only someone who knows the location of our campsite can lure the battle bears there".

"What?".

Alvara locked her brows, a little irritation flashed in her eyes. The man was really up to no good, didn't his words just now suggest that there was a traitor among the members of their convoy.

"Please listen to me before you start spouting words of denial. The perpetrator behind this, clearly had a purpose... and that was nothing but to solidify the story the person had spun in the beginning".

At this moment, his eyes darted towards Simon who was currently being encircled by his teammates. By now, everybody could see that the person the big nose man was targeting was none other than the young provisional adventurer.

Cynthia observed all of this farce with a calm expression and her deep violet eyes would sometimes stop on Simon's figure who seemed as composed as a lake.

"Everyone I believe that you are all being deceived. My action right now may seem forceful but I guarantee you that after this everything will be clear in your eyes".

"Don't you all feel that it is weird for a newbie adventurer to know all this information? Even knowing the race of the monsters just by their habits and few traces is something that even us veteran adventurers might be unable to accomplish".

"So how is it possible for a provisional adventurer, a newbie no less to know all of this? Unless he is already very familiar with this part of the land, the northern outlaw forest. I believe that he is a spy planted by the brigand to slowly sow dissonance among us".

Bignosio revealed a malevolent smile as he stared at Simon.

"Bullshit, he is someone who was recommended by that old man from the adventurer's guild. Are you saying that the old man who had recognised him is also someone associated with the bandits of the Northern Outlaw Forest?".

Chuck barked out loud when he saw that the man was trying to frame Simon and isolate him out.

Bignosio's composure crumbled when he was confronted by Chuck but nonetheless, he still pressed forward.

"You are mistaken Sir Chuck, I'm not doubting the integrity of the guild manager of the adventurer's guild and instead just saying that even he might have been deceived by this horrible person into recommending this job. Don't you feel weird that a weakling adventurer was assigned such a risky task where only veterans like us have the ability to come?"

"Load of crap, what rights do you have to say that he is a weakling adventurer? His ability is something that even the old man Gill had recognised and even without me stating it, hasn't everyone already seen how powerful he is?"

Chuck pointed out while looking at the big nosed man with a disdainful look. He was a man who valued relationships and goodwill greatly, it was also because of this quality of him that he was able to become a renowned person around this region of the kingdom.

From what he could see, although Simon mostly isolated himself from everybody and interacted less, he was not the kind of person who would do that.

"Haha, it seems that detestable person has even managed to trick. In that case, saying anything more will be of no use let me prove that the young man is nothing but a hoax with no ability to speak of. I kindly ask you to stand down and let me deal with that person".

Bignosio declared, grabbing a big axe resting on his back. Similar to his armour, the blade of the axe was made of Whitesilver, however, the body was created from a material from the body of a treant.

Everybody revealed shocked exclamation when they saw Bignosio taking out his weapon that was comparable to a [D] tier armament.

Chuck who ran out of patience, finally had enough of this man and took a simple long sword from his space ring. While it may not be his business to stick his nose, in someone else's affairs, but after conversing with Simon these past few days, he felt like it wouldn't be bad to befriend a person such as him.

Never would have Chuck imagined that this decision of his would become a great turning point in his life and affect his future in a way that even he couldn't have imagined.

Although he was not wearing any armour, Chuck still had enough confidence in him to face the man without needing one.

"It seems that you have made your decision, in that case, please do not mind if I use the numbers to my advantage" Bignoso had a dark and solemn eyes with which he stared at Chuck. With a nod of his head, the members of his team encircling the three, took out their weapons.

"Who said so... if you are hell-bent on opposing our leader then you should better look carefully at who your opponents are" two voices sounded out and immediately two people who were sitting around the fireplace, sprang up from their seats and jumped in between.

The two people who have just intervened, were none other than Chuck's teammates.

The situation around the fireplace instantly became taut with swords and weapons drawn. A heavy silence descended onto the area and the atmosphere became tense with both parties glaring at each other.

Many onlookers around the area had an uneasy look on their faces while others behaved like they were looking at something interesting and couldn't wait for the show to start.

In one corner of the campsite not far away from the fireplace, the old butler observed the situation with an amused face before revealing a contemptuous smile and whispered a few words into a small shell that was inscribed with some runes in his hand.

Just when everybody thought that a full out brawl between these two parties was inevitable, the black robed young man who had been a lake of composure, finally decided to step forward. He put a hand in front of Chuck and said in a nonchalant manner.

"There is no need for all of you to get entangled in my matter. I can handle it just fine".

After saying this, he glanced at Bignoso and asked with a smile that was not a smile "You say that I'm weak and have been deceiving everyone? Do you have any evidence for all of that?".

The moment Bignoso's eyes met with the young man's, an uneasy feeling suddenly assaulted him and all the hair on his body stood on end for a split second.

"Heh, if you are innocent then tell me where you were and what took you so long to come to the campsite when we were all attacked by a group of Battle Bears. I recall that you have arrived quite late, don't tell me that you were not aware of the attack and couldn't see the large wildfire spreading around the forest?"

He suppressed the foreboding feeling that he felt at that moment and swiftly spat out some arguments. His words raised the curiosity of everyone present and all of them glanced at Simon only to find the young man suddenly become quiet.

His reaction surprised quite a lot of people who were in his favour.. It was not only the members of the convoy but even Bignosio himself was stunned when he saw that the young man had no words to refute.

Chapter 249: One Move To Cower Them All

A dark smile crept upon his face and he continued to press the issue.

"What's the matter? Don't have any words to refute? I bet you were silently watching the campsite develop into a battlefield after luring the group of Battle Bears. If not, then tell all of us what were you doing yesterday night when all of us were desperately fighting the monsters?"

Simon narrowed his eyes and frowned in irritation. The man was coming up with one reason after another to frame him as the perpetrator. If he stayed quiet at this moment, the other party would no doubt choke him with their nonsensical arguments.

"That doesn't prove anything. I might have been late but had I not arrived, someone's life would have been in jeopardy. Additionally, I also did my part and took care of their leader, the Battle Grizzly" Simon indifferently pointed.

His words convinced those that were having some other thoughts. It was as he had said, the adventurers and the guard alike were having a hard time stopping the battle bears and the battle grizzly.

Chuck was busy defending the bane Moose whereas the guard commander couldn't leave her post beside the client. In such a situation, if not the young man who knows how many casualties and injured they might have had.

Seeing the provisional adventurer shift the suspicions off of him due to his achievement, Bignosio couldn't help but force out a laugh.

"You took care of the Battle Grizzly? Don't overestimate yourself, the battle grizzly was already worn down by the many adventurers, guards and the guard commander. You just simply took all of the credit by attacking it when it was close to being defeated".

The onlookers went silent once again, his words made the ones who were in doubt of the young man's strength think over it carefully. Those that were not knowledgeable about magic, felt that the battle grizzly died quite easily in the hands of the young man.

Alvara who was the most aware of how powerful the battle grizzly was, found those words absurd and full of flaws. Though she found the situation a waste of time, she however did not intervene and simply stared at Simon waiting to see how he would resolve the situation.

"If you knew that the battle grizzly was in its last breath, then why didn't you give it a final blow? Or perhaps were you waiting for it to recover its strength before dealing with it".

The provisional adventurer's reply immediately made the surrounding people laugh. His words made Bignosio seem like a clown and also at the same time pointed out the flaw in that argument.

Bignosio's face twitched and hot air flared from his big nose, he stared at Simon with a murderous look and pointed his axe at him. Now that words were not working against his opponent, he had no choice to take the crudest method and fight it out with him.

"Hmph, I'll prove to everyone that you only have a sharp tongue and no ability to back it. Fight me, I challenge you in a one on one duel. If you run away from this fight, it'll prove to everyone that I was right about you all along".

OHHHH~ everybody revealed an excited and interested face when they heard Bignosio issuing a challenge to the newbie. All of their gazes turned towards the young man waiting for his response.

The forest was a boring place with not many things to entertain themselves hence all of these people wanted to see the two of them duke it out to relieve their boredom.

Since backing down from the issue would look like him running away from his opponent, Simon naturally did not reject the challenge and swiftly agreed to it. In any case, the adventurer was getting on his nerves and if he let him be, his words might even cause the pride fragment to trigger.

He wanted to avoid that kind of situation at all costs.

Seeing the young man nod his head, the intensity of the excitement around the area instantly rose to its peak.

While there were those that commended the young man for his courage, there were also sighs of disappointment. From their perspective and the strength that Simon had shown yesterday, they thought that his class was a mage and hence he did not need to wear any armour.

A mage fighting a level 289 [Sword Master] in a closed space... there was no need to think about the outcome of the match. A warrior class held an absolute superiority against a mage when it comes to close combat, therefore these people thought that the young man had acted rashly due to repeated taunts.

Of course, there were some exceptions like the rare classes however, they were few and far between.

Chuck looked a little uncertain but chose to remain silent, he knew that the reason behind Bignosio challenging Simon, was because he thought that he held absolute superiority against him in this closed space.

"Hehe, if anything I commend your courage for not backing out. Let me tell you I'm level..."before Bignosio could complete his self-serving conversation, Simon's annoyed voice rang out.

"Shut up, let's get done with it".

The young man's defiant and impatient attitude showed that he was not cowered even when he was fighting with a handicap. Bignosio's expression was contorted in an extremely ugly manner, he ground his teeth and said in a vengeful manner.

"If I can't defeat you in three moves, I will never call myself an adventurer anymore".

Immediately after his voice sounded out, he stepped forward and sped towards Simon with the momentum of a bull.

There was no faint, no special abilities used and was a clean frontal attack. Bignosio immediately closed the distance between him and the young man before bringing down his cherished axe.

The blade of the axe made of whitesilver made an arc around the air as it came swinging down on his opponents head. Just when everyone thought the young man was unable to even move from his spot and his defeated figure appeared in their minds, the scene that happened next made them widen their mouth until it hit the floor.

When the blade of the axe was a few inches away from him, Simon unclenched his hands and a small fireball that was created at an unknown time, gently brushed against the opponent's body.

WHOOOSH... at that moment, Bignosio's entire body became a human torch that blazed with extreme intensity.

AARRGHH... a miserable scream sounded out across the campsite and all the onlookers had to hold their breath at that moment.

With a clench, the fire blazed for a while before it was put down by Simon. A burnt figure with much of his facial hair burnt, appeared in front of everybody. From his looks a few moments ago to his current appearance, took only a few seconds and made it hard for everyone to discern who the adventurer was.

THUMP... Bignosio's body fell onto the ground seized a fetal position all the while his body trembled from burns he suffered all around his body.

The campsite around the fireplace, which was brimming with excitement just a few seconds, was deathly silent. Nobody expected this kind of result from the clash between a veteran adventurer and a newbie.

The scene where the young man was at a disadvantage due to him being a mage did not occur and instead, the result was him winning by a landslide.

"Leader?!" the members of Bignosio's team anxiously ran towards him and checked his injuries, they only sighed when they found that the damage he had suffered was not fatal. However, the next second they brought out their weapons and pointed at Simon.

"How dare you sneak attack our leader? Do you have no shame?" some of them angrily cursed. They were ready to pounce on the young man who faced them all alone.

Looking at the display of these adventurers encircling a single provisional adventurer, Chuck clicked his tongue and was just about to step up with his team when Adalinda who was quietly watching all of this giggled.

"Hehe, these pests indeed do not know their place. It wouldn't be bad if you teach them a lesson". Her childish soft voice had an added depth of darkness onto it.

"What?" being looked down on by a little girl, how could these adventurers who were used to being held in veneration take it?

They immediately took a stance and activated their skill when a crimson light so glaring that it even shook their souls flashed in the depths of Simon's eyes.

"Take one more step and I won't show you any more mercy".

A coarse menacing voice that could give chills to anyone hearing it sounded out. A pressure that engulfed the area around the lot of them descended and immediately made their faces pale with dread. Their legs trembled like a newborn fawn and the weapons they gripped tightly in their hand escaped their grasp and fell onto the floor.

The member of Bignosio's adventurer party fell on their butts and dared not utter a sound anymore.

Simon turned his body and simply left, following behind him was Adalinda who was giving them a gloating smile.

EXHALE~ at this moment, the members of the convoy who had forgotten to breathe, finally exhaled a deep breath of air after the situation that had escalated so fast died down.

All of the people whether they be guards, adventurers or staff of the Serene Palace merchant guild all of them were throwing shocked gazes as they stared at the figure of the black-robed young man. Who could have predicted that the provisional adventurer would hide this much of powers?

They then sent pitiful gazes at the bunch of clowns who had made a fool of themselves and swiftly dispersed from the site of the fireplace.

Inside a wagon not far from the fireplace a voice echoed out from the small conch that was on the hands of the old butler.

"Hmm? What was that commotion all about?".

"It's nothing, everything will proceed as planned Your Highness" Jeeves said, his eerie eyes staring at the wagon that Simon had disappeared into.

"Haha, with you there, no matter what the situation, I'm sure that nothing can go wrong," the voice said sounding extremely confident.

"Leave it your servant. I'll make sure that none of them leave this forest... alive" Jeeves replied with his head bowed.

Inside the wagon where Simon and Adalinda were seated, the young man lazily lounged on his seat and dozed off while the little girl who had been interrupted from finishing her meal, brought it out and started munching on it once again.

"Nom..nom..nom, you should have just killed them why bother intimidating?" Adalinda asked without giving it much thought.

"Sigh... have you forgotten that right now we are adventurers and need to maintain a certain reputation to reach the capital? If not for the fact that we can't use your space magic and navigating a way ourselves would take quite a long time, I wouldn't have bothered with such pretence" Simon replied from his seat.

It was as he had said, if he had applied any more mana on the fireball, the big-nosed man would have been instantly incinerated. That would have left a dark mark on the reputation of the adventurer who he was currently masquerading as.

Plus he would have lost it if those teammates of that man attacked him hence he used [Demonic Eyes] to cower them into submission.

The [Demonic Eyes] skill was a Rare Base tier skill that he got after winning the dungeon war against Gelgar. Since the skill did not have much use on a higher level enemy that Simon was used to facing in the Ghastly Winding Forest, it had never come into use before.

But now looking at the result, Simon was quite satisfied to say that it was quite a useful skill that could save him a lot of time and trouble of dealing with the weaklings.

The [Demonic Eyes] skill as the name suggests, intimidates an enemy with the aura of the user making them unable to move or do anything for a short period of time. It has next to no effect on entities higher level than the user.

In other words, the skill makes the enemy go into a state of shock where they think they are paralysed.

"Hnn~" Adalinda pouted at his words but did not refute.

Inside the most luxurious and well-built wagon, a woman in tight leather armour carrying a sleek longsword on her waistbelt sat across a beautiful woman wearing a purple dress.

These two women were none other than Alvara the guard commander and Cynthia, the mistress of the Serene Palace merchant guild. Currently, Cynthia was seated in her seat cross-legged and a hand supporting her chin, a deep-seated frown appeared on her delicate and smooth forehead.

"What's wrong p... miss?" Alvara asked noticing that Cynthia was lost in her thoughts.

Cynthia raised her head and gazed at her closest friend and aide with her deep violet eyes and questioned.

"Alvara if it was you, would you be also able to defeat the Battle Grizzly alone?"

The guard commander fell into contemplation after being asked such a question, a moment later she nodded her head and replied.

"If its just the Battle Grizzly alone, I am confident that I can deal with it. However, I would have to focus all my attention on it. It might have taken me a few dozen minutes but it is not an enemy that

I cannot defeat. As for defeating it in a few moves, I think that as of now it is still impossible for me".

Alvara held her head down and said in a somewhat ashamed voice.

Cynthia hurriedly supported her friend and admonished her in a soft voice.

"You don't know how much of your efforts had helped me these past few years, so there is no reason for you to bow your head in shame. It only means that adventurer is special or was hiding his strength".

After that admonishment which sounded more like consoling, Alvara revealed a smile and nodded.

"That is true, even from my observation, that adventurer did not seem to be special. But who could have guessed that his powers would be so great to immediately cower those tough into submission? I cannot begin to comprehend where the bottom line of his powers lies".

Cynthia shifted her gaze on the glass of water in her hand, after some time, she changed the topic.

"Do you think that incident somehow had something to do with my big brother?".

Alvara looked a little surprised at those words before a solemnness dawned into her pretty face.

"We cannot deny that possibility, however, it can also be that we were simply camping at the wrong place at the wrong time," the guard commander said a few comforting words to relieve the woman from some of her worries.

"Alright it's quite late, Miss you should get some sleep" Alvara insisted.

Cynthia did not reject her offer and laid down on her bed. When the first rays of the sun shone down on the forest, the vibrant life within rose into action. A convoy of wagons pulled by Bane moose galloped through the lands as it travelled through the forest.

Groups of adventurers and guards formed a perimeter around the convoy and protected it from any potential enemies. The group travelled like this for a while when suddenly the adventurer who was adept in sensing the presence, held out his hands to stop the march of the wagon.

"Multiple hostile presences ahead, from the looks of it, they appear to a group of Vile Boars" the adventurer reported. He then gazed at the guards and adventurers behind him and nodded his head.

Those people swiftly rushed ahead and after what felt like a few minutes, returned with their blades and armour slightly stained with the monster's blood.

"Seems like we will have a satisfying dinner tonight" the people who went on ahead to subdue the vile boars laughed. The mood around the convoy brightened before they started moving once again.

Time quickly sped by and it was approaching evening, during this time they had encountered several groups of [E] rank monsters like the vile boars and swiftly dispatched them. They stored the things they could in their space rings and discarded the leftovers.

By the time sun was beginning to set, they had travelled quite a bit of distance and spread out to search for a suitable campsite.

"Good, I think we should also set out camp in that small peak up ahead. That way, even if some monsters do find us, it wouldn't be able to sneak behind us" Simon gave his input.

The discussing adventurers unanimously nodded their heads and the convoy sped towards the peak to set the camp for tonight.

After his display of strength yesterday, his position amongst the convoy had cemented. They no longer doubted his strength and instead sought his knowledge and experience at every opportunity they could get.

These people had never met a person so informed and knowledgeable about monsters than Simon who could easily see through the pattern and habits of most of the monsters. One had to wonder what kind of the life the young man had led until now to be so composed and skilled.

Of course, after they had tasted the bitter medicine yesterday, Bignosio and his group did not dare to seek trouble with the provisional adventurer again. And just like that, Simon had somehow become the de facto leader figure of this convoy.

"You seem awfully happy today... is something the matter?" Simon who was assigned the duty of the night guard for the day, looked back at the grinning Adalinda and asked.

"Of course I am. But there is no need to ask me because you will find out soon" the little girl said with a tone of mystery.

Simon scrunched his brows but did not question her further since he knew, he wouldn't get any answer.

The night had already arrived and soaked the sky with its black ink. However, unlike the previous times where they had to camp in a place devoid of any light due to the thick canopy of trees, their current campsite which was on top of a small peak, allowed the gentle rays of the moonlight to brighten the area around.

The brilliance of the night sky, with infinite stars dotting the space, was finally in full view. From his current position, Simon gazed at the dark forest teeming with cries of monsters. His eyes swept all over the area before stopping in a place covered in boulders big and small.

For some reason, he felt the flow of mana was a little unnatural there.

'What could it be' Simon was a demon noble hence even in this darkness, his eyes were much better than an average human who did not have [Night Vision] skill.

"Wait here, I'll quickly come back" his words sounded out before his body quickly darted off towards the area he felt the irregularity from.

Adalinda who was giggling and imagining some kind of scenario in her head, became stunned when she saw the direction he was hurrying towards "Eh? Wait a minute!!".

Simon who could jump agilely from one branch to another, didn't take long to reach the place covered in boulders.. With a glance, he immediately knew that the boulders weren't naturally formed and were made by someone.