

Dungeon S 1001

Chapter 1001 Southern Capital Fortification

Ayse and Keyrin were the first to arrive at the scene. The System had teleported them near a church like tower for cover, giving them a good look at the Southerner's defensive line.

"Manually cranked ballistas and trebuchets? Oh come on, how do you suppose those trebuchets will hit? They won't do shit against flying creatures!" Ayse grumbled as they continued to observe from a distance. "At the very least use some sort of grapeshot projectiles instead of a piece of fiery rock, you dumbasses!"

Unfortunately, those anti-siege weapons were the only type of defence the Southern Capital could deploy, so they had to make do with what they had. In a glance, Ayse could already see that the Black Cloaks were the ones who were commanding them. As much as they were just mercs, they seemed to have a higher status in the military.

"Aren't we supposed to help them now – now?" Keyrin questioned as his massive size was a little conspicuous to be hiding properly. He was afraid he would be targeted by the defenders as one of the monsters that came invading the city.

"I thought you are some Cardinal Guardian that Weslie made to protect the Four Regions or something? Shouldn't they know your presence?" Ayse asked but Keyrin got a little agitated before calming down to answer her.

"We are supposed to be. Until the occurrence of the Demon Rats, I had to flee deep into the mountains to prevent their capture. In addition, the news of the Demon Rats was more apparent compared to the rise of the new guardians. And that was also the time where Weslie was still grooming the power within us. You could say I would not have been stronger than I was a few years back. It was fun killing stray Demon Rats though."

"I see... Anyway, the System said that Meomi is teleporting towards the leader to make clear of our stance. You can fly into the skies and start prepping, I will follow suit when I hear enough. Perhaps, I too will make an appearance to spice things up." Ayse's side winked Keyrin which he acknowledged by charging his hoofs with electricity and blasted out of the area. The defenders within the vicinity thought that the attacks were starting and many went into alert.

"Well, that warning made them work faster so I guess that's a boon." Ayse giggled as she swiftly jumped away from the church tower and moved nearer to the Southern Capital's walls while staying hidden as much as possible.

Leopardo noticed the very same portal that Qiu Yue had used and demanded the troops around him not to panic. There, Meomi appeared, now in her full battle gear, despite still being in human form. Like a battle cultivator, she had equipped herself with clothes suitable for her transformation like a tabard so that it would not break whenever she shapeshifted.

The battle tabard she wore too were infused with inscriptions along with her gunblade which she requested be modified as more of a gun than a blade so she still had long range options available to her.

Other than that, there were armour pieces on her shoulders and knees to soften blows to them as well as the automated climbing gear which the Mousefolks wore. With these many flying monsters, the automated climb gear would be a boon mainly because it does help the minions to climb in midair with a mini air jet booster attached to their lower backs.

Propelled with magic crystals, they would be able to refill with crystals stashed in the belt of the climbing gear and those containers on their waist held guns or melee weapons each minion was accustomed with.

Also, to other people, it looked like two rectangular suitcases but they had no idea that it was built with storage ring technology in mind, allowing them to carry ammo cartridges, more weapons and even a few goddamn mini RPG missiles. For the Mousefolks, the size does not matter as the missiles were inflicted with a minimised spell until they were activated. This meant that the Mousefolks still packed a punch despite their stature.

However, each use of the air jet booster had a limited range of 20 metres unless they pushed the crystals to the maximum and thus the quick insertion of magic crystals was available right in front of their belts. For leaders, the Research Team Armoury had given them Jin's Sludge Maqi Crystals which had twenty times more potency than a normal crystal as they knew that they would be the ones doing traversing.

Thus, seeing how oddly equipped Meomi was, Leopardo had no idea on the efficacy of her lightly armoured defensive wear and odd contraptions on her body.

"I hope you are here not to waste my time and reconsider my proposal," Leopardo said as Meomi was still emerging out of the portal. In the meantime, he was curious where such a portal would likely bring him if he tried to enter it.

"Do not even think about entering. The portal will slice you into two." Meomi raised her opinion, seeing that Leopardo was looking at the magical transportation circle floating above the ground. "Answering your question. Yes and No."

"What do you even mean?" Leopardo questioned as he heard thunder rumbling above him. It was unexpected especially when the atmosphere had already been fucked up by the presence of the Nine Oceans Phoenix with the temperature rising on a constant level. The only consolation they have right now was that the monsters' leader was staying in a position far from them to gather her own league of winged abominations to fight. Else, they might have already been burnt by her or so they feared.

But now with the skies rumbling with thunder and occasional flashes of lightning, they did not understand whether it was a monster or natural occurrence.

"What she meant is that we will help you. But on our own terms." Ayse jumped to the top of the walls and everyone instantly pulled their weapons towards her as a sort of reflex. "I see that your soldiers are well trained. Much expected for a capital always besieged with monsters. But it seemed to me that you are lacking in the anti air department."

"We will improvise if necessary," Leopardo replied as he could not phantom the company that Meomi was with. The soldiers were asked to put down their weapons even though she looked half monster with her orc features.

"So, yes. Our organisation will help you but instead of you directing the battle, we will be the ones who do it." Meomi said and that made Leopardo laugh.

"Don't make me laugh too much. And as I said, do not waste my time. You might be a secret organisation filled with...people of unknown origins but so far, I see that you have a few comrades in your midst. How can you fulfil such a demand?" Leopardo replied and decided to ignore them to give the next set of orders. He had entertained these people enough and it was time for serious business.

But before he could open his mouth, bolts of purplish lightning struck near him and Leopardo realised that it was hitting the Orc consistently. "This shows that you have much more to learn. Stop living in your well and witness powers that changed the tide of war." Ayse remarked as she turned into the Avatar of Syltra.

Chapter 1002 Discrimination Against Monsters

The soldiers around Ayse were shocked to see such a beautifully elegant yet deadly monster right in front of them. "You...You work with monsters?!" Leopardo turned towards Nightingale, putting her in a bind.

While The Southern Star scout did warn them beforehand that Meomi could turn into a Werecat, this was still acceptable as the Therianthropy spell had been widely recognised as a pseudo cure against the rat virus. However, Nightingale had not mentioned anything about the secret organisation being affiliated with actual humanoid monsters.

"I did not know how to properly convey it in the reports because it just sounded unbelievable." Nightingale immediately knelt down admitting her mistakes.

"Did Bison not know about it?" Leopardo questioned. The team leader should have warned him about it.

"He's also aware of their organisation working with monsters. I had assumed that he would have informed you about it before your meeting with them since you were more likely to believe it coming from him." Nightingale answered and Leopardo sighed.

It appeared that it was his own fault. Bison had mentioned the need to talk privately with him, but given their dire situation the Grandmaster had sent him off to gather more soldiers from the surrounding smaller towns. As the Leader of Southern Stars, he had read through the reports briefly, yet it had been enough to convince him that Jin's organisation was just amazing by itself.

"Do you have a problem working with us monsters? If so, allow me to call off my comrade who is prepared to risk his life to protect you and we shall all leave your Southern Capital be." With that one sentence, Ayse had practically robbed them of any real choice on the matter. "By the way, don't even think of backstabbing us. If one of your men dares to attack any of us, I will personally assist the Phoenix in obliterating your entire Southern Capital instead of helping you." Ayse threatened Leopardo, since his soldiers had immediately directed their spears towards her at the first mention of her being a monster.

"Is that why you did not wish to work with us in the first place? Because you are a beast monster?" Leopardo asked her directly. "Then why do you fight against the Demon Rats instead of joining them?"

"Have you ever considered that we 'beast' monsters have our personal lives too? That not all of us are the same, just like not all of you humans are completely good or bad? It might surprise you, but we

generally do not wish to get involved in your petty games." Ayse replied. "Phoenixes are supposed to be solitary creatures, known for avoiding mankind at all costs, yet now one is flying right here... Do you really want us to believe that this one's merely bored? Confess! What have you done that caused it to gather such a massive horde against your Capital City?!"

"We have no -" Before he had a chance to deny anything, a thunderbolt from the sky struck him down, forcing him onto his knees. "I can do this all day. The more you try to deceit this pair of eyes, the more you will suffer. Although I've been told to avert the incoming disaster, I will not hesitate to strike you down." Ayse met the angry stares at the soldiers. "And that includes all of you."

"I already have my own suspicions of what is really going on and if those are true it does not look good for you. Either you speak up now, admitting the real situation and we can try to remedy it by defending you bunch of pricks or I shall assist the Phoenix in its path of vengeance." Ayse stated with a sort of hardened temper in her, ready to strike Leopardo once more.

"Enough! We don't have time to waste. Fine, I admit that our leader, Saberteeth had stumbled across a pair of eggs during his last expedition to calm the volcanoes further south. With the loss of our Scholar, Saberteeth had been trying his best to fulfil that role to avert any major catastrophes. Those eggs had looked amazingly beautiful reminding him of pearls from the ocean. He had no idea what exactly they were but he imagined that whatever was inside of them, if we could tame one of those creatures, it might help us in the defence against possible threats. It was only once he returned to check the Grand Library did he realise that the eggs he had stolen belonged to a Seven Oceans Phoenix. All the more we found out that we struck gold because of its miraculous dung." Leopardo explained. "So, I am guessing the one flying towards us must be the mother who wants her eggs back."

"Then where are the eggs being hidden?" Meomi now also turned aggressive and pointed her gunblade towards Leopardo's throat.

"I've already satisfied your curiosity more than enough. Either you can help us, or I ask you to get out of our way. That Phoenix might significantly destroy our capital but it won't be able to exterminate our collective. Even my life is just a small price to pay for it. We will simply rebuild again with their bones and feathers as part of our foundation." Leopardo replied sounding like a man with nothing more to lose, despite Meomi pushing her gunblade closer on to Leopardo's neck.

"My my. Ladies, you do know that you just have to call me out, right? Killing him won't be fun nor will it help our cause at all." A Shadow Portal appeared and a familiar voice sounded out.

Kraft grabbed the fallen Interim Leader by the back and put his hand on top of his head. Only unlike with the dungeon supplier, the pulling of information from Leopardo was an extremely painful process. He struggled to pull Kraft's hand away since he could feel the other party pull his mind apart like a person rapidly pulling the tapes out of a cassette and leaving it to dangle once the deed was done.

"Heh. As expected. It seems his memory is incomplete, someone must have fizzled it via magic. I believe that leader he trusted so much also fuddled with his mind as a safety precaution. There are indeed at least two eggs. One of them appears to have been deliberately broken or maybe it had hatched, but had died a terrible death soon after." Kraft analysed. "I will get Tinda to follow the leads which might lead to that egg as a confirmation while Narris will pursue the possibility of there being another intact egg."

"So does that mean that the second egg is a diversion to the egg they kept hidden?" Meomi questioned and Kraft could only say that was an assumption based on his memories. It made Meomi furious as she used the hilt of her gunblade and knocked him out. But Leopardo, still a veteran combatant stopped her movement and blocked the attack. The Devil Fox was however surprised he was still able to move despite having his mind torn and literally pushed him down with his chi.

Some of the soldiers got a bit restless but Ayse's glare and the thunderbolt raining down next to their feet were enough to keep them away for the moment except for two Black Cloaks who had enough of this charade and charged towards them. As brave as they were, a direct hit from a bolt of electricity, downed them immediately, paralysing before they could do any damage. Ayse's electrical barrier blocked a salvo of incoming arrows and burned them into ashes.

"You were going to let your entire capital die just for an egg?! Are you mad?!" Meomi asked and Leopardo bided his time to strike opportunistically when he felt that Meomi lowered her guard. However, he had not taken into account that Kraft the crafty fox was formidable in his own right and he shot his No Mercy at his legs. To Ayse and Meomi's surprise, it was some sort of glue shot instead of a proper shot. They both looked up, hardly able to believe that Kraft could be this compassionate.

"Why are you so simple minded? If I kill him, it defeats the purpose of this operation." Kraft shrugged his shoulders. "Because of a few rotten people, they will allow a massacre to take place between the monsters and humans. As much as I like bloodshed, I do not appreciate meaningless ones."

"Well, thank goodness Qiu Yue did not agree to help this bastard," Meomi said as she stared at Nightingale for a moment before diverting her eyes away to the battlefield. "At the very least, we will be helping those monsters to find 'peace' more than these humans."

"That I can agree with." Ayse nodded her head and went towards Leopardo. She stepped on his chest and pushed it down so that it felt as if it was going to pierce through the chainmail armour he was wearing. "Listen you prick. We are going to save your people and once that is done, you are going to owe us one hell of a favour. Don't think we will do this as charity work!"

"That's fucking blackmail!" Leopardo coughed.

"That's the whole fucking point." Kraft chuckled as he pulled out a piece of paper and brought it near Leopardo's finger which he later pricked for blood to ooze out. The paper lit up before disappearing and Kraft thanked the two ladies before disappearing. "That was quite fun. Now I will leave the rest in your capable hand, ladies."

"Thanks again." Ayse waved him goodbye and without warning, she jumped into the grey thunderous skies and disappeared. Meomi on the other hand demanded Leopardo to send an emergency missive to the entire wall, announcing their cooperation with Jin's minions.

Chapter 1003 Spiky Fall

"Sir, what shall we do? Can we trust them?" One of the higher ranking soldiers asked as he still had his spear aimed towards Meomi. The scene before their eyes did not really inspire confidence towards their new 'allies'.

"Despite what they did to our Grandmaster, I can assure you that they have the best of intentions for our people! " Nightingale risked her life by putting herself between the spear and Meomi's body even though she knew full well that Meomi was more than capable of dealing with the soldiers herself. After all, the Werecat was at least as or even more powerful than her.

"I've seen them fight to the teeth against the Demon Rats and they came out victorious while ensuring that the citizens were not killed. They might be foul mouthed, yet they also have the necessary strength and capabilities to back up such arrogance!"

"Heh! You are giving us too much credit, Nightingale. We just don't want innocent people to suffer. Unlike your interim leader who is supposed to protect the masses, but instead hid the fact why you're being attacked in the first place." Meomi said.

"Your choice now, Leopardo. Ayse has already given you an ultimatum and you've felt how absurdly strong she is. She's been going easy on you, yet it left you paralyzed up till now. We have plenty more such comrades on route and none of them will show any mercy once the word comes from our leader. We can be your temporary allies or your absolute devastation."

"...Please help us. I was... wrong. Wrong to behave in such a way that does not benefit the interim leader of our Southern Capital." Leopardo did not understand why such words were coming out of his mouth. Though they were coming from the bottom of his heart, he was doing his best to resist the urge to say even more due to his pride.

No one had ever seen him, a champion who had saved the Southern Capital on more than one occasion, this pathetic before. For him to be bested so quickly and even toyed with by these agents indicated that their powers were of another level. (After all, most of the Farming World people did not have magic on their side and those who did got strictly controlled by the Scholars.)

"That's more like it." Meomi nodded as she opened up a System Channel to inform Jin.

"I got the gist of the situation based on the System's summarised update. Go ahead with the plan to protect the Southerners. Kraft has already ordered Tinda and Narris to search for the conspirators and their lackeys. Obviously, there's no need to tell them to hold back but I did recommend condemnation before killing them outright." Jin replied.

"You think the Southerners will empathise with us? They will probably think what Leopardo and Saberteeth did was right, given the harsh conditions that they were accustomed to." Meomi noted her opinion as she sheathed back her gunblade into the Climbing Gear Suitcase and picked up a sniper rifle.

"Nah. I did not mean public condemnation. You will understand when it happens. But first, let's concentrate on the giant flying army coming towards us. Let Spiky get settled in." Jin ordered.

"Aye, Aye, Master!" Meomi jokingly saluted as she instructed Leopardo to tell his people not to attack the unfamiliar monsters which are going to appear unless they have some sort of wings and are flying towards the capital. "If you think every monster you meet is one to take your life, allow us to open your eyes open and show that it's not the case."

As she finished her sentence, a large portal appeared and the southerners who were not informed were immediately taken aback by the spikes coming out of the portal. Only then did Spiky, the Giant Altered

Transforming Spider, came crashing down towards the Southern Capital with absolute delicacy. Before its 'fall', Spiky had aimed his legs right outside the walls. The Southern Soldiers were scared stiff and could not help their instincts to point a weapon towards that monster despite repeated commands not to attack their new ally. After all, they had never seen a spider monster this humongous before.

However, Spiky did not care about the Southerners' reaction to him and he started to change by matching the sandy colour of the fortress walls. It turned its legs into stairs leading to defensive platforms high in the sky and the space around his legs began to create higher walls from thin air. At that moment the scared soldiers realised that the large spider had transformed into extension of the fortress walls.

"What are you bugs waiting for? Quickly get up and take up defensive positions! Interim Leader Leopardo already told us that these monsters are helping us." One of the Southern Army Captains ordered his men to make use of higher ground when given the opportunity. It would be a great boon to have against the incoming army of winged creatures.

A platoon of archers immediately picked up the caches of arrows and hurried to higher grounds, knowing that this would even the playing field a bit. Spiky had even created a gentle slope to allow the knights to push the ballistae up towards a larger defensive platform. They discovered that the floor where they had placed their defensive weapon could be turned 360 degrees with a pulley knob at the side so they would not have to consistently push the ballistae to reposition them.

That was not all. Unbeknownst to them, Spiky had already spun webs between his legs so that any winged monsters that tried to attack them could be removed by the archers or the Mousefolks who were still gearing up for their sorties.

When Jin saw the transformation, he was surprised how detailed it was. It appeared as if the spider had improved considerably compared to when it fought against the (at the time) Demon Exorcist trainees. When asked about it, the System informed the dungeon supplier that the fortress design has been created by the Super Entity on the fly and sent to Spiky to transform as such. "Wow, nice follow up. I did not expect the Transforming Spider could be used so creatively."

"Of all the captured Elder Demons which make up the so-called 'Cardinal Guardians', the Altered Transforming Spider has the most potential. System only tapped less than 5% of its current potential, thus the System does not deserve much praise."

"Only 5%?! Are you kidding me? You mean this Transforming Spider.... Huh. Interesting. I will have to have a one-to-one talk with Spiky or well with Weslie as the translator. Come to think of it, I should probably make the whole tour and also get myself more acquainted with the Burning Lion Demon and Water Snake Demon. Perhaps I could make something exciting for the Pandarens in the future utilising all four of them." Jin thought out loud as he also saw that Spiky too had already achieved the secret air base at the top of its head.

With its head high up into the clouds, Qiu Yue teleported to this improvised airbase with a small oxygen respirator attached to her waist in case she lacked oxygen. After which, she started to use her Empire Building Sub System to attach a portal regulator into it so that the System would not have to waste so much energy and resources to maintain a portal.

That allowed Jin's aerial squadrons to move into the makeshift warehouse which Qiu Yue had placed while setting up the ammunition and magic crystal stocks needed when they returned for a resupply.

Wyrstiker came through the portal regulator last, walking in with his own oxygen respirator. While the Devil Dragons were going through the augmentation with Jin, it would be Wyrstiker's duty to keep the skies above the Southern Capital clear.

With all the technology placed on the Wyverns, an extra team of Goblins followed the soldiers. They were usually working on the Supplies and Technical front and were there to ensure that the Wyverns could be refitted properly if necessary.

After a quick assessment, the Sub System deemed the access to healing magic as well as technical support satisfactory to ensure the Goblins and knowing that the Wyverns could go for a second run, it finally gave them the okay to head out.

"Goblin Wyvern Knights, let's show them who the masters of the skies really are!" Wyrstiker bellowed out through the System Channel and was met with a resounding affirmative cry from his platoon.

Chapter 1004 Augmentation Process

As Wyrstiker's Company of Goblin Wyvern Knights were sorted out into the airspace, Jin was in the Dungeon Maker to start with the augmentation process. Since this would be the first time they would experiment with this type of strengthening, a small portion of Goblin Technicians were also stationed nearby in case of sudden breakdowns of the equipment as a result of the process. To lead by example, Forneus volunteered to go up first.

"Since you are the leader, I guess we've got to make you extremely flashy." Jin smiled and Forneus was remarkably delighted by his new Master's comments.

"If it is possible, I want some firey-" But Jin cut him off before he could continue.

"When I said flashy, I meant the useful kind of flashy. We've got to be pragmatic first and foremost. If it turns out to be a success, you are free to choose your own cosmetic look for fun and decorations." Jin promised him as he used his phone as a remote control to activate some of the consoles.

Forneus and his Devil Dragon were then surrounded by a multitude of screens as images of armour pieces were flashing around them resembling some gambling casino roulette (only lacking the lever). As for the last step, Jin placed an energised sludge crystal which he infused with more of his Maqi and the sludge liquid into the centre of the augmentation circle before it flashed in his eyes.

There and then, the System started its 'magic' and suddenly metallic tentacles appeared all over that particular portion of the Dungeon Maker, equipped with drills, pluckers and all sorts of mechanical attachments for all kinds of jobs. Forneus was picked up like a rag doll while his Devil Dragon was chained to the ground with flashes of light were seen repeatedly over and over again. (Only his legs!!) There was no screaming or whatsoever but somehow it reminded Jin of those magical girl transformation scenes. The fact that they were all oblivious about it, only made it funnier.

Jin giggled to himself as he imagined the System's magic rendering his minion 'naked' with their important bits being protected by a shining light until new armour would magically be placed on them. Only then he realised that he might be in that same position with his System Rider belt and nearly

wanted to transform to make sure that was not the case for him. Yet, the System reminded him to stay focus in case the augmentation process went weary. (Though Jin felt it was unnecessary since the whole procedure was managed entirely by the System and there was nothing much he could do.)

Yet the reality was not that fantasy-ish and when the augmentation process was done, Jin was surprised at Forneus' new look. Even his soldiers were shocked by the all new transformation. They all thought that the augmentation process would merely be something like fixing a new slab of armour on to their body but no, there was sadly zero to none magical girls vibe from them.

Forneus' Devil Dragon turned from a Beast of Nature to a Metal Killer Machine. It was apparent that the Devil Dragon turned robotic in nature, with its legs, neck and tail connected via multiple metallic joint parts and visible metal tubes running under its metal scales. The Devil Dragon tried to spread its wings, but instead of the usual wing membrane, something similar to a sheet of malleable carbon metal appeared. Each digit and fingers on its wings seemed to be attached with air boosters. While its tail had become something akin to a vertical stabiliser and rudder for the dragon.

As for Forneus, he too grew metallic wings since he was part of the Dragonlite races and his horns doubled in size. His face was protected by an air resistance faceless helmet with holes to allow his horns through. (In fact, they were the only factor distinguishing him in this form). Most importantly, his left arm had been replaced with something awesome. At first, he thought the augmentation had caused him to lose an arm seeing that there was a hole in his wrist. But before he could panic, the System quickly explained that he should try focusing his magic to his left arm that he realised the magic energy subsequently turned into a blast of energy when it reached a critical mass. (Cough like a certain 'M' man with a blue helmet on.)

"Holy Shit, Boss. You sure, I cannot keep this augmentation? It feels great! Those Goblin Wyvern Knights are going to be so jealous that they will demand the same treatment!" Forneus was excited as he pet his Devil Dragon and the System allowed the Dragon to shoot a blast of energy out of his mouth. The hyper beam was intense and the size of circumference would depend on how much magic the Devil Dragon wished to use.

"I was totally not expecting this too. This goes beyond my wildest imagination on how the augmentation process could go. Isn't this already something akin to a type of evolution?" Jin queried.

"The System underestimated the effectiveness of the mix between a sludge crystal with the inclusion of your Maqi and User's latest type of sludge. We thought that the augmentation required more energy but it appears that System's calculations were off by a huge margin. Needless to say, it's a positive boon and System excitedly awaits the results, the period Forneus can stay in this form as well as the plausible side effects of the augmentation process, both during and after."

"The only side effect I can think of is you not granting me this as a permanent upgrade!" Forneus noted as he took off first with his Devil Dragon to make sure the rest of the Dragonlites under him would be ready for combat. After all, who else was going to save the Goblin Wyvern Knights' asses when the going gets tough?

With the augmentation process confirmed, the System relayed a bulk of its computing resources to duplicate the augmentation process so that multiple Devil Dragons and its riders could be augmented at

the same time. Jin, however, warned them that they might not have something as great as Forneus since lesser resources were used but most of them understood.

They knew it was an emergency deployment and thus there were limitations if Jin was to mass augment the entire Devil Dragon Company in a very short period of time. But to their surprise, most of the Devil Dragons managed to come out similar to their leader except they were a mix of Biological and Metal parts together unlike Forneus's Dragon who was completely metal clad.

As for the Dragonlite riders, they did not gain any metal wings but their skins grow flexible metal platings which helped resist certain attacks. Yet, the System was not comfortable with the process seeing that the Phoenix or the horde under her might have lightning attacks which could disable the dragons. Thus it added a layer of special lacquered coating to reduce the electrical contact to all the Devil Dragons.

Ironically, the only one who did not get that treatment was their leader and yet he would require it the most so the System tasked the Devil Dragon's vice captain to bring a bottle of self developing coat to make sure Forneus would be protected as well.

With this upgrade, the Devil Dragons were ready to bring a good fight against the Flying Horde!

Chapter 1005: Nine Oceans Phoenix

The skies got darker, the flying monsters were growling with impatience. They had been promised a wondrous bounty if they were to work together as this never before seen horde. If not for the Nine Oceans Phoenix leading the way, most of the monsters would still be dwelling in their own territory and minding their personal business.

Yet, instead of attacking the humans as soon as possible and getting things over with, they had been ordered to fly slowly and wait for a period of time which kind of defeated the purpose of their monster horde.

'Hm. This does not seem to bode well.' The Nine Oceans Phoenix thought to herself. Although not old enough to be counted as an Elder Demon like Keyrin and the others, who had a will and mind of their own, the Nine Oceans Phoenix had similarly turned sentient after severe situational circumstances had forced her to mutate. The reason why she was holding the horde back was that she was giving the humans who had taken her eggs a chance to return them. However, she did not trust the humans, hence the gathering of the monster horde should they refuse or pretend like they had nothing to do with it.

There had been a few encounters with humans in the Phoenix's lifetime and most of them had been with nasty hunters that had wanted to either outright murder her for the feathers she adorned or capture her to gain a constant supply of her dung which she knew had miraculous powers. Nevertheless, she had never forgotten that it was a human who had saved her at the brink of her death encumbered with severe injuries.

He had not cared how monstrous she was as a Phoenix nor bothered how she kept using her powers to frantically protect herself, injuring him in the rescue process. Nevertheless, he had not yielded and used his healing magic from afar to close her wounds. Healing magic had always been designed to be used in close proximity, yet that particular naïve human had continued to strain himself to heal her from afar to

the best of his abilities. It was to the point that he had even sacrificed a portion of his life force to keep the dire firebird from stepping into the grave. Once the Phoenix had finally realised that he was not harming her and in fact hurting himself, she had finally decided to lower her guard a little to see what the human would do.

Seeing the opening, he had not even hesitated for a moment to rush towards her and had quickly applied his healing salves to soothe her pain and rescue her from the dire situation she was in. (Which she made it worse by straining herself to fend him off in the first place.)

The whole time he had been talking to her in a soothing voice in an attempt to keep her calm and eventually, it worked. To his surprise, she purposely thanked the human in his language. Excited about her intelligence, he had started to ask her a mountain of questions ranging from how the Phoenix had lived her life, her eating habits, what kind of lands and oceans she had travelled and many more.

Happy for the rare opportunity to have a conversation the Nine Oceans Phoenix had answered everything to the best of her abilities during her recovery period. She had not even realised that they had been talking non-stop and he even sacrificed his sleep and meal times just to listen to her until the 3rd day.

The mage had just shrugged it off, saying that there were so many things he wanted to know about her, that his own physical needs were nothing compared to the knowledge he could bring back from speaking to a sentient Phoenix. And a variant one to boot. "I'd rather learn every single thing about you and the experiences you have than satisfy my measly needs. Sleep is for the weak! You will have all the time for it when you're dead as my dad used to say! Hahahah!" The human mage joked.

They had spent more than a week together and once the Phoenix's health had improved enough, the mage told her to fly elsewhere, since she would not be able to return to where she lived. Mainly because the human mage could not hide the Phoenix's scent after she got out from the sealed barrier he had placed around them and those pesky monster hunters would try to catch her again.

And although all the encounters had been proven to her that the majority of humans were greedy and downright vicious to the core, that particular puny human mage somehow convinced the Phoenix that not all humans were like that.

'I am sorry, my dear friend. But now that these humans are holding on to my children, I have to think for myself. You did tell me to 'Think for yourself in this harsh world first, but be kind to those who have shown you kindness if possible'.' The Nine Ocean Phoenix thought as she finally gave the signal for the Flying Horde to attack when she saw that a large spider like structure suddenly descended from the skies. The Phoenix knew that those humans were plotting something too and it would be best to act first before they could do whatever they planned to. After all, she was still a monster that followed her instinct.

Thus, with a strong flap of her wings and a loud screech, magical energies burst out of her body coursing through the entire horde. It empowered them and even forcibly mutated a few weaker ones. While she honestly did not care about the monsters that were with her, she still needed a good push so that she could use the time to find her eggs. In addition, she felt that there was another force at work with them and if possible she wanted those monsters to push through that unusual force.

The winged monsters now energised with magical energy screeched and roared simultaneously, which caused the white empty desert in front of the capital to rumble. Some of the humans thought it was some earthquake, only to realise swarms of monstrous looking deformed dogs and cats with tentacle claws were crawling out of the sandpits. And their destination was singular in nature.

The Southern Capital.

"SOUND THE ALARM! Zurglings! Zurglings! Among the Winged Monsters lies a Zurgling Queen!" The Gate Guards shouted as he reported the endless waves of Zurglings running towards them. It was at that point the Winged Monsters also started their descent towards the Southern Capital while the Nine Ocean Phoenix continued to stay in one spot, supplying magical powers to those higher class monsters, especially the Zurgling Queen that had agreed to follow her. While unrelated in blood, the Zurgling Queen too understood and empathised the Nine Ocean Phoenix which was why she was not hesitant to send her children out for battle even though she knew they were going to be battle fodder and be eventually gone with the winds.

"My unborn children. Please wait for me. I am coming for you," the Nine Oceans Phoenix mumbled to herself as she once more released another surge of energy to empower the monsters.

Chapter 1006: Mousefolk's Arrival

Jin watched the sudden turn of events take place from inside the Dungeon Maker and wondered if the Southern Soldiers would be able to at least defend against the first wave of these Zurglings, granting him enough time to organise a proper defensive ground force against this additional monster horde.

"Nubwort, you seeing this?" Jin queried and the Orc Leader immediately teleported into the Dungeon Maker to assess the situation.

"They are swarming us just like the Demon Rats and they appeared to be fiercer and faster than those pests, granting that they do not have any mechanical parts on them." Nubwort analysed as they viewed the imagery from the C-130.

"We can call upon the C-130As that are still parked in Bulwark Port to sortie, but it will take some time to reach the Southern Capital unless the System assists with the travelling." Nubwort estimated that they would need at least half an hour to send his Artillery Orcs into the air and a few hours later to reach the Southern Region barring any weather problems.

"Let's send out the planes en route and in formation first instead of just teleporting straight ahead. This way, we can cram a few of your troops inside of those planes and airdrop them into battle. The System also tells me that by teleporting in mass will be cheaper for us to use them as the gateway points." Jin decided as they watched the Southern Soldiers display their discipline.

It was clear that this was not the first time they had experienced a ground battle and their defence formation was quite effective against the first wave of Zurglings. Spears had been laid out a few metres away from the edge of the wall, guaranteeing that any Zurgling who jumped over would be pierced to a sorry state.

Shieldbearers were ready to push the dead Zurglings off the spears, but not before stabbing them a few times to ensure that they were really dead. This way the Spearman could stay in formation and not

waste too much strength and energy swing their spears needlessly. (Not as if they have the space to do so since they were in such tight formations.)

Under normal circumstances, Archers would assist from the back yet this time around they were keeping their ammunition intact for the flying hordes. Nevertheless, with the new high grounds, courtesy of Spiky, it enabled them to drop down firebombs from a safe distance instead of throwing them. That was the only support they could give at the moment.

"Sorry Nubwort, give me a moment. Pippy, Poppy. Are you guys ready to intervene?" Jin called the Mousefolks via the System Channel.

"Aye aye, Master! Just one last check and our platoons will be able to blast off at the speed of light." Pippy replied happily as he squeezed his automated climbing gear to ensure that the air boosters were working.

"Slight change of plans. There are now enemy forces on the ground which are numerous enough to make up a monster horde on their own. I want you to assist the Southern Soldiers with their ground defence. Let the aerial squadrons worry about the flying mobs. Don't worry about them, it appears that their power boost was more than we had anticipated." Jin informed them.

"Assuming they know how to use their powers." Pippy chuckled. "As Master Zeru taught us before: 'Having power means nothing unless one can utilize its full potential.' "

"Oh, I totally get that feeling. I still feel some of my powers are underutilised." Jin lamented his own situation. "I will talk with some of the other minions to act as your reinforcement, but it will still take some time."

"Don't worry, we will buy as much time as possible for ya. For our dear elder disciple. Hehe." Poppy said as he requested the System to open the portal for his advance troops to proceed first. (Not before Pippy knocked Poppy's head for teasing their master since Zeru's was both Jin's and the Mousefolks' masters. Oh what a complicated relationship.)

The Southern Soldiers were doing decently in their defence against the massive tidal wave of monsters until they found that their efficient defence was proving to be a bane. A few Zurglings managed to jump on top of the corpses of their brethren, thereby avoiding the spears and made it through. They then took the opportunity to move deeper into the Southerner's defence lines where some of their support was working overtime to bring extra ammunition or tend to the wounded.

Unfortunately, because of the strict formation, there was little those Southern Soldiers could do and only hope that the stray Zurglings could be killed by the guards responsible for protecting the backline. They understood that it would be foolish to break formation, as more monsters could potentially bypass them that way and that would result in more casualties.

Noticing their situation, the System promptly changed the portal coordination and sent the Mousefolks towards the vulnerable backend. This time, the System was being a little creative with its teleportation and instead of opening a usual portal, a temporary beam of light was shone on the spot where the Mousefolks would land. (Hence the promise reaching there in the speed of light.) And this too stunned the monsters momentarily allowing the Mousefolks to join into the fray with a better advantage.

At the same time, The Southern Guards did their best to deal with the stray Zurglings who had been focused more on destroying the supplies rather than kill anyone in sight. Suddenly a speedy creature moved through the crowd after that momentary flash of light and annihilated two Zurglings with just one slash to their necks each.

"Impossible!" Cried out some of the guards, as they recognised the one responsible as Mouseman, who was significantly smaller than the Zurglings, yet had such an easy time dealing with them.

"Oh, guess I used too much strength on that one." Poppy snickered as he checked whether his weapon had become blunt by the blow. The guards' shock only increased when they saw that the other stray Zurglings within the vicinity were also killed in the exact same way and many Weremice were standing on the roofs, lamp posts and balconies of houses.

They were literally everywhere and their eyes were fixated on the wall, checking for any Zurglings that managed to escape the tight formation. The moment they spotted one, thread needles could be seen flying out of their machine gear attached to their waist and they flew thanks to the magical wind coming from their back. It was more apparent with the attachment of a cape that they had and a one-eyed Panda embroiled into the red cape.

Upon a closer look, some wondered how the Weremice were able to control those thread needles as they moved extremely smoothly, flying from one spot to another in a matter of seconds. But none of that mattered since there were more important things at hand such as the continuation of the tasks they currently were on.

The Healers continued to tend to the wounded while the support team brought over more arrows for the Archers who patiently waited for their turn and bombs for the Knights. Meanwhile, some of the more talented chemists were creating firebombs in the midst of the chaos to keep the supply ongoing.

The Archers on the high ground wanted to render some help to the ground troops but the situation of the flying horde coming closer made their commanders worry about the lack of ammunition...until they saw a few monsters flying off from the top of Spiky. Since they were not coming at them and instead, facing the incoming Flying Monster Horde, they could only assume that they were the allied monsters that Leopardo reluctantly accepted help from. Thus they were ordered not to hit any of such monsters as much as possible else, they too would not hesitate to kill their allies. (Or so they heard.)

"Control your aim! Fire swift and true so your every arrow scores a hit! Remember, each strike has to be a killing blow or I will personally hound you even after death!" The Southern Commanders bellowed out commands as the Archers took their formation and nocked their arrows.

But before the Flying Horde could come in range, those allied wyverns simply swooped from the skies and towards them, brandishing their lances and wyvern fire to the winged monsters, causing them to crash to the ground.

Surprisingly, the Zurglings did not care whether it was a monster or human. As long there was meat right in front of it, the swarm would simply tear each and every limb to feed on. As the Zurglings munched on those monster's stored energy, they mutated right at that instant, growing additional muscular limbs or even wings. Some of the deformed cat and dog faces even transformed, taking on more birdish features, most likely because of the Nine Ocean's Phoenix's magical energies.

For those who had grown wings, they turned to the skies and started flapping their broken deformed wings in hopes that they could transverse the skies like the others at the top. While a little clumsy at first, most of them got the hang of it pretty quickly and headed towards the Southern Capital Walls. They might not be the most apt at flying but it represented a new target which the soldiers had to waste their precious amount of arrows. Such a transformation inadvertently increased the number of flying monsters as multiple monsters had fallen from the Goblin Wyvern Knights' counter-attack.

"Damn it!" Wyrstriker said as he knew that his counterattack could eventually give the Southern Capital more trouble.

"What do we do, Captain?" His Vice-Captain asked as he too saw what their attacks were doing and suddenly they heard the crackling of thunder which gave the Lead Goblin Wyvern Knight an idea.

"If we can't crush them to the ground, we throw them up to the skies! Otherwise use sufficient firepower to obliterate them into ashes!" Wyrstriker answered and his trusty Vice-Captain immediately relayed the orders via the System Channel.

Chapter 1007: Switch Guard Formation

Most of the Goblin Wyvern Knights were a little confused in regards to their leader's latest commands until he personally demonstrated what he expected from them. Wyrstriker flew towards the nearest Winged Lion and lodged his spear into its shoulder before he commanded his wyvern partner Iwen to distance themselves from it as quickly as possible.

But how to go against a Winged Lion when it still had the strength and power to struggle against just one strike from the spear?

The answer lies in the very next moment as the spear triggered an explosion by using the energy it had been charged with, however it did not originate from inscription charms but from Wyrstriker himself!

With a great number of monsters exposed to cultivators, these minions of Jin had their chi points miraculously activated. For the misinformed, they believed they wielded magic though some were not wrong.

Because of the closeness of mana and chi circuits, it was easy to misidentify until the System informed them so. Yet, the System also saw a small yet significant change among these monsters. It found out that the constant use of Jin's Sludge around them caused the monsters to have a mixture of mana and chi points power activated, which should not happen in theory.

Still, Jin's sludge was a mystery even to the System that it had yet form proper theories on how to fully utilise it. Therefore, the System only informed the monsters what they had unlocked according to the majority of points they had activated. For example, Wyrstriker had 15 chi meridian points and 4 mana focal points opened so far and the System merely stated that Wyrstriker had the ability to manipulate chi.

Even his wyvern had a few chi meridian points opened, although in his case, there was a greater amount of mana focal points in his circuit. That alone had already reinforced his body to withstand the constant struggling of the Winged Lion while he focused on sending the Winged Monster up towards the skies.

Unconsciously, Iwen activated the air boosters with his chi and they zoomed higher to the thunder clouds which the wyvern sent an air blast to push the Winged Lion away from Wyrstriker's spear.

The Lion regrettably had been buffed by the Nine Ocean Phoenix's magic and with the release from the clutches of Wyrstriker's explosive spear, it wanted vengeance by swooping towards the Goblin Wyvern Knight Leader who was at least two times smaller than it.

However, before it could reach Wyrstriker and enact his retaliation, a flash of blue and purple bolt flew hit the lion, disintegrating it before it could even wink for the last time. Wyrstriker blew out a small sigh of relief and quickly aimed for the next monster.

The Goblin Wyvern Knights watched what Wyrstriker expected of them, yet it would undoubtedly be a dangerous task. Only a few of their wyverns had strength rivalling Iwen's. (He was their leader for a reason after all.)

Still, that did not mean they were unable to replicate it and in fact, the Goblin Wyvern Knights immediately stuck to a particular formation which had been practised in the Goblin Military. A formation which had been drilled into their brains.

The Switch Guard Formation.

The formation relied on two Goblin Wyvern knights that were intimately in synch with each other. Lacking the sufficient strength to compete against the aerial threat, the Goblin Wyvern Knights relied on the technology they had attached to their wyverns as they boosted their speeds while approaching a Winged Monster far larger than them. Once near enough for an attack, the lead Goblin Wyvern charged in with their air boosters at the maximum and his semi charged spear ready. Using the blast of wyvern fire acted as the opening volley, they swooped in and counter the Winged monster before it could do any thing to retaliate.

Naturally, the Winged Monster was able to evade the blast of fire but in doing so, the Goblin Wyvern Knight had already tricked the beast into moving exactly where he wanted him to, so he pierced the Winged Ape with his might. However, it was still able to defend itself by bringing up its arms to prevent the strike from reaching his vital spots.

To its surprise, the Goblin Wyvern Knight was not exactly looking to penetrate his vital spots and instead focused on breaking its defences by releasing its charged spear into a forceful air impact before flying away. This caused the Winged Ape to propel backwards and closer to the Thunder Clouds but not near enough for a decisive strike by Ayse and Keyrin. That was when the second Knight who had been building up its speed, swooped into the defenceless ape and slammed its spear right in the middle of the Winged Ape.

The Wyvern's air boosters were pushed to the max once more and even the spear which had been revamped to have its own mini air boosters for more penetrative powers were activated to push into the danger zone.

The Winged Ape was unable to react to this quick switch of their attack formation and suddenly felt extremely numb.

Upon closer inspection, the Winged Ape realised that the bolts were grabbing him like a bird's claw only with it embodied with high voltages of electricity. That was also the signal for the Goblin Wyvern Knight to release himself away from its prey as the lightning bolt claws clutched and squeeze the life out of the Winged Ape by burning it into ashes.

"So this is why you had been keeping your powers eh?" Wyrstriker caught a glimpse of the attack and spoke in the System Channel.

"Got to give credit to that magical horse though." Ayse, now formless after merging with Keyrin in the thunderclouds, answered. She was impressed that Keyrin had not merely charged into the clouds and burst the flying horde. Instead, the Elder Demon has been busy electrifying the clouds to turn the entire airspace into his territory. That way any monsters flying too close to the clouds would be killed.

"I AM A RAM FOR GOODNESS SAKE! *cough* While Master Jin did say to slow them down or perhaps strike the horde before they could hit, I am but one magical ram. A solitary ram king in the grand scheme of things. So, I thought of stuff only that one magical ram could probably do. Fortunately, Wyrstriker was able to figure my plans out on his own."

"Not really. It's just a coincidence that I thought of it when I remembered you two should be doing something." Wyrstriker chuckled as he once more brought another flying monster to the clouds for an electrifying execution.

"But you have to worry no more! For the new and improved Forneus is here!" A large portal suddenly appeared right in front of Wyrstrike and Forneus' Devil Dragon charged into their ranks, taking the lives off a couple of winged monsters with its claws and jaws.

The Mecha Devil Dragon blast out an energy beam from the mouth and aimed directly at the Nine Oceans Phoenix. The Leader of the Winged Horde easily deflected the beam to the skies and stared at the newest threat.

"Ho. This firebird is one feisty prey. It will be a worthy foe to test my skills against it!" Forneus shouted as he charged forward.

Chapter 1008: The Zurglings

"Has he come here alone?!" Wyrstriker asked via the System Channel as he looked around and saw only the new and improved Forneus rampaging forward.

"Affirmative, the others are being teleported via the airbase and will make their ascent to the skies from there." The System replied, implying that Forneus was a one-time exception, especially since it had taken quite a considerable amount of energy to teleport the large beast into the middle of the warzone.

The major disruption of chi and magic in the air had caused the portal to be fairly unstable and the System had been required to apply extra resources and channel more processing capability to ensure that the portal would not break halfway during the teleport. That was one of the reasons why it did not usually portal monsters into the thick of battle (Another was that the cheapskate System lamented the loss of extra resources).

"Hey System! We could use some help here at the ground level too!" Pippy shouted as he killed another pair of Zurglings with the techniques that Zeru had taught him and his brother right in front of the

Southern Capital gates. Unfortunately, the rate of killing was meaningless since the Zurglings were able to replenish their numbers right in front of him.

"Ho Ho Ho! Merry Christmas!" A deep but yet bubbly sound came via the System Channel and suddenly Pippy heard a familiar falling noise from the distance.

"Shit! All units fall back to the fortress post-haste!" Pippy ordered as he did a whirlwind slash to deter the Zurglings from coming close. His move also cut up any that were around him before he used his climbing gear to move back into the fortress.

One of the soldiers nearly mistook him for one of the sieging monsters and sent his spear flying towards him, but the Mousefolk with enhanced senses merely took that as a support for him to climb and run towards the soldier's head.

"Watch who you are aiming your spear at!" Pippy berated him as he used the soldier's helmet as another stepping stone (as payback) and descended further into the Southern Capital while covering his ears. At that point, that soldier was not only stunned by the kick from the one of the mousefolk but also the sights he was taking in right in front of him with the rumbling sounds of the ground and smoke emerging out in a series of shockwaves.

The white deserts had been painted with fireworks, extremely loud ones that scared the frontline troops and the Zurglings, causing them to look back momentarily. Those were courtesy of none other than Wolte. His Explosive Shells rained down indiscriminately amidst the swarm of Zurglings.

The Zurglings cried out in pain and agony as they were burnt in the white desert and their corpses let out a rotting, expunging smell that covered the entire battlefield. However, that did not deter the Zurglings from fulfilling the command of their Zurgling Queen. Through the fire, they jumped into the fray of battle even though their skin got torched and the flames were searing into their bones. All that matters was their fulfilment to the orders of their Queen Mother.

As for the one responsible, she had been meaning to do attack the Southern Capital for a long time now but had lacked the courage to do so until the appearance of the Nine Ocean Phoenix's and her beckon to raid the city. She knew that her Zurglings were numerous but against the well trained Southern Capital, they alone would not be enough to enact revenge.

They had defiled her own grandmother's place of birth and the filthy humans were now using it as their own nesting area. The settlers of the past had taken advantage of the situation when the then Zurgling Queen's developed nesting area had been attacked by a legendary giant beetle.

Aye, the history had been written by the victors.

The current generation of Southerners believed that their ancestors had built this place brick by brick, a monster part at a time. Yet in truth, before the Legendary Giant Beetle had been slain, it had travelled from continent to continent to satisfy its neverending hunger. Around 150 years ago, when it had once again come to feed on the Zurglings, the settlers had taken that chance to side with the Giant Beetle and had killed off most of the Zurglings. After all, the Zurglings of the past had not just been a nuisance to them, but the general population of the Southern Region.

Their meat while pungent had been the most nutritious meat they could ever find. Its blood not only aided with the recovery of injuries but the meat was filled with strengthening properties that allowed the Southerners to prosper to this date.

Most if not all of the Southerners survived with Zurglings meat and while it was a cycle of prey and predator, the table had turned during that particular battle where the Beetle and the Settlers managed to topple the at the time Zurgling Queen. At that point of the time, the then Zurgling Princess had already fled deeper into the Southern Region with a batch of elite Zurglings by first escaping into the seas and later surfacing at the other end of the Southern Region. But unknown to the Beetle who actually thought of the humans as a new form of ally, found itself being betrayed the moment it killed the Zurgling Queen.

The humans were after all settlers from the other three regions and some were reinforcements to fight against the Beetle who was said to arrive and ravage the ragtag settlement of the settlers. Only to their surprise, the beetle had returned to settle its score against the Zurgling Queen. That was when one of their leaders determined to use this chance as a moment of deception and created one of the best art of war in the history of the Farming World.

When the injured beetle found that it had been betrayed by the humans, it was already too late. The fight against the Zurgling Queen had undoubtedly been one of the craziest giant battles the Southerners had ever seen and it had lasted for days on end until the beetle had already revealed most of its tricks and skills. That was how the Southern leader took notice of its noticeable flaws and utilised it against itself during its fight.

While the beetle had a fighting chance against an army of battle-worn warriors, one which also took a heavy toll fighting against the Zurgling Queen, it did not expect that more reinforcements would come. Fresh troops from the three regions to put it down. And thus, with its corpse filled with highly valuable construction materials, the humans dissected and took the beetle apart to create the now Southern Capital.

The current Zurgling Queen was not empathising the Nine Oceans Phoenix as the role of the mother but rather the child who had experienced the human's brutality and knew the type of consequences the Phoenix might have to go through if she lost her child.

Still, she did not understand why now there were monsters siding these humans especially when the call from the Nine Oceans Phoenix was extremely potent. Even the Phoenix herself was at a loss when she tried to contact the monsters that were fighting against the Zurglings through a telepathic mind possession technique but somehow there seemed to be a stronger entity that was controlling them.

"Could the humans be that strong or is another Legendary Monster assisting them?" The Nine Oceans Phoenix feared for her kids even further.

Chapter 1009: A Glimpse Of The Phoenix's Power

"Holy Shit! That was awesome Wolte!" Meomi praised their companion as she slammed a Zurgling on the floor, before using her climbing gear's anchor head to kill the downed Zurgling as she simultaneously chopped the head of another in mid air. "You shooting from the sea? That has to be one hell of a prediction!"

"Hahaha! The System might have played a role in that but you are wrong in one particular aspect! I'm not in the sea!" Wolte boasted as they suddenly heard a loud wail from the back of the capital which faced the direction of the sea. Up in the air, they saw a whale-looking monster travelling forward with an enormous ship ledged on its top. "Brilliant, isn't it?! Jin suggested this!"

"Ho Ho Ho! Merry Christmas!" Mr Derpy shouted as he wailed once more and another series of shots got fired off towards the white sand desert.

"It's the new year, baka derpy!" Ayse corrected him via the System Channel but Mr Derpy did not care. This was the secret plan Jin had promised this unlikely duo. In fact, a similar combination between Wolte and Derpy had been on his mind for quite some time.

Back when Lord Wolte had evolved into a tank, the dungeon supplier had meant to deploy Mr Derpy like an airship transport, carrying tanks and an assortment of warriors into Demopolis as part of the counterassault.

Lord Wolte would have acted as Derpy's defence during the transport and later as one of the few commanders that would cause havoc in case the Demon Army would close in on Pandapolis' Dungeon Core. He had hoped that such an attack would have forced the Demon Army to retreat or at least decrease the number of their elites.

Never could he have expected the skulk of foxes under his employment to be as formidable as they had revealed themselves to be, and the scary thing was that they had not even been very serious in their fights so far. (That also made him wonder how absurdly strong they might have been during the resistance back in their days.)

Thanks to Wolte's 'ultimate transformation' (at least he called it that) into a ship, the same idea had been used with a different twist. Because the Southern Capital was nowhere near the ocean nor sea, Jin had decided to bring the 'ocean' for Wolte closer to the Southern Capital.

To achieve that, Mr Derpy was to ferry the ship right on his back towards the Southern Capital. However, they were not the only ones in the area. The C130 Artillery Planes were also flying in sync with it, providing necessary cover for the Wolte's titan battleship 'Stalingrad'.

This was to ensure the winged monsters were taken out away from Stalingrad's projectiles, else it would be rather embarrassing and hilarious if one of the Winged Monsters would manage to intercept the attacks, only to explode right in front of Mr Derpy's face. In addition, this particular combination allowed Stalingrad to take in Mr Derpy's magical powers, enhancing Wolte's own firepower and gave him the ability to shoot even further.

When the Nine Oceans' Phoenix saw such a threat coming towards them, she did not panic and instead utilised her powers to conjure three similar silhouettes of herself. With a simple nod from her head, those Nine Ocean Phoenix silhouettes flew towards the burnt fields scattering its energy amongst the dead corpses. True to its name, the Phoenix not only had miraculous dung but also the power to resurrect the Zurglings.

But its powers were a far cry from what Jin had predicted. Instead of a full resurrection, the Phoenix's magical energy had merely simulated the remains, which caused them to move forward in their

damaged state. Their minds were blank, apart from their base instinct to hunt down anything that was not related to the Zurglings. It felt as if the Phoenix herself was a necromancer kind of monster.

"Are the portrayal of phoenixes skewed in my world?" Jin asked as he watched the Zurglings raise from the dead and begin charging forward. Some even started to bite the remainders who were not fortunate enough to move despite the phoenix's resurrection ability to combine themselves together into a larger, more terrifying menace to storm the Southern Capital. It was to the point the Southern Soldiers were showing signs of weakness in their defences.

"The phoenixes that User knows of in legends are indeed different. They do not have the capability to resurrect any monsters other than themselves and even so, there should be a limit to the times such a being can resurrect before they truly die." The System replied.

In the meantime, Nubwort who was in the makeshift Dungeon Maker War Room queried whether Jin was going to send more of his soldiers to reinforce the Southern Capital.

"I'm not sure. Do you think it will make much of a difference? It seems that we've clearly underestimated the power of this Nine Oceans Phoenix." Jin answered as he shrugged his shoulders a little. "It feels like we're just delaying the inevitable. I wonder if that is how everyone felt when fighting against my forces. We might not know much of the relationship between the Southerners and the monsters residing in this region, but for all the various monsters to band together and unite in a coordinated effort against the humans... These people must have done more awful stuff than we had imagined. After all, they treated those monsters as a means to survive."

"So what are you proposing to do, Master Jin? Shall we fight a protracted battle until we find the real culprit? Because if your assumptions turn out to be true the citizens of that city might just be as guilty as the ones who made the monsters suffer." Nubwort argued. "And if you ask me, based on that short conversation our colleagues had with their leader, those Southerners deserve to die. If it was up to me, we should be helping the monster horde instead."

"That is indeed a very tempting proposition. These monsters would probably fight fiercely against the Demon Rats to ensure that they could keep the land they have. Either way, finding the culprit continues to be one of our main objectives, which will hopefully allow us to learn more about the whole situation. But yes, given the choice, I'd rather make a contract with them than these scheming Southerners."

"Seems like you can't fight your nature, Master. You'd rather work with us monsters, who have a kind heart than a seemingly nice human who might betray you." Nubwort chuckled.

"Hey! But you trust me with your lives!" Jin said in defence.

"Not that we have much of a choice to begin with, do we?" Nubwort mimicked Jin's very same shrug. "Nevertheless, I am glad that we've joined you." It was then Nubwort had some sort of epiphany unrelated to the current situation.

"If you don't mind me diverting from the situation a little, I'd like to ask your opinion on another matter. What would you say to employing Orcs from our country as mercenaries or maybe as guards and peacekeepers?"

"Do you fear that eventually, the adventurer's dungeon cave might not be enough to sate their lust for battle?" Jin questioned.

"Not exactly. The dungeon cave is a fantastic idea to keep the fighting urges in check for every race in the *cough* Goblin World, all while supplying them, as well as us, with a nice bit of money. No, I've been meaning to ask you for the opportunity for us Orcs to take on extra responsibilities since many of us would like something more stable in terms of jobs."

"Oh, so not only could they earn dough and coin for their family, they could contribute to our fights?" Jin thought it over for a moment.

"Indeed. Remember how you used your world's Royal Snake Battalion for that 'training exercise'? I hope you could do the same not just for the Orcs but also the Goblins. That way, they could go all out and at least still keep their relationships in check. With the System, the participants near death could be teleported away and get healed, thus earning you Frost Echo's and the Goblin King's coin. And if we ever go into war, we could ask for their assistance, whether they're bound by the System would be another issue."

"In essence, Orc General Nubwort is suggesting that since System and User are always in sticky situations, it could prove beneficial to let System act as a middleman and bring in those willing to fight for money and glory and give them a chance to prove their mettle." The System summed up the Black Orc's request.

"That way you could pick the talented ones too and those who died would have served their duties valiantly." Nubwort nodded and even wanted to add more to his proposal, but Pippy interrupted via the System Channel.

"Master! The fights are getting more intense! I cannot let my team spread out too much or they might get overwhelmed!" Pippy reported as he zoomed past a Zurgling and used it as a jumping pad to one of Spiky's towering legs.

"I understand, focus your defences on those already wounded. The rest could not be that lucky. Most of the Devil Dragons are moving out soon so the Winged Monster Hordes should not pose too much a threat to the ground defences. I will see if -"

"Master. Tinda reporting in." The dark elf's voice sounded in the System Channel. The drow was currently holding on to a man's decapitated head and the organs in the head were slowly sliding down.

Chapter 1010: Phoenix Chick

"One moment please, Tinda. Wyrstriker, we need a tighter defence near the walls of the capital. Forneus, get a portion of your Devil Dragons to burn down any Zurglings who get too close to the fortress walls." Jin ordered and Forneus acknowledged it, forwarding the commands to four Devil Dragons to send them on a sort of 'bombing' run along the Southern Walls.

They were in fact dropping carpet bombs from their tails after the augmentation process. This caused a series of devastating explosions which shook the Southern Soldiers hard and some were left deafened by the sound while others were catching their balance, causing many to be off guard.

The Zurglings did not miss this opportunity and pounced on the defenders but compared to the majority that had been burnt and exploded into pieces, they were the lucky few. Nevertheless, their assault was short lived, as the Wyvern Goblin Knights came to the Southerners' rescue and swooped those Zurglings away before they had the chance to maim their prey into bits.

"Sorry, Tinda. What's the matter? Have you managed to find out what happened?"

"Unfortunately the person killed himself under my interrogation." Tinda sighed as she threw the head away like it was some roadside trash.

"However, I did get some information about the approximate location where the second egg is hidden and have already relayed that information to Narris."

"But?" Jin somehow felt that it was the only good news she was providing.

"The first egg has hatched a few days ago and they've not hesitated to start torturing the poor chick. It's furthermore covered in shit stains and what I can only assume is barf." Tinda regretfully reported as she walked towards the injured, chained phoenix chick.

"Healthwise, it appears as it has been given proper nutrition. Only it looks like it has been force fed and I've found traces of chemicals in the food which should be laxatives. From what I could see in their memories, they are planning to do the same for the second egg once it hatches. They are treating the first one as a guinea pig to find out what they have to feed them for the best dung efficiency."

"What..." Jin could not believe how those people treated the monsters.

"How is the bird faring right now?"

"Alive, but not in a good shape. Some of them had been treating the baby bird with scorn because of its mother's appearance. The one in charge had a mindset of making the chick suffer to get the most dung out of it before harvesting it and running off. Luckily, I've managed to find them in time. Still, there are certain memories within a few of the guards indicating they have plans to run because they believe the capital is doomed. Although I'm not too sure if those were rumours or fears." Tinda apologised that her memory searching abilities were not as great as Kraft's, so she could only pluck the ones with the strongest emotions or attachments to it.

"If I'm not wrong, the chick's ability to resurrect should be stronger than the one of its mother. From what little we know about them, they are prone to being left in the wild by themselves for long periods of time while their parents might go out to hunt. Resurrection is their only survival mechanic to get out of danger. And resurrecting would allow them to regain all their bodily organs. Maybe that is why the Southerners were beating it slowly to death so that it would come back stronger and provide better dung." Gold surmised.

"I'm ready to kill it to end its misery and allow it to be reborn via the System." Tinda offered as she picked her blade up and pointed it at the poor phoenix chick that panted for breath. With wounds festering all over its body, and heavy rusted chains bearing its weight, the bird was drowned in its own dung and vomit. Tinda thought she had discarded her empathy during Kraft's training, but this was so downright cruel that she felt a desire to slaughter everyone involved in the treatment once more.

"System strongly advises User to personally go out and use the capture app that System had installed in User's phone. There is no telling how the Phoenix might be able to resurrect, potentially causing System's capture code after death to become invalid." The System interrupted immediately, halting Tinda's intention to grant it a merciful death.

"The memories of these people interacting on their own has plainly shown me that these people are worse than savages. I've been informed that this Southern Continent lives by the laws of the jungle, but this... they are the true monsters." Tinda held her blade for a moment while Jin hurriedly came into the scene. "I'm unable to forgive these Southerners a single bit, Master Jin!"

Even though he was used to the stench of blood, the rancid smell that came from the Phoenix chick nearly made him vomit. He did not hesitate and pulled his phone out to activate the capture app.

The nostalgic panda screen appeared and so he walked towards the little creature. Unsurprisingly, after suffering the constant torture the Phoenix chick (rightfully?) feared for its life and used all its feeble strength to let out one last screech towards Jin.

Instead of the usual whip that came after such an act of defiance, followed by food being forced down its throat, Jin caressed the chick, before he gently tapped his phone on its head. "Don't worry, the horror has ended. I promise you, that you won't ever have to suffer like this. You will find yourself in a better place and understand that the world is not always against you." Jin explained as he pointed towards the dead human body corpse.

The weakened chick followed his hand movement and saw how the dungeon supplier haphazardly conjured a Black Panda Fire in his palms. With a flick of his wrist, the fire was thrown towards those people that had tortured the chick and burnt it until only ashes were left.

Even with fading consciousness, the chick somehow understood that Jin had helped it get its revenge and it felt that it could finally rest. At that moment the System's capturing app started to work overtime. With no resistance against the capture, the Phoenix chick was quickly taken in the System's bosoms.

"System, ensure that the chick is doing well. Get the Panda Nurses and Milk to look at it." Jin ordered as he now held his nose and got out of the room along with Tinda. That was when they heard footsteps coming down hurriedly from afar.

"They seem to have been alerted by the assassinations." Tinda shrugged her shoulders as she held her blade outwards and pushed Jin to the back as if protecting her 'master' was the first priority.

"Nah, let's not push our luck. We got what we wanted." Jin refuted, he opened a portal and dragged Tinda along with him. Although she resisted, the System was able to suck the dark elf who was eager to mete out more justice alongside the dungeon supplier.

"Why did you stop me? They deserve death, don't they?" Tinda questioned as she relayed the found memories through the System and Jin was able to see them as a playback.

Instead of killing the monsters outright, the entire city under the leadership Saberteeth was committing inhuman acts against the monsters. They did not treat them as prey from a hunt but rather abuse and tortured those monsters like how they had done to the Nine Oceans Phoenix's chick to get the most out of the monsters. If it was one particular organisation, Jin would have hunted all of them down.

But no.

This was the culture in the Southern Capital. All in the name of survival of the fittest.

However, Jin could not see how this could be called survival. They were doing this on a daily basis, hauling monsters in, cutting off their limbs and keeping them barely alive, so that they could get more parts once they had regenerated. And if that was not enough, they had fun bullying the monsters and some even committed take joy in burning them, seeing them squirm or putting them against one another in an arena when they stopped being useful.

Jin clenched his fists as he now understood the rage Tinda felt. Even though they did not feel remorse because it was ingrained in their culture, this monster horde was basically karma accrued from torturing all those monsters.

For the first time in the Panda cultivator's history, Jin was about to do something very radical.