

D. of Pride 491

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The orc general was someone who even dared to confront the orc king back during the night of the moon dance. He had also shown his abilities to be nothing like the weakest general as the orcs called him.

He had proven his ability by knocking Berirock away in one move and establishing his position. As much as he hated it, Berirock had to admit that the latter was stronger than him, stronger than any of the orc generals.

On top of that, he was also an orc shaman. If a guy like that said that he had a plan, Berirock could hope that the plan worked. Other than that, he was also concerned about the orcs in the frontlines who were being butchered like livestock by the Gir brothers. Thus he had no other choice but to leave Berigard to take care of the ogre with the crimson horn.

Berirock and Berimond left their station; however, Giz-Mogo did not do anything, he just looked at them with derision. When his eyes shifted back to the last orc general, his brows arched when he found that the latter had no plans of leaving like his other companions.

"Hmm? Why are you still not moving? Do you perhaps not care about your subordinates?" Mogo asked, his question was only replied with a casual gaze by Berigard.

The orc general turned towards his two trusted orc commanders and ordered them something even he knew was asking too much.

"Bellock, Berimarch... lay your life down if you must, but stop one of the brown horns alongside the other orc generals. You are free to fight however way you want and use as many orcs as you want. Is that understood?".

Beirgard did not speak much other than that, he had a stern expression on his face as always and nobody knew what he was thinking.

If it were other orcs who were given such an atrocious order, they would no doubt flip out or show their anger in some way. However, Bellock and Belmarch, who were extremely loyal to Berigard, did not show any such thing and dutifully nodded their head.

Even when they knew the order was practically like a death warrant for them, they still bowed towards their general with utmost respect one last time before leaving their post.

Berigard watched them go and only after their silhouettes had mixed with the many orcs fighting in the frontlines, did he tear them away and fixed it on the ogre who seemed like he was enjoying a rather good show.

His earlier stern expression was gone replaced by an angry face that said that they had a lot to vent about.

"Oi..Oi... don't tell me you are thinking of taking me head on?" Giz-Mogo wasn't an idiot, he could tell what the orc was thinking by sending all of his subordinates away.

"Lets do this Berigel, Berimist... Activate [Soul Bones]" Berigard whispered a few words and touched the bone fragments on his locket. The moment he did so, the locket started vibrating and a special connection was created between him and the soul bones.

"Hmph... I guess orcs are a really stupid race to not even realise this big of a gap between them and their opponent. Be it so, let me teach you an important lesson today" Giz-Mogo stated in a foul tone.

The fact that his opponent thought that they can take him on their own, upset him very much. He was someone who was above level 570, although it was not the highest level around in the ogre tribe, it was nonetheless, still near the top and Giz-Mogo was proud of that.

Never did he think that he would be slighted by someone who judging by their aura haven't even reached the disaster class.

Giz-Mogo was just about to release his suppressed aura and show his enemy who he was up against, when a [Wind Bullet] that appeared out of nowhere, flew towards his head.

Judging by the rotation and the mana within the wind bullet, it was no ordinary magic but a highly compressed single-unit advance magic.

Giz-Mogo's eyes narrowed to a pin and his quick reflexes allowed him to shift his head just in time to dodge the bullet.

DRIP... DRIP... Astonished, the ogre touched his ear only to realise that it was hurt. "How can that be?" the [Wind Bullet] or one could say the [Tempest Bullet] had materialised in front of him without any indication or fluctuation of mana.

It had appeared so suddenly that had it not been for him possessing good reflexes, he would have been hit for sure. Giz-Mogo was surprised but it compared to nothing when he saw that dozen more [Tempest Bullet] were waiting for him.

WHIRRRRR... it was like a turret or a machine gun, the speed of these [Tempest Bulets] were so fast that they made a buzzing noise as if space was being torn apart.

Unlike the last time when Giz-Mogo was able to dodge the single [Tempest Bullet], this time he wasn't that lucky. Most of the bullets clearly hit their mark this time and those that didn't bore a hole through the ground.

"TCH..." A loud clicking noise was heard "To think that I would have to resort to using my mana aura against such an inferior opponent".

Giz-Mogo commented, when the dust from the barrage of [Tempest Bullet] settled down, an ogre with blood red aura enveloping them like armour, appeared in front of Berigard. They were completely unscathed other than the earlier wound they had suffered.

"You bastard making me needlessly waste mana" Gi-Mogo commented, even though he had not suffered any wound thanks to the mana aura around him, maintaining it took a lot of mana. [mana Aura] was the beast version of [Mana Armour].

Giz-Mogo was about to vent out his mind when he saw another round of magic starting to materialise in front of him out of nowhere.

"You bastard... that is enough" the crimson horn of Giz-Mogo shined causing a burst of mana to erupt out of him causing a fierce shockwave that targeted the area where the orc general was.

Berigard stopped conjuring his magic and with a swift movement from his staff, he immediately disappeared from his spot.

"What?!" the next time he appeared, he was already out of the range of the shockwave causing an astonished yelp to leak out from Giz-Mogo.

Nonetheless, this movement also revealed to the latter what kind of shenanigans was in play here.

"Space magic huh... Tch, you got some annoying magic in your hand".

Such quick movement as if teleportation, was only possible with space magic. Even the attacks that seemingly manifested without any indication could only be possible if space magic was in play.

That being said, not just anyone could simultaneously use two elements of magic at once not to mention one was even a super rare space magic. Although the magic he cast wasn't amalgamation magic, for the space magic to augment other magic without taking over it, perhaps only the caster, Berigard would be able to understand what it took to achieve something like that.

The space around Berigard trembled and he disappeared once again. Whoosh... whoosh... whoosh... immediately, a few spells of tremor and gale magic appeared out of thin air and targeted Giz-Mogo.

The latter used his own skill [Shockwave Burst] to counter the magic. Although the magic of this calibre isn't capable of doing much damage to him, it was still annoying to get hit by them since it hurt.

Plus being a class higher than his opponent, Mogo felt it was shameful to even get scratched by his opponent. It was for this reason that he resorted to using his mana aura.

The moment his magic failed, Berigard disappeared from the spot he was in, and appeared in another place. Like that, he kept on harassing and taking advantage of his space magic and the large reserve of mana he has thanks to being an orc shaman.

Berigard would conjure one magic after another with quick succession and using the space magic, he would teleport it near the ogre before the latter even got a clue of its incantation.

BOOM... BOOMM... BOOMM... magic like a storm, hailed down on Giz-Mogo. Earthen boulders as huge as a small mountain came crashing down on him, other times it would be tornadoes with razor sharp wind capable of tearing through even a block of steel.

Berigard's magic was fierce leaving no room for his enemy to breathe. However, Giz-Mogo wasn't just your ordinary ogre. He was an ogre born with a crimson horn. He easily matched the aggression of his opponent with an equal amount of force and nullified all attacks conjured by Berigard.

Just like all other times, right after his attack failed, Berigard used space magic to relocate to a different place and continue his assault. However, this time Giz-mogo was prepared for it. He had calculated the place where Berigard would appear next and was ready with an attack.

Ogres were known for their powerful attacking abilities and amongst them, those born with crimson or higher colour horns, were regarded as the embodiment of destruction.

An ogre's power mainly resided in their horns. Thus when their horns shined brightly, it was an indication that they were using a powerful skill.

The crimson horn of Giz-mogo shined and the aura around his entire body focused around his fist which generated a powerful force when swung forward.

[Aura Blast] a skill that used mana aura possessed by a disaster class being to create a compressed attack that travelled through the air breaking even the speed of sound.

BOOM... the sound of air being torn was apparent as the punch was thrown and the [aura Blast] which appeared in the shape of a fist flew so fast that it was already upon Berigard the moment he relocated to a new place.

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Even the orc general himself did not predict this attack coming and thus was unable to invoke the space magic to run away in time.

BAM... a muffled sound like that of thunder, was heard as Berigard was hit squarely by the attack.

"Hmph, that ought to teach you some lesson. Too bad that you won't be alive to learn it" Giz-Mogo patted his hands after executing his skill. The [Aura Blast] attack was one of his most advanced skills and was powerful enough to claim the life of anyone below the disaster class.

Naturally, he thought that the orc would be done for after being hit by his attack. Though the next second his eyes widened to their limits when he saw a silhouette come out unscathed. What's more astonishing was that, just like the mana aura around him, there was a similar kind of aura enveloping the orc.

The aura slowly wiggled around and quickly repaired the damage it had suffered. Seeing this scene, Giz-Mogo had no doubt in his mind that the aura enveloping Berigard was none other than the [Mana Aura] only a beast above a disaster class should possess.

"What?! This... how is this possible? Y-you have reached the disaster class?" Unable to contain his shock, the ogre asked.

Berigard was silent, he neither confirmed nor denied what the ogre said. This was a secret that only he knew about.

Generally, Berigard shouldn't be able to perform a technique that only a disaster class being could use since he hadn't yet reached that level yet. Not to mention, his physique which was more adept for magic, was unsuitable for a technique such as [Mana Aura] that was used by warriors.

No matter how genius of an orc Berigard was, it would be impossible even for him to execute such a technique. That is if you didn't count the soul bones that he possessed.

Soul Bones were a special object that could be harvested only from a beast that have unlocked its beast inheritance. However, unlike the beast inheritance which contains all of the power of that beast inside the core stone, Soul Bone is something that contains a part of the spirit of that beast.

It is different from beast inheritance in that one cannot learn the abilities and the power of the beast from the Soul Bone and can only use their abilities through the consent of the spirit.

Additionally, just like how a beast only has one core stone, only one soul bone can grow inside the beast. Another thing to note was that the appearance of a soul bone is even rarer than getting the beast inheritance of a beast from their core stone since not every beast grows a spirit.

The reason why Berigard's friends, the beasts in that laboratory were able to form soul bone even though they haven't unlocked their beast inheritance was because of the experimentations done on them.

The laboratory he was sent to, was particularly researching on developing Soul Bones and had it not been for that outbreak in the lab, and their subsequent sentence to death in the coliseum, he too would have had to go through the same process until he developed a soul bone and lost his self in the process.

Fortunately or unfortunately, the researchers weren't able to get their hands on the Soul Bones that they were researching so badly. In the end, Berigel's and Berimist's Soul Bones had fallen into his hands.

Anyways, it was thanks to the assistance of the spirits of his friends inside the would bones that he was able to use abilities beyond his current level and class and stop an ogre far beyond his level.

"No, judging by your presence, you are yet to reach the disaster class. How are you doing this, what kinds of tricks you are using?" Giz-Mogo spoke, it could be seen from his words that he was unable to accept nor understand how the orc managed to use [Mana Aura].

Taking advantage of this moment when his enemy was in a state of bewilderment, Berigard started conjuring Tempest magic, the only magic in his arsenal capable of hurting the ogre.

Wild winds raged chaotically across the Blackfield affecting even the weather itself. Small and big twisters appeared everywhere disturbing the war that was going on in full force.

The other orc generals who were currently engaged in a fierce fight with Gir-brothers, also stopped their assaults at this moment to glance in the direction where they felt an enormous amount of mana congregating.

The power of an advanced magic especially AOE was so powerful that it is capable of even changing the topography and tipping any situation in your favour. But then again it also takes an enormous amount of mana, concentration and time to invoke a magic like that.

The time that is needed to cast an AOE advanced magic is so long that it is enough for the other party to reach where you are and attack you dozens of times. Especially in a place like a battlefield, if one invokes an AOE magic, they are the first one to be targeted by their enemies.

As could be seen earlier when Berigard was attacked by one of the ogres that toppled down the wall just by invoking an AOE intermediate tier magic. Resorting to using AOE advanced magic that

takes even longer, one could only see it as a foolish choice, one that only someone who is truly desperate, would think of doing.

"Grururu... is that the foolish orc that dared to challenge Sir Giz-Mogo? No wonder, he does have a few screws loose. To think that you all had your hopes on that guy... Grururu" Gir-Rago who was engaged in a battle with Berirock, cackled.

"Shut up!!" Berirock barked and re-engaged in a life-and-death battle with his enemy.

'Berigard what are you planning?'

The area where Berigard and Giz-Mogo were fighting, was an empty space filled with the marks left behind by their battle. The area was equally avoided by both the ogres and orcs so as to not get caught up in the aftermath of their battle.

At this moment, the place was the very eye of the storm with a humongous hurricane taking its form. Berigard who was at the centre of all of this, was fully focused on conjuring the magic as he released wave after wave of powerful mana which was then channelled into the magic.

"This is the first time that someone got on my nerve this much. To think that you would try to conjure an advanced magic before me. Looks like I have been severely underestimated. Did you really think I would be unable to stop you from casting your magic?" The ogre muttered in frustration.

"Very well, then I'll let you feast your eyes on what it means to be a disaster class" The moment Giz-Mogo said that, the power he had been suppressing all this while, was released in full force.

It was as if a dam had burst open, the ripples released out from his aura shook the ground for miles. The pressure from a disaster class being realising their full power, was so great that it bore down on everyone present on the battlefield like a mountain.

The might of an ogre born with a crimson horn was displayed at this moment.

Giz-Mogo flashed a satisfied smile as he felt the power rushing through his body. The crimson aura enveloping him, turned darker and darker until it looked like his body was on fire. Afterwards, he rushed towards the stationary Berigard, stopped when he was only a few meters away from the latter and delivered his most powerful skill.

[Force Bomb] a skill that gathers the entire aura around the user into a single point to create a sphere.

Giz-Mogo clasped both of his palms together and focused all of the mana aura around his body towards his palm. Little by little, the aura he released started dropping, devoured by something that was on his palm until all the mana aura around him was gone.

The entire face of the ogre had become pale; nonetheless, he did not stop and put all of his remaining power into it.

Zzzz... at this moment, the space around Giz-Mogo fluctuated and a crimson light started seeping out of his palm.

The aura that seemed to have been devoured by something appeared once again. Though this time, the pressure that bore down on everyone, was many times heavier and more powerful than before.

When he opened his palms completely, a small sphere silently floated in his hand. The sphere that was created from the skill, was as small as a golf ball and was blood-red in colour. At a glance, it looked quite beautiful to look at... that is if one discounted the berserk amount of aura it emitted and the distortion of space around it.

After the skill was ready, Giz-Mogo glanced at the distant Berigard and slowly pushed the crimson sphere towards the latter.

To the onlookers, it seemed as if the sphere was travelling at the speed of a snail. Though in actual case, it tore through the space and was upon Berigard in just seconds astonishing all the peering eyes.

Giz-Mogo intending to teach Berigard a real lesson, did not hold even a bit and used his full power, the power of a disaster-class ogre to dish out his most powerful skill.

Even if the orc was somehow able to use the mana aura skill, he was sure that this attack would end this fight.

Berigard who was currently invoking an advanced magic, still needed a few couples of seconds to complete his magic and during this period of time, he cannot spare a moment of attention somewhere else much less move from his position.

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In any case, the attack if connects was sure to do its job. The skill used by Giz-Mogo was called [Force bomb] for a reason and that reason was none other than the explosion the skill created in the aftermath similar to a bomb.

The radius of the explosion might not be much when compared to AOE magics. However, it was equivalent in might to a powerful AOE advanced magic.

The [Force Bomb] approached Berigard and when it made contact with the [Mana Aura] around him, it detonated expelling every bit of aura condensed inside it around Berigard.

BOOOOMMM... there was a bright crimson flash and then moments later came the sound that was so thundering that it could be heard from hundreds of miles away.

The earth cried and a terrifying shockwave that travelled through the ground, hit all of the participants present in the war even blowing many of them away.

When they came to themselves, they were astounded to find a large cloud of dust envelop the place where Berigard was.

The fierce tempest that was raging around that area, was gone and even the weather was returning back to normal, an indication that Berigard had lost. The ogres cheered wildly whereas the orcs who were regaining some spirits after those words from Berigard, dropped to the pits of despair after that loss.

Perhaps they were destined to lose today.

BANG... BANG... Berirock and Berimond who were fighting the Gir brothers who were equal to them in strength, got distracted at this moment and suffered a blow that dealt quite a damage to them.

Coughing a few times, they picked themselves up, their first reaction was not to look at their wound but to glance towards the direction where Berigard was. One cannot see his figure through the

smoke but from how his presence had completely disappeared and how the magic he was invoking had dispersed, they came to the same conclusion as others.

Except for two orcs who even while being injured from head to toe, were giving their all to fight one of the Gir-brothers who was far stronger than them.

"This is getting annoying... why am I the only one to get weaklings as his opponent? You guys are not even good enough for a warmup".

Gir-Rego said, he looked in the direction where one of their leaders possessing the crimson horn was fighting and couldn't but click his tongue in envy.

A powerful opponent like that orc, he wanted to fight them himself. However, he got stuck with two opponents who were clearly inferior to him.

Needless to say, the opponents he was fighting, were none other than Bellock and Belmarch. In fact, after fighting with them, Gir-Rego could tell that there was a vast difference in level between them.

He was someone who was slowly approaching the max level of his class. That is to say, his level was above 480. Whereas, compared to him Bellock and Belmarch had just entered the Super class and were around level 411-415.

A difference of more than 60 levels wasn't something that could be easily covered... that is unless one possesses a super powerful item. There was no way the orc commander had any thus they were being easily manhandled by Rego who had yet to display his full power.

In some other case, he would have already disposed of his opponent by now instead of playing with them. However, they were ordered to keep a few strong individuals who are willing to submit alive.

Additionally, when he looked around at the entire orc army, there were no longer any strong people whom he could pass his time by fighting. Thus he had no choice but to play with his opponents a little more carefully and make sure that they didn't break down very soon.

Bellock and Belmarch picked themselves back up, they were drenched in their own blood with hideous looking wounds everywhere and a side of their chest caved in. Nevertheless, they always got back up whenever they were brought down.

The orders that they received from their general was clear. They had to stop the orc in front of them no matter what, even if they have to lay their lives down for it. They also knew the vast difference in strength between them and their enemy.

However that did not daunt them from fighting, on the contrary, the light in their eyes was yet to go out, it was trying to find a way to delay the battle for as long as possible.

"Hmm? I must say that you guys are quite tenacious for an orc. However, it has no meaning without any strength. Well, I do feel pity for you all, your king has abandoned you and the one orc that showed you guys hope is dead".

It is so sad that even I, a member of another race am having sympathy for you. Hmm... that's right how about this. Now that all of your hopes are crushed why don't you two fall on your knees and call me master? If you swear to become my subordinates, I will ask Sir Giz-Mogo to show some leniency towards you".

Gir-Rego stated, confidently. From his perspective, he was going out of his way and doing a great favour for the two orcs. He thought that given such an opportunity, they would instantly pounce on it.

However, he was proven wrong. Instead of pouncing on his offer, they pounced at him instead with their battered bodies.

"Tch... It seems like you still don't understand your situation. In that case, let me beat it into you" Rego said utilising a skill he had been saving up until now. [Greater Force], a skill that increases the damage of an upcoming attack by a few levels.

BANG... "Shockwave Blast]" the attack hit the two orc commanders making them fly away like a broken kite.

"Give up" Rego repeated once again.

"Shut up!!"...

"What?!" thinking that he heard incorrectly, Rego asked once again.

"Shut up!! there is no way our tribe of orcs have lost yet, not until lord Berigard is down" the two orc commanders shouted in unison.

"Lord Berigard? Are you perhaps talking about that orc who was taken down by Sir Giz-Mogo? Don't be stupid, there is no way that orc can survive that attack. Forget about surviving, I doubt if he even has his body intact... Gurururu".

Gir-Rego was no stranger to the skill [Force Bomb] that Giz-Mogo used, in fact, he had seen it quite a few times in the past used by the other powerful ogres. Thus he knew how powerful it was.

Forget about the orc named Berigard who wasn't even a disaster class yet, even beasts in the disaster class would be knocked out if they took that attack head-on like that orc.

Berigard surviving that was impossible, that was the thought of every ogre and even the orcs.

The battlefield which had quietened down for a while, raged once again with the increased enthusiasm of the ogres.

Alongside having levels and tactics, morale also played a large role in a war in that it gives a psychological boost to overcome all trials to the individual fighting in the war.

An army high in morale is sure to win the war seven out of ten times. Similarly, an army without any morale is doomed to get defeated. The effect of such a psychological factor is by no means a certain win factor but it cannot be discounted either.

As could be seen in this war, the orc army although inferior in quality compared to the black ogre army, was by no means weaker if you accounted for their large number. Perhaps it would have been even possible for them to fend off the ogre army or even possibly defeat them.

However, the reason why they were losing so fast, was because the morale of their army had hit rock bottom. They could no longer see any hope of victory thus the resistance that they gathered was also very weak.

The orc army was starting to fall, their formation was also collapsing soon. Even a bystander who did not have any military knowledge would be able to see that.

The area where the [force Bomb had gone off...

"Hmph, so their resistance has finally died down huh. Tch... we wasted quite a lot of our time, now we also have to go and search for that item the lord Gish-Bagh mentioned and capture that orc that turned tails and fled... Hmm?".

Giz-Mogo remarked after looking at the quickly falling orc army. He was just about to turn around to leave when all of a sudden he felt the mana vibrating around this part of the land. This fleeting quickly became stronger and stronger until he could literally see the turbulence of mana in the air.

"What going on?" Perplexed, he muttered internally. Soon his confusion turned into astonishment when he realised that a fierce tempest was starting to take form around the battlefield.

"It can't be..." Giz-Mogo hurriedly turned around and faced the crater. There he could see a silhouette emerge from the hole that his skill had created. Needless to say, that figure was none other than Berigard who should have been blown into smithereens after taking his attack.

'What was going on?' the ogre couldn't believe his eyes. His astonishment turned into absolute bewilderment when he saw the damage the orc suffered was only minimal.

Berigard who had emerged from the crater, did indeed look a little worse for the wear with a few injuries here and there. However other than that there was no other damage the [Force Bomb] should have caused that could be seen on his body.

It was only natural for Giz-mogo to become instantly gobsmacked after seeing that his strongest attack, the skill he put all of his energy into managed to only scratch his enemy.

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Whoosh... it was not only him, the tempest also attracted the attention of the ravaging ogres and the dispirited orcs. They too were stunned to find that the individual that they thought had died, come out of their grave.

What's more, they looked completely fine. For the orcs, it was a surprise that brought hope back to their eyes but for the ogres, it was an alarming sight to see. He might have looked fine to others, but the person himself knew how bad his current condition was.

Berigard took deep breaths of air and stopped himself from puking out a mouthful of blood. The [Force Bomb] attack from Giz-Mogo, dealt quite a significant damage to him. If not for the mana aura of Berigel, he might have really been blown to smithereens.

Yes, Berigard due to his extreme tenacity and sheer force of will, was able to simultaneously divert his attention into his advanced magic as well as maintain the mana aura around him. A feat like that was something that even powerful mages above level 600, would be unable to reproduce.

What's more, Berigard did it while still under level 500. Though it wasn't like doing something as atrocious as that did not come with a cost. The price that he had to pay for doing something like that was the total depletion of his mana pool.

Right now, he barely had any MP left which was a big concerning factor since the advance magic wasn't complete yet. On top of that, the mental strain was immense, right now Berigard couldn't even see properly around him.

"T-that is impossible... there is no way you can survive after taking my attack" Giz-Mogo was in denial. This was the first time that he had witnessed an opponent who did not go down even after he was forced to use [Force Bomb].

While he was lost in that emotion, Berigard kept on casting his magic. He did not bother providing the ogre with an explanation. The [Mana Aura] that he was using originated from the soul bone of Berigel who was a powerful calamity class beast.

Naturally, his mana aura would be many times stronger than the likes of a disaster class beast like Giz-Mogo.

To compensate for the required mana to complete the magic, Berigard even went as far as to overload the core stone of his new staff.

Crack... the core stone broke apart and a powerful amount of mana originating from the disaster class beast to whom the core stone belonged, flooded out of it and was quickly channelled into the magic.

RUMBLE... the weather made rumbling noises as clouds started brewing in the sky above the Blackfield. Wind started picking up speed fast until it turned into a powerful typhoon which disappeared into the sky as soon as it appeared.

"[Tempest magic Mastery]... Hand of Zephyrus" with those last syllables from Berigard, all of the wind disappeared from the battlefield and a piercing eagle cry echoed out.

At this moment, whether it be orcs or the ogres or even some people who were watching from the shadows. All of them as if beckoned by something, instinctively looked up at the sky. Right at this instant, the brewing cloud looming overhead was pierced by an emerald green claw that was more than a thousand meters big.

The claw was made entirely of wind, emerald green in colour and was extremely beautiful to look at. However, as beautiful as it looked, it was equally dangerous too. The emerald green claw was not made with just any wind, but razor sharp winds that was moving at an extremely fast speed.

The claw or rather the hand of Zephyrus was one of the AOE magic of the tempest element. It was an extremely powerful magic capable of crumbing mountains and flattening lands. Other than that, due to being a magic from the wind attribute, it was extremely fast perhaps only outmatched by Electro and Light attribute.

As soon as the emerald green claw materialised, on the command of Berigard, it dropped towards the place where he felt Giz-Mogo's presence.

The ogre felt an intense aura lock onto him snapping him out of his thoughts. He tried to immediately run away from the place but was slammed into the ground just from the wind pressure coming off from the claw.

Giz-Mogo struggled, he didn't bring his mount with him and the wind pressure from the magic was far too intense for him to get out of the range of magic in time. Adding to the fact that he was exhausted after his last attack, it looked quite bad for him.

The scene of an ogre with a crimson horn pathetically running away from Berigard was imprinted in the eyes of every onlooking orcs and ogres who were locked in a fight. Nobody expected that an ogre who had entered the disaster class, a realm only their king was able to reach, would be forced to run like that.

For the orcs, it was a blessing that they did not see coming. If the magic landed successfully, it was possible to defeat the ogre. The orcs couldn't help having their hopes up. If they defeated that ogre who was the leader of the black ogre army, it would become the turning point for their victory.

At this moment of need when they needed their king the most, Berigard turned out to become that pillar of support that they were seeking. Every orc on the battlefield no matter if it was Diluvian High orcs, High orcs or just normal orcs, they all looked at Berigard with a new light.

On the other areas of the battlefield, Berirock and Berimond disengaged with their enemies after their attacks nullified the other. The battle was a fierce one with powerful skill flying everywhere; nevertheless, it failed to attract any attention since all eyes were diverted towards the place where the main fighting involving two of their leaders was taking place.

"How did that orc manage to survive sir Giz-Mogo's attack?"Gir-Rago commented, his tone was a little off-putting.

"GUGAGA... it seems like you have underestimated our tribe too much. Even though that guy hasn't reached disaster class, he is more than capable of manhandling you leader" Berirock laughed.

Contrary to Giz-Rago, he was in a happy mood after seeing Berigard survive that attack and turn the situation completely in its head. Honestly, even he was surprised to see Berigard surviving that not to mention being capable of casting such a powerful magic.

He felt like a fool to have challenged Berigard and at the same time, he realised that Berigard had held much of his power when attacking him. He also understood why the guy was so confident when confronting the orc king.

Turned out that Berigard was already this powerful even before reaching the disaster class. Since Berirock and Berimond weren't aware of the soul bones possessed by Berigard, they thought that it was all his power.

Gir-Rago who was facing Berirock, was annoyed by that comment made by the latter. Nevertheless, he did not snap out and instead flashed a derisive smile.

On another side of the battlefield, Bellock and Belmarch who were barely holding on by a strand of life were not at all fazed after seeing their lord surviving that attack, on the contrary, they were operating with the thought that he would be fine from the start.

It was not that they were aware of the Soul Bones and knew that Beirgard would be fine, it was just the faith and trust they had in him that made them not question his survival.

Just like Gir-Rago, Gir-Rego too flashed a derisive smile when he saw the light of hope appear in the eyes of the orcs before in an unexciting battle once again.

The [Hand of Zephyrus] came down on Giz-Mogo causing an enormous storm to ensue out in the aftermath that covered more than half of the battlefield.

BANG... the ground rumbled as the thousand-meter claw came smashing down. The shockwaves were terrifying; however, the storm that brought forth razor-sharp wind, were even more deadly.

Those unfortunate ones who thought that they were safe in that distance, regretted their decision the next moment when wind sliced their bodies and carried them away in pieces. Even the land was filled with crisscrossing marks appearing everywhere showcasing the might of the advanced magic.

Dust carried by the wind, filled the area and it was hard to even see what was around you. All of the orcs and ogres were eager to see who the victor of this bout was. It wouldn't be wrong to say that the result of this fight would decide which side the war will flip towards.

The orcs tightly clenched their weapons, they had already forgotten about the betrayal of their king as the figure of a new leader was starting to emerge in their hearts.

Finally, when the dust settled, they saw Berigard standing in his place and the huge emerald green claw on the ground. However, the orcs weren't overjoyed to see the spectacle, on the contrary, the smiles they had on their faces froze.

The reason for that was none other than the appearance of Giz-Mogo and another ogre who had appeared at some unknown point under the huge claw. The [Hand of Zephyrus] that was supposed to have crushed Giz-Mogo was stopped by another ogre who had a crimson horn just like the other on his forehead.

What was astonishing was that such a powerful advanced magic was being effortlessly stopped by that ogre on his own.

"Mogo, it seems like you have underestimated your enemy. That orc is much stronger than he looks. I suppose you need my help?" the one that appeared was none other than Giz-Bozo who was one of the leaders commanding the black ogre army.

For the higher ups of the black ogre army, the appearance of Giz-Bozo was no shocking matter since they already knew that he was one of the leaders alongside Giz-Mogo sent here to lead them. However, that cannot be said so for the orcs who looked like they had just woken up from a nightmare.

The appearance of another ogre with a crimson horn could only be described as such. The light of hope that they were hoping for diminished with the appearance of that ogre.

"Bozo... it's like you said. I didn't expect that orc to survive my attack and thus was careless. I'll have to burden you to clean after my mess" Giz-Mogo stated gritting his teeth.

Unlike the Gir brothers, Giz-Mogo and Giz-Bozo weren't brothers, if one had to describe the relationship they had, then that would be of a competitor.

Giz-Mogo was the second lieutenant while Giz-Bozo was the first lieutenant. They have been often competing with each other and with other ogres for a higher military rank within the ogre army.

"Hmm... at least you know your mistakes. Well worry not, now that I'm here, I will make sure to close this farce properly" saying that Giz-Bozo turned towards Berigard who had a pale red face due to mana exhaustion (Note that the natural skin tone of the diluvian High orcs is a darker shade of red).

"Sorry but you see you can't kill this guy. Even though he does not look like it, he is the second lieutenant. If I just let you kill him, I would be able to handle the consequences that will follow afterwards. I hope you understand".

Giz spoke politely, the mana aura around his body which had materialised to become a gauntlet around his hand, was so crimson that it was not any inferior to the one released from Berigel's soul bone.

Using the gauntlet formed in his hand, Giz-Bozo clenched his hand tightly "Ability Conferment-[Break]".

ZIIINGG... a red hue passed from the gauntlet and travelled through the entire claw. Moments later, the enormous [Hand of Zephyrus] started shaking and winds broke free from the materialisation.

Feeling the change, Berigard tried to stabilise his magic only to puke out a mouthful of blood due to overstraining himself too much. Unable to contain the escaping wind, the hand of Zephyrus soon started to minimise and dissipate into nothing in front of the thousands of astonished eyes.

"This?!!"

BANG... disturbed for a second, Berirock was hit squarely in the guts and blown back. Berimond fared a little better since he was able to somehow suppress his enemy Giz-Rugo in their exchange thus he didn't get blown like Berirock.

However, one could see the shadow of concern on his face and the sharpness of his attacks deteriorating. He quickly disengaged with his enemy and hurriedly supported Berirock whose wounds didn't look light.

"What do we do now? Berigard doesn't look like he can fight anymore" Berimond asked.

Cough.. cough.. Berirock coughed a few times and muttered "Let's go and support him, in any case if he goes down our race is done for".

They quickly left their post and hurried towards where Berigard was. The Gir brothers did not pursue, on the contrary, they stood still in their place and waited for their next order.

After destroying the hand of zephyrus, Giz-Bozo did not make any other move. He was so calm even when Berirock and Berimond came and supported Berigard that it was creepy.

"Berigard can you still fig...ht?" As Berimond was about to ask that, he quickly swallowed his words when he saw how frail Berigard was right now. The presence he was emitting was so bleak that one wouldn't be able to believe that it came from an orc general.

There was no need to even ask, Berimond understood that berigard was in no condition to fight anymore.

"Ah, you two should be the other orc generals. I was informed that there would be four of you, did the other guy also flee just like your king? Well never mind that, you two... are you perhaps here to challenge me?".

Giz-Bozo asked nonchalantly. One couldn't even see a shadow of concern on his face even while facing all the orc generals together.

To the onlooking ogres, this scene wasn't surprising after all they knew how powerful Giz-Bozo was. The horn on his forehead was an indication of his status. Just like Giz-Mogo his horn was also crimson in colour.

However, if one paid enough attention, one would be able to notice that the colour of his horn was deep crimson with little patches of indigo colour in the mix. That is to say, Giz-Bozo unlike Giz-Mogo was hovering at the borders of becoming a calamity class.

His level was 599 and he was just a step away from stepping into a new realm. Even Berigard with all his soul bones, didn't stand a chance against him.

"Gir-Rago, Gir-Rugo, Gir-Rego..." he called out.

Immediately, three figures appeared before him. Gir-Rago and Gir-Rugo were facing Berirock and Berimond, thus their appearance wasn't concerning but Gir-Rego was facing the two orc commanders of Berigard.

Him being here meant that... Berigard with his hazy vision, turned towards the direction where his orc commanders were fighting. Their presence was nowhere to be felt indicating that they were dead or defeated.

"I assume that you all haven't had enough of your fun? If so then you are free to let loose on the orc army. Hmm, right, how about you start reducing their numbers by half" Giz-Bozo declared callously making the orc generals who heard that clench their hands in anger.

His non-committal attitude to not even bother negotiating with the losing side and jump straight to slaughter, angered them. Nevertheless, no matter how angry they were, they knew that they had lost this war.

"I.. will not allow.. you to do that" Berigard mustered his remaining stamina and roared. Though to others, it felt empty and even comical.

"Gruru... and how do you plan to do that?" Gir-Rago mocked, his words just fell when he rushed towards the latter.

Berirock and Berimond tried to stop Gir-Rago; however, they were intercepted by Gir-Rugo and Gir-Rego on the way.

Unable to stop Gir-Rago, the orc generals watched as a punch that was more powerful than the one that toppled the wall hit Berigard.

Exhausted, dizzy and with no mana, Berigard had no way of defending himself. He was hit surely in the chest and crashed towards the place where the orc army was like a cannon.

Puff... Berigard threw out another mouthful of blood and stayed motionless in his place like the dead. of course, he wasn't dead though, the ogre was tactful enough not to go for a kill without asking for permission from his higher ups.

"Berigard!! Dammit... we have already lost, must you continue this slaughter even after that?" the orc generals shouted indignantly.

The ogres have already started a massacre on the orcs who have lost all will to fight. It was a one-sided slaughter that was very hard to watch. The already dwindling numbers of the orc reduced even further as the ogres enjoyed their carnage.

A sea of blood flowed on the battlefield with bodies dropping on the ground everywhere.

"Hmm? You seemed to be having rather a hard time watching all of this. Don't worry, we are not going to kill all of the orcs. We are just reducing your numbers to a level that is acceptable to us. After all, it is much too dangerous if you were to gather a resistance after all that we did to subdue you... wouldn't you agree?".

Giz-Bozo who was observing the massacre commented after seeing how vexed they looked. From his perspective, he was doing a great favour to do them by letting a few of them survive.

"Reducing our numbers?!" Berirock parroted in a daze, all this killing was... just to reduce their numbers that is acceptable to them?

"Hmm... let's see we will spare around seventy thousand orcs that we deem worthy to live. Ah, don't worry you three are also included in that" Giz-Bozo added.

Berigard who lying in that sea of blood, was in the area to hear everything that the ogre said. He laughed and continued laughing until he did not know if he was laughing or crying.

A deep depression was on his chest formed from the punch that he just received a while ago. Their race of orcs was done for, to be enslaved by a tribe that saw them as nothing but slaves, the tribe would no longer have any future.

Berigard laughed, he laughed at the absurdity of the situation, he laughed at his weakness and at the fate which wanted nothing but to cruelly step on them.

Fighting Giz-Mogo was already tough enough, he had to lead the battle in a way to deplete the energy of his opponent to even stand a chance to win. His tactics were successful and victory was just near the corner when another of those damn crimson horns appeared out of nowhere.

Not to mention that the one that just appeared, was even stronger than the ogre he was fighting. From the start, it was a serious mistake to assume that only one crimson horn was sent here to lead the ogre army. This blunder led to their ultimate downfall.

Well even if Berigard knew that there was another crimson horn within the ogre army, he wasn't foolish enough to think that he would be able to defeat the two of them.

As Berigard was sprawled on the ground, laughing like a maniac, he finally came to a decision.

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The look in Beroigard's eyes changed to that of anger and hatred as he called out—

"I know you are observing all of this from somewhere. I hope that you are pleased with the result. With this, we orcs have no other way out, we have completely run out of all options as you have said. The ogres have given their ultimatum and that is to enslave us after reducing our numbers".

"A life like that, can you even call it a life? I would rather die than agree to be enslaved by them. However, I cannot allow that fate to befall my tribe members. Thus I ask you demon, if I were to submit to you, will our tribe have a better future than the one right now?".

His words were carried by the wind and were heard by ogres. They couldn't help but mock him and wonder if the orc had somehow gone insane due to the shock of losing.

Berirock and Berimond were baffled by the actions of Berigard too. At this point, nothing that he did would matter, so what was he screaming all that for?

The Gir brother and Giz-Mogo laughed at the desperate orc general. It was only Giz-Bozo that narrowed his eyes feeling a little uneasy all of a sudden.

A few seconds passed by with nothing happening when suddenly, there was this weird chill in the air.

CHIIII... something very unsettling and disturbing was slowly creeping near. Within seconds, the air started taking a violet-black hue and the sky got covered by dark looming clouds.

Finally, there was even a miasma slowly seeping out of the ground that made others feel revolted by it. Those that accidentally got exposed to it, started behaving peculiarly. They clutched their head and banged them on the ground before cutting themselves with their own weapon.

Alarmed, all the ogres hurriedly distanced themselves from the seeping miasma. An eerie atmosphere was starting to arise on the battlefield and that was when he appeared.

A few hours ago, at the centre of the Orc territory, right at the entrance of the underground chamber. A Diluvian High orc could be seen coming out. They were wearing superior-looking fur and pelts as armour and a crown on top of their head.

Who could the orc be other than Belgarius? At this moment he was looking in the southern direction where the Blackfield was, intently.

"Judging from the waves of mana coming from there, it looks like the war is in full swing. GUGAGA... what a bunch of idiots, even until the last moment they thought that I would be arriving to lead them on this war".

"Now that I have stored the ancient inheritance, I should leave this place. There is no way those bunch of orcs could stop them for long on their own, I must escape before the ogre army arrives here" Belgarius muttered.

"Oh right, I need to destroy this before I leave" saying that, he took out a transmission conch from his space ring and stomped on it.

"Alright, this should stop any possible tracking. Now then, my destination is the Great Tundra Desert" Belgarious was just about to walk out when suddenly something came dropping down on the ground with a boom.

"I knew that you would choose to escape at the first signs of danger. It's a good thing that I came early" a voice came from amidst the dust.

Hearing that familiar voice, Belgarious couldn't help but yell out their name—

"Gufardus?!".

The figure that had just dropped down from the sky, was none other than the person that was backing Belgarious up until a few days ago, his patron.

One of the seven kings of the forest was here.

Gufardus was a four meters tall hulking fellow, he had a head of a lion, lower body of a minotaur, the tail of a serpent and wings of a demon. His body had multiple stitches and he looked like some kind of a lab experiment.

"It's been a while... Belgarious" Gufardus greeted with a smile that displayed his sharp canine teeth.

Looking at Gufardus, Belgarious was not the least bit happy. Instead, he was on his guard by this unexpected visit from the latter.

"What are you doing here?" he asked in a not-so-friendly tone.

"What's this? Are you not happy to see me again after such a long time? The patron that has been supporting you from the shadows since you were just an ordinary diluvian orc, is here. Have you forgotten already how I manipulated the previous orc king into choosing you as his successor?" Gufardus said melodramatically.

"Stop your nonsense and get to the point".

"GURARA... it looks like you are in no mood for a joke. Well, in that case, I'll come to the point. The reason why I appeared here, I believe you already know it" Gufardus laughed, a sly smile appearing on his face.

"You bastard... so you too were aiming for this?" Belgarious cursed, how could he not know what Gufardus wanted? For a being like him, there could be only one item in the entire orc territory that could entice him and that was the inheritance left behind by the ancient beast.

"GURARA... you are misunderstanding me Belgarious. I only came here to retrieve the item that would supposedly be stolen by the demon noble after you are killed" Gufardus explained.

Belgarious looked confused for a moment, he was about to ask what nonsense the latter was talking about when he was suddenly hit by a powerful attack that came at a speed that was hard for him to even perceive.

BANG...

Belgarious was knocked back by the force and rolled on the ground a couple of times. Smoke could be seen coming out of the palms of Gufardus that was pointed at the orc.

"Ugh, you... you were behind all of this from the start huh?" Belgarious managed to speak out some words amidst his pain.

"GURARA... it looks like you finally realised it. Yes, I was after the beast inheritance that your tribe had from the start. However, I couldn't just snatch it from you guys as that would be attracting too much attention to me and at the same time revealing the position of the inheritance to the rest of them".

"So I had no choice but to find a gullible orc with an over-the-top ambition and raise them to the position of the orc king to guard the inheritance for the time being"...

The gullible orc with an over-the-top ambition, Belgarious gritted his teeth when he heard that.

Gufardus continued—"While I was waiting for a perfect opportunity to arise that was when Gil-Garna came to me with a proposal. Honestly, it was quite hilarious that the guy only just realised that. Nevertheless, his proposal gave me the opportunity that I was looking for".

At this moment, Gufardus suddenly revealed an ugly smile.

"Belgarious, do you know why I asked you to attack that dungeon located in the eastern region of the forest?".

The latter had a lost look on his face... when suddenly the realisation struck them.

"Yes, to drag the demon in this war too. Being one from the demon noble race, I am sure he would not sit still after being tangled in such a mess without his consent. With the involvement of the demon, the war would become even more chaotic".

"It's all okay if he is strong enough to kill the crimson horns sent by Gil-Garna. If not, his death would drag in the higher-ranked demon noble he is serving out making this war even more exciting".

"The ghastly winding forest is right next to the demon continent. Who is to say that the inheritance of the ancient beast that Gil-Garna is looking for, is not taken by the demon or his master? Whatever the case may be, nobody would be able to connect the disappearance of the inheritance with me".

Gufardus explained his schemes causing the eyes of the orc king to widen in shock.

"This.. this was—from the start this whole war was your plan?" Belgarious asked.

"That's right, I revealed the location of the inheritance of your tribe to Gil-Garna in exchange for the Six Nether Flowers. That fool easily fell for my trap and started a war with your tribe believing that he would be able to get the inheritance while covering up the whole incident in a ruse of personal vengeance. GURARA... Now that all of the attention of the seven kings is diverted to the war, I'm free to snatch away the inheritance I wanted for so long".

Belgarious took hurried breaths of air, his blood boiling with anger and he was barely able to stop himself from lashing out at Gufardus.

He had always thought that he was a cunning person to have deceit the entire tribe of orcs and grabbed the position of the orc king. It never occurred to him that he was playing in the palms of someone else. It appeared that he was just a pawn in the end too.

"You don't have to be so disappointed, that inheritance of your tribe will be safe in my hands. Wouldn't you also prefer it falls on my hand rather than Gil-Garna who your tribe has a blood feud with?" Seeing the aghast face of Belgarius, Gufardus commented.

"Youu!!..." Belgarius could no longer take the taunts coming, he activated his numerous skills and attacked Gufardus.

[Mana Aura], [Bile], [Greater Force], [Bulk Up], [Overpower], [Ultra Enhanced Strength], [Ultra Enhanced Defence], [Longsword Mastery], [Rage], [Extreme].

Using his longsword, Belgarius sent a sword slash empowered with all of his skills towards Gufardus. The latter simply stood in his place and took on the attack head-on.

BOOMM... the orc king was a disaster class with a level of 563. The sword slash that he dished out which was also enhanced further by his skill, was deadly enough to even cut a mountain in half.

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One could only imagine what condition Gufardus would be in after taking an attack like that.

Whoosh... right after sending his sword slash at Gufardus, Belgarius swiftly turned around and fled. The reason for that was simple, a being on the level of Seven Kings was in a realm of their own. He did not believe that his attack would be able to hurt them.

Thus using his sword slash to delay them for a while, he quickly left the place. His speed was further bolstered by [Bile] a skill that converts the frustration and the amount of damage the user has taken into temporary agility.

Using this skill, his speed had reached new heights using which he quickly arrived at the boundaries of the orc territory. He was just about to exit when suddenly he heard a thundering roar echo out from the horizon.

"Amalgamation magic... [Infernal-Thunder Mastery]— [Flamma Volt Lion]".

A huge lion made entirely of flames and thunder, split the sky in half and landed in front of Belgarious with a heavy thud.

Looking at the lion that was more than ten meters big, one could feel a heavy pressure and the intense radiation of heat from the flames and thunder that it was made of.

Even though the lion was made of magic, it looked so animate and its eyes shone with an intelligent light that one would even mistake it for an actual beast.

Sitting on top of it cosily, was Gufardus whose mane was actually on fire. "What's the rush Belgarious? Aren't we old friends?".

Gufardus laughed and initiated a conversation.

Belgarious had an ugly expression at this moment. Knowing that he cannot outrun the guy, he looked for other ways of saving his life.

"Why are you coming after me? If it's the inheritance of the ancient beast that you want, you should know that it is in the underground chamber. If you dilly-dally too long, the ogre army would arrive and snatch it before you".

Belgarious made an excuse, he thought that he would be able to dupe Gufardus into returning back to the centre of the orc territory. However, all his words managed to do was evoke a burst of laughter from the latter.

"GURARA... Belgarious, do you take me for a fool? I know that the inheritance is no longer inside the underground chamber. You wouldn't have left the thing there and fled otherwise".

A droplet of sweat trickled down his face, Belgarious commented—"How can you say that without even looking? See, you can even check my space ring, there is no inheritance there?".

Gufardus extended his hands and Belgarious' space ring immediately flew towards him. Nevertheless, he did not check the contents of the ring and simply kept it.

Seeing this, the orc arched his brows; nevertheless, he did not comment anything and simply asked to excuse himself. He walked around the huge Infernal thunder lion and was about to walk off when Gufardus spoke out.

"Wait".

Belgarious slowly turned around and asked in a shaky voice "I-Is the-there still something else?".

"This isn't the only inter-spatial pocket on you is it?" Gufardus remarked making Belgarious even more anxious.

"W-what do you mean? I have already handed you my space ring?".

"Ah, so you did. But I'm not talking about that space ring, I'm talking about the inter-spatial pocket that is the exclusive skill of an orc. It is a very rare skill and is said to be a Rare Ancient skill that only a handful of powerful orcs could learn. You have learnt it didn't you?" Gufardus stated with a smile that wasn't a smile.

At this moment, Belgarious's face was a sight to see, his eyes were continuously trembling and it looked like all the blood in his body had frozen.

"I-Im afraid I don't understand".

"Oh c'mon... Belgarious I know that you have stored the inheritance in your [Stomach Glutton]" Gufardus mentioned. This caused Belgarious who had halted his steps, to run without looking back.

'H-how does he know that? this is a skill exclusive only to our orc race. He shouldn't have any information about that' Belgarious thought internally as he desperately ran away.

Fight? There was no way he was idiot enough to think he could best Gufardus in a fight. The only option he had in this situation was to tuck his tail and run in hopes that he would be able to somehow outrun the latter.

[Stomach Glutton] as Gufardus had mentioned was a Rare Ancient Skill that allows an orc to store any kind of items or things in a special dimension. The things stored inside the skill are unaffected by time and stay the same exact way as when it was stored.

The space inside the [Stomach Glutton] can be enlarged with mana. However one has to constantly supply the skill with mana to maintain that kind of space or else the thing inside would break out.

Since one cannot store the dead inside the space ring, Belgarious had used this skill to store away the inheritance. Never did he imagine that Gufardus would be aware of the skill that even most of the orcs aren't.

The inheritance was his only way of reaching higher classes, the key to breaking through his restraints. There was no way he was going to give it up just like that.

Behind him, Gufardus shook his head in disappointment and commanded the lion to turn around. The lion opened its mouth facing Belgarious and a beam of what looked like a combination of inferno and thunder erupted out, flying straight for Belgarious.

The beam quickly engulfed the latter and travelled forward destroying everything that it touched.

"Who are you?".

Giz-Bogo asked, a figure with a pale white skin, long black hair and wings like a bat, appeared in front of Berigard out of nowhere.

Looking at the two horns decorating his head and the features that was only special to a certain race, everybody present immediately recognised him.

"So you are finally willing to take me up on the offer huh? I assume you are fine with the terms and conditions?".

Simon did not bother replying to Giz-Bozo and started conversing with Berigard. He spoke like a shady insurance agent that wanted to sell you a very dubious policy.

Berigard revealed a self-mocking smile and responded "What a hateful demon... so you really were watching the show. Before I agree to your conditions, can you tell me no tell me one thing? What will become of us if we submit to you?".

He did not bother to keep his voice low, thus every ogre and orc near, could hear him clearly. Simon immediately understood what Berigard was trying to do and thus played along.

"If you swear your loyalty to serve me, then you all will become my subordinates. Being my subordinate means that you would have to follow my commands and complete the tasks I give you. You cannot betray or try to go against me or else the consequences would be far dire than what you are facing now".

"Of course, being my subordinate means that you will also have my protection and a certain level of freedom. Punishment and reward come hand in hand so of course if you do a good job, you all will be rewarded according to your merits".

Simon stated, he did not put out too many sugary words and only gave them the bare minimum of what they should expect. He did not try to win over them by showing them a bright future and instead set their expectations low from the start so that when the time comes and they become his subordinates, their hearts would be won over him after seeing the perks.

This was one of the strategies the company he used to work for, Astro Revolution often employed to retain the interest of the new and old employees alike.

Unsatisfied and frustrated with their previous jobs, many new employees flock to their company and are instantly smitten by the perks the company gives them.

Simon was employing that strategy on the soon-to-become new employees of his dungeon. The orcs and the ogres who heard what Simon said, displayed a bewildered face. Their expression seemed to say 'what was the demon babbling about?'.

"I see... it's not the best future that we can hope for but it is not quite bad. At least it is a thousand times better than becoming the slaves of the ogre tribe. In that case, I agree. I cannot say that I can speak for the entirety of the orcs but I believe they will understand and definitely stay by my decision. I'm willing to swear loyalty to you in exchange that you save the lives of my tribe".

Berigard announced making sure that his voice is heard by everybody.

"Gururu... what is this orc talking about? Have you gone mad... the one that you should swear loyalty to is our king and the tribe of ogres, not some demon who just suddenly appeared out of nowhere".

Giz-Mogo waltzed towards the demon and the sprawled Berigard and snickered. Now that he had recovered some of his strength, he was back to his usual cocky self.

The ogres laughed while the orcs looked at Berigard sceptically.

'Berigard... what are you thinking?' Berirock muttered, he had never seen the demon nor did he know where they came from. In such a situation it was very dangerous to make a decision that concerned their race.

Nevertheless, they had no other choice, they were stuck between a rock and a hard place. As Berirock wondered where and how Berigard had met a demon, the words of Belgarious suddenly appeared in his mind.

It was when he came with his subordinates to the underground chamber to report the actions of Berigard to the orc king a few days prior to the night of the moon dance.

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When he asked the latter where Berimal was, Belgarious told him that he had sent them to the eastern region of the forest where a certain dungeon was. It did not take time for him to connect the dots and figure out a few things.

Giz-Mogo had dismissed the oath of Berigard as nothing but some ruse, the other ogres seemed to think nothing of the demon. However, Giz-Bozo was different, he was still alert of the miasma that was slowly enveloping the battlefield.

The miasma and the demon appeared around the same time so it was clear that the latter had something to do with it. However, he couldn't understand what this miasma was nor could he feel even a tiny fluctuation of mana from the demon.

"I accept your show of fealty. From now on you and your tribe are my subordinates which means that you are also under my protection. The enemy of your tribe is also my enemy, don't worry I'll close this farce and put an end to this war".

Simon announced, he was aware that many of the orcs did not recognise this show of fealty from Berigard and would definitely show their dissent after the war was over. However, he wasn't worried about that.

Berigard had shown what kind of leader he was, he had fought with his life at the stake for them. This gesture was sure to move thousands of orcs. Even if they aren't from his faction, they are sure to follow his lead.

In the case that they didn't, he would just have to use force to show them who was in charge. Anyways, now that Berigard had sworn loyalty to him, all that is left is to show the orcs how powerful he was.

And to do that, what better way than to wipe out the ogres that they were unable to win against?

"Oi... Oi.. Oi... what is this demon babbling? The orcs are your subordinate? Put an end to this war? Listen to me demon, I don't know where you came from, but you shouldn't put your nose in something that isn't your business. Do you understand me? If so then fuck off from here... gugh!!".

Giz-Mogo jabbered causing the demon to kick him in the face before he could complete his sentence.

The kick from the demon was so powerful that Giz-Mogo's face instantly caved in and he flew back a good few meters. When he got back up in rage, everybody could see that multiple of his teeth were broken and one of his fangs missing.

"I'll Kill You..." Giz-Mogo hollered. He wasn't expecting the demon to suddenly attack him, a member of the ogre race and a crimson horn at that, thus he was unable to react in time.

He was about to retaliate back when Giz-Bozo extended his hands and stopped him.

"Stand down... you are not his match" a cold astute voice came from the ogre.

Hearing that Giz-Mogo protested saying that he was careless before and that he can definitely win against the demon. Though he quickly shut up when Giz-Bozo glared at him.

The ogre then turned to face Simon who had a calm expression even while facing an ogre army on his own. That was when Giz-Bozo noticed that purple-black energy emitted by the latter's body.

"This friend here... I'm sure that this is our first time meeting so why is it that you are willing to offend us and help our enemy? Our black ogre army came here with strict orders from our lord, one of the seven kings of this forest to subdue the tribe of orcs. I would advise you to reconsider this and instead ally with us".

Unlike Giz-Mogo who didn't take the big picture in consideration, Giz-Bozo was much more cunning and punctilious. He could see that the miasma surrounding the demon was unusual and he couldn't gauge their proper strength.

From what he could sense from the aura of the demon, they didn't seem particularly strong. However, somehow they were able to blow Giz-Mogo, a disaster class orc with a level of 570 back.

In fact, Giz-Bozo wasn't far from the truth. Simon's level was only around 418, there is no way he would be able to hurt a being that not only surpassed him in levels but also a whole realm.

However, that was not counting the fact that he was in possession of something that did not fall under those norms. The finger of Ozymandias and the curse energy that it produced.

Simon had experienced how lethal and dreadful the curse energy was in the forbidden trials. It was a whole different system of energy than the standard mystical energy. At first, Simon wasn't able to properly control the finger of Ozymandias and could only use it crudely.

However, with time as his mastery over the technique [Dominator control] increased, he learned the other secrets the finger held and was now able to freely manipulate the curse energy it produced.

Although he was now able to use the curse energy even outside the trial grounds, it did not mean that the drawbacks were not there anymore. Just like when he used the curse energy in the fourth trial, he was unable to access the mystical energy of this world. He could only use either energy at a time.

This is to say, that Simon who was using the curse energy cannot invoke his magic that needed mana to channel.

On a side note, Simon had once tried to see how his status looked like when he was using the curse energy since every time he used it he felt like he was multiple times stronger. However, it seemed like the status froze whenever he used the curse energy.

Therefore it was no wonder that Giz-Bozo wasn't able to properly assess Simon's strength in that state.

At Giz-Bozo's words, Simon turned around to face him. Due to continuously being affected by his demon lineage and his pride fragment, Simon was slowly being reformed. He now naturally emitted an aura of confidence and carried himself like a demon noble.

"The ogre tribe led by one of the seven kings of the forest huh. Indeed you guys are strong, strong enough to subdue the tribe of orcs. However, you are weaker than me. I shall give you all a chance, scurry away now or else face the consequences".

Such arrogant words, the ogre tribe who took pride in their strength, how could they take it lying down? They were immediately incensed by that remark and glared at Simon with hatred-filled eyes.

Even the always calm Giz-Bozo was also affected. He didn't think that the demon would be unable to judge the situation and not back down even when he mentioned the ogre army and their lord who was one of the seven kings of this forest.

He was trying to give face to this mysterious demon whose strength he couldn't gauge; however it seemed like the other party had taken them for granted. Since that was the case, there was only one thing he could do.

Giz-Bozo was an ogre who was on the borders of becoming an indigo horn. Someone as powerful as him was bound to be inherently prideful thus it was no surprise that he was offended by that remark. perfectly falling for Simon's trap.

"Since you are hellbent on becoming our enemy, so be it. We will stomp on that arrogance of yours and make you eat your words back" Giz-Bozo glanced at the three Gir brothers who quickly jumped towards Simon.

"Who did you say would eat their words?" a clear voice that had a tone of innocence, echoed out followed by three bangs of gunfire.

BANG.. BANG... BANG... immediately, something that travelled at a speed which was hard to perceive, hit the three Gir brothers making them stop in their tracks and lick their wounds.

Far in the distance, a maid in her teens wearing an armour on top of her uniform, could be seen holding a bow. She had a head full of golden hair and her smile was like the sunflower in full bloom.

Behind her were what looked like mechanised golems standing in a neat formation.

"So she finally arrived, what took her so long?" while everybody was distracted by the maid and the line-up of golems, two more maids at some unknown point in time arrived beside the demon.

"Alice, what took you so long?" Annette asked after Alice arrived in front of them.

"That... there was some issue with the tower town. Miss Irene was busy handling that thus the delay" Alice answered a little nervously when met with the questioning eyes of her elder sister who always had a stern astute face.

"What happened to the tower town?" Simon asked in concern.

"Ah, Master does not have anything to worry about, Miss Irene had already solved the issue. A few days ago, a few orcs had wandered near the vicinity of the tower town causing mass panic amongst the adventurers. Fortunately, backup from the surrounding towns had arrived by then and swiftly disposed of the orcs".

Hearing Alice's story, Simon guessed that the orcs she was talking about, were the ones that were sent by the orc king to investigate Berimal's whereabouts.

It was as he had surmised, they were really taken out by the adventurers who came after hearing the distress call. But even then this wasn't an issue that required Irene's intervention. What possibly could have happened after that?

Alice continued "It was all good up until that point but suddenly amongst the group of adventurers that arrived at the tower town after hearing the distress call, were a few groups that started using this opportunity to kill innocent adventurers diving inside the middle floors of the dungeon".

Adventurers killing other adventurers inside the dungeon? Well, it was not like there was no conflicts amongst the many groups of adventurers that dived inside the dungeon on a daily basis. There were many such precedences before.

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He had seen many cases inside the dungeon where an adventurer is killed and his things looted by none other than his own teammates. He had seen the good and bad sides of the human, thus it was no surprise for him when he heard that.

However, he knew that things weren't that simple, there has to be something else. When he asked that, the reply he got, even amazed him a little.

It turned out that the few groups of adventurers were working together for a particular guild. They were exchanging information inside the dungeon and were targeting adventurers that dived alone or in small groups.

When Bea captured one and interrogated them for information, it was learned that they were sent here by a certain guild and were on the orders to kill as many adventurers as possible and create uneasiness amongst the adventurers of the tower town.

"Which guild was it?" Annette questioned.

Alice who always had a cheerful smile on her face, suddenly adopted an angry face as she stated the name of the guild. "It's that hateful Sea God's Trident. I didn't understand at first why they were doing this but Miss Irene told me that it is to degrade the dungeon's name".

Sea god's trident... it was them again, Simon narrowed his eyes. The guild was hellbent on making his life difficult, it was like they cannot rest in peace without inciting his anger at every turn.

"That guild needs to be eradicated sooner rather than later" Annette commented, Alice seconded it while the always-silent Bianca nodded her head in affirmative.

"What happened afterwards, did miss Irene wiped those miscreants out?" Annette asked.

Alice shook her head and said "No.. she told us that by doing this, we won't be able to restore our name. Thus she devised a plan to make the adventurers of the tower town aware of these miscreants who were deliberately causing trouble and handed those guys over to them. Unfortunately, these people were prepared and quickly drank something that took their life"...

Simon's group of four discussed when suddenly an attack compressed of a dense amount of mana, came attacking them. Needless, to say the aggressor was Giz-Bozo who had enough of their nonsense.

He was right in front of them; however, they ignored his presence and start discussing something unrelated. He was greatly offended by that and so he attacked without any warning.

The highly compressed mana aura attack took the form of a fierce crimson beast as it came charging at them, ripping through the four of them. Or so should have been the case, but the beast suddenly came to halt unable to progress after colliding with the first person.

Unlucky for Giz-Bogo, the person that he chose to target was none other than Bianca whose defence was something that even people above her level would find difficulty breaking through. Forget about Giz-Bozo who was yet to breach level 600.

The mana aura beast was instead smashed apart by Bianca. Neither the orcs nor the ogres had expected that kind of result. After all, Giz-Bozo was someone who even Berigard's strongest magic couldn't defeat.

It came as a surprise to them that a maid was capable of accomplishing what their strongest general couldn't.

Meanwhile, Berigard laughed, after seeing the slight display of power, he was certain that he did not make a mistake in his judgement. The demon aside, even the maids by his side were incredibly strong.

It was also at this moment that he realised his senses were not wrong, the strong presence of danger that he felt from the maids the first time he met them, was indeed true.

"Alice... we will discuss about that later, let me first clean this mess up" Simon stated turning towards the ogres. He did not forget about them, it was just that he was getting no sense of pressure from them that he slide them at the back of his head.

"Master, let us help you" Annette proposed, although she hid it well, one could still feel the anger seeping out of her body. The fact that the ogre dare to attack them while they were talking, made her absolutely furious.

Thinking that this was a good chance for them to gather experience, Simon nodded his head. However, he also added a few conditions to their powers and skills.

As it wouldn't even be a fight if they were to use their full strength, Simon put a restriction on them to only use ten per cent of their power and banned them from using all of their skills except during life threatening situations.

The Valkyries obediently nodded their head and took out their weapons. Annette held a staff that was a [B] tier [Gacha] item or should he say a [Ga?????] item.

Bianca just like her class which was a branch of knight, held a sword in one hand and a shield in the other. Of course, they too were [B] rank items drawn from the [Ga?????]. And as for Alice, she held that bow that Simon had given her.

Needless to say, all of these weapons weren't the heirloom meant for them. However, it was powerful enough for them to be using it for a while before the prototypes are complete or he draws a real Heirloom from the [Ga?????].

Simon and the other did not keep their voices quiet thus it was audible enough for the ogres to overhear their conversation.

"Sir Giz-Bozo please allow us to fight them. We cannot let them leave without a scratch after all they said. We must show them the strength of the ogre tribe so that no one can make such a slight ever again" the Gir brothers plead.

Gi-Bogo was silent, that attack earlier he had put at least fifty per cent of his power into it. For it to be smashed apart so easily told him that their enemy wasn't simple. Perhaps they might really have the strength to back their words.

In that case, wouldn't they lose if they started a fight? No, it was hasty to draw that kind of conclusion. He needed more information, Giz-Bozo nodded at the Gir brothers who commanded the ogre army to charge at Simon's group.

After all the casualties that they had incurred, the ogre army was still 37,000 strong. An army this big was intimidating to say no less. However, Simon and his group didn't look the slightest bit fazed. On the contrary, some of them (Alice) already looked eager to start this fight.

The ogres had shown all of their cards, while on the other hand, the strength of this group of new people was still a mystery. This was the first time, that Giz-Bozo was uncertain of starting a battle. Nevertheless, there was no retreat for them, it was either forward or death.

There was no place for incompetent subordinates who couldn't even complete their mission on the ogre army. Forget about the ogre king, Gish-Bagh would kill them himself on the spot if they returned without accomplishing their objectives.

"Mogo did you eat the nether fruit that I gave you?" Giz-Bozo asked looking at the fuming Mogo.

"I did...I will be able to recover some of my strength in a few more minutes" Mogo replied, his missing teeth and bent nose made him look very miserable. Though it was not a big injury for an ogre who innately possesses the [Super Regeneration] skill.

For a crimson horn like Giz-Mogo, he even possessed the superior tier of the skill and other various recovery abilities.

"Good, you would be joining the battle once you are done healing" Giz-bozo ordered.

This made the other ogre confused, he didn't understand why Giz-Bozo was being so careful of these people. Sure they might be powerful enough to fend off an attack from him; however, he did not use any skill nor his full power in that attack. Nevertheless, Giz-Mogo obeyed the order and nodded his head.

The three Gir brothers called upon their mounts, one rode upon a fierce hawk like monster, one on a Stone Hide Mammoth while the last one rode on a Fire Breed Hound.

Each of these beasts could only be found inside the western region of the ghastly winding forest and were a force on its own. Level wise, these monsters were all around level 400 with quite a few skills in their arsenal.

When the orc generals Berirock and Berimond saw that, they couldn't help but clench their hands in frustration. The Gir brothers never used their mounts against them in their battle, which meant that they were still not going full power against them.

Anybody who knew about the black ogre tribe of the ghastly winding forest would know that they become more powerful when riding atop their beasts.

Although the orc generals hated it, they had to admit that, if the Gir brother were using their mounts from the start in their battle, they would have been no match for them.

"Annette, Bianca, Alice... you three take on those ogres. Remember not to use your full strength, this is a good opportunity for you guys to get some battle experience and learn how other races fight" Simon declared seeing the charging ogres.

"What about you master?" Annette asked.

"I'll be taking on that delicious meal of experience there".

Annette could see that Simon had already made up his mind. Though she was a little anxious given that the level of the enemy this time was a little high, she had enough faith in her master not to contradict his decision.

"Andromedas prepare your weapons and fire" Simon commanded. The thousand of Andromedas mk 11 flying in the air using the jet boosters, were set to follow his voice command by the wisp.

Immediately, they brought out their light blasters, blast cannons and opened fire on the ogre army.

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The Valkyries too joined the fight as they dived amidst the ogre army. Their attacks even when restrained to only ten per cent were powerful and when combined with their [B] tier weapons, it was a walk in the park for them.

Alice used her bow to continuously snipe down the ogres from the distance. She was so skilful that a single arrow from her hit more than one ogre and was powerful enough to puncture a hole in their bodies.

That was not all, she was so quick on her feet and her finger that arrow kept on flying even though the enemy pursued her continuously. Judging from the way she never got cornered, her situational awareness was second to none amongst the valkyries.

Bianca just like her class [Imperial Aegis knight] stood her ground and mowed through the ogres with sheer brute strength and defence. She was like a bulldozer mowing through a land unmatched in strength and power.

A few ogres tried to attack her from the distance using their magic and skills; nevertheless, all of it bounced back to them due to the [B] rank shield. The longsword on her other hand efficiently cleaved through their bodies without any resistance.

The eldest of the sisters (not counting Mercedes), Annette skilfully used her magic. She found a perfect combination of attack and defence. She never allowed any enemy to get too close to her or let their attack land on her.

She moved like a lithe fairy continuously chanting her magic and skilfully using her staff. She never used anything above novice-tier magic. However, because of her sheer mastery and understanding of that element, her magic was comparable to other's intermediate or even advanced magic.

What would probably take a couple of seconds for others to invoke the same kind of magic, she did it in just one-tenth the time. Not only that, her control over mana was so beautiful that perhaps only Irene and a few others Simon knew would be able to outmatch her.

Sprawled on the ground, Berigard who was watching all of that couldn't help but widen his eyes in surprise. The number of enemies was in the thousands and the war was far from over. However, given how skilful they were, it was enough to give him a sense of assurance.

"This is them... only using one-tenth of their power?" Berigard murmured. He who was lying on the ground behind Simon, heard their whole conversation and truthfully, he was more than surprised when he heard the demon command them to use only ten per cent of their power and restraint them from using all of their skills.

At first, he thought it was absurd for them to fight the ogres like that but it seemed like he the one who was being absurd was him.

Additionally, when he looked at Annette and her mastery over her elements and how she used her magic, even he was impressed. Though he was not among the ones that boast their strength to others, he believed that when it came to magic he had attained mastery and comprehension far beyond others around him or even above him.

But looking at Annette who was easily taking care of hordes of ogres with nothing but just weak novice magic, he felt like he was living in a well all this time. She had shown him that the staff on her hand was not just for casting spells but can also be used for deflecting, defending and even attacking enemies.

"Berigard are you alright?".

At this moment when he was lost in thought, the other two generals came over and supported him.

"Yeah, I'm fine... my [Ultra Regeneration] skill juts kicked in" Berigard explained. His external wounds were starting to close and his hazy vision was slowly returning to normal.

"Berigard... who is that demon?" Berimond asked looking at the demon and the maids he commanded.

"Haha... that demon is going to be our new ruler in the future" Berigard answered in a calm and peaceful manner. There was no hesitation nor any dissatisfaction in his tone.

Now that he had sworn his oath of loyalty to the demon and became his subordinate, it was as if a huge weight weighing him down for the past few days had been removed from his shoulders.

"Berigard are you serious? You cannot possibly bow your head to someone who is not even an orc and become their subordinate" Berirock argued unwilling to accept what had happened.

"Then you guys tell me what other ways did we have left?" Berigard questioned making the two orc generals silent.

With his defeat, the orcs were all out of options. They either had to submit to ogres and allow their number to be cut down to mere seventy thousand or accept the help of the demon and become his subordinates.

The demon did not show them a golden future; nevertheless, if they bent their knees to him at least they would be able to keep the lives of their tribe members intact.

"Even if that is the case, we can't possibly expect that demon to keep his words?" Berirock pointed out.

"Isn't he keeping his word right now? Was there any need for him to take on the whole ogre army for himself? Yet he has sent his subordinates to help us out. Even if we forget about that, just the fact that he showed up now rather than later when we would be in a more desperate situation to save the lives of our remaining tribe members, tell us that he is the kind of leader who protects his subordinates. Believe me, I haven't taken this decision without thinking things through".

Berigard explained. Nevertheless, Berirock was still unwilling to accept that their race will now have to bow towards that demon and listen to all of his orders.

"Even then... let's believe that the demon does indeed keeps his word, do you expect the orcs to follow your oath and take the demon as their new lord?".

Hearing the self-centred remarks of his fellow orc commander, Berigard had a scornful look on his face. Now that his backyard was not on fire anymore, Berirock was trying to put off all the responsibilities.

Berigard did not involve himself in a debate with Berirock and answered him dismissively—"Those orcs that want to, will do so. Those that don't, I won't be responsible for what happens to them".

From what he could tell, the demon was not some Samaritan that would help others without any strings attached. He was helping them because he had seen some profit in them.

The battle between the Valkyries and the ogre army, intensified. Seeing that the black horn ogres were no match for them, Gir brothers turned up to face the Valkyries. On the other hand, the fight between the Andromedas and the ogres was an insipid one.

The main job of the Andromedas Mk 11 in this fight was not to win the war but to collect information. Even if they weren't able to match an ogre they were still able to gather quite a bit of data before being destroyed.

"It looks like the army of golems you brought is far too inferior against my army" Giz-Bozo stated, he could see that his army had a clear advantage against these golems.

Their attack pattern might be peculiar than any of the monsters that the ogres had ever faced inside the ghastly winding forest. Nonetheless, the golems weren't an opponent for them. Soon, the numbers of the Andromedas started dropping, smashed and destroyed into bits.

However, since they were inanimate objects and had no blood, the ogres weren't quite satisfied with their victories.

"It is too soon to say that... won't you agree?" Simon smiled and silently released the miasma from the finger of Ozymandias.

As the [inventory] was a part of his [Main Menu] and not an external pocket like the space ring, the miasma came out of his body. It slowly covered the entire Blackfield and painted the air a peculiar violet black.

The curse energy was filled with negativity and abhorred the living. The moment this energy made contact with the ogres, they started behaving unusually and attacked one another. It was as if they had suddenly lost their mind and turned into a mindless beast who only knew how to kill.

Seeing this, the other ogres tried to avoid the energy but like a magnet, the energy kept on following them. In actuality, the miasma wasn't following them but was being manipulated by Simon who had gained a little more understanding of the curse energy to follow them.

Unlike the mystical energy which felt like clear water from a stream, curse energy was stickier, polluted and had a stench of the dead. It had a decaying attribute and was an energy that was not from this realm.

Of course, Simon did not know why and how he was able to manipulate a foreign energy; nevertheless, it was a far more powerful weapon currently in his arsenal than the mystical energy whose essence was yet to be grasped by Simon.

With the interference of the curse energy, the ogre army started faltering which gave way for the andromedas Mk 11 to advance. T

he andromedas weren't your living being but drones controlled by wisp thus they were unaffected by the curse energy. The ogre unable to mount any resistance against the energy at all, fell one after another from the attacks of the andromedas and soon—

DING... [You have levelled up]

The notification that Simon was waiting for, soon arrived.