

## D. of Pride 401

### 401 Chapter 401

Even if they solved the problem at hand, it won't matter in the long term if they don't address the root of the problem. From this point on forward, the adventurer that would dive inside his dungeon would perhaps only get stronger and if he wanted to defend the dungeon, he needed to add new floors.

The maximum number of floors a [D] rank dungeon can have was hundred. His dungeon Laplace on the other hand did not even have half of it. Previously, before the influx of adventurers, he had to worry about his DP expenditure; however, right now he had amassed so much DP that adding ten or even fifteen floors wasn't a problem.

Due to the level of the adventurers diving inside his dungeon increasing all of a sudden, it also brought a storm of DP to his dungeon. Now it was time for him to harvest his reap and put them to use by upgrading his dungeon.

Simon thought over it for a bit before allotting some DP to his [Helpers] so that they can modify some of the aspects of the floor. Although they did not have as much authority as Guardians or Administrators, with this DP the [Helpers] would be able to at least install those changes that are absolutely necessary for the dungeon.

"Use it however you see fit" Simon ordered the [Helpers] to return to their stations and keep monitoring the floors as usual, especially the team that was clearing the thirty first floor.

After they dispersed themselves Simon and Irene were the only ones left in the huge hall.

"You have changed quite a lot" Irene suddenly said observing him.

Puzzled, Simon turned towards her and asked "What do you mean?".

"What I mean to say is the journey this time had developed you more as a person. You are far more decisive and calm that it also rubs off on to others who look up to you. You have learnt to rely on others more and are starting to act more like a leader now. I think it's a good thing".

Irene explained, her deep eyes staring straight at Simon. She wasn't naïve, she knew for a person to change so drastically so fast, they must have had to go through incredibly hard and risky trials. And given the way how Simon's entire outlook and conduct changed after he returned, she felt like the tribulation he had to go through was very tough on him.

Looking at those deep crystal blue eyes that was masked with concern, Simon felt a feeling that he had long forgotten about. Just when he felt like he wanted to stare at those eyes a little longer, Cecilia and the Valkyries arrived from their tour of the White Palace.

"Big brother... we are back"

"Master"

Cecilia declared her presence while the maid sisters mannerly performed their bows.

Irene hurriedly shifted her eyes, looking a little flabbergasted; Simon on the other had a helpless smile on his face.

"What were you all talking about?" Cecilia asked finding a seat in between them matter of factly.

"Nothing much, I was just about to go see the changes that have occurred to on the main floor while I was gone," Simon said putting his head straight.

"Oh Oh!!... I want to come too" the little Forest Spring Royal Spirit showed her willingness to come with him. What's more, she grabbed Irene's hand and forced her to tag along.

Simon pondered over a bit before deciding that there was no harm to bring them along. He then glanced at the silently standing Valkyries before asking "Do you want to join us too? It will be a good experience for you all to familiarise yourself with the structure of the main floor".

Since he was already taking Cecilia and Irene there was no harm to bring the maid sisters. Plus he felt a little bad to ask them to just stay in the hall while they are gone.

"It will be an honour to see our lord working," Annette said agreeing readily.

"Ahhh~ to witness our master working with our own eyes, I cannot tell you how excited I am" And of course, Bea added sensually, not even trying to hide her second nature.

The group exited the white palace, strolled around the backyard before heading towards the tall crystal trees in the distance.

"I have been meaning to ask this for a while, why are there clouds on the ceiling of the Main Floor? I remember those kinds of features can only be added after the dungeon becomes [B] rank or higher" Simon asked turning his head up and looking at the looming white clouds on the ceiling.

"Hehe, Big brother let me tell you, those aren't clouds but actually the mystical energy. Those clouds that you see up there are actually the condensation of the dense amount of mystical energy that was produced on this floor".

"The mystical energy on the main floor had become so substantial that the mist transformed into clouds thus pouring down as rain onto the land as a part of precipitation and then evaporating to become new clouds, therefore forming a mystical cycle" Cecilia said proudly puffing her chest.

Simon blinked his eyes and looked at Cecilia beside him in amazement. Was she really the easy going, carefree Cecilia that he knew? Who was this knowledgeable person talking beside him?

"Wow princess Cecilia is so amazing she knows so much about the main floor" Alice walking behind them, added. Her eyes seem to be idolising Cecilia.

It seemed that it was not only him that was amazed by Cecilia's sudden outburst of knowledge. Also, at some point it looked like the two had become good friends.

"Hehe, Big Sister Irene also said that these are all signs of the Mystical veins underneath the Main Floor evolving" Cecilia added beamingly.

'As I thought, it was Irene who told her all that' Simon thought internally.

The thing about the mystical veins on this floor evolving really intrigued him. Mystical veins are like a huge invisible river running through the earth that nourishes the life and fills the world with mana. The more concentration of mystical veins a place has, the more rich it is in mystical energy.

One does not even need to explain how important and wondrous a place can be if it is rich in mystical energy. Take the serenity pond for example, after Cecilia altered it with her abilities and connected the mystical veins with it so that all that energy from the earth is deposited in it, the pond started changing drastically.

Not to mention it started producing many extraordinary items like the serenity stone, scarlet mutation crystal and so and so forth.

Simon could tell that the concentration of mystical veins underneath his [Main floor] was so high now that they are starting to undergo some changes and the mystical clouds on the ceiling was just a resulting effect from these change that are happening.

According to the memories he had inherited, these changes should only occur after his dungeon evolves up to become [C] rank or above. But for some reason, it was already happening now.

When the concentration of mystical veins reaches a certain threshold, they evolve to become Heart Veins. Needless to say, the Heart Veins are much more rare and rich in mystical energy than the mystical veins.

If the mystical veins are spread out like small brooks, then the heart veins are like tributaries of a river spread out all across the floor in a vastly complex network. They carry mystical energy that is far more purer than mystical veins.

And currently, the mystical veins on his main floor were on their way to becoming heart veins.

Simon was pleasantly delighted by these changes as he glanced at the innocently smiling Cecilia who was the main perpetrator behind all these alterations taking place on his main floor.

No one, not even the high ranking demon Nobles from the demon society would ever believe that a low rank dungeon that emerged not so long ago, having heart veins on its main floor.

Smiling in contentment, Simon believed that it wouldn't be long before his dungeon evolves up to become a [C] rank.

The group walked around the white palace before moving towards the garden that was maintained by Irene.

"What's all these?!" Simon asked looking at the marvelling scene in front of him. As far as his eyes could see, the garden was filled with varieties of flowers, shrubs, vines and speckles of light arranged in a neat and tasteful way.

That was not all, the things planted in this garden were all incredibly rare herbs and flowers that could only be found in places rich in mystical energy.

"Wow"

"What a lovely view"

"This is breathtaking"

The captivated voices of the Valkyrie sisters sounded out. It seemed that they were smitten by the view of the garden.

"Did Mistress Irene do all of this?" Annette asked looking at the colourful garden all around her.

Irene nodded her and showed the sisters around. Of course, as a member of the Forest Spring Spirits, Cecilia had much more knowledge about the plants and flowers that was growing around here than anyone else. Her description were always detailed and was informative to hear.

Seeing the group of girls getting excited and carried away, Simon could only smile helplessly. It seemed no matter what world, beautiful things always appealed to women.

Simon sat on a bench that was made of vines and leaves while the girls went ahead and had a tour of the garden. Simon wasn't much interested in gardening and stuff; however, from the breathtaking sight around him, he could see the efforts Irene and Cecilia put into planting them.

As he arched his body and lay on the bench, the fragrant wind carrying along a wondrous effect brushed past his body.

402 Chapter 402

At this moment, he felt his body rejuvenated, refreshed and filled with energy. He felt as if he had to come to a legendary place that soothed his heart and healed his mind.

Shocked, Simon opened his mind and examined the flowers and plants around him. If he was not mistaken, some of the plants and flowers around here should be the seeds that were brought in by the Forest Spring Spirit clan.

No wonder he felt a sense of familiarity, he had seen these plants before when he went to the Ancient Treants territory to get the Forest Spring Spirits.

The effects that he felt in the breeze just now was because of these rare plants and herbs. A unique effect must have been triggered when so many varieties of these plants and flowers were blended in one garden.

What these changes entailed, Simon had no idea but given the fact that Irene and Cecilia had a hand in it, he was sure that this place would become something incredible in the near future.

After the girls came back from their trip to the flower garden, the group slowly strolled towards the distant mountains which were allotted to Cecilia to grow mana trees. Standing true to her race, Cecilia delivered a lush and Verdant canopy of mana trees growing all around the mountains.

Even before the group arrived near the place, they could feel the vast amount of mana being released by those mountains. A thick amount of mist lingered around the place and covered the mountains, giving it a more mystical look.

"Hehe, Big Brother, everyone let's go up... I'll show you something," Cecilia said arching her nose high and started walking in front of the group.

Seeing her antics, Irene smiled probably aware of what she wanted to show to others.

'So there was something else up in those mountains other than the juvenile Mana trees?' Simon thought internally as he followed behind the little girl curiously.

It had only been around five months since the time he gave her the seeds of mana trees. During this period, the mana trees had not only grown from their seed to become sprouts, but turned into young juvenile trees growing up to a height of ninety meters on average.

Mana trees were extremely important for a dungeon as they produced and even synthesised mystical energy all across the floor. The density of mana inside a dungeon also indicates how closer it is to increase up a rank.

Naturally, the higher the rank of the dungeon, the denser the mana it has within it. And the denser the mana, the better the plunders. This is also the reason why high ranking dungeons are so lucrative to adventurers as it provides simply more rewards than a low ranking dungeon could.

In any case, if he wants to increase the rank of his dungeon, it is important that he plants Mana Trees all across the floors. Usually, the Mana Trees would have taken a long time to even grow into a sprout and producing and synthesising mystical energy would be a long dream, especially for a low ranking dungeon with limited features.

But thanks to Cecilia, a member of the forest Spring spirit race who is known for being close to nature and having the ability to manipulate it, the mana trees in his dungeon had grown at an astonishing rate incomparable to the ones growing in any other dungeon.

Although he knew how amazing Cecilia's abilities were, he was still a little amazed to see mountains full of young mana trees.

Following Cecilia's lead, the group trekked up the mountain and arrived in front of a cave. Seeing Cecilia stop in front of it, Simon couldn't help but ask "What is it that you want to show us?".

Seeing Juvenile Mana trees was already plenty surprising... could it be that there was still something inside the cave?

"Hehe, big brother weren't you discussing about materials required to produce those golems with Little Wisp? Guess what, some of it is currently growing inside this cave" the little forest spring spirit girl declared rubbing her nose.

Hearing what she has to say, Simon's eyes contracted for a fraction of a second. The materials needed to manufacture higher versions of Andromeda weren't something that are easily available and needs to be procured using various other means.

Simon believed that given enough time, his dungeon would naturally be able to produce some of it. However, even he didn't expect that he would be hearing that his dungeon was already producing some of it.

Without waiting for anyone, Simon stepped forward and walked inside the cave only to stand rooted the next moment.

All around him and as far as the eye could see, minerals were protruding out from this place like stalagmites and stalactites. They were in so much quantity that if one wanted to mine them, it would easily take quite a few weeks of their time.

Not to mention the cave was just starting out and looked very deep. As Simon walked further in, he was astounded to find the quality and quantity of the minerals increasing. There was not only one type of ores to be found here, but different varieties of it.

For example, there was BrightSilver, a mineral that was a little more stronger than WhiteSilver, Blackgold and Neo steel growing in it. NeoSteel was one of the materials required to create a higher version of Andromeda and although Blackgold would be a little difficult to process given the mechanism of the factory was yet to be fully built, it was a good enough substitute for now.

At this instant, Irene and the other also caught up with him and seeing his excited face, they couldn't help but smile themselves.

"Are these minerals what you were looking for?" Irene asked not understanding what was so engrossing about these inanimate stones. She had seen the golems and experienced its powers herself but it did not strike as much emotions within her as Simon which led to her wondering what was so amazing about those metal golems.

It was not only her but even the Maid sisters had blank or puzzled expressions in their eyes. It was only Cecilia that was having a genuine happy face. Though in her case she just wanted to be praised by her big brother.

Hearing Irene's question Simon nodded his head, these were indeed some of the materials needed to manufacture the Andromedas.

"How did this..." he asked, puzzled and delighted by the discovery.

"You should thank her for this, this little girl had altered the trajectory of the mystical veins and created a path that flowed internally through the mountain. Thanks to that, the mountain itself had drastically changed and transformed into one that produced minerals" Irene explained.



Since Cecilia herself did not know much about her powers, she was more or less clueless about it just like the other.

Hearing her clarification, Simon understood what had happened here, this forest spirit girl had once again used her incomprehensible powers to induce changes around her without herself being aware about it.

Simon looked at Cecilia who was smiling smugly and patted her head. Although she always did these kinds of absurd things, it had always ended up involuntarily benefitting him.

Mineral mountains Grade [C]- Mountains with a deposit of Mystical energy that produces minerals and ores over time. The larger the deposit of the mountain, the higher the quality and ratio of ores.

Simon could install these mountains from the shop, in fact, he even did so on some of the floors. However, the ones accessible to him currently in the shop, were all below grade [C] and only had WhiteSivler and low ranking ores growing on them.

Far from what he needed to build better marks of Andromeda. Simon was getting excited just by thinking how he would be able to have those powerful warmachines from that game at his disposal.

He was a game developer and game maniac in his previous life, of course he loved mechas.

"Big brother are you happy?" Cecilia asked wanting to be praised.

"Yeah, I am very happy, thank you Cecilia" Simon thanked Cecilia and along with the others, descended down the mountain. Now that he knew there were NeoSteel and BlackGold growing inside those mountains, he made a mental note to tell the third guardian about it so that it can send some of the Andromedas here to mine it.

Also, he would like to see if Cecilia can induce the same changes with the mountains on the workshop (the Third Guardian's floor).

Now that they had toured almost all around the main floor, it was now time to go check out the main showcase of the floor located at the centre. The pond of serenity and the beautiful tree of mana crystals around it.

The pond of serenity had always been the most mysterious and precious treasure on his main floor. Not only was it the place where all the mystical energy from the mystical veins are deposited, it was also the place that produced the serenity stone, scarlet mutation crystals and various other things that were yet to be discovered lying on the bottom of the pond.

The last time he dived inside it he was able to endure for as long as one minute, Simon wanted to test his limits and see how long he can endure inside the pond now that he was much stronger than before.

As the group approached the centre of the floor, the density of the mystical energy in the air became so high that it was palpable. A dense amount of mist lingered around this place produced by the pond endlessly and gave others a chilly yet pleasant sensation.

Amidst the mist at the centre where the multi-coloured lights were coming from, was a beautiful pond straight out of a fairy tale.

403 Chapter 403

It was surrounded by wide trees of mana crystals that were each as big as fifty meters with branches spread over a wide area. What was beguiling about those trees was that instead of having leaves, the trees grew beautiful crystals that shone just like a diamond.

Naturally, seeing the mystical scene in front of them, anybody would be enraptured, the same was so for the maid sisters who were looking at this scene for the very first time.

"Wow this is beautiful"

"Indeed"

"Un.. Un"

The maid sisters couldn't keep their voices down and each expressed their opinions at the sight in front of them.

Simon who was walking in the front smiled, he too was just like them when he saw the sight for the first time. Leaving the awestruck girls to their own devices, Simon approached the pond which had evolved even further in the span of five months.

The pond of serenity due to the tinkering from Cecilia had become completely different. It was now much more precious than a mere pond of serenity and was a valuable part of his dungeon.

Since a large volume of pure mystical energy is deposited in the bottom of the pond constantly, it was bound to evolve in time. Even Irene whose favourite place on the main floor was the pond, was of the same opinion.

In fact, it was her who told him about the changes taking place inside the pond. Simon came near the shore and set his gaze at the depth of the water that was shining with a bright azure colour. It looked quite beautiful and serene to look at but make no mistake, it was no ordinary water but actual mystical energy condensed into a liquid form.

It was because of the presence of this energy that was so dense and pure that many mysterious and powerful things were growing inside the pond. No to mention that energy itself was very beneficial for Simon; after all, the water at the bottom was the purest form of mystical energy itself.

If Simon can adjust his body to the tremendous pressure it puts on him, he can actually benefit from it. Smiling fiercely, he dived inside the pond without any further thoughts.

SPLASH... hearing the sound of splashing water, the girls turned towards the area where Simon was just a moment ago. They all were surprised by his sudden action to dive inside the pond except for Irene who expected Simon to do something like that.

From the moment Simon laid his eyes on the pond and observed it so carefully, she could tell what was going inside his head. It came as no surprise to her that he would decide to dive inside it the moment he approached the pond.

"Umm master... we should follow after him" Annette stated, anxious from the abrupt action of their master.

The Valkyries were just about to follow in the footsteps of Simon and dive inside the pond when Irene stopped them.

"It's alright, he knows what he is doing. Although the level of mystical energy inside the bottom of the pond is at dangerous levels, he wants to experience it himself and test the limits of his current body. Let us wait for him outside".

The Valkyrie sisters nodded their heads without any complaints, they were watching Simon from the void thus they knew the position Irene had in this dungeon. They respected her not because she was powerful and earned her own place in the dungeon but because of how much time she spent with Simon, guiding and standing beside him.

The girls waited by the shore of the pond discussing various aspects of the main floor when the splashing of the water sounded again and Simon came out of the pond.

"Welcome Master" Bea passed him a towel she procured from who knows where.

"Three minutes fifty seconds, you were close to enduring it for whole four minutes. So how was it inside?" Irene asked.

"Huff... Huff... it was a good experience. I can tell that my body is far stronger and durable than before. Thanks to soaking in the effect of the pond of serenity, I feel like my body has rejuvenated and become a little lighter" Simon said observing his body.

"That is because the mystical energy has the effect of nourishing all life, due to it all the hidden wounds that you have suffered through your journey, was healed. Not only that, if you keep on soaking inside it like that, it will also improve your talent and aptitude gradually".

Irene added before changing the subject.

"So did you find anything useful inside there? I know your goal besides testing the limits of your body was to see the things that are growing inside the pond".

Seeing that he cannot hide it from Irene, Simon decided to just take it out of his inventory. A crimson stalk of a plant that was around half a meter big, was held in his hand.

The moment Irene saw the thing, she immediately recognised it.

"What are you going to do with this?" She asked curiously.

"Well, our guest took so much trouble to come to our doors, it would be inappropriate of me, if I do not give them a good welcome. As the dungeon master of this place, I should extend my hospitality towards them" Simon said flashing a wicked smile.

Looking at his face that was planning something, Irene sighed. Knowing the effects of that stalk she now felt bad for the adventurers who were going to suffer because of it.

'Really, the moment he returns back, he comes up with stuff that makes you wonder who the real bad guy is' Irene thought internally.

"You should wipe that grin off your face, you look like a villain right now," she said finding a nearby rock to seat on.

"What?!" Conscious from that remark, Simon touched his face. Was he really making a face like a villain?

Seeing the two get lost in their own conversation, Annette and the others tactfully decided to take their leave at this moment, leaving the two to have their moment.

"Master please excuse us, we shall return to the palace". The Valkyrie sister bowed and exited the place taking along Cecilia who had found a friend in Alice.

Simon frowned his brows wondering why they were in such a hurry to leave the place. Nevertheless, he didn't think much about it and discarded the thought.

"Ah! Before I forget, there is something I need your help with" Simon asked turning towards the peacefully sitting Irene near him.

"Hm? And what that might be?" Irene asked a little surprised. This was the first time Simon had ever vocally asked her help with, of course, she would be surprised.

Simon stepped a little back, opened his [Inventory] and dropped a huge block of ice that looked like a coffin.

The moment the ice coffin came out, it rapidly decreased the temperature of the air and almost solidified it.

Seeing the ice coffin, Irene's eyes went wide. "So you used the Philosopher's stone huh" she said, there was no way she won't recognise the magic she had stored inside the philosopher's stone that she had given Simon as one of the parting gifts.

It did make her uneasy that he was forced to use her magic; nonetheless, it was all good now that he was here safe and sound.

Irene did not know why, she felt a tinge of anger at Adalinda for not keeping her promise to keep Simon safe. Shaking her head off the thought, Irene decided to focus on the thing that was currently sealed inside her magic.

The moment she laid her eyes on it, she was stunned once again. Sealed inside the magic, was a gigantic grey finger that was around ten meters big. Seeing the size of the finger, one would have to wonder how big the entity this finger belonged to was.

However, the reason Irene was shocked was not because of the size of the finger but because of the great amount of curse energy it had inside it.

"What is this?" Irene uttered locking her brows.

This was the first time Simon had seen Irene so confused thus he decided to tell her about it. In any case, Adalinda knew about his adventures on the Forbidden trail ground so there was no reason or him to keep it a secret from Irene who was one of his guardians.

Additionally, he knew that she cared about him or else there was no explanation for her behaviour and the precious gifts that she had given him.

When Simon recounted his tale of entering the forbidden trails, Irene did not react like how Adalinda did. Though she showed more concerns when he mentioned how he was cornered by the Sea god's trident guild and his near death encounters in the trails.

Simon thought that she would react more from the name of Forbidden trial but given that she did not show even a tinge of reaction, he wondered if she didn't know about the place. Which brought him to his earlier thought about whether summoning brought subordinates from other worlds or not.

Anyways, back to the ice coffin in question. After Simon finished recounting his story of the fourth trail of the forbidden grounds, Irene became silent all of a sudden.

Wondering why she was like that, Simon glanced at her eyes and realised that it was icy cold. Even the aura she was currently releasing, was frosty. After living with her for some time, he had learned how to read the expressions of this ice cold beauty and given that ability, he could tell that she was currently angry; No, furious.

"????!" Not realising what triggered that reaction Simon locked his brows in consternation.

404 Chapter 404

Irene looked at him with icy cold eyes then got up from her seat and approached him. The way she came forward one step at a time, made her look menacing which ultimately dropped the temperature of the surrounding even further.

Simon thought that it was his imagination but the pebbles lying on the floor getting covered with frost, indicated otherwise.

Irene stopped when she was just a few inches away from him. From this distance, Simon could even feel her breath and smell the fragrance that always surrounded her.

Since the moment he summoned her, she always held a special spot in his heart. Not because she was the first guardian he had ever summoned, but because of some reasons even unknown to him. He had met many other beauties on his trip to the outside world; however, none of them ever manage to make his heart and thoughts turbulent like she did.

On any other occasion, he would have enjoyed the company of a beauty so close to him. But right now, her icy cold eyes made him feel like he was being threatened at the gunpoint.

Irene took a deep breath and released it, her bountiful chest rising up and down. Her icy cold gaze that was locked onto Simon dissipated a little at this moment as she asked "You don't even realise your mistake do you?".

"Huh?!"

"This clueless attitude of yours is still the same. You don't even realise how close to death you were. It pisses me how carefree and easy you make your adventures sound like. Do you not know or just

don't think about it? if any of those factors were missing in your story, you would have likely been captured or died".

"How many times did I tell you not to act recklessly, do you ever listen? Or everything that I say just goes to one ear and out the other? Have you any clue how concerned Cecilia and the forest Spring Spirits were after you were out there for more than five months?"

"You didn't even send any words making us all anxious whether you were safe or not. And now this... Did you really think you can up make up for all this by cooking us a meal? I thought it was weird how you were out for so long leaving your precious dungeon like that. But who knew that you were out there enjoying putting your life at risk..."

Irene kept on going on for a while giving Simon an earful of her pent up frustration.

Simon opened and closed his mouth a few times trying to come up with something. But in the end, gave up on it seeing how concerned Irene was.

He was not a god, there were many things that he didn't understand or things beyond his capability. Sometimes he was dumb to stuff happening around him, other times a crafty fox. However, even he could realise from her words that she was genuinely and truly concerned for him.

BA-DUMP...

At this moment, Simon had this sudden urge to embrace the beauty in front of him and so without thinking anything else, he did what his guts told him.

SQUEEZE...

Before Irene could compose herself, she was suddenly grabbed by her waist and her body was tightly nestled into the embrace of Simon.

BA-DUMP... BA-DUMP... at that instant, Irene's mind became blank and she could no longer think things straight. Feeling the broad and hard chest filled with muscles that her body was stuck to, her heart started beating like crazy and she felt like a captured rabbit.



When she looked up and gazed at the deep crimson eyes of the man that was embracing her, her face immediately became beet red and she couldn't help but distance herself by pushing with both of her hands.

Simon suddenly felt regretful and empty the moment Irene escaped his embrace. Just until a few moments ago he was relishing on the feeling of her soft and lithe body that felt like it would melt from his touch.

Even though due to her abilities, her body exuded an extreme amount of cold, he felt the heat of her body at that moment. Her crystal blue fragrant hair that was like the waterfall, her snow white skin that was so smooth to touch, and her wildly pounding heart, Simon vividly remembered the sensation.

He wanted to embrace the beauty a little more; however seeing the redness in her face reach till her beautiful neckline, it finally dawned onto him his own actions.

Simon couldn't help but make an awkward face realising that he had taken advantage of her when her guard was down.

The two looked at each other and Irene hurriedly shifted her gaze as if escaping his. Her heart and mind was a mess right now and no matter how she tried to calm it down or don her indifferent expression, she felt as if she was not in control of her own emotions anymore.

She would be right in her place to be angry at Simon; however, for some reason, she couldn't get furious at him. On the contrary, this other foreign emotion that she had no control was currently ruling her mind.

In the distance amidst the plentiful foliage of the Mana crystal trees, three people were currently spying on the couple that was just a few seconds ago embracing each other tightly.

"Hehe, way to go big brother, hug her again" a certain girl with emerald green hair, fairy like wings and having a doll like appearance said grinning widely.

Beside her, was another girl a few years older than her, with short blonde hair, rubellite eyes that was masked with excitement over watching the adventures of the couple.

The last person with them was a mature beauty with peach hair that was tied with her hair band releasing a sensual aura. "Ahhh~~ not fair master, I'm too available for you to embrace me anytime".

Who could the three be other than Cecilia, Alice and Bea? As the three watched the embarrassment of the couple and laughed, out of nowhere from the shadow, a person donning an armour over their maid outfit, appeared.

Annette looked at the three stalkers who had suddenly disappeared from the palace and grabbed them by their ears.

"Ow... ow... ow... elder sister it hurts it hurts," Alice said pleading mercy.

"Ahh~ what are you doing elder sister, only master is allowed to torcher this body of mine," Bea said twisting her tantalising body.

"Hmph, I was wondering where you were gone off to but to think you are spying on our master. It seems that you all need discipline... come back with me. You too princess Cecilia, peeping on someone is a disgraceful act".

Annette said, setting the three troublemakers straight. After that, with her strength, she pulled the unwilling trio back with her.

"Ehhh.. I want to see big brother hug big sister more"

"That's right.. that's right elder sister Annette please let us watch master some more"

"You must be kidding me... just when we have reached the best part. I must witness what happens next".

Simon and Irene turned their heads and listened to the ruckus made by a certain group of people which quickly disappeared into the distance. From the look of the things, it seemed that they were being spied upon.

Hearing their words, Simon's eyes twitched continuously. The same was so for Irene who had trouble looking at him with her gaze. There was no way either party was not thinking about what happened a few moments ago.

With the current situation being the stimulus, of course, the memories from what happened a couple of months ago, also surfaced up at this moment.

Simon instinctively felt his hand twitch, that bountiful and full sensation he felt when he accidentally fell on top of her and grabbed her chest. That soft pink lips that was a few inches away from his. All those memory from before flooded his mind.

Irene too was no exception, with the way she was covering her chest, there was no way she was not thinking about that moment, that little accident that happened a few months ago.

At this moment, the environment around them turned absolute silent with neither party saying anything. Just when it looked like it would continue, Simon thickened his face and coughed to disperse the silence.

'Goddammit, why does she has to be so stimulating even when embarrassed' Simon cursed internally seeing how red Irene looked at his moment. Her snow white skin coupled with her glossy eyes and the red hue on her gave her an otherworldly unique charm.

"Ahem... about the ice coffin, can you do something about it?" Simon tried to change the subject.

The mood was already destroyed by the spectators that were spying on them thus it was best to avoid the topic. Plus with the change of subject, he wanted to see if Irene was furious at him or not for his previous transgression.

As he had mentioned before, he was not good at everything, there were obviously things that he was bad at and reading Irene's emotions at certain times was one of them. Though from his perspective she didn't seem particularly angry to him.

Fortunately for Irene, the change of subject finally provided her with the opportunity to compose herself. She took a deep breath of air and quelled the emotions that was running rampant inside her.

She decided to go with the pretext that Simon had thrown at her.

"I don't know what you were thinking bringing this thing here? The finger contains an extreme amount of curse energy that is beyond your current level".

405 Chapter 405

Do you even know what harm it might bring if you can't control that energy? The curse energy is completely different from the standard Mystical energy of this plane without the appropriate knowledge, technique and affinity, one shouldn't even be able to harness it. I don't know if I should be amazed anymore or simply get used to your unusualness".

Irene quipped admitting defeat. From her perspective, Simon shouldn't even be able to survive an encounter with the curse energy, much less be able to harness it.

The fact that he could stay sane even when exposed to it would already be a miracle but to even control the energy, Irene had given up midway and decided to just accept his unusualness.

"I was thinking maybe you could tell me if there was a way for me to use this thing. Now that it no longer has any intent of its own, it's just a dead piece of flesh that produces its own supply of curse energy. After experiencing how dominant the energy was, it felt like a waste to just leave it there" Simon explained his reasoning behind bringing the thing with him.

Hearing his words, Irene narrowed her eyes and approached the finger sealed within her magic.

"How did you even bring the thing with you?" she asked, technically it could be considered a corpse and one cannot bring a dead body inside the subspace of a space ring. Unless Simon carried it physically, it was impossible to bring the thing with him.

"About that... I found a loophole in my [Inventory]" this was not the world of his game, there are bound to be some bugs and loopholes popping up now that he had reincarnated in a world with his menu.

Irene arched her crescent brows, although she did not understand what he meant by loophole, she got the gist of it.

"What do you think?" Seeing Irene carefully examine the finger inside the ice coffin with her phoenix eyes, Simon asked. The earlier awkward atmosphere between them was long gone and an air of seriousness had taken its place.

"I didn't think it was possible for you who haven't even mastered the true essence of the mystical energy to manipulate the curse energy. However, if you say that you are somehow able to harness its power, it's not like there is no way you can't use the finger" Irene said finishing her examination of the finger.

"Is there really a way I can use the finger?" Simon asked back excited. He only brought the finger with him since he felt it was a waste to leave it there after he had worked so hard to clear the fourth trail.

He basically did not have much hope for using it as a weapon. However, Irene's words ignited a new hope within him.

"How much do you know about techniques?" all of a sudden, Irene asked him a peculiar question.

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A couple of hours later... inside the white palace.

The moment Simon and Irene walked inside, they were greeted by the line-up of five maids, each wearing a beautiful maid dress underneath their armour.

Simon was a little astonished by this welcome, his previously empty palace was starting to become a little more alive now with the addition of the Valkyries. Also since they were absolutely loyal to him, he had no qualms with them staying here.

The white palace had more than enough room to accommodate them. On the off chance that it was still not enough, Simon could always add a few more rooms to the white palace.

"Master please excuse us, we took the liberty to enter the kitchen and cooked a meal for all of you" Annette said stepping forward.

Simon was not amazed, the Valkyrie sisters besides being good at combat, had excellent housekeeping skills. He designed them in a way that they not only aided the players in their adventures but also served them in doing all the menial chores.

Some of their skills were also created keeping them in mind. Be it from cooking to taking care of the palace, perhaps there was no one better than them. Simon was not surprised that they had already familiarised themselves with the kitchen; after all, he was the one who created them thus he knew how seriously they took their work.

He thought over it before deciding that he would have the meal later, right now he was just too tired from his training and needed a warm bath to relax his fatigued body.

When he mentioned that to his maids, they immediately replied by telling him that the bath was ready.

"We thought that after training for so long, Master would want a bath. That is why, we had already prepared the bathhouse for you".

The moment Simon he heard that, he was stunned. "All of it?" he asked.

"Yes Master, all of it".

The bathhouse of the white palace was enormous and a place of extravagance. Not only was it based on the things he experienced on earth, but it might also be one of its kind on Althaea.

The bathhouse was divided into sixteen zones in total and was further subdivided into nine for the two genders. Not only did it have large changing rooms, but it also had different kinds of baths starting from the Roman Bath, the Jungle Style Bath, Carbonated bath, Jazuzzi and so on so forth.

The reason that the bathhouse of his white palace was so extravagant was because Simon was a huge fan of bathing in his previous life. Thus when he installed the palace, bathhouse was one of the things that he vividly pictured in his head.

Since there were so many baths and there was no telling which one Simon would use, it came as a surprise that the valkyries prepared all of them.

It seemed that he had underestimated the work of efficiency of the maids, it had even been one day since he summoned them, but they have already started taking care of the palace.

HAAAA...

Simon was thinking all of that while lying inside the Roman bath. Ten golden statues of the lions that constantly released water from its mouth were placed around the bath.

As he allowed his body to lie inside the tub, he felt all his exhaustion dissipate away as if it was never there.

After he was done taking a bath, he went to the dining hall where they all had a meal. Simon asked the maid sisters to join them but it seemed that they were too stuck up with their work ethics.

After that, Simon went back to the pond of serenity to continue his training. As a demon viscount, his body didn't need much sleep, simply taking rest was enough for him to recover from his fatigue. Thus Simon trained near the pond of serenity day and night and just like that three days had passed.

During these three days, Irene would be constantly guiding him and showing him all the mistakes he committed in his training.

"Alright, it seems like you more or less got it. With that, you should be able to control it. Now you just need to..."

As usual, today too Irene was beside him checking on his progress. She was just him some advice when from the corner of her she noticed one of the [Helpers] hurriedly walking towards them.

Even before they gave their report, Irene immediately understood what it was about and narrowed her eyes. She looked at Simon who was calmly sitting on a rock after finishing his training.

"Huff.. Huff... Lord Simon, I have an urgent message..." the one who came to report was Jared.

Looking at the distressed face of the boy, Simon first told him to calm down before giving his report.

Jared did as he was told, took a deep breath to calm his anxious heart and reported "Lord Simon the adventurers you have told to keep an eye on, have reached the thirty-fifth and will soon arrive on the thirty sixth floor. Sir Coleus and the others are on the thirty sixth floor, awaiting your orders".

So the time has finally come huh, the opponents were about to reach their last line of defence, its time he made his move too. Simon stood up and steadily recited out orders.

"You all did a good job monitoring them. Tell coleus and the others that I'll be soon arriving on that floor. Do not do anything and stay in your stations till then. Additionally, avoid bringing the news to the Forest Spring village, your clansmen will be needlessly troubled because of this. You may leave now".

"Yes" Jared bowed once before walking towards the teleportation gate located on the main floor.

"What are you planning?" Irene asked standing beside him.

"Since the enemy has gone through so much trouble to arrive on the thirty sixth floor, naturally, I will welcome them with our full force. Make them understand that dungeon Laplace isn't a place that they can simply conquer on a whim" Simon declared, his crimson eyes burning with a brilliant radiance.

Seeing him raring to go, Irene sighed and stated "In that case allow me to come with you too".

Simon turned towards Irene who wanted to follow him in their last stand at defence on the thirty sixth floor. As one of the Guardians of the dungeon, it was only but natural for her to safeguard it and given that she was the strongest being inside the dungeon, Simon felt more safe when she was guarding the main floor.

He wanted to change her mind and tell her to protect the dungeon core instead but when he saw her determined eyes, he gave up on the thought and nodded.

Simon knew how protective Irene was of the Forest Spring Spirits, there was no way she was just going to sit there and do nothing while he and the other fought for the survival of their dungeon on the upper floors.

406 Chapter 406

"In that case, I have a task for you..." Simon discussed a few matters of relevance with Irene before using the [Teleport] function to move away to a different place.

Irene saw him off with her eyes before moving to complete her own task assigned to her.



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[Grand Lightning Slash] a huge broadsword covered in red thunder came slashing down bisecting a monster that looked like a huge rat covered in crimson furs.

"What the fuck are they?" a man with a body filled with scars said. He had the build of a warrior, kept a shapely brown beard and was taking the charge for his teammates.

"We have no idea Guild Leader Morgress, this is the first time we came across a monsters called the Fire Eater Rat" Sable the [Crimson Scorching Sage] and also one of the sevens swords said. Beside him were the other members of the seven swords and also a few other people whose levels were not below them.

"What about you guys? Don't you have any information on these monsters?" Morgress asked cutting another mouse and stopping the others from encircling them.

The people he was talking to, were members that were sent here by the Sea God's Trident guild to aid them on their conquest to capture the forest Spring Spirits. Obviously, they weren't the members of that guild and were people that were hired by them.

Morgress had no idea who they are but from the heavy bloody aura lingering on their body and their rough characters, he could tell that they were no adventurers but criminals. For what reason they were following the orders of the Sea God's Guild didn't matter to him. As long they are useful or could be used as a meat shield, he had no qualms to work with them.

"KuKu... you seriously think when adventurers like you don't know what these monsters are, we will know that? Besides, I'm more amazed that you all call yourself adventurers when you can't even recognise the race of these monsters without the aid of your skills" one of the people holding the charge with Morgress in the frontlines said.

"Is that so..." Morgress made an irritated face and quickly disposed of one of the mouse that was trying to get past their defence.

"How long do you idiots want us to hold the front lines for you..." he shouted out towards the backlines where the mages were currently conjuring their spells.

Right after his words, sounded out, various spells and magic took form in the air and flew towards the hordes of crimson mouse surrounding them.

Currently, they were on the thirty fifth floor, inside a gigantic pit that was filled with these monsters. The entire place was dark and hot with nay a light to be found anywhere. The pathways were narrow and the entire place was like a labyrinth, difficult to navigate.

The only illumination this place had were the monsters who released a scorching fiery energy. They had fought these monsters on the thirty fourth floor too but their numbers and levels weren't this high.

Additionally, they wouldn't have been in this pinch where they were surrounded from all sides had they not fallen inside the hole that was the lair of these monsters.

There were all shapes and sizes of monsters surrounding them. Some were as small as a few inches, while others were as big as the entire pathway. Leaving the big ones aside, the small ones weren't that much of a threat but what made them obnoxious to face was the heat that surrounded them.

Each of these mouse released a huge amount of heat which made it all the more difficult to bear in these narrow pathways. Not to mention when they die, they burst into fiery cinders damaging everything in the surrounding.

If things went on like this, they would be dead tired before they even reach the thirty sixth floor. It didn't matter that their team comprised of all elites, it was all the same if they were all out of energy fighting thousands of these monsters.

It was the worse move one can make in a dungeon. Therefore, they needed to find an exit out of this pit soon. Fortunately, they had many people with assassin class for the job.

In fact, their sevens swords also had one but that person was a betrayer and Morgress didn't want to associate that person with the seven swords any longer. The fact that he didn't kill the person yet was because they needed his might for their current mission and because the person himself was strong.

The assassin he was talking about was none other than Boris who was being ostracised by his teammates for selling them out.

Currently, he was on the frontlines tanking most of the damage. Nonetheless, he did not make any complaints and skilfully did his job. But it did not mean that he was okay, right now his eyes were burning with anger and his body filled with hatred which he was taking out on the monsters.

The reason he was here was different from the others, Boris was here to avenge his brother Laris who had died at the hands of the demon who was the master of this dungeon. The scorn filled eyes of his former teammates and their glare didn't matter to him anymore. As long as he can kill that demon with his own hands and settle this grudge, he was fine dying here.

What's more, given the years of partnership he had with them, he knew that they were planning to leave him here to die anyways.

Activating his skills and abilities, Boris brandished his dagger killing any mouse that tried to get past him.

Mages from the backlines would provide timely aid with their magic and like this, the team of fifteen people in total progressed. They would stop from time to time and switch places to recover their energy and drink potions to restore their health.

But not Boris, he was being constantly pushed to be on the frontlines and rapidly deplete his reserves of potions.

"Kuku... your teammates are really callous, they don't care about your life and death" a guy who was an assassin just like Boris, said. He wielded two short swords instead of daggers and tied his hair back into a ponytail.

"The name is Bryan" the assassin said trying to initiate a handshake. Nevertheless, he was ignored and shown the cold shoulder by Boris who didn't even bother to look at him.

Bryan shrugged his shoulders without minding it, from his perspective he was bored of constantly fighting monsters and thus initiated a conversation. It matter not if the other party was being cold to him or not.

A few big spells came from the backlines and took the big ones down which were always a pain to face against. Each of them were all above level 300 and had multiple skills at their disposal. The thing that made them annoying was not their levels or numbers, but the heat they radiated.

Whenever they killed one of the big fellows, it would burst apart in an explosive fashion and radiate enough heat similar to a bomb. In this narrow pathway there was no way to escape it thus it made it a very irritating ability for the warriors.

The team depended on the mages to take them out whenever a big one showed up.

Bryan just finished taking care of one of the moderately sized Fire Eating Rat when suddenly one of his skills [Guide], acted up.

[Guide] was a skill exclusive of his rare assassin class [Templar Assassin] that gave him a few instructions every now and then and was a skill he always relied on to get out of any difficult or pinch situation.

Additionally, [Guide] was also a Rare Ancient skill that took him quite the effort to learn.

Reading the instruction provided by his skill, Bryan turned towards one of the pathways and strained his senses. It was then that he felt it, the feeling of wind brushing past his skin. The feeling was so light that he would have otherwise missed it had he not paid enough attention to it.

However, that was not the point here, the presence of wind here could only mean that this pathway was connected to an exit that led out of the pit.

"I found the exit" he said out loud immediately gathering the attention on him.

"It's this way" Bryan pointed out with his dagger.

"Alright let's move" Morgress declared acting as the proxy leader. He didn't trust the outsiders; however, he had no choice but to do so this once given the situation they were in didn't look good.

The fifteen of them turned around the corner and fought the monsters for a while before an exit finally showed up. The group got out of the pit, took a rest for a while before marching forward.

The ground above the pit did have monsters roaming around but the numbers were far less than what was inside the pit and even the heat that they released when dying could be avoided.

It didn't take long for these elites to explore the current floor and soon found the entrance to the next floor.

"I must say, when I was asked to do this mission by Benny, I thought it would be an easy task to conquer a [D] rank dungeon. But seeing that we have descended all the way down to the thirty fifth floor and have yet to meet a single powerful subordinate of the Demon Noble , makes me wanna reconsider if this really is a [D] rank dungeon or not" one of the people sent here by the Sea God's guild said.

407 Chapter 407

"True that, the fact that the monsters here are all above level 300 contradicts with what the adventurers associations said".

"Now now, even if there are hundreds of these monsters blocking our path, they are not a threat that we can't face. The guild master of the Sea God's Trident told us the demon, the master of this dungeon, no longer has the protection of that person that destroyed the capital".

The group discussed outside the entrance to the thirty sixth floor as they recovered their expended mana and stamina.

"Tch, don't you guys go slacking now, I don't want to babysit eight individuals. If I must, I will not hesitate to throw you guys as bait".

Morgress said a little irritated with the idle chatter of the people. His mood had been sour since the moment he entered the thirty fifth floor. For some reason, he had been having this weird unsettling feeling as if something big was about to go down.

Naturally, as a level 500 [Grand Lightning Warrior] he had absolute confidence in his abilities to block any obstacle coming his way. Nonetheless, why is it that his nerves were all tensed when he had yet to meet a single strong opponent that could contend with him?

The rumours about some nightmarish looking warhorse that was a calamity class, did evoke some concern from him but given the fact that the full line up of seven swords was present at this moment boosted his confidence even further.

It was not like this was the first time they were trying to conquer a [D] rank dungeon, since they had already succeeded once a little over ten years ago for which they had received a domain to rule and a peerage from the Ellesmere royal family.

However, the [D] rank dungeon that they had conquered in the snow valley was completely unlike the one they were facing right now, and was much more easier and had far fewer floors. Even the monsters there weren't as unusual as the ones here not to mention the density of mana as they descended the floors got much more palpable.

As an adventurer who is at the doorstep to become one of the powerhouses, he had fought many monsters in his adventures. However, none of them were as peculiar as the one he had met on these past two floors.

His instincts were telling him that the dungeon was unlike any other one and cannot be underestimated at all costs. Gathering the seven swords except for Boris, he told them his plan and asked them to be cautious at all times.

After the group was fully ready to move forward, they stepped towards the entrance to the next floor.

The thirty sixth floor was unlike the past few floors as it vast a huge jungle with gigantic trees and diverse flora and fauna. The mana around here thanks to the proximity of the floor to the dungeon core and the many mana trees planted here, was so dense that it had turned into mist and covered the entire floor within it.

There was not only one type of monsters that spawned here but different races of them that continuously fought against each other for dominance and territory.

Nonetheless, the aforementioned things weren't the only reason that set this floor apart from the others. There was another factor to this floor and that was the presence of the apex predator, a boss monster of sorts with power incomparable to ordinary monsters.

Yes, the thirty sixth floor was home to the Lightning Draconic Serpent that Simon had subjugated on one of his trips to the ghastly winding forest.

Before leaving the dungeon, he using the [Ancient Draconic Compel] technique subjugated the Lightning Draconic Serpent one of the three overlords of the north and brought it inside his dungeon to safeguard it from the intruders.

And today was the day it will finally going to show its appearance to the adventurers and make its presence known to the entire inhabitants of the tower town. It will become one of the strongest boss monsters present inside the dungeon Laplace and an element of fear for the adventurers but that was for the future.

Presently, on the tallest mountain shrouded by mist, a group of five individuals were currently waiting on top of it. Their faces were masked with anxiousness and a dreary aura surrounded them.

What was common about them was that they all had light green hairs, slightly pointed ears and released a vast natural aura. The people waiting on top of the mountains were none other than the five Forest Spring Spirits appointed as the [Helpers].

At this moment, they were all looking at the window that displayed the progress of the adventurers.

"They are here..." Coleus said narrowing his eyes.

"Jared did you inform our lord about it," Birch asked turning towards the boy named Jared.

"Yes, Lord Simon is aware of it, he would be here any moment".

Hearing his words, Maya, Fay and the others [Helpers] all glanced towards the huge Teleportation Gate that was set on this floor.

"Worry not, our lord is on his way. No matter how powerful the intruders are, they will not be able to pass through my floor. I will ensure that they regret ever trespassing into the domain of my lord".

A deep oppressive voice that made one's eardrum ring sounded out from the mist surrounding the mountain and the gigantic figure of the Lightning Draconic serpent could be seen descending down.

The reason why the thirty sixth floor was unique was because of the presence of this fellow. His appearance and his aura alone was strong enough to cower these meek Forest Spring Spirits who did not have much combat ability to begin with.

The fact that the Lightning Draconic Serpent was on their side, gave them a sense of assurance. Even without it telling them, the forest Spring spirits had absolute faith in Simon and wouldn't waste even a second doubting him.

He was like a pillar of faith to them to which all their devotion lied, just his presence inside the dungeon gave them the confidence to overcome all obstacles.

"You are right, instead of just standing here let us do what we can. Jared, what order does Lord Simon has for us?" Coleus asked trying to lift the spirits of his clansmen.

"Lord Simon told us to wait here" Jared replied.

"Alright, you all heard him, we wait for lord Simon to arrive here".

While he made a joke of himself with those contradicting words of his, he did end up lightening the mood.

ROOOARRRR...

At this moment, the Lightning Draconic Serpent looked towards the distant end of the floor and roared. His roar also marked the beginning of the battle.

"So this is the next floor huh... I must say that the mana around here is quite dense" one of the warriors said after descending down the stairs.

"Don't let your guard down, this floor is unlike the other ones we have explored up until now. Even though it's very far away, I can still feel its presence from over here. Whatever that thing is, it is strong" Bryan said activating his detection skills.

"Is it that warhorse?" one of the Seven swords, a warrior decked out in full plated Blackgold armour and carrying a gigantic hammer said. His name was Lombus and along with Morgress, Kendric and Boris who had betrayed them, they were the front liners of the team that held the enemies at bay.

After listening to all the various rumours about how strong and menacing the warhorse was from the adventurers, Lombus always wanted to have a go at this beast. He believed that no matter how exaggerated they made the being in the rumours to be as long as he could reach it with his hammer, he would be able to flatten it into the ground.



His confidence was given, after all, he was a level 483 [Viking Warrior]. Just when the group of fifteen all stepped onto the floor, a distant draconic roar that had the ability to shake one's soul, rang from the distance.

Immediately, the mana around the surrounding became turbulent, and howls of monsters started sounding intermittently from the forest. It was as if a command had been given to them by their king as all the monsters started heading towards the adventurers.

"Get into formation, they are coming," Morgress said taking out his broad sword and standing in the front.

The ground rumbled and when the mist finally cleared a little, they could see hundreds of different monsters charging towards them. There were hordes of Battle bears, Battle Grizzly, Sabre Lions, Warring Mandrills each extremely territorial and savage, charging at them.

Thus the humans and the monsters clashed like a huge messy meat grinding machine. Spells and skills flew everywhere killing dozens of monsters and raining blood everywhere.

The monsters might be ferocious from the point of view of average and strong adventurers; however, this team was different in essence in that even when they were all from different groups and backgrounds, they were all elite warriors capable of easily handling dozens of these monsters each.

Plus, unlike the mutated Fire Fanged Mouse and Fire Eater Rat, these monsters were just too ordinary for them and something they had faced many times before.

It didn't take time for the mages in the backline to conjure huge AOE magic to clear hordes of them and warriors in the front to clear up the rest. If one looked at how efficiently this team worked, they wouldn't be able to tell that they all belonged to different groups and were a ragtag team that was put together a week or two ago.

It wasn't like they were used to working together after diving inside the dungeon for a week, it was just that being all elite themselves with levels over 400 they just knew when to use their skills and abilities in coordination.

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Name- Lombus

Age- 237

Class- Viking Warrior

Skills- Analysis, Super Enhanced Strength, Body Enhancement, Fire Resistance, Pain Resistance, Blunt Damage Resistance, Super Enhanced Endurance, Super Defence, Sharpened Senses, Hundred Brutal Hammer Mastery, Berserk, Reinforcement, Brute Force, Brutal Swing

Class Specific Skills- [Viking's Heavy Slam], [Viking's Shout of Courage], [Viking's Force], [Viking's Indomitable Will].

408 Chapter 408

"Haaaaaahhhh!! [Viking's Heavy Slam]"...

BAM... a heavy hammer was swung around and slammed onto the ground, making a meaty paste of the Sabre Lion that was caught in it.

"Hahaha... easy, too easy. If the monsters of this dungeon are at this level, I think we have already conquered it" Lombus said resting his hammer on his shoulder. While the numbers of the monsters did make them work up a sweat, all was good after taking a potion or two.

"Lombus don't get careless we still don't know what lies ahead and where that creature is..." Thiago said putting his bow down.

"I know but this is what makes diving inside the dungeon so exciting, one cannot tell what will happen next. But in this case, I do. We are gonna conquer this dungeon after I beat the crap out of that calamity class monster... Hahaha".

Lombus made jokes, however, his guard was still up so Morgress didn't bother to comment. Now that they had all but defeated all the monsters on this floor, it was time they faced the being that was releasing that terrible aura.

Fortunately, they had Bryan's [Guide] and other people with varying detection skills thus they quickly found the mountain where the being was. It was then that they noticed the being that was hiding within the thick mist.

If one had to describe it, it was gigantic and had a long slithery body covered fully in black scales just like a snake. It was flying around using its fins and its huge violet eyes stared at them menacingly.

The moment the group noticed it, they became alert and got into formation.

"Incorrigible humans who dared to trespass into the domain of my lord, your greed knows no bound. Your actions have infuriated my lord and thus you shall now face his wrath" The Lightning Draconic Serpent hissed, a terrible amount of thunder started generating from it.

"Hmm? This one doesn't look like a warhorse to me. Were those adventurers so scared that they made a run without even looking at the appearance of the entity?" Lombus remarked ignoring the words of the Lightning Draconic Serpent.

"That cannot be, it's not just one or two adventurers whose account of the being matched up with the warhorse but dozens of them. They all cannot be lying at the same time" Morgress said thinking things through.

Nevertheless, that was not the point here.. the appearance of the being in front of them meant...

"So you are telling us there are two of those calamity class beings in this dungeon?" a mage said looking a little worried.

Calamity class, a term used and given by the adventurer's association to address those beings whose powers were enough to bring calamity around the world. Their powers were just like forces of nature, capable of destroying everything in their path and cause mass destruction. Hence the term Calamity.

"Hehh.. so there are two of them huh. This makes things a little more interesting but it is not something we can't handle" Lombus said brandishing his huge hammer.

On the sides, Bryan locked his brows and used his [Guide] ability to see what his skill had to say about this situation. Suddenly, his eyes opened wide and he looked towards the mountaintop where he saw a few people standing there.

His actions naturally didn't go unnoticed; the people around him too looked towards the mountain top and were immediately stunned.

"A-aren't they..." Their voices shook as they pointed up with trembling hands.

When the others heard that and looked up, their eyes too went wide with shock. There was no mistaking it, that appearance and that aura around them clearly matched with the description they were told about.

The beings standing on the mountaintop were their target and the reason behind them diving inside this dungeon, the Forest Spring Spirits.

Morgress and the Seven Swords immediately narrowed their eyes when they saw the Forest Spring Spirits standing on the mountaintop. For them, it can be said that they have quite a bit of history with this clan.

When they saw them with their own eyes, it naturally evoked some emotions inside them. If not for that mistake, their guild would by now be enjoying the rewards of their efforts and all the spirit orbs of those forest Spring spirits would be now in their possession.

Be that as it may, one cannot turn back time and redo their mistakes. Their Seven Swords guild has no choice but to complete the mission they had once started.

"Tch, so they are the ones that fucked our guild? Why have they come out on their own accord? Are they already conceding defeat?" Lombus said mockingly.

"Wrong"...

It was then that they heard another voice. A brilliant light lit up from a huge oval structure on the mountain top and a couple of figures arrived from within. What was amazing about the situation was that their arrival instead of making the group of humans tense, made them excited.

Some even started to droll and leer with their eyes looking at the figures that came out of the peculiar construct. A lineup of beauties were currently standing on the mountain top, each so pretty and beautiful that they attracted gazes from all around them.

Naturally, for these rough and tough bunch of group who have been suppressing their urges for this mission, to be served such a delicacy in front of them, how could they resist it? Except for a few, all of them were immediately smitten as they stared lewdly at the ladies, their eyes roaming all around their well-endowed curves.

Seeing the sickly gaze of these people, Irene and the Valkyrie sisters naturally felt disgusted as a faint bloodlust appeared in their eyes. The one who had just spoken now was Irene who brought the Valkyries along with her on Simon's order.

"Hnn~ really now, I want to gauge their eyes out and add it to my collection," Bea said with a smile that wasn't a smile. Her eyes had a dangerous glint about them and a crazy aura was subconsciously released by her.

"I know how you feel but you must wait for that is master's order" Annette said coldly.

"KuKu... hahahaha... what is this? I thought this mission to dive inside this dungeon would be a boring one, who knew that at the end of it such a treat was waiting for us".

"Right, look at each of them, they are all so beautiful that I want to immediately push them down and make them my slave".

"Don't worry, we will get to enjoy all of them. After we conquer the dungeon and the Demon Viscount residing here, they are all but ours".

Such talks were going on amongst the adventurers as they eyed the ladies on the mountaintop with a heated gaze.

Morgress who was a hedonist to begin with, was no exception to their charm. He even started imagining of a future where he was enjoying all these beauties.

"Forest Spring Spirits and even these beauties, I must say guys we have lucked out incredibly by taking this mission," He said smiling at his teammates.

"I would rather say that you have run out of your luck by entering this dungeon" At this moment a coarse demonic voice rang out across the floor and at the same time, the teleport gate located at the mountaintop lit up again.

'So you are finally here' Irene smiled, the Valkyries and Forest Spring Spirits immediately became happy the moment they heard the familiar voice.

The fifteen humans as if all manipulated by an invisible will, focused their eyes on the peculiar construct at the same time.

What came out of it, was a demon with long black hair and pale white skin. His crimson eyes that was glaring at them, was ruthless and filled to the brim with bloodlust. His two jagged horns looked like a crown decorating his head and he was holding a crimson sword that seemed like it was bathed in the blood of thousands of his enemies.

Just by standing there, the demon emitted a solid presence so wicked and bloody that it gave chills to others. That was not all, he was riding on top a nightmarish looking warhorse that radiate flames out of his body like a mane and had three pairs of demonic eyes that stared at them with menace.

The rider was so, but even his steed was as diabolical as him.

The moment Simon riding atop his Bloodthorn Demonic warhorse appeared, he instantly stole the attention of everyone present here towards him. Without even bothering about the humans who had their eyes fixated on him, he marched towards his subordinates and stood in front of them.

The Valkyries, the Forest Spring Spirits and even the lightning draconic serpent bowed its head welcoming his arrival. Simon nodded his head and asked them to raise their heads.

"I hope I'm not too late".

"Not at all my lord, you are just in time. It just so happens that these puny humans were getting on my nerve and I was about to show them their place" The Lightning draconic Serpent said locking its aura at the humans.

"You are told to stay your hands before my Lord gives the order. Are you trying to go against it?" The warhorse spoke asserting its dominance and silencing the former.

The beasts had their own hierarchy and the Bloodthorn demonic warhorse being who he was, was telling it not to get ahead of itself.

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p Name- Thiago

Age-209

Class- [Sharpshooter]

Skills- Analysis, Far Sight, Mana Enlargement, Sharpened Senses, Piercing Enhancement, Super Enhanced Agility, Super Enhanced Endurance, Sharpshooter Bow Mastery, Intuition, Hide Presence,

Class Specific Skills- [Object Enhancement], [Invisible Arrows], [Swift Notch], [Rapid Fire Arrow], [Unlimited Arrow], [Swift steps].

409 Chapter 409

As amazed as Simon was, he found it unnecessary to meddle in the affairs of his subordinates. He believed that the Bloodthorn demonic warhorse would be able to solve it without any skirmish. That being the case, it was time for him to show the intruder what they were up against.

"So you are the Master of this dungeon? the one who killed my brother?" Boris who was trying to restrain himself, finally couldn't hold himself and spoke out loud.

Hearing his words, the first reaction that Simon had was tilting his head in confusion. What was the other party going on about, when did he ever kill somebody's brother? In the first place, he did not even know the other party.

,m Ignoring the words of Boris, Morgress stepped forward and spoke on behalf of everyone "I assume you are the Demon Noble, the Master of this dungeon?".

"Indeed it is me" Simon acknowledge placing his gaze on the man who clearly emitted an aura stronger than anyone.

"Good, then I will not beat around the bush. I know that you are hiding the forest Spring Spirits inside your dungeon don't try to deny it, those five behind you are already proof enough. They are

the property of our guild which you have forcibly taken, it will be better for you to surrender them before its too late or else..." at the end of his sentence, Morgress flashed a mocking smile.

Simon was unfazed by those words, he looked towards the Five Forest Spring Spirits and gave them a comforting smile to relieve their worries.

"Or else what...?" Simon asked entertained by the choice of words of his guests.

Morgress shrugged his shoulder and said nonchalantly "Or else we will simply have to take them back with force. If we do waste our effort on that, we not only stop at the forest Spring Spirits but even take those beauties from your side and conquer the dungeon while we are at it".

Everyone present on the mountaintop starting from the Valkyries to the forest Spring spirits and the Lightning draconic serpent were infuriated by that comment. Even Irene who always had a calm and cool atmosphere about her, was showing signs of silent fury as her body was starting to release a terrible amount of cold aura.

Perhaps it was only Simon and the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse he was riding that remained unaffected. The latter was so simply because of his loyalty towards the former and being his steed it also carried the dignity and honour of its master. Thus it had to remain calm and collective no matter how infuriated it felt inside.

Simon on the other hand simply found the comment amusing, he was treating the person who said it as a child, naïve and ignorant.

"Hehe, really now, people are starting to take me and my dungeon lightly. As the master of this place I can't just sit around and let that happen can I?" Simon flashed a wicked smile that was very much so like the race that he belonged to.

However, if just words were enough to daunt Morgress and this elite group, they wouldn't be able to reach this floor in the first place.

"You say some truly amusing stuff demon. It is true that you have two calamity class subordinates under you but so what? If you think that this is enough to stop us, then you are sorely mistaken. Haha, it is still not too late for you to beg for mercy and surrender to us. Perhaps once we are done enjoying ourselves with those beauties around you, we might just leave you with the dungeon"



Morgress said evoking a burst of laughter from the humans around him. Finally, there was some changes in the eyes of Simon, his crimson eyes that up until now found it all amusing, had an aura of seriousness to them.

He was not the previous him who could tolerate being underestimated like that. Simon opened his hands wide and declared.

"When did I ever show the true extent of the might of my dungeon to you all? This is my dungeon and I make the rule, you are not just fighting against us, but all of us... [Wisp send all of them here]".

The moment Simon declared that, the teleportation gate started acting up once again and lit up with a brilliant light. In front of the astonished eyes of everyone, beings that had a humanoid appearance, started pouring out of it.

"W-what?!!" Morgress who had a mocking smile plastered on his face all this time felt it crumbling down right this instant. He was so shocked by the things that were happening right in front of his eyes that he had difficulty believing.

That's right, in front of his stupified eyes, out of that peculiar construct dozens no hundreds and even more of what seemed like golems made of metals were pouring out of it.

As someone who had reached this floor after tackling all the other floors, they knew how powerful each of these golems were. Not to mention how annoying each one was to face. And at this moment in front of their very eyes there were hundreds no thousands of them assembled on the mountain.

How could this not shock the living daylights out of anyone? Given that they were all elite, one or two or even a couple of them might not be a problem for them to face each individually. However, that number was clearly just too ridiculous.

It was like they were facing against a small army of golems made out of technology even unknown to them.

The advent of the Andromedas coming out of the teleportation gate, was enough to wipe that condescending smile off the face of these humans who thought they had everything in their hands already. And an expression of disbelief and even fear could be sensed from them.

Although Simon did not want to admit it, he really did feel good seeing their faltering confidence and feeling their fear. He was enjoying it so much that, it was almost like these feelings were being fed to him and it tasted like a delicacy that one couldn't get fed up off.

But this was just the beginning, he was going to savour it till the last bit.

Seeing that expression of Simon, Irene couldn't help smilingly comment "You really like to make a grand entrance don't you?".

With how he appeared activating his [Demonic eyes] skill and riding on top of his warhorse and even bringing along thousands of those Andromedas from the [Workshop], there was no way to convince her otherwise.

"I had to implant this feeling of fear within them or else they would start running rampant thinking the dungeon was too easy to conquer" Simon willingly admitted.

There was no way he going to allow them to do that. He needed to be a factor of fear and what better way other than bringing an army with him. Now then, it was time he showed these adventurers who dared to covet the things that are his, their place.

He lifted his hand and pointed his index finger towards the humans who no longer had their previous carefree attitude and made the same mocking smile they had towards them.

"Attack!!!" with those simple words, the thousands of Andromedas started making mechanical noises and their eyes locked onto the fifteen humans down below.

Whoosh... Whoosh... Whoosh... like missiles being launched, these Andromedas activated their jet boosters and jumped down towards the base of the mountain.

Morgress already had an ugly expression but it distorted even more when he saw the army of golems being given the command to attack them.

"Get into formation, even if they outnumber us greatly, they are still no match for us. We just need to conserve on till we cull down their numbers" Having no other choice the former guild master of the seven swords decided to engage the enemy and quickly shouted out orders.

Even if these people were suddenly fazed by the numbers of their enemy, they were still an elite group of humans with levels above 400 and years of experience under them. Thus, they quickly regained their composure and got into formation.

So what if their numbers were far beyond them, they who had fought against these golems before, knew how to handle them. They believed that they wouldn't be defeated simply by the numbers of their enemies.

Thus when the Adromedas descended down, a chaotic battle started that would decide who would survive till the end. Whether it would be the cold and unfeeling golems or would it be them who are individually far stronger than the golems.

When the battle started, it seemed like the humans had a clear advantage, they knew how to coordinate and attack and retreat together thus pushing the golems back.

However, things did not go as it was supposed to, the golems that could adapt to their enemies and learn continuously through the shared information network of theirs.

Soon they started spotting the faults and problems with the formation of the humans and targeted that specific areas. Thus rendering their formation useless after some time.

With the collapse of their formation, the humans started spreading out thus giving the golems even more room to attack them. Although individually they were no match for the humans who were all above level 400 and could destroy them after a few moves, every little damage and the energy that they made them spent chipped away at the adventurer's strength.

Humans were after all not machines and only had a limited amount of mana and stamina. Their stats made them powerful; however, they still needed time to rest and recover their energy.

410 Chapter 410

Though they could use potions and elixirs, it was just delaying the inevitable. Unlike them, the Andromedas can continuously pressure them without tiring out and the more time passed, the more stronger the Andromedas became.

Of course, the Andromedas weren't actually becoming stronger, it's just the humans slowly running out of stamina. Additionally, the Andromedas were continuously scanning them, their attack patterns and skills, and processing all that data to find the optimal strategy to fight them.

After a while, the Adromedas started adopting the tactic of attacking from the distance and mainly targeted the mages in the backlines providing powerful AOE magic.

"It's a chaos down there. It's too bad, I wanted to show them hell myself but from the looks of it, there won't be many of them surviving after this" Bea said enjoying the show that was going on at the base of the mountain.

Every time a person was injured and blood flowed out she would have an ecstatic expression and her body would wiggle continuously.

Except for Annette, Emma and Bianca who stay composed during all of it, Alice was no different. She would imitate holding guns with her hand continuously and utter pew pew pointing at the humans like a gunslinger.

"Those ones look different, when did you ask the Wisp to build all those?" Irene came near him and asked.

Still sitting atop the warhorse, Simon smiled at her question and asked a question himself.

"So you could tell huh?".

"Hmph, who do you think took care of your dungeon while you were gone? Although I don't know much about these golems that you call Andromeda, I can tell that those ones over there are different than the others" Irene remarked.

"You are right, those ones are Mark Ten and are different than Mark Eleven. Not only are they more stronger, but they are also far more agile and better at combat" Simon explained.

He who was the most knowledgeable about them, knew them inside out. A few days ago when Simon discovered the mountain that was producing all those ores on his main floor, he contacted Wisp and asked him to send a few Andromedas that could mine them.

Additionally, he also ordered it to start manufacturing other versions of Andromeda as soon as the workshop and the assembly line is ready. Though it was a tough order, the Null elemental still managed to exceed his expectation and produce twenty of them in the span of a few days.

If it's the Andromeda Mark Ten, they would be able to handle a person above level 350 and could contend against these people for a while or at least drain them of their energy.

"Huff.. Huff.. their numbers are just too much" one of the mage a powerful one at that said, by now he had taken out a few dozens of these golems and had used up all of his stock of mana recovering potions.

However, the number of Adromedas was just too much and the pressure did not seem to be reducing. He fired one more intermediate-tier gale magic and lowered his staff to take some rest when suddenly his teammate shouted from behind.

"Watch out you fool".

But it was already too late, one of the Andromedas mark ten broke out of the frontlines and used its chainsaw to attack him.

"Dammit... Gale Magic Mastery- Gale Wrath" a huge tunnel of gale was formed capturing the golem inside it before shooting it towards the distance like a cannon.

"Are you alright?" his teammate came towards him but was stunned the next moment. The mage who was just attacked had a huge chainsaw inserted in his stomach from which blood was continuously pouring out.

THUD... A few seconds later his body hit the floor and stayed motionless there forever.

With the fall of the mage marking the first casualty, the humans started becoming more frantic and one could even feel their panic from the mountaintop. Even if the Adromedas were not their match, a thousand of them was simply just too much for them to handle given that their formation had already fallen.

It was so impossible that it was straight up bullying. As more time passed and the Andromedas fell, the reserves of potions the humans brought was running out and along with that, their energy too.

Some of them who were not careful enough, died under the combined Blast Missiles from dozens of Andromedas who were spamming their missiles from the distance.

BOOOM...BOOMM... no matter where one looked, continuous sounds of explosion echoed out and destruction spread everywhere. The death on the human side continued to skyrocket until there was only twelve of them remaining standing.

These eleven people were far stronger than the ones that died and were on the upper spectrum in terms of levels. Most of them were above level 450 and around the borders of level 500.

"This is stupid, there is no end to them. We are simply exhausting ourselves by fighting them. You all follow me, we are gonna break through the encirclement and dash towards the mountaintop" Morgress said swinging his broadsword and generating a powerful amount of thunder reducing the attacks of the few of the Andromedas into nothing.

Lombus, Thiago, Sable, Kendric and Orson, all of the seven swords excluding Boris, nodded their heads and followed behind Morgress who tried to make a beeline towards the mountain.

On another corner of the battlefield, Bryan was similarly dealing with the Adromedas that came his way, his stats that was centred around his Agility, gave him quite the edge on the Andromedas and his tricky skills came at an angle that was hard to avoid.

The way he fought, seemed like he was more adept in dealing with humanoid beings rather than monsters. [Swift Backstab] appearing behind one of the Andromedas like a shadow, Bryan plunged his sword into the gap between their armors and destroyed their circuits internally before jumping back and avoiding the blast.

"Phew, that makes twenty three of them. But holy moly, there are just way too many of them. Hmm? What are those guys planning?" seeing that the Morgress and his team were making a formation and running towards the mountain top, a mysterious glint appeared in his eyes.

"[Templar Stealth]" reciting his skill, Bryan's body melded with his surroundings and disappeared from the Andromedas range of observation.

It was not only Bryan who found the weakness in the detection ability of the andromedas but also Boris who was an elite assassin bordering around the edges of level 500. He deployed a similar stealth skill and disappeared from the surveillance of the andromedas.

"[Storm Hammer] [Brutal Swing]" Lombus with his wild charge, brandished his huge hammer and pushed back any and all Andromedas trying to block their way with his overbearing skills. He along

with Morgress and Kendric would hold the frontlines, Thiago would provide timely aid with his sniping skills, while Sable and Orson provided backup with their magic.

The members of the seven swords were used to working together and knew each other's skills and magic well, thus their coordination was far better than the rag tag team that was put together by the sea god's trident.

Even amidst the pressure of hundreds of andromedas, they were somehow able to reach the mountaintop where Simon and the other were. And the moment they did, the constant barrage from the golems stopped.

CLAP... CLAP... CLAP...

"That was a splendid display of teamwork; I must say you people are quite good" They heard the jubilant voice of the demon that was enjoying their struggle and his mocking applause.

As angry and impulsive Morgress was, he still restrained himself from immediately charging at the other party and took a deep breath of air to calm his heart.

"You have achieved your objective and reached the mountaintop so what comes now? Need I remind you that there are still more than eight hundred Andromedas remaining for you all to fight" Simon snapped his finger and the Andromedas spread around the surroundings immediately flew towards the mountaintop.

Looking at their line-up, one wouldn't be able to help but cower and at the same time marvel at their numbers that made them look just like a wall in the sky.

At Simon's command, they all activated their light blasters, blast missiles and locked on to six humans who already looked quite tired.

Seeing that they were targeted and surrounded by an army of golems, Morgress raised his hands and uttered words that made the teammates around him astonished.

"Wait.. wait... we give up, the numbers on your side are clearly too much, we surrender".

"W-what are you saying guild master? How can we give up just like that when we are this close to the demon?" Lombus shouted, angry and in disbelief that his guild master would decide to give up when they were so close to victory.

From his perspective, as long as they can kill the demon controlling the golems, they would be able to easily achieve the victory in this fight.

It was not only Lombus who was stunned by Morgress's decision to surrender, but all the other seven swords were too. However, when they observed his eyes and behavior, they immediately knew he was planning something and decided to go along with the pretense he was cooking without any question.

Though Lombus with his muscle brains was the only one to not get the clue and behave like an absolute moron.

The Valkyrie sisters looked at the group of humans who suddenly had a change of behavior after reaching the mountaintop and narrowed their pretty eyes suspiciously. It was not only them but even the Lightning draconic Serpent and Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse had a dubious look on their face.