

D. of Pride 781

Chapter 781- One Man Army (3)

Inside the White Palace, Main Floor— Simon continued recounting the story of the mythical warrior Mars to his subordinates.

[The undefeatable guardian that stood in between Helldor and its enemies, that's who Mars was. His military feat was so exaggerated that he became like a war god in the hearts of his enemies. It was said that as long as it was Mars and his army that stood on the battlefield, there was no enemy in this world that needed to be feared]

[The famed general had led his army to countless victories. However, as it turned out, even legends weren't immune to the whims of fate. The curtain to his epic came to a close with a betrayal so profound it shook the very foundations of trust]

[His allies, driven by fear of his growing influence, deceived him. They manipulated Mars into leading his invincible army into a treacherous battlefield, a battlefield designed to be a death trap. In a cruel twist, his own allies struck from behind, sealing the fate of his once indomitable force]

"How could they do that?" Bea grumbled, furious at the betrayal.

"Haha" Simon laughed and continued— [The despair of that day was etched into Mars's soul. He lost not just a battle but everything he held dear—comrades, brothers in arms, and the empire he served. The royalty, fearing Mars's power and seeking to extinguish his existence, orchestrated this tragic demise. Betrayed and broken, Mars found himself standing before the gates of Helldor, the very fortress he was meant to protect. Consumed by grief, anger, and the weight of his losses, he did the unthinkable]

[In an act of defiance against the empire that had forsaken him, he razed Helldor to the ground. The fortress, once a bastion of defence, crumbled under the might of Mars's fury. Yet, in the wake of that destruction, Mars emerged as something more than a disgraced general. He became the embodiment of resilience and retribution, a one-man army whose very name struck fear into the hearts of those who had once sought his demise]

[The legendary skill he unlocked on that desolate battlefield became the stuff of myth—the ability to call forth a spectral army, the echoes of his fallen comrades fighting alongside him. This skill, a

testament to his enduring spirit, transformed him into a force that transcended mortal limitations. The legend of Mars, the one-man army, was born from the ashes of betrayal and despair, a testament to the indomitable will of a warrior who refused to be extinguished].

"Hmph, it's good that those people died at the end, they deserved it" Bea humphed.

Sitting next to him, listening to the story, was Irene who realised something at this moment and asked "Then the reason why you gave him that name..."

"That's right, I saw the visage, the indomitable will of that warrior inside him" Simon explained his reasoning "But more so than that, my biggest reason behind giving him that name was when I saw its status..."

There were many similarities between Mars and the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse, both possessed the indomitable spirit of the strong, both were loyal to their very bones and served as the Guardian that protected their respective masters.

Furthermore, both were like a one man army, a juggernaut of the battlefield that struck fear into the hearts of their enemies. In the case of the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse the resemblance between the mythical warrior and his demonic steed was more than just a namesake, it was the manifestation of power that brought the two realities together.

That's right, the legendary skill that once dwelled into the indomitable warrior Mars, now resides in the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse.

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"Hm? What is that Aberrant doing?" Back at the battlefield, Garder exclaimed seeing the abyssal warrior in front of him suddenly get enveloped in a dark black haze.

This dark haze that swirled like ominous tentacles caused the very atmosphere in the battlefield to take a sinister turn. The sky itself seemed to shudder under the weight of the impending darkness, casting an eerie shadow over the once tumultuous scene.

The changes were so drastic that all the eleven former rankers had a bad feeling welling up in their hearts. It was as if the very air was charged with an impending doom.

At this moment, from Amidst this unnatural phenomenon, two pairs of eyes glowed with an otherworldly intensity. Eyes that seemed to pierce through the darkness and lock onto the souls of those unfortunate enough to witness the spectacle.

It started with two, but soon an army of ethereal gazes emerged from the shadows, each pair a harbinger of the impending storm.

Then came the unsettling sound—a cacophony of footsteps, like the march of an unseen legion.

CLACK... CLACK... The rhythmic thudding echoed through the ground, sending a shiver down the spines of the former rankers. It was a sound that resonated with an eerie sense of inevitability, heralding the arrival of something beyond their comprehension.

The Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse, named after this legendary warrior, seemed to have finally channelled the same essence of relentless power. As it decided to unleash its true might, the air around it crackled with anticipation, flames flickering more fiercely. The crimson antlers atop its head mirrored the legendary Mars's ferocity...

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"What just happened here?" After a while as Blake and the other adventurers made their way over here, all they saw at the scene was carnage.

The streets were now drowned in a sea of crimson, forming gruesome pools within the larger craters. Mountains of monster carcasses lay strewn everywhere, turning the air rancid with the pungent scent of blood.

The cityscape itself bore the scars of a colossal clash. Buildings lay in ruins, their structural integrity shattered by the sheer force unleashed in the battle.

Craters pockmarked the ground, evidence of devastating blows that had rocked the very foundations of the area. The debris of what was once a thriving urban landscape now painted a grim picture of destruction.

"Some kind of big fight must have broken out here before our arrival. However, who or what could unleash this kind of damage?" Wyot stated, investigating the scene.

The magnitude of the fight that had transpired here was undeniable. The remnants of magic, the lingering echoes of combat, hung thick in the air, creating an almost tangible aura of tension.

It made the newbie adventurers tremble in their boots. What kind of a battle are they going to involve themselves in?

With their eyes widened to their limit, a collective gasp escaped their lips as they surveyed the battlefield. A few stumbled backwards, their expressions shifting from excitement to terror in the blink of an eye.

Nobody could blame their spirits for faltering at the gruesome sight.

"I've seen my fair share of conflicts, but this... this is another level of chaos" A veteran warrior, marked by the scars of numerous battles, couldn't help but let out a low whistle.

"Looks like we're not dealing with ordinary trouble, folks. This is the aftermath of something serious" His grizzled features, etched with experience, betrayed a sense of unease that echoed through the entire group.

Even the veterans, who had faced monsters and powerful adversaries, exchanged uneasy glances. The atmosphere weighed heavily on them, leaving an unspoken understanding that whatever had transpired here was beyond their usual encounters.

"Everybody, don't let your guard down. We came here despite knowing the dangers we are about to face, it's too late to back down now. Remember your training, and don't let fear cloud your judgment. No matter what it is we can overcome it if we put all our strengths together"

Blake spoke a few words of encouragement. His words were a reassurance, a steadying force amidst the palpable tension.

With the veterans leading, the team of adventures made their way towards the headquarters of the criminal organisations.

"We are here!!!"

Blake mentioned looking at the buildings in front of him. The headquarters of the criminal organizations blended seamlessly into the urban landscape, cloaked in an unassuming facade.

From the outside, it appeared to be just another nondescript building, its exterior betraying no hints of the illicit activities transpiring within. The architectural design mimicked that of neighbouring structures, offering no visual cues that would set it apart as the epicentre of the criminal operations.

"Hmm, it's weird no matter how I think about it?"...

"What is weird Sir Wyot? The headquarters of the criminal organisation is right in front of us" A newbie adventurer questioned. From his perspective, everything seemed to look normal.

"That's precisely why it's weird. We were able to get right in front of their doors without encountering any trouble. I was genuinely thinking we would have to fight a bloody battle just to get to this point. However, forget about meeting any obstructions, I can't even see any of their members. The whole thing seems so easy that it's creeping me out" Wyot explained sighing a deep breath of air.

"D-Does that mean that the enemy has gathered all of their forces and is waiting for us inside?" the newbie adventurer looked around him nervously.

"Maybe, but given the grotesque scene we just saw earlier, it's also possible that a very powerful monster had devoured all of them"...

"What?!!!" the young adventurer's pale instantly turned pale and he was on the verge of passing out.

"Wyot stop messing with the newbies. It's a good thing that we were able to get si far without expending needless manpower and energy. Whatever traps or plots they have set up for us, let's go and uncover them. Everyone, stay sharp, we are entering our enemy's base now"

Chapter 782- Catastrophe of the Tower Town

With Blake, Alvara and the others taking the rein, the team cautiously entered the building. Inside, all they found were ordinary offices, seemingly abandoned. Fallen chairs, broken desks, and scattered documents told a tale of recent desertion, leaving many confused.

Nevertheless, the adventurers proceeded forward without letting their guard down. As they ventured further, eerie silence pervaded the air, broken only by the distant echoes of their own footsteps.

Dust particles floated lazily in the dim light, adding to the surreal atmosphere. What was going on? The first building was completely empty with not even a trace of any traps laid out for them.

The adventurers, who had initially entered with anticipation and battle-ready spirits, found themselves caught off guard by the emptiness. The absence of opposition deflated the adrenaline-fueled tension that had accompanied their arrival.

Weapons that had been tightly gripped relaxed in uncertain hands, and the zeal for confrontation waned. Their expectations of a fierce battle began to dissipate, replaced by a sense of confusion and disquiet.

The eerie quietness seemed to amplify the creaks and groans of the building, creating an unsettling symphony of solitude. The adventurers exchanged uneasy glances, grappling with the surreal contrast between their preparedness for combat and the ghostly stillness that surrounded them.

The absence of any overt signs of villainy left the group perplexed. Did the criminals master the art of concealment or something?

The first building they explored revealed empty rooms and corridors as if the criminals had vanished into thin air. Nevertheless, Blake didn't let them to relax their guard and urged them forward.

Just as they approached the second building, a sudden tremor shook the entire town. The ground quivered beneath their feet, catching many off guard. The buildings groaned in protest, and dust billowed into the air as structures nearby succumbed to the seismic force.

"Everyone steady yourselves!"

The adventurers struggled to maintain their footing, grabbing onto whatever they could to stay upright. The sudden intense tremor of the ground caught them by surprise; however, it did not last long.

After the earthquake stopped, the adventurers recomposed themselves and helped one another up.

"Blake, just now... that tremor, it was no ordinary earthquake but a result of a clash between some tyrannical force. What's more the epicentre of that tremor was right below us" Frida informed, coming over to Blake's side.

Just now, before that intense tremor had hit them, she felt a massive amount of mana rushing underneath them.

Blake narrowed his eyes and looked at the ground below them. he did not doubt Frida's words as he knew that she was a gifted mage with a talent not any inferior to his own. If she said that she felt the epicentre of the disturbance was underneath them then it meant that it was true.

"Alright everyone, on your feet. Let's enter the second building" Blake bellowed.

With grim determination, the adventurers pressed forward, recognizing that whatever force was at play, they needed to reach the heart of the disturbance to understand and neutralize it.

Just like the first building, the second building was also completely empty, devoid of any presence. The adventurers were met with nothing empty silence and a shell of a building that was the criminal organisation's headquarters.

However, unlike the first one, the second building had something that the first building didn't.

"Everyone, come down. I found something".

When the adventurers thoroughly searched the place, they were met with an unexpected sight—an expansive underground chamber, its passage hidden with a formation.

No wonder they were unable to spot it at first, it was because the formation used here was a strong formation that isolated the place from the outside. What were they doing with a massive underground space underneath the building?

Numerous questions popped inside the heads of the adventurers. Given all the clues they had found so far and the fact that they had yet to meet a single member of the criminal organisations, it was most likely that something had happened here.

The possibility that it was a trap was also very high. However, there was no backing down from here, trap or not they had to go down and see for themselves.

"Everyone, the chances of this being a trap are very high as such, I would like some people to stay behind and guard the entrance. If you find something off, quickly get out of here"

Blake looked at the newbie adventurers and instructed. It would be too risky to take inexperienced people with them any further. Things had already deviated so much from the expectations that even Blake was starting to feel the gravity of the situation.

The disappearance of the members of the criminal organisations weighed heavily on everyone's mind. Who or whatever had caused this, must be immensely dangerous. If this was a trap, there was no reason for all of them to fall for it.

"Sir Blake, please don't take our resolve lightly. We have already decided to put our life on the line for this mission" Hearing Blake's words, the newbie adventurers replied in a determined tone.

"Hey, hey... since when did the younger fellas become so serious? It's not about resolve or anything, it's about not foolishly falling for the trap. Just to do as he says or do you guys think that us old timers are too weak or something? Brats if it's the other case, I will beat the crap out of your right now" Wyot joked.

"Alvara what do you think?" Blake asked turning towards the Guard Captain for her opinion.

"I'm fine with the decision. I too think that the inexperienced ones should stay back and guard our backs".

Now that even the Guard Captain had opened her mouth, the newbies could only stay behind and did what they were asked.

"Don't worry, if we need your help we will call for you. Not that it's gonna happen though" The veteran adventurers made fun.

Before long, with Blake and others at the helm, they made a neat formation and dived inside the underground chamber.

The air grew denser as they delved deeper, the complex architecture here hinted at something that was being hidden beneath the surface. The flickering torchlight cast dancing shadows on the rows of smaller rooms that have collapsed in the aftermath of the recent earthquake.

As they progressed, the atmosphere shifted. The chamber widened into a vast underground space. The air became charged with remnants of magic, and the adventurers could sense the aftermath of a powerful clash.

The ground bore scars of devastating blows, creating craters and upheavals that told a tale of forces colliding with titanic strength. The further they went, the more obvious these signs became.

The echoes of battle lingered, and the air was thick with the scent of magic and burnt debris. Strewn across the expansive chamber were shattered remnants of magical constructs and the remnants of spells unleashed in the heat of combat.

"I was right, something happened here, something that took the members of the criminal organisations by surprise" Wyot commented looking at the enormous crater in front of him "Something that even they were powerless against"...

"Are you suggesting that they were attacked? Who would attack them? Monsters?"...

"Could be... or it could be something else".

The bizarreness of the events or the destruction wrought here had already far surpassed the capability of an ordinary monster.

Feeling the weight of the recent confrontation that had taken place here, the adventurers moved cautiously through this underground chamber. And finally after a while, they arrived at the place which was the centre of all the strange and bizarre events that occurred in the tower town lately.

The moment they arrived here, all the adventurers suddenly stopped moving at the exact same moment. It was as if somebody had pressed the pause button, all of them came to a halt.

Silence hung in the air as nobody muttered a word, all eyes focused on the being in front of them. If somebody asked the adventurers at this moment, what made them stop like that, the answer would be their instincts.

The senses they had honed through multiple battles and adventures, screamed at them at this very instant, telling them to run, run from the DANGER that was in front of them.

There at the far end of the chamber, standing amidst what looked like ripped bodies of some warriors, the silhouette of a black figure could be seen.

The figure was not human, it had crimson antlers atop its head that seemed to reflect the light from the flickering torchlight, casting eerie shadows on the walls. Its flaming mane danced with an ethereal fire.

Eyes, glowing with an otherworldly intensity, fixated on the approaching adventurers. As the flickering light of the torch fell on it, the figure's form also became clearer, revealing the ancient-looking armor that adorned its powerful frame.

Four nightmarish eyes that glowed like coals in the depths of night, silently observed their every action.

GULP... it was unknown who made the noise but everybody present here could feel their throats drying at this moment.

"What is that?"

One of the adventurers asked. The figure exuded such an imposing and formidable presence that it made others unsettled just by getting exposed to it.

"Mars!!" right ahead in the forefront of the formation, Blake muttered with a solemn voice. "What? Do you recognise it Blake?"

Wyot asked from the sides. At this moment he noticed that Frida was also acting weird to the point where she lost balance of her body and had to be carried by the teammates around her.

Chapter 783 Catastrophe Of The Tower Town (2)

"Blake that thing..." Frida shouted from the backlines with a pale face.

"Yeah, it's the very same opponent we met that year"

Blake answered not removing his eyes from his opponent for even a second. He was not surprised by her reaction after all, even he was no different when he met that thing earlier today.

"What's going on? Do you two know this thing or something?" The adventurers asked confused by their reactions.

It was no wonder they did not recognise the being in front after all, they were not the part of the Burning Arrows Guild. For them, it might even be their first encounter with it.

"I don't have time to explain about the past, but I will tell you this, get ready for battle... that thing is no ally"

Blake shouted, cautioning his teammates. On his instruction all of them raised their weapons and shields, ready to go into battle in a moment's notice.

"I finally understand why we didn't meet a single high ranking member of the organisations. It's because they were all killed by that thing"...

"What?" His words caused all the adventurers to widen their eyes in shock. Killing all the high ranking members of the criminal organisation on his own, what kind of being could do something like that?

The people in question weren't just your average Joe but members of a powerful organisation all with a very high level. It would be easier to understand if one thought of them as Blades of Ascension.

The members of this guild were all insanely strong; however, they were only just one part of the whole organisation. There were many more like them in the upper levels of the Viepr nad Chaos Order.

Just based on the level of the members they got up there, it was not hard to understand how powerful the criminal organisations were. It would not be an exaggeration to say that they could have become the tyrant of the tower town even without needing to take the adventurer's families as hostages.

All the adventurers of the tower town regardless of the guild they belonged to, had to untie together just to stand a chance to fight them. Yet what was Blake saying all of a sudden?

The figure in front of them defeated organisations on that level, all on its own? If it could do something like that, then didn't it mean that they stood no chance at all?

Just as that thought popped in their minds, they quickly suppressed it. Being veteran adventurers, they knew they could not lose their spirit before the battle even began.

"Haha, I hate being right during times like this"

Wyot laughed bitterly. Just until a few moments ago before they arrived here, he was joking and teasing with the newbies, laughing at their fear. Who would have known that there really was something much more dangerous than the members of the criminal organisations down here in the underground chamber?

"Have you fought with it before, Blake?"...

"Yeah, twice even. Both times it was my complete loss" Blake responded by nodding his head "He was also the one who opened the hole in my shoulder"...

"What?" Wyot, Frida, Alvara and the others turned to glance at him.

"Don't tell me that the other time when you disappeared, you went to fight him?"...

"That's right"

Seeing Blake nod, his teammates didn't know whether to laugh or cry. He went away during the middle of an important mission to fight such a dangerous guy. No wonder they found him battered and bruised.

Frida looked at him with silent fury burning in her eyes, while the others were astonished at his galls. The being in front of them could wipe out a power organisation like the Viper and the Chaos Order all on his own.

What was he thinking picking a fight with it?

"Blake I'm disappointed in you. How could you fight such an exciting battle without inviting me?"

At wyot's words, everybody started chuckling. As if having him would have made any difference. Nevertheless, with Blake and Wyot fooling around, the grim atmosphere settled amongst the adventurers, gradually disappeared.

"Jokes aside, Blake do we stand a chance against it?" Wyot asked the question that was on everyone's mind.

"Perhaps"

The answer they received was surprisingly positive "Hoh, you sound quite sure? What's your basis for that? W that it reminds me, how did you manage to come out only with a hole in your shoulder after fighting that guy? I sure would have counted myself dead if I fought that thing all on my own" ...

While the adventurers were chatting and discussing among themselves, Mars stood across from them without moving. It was obvious that they were making some kind of plan to defeat him.

However, he did not interrupt them and continued to allow them to make their plan. It went against his honour to attack an enemy while they were still making their preparation. As such, he remained still while waiting for the adventurers to ready themselves.

After a while, the adventurers entered his range. Their formation was simple and effective, perfect for sieging enemies multiple times bigger and stronger than them.

"Wow, it's really as you said Blake, this thing really didn't attack us while we were making our preparations. To think that some monsters would also have a sense of honour, I guess I really was a frog living in a well" Wyot commented brandishing his dagger.

Blake had already debriefed them about his fight with Mars, the past of the Burning Arrows guild and the abilities and disposition of the enemy. As a result of which, they knew that the being in front of him was a monster that had come out of the dungeon.

What's more, it was not just any ordinary monster, but a highly intelligent one, capable of taking a humanoid appearance.

Since none of them came from a first grade country or encountered a powerful monster like the one in front of them, they didn't know that once a monster reaches the Catastrophe class... that is level 700+ they gain the ability to take on a humanoid form.

That being said, even though these adventurers were unaware about it, they did not dare to underestimate their opponent. From the start their plan was to go all out.

Blake activated his skill [Solar Protector] and quickly merged with his avatar becoming bigger and bigger. Frida started casting Amalgamation magic of two intermediate tier elements, Alvara unleashed the skill of her sword [Rose Thorn], Wyot activated his stealth, Marba unleashed her magic and Burg raised his defence.

All the adventurers activated their most powerful skills with no one holding anything back. Their attitude seemed like they were not just initiating a battle but instead fighting a battle that had reached its last stage.

NEIGH... Mars released a deep grunt, impressed at the determination of his enemy. It wouldn't have been surprising to him if they decided to run away after feeling his presence.

However, not only did these adventurers not run away, but they also saw through the injuries that he sustained and utilised this chance to defeat him. That's right, Mars was not in his optimum condition.

Not only had he used his most powerful skill to defeat the top executives of the criminal organisation, but he also sustained some serious damage while trying to fight the two leaders of the organisation.

The two corpses that lay in a gory and gruesome manner around him, were none other than the bodies of the two leaders of the Viper and Chaos Order.

Against these two, even Mars had to go all out and sustained severe injuries in the process. By now, he was already tired and running out of energy. Even then, while facing a new group of opponents he didn't back down.

Instead, the fires in his body burned even more fervently excited at the battle that was about to go down.

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Above the underground chamber, atop the buildings of the criminal organisation, the group of true vampires stood muttering something among themselves.

"That just now was the spatial magic of sister Bea. Is she on with his plan too? I don't understand what he is trying to do. Defeating the criminal organisation all on his own and then facing the adventurers who were supposed to go against those people, himself"

Theodore commented, his crimson eyes piercing through the layers of ground and staring at the underground chamber.

"Hmm... brother, could he be trying to become the..." Before Maybell could complete her sentence, Theodore shouted urgently.

"Wait! What the hell?!! Get away from here everyone, that insane guy, he is trying to blow away the layers of ground between the surface and the underground chamber".

Everybody was shocked; nevertheless, they hurriedly jumped away. As soon as they moved, the ground, no, the entire town started shaking fiercely. From the surface, it looked like another earthquake; however, the magnitude was far different than before.

Buildings collapsed everywhere and large ravines ran through the ground. Before long, the topography of the place started changing, as if the very fabric of earth was responding to some tremendous force from within.

The trembling intensified, and the earth seemed to convulse as if awakening some ancient, slumbering giant. Enormous chasms opened up, revealing the churning depths below.

BOOM...

Finally as if unable to bear the strain, the ground split apart, sending massive plates of stone and layers of ground, colliding and hurling through the air. The aftermath of the impact was disastrous, sending waves of shockwaves throughout the town.

Chapter 784 Heroes of the Tower Town

The commotion was so loud and conspicuous that it could be heard from every part of the town and beyond.

"What is going on? Its like a natural disaster, the tower town would be destroyed at this rate"...

"The commotion came from the direction of the headquarters of the criminal organisations. They have already started the battle, quick let's go there and support them"

The people of the town now of one mind, quickly rushed to the scene.

On another side, looking at the devastation unfolding in the eastern district of the town, Cynthia couldn't help but mutter to herself in concern.

"Such power... Will Alvara and the others be okay?"...

"Don't worry Your Highness, Theodore and the others are also there. They will make sure that nothing happens to the adventurers"

Annette reassured from the sides. Although she said all that, even she was somewhat unsure of where the whole thing was going and how the events would unfold. Ever since his arrival, things had started moving at a pace so fast that it was almost unpredictable even for her.

'I sensed Bea's spatial magic a moment ago. Why did she come to the surface?' Annette wondered in her head.

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The immense force from within had torn the ground apart, creating a colossal chasm that yawned like the maw of some abyssal beast. The thousands of meters of area, which was once the criminal organization's headquarters, was now replaced by this ominous, dark void.

This gaping chasm seemed to reach deep into the very bowels of the earth, leading directly to the underground chamber.

At this moment, the figure of Mars flew out from within. As he unfolded his wings, he looked at the bodies of the adventurers lay strewn about.

Some were battered and bruised, bearing the injuries of the intense battle that had unfolded moments ago. The broken remnants of the underground chamber's stonework, the shattered plates of stone, painted a picture of the seismic clash that had taken place.

Yet, even in their injured state, the adventurers exhibited resilience. Slowly but surely, they rose to their feet, determination burning in their eyes. The ground beneath them, though fractured, served as a testament to their unwavering resolve.

"Hoh, you still have the energy to stand up huh? Then come all of you, I—Mars shall fight you with all my strength"

After uttering those challenging words, Mars began transformation again. His form shimmered with a dark, ethereal energy as he reverted to his original state—the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse.

The crimson antlers, the flaming mane, and the otherworldly presence became more pronounced, giving him an imposing, legendary aura.

Sensing this change, the adventurers cursed.

"Dammit, he is up to something again"...

"I can't believe we were thrown all the way to the surface outside. What kind of ridiculous strength does it possess"...

"Even with all those injuries, it still had that much strength. Everyone don't let your guard down".

Even in this despairing situation, the adventurers still had the mood to make jokes. This meant they still had some energy to spare.

Looking at them, laughing while barely holding onto their consciousness, Blake couldn't help but smile. Everyone here had already expended all their energy and most powerful skills in the previous clash inside the underground chamber.

Their bodies were decked with numerous injuries and broken bones yet none of them refused to back down. Right now, what drove them all was simply willpower.

It could be said that they were on their last leg; however, the same could also be said for their opponent who had been cornered by them. The fact that it chose to revert back to its original form, could only mean that it was backed into a wall and had no choice.

"Everyone maintain your position, this is going to be the final battle"

Blake declared holding the frontline for his team. In fact, he was not wrong, both sides were completely depleted and the ensuing battle would decide the outcome.

Just as the adventurers channelled their mana ready to fight their last battle, multiple figures appeared around them, surprising them for a split second.

"Everyone, thank you for fighting on our behalf. From Princess Cynthia, we got to know everything. Thank you for freeing the town from the Criminal Organisations"...

"Yes, truly thank you. I heard that they are currently being sheltered in the serene palace merchant guild building. My wife is also there, I cannot tell you how grateful I am"...

"Although we don't know the whole situation, it looks like the enemy in front is giving you a tough time. Allow us to give you a hand"...

Blake and the others looked around them in shock. All of these figures were the adventurers of the tower town. At this moment, they were fully decked out in their gears, here to aid them after having a change of heart from Cynthia's speech.

That was not all, as rays of healing light fell on the injured adventurers, they saw that all the people of the tower town were gathered here at this moment.

"Everyone" Blake and the others couldn't help but be impressed. It seemed like the Princess' words had reached the masses.

"Her Highness really is impressive. All of you on your feet, we can't let her down. Today, we have to win this battle"

Blake roared, his battle cry lifted the morale of his teammates and everyone present. Thanks to the incoming heals from their newly arrived reinforcements, Frida, Alvara and the others were back on their feet.

Right now, they had all the support in the town, the victory was theirs.

Across from them, facing the adventurers; no, the entire town by himself, Mars released a deep roar of excitement. He did not feel any pressure, instead his eyes seemed to burn with the same intensity as the flames covering him.

This is how it should be, this is how it had to go down. All the people of the tower town united against a single enemy.

Mars who had reverted back to his Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse form, now fully exhibited his strength and ferocity that seemed boundless. Flames flickered around him, and his crimson antlers gleamed with an eerie light.

"Come!!"

With his roar, the battle that would shape the Tower Town anew began.

The ensuing battle was nothing short of epic. Every clash, every strike, resonated with a sky shattering might. Everyone fought bravely, unleashing all their strength.

Blake and his companions, driven by sheer determination, stood their ground against this formidable opponent. The clash of weapons, the roars of Mars, and the sparks of magic filled the air with a symphony of chaos and power.

Over on the outskirts of the battlefield, watching the battle with awe and a tinge of dread, were the townspeople.

They who were once gripped by fear and suppressed by the criminal organisation, looked at the adventurers with hope and expectation as they challenged such a mystical beast.

As the battle unfolded the ground trembled with the intensity of the each collision of steel magic and flames. The sky seemed to echo the thunderous clashes below. Excitement and fear mingled in the hearts of the onlookers, their eyes wide with amazement at the adventurers who fought not for themselves but for the tower town and the freedom of its people.

They were the brave warriors that the princess said would liberate them from the tyranny, the hopes of this town.

The people of the town witnessed their struggle, the great clash of powers that transcended the ordinary. They felt a surge of pride and admiration for these adventurers who left an indelible mark in their collective consciousness.

BOOM...

Back at the battlefield, Mars who was besieged by attacks from all directions, suddenly erupted with a powerful dark pulse that travelled with him as the centre and quickly covered half of the town.

The adventurers who were caught in the range of the pulse were all blown back, crashing and tumbling everywhere like falling debris.

The onlookers on the edges of the battlefield had to flee and the only ones who managed to survive that attack were a handful of adventurers protected under a barrier of light. The rest who were unable to counter the dark magic were blown back and rendered out of commission.

"Thanks, You saved us" Blake thanked the Mage who conjured the Light Magic- [Dark Banishment] and saved them from getting knocked out too.

"Huff.. Huffff... Dammit, it still had this much energy to cover half of the town with its magic even after all this? How ridiculously strong would it be at its peak? Haha, we really have a screw loose to mess with a monster like that"

Wyot commented, trying to suppress the fear in him by making foolish jokes. From where they stood, they could see their opponent preparing another attack at his moment.

With the sky darkening all of a sudden as if day and night had changed places, they saw a humungous image of the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse projecting in the sky.

The image was so huge and intimidating that they felt like an ant in front of a giant. Just the sight of that abyssal beast was enough to instil fear and immediately make them surrender.

The huge image stayed in the sky for a couple of seconds before getting pulled into the warhorse, who at this moment was rearing it's four powerful forelegs up.

And then, in a decisive moment, it scraped the ground preparing for a charge.

Everyone who faced the Bloodthron Demonic Warhorse knew how destructive and unstoppable its charge was.

Chapter 785 Heroes Of The Tower Town (2)

If they allowed it to charge towards them, it was almost certain that they would be defeated. Making his decision in that split moment, Blake spoke in a solemn voice.

"I'll be honest with you all, I'm already completely spent. It's a miracle that I am still standing. My arms and legs have feel heavy as if they are blocks of steel. I guess it's the same for you all. That said, if we allow it to charge at us, there would be no hope for victory. Somebody has to stand in between it and stop its charge"

A heavy silence fell amongst the adventurers. To stand in between its charge meant that they would have to take the full brunt of its impact.

In the state that they were in, this was practically a suicide mission. One of them would have to sacrifice themselves for the team. Although Blake did not say all that, the meaning was clear.

They would have to make the decision now, who would go up and die?

"I'll go, my bones are creaking for a while, I guess I need to exercise them more" Wyot stretched his arms stepping forward.

A few of the others also wanted to speak up but they were beaten to the punch by Wyot.

Blake gave a side glance to his friend before shaking his head "Actually, I was suggesting I should go up"...

"What?! No!!"

As soon as he said that, Frida came up to him and blocked his path "You can't go, you can barely stand straight. There is no way you can survive after taking its charge. Have you forgotten what happened the last time you did that?".

How could he forget that incident that tormented every aspect of his life and came as a nightmare to haunt him every night?

"This is precisely why I need to do that. Out of all of us, I have fought against that monster the most. What's more ever since the beginning of this battle all it did was pay attention to me. It hardly cared about the others. Even though it's a monster, it's a warrior through and through. I feel like it only pays attention to those it deems worthy. If I don't take this mission, it wouldn't charge towards them and everything would fail".

As Blake spoke till here everybody got silent. It was because what he said, made sense. They have all witnessed their opponent speak to Blake and recognise his strength which none of them managed to accomplish.

Even during the battles, it would wait for him to complete his strategy before taking action. If it was Blake, the warhorse would definitely charge at him.

"But why you? You barely managed to survive the last time, the wound in your shoulder is proof enough that you are not its match.." Frida spoke out in concern.

"It has to be me. I have taken its charge before, that is why I stand the most chance. Besides, our opponent is also severely weakened, its charge right now would be much more weak than its peak. Believe in me, this time I will definitely win"

Blake hugged his partner and stepped forward. He needed to do this, not only for others, but for himself too. To end the nightmare that plagued him every second of his life, he had to be the one to take its charge. That was the only way.

"if you have made your decision, then I won't stop you. However, at least take these skill crystals with you" Alvara extended her hand and took out a few skill crystals from her space ring.

"These are..."...

"These skill crystals contain powerful enchantments that Her Highness gave me in case I find myself in a situation where I am face to face with death. Since you are going against that thing, I think you need it more than me".

Items that came from Her Highness, Blake did not hesitate to take it.

"Yeah, it would be quite helpful. Tell her highness thanks on behalf of me"...

"You can say that yourself when you meet her"...

"Haha... will do"

And so leaving behind his teammates who were showing varying sorts of emotions on their faces, he turned to face the Bloothron Demonic Warhorse. Step by step, he walked forward until he made sure that his teammates were far away and couldn't get caught in the charge.

'Now then, shall we do this? Although I said that the opponent was equally depleted, the moment it reared its forelegs to assume the charge stance, I felt it through my bones and every cell of my body, the thick air of death. Had it charged like that, all of us would have died'

'Although I feel bad for lying to Frida and the others, I cannot allow them to die, especially her. Call it my selfishness or stupidity, but I feel like I need to be the one to settle this. How many times have I activated it today? Once again I need to rely on you partner'

Muttering to himself, Blake raised his shield and activated his skill [Solarguard Protector]. In a state where his body was severely injured and mana depleted, activating a skill as powerful and draining as that was peak foolishness.

Forget about being able to transform, his body might just even explode from the strain.

"Aaarrgghhh!!" Blake gave a suppressed scream as the veins all around his body started bulging and wriggling like snakes.

Blood sprayed out like a fountain from the numerous injuries he suffered and his his body expanded, turning bright yellow.

This was his ultimate skill [Solarguard Protector]. Whenever he activated this skill, his attacks and defence stats would increase drastically and he would become the very avatar of his class, the [Solarguard Protector].

Usually, when he activated the skill, he would become as huge as twelve meters; however, after activating the skill more than three times today and in his heavily wounded state, he couldn't even break past seven meters.

Crack... there was a cracking noise and the skill crystals he held in his hands were immediately crushed. A few bursts of light surrounded his body alleviating some of the strain and revitalising his strength.

Experiencing the effects of the enchantments in the skill crystals, Blake was somewhat amazed. He felt energy coursing through his body making him stronger and sturdier. With this, he should be able to do it.

"Where did Her Highness get items like these?" He couldn't help but wonder.

"Are you done with your preparations? Then get ready, here I charge. This will be my final attack. If even after this you survive, I will take it as my loss"

Across from him neighing loudly was Mars. He scrapped his legs which were like engines of a powerful machine and then charged.

Rumble... Rumble... [Hundred Mountains Charge] a skill filled with all of the devastating might of the Bloodthron Demonicc warhorse. When it charged the earth trembled beneath his hooves and when it crashed into its target it was like the might of a hundred mountains crashing at once.

There was no opponent that it had faced until now, that could take its charge and still stay standing. Even if the might of the skill had diminished due to its exhausted body, it still packed a devastating punch.

Facing the charge of the warhorse, Blake could almost feel his breathing stop. It was yet to crash against him yet he felt like his hands and legs getting soft. Just the pressure coming from the charge was already so intimidating, how powerful it would be when it crashed against him with all that momentum?

For a second there, Blake had the vision of the time when he took the charge head on for the first time inside that dungeon.

The pain and feeling of bones getting turned into fine powder was still vivid in his mind. The agony was so outlandish that he immediately lost consciousness after that impact.

And even after he came back to himself several weeks later, he was still bedridden for several months and needed the aid of a high ranking Holy magic user to completely heal him.

This time though, the odds were also stacked against him, making the situation almost despair inducing. Nevertheless, Blake did not lose hope and put all of his faith into this skill of his.

"Haaaaarrghh!!!"

Moments before the despair inducing charge of the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse crashed against him, Blake gave a loud war cry to get his spirits up and smashed his shield against the opponent.

BANG... the ensuing clash caused a visible depression to form in the space. Shockwaves, like ripples of water spread through the air showcasing the tremendous might of that charge.

Crack... and then there was the noise of bones cracking, no being shattered. Blake who took the brunt of the charge of the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse saw the illusion of a hundred mountains all crashing towards him at that split second.

The impact caused all the air in his lungs to get knocked away, and the hand that was holding the shield was destroyed to the point where it became completely unresponsive.

Every nerve and muscle in his body screamed at the damage that far surpassed his physical limits, causing his consciousness to immediately shut down. And thus, at that very instant of the clash, Blake lost consciousness.

Whoosh... the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse continued forward lifting him off the ground. Behind him, were his teammates and Frida, heavily wounded by the battle so far. If the warhorse continued to charge at them with momentum, they would no doubt...

At that very instant, he did something that his previous self was incapable of.

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Forcing his consciousness that was shut down from the impact, to open again with inhumane tenacity, Blake planted his feet back on the ground.

He threw away his shield, grabbed the bloodthorns of the warhorse and with every might and willpower that he gathered from who knows where, he used his body to struggle.

SKID... even when his feet left a long narrow gorge on the ground, Blake continued to fight against the charge in hopes that he could slow down its momentum.

"Get away from its way"

Seeing the oncoming charge of the warhorse, Wyot hurriedly shouted. His shout woke the others and they hurriedly moved out of the way.

The Bloodthorn demoni warhorse continued its charge pushing the man along with him.

"As I thought, it's impossible even for Blake to stop its charge"..

"No, look he is still fighting, trying to stop the charge even now. However, where is that thing taking him".

Frida, Wyot and his teammates chased after the charging warhorse.

"Haaaarrghhhh!! Stooooopp!!"

Blake roared, he applied so much force to stop the momentum of the charge that he even burst a couple of nerves and bled from all of his seven orifices.

Crack... there was a sound of bones breaking and his left thigh bone gave up, followed by his right. His sternum and upper arms also soon followed next. At this moment there was not even a single bone on Blake that was intact, yet even while enduring that unimaginable pain, the person still held on.

His unbelievable tenacity would give any onlookers goosebumps, making them wonder if he was still a human.

That said, his transcendent willpower, suffering and efforts, did pay off. Although Mars was still charging forward, his momentum nevertheless, was slowly slowing down.

"Heh, to stay conscious even with that kind of damage, I'll give you that. However, it's time we end our battle"

BANG... the moment the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse said that, it went and crashed into a wall.

"Bugh!!" Blake coughed out several mouthfuls of blood, the force of the impact was the last straw. Finally, as if even that inhumane willpower of his had reached its limits, his grip loosened and he slowly fell to the ground.

Since his consciousness was blurry and fading at a rapid speed, he wasn't aware of where he was. However, he could still see and hear the vague words of his opponent who slowly disappeared from his vision.

"Since you managed to survive my attacks till the very last second, I guess I will take it as my loss this time. However, the battle isn't over yet, the tower town might have been saved by you all this time. Nevertheless, the next time monsters overflow from the dungeon, I will appear again".

With that final message, Mars entered the tower and disappeared from the tower town. Although he left, his actions had left an indelible mark on the tower town's collective consciousness which would still be talked about and sung by minstrels in the taverns of the town for many years to come.

And then there were those words he left behind which indicated that although they managed to avoid the calamity, it was not completely over yet. Who knows when that abyssal warhorse would appear again along with an army of monsters?

This gave all the adventurers of the town a pressing reason to enter the dungeon and maintain the monster level after all, it was widely known by the adventurers that a dungeon overflow occurs when a dungeon has been left to its state for too long.

In such a case, the monster's spawning and breeding rate increases drastically. And since there is no one to cull their numbers, they start overflowing and going up the floors until they break out of the tower.

The dungeon overflow that occurred today was due to the criminal organisations who completely took over the town and its adventurers, barring their entry into the dungeon and putting heavy tariffs on those who did.

As a result of which, only a certain class of adventurers were able to enter the dungeon and even then they had to act as the pawns of the organisation, doing and running all of the tasks and errands they told.

In a situation like this, it wasn't unusual that there was a dungeon overflow. To make sure that something like this doesn't happen again and that abyssal warhorse doesn't get another chance to set foot on the surface, they had to explore the dungeon and cull the numbers of monsters periodically.

At the mouth of the tower, Blake's body lay unconscious in a pool of his own blood. A natural response from his system to prevent any further damage to his body. He had already forced himself conscious once, incurred great damage and almost turned all of the bones on his body into dust.

It could be said that he had far surpassed his physical and mental limit and abused his body to the state it was right now. In fact, he should have fallen unconscious far earlier; however, he kept on pushing with his inhumane willpower to stay conscious until now.

This time though, he had passed out for good. As if a machine whose plug had been pulled out to force a shutdown, he was not getting up any time soon.

Forget about getting up, it still remained a question whether he would survive the whole ordeal.

Not long afterwards his teammates arrived at the scene following the trail of gorge that he and the warhorse left behind.

"Oh my god? Blake? Blake!! Stay conscious... somebody quickly cast a heal"

His teammates panicked after seeing the condition he was in. They did all the emergency treatment that they could; however, the condition of Blake was far too worse for just a simple healing spell or a potion to cure him. They urgently needed to treat him.

"What should we do? Blake you idiot, why did you have to push yourself to such an extent" Frida held the warrior's head and cried. Her voice and cry for help were heart wrenching.

"Leave it to me" At this moment they heard the sonorous voice of a young girl.

Unbeknownst to them, at some point all the adventurers of the town and its people had gathered around them. Why would they not? They were after all the heroes, the brave warriors who as per Her Highness saved the tower town and freed all of them.

Everybody wanted to engrain in their eyes the appearance and looks of these courageous warriors who fought on their behalf and chased away that catastrophe from their town. They who were the heroes of Tower Town deserved their respect and admiration.

However, at this moment, it did not look like the heroes were in any mind to pay attention to their admiration as one of them looked like he was on his death bed.

The adventurers of the town who surrounded them were equally gloomy too. The mages who practised light magic, wanted to help but even they knew that those wounds were clearly beyond their ability.

Only a holy mage or a peerless elixir could heal injuries of that magnitude and the tower town had none of the two.

The criminal organisation had been defeated, the people of the tower had been freed and the catastrophe was chased away. At a time for celebration like this, none of them could bring themselves in a joyous mood.

"Leave it to me" Combing through the crowds of people in a mysterious way, a young girl wearing a crimson black gothic dress, and holding a plushie in her hand, stepped forward. The voice just now, was from her.

"You are... one of Her Highness' aid... Maybell"

Wyot remembered her name. She was one of the members of that unusual group. The group which was made of many different races of demi humans. How could one easily forget about that?

Amongst them, the two children stood out especially. Having the ability to command those insanely powerful demi humans, left a powerful impression on him.

"Can you heal him?" he asked not wanting to get his hopes too up. The condition that Blake was in, was too dire. Unless it was a holy mage, it was impossible to heal him.

At Wyot's question, the girl nodded her head without any hesitation and stepped towards Blake.

"Can you really save him? Please, I'll do anything... just save my Blake" Seemingly clutching at last straws of hope, Frida begged looking at Maybell.

"You don't have to do anything, I'm taking my payment along with my help" The latter spoke arriving before Blake and feeding him a droplet of her blood.

Nobody knew what she meant, nor did they have any time to stop her. All it took was a fraction of a second for her to complete her action. Before anyone could comprehend or even see what was going on, Blake's body suddenly started jolting and twisting.

Veins all over his body started glowing red, becoming more prominent. His bent arms and legs started falling in place to the point where one could even see the movements of his bones.

The changes scared Frida and Blake's other teammates. However, when they saw his injuries closing up and his breathing becoming stable, they realised that the girl was indeed helping them.

"Thank you... thank you very much. This debt, I will never forget it"

Frida kneeled on the ground and thanked her. There was nothing more important to her than the safety of her man.

Chapter 787 Rank up- [B] Tier Intermediate Ranking Dungeon

"Who is this girl? She actually cured those hideous injuries"...

"Could it be she is a Holy mage? Since when did our tower town had a person like her?"

"Who cares? The fact is that she just cured one of her heroes, means that she is a good person"

The people of the town and the adventurers who didn't know about Maybell, gossiped among themselves. The technique or skill that she just displayed was no less than a miracle of a holy mage.

With one of their heroes no longer near his deathbed, the town's people returned to a festive mood. The next couple of days were filled with festivity and banquets. Adventurers, merchants, slaves and town's people celebrated their liberation and freedom from the tyranny of the criminal organisation.

People ran over the streets of town, celebrating the defeat of the six legged catastrophe and their reunion with the dear ones.

Amidst the celebration and merriment, Blake and his team who were the heroes of the town, received the generous hospitality and the treatment that they deserved.

Gathered inside the Serene Palace Merchant Guild building, in one of the rooms bathing in ample sunlight from the open window sills, were Cynthia and the others.

In one corner of the room, adjacent to the window was a bed with clean white sheets and bedding. Lying on the bed, sleeping with a peaceful look on his face was Blake. Next to him, sitting on a chair was Frida.

There were other people in the room too, including Cynthia's retainers and Wyot.

"It has been three days since then, he is yet to wake up" Frida muttered in worry.

"Don't worry, he is not amongst the people to die so easily. Before long, you'll see him getting up from the bed, bored of sleeping too much"

Wyot tried to lift her spirits. It was not like the man was in any danger, if anything he was totally out of it. All the light mages in the town had said that Blake's vitality and body had returned to its normal condition and he should soon wake up.

However it has been three days since then and every day, the mages would say the same thing. Since there was no injuries or damage on the person to heal, they could only wait for him to wake up on his own from his comatose state.

"By the way, I just came back from strolling around the town. Man, they are totally putting all the achievements on us. It is still a mystery as to how the top executives of the criminal organisation disappeared like smoke without leaving any trace"

"Although we were able to investigate a fierce struggle from the aftermath that was left behind, all the clues ended there. We don't even know if they are alive or not or if that catastrophe killed them. In any case, the people of the town are glorifying and publishing everything as our achievement. It makes me a little uncomfortable hogging rewards and praises for something I haven't done" Wyot hugged his shoulders and shuddered.

"Haha, you are right. Wherever we go, we get surrounded by the people of the town who keep on singing praises for us. It's like we have completely become the heroes of the town"

The others agreed. Things have blown out of control and the facts have been exaggerated by the people to the point where it hardly sounded like what originally happened.

It couldn't be helped after all the town had people from all walks of life. What they witnessed and understood was naturally different from other people. And since even the people who were at the scene were not completely in the know of what had actually transpired, there was no way of stopping this chain of exaggeration that spiralled out of control.

"Your Highness, the other day I saw the adventurer association branch rebuilding itself. However, I don't think after what happened, people are going to follow them blindly again. In fact, the people of town have the same consensus when it comes to this matter. Have you thought about the proposal they sent Princess? If you accept it, it would be a great help to the merchant guild and the royal family can once again reestablish..."

Blamenco the butler spoke, shedding some light on the activities and agendas that was happening around the town. However, before he could continue further with his sentence, he was stopped by his liege Cynthia.

"I told you before Blamenco, I will not make a decision right now, I need time to think about it"

Just the other day, the association and the people of the town, put forward a proposal that requested Her Highness Cynthia to become the governor of the town.

The Tower Town was taken over by the criminal organisation and became what it was, due to the lack of a governing body. Just like every city or village needed a mayor or elder, the tower town also needed its own ruling body so that an incident like this could be avoided in the future.

And who better to assume this position than Cynthia?

If there was any one person in the entire town that the people respected with their whole heart, it would be her. Not only she commanded a high level of influence over the adventurers, merchants, slaves and other various people from different walks of life, but her presence in their hearts became unshakable after the incident.

Then there was also the group of high level people that followed her which included her subordinates, Blake and his teammates and Annette's group. With so many strong people behind her, her position was almost unshakeable in the town.

And then adding to the fact that she was also a royalty from the now ruined kingdom of Ellesmere, all the people wanted her to become the governor of the new tower town.

The proposal came in from the Adventurers Association branch. Everybody inside the room understood what it meant for her to assume that position, which is why nobody said a word. After all, it was up to Cynthia herself to decide what she wanted to do.

"By the way, I don't see the unusual group of demi humans around Your Highness. Did they go somewhere?" Wyot changed the topic to clear the atmosphere.

Cynthia turned to look at Annette who stepped forward to answer.

"I have sent them for some task somewhere, they will be returning soon"...

"So that was the case"

Wyot nodded his head and did not pry more. He understood that everybody had their own secrets and things that they needed to do, there was no point in prying. Besides, he felt like the demi humans were cold and distant to him, not only him but to all the humans of the town except for Cynthia and her group and the slaves.

With the tyranny of the Criminal organisations over, all the slaves that were brought from the foreign countries and mainland, was released. Their slave collars removed and they no longer needed to follow the command of their masters.

They were now free to stay in this town or go wherever they wanted.

Thinking about it, most of the slaves that were brought in the tower town were demi humans, just like that unusual group. Were those people once slaves too? If they were, it would explain their hatred towards him and the other humans.

"It is not good to make noise in the room where a patient is recovering, let us go to a different room".

Leaving the couple by the bed alone, the rest exited the room. Outside in the hallway, Cynthia opened her mouth to ask—

"Miss Annette... do you not need to go where Theodore and Mayebll went?".

Annette glanced at Cynthia and smiled "Just Annette is fine Your Highness and no, I don't need to go there. My priority is your safety as such just sending them there should be enough"...

"I see"...

People like Wyot and others from Blake's team would wonder what they were talking about. However, those in the know like Alvara and the others understood what the topic was all about.

However, they were not in the liberty to divulge any information, after all, it related to Her Highness and that person.

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Main Floor of the Dungeon Laplace, inside White Palace.

At this moment, almost all subordinates present inside the dungeon, assembled in the Main Hall. Whether it be the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse, Berigard, Colues, the other forest spring spirits, Wisp, Prime, all were present.

Seated on the head seat was Simon looking at them as they kneeled in front of him.

"Everyone, raise your heads. Today I gathered you for no other reason but to tell you all that the scourge plaguing the tower town, is now gone. Thanks to the efforts of Annette, Theodore, Maybell and the others, we won't have to worry about our dungeon going into decline again"

"Our actions would soon bring over waves of adventurers flooding inside the dungeon. I want everyone to continue putting in the efforts you have been for the dungeon"

Simon first complimented his subordinates for a job well done before moving on to the important topic.

"Most of you might not know but our actions were very important for the development of the dungeon. The tower town is not only the source of income for the dungeon, but it is a place that is associated with the life and death of our dungeon. As such, we cannot leave it to its state"

Chapter 788 Rank Up- [B] Tier Intermediate Ranking Dungeon (2)

"However, with your actions we successfully retook the town, an action that would help increase the rank of the dungeon. That's right, it was an important accomplishment worthy of recognition. The one who made it possible, deserves a reward. Is there anything you guys want? If it's possible within my power, I'm willing to grant you your wish?"

Simon looked at his subordinates. An organisation's productivity was directly related to the satisfaction factors of its employees. It would perform well if its employees were adequately motivated and properly remunerated for their efforts.

Simon wanted to insinuate what he learned from his previous life to this slowly expanding organisation called the Dungeon Laplace. However, honest to the fault, his subordinates were just too damn loyal to him.

"We thank Master for his generous words. However, serving you is the greatest honour that we could ask for. We dare not ask for anything else, just that we want to keep following and devote our loyalty to you for eternity".

Haaa... Simon sighed, even Theodore and Maybell were saying things like that. He would have liked it more if they acted a bit more selfishly.

That's right, they were usually much more relaxed and acted spoiled around him, why did they turn like all the others all of a sudden? Could it be because this was a formal audience with everyone present?

Simon realised that he needed to change his approach. It's not that they didn't want anything, it's just that they were in front of everyone and had to act their part. He made a mental note to ask his subordinates what they wanted when he met with them in private later.

For now, it was important that he progressed with the audience.

"Once we place a figurehead to govern the tower town, all the conditions to evolve the dungeon would be met. Just like usual, all the inhabitants of the dungeon would receive a gift based on their talent and aptitude. However, before that, I would like to announce the biggest contributor who made all of this possible and a very important revelation that we learned from this endeavour"

Saying that, Simon called forth the warrior who played the leading role. Mars stepped forward and kneeled in front of him. His stature even while bent, was towering when compared to all of his other subordinates.

"I would like to introduce everyone to Mars here. You might be confused by his change in appearance, but make no mistake, he is a very loyal subordinate of mine, the leader of all the beasts of the dungeon, Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse that you all know" Simon introduced.

"I thought as much... but look at you, you really did change a hell lot" Theodore commented.

"What he was the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse?" Cecilia being the clueless one, gasped in surprise. She tottered over to Mars' side and curiously started inspecting him.

"Woah, Sir Warhorse has changed a lot. Ah, I should call you Sir Mars from now. However, what brought this change?".

Even if not for Cecilia, Simon knew that everybody would ask this question. As such, he told them about his recent rank up and Mars' naming ceremony.

"Woah... big brother ranked up and gave sir warhorse a name?! Hehe... it's such a good news. Everyone from the village would be overjoyed to hear this" Cecilia jumped with merry.

"Cecilia you are interrupting the audience" Irene quietly reminded from the side.

"Ah!" As if realising her mistake, the girl hurriedly backed away.

"Anyways, it is due to Mars and the others that the plan went as smoothly as it did" Simon resumed "Not only were we able to pull out all the plague infecting the tower town and take control of it in one go, we were also able to discover the objective of the Criminal organisation's which was much deeper than we had initially imagined".

At this moment, he turned towards Prime who was standing among the ranks of his subordinates and asked— "Prime please tell everyone what you have discovered from the pieces of equipment and machineries we found inside the underground chamber of the criminal organisations".

On his orders, the tiny Lumynar jumped on top of a large strange looking machine and began his explanation.

"This thing here is quite amusing. After opening it up and learning about it, I discovered that it runs on a large number of core stones. The energy it can hold can easily destroy a town as small as the tower town. However, that is what's not amazing about this thing. As far as I can tell, this thing can borrow the power that can isolate and lock space for a set period of time"...

"What?!!"

On Prime's explanation, everyone except for Simon, showed an astonished expression. An equipment that could lock space... This strange looking machine did what?

Their astonishment stemmed from the fact that the attribute of space was one of the most mysterious and fearsome attributes out of all the other elements. It was not only extremely rare, but much was still unknown about it.

Because of this reason, the fact that this machine here could do something that was beyond their understanding, came as quite a bit of shock to them.

"This machine can lock space? How is something like this even possible?" Coleus muttered, looking at the machine with intrigue.

"Fufufu... Even laws can be bent to one's will if one has a deep understanding of its workflow and mechanics. Why can't there be a machine that can lock space? Hmph, this thing is still in its early stages and needs much more work on it. However, I have already seen machines that are much more better than this, machines that can even lock time and space, create slip space and such. Compared to those machines, this thing is nothing"

"That aside, although I said it can isolate and lock space, this here is just one component of the real machine. The one which can lock space, is located somewhere else. This machine here is simply a transceiver, it receives and modulates energy waves sent by the actual machine"...

"Are you saying that this machine here is not the actual space locking machine?"...

"That is right" Prime nodded with confidence.

He was a Lumynar, a race known for its extremely high intelligence, not to mention he was also an inventor from a highly advanced race. There was no reason for Simon to doubt his words.

"It's a shame that we weren't able to get our hands on the real thing. But that is not important right now, actual or not, this thing can isolate and lock space. I don't need to tell everyone what that means".

Even without him needing to say it out loud everybody understood what it meant. A machine that could isolate and lock space, it was built to counter places or things that reside in a special space like the dungeons.

If this machine was ever used inside a dungeon, it would essentially lock the spatial laws of that dungeon, making teleportation or any form of communication practically useless.

A dungeon with its spatial laws sealed and isolated from the rest of the world, it was not hard for Simon to imagine what would be the fate of such a dungeon.

What's more the fact that such a machine was confiscated from the possession of the criminal organisations, left him with an uneasy feeling. He practically knew nothing about the objective of the criminal organisations, their reason for coming to the tower town and taking over it.

Fortunately, thanks to Mars' plan he was able to capture quite a few of their high ranking executives. Although it was a pity that he was unable to capture their two leaders alive as they self destructed their bodies after they lost, he should be able to get some information if he investigated the ones he captured.

"Bea, I leave the interrogation of the captives to you. Make sure they spill out every piece of information they have. I need to know what they were trying to do by creating an underground chamber and producing machines like this right under our nose"...

"Leave it to me, master" Bea dutifully nodded.

The captives were currently imprisoned in the underground prison of the training floor, at the deepest third layer.

Not only the place was extremely sturdy, but the cells were also made of material that constantly drained mana from the prisoners. Then there was also numerous traps and formations to make them weaker. As such, even if they rankers, escape was practically impossible from the underground prison.

'It's a good thing that I decided to intervene. Had I left the tower town on its own, I wouldn't have been able to unveil their plot. In any case, I hope it's all just my needless concern and has nothing to do with them' Simon thought internally.

The discussion from the Hexennacht still weighed heavily on his mind. The fact that even high ranking dungeons that have been there in the world for hundreds and even thousands of years, can be conquered just like that, gave him a heavy sense of unease.

What's more, the perpetrators who destroyed the high ranking dungeon, did it so spotlessly that they could even evade from the senses and pursuit of Demon Archdukes, making it all the more harder for low and intermediate dungeons and their masters to ignore this news.

Especially after hearing about the recent destruction of the [A] ranking dungeon which was the layer of an ancient Demon Duke. Moments before that dungeon was destroyed, all communication from that dungeon was severed and it was isolated from the rest of the world.

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It was highly likely that the space of the dungeon was locked and its communication jammed. Thus the reason for the chaotic message the Demon Lord of Envy showed them.

At that time, he still believed that he had enough time to grow his dungeon until it became a behemoth kind of existence that couldn't be toppled down easily. However, the recent events told Simon otherwise.

He cannot let his guard down even for a second. Although there is no proof that the things he discovered in the underground chamber of the criminal organisation in the tower town are connected to those people who are responsible for conquering the dungeons, in the case that it is, he needs to be prepared.

On that note...

"Mars you did an excellent job by cornering the prey and discovering their plot in the underground chamber. Bea you too. Just as I said before, I am willing to grant any of your wish. If there is anything you want, don't hesitate to speak up".

Although Bea stayed behind and didn't participate in the recent mission, she nonetheless was on board with Mars' plan and helped him teleport all the captives and the machines that they were manufacturing for Prime to study.

She was entitled to a reward as much as everyone.

"Thank you my lord for your generous words. However, serving you is the biggest reward one can ask for. I don't need anything else" ...

Another deferential response, Simon already knew she would reply like that. He didn't get his expectations up, on the contrary, he was even relieved hearing her response.

This was Bea after all, who knew what she might end up asking? It was not like Simon was oblivious to her feelings.

Contrary to Bea and the others, there was someone who finally opened his mouth and muttered a response that was different from the usual deferential answer all his subordinates gave.

"My lord, there is one thing that I want to ask of you?"

Mars arched his head and looked at Simon from his position. Finally, one of his subordinates was asking something of him. If it was not something beyond his capability, Simon decided to grant them their wish.

This would set a good precedence. Mentally praising Mars for a job well done, he asked— "What is it Mars, you don't have to feel reserved. Ask away" ...

"Yes" Mars too did not stand on ceremony and made his request "The thing is, I want to create an elite unit of my own that serves my lord and protects this dungeon in times of need. I want my lord to grant me this permission".

Most of the subordinates present inside the hall, wore various expressions of surprise on their face. Mars was the first one among all of Simon's subordinates to ask for a reward. What's more, the reward he asked for did not benefit himself but was all for the master he served.

Creating an elite unit that was led by him and which directly served Simon, the master of the dungeon and the highest authority here. If Mars was requesting something like this, then his goal was clear.

People like Coleus, Prime, Berigard and the others looked at Theodore, Maybell and the other Guardians. The Guardian on the other hand were looking at Mars with intrigue and amusement in their eyes.

Especially Theodore, he was looking at Mars as if he was looking at something that he found very interesting.

Why would he not? After all, saying those words to their master meant that he wanted to stand on the same grounds as them. That is to say, Mars' goal was to become a Guardian, the pillar that supported the dungeon, just like them.

"Hoh, are you sure? Granting the permission is not difficult for me. However, the path you have chosen is not easy. You should already know the level you need to reach that goal of yours. The rank of guardian is the highest in the dungeon after the dungeon master. Only a limited few people can sit on these seats. You not only need to have strength backing that rank, but you also need to be acknowledged by the dungeon"

It was as Simon said, the position of the Guardians, the rank that comes directly after the dungeon master, was limited. Right now, there were already five Guardians. What's more, all of them are chosen by the dungeon itself.

Simon did not know how many guardians his dungeon Laplace could appoint. Nevertheless, he knew that it could only be a handful more.

It was not like he didn't have any confidence that Mars could become stronger. In fact, being his first subordinate, he trusted Mars more than anyone and knew that the latter could become much stronger in the future.

However, in this world there was the absolute restriction called the bloodline limit that any and all creature of this world is constrained to.

When he first summoned the Bloodthron Demonic Warhorse, it was ranked [B] by the Status. However, after the Naming ceremony, its rank rose up to [A]. Considering the fact that all those who were assigned the rank of Guardians were at least [S] rank, it could be seen that [S] rank was the bare minimum to become a Guardian.

It wasn't just based on level, but individual specialness. Or else Cecilia and Wisp wouldn't have become a Guardian. It was the same with the Valkyries, given their strength and uniqueness, they too ought to get the rank of Guardians.

However, the rank that they got was Administrators, a rank that was a few levels below the Guardians. From this one could see how stringent the requirement to become a Guardian was.

"I am aware my lord, and I have made my resolve. I will become strong enough to be regarded as your most powerful subordinate"

Mars spoke with an undeterred determination. There was no hesitation in his voice nor any doubt only pure confidence and tenacity.

Simon was a little amazed as well as a little surprised by the resolve of his subordinate. The cause to protect something and the intense fervour to become stronger was something that he too shared. As such, he knew what Mars was feeling.

That said, more than him, the ones who were most affected by the last sentence of Mars, were obviously the Guardians. To dare and say in front of everyone that he would become the most trusted and powerful subordinate of their master, how could it not light a fire in them?

"Heh, looks like somebody is underestimating us. Very then, I'll take on the challenge. Let's see who become the most powerful and trusted subordinate of Master" Theodore declared, revved up by the atmosphere.

"Maybell you agree with me, right?"...

"I don't know brother, Isn't it good that he wants to become a Guardian? Why do boys always have to be so competitive"...

"Right... right... boys are always like that, getting fired up over the smallest of things"... Cecilia added, backing Maybell up.

"What did you say? Hmph, I knew it, girls don't understand a thing. In a situation like this, it's obvious to take on the challenge".

While the immature ones started bickering among themselves, the mature ones like Irene smiled looking at Simon.

"You have good subordinates"...

"Yeah".

And so, feeling the determination of the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse now known as Mars, Simon gave his permission. In any case, he himself wanted to see what great heights this first subordinate of his would reach in the future.

Although he did not know at that time, but this decision of his would come to effect his dungeon greatly in the future. An elite legion led by the Legion Commander Mars would etch their names in the history of Althaea.

Defeating every army and opponent they faced with an unsurpassed record. However, that is something for the future. For now, even Simon couldn't have predicted the result of his actions.

After the audience was over, Simon ordered Prime to stay behind and dispersed his other subordinates.

Now that the plague infecting the tower town was gone and it was in the midst of rebuilding itself anew again, the dungeon would soon get busy. This meant that his subordinate would not be able to stay idle too.

They all had their own tasks and responsibilities handed to them. As such, they soon left after the audience was over.

Now inside the hall, Simon, Prime, Irene, Cecilia and Bea were the only people remaining.

"Hey brat, why did you ask me to stay? If it is to ask about the Resonancer, I already told you that I'm in the last stages of completing it. As you know, I am shorthanded. The robots you send, although can carry the orders as they were told, they lack ingenuousness and creativity. To be honest, they are simply boring to work with. If you want that machine to be completed fast, send some capable workers to my abode"

Prime opened by complaining about how short in staff he was. He was the only one among his subordinates to call him a brat. Nevertheless, Simon did not mind.

"I understand; however, there is no available workforce for me to assign to your tool shop"

Dungeon Laplace was severely lacking in manpower. The Forest Spring Spirits were already busy running different errands and the Andromedas although excellent workers lacked something significant that the living had.

All the people he could trust already had their plates full with all the work. And although the increasing population of the forest spring spirits was a good sign, it would still take some time for the children to grow up into proper adults and help him manage the dungeon.

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Simon needed to find some other way.

"If the Forest Spirits are too busy, then send me those orcs. If I am not mistaken, you have a huge population of them inhabiting a couple of floors of your dungeon right? The orcs are one of the races in the universe gifted with an all encompassing abilities"

"Although they are not masters of any one craft, they do have abilities that allow them to do anything they want. Artisanry, Warmongering, Magecraft, Weapon Smithing... their builds allow them to be able to do anything. The ones in your dungeon still have unevolved potential. If you give them to me, I may be able to help them evolve into higher stages"...

"Orcs huh"

Prime's words reminded Simon that he still had lots of unused manpower inside the dungeon. Led by Berigard, the race of Diluvian High Orcs was a force to reckon with.

They have been steadily making progress, evolving all of their high orcs into Diluvian High Orcs. However, other than that, there was not much to talk about.

The position of the Diluvian High Orcs were deep inside the lower floors of the dungeon. Not many adventurers have the strength to reach those floors causing much of the potential of the orcs to remain unused.

It was not like the Diluvian High Orcs had no potential, he had seen himself how powerful the orcs could grow if they had the right resources and appropriate environment. There was a possibility of more individuals like Berigard popping up.

However, the truth was that by shifting them inside his dungeon and placing them in a secured place, he robbed them of this opportunity. What he had forgotten was that the orcs were able to reach the level they were precisely because of the warring environment that constantly needed them to fight and advance themselves.

All of those conditions were absent in the deeper floors of the dungeon leading the growth of the orcs to become stagnant.

Although their level couldn't be said to be weak especially when compared to the adventurers around this region. However, how long would that last? With the increase in the rank of the dungeon and the changing times, it wouldn't be long before when level 400 would be seen as weak.

At that time, the powerful floors of the Diluvian High Orcs will become a dead weight to his dungeon. In that regard, Prime's offer was not bad. If he can allow them to evolve into higher stages, it would help increase the defence of the dungeon.

Simon understood that but the fact that they were a race that was initially foreign to the dungeon and was later brought inside by him, bothered him. To put it simply, he cannot trust them as he did the forest spring spirits and the Andromedas.

Their leader Berigard who formed a soul contract with him was one thing but bringing in the other orcs into the [WorkShop] which was essentially one of the most important floors of the dungeon...

As if seeing through his concerns, Prime recommended "How about this then, send one of your subordinates to bring the words that I said to the orc that was here a moment ago. If I reckon, he should be the leader of the orcs. I will only take those orcs who are the most loyal. As an added precaution, you can also assign a small unit of Mk 7 Andromedas to watch over them. That way you wouldn't have to worry too much".

Prime's words made sense, in a situation where he needed manpower to continue to operate his dungeon, he could not be too picky. Take what you get... in this case, the Diluvian High Orcs were the only ones that could solve the problem his dungeon was facing.

"Alright, I'll talk with Berigard, I am very curious to see what higher races you can evolve them into. That said, the reason why I asked you to stay behind isn't because of the Resonancer. Although it's a good thing that it is in its final stages, what I needed to talk to you about isn't that"...

"Hoh?! Then what is it?" Prime questioned.

Simon took a deep breath and answered "It's about the machine we retrieved from the underground Chamber. To be honest, I cannot shake off the feeling that all of this is connected to something big, something that would take the entire world with a storm"

"I don't know when it will happen but I know that it will. And for that, I need to be prepared. That said, the dungeon is completely unprepared for an event like that. If that machine had been used inside Laplace, there was no way we would have been able to avoid it. To isolate and lock space, to prepare for a contingency like that, I want to request your aid"

Simon revealed the real reason he asked Prime to stay behind.

The Lumynar looked at the machine and was silent for a while "I see now, so that was the reason. You want me to research this machine and develop something that can counter it right?".

He nodded his head "To be exact, I want you to build a counter for a few more machines whose effect I am gonna tell you now. If it's you the genius Lumynar who was awarded the name Prime, you will be able to do it".

"Haha.. you praise me too much. Alright, you can leave it to me, I will try my best" Prime rubbed his head and glowed a brilliant blue that portrayed his emotions of being shy.

After the lumynar left the hall, Simon sighed. It was not hard for him to manipulate Prime who was from a race who were upfront with their emotions and extremely simple. What tired him was the act that he needed to put in front of his subordinates.

Whenever he met them, they all glanced at him with eyes full of reverence and worship and honestly it was sometimes too much for him. Nevertheless, knowing where his subordinates came from, he felt like he couldn't let them down.

Thus he also started to act his part, the charismatic and regal leader that they all admired.

"Good work" Irene came over and sat beside him.

"Hehe, brother let me tell you about my new powers" Cecilia occupied the seat on the other side of him and started rambling about her powers.

Ever since she started taking care of the Spirit Tree, the power sleeping dormant within her, started awakening at a faster rate. Simon worried that her personality might change once she starts regaining all of her powers.

The visions that he saw and the words that Aldebaran said, were still floating at the back of his head. However, looking at her now, there was no difference between the her right now and Cecilia from before.

This made him realise that he was worried for nothing. Emissary or not, Cecilia would always be his little sister.

Cecilia continued to talk non stop while Simon silently listened to her. Irene and Bea would sometimes join the conversation adding in their suggestions.

At this moment, a window suddenly popped up in front of Simon.

"So it's finally starting huh"...

"Woah, the dungeon is going to increase in rank again!!"

It was not only him, all the residents of the dungeon received the same notification.

[Notice- All the conditions for the rank up have been met. Dungeon- Laplace will now undergo a transformation to become a [B] ranking dungeon. Time till the transformation ends—3 Days]...

Ding...

[Additional Notice— Gifts will be sent to all the inhabitants of the dungeon as per their contribution]

Almost at the same time, Tower Town—Adventurer's Association building. At this moment, a large crowd was gathered inside the building. People were cheering, applauding the new mayor of the town standing at the gallery on the upper floor.

She was a beautiful woman with long lustrous violet hair that reached till her back. She had an alluring body with curves that could mesmerise one's eyes. Long slanted eyebrows and protruding violet eyes.

On her body, she wore a dark purple dress with a long slit on the side, revealing and hiding her beguiling shapely legs. Just by standing there, she exuded a noble, elegant aura that made her stand out amongst the crowd and her every action that had a certain eloquence to it, hinted of her high birth.

Who could the woman be other than Cynthia Augusta Ellesmere? After she accepted the offer of being the mayor of the town, the people of the tower town, threw a big celebration party. Commemorating the freedom of the town and a new beginning.

Standing next to Cynthia, were her loyal retainers and Annette and her group. Blake and his party were also there, as this was also a party to celebrate the awakening of the heroes and their triumph over the catastrophe, they were the stars of the show as everybody fawned over them to gain their favour and leave an impression.

"How are you, Blake? I heard you woke up just a few hours ago. Is it alright for you to walk and drink already?" Cynthia walked over to Blake and asked.

"Haha, my body feels like it's overflowing with energy for some reason. It's refreshing as if I have become more powerful. With how pumped up I am, there is no way I can continue sleeping in that bed for even a second"

Blake commented, biting a generous size meat with his teeth. With how high spirited he was, nobody would even think that he was in a comatose state for more than three days.