

Earths GMagus 481

Chapter 481: Duel

The stone wall Julian made backfired, causing all six legions to be trapped by his own creation.

Thanks to that, with just a few hundred gladiators, the rebels managed to hold the wall for hours, while the remaining 40,000 rebels were able to get out safely of the mountains and start walking toward the capital city of Rome.

This once more turned the legionaries in a difficult situation, as there was no legion left protecting their capital city other than the town guards. Hence the Roman legion had to quickly rush back to stop the rebels.

Along their way, the rebels took some time to sack a few villages in order to get some food and liberate more slaves. Within the span of just two days, their numbers grew once more.

On that night, Spartacus, their leader, ordered them to do something that was unexpected, but much welcomed by everyone.

They went to a large, empty field near one of the villages and cleared the place out of debris, while a few of them gathered wood to create a bonfire. Thanks to their cooperation, everything was done in a few hours, dozens of bonfires placed in a circle creating a space that resembles an arena.

Thrax ordered them to prepare a game to honor the fallen.

The rebels gathered dozens of captured Roman soldiers from the garrison and forced them to stand in the middle of their makeshift 'arena'.

"Win the game and you shall live." said Thrax.

That was the offer given by the rebels, an echo to the gladiator games they were once subjected to.

Some decided to accept and bet their life, but others refused to give the rebels the satisfaction and they chose to die by the sword.

The game was held as a way to honor the dead slaves from the last battle, and to raise the rebels' morale for the final battle in the near future.

At least, that was what Thrax claimed to be. But the real purpose was to prepare for the promised duel. After 2 days of preparation, this is finally the time.

It was open with the fight by the captured Roman. As expected of a game made to showcase its inherent cruelty, the Roman soldiers who tried to claw their way out were swiftly torn apart by the slaves.

After the death of all Romans, the awaited match finally started. It was time for Spartacus himself to stand on the rough sands of the Arena once more.

Thousands of people were cheering when their champion showed himself.

"My brothers! Tonight, I will fight to honor the blood spilled by the cruelty of Rome!"

From one side of the arena, a figure fully decked in Roman officer garb walked in with confident steps. There was no one else it could be, but Julian himself.

While on the edge of the Arena, Emery and Klea stood to watch their duel.

Klea had come prepared with her bracelet artifacts to help her cast magic towards the spectators. Enchanting thousands of people with mind-affecting spells was not easy, but she found a way to just bend their perception of reality a bit, so they would merely see this particular fight as if it was a dream.

Julian and Thrax would be going all-out. A panicked and shocked audience was the last thing they wanted at this moment.

The cheer echoing the night as the Roman officer stopped at the center of the Arena and locked eyes with the legendary Thracian.

"I didn't know you were such a performer," Julian smiled and turned around in to audience. "This arena and crowds were unnecessary, but this is a pretty good reception."

Thrax raised his arms towards the spectators, which earned him another round of applause and calmly answered.

"One of the good things I have learned from the Romans."

"Is that so? I am glad we managed to teach you something at all."

With Emery and Klea as their witness, the two promised no matter who wins, the loser will have to pull back from the battle between Rome and the rebels. The results of this fight could mean the death of ten thousand rebels, or the fall of Rome. Both came with the intention to win.

"Let the fight begin!"

Julian stood on one side, wearing a magnificent Roman combat gear and wielding a roman gladius and a massive tower shield. As for Thrax, he came prepared with a bit of leather armor and a spear fully made with Roman forging irons.

While the two raided their stance, the crowds of tens of thousands started to cheer for Thrax, while booing Julian, the representative of Roman forces. Any normal man would be affected by the enraged shouts and insults directed towards them, but not Julian.

He concentrated his spirit energy towards his nerve points and unleashed the full might of his strength.

[Immortal Gate: Stage 4]

[Battle Power increased by 16 points!]

[Battle Power: 70 (52)]

Normal adult humans would usually have their battle power in the range of 10 to 15 battle power. 52 battle power means having five times the strength of normal men. One punch hit from such a person would be enough to send any gladiator in the arena out of commission.

But Julian knew, it was far from enough to defeat Thrax. Atop of that, he decided to layer an extra defensive spell [Stone Skin] before charging towards the gladiator.

With his shield, Julian bashed the calm-looking Thracian before attempting to attack.

Thrax shouted his battle cry and, with it, he used his own skill.

"AArgggghh!!" A sudden explosion of power followed by a smash using the spear.

The massive Roman shield was broken into pieces with just one hit and Julian was pushed away a few meters.

[Immortal gate stage 5]

[Battle power increased 32 points]

[Battle power: 94 (74)]

If Julian did not use his [Stone Skin] spell beforehand, such strength would definitely knock him out.

Thrax walked with relaxed steps, as his muscles contracted. In that moment, his power, speed and reaction time were all boosted. He had become the legendary warrior he was known as.

He raised his spear towards the audience and spun it around.

The display made the audience scream in ecstasy and wonder, all of them eager to see the defeat of what symbolized their time in suffering. He held the spear with both hands and pointed it at the half-kneeling Julian.

"Spartacus! Spartacus!"

Thrax looked at Julian and smirked.

"Is that all you got, Roman?!"

Chapter 482: Battle Art

In terms of combat skill, Thrax was definitely the most talented one among the five of them. Immortal Gate Stage 5 really was no joke. The double battle power given came with very difficult requirements to unlock.

With this, the fight quickly turned in the Thracian favor, with Julian being pushed to the side by Thrax's fierce spear attacks.

Clank! Clank!

[Vicious Barrage]

Thrax's special battle art quickly allowed him to carry out half a dozen piercing strikes towards Julian.

The Roman tried his best to defend from such barrage attacks that were coming his way.

Unfortunately for him, Julian was only able to parry some of Thrax's assaults with his sword. Due to the sheer amount of strikes that were being directed at him, one managed to hit him in the shoulder.

Crackk!!

The force of the blow had been so powerful that Julian could see his [Stone Skin] begin to crack. It all happened so fast, he barely had any time to react; he took a couple of steps back, while dodging more attacks when the pain finally settled in. The sensation came so suddenly it caused him to double over, spitting out blood.

Once more, cheers reverberated around the arena, as people screamed out their support for Thrax. They practically leapt out of their seats to cheer for their champion, who had proved himself in battle yet again.

"Spartacus!! Spartacus!!"

Julian struggled to get back on his feet. As he slowly got up, he began to speak through the blood in his mouth.

"I understand now... Spartacus! This is the real reason why you do it, huh?! Who doesn't like being worshipped like this! This is it, isn't it! Everything else, justice, revenge all just lie!"

Upon hearing this, Thrax's expression abruptly soured. His previously triumphant grin was now downturned. He wished to charge towards the Roman right away, but he suddenly took a moment of self control and returned to his defensive stance.

"Good try, Julian, but no!" He shouted over the roar of the crowd. "I will not be lure to fight by emotion and be defeated the way you did in the Academy.. not again!"

Thrax ultimately ignored Julian's silver tongue and prepared his attack once again.

"Very good, Thrax," Julian remarked. "Aaa...You make me miss the old barbarian, really."

Again, Thrax began to charge violently towards Julian with his 20 extra points of battle power. But Julian was somewhat prepared this time and he quickly planted the palm of his hand on the ground, a wall of stone immediately erupted between them.

"This wall won't stop me!" Thrax shouted, as he swung his elbow across it. The stone wall crumbled to the ground, completely destroyed.

When the wall was cleared, though, he realized Julian was already gone. He frantically looked around, wary his opponent was going to attack him from the back. All of a sudden, a shadow descended upon him.

"Up!?" Thrax saw that Julian had already jumped in the air, his body was completely engulfed in flames, as he cast his [Fire Aura] spell. It was a Tier 3 fire element spell that provided the user with extra power and speed.

He swung the gladius sword towards Thrax at full speed but the thracian gladiator did not panic

"Not good enough Roman!!"

Thrax cast [Mighty Swing], another battle art that was thrown forcefully at Julian who was still in the air.

CRACCKK!!

The blade of their respective spear and sword met with full force and with such a strong hit, Julian's sword shattered into a pieces and he himself was thrown a dozen meters back once more, landing on his back with a painful thud.

And with that, the spectators went crazy. They understood the fight that was unfolding before them right now could be a comparable to the battle between gods.

The two that stand watching in the corner also get excited watching the duel.

"Emery, let's bet! Who's going to win...?" Klea said to Emery. They were both perched in the corner of the stadium, with front row seats to witness their former classmates' gruesome fight.

At the moment, Emery was just basking in the warmth of their company. Wishing to simply see the girl to be happy, he gave a nonspecific answer to satisfy her. "I don't know, what do you think? Which one do you think will win?"

Klea pursed her lips in thought for a second. "I don't think Julian will win this time. I chose the mad gladiator."

In actuality, Emery did genuinely think the same, but he decided to accept her proposal for a bet and chose Julian instead.? "What do you want to bet on...?"

Klea suddenly broke into a grin. "I want one whole day spent on a romantic date with you!!"

Emery could only shake his head, the girl could not have been more obvious about her intentions with him. He nodded, agreeing wordlessly.

Klea quickly turned gleeful and shouted.

"Yo!! Thrax!! Hurry, beat that Roman ass down!!!"

While the two of them were conversing, Julian had just lost his sword and was now cornered. Hearing such words spoken by Klea only made him more depressed.

"Urggg!! you guys are just the worst!! Now see the new and improved me!"

The unarmed Julian breathed out a long sigh and once more gave a surprise to their friends. He raised both his hands to concentrate on a skill and, suddenly, his body exploded with new power.

[Immortal Gate Stage 5]

[Battle power increase - 32 points]

[Battle power - 86 (68)]

Apparently, it wasn't just Thrax who had gone through extreme physical training during the past year and a half. All those battles he fought with the legionnaires, all the near-death defeats, gave Julian much experience and the push he needed to break though this battle art thought by Lord Izta.

Both Emery and Klea were surprised to see this. Especially Emery, who started sulking, as he was reminded of the fact that his battle art training skills were quite lacking and that he was still in the fourth stage.

With this, Julian was now able to close the gap between them up to less than 10 battle power points, a number he was quite comfortable with.

As for the Thracian, he didn't run away just yet. He stood in place, piercing his spear into the ground as he cast [Fire Aura], his body also starting to glow just like Julian's.

The warm up was done, It was time for round two.

Chapter 483: Winner

The duel had reached its climax as the two fighters were already in their peak condition.

Julian had already used his [Immortal Gate: Stage 5] on him, coupled with [Stone Skin] and [Fire Aura]. Three buffs were being used at the same time.

Having three buffs activated at the same time was something not many acolytes were able to do. It required full control of different elements and concentration in order to ensure both elements would not escape the caster's control. In Julian's case, it was his earth and fire elements.

Thanks to them, the duel slowly ground to a halt. Although Julian had less battle power, the [Stone Skin] defensive buff and its natural strength was more than enough to make up the difference.

They kept trading blow after blow, but neither side budged.

Clank! Clank!

To achieve a balance of offense and defense, Julian resorted to a combination of [Stone Wall] and hand-to-hand combat. The walls were aimed to narrow Thrax movements and stop several of his powerful strikes.

Eachtime Thrax came to strike with his spear, Julian would block his attack, before countering by focusing his [Stone Skin] on his fist. Some other time he would even cover his whole self or his opponent in stones to create an opening for a punch.

BAMMM!!!

The punch was decently heavy, causing a massive bang to echo all over the arena. The force had made the sand fly up and all the audience looked in concern to the middle of the arena.

However, when the dust cleared up, the quiet exploded into a series of cheers.

The Thracian had taken the blow, but remained stalwart like a mountain, uncared for the obvious wound he received, Thrax quickly countered by swinging the end of his spear on Julian's head.

Crackkk!

Julian was quickly pushed back a few steps, the throbbing headache made his vision blur for a second."

"Savage! You fight like a madman!"

The two acolytes have wildly different battle styles. Julian, with his calculative nature, used a balance of dual element spells to compensate for his weak points, while waiting for the best time to strike with all his might.

Meanwhile, Thrax preferred a more direct approach, using his fearlessness to create a decisive strike, a bold move that bordered recklessness. It could hardly be called a 'style', but it also made his movements more unpredictable, assuring his opponent would need to be extremely careful.

The spectacular fight made the crowd turn wild with excitement, to Klea's worries. Even though she had promised to help alter their memory, there was no way to completely erase it from their mind after such an exciting moment.

Clank! Clank!

Unfortunately Julian had no real training in hand to hand combat, hence he kept getting hit by the spear, hence he had to return using his spells as well to level with Thrax superb spear art.

[Stone Wall]

This time, knowing the tall stone walls were enough to stop the barbarian, Julian started making shallow one, surrounding Thrax's feet just enough to stop or stumble the man.

It was still not enough, as Thrax got out quickly with his sheer power alone, but the tiny walls were effective in reducing his mobility.

The tactic gave Julian some hits on the gladiator and Thrax knew he couldn't let this continue.

"Julian! Don't blame me for hurting you!"

[Fire Infusion]

With this spell, the custom made iron spear turn glowing red, covered with fire. This spell made his spear become way more dangerous.

Swiiisshhhh!!!

One swing managed to hit Julian chest and this time his [stone skin] only managed to block some of the strength, as blood could be seen coming out of his roman uniform.

Unfortunately these extra spells also affected Thrax, as from his suddenly pale face, it was clear the move took quite a toll on him. It appeared Thrax's limited spirit talent started to become his downfall. But, Thrax kept pushing himself. He came with the intention to win, especially with tens of thousands of lives at stake.

Thrax made a huge ground sweep in an arc and Julian jumped to the air in response.

Seeing his chance, Thrax charged forward and used [Vicious barrage].

The battle art and fire infusion technique he used beforehand made his particular attack even more deadly than before.

Julian tried to block the continuous attack, but again the stone skin was not enough to protect him.? His body started to bleed all over which made it necessary for him to dodge. If he weren't careful, he could be killed in one wrong move.

Klea and Emery watched anxiously, the heat of the battle made them concerned for their friends.

"Give up now Julian!" Thrax shouted while his attack became even more fierce.

"No! Never!" Julian gritted through his pain.

Thrax's skills in combat had been tempered countless times, be it in a true battle for his freedom or in the gladiator arena. The way his body moved and dodged in battle may have lacked grace, but it told the story of someone born for battle.

As a result, more and more blood started to spill from Julian's body.

"Yes! As I said before, the barbarian will win!" Klea shouted in excitement

Meanwhile, Emery stayed silent and watched the fight intently. Even though Julian looked wounded and cornered, Emery's improved spirit reading showed Julian had a very good control over his spirit and he appeared to circulate his spirit energy well. For an adept spirit reader, that was a clear indication of an upcoming attack.

Just as he predicted, the chance Julian had been waiting for presented itself. Right as Thrax's attacks started to relent, the stone skin covering his body quickly changed. Now, his skin looked like it was made of smooth rocks, but the density and weight of the rock layer has been increased.

"Arrrrrrggggghhhh!"

Julian let out a loud battle cry and showed off his newly mastered [Greater Stone Skin], a tier 4 earth element spell.

The spear attack which was supposed to pierce Julian's body was instantly broken apart into metal splinters.

Not wanting to waste this chance, Julian launched a heavy punch towards Thrax.

Bammmm!

Followed with another one and another one!

Each punch sent massive shockwaves throughout the arena, alongside an ear piercing sound. But even with such punches, the barbarian still refused to fall, like a mountain that stayed upright even against relentless winds.

Another punch hit Thrax's face and a loud crack could be heard, before blood seeped out from his nose and mouth.

At this moment, Klea and Emery were ready to stop the fight, however...

Julian pulled his punch, preparing for the hardest one yet, in hopes the legendary gladiator would finally fall.

But no matter what, Thrax refused to give up, even as blood dripped on his face and the pain from his bruised face increased with every strike, he refused to let Julian trample all over him again.

Today was an important day in his life, where the fate of tens of thousands depended on him.

No! Never! He will never yield!

Thrax gathered all of his strength and forced himself to do the one thing he has been pushing himself to do the last few months and at this desperate moment he could feel his efforts had started to bore fruit.

With his bleeding body, Thrax gathered all his strength and shouted, forcing his body to initiate a most likely too early breakthrough. But, regardless of Thrax's current state, it worked, causing Klea, Emery and even Julian himself to stare at him in disbelief.

[Immortal Gate: Stage 6]

[Battle power increased by 64 points]

[Battle power: 116 (99)]

Stage 6 was a stage Lord Izta had said to be all but impossible to achieve by anyone under rank 9. But the Barbarians tenacity had allowed him to unlock the power while he was still at rank 7.

Propelled with this explosion of strength, Thrax grabbed Julian's arm, shattered the stone layer. And with his newfound strength he broke one of Julian's arms.

Crackkk!! Aarrgggg!!

It was the sound of the broken stone skin and his bones together

Unable to accept defeat, Julian kept moving and attacking, only to find himself unable to touch the barbarians, while each of the Thracian counters smashed his body really hard.

His tier 4 [Greater stone skin] couldn't help him.

Thrax continued his punches until Julian's defensive spell broke. But even then Julian would not admit defeat. Thrax sent one of the strongest punches that made the Roman finally drop to his knees.

"Surrender now!"

The Roman unable to answer anymore, it appeared Julian was already half unconscious, he tried to stand with his seer spirit only until finally Emery and Klea broke them apart.

Klea jumped to catch the defeated Roman, while Emery approached Thrax and announced Thracian as the winner of the duel.

The legendary gladiator screamed out his victory, while the crowds cheered in ecstasy.

"Spartacus! Spartacus! Spartacus!"

Chapter 484: Arrive at Rome

"Spartacus! Spartacus!"

Cheers accompanied Thrax's feat of winning the duel; the night was filled with happiness from the thousands of rebels. To celebrate, Thrax raised his fist up high and let out a magnificent scream.

Klea approached the beat-up, half unconscious Roman, her hands brimming with white-greenish energy from her [Soothing Mist] spell.

"I am... Not... giving up... yet"

"Duh, shut up already!" Klea said dismissively and let her hands hover along his wounds. "You were clearly beaten,-"

Julian started to struggle, trying to stand despite his broken body.

"Don't you dare! If you mess up my bet, I will make sure you suffer even more!"

Not far from them, Thrax was writhing in pain, but he gritted his teeth and forced himself to bear it. The strength of his heart forced his own body to go past the threshold it needed for a breakthrough and now he felt as if his muscles were about to explode.

He even needed to forcibly calm himself just to stop the energy from the battle art from leaking out.

Seeing Thrax act weirdly, Emery quickly grabbed his arm and helped him stand by holding onto his shoulders.

After a few minutes of healing, finally Julian admitted his loss.

Julian approached the limping Thrax, took a deep sigh, and said. "You have won, Thrax and I will not stop you."

He offered his hand and the Thracian accepted it. Fortunately the duel ended without any grudges between them.

But, a moment after, Thrax spat out blood and he felt his knees wobble. Klea reacted quickly and casted her healing spell on him.

Julian let out a dry laugh at the sight. "Ha! Should this be considered as my win? After all, I'm the last one standing."

"Heh, you wish!" Thrax wiped out the blood from the corner of his mouth.

Late at night, when everything else had quieted down, the game came to a close and the whole rebel army had witnessed the best duel for centuries to come. Most didn't know what happened exactly, but the gladiators knew about the gap of strength between them and they slept with burning resolution.

However, thanks to Klea's enchantment, the next morning everyone woke up with slightly different memories of what happened. When they tried to picture the battle again, it was a little blurry. Everyone had different stories.

But, what united them all was the sight of their leader beating a Roman official in such a glorious fight. It was definitely worthy of being a story to be passed down to the next generations.

Inside the rebel camp, in a tent that looked no different from the others, Thrax woke the others from their rest with bad news. Although all his wounds had been healed, he found himself unable to cast any skill, let alone spells.

Klea quickly tried to use her enhanced water element healing spell but give no result.

"What do you think of this, Emery?"

Emery had had the worst experiences involving his spirit core, but he couldn't say what was actually going on either. He would rather not make any conclusion without all necessary information at hand.

"Don't worry about it then, guys." Thrax dismissed it. "I'm sure it will be back soon enough."

The sun finally rose and the rebels packed up, ready to continue their march.

40.000 men, united in the spirit to see their oppressor destroyed, marched to Rome, one of the most advanced cities in the world.

"Are you sure about this, Thrax?!" Emery asked in concern. "You are not completely healed!"

"Don't worry, even without any skills or spells, I am sure I can bring down that city. Besides, time isn't on our side. We need to get there as soon as possible."

Figuring they were stuck for the long haul, both Emery and Klea decided to see everything through and came along with the rebels while staying as hidden as possible, careful to be close enough to Thrax, yet beneath the notice of the marching rebels.

Another day passed and they kept walking, even as the scorching sun beat down on them. No one was willing to give up, now that Thrax's duel showed how it was possible to defeat the Romans.

When they finally were just on the outskirts from the city of Rome, they saw crowds upon crowds of armed men were waiting around the city. At least four legions' worth of soldiers oversaw the city from all directions. The view once again confused them, as the city wasn't supposed to have these many roman soldiers.

Thrax and the rebels talked to discuss what they could do, when they heard the sound of horses from afar. They looked in that direction, only to see more Roman cohorts advancing towards them. The rebels quickly took their weapons ready to fight, but a group of riders separated to from the formation, while the others waited.

When the group were close enough, they saw it was Julian again who came.

Thrax stared at his friend in annoyance. He was defeated already, why was he still with the Roman legion.

Julian approached and whispered to Thrax, requesting to speak in private.

Inside the camp, the three others stared at Julian with barely restrained anger.

"What is this now, Julian?" Klean narrowed her eyes and asked first. "I believe that we have made an agreement."

"Whoa, wait, wait, don't be so quick to judge." Julian shook his head and explained. "You have made a mistake, I didn't come here to attack you, I came to help."

"What do you mean?" Klea raised her eyebrows questioningly.

"I am coming to deliver bad news and to warn you."

Julian explained that, ever since Marcus Crassus suffered the humiliating defeat, he had already drafted 4 more legions to be prepared for the invasion. That was the legion they currently see gathering outside the city of Rome and unfortunately it was not even the worst news.

"Thrax, six Roman legions have returned from the Pontus war and they are marching from the North, under the leadership of Pompeius Magnus."

The information made the three look at each other in shock. From the west there were 20.000 legionnaires who had been chasing them since Sinuessa. From the south, 20.000 more stood between them and Rome and from the north, 30.000 more just returned from war.

It meant, the rebels were surrounded from all sides and the hope for victory became even slimmer with each passing moment.

"So, what're you going to do now, Thrax?"

Chapter 485: The Legacy

"AARRGHHH!" Thrax shouted, while kicking the table standing innocently at the corner of the tent.

Looking at the current situation, everyone in the place knew the chances for the rebels to win their cause was now almost reaching the point of zero. It would still be hard to say whether they would win the fight, even if Thrax was able to revert to his optimal condition.

Julian approached calmly and grabbed Thrax's shoulders firmly, preventing him from destroying another piece of object.

"I am sorry, Thrax. But there will be no victory in this, My advice is to quickly head up north, I could somehow find a way to slip you all away, or convince them to let you go."

Unexpectedly, instead of Thrax, it was Klea who commented first. "Let you go? With that man, Pompey, present here? No! I don't think he will let you go."

Pompey was the same Roman who had been meddling with Egypt. Klea knew the man had massive ambition and looked for a way to become consul, the head of the 600 magistrates in the senate.

And the successful feat of defeating the rebels was certainly something he wanted to put under his name, in order to smooth his way into achieving that exact goal.

The group quickly realized why Julian's mentor, Marcus Crassus, was willing to fork his own wallet and spend all those coins, and why the legion led by Pompey had returned from the front so quickly. They all saw this slave rebellion, which had terrified all the people of Rome, as a chance to advance their careers.

Thrax's head snapped to Julian and glared at him.

"Do you hear that, Julian? Do you finally see the real face of the people you are defending?!" Everyone could vividly feel the boiling anger behind those words.

Julian was silent, as he now knew that wasn't the time to argue and preach about his ideal again, especially when he also dreamt to achieve said position.

Emery, who watched all of this from the sideline, finally opened his mouth.

"So, what's your plan, Thrax? I will, I mean, We will help you.. Whatever your choice is."

Klea quickly suggested an idea. "Emery, with your spells, you could just sneak inside and kill whoever needs to be killed, right?"

Hearing this, Emery wasn't really happy with the idea. Well, he did, sort of, threaten the Cantiaci and Logress King with the same tactic. But killing people he didn't know...

He was not sure if he could do that.

On the other hand, Julian definitely disagreed with the idea. However, before Klea could spark another brilliant idea of hers, Thrax had finally made his decision.

"No. Assassinating the senate is not what we wanted to achieve when we started the rebellion. If that was my intention, I would have done it myself. No! The objective is to bring fear to the Romans... I have decided. I will lead my men to attack Rome."

His decision instantly made everyone who heard it speechless. It was truly the kind of decision a reckless person like him would make, but one that was inappropriate for the situation.

As expected, Emery and the others vehemently disagree with it, but Thrax - a strong bull-headed he was - didn't want to listen. He claimed he already earned his right from the duel and, therefore, everyone could only to his ramblings with irritation.

At noon, Thrax stood in front of his 40.000 men and spoke out about their current situation and his plan to march onward. Then, he gave them the choice of retreating or joining the glorious yet deadly battle that was to come.

In the end, only less than 10,000 decided not to join the battle, with most of them being forced not to join. Those who were chosen not to join were mostly young and weak slaves. This was because Thrax wanted to leave an amber for their future generation and not let it die in his hands.

These 10.000 slaves composed of women and children would be handed over to Emery and Klea. The two would bring them to the north, where they would escape and be safe from the clutches of Romans, if the rebels failed in their endeavor. With Emery's spells and Klea's enchantment, this should be achievable.

Julian, on the other hand, would return to his legion and hold them back as long as possible, increasing Thrax's chance to be successful in his pursuit.

...

Before the group went their own separate way, Emery took the time to convince him once more.

"Thrax, Do you have to go this far? There is almost no hope of winning. Even if you somehow manage to defeat the Romans and take over the city, by the time the other legions return, you will lose it again. Why don't you focus on their lives?"

Thrax didn't immediately answer Emery's question. He looked at the seemingly endless landscape and said, "Emery.... Even if we all die in the end, we still have to do it. Someone must show the world that what the Romans did was wrong and everyone has the power to stand up for their freedom!"

Emery didn't know what else he had to say and thus, their walk ended. Before leaving, Thrax gave one sentence that bothered him.

"Emery, no matter what, I have chosen my own fate. So, don't you dare come and save me, while my people are dying in battle."

...

The battle went just like the plan, with 30.000 rebels charging at Rome with everything they got. Spartacus was seen at the front of the human sea, going fiercely into the defending Roman legions and tearing them apart like a hot knife slicing through butter.

The legion that defended Rome was blitz-styled drafted legionnaire's recruits, as the Romans' main forces were away fighting wars at their border. Therefore, the rebels were able to defeat them in mere hours.

However, sieging the city was different from fighting in an open field. The rebels were having quite a bit of a hard time defeating the Romans because of the city walls, and it resulted in a lot of time spent.

Then, just when the city was about to fall, Pompey's 6 legions had arrived and their appearance spelled the doom of the rebels.

Faced with attacks from their front and back, the rebels were slowly, but surely forced into a corner. One by one, those who were headstrong were killed and cut down, while the majority was captured. Their fate certainly to become slaves again.

In the end, the only left standing were the gladiators who surrounded Spartacus, making their last stand.

"I am Spartacus!!!" shouted Thrax loudly. "Come and take my head if you can!!!"

Thrax and his band of gladiators stood tall against veteran Roman legionnaires led by Pompey. The Romans came at them like waves, but they managed to knock everyone down, leaving a patch of land full of corpses in front of them.

Unfortunately, in the end, gladiators were still humans. The exhaustion from the previous battle, as well as the current slaughter, had finally caught up to them. They fell one by one under the Roman blade.

Even though there was no one by his side anymore, Spartacus continued to brandish his weapon and kill the Roman legionnaire like an unrelenting machine. However, even he, who was standing like the war god himself, fell in the end.

The legend of Spartacus, a slave who managed to make the world's mightiest empire tremble had become synonymous with the fight for freedom. His legacy echoed from Rome to the world, as the torch of his belief passed on throughout generations.

Many witnessed the death of Spartacus in battle, but his body was never found.

Chapter 486: Journey

"Aaarrggghhh! Let me go! Emery, Klea, let me go!"

The wooden cart shook as the man screamed. He was laying inside the cart, his entire body covered with Emery's healing paste and multiple thick ropes binding both his arms, legs and part of his midsection for good measure. Thanks to the grueling battle, he was weakened and the thick reinforced rope was effective enough to hold him down.

Merely several hours ago, the man was pierced by multiple weapons all over his body and it took the combination of Emery's [Spatial Gate] and Klea's [Enchantment] spells to finally make the Romans think the man had fallen in the battlefield.

"let! Me! Go!"

Ever since he regained consciousness, he had been screaming for them to release him, even threatening his two friends. But they kept on moving while ignoring him.

A few hours passed just like that, until they heard the sounds of another galloping horse coming closer. They stopped right under a tree and waited.

"How was it? Did you encounter any problems?"

"No, all the rebels had safely gone their separate ways to Gaul. They really hate Romans as well, so they should be fine."

The person who just came was Julian.

They stopped there and helped each other set up a simple camp from materials they could get all around. Ever the gentleman, Emery ventured the furthest to get some firewood. Thanks to him, they managed to light a fire just as the sun set.

Thrax was still tied up, but he was lying on a makeshift bed made of leaves this time. Though he didn't say anything, it was abundantly clear that each word report of the battlefield from Julian only stoked his anger.

Spartacus, the legendary rebel leader, along with his band of trusted rebels, were no more.

"Aaarrggghh! Screw that, I am pretty much alive! Let me go and I will continue to ram my spear up-"

Klea sighed, stood up and slapped the Thracian.

"Calm down first, will you?! At least, fight with a cool head and heal yourself first!"

Realizing she was right, Thrax took deep breaths and tried to calm his raging emotions. But everyone could see his heart was aching. His mind could only focus on how all his men, the people he considered friends, had died in the battle.

"Klea's right, you know, you can always come back later." Emery offered his advice. "I am sure the Romans won't be going anywhere, besides..."

"Emery! I told you to just leave me there! Why can't you just let me fight to the end with them! What kind of leader am I, leaving them like this..."

Emery gave a long sigh and answered.

"Aren't we here also your friends? We definitely cannot let you die! You still have many things to achieve in front of you... and don't forget, we need you in the Academy, too."

Hearing such words, Thrax fell silent, although his heart was still aching and his anger burned inside, he accepted Emery's words to be true, hence he calmed himself down.

At this moment, Emery decided to ask both Julian and Thrax to come to follow them on their journey. Some time away from Romans might help cool his temper down and the quest Emery was supposed to finish could also help his spirit core problem. There was a chance Thrax might find his solution there, as well."

Before Thrax was able to give a definite answer, Klea said.

"Yes! Let's all journey together! I will contact Chumo, so we can find a place to meet-up. This is going to be fun!"

Thrax could only stare at the enthusiastic girl without commenting. They were right, he had nowhere to go for the moment. As for Julian, after a few thoughts, he decided to refuse.

"Hah! The Roman will be busy claiming his reward, I am sure!" Thrax huffed.

Julian did not bother humoring the obvious jab with an answer. Knowing Thrax's condition, another huge argument was the last thing either of them needed.

They took turned for night watch duty. The next morning, all four of them rode to the east, towards the place where Klea's boat was anchored. Emery could just use the [Spatial Gate], but Thrax insisted he had to see what was left of the battlefield.

The other three were skeptical, knowing what happened was still fresh in the Thracian's heart, but he was strangely cooperative and even agreed to wear a cape.

The four rode together and passed the outskirts of Rome. As they had expected, once more the disturbing sight greeted their vision.

At first, they merely noticed the stench, a sharp, unforgettable smell of iron that would make any ordinary people's stomach turn in disgust. Then, it was followed by the shrill noises from crows.

On the road passing through Rome's capital city, only corpses of rebels could be seen, each crucified and left to die hanging on the road. They did not pass the road directly, but there must be hundreds, even thousands of corpses.

This was what the Romans did to the 8000 captured rebels. It was a haunting demonstration of what cruelty they were capable of and the lengths they would go to defend their perceived authority.

As they looked at the faces of those strapped to the cross, everyone took the time to glance at Thrax every few seconds.

The corpses looked mutilated and desecrated, some had their faces bashed so hard they were unrecognizable. It appeared none of them were able to last a day, be it they died due to their wounds, or they died due to exposure to the elements. Black birds had circled the area around them; they seemed to have pecked some parts off the dead rebels.

Emery saw Thrax's eyes become red with tears, while blood seeped out from his bone-white knuckles. He was trying to hold his rage in and he would have exploded, if not for Klea using her enchantment to calm him down.

On that day, under the empty eyes of his former comrades, Thrax swore an oath to come back and bring down Rome by his own hand.

Julian stayed silent. Though the oath burdened him, there was nothing he could do.

The four friends continued their journey until they arrived at an empty, but well-maintained port where their boat was located.

Right as the three were about to go their separate ways from Julian, their roman friend unexpectedly decided to go on board with them.

It appeared the sight of the tortured corpses really did bother him as well and currently, he could use some time away from Rome. He wrote a quick note to be given to his family and superiors about how he needed to go on a journey for a few months.

With Julian joining them, all 4 friends now headed together to the east.

"Are we going to pick up Chumo along the way?"

"Don't you know how far he is?"

Chapter 487: Great Cities

After they leave the Roman port, the group headed by ship to the east, towards the Greek city of Athens.

As the ship closed in, the group could already see the pristine, white buildings of the city looming before them. Sure enough, it was as beautiful in person as it was in the stories they had heard. Despite this, though, Julian turned anxiously to Klea as the distance between them and Athens began to close.

"Klea," he started, the anxiety apparent in his voice. "Why don't we just head straight to Egypt and east to seek this place that Emery is looking for?"

Upon hearing this, she huffed. "Huh! The nerve of all you people! Can't you see we are taking a special guest from Briton here?"

The others shuffled uncomfortably. Klea simply rolled her eyes and continued. "Just be a good host, okay? Besides, you are on my ship, which means I decide our route."

"I just thought if you would like to go sightseeing, avoid a Roman-occupied city, please," Julian muttered.

It appeared the Roman was still concerned about his Thracian friend's condition. This whole time, Thrax had been spending most of his time sulking by himself, having decided to stay behind on the ship instead. Overhearing their conversation, though, he made his way to approach the bow of the ship, bowing his head slightly.

In an uncharacteristically quiet voice, he said, "Actually... I think I would like to see the place where they worship our gods."

Klea nodded enthusiastically in agreement, beaming once again. "Good choice! To the Acropolis it is, then."

As they descended from the ship to the port of Athens.

The first thing they saw was the beautiful beach with its glistening ocean stretching far across the horizon. The wide expanse of sand and water situated so closely to the bustling city was a breathtaking sight. They could tell the buildings were old, it was as if the entire city had been yellowed by time. As they walked through the sandy streets, they covered their faces from the briny ocean wind.

Klea insisted all four of them donned long, hooded cloaks in order to disguise themselves. It was a countermeasure so their pleasant trip wouldn't be bothered. After all, four individuals from different nationalities walking together would bring unwanted questions in this city.

They walked through the scenic city, nearly in a daze; everywhere they turned, great buildings with intricately designed pillars and columns towered overhead. They continued on like this for a while, until finally, they reached a particular spot within the city where the ground had risen up towards the sky, like a mountain.

They had finally arrived: the famed Acropolis, its name meaning "the city of the sky". In actuality, it was more like a compilation of multiple buildings. These buildings acted as various temples to worship each of the Greek gods: Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, Demeter, Athena, Ares, Aphrodite, Apollo, Artemis, Hephaestus, Hermes and Hestia.

Thrax was born worshipping Ares. The Thracians even considered themselves to be the descendants of the god of war himself. When they arrived, he immediately made a beeline towards the temple of Ares and sought out the sculptures that the locals had created to worship the god.

Upon seeing the amount of fuss that was made over these 12 Greek gods and the hordes of people filling the temples to worship them, Emery actually began to ponder: were these gods ever real in the first place? If they were, who exactly were they?"

Thrax was born knowing them as the only true gods, as the patrons and patronesses that dictated his future; as for Julian, the Romans actually worshipped the same gods as the Greeks did, only with different names.

Believing them to be gods meant they were not human and therefore to think of these figures as flawed human beings was forbidden. Despite all the things they had learnt and seen as a result of the Magus Academy, even meeting figures that could be considered gods themselves, it was only after Emery expressed his thoughts to his friends that they began to question their beliefs.

These thoughts made them ask questions about their own histories and, because of this, they headed to their next location with an extra objective.

The group stayed there for one day, in order to enjoy the local cuisine and culture. In Emery's case, he visited the various market stalls that lined the streets and checked on the local goods. Each time he

picked up a product that intrigued him, he casted [Analyze] to see the specific properties of each item. He bought some to keep in his personal storage. Before they all finally left the Greek city.

After a few days of travel across the sea, the ship finally arrived at the port of Alexandria in Egypt.

"Welcome to my city!" Klea said in her usual cheery tone of voice. She was practically leaping for joy when their ship began to pull into the harbor.

Of course, the ship was quickly recognized. The group received the royal welcome from the Egyptian subjects. Even the current king and queen of Egypt, Klea's sister and brother, came to welcome them.

It was definitely an impressive display: the girl had the entire Egyptian civilization wrapped around her finger, all while she was travelling and gallivanting around the sea for fun.

Seeing how effectively the king and queen managed to rule their subjects made Julian dumbfounded. He realized a monarchy really did have its benefits compared to a republic. All 5 classes of citizens, from the royals, priests and down to the slaves, were all working efficiently to run the kingdom.

Their arrival quickly became the event of the century for Egypt. A bountiful feast was prepared, with hundreds of dancers and lively music accompanying the meal. For a whole day, the group managed to forget about all of their problems.

No war or senates, no rebels or gladiators. No Seven Kingdoms or certain girls that were left behind. All of them were simply enjoying the ceremony that was held in their honor. The feast continued on for more than a day. There were enough preparations that could last them a week of celebration, if they were so pleased. But on the third day, the group decided to continue to pursue their objectives.

It was time for them to visit Klea's favorite place in the entire world. The Library of Alexandria. Where it was said all of the Earth's information was kept in store.

Chapter 488: History of the World

Alexandria, a city known and regarded as the capital of knowledge and learning, all because of the existence of the Great Library of Alexandria. For a few hundred years, many prominent and influential figures worked at this Grand Library. These scholars all came from different corners of the world: the Greeks, the Romans and even those from the Far East.

"We have more than 400.000 scrolls stored in the Great Library, each containing the quintessence of the knowledge that exists in this world. If you can't find what you want here, then it probably doesn't exist," said Klea proudly, as she gave Emery and the others an introduction of her playground.

In the meantime, Emery was inwardly happy to see the massive hall presented before them, where rows of pillars filled with countless scrolls and parchments could be seen. The scale of this Grand Library was so colossal he didn't even want to compare it to the one the Lioness Kingdom had.

In the middle of her introduction, Klea turned to Emery and said, "I know you are also a student of knowledge like me. So, what do you like to see?"

Emery was sure it would take him dozens of years to read all of the precious information in this library and a few dozens more to completely absorb and comprehend them. Therefore, now was not the time to browse around and submerge himself in this deep ocean of knowledge.

The group immediately walked away from the hall they currently were in, as Klea brought them to the section filled with Earth's history. They look for any scroll with mentions of Gods, as it might have a link to the existence of the magus world.

As for Emery himself, he particularly looked for information regarding certain scrolls that ever mentioned a great tree. He was wondering if there was any record or text that stated and quoted the existence of Gaia and hopefully also the Feys.

Soon, Klea called a dozen scholars to come and help with their needs. The focus would be Earth's history and myths. They would definitely need days searching for the information they want if they do it themselves. Therefore, better to let the experts do the work.

Minutes later, the scholars carefully placed dozens of scrolls on the long table standing in front of the group. Looking at the line of scrolls before him, Emery couldn't hold his inner scholar any longer, as he immediately approached the table to examine them.

The majority of these scrolls were copied from their original text. Hence, they were written in many different languages, corresponding to the person who copied the related knowledge.

Fortunately, with the help of the symbol on their hands, the four of them were able to read all of these ancient texts with ease, without fearing that they would misunderstand the context.

As Emery grabbed one of the scrolls of his interest, the others quickly followed suit. It was a few days of interesting reading and research for this group of friends.

They found out the oldest text that could be found was actually the one Klea came across and collected from the secret room in the pyramids. It was dated 3000 years ago, in which they actually found references of their master: Lord Izta, who was known as Gilgamesh at the time.

There was also a mention of Gilgamesh's companions: the Great Sage from the East, the North Shaman, the Beast King of the West and, lastly, his best friend Enkidu. It was a journey of how Gilgamesh and his companion were fighting against great evil and ended up finding the path to become gods.

The next oldest text the group could find was after the Great Flood, a world-shaking event in which a disastrous deluge occurred and covered the entire Earth. This event, which was considered a punishment that God had given to mankind, had erased and destroyed almost all texts containing information about what happened to humans 2000 years ago.

This rendered human history before the Great Flood a blank that couldn't be traced back. The records regarding that era were lost completely.

After that, was the advent of the Bronze Age, in which humans started to gradually develop. Humanity developed themselves in peace for about 1000 years until another mystery appeared in the annals of history. An event where major civilizations in Greece, Anatolia and Egypt abruptly disappeared.

"Disappear? What do you mean disappear?" asked Thrax, as he looked up from the scroll in his hand, which was swiftly followed by Emery and Julian.

"It's just that: disappear. There are no more texts. It's really weird. The scholars describe this period as the Greek Dark Age." explained Klea to the curious trio.

The group can't stop being suspicious that this must be Magus's hand at work. The group mind was all came to one name: Nephilim, the faction that was assigned to be the 'Caretaker' of Earth.

The Dark Age went on for a hundred years and become the missing history of the world.

Other than the scroll Klea found in the pyramids or the bits and pieces of historical text, The group collected three related records from three sources that was related to what they were looking for; one of the ancient Sumerian, one was the Greeks, and one text from the eastern kingdom.

All three records had mentioned a great tree. The name Gaia was even mentioned in the Greek text. Gaia was described as the Mother of Earth, the mother of Kronos, who later gave birth to the known Greek gods: Zeus, Hades and all the other greek gods.

They found many similarities connected between the gods written in the three texts. Unfortunately, these were not history, but more like poems. A series of tales that had been passed down throughout generations and then written into a physical record.

These scrolls have similar stories, all about the greatness of the Gods and those who challenged the Gods would perish.

Emery found the record named Gaia as Mother of Nature made Emery realize there was some truth written in it, after all. But there was no mention of a place at all in the greek text.

The text from ancient Sumeria came in 14 clay tablets. These ancient texts have even more depth as they mention that the god came thousands of years ago from outer space and taught them the knowledge to the worlds.

It mentioned a certain Garden of Eden and the great tree that was situated in the old city of Babylonia called Eridu.

"The Babylon old city of Eridu has also long been destroyed. There is absolutely nothing there at all." said Klea with conviction, which caused Emery to look at her with confusion. Realizing why Emery looked at her like that, she added, "The city isn't too far from Egypt, so I know the place quite well."

Out of the three texts, The only remaining lead the group had was the one that came from the eastern kingdom. It mentions a certain place, a temple with an ancient tree inside.

The information that was written from the text was very limited but Emery found it's definitely not a coincidence at all that Gaia's mission told him to go to the east.

"Do you know what place it is?" asked Emery.

Klea shook her head "I never know much about this place, but from the stories, it's supposed to be a temple, a place full of worshipers who shave their heads and just sit for weeks"

It was a weird fact when she heard about it years ago, but then it suddenly hit her, these said worshipers could be cultivators.

"It's somewhere within the Yavana Kingdom."

As she said that, Klea's finger pointed to a location on the world map. The pointed location was situated far east from Egypt, even further distance compared Egypt to Briton. This did seem to be a promising lead.

"Yavana Kingdom it is, then."

With this, the group had decided their next destination. This time, they would be travelling by land and it would probably take them 3 to 4 weeks to travel the distance by camel.

Unfortunately, Emery didn't find any information about the Feys or humans turning into wolves.? There wasn't even any text about the Briton's forbidden forest.

During these past few days, Emery also came to realize he was very lacking in overall knowledge about his world. His inability to take a position during the debate between Rome and the rebels was the direct proof of this.

He was ashamed of this part of his, as he believed as a magus of Earth, he had to at least know more about Earth's history itself.

Before they left, Emery decided to put his stone formation in the Great Library, in the hope that, when his spirit force increased, he could return to this place to study some more. Klea, on the other hand, fully supported his intention when she heard it.

Chapter 489: Crossing Desert

"Move, you stupid beast! Move!" Thrax lightly kicked the side of the animal he was sitting on, but strangely, the creature didn't react one bit. It just kept walking at the same pace as before.

He rubbed his forehead to calm himself down and turned to look at Klea. "Dammit, Klea, this beast is moving too slowly! Why can't we just use horses here?" He grumbled. The uncomfortable seat, coupled with the sandy roads, did not do wonders for his still burning temper.

"Yeah, sure," Klea rolled her eyes. "Try it, let's see how long horses can last in the desert."

The group took the camels from Egypt to pass through the Sinai Desert. During the long, slow ride, the yellow sea of sands and the golden rays of sunlight provided them with an unique, beautiful sight.

"Alright, alright, I get it." Thrax sighed. "It's just that, this beast is moving too slowly. How long will it be until we reach the next stop?"

"Four days, give or take." Klea answered.

"Wow, you're saying we will spend 40 days in the desert? That's far too long..."

"You can say that again to the Israelites, who needed 40 years to pass through this very same desert."

"Seriously?!" Thrax exclaimed. "What took them so long?"

Klea only shrugged to the impatient Thracian, while Julian and Emery took the journey in stride and watched the two talk to each other. It didn't take them long to see that the desert was helpful in cultivating the understanding of the Earth element, and they proceeded to spend most of the journey in deep concentration.

A week passed, they stopped for a while in a city called Jerusalem.

If they just walked in without preparation, they would bring a lot of trouble, as the arrival of the Egyptian queen was bound to attract unwanted attention. Luckily, Julian recommended a place to stay.

They left their camels in a secure place and walked into a narrow alley, stopping in front of a simple but clean and well-maintained inn on the other side of the road.

Julian walked in first, the four of them were greeted by a high-ranked Judean named Antipater, whom Julian had known for quite a while. He had two young sons that peeked from behind the table as they entered.

One was merely looking in mild curiosity, but the other showed much more interest in the group.

"Herod, don't be rude to our guests," Antipater reminded, the boy quickly ran into the back of the room.

They stayed there for the night and, as soon as the sun shone through their windows, they woke up, prepared themselves and took extra camels, before resuming their trek through the desert.

With more camels, they could change rides during their journey, reducing the need to stop and rest.

One week, two weeks passed.

During the journey, other than cultivating, sometimes the group would do some training together and share things about their progress.

As they talked, they realized Emery, who had the least aptitude for cultivation among them, had maxed out his rank 8 spirit force requirement.

Even Klea, with her S-rank aptitude, still needed another 100 points and her spirit force was currently at 400. Meanwhile, Thrax and Julian just reached 250 points, the maximum spirit force for a rank 7. Weeks had passed, but they were unable to make a breakthrough.

The two of them admitted they had given up reaching rank 9 before the next recall in one and a half years, but when they heard of Emery's progress, all three stared at him with jealousy.

"Hey, tell us how you did it?!"

The three of them had known about Emery's half-blood status and the Forbidden Forest, but they were no fools. Even if those two things played a factor, his crazy affinity for the Darkness element did not add up.

"Look, guys, as much as I want to tell you." Emery rubbed the back of his head. "I honestly still have so many unanswered questions, too. Trust me, I will tell you guys when I know more."

He knew telling them about Killgragah would only lead to more questions. Perhaps, he would tell them when he discovered what was hidden behind the door Killgragah mentioned. Unbeknownst to the other two, Klea gave Emery a glance and smiled, knowing Emery told her more than the others.

A few more days passed and they started to see some greenery in the distance. The heat was no longer as oppressive, a sure sign they have reached a more tropical area. From the map, it seemed they were already at the outskirts of Yanava Kingdom's territory.

The Eastern Dynasty spread across lands much bigger than even the 7 Briton kingdoms combined. Hence, it would still take a while before Emery could start looking for his objective.

But he believed he would find it sooner or later, as his [Nature Grasp] spell had detected they were getting closer.

As they leisurely rode their camels across the city roads, it was clear this city still held some remnants of the ancient Greeks, including their culture. It was to be expected, as the city was conquered by the macedonian king Alexander The Great 500 years ago.

They went and stayed in the local inn for a while, taking turns to walk around and gather information. Emery was surprised to see several new herbs he had not seen before and started to collect them.

From the locals, they heard about a certain monk temple built on a holy ground and protected by sacred trees. They referred to the temple as "The Great Awakening Temple" and the land it stood on as Gaya. They just needed to go farther to the west.

They traded their camels for horses and went on another week's worth of journey. Thrax did not grumble as much now for they have reached a less hostile land.

Finally, they reached Gaya City.

The city was much bigger than they thought and people with various styles of clothing filled the place. From the heaps of fruits and various offerings all around, it was safe to assume they were in the middle of a festival.

However, that was not their main concern. The four looked at each other in shock, for they felt a disturbance in the spirit force.

Emery could tell a few dozen, perhaps even a hundred people with high spirit force were gathered here.

"How is this possible? What kind of place is this?"

Chapter 490: Holy Harvest

For one month, they continued their journey, passing through scorching deserts, humid forests, and finally reached this place that seemingly stood in the middle of nowhere.

But within this desolate place, they saw a crowded town filled with people possessing such high spirit power. This made Emery and the others very surprised.

As they wandered inside the town, they could see many people in different clothes, a sure sign they did not come from the same place. Some wore luxurious flowing silks from head to toe, while others were covered in furs.

With her experience as the ruler of Egypt, Klea could recognize them as travelers from different regions.

Emery saw another particular group of people walk past them. They wore black garbs, with their faces covered until only their eyes could be seen, all of them carried a long sword on their back. Those with keen eyes would see that their feet hovered slightly above the ground.

They were led by a person wearing a silver mask who looked at the four curiously before leaving to lead his group again.

With his spirit reading ability, Emery could tell those people in black garbs were all great fighters, especially the one wearing a silver mask.

This was definitely an odd situation and they quickly became cautious.

Emery glanced at Klea and asked, "How is this possible? Did I read it wrong?"

Klea shook her head. "No, I can feel it too. There are more than a hundred of them with unusual spirit force and, there are stronger ones on top of that hill"

Klea aimed towards the hill and from afar the group could see multiple stone structures that rose tall to the sky.

"That must be the holy temple they mention."

At the same time, the sun had started to set and they quickly decided to stop at one of the nice-looking taverns to get some food, a place to stay and most importantly information.

When they entered the inn, to their surprise, even the tavern servant appeared to be a fighter, no less strong than a silver knight back in Briton.

The group became even more cautious, as they walked into one of the tables and seats.

A moment later, a brown-skinned man dressed in formal clothes welcomed them. He looked at them from top to bottom and said,

"Welcome, welcome, you came for the Holy Harvest Ritual, didn't you? We rarely see any Latin people joining. You are most welcome."

"Holy Harvest Ritual?" Julian piped up, and Emery followed by asking the man about the significance of said ritual.

Surprisingly the answer of the man was not as they expected.

"You all come from Latin, so far from this town, but don't know about this ritual? That's strange... Who are you guys?" The tavern owner suddenly turned a little suspicious towards them.

The sudden change in behavior quickly made Emery and the others realize something was odd. Knowing what was about to happen, Klea quickly casted her enchantment spell and the man's expression turned calm and turn compliance.

Again, he was ready to answer any questions they might have.

As if nothing happened, the man gladly explained about how the emissaries from neighboring kingdoms and nations would come to join the "Holy Harvest Ritual" that would be held every decade in the temple. This event was supposed to be invitations-only and the fact that none of them knew about it made him very suspicious.

"What kind of Ritual is it? What kind of people joined?"

The ritual has been held for a few hundred years; it was to celebrate the time when the sacred tree that stood over the temple would bear holy fruits. A fruit that was known to be able to cure any illness, increase one's strength tremendously, or even increase someone's lifespan. However, there were many people, regardless of them being good or bad, that were interested in the fruits, so the event was made invitation-only and each invitation would be sent in secret.

Hearing this Klea narrowed her eyes in annoyance.

"How come Egypt doesn't get invited?"

The man surprisingly knew exactly about Egypt and said that ten years ago a certain Egyptian priest did come and join the event.

"Huh! That must be Imoteph! That priest dares keep secrets from the King!"

Considering how the man emphasized the effects of the fruit and how the people they encountered possessed high spirit power, the four of them quickly concluded that there would be a competition of sorts to determine who got to receive the fruits and the enchanted tavern man confirmed their thought.

These quickly give a nice breeze to the group after such a long journey. Just the thought of stretching their muscle made Julian and even the wounded Thrax wanted to participate.

As for Emery, he pondered that it must not be a coincidence for Gaia to tell him to come here right in the middle of this particular event.

With Emery expressing his interest to join, Klea followed suit. They missed the feeling of having an interesting fight in this journey, but when they asked about how to get the invitation, the man explained the invitations were very limited, and even if someone was willing to sell it, they would be lucky to only pay a full cart of gold.

Everyone sighed hearing about it while Klea was irritated, as she didn't bring much gold with her.

While everyone was mulling over how to solve this problem, Emery suddenly stood up as his spirit reading once more found some kind of disturbance. There was a distinct feeling of someone strong was closing in on their direction, but his eyes had not caught sight of anything yet.

He was sure the person was probing at them and this person was not weaker than any of them

"Guys, get ready!" Right as Emery spoke, everyone wore a serious expression on their faces. They quickly realized something was going on.

They all stood up and walked outside and their hands darted to the handles of their weapons, ready to strike at whoever was coming their way.

"There!" Emery pointed at the shadows in one of the alleys. "Who are you?! Come out and show yourself!"

From behind the cover of darkness, a guy with black hair and simple clothes leisurely walked out. Each of his steps made them tense, but when the light of the torches finally illuminated his face, all four were quickly surprised.

The person gave the four of them a wry smile before laughing.

"Goodness, you guys... you all forget about me already?"