

Death Guns 261

Chapter 261 - 256: Arrival At The Dungeon's Village

The magic carriage driven by Isabella went towards a building. Alex, Artemia, and Isabella entered the building to use the teleportation circle to go where the dungeon was located.

However, they were told to wait for a moment because the teleportation stone would be replaced. Alex decided to use this chance to ask few questions to quench his thirst for knowledge.

"I'm curious about something." Alex couldn't help but said this as he watched the intricate designs of the gigantic teleportation circle.

"Fufufu! Let's me guess you are wondering about how these teleportation circles all over the capital have been made?" Artemia asked with a smile.

"Indeed. I want to know how." Alex responded while he ignored Isabella, who was still giving him the cold shoulder.

"Well, I'm privy to the details of how they are made, but I know it was made Runmasters," Artemia explained.

"Runemaster?" Alex reacted to the unfamiliar term.

Artemia wasn't surprised by Alex's lack of knowledge on what runemasters are, hence his surprise.

"They a group of person capable of using Rune Magic, ancient magic. They are extremely rare and recluse. Those teleportation devices, teleportation circles you saw all over the capital, have been made hundred years ago. Some are even more ancient. Rumor has it that Avalon floating in the air was done by a Runemaster, the most powerful of runemasters to have ever existed. Well, in the end, it was still a rumor, nothing more, nothing less."

Alex's eyes narrowed at Artemia's revelation. He was also curious about how such a colossal island could float in the air. It went against the law of physics. If Earth's scientists were here, they would have discarded all their projects to focus on studying this floating island. If that rumor was true, then that Runemaster must be pretty powerful; Alex doubts that he/she was from this world.

"Magic swords and other magic weapons have runes engraved on them. Am I right?"

Alex asked when he remembered Golfak magic sword. He wondered if he and the others are doing fine. Somehow, Alex missed them. He hopes he could see them soon.

While crossing her leg one over another as she waited for the teleportation stone to be replaced, Artemia answered.

"Yes, it's as you have said. However, true rune magic is more complex than those simple runes used on the weapons; it's why those responsible for engraving rune magic on the weapons are called 'Lightruner.' A true runemaster is capable of making a teleportation device, and even the famous magical pouch (Magic storage), space ring. Even treasures such as Loki, Sleipnir found inside dungeons are said to be products of High-level Runemaster that existed in the bygone era."

Artemia made another revelation that startled Alex.

"Wow! Incredible! I want to encounter a Runemaster, and if it's possible, I want to learn that magic."

The last part was said rather inaudibly. Artemia chuckled when she heard Alex's words while Isabella harrumphed; Artemia's expression changed.

"Humph! What a country bumpkin you are. Dare to dream of encountering such existence. Who do you think you are?" Isabella couldn't let go of the chance of mocking Alex.

The latter smiled; it was a devilish smile, "You ask who I am? Well, I will tell you. I'm the one who is going to green your father."

"Pfft"

Artemia couldn't help but burst into laughter; she quickly closed her mouth to stifle it not to draw too much attention.

"You- You--"

With a trembling hand, Isabella pointed her finger at Alex; the latter expression became cold, and he released a bit of killing intent that made Isabella's body froze; she started trembling shortly after as if she was having a seizure.

"Listen carefully, I'm not going to repeat myself. I don't know what I have done to earn your hatred, but I want to stop it from now on as I won't stay silent if you keep up with that attitude. Understood?" Alex increased by bit his killing intent.

Like a cornered rabbit that was about to be devoured, Isabella nodded. She was scared of the look Alex was giving her. It was like she was not worth even a pebble in his eyes.

"Good," Alex said pleased, the killing intent disappeared like a joke. Isabella breathed a sigh of relief, unaware that Alex and Artemia exchange looks before smiling. Both understood what the other wanted to convey; no word was needed.

For Artemia, it was gratitude, gratitude for what he has done; while it was confirmed that Isabella is exceptionally talented, she has one big flaw. She was too arrogant, tend to look down on everyone, especially men. For the first time, she lost facing someone younger than her, and a male to boot, her anger and shame because of the defeat turned into hatred for Alex. She couldn't stop but ridicule Alex at every opportunity she got; this was done to maintain the illusion that she was still superior to Alex. If nothing were done, this would have evolved into something Artemia wished not to see; it was why she sought Alex's intervention; he knew he would react and chose not to do anything.

From now only, Isabella will behave and know that they exist people she should never provoke.

Even though Alex reacted because he couldn't take any more being ridiculed in almost every discussion, he knew he was being used to teach Isabella a lesson. It was why after rebuking Isabella, he looked at Artemia as if to tell her, 'You owe me one.'

Artemia knew if she tried to fix Isabella's behavior because of their relationship, even if she were to listen to her, it wouldn't completely disappear. Let's her suffer first before advising her to better behave from now on using what happened as an example; it was Artemia strategy.

〔This girl is rather shrewd. Carefully not let yourself get devoured, not even leaving a bone behind.〕
Silveria, who was watching the entire scene from the beginning and understood what was going on, couldn't stay still but warn her master.

'Don't worry, I know.' Alex said.

At the same time, someone entered to inform them that the teleportation circle was ready to be used.

"Let's go." Alex stood up and followed after the one that informed that everything was easy. Artemia and Isabella silently followed behind.

Everywhere they pass, people would look at Artemia in awe, almost as if they were worshipping her. Strangely, nobody pointed their fingers at Artemia even though the latter face was uncovered and they knew her identity.

'I wonder if it was due to the goddess halo?' Alex couldn't help but have this irrelevant thought. He quickly discarded these irrelevant thoughts and stepped into the teleportation circle; Artemia and Isabella joined him.

The man responsible for activating the teleportation circle bowed respectfully before activating it.

The teleportation circle shined brightly before the light went out. Alex and Co had disappeared.

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When Alex and the others opened their eyes again, they inside a somewhat identical room; however, this one scale was small compared to that of the capital (Teleportation room, the teleportation circle).

After a quick exchange with the one responsible for this building, Alex, Artemia, and Isabella left the black building and appeared outside.

"Wow! What incredible sight." Alex muttered in awe. He was not the only one, though. Isabella was also surprised; only Artemia appeared to be lost in thoughts.

Even though Alex heard that it was a village, the current scenery in front of him made him doubt if it was really the case. Rather than a village, it would be more accurate to call it a small town surrounded by high mountains and beautiful forest.

"Are we still in the capital?" Alex couldn't help but ask this question.

"Well, you will be surprised how big Avalon is. Did you know our capital nickname?" Artemia, who had come back to reality after feeling the nostalgia of setting foot here again; however, compared to last time, she was in better condition, spoke.

"I don't know; I'm all ears," Alex said.

"It's called the sixth continent. Avalon is almost half of the beastmen continent. From the ground, you won't how big it is."

Astonishingly it was Isabella who answered Alex's question.

"I see. Thanks for the information." Alex said he was not someone doesn't know how to show his gratitude when helped.

Isabella was surprised; she thought that because of her behavior, Alex wouldn't respect her; however, he proved otherwise. Isabella felt ashamed, biting her lips, her eyes became resolute, she decided to interact before judging someone.

Looking at Isabella's unwavering gaze, Artemia smiled, feeling happy that the latter was evolving.

"Welcome, princess. Shall we led you to your the house specifically prepared for you?" The captain of the guards stationed over this village approached them and asked.

"No need, we shall book rooms. What do you think, Alex?" Artemia refused; she tilted her head in Alex's direction.

"Let's do that." Alex accepted Artemia's suggestion.

"Understood your highness, Mr. Alexander, Ms. Isabella, Please follow me." the captain bowed respectfully before turning to walk towards the best Inn in the village.

Chapter 262 - 257: Visit At The Guild Branch

After booking rooms at the best Inn, Alex and Artemia went to the Guild branch to inform the staff about their arrival and goal.

The Guild branch building looks smaller than that of Eria's city; however, it appears more sturdy probably due to its proximity to the dungeons; in fact, all buildings in the village were built sturdily.

After a quick scan of the building, Alex declared,

"Let's enter."

Artemia nodded.

As they entered, they looked around the inside of the guild.

"As I thought, it's different compared to the others," Alex commented as he scanned the guild with Artemia standing next to him.

As for Artemia, the moment she appeared, the guild staff and adventurers all unintentionally glanced at her. It was expected; however, those with keen eyes immediately understood Artemia's true identity, so nobody said something disrespectful.

Alex ignored the odds stare he was receiving and observed the guild. As he said, the Guild branch here is different.

Maybe related to its temporary nature next to the dungeon, it was very different from the guild he had set foot in. The most significant difference was that the guild didn't have a bar.

Material purchasing and party application, because a large number of adventurers would gather at the guild, the bar in Eria's city was something that was added for their use. For example, many requests were always posted on the request boards in the guild at Eria's city.

Also different were the periods of crowdedness in the morning and evening when people went to start and finish requests. Even then, they still had room to spare.

However, because all the adventurers were aiming for the dungeon gathered here, the guild here was crowded. At night, the monster in the dungeon became more belligerent and active, no different from when they were outside. Because of that, most adventurers would enter the dungeon at roughly the same time, causing this packed crowd.

After searching for the guild counter and found it, Alex and Artemia walked toward it. The crowd parted the way to let them pass. For most adventurers here, it was their first time seeing the famous Third princess, so they were in awe.

As the adventurers and guild staff who had glanced over finally gathered themselves, Alex and Artemia were already in front of the counter. Alex left Artemia to do the talking.

"Good Evening." Artemia politely greeted the man behind the counter.

"Ah, yes. Good evening your highness. What can we do for you?"

"I have a little business with the person in charge of the guild here; I would like you to inform him of my arrival them," Artemia announced.

"Pardon my rudeness, may I ask about what for?"

As expected for someone working for the guild near the dungeon. Although the young male staff member was stunned by Artemia's presence and status, it didn't take him long to calm down as he spoke and gave a reply as usual.

Impressed in her mind at his professionalism, Artemia continued to speak.

"That's right, I forget. Here, take it."

Saying that she presented a letter that had the Elseria seal on it.

The young male staff immediately recognized this seal. He became nervous all of a sudden.

"I understood. Please wait. I will inform the head branch of your arrival."

He then ran up to the stairs next to the counter at a quick pace.

Watching him go, Artemia looked around the inside of the interest. It has been a long time since she sneaked out disguised to play the adventurer. Glancing at Alex, who had a bored expression on his face, Artemia chuckled.

"Relax, we will go back soon and rest. Tomorrow we will dive into the dungeon. You won't be bored any longer."

"I hope so," Alex answered.

Just as Artemia wanted to say something, the young male guild staff came back.

"Sorry for taking so long. Our representative would like to meet you."

"Ah, you back. Sorry for the trouble."

Artemia nodded and followed the staff, who guided her up the stairs. Alex followed them as well, and soon they arrived on the second floor.

"Representative, I've brought her Highness and his comrade."

After respectfully guiding them to the room of the guild representative, the young male guild staff knocked on the door and called out. The reply to the staff member was an unexpectedly young voice.

"Yes, please enter."

Following the voice from inside, he opened the door and entered. Artemia and Alex followed after him.

"Welcome. My name is Axel, and I serve as the representative of the guild."

Saying that a man in his twenties stood up from behind his work desk and gave a bow. Even the highest estimate of his age wouldn't be above his early thirties. He had gentle features and gave off the atmosphere of having a good attitude.

Alex didn't pay too much attention to the man; even though he appeared gentle, he must have another face, and this would be used depending on the situation or the person he was dealing with.

Artemia sat down on the sofa for visitors and spoke up without any particular change in expression. Alex was sitting on her right.

"As you may have guessed after seeing that letter, we are here for that dungeon." She said.

"Indeed, princess, I have been informed about that matters. Although I'm aware of you and Mr. Alexander's strength, I still think it would be hard to accomplish your goal due to the existence of that boss." Axel warned; he seemed to be saying this out of good faith.

Alex frowned; he knew this expedition was not going to be easy, but he faith in his skills; however, judging from Axel's words, the difficulty of this dungeon was high. While their goal is not to conquer this dungeon, there's a floor they must enter to complete their original goal.

After hearing Axel's warning, Artemia smiled.

"I understand the circumstances. Don't worry; I have faith in my subordinate and Mr. Alexander here. We will proceed carefully and won't let our guard down." She promised.

"Okay, I shall believe in the princess and Mr. Alexander. Is there anything I can help you with? Anything you wish for?" Axel asked.

"Not for the time being. We have prepared sufficient goods and combat strength before coming. There are no particular issues as long as we can smoothly enter the dungeon." Artemia said; she seemed to be hinting at something.

It didn't take long for Axel to understand what she was hinting at. He took out something similar to a guild card; it was black. Axel gave this black card to the princess.

"Please have this. You will need it to have free access to the dungeon." Axel explained.

"It's more like a pass to not wait in line and directly enter the dungeon, isn't it?"

For the first time since entering the room, Alex spoke. His words surprised Axel as he didn't think Alex would immediately understand the use of this card after his first time seeing it.

Smiling, Axel explained.

"Yes. All the adventurers enter the dungeon at about the same time. Because of that, waiting is sometimes necessary. You can use this card to go in immediately without waiting."

"I see. Thanks. I'll be grateful to receive this. When I return, should I return it?" Artemia asked with a smile. Looking at her, you would almost think she wasn't expecting this kind of card. However, she knew it existed; it was what she was hinting at when she said, 'Smoothly enter the dungeon.'

"Yes, that would be helpful," Axel said, not saying anything on the fact that Artemia made him intentionally hand over the black card.

"I understand. Do you have more detailed map of the dungeon? The one I have is only limited to ten first floors." Artemia, who suddenly remembered something, asked this.

"No, we don't have any other map, as you might know. This dungeon is practically sealed. Few are allowed to go in, and it is limited to the first seven floors. I apologize for b-"

Artemia stopped Axel before he could finish his words and said.

"Don't worry. While it may be dangerous to go down without a complete map, it is exciting. We will need to be careful, that is all. Well, she is calling me, maps or not, I will still be able to get there."

The last part was said almost inaudibly; Axel didn't hear it; however, Alex heard it, he didn't say anything and waited for the meeting to end. He was feeling extremely bored; he wanted to go back and rest to be prepared for tomorrow. If not, because Artemia needs a guard when coming here and Isabella was busy with something else, Alex wouldn't have accompanied Artemia. Well, Artemia was almost like his employer, so he ought to do his job.

"Sigh"

Alex let a sigh escaped from his mouth as he closed his eyes. Artemia, who was talking with Axel about another matter, chuckled before ending this meeting after exchanging few words.

Alex and Artemia left the guild after that. They went back to the Inn to rest. Tomorrow, Alex would be experiencing his first dungeon exploration.

Chapter 263 - 258: Into The Dungeon

Early morning the next day, they finally went to the dungeon's grounds. Artemia led Alex and Isabella to the dungeon.

Isabella was the vanguard, Artemia the midguard, Alex at the rear; he can also play the two other roles as a long-range attacker.

They walked through the village while feeling the cool weather on their skins; it was a fine autumn day.

They encountered adventurers on the way; those adventurers were probably going into the dungeon. The second dungeon, the most used, different from the one Alex and others were going into. The adventurers they encountered ranged from parties of 5 to people going solo. Alex could also see a few parties of up to 10 people.

Ignoring the curious stares they were receiving, the three continued forward, and soon they arrived before the dungeon.

Several adventurers were lined up at the entrance of the dungeon. Roughly 20 people or so, about four parties if you consider one group having five members.

"It seems that we will need to use that card after all," Artemia muttered when she saw the adventurers line up at the entrance.

"Well, it's why you got it in the first place. Make sure that everything is prepared." Alex said.

After hearing his words, Artemia and Isabella checked their equipment; even though they have prepared before going here, it wasn't wrong to verify if everything was alright one more time before heading to the dungeon.

"Let's go. Everything is okay." Artemia announced after checking her equipment; she wore elegant silver armor with blue patterns on it. Isabella's equipment seemed okay as well.

Passing the adventurers, they went towards the guild staff member at the front of the entrance next to the queue.

Even though some adventurers wanted to complain, they shut it after seeing the black card.

After recovering the black card, Artemia gave a generous bow toward the adventurers, leaving a good impression. She did this in order to weaken the dissatisfaction they felt when they used this particular method to go ahead of them.

"I understand why you are so popular," Alex mumbled when he saw Artemia's way of handling things.

"Did you say something?" Artemia asked as she didn't hear what Alex had said.

Shaking his head, Alex said, "Nothing."

As Artemia entered the dungeon, the adventurers around her involuntarily looked at her admiringly.

The entrance to the dungeon itself was a standard set of stairs. They went down into the ground.

Curious, Alex couldn't help but ask.

"Are the stairs also part of the dungeon?"

"No, the stairs were prepared by the guild after the dungeon was formed. Here, this is the evidence."

At the end of the stairs was a black door. As for what it was, it was something the guild installed to stop monsters from coming out of the dungeon because sometimes monsters escape from the dungeon and attack the nearby villages; these monsters are fierce than the monsters outside.

"In other words, past this door is the real dungeon?" Alex asked after studying the black door; it was sturdier than anything he has ever seen. As for what materials were used to create this door, Alex didn't know. His appraisal skill only showed only one thing: Black door.

"Exactly." Artemia nodded. Her voice brought Alex back into reality.

Isabella opened the door; a wide corridor greeted them.

"This, it's pretty wide. Do the walls emit light themselves?" Isabella muttered, impressed, and touched the walls that emitted a faint light. Judging from her reaction, it was her first time seeing this.

"According to the information I've gathered, walls that emit light seem to be a feature that is common to all dungeons. Well, depending on the layer, there are places completely wrapped in darkness with no light, so you shouldn't become careless." Artemia explained.

"By any chance, can you take the walls here back home and sell them for a considerable amount?" Without thinking, Isabella muttered.

However, Alex shook his wry smile.

"I doubt it will work," he said.

Artemia confirmed Alex's doubt before further explaining.

"It's as Alex said. Or did you think no adventurer has thought of that before? Even if you shaved off parts of the wall and brought them up, they don't seem to shine outside. It seems to be a dungeon-only feature. Some speculated that dungeon nucleus (Dungeon Core) does this as not to inconvenience the monsters that live inside the dungeon."

"Wow! Dungeon's Core can do that for monsters? Something like that is that possible?" Isabella asked in disbelief.

"Isabella's question is reasonable. I think it's possible as to why the Dungeon's Core does this? All I can say is that it's done in order to help monsters, as the others speculated. Most monsters can't see in the dark, so this will help them attack the intruders. I do not think the monster would hardly be active if it were completely dark."

"I see. It certainly might be if you think about it." Isabella nodded at Alex's words.

"Well, what the Dungeon's Core does is impressive, but I'm more interested in knowing how dungeons are created. And who created them, for what purpose." Alex voiced his thoughts.

Artemia sighed; it was the eternal question. Numerous people tried to find the origin of the dungeons to end up failing at the end. Nobody knows how they were created, just that they existed a long time ago. Even if one manages to conquer a dungeon by acquiring the dungeon's core, a new one will soon form elsewhere.

"Well, that's some good questions. However, we do not have time for this. Let's get going." Artemia said.

Alex and Isabella nodded. Following Artemia's instructions, their party advanced through the dungeon. As expected, most of the monsters that appeared on the first floor were easy to deal with, such as Horned Rabbits and Giant Bats.

Thrusting her spear forward, Isabella cut down the giant bat, diving toward her.

From the other side, Artemia moved her glaives and cut down three Giant bats.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Alex threw his knives around to eliminate the remaining monsters.

Soon the monsters on the first floor were cleared, and the group walked toward the second floor.

The group went straight to the stairs leading to the third when they entered the second floor after quickly dispatching the monsters on this floor. Monsters on the second were not different from the one on the first floor.

"I thought it would be hard, but I guess I was wrong," Isabella muttered as she sliced a 2 m long Poison Toad, which had jumped at her with her spear. The third floor was filled with Poison toads.

Artemia, with her glaives, danced amidst a group of Poison toads; she struck their vitals, killing them with almost no effort.

Alex at the back made use of his Swift fingers and launched knife after knife at monsters standing further away. His knives effortlessly killed the poison toad charging toward the others. He was a little bit surprised by how strong he became; if it was three months ago, he couldn't kill Poison toads so easily as he did now. This shows that he has grown up and was still growing.

"Let's go," Artemia said after shaking off the blood on her glaives.

The three moved toward the fourth floor.

"I hope that the monsters ahead will be more interesting than Poison toad or Giant bats," Isabella said as they moved.

Soon they arrived on the fourth floor. What greeted them was another group of Poison toads; however, unlike on the previous floor, the toads here were larger.

The three quickly cleared the monsters. However, soon an ominous feeling assaulted them just as they killed the last Poison toad.

"New monsters are coming," Alex warned.

Suddenly, the dungeon's light dimmed, and when it got lighter again, Alex and the girls found themselves surrounded by monsters. It was a goblin.

Twenty goblins showed. Most were armed with long swords or daggers with simple shields and armor.

"Their equipment seems to be quite substantial for Goblins," Isabella commented.

"Perhaps they stole them from inside the dungeon or obtained them by attacking adventurers who came exploring the dungeon," Alex said while Isabella nodded.

Artemia looked at Alex for a moment. Alex understood what she wanted to convey. While the two charged toward the goblins at the front, Alex summoned Silveria for the first time since their arrival inside the dungeon.

BANG!

One bullet was shot; however, five goblins lost their lives. Isabella, who was killing a goblin holding a rusted sword and a half-broken shield, froze when she witnessed Alex killing five monsters with only one shot.

"How?" She couldn't help but raise her brows.

"Can you please focus?" Artemia chided the distracted Isabella. While the monster in front of her may be just a goblin, one of the weakest monsters, the slightest lack of focus may result in injury worth death. Goblins are cunning creatures by nature.

"My apologies, your highness." Isabella apologized and moved her spear at fast speed. Like a snake, the spear tore through the neck of two goblins, instantly killing them.

Alex, who was watching them after killing another two goblins, was impressed by the level of Isabella's spear skill.

"She seems to have improved as well." He muttered.

「It's natural. Her defeat against you must have been a hard blow for her. So, it was natural for her to try to improve. By the way, master, why you didn't use me until now?」 Silveria asked, a bit dissatisfied.

Alex ignored her and killed the last goblin.

Artemia turned to face him and asked.

"How did you do it?"

Chapter 264 - 259: The Fifth Floor 1

Artemia turned to face him and asked.

"How did you do it?"

Alex chuckled. It seemed that the princess was curious as well. However, she suppressed her curiosity and let them finish the monsters before asking him how he killed five goblins with only one bullet.

Isabella approached them as she was curious about what happened.

"It's a secret." Alex declared after a moment of silence.

Isabella looked disappointed while Artemia pouted. Alex was so surprised to see such a reaction from Artemia that he burst into laughter.

After laughing for a while, he finally explained.

"My bad, I just used a special bullet. I called it: Homing bullet. It has the ability to track its target. That's all I can say."

"I see that's some awesome ability. How envious." Artemia said she didn't ask more about the Homing bullet remaining ability.

Isabella stayed silent as well. Looking at their reactions, Alex was pleased that they didn't ask more. There was a reason for his action; it was to establish trust between them. He sincerely wishes to have a good relationship with this princess; in the long run, it will be helpful.

"Let's take a break. I think the next floor going to be troublesome to deal with. There is a trap near the door leading down to the fifth floor." Alex announced as he sat down on the cold floor.

Artemia's eyes became wide open before she smiled after exchanging a look with Isabella, who should act as a scout as she possesses a certain amount of skills.

While taking a seat next to Alex, Artemia praised before suggesting.

"I didn't think you have the skill to be a scout as well. Well, I won't ask how you know that there's a trap ahead, but I would like to assist us later in detecting traps. This would help alleviate Isabella's burdens."

"I understand. I will help as much I can." Alex said while recalling how surprised he was after seeing that his Divine Sense worked inside the dungeon. He had thought it wouldn't have worked. Not only it worked, but it also showed him if there was a trap ahead or not. It would have been great if he could scan the whole floor. Well, it's living creature nature to ask for more when it has a little.

Shaking his head, Alex took out stuff such as water bottles and sandwiches from his item box and handed them around. The girls accepted and gave their thanks before eating the sandwiches.

After they were done, Artemia ordered Isabella to bring out the dessert, and the three shared it.

It took them 20 minutes to successfully release the trap blocking the way. Isabella handled such a task; Alex watched like a good student, trying to learn the much he could.

The three moved toward the fifth floor, however, this time with a different formation. Alex acted as the vanguard; Artemia became the midguard while Isabella was at the rear. They decided to use this formation because of Alex's skill. Artemia had figured out more or less about his divine sense, so they decided to make use of it, especially on this floor where they may be a Boss awaiting them.

Alex and the others went down the stairs and safely entered the fifth floor of the dungeon.

However, when Alex took his first step on the fifth floor, he reflexively swung Razor his custom-made knife.

'!?'

At the same time, Artemia used one of her glaives to repel something that flew towards her.

Looking at the thing that wrapped around his knife, Alex clicked his tongue. It was a spider thread coming from the ceiling.

"What intense welcome." He couldn't help, but joke about their current situation attacked the moment they entered here.

Lifting their heads to look at the ceiling, they saw a big spider with eight legs, more than twenty eyes coldly staring at them.

"Is that the Boss?" Isabella asked to receive a negative response soon as she finished asking.

"You should look around you first," Alex suggested.

When Isabella looked around, she was forced to shout, almost jumping back because not too far from them appeared monsters. They were bigger than a human face and had green scales covering their hands and feet. Lizardmen.

Armed with bows, swords, and spears, they glared at Isabella with hostility as if looking at prey.

"Alex, you do something about the spider. If possible, it would be great if you could finish that quickly and come to help us as soon as possible." Artemia instructed, unlike Isabella, who was too focused on the spider just after they received an attack; she noticed these lizardmen sneak out, trying to surround them.

Alex nodded at Artemia's words. The latter had already made a move. She threw one of her glaives toward the lizardmen; this move caught them off guard. Like a whip, the glaive twisted around and tore through the air like a bullet, injuring numerous lizardmen before instantly killing the lizardman that held a bow at the back and was about to shoot; Isabella shot forward to give Artemia some assistance; the latter had called back her glaive.

If not for the fact that he had noticed a faint thread like a chain the first time he saw Artemia's Gift, he would have been surprised seeing what her weapon just did.

Even while watching the situation from the side, Alex wasn't idling; he pulled on the thread that had twisted itself around the Razor to drag the spider down from the ceiling. As if understanding what would happen if it fell, the spider desperately resisted as it pierced its legs into the ceiling.

This amused Alex. Therefore he decided to put more force into his arms; his physical strength wasn't something this spider could hope to compete against. Soon, the spider was forcibly dragged down, producing a loud bang that sent a shockwave rippling forward. Numerous lizardmen fell onto the ground due to the powerful shockwave.

Artemia looked at Alex with a look of gratitude before continuing to mow down the lizardmen who had failed into confusion.

On the other side, Alex was finally going to make a move to deal with the spider.

Chapter 265 - 260: The Fifth Floor 2, The Boss

On the other side, Alex was finally going to make a move to deal with the spider.

Armed with his two knives, he shot toward the spider who had suffered a bit after falling from such height.

However, just as he was about to cut one of the spider legs, he jumped back out of instinct.

The spider opened its mouth at that moment, spitting out some kind of liquid.

"Tch!"

Due to his intuition, Alex managed to avoid a disaster. Seeing that the liquid gave out smoke as it touched the ground when it landed, it was clear that his choice had been the right one. If he were late, he would have ended up like a certain supervillain (Hero?).

The spider was surprised that Alex avoided such an attack; the spider had intentionally lured Alex into attacking her to deal him a fatal blow. Unfortunately, she still failed in the end. Since Alex would be a formidable opponent to handle and seemed to be protected the other two, she decided to attack them. It could be said that this 3 meters tall spider possesses some level of intelligence.

The spider shot out some threads toward Isabella she deemed the weakest between the three.

"As if I would allow that," Alex shouted before throwing knives at the threads, making them deviate from their original target.

The spider's eyes widened when she saw her attacks missed their target. She didn't have time to be concerned about her failure as Alex was already upon her. He swung the knife on his right arm; it was already late when the spider felt the danger of this special knife. One of her legs had been cut off.

"Kyi kyikyiyi~."

The spider wailed and instinctively swung one of her remaining legs at Alex, the latter evaded by moving to the side before cutting that leg off.

Putting a little bit of strength in his legs, Alex's speed increased, and he moved between the remaining legs as if he was formless; all the six remaining were cut off before a knife went through the spider brain forever shutting her off. The spider died, no knowing why she died so fast. The difference in strength was immense; she was just Rank 4 (Level 39), compared to Alex, she was really weak.

Alex didn't stop for a moment after eliminating the spider; like a ghost, he moved to his left, where there was less concentration of lizardmen. One of the lizardmen noticed Alex and tried to bash his shield against him; however, Alex bypassed him to his utter dismay, and when that lizardman wanted to turn to attack Alex, he was forced to realize that his arms were gone, cut off from the middle.

"Shaa!"

That lizardman cried in pain and fell onto the ground, and started thrashing. His cries put others into a state of confusion; Alex wasn't the one to miss such an opportunity; armed with the two knives, he danced amidst the lizardmen, ripping life as if he was the death god. He was fast yet accurate and deadly.

In the span of a minute, he had killed the seven standing lizardmen.

The lizardmen's leader (he was different from the other lizardmen) standing further at the back noticed Alex slaughtering his men. Furious, he bellowed.

"Shaaaa! Shaaaaa!"

Maybe he was telling the others who started to panic seeing their brethren die so easily to behave; however, before they could recollect themselves after hearing their leader's shout.

Isabella fell back and retreated to Artemia's side. The latter was silent; however, if you watch closely, you could see tiny lightning dancing inside her eyes. Pointing her glaives forward, numerous lightning arrows appeared and were shot at the lizardmen.

One Lizardmen chose to defend by evading while others chose to defend with their shields. As for the one who chose to evade, though he could avoid 1 to 2 arrows, with ten arrows flying, it couldn't dodge them all. A lightning arrow pierced it the moment the Lizardman couldn't evade. Intense lightning spread through his body instantly; he started to dance some kind of unknown dance before getting cooked from the inside and died.

On the other side, the Lizardmen who lifted their shield instead of evading were even more miserable. If what Artemia had shot was a normal lightning arrow, then it would have been the correct course of action. However, the arrows shot this time were not ordinary lightning arrows but arrows made of black lightning, something she hadn't used in their dual. In fact, it was Isabella's first time seeing this.

Shaking his head, Alex observed the lizardmen, who had fallen into a panic after seeing a bunch of their brethren getting annihilated in just a single blow.

"Let's finish them before they recover from their confusion," Alex shouts at the other two.

The three moved, and in just five minutes, all the lizardmen were annihilated except for their leader. He seemed to be targeting Artemia with his intense glare filled with murderous intent.

The lizardmen's leader was one size larger than a normal lizard man (1.5 m) and was 2 m in height. His muscles seemed to burst out from the leather armor he wore, which seemed to be made from the skin of some monster. In his right hand, he held a huge greatsword that was well over 1.5m long. His other hand held the only metal shield that the Lizardmen had. This lizardman, whose level was 52 (Rank 6), easily controlled the greatsword with one, and he turned the tip towards Artemia as if asking for a duel.

"Oh?! How interesting. You targeted me because I have annihilated more of your subordinates? You want to avenge them?" Artemia asked while cracking her neck.

The leader of the lizardmen nodded his head.

"I see. I shall entertain youth; however, I doubt you will even last a minute. The fight will end in an instant." Artemia declared, sure of herself.

Alex was watching everything from the side with a smile on his face.

Isabella seemed to want to say something when she saw Artemia stepping forward. It wasn't that she feared for the life of her mast; far from that, she estimates the leader to be unworthy of Artemis personally taking action, that's all. However, knowing her master, when she decides on better not force her or else you'll suffer her wrath. So, Isabella couldn't only watch Artemia step forward.

Artemia faced the leader of the lizardmen with her glaives.

For several seconds, neither side moved.

"SHAAAAAAAAAA~!"

"Haaa!"

Both emitted a cry before kicking against the ground at the same time and rapidly closed the distance. Just as Artemia almost reached the leader, she threw one of her glaives toward him. The lizardmen's leader, also the boss of this floor, tilted his head to the side to dodge Artemia's glaive before trying to swing his greatsword at Artemia. However,

"Too slow."

A voice coming from behind him sounds in his ear; the leader felt a chill running down his spine; he knew he was in trouble; however, before he could turn around, his head was sent flying into the air.

"As I said, it would end in an instant," Artemia said before sheathing her glaives.

Isabella was in awe while Alex sighed. That Boss was unlucky; he thought he had avoided that glaive was thrown at him by Artemia; however, what he didn't notice was the blue chain at the butt of the sword. Artemia threw the other glaive into the monster right as if she had teleported; she appeared right before the same glaive and caught it before catching the other one floating in the air and due to both glaives taking different directions after being thrown (the first went on the left while the second on the right.) and let not forget about the faint blue chain connecting them, Artemia used this chain to sever the head of the Boss.

"Brilliant." Alex couldn't help but praise Artemia's ingenuity.

"Thank you. Let's rest before continuing."

Artemia smiled before sitting on the ground to recuperate. Isabella moved around to collect monsters' materials; unlike the other floors where they didn't especially collect materials, the monsters they fought here had pretty good materials worth some money.

When Alex wanted to help Isabella, she politely declined, so he was forced to join Artemia, who had closed her eyes to rest.

Chapter 266 - 261: Encountering Another Group

Alex and the others descended to the sixth floor after Isabella finished collecting the usable monster's materials.

Unlike on the previous floors where all floors looked alike and were simple. The sixth floor was different; it looks like a forest made of some strange flowers and giant mushrooms.

Just as they arrived at the sixth, Alex sensed people's presence ahead.

"There are people ahead. They are coming in this direction." Alex announced.

Isabella became cautious as she heard the story of how some adventurers did some nasty things.

Seeing her reaction, Alex immediately understood what was going on inside the Knight's mind. Indeed, she was right to be cautious.

After all, anyone could become an adventurer by registering in the guild. Because of that, there were naturally nasty adventurers as well. Adventurers who attacked other people to steal their belongings existed as well. And in the dungeon that they were in now, there wouldn't be any trouble if no one could complain about any events that occurred. If anything happened, it would probably be judged that they died in the dungeon. It was why one must be cautious when inside a dungeon, as you don't know what kind of adventurers you might encounter.

"I see. Then let's wait to see the attitude of the other party. If the party is passing by looking for something, there's no problem. However, if they are scums that are after our wealth, we'll know immediately from experience and deal with them accordingly." Artemia said with a severe expression on her face.

Nodding at Artemia's instructions, they waited where they were.

Eventually, after 5 minutes, the three could hear the sound of walking coming from the forest of flowers mixed with mushrooms. Mixed in were also the sounds of armor rubbing against each other. Soon, the shadows of people could be seen coming from the forest.

There were five people. All the members were men. An agile-looking man seemed to be a thief and two swordsmen; the fourth man held a big spear. As for the last man, it was a porter carrying a huge rucksack on his back.

"Huh?"

Before long, the thief, who was walking ahead, stopped and looked at Alex suspiciously. The two swordsmen at the back also stopped to look at Alex with caution as they stepped forward to either side of the thief; the spearman also readied his weapon. For a moment, a grin appeared on the spearman's face; however, it got instantly wiped as if it was an illusion.

On the other hand, the thief glanced at Artemia, and his expression changed; he had the feeling that he knew this girl somewhere; however, he couldn't remember where.

Sighing, he looked at Alex, who was walking toward them, and couldn't help but whistle internally. While it may seem that Alex was walking toward him relatively unguarded, full of opening, the thief knew he would be the one to die if he made a move.

'Better deal with them calmly. No need to antagonize this group.' The thief decided after a moment of consideration.

〔This little thief is sure clever.〕 Silveria praised after seeing the thief's expression.

Alex didn't say anything as he stopped not too far from the group.

The first to speak was the thief, who was at the front of the party.

"Hey, it's pretty unexpected to meet someone here."

Seeing the other party's attitude, Alex decided to go along with it.

"An unexpected meeting, that's a funny thing because you're the first other people that we've encountered since we started exploring the dungeon. We were the first people to enter the dungeon this morning and came straight here. How about you?" Alex raised a question from the guild staff member stationed at the entrance, Alex's group to enter the dungeon this morning, hence his question.

"Ah! It's that so? We came here for a request to obtain some materials from a monster down here. In addition, we had to spend yesterday night in the dungeon since the monster in question only appears at night." The thief explained.

"I see; that must have been pretty hard then?" Alex said.

"Not really. Ah! My bad, I'm Kahil, leader of this group. By the way, it's C Rank group." Kahil, the thief, introduced himself. Alex did the same.

"I'm Alex, a D Rank adventurer."

"I see; you look pretty strong for a D Rank. Well, I won't bother you anymore longer. We will be taking our leave. We rather missed the soft feeling of a mattress. See ya, Alex, and take care." Kahil said before leaving with his group; before leaving, he cast one last glance at Artemia. Still, he couldn't remember where he met this girl or where he heard about her.

'Well, whatever, let's forget about that girl.' Kahil mumbled to himself.

From the start, Isabella's presence was completely ignored as if she didn't exist. She didn't mind at all. She was glad that nothing happened as she didn't want to kill another human, not in front of Artemia as the latter believe that Isabella had never killed, that she was just an innocent girl. Well, it was what Isabella thought.

"It went pretty well." Artemia, who was approaching Alex, said.

"Yeah! It's only because that Kahil guy is smart. That spearman gave me a nasty feeling. He grinned when he saw you two." Alex said after turning around.

"Oh? So, you noticed it too? Well, I would have cut him down if he made any move. Good for him, he didn't." Artemia said while caressing her glaives. Alex felt a chill running down his spine when he saw that smile.

"What?" Isabella was confused as she was the only one not to have noticed anything amiss with the spearman.

"Nothing. Let's go." Alex said and started walking forward, going into the mushrooms forest. Artemia and Isabella followed him.

Alex had already forgotten about Kahil's group. He wondered how his sister, Luna, and others were doing.

•••••

Back on Kahil's group side.

"Hey, what do you think?"

One of the swordsmen murmured when they were far away enough from Alex's group. He didn't need to say what he was asking about. It was about the strange party they had talked with earlier.

The second swordsman didn't say anything. Meanwhile, the spearman licked his lips like a starving wolf.

"That blue-haired woman was a beauty. She is the most beautiful woman I have ever seen, almost as the Goddess depicted in a story. I want to taste her, I-"

The spearman got interrupted by Kahil, the latter asked.

"Did you say almost like a goddess just now?"

Even the spearman found Kahil's weird, he still responded.

"Yeah. What is it?"

"No way. It's her, the third princess, the famous Goddess of beauty, Artemia Eretria Von Havens." Kahil said after remembering Artemia's identity. He finally understood why he found her familiar; he had seen her once, from afar; however, her beauty almost got engraved into his mind.

"No way." The spearman trembled when he heard Kahil's words. All his build-up wild fantasy disappeared the moment he heard about Artemia's real identity. He was lucky that lust didn't get the better of him.

"Let's leave; I need to cool off." The spearman said; the others nodded, unaware that at the moment, that insignificant porter was grinning as if he knew beforehand who Artemia was; no, it even went beyond that.

'So, it's him. It's showtime.' the porter muttered before silently flicking his fingers.

Chapter 267 - 262: On The Girl's Side 1

Going back in time a little just before Alex and his group entered the sixth floor.

Maria, Luna, Gracier, and Sakuya were already killing monsters on the fourth floor of the dungeon they have been assigned to.

The girls were fighting against a group of goblins; unlike normal goblins who have green skins, the goblins the girls were fighting had black color.

Sakuya moved between three goblins, and immediately they were sliced into two, blood spurt into the air; however, none of those blood landed on Sakuya as she had already vanished from there.

Marla's Ice arrows pierced through the head of five black goblins, Gracier armed with a scythe, sliced two black goblins apart.

Luna stood farther away from the ground, not doing anything.

It didn't take many minutes for the three girls to wipe out the fifteen remaining black goblins.

They decided to take a short break.

After spending 20 minutes of break, the girls moved toward the next floor.

Just as the four descended on the fifth floor, a blinding light covered them, startling not only the girls but the person observing them from the shadow. Maria and the others were forced to close their eyes; when they reopen them again, they appeared elsewhere.

In front of them was inside an endless dead black forest.

"What the hell?" Sakuya couldn't help but curse.

Maria's expression changed; she found their current situation unusual. Gracier became vigilant and readied her scythe. Luna observed their surrounding, when suddenly,

Boom!

A black light exploded not too far from the girls forcing them to protect their eyes, and when the girls became able to see again, they were startled to see that numerous monsters appeared right before them. It was more than thirty black goblins that stood not too far from the girls.

"No way. Is this still the fifth floor?" Gracier asked in disbelief.

"I doubt it is the case." Maria was the one to answer her. Sakuya was ready to unsheath her Katana at any moment; however, she seemed to be hesitating as if she was considering something.

This left Gracier confused; therefore, she asked.

"What's going on? Why are we not making any move? Shall I?"

"Just watch," Maria said.

At that moment, Gracier remembered that they were four of them, and when she turned in Luna's direction, she got the shock of her life.

The black goblins bellowed and charged forward like a bunch of crazy bulls.

However, Luna, who had already taken a step forward, snarled, raising and swinging her right fist abruptly.

"———!"

A glaring, holy light beam exploded from her fist, blasting straight at the army of monsters ahead. Facing this sudden, oncoming brilliance, the black goblins were devoured entirely before they even reacted. In an instant, a brilliance occupied the entire space of thirty meters, enveloping it in whiteness that was as bright as daylight.

The blinding light wreaked havoc on the black goblins' formation. It seemed that the black goblins' weakness was bright lights. They started wailing and thrashing on the ground as some had their eyes destroyed.

Hundred white arrows appeared in the sky before raining down on the poor black goblins who had not recovered from the first attack. One could be used to describe the current scene, massacre; it was destruction.

"Awesome." Gracier couldn't help but praise Luna's prowess when the scene in front of her.

"It's not the end," Luna warned before Gracier couldn't celebrate.

Indeed, it wasn't the end just after Luna warned Gracier.

Another black light appeared and exploded. In the blink of an eye, there was nothing except darkness. This was a skill of the black goblins shaman - Dark Mist.

They fired one when Maria's and others appeared for the first time; however, it was not strong, while this time, it was the combined effort of three black goblins shamans.

But it was a pity that the same move wouldn't work twice on the girls, especially with Luna being prepared against it.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Shortly after the black goblin shamans released the dark mists in a panic after seeing the first force they sent getting wiped, a series of rumbles and explosions echoed as a dazzling, white light column appeared above them before transforming into the form of a gigantic fist. Then, it slammed the ground like a gigantic hammer. Not only did the holy light eradicate the darkness, but it also smashed the black goblins hiding into bits.

Luna withdrew her right arm and let out a peal of evil laughter. What she just used a new skill she just perfected, Holy fist + Holy Bash= Holy hammer.

Gracier's mouth was opened in an o shape.

"What are you spacing for? Let's finish them before they retaliate."

Luna shouted at Gracier before a white light covered her body, and she shot forward like a cannon, clashing against some unfortunate black globin. That goblin was shot back like a bullet, his fate unknown. Luna moved to the next enemy, her fist covered by a white light glove smashed the jaw of a half injured globin to bit.

Maria and Sakuya joined Luna, slaying black goblins here and there.

Finally, Gracier also moved. Because she was the last to move, the remaining black goblins who had regained a bit of calm launched their attacks on her, thinking that she was the weakest one.

"Humph!"

Gracier harrumphed before spinning her scythe to block the arrows fired at her. Before another attack could reach her, Gracier jumped back and, at the same switched her Gift into bow form and started to perform a rapid shot.

Swoosh! Swoosh!!!!!!

Numerous Fire arrows tore through the air and pierced the goblins' archers at the back. It was not the end; those arrows which missed their target landed on the ground and blossom into beautiful yet deadly Fire lotus that swallowed the nearby black goblins' and burned them to crisps.

Maria, who just dodged the blade of the black goblin, couldn't help but be impressed by Gracier's skills. However, Maria didn't have the time to focus too much on Gracier's fight as she was fighting a rather

tricky goblin. This one was bigger and taller than the typical black goblin (1.2 m). This particular goblin was almost 3 meters tall. It was dressed in black armor, had a greatsword and a shield.

Clank! Clank!!!

Both human and monster moved at fast speed, exchanging blows.

At first, the giant black goblin successfully blocked Maria's sword; however, as the fight progress, the goblin was finding it hard to perfectly control his body, as if he was getting dull.

Suddenly, the monster froze after locking eyes with Maria; she used Glaciate on him, her unique eye ability. Just when Maria's sword was about to claim the giant black goblin life, Maria's switched to defensive posture because of the sudden feeling of danger.

"Gah!"

Maria was blown away; she almost coughed blood. She managed to control her fall and successfully landed on the ground.

Looking in front of her, Maria was shocked to find another two identical monsters appeared. The battlefield turned silent at that moment.

Chapter 268 - 263: On The Girl's Side 2

Looking in front of her, Maria was shocked to find another two identical monsters appeared.

The battlefield turned silent at that moment.

To be more accurate, one of the new monsters that appeared was a little different from the others; it had a snake tail.

Luna, Sakuya, and Gracier quickly jumped back and warily looked at new monsters.

"Alexia, are you okay?" Luna asked.

"Don't worry, I'm fine. Those monsters will be hard to deal with, especially that chimera one." Maria glared at the black goblin with a tail.

Boom!

The goblin chimera moved so did Maria.

Sakuya and Gracier also moved to take care of one of the remaining two black goblins, while Luna dashed toward the goblin Maria had also killed. She knew she must quickly take care of this monster to assist Maria.

Luna threw a punch straight at the head of that black goblin, and because her body was enhanced, her fist was pretty fast.

Even so, the black goblin was able to dodge the blow by tilting his head to one side and send a kick toward Luna at the same time.

A white shield appeared right before the goblin leg could strike Luna; she summoned her staff and used it to bash the black goblin. He couldn't dodge in time, so he was pushed a couple of steps back.

"Shit"

Just as Luna was about to pursue the black goblin, she was forced to stop and immediately prepared her next move.

Hiding among the dead goblin, an injured black goblin shaman finally finished casting his spell; he launched it.

Hiss! Whoosh!

A gigantic viper made from dark energy widened its jaw and pounced on Luna.

And Luna, who was seemingly unable to react in time, was swallowed by the viper entirely.

"I did it."

That was what the black goblin shaman thought. Even the goblin Luna was fighting against thought the same because he knows how powerful that spell is.

However, before they could celebrate, a dazzling, white light flashed past their eyes, blinding them.

Boom!

In the blink of an eye, the enormous viper exploded into bits of fragments. The burning, holy energy surged like blazing flames, devouring the snake.

Before they could open their eyes, Luna had already flashed next to the black goblin, her right palm almost the left chest of the black goblin and,

"Holy beam"

A blaring white light was shot from her palm and tore through the goblin's chest, leaving a big hole there.

Everything happened too fast, and by the time the black goblin shaman could utter a word, a white arrow punctured his head, instantly killing him.

"Hah.. hah. Hah!"

Luna panted, she started to feel dizzy, and she knew the reason for the current feeling of dizziness. It was because she almost depleted her MP. She quickly took out a Mana recovery potion and drunk it in one gulp.

"Pouah! It doesn't matter how many times I drunk it; I can never get used to its taste. Time to help others."

Quickly scanning the battlefield, Luna saw that Gracier and Sakuya battle was nearing the end; there was no need for assistance; however, Maria was struggling against the black goblin chimera.

There were a few injuries on her body. The chimera, on the other hand, could regenerate at will, making him troublesome to deal with.

However, Luna had the solution against such an opponent.

Creating five white arrows around her, Luna launched them at the chimera; it was to obstruct him to give Maria enough time to jump back for Luna to treat her injuries.

It worked, and by the time that chimera managed to take care of Luna's arrows, Maria had received treatment and heard about Luna's plan.

Maria couldn't help but smile as she shot forward like a bullet, her sword aimed at the neck of the chimera; however, it couldn't connect, it got blocked by the chimera battle-ax.

It was a moment a white ball came from behind Maria's back and exploded, covering her body and the chimera's body.

The black goblin chimera bellowed because he started to feel uncomfortable, as if something was changed inside his body, and he soon got the answer.

Maria switched to daggers, her speed increased, leaving afterimages behind she slashed at the chimera from all sides.

Numerous wounds appeared on the monster's body, and unlike the previous times when the monster's body got healed at astonishing speed, this time something like that didn't happen; this surprised the monster, he wondered what happened to its body?

However, he didn't have the leisure to think about it as new enemies appeared and joined the battle.

Moving his great battle-ax, the monster blocked Sakuya's katana; his tail forced Maria back.

Like an angel of death, Gracier, with her flaming wings, descended from the sky intending to slice the chimera into two; Sakuya had already jumped back.

Clang!

The chimera managed to block Gracier's scythe with his ax; however, he was forced to jump back because flame burst out from the scythe and tried to swallow him.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

Boom! Boom!

Before the monster could stabilize his body, he was attacked by light arrows. (A/N: also known as White Arrows)

Annoyed, the chimera bellowed, his muscles bulged to their limit, and he sent his right fist crashing against those arrows. Using his remaining arm that held the great ax, he blocked Sakuya's katana. The force of their clash sent Sakuya crashing back.

Fortunately, Maria happened to be on her trajectory; she quickly caught her body before placing her down.

Before she could ask Sakuya anything, a chilliness erupted deep down in Maria's heart without any warnings, instantly engulfing her entire body. She knew death was coming.

The chimera had flashed next to them; her great battle-ax raised high, ready to claim their life.

Luna couldn't make it in time; before her arrows could strike, the great battle-ax would have claimed their life.

In this hopeless situation, Gracier moved; she shouted out of her lungs to catch the monster's attention.

"You scum!"

And it worked. Gracier immediately unleashed Dragon's eyes with all her might.

The chimera froze for a second; Luna's white arrows arrived before the monster and exploded against him.

A flame whip coiled around Maria's and Sakuya waists, and they were dragged back.

Everything happened too fast, and by the time the monster was able to see again, the girls had been rescued.

"Rahhhh!"

The black goblin chimera roared before charging toward the girls. Maria and Sakuya went to intercept him. They exchanged dozen of moves before falling back, leaving Luna and Gracier the opportunity to shine.

More than forty arrows were shot at the chimera, light arrows mixed with fire arrows.

The chimera roared; his roar was so loud that it managed to divert some of the arrows from their original target; he took care of the remaining by cutting them down.

However, Maria and Sakuya didn't continue to attack him as he thought; they stood each at Gracier side; Luna had her hands put on top of Gracier's back.

The monster had a bad feeling; he tried to launch his great battle-ax at Gracier; however, it was already too late.

Luna poured almost all of her remaining MP into Gracier's body.

"Go!!" She shouted before falling back to the ground.

A sadistic smile found its way on Gracier's beautiful face.

"Blossom." She said and,

A beautiful fire lotus appeared out of the ground instantly before exploding, swallowing the black goblin chimera.

Even though a normal monster would have died after such a big explosion, the chimera was still alive; however, he was a pretty bad shape, one of his legs and arm were gone. The monster was half-kneeling using his great battle-ax.

He knew he was going to die, so he held his head high; he matched his black eyes with Maria's blue eyes before the latter swung her sword to behead him. Thus the battle came to an end.

The girls sat on the ground to rest.

"Seriously, what happened?" Sakuya asked.

"I don't know, but I can speculate that we are on the higher floor," Maria told them her hypothesis.

"I wonder why it happened, though."

It was Luna who said this. Gracier stayed silent before speculating.

"Maybe it was man-made. I have this feeling."

"What?"

The others shouted unintentionally before Luna became worried.

"I hope Alex is doing fine."

She was not the only one concerned about Alex's wellbeing; the others as well couldn't help but pray for Alex's safety now that they knew someone could alter their destination inside the dungeon.

After resting for a moment, the girls moved, they decided to explore this floor.

Meanwhile, on the other side, Alex's group was fighting.

Chapter 269 - 264: Eighth Floor

"Alex, I will leave the mushrooms at the back to you."

Artemia's voice echoed into the surroundings. Alex nodded before moving; using two knives, he cut the body of a mushroom into two before moving to the next.

In the blink of an eye, he slew five mushrooms; he killed his sixth mushroom by crushing it under his foot.

It was about an hour after they encountered the party that had spent the night in the dungeon.

Though Alex and the others had steadily made their way towards the stairs to the seventh floor, as soon as they got near, they were attacked by mushrooms in the nearby area.

The smallest was about 1m tall. The largest was about 3m tall. For some reason, tree-like roots grew from the huge mushrooms, which allowed them to move. Fortunately, its only attack was to throw its body towards them. Though spores were spread out every time they were cut, they didn't seem toxic and didn't hurt them.

After killing the last mushroom, Isabella, who was panting, said.

"I think it's the end, nothing w-"

Her words got cut off by an explosion.

Boom!

The forest made of strange flowers and mushrooms trembled as if something was about to come out underground.

Something did come; it was five meters tall man-eating flower.

Just as the man-eating flower came out, thick vines were shot at Alex and others.

They quickly dodged these vines. Artemia shouted at them to fall back when she saw them wanting to go towards the man-eating flower.

Clapping her hands together, a three meters long black lightning spear was created.

Sensing the danger coming from the black spear, the man-eating flower tried to attack first; however, everything got destroyed when they came into contact with the black lightning spear.

Swoosh! BOOM!

The body of the man-eating flower was pierced by the black lightning spear and exploded into pieces.

"Wow! Black lightning is indeed too destructive." Alex commented when he saw how destructive Artemia's black lightning was.

Isabella nodded her head while Artemia only smiled.

The group moved toward the next.

On the seventh floor, Alex's encountered a group of mantis (3 meters long); they quickly dispatched them before moving to the next floor.

However, the group was stunned by the scene in front of them.

"Wow! Unbelievable!"

At the scene spread before his eyes, Alex muttered involuntarily. Isabella was surprised as well. Only Artemia seemed not surprised by this scene.

"Uhh, there's no mistake that this is the eighth floor down, right?"

"That's right, there's no doubt about it. This is the eighth floor."

At Isabella's sudden mutter after she had gathered herself, Artemia affirmed her question.

"Then why there's a forest inside a dungeon? Furthermore, no matter how you think about it, why is there a thing like a sun as well?"

Yes, the scene before Alex's eyes couldn't be described as anything other than a forest. The sun-like thing in the sky that Isabella mentioned actually illuminated the area with light.

"Calm down, Isabella. This is a dungeon; it's a strange place where anything can happen. You will let your guard down if you get confused."

Artemia called out and put a hand on Isabella's shoulders to calm her down. The latter quickly pulled herself back together after hearing Artemia's voice. She lowered her head with a flushed face.

"Well, although I'm surprised as well, what Artemia said isn't wrong. We must focus especially in such strange environment; this forest is nothing but peaceful as it appears." Alex warned in turn.

The three walked into the forest with Alex as the vanguard, Artemia, the midguard, and Isabella at the rear.

Alex, who at the front sensed some presence through his divine sense, quickly warned the others. They all readied their weapons, and soon the enemy appeared from literally all directions. Their appearance was close to that of a monkey. However, sharp fangs extended from their mouth, and their skin was covered with water. The smallest ones were 80cm tall, while the biggest was around 1m tall. However, there were about 40 of them surrounding Alex and the others.

"Water monkey," Alex shouted the name of the monsters surrounding them.

BANG!!!!

Armed with his two silver guns, Alex shot down more than eight Water monkeys in one attack.

"Kikiki~!"

Suddenly seeing its companions being killed so easily, it watched as the bodies hit the ground, blood coming from their forehead. A Water-Monkey raised a cry of caution. However, it was too late; both Artemia and Isabella launched magic attacks.

"Lightning arrows."

"Wind blades."

Those magics slew numerous Water monkeys. Isabella moved toward the last Water monkey.

The last Water monkey had its head removed by Isabella's spear.

Just as they about to clean up the battlefield, another group of Water monkeys appeared; there were 20 this time.

Alex quickly eliminated half of them, another five got eliminated by Artemia's lightning arrows, and when Isabella wanted to kill the remaining five, they heard a ferocious roar resounded through the neighboring area.

"Groaaaaaaaar!"

The remaining Water Monkeys fighting with Alex's group before immediately disappeared into the forest without hesitation after hearing the roar. It was like the withdrawal of soldiers given a command.

"I see. As expected, the reason why the monsters were all here was because someone was leading them."

Though Alex watched the surroundings while hearing Artemia's impressed murmuring, his Divine Sense caught sight of something.

Alex reflexively pointed one of his guns in that direction.

It was a Water Monkey that was considerably larger than the ones from the troop before. It was about 3 m tall. Its large size was apparent when you considered that the largest Water Monkeys from before were only 1m tall.

'No doubt, it seems this is the guy that raised that roar just before.' Alex mumbled.

Maybe the huge Water-Monkey noticed that it had been spotted; it tried into the forest depths after glancing at Alex, Artemia, and Isabella. There was a dangerous glint that flashed through the huge Water monkey's eyes when he turned around to escape.

Alex knew he would regret it if he let such a dangerous monster go.

"Phantom Bullet."

The invisible bullet tore through the air and claimed the life of a huge Water monkey before he could completely disappear into the forest.

Bang!

The huge Water monkey headless body fell into the ground startling the other Water monkeys.

"Kikikiyi~!"

"Kikikikikiyi~"

After raising confused cries seeing their leader died, the remaining Water monkey fled after understanding what would happen to them if they were to stay and confront Alex and his group.

"Smart," Alex commented.

Chapter 270 - 265: First Night Inside A Dungeon

After seeing Alex killed the huge Water monkey, Isabella couldn't help but raise a question.

"Why did you kill him even though he tried to flee after knowing the difference between us."

Sighing, Alex explained, "It where you got it wrong. That monster had enough intelligence to signal a retreat after seeing that our strength was dangerous. He would go back to further prepare before attacking us with a massive force. So, I chose to eliminate it before he could."

"You have done well. I was exactly thinking the same." Artemia said.

"I see. I thought that he wouldn't attack us anymore because he saw we were stronger, how naive of me."

Looking at the dejected Isabella, Alex said.

"Let's continue."

The three moved deeper into the forest.

It was about half an hour after leaving the place where the Water Monkeys attacked them. When Isabella used a sword to cut through the bushes, which seemed to be hiding something, they finally

found what Alex had been looking for since he saw this forest. It was a fast-flowing river. The water was clear, and fish could be seen swimming inside.

"I'm still surprised that there is a river inside a dungeon; there are even some fish inside it. Alex, where do you think we'll end up if we followed the river upstream?"

Isabella asked lightly while checking the quality of the river water with some chemicals.

"I don't know. You will find out if you tried it, though.' You should stop using your common sense inside a dungeon.' Alex shrugged his shoulders while looking at the surrounding for any monsters that could sneak attack on them, especially Isabella, who was busy testing the water.

"Right. Inspection has been completed. Your highness, there's doesn't seem to be any particular problems with the water's quality, so it's safe to drink."

"I see, good work. Well then, where should we set up camp?"

After thanking Isabella, Artemia took a look at the surroundings. There was no doubt that the waterside was a place for monsters to drink water; if adventurers camped here without care, it was like asking to be attacked.

Because of that, somewhere near the water source that wasn't conspicuous from the outside was desirable.

Just as Alex was about to start searching for a good location for camping, he heard Silveria's voice.

〔Master, I found the perfect location for you to camp. I'll guide you there.〕 She suggested.

'Okay, I will follow.' Alex nodded his head.

It was a few minutes after going back into the forest. The place where Alex had stopped following Silveria's suggestion was a huge tree with a cave-like opening that was wide enough for a few people to enter. It didn't seem like any monsters were lurking inside as dead leaves were piled up. There were no discarded corpses inside either.

"You are a good scout. I never thought there was something so convenient inside the forest." Artemia offered honest praise.

"Really, what is with this dungeon? If there was a light-like setting sun, I could still accept it, but I didn't think it could accurately make dusk into night." Isabella muttered with an amazed voice as she looked up into the sky that was dyed a fiery orange because of the setting sun.

"As I said, it's meaningless to think about every single thing in a dungeon," Alex said while making an exasperated sigh.

Artemia chuckled while Isabella was forced to stop acting like a country bumpkin.

After making a campfire, the three sat around it. They ate and drunk some light vine.

Because Artemia had some devices set up around the camp that would act as alarms, it became unnecessary for them to take turns and guard.

"It seems you are feeling sleepy, Isabella, so go to sleep," Artemia suggested after seeing the sleepy Isabella.

Of course, Isabella was going to admit that she was feeling sleepy; if she did that, it would be admitting that she was a failure as Artemia's knight.

"No, your highness, I'm not feeling sleepy at all. I shall stay here and guard you." As expected, Isabella's answer was a denial. Artemia could only chuckle.

"What are you thinking about?" Artemia asked Alex, who stayed silent since the moment they finished eating.

"Oh! Nothing important." Alex responded.

There was a mischievous glint that passed through Artemia's eyes.

"You are thinking about your fiancée? You missed the feeling of her smooth skin?" She teased him.

Alex looked at Artemia with a blank look on his face.

Artemia ignored Isabella, who had a surprised expression on her face after hearing her words.

"What with that look?" Artemia asked, seeing that Alex was still giving her the blank stare.

"For a dignified princess, you don't act like a one. You seem angelic at first, but after interacting with you, I know you are nothing but angelic." Alex said with a smile.

Even though Isabella found Alex's comment to be rude, she didn't say anything.

On the other hand, Artemia, who heard Alex's words, had a blank look on her face for a second before she burst into laughter.

"It's good now that you smile. I don't know what you were thinking about to make such a face, but I know it is going to fine. If you consider me as a friend, then I will gladly help you when you would need me. Don't keep everything for yourself; share it with others. This way, your burdens will feel lighter and easy to carry." With a bright smile, Artemia announced.

Isabella nodded her head while Alex smiled at Artemia.

"Thank you, your highness. I will gladly ask for your help when I will need it," he promised.

"Can you tell me a bit about your world? I'm intrigued. I want to know how your world looks compared to ours." Artemia said she was curious about Alex's and the others' world, a world said without Magic. How fascinating. Being born into a world of Magic, Artemia didn't know how a world without magic would feel.

"Our world? Why not. Earth is..."

Alex told the duo about Earth's history. The girls were excited to learn about Earth's fascinating history.

And with this, the party spent their first night in the dungeon.