

Dungeon S 701

Chapter 701 Can You Believe it?

For the remaining part of the day, the soldiers spent it moving around the floating platforms in order to familiarise themselves for the upcoming defence raid.

They quickly came to the conclusion that the dungeon instance that they were in was way too detailed and intricate for just a 'normal defence raid'. It looked as if it was a real living city broken into many parts for the monsters to work at.

Some soldiers started to get the feeling that they would not be participating in an exercise but actually be defending a real city. Even the commanding officers who were being escorted by Jin and toured around the area found it overly suspicious.

Confronted with all the questioning gazes Jin came up with the excuse of telling them that he was creating a living breathing city and this was the prototype for it.

"If I can create a defence raid and accommodate massive numbers without the server breaking down, it will mean that we'll be one step closer in creating an alternate reality fantasy world for people to experience real-life rather than just a virtual reality."

"For example, we could use it to let city people experience a little bit of the rural lifestyle. It could be used to teach them about farming and get them to appreciate how tranquil it could be. With a bit of magic on hand, it should easily serve as an interactive agricultural simulation for them to enjoy." Jin mixed some half-truths in his lies when they passed through the first Agriculture Sector.

"This is insane. From what I know about dungeon instances, this should not be possible right now. Your technology has already toppled the charts in many different ways. To be able to stay, live and breathe- heck! Eat and enjoy this area as if we were at a tropical resort. That's more than enough evidence to show that your dungeon technology is more than just cutting edge.." Chen Lai praised when he saw how vast the agriculture fields were.

"Can you believe it? When we passed the industrial sector, it was filled with those orcs and goblins who seemed to be working. If Jin ever reaches a level where he could ensure that the products produced here could be used for the outside world... just imagine how much the defence minister would love to locate all-out black sites with Boss Jin." Kan Jian pointed out as he was able to perceive the capability of Jin's 'alternate reality' dungeon instance. (Although Jin had already been doing that.)

"He would have endless orders just by the simple fact on how secure it should be. There would be no need to worry about foreign eyes peeking at our projects! This would be a fantastic boon! You should inform us as soon as you can maintain them for a long period of time!"

"I'd not agree to that," Jin uttered without thinking too much. As the commanding officers surrounding him stopped, he looked around and decided to explain his reasoning.

"Look, I don't want to be accountable for the government. One small screw up be it on my end or yours, and I will be held responsible. Besides, do you really think I'd look forward to having my employees be at risk against possible foreign kidnappings, interrogations or assassinations?!" Jin said as he recalled how the Triads had tried to capture Lynn.

"Ah... you're correct. You're a good boss for caring so much about your employees." Boon Tiong nodded his head almost immediately, and Jin started to wonder how much this Major knew about him. Had Hou Fei allowed him to collect data on him that easily?

Even though it should not be much of a surprise that he might possess the dungeon supplier's data, but it was still rather disturbing to reveal something like that so openly.

Aside from some minor chats, the commanding officers had a thorough look at Jin's battleground and upon Hou Fei's eventual instruction, they decided not to pry too much into Jin's current dungeon. Instead, they accepted it as is and prepared for the attack.

Soon after, Jin left the commanding officers to their devices and spoke with General Hou Fei privately. "Do you think it's a mistake to show them all these or to even recruit your soldiers for the battle?" Jin asked with some pressing concerns on his mind.

"You planned to eventually open it for the cultivators and customers alike, so I don't see why this should be a problem. As much as they want to speculate, the fact is they are in this already. So, just relax and enjoy the remaining part of the day." Hou Fei consoled Jin and left, stating that he needed to find Qiu Yue for a few matters.

"Relax for the remaining part of the day?" Jin laughed at that possibility. He couldn't even remember the last time he sat down and relaxed properly. Perhaps it was karma for all the times he had slacked during his school days.

However, the advice that Hou Fei had given him was not bad per se. Jin decided to combine work with relaxation and chose to take a look around the new hotels that Qiu Yue had created and their amenities. After which, he teleported out of the Dungeon City Fortress and took a short stroll in the Tree Mall.

He had yet to thank the hawkers for that grand food order they accomplished for New Year's Eve. Jin even had the cheek to think about scaring them again by informing them about the soldiers' presence once more.

"AH BOSS JIN!" Sam Su, the owner for the mixed rice stall, recognised Jin checking out his stall despite the large crowd. His shout alone caught the attention of the rest of hawkers who came over to loudly greet their landlord.

"Thanks for the great work you all did that day. I'm truly sorry about it being so sudden of a request." Jin bowed gratefully before his tenants.

"Small issue! The money we earned from you is more than sufficient gratitude. More importantly, what brings you here today? Want a plate of rice? Free of charge!" Sam Su offered, and the others chipped in.

"Eh, you stupid rice hawker! Stop taking Boss Jin for yourself! Boss! Come over to my shop, coffee's on me!" The drinks stall owner shouted from the pyramid base despite the crowd they were having.

"Boss Jin! Don't listen to these amateur chefs! Have a plate of my dumplings! My treat!" The noodles stall owner called jokingly, and everyone started trying to outdo the others in showing off how grateful they were for Jin's order.

"Fine! If all of you insist! I shall be shameless and take one of your signature dish each!" Jin agreed with a smile on his face, and all of the hawkers cheered on. The customers hadn't expected such camaraderie between the hawkers and their landlord and it did bring a little smile on their faces too. Some decided to purchase a bit extra from these hawkers and to share it with their colleagues and such.

It was a small gesture but nevertheless a positive one.

"So, I heard that there is some event coming around?" Sam Su had decided to serve some steamed fish for Jin to eat as the dungeon supplier thanked him for the food.

"Yup. If I remembered correctly, about a thousand have already signed up." Jin informed him, and at this point, Sam Su was no longer surprised by the numbers. Most importantly, the System only counted those who had purchased the game tickets in advance, and the numbers were still increasing as Jin was eating.

"Then I guess I will get the other hawkers to prepare more food for tomorrow's event." That was all Sam Su needed to know, and he allowed Jin to enjoy his food in peace. To Jin's surprise, the hawkers purposely brought a mini bowl from their stores instead of a large portion since they knew that Jin would sincerely be tasting each and everyone's gratitude.

The more he sampled from the hawkers, the more he realised that they had improved leaps and bounds. "I guess it worked. Inserting the penguins as semi trainers did prompt them to improve their culinary skills after all. Lynn is truly a genius."

Jin smiled as he thought back to the stuff Kraft had randomly spouted about the Pyramid Food Guild. Should he perhaps help and set it up to become a reality?

Chapter 702 Bread

"Relaxing sure is hard," Jin mumbled to himself after he woke up to a series of sludge crystals once again. As usual, he took a few for himself and the rest was absorbed by the System.

After the impromptu lunch, Jin decided to man the store for a few hours allowing Yun to take a break. Ironically, some of the new regular customers mistook him for a brand new employee and kept asking for 'Lady Boss Yun' instead.

Jin figured he should try to come out in person a little more to make sure that his presence was still felt. Or perhaps, that should be placed into consideration when he creates the new shopfront instance.

After that, the group dinner was a slew of reviewing the city defences for one last time. Despite her absence in the previous war room briefing, Lynn wasn't entirely out of the picture. She had merely focused on what she's best at.

Feeding the cultivators good food so that they could be in tip-top form for the fight. The Sub System User also revealed that they had prepared an energising breakfast for all the soldiers so they should be able to even exceed their peak conditions.

"We've even prepared emergency snack packs for the soldiers in case the fight drags on too long," Lynn added and Jin asked if the cultivators have such privileges as well.

"Add that option in the Pandamonium mobile app store. We can earn a lot of money from those people." Qiu Yue chimed in immediately. She also suggested offering the first snack pack with a 50% discount to entice people to try it out.

Other than that particular issue, Qiu Yue was mostly the one educating them about the latest changes to the city defences, and everyone except for Kraft was listening intently to all of it.

"Morning Jin." Lynn greeted him after she heard Jin coming down from the stairs.

"You're really making breakfast for us? I figured you'd need to be in the Kitchen instance to oversee the production for today's meals?" Jin asked groggily as he took out a carton of milk from the fridge to drink.

"Silly, did you already forget that I promised to make breakfast for everyone at the end of our dinner conversation last night? Can't go around breaking promises." Lynn smiled with her eyes closed so she could smell the fresh bread baking in the kitchen's oven.

She woke up early to try out baking bread after receiving some tips from Qian Qian. The older woman was also currently awake in her bakery instance to finish up the last few orders for the soldiers' breakfast buffet.

"Anyways, you woke up at the perfect time. Come and take a whiff of this." Seeing how the Cultivator of the Perfectible Penguin Ruling the Kitchen Hell was so focused squatting at the oven to sniff the making of the bread, Jin copied Lynn and smelt the bread.

While the general scent was full of wheat, focusing his attention on the oven and watching it bake did make him start to feel very hungry even though with his cultivation and yesterday's spread of food, there was no actual need to eat for another day. (It's a surprise how all those extra calories escaped from Jin's body, though he suspected they might have been used up during his cultivation.)

"Were you aware that Qian Qian is an accomplished food science graduate? She even published a few research articles in the Journal of Cereal Science."

"What is it about?" Jin asked as he opened the cap to the carton of milk and started sipping it.

"She had discovered that her traditional methods of baking allowed a special form of fermentation to happen, despite the fact that according to modern culinary arts, this should not be possible? It's crazy, and many peer reviews tried to disclaim her thesis as fake, but all failed." Lynn rambled about some facts that Jin had no prior knowledge of.

His culinary knowledge was at a point where he had been amazed that cereals had their own science behind them until he thought about it logically.

"Does that mean you were also one of the doubters? That you actually didn't believe it, until you saw it?" Jin asked to try to keep the conversation going when it was exceptionally rare for Lynn to ramble on like this.

"You got me. I was taken aback by it until Qian Qian quickly took one out for me to analyse. Of course, I had to use Ayse's lab on standby to do so, and everything she claimed was true." Lynn admitted with her eyes open and with elation in her expression.

"Then we can consider ourselves lucky to have a hidden expert in our midst." Jin replied as he heard the 'ding' from the oven and Lynn had already put on the pair of oven gloves. As she took out the bread, the aroma of it spread throughout the house. It was strong enough to attract the sleepyheads out of their room.

"What is that heavenly smelllll~?" Peppers shouted in a slurred manner as she was leaning her head over railings from the second floor.

"Smells like a good hearty breakfast," Kraft answered as he picked Peppers up by her waist and brought her down with him. Unlike her usual antics, she did not make a single noise and allowed him to do so.

"Indeed. We are truly blessed to have Lady Lynn in our household." Zeru mentioned as he came in from the backyard with a towel in hand. He had never missed a day of training in his life, but all the more he would not miss this tasting of freshly baked bread.

"I won't say no to any of Lynn's food." Yun had already teleported into the living room upon System's notification that the bread was ready.

"Too bad, Milk and Qiu Yue are not here with us." Lynn lamented while she was preparing the side dishes and that prompted Jin to help out by taking the various fruit jams from the cabinet. It was already a rare occasion for Lynn to make breakfast in the morning, yet an even rarer situation had occurred for the Devilman was helping arrange the cutlery.

Even Zeru was taking the various cartons of drinks from the fridge and assisted in pouring everyone's favourite drink. It looked like a harmonious family dinner picture... If it were not for Peppers. It would have been okay if she had sat down quietly at the dining table without contributing but nope.

Her curiosity for the freshly baked bread led her to sneakily try to pinch a small portion of bread aiming to have the first taste while everyone was distracted with their various tasks.

"Don't you dare." Yun immediately pulled Pepper's ear and dragged her by her red panda pyjama's collar away from the heavenly bread before she even had the chance to touch it.

"Nooooooooo!!!" Peppers moaned as she ended up tied by Yun's binding spell. Even though the mage Bellator had the power to break the spell easily, she was acting as the child of the family, yearning for the bread to be served to her right now.

The rest of the group chuckled at Pepper's behaviour, and they continued aiding Lynn with the breakfast before the big fight.

Chapter 703 Pandaren

As expected, on the day of the Demon Army Defence Raid event, the Tree Mall was bustling with life more so than ever before. Dungeons and Pandas, being the (literal) epitome of shops in the Tree Mall, had given cultivators and their families a reason to get out of the house and enjoy it.

The hawkers had already expected this and prepared way more food than usual. Many around the Tiangong Shopping District had started to become regular patrons of the stores. Without the hassle of finding any tables, people just had to wait until it was their turn to order, making it a big hit in the neighbourhood.

It had reached a point where the hawkers had even asked Jin if it's possible to allow their regular customers to book tables at the front of their store. Jin naturally agreed to it since such staunch support for the store just proved their food was getting better. (in fact, healthier too)

Asking the System to add such an option on the app, was considered as a small friendly gesture or maybe even a privilege for them.

The Panda Burger instance made use of the increased people count to finally reveal its new breakfast menu in conjunction with Qian Qian from the Bakery Instance. The 'Imperial Baker' (or that was what Lynn teased) was seemingly starting to collaborate with Jin's people like the drinks stall owner in the Food Pyramid Instance. The owner had been selling soft boiled eggs in the morning together with her toasted bread to supplement his income. As for the Panda Burger instance, it had a more westernised form of breakfast, similar to Wacdonalds.

The so-called 'Panda Pancakes meal' featured pancakes looking like a panda's head. To make things even more interesting, the panda pancakes had been imprinted with 'dark brown' spots on either side of the pancakes to simulate the black spots a panda has near its eye (or on its eyes). The pancakes varied in regards to where the spots appeared and sometimes both sides of the pancake had it.

Qian Qian, with the help of the Orc engineers, had created a customised pancake maker that allowed for such imprints. Fortunately, they had benefited from an increase in manpower courtesy of the Salamanders. As part of the new animal tribes, they had been given the task to help Qian Qian and Panda Burger mainly because of their new cultivation that allowed them to control heat.

The Sassy Salamander Cultivation.

While throwing massive fireballs was not too far-flung off in the future based on their cultivation, they still received their education from a mix of Flame Ripper and the Fire Wyrms who had a natural affinity towards the fire. At the same time, Lynn refrained them from learning from Peppers and deemed her ways as something akin to the forbidden arts.

Naturally, the little mage bellator loved to create trouble and learning that she was not allowed to do so, made her more inclined to explain her ways of explosive magic to the Salamanders. (Perhaps, Lynn was using reverse psychology to prompt Peppers to teach?)

Speaking of Lynn, the Restaurant Train Instance was jammed packed with people too. There wasn't anything new on the menu, yet everyone was practically gorging on every food possible for the various buffs Lynn's food could provide.

The dish which had been ordered the most on that day was definitely the onigiris. Rumours had spread (all started by a certain bored Devilman) stating that there was a set of onigiris that would give an overall boost to strength, agility and vitality as well as chi generation all packed into one meal. This made people go on a search frenzy to see which of those random onigiris had it.

And true to his craftiness, Kraft would occasionally fan the flames by sneakily walking amidst the customer who bought it and quietly buffed their onigiris by adding Evon's strengthening drug concoction in it.

One or two lucky random cultivators made an uproar upon finding the holy grail of onigiris and immediately posted it online. However, truth be told, the sneaky Fox Bellator had already researched them beforehand and knew who were the major influencers that participated in the advanced raid. All it took was a bit of nudge and that Meibo post spread like wildfire in the dungeon scenes.

In the meantime, the redemption counter for Dungeons and Panda was also filled to the brim with people who were there to redeem their T-shirts.

When asked if there was a T-shirt size, the red pandas at the counters stated that they had already customised their shirts based on their previous dungeon runs. For the cultivators who entered for the first time, the sizes were prepared on-site and some of them only had to wait for 15 minutes or so to receive their shirt.

As for the shirt, it had a simple graphic design on the right chest corner at the front of the shirt. With a pocket to contain the design, a Panda holding a sword was depicted there. However, what most cultivators failed to realise was that their graphic shirts were customised to the type of weapons they were using. For example, Xiong Da's shirt had a Panda holding a two-handed war club weapon.

A short text was placed at the left side of the shirts' sleeves, namely, the word "Pandaren" (or "Xiong Mao Ren") in Chinese. What it meant was literally "Panda People", and this was to give the cultivators who had dedicated their cultivation 'hobby' or profession to this particular dungeon supplier a sense of belonging. As for the Pandawans who had registered (naturally all of them had pre-ordered), theirs had been printed with the Pandawan title instead.

For both Pandawans and Pandarens, they all noticed that a set of numbers was also stitched onto it right below their titles. At first, people assumed that it was the registration number imprinted on the shirt.

It was only after one of the newcomers pointed out that the numbers looked like today's date, and someone followed up with the deduction that it was actually the dates the cultivators had entered the shop. Through that astute inference, many began to appreciate the fact that Jin did not treat them as a digit on his database.

Instead, this showed that they were born as Pandarens on that day and date, allowing them to forge a better identity with the Dungeon Supplier store. To the Pandawans, this was no longer some store but a place where their second family belonged.

One last special thing about this customised shirt was that on the right side, there was a Velcro patch with a badge on it. The badge was specifically made for this raid alone, and only those who participated would have it.

Should they wish to sell it, Jin could not stop them at all, but each and every one of them would be limited to that one. The design of the badge was similar to what they were going to experience. There were multiple floating platforms in the foreground of the badge while a stereotypical demon with bat wings was kneeling down, covered with swords, axes and lances.

At the bottom of the badge, it wrote "Demon Army Defence."

For a simple-looking shirt to provide a collective identity between cultivators and offered exclusivity, made them feel extra special. It had inadvertently made the customers want to start gathering more of these in the future.

Chapter 704 Pandapolis

"There is no turning back now, you sure we are ready for this?" Moloch asked one last time at the war room table which was busy as hell even though this was just for the preparations of the eventual demon army raid.

"I will laugh my ass off if your so-called King Baal does not even come at all." Dark Elf Leader Drex replied in a crude way as for once he was donned in his full battle armour passed down from his ancestors.

They relied on no god for they themselves could become gods of war on the battlefield. It was true that the once mighty Drow Empire had fallen far from grace, reduced in size to a tiny population that would have been considered impossible in the past.

After centuries of arrogance, they had incurred significant losses while defending their very last bastion until they were forced to live in solitude.

However, with the advent of Kraft and his Foxes, they had now regained their confidence and strength to return to their past glory that the Goblin World had once feared. Still, they refused to ever bend the knee for him anymore. ("Only such prideful creatures deserve my pity!" said Kraft)

"My other servants Yem and Mer had been to the other Dungeon Towns and Dungeon Fortresses, the news about the incoming attack was significantly well spread. Enough to garner the attention of both adventurers and monsters which pretty much guarantees that some of them will want to join the fight on Baal's side." Moloch confirmed that the attack was imminent the moment they dropped the shield.

"Even adventurers?" Jin asked, and Wolte shrugged as if it was a regular occurrence. To them, it was no surprise that some adventurers ventured into the dark arts. Besides, King Baal's metropolis was not a place where one could stay at will. Even merchants needed to apply for a special pass or pay a dubious sum of money to enter. Else, every other single person had to be invited to be in there.

"These kinds of demon army raids are quite rare, so they act as ideal chances to earn free passes for them to enter after they are done raiding. The more there are, the more it guarantees that the demon army will win, which is why news spread fast, and people happily volunteer to help King Baal to take out the betrayer." Wolte answered indicating why Moloch's switch to Jin initially felt like a death sentence.

"I guess no one ever lived to survive King Baal's betrayal." Jin queried, and the two demons nodded their head. "All the better. We shall build our legacy by becoming the first to defy him and come out on top as the city that repelled King Baal's demon army." He proclaimed with such a resolute voice that the two Demon Lords believed there was indeed a glimmer of a chance for success to be possible.

"General, everyone is in place." An Orc telecoms operator reported to Nubwort, who nodded silently at this.

"General Hou Fei, your men are in position too." A goblin operator reported the very same thing to General Hou Fei, the only one representing the real human soldiers in the room.

He knew that there were sensitive issues to be discussed and told the other commanding officers to take charge of the various defence sections. They had their very own war room table at the opposite side of the building, allowing Hou Fei to attend to them if necessary. But for now, the Panda Remnant stayed with Jin to assist him in making major decisions.

What came as a surprise was that Jin expressed his intention in wanting to fight on the ground alongside his bellators. Those listening were forced to agree without much of a choice. He knew the commanders around the table were also itching to put up a fight.

"I can stay here and watch the battlefield, you guys can enter and do the fighting if you want."

"You serious?!" A resounding question came from the war table after Kraft teleported in to announce his own intentions. It's not that they didn't trust him for his commanding skills. In fact, he had proven himself to be quite formidable during the Goblin War when he assisted Jin with it. The devil Bellator merely nodded his head.

"Don't worry, I won't be alone. Just think of me acting as a bodyguard for our Red Panda Cutie here. I want to watch her coordinate this fight and test if she is as interesting as she was during the random match she did with Jin." Kraft reassured the group and casually 'added' that he would join in if he felt like it.

"But Kraft had not been in for most of the meetings, is it okay for him to watch over the war room table without knowledge of the plans that we have?" General Nubwort brought up a genuine concern.

"I will be assisting Kraft immediately once I unlock the dungeon core so do-" Moloch was later interrupted by Kraft who threw some popcorn into his puppet mouth and voluntarily dragged him away.

"Alright then, let's do it people." Jin reluctantly gave the final go-ahead which prompted Kraft to teleport Moloch into the room equipped with the Dungeon Core. It was hidden within the temporarily floating fortress platform which Jin had asked Qiu Yue to build.

Up till now, Qiu Yue was still doing some final checks and demanding the goblins and orc workers to insert temporary machine gun emplacements where she deemed suitable. The brand new floating fortress was hailed by the Building Empire Sub System User as the best creation to date.

Although the schedule to build it had been tight ("Tight? It WAS extremely tight, five days? Who gave five days to build a FLOATING fortress? Rome was not built in a day! So much having a more flexible working lifestyle working under Jin!" Qiu Yue had lots to complain.), she managed to obtain more input and reviews from the Royal Snake Battalions' commanding officers.

It forced her to make some drastic changes but with most of the workers free after the completed construction of the sea domes, they had enough manpower to make it happen before they called Peppers to add the permanent floatation magic into it.

Unlike the others, this one was not a piece of land but a steel platform built from scratch. Due to the weight of the fortress, Industrial Sector 2 dipped sideways by 6 metres and Peppers needed to be called in to make temporary adjustments to the floating platform or else, items and furniture would be tilted sideways.

"Qiu Yue." Moloch teleported to meet her first, informing her that Jin and the other generals were giving the go-ahead.

"Huh, it's finally here." Qiu Yue wiped her sweat from her forehead and with a switch on her phone, she was fully equipped with the same gear Jin had given her during the Goblin War. Having Moloch at her side, and a certain onlooker watching from behind with popcorn in his arm, she deactivated the concrete lock created by Sandy so as to allow Moloch to interact with the dungeon core to bring the shield down.

This was it. The opening of their new city.

Pandapolis!

Chapter 705 Early Release of Dungeon Shield

"My Liege! My Liege!" A hurried demon servant came crashing into King Baal's bathing room, where he noticed that he had interrupted his majesty's pleasure time.

The demon maids screeched a little and hid behind King Baal's legs, chest, and one even flew above his head. However, the King of Demons grabbed her as she attempted to glide over his head.

"My lord! Please forgive me for my rude-" The maid realised her mistake a little too late, and before she could finish her sentence, her life was squashed out of her chest. And all that remained was a container of broken bones, organs and blood hanging over King Baal's hand. As if the demon maid's pitiful demise wasn't enough to satisfy the King, he brought it near his face and sniffed it before taking a bite out of her thigh.

"Hmm, not too bad. What is it you want, puny Imp?" Even though King Baal had a human face, there was always a split second where the Imp servant could see the facial silhouettes of an old frog or a grumpy cat appearing like a sort of transition, as if King Baal himself had two other souls residing within him. The servant hesitantly wiped his sweat away as understandably the sound of his Baal munching on demon meat was rather overbearing.

But in order to avoid letting King Baal lose his patience again, the imp servant swallowed his saliva and announced the news he bore. "The traitorous Minotaur Lord Moloch has brought his shield down one day before the deadline! Our troops, ever ready, are in the process of organising themselves to follow your command." The imp servant did not speak a full lie, but a half truth was still a lie.

The troops were indeed amassed for the fight, but their commanders had allowed them to take one final break. Even King Baal had assumed that the traitor would try to avoid his fate until the very last second and had hence decided to relax for the day. Clearly not even he expected the Demon Minotaur Lord to choose to bring his shield down early. But then again only a few had expected him to turn into a traitor.

"So you're telling me they are not ready for battle?" King Baal's left eyebrow raised at his imp servant's phrasing. He had been around all types of demons, so he understood them better than anyone and knew than someone tried to twist their words.

"They are! They are!" The lowly Imp outright lied hoping to not join the demon maid in King Baal's belly, but a snort came from his liege as he stood up. At roughly 5 metres tall, his stature might be lean and slender, but that did not mean the aura he radiated was not death defying.

The imp servant continued to lie prostrated and prayed to the netherworld that he would still be there in the next minute or so. (Even though he would get resurrected just like the maid.)

"What are you waiting for? Don't you know what to do next without me telling you?!" King Baal questioned, and the imp servant shook his head violently. Without a moment of hesitation, he ran off to quickly inform the other imp servants and demon maids to prepare the King's armour while he would send a messenger to get the generals to meet with him immediately.

But before the Imp servant was done telling the others what to do, King Baal came out of the bathroom and shouted his first command. "Send the first wave in! Let's see what made the cow toy dare to defy us." The Imps simultaneously acknowledged his orders as they continued to hurry in preparation for the start of the battle.

After all, it would be a shame that the Demon Army did not strike any fear in the hearts of any would-be traitors of the King.

As the 'newbie' shield came down, there was a slight disturbance within the air. It made everyone tense up for the next few moments. Yet the first minute since the birth of Pandapolis passed without any incident, causing the demons under Lord Moloch to smirk. "Seems like our lord's strategy worked." Sebastia who had returned from the Farming World for the fight was clearly happy about her chosen lord's plan.

Lord Moloch knew that every demon would be given a break before the big battle so they would be in an ideal condition for the first strike. King Baal hardly changed his strategy, always utilising the old plans without fail, but then again, they always worked.

Considering it had been ages since the last traitor, it would be strange if anything had changed. Thus Moloch had gambled on this. In any case, the worst case scenario would have been that the Demon Army teleported into the area immediately after the shield dissipated, which was what they had been preparing for till date. (Although some bet to differ that the worst case scenario was the Demon Army not coming at all. This would definitely throw a blow to Jin's time sensitive event, and the dungeon supplier was clearing not prepared for such a scenario.)

But seeing that nothing of that sort happened, Lord Moloch and his minions knew that following the tradition, the first wave of the army would be hastily organised for the imminent attack. True, the first wave might still be formidable, but it at least meant that they would not be in full strength due to their disorganisation, giving the defenders a slight edge.

Right now, it felt like a game of tower defence where reducing the number of attackers meant everything.

At the same time, the cultivator's crowd continued to gather around the shop instance and waited for the official start of the event. Usually, Jin would appear to give some nonsensical speech, but this time around, an informative video was brought up in all the auditoriums, allowing everyone to have a basic level of preparation.

Depending on how well Moloch's plan worked, they could even take a moment to decide on which front they wanted to be assigned. (Though they did not know was that ultimately, their placement was down to the strategists and tacticians in the dungeon world's war room.) Even in case the plan failed, the first phase of defensive countermeasures did not concern the cultivators.

Separately, Xiong Da and the rest of the Pandawans had been given a specially coded message from their app, asking them to step into the conference room instance. Trusting in Boss Jin they did just that, only to find Bear Cub One waving at them intensely.

"Boss Jin is busy handling the last few adjustments of the raid, but the server has already started up. What we want from you is to act akin to the cultivators' 'special forces'." Bear Cub One explained as he passed them the very same USB chip which Xiong Da and others had used previously for the Squads testing.

"Does that mean we will all be able to officially use the squads' function?" Xiong Da asked with excitement, and Bear Cub One inadvertently shook his head.

"We still need more testing. This time around, we have limited it to all the Pandawans." The little bear announcer replied which made people like Yue Wen, the Healing Maiden Cultivator and Se Lang, the Wacky Wolf Cultivator have blank faces and question marks floating above their heads.

"Don't worry, we will fill you in. It's going to be lots of fun!" Luo Bo smiled as she felt excited to use the Squad functions again.

"Unfortunately, there were a few drastic changes to the squads due to the limitation of the server. All the changes are recorded in the USB drive, and a notice will be uploaded to your screen the moment you plug it in. Please read it carefully and use this place to get some practice using the new squad function. We will send you out when it is appropriate." Bear Cub One assured them that they would definitely receive more points than the cultivators who rushed in first. And if they were to rush first, it was mainly the decision of the 'server's' algorithm.

"But do we even have the place to practice the squad function in this small cramp place?" Ruo Ying, the Esthetic Egret Cultivator, asked, and the Bear Cub One roared cutely in response, causing the conference room to widen in size.

Without further ado, some of the Pandawans started to insert the USB drive into their phones and read the notes in amazement.

Chapter 706 Orc Artillery Company

"This is ridiculous. Who in the world would remove their shield one day early instead of taking all the time in the world to enjoy the last of your days for betraying King Baal?" Forcas, the Knight of Hell asked rhetorically as he assembled his troop of demon cavalry and foot soldiers, ready to be teleported and take down the traitorous Lord Moloch.

The heavily armoured infernal Tiefling paced himself hastily as he checked up on his captains and everything else before the teleportation.

Were it not for a mage who noticed the sudden change and reported on the status of the Dungeon Fortress Lord Moloch had stolen from the grasp of King Baal, they would still have been busy relaxing for the day. Yet continuing to do nothing would bring further disgrace to the Demon Army for not acting promptly against their traitors.

"He must have gone insane with fear and prefer to accept his fate instead of cowering in fear." One of his squires concluded while the others chimed in that Lord Moloch might be vying for forgiveness, knowing that he's unable to compete against King Baal's mighty army.

"I'd love to see the face of that arrogant cow puppet begging on his knees!" Forcas grinned while dreaming of the riches he could get from King Baal. It would be a dream come true if he could become the one to gain Moloch's title of Lord before killing him, sending that cow puppet either into exile or to the rank of knights... That is if King Baal was still willing to forgive him.

"Mages! Teleport us the momen-" Forcas shouted, but the demon mages had already prepared the teleportation circle and activated it the moment they heard Knight Forcas utter the word 'teleport'. There was no time to waste, especially since one of their own had informed them that he felt the presence of King Baal coming towards them. If by that time Knight Forcas' army wasn't on the battlefield, their heads wouldn't stay on their shoulders.

SAAZAM

"Bloody mages..." Knight Forcas grumbled as he suffered a slight headache, realising it was a forced teleportation. He suspected that the mages had skipped a few chants to get them to their destination even faster.

"Regardless, we should be in the safe zone now. Assemble our troops! We need to get into format...what in the world?!" Forcas could not believe his eyes as he gazed upon the land's horizon. There were no gates nor buildings right in front of him. Instead, it was littered with stone-cold clay statues except for the 'safe' zone that they were in.

Tens of floating islands right above them with bridges connecting each one made the demon army start to doubt if they hadn't mistakenly been sent into a dungeon cave rather than the city. Further, beyond the shoreline, was just a massive body of water.

Naturally, Knight Forcas assumed that there must be some magic in play. "The old cow must have spent his time drawing up a giant magic circle to show them this illusion hoping to get them to flee. How the bloody hell did the mages manage not to detect it? What were they even paid for?!"

"Are they using any relics?" Forcas asked his senior Tiefling mage for information but their leisure chatting time was interrupted by a series of distant blasts from afar. While it took the commanding knight a moment to realise that it could be the enemies' attack, a series of explosions happened simultaneously right in front of their eyes, causing disbelief.

"I thought magical spells are disallowed in the safe zone!?" Knight Forcas changed the topic as he raised his shield and used a defensive magic spell to ensure his survival. He was fortunate to have done so, as he got hit by a blast the very next second.

Somehow the impact had caused his magic shield to break. Even though Forcas was able to withstand the initial blast, the splash effect of the explosion caused him to be knocked backwards, indicating it was no ordinary fireball or magic spell.

"That's correct, but physical projectiles are still able to pass through! Therefore, I believe it must be some form of-" The senior mage was talking protected by a mana shield, yet was suddenly killed by subsequent blasts of whatever that traitorous cow had managed to acquire.

The shell not only pierced through the senior mage's defences but also exploded right in front of Forcas, making his ear start to ring and disoriented him. All there was left of where the other Tiefling had stood was fire and 'brimstone'.

"What kind of sorcery projectile is this then?! Why can't we see them!" Knight Forcas shouted in despair as he saw his troops getting decimated in a matter of seconds. They had no time to regroup, and he couldn't even find any mages to relay the message back to the main demon metropolis to report about this strange situation.

As the bombardment was sequentially released by the Orc Artillery Company, Nubwort was not giving them any chances to relax just yet.

Even after they had rained down waves of artillery barrage into the safe zone, it was not enough unless the System informed them that it was absolutely clear of any enemies. A few of Que Er's magpies were also on the lookout for the System to accurately adjust the barrage's coordinates so that they were not wasting any ammunition.

At the same time, General Hou Fei was pleased with the Orc Artillery Company's display of continuous bombardment. Although they knew this was all a giant simulation, the Royal Snake soldiers in the artillery section felt itchy to use their own big guns. Unfortunately, the strongest they had were mortars and anti-tank guns they had rented from the Dungeons and Panda's weapon section. It was mobile enough for them to be able to adapt for varying situations, but the soldiers wanted some big 'pow' to blow off some steam.

"Stop." General Nubwort commanded, and everyone understood that this meant there were no more enemies back there. Even the fabled Knight Forcas who had brought fear and terror to countless of King Baal's enemies with his cavalries stood no chance against the overwhelming bombing.

Still, this was the Dungeon World, so even if all of them would fall, given time they would definitely resurrect again... Or that was what had Knight Forcas thought before he succumbed to the explosive power of Lord Moloch's attacks.

Chapter 707 Kraft's Hidden Agenda

It felt as if Knight Forcas and his army was just the warm-up practice as the subsequent waves of troops which entered afterwards were obliterated much more quickly than previously expected.

After being among the few who had consistently ridden into battle with King Baal, Lord Wolte instinctively knew the composition of the armies that came in, especially since he had in designing some of these, giving Jin and the others a battle advantage. This was even truer since most strategists had to receive King Baal's approval before being allowed to change any tactical plans.

Thus, the Orc Artillery Company was able to amass a successful killstreak of over six hundred soldiers thanks to this obscene lack of feasibility.

While some of the demon soldiers were able to move out of the area in time, mainly the ones with heavier constitutions, they were all later killed one by one, courtesy of the snipers from the Royal Snake Sniper Company.

A series of them were taking encampment at the nearest floating platform, taking shots with heavy-duty Barret M82 sniper rifles. Their captain stated that this was a perfect time to train up their long-distance kills since there was little to no wind to be taken into account in this particular 'dungeon' instance.

However, the captain severely underestimated Jin's weapons store as it had provided these snipers rifles with a little perk. The scope that was attached to it had been calibrated with an assistive AI system, giving minimalistic help functions to subtly direct the shots.

This was merely a one-time offer because the System for once calculated that they could not afford any misses that would hit its precious clay statue defences. Thus, the mini AI system within the scope was built to avoid these clay statues and increased the chances of the snipers hitting their actual targets.

Obviously, the captain did not know any of this, since the snipers were wise enough not to tell him, especially when he was already too busy coordinating where the snipers should go afterwards once the main bulk of the army would arrive. This made the snipers chuckled at the fact that they collectively manage to bluff their captain.

Despite the assistive AI system, the Royal Snake snipers themselves had something more riding on this 'warm-up' exercise. Priding themselves as the finest snipers in the Snake Clan, they had made a bet to count how many times their AI 'crap' would appear to assist them, especially when there was a kill count statistics in their app.

Within the statistics, there was a section for the kill count with assistance, and thus, the sniper with the highest kill count in that section would have to treat the entire Sniper company a celebration drink after this exercise.

So far, all of them managed to hit on sight with at most one to two misses without any assisted kill. This subsequently prompted some to increase their bets with weird conditions such as sniping down two foot soldiers with a bullet.

As for the clay statues, they remained deactivated until the battlefield would fill up, which seemed rather soon, considering how there was a sudden break in the intervals of army waves coming in.

"Hmm, that took longer than expected." Lord Moloch pondered at the war table with Kraft after returning to unlock the dungeon core to bring the city shields down.

"Isn't that a good thing? It should mean that it's chaotic back in your demon king's city." Kraft questioned as he leaned back on the chair and tinkered with another Tact Tweak from the System, the technical device which enabled Jin to check the status of the monsters and equip them with items quickly.

"Still, their response shouldn't be this slow. Something must be way off, or they are preparing to give a huge push forward to find the dungeon core." Moloch stated worried as he looked at the war table and the statistics of the kill count.

"But didn't you say the first wave of army troops shouldn't resurrect until maybe a day or two later?" Kraft asked before he 'realised' something vital.

"Ah yes, my bad, that capturing thing that Jin has is still affecting all of us, including the soldiers using our weapons. Oh ho ho. That means no resurrection of demons on their end. Do you think they found out?"

"How could you forget such an important detail?" Moloch suddenly remembered, that he was talking to the fox bellator, and regretted to have bothered asking. Yet, to get 600 soldiers worth of disciplined, armed Tiefling soldiers would definitely prove to be a boon. Maybe they could utilise them at a later stage to cause mass confusion in the war.

"After Jin had been so into rescuing the animal tribes I totally 'forgot' he even had this cheat-like ability as a glorified and improved Necromancer. Well, at least that solved the problem of further reinforcements." Kraft chuckled as he drank a cup of blue mountain coffee at the side of the table.

"Imagine if we capture King Baal. Wouldn't that be absolutely hilarious? Not only would we probably outright end this war, but we would also most likely gain another huge-ass city and let's not forget about single-handily solving a heck lot of money and resources problems that Jin has."

"Honestly, I did not think that far, even though I said King Baal will personally attack the place. Besides, we would have to kill him to manage that first. If what Wolte claimed about his power multiplying many times over, we will be happy he doesn't annihilate us first." Moloch replied as he remembered how the little minotaur puppet submitted to Jin with just a knock of his phone.

"Tsk, why are all of you Brainiacs always so uncreative? No ideas for any quick insertion team into your 'greatest' demon metropolis in the dungeon world to make use of the probably once-a-century opportunity of your King's absence? Shit man, and here I thought you are a shrewd person with far greater ambitions." Kraft leaned forward and shook his head disapprovingly. Even if Jin and his allies managed to capture King Baal, chances were the Demon Metropolis he owed would be transferred to the next in line King's candidate.

"I mean, I did think of it, but the feasibility is near zero. It would be simply sending out a suicide squad. Jin does not have the resources to waste to consider putting together a quick insertion team to get their dungeon core. Besides, I am sure the defending forces would prove to be a pain in the ass. Only a madman would even want to attempt to do that." Moloch replied and as soon as he did, a crude smile appeared on Kraft's face.

There were no two ways thinking about it.

The Minotaur Lord only wished he could take his words back as the smile turned into a quiet, sinister smirk. Moloch didn't doubt that Kraft had led him down this particular rabbit hole with his line of peculiar questioning, and he was sure that the devilman always had this agenda to be the solution to the aforementioned 'impossible' problem.

And so, three magical words came out from Kraft's mouth.

"Just do it."

Chapter 708 Lost Communication

"Sir! We have lost contact with Knight Forcas and the reinforcements that were supposed to rendezvous with him." The very same imp servant brought the unexpected news to his King, the ever great Baal who was being attended by other servants who were helping him don his armour.

"What do you exactly mean you lost contact?" Baal may look indifferent to the cause, but deep inside, he was irritated that his imp servant had to report a simple case of miscommunication.

"No, sire. We CANNOT contact them at all. Their signals disappear from our mages' communication centre as soon as they enter the safe zone. And to add on, Knight Forca's flame in the Halls of Ceremonial Titles has disappeared entirely." The imp servant emphasised the severity to his liege, hoping he got the message that Lord Moloch could be packing more firepower than expected.

For the distinguished Knight of Hell, whose skills in jousting was nearly unmatched in the metropolis, King Baal could not believe Forcas would die in a duel with Lord Moloch, much less permanently. He was well aware of Sebastia, the hidden trump card of Moloch's Battle Maid Minotaurs, yet even if she somehow had improved greatly, it should not be possible to best someone of Forca's calibre before he could send back any news.

Something was very suspicious about this whole situation.

"What do you mean you cannot contact any of them at all? Are you implying that the death of Knight Forcas equates to the complete loss of demon foot soldiers? I'm very sure they are all dying to prove their glory." King Baal paused the donning of his pauldrons to get the full picture from his imp servant.

"There was a single glimpse of imagery that managed to be sent back to the mage communication centre before they lost contact with the reinforcements. We have temporarily stopped the invasion following Duke Crocell's advice. Awaiting at the audience hall is the senior mage who received the image before it went all black." The imp servant finally relayed the entire message he had been entrusted with.

"Tell Duke Crocell to continue with the invasion and authorise him to use whatever forces he deems necessary to break through. Get Duke Vepar and Earl Furfur to assist him in the meantime. While I do not believe that cow has the brawns to win against Knight Forca given the state he is in, I trust in Crocell's decision making. Also, have the senior mage enter this room, while I finish donning my armour." King Baal appeared to be calmer and more collected, though inside he was burning with rage that Moloch still wanted to resist against him. Perhaps he should have done more than reduce him into a plushie all those years ago...

"... Your Majesty, Senior Mage Twice Eyes from the Mage Communication Centre at your service." The Tiefling mage went down on one knee and reported what he saw to King Baal. The imagery of smoke and fire all around the mage that took the image before he went down.

"This is all the information we have collected. Judging from the otherwise complete lack of communication, we can only assume either the worst-case scenario that all of our soldiers perished soon after entering the fray or that Lord Moloch employed some sort of anti-magic field that blocks communication. Perhaps it also has an effect of breaking the mages' ability to cast magic. There are some amongst us who deduced that the magic the mages cast may have backfired hence the smoke and- "

"Enough." A word from King Baal was sufficient to render the Senior Mage silent.

"If they are rendering us useless of magic or using explosive spells against our foot soldiers and cavalry, then send in the Horned Armoured Knights and be done with it. Duke Vepar should have some under his command." King Baal commanded and told the senior mage to relay the message.

"But I am just a lowly mage, I do not think Duke Vepar, The Armoured One Winged Angel would listen to-"

At that point, Twice Eyes could feel his neck tightening and was rendered breathless almost immediately. It felt as if a slippery rope was wrapped around not just his neck but his entire body too. Then, he saw a long reddish thread appearing out of King Baal's palm.

It was the infamous toad tongue whip which King Baal preferred to use to anyone talking back to him as it had the ability to allow the user to manipulate it in any way he wanted including the option to inject poison into it.

"Don't waste my time any longer." King Baal ordered as he left an unmistakable mark which only the toad tongue whip was able to inflict. It was as if King Baal branded the senior Tiefling mage with his mark so that Duke Vepar would have no doubts in believing what Twice Eyes was supposed to say.

The succubus maidens who were helping Baal to don his armour immediately stepped backwards even though they needed to complete the procedure. However, they all recalled that one incident where their Liege had entered a small frenzy and swiped his toad tongue whip a little too wildly and killed two maidens in the process.

Henceforth, they remained behind his other sets of armour, hoping they could provide some protection in case of a repeat scenario.

And being the impatient King of Hell, Baal also sent a surge of magical energy into Twice Eyes, giving him the energy needed to make an instant teleport to where Duke Vepar was so he could relay the message as soon as possible. Yet, he did not notice, nor did he care that upon sending the message, Twice Eyes succumbed to the poison within King Baal's toad tongue whip and perished.

The One Wing Armoured Angel, Duke Vepar treated it as King Baal wanting to keep this as a secret from the rest of the army to keep the morale up and going.

"Lord Moloch, is the reason why you have the guts to betray the King because you found some new powers or was it solely because of him?" Duke Vepar thought to himself as he shook his head and headed to the Mage Communication Centre where he met up with Duke Crocell and Earl Furfur.

"Crocell, Furfur. I've received royal orders from his Majesty himself. Proceed with the invasion as arranged. We will send out our best men." Vepar said, and he could literally see the Demi Tiger Crocell wanting to open his mouth to rebut upon taking in the latest news.

"No, Crocell. This is not up for discussion. I am sending my Horned Armoured Knights into the fray as well. This time around, let Lord Moloch feel the wrath of the Armoured Guards."

Crocell remained speechless, and since Duke Vepar was sending his Elite Knights in without care for the 'traditional' order of battle, he decided to resume the attack.

"I hope it is as simple as you said." One of the senior mages injected his comment as he looked at the smoke and fire from the imagery that was left behind by the dead mage.

"I've seen such a density of smoke and brightness in the fire. It doesn't look like a magical explosion, more like a chemical one..."

"Who cares? As long as that traitor Moloch is dead, we'll get our glory in servicing the King." Duke Crocell replied as he continued ordering his mages to send the order to resume the attack.

Chapter 709 Chemical Warfare

"Incoming." The System stated loudly through the System Channel which prompted the Orc Artillery Company to ready their fingers on the trigger and shells to be discarded and reloaded. When there was no movement for about five minutes, Moloch had already informed Orc General Nubwort to change the type of artillery shells they had been using.

What they had initially used was the smaller 75mm artillery calibre in order to save the better ammunition on their howitzers for the later fights. Now, Moloch had called on them to switch to the chemical shells as he predicted that the demon army would be sending in their armoured knights to counter the explosive rounds.

"Use them before the mages appear and wipe the chemicals off," Moloch told them and the Orcs manning the howitzers had already equipped themselves with sufficient safety gear in case the chemical shells malfunctioned or backfired on them.

The labs had made them in preparation against the rats in the Farming World, but they figured this could possibly work against the demons too. (Also, free guinea pigs in the System's eyes.) Naturally, Ayse had used Jin's world military history to recreate war chemicals which were banned in modern times for today's use.

It was not something Jin had condoned since all was fair in war and they needed every advantage they could get. Besides, the System stated that the Dungeon Core always clean up the battlefield mess at the end of it. So, there was not much to worry in terms of environmental damage. In the meantime, the Orcs had also adjusted their barrels and cleaned them up for a smoother firing experience.

"Hmm. Chemical shells. The forbidden weaponry of our world, this will be an eye opener." Colonel Kan Jian mused as he was looking forward to actually witnessing the effectiveness of the chemicals on the monsters. Even if it was just a dungeon simulation to him, there was no harm seeing it happen.

While a majority of the snakes dabbled on chemical weapons on a smaller scale such as poison for assassination purposes, to see the banned weapon in action was already worth the trip for this particular warm up exercises.

True enough, the first batch of demon soldiers that entered were knights armoured to the teeth. Filled with anti-magic runes and steel that even swords and spears could barely scratch, they were the elites of Duke Vepar.

Though the Knights had trouble understanding why they should be sent out first as the vanguard, they still followed the orders of their revered duke. Soon, they saw the very same scorched land their previous comrades had observed. Just as they arrived in full, a wheezing sound came from afar with a loud popping sound.

Yellowish gas appeared right in front of them, and the Knights of Vepar scoffed at their enemies for creating a fog to stop them from advancing. They believed it to be merely a dirty ploy for an ambush, and thus they moved forward, ignoring the gas to get out of the 'safe' zone area. What do they have to worry about?

Even though the smell of the gas was so stifling that they could taste something bitter in their mouths, they soldiered on as a tight group formation out of the safe zone.

Despite the chemical gas blocking their view, the Royal Snake Snipers had already anticipated this and switched their scopes to infrared sensors to continue firing at them. Their shots did manage to push back the heavily magical armour knights, but it was not enough to pierce their defences. Still, it certainly surprised the knights enough to hold their shields up for additional protection.

Because of the little damage done and with only infrared to guide them, the snipers decided to hold their actions back and waited for more vulnerable targets. As a result of their actions, the demons moved even slower and became more cautious about whatever hit them.

Even their legendary status for being the frontline stewards, those Barrett Sniper Rifles was able to put a hole through their armour easily. Thus, this made them even more susceptible to the gas that they had been inhaling. (If those snipers tried harder, they would have succeeded.)

With the exception of the gas attack, the knights managed to send a communication response back, indicating that there was effectively no resistance except for a shady surprise attack.

"It might be an over-exaggeration, but I believe Lord Moloch knew the explosive magic would be useless against us. Maybe that is why they decided to throw some gas to make us warier." The Knight Captain reported back. "We recommend sending overwhelming numbers to search and subdue Lord Moloch."

"I still think we should continue to be careful. The old cow has already surprised us more than once, and I suspect that geezer has more nasty things prepared." Duke Crocell warned, but Earl Furfur ignored Crocell trying to caution them. Instead, he told the mages to continue with the original plan to send the other waves of foot soldiers in.

"Since we have already delayed our attack, we should compensate by sending in an overwhelming number to break that fog and show them the might of King Baal's army." Earl Furfur's order was relayed immediately.

As for the armies that were waiting after the initial alarm to assemble, they thought at first that Lord Moloch was already killed, especially since a yellow flare was shot from the mages and there was no response to continue with the fight for over ten minutes.

But as soon as the mages communication centre shot a green flare up to indicate that the fight was still on, they cheered loudly and demanded their mages to teleport them in immediately.

Yet soon after the communication, the Knight Captain started to cough as more of the yellow gas was shot from the sky. Due to their stout constitution, it did take a longer time for the gas to take effect, but ultimately it did its job. After all, the knights still needed to breathe and with a denser concentration of gas around the area, the knights finally succumbed to its effect.

The Knight Captain then decided to give the command to charge forward so they would leave this area of strange gas. Unfortunately, they did not know that Moloch and the others had already prepared a trap for them when they were dozens of metres out of the safe zone.

An explosive ditch trap deep enough to even prevent Ogres and the like from crawling out.

The first few foot soldiers who managed to run past it did not trigger it. Their weight had been insufficient to activate it. While it was meant to slow down a large group of soldiers, Moloch guessed having a majority of Elite Knights from Duke Vepar in the trap was a good trade off as well.

The explosive ditch activated with the aid of the System after determining the highest number of knights within the 10 metre wide trap before releasing the explosives to cause them to fall within it.

Ba da Ba da Ba daaaaa booom

A series of explosives went off consecutively, breaking the unstable ground and revealing the ditch. Some broke their foot from the fall while others injured their shoulders or hands. And because of their heavy armour, they had no way of getting out of it.

Yet, that was not the main concern until a gas shell descended down into the ditch and filled it with even more poisonous substances. Without the chance to even fight a single enemy, the ditch became a mass graveyard for the company of Elite Horned Armoured Knights.

Chapter 710 King's Order

The armies who received the go-ahead started to teleport in, and the moment they set foot on to the battlefield, they were greeted by the haze of yellow smoke. After taking their first breath, they irked from the smell and immediately started to cough from it.

Within the next five seconds, their eyes got irritated, and they felt like someone had set their throats on fire. The more they desperately gasped for air, the more their situation worsened.

Some ignored the previous orders of staying in formation and rushed forth in the hopes of leaving this highly hazardous zone. Alas, they did not know there was a 10-metre wide and 30-metres deep ditch surrounding the entire safe zone awaiting these stragglers.

A number inadvertently fell to their death and the reinforcements none the wiser continued to act the same way, also craving the sweet release of death to alleviate the severe burning of their throats. As for the rest who managed to tolerate the burning sensations, the side effects develop further until they felt like their whole skin was on fire.

The Tiedling Mages, on the other hand, were somewhat prepared for this sort of situation. In their repertoire, they had spells which could grant themselves and others magic resistance against all types of poisons.

They began to cast a wind gust spell first to move the gas away, yet soon after they began chanting, they were taken down by the Royal Snake Snipers without any prejudice or mercy. Those not finding a bullet going through their brain who tried to continue chanting the spell were met with even more bullet holes that rendered them to the ground.

Back at the Mages Communication Centre, Duke Crocell sighed at the loss of soldiers. They had severely underestimated the viciousness of this yellow gas their enemy had deployed. Earl Furfur who previously passed the order to press for the attack, knew it was 'partially' his mistake to push forward. But his pride as a Demon Lord prevented him from apologising.

"His Majesty has arrived!"

An imp servant shouted to inform the rest of his presence, and Duke Crocell immediately moved away from his seat to allow King Baal to take over his rightful position as the Supreme Commander over the army. It became deadly silent in the room as all eyes were on the King of Hell.

Without being briefed or questioning the progress of their campaign, he merely uttered two words after he had enjoyed the stifled down panic in the room.

"Send more."

It made sense to the demon mage communication operators and the rest of the lords in the room even though it sounded ruthless. Currently, they were being pinned down at the safe zone, but surely the concentration of gas would decrease once they managed to leave the area.

It was plainly obvious that some sacrifices were needed to push on the attack. If they backed out now with King Baal present, it would be a major disgrace.

"Looks like Lord Moloch is suited for more than just dressing up his underlings. We never expected the old cow to use actual tactics fighting against us." Earl Furfur tried to redeem himself in the situation by implying that it was basically Moloch's fault that this happened. However, King Baal did not care much for these kinds of excuses.

"Gather all my children, the Dukes, Counts and Marquis and get them to contribute. If Moloch wants to play a game of wits, we will show him that no matter what he may have come up with, all trickery shall fail in the face of overwhelming power."

King Baal ordered, stood up and left the area. The instruction was vague but demanding, making Earl Furfur regret ever opening his damn mouth in the first place. All the Serpent Demon could say in response was a weak Yes.

Reluctantly he headed out to search for the forty odds Sirs and Ladies to present them with the news, something the King could have done with but a single thought in his mind. It was evident that this was meant as a punishment for Earl Furfur, and he hated it. Not only was it a tedious task, but the more dire consequence was that this also meant King Baal's impression of him had worsened.

"I told you earlier not to be in a rush." Duke Crocell reminded him before the other set off. Furfur was clearly not taking it well. Nevertheless, he decided to swallow any complaints.

This was neither the time nor the place to argue, not to mention that Crocell outranked him as a Duke.

"Finding all the Sirs and Ladies sounds like a pain. If you can get ten of them, it could be a miracle, much less all of them." Crocell said solemnly.

He was stating the fact, despite clearly being unwilling to aid his companion and Vepar laughed at the sight of the slithering snake.

"He can be glad this was all. At least he didn't have to also gather all the princes and princesses of Hell even though King Baal only mentions his 'children'. They would have given him a piece of their mind for disturbing them."

"I think it is implied that he wants all of his children to be in the war. Heh, good luck on him for they will either kick him out of their premises or kill him depending on their mood before he would even have the chance to say that he bore the orders of their father." Duke Crocell gloated at Furfur's situation.

Truly, misery loves company as Vepar agreed heartily with Crocell's comment to get his mind off losing his Armoured Knights. Seeing the Earl being punished had been indeed a welcomed medicine.

"What do you suggest? We know that there is that ditch there. Should we send in our aerial units to eliminate the archers firing the gas into the area?" Duke Crocell asked Vepar who had given the go-ahead to the mages to send the mobilising message to his army.

"Do what you need, I already transferred command over my army to you. All I have left are my personal guards." Vepar shrugged as he decided to return to his quarters. Those Horned Armoured Knights had a track record to uphold and Moloch would have to pay for breaking it just like that.

The One-Winged Armoured Angel was not going to give it up lying down. He went to equip himself properly and move into the fray to collect his due.

"Very well, I shall gladly take charge." Duke Crocell replied with a smile. For Vepar to throw his army away for a petty vengeance was unlike the usually stoic him, but Crocell was going to use it to his advantage. Why bring his troops to the fray when others could take the brunt of it first? Fortunately, Furfur had left his army here for him to command, too, so how could he say no?

Thus, he decided to send the entirety of Vepar's Armoured Gargoyles and Furfur's Winged Hydras first. It may be glorious to die in the midst of battle, yet there was more glory to be earned in surviving the campaign, therefore Crocell planned to bring out his Flying Tigers to dish out the last strike.

In the meantime, he shared the information about the yellow gas with remaining Horned Armoured Knights as well as the armies going in. He also ordered them to do their best in trying to ensure the mages would be able to cast their spells.

They were going to break through this haze of death with numbers and send Moloch and his army into the abyss.